

Reflections

Public Rhetoric, Civic Writing and Service Learning

Volume 17, Issue 1, Spring 2017

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Reflections, a peer reviewed journal, provides a forum for scholarship on public rhetoric, civic writing, service learning, and community literacy. Originally founded as a venue for teachers, researchers, students, and community partners to share research and discuss the theoretical, political and ethical implications of community-based writing and writing instruction, *Reflections* publishes a lively collection of scholarship on public rhetoric and civic writing, occasional essays and stories both from and about community writing and literacy projects, interviews with leading workers in the field, and reviews of current scholarship touching on these issues and topics.

We welcome materials that emerge from research; showcase community based and/or student writing; investigate and represent literacy practices in diverse community settings; discuss theoretical, political and ethical implications of community-based rhetorical practices; or explore connections among public rhetoric, civic engagement, service learning, and current scholarship in composition studies and related fields.

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Editor's Introduction

Cristina Kirklighter,
Texas A & M
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Christi

Well, this is it. My last introduction as editor. Soon it will be time to pass the editor's baton to our incoming co-editors, Laurie Grobman and Deborah Mutnick. I wish them well, and I look forward to working with them during this transition stage until Fall 2017. I have many deserving thanks to give in this rather lengthy paragraph, but I hope it will show the many folks who play a part in this journal. I want to first thank my editorial team. Willma Harvey, our Associate Editor, has a special gift for copyediting, and authors have thanked her over the years for the care she took in carefully editing their work. She also worked diligently to learn how to navigate the backside of our website and keep us running with many updates. We had a few conversations along the way about racial and social justice—conversations that sometimes were personal with our POC identities and influenced the vision path of this journal. Some have said I may be the first Latina managing editor of a predominantly Rhetoric and Composition

journal. If it's true and maybe it is, the path as a perceived first is never an easy one. I also have a disability, but it's taught me to persevere through obstacles. I want to thank Jessica Pauszek for her work with our social media, specifically facebook and twitter. While I was more comfortable with face-to-face interactions, she knew exactly where to take this journal's visibility with social media. She taught me how to take a mostly print journal and bring it alive via social media through contributor social media participation. It was wonderful to see authors' videos and audios about their articles or some related aspect. A community engagement journal isn't really engaged without a strong social media presence these days, and I hope it continues and reaches new heights in the future. I want to thank Tobi Jacobi for her work as book review editor. I was amazed at the number of reviewers she found and the quality of the reviews. When we had special issues, she always found reviews that blended in nicely with the article conversations. She understood our vision for the journal, and we were able to give voice to many diverse books and reviewers. I wish to thank the reviewers over the years for their generous time and detailed reviews. I also want to thank a number of people who didn't review manuscripts but who advised me on who would be best to review particular submissions. It takes a village in the review process. To the authors, I was so pleased with your work and the revisions you willingly made to make the articles rigorous, reflective, and reader-friendly. Although I wasn't so engaged with the Board, a number of board members reached out to me and provided suggestions and feedback over the years. Thank you for your input. Steve Parks, as the previous editor, was always there if I needed advice and was very generous in adopting *Reflections* under New City Community Press. A number of you worked to build the institutional subscription base and/or continued to subscribe to the journal. Thank you for your support. Elizabeth Parks was instrumental in designing our beautiful and meaningful covers over the years and ensuring our issues were well designed. I thank her for her work over the years. Thank you to many NCTE/CCCC Latin@ Caucus members and other identity-based caucuses and committees for their support and help in shaping the identity-based vision for the journal before and during my time as editor. For several years, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi supported this journal in many ways. I was lucky to be at an institution who supported a faculty member who edited a journal with a course release and financially supported

the journal and Associate Editor. All institutions should support journals in such ways and, unfortunately, many don't.

