

9 Pedagogical Practices

This chapter takes students as the primary focus of attention to ask: *How do college students go public? And, as educators trained in rhetorical theories and practices, how can we best support them?* This chapter gathers recent pedagogical scholarship from the field of rhetoric and composition, including scholarship in community literacy, service learning, community action, university outreach, and public writing. Each source—from A. Suresh Canagarajah’s “Safe Houses in the Contact Zone” to Welch’s “Living Room: Teaching Public Writing in a Post-Publicity Era”—addresses pedagogical issues. Each also stakes a unique position within this discussion. The scholars’ positions account for the different versions of local public action that circulate in the field. Yet for all their differences, these pedagogies tend to cluster around many of the same literacies reviewed in current views, chapters 4 through 8. These clusters reflect the larger disciplinary efforts, for instance, to adapt familiar interpretative literacies to community settings; to celebrate tactical literacies of resistance and surprise; and, most recently, to theorize public performative literacies. table 7 summarizes these clusters of pedagogies, the version of public action each endorses, and the sequence in which these pedagogies are addressed in this chapter in relation to the order they appeared in current views.

As the reader would predict, the pedagogical practices discussed in this chapter do not rest in easy relation to one another. Strong conflicts and contradictions exist among them. Taken together, this collection of practices poses a number of quandaries for educators, including the following questions:

- Do we best support students by asking them to venture into the borderland of a classroom’s safe house (cf. Canagarajah “Safe Houses”) or to risk police arrest downtown (cf. Welch)? by forging a cross-institutional no-man’s land (cf. Goldblatt

Table 7. How students use prominent literacies to go public.

Pedagogies Public Action	I Interpretative	II Institutional	III Tactical	IV Inquiry-Driven	V Performative
Students take public action by going somewhere new, building relationships, confronting and revising familiar stereotypes	. . . learning professional methods for recognizing the expertise and agency of others	. . . learning to circulate their own public writing that challenges the <i>status quo</i>	. . . deliberating pressing social issues with community partners; circulating documents that serve as catalysts for social change	. . . engaging as rhetors with others to gain the practical wisdom required to build inclusive communities for effective problem solving
Prominent literacies used to take public action	interpretative	institutional	tactical	inquiry-driven	performative and inquiry-driven
Chapter/s in current views featuring these literacies	Chapter 5	Chapter 6	Chapter 8	Chapter 7	Chapter 4 & 7

“Van Rides”) or by providing access to public homeplaces (cf. Coogan “Counterpublics”)?

- Do we best support students by trusting their spontaneous willingness to develop on their own terms and at their own pace (cf. Canagarajah “Safe Houses”; Coogan “Counterpublic”; Goldblatt “Van Rides”) or by setting demanding rhetorical expectations and helping students manage the challenges entailed in meeting them (cf. Coogan “Service”; Flower “Intercultural Inquiry”)? If we opt for the latter, at what point do the inherent conflicts in local public rhetoric frustrate students beyond the point of productive cognitive dissonance (cf. Deans 138)?
- Given time constraints, how do we best support students to circulate their public writing (cf. Wells): by providing websites where students can post their work (cf. Flower “Intercultural Inquiry”)? by sponsoring venues for live public performances (cf. Fishman et al.; Flower and Heath)? by working behind the scenes to position research projects within the community (cf. Coogan “Service”)? or by placing the responsibility for producing and circulating texts on students themselves (cf. Welch)?

Along with exposing difficult choices, this collection of practices has several attributes to offer.

First, these practices make innovation accessible. Clearly, the politics of forging mutually beneficial community-university partnerships are daunting, but such complications haven’t stopped these scholars from radically reshaping students’ rhetorical education and their own rhetorical scholarship. Rather, these very complexities and potential benefits motivate scholars to test their own rhetorical know-how and to forge innovative institutional relationships for local public action. Second, the practices capture educators’ situated problem solving as they grapple with the challenges that inevitably arise when pedagogy “gets real.” Third, the practices represent the synergy that circulates among a loosely organized group of educators who grapple with how to make good on the promises and challenges of contemporary rhetorical education. This cross-fertilization allows for the borrowing and blending of situated-public literacies, and it permits educators to exchange one set of literacies for another over the course of his or her own inquiry into community outreach and curricular design. These practices, then, represent not only synergy among the pedagogical

studies reviewed here, but just as importantly, the categories (interpretative, institutional, tactical, inquiry-driven, and performative) provide a scheme for comparing other pedagogical discussions, as well.¹

As Weisser acknowledges: “Involving students in ‘public writing’ is fraught with headaches of all sorts” (xi). In consolidating these best practices, I can’t promise to alleviate such headaches. But by putting pedagogical practices in relation to one another, I hope to offer some options that might fuel readers’ inventional processes as they design their own community-literacy courses. In pooling our collective experiences, my hope is that we might free ourselves from at least some of the day-to-day trouble shooting that community-literacy courses entail so that we may have time and energy to join students in grappling with some of the most interesting, difficult, and invigorating issues of our day.

OVERVIEW

In this chapter, I ask readers to repeatedly shift perspectives from that of *students* going public to *teachers* employing pedagogical practices to support students’ public actions. Though this shift in perspective makes particular demands on readers, I believe it best captures the dynamics of rhetorical intervention. To encourage the reader to make these shifts in perspective with me, I employ a couple of simple text conventions.

The chapter is divided into five sections, each describing pedagogical practices that support different ways that students take public action. Each section lists in bullets several exemplary community-literacy courses.

The thrust of each section is how *students* use situated-public literacies to take public action. In each section, students’ public actions are set in italics and enumerated—1, 2, 3—the same conventions that marked the implication section following each analysis in current views. A brief description of the public action then follows.

Instructional practices are listed after each public action, with the practices set in italics and followed by commentary synthesizing relevant pedagogical studies. These are instructional practices that *educators* have used to support students’ public activity. To remind the reader that these instructional practices are not new public actions that students take but rather what teachers can do to support them, each

pedagogical practice is introduced with an ellipse and completes the phrase, *What teachers can do to help. . .*

Some of the earliest community-literacy pedagogies adapted the English department's stock in trade: interpretative literacies for engaging with texts. So it is with interpretative pedagogies that our discussion begins. Interpretative pedagogies commend reading and writing as acts of intense public involvement.

INTERPRETATIVE PEDAGOGIES

Interpretative pedagogies stress that students take public action when they venture somewhere new to build working relationships with others. In the process, they interrogate and reinterpret outmoded assumptions, for instance, about what constitutes literacy (Goldblatt "Van Rides") or what the people and neighborhoods are like beyond campus borders (Coogan "Counterpublics"). Interpretative pedagogies emphasize the interactive engagement between readers and writers (Brandt *Involvement*). Based on their experiences reading and writing with others, students develop and circulate new insights. In the process, they forge communicative links between the university and neighboring communities. Exemplars include the following:

- the Literacy Practicum at a Catholic university in Philadelphia (Goldblatt "Van Rides")
- a pre-college composition course designed to retain minority students at the University of Texas at Austin (Canagarajah "Safe Houses")
- Phase One of a community-based Interprofessional Research Project (IPRP) at the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) in Chicago (Coogan "Counterpublics").

1. *Students stir things up in their own minds by venturing somewhere new.*

The academy has structural blind spots that make some really poor ideas seem natural, commonsensical, just the way things are. Take the idea of "public housing" for instance, and, by extension, the people who live there. Assigned to work in a public housing development near his school, a student named Andy was surprised to find that residents were "honorable and respectable" and not at all "mean or tough"

(Coogan, “Counterpublics” 461) as he had assumed. To set culturally loaded terms like *public housing* in relief so they can be identified, interrogated, and revised, students need some critical distance—something best gained from a new vantage point and in relation to others who provide new perspectives.

What teachers can do to help:

. . . *Arrange for students to get off campus to work and to write with others.* Goldblatt worked with the Center for Peace and Justice Education at his university to offer a literacy practicum that placed students as tutors at either a prison or a community literacy center. In this way, Goldblatt and his students were positioned at the intersection of several institutions, a stance that permitted them to “explor[e] the ways that each institution shaped literacy experience” (“Van Rides” 81). Similarly, Coogan took advantage of the community-based IPRP at IIT which places teams of students in work sites to study “real-world” problems (“Service” 680). Coogan placed students with community leaders who were committed to building “public homeplaces” in Chicago’s south side (“Counterpublics” 473). These leaders were willing to support students’ moral development not on the basis of their race or gender but simply because students belong to “the human family” (473).

. . . *“Stay grounded” in the rhetorical practices of your community partners.* “Stay[ing] grounded” means using interpretative literacies to identify the rhetorical traditions operating in the communities with which one works (Coogan, “Counterpublics” 468). Coogan found that community leaders in Chicago’s south side didn’t often go public by “waging arguments in a public, citywide forum” (468), but rather by “convert[ing others] to the cause of community development” (465). Thus, Coogan needed to design research projects to coincide with community leaders’ rhetorical expectations and to support “ideals of social change” and “forms of community involvement” that differed from conventional academic formulations of rational-critical public discourse (468).

Interpretative pedagogies strive to balance students’ personal growth with the interests of the community, a balancing act that poses challenges to both students and educators. The next set of public actions and instructional practices strives to achieve this balance.

2. *Students prioritize both new working relationships and deeper understandings of loaded cultural issues.*

Interpretative pedagogies value students' personal growth; however, critics caution that the focus on relationships "may encourage a detachment from social analysis of injustice and naïve identification with the other" (Coogan, "Counterpublic" 476). The concern here is that students will get so focused on building new relationships (or managing obstacles in the way) that they will not interrogate the larger structural forces that cause the injustices that outreach programs are designed to address.

