**Fall 2022 Interview: Dr. Kimberly Harper**

**October 6th, 2022**

**Florida State University Rhetoric and Composition Program**

## RC Interview Transcript, Pre-Arranged Questions:

**Ashley Pendleton:** Okay, are we ready? Okay, well, I can get us started. We might go ahead and maybe spend a couple of minutes doing a little bit of introductions too, because I don’t know about them, but I this is the first time I’m going to meet you. So, hi! My name's Ashley. I am a second year PhD student in Rhetoric and Composition and a lot of my research has to do with feminist rhetorics, pedagogy, archival studies and stuff like that.

**Shelby Ramsey:** 'm Shelby, Shelby Ramsey. I am a first year PhD student and my research interests are mostly digital and feminist rhetorics as well as composition pedagogy.

**Claire Kirchner:** Hi, I'm Claire, yes, I said I'm a first year M.A. student. Right now, I'm kind of… yeah thinking about what I am going to be interested in research-interests wise. But right now, I'm looking into composition pedagogy and embodied rhetorics. So that’s, yeah.

**Bridgette Sanders:** Hello, It’s nice to see you again. My name is Bridgette Sanders. I’m a second year PhD student in rhetoric and composition. Some of my research interests are writing across the curriculum, digital and visual rhetoric, and also African American literacies and literature.

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:**  Okay! Well, it's nice to meet you all.

**Ashley Pendelton:** So, the first question I'll be posing for us here, and I think it's a fun one because I think it's maybe…not like a straightforward answer for everybody, but how did you get into rhetoric composition as a field?

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Oh, boy! So, I kinda fell into it. My, my main background is technical and professional communication and so while I'm not a strict rhet/comp scholar, you know, tech comm grew out of rhetoric and composition studies. Although, some people would argue that point. You know, everybody likes their discipline to stand on its own. So, I was interested… introduced to rhet/comp at East Carolina University, where I started teaching composition courses, so we had to do…we had to take some classes as a TA and that was my introduction to rhet/comp. So it wasn't, you know, [inaudible]. I fell into it. That’s how I got into it.

**Ashley Pendelton:** I love that. Was there any like specific experiences that led to you going in your specific research interests?

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Originally, I worked in the industry as a technical writer for quite some time, and then I got laid off. And so, that's what put me in education. I had intended to open up my own technical writing firm, and I just…I had to come back home because I was living in Ohio and then I moved back home to North Carolina, and I started teaching at my alma mater, North Carolina A&T and I was like I… I like this. I like the freedom of, you know, the college classroom. I enjoyed the exchange of ideas, and that just kind of transitioned me into the field. But in…in terms of health communication, it's my interest in critical discourse analysis and visual rhetoric that, that, really started me down this lane. And then, obviously I had a child. So that put me in maternal health.

**Ashley Pendleton:** Yeah, was there anything like specific? Because I know that you mentioned like that you're studying the rhetoric of black motherhood, which I think would be so fascinating, so was that what led you down that path too?

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Yeah, I had a birth trauma, and after giving birth to my first child, I started asking because as academics, you question everything, right? You just don't take the hat off. I said why, why did I have the experiences that I had? Because I had good health insurance. I had, you know, prenatal care. I did everything right, and I just didn't understand why..why I went through what I went through? And so I started looking at the images of black women in society and black children trying to understand how those images affect the the care that you, receive when you go to the doctor's office. So, that really…having a child, is really what pivoted the, my research because I was squarely situated in critical discourse analysis and looking at textbooks, and textbook narratives and the choices of book publishers. I do think the textbook industry is a racket. I’m okay saying that on record and I really want to understand that system. But, having a child just completely changed my whole focus.

**Ashley Pendelton:** That is so cool, thank you for sharing that! Is there anything else that kind of like led to like the part of studying social media for you?