Now, on to describing this 17.1 issue. Our issue journey begins with Nathan Shepley's "They Want to Tell Their Story": What Folklorists and Sociologists Can Teach Compositionists about Linking Scholarly Research to Nonacademic Communities." Part of my vision of this community engagement journal was to make it more interdisciplinary and reach out to those in other disciplines who focused on community work. I attended and presented at the Engaged Scholarship Consortium and Campus Compact. What an experience it was to go to workshops, sessions, and poster events, where those from other disciplines were so engaged in communities. How interesting it was to converse with community engagement journal editors from many disciplines. I realized how much they had to teach me just as we see with Nathan Shepley's interviews with folklorists and sociologists. As Shepley learns from his interviews "with five publicly engaged, university-employed sociologists or folklorists in Houston," those in Rhetoric and Composition involved in composition history have mentors outside our discipline who develop sustained ethical research projects within local nonacademic communities. As we address composition history, especially as it pertains to the history of communities, the ethical implications are great. When we involve students in this type of research, especially research they have an affiliation with from the start or develop through the research process, they need research mentors who also have these affiliations and take great care to work within ethical frameworks. As students navigate through the researcher and researched process, as they see stories they wish to tell shaped through such navigations, Shepley demonstrates, as he experienced through these interviews, the importance of what others outside our discipline can offer. My hope is that one day we will have many scholars and teachers like Nathan Shepley who will venture outside our discipline to discover interdisciplinary mentors. We will be better for it.

This next article, "Writing our own *América*: Latinx middle school students imagine their American Dreams through Photovoice" by Zak Montgomery and Serena O'Neal could not have come out at a better time given the anti-immigrant times we live in today and the

challenges children and young adult immigrants increasingly face today. In this article, Montgomery and O'Neal show us through four Latinx ELL sixth-graders' photovoices how these students' personal presentations of the American dream in collaboration with college students and a Latinx ELL teacher are grounded in individual attainment only by means of a collective dream. This emphasis on their reliance on a collective dream involving family, teachers, and others rather than a "bootstraps" mentality is especially critical today when immigrant families are torn apart through deportations and represents a threat to Latinx student success. Through a combination of Photovoice and "reciprocal service-learning partnerships based in principles of public pedagogy," these students were able to educate those they partnered with, school administrators, teachers, and students on their educational and economic challenges. All of them saw education as a path to fulfilling their American Dream. Their courageous teacher who experienced similar educational and economic challenges as a Latinx immigrant played an important role in challenging a standardized curriculum to create this empowering and validating space for this community partnership to occur. In such oppressive times for U.S. immigrants, this article gives us answers on what we can do to foster hope in our young adult immigrant students. It's a welcome addition.

Beth Godbee and Elizabeth Andrejasich Gibes take us on another journey of partnerships, campus partnerships collaborating with partners in a local YWCA's Racial Justice Program. The "Writing for Social Justice" class focused on creating videos. Given that English Departments and Writing Programs can be particularly large, sometimes we tend to collaborate amongst ourselves thus creating disciplinary silos. In community engagement, we are able to have our own conference. When I first met Beth and Elizabeth at the Conference on Community Writing, I appreciated the strong collaborative interdisciplinary bond they shared as they described their work in a small discussion group I was in at a workshop focused on social justice and racial justice. What I have found in my years as a journal editor of a social justice and racial justice journal is that those who focus on these same issues tend to look beyond their disciplines. We see this in articles in this issue and other articles in previous issues. With scholarship, readers of *Reflections* have and do benefit from interdisciplinary articles because of the rich interdisciplinary

research and approaches. Godbee and Andrejasich continue this tradition, but they enlighten us more by specifically discussing the why and how of cross-campus collaborations with a specific focus on the intersections between librarianship, digital media, and writing studies. They also discuss other partnerships across campus. As they mention in their article, their collaborations consist of the following: “(1) to plan, offer, and teach in-class workshops and out-of-class conferences; (2) to design, model, and scaffold video assignments; (3) to pilot a course tutoring program for undergraduate peer mentoring; and (4) to engage in other cross-campus collaborations that further strengthened our learning and relationship with the YWCA.” With their interdisciplinary efforts across campus, they were able to rename the Digital Media Studio to Digital Media Scholarship thus promoting a more interdisciplinary approach to digital media. Renaming a disciplinary area to make it more interdisciplinary is no easy task in academia, so I applaud them for their cross-collaborations.

