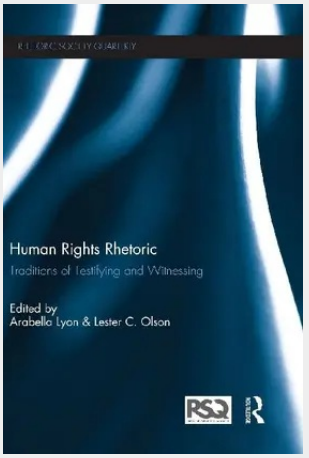
Lyon / Olson

Human Rights Rhetoric

Traditions of Testifying and Witnessing

Rhetoric scholars have articulated diverse approaches to both civil and human rights as political, ethical, and academic discourses. “Traditions of Testifying and Witnessing” initiates important interdisciplinary conversations within human rights rhetoric concerning the construction of rights knowledge, the role of advocacy, and politics of representations during acts of witnessing. Developing a conceptual framework for rhetorical inquiry into rights discourse, the collection of essays by established scholars demonstrates a range of approaches and subject matter. From textual analysis of AIDS politics and activism to theoretical discussions of the nature of rights rhetoric and confession, the book challenges many current assumptions about rights history and practices and still provides an introduction to the recent themes for classroom use. To encourage critical reflection on the assumptions, contentions, and implications of political representations and human rights, the editors have concluded the collection with a series of suggestive visual works without comment to prompt viewers’ own engagement with them. This book was originally published as a special issue of Rhetoric Society Quarterly

This brief collection introduces rhetoric as a critical orientation to understanding acts of human rights witnessing. This book was originally published as a special issue of Rhetoric Society Quarterly



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