



PUBLIC PEDAGOGY IN  
COMPOSITION STUDIES

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## Public Pedagogy in Composition Studies

In our journals and at our conferences, one finds repeated again and again the assertion that our work—our teaching, researching, and theorizing—can clarify and even improve the prospects of literacy in democratic culture. If we really believe this, we must acknowledge our obligation to air that work in the most expansive, inclusive forums possible. . . . We must go public. And we can.

—Peter Mortensen, “Going Public”

IN THE NEARLY TWO DECADES SINCE PETER MORTENSEN emphatically asserted “we must go public,” writing teachers, administrators, and students have answered his call. The prevalence of publications and conference presentations related to public engagement and public writing show that composition specialists have raised and begun addressing important pedagogical and administrative questions related to the public turn in composition studies. While the 2013 Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) theme, “The Public Work of Composition,” highlighted the ongoing and strengthening connections between composition studies and public outreach, there is still more work to be done. When I began designing my study of public pedagogy, I found myself agreeing with the tenor of Mortensen’s mandate that “we must go public. And we can” (182), but I also wanted to know: How does public pedagogy impact student learning? How might composition courses employing public pedagogies fit within the broader structure of a writing program? In what ways might administrators gain institutional support for public pedagogy in composition? I valued the knowledge students gained from going public with their

experiences and writing in my courses, but I sought an approach to composition pedagogy that accounted for and critiqued the diverse public sites where I chose to (re)locate my pedagogy and that acknowledged the significance of those publics as locations—places with histories and rhetorically positioned within broader spheres.

Works like Paula Mathieu's *Tactics of Hope*, Christian Weisser's *Beyond Academic Discourse*, and Eli Goldblatt's *Because We Live Here*—among many others—have been essential source books, guiding my own sense of the public turn in composition studies and the possibilities for how I might design pedagogies to support students in going public. In more recent publications, I began to see that phrase—"go public"—repeated more often. For example, Linda Flower's *Community Literacy and the Rhetoric of Public Engagement* addresses significant questions about how and where "ordinary people go public" (5), and Nancy Welch's *Living Room* translates lessons from the past about "what it means, and what it takes, for most people to try to go public" into specific pedagogies for composition and rhetoric classrooms (9). And, Shirley K Rose and Irwin Weiser's edited collection *Going Public* considers community-based and pedagogical concerns by addressing publics related to writing program administration. My hope is that *Public Pedagogy in Composition Studies* contributes meaningfully to these discussions of the public turn by (1) offering a series of comparative case studies that highlight pedagogical examples and administrative approaches for how many practitioners in our field are going public with pedagogy, (2) arguing for the significance of understanding our institutional histories in contemporary efforts to go public, and (3) prompting critical questions about how teachers should ethically attend to students' affective responses that may arise from public pedagogies, while acknowledging the power of disorienting dilemmas in students' learning.

Given the strong base of scholarship in public writing within the field, it was not surprising for me to find—through the interviews I conducted with writing teachers and administrators at Oberlin College, Syracuse University, and the University of Arizona—that many compositionists are already going public. What I did not

fully anticipate were the diverse terminologies being used by study participants to name, define, and discuss quite similar pedagogical approaches:

“The terms I tend to graft onto are *community partnership*, *civic*, . . . [and] *social change*.”

“My word is usually *community*, and I kind of think of that and use it in contrast to academic writing.”

“I think the term that has come up quite a bit . . . is *community engagement*.”

“The term that I used . . . was *client project*, but *service learning* became more easily index-able [at my institution].”

“I find myself leaning more towards *service learning* because to me it imbues that sense of public.”

“*Service learning* is a term that I use just because people know what it means.”

“I gravitate toward *real world* mostly . . . because the way that I envision public is students going to areas outside of the university.”

The sampling of quotes from teachers in my study showcases just a few examples within the broad range of terms composition teachers are using to describe pedagogical practices that have a common interest in going public. Words such as *civic* and *social change* suggest pedagogies for democratic or activist purposes, whereas words like *service learning*, *community engagement*, and *community partnership* suggest pedagogies that require students to directly serve their local communities; moreover, *client project* and *real world* suggest a professional writing or internship-style approach to the public work of composition. And, of course, each of the quoted teachers had a particular rhetorical purpose for naming their pedagogies as they did—whether because of the value and understanding within one’s particular institutional or professional context or because of one’s personal conception of what it means to go public. While

the teachers I interviewed represented this variety in terminology, I also found this multiplicity echoed within our field's professional conferences.

For instance, when I presented at the inaugural Conference on Community Writing in October 2015, I attended panels that demonstrated the range of ways teacher-scholars are interpreting the public work of "community writing"—from service learning, to place-based ecocomposition, to the use of Twitter in local business communities. Likewise, the submission category for CCCC, "Community, Civic, & Public," represents an assortment of names; no other CCCC category has quite this level of catchall. While an array of terms can be advantageous in representing a polyvocality that captures the shades of difference in our approaches, I want to make the case for *publics* as a useful umbrella term for composition pedagogies that have a common interest in relocating student writing and experiences to places beyond the classroom to enhance student learning. One of the risks in using different terminologies is the potential for missed connections and neglected conversations. While I am not advocating for losing these terms—terms that I use throughout my scholarship, too—I hope that we might also form stronger alliances around our common goals of going public.

Based on the case studies I feature in the coming pages, I define public pedagogy in composition studies as an approach to the teaching of writing that values the educative potential for public sites, communities, and persons beyond the boundaries of the traditional classroom and/or campus community; these values initiate moves to go public with composition pedagogies by relocating composition teaching and learning within increasingly public spheres. Public pedagogies often require students to encounter new or unfamiliar places (or to approach familiar publics from a new perspective) and, because they are situated within public contexts beyond the teacher's control, students sometimes experience spatially prompted disorienting dilemmas that can ultimately be productive for their learning. My usage of the term *public pedagogy* draws on theories from curriculum studies, as I advocate for the umbrella concept of publics to both represent a common language

for the public work we do within composition studies and to expand our sense of what it means (and where) to go public. Indeed, while my own way into public pedagogy began with service learning (a pedagogy that I continue to value and implement), I advocate for public pedagogy as an approach that does not limit public engagement to service. Public pedagogy has allowed me to envision teaching and administering writing in ways that broaden the scope of possible locations for writing, to relocate learning to public sites outside of formal schools, and critically attend to place-based issues while going public. For me, as for many of the teachers I interviewed for this study, asking students to engage with new or unfamiliar public locations—sometimes through service learning or for civic purposes, though not always—became a central value for students' learning in composition courses with a public pedagogy.

