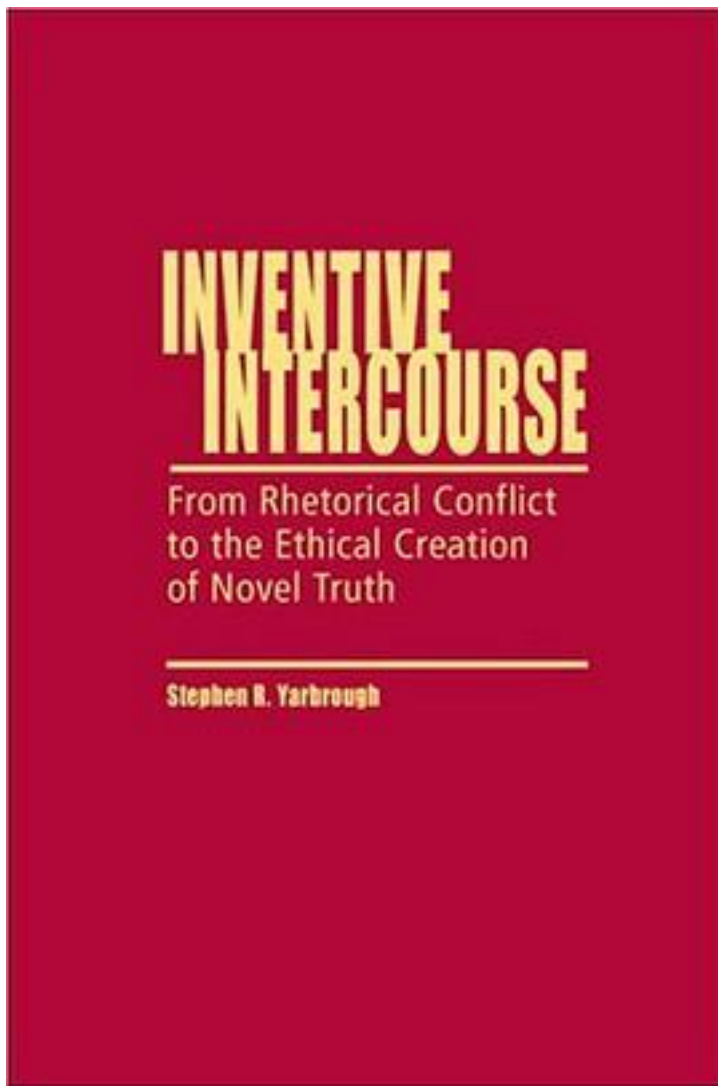


# Inventive Intercourse



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著者:Yarbrough, Stephen R.

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Applying interactionist discourse theory to show how we create novel beliefs  
""Inventive Intercourse: From Rhetorical Conflict to the Ethical Creation of Novel Truth  
"offers a theory of discursive interaction, illustrating how we can understand human communication without resorting to the notion of language. Using the perspective of interactionist discourse theory, author Stephen Yarbrough investigates how we create novel beliefs, beliefs we could not have inferred from our established beliefs. The volume considers a central dilemma of post-modern thought: If language is a system of conventions and rules that limit what we can say and think, how can we deliberately produce anything truly novel? While postmodernism concludes that linguistic and conceptual change within our incommensurable worlds is driven by contingency and blind mechanical forces, Yarbrough argues that this view is wrong because the notion that language mediates our perception is wrong. Beginning with philosopher Donald Davidson's assertion that "there is no such thing as language" in the sense of a system of conventions and rules, Yarbrough develops an interactionist theory of discourse and uses it to revise the major elements of Aristotelian rhetoric to explain how we deliberately invent novel concepts that we come to believe. Yarbrough suggests that all conceptual change is initiated by a shift in our ethical apperception of elements of a situation and that an ethical change will have emotional consequences. Changes in our emotional responses to things will change the ways we interact with them, he says, and changes in our interaction with things will create new technical relations which we can communicate to others only by altering our habitual shared way of using signs, metaphors, and other tropes.

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目录:

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