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Ooh, I'm a techie so, I've always been interested in technology. So, I think that was just a natural extension of my interest, and also, I like this idea of, like curating, like who you are, and I like ethos. I study ethos, and character, and image, so social media…fits right into that because people are creating their identities online and like I said earlier today, but you know they're falling apart in real life. The world looks great online. So that's, you know, one reason why I like studying social media and also it's a venue for social justice, an opportunity for people to voice their opinions. So, those two things mesh well for me.

**Ashley Pendleton:** Awesome, thank you so much for sharing that with us! I think Shelby has our next questions.

**Shelby Ramsey:** The question is, which scholars in the field have most influenced your thinking?

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Okay, so, like I said, I’m not like rhet/comp, but in tech comm…technical, professional communication, Miriam Williams, Natasha Jones. They write about social justice, and how you know, written documents support systems of oppression in society. We have a new batch of scholars, Temptaous Mckoy, Cecilia Shelton. They are kind of the impetus for creating my black rhetorics of health communication, because I never thought I could make a theory… like everybody in here can make a theory. We read all these theorists from, you know, back in the day, and I just didn’t think that's something I could do. But when they did it, I said, oh, that's something I could do as well. I am in love with Toni Morrison. So her, her critical theory, and also her novels influence what I do. And then, I love Bell Hooks and Patricia Hill Collins and I love James Baldwin as well. So, I like lit, I like lit, cause you know, that's what we do, we tell our stories when we write. So yeah, I’m going to stop there.

**Shelby Ramsey:** That's wonderful, no that's great, thank you!

**Shelby Ramsey:** As a follow up, you’ve already kind of hit on this a bit, but what about life experiences? Like, how have they kind of shaped your way of thinking?

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Oh boy, life experiences… I think being an educator, that wasn’t my original intention, but it has been one of the best things I ever did and … coming in and out of the classroom and meeting, like, students from all walks of life … So, I guess teaching has really influenced my life instead of the other way around. It has taught me compassion, patience, and just that the human experience is so interesting. So, that's one thing that I find… really touching, what I do in my classroom… I know that didn’t answer your question, I started going off on a tangent.

**Shelby Ramsey:** That’s okay!

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** But, what was the question again?

**Shelby Ramsey:** It’s … what about like your own personal life experiences? Although, I do think that fits with it.

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** I do.

**Shelby Ramsey:** I agree.

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Yeah, I can’t think of any one moment so I’ll stop there. Yeah.

**Shelby Ramsey:** Sure!

**Claire Kirchner:** Good, good. Okay, so the next questions we have are a little bit more fun maybe, but, so what classes do you teach? Which are your favorite? And why?

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Okay, so, I teach technical writing courses, I teach undergraduate and graduate. My favorite class is Intro to Science and Technology, which is an introductory technical writing course. I have students from all across the university in that class. And I love that class because I get a chance to teach them about business writing and the importance of communication skills, but then they also come up with their own ideas in terms of making manuals, like we use social media a lot now, and it’s project based which is fun. I’m not like a…I don’t like to lecture and, you know, talk about all these theories. I want to see what we’re gonna make. And so that’s my, my favorite class. And what’s the other part of the question?

**Claire Kirchner:** Yeah, so, um, that’s, that’s basically what the question was…what classes do you teach, why, and like what are your favorites?

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Okay, okay, yeah.

**Claire Kirchner:** Yeah.

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** I do have a grad class, I like teaching Research Methods. That’s my favorite. It’s… it’s interesting. I like to hear people's ideas and help them bring them to life, bring the vision to life. So, yeah.

**Claire Kirchner:** Very cool, yeah. If you don’t mind me asking…what, what are kind of some central themes that you focus on in the Research Methods class?