The word “Reflections” is a significant word in this journal’s title. It means something to Sarah Hardison O’Connor in her article “The Role of Narrative in Student Engagement” as she describes how student narratives in service-learning play a significant role in shaping their identities and understandings when working with communities. Hardison O’Connor shares with us her early career background in creative writing and how it shaped the narrative elements in the course “Writing in the Community.” Those faculty who are involved in community engagement courses will benefit from her creative writing background as she shares her ways of weaving mentor texts and narratives into students’ readings and writings. This is yet another interdisciplinary connection and a way of appreciating faculty who come from multiple disciplines. Mentor texts are very prevalent in creative writing and education classes. As one of her students writes, mentor texts belong in community writing classes as well: “All of the people we have read about started their journey by serving their community, whether it was accidental or with a set purpose.” By reading and following the personal journeys from leaders in community engagement and activism, students gain confidence in writing their community engagement narratives. Student narratives, as Hardison O’Connor points out in her abstract, “give broader context to students’ service, foster critical consciousness, help students believe they can contribute in

their own communities, and contribute to making service-learning a transformative experience, all outcomes that remind us of the importance of the humanities in forming active citizens.” The more subjective students become through reading mentor texts and writing narratives with the help of their instructors and community members, the more possibilities they have in understanding these subjectivities in relation to the communities they engage with.

The next article by Johanna Phelps-Hillen also places an emphasis on reflections, but in this case, the reflections take on a more feminist engagement praxis approach when Phelps-Hillen brings on her community partner as a co-teacher and co-developer of a technical writing class. The class becomes one grounded in civic engagement and activism. “Collaborative and democratic engagement” with her co-teacher and community partner becomes vital to enacting these empowering feminist initiatives and especially fills a gap in technical writing and community engagement. She challenges deficit narratives that privilege knowledge-making within the academy instead of the community. The co-teacher/co-community partner greatly participated in shaping this course and ultimately help Phelps-Hillen in engaging students and co-teachers through reflective questions. As Phelps-Hillen describes towards the end of her article “Engagement efforts undertaken without considerable project development and management, or lacking regular self-reflection and assessment, merely reify the discourses that disempower communities.” Phelps-Hillen also includes a section at the end chronicling the challenges and breakthroughs of this feminist approach.

Barbara LeSavoy’s “*One Billion Rising: Theorizing Bodies, Resistance, and Engagement in a Campus Stop Violence Against Women Movement*” is another feminist article with interesting connections to Irene Lietz and Erin Tunney’s Fall 2015 article “Service Learning as Social Justice Activism: Students Help a Campus Shift to Bystander Awareness.” Both articles address campus personal trauma when one of their female students is murdered by the hands of their boyfriend. Both describe campus engaged movements to bring awareness to these acts of violence. Lietz and Tunney describe the classroom interdisciplinary courses they developed together to bring about bystander awareness. LeSavoy discusses a national movement, *One*

Billion Rising, brought to campus to deal in part with their personal trauma of this lost student, but she also goes on to critique this multidisciplinary flash-mob dance and open mic poetry event on her campus and its limitations. She asks important questions for campuses who have *One Billion Rising* events including her own: “But when the dancing, music, and poetry subsided, who and what had we moved? And what would become of the multidisciplinary points of encounter to our campus engagement efforts?” As editor of a small independent community engagement journal, I have to ask myself why I’m seeing a number of submissions addressing similar issues of campus violence and harassment. Readers should be asking these questions as well when they look at their campuses’ personal traumas. Publishing articles such as these are our journal’s way of raising awareness and perhaps fostering dialogues in these areas of community engagement. Who knows, perhaps you as a reader will be inspired by these articles and take community engagement action to diminish these types of personal traumas on your campuses. It takes a community and multidisciplinary engagement village.

