the difficulties of archival research and the necessity to save our important (and not-so-important) documents in individual university archives and the National Archives of Composition and Rhetoric at the University of Rhode Island. Maybe then future researchers who want to write histories from “behind-the-scenes” will have even more material to work with, more stories to tell, and more detail to provide.

*Chicago, Illinois*


*Reviewed by Clay Walker, Wayne State University*

As a recent title in the “Reference Guides to Rhetoric and Composition” series, Elenore Long’s *Community Literacy and the Rhetoric of Local Publics* aims to introduce some of the important current views in community-literacy research to those new to the field. Behind this array of scholarship on community-literacy, Long argues, is a single question: how do we engage issues like reading and writing, ethics, and border crossing “in ways and in locales that will make a difference” (3)? Put another way, the question asks “how do ordinary people go public?” The many responses given to these questions, she argues, expose “a whole range of possible relationships between local public and formal institutions” (6). Thus, the purpose of this text is to pull together varying accounts of public engagement by focusing on the central metaphor employed by scholars (e.g., Barton and Hamilton; Brandt; Cintron; Cushman; Flower; Goldblatt; Heath; and Heller) in their efforts to describe local publics. Thus, the heart of the text includes a series of chapters devoted to analyzing current views in the field through an analytical framework organized around the metaphor used to describe a local public (chapters 4-8). This section is followed by a chapter discussing pedagogical implications of local publics research (chapter 9), a glossary of sixty terms relevant to community literacy studies (chapter 10), and a lengthy annotated bibliography (chapter 11).

Although Long’s work is issued as an introductory text, readers already established in the field will find several aspects to be of interest. By focusing on explicating the meaning and implications of local publics to community-literacy scholars, Long’s work carries some important contributions to the field. Aside from offering a complex view of how local publics relate to institutions, individuals, and the literacies they deploy, she also develops a
framework for analyzing varying community-literacy accounts. Because this framework enables readers to draw connections across diverse examples of community-literacy research while focusing on specific examples from the scholarship examined by Long (e.g., the street performances by residents in Heath’s Trackton), it is a strong candidate for graduate-level courses on community-literacies. Additionally, Long’s explication of local publics is further enhanced through a substantial chapter articulating a series of distinct pedagogical approaches developed from her analysis of local publics (chapter 9). Readers interested in developing pedagogies shaped by community-literacy scholarship will find this section invaluable. Finally, Long offers a particularly needed, if brief, history of community-literacy studies (chapter 3).

Further, Long’s framework usefully demonstrates how a local public’s location, the affective tenor of its discourses, and the kinds of literacies enacted by individuals work together to shape how individuals solve problems through practices of rhetorical invention. However, some readers may find Long’s development of her framework to be in need of some theoretical justification; for example, Long’s explanation of affective tenor could benefit from a more rigorous development, in my view. Doing so would enable a more focused and extended analysis that might better account for the implications of non-ideationally based dimensions of literate practices. But as Long states herself, the local public framework offers “just enough structure to put alternative accounts of people going public in relation to one another” by “emphasiz[ing] public features of community literacy not always salient in other standard accounts of literacy” (15). In addition, its success is measured, according to Long, by its capacity to “spur readers to make connections and comparisons of their own” (22)—seen from this angle, the framework gets the job done.

Following the “Reference Guides” paradigm, chapter 1 briefly introduces Long’s project explained above, while chapter 2 introduces key definitions and distinctions. Much of the work of this chapter is to establish the local publics framework, which consists of five core categories: [1] the central metaphor employed by the literacy scholar; [2] context, including the location and other socio-cultural features that give public literacy practices and activities their meaning; [3] the affective register, or tenor, of a discourse; [4] literacies, which organize life, employ conventions, and are transformable; and [5] rhetorical invention, which describes how discourses enable one to respond and act in response to exigencies.

Chapter 3 situates Long’s project in the field of Composition and Rhetoric, arguing that community-literacy scholars’ interest in the “connection between vernacular literacies and public life” intersects broader interdisciplinary concerns over individuals’ language rights as well as public-sphere studies (26). Given that, as Long herself points out, the existing histories of com-
munity-literacy are brief, much of the work of this chapter is to establish a detailed historical view of the field, tracing the development of public-sphere interests in community-literacy scholarship from the 1970s through the past decade of research in the field. Of the introductory chapters, readers will find this to be the most developed.

