

Introduction to the Tenth Anniversary Section of *Catalyst*

Catalyst's Editorial Team

Celebrating the Legacy and Future of *Catalyst*

In preparing the Tenth Anniversary Section of *Catalyst*, the current editorial team met to reflect on the legacy, politico-ethical vision, and future of the journal. Using the [introduction](#) to the inaugural issue as a prompt for our reflections, we discussed what makes the journal distinctive, how it has contributed to the field of technoscience, the intellectual inheritance of feminist scholarship on which our work builds, and the generative associations materialized through the metaphor of a catalyst. Our discussion was also guided by the following questions:

- 1) What kind of topics do you observe are the most current within the field of feminist technoscience?
- 2) Since you started working at *Catalyst*, has your perception of feminist technoscience as a field changed? If so, how?
- 3) How does the current geopolitical climate affect your thoughts on feminist technoscience and vice versa?

As wide-ranging and capacious as feminist technoscience, the discussion also included lively reflections on the catalytic qualities of bacteria and the ways in which they participate in life-giving processes of kin-making. In the spirit of capturing both the unique voices of the editorial team and the relational assemblage of the conversation as it unfolded, we present it below in conversation-style format. This opening discussion offers a rich companion piece to the reflections of former editorial teams presented in the anniversary section, surfacing the ways in which *Catalyst* continues to be a playground for alterity and a safe harbor in this historic moment.

A Decade On: Editorial Reflections on the First Issue of *Catalyst*



Figure 1. *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience* front covers spanning 2015–2018.

Xan Chacko (XC): I was struck by the list of names that the first editors chose to include in their first list of acknowledgments. Not traditional acknowledgments, but [in-text shout-outs](#) to the people who were a part of the origin story of the journal. I liked seeing how awkwardly all those names take up space on the page because the list is so long. It is a testament to how collaborative and interdisciplinary, but also collegial, the enterprise of the founding of this journal must have been. The luxury and the freedom to take the space to name all the names was just so nice to see. That was one thing that stood out to me. Then, the second thing that emerged was the test of time. Just looking at the articles in the rest of that journal and seeing where those people have ended up, it seems like a self-fulfilling prophecy or just amazing work of editorial prescience to have gathered together people who went on to become rock stars.

Kiran Pienaar (KP): I was struck by the same thing, Xan: the fact that they took the space to name all the people involved. For me, that illustrates a feminist ethic which is important. I was also just struck by the luminaries among those names. I thought, "Wow, what an incredible legacy we're building on!" I feel so privileged to be a part of that.

Marika Cifor (MC): Yes, the list! This is citational justice in action. This represents one of the most powerful things in my experience about feminist technoscience. I see a deep commitment then and now to holding open doors in ways that subvert, undermine, and make possible for other feminist researchers. It's just beautiful.

KP: I was also struck by the ways in which *Catalyst* continues to be at the vanguard of pushing the boundaries of what counts as scholarship. For example, including artistic commentaries and the video pieces in the first issue, and finding ways to make them visible as scholarship, and really push at the limits of what we see as scholarship through a very interdisciplinary, experimental, open-ended "becoming" approach. I think this is such a feminist STS approach, as in, let's see what will unfold. The boundaries are meant to be challenged and disrupted in the spirit of making new kin, making new worlds: compassionate, kinder worlds. I think that was something that stood out to me because as I was typing up some reflections, I thought, "That's the kind of legacy that I feel our team wants to build on and it's so beautifully articulated in this first issue."

Robyn Lee (RL): I was really struck by how timely it all feels still. It feels very fresh and not dated at all. I think that really speaks to the way the *Catalyst* is on the cutting edge. In terms of the risk-taking and the experimentation of bringing all of these different things together. It's so generative, but I think that there's still lots of really important ways that we're in dialogue with these earlier pieces. I was just reading that [first issue] speaking back to this one and then also thinking through things differently and pushing things further. It's really that there's such a strong trajectory to the journal and to the collective of people involved in it: this sense of

community in the way that it keeps percolating and keeps generating even over the decade and hopefully for decades to come.