We are now to our final article, Tasha Golden’s “Subalternity in Juvenile Justice: Gendered Oppression and the Rhetoric of Reform.” Some might be asking why there are so many articles in this issue. Well, it is to provide the new co-editors with more room to begin their vision through article selections under their editorship. We continue to focus on women in this article, but this time young women in the juvenile justice system. Through her research, Golden shows us how “the rhetoric surrounding them remains under-studied and under-critiqued” and how oppressive it can be, especially for young LGBTQ+ women and women of color. Connecting with the previous article, we see how most of these young women were/are victims of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, yet this is often underaddressed in the juvenile justice system. This creates challenges for Golden as she works to empower these young women through writing sessions, where they write about some of these experiences. She advocates using “approaches based on critical and culturally sustaining pedagogies, social justice youth development, and radical healing—particularly when working with young women of color.”

Kathryn Yankura Swacha's review of Thomas Ehrlich and Ernestine Fu's *Civic Work Civic Lessons: Two Generations Reflect on Public Service* harks back to Sarah Hardison O'Connor's article with an emphasis on mentor texts for undergraduate students in service-learning classes and models to help them reflect on their experiences with community engagement. As Yankura Swacha discusses in her review, *Civic Work Civic Lessons* provides an ideal cross-generational classroom text from nonacademics engaged with communities with an emphasis in politics and public policy. The conversational book provides practical "how to" and "lessons learned" useful to younger generations interested in civic work or service-learning even though the authors are not in service-learning. These authors' extensive personal reflections in the book would be beneficial models for students to use as they reflect on their experiences with service-learning or community engagement.

Shane Teague's review of Octavio Pimentel's *Historias de Éxito within Mexican Communities: Silenced Voices* is a timely review in the midst of today's heightened Latin@ anti-immigrant rhetoric. As Teague notes, the book problematizes the White European American (WEA) perception of success tied to economics. Success in Latin@ communities is not so tied to economics and more tied to the concept of a good man or woman by helping others (*buena gente*) and working hard (*buen trabajador*). As an example, Teague shares Pimentel's story of Quetzin, an immigrant who became economically successful in the U.S. with a food production business. However, his interpretation of success is defined by "how many people he can help and how he can help them, how hard he works, and his family's well-being." As editor of this journal, I share some of these values of success and wonder how it has shaped my vision of this journal.

Romeo Garcia's review of Kevin A. Browne's *Tropic Tendencies: Rhetoric, Popular Culture, and the Anglophone Caribbean* has interesting connections to Teague's review. Latin@s from Caribbean countries may identify more with Browne's book than Pimentel's book, even if they are not predominantly from Anglophone countries given the constant historical migrations and colonial experiences of these countries. "The body-graphical, geo-graphical, and mobile-graphical cultural displays of expressions" tied to public vernacular rhetoric shape perceptions of success as well. As Garcia references

Cresswell in his review, “Still there persist generalizations for talking about place and culture, risking the erosion of the local culture and the production of homogenized global spaces.” History becomes a performance thus creating shifting identities. Just as WEA perceptions of success are sometimes at odds with certain Latin@s views of success, so too might, in the case of Anglophone Caribbean and other Caribbeans, “the academy and Western conceptualization of agency, as exhibited with resistance and subversion, at times fails to consider a community’s intentions and desires for citizenship and democratic participation.”

Edward Santos Garza’s review of Clare Oberon Garcia, Vershawn Ashanti Young, and Charise Pimentel (Eds.) of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin to The Help: Critical Perspectives on White-Authored Narratives of Black Life* provides critical insights focusing on white-authored books and films focusing on black lives. As discussed in the last two book reviews, we see the pitfalls of WEA misperceptions of the Other as several authors in this edited collection describe. We also see, as in the case of Ebony Lumumba article “praising Eudora Welty for her rarely studied photography, characterizing the writer as a rather responsible chronicler of her milieu.” Interestingly enough, I remember in the early 80’s Welty lovingly showing me and others in an undergraduate literature class these beautiful photos of Southern Blacks rather than talking about her literary works. Early in life, I was introduced to and recognized a Southern white ally author and photographer. I was lucky as a Southern Latin@ to have this experience. The edited collection fits with the interdisciplinary aspect of this issue and “offers a rich, interdisciplinary template that can be adapted by others in race studies. Its voices come from various fields across the humanities, each possessing a facility with Critical Race Theory.”