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Yeah, so we talk a lot about ethics. I’m deeply committed to the belief that if you are going to go into someone’s community and help them you have to be ethical and you’ve got to respect whatever it is you, you’re hoping to, hoping to get from them, but also what you’re gonna give. You have to have that level of respect. So, ethics is really important to me. We talk a lot about, um…like not seeing communities as damaged, because researchers often go into communities that have a need, but they go in with a damaged perspective. So, we talk a lot about shifting away from that. And then, just the nuts and bolts of research, which is stuff I like, you know, the IRB, what types of, what are your methodologies and things. Like, I’m a mixed methods researcher. So I do qualitative and quantitative… you know, so trying to help them find that lane which is most comfortable. I’m an English person, so I don’t like to count, but…

**Claire Kirchner:** Yeah.(Laughs)

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** … you have to

(Group laughter)

**Claire Kirchner:** Yeah

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Yeah

**Ashley Pendleton:** That’s so cool though, because you get to help them find, like we’ve all taken a research methods class, I think you guys are in it right now, and having that person who genuinely cares and like wants to help you find what you want to do with your research is really cool.

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Yeah. It’s important, I mean you’re in graduate school. I just remember, like graduate school was so liberating because I didn’t have that undergrad curriculum that I was stuck to and now it was like my own ideas and I got a chance to develop them. And that’s what I really loved about it and I had some great people to help me on that path.

**Claire Kirchner:** Okay, well, yes. So, a little bit of a pivot here… what books are on your nightstand?

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Oooo

(Laughs)

**Claire Kirchner:** Or your reading list, yeah.

**Ashley Pendleton:** That’s a fun one!

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Yeah, okay, what am I, I read a lot of little pieces here and there. What am I reading? I have Long Division by K—, I think his name is K— K.I.E.S.E. Laymon. And it’s really good, but it’s like the book is…it’s just hard to explain. So, he’s in the past and then he’s in the present and the stories meet in the middle. Yeah, it’s really, it’s really good. So, Long Division. Like I said, I love Toni Morrison so I am rereading Song of Solomon. What else? Pete the Cat!

(Laughter)

**Shelby Ramsey:** I love that!

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** And, uh…what else is on my nightstand? I can see the book, but I can’t think of the title … because I haven’t started reading it… Americana! But I can’t think of the author’s name…but those are the books that are on my nightstand right now.

**Claire Kirchner:** Very nice.

**Ashley Pendleton:** I was gonna say that’s so great! I really wanna look up the Long Division one, that sounds awesome!

**Claire Kirchner:** Oh, yeah, definitely. This is related. I think you touched on this a little bit just what you're reading right now. But what are you reading for scholarly and non scholarly purposes?

**Dr. Kimberly Harper**: Okay, so for scholarly purposes, I just printed a journal article by someone in health communication, I think his last name is Dutta, D-U-T-T-A. And he's talking about the rhetoric of health, um–RHM–rhetoric of health and medicine being so white. And so I wanted to see what he was talking about. I'm also reading, we did a special issue in Technical Communication Quarterly, about black Technical and Professional Communication. So I'm rereading that, in the hopes of it helping me with the article that I'm working on about Roe v. Wade. So I'm doing some research about that now trying to get up to speed on that, because I'm working on a student project, where she's looking at social media, and hate and like this, uh, this weird thing where men are just like, I can't think of the right term, the anti- anti- women. And so she wants to talk about that in terms of, like, the misogynistic culture you find on social media. So I'm doing the reproductive justice portion, and she's doing that part. So I'm reading Loretta Ross. I can’t think of the name of the title, but I'm reading Loretta Ross. These questions are hard! (LAUGHS…)

**Claire Kirchner:** Yeah, you're handling them well, yeah. That's very interesting, yeah, important. Very cool! That's all I have I think.

**Bridgette Sanders**: Okay, so my question, what do you think is the most important question that students in rhetoric and composition should be considering today?

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Hmmm wow, this is… (laughter and unclear).

