

Trajectories, Kairos, and Tulips

A Personal Reflection and Meditation on Programs in Rhetoric, Technical, Professional, and Scientific Communication

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Abstract. The purpose of this article is to reflect upon the emergence of programs in rhetoric, technical, professional, and scientific communication (RTPSC) during the past twenty years through a personal narrative of experiences from graduate study to the present. Using a method of inquiry based in rhetorical meditation, the article presents a story of these experiences at Purdue University, Miami University of Ohio, and Michigan Tech University and then moves outward toward national concerns and, finally, suggests a selected inventory of challenges the RTPSC field faces in the coming years.

Keywords. naming, *techné*, arts, meditation, academic programs, making, rhetoric, branding

My exigency for writing this article is threefold. First is the gracious invitation by the three editors of this inaugural journal to say something about programs in the field of rhetoric, technical, scientific, and professional communication (RTPSC). Second is my personal desire to write a reflective narrative of my experiences in this emerging, burgeoning field. Third is a related desire to use this opportunity to meditate upon my experiences and those of the many people I have had the opportunity to work with, to identify some of the greater questions we might confront as the programs in this broad-ranging field continue to emerge and develop their identities.

Before I begin this narrative journey, I say a few things about my approach, the “method” of meditation. As a consequence of its wide-ranging nature, meditation has many “whys,” “whats,” and “hows.” My intent is not to overview all of these methods—that would be a multivolume work in its own

right. Rather, my purpose is to mark a particular way of meditating grounded in the histories and theories of rhetoric, particularly rhetoric as a productive craft, as an art of invention and making. Specifically I use this method to craft some questions about RTPSC programs as a way to think through the trajectory of the field and how it might continue to trace its arc into the future.

A fruitful distinction between two types of thinking—meditative vs. calculative—is expressed by the German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1966) in “Memorial Address.” Heidegger distresses over what he calls the “flight from thinking,” which refers to “growing thoughtlessness [that] gnaws at the very marrow of man” (p. 45). He goes on to say that modern humans have become almost totally relegated to a way of thinking that he calls *calculative*. In short, calculative thinking for Heidegger is thinking that “serves specific purposes,” “counts on definite results,” “races from one prospect to the next,” and “never stops, never collects itself.” Most bluntly, he says that “calculative thinking is not meditative thinking, not thinking which contemplates the meaning which reigns in everything that is” (p. 46).

Meditative thinking, then, is quite distinct from calculative thinking, but he does not suggest that it is without a sense of its own powers and processes: “Meditative thinking does not just happen by itself anymore than does calculative thinking. At times it requires a greater effort. It demands more practice. It is in need of even more delicate care than any other genuine craft” (pp. 46–47). Even more pointedly, “Meditative thinking demands of us not to cling one-sidedly to a single idea, not to run down a one-track course of ideas. Meditative thinking demands of us that we engage ourselves with what at first sight does not go together at all” (p. 55).

As you can see, Heidegger (1966) provides some good starting points for thinking about thinking (and, indeed, much of his later scholarship fleshes out this concept in great detail). Nevertheless, this short introduction to these two types of thinking—calculative and meditative—can engage us in contemplating how we move from thought to thought in ways not only progressive (in the sense of forward movement) but also reflective and iterative. Yet his explanation leaves me somewhat wanting because it does not provide enough explanation of what the *action* of such thinking is. If we are to enact a meditative way of thinking, how do we actually practice what Heidegger himself calls a *craft*? For some assistance with this, I now turn to the monastics of the medieval period.

In *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 40–1200*, Mary Carruthers (1998), a professor of Rhetoric and English at NYU, provides a most substantial answer to this problem of turning meditation from an internal thinking process to a rhetorical craft (art) of thinking that

has tangible and useful outcomes. Again, a thorough rendering of her work is beyond my purposes here, but I want to summarize some of her key points to explain more concretely my reasons for using meditation as both a method and as a genre.

At the outset of her book, Carruthers (1998) most plainly states that “I have chosen to deal with meditation as a rhetorical process and product” (p. 2). She goes on to say that this choice is unusual in our present day as most (at least Western) approaches to studying meditative practices have been through the vein of psychological analysis and thus have relegated such investigations to an “over-concentration on the individual and personal” (p. 2). The approaches of the monastics, on the other hand, were based in a sense of rhetorical craft knowledge that placed the individual always within a “larger community, within which a single life was ‘perfected,’ ‘made complete,’ by acquiring a civic being and identity” (p. 2).