Thao Phan (TP): I totally agree with what everyone's saying. I was also really taken with all of the different sorts of figures for *Catalyst*. It begins with the literal definition from chemistry as an agent that sparks reaction which then produces pathways. It's an energy. It's more than a home. It's a chain of scholarly reactions. It's an experiment. It's a meeting place. It is always about motion and movement. You get the sense that there's a real sort of reticence to define feminist STS as any one thing, even in their opening provocation where they announce the journal as a kind of experiment, where everything is about chain reactions and looking forward to the kinds of futures that feminist STS could become. It's an interesting invitation, because here we are situated at the vantage point of the future reflecting on past visions of the now. They ask, "What might a future feminist STS become?" And here we are, ten years on, reflecting on that very provocation. It's one that I don't think any of us would feel comfortable answering. That is to say, I don't think any of us, like them, would want to put forward a rigid, definitive position on what feminist STS is now. Like them, I think we also would extend that invitation forward. To stay in the spirit of the first introduction, extending forward in perpetual motion. As Kiran said, to stay oriented in this ongoing project and in this sense of becoming. I think even the name *Catalyst* is still so apt, like a spark, a reaction. It's something that pulses and pushes from within each of us.

MC: And it speaks to this kind of work that is only possible in community and collectivity.

TP: The other thing to comment on, I suppose, was the commitment from the beginning to use this open access platform. They write a little bit about the labor and they name everyone who's involved. Again, making visible all of the actors it takes and doing this as an act of recognition. Maybe that's something we would like to continue commenting on: what it means to continue to be open access and what that enables us to do. On the one hand, it's resisting metricization in a time when a lot of people need metrics in order to be valued or legible inside of their institutions. But we're also in a time when the work we do is under extreme attack. As such, there is no recognition inside of a white supremacist capitalist, patriarchal institution anyway. So we'll just do what we do and at least we can publish for free and give people a platform.

MC: I think you are right on, Thao, open access is more important and more challenging than ever. It also points to how open access publishing is vital in a feminist context because it aligns with core values. By working to dismantle paywalls and academic gatekeeping, it helps to ensure that feminist research—often centering marginalized voices—is freely accessible to the people who need it most, whether activists, scholars, artists, and diverse communities worldwide,

especially in the Global South. I would argue that open access also reflects a feminist ethics of care by making research more accountable and beneficial to the very communities it engages.

XC: I want to return to something that's weird about the definition of a catalyst is that it provides, as Thao said, the spark or some kind of help to the chemical reaction, but it itself stays unchanged. It stays apart from the inputs and outputs of the chemical reaction; it works in the background and remains that way. So the output does not emerge from any part of the catalyst itself. Yet the catalyst is required to produce the outcomes, whatever they are. The desired outcome could be the chemicals themselves or the energy produced by the chemical reaction. I wonder then about that choice of term because what does it mean to stay unchanged and be the force that is enabling change?

I both like it and I'm confused by it. The concept also figures well with the way in which the transitions of leadership and labor have taken place. The people at the helm can come and go from the masthead because in some way the labor is backgrounded. What's great about this introduction is that they're foregrounding the labor that henceforth gets backgrounded.

KP: Maybe this is my own theoretical inspiration, but I read it more in an agential realist way of being an entanglement. So I didn't see it as something separate from the reaction but it's in the apparatus itself. The "catalyst" changes and is intricately embedded in what materializes. Our particular assemblage of editors and the articles that we shepherd through the process, they are part of the whole assemblage. I read the catalyst as more of an intimate entanglement where you can't separate out the thing that produced, generated, or provoked the reaction from the forum or the platform that holds it, and the labor that shepherded it through the process. One of the things I like about our previous issue, which is the first time we've done this, is that we also acknowledge the labor of copy editors. We did that front and center. Maybe that's something we could do more to surface the labor that otherwise as you're saying, Xan, gets backgrounded and is only really visible if you're in the machinations of the system. *We* know what goes on but it's otherwise invisible to broader publics. It's been so enlightening to me to appreciate the huge amount of labor behind the scenes. And yes, it's amazing to have this commitment to open access. I fully support it, but it comes at the cost of an incredible amount of labor that the editorial team carries.