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** You know what, they should be considering access, agency, and voice. Because if you don't have access to stuff, then you can't, like, maneuver in the society in which you need to in terms of finances, right? Your voice is important. Because if you are, if you're not allowed to speak, if you lose control of your voice, right? And then agency, how do you take your power back? Now, and those are all issues, I think, that are situated in composition and beyond. I mean, because writing is one way that people can have all three of those things for themselves, right? I can't, you know, I can take your voice away, but you can still write, you know, I might silence you but you can still write. So I think those are things that composition students should consider how they're going to continue to push that conversation forward. And then also social media, um, and the power behind social media. Because it is still a form of written communication, even though students don't think so. Still communicating. Whether is is your 72 characters and not. So, yeah.

**Bridgette Sanders:** Where do you see the field of rhetoric and composition going?

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Ah. I don’t know, y’all! I think feminist pedagogy has played a huge role in kind of bringing different voices to the conversation. I do think, and this is just me sitting on the margins and not really knowing but I think, um, the studies that we're starting to see with disability and able bodies, I think that needs to find its way into Rhet/Comp. And I can't say enough technology, we've got to find a way to mitigate technology with the actual physicality of writing. Because it's good to have a computer but you got to, it has to be purposeful in the classroom. You know what I mean? So people [Typing motion], but is it purposeful, you know, and that's just something I run into with, with my students. They have all the swag, but they don't know how to use it. You know, when it's time to research and it's time to be in a professional setting. So I think that's something we have to find a way to help bridge the gap for our students.

**Bridgette Sanders:** I like that. You're stating that technology must be purposeful.

**Dr. Kimberly Harper** Yeah, yeah. Because a lot of times it doesn't feel like it. And I'm not preaching, honey, I'm addicted to my phone, I can't wait to get to my laptop

**Bridgette Sanders:** Anything else you would like to add that we didn't address?

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Um, I can’t think of anything else other than, and we all know this, that words really are powerful. What we, what we say to ourselves and to other people. What we write. You know, they have long lasting effects. I mean, historically, we have, you know, a breadth of documents just about our nation because somebody wrote something down. So we are kind of like guardians, if you will, you know, because somebody has to be responsible for those, those stories being told and helping other people tell their stories.

# R/C Interview Transcript, Follow-Up Questions

**Ashley Pendleton:** Actually, I came up with a few follow up questions, if that's okay (LAUGHS).

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Okay! Absolutely yeah yeah yeah yeah…

**Ashley Pendleton**: So you mentioned earlier, the project that you're doing with your student, um, now is that something that you just kind of like, do often on your own or that is that a part of, like, a program?

**Dr Kimberly Harper:** Well, she's in an independent study, and we have an undergraduate research, like, organization that the university really encourages us to participate in. So she was already in the independent study. And I was like, okay, let's do, let’s bridge this gap. And then I had an opportunity to write for this journal, Women in Language, they invited me to participate in, um, a response to the overturning of Roe v. Wade. And I thought her research is very important because part of the sentiment is that well, or she's arguing is that the misogyny that you see online that goes unchecked, is one reason why people don't understand the seriousness of this being overturned. And so it's really interesting to me. There's one guy that I can't think of his name, I know one guy's Kevin Samuels, or Kevin Powell. And there's another guy that she's following their Twitter feed…

**Ashley Pendleton:** Is it Andrew Tate?

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Yes, that’s it (LAUGHS…) and so yeah. And so she's following their Twitter feeds like the first guy died, I think Kevin, whatever his name is, he died, which was really wild.

**Dr. Harper:** Not to be... [laughter]. But anyway. So, she's following their Twitter feeds and she's going to do a critical discourse analysis on what she finds to identify themes. For instance, how many times the word "bitch" is used or how many times, you know, something derogatory... She's creating the parameters now to kind of create a visualization of this language and she wants to put together a checklist or help list for young women so they don't get caught up.

**Ashley Pendleton:** That's so cool!

**Dr. Harper:** Yeah, I thought that was really awesome. So we're trying to pair those things together. She's undergrad. She's a senior.

**Ashley Pendleton:** That's such an exciting opportunity for her!

**Dr. Harper:** Yeah, me too because I was like, "What am I gonna write about?" And I was like, "This is excellent. Let's co-author together." I'm excited to work with her.