Further, she demonstrates that “Monastic rhetoric emphasized ‘invention,’ the cognitive procedures of traditional rhetoric. Rhetoric was thus practiced as primarily a craft of composition rather than one primarily of persuading others” (p. 3). She elaborates on this concept of invention through meditative craft in several ways, but most interesting for this discussion is that invention had two distinct meanings. First was what we usually think of as invention—as the art of creative thinking that allows us to make things anew. Second, and quite interestingly, she points out that another contemporary word derived from the Latin *inventio* is “inventory” (p. 11).

Centering her discussion on the rhetorical concepts of memory, as well as invention, Carruthers makes the point that inventory did not just mean a collection of thoughts or objects, but it also meant an ordered collection:

Inventories must have an order. Inventoried materials are counted and placed in locations within an overall structure which allows any item to be retrieved easily and at once. This last requirement also excludes collections that are too cumbersome or too unparticular to be useful. (p. 11)

In addition, this meditative craft was a “memory *architecture* [used] to make things, such as interpretations, as well as buildings and prayers” (p. 4). Thus the medieval craft of meditation was directly aimed at being useful.

Finally, meditative craft, as I alluded earlier, was integrally linked with a sense of civic activity, communal knowledge, and ethics. In ancient Greek culture, the making of things was not separated from the culture within which they were made. Mass production and making things merely for consumption was not a concept the ancients would understand or practice. The same

is true of the monastics. The things made through meditation were part of their civic fabric, whether as “citizens of the City of God” (p. 18) or as artisans creating artifacts (discursive or material) that benefited the life of a community through offerings that combined both “beauty and benefit. . . in which *usefulness* is merged with *delight* in the service of an enriched social order” (p. 20).

I hope this excursion into a reflection of personal experiences in RTPSC through meditative method will prove to be, literally, useful. To the end of usefulness, in what follows I use two particular aspects of the method of mediation. The primary aspect is the concept of contemplative thought as a way to work against the calculative grain. Thus what I present is more essay than report or analysis. Put more concretely, I want to explore some alternative ways of thinking through issues that result in questions; with hope, such questions ultimately bring forth better questions and can focus attention on key matters in RTPSC through different lenses. In addition, I draw upon the concept of “invention as inventory” to compile these questions into some semblance of order that can be further contemplated and, potentially, stored in collective memory for further creative use by RTPSC professionals, especially those who serve as stewards of the academic realm of the profession. Now, on to the main point of this article: meditating upon the linked trajectories of one person with the trajectories of RTPSC.

I often characterize my journey into RTPSC in two ways: as “accidental” and as “fortunate.” The beginning point was both relatively unplanned and, at the same time, *kairotic* (something that reflects the parallel trajectories of RTPSC—something I will refer to throughout this article). I came to graduate study in my thirties as someone who had left college during the turbulent Vietnam Era when many young college students felt as though the academy was not providing us with a realistic way “into life.” That is, there was little apparent connection between what we were learning in college and what we thought we might actually do with all of this new-found knowledge. At least that was my excuse. I remember saying at one point, “I want to learn to work with my hands. I feel that I don’t know how to make anything.” This simple statement has stayed with me in ways that I could never have imagined then. The arts of making have now become a center of my thinking and scholarship.

So I journeyed into what RTPSC often refers to as the “nonacademic world” where I was a fledgling carpenter, a roofer, a laborer, a gas station attendant and manager, an organic dairy farmer, and other jobs that I can hardly remember. Ten years, and several children later, I had been laid off

so many times due to the economic roller coaster of those postwar years that I decided to return to finish my undergraduate degree. I did so at the University of Houston—Victoria where I received a BA in Humanities in 1985. By accident, I had a wonderful advisor who knew I wanted to pursue further study in the humanistic arena, but he also knew that the traditional entrance into the field through literature was problematic, especially for someone who had a family. It was no secret then, and it has become even more painfully evident over the intervening years, that advanced degrees in literary study hold tenuous promise for future employment. In fact, he had also been through the bleak prospects for tenure-track literature jobs at that time. Thus he imparted his wisdom about this situation to me by telling me of a new field called Rhetoric and Composition and explaining that his alma mater, Purdue, had started a graduate program in this new area of study. He knew I was interested not only in studying “texts” but also in studying writing. This all made sense to me so, I applied to Purdue and went there on a graduate assistantship the following fall.