Public pedagogy, like other community-based and critical pedagogies, attempts to break down the perceived and actual barriers between town and gown. Taking a public approach to composition pedagogy means facilitating students' understanding of the significance of learning that happens in public spaces that may be marked as nonschool, unacademic, or everyday. For composition teachers and administrators, public pedagogy may result in a radical shifting of authority from traditional fonts of academic knowledge—the credentialed professor and the stacks in the campus library—to public sources of knowledge—the director of a local nonprofit organization and the streets and neighborhoods in our surrounding communities. Scholars such as Henry A. Giroux have raised important concerns about the powerfully negative educative potential of corporations, and I argue that public pedagogy in composition studies counters this neoliberal agenda by assigning students to study and/or serve their communities and to learn from the diverse publics around them, despite the risks that these experiences may involve participation in neoliberal forces.

While public pedagogy in composition studies connects with many of the goals of cultural studies, critical analysis, and writing for civic purposes, my analysis of the case studies demonstrates how it can differ from those approaches in the pedagogical methods



used. While cultural critique and civic writing can happen wholly inside of formal school spaces, public pedagogy, drawing on community-based commitments of service learning and place-based approaches to teaching writing, involves students *going* public—through, for instance, community service, observing or gardening in a nearby park, or participating in an in-person protest.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, it is the act of *going* public that imbues this pedagogical approach with so much potential. Teachers who go public with pedagogy recognize that, even though critique and analysis within the classroom are valuable approaches, they ultimately cannot replicate the visceral experiences of engaging with new or unfamiliar spaces on or off campus, experiences that can spark deeply meaningful learning for students. The examples from composition teachers I interviewed suggest that relocation is a key feature in public pedagogy—relocating both the sites of composition teaching and learning, and, by extension, re-envisioning writing program administration and work within our institutions through a more public lens.

The comparative, cross-institutional study I conducted takes a snapshot of how composition teachers and writing program administrators in three different institutions across the United States are currently going public with their pedagogy. Through analyzing best practices of programs and instructors, *Public Pedagogy in Composition Studies* documents model programs and pedagogies. The book considers public pedagogy at a number of levels: within composition pedagogy (Chapter 2), as part of writing program administration (Chapter 3), in the context of contemporary institutional conversations and historical trajectories (Chapter 4), and in tandem with students' transformative and affective learning (Chapter 5). Before delving into the findings of my case studies, though, I provide in this chapter background information on the study I conducted, a review of public pedagogy theorizations within curriculum studies, and a rationale for relocating composition pedagogies.

#### CASE STUDIES OF PUBLIC PEDAGOGIES

In 2011, I set out to study the ways writing teachers and program administrators were going public with their pedagogies and how

they were supporting that work administratively. My research from that time has resulted in the case studies of public pedagogies within the Rhetoric and Writing Program at Oberlin College, the Syracuse University Writing Program,<sup>2</sup> and the Writing Program at University of Arizona, on which I draw in the coming chapters. Bearing some similarity to Carol P. Hartzog's 1986 study *Composition and the Academy*, the project I designed approached writing programs—including their administrators and instructors, their goals and objectives, their histories and future plans, their institutional and geographical contexts—as significant sites of scholarly study. I selected the three sites for comparative study in this project because each has an explicitly public approach to the teaching of writing through coursework, outreach initiatives, and/or an institutional history of public engagement. Drawing on the wealth of knowledge of the practitioners within those writing programs, my comparative study relies on nineteen interviews I conducted with graduate teaching assistants, faculty, and administrators; program and teaching documents I collected from study participants, such as syllabi, assignment sheets, and program mission statements; and notes and observations I made from campus visits to two of the three research sites.<sup>3</sup> Through the IRB-approved consent process, all participants chose to be named in the study; participants whose interviews and course or administrative materials I drew on heavily were also given an opportunity to read and give me feedback on the drafts of the chapters in which they are referenced.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to selecting institutions based on existing public initiatives, I also sought diversity in terms of institution location, type, and size, as well as the kind of program or department and the courses, majors, or minors each oversees. Because of the comparative nature of this study, differences across institutions inform the analysis of how public pedagogies function within local contexts. In “Institutional Differences in Pursuing the Public Good,” Barbara A. Holland argues that the growing engagement movement in higher education is making it “more important than ever to understand the distinctions among institution types and to consider why engagement seems to take root in some institutional contexts more

readily than others” (235–36). Holland contends that the general public and media too often look to research universities as the measuring stick for engagement efforts, when her analysis finds that these institutions are often the least likely to involve themselves in a civic mission or engaged scholarship. According to Holland, different institutional types and missions result from the different ways administrators assess risk, value, and profitability. As I considered institutions for my study, I wanted to make sure research and liberal arts institutions were represented, as well as public and private, among other differences.

Table 1 summarizes some of these key distinctions among the three research sites in my study. The University of Arizona and Oberlin College represent two different ends of the spectrum in terms of size and differences in institutional type, with Syracuse University falling in the middle in terms of size and being a private, research institution.

My selection of a range of institutions and programs was meant, in part, to address some of the limitations that might emerge from focusing on a case study of only one program. However, the small number of study sites is not representative of the diverse programs and schools where composition is taught. Two of the three institutions are private, and all three institutions are fairly highly ranked within the *U.S. News & World Report* College Rankings: Oberlin College is ranked #23 of National Liberal Arts Colleges, Syracuse University is #61 of National Universities, and the University of Arizona is #121 of National Universities (“*U.S. News*”). In other words, these are institutions with national reputations, a degree of prestige, and well-established institutional histories. Even though there are a number of colleges and universities that may not share characteristics with the three sites in my study, the data I collected has applicability in a range of institutional contexts. Like Hartzog explained in her study of writing programs, my study “is not, nor does it pretend to be, a comprehensive study of writing programs in the country today,” nor a comprehensive consideration of public composition pedagogies within the full range of institution types (x). For the scope of this study, though, the three selected institu-

**Table 1. Comparative Data for Three Research Sites**

	<b>Oberlin College</b>	<b>Syracuse University</b>	<b>University of Arizona</b>
<b>Geographical Location</b>	Midwest Oberlin, OH	Northeast Syracuse, NY	Southwest Tucson, AZ
<b>Institution Type</b>	Private Liberal Arts College	Private Research University	Public Research I University
<b>Institution Size (Number of Students)<sup>5</sup></b>	2,912	21,789	39,086
<b>Program or Department's Institutional Affiliation</b>	Department of Rhetoric and Composition, stand-alone department	Department of Writing Studies, Rhetoric, and Composition (formerly the Syracuse University Writing Program), stand-alone department	Writing Program, within the Department of English
<b>Level and/or Type of Courses Overseen</b>	General education writing; First-year seminars; Undergraduate minor	General education writing; Undergraduate major and minor; Graduate program	General education writing (lower and upper division)

tions offered me the chance to delve deeply into a close analysis of how each program was going public and then make comparative claims about how public pedagogies function in different institutional and programmatic contexts, even though those institutional contexts were localized and narrowly defined.