**Ashley Pendleton:** That's awesome. And then I think the other follow up question that I had – I don't know if you guys came up with anything too. Just let me know. Or [to Dr. Harper] if you have any questions for us, that also works. – But what would your advice to graduate students be right now?

**Dr. Harper:** Hmm, hmm... I would say pace yourself. And I know that seems... that's hard because I have curriculum and I teach, but when you're teaching, find ways to make things interesting for yourself even if you have the constraints of whatever the curriculum is. But then also find ways to give low stakes assignments or turn assignments that are part of the curriculum into low stakes assignments so you don't overwork yourself. Teaching is a very draining mental job and I think we forget... we focus so much on the well-being of the students that we don't focus on our own well-being. As a grad student, I think you have to be very careful with that. I think you also need to know that you're supposed to be here in this space at this time. So, nine times out of ten, everybody is feeling the same thing you are whether they admit it or not. And I think just finding a workload that is manageable and do something that brings you joy. Like absolutely every week do something... I love to sew. I love to quilt. And everyday I sew a block. Because that's what makes me happy. Because I've been giving this person my time, that person my time. And I'm just gonna sit down here cause it's thirty minutes or however long and I'm gonna make a quilt block. And that's what I do for my peace everyday. You have to do that for yourselves. Cause grad school is really stressful.

**Ashley Pendleton:** Yeah.

**Dr. Harper:** Really stressful, and competitive.

**Ashley Pendleton:** Mm-hmm.

**Dr. Harper:** And protect your research ideas. You're gonna be in a cohort, and everyone is your friend, [inaudible], But protect your research ideas. I mean I've seen other people steal other people's ideas, I mean, I'm going off here...

**Ashley Pendleton:** That's so helpful. Thank you!

**Dr. Harper:** You're welcome.

**Bridgette Sanders:** Well, I have a follow up question. You mentioned that you like to read African American literature such as James Weldon Johnson. So I enjoy reading his works also. And one of his works is "Lift Every Voice and Sing." You know, considered the African American national hymn. So, what do you think about the new rise in popularity with that particular hymn?

**Dr. Harper:** Well, tell me about it because I didn't know it was re-popularized. You know, we sing it for... Well, I'm teaching at an HBCU so it's like part and parcel for us. We sing it at every convocation. We don't do it at graduation, but, you know, it's really part of the culture.

**Bridgette Sanders:** Right.

**Dr. Harper:** So, how is it like being re-centered?

**Bridgette Sanders:** Well, now it's... sometimes during sports events. Like, for instance, some of the NFL games...

**Dr. Harper:** Ok. Oh, I didn't know that.

**Bridgette:** ... they'll be singing the theme song in addition to the American one.

**Dr. Harper:** I didn't know that.

**Bridgette:** Yeah. I guess it's a way to be more inclusive and so it's broadened awareness about, you know, lift every voice.

**Dr. Harper:** I think it's a beautiful song. I mean, you think about "lift every voice and sing till earth and heaven ring." The idea of bringing us all together is a beautiful idea. I think it's a great idea. You know, it honors... but then when you do that though, you have other cultures in this country that are equally important, right? So, I don't think it's a bad idea, but then how are you honoring other cultures? So, I don't know. I don't have an answer for you. But I like it. I can't sing it, I can hum it.

[laughter]

**Dr. Harper:** I don't know all the lyrics. But I didn't know they were starting to sing it at the games and stuff. That's really good.

**Bridgette:** Yeah, it was in response to social justice issues and after the George Floyd incidents.

**Dr. Harper:** Now, in terms of that, I think that's [inaudible]. That's my term for a bunch of bull-crap.

[Laughter]

**Dr. Harper:** If we want social justice change, we gonna have to do some other stuff than sing some songs. [laughs] We gotta do a little bit more than painting Black Lives Matter out here on... what is this? Gaines?