At Purdue I matriculated into the master’s program in Rhetoric and Composition and my journey began to turn from accidental to fortunate. During the fall of 1985, I knew little about the field, but through the rigorous and well-designed structure of the program, I quickly began to understand that we were all about the teaching and scholarly study of *writing*, broadly construed. Then, in my second year, I was given the opportunity to teach a course that looked interesting to me due to my workplace experiences: technical writing. Suddenly (or it seems in retrospect to have been sudden), I saw how I could teach about and even make things myself that were useful. Audience, user, context, purpose, social application, problem-solving, and a variety of other descriptors associated with technical writing (especially via rhetorical history and theory) made perfect sense. So much so that by 1990, I was ready to venture into the academic arena as a job candidate.

In August of 1990, I began a position as assistant professor at Miami–Ohio. I couldn’t have been more pleased with Miami’s stellar master’s program in Technical and Scientific Communication that had, in many ways, helped set the stage for such programs nationwide. The program began in 1983 when only five other similar programs existed in the country. There was also a bachelor’s program, but it was undergoing revision and had been suspended pending an evaluation and redesign. Thus I was immediately launched into the work of preparing graduate students and designing undergraduate curricula somewhat similar to my Purdue experience, but quite different as well.

The Miami–Ohio Technical and Scientific Communication (MTSC) master’s degree program, for instance, focused almost solely on preparation for en-

trance into the nonacademic workplace. The courses taught everything from genres and project management to document design, rhetoric theory, and electronic discourse appropriate for use in the nonacademic sphere, among many other things. The revised undergraduate program took its reflection from the master's program and also set a course for students to pursue workplace positions. The graduate program, however, grew out of composition studies with a specific interest in expressive discourse. This focus changed to some degree with the hiring of faculty more based in rhetorical studies and RTPSC and, eventually, a professional communication concentration in the PhD program evolved (through the commitment in large part of some dedicated graduate students) that prepared students for academic work in the profession.

In 1999, another kairotic moment arrived as I was invited to apply for the chair of Humanities at Michigan Technological University (MTU). After a long search process, followed by much personal introspection, I moved to Michigan Tech and entered yet another realm of RTPSC. In brief, the MTU programs were a hybrid of my experiences at Purdue and Miami–Ohio in that the RTPSC elements of this interdisciplinary department prepares undergraduate students for the nonacademic workplace, and the graduate program prepares students for both the academic and nonacademic roles.

This hybrid model had worked well for several years, and at first, I saw few problems with just continuing in this same vein of student preparation. Suddenly, however, along with many other state-assisted institutions, MTU experienced significant budget reductions during the first half of the present decade. The result was that there were losses of some faculty lines across the university (mostly due to attrition through retirements) accompanied by a reduced ability to hire new faculty as the lines were “eaten” to some extent through the cuts. We were fortunate regarding RTPSC endeavors at MTU, however, because a significant number of faculty associated in one way or another with RTPSC. We were less affected by such budgetary turmoil as some other programs across the country that had even fewer faculty in RTPSC.

Nevertheless, we, too, had to regroup, and one outcome of this process was to refocus our goals for students. The undergraduate program retained the same focus of preparing students primarily for nonacademic work. At the master's level, however, the program's attention focused more fully on preparation for the academic world, preparing students to become community college faculty or to go on to doctoral study. One lesson learned during this period was what I refer to as the “fragility” of RTPSC programs (something I will return to later). In my experience at all three institutions, the “fragility factor” is always lurking in the doorway.

Interlude: Inventing an Inventory of RTPSC Program Challenges and Opportunities

I have presented a summary of my lived experience in the RTPSC profession to provide a context and background for what is to come in this article—the beginning of an inventory (albeit quite incomplete) of what many of us confront when designing, implementing, and maintaining academic programs. Thus the goal of this excursion to this point has been to move toward possible *ends* for RTPSC programs, or what we often refer to in rhetoric as the *telos* of a given problem. In one sense, the *telos* of program development is to create a product: the tangible outcome of our making. However, the *telos* of any making is more than the product: it also must attend to the *use(s)* of that product. Some of these uses are apparent from the beginning. For instance, we might create a curriculum that produces majors in RTPSC for an undergraduate or graduate program. A conundrum of any human making, however, is that uses are often not apparent, not planned. They could be subtle and ultimately surprising; sometimes outcomes are serendipitous, sometimes not so. In what follows, I pose several questions that have grown out of my experience and experiences of others in the field. This product, this preliminary inventory of questions, considers the products of our making, but also places a critical eye on the uses to which these products will be put in the future.