Increasingly, advocates of interpretive literacies cast the challenge another way. They say the point is not to subordinate personal relationships in favor of social analysis but to support authentic, rigorous rhetorical engagement with others across difference. Moreover, there is no reason to expect that students' insights will match the ideological form and terms of academic cultural criticism. Students' insights are likely to be provisional, exploratory, and cast in terms of their own interpretive schemes. To explain, Coogan describes the personal narrative that a student named Cindy wrote after shadowing Tyrone, the leader of a public art project called the DreamCultivation Mural. After learning that Tyrone had dedicated a mural to a teenager from the community who had been killed in gun crossfire, Cindy wrote that she found the dedication moving and that it "helped [her] put [her] life into perspective" ("Counterpublics" 476). Although Cindy didn't sustain an extended social analysis in her response, it is evidence of rhetorical engagement, and Coogan values it accordingly: "When confronted with that work in its cultural context, [Cindy] cannot *not* react to it. Nor would the leaders that I have met through this project want her to bypass her emotional responses or privately held opinions. They would want her to confront them head-on" ("Counterpublics" 477).

Interpretative pedagogies attend to the pressing question in community outreach: *who benefits and how?* Instructional practices balance students' personal growth (where students are the immediate beneficiaries) with rhetorical work that serves community interests according to the terms that community partners themselves set.

What teachers can do to help:

. . . *Assign personal narrative and public writing.* To balance student growth and community interests, Coogan assigned his students both

personal narratives (like Cindy's reflection) and public writing. To determine the shape of the public-writing assignment, Coogan worked with his community partners at Urban Matters in advance of the new academic year. He found that Urban Matters trained community leaders; it offered programs and graduated community leaders whose activities in their own communities were one of the best indicators of the program's impact. However, Urban Matters did not have the time to follow up on these graduates to document their community-development achievements and activities. In response to this need, Coogan proposed that students research and write leadership portraits featuring Urban Matters alumni. Once written, Urban Matters could use these portraits to seek greater visibility and continued funding.

. . . *If you want students to build alternative interpretations of complex issues, support alternative means of reflection.* For the Literacy Practicum, Goldblatt assigned more conventional weekly readings, mailbag entries, journals, mid-term reports and essays ("Van Rides" 82). Just as crucial were the conversations students had on the vans they took to and from their tutoring sites. Such conversation "helped [students] process the extreme diversity of the individual tutoring experiences [. . .] and it fostered complex thinking" (83). Assessing the interpretive insights that these van-ride conversations cultivated, Goldblatt writes: "These young adults were facing ways of living they had never encountered before, and they needed each other to *find the familiar* and to *comprehend the strange* in what they met" ("Van Rides" 83, emphasis added). To make these institutional forces salient and distinctive to students, Goldblatt and his students compiled institutional portraits of the "priorities, regulations and social pressures" shaping literacy within each locale (79).

Reflection—especially structured reflection that prompts students to turn some level of attention to sites of contested meaning making—is discussed further as a feature of performative pedagogies.

3. *Students circulate their new insights.*

Finally, interpretative pedagogies emphasize that students share what they have learned over the course of their off-campus experiences. Sure, their insights are likely to be provisional. They may be posited as questions or problem narratives rather than statements or full-blown theories. But the goal is for students to unearth and to interrogate ill-

founded assumptions and to circulate more informed interpretations in their place, so it is imperative that they share what they have learned with others.

What teachers can do to help:

. . . *Assign students to circulate their new insights within larger publics.* This is what Canagarajah did within a composition course designed to introduce African-American pre-college students to academic discourses. Formulating ideas in the security of the “classroom’s safe house” was one thing. But for students to go public with their ideas, they had to circulate them in “public sites of the contact zone” (“Safe Houses” 176). In the context of Canagarajah’s classroom, students made the public turn by moving ideas from the safe house (e.g., informal, highly charged e-mail exchanges and classroom discussions) to the larger academic domain by incorporating these ideas into their formal academic essays.

Since Canagarajah’s essay was published in 1997, some rhet/comp scholars have debated the extent to which academic classrooms constitute public spaces (cf. Trimbur, “Circulation” 194; Weisser 43); others have identified criteria that distinguish academic and public domains (cf. Barton and Hamilton 9–10). Instructional practices that help students circulate their writing outside the academy are addressed further in each of the pedagogies discussed below.

. . . *Acknowledge that intercultural, institutional border crossing is rhetorically significant in its own right.* Coogan stresses that the effort to leave campus and to take up learning with strangers in a new locale is itself rhetorically significant. It forges a “communicative link [. . .] between the counterpublic spheres of public housing and the larger public sphere that students represented” (“Counterpublics” 480). In connecting with others across institutional boundaries, students construct the kind of communicative link that in chapter 6 we saw Shirley forge in Springside as a liaison and border crosser. Assessing the outcome of this IPRP, Coogan explains: “The students did not just cross the street to receive this message. Their presence enabled the construction of the message, and hence, the construction of a new public sphere linking community leaders, public housing residents, and IIT students” (“Counterpublics” 480).

As interpretative pedagogies adapt familiar interpretative practices to community settings, the next set of pedagogies strive to invent new practices within familiar institutional settings.

INSTITUTIONAL PEDAGOGIES

Institutional pedagogies focus on students' futures—especially their careers as technical communicators and human service workers. As we saw in chapter 6, Cushman's *The Struggle and the Tools* testifies to the agency and local knowledge of community residents. Cushman's study shows that community residents' knowledge isn't necessarily cut off from formal public knowledge. Residents may be fluent in many public institutions' forms, regulations, and procedures. They may also have something to say about institutional discourse that isn't usually part of collective social knowledge; moreover, they know something about the gaps between the professed intent of specific public policies, on the one hand, and how they play out in lived experience, on the other. In many institutional settings, this situated knowledge is vital for accurate problem analysis and effective solutions (cf. Grabill and Simmons; Swan). However, over the course of her study, Cushman observed practices that elicit this kind of knowledge just once, when Mr. Villups "cleared a rhetorical space for [Raejone] to bring her community based discourse to bear in a context where fluency in academic English is valued" (Cushman, *Struggle* 187). Designed to mediate the social world as it is and the possibility of a better one (cf. Branch 190), institutional pedagogies insinuate inventive practices into institutional settings in attempt to bridge the lived experiences of community residents and the policies of public institutions.

Cushman's insight into the agency of others is "built on the kind of knowledge normally available only to the attuned ethnographer, confidant or friend [. . .]" (Flower, "Intercultural Inquiry" 197). Institutional pedagogies ask what it would take for students to learn to identify and to represent the agency and knowledge of others within the institutional contexts they will occupy in future professional capacities. Thus, institutional pedagogies focus on institutional change: how classroom pedagogies can circulate professional practices that are more rhetorically sound than those Cushman typically observed in Quayville—more responsive to intercultural differences and more at-

tuned to the situated knowledge of community residents. Some exemplars include the following:

- a technical writing course at Texas A & M University (Cárdenas)
- a public-policy seminar at CMU (Swan)
- a web-design project at Georgia State University (Grabill “Writing the City”; see also Grabill and Simmons)
- a service-learning course at the University of Central Florida (Scott).

Institutional pedagogies portray students as professionals in training. Students in these courses go public in their professional roles; likewise, these pedagogies promote social change by altering the rhetorical practices students take with them into the workplace.

1. *Students note the ethical implications that technical communications carry.*

The communications that institutions circulate often distance ordinary people from decisions that affect the quality of their lives. Yet because many public institutions and social service agencies are grounded in a history of genuine concern for people’s well-being—and students, likewise, may be eager to launch careers that do good (Cushman, *Struggle* 223)—these implications can be difficult for students to identify.

What teachers can do to help:

. . . *Address these implications directly with students.* This is what Diana Cárdenas does in her technical writing class where a good many students aspire to the kinds of public-sector jobs that caused residents in Quayville so much grief, including “criminal justice majors who will work with juvenile and adult probation departments, child protective services, border patrol, and immigration services” (Cárdenas 121). Cárdenas addresses the ethical implications of technical communications directly with her students. Assignments “take [students] into their future workplaces to learn the literacy of the work environments” (121). In addition, she talks with students “about being empathic to the ‘clients,’ about understanding the factors that create their situations, and trying to intervene to change those factors” (121). She challenges students “to identify community needs that must be solved” (121).

. . . *Challenge the norms for relating to clients as inscribed by bureaucratic institutions.* John McKnight would probably try to deter students from entering human-service careers in the first place—indicting gatekeepers of the same ethical violations as the well-intentioned “bereavement counselor” whose “new tool [. . .] cut[s] through the social fabric, throwing aside kinship, care and neighborly obligations,” leaving finally even the bereavement counselor bereft of the “[. . .]possibility of restoring hope in clients [. . .] with nothing but a service for consolation” (266). However, institutional pedagogies challenge educators to join students in negotiating this terrain. The ethics of going public are not unique to advanced professional communication courses. Even at the most introductory level, rhetorical pedagogy “produces, circulates, and delivers communicative souls to the discourse of a public” (Greene 434). What *does* distinguish courses like Cárdenas’s, however, is that they replace the norms of “stranger relationality” (Warner 74–76) that Quayville embodied with the expectation of becoming “knowledgeable advocates and fair judges” (Cushman, *Struggle* 187).

2. Students interrogate asymmetrical relationships as institutional arrangements with complex histories and important social implications.

Whether students are planning careers as technical communicators, social workers, or medical professionals, they face a similar problem: asymmetrical relationships—the power differentials that position professionals and community residents in a “one-up/one-down” relationship (Tannen 24). Good will alone won’t level the playing field. Even well-intended “collaboration” or “reciprocity” can’t “level the asymmetries of power relations” (Cushman, “Response” 151). Though Cushman addresses implications for researchers, her advice holds for professionals-in-training, as well. She suggests that researchers “open[ly] negotiat[e] with participants the terms of give-and-take” (“Response” 151)—just as Mr. Villups negotiated rhetorical space with Raejone. But if give-and-take is “tricky, awkward, and at times discombobulating” for the researcher (151), it is all the more so for the gatekeeper-in-training, for whom it means suspending one of the main tools of the trade: control. Institutional pedagogies teach students that engaging in give-and-take isn’t a procedure, per se, but a “listening stance” (Grabill and Simmons 427) that attends to “dissensus” as a “heuristic” for listening to the interests of others (Powell and Takayoski qtd. in Cushman, “Response” 152).^{2,3}

What teachers can do to help:

. . . *Teach students how to engage in dialogue that negotiates asymmetrical relationships.* If you want to change an outmoded practice, you have to replace it with a more robust one. Scholarship describes two *techne* (or rhetorical strategies) that are particularly well suited to helping students learn to negotiate asymmetrical relationships:

- the rival-reading technique for eliciting alternative interpretations of a cultural artifact—e.g., a housing application form (Flower, *Problem Solving* 415–19; Lawrence)
- the “cultural circuit” heuristic for critiquing “the power relations in which [students’ technical communications] participate” (Scott 304).