I read the provocation and the metaphor of a catalyst in a more agential realist or new materialist way as this intimately entangled phenomenon that is shaped by our own intellectual inheritances, our own particular ethics. If we were to track the editorial process through the issues, I think you would find they bear different imprints. We'd all read that differently, but I think that entanglement is reflected across the issues and the different editorial collectives that have led them.

TP: I had a moment just now where I was like, “Wait, what does ‘catalyst’ mean?” I’m just going to dig back into the chemistry definition to move between metaphor and materiality for a moment. In the *Britannica* definition, it says what Xan was suggesting: Catalyst and chemistry is any substance that increases the rate of reaction without itself being consumed. But then further down, it’s a chemical reaction between catalysts and reactants. It forms these chemical intermediaries that are able to react more readily with each other to form a desired product. During the reaction between the chemical intermediaries and the reactants, the catalyst is itself regenerated. So it doesn’t change and yet it is regenerated each and every time. It’s this interesting tussle of definitions going on where it itself is never consumed and yet is regenerated in each instance. It spurs the reaction, like there would be no process without the catalyst and yet the catalyst itself is untouched by the process or something. I feel like I need to go deeper into this metaphor because what is being suggested is more than just a platform where we’re just an intermediary that allows other people’s voices to be disseminated. I do think there is a chemical reaction that happens inside of each of the editors, and they come out a different person. They come out in a different relation to their community than when they went in.

Carina Truyts (CT): Given the current political landscape and mood of terror, it was great to reflect on how *Catalyst’s* origin and model has allowed us to remain untainted and independent. I remember Irina saying in our last board meeting, when we were discussing budgets and income, “It’s better to be poor and independent.” It was beautiful to read that description, learn about the open source software and also how the website itself was *written*. I really loved that linguistic reminder that our discourse is translated into shareable material through a code—a code that was also (laboriously) written. That server hosted in Canada, the dynamic model of work that we’re part of: it saves us from getting enmeshed in the capitalist machinery of the journal publishing landscape. I’m so grateful for the thoughtful way *Catalyst* was put in motion.

Irina Aristarkhova (IA): To pick up from here, we can see ten years later how our methodologies and materialities, both our actual labor as well as what we are doing in terms of knowledge production as a journal, have been catalyzed by the first team and subsequent editors. As editors now, we are learning what the infrastructure itself does for knowledge production and to our maintenance labor that a journal like this takes to run, the kind of resources that it needs. It’s the work of our feminist village where each person evaluates what they can afford to give at this moment. I hear you, Carina and Kiran. We benefit right now from our own independence that we want to maintain, though this makes the journal vulnerable, too, in terms of limited resources and capacities, since there is so much variation and inequality built in academic work across the globe. Our editorial board members have been generous and supportive, and this is what we

depend on right now—feminist sharing. Sometimes, institutions are supportive, but when they are not, those who moved towards the institution so closely that the whole work of knowledge generation depends on that particular institution or a funding source, become more vulnerable because feminist intersectional work is often the first one to be defunded or cancelled. That's why we need more *Catalysts*. Redistributed nature of our work together, and plans for sustainability, such as the structure of our editorial team and international infrastructure of our platforms and knowledge production, give me hope.

We certainly witness and are a part of the intergenerational feminist technoscience community that has profoundly influenced what and how we research or teach. And I really appreciate this community. In the moment of renewed backlash against and disrespect directed at our work, we meet and continue to do what we are doing. We are not going anywhere. The only way we do theory or science, we do it with people. We are bouncing ideas off each other within the editorial team, even though we are working on the journal and other people's work as our primary focus. I was really excited when I was rereading the first issue. Thinking about how they thought about all these different topics in theory of feminist technoscience and layers of building journal infrastructure. That their ideas would manifest in the platform. Their ideas would manifest in the editorial board, relationships with authors, and in a way, I see *us and our work* as an iteration of their design.

