Collier, Mary Jane (eds.)

**Community Engagement and Intercultural Praxis**

Dancing with Difference in Diverse Contexts

Critical Intercultural Communication Studies. Vol. 14
General Editor: Thomas K. Nakayama

Print: ISBN 978-1-4331-2033-6 hb. (Hardcover)
SFR 84.00 / €* 74.00 / €** 76.10 / € 69.20 / £ 55.00 / US$ 89.95

Order online: www.peterlang.com

### Book synopsis

Although community engagement to enhance justice, equity, and inclusion is at the heart of this book, dancing with difference is the overarching metaphor. It is used to explain diverse relations between contexts, institutions, structures, community organizations, and groups, and the diverse relationships between organizational representatives and community members. It is these dances with difference through which groups and individuals deal with contextual forces, negotiate cultural identities, subjectivities, and positioning, and orient themselves toward their work.

Featuring case studies of several international, national, and local organizations, the book showcases both first-hand and public discourses related to community engagement work from Nepal and Northern Ireland to Kenya, Zimbabwe, and the U.S.

A framework of critical/interpretive intercultural praxis is offered to guide research and practice across the case studies. It is designed to benefit scholars, students, and practitioners who work in community-based settings by presenting a relevant and applicable guide for entering into community engagement.

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### About the author(s)/editor(s)

Mary Jane Collier (PhD, the University of Southern California) is Professor of Communication at the University of New Mexico. She was editor of volumes 23-25 of The International and Intercultural Communication Annual. She has received, among other awards, the Distinguished Scholarship Award in the International and Intercultural Communication Division of the National Communication Association.

### Reviews

«An outstanding undertaking and outcome! The critical praxis framework Collier articulates and illustrates captures the complexities, contradictions, and challenges of community engagement in the neoliberal global context; the framework also calls for fluidity, reflexivity, and innovation that can generate new perspectives and approaches – practical and theoretical – to enhance community-based social justice work. Highly recommended!» (Kathryn Sorrells, Professor, Communication Studies, California State University, Northridge)

«Through a better understanding of the complex assumptions, underlying contexts, cultural baggage, historical background, and power relations pertaining to difficult situations, Collier and her coauthors and collaborators take us around the world and back home to places we might know little about. Collier breaks down, in expert fashion, the communicative dimensions that both limit and have the potential to produce mutual self-recognition. Her metaphor of ‘dancing’ with difference captures Collier et al.’s voice – patient, engaging, apt, energetic, willing to move next to
and with her subject creatively, artistically, humanistically, sensitively, and performatively. » (Kent A. Ono, Professor and Chair, Communication, University of Utah)