What are Some Challenges of Creating Coherent, Well-designed Programs?

We face interesting and unique problems in RTPSC program design in comparison with the more traditional disciplines that make up the academy. Chief among these problems is that the students who enter programs in RTPSC, either as undergraduate or graduate students, likely have not acquired a thorough background in the field. That is, it is rare for students at the undergraduate level to know what they will be expected to do in this profession. At the graduate level, it is still the case that their undergraduate backgrounds come from a wide variety of disciplines (literature, creative writing, business, the sciences, engineering) that demonstrate their abilities to be strong students in content areas relevant to RTPSC; yet, they will not have had a thorough grounding in the specifics of RTPSC. In most other disciplines, students come to graduate study with a bachelor's degree in that specific discipline. Thus the question for RTPSC programs is, How do we bring students up to speed so that they can pursue a graduate degree in a reasonable period of time?

One answer to this question is that we must provide fundamental knowledge of the theories and practices of the profession of RTPSC. At

the undergraduate level this problem is probably less pressing because we are expected to prepare students for a profession with the assumption that they will have little background in RTPSC. Thus most undergraduate programs are of the professional school ilk. Put simply, the expectation is that we will prepare students for the practicalities of becoming RTPSC practitioners, usually in the nonacademic world. Even here, though, we have significant challenges to address. Some programs prepare students for a variety of professional options, while others are more specialized. For example, concentration areas in science, technology, or business enable students to target their professional goals. However, not all programs can be so specialized due to economic, demographic, institutional, or geographical limitations.

Further, we have another dilemma at the undergraduate level: What about students who want to pursue a graduate degree that is not of the professional, nonacademic type? Clearly these students must be grounded in particulars of the professional type of program because this grounding is part and parcel of what RTPSC programs are required to provide. Yet there is only so much time and money in both institutional and student pockets to provide the more theoretical and historical background that future graduate students might be expected to possess if they are inclined to seek an academic career.

Thus the problem of preparing nonacademic practitioners or academic professional sets up an interesting binary. As with any binary, this dual problem can provide opportunities that can define more succinctly what we are as a profession. Maybe we don't need to prepare students for one "world" or another. Possibly we can prepare students for the potential to go in either direction (or both), thus giving them choices that might not be possible in more traditional disciplines. As such, maybe RTPSC can be defined as an example of a profession that crosses not only disciplinary boundaries but also professional career boundaries. However, at least one more challenge arises. If we are going to prepare students for the academic career path, how can we conjoin our professionally oriented programs that prepare students for the workplace with the theoretical, methodological, and historical knowledge-base that an academic career demands? Are there time and resources to accomplish this?

Has RTPSC Become Governed by Digital Technology?

Historically, RTPSC has been intimately associated with technology, broadly construed. Such a linkage makes the field able to locate its scholarship in many varied places—the study of handbooks, instructional documents,

business memos, proposals and reports, and virtually any text that links making and doing with human existence. Technology offers a soil rich with things to investigate and learn from that many fields could envy. During the past couple of decades, however, the impetus of programs in RTPSC has been to collapse technology to one type of technology that we dub *digital*. Digital now appears on program mastheads, in concentration areas of student degree plans, and in other various places of the educational apparatus. This technological specificity is a good thing in some ways because it does accurately describe some of what we do: work with and through digital technologies.

At the same time, I ask, are we thinking through the implications for students and programs? Are we, as one scholar of media and culture suggests, trading in tulips (Sconce, 2003)? In an illuminating chapter, Jeffrey Sconce makes a telling analogy between the current digital phenomenon and the tulip mania that occurred in seventeenth century northern Europe. He tells the story of how the Dutch and Germans became so enamored of the Turkish floral import that it took on value far beyond its original. People traded even single tulips for acres of land, eventually making tulips a major commodity on the Dutch stock market. In the end, the demand for tulips finally fell and the price of tulips never rose again.