Yes, I'm also excited about this playfulness, which I saw there, in the introduction especially, with various forms of writing. It means, we can play, too, make it our own. Initially, during the learning curve, I thought we would reproduce what we inherited—this is our first task, to make sure the journal continues. Now, in addition to continuing for the issues to come out, in the second year we can start playing. Reading the introduction opened up my affective/creative as well as mental space. The desire for us to find space, find time, where we make it ours. Where we experiment, consider what we can bring to the work that would make it both sustainable as well as truly go to these ideals that they had about activism, about community, potentially outreach, or creativity, as well as changing spaces where technoscience is done, or being even more interdisciplinary than we are right now.

The other thing that struck me ten years on is how science itself has a capacity to still reproduce itself in most capitalist, exploitative forms. Also, about who society thinks of as a scientist or as having knowledge. We still seem to be chasing technoscience or chasing after technoscience. Theoretically, it still seems that technoscience developments and money around them, where they are going, like the AI, for example, or military research, just squeeze all air out of a feminist, intersectional room. There are still heavy, extractive, and abusive practices which we face, or even the ones that initially used to be based on someone's curiosity or spark, but then become quickly appropriated as a new marketable product. This is

what our authors often critique, so it's hard to be all playful without feeling irresponsible or being defunded. That extractive, imperial, colonial, object, and subjects attached to that object seem to be continuously tripping us up and sapping our energy. How do we find space outside of that?

TP: In these moments, I think of Donna Haraway's *Staying with the Trouble* and that great line about acknowledging the troubles without "succumbing to abstract futurism and its affects of sublime despair and its politics of sublime indifference" (2016, 4). It strikes me that a catalyst is what you need when you are feeling paralyzed. When you are despairing, when exhaustion is the main thing that plagues feminist work. We are not only asked to do a lot, we are often the first to respond to the call. The result is that you get worn down. You're physically exhausted. You're mentally exhausted. You're politically exhausted. It's in those moments that you do need a bit of energy and action and reaction, but I hear you. I think this is the curse of STS generally, we're forever chasing innovation. This is the curse of doing science in the making. The agendas that you follow are sometimes set by people, elsewhere. I feel like feminist STS is at risk of chasing lines of despair sometimes, chasing injustice which sadly always continues to present itself in new and extreme forms. But, again, it's maintaining that orientation towards some kind of justice despite all those things.

XC: I think what was striking about those early issues and the people who were involved in that period of feminist STS is their commitment to staying with the troubles of the science was not necessarily a denouncement. It was a commitment to imagining differently. Many of them were scientists and continue to have labs that are humanities–science hybrids. They have created a pathway for certain kinds of research and thinking. That is, they live in the successor science project, rather than only critiquing the existing cutting edge of science. The trouble with always being in that mode of critique, rather than productively engaging a possible otherwise, is they are always stories in a negative register, ignoring the hopeful possibilities that might emerge. The trouble with always responding to the cutting edge of science is that it traps STS scholars into this paradigm of reactivity. "You're forgetting about justice and what of the variegated impacts on people of color? Have you thought about the environmental impacts of AI?" The register of reminding the science that is drawn into the thrall of new technologies like AI to "solve" crises (climate or pandemics) to slow down is seen as an irresponsible delay.

We, STS scholars, thus remain the naysayers or killjoys—not that there is anything wrong with that. However, if you look at the origins of feminist STS, as these early issues of this journal provided, they were always doing both hand in hand; beautiful, strong, powerful critique at the same time as imagining otherwise. They gave us new vocabularies, new concepts, new biologies, new sciences to think with and live through otherwise. In some ways, what has been nice about the lag of our special

sections is that they don't fall prey to the immediate reactivity of the "Oh, we have to do an AI issue immediately, because that's what everyone is doing" kind of logic. We are already committed to birds and Asian Americans and hormones!

IA: I was just going to ask about the AI issue? (Just kidding.) I agree with you, Xan.

MC: This also speaks to the anti-capitalist moves of the journal; we are not beholden to doing work that is trendy or unfundable. We can be nimble without being constrained by the whims of the market, funders, or other forces that shape far too much about academic life and scholarship.

