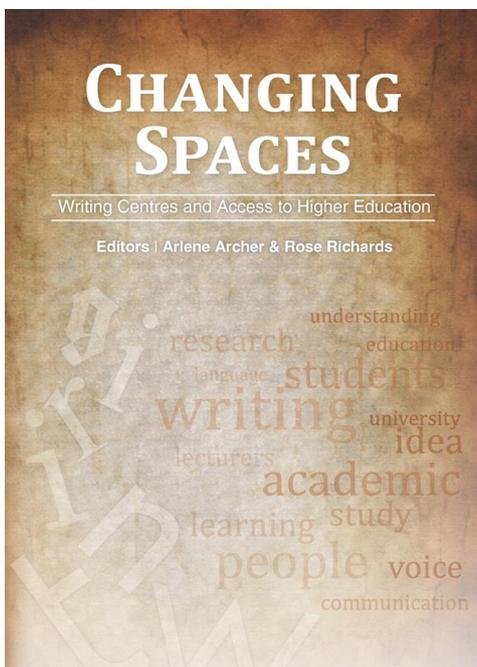


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**PRESS RELEASE**

**19 July 2011**

## **BOOK LAUNCH – CHANGING SPACES: WRITING CENTRES AND ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**



*"[Changing Spaces] is aimed at ... those who wrestle with the tensions and contradictions of our contemporary education system and its role in contributing to nation-building."*

**Rose Richards, Co-Editor**  
Writing Laboratory  
Language Centre

*Changing Spaces* is the first book ever written about South African writing centres. It developed out of an on-going conversation about writing centres' praxis, policies and place in South African Higher Education Institutions. It is aimed at those interested in writing pedagogy in Higher Education as well as those who wrestle with the tensions and contradictions of our contemporary education system and its role in contributing to nation-building.

This collection of papers falls into the ambit of academic literacies research where the ideological stance can be described as 'explicitly transformative rather than normative' (Lillis and Scott 2007:12). A transformative approach involves exploring academic practices in relation to contested conventions of

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knowledge-making and also involves examining different ways of meaning-making in academia by utilising students' resources. It highlights the importance of finding ways of designing interventions to accommodate and harness student diversity. The hope is that putting together a book of this nature will help writing centres in South Africa to re-engage with our history of remediation and to redefine our practice theoretically.

*Changing Spaces* showcases writing centres from seven institutions in South Africa and reflects on good practice in these differing contexts. It outlines differing theoretical approaches to writing which underpin the various centres, as well as differing implementation of these theories. It grapples with some of the tensions within writing pedagogy, such as the relation between the generic and the discipline-specific in teaching writing, the extent to which we need to engage with the increasingly multimodal requirements in student assignments, the placement of Writing Centres in institutions, and degrees of perceived legitimacy and authority. In 'academic literacies' work there is a persistent tension between helping students gain access to dominant practices and helping them to critique these same practices on which their success depends.

**Arlene Archer** has been the coordinator of the Writing Centre at the University of Cape Town since 1999. She has a PhD in English from the University of Cape Town. She teaches in Applied Language Studies, Higher Education Studies, Film and Media as well as in an Engineering Foundation programme. Her research focuses on the possibilities that multimodal pedagogies may offer for enabling student access to Higher Education. She has published in journals such as *Language and Education*, *Teaching in Higher Education*, *English in Education*, *Social Dynamics*, and *British Journal of Educational Technology*, *Education and Change*.

**Rose Richards** has been English Head of the Stellenbosch Writing Laboratory since its inception in 2001. Together with her colleague, Sharifa Daniels, she has designed a training course for writing centre consultants, developed a variety of resources for teaching writing and workshops for thesis and dissertation writers. She has an MA in English Literature and her PhD is in Psychology. Her research includes illness narratives, identity studies and teaching writing. She has published academic work and creative writing. Some of her writing has appeared in *Kunapipi: Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, *New Contrast*, *Qualitative Health Research*, *The South African Journal of Higher Education* and Modjaji Press's *The Bed Book of Short Stories* (2010).

The details for the book launch are as follows:

**Date and Time**

28 July 2011, 17:30 for 18:00

**Venue**

STIAS Heerenhuis, Wallenberg Research Centre

10 Marais Street, Stellenbosch, 7600

**RSVP**

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