Susan Lawrence observed that college mentors at Pittsburgh’s CLC often assumed the need to find and maintain common ground—to try to level the ground between their teen writers and themselves; the rival reading technique provided an option for more generative conversations.⁴ In explaining their rival readings of texts (such as a jeep advertisement in *Ebony* or an image of success in *Fortune*) mentors and teens traded stories that called attention to the differences in one another’s social locations and prompted the “moral humility” to listen across difference rather than assume they could fully imagine walking in another’s shoes (I. Young, *Intersecting* 168).

While the rival-reading teaches double-sided discourse moves between intercultural partners, the cultural-circuit heuristic examines the consequences of the technical communications students write for the community. Designed for the service-learning classroom, the cultural-circuit heuristic is based on Richard Johnson’s model that “tracks the transformation of cultural forms” (Scott 304). In adapting Johnson’s cultural theory to service-learning pedagogy, Scott replaces questions that prompt students’ personal reflections with those that address “the power relations in which [their texts] participate” (304). Focused on how documents circulate in a web of cultural conditions, such questions include, “How could the texts and their contexts of distribution more respectfully depict the audiences and their needs?” and “How could the text be more responsive to the audiences’ and community’s needs, values, and contexts?” (305). Scott suggests that such a heuristic

“can push students past purely practical and uncritically empathetic stances, help them account for the fuller circulation and effects of their texts, and enable them to more strategically intervene in problematic cultural practices” (304).

Such a heuristic can make or break service-learning curriculum. So writes Nora Bacon in her review of service-learning textbooks. Writing in 2004, Bacon observed a tendency in service-learning textbooks to treat writing for the community as an entirely vocational endeavor carried out to hone students’ technical proficiencies. Such textbooks discourage students from participating in community organizations outside their assigned roles as professional writers and restrict engagement with community residents beyond the executive directors who give students their writing assignments. While Bacon acknowledges these restrictions “makes sense in terms of project management” (366–67), such a curriculum also restricts students from more significant public engagement. Bacon states her priority this way: “If my students could take only one service-learning course, I might prefer that it be one where their *range of contacts* in the community and the *range of critical questions* raised about the experience were broader” (367, emphasis added). Pedagogical practices that teach students how to structure and to conduct rival readings or to interrogate cultural circuits (especially by considering Scott’s questions with community residents themselves) can help students take the public turn that Bacon envisions.

The rival-reading technique and the cultural-circuit heuristic are informal and flexible techne that students could adapt to many rhetorical situations. The next move ratchets up institutional pedagogies. Here, formalized community-based research methods serve as the cornerstone for how students learn to carry out their work as professionals.

3. Students learn professional research methods for seeking out the perspectives and situated knowledge of community residents.

There’s all the difference in the world between advocating for community-based practices (“you should!”) and eliciting the situated knowledge, interests, and concerns of ordinary people as a matter of course (Grabill and Simmons 437). In the professional roles they will assume as graduates, professionals-in-training are in a unique position to bring community-based research methods to institutions that

are accustomed to bypassing community perspectives. As Grabill and Simmons note, students' effectiveness will turn on their ability not to strike a didactic or defensive stance but a procedural one that goes about structuring participatory processes as a function of how they carry out their work as professionals.

What teachers can do to help:

. . . *Teach research methods that incorporate community residents' interests and expertise into the institution's decision-making process.* Such methods include:

- human-centered design principles for technical communicators (Grabill and Simmons)
- community problem-solving strategies for public-policy professionals (Swan)
- the collaborative-inquiry communication model for medical providers. (A. Young and Flower)

Human-centered design principles include “a range of contextual interviewing and observation practices [. . .] that necessitate researchers work with audiences in the construction of knowledge” (Grabill and Simmons 432). They embody a critical rhetoric for technical communication and can be used, for instance, to assess and to communicate environmental risks (Grabill and Simmons), to design institutions responsive to community interests (Grabill *Community*), and to design computer interfaces that make data accessible and useful to community residents involved in policy decisions about their communities (Grabill “Written City”).

The CLC's problem-solving strategies described in chapter 7 provide another set of inquiry methods for eliciting and representing the situated knowledge of community residents. In Swan's study of a public-policy course at CMU, graduate students used the story-behind-the-story, rivaling, and the options-and-outcomes strategies to study a proposal for an urban renewal project. The strategies prompted the graduate students to listen to the perspectives of local residents and urban teenagers and to draw on that expertise to qualify the positions of academic experts and to build more robust representations of urban problems and more comprehensive proposals for urban renewal.

These same problem-solving strategies inform collaborative inquiry, a rhetorical model that engages both health-care providers and patients in a shared process of interpretation and deliberation (A. Young “Patients”; A. Young and Flower). Adapting the same rhetorical problem-solving strategies that Swan’s public policy students used to build alternative discourses to deliberate over shared problems, collaborative inquiry functions rhetorically as a heuristic that allows “patients to represent their medical problems in the context of their life experiences and to define, both for themselves and for the provider, the logic that directs their health care decisions” (A. Young and Flower 79). Likewise, collaborative inquiry is adaptable—both to “short, structured conversations” and “extended dialogue between a health educator and a patient in a clinical setting” (83). Collaborative inquiry creates a new rhetoric for patient-provider interaction that prioritizes “creating new knowledge, participating in a problem-solving dialogue, creating partnerships, and sharing knowledge” (86).

. . . *Anticipate forces that militate against collaborative practices by providing more and more frequent explicit instruction and, when possible, by designing and conducting courses with off-campus partners.* In some formal domains, “mere awareness” seems to be all it takes for people to go public (Warner 60). But Ronald Greene suggests “[t]he standard of ‘mere attention’ applies a thinner ethical subjectivity than that increasingly imagined by rhetorical studies” (441). “Mere awareness” was certainly insufficient for graduate students in the public policy course Swan studied. Ultimately, their grasp of the problem-solving strategies was no match for the “pull of genre expectations” and their “very real need of soon-to-be-graduates to be seen as policy professionals” (106). Yes, students became adept at using rhetorical problem-solving strategies to conduct their interviews—and, thus, accessed knowledge that wouldn’t have been available to them otherwise. But when it came to writing their results of their inquiries, students had difficulty figuring out how to use the community knowledge so opted, instead, for discursive moves—from sentence structure to graphic organizers—that muted ordinary people’s voices and overlooked local insights in favor of discursive moves that complied with conventional, disciplinary standards of validity, rigor, and authority. Even at the sentence level they had trouble doing justice to the agency and expertise of others. Swan explains: “The grammar of the students’ research project usually

located agency in academic experts, the public policy students, or their research projects” (99). When they did represent the agency of youth, for instance, youth were represented in the aggregate, in a graph, but not in “their own words” (99).

In light of the disciplinary pressure that thwarted students’ efforts to incorporate community residents’ expertise into their proposed urban renewal projects, Swan speculates that a “new [research] method” could improve the situation: “What may be called for is a new method constructed outside any specific academic genre or discipline, situated in the community, and performed collaboratively [with community residents] throughout the entire process” (106).

Institutional pedagogies promote social change by insinuating into professional settings rhetorical practices that recognize and represent the agency and expertise of community residents. In contrast, as we see next, tactical pedagogies tend to defy formal, public institutions and to capitalize on the capacity of indecorous and hostile counterdiscourses to upset the status quo.

TACTICAL PEDAGOGIES

Tactical pedagogies prioritize that students learn to produce and to circulate their own public writing. The tactical shadow system that Cintron used to interpret Angelstown’s everyday public culture (chapter 8) is most evident in Welch’s “Living Room: Teaching Public Writing in a Post-Publicity Era,” but it operates in other tactical pedagogies as well. Exemplars include the following:

- Aphrodite’s Daughters—a women’s studies seminar at the University of Vermont (Welch)
- Curriculum for community studies as proposed in *Class Politics: The Movement for the Students’ Right to Their Own Language* (Parks)
- Introduction to Black World Studies at Miami University (Pough)
- Literatures of Homelessness offered in conjunction with a writing project called Kids’ 2 Cents in Boston (Mathieu *Tactics*).

As the pun on “living room” in her article’s title indicates, Welch orients public writing less in the domesticated kitchens and rented rooms

of Ann Ruggles Gere's extracurricular rhetoric and more in the workings of the shadow system: "in city streets, public parks, on picket lines and graffitied walls" (474). To identify fissures in the dominant discourse, Welch looks for topoi, including many on Cintron's list: order vs. disorder, civilization vs. barbarism, deliberative citizen vs. threatening mob (Welch 482). Mimicry of "rhetoric from above" serves as a heuristic for Welch and her students' public displays of social criticism and protest (478). Rejecting formal argumentation for proving ineffective in her university's current organizational climate, Welch modeled tactical literacies that include a cake sale that critiqued the university's employment practices, including "Rice Krispie Temps ('cheaper by the dozen') and Vice Provost Cupcakes ('Now 40 percent more!')"; a map of Iraq that traded the name of prominent cities for U.S. corporations under the banner "Neo-Liberated"; an anti-war flag that usurped the U.S. flag's position on the campus green; and graffiti that changed campus stop signs into STOP BUSH signs (484, 488).

It was not only Welch who cast Aphrodite's tactical pedagogy as a shadow system; her students did as well. For instance, a student called Katie dressed in black and lurked downtown at night to post ransom-note-style poetry in undesigned areas. In sparking these "arresting moments," students flirted with, tested, and defied the police's version of law and order, as did RavenLight (bearing her mastectomy scar) and Angelstown's street gangs (holding picnics two thousand strong in public parks in a defiant display of nationhood) as described in chapter 8. In the same cadence that Cintron uses to ask how "one acquires respect *under conditions of little or no respect*" (183), Welch asks how ordinary people find "visibility, voice, and impact against the powerful interests that seek to deny visibility, voice and impact" (476). The conclusion she reaches is also the same: by enacting tactical literacies the system world considers "dangerous indeed" (Welch 486).