IA: I am also thinking here of [FemMeeting: Women in Art, Science and Technology](#) community and conferences. I attended the last meeting organized by Dr. Jennifer Willet, artist and director of Incubator Art Lab at the University of Windsor, Canada. One of the plenaries had a presentation by Dr. Catherine Febria, director of the Healthy Headwaters Lab at the University of Windsor, who spoke about her choice of doing science of tributary waterways (rather than large bodies of water) as feminist and antiracist, because the lab is focused on doing science and community organizing as one and the same work: One cannot make water cleaner and safer without working with people, especially children, who live nearby and depend on it. This lab is an inspiration! In terms of new directions, as I was reading the first issue, two topics, in addition to new ones, have continued to be prominent. One is reproductive justice and reproductive biotechnologies. Second, the question of technoscience's relation to capitalism and proposals around the alternatives, such as democratic socialism, for example. Let us remember that Donna Haraway's *Cyborg Manifesto* was supposed to be a *socialist* feminist contribution, directed at a future without capitalism. What does after-capitalist or beyond capitalist technoscience look like today to us? I'm just thinking here in terms of labor and capital, and what we see today, compared to, let's say, a longer arch of feminist analysis, say, back to the '70s. Do we see as many contributions today using the Marxist feminist questions? What do you think, Robyn (our peer review editor), as you read our submissions?

RL: Yes, [Neda Atanasoski and Kalindi Vora's piece on labor](#) in the first issue illustrates how important feminist perspectives on labor and technology are. So I was thinking about that and how we're thinking about feminist perspectives of labor in relation to technology. Certainly, it seems, it just doesn't go away. That's always the technological promise of freeing us from labor. I think that's something that feminist STS always shows us. As labor intensifies, it changes, it becomes more precarious. It becomes more racialized, it becomes more gendered in lots of different ways. We're certainly not doing less labor. This promise of technology, it's always failing to deliver on that promise. I think that's really important in terms of thinking about the socialist and Marxist feminist contributions: thinking about technology as always coming back to labor.

TP: I suppose one provocation that might set forward interesting ways of figuring out *Catalyst* is: what kind of figures would we like to propose, to help us think this through? To again, repose the question: what might a future feminist STS become? I know we've spoken about playgrounds for alterity. Perhaps, in this moment we also might consider safe harbors. Maybe this is something we might think about more. What figures do we think would help us think through the future of feminist STS and *Catalyst*?

CT: One thing I always think about when I picture catalysts is those formulas we learn in high school chemistry. That idea of a catalyst as an additive in an experiment which is done by a human or some hovering god-like figure. Is there a "god-like figure" that's adding the catalyst to the thing that's making it work? I know that catalysts occur in nature and these interactions occur in other spaces where there isn't a hand that adds the catalyst. I'm just trying to think about catalyst scenarios that don't include the "science man up above." Xan has some.

XC: Catalysts are super important to understand how it is that plants do all the things that they do. A lot of the time, the catalysts are actually other creatures, mycorrhizal connections, bacteria, and fungi. All of our gut digestion is happening with bacteria as catalysts in our digestive processes. We do not really understand how it is that those beings are contributing, sometimes beneficially, sometimes neutrally, sometimes detrimentally to everyday processes.

One of the big revelations of the twentieth century is that at every stage, in every process, all of these other beings that are participating in making what we understand as chemical, physical, or biological processes happen. I remember listening to Margaret McFall-Ngai talk about how the bacteria intervene in the uterus, which was imagined as this hermeneutic sealed space, that is, nothing else coming in other than the genes of the parents in there. But, in fact, bacteria are passing genetic information from the gestational carrier to the fetus during gestation. Some fetal cells remain inside the gestational body and the next time that being is pregnant, some of those cells pass through to the next fetus that is occupying that same uterus. So if you're a second child or a third child, you have not only your maternal cells inside you, actual cells from your mother that have passed through bacterial conduits, but also cells from your older siblings.