My method of comparative analysis involved “access[ing] different levels”—e.g., curricular, programmatic, departmental, institutional, historical—in order to “examine how they relate to each

other and inform the discourse of pedagogy and the act of teaching” (Alexander 513). As Robin Alexander argues, comparativists have tended to ignore pedagogy, and her claims guided my attempt to account for the ways in which “local values, ideas, and debates are part of a much wider educational discourse” (513). The case studies, when taken together through a comparative lens, demonstrate how accessing different levels for comparison allows us to “teas[e] out what is universal in pedagogy from what is unique or site/culture specific; informing the development of pedagogy theory; and extending the vocabulary and repertoire of pedagogic practice” (Alexander 513). For example, my analysis in Chapter 2 shows how a common feature of public pedagogies across institutional contexts, and even within different kinds of composition courses, involves asking students to engage with unfamiliar publics, or to approach familiar publics from a new perspective; however, the comparison also suggests that some of the administrative methods I highlight in Chapter 3—such as next step course sequencing—may be challenging within departments or programs that do not have enough writing courses to create an extended series. In sum, while these three case studies are not wholly representative of the diverse contexts in which compositionists teach and administer programs, I believe they offer a sense of what may translate easily within similar or different kinds of courses and programs. Before delving further into how teachers are going public with composition pedagogy, the next section highlights some of the early conceptions of public pedagogy as the term has been defined within curriculum studies and cultural critique, as well as how the theory’s foundations connect with values in the field of composition.

**THE “FABULOUS HAZE” SURROUNDING  
THE TERM *PUBLIC PEDAGOGY***

Educational researchers Jennifer A. Sandlin, Michael P. O’Malley, and Jake Burdick identify the first appearance of *public pedagogy* in 1894, and they trace how the term “has been widely deployed as a theoretical construct in education research to focus on processes and sites of education beyond formal schooling” (338). Sandlin,

O'Malley, and Burdick also note that the term's usage proliferated in the mid-1990s, resulting in part from the work of cultural studies theorist Henry A. Giroux. Giroux's early work on public pedagogy, such as his 1999 article "Public Pedagogy and Rodent Politics," critiques the educative, neoliberal influences of corporations. Giroux argues that corporations, like the Walt Disney Corporation, function as "teaching machines" espousing ideologies that "rewrite memory" and "influence how young people are educated" ("Mouse Power" 222–23). However, since Giroux's conception of the term, scholars from fields such as education and curriculum studies, anthropology, and language and literacy studies have sought to build on and extend theories of critical public pedagogy. Editors of the *Handbook of Public Pedagogy*—the first comprehensive collection published on the concept—note that public pedagogy has been defined in a variety of ways and within a range of contexts (Sandlin, Schultz, and Burdick 2). Indeed, as Glenn C. Savage notes, "there appears to be a fabulous haze surrounding the term [public pedagogy] . . . which renders it both exciting and problematic to consider" (103). Other scholars similarly note that "multiple and distinct articulations of public pedagogy exist within the literature" (O'Malley, Sandlin, and Burdick). While the fabulous haze presents challenges to researchers of public pedagogies, defining what public pedagogy means for composition specialists can help clarify the usage for our particular discipline, while still maintaining its interdisciplinary roots.

Within their contribution to the *Encyclopedia of Curriculum Studies*, O'Malley, Sandlin, and Burdick offer their definition of *public pedagogy* for curriculum studies:

Public pedagogy is a theoretical construct focusing on various forms and sites of education and learning occurring beyond formal schooling practices; in institutions other than schools, such as museums, zoos, libraries, and public parks; in informal educational sites such as popular culture, media, commercial spaces, and the Internet, and in or through figures and sites of activism, including "public intellectuals," grassroots social activism, and various social movements. (697)

Definitions from curriculum studies, like the one quoted here, focus on how public locations beyond schools have the potential to be educative; this definition is rooted in the way Giroux theorized public pedagogy in his critique of the Disney Corporation.

Giroux's scholarship emphasizes the importance of cultural studies and critical pedagogy, and composition specialists who already value these approaches to the teaching of writing will find many commonalities between those and his conception of public pedagogy. Giroux's definition of *public pedagogy* hinges on his belief that the cultural is pedagogical, and he sees culture as a "powerful educational force" that shapes individuals through the narratives, metaphors, and images that it produces ("Cultural Studies, Public Pedagogy" 62). Therefore, Giroux is particularly concerned with how corporations and neoliberal forces espouse a public pedagogy that educates young people to value consumerism and individualism, and he advocates for educators to engage students in critical analysis of public media and mass culture ("Cultural Studies, Public Pedagogy" 62). In a recent study of Stephen Colbert's *The Colbert Report*, Sophia A. McClennen extends Giroux's conception of public pedagogy and mass media to argue that "post-9/11 satire" communicated through cable television is "one of the most significant forms of critical pedagogy in operation today" (73). For Giroux, though, cultural studies and critique serve as pedagogical tactics for combating the powerful messages targeted toward young people: in other words, he advocates for countering the corporate-driven public pedagogy of consumer culture with critical pedagogy in the classroom. Of course, cultural studies and critique of mass media have a strong tradition in composition studies. As James Berlin argued in *Rhetorics, Poetics, and Cultures*, compositionists should instruct students "to see not only the rhetoric of the college essay, but also the rhetoric of the institution of schooling, of politics, and of the media," providing "students with the heuristics to penetrate [semiotic] codes" (93). Like Giroux, Berlin's work conveys powerful commitments to critical and cultural analysis within composition studies; the public pedagogies I highlight in the coming pages invite students to move beyond the classroom, though not aban-

doing the classroom entirely, to engage public spaces as a method of analysis and critique.

Giroux's public pedagogy also aligns with composition teaching that emphasizes the civic purposes for public writing. Because the health of democracy is tied in with the system of education in the United States, corporate-driven public pedagogy is particularly dangerous because it risks jeopardizing the foundations of our democratic society—public citizenship and agency—by replacing them with increasingly privatized and commodified notions of citizenship and agency (Giroux, "Mouse Power"). Like John Dewey and many other educational theorists, Giroux values the symbiotic relationship between education and democracy, and he critiques neoliberal corporations for "teach[ing] an utterly privatized notion of citizenship and democracy" ("Mouse Power" 222). In this way, corporations pose a unique and serious threat to our nation's democracy by valuing consumption and individualism as models of citizenship and by de-emphasizing the importance of "non-commodified public spheres" ("Mouse Power" 222). Neoliberalism, as one of the most powerful "anti-democratic ideologies," is therefore threatening "a critically informed citizenry, a viable notion of social agency, and the idea of the university as a democratic public sphere" (Giroux, "Cultural Studies in Dark Times"). The commercialization and privatization of citizenship limits the sense of agency young people might envision for themselves in public spheres. In *Living Room*, Nancy Welch identifies how the social turn in composition studies is at odds with the growth of privatization resulting from neoliberalism: "Even as our field has increasingly focused on the public dimensions of students' writing and writing pedagogy, the national turn has been in the opposite direction, toward increasing privatization" (7). Welch goes on to examine neoliberal logic and to highlight models and lessons from historical case studies of effective rhetorical action. While Welch's work is more interested in how writing and rhetoric can address some of these problems, she shares many of Giroux's concerns with the proliferation of neoliberalism and its impact on students as citizens and writers.



