



Women Writing the Academy: Audience, Authority, and Transformation (Studies in Writing and Rhetoric)

Gesa Kirsch

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Women Writing the Academy is based on an extensive interview study by Gesa E. Kirsch that investigates how women in different academic disciplines perceive and describe their experiences as writers in the university.

Kirsch's study focuses on the writing strategies of successful women writers, their ways of establishing authority, and the kinds of audiences they address in different disciplinary settings. Based on multiple interviews with thirty-five women from five different disciplines (anthropology, education, history, nursing, and psychology) and four academic ranks (seniors, graduate students, and faculty before and after tenure), this is the first book to systematically explore the academic context in which women write and publish.

While there are many studies in literary criticism on women as writers of fiction, there has not been parallel scholarship on women as writers of professional discourse, be it inside or outside the academy. Through her research, for example, Kirsch found that women were less likely than their male counterparts to think of their work as sufficiently significant to write up and submit for publication, tended to hold on to their work longer than men before sending it out, and were less likely than men to revise and resubmit manuscripts that had been initially rejected.

This book is significant in that it investigates a new area of research— gender and writing—and in doing so brings together findings on audience, authority, and gender.

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