

Community Literacy Journal

Volume 8
Issue 2 *Spring*

Article 1

Spring 2014

Front Matter

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Recommended Citation

Editors, CLJ (2014) "Front Matter," *Community Literacy Journal*: Vol. 8 : Iss. 2 , Article 1.
DOI: 10.25148/CLJ.8.2.009306
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/communityliteracy/vol8/iss2/1>

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Mission

We understand “community literacy” as the domain for literacy work that exists outside of mainstream educational and work institutions. It can be found in programs devoted to adult education, early childhood education, reading initiatives, lifelong learning, workplace literacy, or work with marginalized populations, but it can also be found in more informal, ad hoc projects.

For us, literacy is defined as the realm where attention is paid not just to content or to knowledge but to the symbolic means by which it is represented and used. Thus, literacy makes reference not just to letters and to text but to other multimodal and technological representations as well. We publish work that contributes to the field’s emerging methodologies and research agendas.

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Institutions & libraries	\$200.00
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Cover Art: “Artisanal Expertise: Wool Dyeing in Lurín, Peru” by Aida Villarreal-Licona

Aida Villarreal-Licona, Scripps College 2016, Media Studies and Spanish, served as a summer Media Intern and Photographer for emiLime Handcrafted and Green Design Link, companies that connect artisans in Peru with the global marketplace. This photograph was taken at the home of master weaver Urbano during a wool-dyeing workshop attended by his wife Teodora and their friend and fellow artisan Juan Carlos in Lurín, Peru. It captures the near-end result of the dyeing process after wool has been spun and soaked in boiling plants, such as molle and chilka, and minerals including iron and copper sulfates. The literacies circulating in these workshops range from cross-generational, to botanical, to artisanal and historic, as the pre-Columbian techniques that are used have been learned, passed down, and practiced in these artisans’ families for many generations.

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Manuscripts should be submitted according to the standards of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed. (New York: MLA).

Shorter and longer pieces are acceptable (8–25 manuscript pages) depending on authors' approaches. Case studies, reflective pieces, scholarly articles, etc., are all welcome.

To submit manuscripts, visit our site—communityliteracy.org—and register as an author. Send queries to Michael Moore: mmoore46@depaul.edu.

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ISSN 1555-9734



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COMMUNITY LITERACY *Journal*

Volume 8 Issue 2 Spring 2014

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Re-Framing the Argument: Critical Service-Learning and Community-Centered Food Literacy

Veronica House

As a WPA and a service-learning director and practitioner, the author suggests connections between food studies, rhetoric and composition studies, and critical service-learning theory that involve mobilizing students to join in or help lead community efforts surrounding the local, organic food movement, food justice, and food literacy. The study is framed by questions of how composition instructors can create courses around issues related to the global food crisis to embed students in community-centered food literacy initiatives, and, more generally, how practitioners and WPAs can effectively promote and explain community-engaged pedagogies to higher-level administrators who question the value of the practice.

I recently had a conversation with a dean at the University of Colorado Boulder about why the Program for Writing and Rhetoric made a curricular commitment to service-learning and civic engagement throughout its lower- and upper-division courses. More specifically, he wanted to understand the benefits of service-learning for students. He was not interested in assessment data about personal growth and civic learning. That students become more engaged and "critical citizens for a participatory democracy" (Berlin 97), as has been shown in numerous large and small-scale assessment studies (Ash, Clayton, and Atkinson; Astin and Sax; Eyler and Giles; Eyler, Giles, Stenson, and Gray), did not particularly impress him. "Yes," he said, "but is there something about service-learning that teaches students more effectively *how to think and write?*"

As some within Rhetoric and Composition Studies argue to move beyond Paula Mathieu's "public turn" to a "political turn"¹—one that would focus more deliberately on political issues than the social turn of the 1990s—practitioners, scholars, and WPAs once again face a host of questions that get at the heart of why we teach and what higher education's purposes are and should be. This is nothing new. These conversations have persisted through the last century from John Dewey to Paulo Freire to Ernest Boyer. In Rhetoric and Composition specifically, binary viewpoints about how to teach and the purposes for rhetoric and composition classes incite emotional and compelling arguments. In one camp, for example, are critical literacy scholars such as Henry Giroux and Ira Shor, who argue that critical pedagogy is an "emancipatory" project of "transformative intellectuals" (Giroux 174-175). Critical pedagogue James Berlin declares, "the objectives of English Studies are many. *The most significant of these* is developing a measure of facility in reading and writing practices so as to prepare