



# The Way Literacy Lives: Rhetorical Dexterity and Basic Writing Instruction

*Shannon Carter*

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**The Way Literacy Lives: Rhetorical Dexterity and Basic Writing Instruction** Shannon Carter  
*Challenges an autonomous model of literacy instruction in favor of one that recognizes and builds on students' facility in navigating other rhetorical contexts.*

Working from the premise that literacy is a social process rather than an autonomous practice, *The Way Literacy Lives* offers a curricular response to the political, material, social, and ideological constraints placed on literacy education. Shannon Carter argues that fostering in students an awareness of the ways in which an autonomous model deconstructs itself when applied to real-life literacy contexts empowers them to work against this system in ways critical theorists advocate. She builds upon a theoretical framework provided by new literacy studies, activity theory, and critical literacies to construct a new model for basic writing instruction, one that trains writers to effectively read, understand, manipulate, and negotiate the cultural and linguistic codes of a new community of practice based on a relatively accurate assessment of another, more familiar one.

“This slim but powerful volume deserves the attention of anyone who assigns essays, particularly to first-year college students. But it also raises a variety of fundamental questions about teaching and learning in theology and religion.” — *Teaching Theology and Religion*

“*The Way Literacy Lives* ... presents a groundbreaking new perspective to Basic Writing Studies and to the field of Rhetoric and Composition.” — *Issues in Writing*

“...Carter provides a powerful lens to refocus the way literacy is taught and learned ... A challenging but worthwhile book.” — *CHOICE*

“This book is a critical addition to research in literacy studies and basic writing. Weaving together contemporary theory with rich personal experiences, Carter’s text offers a fresh perspective that is sure to engage many teachers and researchers.” — Laura Gray-Rosendale, author of *Pop Perspectives: Readings to Critique Contemporary Culture*

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