Tactical pedagogies teach students to circulate counterpublic discourses as expressions of students' social and political views. One measure of the discourses' rhetorical effect is that university administrators often find them offensive. Tactical pedagogies also situate counterpublic discourses in a larger historical narrative of radically progressive social change. These two features—a countervailing rhetorical force and a highly charged historical narrative—infuse both the distinct ways students go public in such courses and the ways teachers support students' efforts to do so.

1. *Students place their own public writing within a larger historical, sociopolitical context.*

Students in Aphrodite's Daughters positioned their writing in terms of the twentieth century working-class struggle, specifically "capitalism's long history [. . .] of the creative and persistent ways in which ordinary people have organized to claim living room" (470). It's not class struggle but Black Power that was the theme of Gwendolyn Pough's Introduction to Black World Studies. Students positioned their exposés of campus race relations as an extension of the political demands of the Black Panther Party's (BPP) political platform. For instance, students updated and localized the BPP's "What We Want, What We Believe" to make ten "demands for a more diverse academic and social climate" (481). The shared history between the twentieth century American labor movement and the Black Power movement drives the community-studies curriculum Park proposes in the concluding chapter of *Class Politics: The Movement for the Students' Right to Their Own Language*. He commends "a multidisciplinary program linked to the community"—where students use a range and combination of discourses—from SWE to any number of street vernaculars—to engage in and study the possibilities of progressive social change (246). Similarly, in *Literatures of Homelessness*, students contextualized not their own tactical texts but rather those of other younger writers. In a sixteen-paged issue of *Spare Change*, college students "contextualize[d]" young writers' first hand accounts of homelessness with various "articles," "book reviews," and "background pieces" (Mathieu, *Tactics* 109).

What teachers can do to help:

. . . *Teach the history of powerful social movements—and assign key documents from these movements—as bodies of rhetorical knowledge.* For Welch, rhetoric is most productively viewed not as "a specialized techne [. . . and the] property of a small economic and political elite" but as a "mass popular art" (474). The history of twentieth century working-class struggle provides "clues about working with others to create rhetorical space while anticipating the resistance that comes from [trying to do so]" (475). To educate ourselves about this history and the tools it embodies, Welch recommends her colleagues read and share with their students *Detroit, I Do Mind Dying*, "an account of the League of Black Revolutionary Workers" and *Teamster Rebellion*, the

story of how truckers instituted “the nation’s first daily strike newspaper” (480).

For Pough, it was the rhetoric of the BPP that motivated her teaching. Like Welch, she reached back in history to teach students to critically examine contemporary social issues and to imagine rhetorical responses to them. Used to interpret the current demographics at Miami University, BPP documents fueled “disruptions in the academy through public debate and protest” (468). Both Welch and Pough position their courses in relation to America’s history of radical progressive social change and urge educators to make the rhetorical significance of such movements accessible to students.

. . . *Show students how current economic and political conditions thwart ordinary people’s efforts to go public.* As Welch sees it, “this latest wave of economic privatization” has suppressed “public voices and rights” (470). It’s not just that publics are inherently difficult to construct, which was the lesson that Wells took from President Clinton’s failure to find a responsive public to deliberate health care reform. Rather, institutional and political forces make it all the harder for ordinary people to do so. From Welch’s perspective, Clinton never intended for his appeal for broad-based public deliberative to take effect; instead, his speech was “designed to hide from public view the powerful private interests that had already set with Clinton the health-care agenda for the 1990s” (489). Welch stresses that in order for students to use tactical literacies to go public, they need first to understand the larger “discursive and extradiscursive obstacles” that regulate public discourse and restrict access to it (474).

2. Students adapt the counterpublic discourses of radically progressive social movements to their own rhetorical purposes.

Students in Aphrodite’s Daughters found—and constructed, when needed—the venues they used to go public. Typically, the genres they used were not the formal essay and stylized debate of the academy but rather the “placards, poetry, murals, chants, handbills, [and] slogans” of class struggle (Welch 480). These genres performed social action not only by communicating their stated messages, but also by creating a “palpable tension between individual and mass, legislative and extralegislative, and ruling-class and working-class argumentative forums and forms” (478). Similarly, students in Introduction to Black

World Studies “could not wait to have the chance to write things that would have a larger impact” (Pough 474). Students’ newspaper editorials “sparked a wave of controversy” (479) punctuated by “class walk-outs, building takeovers, marches, and protests” (480).

What teachers can do to help:

. . . *Teach a contemporary take on the canon of delivery.* For Welch, rhetorical education in tactical literacies requires “students and teachers to ponder in the fullest way possible the rhetorical canon of delivery” (478). Welch suggests “training in civil disobedience or at the very least a guest lecturer from the ACLU” (478). In *Community Action and Organizational Change*, Faber offers what could serve as the curriculum for such lectures: “show how special interests achieve political goals [and . . .] teach how to read a situation and determine the roles power, rhetoric, and change are playing and how strategic players may be able to influence these roles” (136). By associating tactical literacies with the rhetorical canon of delivery, both Welch and Faber reinforce Carolyn Rude’s argument in “Toward an Expanded Concept of Rhetorical Delivery” that “[p]reparing students for civic engagement requires new knowledge about the uses of documents for advocacy and social change” (271).

3. *Students know they don’t “have to go it alone.”*

The students in Introduction to Black World Studies organized. They initiated the Black Action Movement (BAM) on campus to carry out the political actions discussed in class and to respond to their consequences. Pough explains that BAM was a “response to Miami’s lack of diversity and to the telephone threats to an African American male student by alleged members of the Ku Klux Klan” (480). Students from Pough’s class provided BAM with key leadership.

Such solidarity was missing among students in Aphrodite’s Daughters. Too often, Welch reflected afterward with remarkable candor, students “risk[ed] penalties for their words, and [. . .] felt (in a class drawing out no specific lessons to the contrary) that going public means going it alone” (477). For Welch, this is a lesson learned. Next time she teaches the course, she’ll take measures to ensure individual students don’t take unnecessary, uncalculated risks to go public.

Juxtaposing Aphrodite’s Daughters and Introduction to Black World Studies suggests that the African American students who en-

rolled in Pough's course may have come to class better prepared to organize as a collective body (e.g., BAM). It also suggests that they used assigned readings—the platform and autobiographies of the Black Panthers—to imagine tactical literacies as decidedly *collective* acts of political resistance.

What teachers can do to help:

. . . *Interrogate the image of the edgeworker.* The dominant popular image of the ordinary person who goes public is the “anarchic ‘edgeworker’” (Welch 484). Aphrodite's Daughters didn't do enough to challenge this dominant image. This image makes the individual responsible for all the risks of going public. Welch notes: “It's much easier [. . .] for a university administrator to sanction one student for her speech than to sanction one hundred” (476). But it also erroneously applies Nike's “Just-Do-It” shoe campaign to local political life (Welch 484). Next time Welch teaches a course like Aphrodite's Daughters, she says she'll draw upon the history of class struggle to help students to interrogate the image of the edgeworker, to explore “the limits of a poetics/politics fixated on solitary acts of writing” (485), and to imagine creative and timely acts of political solidarity.

Tactical pedagogies encourage students to find their own venues for going public. Because tactical pedagogies are rooted in the history of American resistance, students typically use these pedagogies to go public in bursts of what Cintron calls “persuasive displays”—in-your-face mockery of the status quo (*Angels' Town* 174–76). But in some circumstances, students in such classrooms construct venues for going public that prioritize extended and focused deliberative inquiry. For instance, a student called Cassie from Aphrodite's Daughters organized a forum that more than 70 people attended to discuss the consequences of welfare reform. Such a forum requires the ability to engage multiple perspectives in sustained dialogue. This rhetorical capacity is most directly supported by inquiry-driven pedagogies.

INQUIRY-DRIVEN PEDAGOGIES

Inquiry-driven pedagogies support discursive spaces where students work with intercultural partners to inquire into and deliberate about pressing social problems, working toward both personal and public change. Readers will note that many institutional pedagogies share

this commitment to inquiry. In fact, the rival-reading technique (Lawrence) and collaborative inquiry (A. Young and Flower) belong to a family of practices that are central to this discussion. But the focus of inquiry pedagogies is not to prepare students for future professional careers, but to engage them in contemporary public action here and now and as part of their civic education. Intercultural pedagogies respond to the interests and expertise of community residents; they reposition members of a university not as experts with the answers but as committed and concerned citizens who bring to the table particular kinds of resources, including the ability to elicit and to document multiple kinds of knowledge. In inquiry-driven courses, college students learn to participate with other people and perspectives in problem-focused dialogue. Exemplar include:

- Community Leadership in Bronzeville Public Schools, Phases Two and Three of the community-based IPRP at IIT (Coogan “Service Learning”)
- the Community Literacy Seminar at CMU sponsored in conjunction with the CLC’s literacy programs for urban teens (Flower “Literate Action”; Flower “Intercultural Inquiry”; Long “Mentors Inventing”)
- the Rhetoric of Making a Difference at CMU sponsored in conjunction with Community Think Tanks (Flower “Intercultural Knowledge”; Flower and Heath; www.thinktank.cmu.edu).

These examples embody the dynamic tension between the rhetoric of consensus and a rhetoric of difference explored in chapter 7—but now in terms of options for students’ public action and the instructional practices that support it. In the analysis that follows, I move between two sets of pedagogies—materialist rhetoric and intercultural inquiry—to highlight the pedagogical implications that follow from different conceptions of public deliberation. table 8 and the brief overview below may help readers follow the discussion.

MATERIALIST RHETORIC: REALIZING PRACTICAL OUTCOMES THROUGH CONSENSUS

Coogan’s Community Leadership in Bronzeville Public Schools enacted a materialist rhetoric, teaching students to develop arguments to

Table 8. A comparison of materialist rhetoric and intercultural inquiry.