In addition to Welch's consideration of neoliberalism and the privatization of public writing, other scholars in composition studies have addressed neoliberalism, often via Giroux, and in some cases these scholars have explicitly engaged with his theory of public pedagogy. In their 2004 article "Cultural Studies, Rhetorical Studies, and Composition," Ryan Claycomb and Rachel Riedner briefly mention "neoliberal public pedagogy" as a component of "disciplinarity that governs intellectual production." Claycomb and Riedner contend that disciplinarity "reduces much intellectual labor to budgetary line items," which suggests a "neoliberal public pedagogy that focuses on the production of workers and consumers for the newest phase of the capitalist economy." In Riedner's more recent collaboration with Kevin Mahoney, *Democracies to Come*, they work more in-depth with Giroux's theories of neoliberal public pedagogy. Riedner and Mahoney highlight the struggle between neoliberalism and cultural studies and how the tensions in this struggle produce pressures that "can be seen as pedagogical, what Giroux calls an educational force of the larger culture, in the sense that they seek to define, instruct, or even discipline us in the possibilities for social life, public ideas, and identity formations" (32). Ultimately, Riedner and Mahoney call for a cultural studies model that works "with communities both inside and outside of the classroom" (33); however, they highlight that "critical pedagogical practices that focus on the classroom as the primary, if not sole, site of pedagogy [eschew] broader theoretical implications . . . and de-prioritiz[e] non-classroom cultural spaces" (11). Riedner and Mahoney propose that educators bridge the theory/practice divide—and by extension the inside/outside classroom divide—in cultural studies by "considering pedagogy as a contingent, situated practice that brings theory and practice together" (11). Public pedagogy in composition courses invites students to engage with and critically study public locations beyond the classroom, offering an approach to teaching writing that helps students see the power of rhetoric in breaking down neoliberal agendas within their everyday lives. Moreover, a public pedagogy that invites students to see the educative potential of locations beyond the classroom models that

publics are not meant to be feared but can be sites of meaningful learning and social advocacy.

Giroux's conception of corporate public pedagogy has been critiqued for being overly negative and limiting the possibilities for agency. Glenn Savage argues that, too often, public pedagogies are "posited as negative ideological forces that are largely seen to *act upon* and *corrupt* individuals" (emphasis in original, 109). Part of the problem Savage identifies is that public pedagogy expressed in this manner serves to "silence the counter hegemonic possibilities . . . of subaltern resistance" (109). Glenn raises a fair concern with Giroux's conception of public pedagogy as being a powerful ideological tool used by neoliberal corporations. How, then, can students resist corporate public pedagogy, and what will our role as composition teachers be in facilitating this resistance? While I agree that Giroux's work tends to emphasize problems rather than solutions, I believe he does provide insight into the possibilities for subverting or, at the least, redirecting neoliberal public pedagogy. As previously mentioned, Giroux advocates for the study and critique of culture and mass media, primary outlets for the spread of neoliberal public pedagogies. Additionally, in defining civic education, Giroux highlights the importance of "developing democratic public spheres both within and outside the schools"; doing so, contends Giroux, allows us to "reclaim the notions of struggle, solidarity, and hope around forms of social action that expand rather than restrict the notion of civic courage and public life" (*Schooling* 35). Unlike Savage's critique of the limitations in a neoliberal view of public pedagogy, Giroux suggests expanded possibilities for hope and social action. Even though Giroux is not directly addressing public pedagogy in this context, his recommendations certainly have implications for a pedagogy that is increasingly turning toward public engagement:

As teachers, we can help make the political more pedagogical by joining with social groups and movements outside the schools that are struggling in order to address a number of important social problems and issues. . . . As critical educators, we can move beyond our social function as public/university/

private school teachers so that we can apply and enrich our knowledge and skills through practical engagements in oppositional public spheres outside the schools. (*Schooling* 35)

In other words, while much of Giroux's scholarship on public pedagogy may leave educators wary of engaging with publics beyond the classroom because of the neoliberal risks they pose, placing this work in the broader context of Giroux's views on the purposes of education for the development of civil society indicates the power he sees in forming alliances to address social problems. Giroux proposes partnerships with "social groups" and engagement within "oppositional public spheres outside the schools," again indicating the value and importance of going public. Even within one of his seminal essays on public pedagogy, Giroux makes the case that preserving democracy and our roles as active, engaged citizens means paying attention to "how we educate our youth" through "the stories that are told in the noncommodified spheres of our public culture" ("Mouse Power" 228).

The potential Giroux highlights for oppositional and noncommodified public spheres outside of schools provides a pathway for composition specialists interested in public pedagogy. Giroux's conception of public pedagogy led me at first to be concerned about the negative, neoliberal forces students might encounter if I situated my teaching within public spheres: Would students learn anything valuable within a context dominated by corporations that promote privatization, capitalism, and individuality? Indeed, I believe this is why many scholars who have critiqued Giroux's approach are left feeling frustrated, with few options for combating what is portrayed as a powerfully negative public pedagogy that our students encounter constantly in their everyday lives—perhaps school should be a location where these forces are not dominating the agenda. However, ideologies of neoliberalism are so pervasive, we cannot claim that school-based experiences are free of them, especially as institutions of higher education are increasingly run like corporations (Bousquet). In *Rhetorics for Community Action*, Phyllis Ryder argues that "the university operates in a space saturated with neoliberal justifications for its purpose: to boost the economy, to create good

workers, and to create its ‘products’ efficiently” (241). Moreover, from my experiences of collaborating with nonprofit organizations, engaging with activist public street art (Holmes, “Street Art as Public Pedagogy”), and partnering with local schools, I have found that not all public pedagogies are inherently corrupt—that publics beyond the university also have valuable lessons to teach my composition students, especially when those publics are representative of the kinds of noncommodified public spheres Giroux writes about.

Even though publics beyond the classroom can and do expose students to negative forces of neoliberalism, publics and counterpublics can also powerfully teach students in different and positive ways. In her critique of the Habermasian conception of the bourgeois public sphere, Nancy Fraser argues that subaltern counterpublics are “parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups [women, workers, peoples of color, and gays and lesbians] invent and circulate counterdiscourses, which in turn permit them to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs” (67). Similarly, Michael Warner has conceived of a counterpublic as a group “in conflict not only with the dominant social group but with the norms that constitute the dominant culture as a public” (112). Thus, counterpublics invite the kind of critique and resistance of dominant practices, and in some cases the practices of neoliberal corporations. Going public may be one way to help students see a multiplicity of (counter) publics and to become critical of how each can serve in a pedagogical capacity, for good or for bad.

