

Calvin Pollak, *Ph.D.*

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## Biography

Calvin Pollak is a postdoctoral teaching fellow in Technical Communication and Rhetoric at Utah State University. His research focuses on institutional rhetoric, language accessibility, and social justice. He is also co-founder, co-producer, and co-host of *re:verb*, a podcast about language in action.

## Education

*Department of English, Carnegie Mellon University; Pittsburgh, PA*

Ph.D. Rhetoric

May 2021

**Dissertation:** *Leaks and the legitimation of state power: How the 2013 NSA disclosures reshaped debates over government surveillance policies*

**Committee:** John Oddo (Chair), David Kaufer, Andreea Ritivoi

B.A. Professional Writing & Philosophy (College & University Honors)

2011

## Research and Publications

### *Peer-Reviewed Articles*

Pollak, C. (2022, forthcoming). Language Accessibility and Political Legitimacy: The Role of Style in NSA Surveillance Discourse. *Proceedings of the IEEE International Professional Communication Conference*. July 17-20, 2022, Limerick, Ireland, UK.

Pollak, C. (2021). Legitimation and Textual Evidence: How the Snowden Leaks Reshaped the ACLU's Online Writing About NSA Surveillance. *Written Communication*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07410883211007870>

Johnstone, B., & Pollak, C. (2016). Mobilities, Materialities, and the Changing Meanings of Pittsburgh Speech. *Journal of English Linguistics*, 44(3), 254–275. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0075424216654519>

### *Under Review*

Pollak, C. & Bhardwaj, S. (De)-Legitimizing Dystopian Science: Social Justice Implications of Militarized Tech Research. *Technical Communication Quarterly*.

## *In Progress*

Pollak, C. & Bhardwaj, S. (Untitled Student Activism Analysis Study). Target journal: *Technical Communication Quarterly*. Expected date of submission: December 1, 2022.

Pollak, C. (Untitled IRB-Approved Study of Sexual Misconduct Prevention Professional Data Analysis & Communication). Target journal: *Communication Design Quarterly*. Expected date of submission: February 1, 2023.

## *Public Scholarship*

**re:verb** – a podcast about politics, culture, and language in action. Available from [reverbcast.com](https://reverbcast.com), Apple, Stitcher, Android, and other podcasting platforms.

- 57 episodes produced, featuring 31 interview episodes and 7 concept-based educational episodes.
  - Selection of interview episodes: [E13](#) (Stephanie R. Larson), [E15](#) (Dana Cloud), [E32](#) (Benjamin Dixon), [E35](#) (James J. Brown, Jr.), [E41](#) (Asao B. Inoue), [E45](#) (Britt Paris), [E47](#) (Karma R. Chávez), [E56](#) (Richard Purcell), [E59](#) (Bernadette Calafell).
  - Selection of concept-based episodes: [E14](#) (Ideographs), [E17](#) (Dialogicality), [E18](#) (Rhetorical Situation), [E24](#) (Genre), [E30](#) (Irony), [E54](#) (Conceptual Metaphor), [E60](#) (Publicity and Counterpublicity).
- Approximately 20,000 monthly subscribers.
- Used in 25+ rhetoric and composition courses around the US.

## **Recent Academic Positions and Courses Taught**

### *Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of English, Utah State University*

Workplace Research Methods (3 sections; 37 students)	Fall 2021-present
Technical Communication Capstone (2 sections; 31 students)	Fall 2021, Fall 2022
Cultural Research Methods (1 section; 17 graduate students: 4 PhD, 13 Master's)	Fall 2022
Professional Editing (2 sections; 36 students)	Fall 2021-Spring 2022
Writing for the Workplace (1 section; 17 students)	Spring 2022

*Predoctoral Fellow, English, Carnegie Mellon University*

Instructor, Interpretation & Argument (10 sections; 183 students) Fall 2014- Spring 2017  
Fall 2019-present

Instructor, Writing About Data (3 sections; 55 students) Fall 2018-Spring 2019

Instructor, Writing In the Professions (1 section; 17 students) Fall 2017

Teaching Assistant, Writing About Data (1 section; 18 students) Fall 2018

**Academic and Scholarly Service**

*Department of English, Utah State University*

Member, Graduate Admissions Committee, Technical Communication & Rhetoric (TCR) Fall 2021-present