Those catalytic processes are not even well understood. Like, why do we need those? Why do we need to have those connections built in? Why are these bacteria participating in this process of kin-making? You know, it really makes you question gestational surrogacy. The idea of a sealed space of anyone's genetic material can be housed inside, and it is just an environment for making a baby is blown apart by this knowledge. So, yeah, catalysts are everywhere. They're crucial to life. We couldn't be what we are without them.

TP: There's so many figures Xan pointed to just now. A catalyst is a seed. A catalyst is a womb. What if we think of a catalyst through each of the figures that we all work with every day? Like, what if the catalyst is a drug and then you can rethink it through this [narcofeminist](#) lens? It would be a really fun exercise to think through.

CT: Thanks, Xan, that was so satisfying and so beautiful to see you just beaming while you demonstrate this for us. That is the *Catalyst* energy, I am here for it. This diversity is something I think about when I work on *Catalyst* covers.

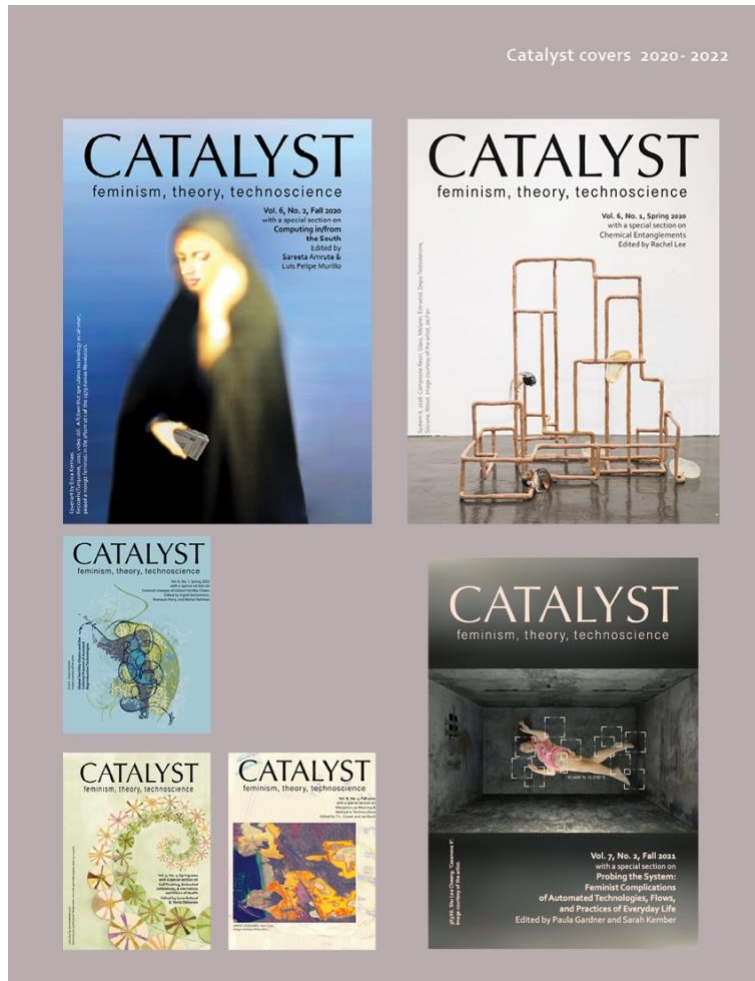


Figure 2. *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory Technoscience* front covers spanning 2020–2022.

KP: I agree. I just love the way you sparked up. There was this catalytic reaction within you, Xan, as you explained it to us. It was just beautiful and it made me wonder if, among our teams, among the editorial collectives and the authors that we're working with, all of these catalytic reactions are remaking us and transforming us in new ways, and in turn, the journal. It feels like there's so many beautiful ripples, a kind of diffraction pattern if we think in Karen Barad's terms, diffractions or ripples that perhaps aren't even visible to us or aspects of it become

visible in particular moments. For me, that's part of the beauty of it, this open-ended becoming that we can't predict. This includes how the work will be taken up and how it bears our impress. All of those things are part of that generative sense of being in motion that *Catalyst* suggests. The way that you described that metaphor in relation to the womb was just fantastic. Thanks, Xan.

TP: A world of reactions that reverberates across generations. I think that's a really wonderful metaphor.