Features Exemplars	Sponsor	Inquiry Method	Aim of inquiry	Students' off-campus role	Off-campus text and forum	Students' on- campus final project
Community Leadership in Bronzeville Public Schools	Office of Community Development at IIT and Urban Matters	material- ist rhetoric; ideological analysis	consensus; practical, institutional outcomes	public advocate and rhetorical analyst	research report; meetings	project- management reports
Community Literacy Seminar	CMU and Pittsburgh's CLC	community problem- solving strategies	deliberative inquiry that turns critical reflection and personal exploration into rhetori- cal action.	writing men- tor for urban teen community researcher	newsletter; community conversation critical incident interviews; community think tank	multi-voiced inquiries
The Rhetoric of Making a Difference	CMU					

achieve consensus. Much like the knowledge activism of Goldblatt's community organizing, materialist rhetoric engages students in the process of forging consensus among disparate stakeholders. Although the activist practices of Alinsky date back to the 1930s, applications for such a rhetorical pedagogy have been articulated much more recently in Coogan's 2006 article "Service Learning and Social Change."

You'll recall reading about Phase One of this IPRP under interpretive pedagogies. In that phase, students shadowed community leaders and wrote leadership portraits for Urban Matters. Coogan revised the next iterations of the IPRP—the ones discussed here—to "teach[. . .] students how to position themselves on the ideological battleground of claims and warrants on public issues facing our communities" (669). The IPRPs had two components, fieldwork and coursework. For their fieldwork, students worked as a team of "public advoca[tes]" conducting rhetorical analyses and, on the basis of their findings (689), compiled a research report recommending arguments to create the conditions for a diverse set of stakeholders to "organize *for* something"—in this case, the reform of Bronzeville's public schools (689). For their coursework, students wrote a final reflection paper explaining how their team managed the demands of the year-long research project.

INTERCULTURAL INQUIRY: RESTRUCTURING DELIBERATIVE DIALOGUES AROUND DIFFERENCE

Inquiry-driven pedagogy developed at the CLC transforms personal and public knowledge by re-structuring deliberative dialogues among individuals and groups across lines of difference (Higgins, Long, and Flower). Like the community think tank described in chapter 7, this pedagogy emphasizes intercultural difference as a resource for problem solving. The phrase *intercultural inquiry* describes both the alternative model of deliberative inquiry developed at the CLC and the distinctive pedagogy that makes it possible (cf. Peck, Flower, and Higgins 209). Grounded in the theory behind several dozen literacy projects, university seminars, and think-tank initiatives, this pedagogy emphasizes intercultural inquiry and typically engages college students either as writing mentors for urban teens writers (cf. Flower "Literate Action"; Long "Mentors Inventing") or as researchers investigating and documenting the problems and perspectives that launch community think tanks.

These courses include both an off- and an on-campus segment, both of which circulate alternative public texts and practices. The off-

campus segment positions college students as supporters, learning to elicit and to help document the situated knowledge of community residents. For instance, in the Community Literacy Seminar, sponsored in partnership with the CLC in the 1990s, college students served as mentors trained in collaborative planning to support urban teenagers who wrote newsletters that provided the basis for projects' culminating community problem-solving dialogues (cf. Flower, *Construction* 141–49; Flower, Wallace, Norris, and Burnett). Similarly, the Rhetoric of Making a Difference continues in conjunction with Community Think Tanks, and Literacy: Educational Theory and Community Practice brings urban teens with learning disabilities to campus for Decision Makers. In these iterations, college students conduct critical-incident interviews with stakeholders in order to write problem narratives like the one described in chapter 7 about Melissa negotiating the gaps in her on-the-job training.

As a complement to such fieldwork, the on-campus segment initially teaches students problem-solving strategies and provides relevant scholarly background. Then, after the community think tank, students use the design of previous *Findings* (organized around a scenario, decision points, and a discussion of options and their outcomes) to orchestrate an event and create a text that replicates some of the dialogic dynamics of the community think tank. Back on campus, students consolidate and represent the critical statements they heard during the think tank sessions. Their work informs the formalized *Findings* published for that think tank. In addition, for their final projects, students synthesize their fieldwork, readings, and reflections in the form of a “multi-voiced inquiry” in which students deliberate culturally loaded open questions with teen writers or other community partners (Flower, *Problem Solving* 421; “Intercultural Inquiry”). These inquiries “put charged issues like [. . .] justice, success, responsibility, emancipation, or role models [. . .] on the table as open questions” where they “become[. . .] qualified, conditionalized concept[s . . .] for both the teenager and the mentor” (Flower, “Intercultural Inquiry” 197).

1. *Students position themselves as members of a local public deliberating with others across boundaries of difference into a pressing social issue.*

In learning new rhetorical skills and gaining new intercultural competencies, students become members of a community—one that exists to deliberate a pressing social issue. Material rhetoric evokes a con-

ventional model whereby stakeholders come together to deliberate claims and evidence in order to reach decisions for future joint action. Students position themselves as rhetors in the local public that resembles the discursive site of community organizing. Here, they “listen[. . .] closely to [. . .] community partners” in order to identify claims and warrants that had (and hadn’t) worked in the past and those that have the best chance of securing agreement under the current circumstances (Coogan, “Service” 690).

In contrast, intercultural inquiry invites students to participate in a transformed model of local public talk. Given intercultural inquiry’s search for alternative perspectives, student position themselves as supporters and participants in the local public of a community problem-solving dialogue. Here, students develop their intercultural competence by learning to listen imaginatively across cultural difference. They actively seek out difference (in the form of diverse perspectives, rival hypotheses, situated stories behind the story), put inquiry before advocacy, and engage collaboratively in problem-solving dialogue. They also prompt other participants to do the same, so the focus isn’t solely on what the students can learn but also on the public interaction they help create.

What teachers can do to help:

. . . *With community partners, assess the rhetorical situation.* In classical rhetorical theory, deliberation begins at the point of stasis; however, “in diverse communities, such argument seems premature; the problem space itself has not been defined” (Higgins, Long, and Flower 35). Consequently, both materialist rhetoric and intercultural inquiry—despite their different aims—stress that deliberation begins with the initial work of discovering with community partners the nature of problems and thus plausible responses to them.

With consensus as its aim, a materialist rhetoric looks for an argument that a community partner needs to win—one whose impact stands to improve the lives of urban residents—and one for which it is reasonable to assume that college students’ research projects can make a significant, if modest, contribution. For instance, Coogan started assessing the rhetorical situation with his community partners in advance of the school year. Initially, he and community leader Mrs. Brown identified the need for a “network” of community organizers and parents to work together—“independent” of the school system—

to “improve all Bronzeville public schools” (681). This assessment posed the question: *What kind of an argument would mobilize such a network?* Producing viable alternatives and testing their impact are part of Coogan’s materialist method, so over time, he and his partners refined this initial assessment and refined their guiding questions and shifted their focus accordingly.

Intercultural inquiry also stresses that analyzing the rhetorical situation is an ongoing, collaborative process. It identifies four activities central to this process:

- configuring the *problem space* or object of deliberation
- identifying relevant *stakeholders* in the community
- assessing existing *venues* for public problem solving and
- analyzing *literate practices* used to represent and address problems and the way these practices structure stakeholder *participation* (Higgins, Long, and Flower 11).

Assessing the rhetorical situation entails both identifying the exigency (the perceived problems) and audience (the potential stakeholders addressed) and also critically reflecting on the process of problem solving itself, the ways in which existing practices and histories of decision making and argument might privilege or exclude important stakeholder groups. Literacy leaders, researchers, and student mentors who work in community-literacy projects contribute not by defining the problem for others or offering prepackaged responses but by helping groups articulate, document, and update their sense of the rhetorical situation as it unfolds and develops.

In diverse settings, assessing the rhetorical situation means engaging as part of a team, not an observing ethnographer, objective consultant, or professional facilitator (cf. Faber). Inquiry-driven pedagogies stress that all stakeholders have knowledge, cultural capital, material resources, and experience that contribute to a robust assessment of the rhetorical situation.

. . . With community partners, create a local public for the purpose of joint inquiry and social change. You’ll recall from chapter 7 that the community-organizing effort and the community think tank offer alternative images of local public deliberation: the former focuses on generating talk and text to secure agreement; the latter also depends on text, but

its purpose is to enact an alternative public discourse where ideas and identities are argued and performed in the hybrid discourse of community literacy. This distinction explains the underlying logistical differences in how educators use materialist rhetoric, on the one hand, and intercultural inquiry, on the other, to support students' public action.

A materialist rhetoric focuses on argument—particularly, how argument works in community settings and what it takes to secure the kind of agreement among diverse parties that can change institutional policies and practices. If assessing the rhetorical situation is the preliminary work required in order for university partners to participate intelligently with community partners and to incorporate students in the mix, then creating the local public is the deliberative process of securing the desired agreement. Like Goldblatt in “Alinsky’s Reveille,” Coogan documents the rhetorical traction required to mobilize a local public that reaches toward consensus. He and his community partners mobilized a local public once they focused on the right question, not how to advocate local control over all of Bronzeville’s public schools—as they had initially framed the question—but what it would take to increase parental involvement in fewer and more needier schools. College students participated in this local public by attending “formal meetings with the teachers, staff and parents to brainstorm appropriate programs for parent involvement” (Coogan, “Service” 689) and conducting field research to determine “the needs and current resources” of individual schools (689).

From an intercultural perspective, a local public is a problem-solving dialogue that reaches not for consensus but a working resolution that acknowledges the need for continued negotiation in the face of reasonable difference. You’ll recall how findings from the think tank embodied this contingent resolution by using an inventive “mix of narrative, argument, evidence, testimony, and practical plans” (Flower, “Intercultural Knowledge” 255) to capture “the abstract voices of published reports, data and policies found in the literature, the rich specifics of critical-incident interviews, the interpretations drawn from rival readings of problem cases, and the action plans of decision-making dialogues” (266). Creating such a local public means designing a discursive site where college students join other members of the community to seek out rival perspectives on a shared problem and to put these perspectives into generative dialogue. Computer technology can support such public dialogue.