We’re at the last book review of this issue with a review by Erin Brock Carlson of Harry C. Boyte’s edited collection *Democracy’s Education: Public Work, Citizenship, & The Future of Colleges and Universities*. To my delight, we see yet again another interdisciplinary book; this one is particularly helpful to those involved in interdisciplinary engagement work. With the words “Democracy’s Education,” we see words harking back to John Dewey and indeed some of the theories

relate to this educational reformer. However, as Brock Carlson points out, “the heart of this collection rests upon the notion that we must position education as “a great civic vocation, a vital form of public work” (29)—a positioning that only continues to increase in relevance.” Given our current educational political climate, we need books like these to show us civic engagement across and within the disciplines to combat these challenges.

Thank you, readers, for journeying with me through this issue. I wish you well with all your community engagement endeavors, and it has been my pleasure to serve as your editor.

Cristina Kirklighter

Editor of Reflections: A Journal of Public Rhetoric, Civic Writing, and Service Learning

“They Want to Tell Their Story”:

What Folklorists and Sociologists Can Teach Compositionists about Linking Scholarly Research to Nonacademic Communities

Nathan Shepley,
University of Houston

This paper uses interviews with five publicly engaged, university-employed sociologists or folklorists in Houston to illuminate ways that rhetoric and composition scholars studying composition history can connect our research projects to nonacademic communities near our campuses. Drawing from covenantal ethics, it argues that we stand to re-see our work’s significance if, starting with general education classes like first-year composition, we share our research with members of nearby nonacademic communities and allow members of those communities to give our research new interpretations and uses.

Off and on since the 1980s, scholars and teachers in rhetoric and composition have explored the researcher’s role in relation to people whom he or she studies, whether college student writers, employees at specific businesses, or non-academic members of a community. Much of this exploration has centered on what compositionists have gleaned from an ethnographic research tradition acquired from anthropology, a tradition many compositionists know through

Shirley Brice Heath's *Ways with Words: Language, Life, and Work in Communities and Classrooms* (1983), a study of children's literacy practices in two rural Southern towns. And since the publication of Heath's book, research methods associated with ethnography—thick description, triangulated data collection, extended on-site stays (Sheridan 76)—came under scrutiny by critically inclined scholars in anthropology and in rhetoric and composition for encouraging the researcher to create his or her own narrative of the researched, thereby disempowering and even objectifying the very people whose literacy practices the researcher set out to study (Brown and Dobrin; Applegarth 8-9). Questions of who speaks for whom, common in feminist theory and cultural studies scholarship, became a central consideration for some ethnographically inclined compositionists. Mary P. Sheridan summarizes the 1990's ethnography scene as one plagued, though not by any means ruined, by representational crises (79). By the early 2000s, Stuart Brown called researchers' practice of studying other populations for career advancement "a discursive relic of a colonial era" ("Beyond Theory" 300), while Bruce Horner described ethnography's long history with Renato Rosaldo's figure of the Lone Ethnographer who "rode off into the sunset in search of 'his native'" and later "returned home and wrote a 'true' account of the 'the culture'" (qtd. in Horner 15). Along with this criticism, discussions began about the ethical stances possible for the researcher attempting to work with and on behalf of nonacademic populations (e.g., Williams and Brydon-Miller 246).

The latter discussion arose with unusual care in English professor John Lofty and cultural anthropologist Richard Blot's 1997 conversation "Covering One's Tracks: Respecting and Preserving Informant Anonymity," which focused on the researcher's need to balance research accuracy and informant anonymity—or the acts of revealing and disguising—when gathering information about a community or culture. Building on Donna Deyhle et al.'s work, Lofty and Blot discuss several theories of moral behavior, including "critical theory and advocacy," which see ethical research as "necessarily promoting the needs and interests of those being researched." Another is the theory of "covenantal ethics," which "acknowledg[es] the specific obligations anthropologists incur" with the researched and clarifies "that the researcher's primary responsibility is to those he [sic] studies" (qtd. in Lofty and Blot 46-47). Following these guideposts,