XC: I do feel it in the way my life has been by mentors and ancestors, in ways that I can see and recognize but also in unseen ways that I can only surmise. So I am the thing that is becoming. I can feel some of the agentic forces that are part of what is going into producing the thing that will eventually become me. I know that there are all kinds of invisible forces too, like this feminist STS legacy. I know that when certain opportunities open up for me, there are hidden connections of love and generosity at work behind the scenes. I think that is part of what I was suggesting initially, when I said that the catalyst stays behind. The catalyst doesn't seek to benefit. The ability to make reactions go faster or facilitate them is such a gift in and of itself. It is not about altruism. Rather, it is about being part of creating the kind of world that you want to live in. I feel that I am both privileged to be part of the shaping now because I have been so shaped by the catalytic forces of feminist STS.

IA: I will just mention a few of those examples. In 2021 the virtual meeting for the Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts (SLSA) conference was devoted to the expanded theme of [Energy](#). Among amazing panels featuring interdisciplinary research and creative work, the conference had several plenary sessions, keynotes and roundtables, and their titles speak to the kind of world we want to create, as you said it so well, Xan: [Lisa Nakamura](#)'s opening keynote, chaired by [Osman Khan](#), was titled "The Minor Energy of Anti-Asian Digital Racism: Women of Color and the Digital Labor of Repair" (recording is available [here](#)); [Imani Cooper Mkandawire](#) curated a plenary between [Zakiyyah Iman Jackson](#) and [Chanda Prescod-Weinstein](#) titled "'Theorizing in a Void': Towards a Theory and Practice of Black Feminist Mathematics and Science" (the conversation was streamed but not recorded as requested by one of the speakers); a closing keynote became a performance-dialogue between [Cristóbal Martinez](#) and [Liz Lerman](#), chaired by [Jane Prophet](#), titled "Our Fathers, Crimes, and the Nature of Energy in the Universe" (recording is available [here](#)). It was just amazing to see people sitting in a sustained manner and discussing various kinds of ways in which personal, theoretical, and political could be reimagined anew in modern technoscience. In addition to being excited by the new subjects of knowledge or imagination of our *Catalyst* submissions, working on making the journal happen, as a team, has been especially meaningful in this difficult time for science *and* feminism in the US and many other places. You never know when knowledge would become community,

when community would become energy. When that energy would transform into an epigenetic effect. Being part of this process is incredibly energizing. So maybe we do need a playful framework, in which we are even more experimental with form, without making it harder on our already stretched skills and time. I know some of my colleagues work on charades and organize discos...

KP: This is just a small point, but I was really struck by the idea that in the first issue of that introduction, they don't give the names of specific members of the editorial board. It's really a collective endeavor. They just name the board. I think it speaks to their pushing back against that neoliberal atomization and the metricization of the academy. I love the fact that they're doing the feminist work and it's evident in that as an intervention. We're not going to name specific contributors, we're not going to play the game where individuals take credit for a particular piece of work. Instead, the refusal to name individual contributors acknowledges that this has been a collective endeavor. I think that really speaks to living the feminist ethic. It might seem like it's a small gesture, but I think in our increasingly neoliberal, metricized cultures it speaks volumes to their commitment to a collective endeavor that's going to push things in new directions, including challenging the boundaries of what counts as scholarship and how we produce it. Rather than these atomized subjects, who then take credit for particular pieces of scholarship to say, this is a collective.

IA: This conversation is part of building the community, and building on that first issue, because that was a group of people who felt that they didn't have other venues to show this work and to publish this work. It shines through as well in that first issue. As we are contributing to this text, as a collective, your voices are an important part of where the journal is going. So, yes, Xan, you will be kind of a vibrating bacteria.

XC: They're so smelly, so smelly. The thing that you're smelling when you have bad breath, that's bacteria. But I am not afraid of being a smelly bacteria, it's all good.