**Ashley Pendleton:** Gaines Street?

**Dr. Harper:** Gaines Street?

**Ashley Pendleton:** Yeah.

**Dr. Harper:** Yeah. We gotta do some [inaudible] It's a systemic problem. So, that's my real answer then.

[Laughter]

**Bridgette:** Ok, thank you.

**Dr. Harper:** Other questions?

**Claire Kirchner:** I was just kinda wondering, hopefully this isn’t too hard for you to answer, but just what's your favorite part about your day-to-day, of being a teacher, researcher?

**Dr. Harper:** You know what, I really like – and you all might feel the same way – I like reading and engaging with people's ideas. So that was kind of like the bum side of COVID is that we couldn't conference. You know, conferences and meet up our colleagues and hear what other people are working on. So, that was a downside. But that's why I really enjoy... Like, if I could... Like I like teaching, but I think I'm also maturing into a space where I wanna be a researcher. So, I enjoy the reading and the research, looking and connecting the dots. I use Fridays as my reading day. I don't do anything but read or write. And I really, I enjoy that a lot. You know how academics are. We all get together and start talking [laughs]. It's fun. I do enjoy the solitary nature of research.

**Claire Kirchner:** I agree,thanks for [inaudible]

**Dr. Harper:** Yeah, absolutely.

**Ashley Pendleton:** So, with you saying that, if you don't mind me asking, is that one of the ways that you balance and manage your time?

**Dr. Harper:** Yeah, absolutely. Like how many of y'all... how many people ask y'all to read something for them or to edit something? Right? It gets to the point where you're like, "I can't do it cause I'm already doing it for a living or I’m doing for school. So, I sat in on a workshop a few years ago about the tenure track process and how if you do not cut certain things out, you're not going to achieve it. And so, you've got to very strategic in what you do in terms of the journals you're hoping to publish in, the conferences that you go to, the organizations that you join so you can make those connections to publish. Because publishing is... they call it publisher clearance for a reason. And what I cut out a lot of the "no, I can't read this for you," the committee work. Also, as women, you have to be very careful when we go into the academy, we serve on committees for service, but people end up... women get dumped on in terms of being the secretary. You know, you end up carrying a lot of weight. So, when you find yourself further in your career, you know, just protect your time. And when I started doing that, I became more productive. So, I teach Tuesday and Thursday; I grade all day Wednesday; Friday is my day. I participate in writing groups, so sometimes, now with Zoom, we all have a checklist we fill in about what we want to achieve and then we write. We're sitting in silence in different places doing whatever we're gonna do. We don't read each other's work. It's just a way to hold people accountable. I find that really helpful. And then, doing like a strategic plan for your career. Where do you see yourself five years from now? I had none of that when I started. And I was just kinda like all over the place. And once I attended that workshop it really changed how I treated my time cause I swear to god, people were asking to read and edit stuff all the time. And it was just like, really? But y'all told me I couldn't get a job cause I'm an English major. [Laughs] So just protect your time. That's very... don't bother me on Friday. Don't bother me on Fridays.

**Ashley Pendleton:** Thank you.

**Bridgette Sanders:** You mentioned access, agency, and voice. I think those are three powerful things. I will definitely keep this in mind. And, when I think about writing–because I agree–we do need access, and it’s important to have a voice. And, I think it’s important that we do find ways to take our power back. For instance, in the Rhetoric of Health and Medicine, there’s the illness narratives, and it’s a way that we can tell our story, you know, hear it from patients’ perspectives.