Warner argues that “counterpublics are publics, too,” and that they function similarly (113). Extending this claim, we can see how both publics and counterpublics have educative power as public pedagogies; in other words, corporations are not the only publics educating young people into what it means to be a citizen, even if corporations as dominant structures tend to be powerfully persuasive. Fraser’s rethinking of the public sphere, though, reminds us that there are multiple and competing publics and counterpublics, and this multiplicity and competition gives me hope as an educator who believes that students can meaningfully learn from publics

beyond the classroom. While corporate sites and messages cannot be ignored, I ultimately believe that the value of public sites for student writing and learning outweigh the risks of moving beyond the classroom. We should guide students to critically consider the way ideologies function in all spaces, academic or public. As editors of the collection *Rural Literacies* contend, “to engage in public pedagogy . . . means both to teach beyond the classroom and to analyze the pedagogies of those other institutions and groups who shape the public’s understanding of social and political issues” (Donehower, Hogg, and Schell 7). The both/and of teaching beyond the classroom while also analyzing is important: going public with composition pedagogy involves, first, relocation to increasingly public sites but, subsequently, requires critical engagement with and critique of those locations, as well as the social and political implications of that public work.

#### RELOCATING COMPOSITION PEDAGOGY

In my analysis of the case studies of public pedagogy, I found that relocation—from traditional school classroom spaces to increasingly public, unfamiliar, and/or everyday places—became an important component for going public in composition courses. Researchers have called for teachers to come to a better understanding of how the locations or sites of our pedagogies affect teaching and learning. Jeffrey R. Di Leo, Walter R. Jacobs, and Amy Lee argue that we need to expand our thinking of educational sites beyond traditional spaces of the four-walled classroom. Doing so, they believe, will help students continue to apply their course-based learning and transfer school-based concepts to a range of nonschool experiences. “If students expect that learning can only occur against the backdrop of a blackboard,” Di Leo, Jacobs, and Lee maintain, “then . . . they will *turn off* their learning expectations” when they leave those traditional classroom spaces (8). In the same ways we prepare for courses by selecting course readings and crafting writing assignments, Di Leo, Jacobs, and Lee ask us to also take time to carefully select public sites of pedagogy.

Relocating our sites of education requires a belief that student experiences in locations beyond formal schools and classrooms can have a powerful impact on their learning. As editors of the *Handbook of Public Pedagogy* note, “schools are not the sole sites of teaching, learning, and curricula, and that perhaps they are not even the most influential” (Sandlin, Schultz, and Burdick 2). The concept of valuing the educative potential of nonschool places and people has its roots in experiential education. For instance, in *Democracy and Education*, John Dewey clearly makes a distinction between “schooling” and “education,” arguing that education can happen in a number of places that are not necessarily schools (76). Similarly, in *Deschooling Society*, Ivan Illich argues that “we have all learned most of what we know outside of school” (28). Echoing Dewey and Illich in “Outside Curricula and Public Pedagogy,” William H. Schubert contends that focusing only on school-based curricula “presents a myopic view of what shapes human beings” (16). When teachers relocate their pedagogies in public locations beyond the classroom, they are contesting the traditional assumption that the teacher and the school are the only arbiters of meaningful knowledge.

Relocating composition teaching and learning to public sites also means critically attending to issues of space, place, and the geographies of writing. Composition researchers, such as Nedra Reynolds and Johnathon Mauk, have called for teachers of writing to further explore the relationship between place and the teaching of composition. In “Location, Location, Location” for instance, Mauk suggests that the “physical geography of an institution, and the human geography which surrounds and constitutes it, have an impact on the topography of composition courses—and ultimately influence the success (or failure) of pedagogical strategies” (374). Mauk’s attention to both physical and human geography calls composition specialists to be mindful of the places in which we situate our teaching and students’ learning, as well as the educative potential for public places that surround our institutions. Mauk advocates for assignments that invite students to excavate their everyday lives, again, aligning with the idea that public pedagogies value everyday sites of learning and public knowledge. Part of what is compelling

about this conception of public pedagogy, as opposed to conceptions that suggest subjects have little agency in neoliberal forces of public pedagogy, is how Mauk frames students as “agents of academic work” who are “using academic tools within their non-academic lives,” moving them “beyond the academic/nonacademic dichotomy” (362). Mauk’s claims suggest that students can act as agents within their lives by valuing public sources of knowledge that emerge from engaging with public sites.

Other composition scholars have called for a relocation of teaching and writing to another public site: the streets. In *Tactics of Hope*, Paula Mathieu argues for writing in the streets, bringing street life into the writing classroom, as well as getting students, teachers, writers, and scholars in the streets (2). Mathieu grounds her turn to the streets in spatial and temporal politics, arguing that the public turn in composition “represents a significant redrawing of geographic boundaries that define sites for composition teaching and research” (14). Similarly, Nedra Reynolds argues for “streetwork” in *Geographies of Writing*. She uses examples from student projects at the University of Leeds to show how “streetwork begins from geographic assumptions that places and senses of place are complicated, difficult to access, and constantly in flux” (117). The work of Mathieu and Reynolds highlights the importance of physically and spatially going public by moving from traditional classroom spaces into the streets, suggesting that the sights, sounds, people, and spaces within these publics offer students a valuable and realistic context for their use of writing and rhetoric.

Movement from traditional academic spaces to increasingly public spaces is also being discussed by scholars of public and civic rhetoric. “The public work of rhetoric,” argue editors John M. Ackerman and David J. Coogan, “is not shaped in our treatises and classrooms alone but in the material and discursive histories of communities outside of academe” (1–2). While Ackerman and Coogan note that communities can benefit from rhetoricians, they also emphasize that “rhetoric can also benefit from community partnerships premised on a negotiated search for the common good” (1–2). However, central to the task of studying rhetoric “out there”

is “a shedding of academic adornments . . . and a more grounded conception of public need” (1). For Ackerman and Coogan, academics must step out of the ivory tower and into public spaces “out there” in order to study realistic and everyday examples of rhetoric. However, framing publics as “out there” constructs a binary relationship between the academy and spaces beyond.

