

Introduction

Publishing in Rhetoric and Composition is a collection of essays about the politics and practices of generating scholarship in rhetoric and composition and literacy studies. It contains sixteen chapters by prominent compositionists addressing a range of timely and important issues.

The book is divided into three parts. **Part 1**, *Joining the Scholarly Conversation: Publishing Articles and Chapters*, presents the viewpoints of several journal editors on publishing composition scholarship, including such topics as breaking into print, writing about teaching, developing an appropriate style, and introducing the “personal” into academic writing. **Part 2**, *Shaping the Conversation: Publishing Monographs and Textbooks*, discusses book-length scholarly projects, from transforming a dissertation into a book to producing monographs and edited collections; it also explores the production of composition textbooks, from creating a prospectus to publishing rhetorics and readers. **Part 3**, *Negotiating the Conversation: Examining Issues in Scholarly Publishing*, contains six chapters analyzing such topics as the politics of how composition research is valued in departments of English, recent developments in electronic publishing, the work habits of successful academic writers, and the complications of mentoring graduate students in a publish-or-perish profession.

Despite the fact that there are over 11,000 members of the Conference on College Composition and Communication and that there are several thousand more instructors of composition throughout the nation who are not members of CCCC, only a relatively small number of these compositionists regularly produce scholarly books and articles. Part of the reason why many professionals do not attempt to author their own scholarship or fail to get their scholarship published is a lack of familiarity with the politics, conventions, and procedures of publishing scholarship. *Publishing in Rhetoric and Composition* affords insight into these issues so that more professionals can successfully enter the ongoing scholarly conversations.

The types of credentials necessary to secure an entry-level position in the field have changed drastically over the last ten years so that new Ph.D.’s must typically have published scholarship prior to entering the job market, and full-time faculty are being asked to publish at unprecedented levels in order to advance toward tenure and promotion. This text will benefit both constituencies, as well as accomplished scholars who serve as mentors to other faculty. However, this book is more than a “how-to” manual for those who wish to join the field’s scholarly conversations through publication in that it

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includes commentary from major figures in rhetoric and composition who, in examining, defining, and problematizing the nature of what we do as teachers and scholars, are producing a kind of “meta-study” of the field. Thus, it could be seen as a kind of adjunct to Stephen North’s *The Making of Knowledge in Composition* and might be used in graduate classes as a companion to that text.

Many of the contributors to *Publishing in Rhetoric and Composition* are eminent scholars in the field. For example, Jasper Neel, who in this collection writes about the politics and production of scholarly monographs, is one of only two scholars in rhetoric and composition ever to have won national awards for two separate scholarly monographs. Janice Lauer, who writes about questions of mentoring, directs one of the field’s most successful graduate programs. James Murphy, Professor Emeritus and founder of the International Society for the History of Rhetoric, discusses producing scholarship in the history of rhetoric. Linda Flower, the field’s acknowledged leader in empirical research, addresses the complexities of observation-based research. Lynn Bloom, Distinguished Aetna Chair of Writing at the University of Connecticut and a long-time advocate of using belletristic essays in composition classes, describes the ins and outs of publishing essay anthologies. Cynthia Selfe, chair of CCCC, book series editor, and editor of numerous collections of essays, describes how the essay collection can be a valuable contribution to scholarship.

Many of the contributors are current or past editors of the discipline’s most prestigious scholarly journals: Richard Gebhardt and Joseph Harris, *College Composition and Communication*; Gary Olson and Thomas Kent, *Journal of Advanced Composition*; Theresa Enos, *Rhetoric Review*; Christina Murphy, *Composition Studies* and *English in Texas*; Jasper Neel, *ADE Bulletin*; Gail Hawisher and Cynthia Selfe, *Computers and Composition*; James Murphy, *Rhetorica*. Collectively, these editors have their finger on the pulse of composition’s most current scholarship and offer invaluable insight into the production and publication of original research. In addition, the collection also contains a chapter by Robert Boice, the nation’s foremost authority on the psychology of academics’ scholarly work habits, as well as a foreword by J. Hillis Miller, past president of the Modern Language Association and one of the world’s most eminent literary critics.

We hope this collection helps demystify the processes of producing scholarship and encourages more compositionists to join the many scholarly conversations that over the last three decades have made rhetoric and composition one of the most intellectually stimulating disciplines in the academy.

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