Computer-supported dialogue. The local public that developed from the CLC is the community problem-solving dialogue. In the context of both the Community Literacy Seminar and the Rhetoric of Making a Difference, these dialogues are actual forums, the culmination of extended projects. As a metaphor, however, the concept of a problem-solving dialogue affords the possibility of teachers and students of rhetoric using computer technology to create local publics in other venues, as well. Consider, for instance, Amanda Young's interactive multimedia tool *What's Your Plan?* To support decisions about safe sex and abstinence, the computer interface brings to life the faces and voices of multiple boyfriends and girlfriends as well as teens' moms, older friends, and medical advisors. In Young's study, physicians and counselors used the software to engage young women in conversations "to develop strategies for effective contraceptive use or for maintaining sexual abstinence" (A. Young and Flower 90). But the concept applies to rhetorical education, as well. To explore a pressing social issue in their community, college students, for instance, could research multiple perspectives—using the same critical-incident technique that students in *The Rhetoric of Making a Difference* have used to elicit the situated knowledge of welfare-to-work recipients and nursing aides. Students could also design the software interface to reflect the complexity of the issue and to engage participants in actively negotiating the competing perspectives. First, students would be designing a virtual local public encapsulated in the computer program. In addition, their work would come to life when they use that interface to host problem-solving dialogues with other members of the community. In such a venue, the local public would be the intercultural relationships and focused inquiry that such an interface supports among those whose conversations it helps to structure.

Digital storytelling offers another option for using computer technology to create local publics. Wayne Peck and Jan Leo's *Telling Our Stories* provides an example. The core concept here is the *audio tour* that one finds at technologically equipped art installations. (In structure, the set up reminds me of wandering the wheat fields of St. Remy, France, with headphones on my ears—listening to excerpts of Vincent Van Gogh's biography while looking at Plexiglas-protected reproductions of the art he produced inspired by a given wheat field or haystack.) But *Telling Our Stories* is a traveling exhibit with a decidedly

counterpublic purpose: to bring to light the stories of the Presbyterian gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (GLBT) community. The exhibit travels to the sanctuaries of “more light” congregations affiliated with the Racial and Social Justice and Reconciliation Ministry Team of the Pittsburgh Presbytery. On easels stand portraits of people who have gone public with their stories, compiled and entitled *Voices from the GLBT Community*. On MP3 players equipped with headphones are state-of-the-art radio stories on par with National Public Radio’s *StoryCorps* and *This American Life*. These stories tell of the pain of exclusion and call into question homophobic practices and attitudes that marginalize church members based on their sexual orientations. Entitled “A Couple’s Story,” “One Man’s Story,” “A Sister’s Story,” for instance, participants’ stories go in many directions, given their own experiences and perspectives, but each is a problem narrative that culminates in a statement that speaks to divisions in the church at large and create paths toward healing and reconciliation. The stories are edited into segments; the printed subtitles are listed on the right-hand bottom corner of each portrait. This feature allows listeners to select the parts of the storyline that strike them as most interesting. It is my observation, however, that people tend to listen to stories in their entirety.

Though the focus here is telling stories of exclusion to a homophobic public, the rhetoric of this digital storytelling program could be adapted to any number of community issues and community-literacy courses, as well. With sufficient support, students could learn to conduct the interviews and to edit the digital radio stories that community members use to go public with their stories. Likewise, students in community-literacy courses could use such digital-story telling techniques to host similar forums—with the portraits, easels, digital recordings, and follow-up dialogue of their own.⁵

Readers interested in digital storytelling will take inspiration from DUSTY, as well—University of California at Berkeley’s multi-media, multi-modal outreach project. Housed in the basement of a community center amidst the urban poverty of West Oakland, DUSTY asks participants “to articulate pivotal moments in their lives and to assume agentive stances toward their present identities, circumstances, and futures” (Hull and Katz 44).

2. *Students structure inquiry with others, using tools attuned to their rhetorical goals.*

In the face of pressing social problems, conversation alone is often insufficient to bring about either personal or social change. Rather than relying solely on default strategies in such situations (e.g., establishing common ground or magnifying differences), students use inquiry pedagogies to structure dialogue as a dynamic process of engagement and learning. Expandable and exportable, the methods that students use are also attuned to off-campus partners' perspectives and priorities and the particular deliberative aims associated with the given local public.

What teachers can do to help:

. . . *Develop rhetorical capacities.* Inquiry-driven pedagogies emphasize that deliberating with community partners is a demanding activity that merits its own name and requires its own rhetorical method. Two techne that develop specific rhetorical capacities are ideographic analysis and community problem-solving strategies.⁶ Ideographic analysis helps participants to conduct the following public work:

- to discover the arguments that already exist as ideographs in a community
- to analyze the effectiveness of those arguments
- to collaboratively produce viable alternatives with community partners and
- to assess the impact of these interventions (Coogan, "Service" 668).

Community problem-solving strategies support the following abilities:

- to elicit situated knowledge
- to engage difference in dialogue and
- to construct and to reflect upon wise options (Higgins, Long, and Flower 19–29).

Both methods develop participants' capacities to navigate the complex terrain of local public deliberation. However, ideographic analysis charts a more specified "path from rhetorical discovery to practical outcomes" such as policy changes within specific institutions (Coogan

“Service” 668) while the community problem-solving strategies open up the possibility for “personal and public transformation” (Higgins, Long, and Flower 29).

Emphasizing the historical and political context of public arguments, materialist rhetoric asks students to use ideographic analysis to investigate “the larger rhetorical history that has shaped—and is likely to continue shaping—deliberations” on a given problem in a given community (Coogan, “Service” 668). Such analysis involves ferreting out “the ideographs” that circulate in the larger culture—fragments of cultural codes and concepts that carry persuasive power. It reveals how institutions exercise authority. For instance, in *Community Leadership in Bronzeville Public Schools*, an ideographic analysis revealed that beneath seemingly persuasive arguments for “local control” was a history of fractious political positioning in Bronzeville’s ongoing debate over school reform. The analysis suggested that a more productive tack would shift the focus from “local control” to “local responsibility.” With this new focus, students were able to help mobilize alternative rhetorical strategies for securing agreement and instigating action among diverse stakeholders to institute specific policy changes.

In contrast, intercultural inquiry develops students’ rhetorical capacities for deliberating across lines of hierarchy and difference in order to arrive at more nuanced understandings of complex public issues. As pedagogy, intercultural inquiry develops the same rhetorical capacities that allow community think tank participants to engage one another in dialogue, as described in chapter 7. Intercultural inquiry teaches students to serve as collaborative planning partners, how to rival, and how to prompt for the story behind the story. Its problem-solving strategies are adaptive heuristics for treading into unfamiliar intercultural waters and interpreting, then circulating, the products of joint inquiry.

3. Students circulate alternative texts and practices.

In inquiry-driven community-literacy courses, students translate their inquiries into purposeful public documents that respond to rhetorical goals and social exigencies.

Students use materialist rhetoric to work simultaneously as public advocates and rhetorical analysts, listening to clients’ needs and crafting any number of texts in attempt to meet them (Coogan, “Service” 682). In the *Community Leadership* project, for instance, stu-

dents' most effective contributions were their "formal, group-written reports" that followed from their ideographic analysis. These reports made specific recommendations for parent-involvement programs in each of the partnering schools (689).

In a pedagogy based on intercultural inquiry, students circulate both alternative texts and inventive intercultural practices. Consider, for instance, the rhetoric of mentoring. In the Community Literacy Seminar, mentors forged working relationships with their teen writers—relationships based on inquiry into community issues. Building these relationships was an inventive act of intense negotiation of competing priorities, values and goals (Flower "Literate Action"; Long "Mentors Inventing"). So, foremost, these relationships were sites of mutual learning and shared respect—rhetorical achievements in their own right. In addition, they provided valuable support for teen writers articulating their experiences and expertise publicly in newsletters and community conversations.

Students working in conjunction with the community think tank also participate in the circulation of public texts. Consider, for instance, a think tank designed in response to a local, unresolved crisis in staffing at long-term care facilities. The think tank gave voice to the insights of low-wage nursing aides, the women, usually African American, who worked at the bottom rung of the medical establishment's intensely hierarchical system. For two semesters, students in *The Rhetoric of Making a Difference* conducted critical-incident interviews, scripted problem scenarios, and worked with small groups to draw out "stories-behind-the story," all of which went into a briefing book that was distributed first at a series of think tank sessions with nursing home staff and management and later in a city-wide session with stakeholders from hospitals, agencies, government, policy research, medical education, and nursing homes. This led to the more formal publication and distribution of the *Carnegie Mellon Community Think Tank Findings on Healthcare: The Dilemma of Teamwork, Time, and Turnover* (see www.thinktank.cmu.edu).

What teachers can do to help:

. . . *Set expectations for the public documents students write, and teach strategies for meeting these expectations.* Engaging in inquiry with community partners is one thing; turning material from that research into texts capable of accomplishing cultural work is quite another.

Intercultural inquiry teaches the inventive use of text conventions in order to draw readers into the issue at hand while inviting readers to negotiate and integrate rival perspectives from the text for themselves. Like the think tank's findings, students' end-of-term multi-voiced inquiries, for instance, don't "add up" to a tidy thesis but "confront [. . .] contradictions" and "invit[e] rivals [. . .] through the eyes of difference" (Flower, "Intercultural Inquiry" 187). Intercultural inquiry invites students to explore the tendency of conventional academic research conventions to absorb difference, contradiction, and complexity—making it hard to express the tentative, experiential, or unresolved aspects that arise when students engage difference in dialogue. It encourages students to draw upon "techniques [they] know from creative writing and expressive document design" to juxtapose alternative perspectives while offering a running commentary that interprets these voices and their significance to the inquiry (Flower, *Problem-Solving Strategies* 421).

. . . *Provide structure and opportunity for feedback from real readers.* An important component of text production in both materialist rhetoric and intercultural inquiry is reader-based feedback (Schriver 160–62). In Coogan's materialist pedagogy, a community-based "approval process" structured the means by which students refined their reports prior to publication ("Service" 689). Similarly, CLC college mentors sat next to teen writers to listen to visiting readers respond to the teens' drafts before final versions were sent to the printers. Based on these exchanges, the mentors prompted the teens to fill in gaps in the story line and to articulate the otherwise hidden logic to make the documents accessible and comprehensible to a broad range of readers.

Community think tanks provide other opportunities for reader feedback, but here readers include stakeholders with whom students conducted critical-incident interviews. College students typically launch the first phase of a think-tank dialogue by performing the scenarios (or playlets) they have written on the basis of their critical-incident interviews. The audience includes the very the people whom the students have previously interviewed. Their responses indicate how well students have represented their versions of the problem.