#### “REAL WORLD” PUBLICS “OUT THERE”

With an emphasis on relocation, the way I have defined public pedagogy based on the case studies from my research implies a number of binaries, such as school/nonschool, on-campus/off-campus, four-walled classroom/no-walled public spaces, academic world/real world, in here/out there. Nedra Reynolds critiques moves to construct “a problematic separation between classrooms and the real world,” arguing that seeing writing classes as “mere rehearsal for the ‘real world out there’ reproduces a binary relationship between the world and the academy that geographers and many spatial theorists would reject” (44). While I agree with Reynolds’s critique of constructing a binary relationship between academic and real world spaces, or even academic and public spaces, my position is that the historical privileging of the academy—the ivory tower—already puts nonacademic spaces at risk for being perceived as not worthy of academic study and engagement. Thus, part of the importance of going public by physically and spatially moving beyond traditional classroom spaces means tilting the scales to imbue nonacademic publics and counterpublics with the kind of scholarly respect that traditional academic spaces—campus libraries, faculty offices, classrooms—already inherently have.

Traditional classroom spaces are no less “real” than publics beyond and the classroom often replicates the real world; however, I do see these spaces as different. According to Reynolds, a binary construction of academic space versus real world space “makes us think . . . that borders just need to be stepped over,” which she suggests as a limiting or reductive perspective (45). In my experience, however, stepping over boundaries is precisely what needs to happen—at least as a first step—in many cases. For example, when



I taught as a lecturer at a private liberal arts university that was primarily a residential campus, students rarely left the boundaries of campus and often knew little about the surrounding town; in fact, in the years I was there, both students and faculty often referred to this phenomenon as “the bubble.” When I began asking students on that campus to go public through service learning, my motives were first to have students step over the border—to burst the bubble. In this context, stepping over the border became the first move in valuing public sites for pedagogy, seeing them as valuable contexts for student writing and learning and communicating those values to students.

Reynolds suggests that we should resist “containerized conceptions of space” by focusing on “spatial practices of the everyday” (45). While our arguments align here, I wonder how students will be able to engage with diverse spaces and people if their everyday spatial practices are confined to the campus boundaries. Even at the institution where I now teach—a largely commuter campus in downtown Atlanta—students still experience somewhat of a bubble effect, rarely venturing beyond the few city blocks where their classes are held and their car is parked. In this case, students live far away but are equally unfamiliar with the community surrounding campus: many students live in the greater metro Atlanta area, commuting miles on interstates to come to campus, and know little about the local, public context in which their school is situated. I use public pedagogies in this urban environment to invite students to study public street art or to serve as mentors at a nearby middle school. When I designed a service learning partnership with a local middle school three miles from campus, I learned that the majority of students in my course had never even heard of the school, even though it was just around the corner. In other words, while I do not want to construct a problematic binary relationship, public pedagogy in composition studies calls us to be mindful of the spatial differences (as well as similarities) between traditional academic spaces and public spaces in order to help students see the interconnections among their academics, their everyday life experiences, *and* the experiences of local public and counterpublic groups with which they may rarely interact or study.

Many arguments that tend to construct boundaries between the “real” world and the academic world hinge on the idea that the work in classrooms is inauthentic, or at least less authentic than what happens in nonclassroom spaces. For example Paul Heilker, who Reynolds critiques, contends that “the classroom does not and can not offer students real rhetorical situations in which to understand writing and social action,” primarily because of a lack of “real audiences and purposes” (71). Heilker, making similar arguments to the ones I have forwarded for public pedagogy, contends that “writing teachers need to relocate the *where* of composition instruction outside the academic classroom” (71). Likewise, Ellen Cushman and Challon Emmons advocate for “real world contact zones,” as opposed to Mary Louise Pratt’s classroom-based contact zones, because they afford opportunities for “multicultural and literacy issues [to] be negotiated through face-to-face interaction and experiential learning,” rather than the “superficial interactions” that may occur in a classroom “where students have little stake in expanding their conceptions of others or in negotiating interpretations with those who are represented” (205). For Heilker, as well as Cushman and Emmons, the traditional academic classroom space does not fully represent the diversity and rhetorical complexities—in terms of civic issues, multiculturalism, and literacy—that students may (or may not) encounter in their everyday lives. I value students going public—physically and spatially—in composition pedagogies not because I conceive of the classroom as any less real than public spaces beyond but because the classroom can feel like a somewhat protected environment. Inviting students to go public welcomes riskiness and messiness in the processes of composing and community engagement: possibilities that I see as potentially productive for student learning.

#### RISKY PUBLICS

A line of inquiry I explore in more detail in Chapter 5 is the way public pedagogies situate student learning within public spaces over which teachers have less control; the risk and unknowns of working within publics beyond the relative safety of the classroom can be both disorienting and transformative for students. Relocating

the context and space for student learning experiences introduces a kind of spatial shock—a discomfort from engaging with unfamiliar public places that, with teacher and classroom-based support, can provoke students to confront their assumptions about people and places that are different from them.

Part of what initiates risky public experiences is when we situate student learning in what Donald Schön calls the “swampy lowlands.” As Patty Wharton-Michael et al. argue, learning that occurs in strictly academic environments, the authors argue, is limited to “manageable problems,” whereas “the swampy lowlands” require students to address messy complexities of problems (Schön qtd. in Wharton-Michael et al. 68). In this way, public scholarship “draws knowledge out of disciplinary boxes ensconced in the ivory tower into the swampy lowlands that require multiple perspectives for diverse and complex audiences” (Wharton-Michael et al. 69). They argue that public scholarship promotes “transference of discipline knowledge,” which encourages “adaptation, abstraction, and flexibility” in student learning (Wharton-Michael et al. 68). The distinction that is significant for public pedagogy, in my opinion, is not between real and unreal spaces but between low risk and somewhat higher risk pedagogical contexts—between pedagogies that are nicely planned or manageably accepted and pedagogies that are messy, complex, and often unexpected, despite teachers’ best laid plans for going public. As I argue in Chapter 5, the challenge for students, teachers, and the publics with which we partner is to try to strike a balance between the risks and messiness of publics beyond the classroom and the disorientation, affective responses, and transformative learning that may occur as a result.

I believe the kind of disorientation students may experience as a result of relocating our pedagogies to local, public spheres is deeply connected to students’ physical and material experiences in new places. Jenna Vinson describes these visceral experiences as “spatial shock”: “students’ feelings of discomfort, uneasiness, or alarm that surface in the moment of crossing a material boundary and visiting an unfamiliar place.” Like Vinson, I see moments of spatial shock—sometimes personal and emotive—as productive for student learn-

ing; spatial shock can bring “both recognition of socially-produced assumptions and, potentially, reflection on one’s own subject-position as an outsider to that place” (Vinson). Learning and growth in this context typically results from students’ physical engagement with places in their local communities, often locations that are new to them, or approaching familiar places with an unfamiliar or critical perspective. Students in a 3000-level course I recently taught titled *Literacy, Community, and Public Schools* experienced spatial shock when I relocated their course experiences to our partnering local middle school. Students in my course immediately reacted to the locked school doors, complex buzz-in and sign-in procedures, visible video cameras around the school, and school codes that did not allow students to carry backpacks between classes.

