

**Review of *Women's Ways of Making* edited by
Maureen Daly Goggin and Shirley K. Rose
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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO all the women makers who have been invisible and does the job of increasing their visibility. It is almost ironic that the editors use a visual metaphor in their dedication because one of their aims is to question the privilege of visual representations and language by expanding understandings of how women's bodies and (all their) senses are wholly and integrally connected in women's ways of making meaning, messages, and feminist rhetorics. Lainey Jenks (West Chester University) and I have long discussed the widespread and limiting privileging of the "eye." She has written and presented widely at communication conferences on the importance of recognizing multiple ways of being able (as in able-bodied) in our society, specifically related to blindness; this is an issue she is keenly aware of because her son is blind. Since my partner is legally blind, I also notice, write about, and appreciate this kind of consideration and opening up of sensory metaphors in discussions of meaning-making — especially the idea that doing/ making is meaningful messaging. Notice how many academic explanations of things include the words "viewing" or "seeing." Authors have included more visual (and passive) descriptions than "doing" or "making" ways of perceiving in much literature.

The chapters in this book explore material practices or "making" (that the hands perform and do) as alternative ways of knowing that (episteme), knowing how (techne), and wisdom-making (phronesis), which is a welcome departure from more limited "views" of things "seen" (that the mind perceives, conceives, and/or thinks about). "Privileging the hand over the eye... problematizes the way in which the eye has been co-opted by thinkers as the mind's tool of investigation" (back cover). Contributors to this volume argue that other senses, like touch, smell, taste, and hearing, along with movement and body positioning, are all keys to knowing one's materials. When

authors and audiences engage all these ways of knowing, making can be understood as a rhetorical practice. Laura Ellingson has long advocated for valuing this sort of embodied knowledge, where the body of the doer/maker is a vital part of knowing and understanding what is done or materially made. This collection provides a disparate, yet connected by rhetorical analysis, range of examples of qualitative studies across making occupations and practices.

The essays included in this book were originally presented in the Tenth Biennial Feminisms and Rhetorics Conference held in Tempe, Arizona, in 2015, around the theme of women's ways of making as feminist rhetorical acts. While the individual chapters stand alone, they are connected by the manner in which they demonstrate the three ways of knowing (episteme, techne, and phronesis) described earlier, which emerge together as a rhetorical embodied endeavor, making. It can be argued, and is in this book, that making as an embodied practice has been gendered and devalued. Often, mundane practices considered servile or feminine are undervalued. Authors in this book argue that much of this material culture merits study as artifacts and practices of social, cultural, and economic history. I, and others, heartily concur in our *Dirty Work* book. Women's work is routinely tainted or diminished by virtue of its feminine connotations, even as much of that work is foundational to and necessary for a functioning society.

Women's Ways of Making seeks to challenge conventional (impoverished and tired) binaries in favor of a (richer more inclusive) feminist rhetoric. It questions gendered notions of making, of material artifacts, of practices and innovations for both research and everyday life, and of digital spaces (remember how there was such hope that these would be gender neutral?). In addition to continuing the work of previous feminists seeking to dismantle dysfunctional and harmful binary thinking categories, it also challenges conventional ideas about ways to make arguments, knowledge, and sense. The editors position these discussions as historically-situated and ongoing, which is very useful for class discussion.

Although I do not have the space in this review to cover each chapter, let me describe each of its three sections. The first is "Women's Ways of Embodying Rhetorics," which includes six

chapters covering reproductive bodies, fit bodies, flexible bodies, representing bodies, and healing/maintaining bodies. They are examined using multiple media and means, including comics and zines, athletic performance, and online communities.

The second section is “Women’s Ways of Making Arguments together Using Words and Deeds,” which includes four essays that demonstrate how making arguments and meaning are collaborative processes. The chapters include the diverse topics of rhetorical choices in marriage crises, YouTube blogging, a commemorative project, and community making in a jail counseling context.

The third section is “Women’s Ways of Making the Academy,” which includes three essays about remaking the academy by transforming gendered roles of students, teachers, scholars, and administrators. These thought-provoking ideas include comparisons to challenges in higher education from the 19th into the 21st centuries (again, situating the discussion in historical contexts), transcending traditional academic trajectories, and feminist pedagogies from both student and teacher perspectives. This last chapter includes vignettes to show how women’s bodies are treated differently, which demonstrates physical consequences for rhetorical choices.

Because the chapters can stand alone, it is possible to assign them individually to meet one’s teaching needs. However, it would also be good pedagogy to assign the whole book around the three ways of knowing (theory) and study making as method (research). In short, students can learn about women’s ways of making as embodied epistemic acts. I enjoyed the collection. The initial conference that brought us these essays encouraged participants to explore the implications of claims like this one from Betsy Greer — “I think every act of making is an act of revolution.” Each section included thought-provoking challenges to things we all have taken for granted. After reading each section, I am inspired to live even more intentionally.

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work, women's work, aging, and automythography in book chapters, journals (including *Women & Language*, *Qualitative Inquiry*, *Women's Studies in Communication*, and others), and hundreds of conference presentations in multiple fields including communication, women's studies, sociology, business, popular culture, and interdisciplinary studies. She co-edited the book, *Dirty Work: The Social Construction of Taint* (2007). Post-retirement, Dr. Mills serves on boards and volunteers for not-for-profit organizations including Rotary International, Girl Scouts, and multiple women's giving circles. Direct correspondence to mbmills@eiu.edu.

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