Member, TCR Program & Curricular Revision Working Group S22-present

Member, TCR PhD Student Annual Review Committee S22-present

*Department of English, Carnegie Mellon University*

Graduate Representative to Rhetoric Program Faculty 2019-2020

Graduate Representative to Summer Teaching Committee 2019

Rhetoric Representative to Graduate Student Assembly 2017- 2018

Facilitator, Graduate Student Symposium: “Rhetoric & Resistance” 2017

Facilitator, Graduate Student Symposium: “Publicity and Counterpublicity After Election 2016” 2016

*Critical Military Studies* (Journal Reviewer) 2022

*Discourse and Writing/Rédactologie* (Journal Reviewer) 2021

*Romanian Journal of Political Science* (Journal Reviewer) 2017

## Other Academic Appointments

### *Department of English, Carnegie Mellon University*

Research Assistant, Professor Andreea Ritivoi July-December 2016

Research Assistant, Professor John Oddo Summer 2015

### *Global Communication Center, Carnegie Mellon University*

Writing Center Communication Consultant Fall 2018-Summer 2021

### *Health Professions Program, Carnegie Mellon University*

Advisor and Professional Writer Summer 2015, Summer 2016

### *Department of College English, Beihang University; Beijing, China*

Foreign English Teacher September 2011 to July 2012

## Public Presentations

Language Accessibility and Political Legitimacy: The Role of Style in NSA Surveillance Discourse. (2022) *IEEE International Professional Communication Conference*. Limerick, Ireland, UK.

How Can Podcasting Help Us Re:Engage with Social Justice (Inside and Outside the Academy)?. (2022) *Computers and Writing Conference*. Greenville, NC.

Legitimizing mass surveillance through web design: key updates to *NSA.gov* from 2001-present. (2020). *Rhetoric Society of America*. Portland, OR. (Accepted). Conference subsequently canceled due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Telling stories with data: the NSA, the ACLU, and DH text analytics. (2019). *Association for Computers and the Humanities*. Pittsburgh, PA.

Overview of dissertation project. (2019). Presented during seminar on “Code Switching: Race and Digital Rhetoric” led by James J. Brown, Jr. and Catherine Knight Steele. (Invited to Present). *Rhetoric Society of America Summer Institute*. College Park, Maryland.

The National Security Agency: perverse, intertextual, compromised. (2018). *Rhetoric Society of America*. Minneapolis, MN.

Boundary-crossing in the NSA leaks, campus militarization, and the deadly exchange. (2018). Literary and Cultural Studies Colloquium on “Activism and the Academy.” *Department of English, Carnegie Mellon University*.

The social value of privacy: emergent subjectivity and rhetorical resistance. (2017). Graduate Student Symposium on “Rhetoric & Resistance.” *Department of English, Carnegie Mellon University.*

Sovereignty, publicity, and dissent. (2016). Graduate Student Symposium on “Publicity and Counterpublicity after Election 2016.” *Department of English, Carnegie Mellon University.*

## **Academic fellowships**

*Department of English, Carnegie Mellon University*

A.W. Mellon Fellowship in the Digital Humanities January-December 2018

Qualifying Exam Summer Reading Fellowship Summer 2017

## **Media and Technology Employment**

*Netease; Beijing, China*

English Editor May 2021-August 2021

*21st Century Senior Teens, China Daily; Beijing, China*

Foreign Copy Editor February 2013-July 2014

## **Professional Development Workshops Attended**

Seminar on “Code Switching: Race and Digital Rhetoric” led by James J. Brown, Jr. and Catherine Knight Steele. *Rhetoric Society of America Summer Institute.* (June 2019). College Park, Maryland.

Seminar on “Stylometry with R: Computer-Assisted Analysis of Literary Texts” led by Jan Rybicki and Joanna Byszuk. *Digital Humanities Summer Institute.* (June 2018). Victoria, British Columbia.

Seminar on “Out of the Box Text Analysis for the Digital Humanities” led by David Hoover. *Digital Humanities Summer Institute.* (June 2018). Victoria, British Columbia.

A.W. Mellon Summer Workshop on Digital Humanities led by Scott Weingart. (May 2015). *Carnegie Mellon University.*

## **Digital Teaching Tools and Analysis Methods**

- Zoom
- Canvas
- keyword analysis
- [AntConc](#)
- [Perusall](#)
- [Piazza](#)
- [DocuScope](#)
- [Stylo](#)