Students in the *Literacy, Community, and Public Schools* course also experienced the frustrations associated with public pedagogies situated in contexts beyond the teacher’s control. For example, as a required service learning component students in my course served as mentors for middle school students who were defined by administrators as on the cusp of being at risk. Students in my course became frustrated when they would show up to our partnering middle school and their student mentee was absent or unable to leave class that day to meet with their mentor. These were situations that were unexpected and beyond my control. As a class, we talked through my students’ understandable frustration at having made a special trip to the middle school and not having the opportunity to complete their mentorship assignment. Through our discussions, it became clear to me that some students in my course were privileging our project over what they perceived as less important tasks in the middle school, suggesting that the middle school students could simply make up a test at a different time or take their school picture on another day. Sometimes, the tone of the discussion shifted to the point where students in my course were nearly demanding the opportunity to serve, instead of seeing the opportunity as a privilege in itself. We spent much of the semester talking through the challenges of partnering with publics, the demands placed on public school administrators’ time, and our purposes and goals for being

in the middle school. And, by the end of the semester, I believe many students began to learn from these unexpected challenges we faced in our partnership, seeing them as opportunities for inquiry and as a chance to move toward mutual understanding between their goals and expectations and those of the public community group with which we partnered. The messiness that came with unexpected challenges in going public represented some of the most valuable lessons students learned in the course.

Another major benefit I see in relocating student experience in increasingly public, nonclassroom spaces is the possibility for de-centering authority in ways that are different from what is often possible solely in the classroom. In the same course on Literacy, Community, and Public Schools, I scheduled six of our two-and-a-half-hour seminars as onsite meetings at our partnering middle school. After direct interaction with middle school students for one hour, we used the remaining class time to debrief and reflect on students' experiences and learning for the day. In one of these debriefing sessions, I asked if one of the school administrators had a few minutes to join our class to answer questions. Students in my course asked about the home lives of the middle school students, the challenges the students and their families faced, and the demands of being a school administrator. The school administrator gave students in my course valuable information that I simply could not have given them; his firsthand knowledge and experience in this particular school and with these particular middle school students was also not something we could find in a library book. This impromptu forty-five-minute discussion became one of the most meaningful learning experiences in the course, and students referenced it repeatedly in their journals and in their final research papers. In this context, I saw my pedagogical role as liaison between local publics that offered essential knowledge and the students in my course who needed the kinds of direct experiences in the local public community in order to gain this knowledge. Of course, I could have invited a local school administrator to speak to students in our college classroom or even used Skype to virtually bring him to class. However, I believe the experience would have been less

meaningful taken out of the local middle school context and location. If students in my course had not been observing and experiencing middle school students within that specific local public, their questions would not have been the same and would not have had the same exigencies. Because I chose to go public with pedagogy in this course, the school administrator became the teacher of students in my course momentarily; I was able to offer the class time for what I saw as a valuable spur of the moment discussion, even though I had other plans on my course agenda. This example, though, underscores the importance of traditional classroom spaces, too.

I see the traditional on-campus classroom space as equally important to an effective public pedagogy. While we cannot pretend that the classroom offers any more safety than publics beyond the classroom, I believe it offers an important space for regrouping, debriefing, and contextualizing public knowledge through an academic lens. The traditional classroom space is, not surprisingly, what separates our courses from everyday life, and thus, we need traditional classrooms as places to make sense of our public experiences. The traditional classroom provides a context for discussing theories and readings, exchanging essays for peer review, and reconnecting in ways that are not always possible in local public contexts. To use the Literacy, Community, and Public Schools course as an example again, we used our traditional classroom time to address students' concerns or questions that may have been too risky to communicate within our partnering middle school—questions about an observation of a teacher speaking harshly to a student in the hallway or about the ethics of video cameras in the school. Additionally, the traditional classroom provided a somewhat more controlled context to balance the messiness of what we could not control in the middle school; I could plan an agenda for our class that usually resulted in fewer disruptions and unexpected changes. Because the messiness of our public engagement days was demanding for some students (and, quite honestly, for me as their instructor), I believe our in-class days provided some relief—a chance to engage pedagogically in a manageable, typical, and expected way.

Therefore, my arguments for relocation are not to suggest that we abandon traditional classrooms as sites for learning, because I believe it is within these spaces that we can offer the kind of support—or reciprocal care, as I explain in Chapter 5—that helps students make sense of their public experiences.

The reciprocity and transparency for which I advocate in an ethical approach to public pedagogies aligns with core tenets of service learning. The growth of service learning is evident in our journals, at our conferences, and on our campuses, and compositionists have been exploring best methods for incorporating public service within a context of teaching writing. Part of my interest in going public with pedagogy emerged from my experimentation with service learning pedagogies. In the examples throughout this book, and in scholarly conversations I reference, there are a number of ways in which public pedagogy and service learning overlap. Because public pedagogy sees the educative potential in sites beyond the composition classroom, the community partnerships that arise from service learning suggest a similar pedagogical relationship, especially when those partnerships are founded on reciprocity with an expectation that all participants have something to learn and gain from the engagement. Throughout this chapter I have advocated for the language of public pedagogy and the lens of publics, as opposed to service learning or other terms for similar approaches, for two main reasons: (1) I find the broader lens of publics invites a range of public engagements, many of which may not involve direct service to an organization, and (2) I believe the emphasis on relocation to public, often nonschool, sites in public pedagogy highlights what I find to be particularly valuable about the approach, an aspect of service learning that is certainly present but not always accentuated. In other words, most service learning projects would fall under the umbrella of public pedagogy in composition studies, but I see the concept of public pedagogy as allowing for public engagement that is not limited to service. Whether through service learning or another approach to public pedagogy, the proliferation of digital and social media provides yet another method for studying and engaging with publics beyond the classroom.

## DIGITAL PUBLICS AS PEDAGOGICAL

Two recent studies of social media and public pedagogy demonstrate the great potential of this approach in composition studies. In his contribution to the *Handbook of Public Pedagogy*, Alex Reid examines how social media “destabilizes the conventions that have allowed us to consider a ‘public pedagogy’ separated from formal schooling and other sites of learning” (195). Reid notes how social media transform conventional public spaces, like a mall food court, into sites of formal schooling “when a student accesses an online course” at that location; conversely, “the traditional classroom becomes a site of public pedagogy when students use mobile phones and laptops to check their Facebook accounts” (195). Reid’s work highlights the continued blurring of boundaries between public/private, school/nonschool. Moreover, responding to Giroux’s calls for intervention in public pedagogy, Reid concludes that “social media have the potential to bring critical-pedagogical work into public spaces” (199); this resonates with a view of public pedagogy in composition studies that values the positive educational potential for public sites of student writing and learning. In a more recent article on social media and public pedagogy, Joannah Portman-Daley interviewed members of the “net generation” to examine the use of social media for civic purposes. When Portman-Daley asked student activists in her study about the digital democratic learning that happened in nonschool spaces, she found respondents were “hesitant to admit that it was ‘real’ learning or teaching—precisely because, for them, it wasn’t related to a traditional, classroom-based agenda.” Portman-Daley goes on to critique the “informal/formal learning binary” for “failing to recognize the more progressive roles and implications of pedagogy.” If composition teachers can use public pedagogies to help communicate a value for learning in spaces beyond the classroom, students will see the value in studying and engaging with these nontraditional sites of schooling.