This analogy is a good one, but tulips are not exactly analogous to “the digital.” I imagine that digital technology will continue to rise in demand and currency across the globe. However, in terms of RTPSC programs, the analogy does take on a revealing hue. That is, it is not so much a concern to me that we invest in the digital, but rather how large that investment becomes, and more importantly whether that investment might erase the larger context of all technology, all human making, as the focus of scholarship, practice, and teaching in the RTPSC profession. Thus it is not the digital tulips we might lose; rather, it is the larger questions concerning technology that might vanish. RTPSC has much to offer in the debates about technology, writ large. Such would be a great loss to RTPSC and other disciplines. To address this potential problem, I wish to think meditatively on the issues involved, as Heidegger (1966) suggests, and not fall prey to mere calculative thinking that seeks answers before the good questions are even formed.

How/Why are RTPSC Programs Fragile?

There are many avenues through which to pursue this question, but I will constrain myself to two of those: a) the problem of managing scarce resources and b) the struggle to develop intellectual identities for the

field and its academic programs. In terms of the problem of dwindling resources, especially at public institutions, if a program has the support of its institution at high levels of administration, then there is a good chance of preparing a given program for strong growth and ongoing assistance. If, however, a RTPSC program is situated within a department or college where traditional disciplines have significant numbers of tenured faculty lines and the resources are locked up in these lines, then it can be quite difficult to procure the necessary permanent faculty support to sustain those programs. For example, many RTPSC programs are located in English departments where it can be difficult to influence the numbers in terms of hiring priorities and program offerings. Some RTPSC programs have even moved out of these large departments and blazed their own trail. This is a dicey situation, however, as the support for new departments may take a turn for the worse if more budget reductions come along or if priorities change due to new deans, provosts, or presidents. Further, there are many RTPSC programs that, whether they remain as part of a larger department or split off, are managed by small numbers of dedicated faculty. The demand to grow these programs becomes intense; without adequate support, these RTPSC faculty assume heavy teaching and administrative loads, thus leading to the second issue to ponder: the intellectual work of the RTPSC profession.

In addition to material and human resources, we also have the “non-material” problem of making our intellectual identities visible. RTPSC prides itself in being variously termed an *inter- trans- multi- integrative field*. This terminology is one of its strengths and, at the same time a potential weakness, especially when it comes to defining the intellectual sphere of the profession. Put more concretely, many disciplines now tout themselves as being interdisciplinary (or one of the other descriptors mentioned previously). My intent here is not to survey the whole problem of “being interdisciplinary”—that discussion warrants a much more involved interrogation at a later time. Instead, I will merely state that “being interdisciplinary” implies “being disciplinary.” That is, when disciplines come together to do integrative work, they bring with them recognition of their intellectual core—the disciplinary knowledge that signifies their identity. On a philosophical level, this coming together of disparate disciplinary identities may appear to be a small problem. After all, RTPSC works in interdisciplinary spaces by virtue of a long history of collaborating with the sciences and engineering as well as other disciplines. Despite this history, however, I am not sure that our intellectual space is visible to these traditional disciplines. Most pointedly, we still suffer from the same image that composition stud-

ies does of being a service object, of having little agency, of owning little disciplinary knowledge.

A most telling example of this invisibility is the inability of RTPSC scholars, with some rare exceptions, to qualify as Principal Investigators on National Science Foundation (NSF) or National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants. RTPSC is simply not on the list of professions allowed to steer these large grants. Yes, we do take part in them, but the primary resources for these grants are administered by the traditional science and engineering departments, resulting in most of the prestige and profits of these funding agencies going to the traditional disciplines. Putting NSF and NIH aside, it is also the case that we are officially not listed as being viable for external funding through the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). This lack of prestige and visibility lends to our fragility because we are rarely seen by our home institutions as significant “players” in a world where external funding is becoming more and more the object of concern in higher education.