. . . *Provide venues for students to circulate the fruit of their inquiries.* No matter how educational the inquiry process itself may have been, a

goal of inquiry-driven pedagogies is for students to circulate the fruit of their research (Coogan, "Service" 686). To support students' circulation of public writing, inquiry-driven pedagogies provide several options. One option is to let the larger rhetorical exigencies determine, by and large, the venues students will use to go public. In advance of the academic year, Coogan worked behind the scenes to figure out how to position the IPRP within the community. But once the project began, the collaboration process identified the research problem students would pursue (e.g., "the sort of parent involvement programs [that] work in low income, African-American urban communities") and the writing students would produce, ranging from "a guidebook for parents of school-age children; a PowerPoint presentation on how to read and interpret a school budget; and flyers, posters, even magnets advertising upcoming meetings" to a research report on their rhetorical analyses (682).

Intercultural inquiry provides other venues for circulating texts. Implications for the off-campus segment of a course are obvious—with its emphasis on eliciting and documenting the situated knowledge of community residents through newsletters, community conversations, and think tanks. But the multi-voiced inquiries students complete for the on-campus component also circulate beyond a given classroom. A website posts selected student inquiries. Students in subsequent community-literacy courses then read from these posts as a regular assignment. The Intercultural Inquiry website also links selected inquiries to the project's findings, the CLC archive, printed dialogues, pertinent research, and the community think tank homepage.

PERFORMATIVE PEDAGOGIES

In Heath's description of Trackton's public stage (chapter 4), local public performance was an end in itself. Trackton's boys "handle[d] their roles by getting their cues and lines straight and knowing the right occasions for joining the chorus" (Heath 79). Performative pedagogies capitalize on the dramatic aspects of public performance, particularly the capacity to call a public into being. However, just as the shadow system complicates the theater as a metaphor for local public life, so, too, pedagogical practices broaden performance beyond its dramatic connotation. At question is the relationship between inquiry and performance in daily deliberations over human affairs—the capacity of

people to figure out what to say and how to say it in the presence of strangers. You'll recall that inquiry wasn't the focus in Trackton. Heath observes: "None of these daily situations [such as Aunt Bertha's eviction notice] brought a lot of talk about why they happened or what was needed to set things straight. People [in Trackton] just waited quietly or acted quietly [. . . F] or a change to come along, they often had to wait a long time" (66). In stark contrast, emerging performative pedagogies are intensely interested in the connections among inquiry and performance, invention and participation, wisdom and action. But, as we'll see, this interest pushes performative pedagogies to the borders of contemporary rhetorical theory.

Performative elements permeate many of the pedagogies reviewed earlier. Tactical pedagogies—particularly their persuasive displays—typically have a dramatic quality. Intercultural inquiry is also a rhetoric of performance. But to signal distinctive performative pedagogies, Flower invokes a decidedly rhetorical interpretation, one that depicts members of marginalized communities circulating ideas that lead to dialogue, deliberation, and social action (*Community Literacy*). Likewise, material rhetoric cultivates not "expert dissectors of texts" but "*agile performers* who cue their audience with a 'dense reconstruction' of the fragments" (Coogan, "Service" 671, emphasis added).⁷ In addition to those discussed previously, exemplars include the following:

- TeenTalk and similar programs featured in *ArtShow* (Flower and Heath; McLaughlin, Irby, and Langman; Smyth and Heath)
- The New Ghost Dance, a model of intercultural dialogue that recognizes the rhetorical sovereignty of indigenous peoples (Lyons).

Equally helpful to this discussion are emergent theories of rhetorical performance, including:

- *Community Literacy and The Rhetoric of Engagement* (Flower)
- "Sophists for Social Change" (Coogan)
- "Toward a Civic Rhetoric for Technologically and Scientifically Complex Places: Invention, Performance, and Participation" (Simmons and Grabill).

To synthesize this discussion, I begin with a pedagogy that cultivates the dramatic aspect of public performance. I then describe a pedagogy that draws on Stephen Greenblatt's notion of *performatives*—indicators of the rhetorical agency required to chart literate social action amidst competing, legitimate alternatives. Finally, I describe practices that recast and reinvent the sophistic paideutic tradition as a contemporary performative rhetoric—engaging citizens in cultivating the practical wisdom required to build inclusive communities for effective problem solving in a complex world.

1. *Students capitalize on the dramatic aspects of performance, the poetic world making that Warner—writing about text—associates with style.*

Wells had hoped that deciding what we want from public writing would let educators shift their attention away from the vexing issues of identity politics and instead direct their attention “to the connection between discourse and action” (337). However, Stanford University's longitudinal study of writing suggests that because of the world-creating capacity of style and style's affiliation with expressions of identity, students often develop their repertoires as public rhetors through “live enactment of their own writing,” often publicly performed identity narratives (Fishman et al. 244). This version of performance stresses the theatrical dimensions of local public life such as those Heath identifies with Trackton where verbal challenges called a public into being, transforming “the plaza” into “a stage for [. . .] performers making entrances and exits” (Heath 72).

Students in Stanford's longitudinal study of writing reported that a similar dramatic quality was central to much of the writing they did out of class and contributed to their growing repertoires as rhetors capable of calling a public into being—what Warner describes as “the reflexivity by which an addressable object is conjured into being in order to enable the very discourse that gives it existence” (67). Consider, for instance, the spoken poetry artist Mark Otuteye featured in the study. Otuteye performed his slam poetry differently whether it was staged in a coffee shop, a professor's office, or a conference session. The differences constituted a “performative reinvention of writing” based on “the decision he ma[de] in response to the actual scene of enactment: his spontaneous adjustment of words, gestures, and voice in response to heads nodding, feet tapping, and the intangible, yet palpable energy of a full room” (Fishman et al. 244). These adjustments—Fishman et

al. suggest—capture poetic world making in the making. In the same study, a student named Beth McGregor deliberately adapted improvisation techniques learned in drama class to quiet her internal editor and cultivate the character of Elizabeth, a competent, knowledgeable college-level writer (236). Encouraged to reflect on the rhetorical decisions required to adjust individual performances “to the rhetorical situation at hand” and “to such physical logistics as acoustics, space and time,” student writers develop their own working theories of how to bridge gaps in one’s knowledge and to transfer rhetorical expertise to new terrain in order to create a public for their self-performed writing (Fishman et al. 227, 232).⁸ By performing their writing for “external audiences, especially public rather than personal ones,” students in Stanford’s study reported that their writing took on some distinct—and distinctly rhetorical—characteristics. Such writing was “purposeful[. . .]”; it encouraged them, as rhetors, to find the “courage” to take risks (231).⁹

What teachers can do to help:

. . . *Look to drama theory to set standards for what constitutes decidedly public performance and how to support its claims for social change.* Fishman et al. stress that educators need to set standards for what distinguishes public performances from those that are primarily literary or entertaining. Performance “on a public-scale” is “something efficacious or capable of producing change” (Sedgwick qtd. in Fishman et al. 232).¹⁰ But in relation to the college classroom, what constitutes efficacy and change depends on how educators (and other stakeholders) configure the public sphere. Drama theory suggests students’ performances might interrogate existing social hierarchies or explore the possibility of alternative configurations (cf. McKenzie 31); or combine social critique and resistance (cf. Pineau 41). To bring drama theory into the composition classroom, Fishman et al. urge compositionists “to define a rhetoric (or several rhetorics) of performance” and “to develop strong rubrics for evaluating the different ‘writing’ performances that our students complete for our classes” (246).

2. *Students develop the reflective, rhetorical agency that Greenblatt calls performatives.*

Amanda Young uses the term *performatives* to describe the rhetorical agency of the young women who used *What’s Your Plan?* to make deci-

sions and negotiate expectations, needs, goals, and preconceived ideas about sexual behavior. She borrows the term from Greenblatt's observation that words can perform actions—the premise of any self concept or belief system. Different in content but not in structure, equally strong performatives operated for college mentors in the Community Literacy Seminar who negotiated alternatives for linking literacy and social justice in their work with urban teen writers. But here, mentors negotiated not the voices of safe sex (“Ever heard of Aids?”), but the disciplinary debate in rhet/comp over how to link literacy and social justice. As documented in the self-interviews they conducted and audiotaped following afternoon writing sessions at the CLC with their teens, the college mentors wrestled with *how* to make good on the promise of literacy as a tool for social justice. Upon reading about their work, Ross Winterowd appraised the CLC mentors' performatives this way:

[The] outline of issues, as developed by the college mentors, is enough to occupy the thoughts and nightmares of a compositionist for at least the interlude between one CCCC convention and the next. Emphasize grammatical correctness. Support emancipation. Invite free expression. Support action-oriented problem-solving. For each of these items, we could supply a plethora of citations, festoons of allusions, long bibliographies. *The point, though, is that the issues arose from the work of nonexpert mentors.* (371–72, emphasis added)

Mentoring positioned college students in the vortex of rhetorical activity: contingent choices among competing alternatives for purposeful action. In negotiating this terrain, mentors engaged in the very problem that characterizes the nature of human affairs:

If we approach the debate over literate social action by holding out for universal truths, we will end up empty-handed. And if we are content merely to analyze the reasonableness of competing claims, literate social action will remain a theoretical construct that never moves outside the walls of the library. (Long, “Rhetoric” 314)

By moving beyond text-based alternatives, mentors “drew from the disciplinary debate to make judgments about what *to do* as literacy mentors” (emphasis added, 314). Combining Greenblatt’s terminology and Flower’s theory of negotiated meaning making, we can say that the college mentors’ performatives were sites of negotiated conflict and risk—the conflict and risk that comes with building inclusive communities. Students’ performatives allowed them to take action and be accountable to that action.