Conclusion

Building on the vision of the founding editors beautifully articulated in the introduction to the inaugural issue, *Catalyst* continues to foster boundary-pushing, interdisciplinary research. It is animated by a desire to create more inclusive, compassionate worlds. While providing a home for critical feminist technoscience studies scholarship, *Catalyst* also continues to elaborate and transform the field, pushing it into exciting, uncharted territory. In this respect, we build on the legacy of the inaugural editors as captured in the journal's name to *catalyze* capacious forms of scholarship and creative work that expand the terrain of scholarly endeavors to include research-based media practice, commentaries, audiovisual research, artistic provocation, and other forms of experimental practice. For example, our [March 2025 special section](#), "Knowing Borders," was the first bilingual section of *Catalyst* featuring articles in Spanish and English, creating a "pocho linguistic third space" for feminist scholarship (Smith et al. 2025, 1).

Another hallmark of the journal is its commitment to plurality. *Catalyst* articles draw on and often combine rich theoretical traditions, such as more-than-human approaches, new materialisms, science studies, disability studies and crip theory, queer theory, Black studies, decolonial approaches, gender and sexuality studies, digital studies, and the history and philosophy of science...to name just a few! In this respect, they elaborate feminist STS as a "dispersed project" (Catalyst Journal Editorial Board 2015, 1) that traverses disciplinary and theoretical boundaries to generate new insights, new scholarly reactions, and new futures for feminist technoscience broadly conceived. The anniversary issue is no exception. Our cover art titled *Teacher* is by Australian artist [Jordan Wood](#), and the accompanying artist statement is supplemented by an interview with Jordan and Indigenous Australian artist [Yhonnie Scarce](#) discussing shared concerns across their work. The issue includes an Image and Text piece titled "Heart Feminism, Careful Whisper," by Anne Pollock, Nina Wakeford, Maithili Pittea, and Aysha Leach. The piece is inspired by an experimental art installation that emerged out of an essay titled "[Heart Feminism](#)," which was published in the inaugural issue of the journal. In returning to the earlier piece, "Heart Feminism, Careful Whisper" illustrates the enduring impact of *Catalyst* articles in their open-ended becoming. This special anniversary section also features a timely commentary by Rebecca Herzig and Banu Subramaniam on the Trump administration's insistence on binary biological sex differences. It highlights the value of feminist science studies scholarship for interpreting and challenging these forms of authoritarian, retrograde politics. Alongside these pieces is a reflection on the use of *Catalyst* special sections in feminist STS curricula; in "A Pedagogical Ecosystem: Building Connections in and Beyond the Classroom," the authors discuss the pedagogical ecosystem that emerged via collective engagement with *Catalyst* articles in the classroom.

We are also delighted to feature three reflective pieces by former *Catalyst* editors on the origins, legacy, and future of the journal. Like our introduction, two of these pieces are presented in a conversational format, while the third applies the generative metaphor of a garden to present editing as a form of “worldbuilding.” Read together as companion pieces to our introduction, these editorial reflections offer insights into the foundations of the journal, its ethical commitments, and its wide-ranging contributions to feminist technoscience. In the spirit of profiling the work of feminist artists, the issue includes artwork by three artist-scholars who responded to our open call for cover art that engages the concerns of feminist technoscience.



Figure 3. *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience* front covers spanning 2023–2025.

This issue also features a Lab Meeting that emerged from a workshop of Australia-based scholars on the topic of “Thinking Populations in Feminist Technoscience.” Presented as a series of short commentaries by workshop participants with an introduction by the workshop convenors Jaya Keane, Thao Phan, and Sonja van Wichelen, the piece elaborates an antipodean feminist toolkit for thinking populations. Alongside four book reviews, the anniversary issue features six original research articles on topics ranging from COVID-19 mortality data, sexual violence, crafting and coding as forms of worldmaking, and the epigenetic memory of trauma.

As the diverse array of contributions in this special ten-year anniversary issue attest, *Catalyst* is an open-ended experiment, one that diffracts the insights of the arts, humanities, and sciences through each other to yield new ways of theorizing and doing technoscience. In the process, it creates new assemblages designed to illuminate and disrupt social hierarchies, and incrementally help to undo the structural and onto-epistemological violence built into knowledge-making practices.

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