The next five chapters apply Long’s local public framework established in chapter 2 to some of the core texts in community literacy studies. Each chapter briefly introduces the text at hand, then in clearly delineated sections, applies the framework to the text. When the chapter takes up more than one primary text, each text is treated in turn. Following this format, Long first establishes the core metaphor adopted by the text’s author, then considers the location or context of the local public, the tenor of the discourse, the literacies enacted, and the process of rhetorical invention adopted by the community. Each analytical section is followed by a series of implications for understanding local publics drawn from the preceding analysis, and at times, from other work beyond the text at hand. These tenets vary from text to text, and while they are rooted in the analysis, are presented in more general terms to facilitate the reader’s ability to draw connections across texts and contrast the varying accounts of local publics.

Thus, following this pattern, chapter 4 takes up Shirley Brice Heath’s *Ways with Words*, and focuses on Heath’s metaphor of the local public in Trackton as an impromptu theater that entertained residents with edgy and competitive verbal play that also helped prepare Trackton’s “children to survive in a world that adults knew to be unpredictable and unfair” (55). Chapter 5 focuses on two texts—Deborah Brandt’s *Literacy in American Lives* and Caroline Heller’s *Until We Are Strong Together*—that conceptualize the local public as, respectively, a cultural womb and a garden that each nurture and prepare individuals for social activism. Chapter 6 considers how individuals and institutions come together for the purpose of social action in David Barton and Mary Hamilton’s metaphor of local public as a link between individuals and institutions in *Local Literacies*. The second half of the chapter focuses on Ellen Cushman’s *The Struggle and the Tools* which utilizes a gate metaphor to explain how local publics represent points of contact between inner city residents and the various institutions with which they interact. Chapter 7 discusses community organizing, including Eli Goldblatt’s “Alinsky’s Reveille,” which Long argues positions community organizing efforts as local publics that work to “transform problems into issues to act upon” (107), and Linda Flower’s “Intercultural Knowledge Building,” which Long explains, establishes the community think tank as a local public that brings diverse members of a community together to deliberate social issues, with the aim to broaden individuals’ responses in their own spheres of influence. Finally, chapter 8 initially takes up Ralph Cintron’s *Angels’ Town*, in which the local public is a shadow system wherein individuals demand respect in conditions of no respect. Notably, Long extends
her discussion of Cintron’s shadow system via brief analysis of Perry Gilmore’s “‘Gimme Room’: School Resistance, Attitude, and Access to Literacy” and Phaedra Pezzullo’s “‘National Breast Cancer Awareness Month’: The Rhetoric of Counterpublics and Their Cultural Performances.”

Chapter 9 sifts through the challenges of applying community-literacy research to composition pedagogy by exploring five distinct pedagogical approaches: interpretative, institutional, tactical, inquiry-driven, and performative. Long carefully delineates these five pedagogies, explaining how each approach develops a particular relationship to local publics through a series of concerns given from students’ perspectives. These concerns are followed by a discussion rooted in research that outlines one or more strategies instructors might develop in response to the concern raised by Long. Additionally, Long situates her explanation of each pedagogical approach not only in the context of current community-literacy research, but she also usefully connects each approach with at least one of the prior current-views chapters (4-8). Thus Long works to develop a holistic view of how community-literacy research may be applied in classrooms that, taken together, address the following set of concerns: how can we best support our students’ movements across community borders? How can we best support students’ intellectual development in community-based pedagogies? And, how can we best support the circulation of student writing?

*Detroit, Michigan*


*Reviewed by Lori Ostergaard, Oakland University*

In graduate school I had the privilege of working alongside a particularly savvy graduate teaching assistant who had at his disposal a number of effective appeals that he would call on during heated exchanges about composition pedagogy. Among the most effective of these appeals was the one I came to call the “I’m sure we all know” appeal. At a moment when it seemed the group had reached an ideological impasse, he would baldly and perfunctorily announce, “as I’m sure we all know, research has proven that grammar instruction is of little value in the writing classroom.” Or “now we all know that students learn best by doing, not observing.” By appealing to what professional compositionists are collectively “supposed” to know about pedagogy, my friend was able to fashion a serviceable consensus