What teachers can do to help:

. . . *Structure reflection*. Face-to-face interaction with teen writers was imperative to the mentors’ rhetorical agency. Just as important were the structured reflections that prompted mentors at the CLC to attend to competing goals and priorities. The Community Literacy Seminar assigned students to conduct and to record structured self-interviews back in their dorms following each literacy session. The open-ended self-interview questions asked:

- What were your expectations for the session?
- In what way were they met or complicated?
- What did you and your writer accomplish? and
- What other issues are on your mind that you’d like to explore here? (Long “Intercultural” 113)

Structured reflection helped to focus students’ attention on the competing priorities, goals, and values they brought to their roles as mentors. It also served as a catalyst for students to actively negotiate these competing voices, to build richer interpretations of their roles and ways to enact them (cf. Flower “Literate Action”; Long “Intercultural”). As a pedagogical practice, structured reflection provided the basis for electronic bulletin board discussions and group reflection meetings. On a theoretical level, reflection was also the primary catalyst that developed the rhetorical agency that college students needed to navigate (in their working relationships with teens, as well as in their minds) the unfamiliar terrain of community literacy.

3. Students perform contemporary paideutic rhetoric by standing for something with others across difference.

The term *paideutic* refers to the “promise” of classical rhetorical education: “the making of good citizens” (Coogan “Service” 667; cf. Fleming “Rhetoric”). A question for today’s educators is how classical rhetoric can inform performative rhetorics of contemporary local public life. Relevant classical concepts include the following:

- Aristotle’s heuristics—strategies for making deliberate rhetorical choices and for responding to their outcomes (cf. Flower *Community Literacy*)
- Isocrates’s paideutic rhetoric—a *progymnasmata* for cultivating good citizens (cf. Coogan “Service”)
- The sophists’ emphasis on practical wisdom—a model for taking action in the face of incomplete knowledge—the conundrum of human affairs (cf. Coogan “Sophist”; Flower *Community Literacy*; Flower “Intercultural Knowledge”).

However, to be useful, these concepts must be recast in light of the dynamics that distinguish contemporary public life from its counterparts in ancient Greece and Rome, dynamics reflecting the prophetic commitments of progressive activism, the African-American freedom struggle, and the intellectual tradition of prophetic pragmatism (cf. Flower *Community Literacy*); the fragmentary nature of contemporary culture (cf. Coogan, “Service”); and the demands that scientific and technological complexities place on public deliberation (cf. Simmons and Grabill). As I write this chapter, a contemporary theory of rhetorical performance is still very much under construction—as Simmons and Grabill note when they write: “We use the term *performance* along with writing and composing in this article because *we are unsure what, precisely, to call what we see* in communities and how to name what people can make with advanced information technologies” (443, emphasis added). In sum, their approach suggests “a more theoretically informed notion of performance” (443).

Thus far, efforts to articulate a contemporary rhetoric of performance tend to pursue two projects. One project describes the synergy between rhetorical inquiry and rhetorical performance, particularly how specific inquiry practices inform specific kinds of public performances. This is Lyons’s purpose in describing the Native American New Ghost Dance. As an image for rhetorical education, the New Ghost Dance evokes performance (communal prayer, protest, and

dance) in relation to inquiry that “locat[es] history and writing instruction in the powerful context of American rhetorical struggle” (465). The connection between performance and inquiry also drives Simmons and Grabill’s interest in software interface design. In order for community residents to do the science increasingly required for public deliberation, computer interfaces must be designed to support rhetorically astute data analysis.

The second project is to revise the liberal humanist notion of the lone rhetor delivering a persuasive speech to a larger audience from behind his podium.¹¹ Simmons and Grabill observe it no longer makes sense to theorize the individual rhetor but rather organizations. Organizations read. Organizations distribute and orchestrate knowledge. Flower speaks for another alternative—one that recognizes not only the collaborative and relational quality of community literacy but also the inseparable individual and social nature of literate action.

In the spirit of this theory building, this chapter’s final entry does less to maintain a sharp division between students and teachers and more to convey the synergy among design literacies (cf. Flower “Intercultural Knowledge”), institutional organization and innovation (cf. Simmons and Grabill), and the capacity of people as rhetors with something to say and the right to say it in the presence of strangers (cf. Hull and Katz). These design literacies, inspired contexts, and rhetorical agents are highlighted in the following discussion of *ArtShow* and the community think tank.

What teachers can do to cultivate contemporary paideutic rhetoric:

. . . Support students as they move between performative literacies that call a public into being and inquiry literacies that support deliberation over complex issues—treating performance and inquiry not as mutually exclusive literate forms but as complements to local public life.

ArtShow and the community think tank have used performance to introduce and to dramatize issues that—in the same public event—were focal points for public deliberative inquiry. Regarding the performative qualities, dramatic descriptors are inherent in *ArtShow*’s program design. The youth group was comprised of “a drama team” who wrote “scripts” to be performed “as dramas” (Flower and Heath 48). In *ArtShow*, for example, dramatic performance had a single goal: to “bring audiences to a tense edge of understanding” on issues “of

peak concern in their communities” (Flower and Heath 48). Performance is especially adept at calling local publics into being.

Quite separate from their dramatic performances but as part of the same event, *ArtShow* drew others into inquiry around issues that the forum was designed to address. For *ArtShow*, actors choreographed the moment that they dramatically turned their backs on their audience, snapped their fingers, or left the stage to signal that their scripted performance was over and that it was time, now, for audience participation. In this second phase of activity, actors posed questions to the audience to engage them in careful consideration of the information and perspectives that the drama presented. To prepare for such performances and discussions, youth had worked with subject-area experts to develop their scripts. Orchestrating performance and inquiry, the youth were more than conduits for this information. In appraising *ArtShow*, Flower and Heath distinguish between performance (“dramatic form”) and inquiry (“sensitive insightful discussions”) even as they commend their complementary relationship: “For many audiences, university experts could not have gotten either information or persuasive arguments across. Young actors could—for many groups that would never listen to adult experts” (50). The actors in *ArtShow* knew that performance, not academic analysis, would draw audiences into the heat of controversy that makes the influx of illegal drugs and the spike in suspension rates complex social issues. But the point isn’t that performance *wins the day* over inquiry or that community discourse is *intolerant* of careful analysis. Rather, to put analytical strategies to work, these rhetors needed first to establish the complexity of the terrain they urged the audience to consider. Such complexity is best embodied not in isolated facts but in the details of lived experience dramatized in performance.

Likewise, the critical incidents that students research for community think tanks move students from inquiry to performance and back to inquiry. As part of their course in community outreach, students learn the distinguishing features of the critical incident (cf. Flanagan) and practice strategies for eliciting such information from those whom they interview (cf. Flower, *Problem-Solving Strategies* 340, 368). For example, for a series of think tanks focused on the workplace/worklife issues of healthcare workers, students interviewed “food service workers, cleaning staff, nursing aides” (Flower and Heath 52). Students then experience the world-creating capacity of performance when they

perform—as the catalyst that launches a think tank’s first phase of dialogues—the scripts they have written on the basis of their critical-incidents interviews. Of all the tools that community think tanks employ—the crib sheets, the briefing books, the strategies—no tool has rivaled the power of dramatization to focus participants’ attention on real problems.

CONCLUSION

The practices reviewed in this chapter radically depart from the “warped” image of citizen-as-consumer so prominent in mainstream culture (Cintron 126). Far from simply advocating politically correct consumer choices, these practices ask students to take risks, to build new kinds of working relationships, to venture into spaces they’ve never gone before, to tax their writing skills like nobody’s business, to think long and hard about the challenges and possibility of social change, and to act. But that departure also means that the pedagogies described here reflect very different images of local public life than students in all likelihood bring with them into the classroom. The bigger difference between students’ preconceptions of public action and our public pedagogies, the more disconcerting students may find what we ask of them (cf. Deans 137–38). Of course, there’s nothing wrong with cognitive dissonance. But the fact that we can predict—or “pre-interpret”—such dissonance from students puts us, as rhetors, in an especially interesting place (Faber 101).

On the one hand, in anticipating such dissonance, we may be tempted to pull out more tools of the academic trade: more and lengthier syllabi, lectures, and assignments. The practices reviewed in this chapter suggest that while such tools may provide valuable clarity, they are likely insufficient to support students’ public action.

Nor will it do simply to amend this list of pedagogical practices. Instead, what I think might benefit students and community partners most of all is for each of us to figure out how to invest such pedagogical practices with the world-creating power of style.

In part, I’m suggesting that *in ways reflective of the images of local public life that drive our pedagogies*, we need to become what Heath might call “smart-cat Darrets” for those looking to us for cues about going public. From the dramatic accounts in “Living Room,” I sense that Welch is particularly good at using style to bring to life with and

for students a distinct and knowable discursive space, as well as the working theory of public rhetoric that governs that space.

But the politics of community literacy also quickly complicate this focus on the teacher-as-world-creator. Coogan alerts us to the fact that the rhetorical traditions operating in the community may differ from those recognized and valued in the academy. He reminds educators “to stay grounded in the rhetorical practices of the communities we wish to serve if we are to have any hope of successfully partnering with these communities” (“Counterpublics” 468). Likewise, Flower warns us against “wrap[ping] ourselves in the purple robes of human agency [. . .]” (“Intercultural Inquiry” 198).

Ultimately, this chapter’s list of practices calls us, as educators, to create *with community partners and students* at once tangible and poetic interpretative schemas to guide our participation in local public life. The previous chapters bear witness to what Warner might call the world-creating power of “style” in community-literacy studies (129). Through metaphor, Heath, Brandt, Heller, Cintron, and others capitalize on this world-creating power of style. In academic publications, scholars use figurative language to bring new images and working theories to life for themselves and one another—to create a discursive space (a public) for the study of local public rhetoric. I’m less confident that we always know how to do this performative work in conjunction with our community partners and in relation to our community-literacy courses. In light of the previous chapters, I would suggest it is probably not enough for students to go to new places or to work with others in new ways—as important as these moves may be.

As Cintron’s critical ethnography attests, students are, like the rest of us, symbolic beings who depend upon interpretative schemes to make sense of complex and contradictory experience and to take action in the face of such complexity. With studies of situated literacies as a benchmark, we need to construct with others compelling, tangible interpretative schemes that are capable of describing and responding to the demands of contemporary local public discourse. And we need to articulate the working theories that support these interpretative schemes. Finally, we need to continue documenting such collaborative efforts and sharing them with interested colleagues in and outside the academy. To be sure, this work will be as invigorating as it will be worthwhile.