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** You know, and that’s… You bring that up and it’s really interesting too because patient narratives are a huge part of the charts that doctors read, but doctors–and other clinicians–sometimes stigmatize people when they're writing those charts, right? And people, rhetorically, think about how they're going to present their illnesses to their physicians because they know there might be some type of pushback. For instance, if somebody’s–you know, if you’re doctor tells you it’s all in your mind, but you know you don't feel well and you need this prescription–rhetorically, patients are thinking about how they are going to present that, you know, so it's very important especially in healthcare. I think written communication is downplayed a lot, but it is… They have very detailed charts, some people. You know? So, you read my chart and then you go consult, and you said something derogatory or dismissive: “Well, she has a mental health condition or something. It’s all in her mind.” You’re not going to take what I’m saying seriously, you know. So, on the back end, it is important for clinicians to understand that their words have power. What you write is important–same thing in social work. You could…What you write in that file…Somebody’s child could be taken away based on what you wrote, you know. So I can’t say enough: the written word is powerful. It really is. It’s the basis of our society and why we’re [inaudible]. But I’m starting to ramble because I like to talk about RHM. [Laughs]

**Bridgette Sanders:** Also, on your book cover, you used a very powerful image that resonated with me. I like that image. Can you tell us anything about how you came about choosing the image for the cover of your book?

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** You know, it was really arbitrary. The publisher gives you like stock images to pick from, and I asked my husband to pick something because I couldn’t…I couldn’t narrow it down. And he was like, “Well I like this one. It’s a sister with an afro and a baby, so pick that one.” So, it really wasn’t any deep thought to it. I knew I wanted something to represent Black mothers, but I wanted an illustration and not an actual photo, so he was like, “Go with that,” so I said, “Okay.” Plus, it was COVID. I was tired, y’all. I was… I don’t care. [Laughs]. I wanted this book to publish so I could get a promotion and tenure.

**Shelby Ramsey:** I was actually going to ask about like, kind of, the process of you writing your book. If you wouldn’t mind like, kind of illuminating some of the things you maybe did to get it done.

**Dr. Kimberly Harper:** Yeah, I started with that outline. Once I figured out, umm… okay Fridays are going to be my days for writing. I stuck to a strict writing schedule. So, after I drop my kids off at 8:00–I had to pick them up like at 3 o’clock–So, 8:00-3:00 I was reading, writing, and researching. I don't write on the computer. I outline and I kind of, like, fill in notes, and then I go write. Then I had an editor, who was a friend. She’s a friend, but she’s also an editor. So I would write a chapter and send it to her, and she would give me feedback, and then I would go back in and make changes based on what she said. And, in that process, the book goes out for peer review. So if something’s not peer reviewed, it’s not gonna be taken seriously the same way. But, once I got the peer review edits back, then I would make changes again.

So, I had like Chapter One, Chapter Two, Chapter Three–like in rotation. I took copious notes. I am like the notebook queen, but I just got something that’s electronic that I really like. So, I have all these little–I’m left-handed–so, I get the composition books, like a ton of those based on the subject. So, Chapter One had its own comp book. Chapter Two had its own. And so, I organize my notes that way to save me time. I’m a tab queen, like the post-it tabs, they save you time like, “Oh, I read this. When did I read it?” Tab it in the book and in the notebook. I used this software called Scribner, which was really good for like organizing and then Trello. I think Trello has been renamed something else, but it allows you to visually outline your stuff and then you can move it to another checklist when it’s done.

And my biggest thing towards the end was the copyediting. I outsourced that to somebody–different friend, because she’d already been reading, you know. So, that’s not going to work because she’s already familiar with the text. So, another lady did my copyediting. I saved some money to pay for things that I knew I wasn’t going to be able to do. So, I just bit the bullet and had to save that money up. And then for the indexing as well. But the biggest thing that mattered was… just don’t call me on Friday. Like, literally, I am unavailable to you unless you dying or you in the hospital or something has happened to my children, I did not answer the phone. And people knew to leave me alone. And that’s really the only–that’s actually how I finished my dissertation too. Because you get to the point where you are burned out and you sick of it, and so, when it’s time to write, you’ve gotta have that writing schedule. That’s like the most important thing. And especially when you get tenure track, because the pressure is different. So… that answer your question?

**Shelby Ramsey:** Yeah, it did. Yes, thank you very much. [Group laughs]. Yeah, no, that’s like exactly what I was asking. Thank you.