



Community Literacy and the Rhetoric of Public Engagement

Linda Flower

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Community Literacy and the Rhetoric of Public Engagement explores the critical practice of intercultural inquiry and rhetorical problem-solving that encourages urban writers and college mentors alike to take literate action. Author Linda Flower documents an innovative experiment in community literacy, the Community Literacy Center in Pittsburgh, and posits a powerful and distinctively rhetorical model of community engagement and pedagogy for both marginalized and privileged writers and speakers. In addition, she articulates a theory of local publics and explores the transformative potential of alternative discourses and counter-public performances.

In presenting a comprehensive pedagogy for literate action, the volume offers strategies for talking and collaborating across difference, for conducting an intercultural inquiry that draws out situated knowledge and rival interpretations of shared problems, and for writing and speaking to advocate for personal and public transformation. Flower describes the competing scripts for social engagement, empowerment, public deliberation, and agency that characterize the interdisciplinary debate over models of social engagement.

Extending the Community Literacy Center's initial vision of community literacy first published a decade ago, *Community Literacy and the Rhetoric of Public Engagement* makes an important contribution to theoretical conversations about the nature of the public sphere while providing practical instruction in how all people can speak publicly for values and visions of change.

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