There are no simple or immediate solutions to these problems of fragility. Nevertheless, there are pathways to explore. For instance, we can work like the Consortium of Rhetoric and Composition Programs (through the College Conference in Composition and Communication) to create a category for RTPSC in the National Research Council (NRC) taxonomy. This taxonomy makes disciplines more visible and perhaps more credible in the national scene. Such an effort might also put the various organizations that support RTPSC nationally into a working coalition (something that has been attempted in the past, but certainly needs more attention). For instance, the Council of Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication (CPTSC), the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW) and the Society for Technical Communication (STC) had several officers meet in the early 2000s to make connections between these (and other) organizations that advocate for RTPSC. As far as I know, these efforts have bogged down and could be resurrected with the aim of making RTPSC more visible to other audiences. In addition, on the home institution level, we can work to garner endowments to support our programs. This is a difficult task, but one worth the effort if even only modest gains are made in guarding against “the fragility factor.”

Is RTPSC a Liberal Art?

In this concluding portion, I address an enigma in the RTPSC profession, one that confronts and complicates the issues of fragility and program development addressed throughout this essay. Beginning with Carolyn

R. Miller's landmark essay (1979), RTPSC has for several decades debated whether the profession is humanistic. This debate will undoubtedly continue because it does place on the table a central problem that should occupy the thinking of any profession that straddles more than one disciplinary space—the problem of identity. If we do call RTPSC humanistic, then what does that mean? Certainly in part it means that we are concerned about the classic question: What does it mean to be human? It also focuses RTPSC on issues of communication, language, ethics, and a plethora of other questions posed across the millennia about the nature of the human being.

For RTPSC programs, however, the nomen *humanistic* may be too ill-defined. As a former chair of a humanities department—one that includes not only RTPSC but also cultural studies, modern languages, philosophy, literature and composition studies, among others—I have often been asked by those outside the department, “So what do you do in a humanities department?” Although those of us in this department have ready answers to this question, there often tends to be a subtle dissatisfaction on the part of the hearers. Put another way, I believe people outside the humanities want to have a more specific sense of what we are and do (beyond teaching the service courses that support the sciences and engineering).

To this conundrum I pose one final question: Should we think through RTPSC as a liberal art? Certainly this designation might not get us on the masthead of NSF, but it might further provide at least a starting point to defining some of RTPSC's identity. First, however, is to clarify what is meant by liberal arts. In the modern era (especially since the late eighteenth century), *liberal arts* has most commonly come to mean those sites of learning where the end is in the knowledge of the reader/hearer of the object being studied. Thus the liberal arts are perceived as having little use in modern education. In this view of the liberal arts, learned subjects are made who bring to their lives a richer sense of being human. This, of course, is a keystone to the humanities and should not be abandoned.

This concept of the learned individual who has come to *how to know* but not necessarily *how to make*, however, is a problem for RTPSC because students and professionals in this profession must act and do and make. Returning to the premodern conception of the liberal arts may provide some answer to this conundrum. Western classical philosophers and rhetoricians viewed the liberal arts as two traditions. One is reflected in the modern sense described previously where the human subject comes to knowledge for the sake of knowledge. In this sense of liberal arts, the implication was that the *good man* created from such education would carry that knowledge to the

active life. However, *how to make* or *craft* based on this knowledge was left to experience, not to overt education in how to make things from knowledge.

The second sense of liberal arts, on the other hand, was founded on the arts of making, in productive knowledge, as exemplified through *techne*. *Techne* is a theory of knowledge—the knowledge of making—but *techne* also describes the processes and actions of making. Therefore, the liberal arts defined through *techne* involved the human subject in the crafting of things either material or discursive (as in rhetoric).

Clearly this second sense of liberal arts, one that involves making and using, has been abandoned in our present day educational systems, or if it does exist, then it is invisible. Further, when it does exist, then it is relegated to the level of “mere skill” or some other synonym for nonepistemic knowledge based on rote learning. It might behoove us in RTPSC to consider the possibilities for the field to be thought through as a liberal art that engenders both approaches to learning: one that engenders the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake *and* one that engenders knowledge of production and, ultimately, of use. Such a linkage might to some degree address the problems of academic and nonacademic professional goals of students and curricula that support those goals. Additionally, it could open up scholarly venues for technology writ large, thus branching RTPSC out beyond the mono-technological impetus of *the digital* phenomenon.

Certainly my presentation of RTPSC as a liberal art is but a preliminary sketch that needs to be brought through more thinking, more meditating, and more discussion. To that end, I leave this essay as an offering for anyone interested in entering the discussion. The trajectory of RTPSC is but one of many human makings that might benefit from all this conjecture.

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