Other scholars in computers and composition have explored the ways in which digital, social, and mobile media intersect with an increasingly public and/or civically engaged pedagogy. For example in *Writing Community Change*, Jeffrey T. Grabill analyzes



“the practices of ordinary people making [and using] technologies to solve local problems” (1). In discussing pedagogical approaches, Grabill advocates for “locating the civic” and developing ways to “locate civic rhetorical performances,” rather than working with abstract notions of civic. Grabill’s attention to location here aligns with how I have defined public pedagogy based on the case studies I conducted; as with locating the civic, an abstract notion of public will also not be useful unless we locate and more specifically define that public.

As a teacher of digital writing, I often ask students to engage with digital publics; however, I also have some concerns about how student learning may differ in a wholly digital experience with publics. The case studies in *Public Pedagogy in Composition Studies* show the significance of relocating student learning through powerful, in-person student experiences in public places beyond the classroom; the physical and material experience of being in diverse publics is part of what I believe makes public pedagogy a transformative learning tool. In other words, I am unsure if reinterpreting students’ public experiences to a mediated rather than a physical experience would result in the same kind of learning. I see this as an area ripe for more research. Admittedly, the case studies in the coming pages deal only tangentially with digital publics and, in some cases, not at all. The schema I suggest at the end of Chapter 2 leaves room for future research into how physical and digital locations intersect with public purposes for composition pedagogies. As I suggest in the conclusion, though, my own approaches to bridging the digital and material through public pedagogies has recently drawn me to incorporate more mobile technologies into my instruction; in mobile composition, students have the potential to physically be in public locations while also engaging with digital, online technologies.

#### PREVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

Drawing on the interviews, teaching and program materials, and historical documents I collected and analyzed, the following chapters offer composition teachers and administrators examples and

models for going public with pedagogy and administration. Beginning with a narrowed scope, Chapter 2 analyzes three case studies of public pedagogies from specific composition courses. In the first example, I analyze an interdisciplinary first-year seminar from Oberlin College that invites students to go public by visiting surrounding watersheds and gathering oral histories from local residents. Next, I examine a writing assignment from Syracuse University that asks students to engage with on-campus communities that represent new or unfamiliar publics to them, resulting in a partnership with the student-led HIV/AIDS organization. I then review a project from the University of Arizona that prompts students to visit local, public spaces to observe and critique spatial inequalities. Throughout the analysis, I apply and extend Elenore Long's pedagogical schema for students going public. I conclude this chapter by offering a heuristic on which to plot intersections between the locations and rhetorical purposes of public pedagogies.

Chapter 3 broadens the scope to writing programs by focusing on the administrative strategy of curriculum design and how, when approached from the perspective of morphing, it can exploit tensions between stasis and change, creating a productive method for administering public pedagogies. At Oberlin College, I look at how their community-based writing program initiative evolved over time and how part of its strength and sustainability arose from its curricular ties. I then examine a course sequencing strategy that employs a series of "next step" courses within the undergraduate writing and rhetoric major at Syracuse University. The final administrative example is from the University of Arizona's public events and pedagogy, showing how they are supported through the curriculum, custom publications, public events, and assessment.

Broadening further to an institutional level, Chapter 4 analyzes the mission statements of Oberlin College, Syracuse University, and the University of Arizona, showing how they function ideologically and rhetorically to construct an identity for members of their institutional communities—an identity that often values public engagement and service. Because these mission statements are framed within the storied histories of each institution, historical narratives

represent an economy of literacy that carries weight within institutions, particularly in the language of upper-level administration. Drawing on the histories of my three research sites, I demonstrate how composition specialists might construct partial institutional histories to help support public pedagogies by, in these cases, tracing an institution's roots in religion, morality, coeducation, and/or African American education, as well as land-grant founding and ties to local Native populations.

The final chapter shifts back to a narrowed snapshot of a moment in a composition course by highlighting some of the affective responses that may arise for students, public partners, and teachers when we situate our pedagogies in public sites beyond the classroom. I analyze a teacher-narrated moment of student distress to demonstrate how theories of transformative learning might help us theorize affect in public pedagogies. To conclude, I offer a reciprocal model of care that employs tenets of feminist pedagogy, such as transparency and decentering of authority, and that acknowledges the valid emotions students, teachers, and members of local publics may experience. I call for composition specialists who employ public pedagogies to see the power of all participants to both give and receive care in transformative education.

In a cultural context that questions the relevance of much college instruction, Holmes recognizes that “we need to demonstrate our worth in material ways that positively impact our communities and that publicly document our efforts.” Holmes’s case studies draw us into a generous scholarly conversation on the ways going public with pedagogy can transform personal learning. And how a curriculum—strategically designed to “morph”—can change institutions.

—Linda Flower, Carnegie Mellon University

In lucid prose, Holmes details evidence gathered from a comparative cross-institutional study to illustrate the case she makes for *public pedagogy* as a useful term in composition studies to describe an array of experiential learning opportunities. Holmes argues that the relocation of learning in public pedagogies necessarily invites the study of place, institutional histories, and the emotional impact of learning. She delivers a necessary and timely intervention into conversations in writing and rhetoric.

—Ellen Cushman, Northeastern University

How many of us have difficulty remembering specific moments of learning in classrooms but vividly recall gaining knowledge through experiences outside our college or university walls? In the long term, how distinctive and memorable are the courses that remain within traditional spaces and follow a well-worn path toward teaching and learning?

*Public Pedagogy in Composition Studies* demonstrates how theories of public pedagogy can help composition specialists relocate teaching and learning within local public contexts beyond the classroom or campus, where true learning and transformation take place through the dissonances between people and places. Ashley J. Holmes argues for public approaches to pedagogy and administration based on comparative analyses of three case studies conducted within the writing programs at Oberlin College, Syracuse University, and the University of Arizona.

After analyzing competing theories of public pedagogy, she highlights specific composition pedagogies that invite students to go public, provides administrative strategies for going public in writing programs, demonstrates the value of drawing on institutional histories to support public pedagogies, and addresses some of the affective responses that may arise for students, community partners, and teachers when we situate our pedagogies in public sites beyond the classroom, suggesting a model of reciprocal care.

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