Blot indicates that, consonant with the American Anthropological Association’s Code of Ethics, the researcher should work with the people whom he or she studies to decide how much information to reveal in published research (Lofty and Blot 49). Lofty and Blot end their conversation with questions about the ethnographer’s responsibility to those whom he or she studies if the ethnographer follows covenantal ethics. In Lofty’s words, “Is the ethnographer under any kind of reciprocal obligation to support publicly the professional lives of those who have made the study possible? Letters of support or recommendation—which on occasion I write—could link researcher, subject, and site” (Lofty and Blot 56). In other words, Lofty and Blot ask ethnographers to take seriously the social webs that they enter if they approach their research from the angle of covenantal ethics. Nowadays, we might interpret this complex dynamic as a literacy ecology, which Anne-Marie Hall describes as the way literacy “manifests itself in the *relationships between* groups of human beings living their lives in specific contexts or environments” (82, emphasis added).

For me, the mutually created ecology that Lofty and Blot elevate for attention is the one between the researcher and the researched, and the issue that I want to take up here is what the ethnographer’s or, more broadly, the qualitative researcher’s responsibility can be to those whom he or she studies. Entering this discussion as a rhetoric and composition scholar specializing in local histories of composition, and as someone sympathetic to Mary P. Sheridan’s call for compositionists to adapt ethnographic practices “for our own purposes” (80), I wondered what kind of “reciprocal obligation” (Lofty and Blot 56) I have to the people whose lives I pore over, to some degree, when I sift through archived collections at the public university where I work and in the surrounding city where I live. Although textual historical research differs from ethnographic research, both necessitate that the researcher strive to fairly interpret information from or about other people; and, if we accept the critical and covenantal ethical stances above, both push the researcher to use that information to benefit the population studied. Recently, in edited collections like *Working in the Archives* (Ramsey et al.) and *Beyond the Archives* (Kirsch and Rohan), composition historians entertained questions along these lines, Neal Lerner asking, “Do the persons being studied, those who contribute to the archive, or those in the present have some stake in the stories

being told?” (204). And the contributors to *Beyond the Archives* model compassionate consideration for many possible stakeholders of historical research.

To give me perspective on what a reciprocal researcher-researched ecology can mean, the degrees of involvement in each other’s lives and interests that may result from qualitative studies consistent with critical and covenantal ethics, I interviewed five scholars working in my city who had made a name for themselves publicly and professionally by studying local nonacademic communities and cultures. None of the five scholars held graduate degrees in rhetoric and composition, a fact that I find important to enrich my awareness of researcher-researched possibilities. Rather, they identified primarily as sociologists or folklorists (though a couple of them had backgrounds in English studies); they had published books and numerous peer-reviewed articles on the communities that they had entered; and some of them were still, many years later, engaged with the local people whom they had studied, still contributing to the ecology that they had connected to a scholarly sensibility. Overall, what I take away from this interview data is that even when qualitative researchers study archived texts, we can use critical, covenantal steps to position our work as also the work of the community that we study; and if we reach out to living members from that community, we can re-see this research’s significance. The cases that I discuss below unveil relational factors worthy of consideration, each case adding a new dimension (e.g., gender, trauma) to the responsibility we may bear to our research participants.

RESEARCH AS RELATIONAL MOVES

More than four decades after Brazilian educator Paulo Freire advocated for literacy work “forged *with*, not *for*, the oppressed” (48, emphasis in original), Sarah Hart Micke et al. conjoined Freire’s critical literacy and French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas’s ethical framework for scholars working with lay populations. Observing that when Levinas taught in Paris, he “valued students’ engagement with Parisian culture as part of their educational experience,” Micke et al. explain:

[f]or Levinas, students’ engagement with local places helped cultivate their responsibility for others. His students would emerge with traces of others’ singularity—the artists, actors, performers, musicians, directors, etc.—by attending these cultural events and exhibits and also engage with other audience members and visitors directly. These places bear traces of others’ singularity and also serve as sites of encounters and dialogue with others (127)

Micke et al. use Levinas’s educational approach to describe their own Colorado-based history writing assignments, exemplifying “a pedagogy of responsibility” by “invi[ng] all participants—students, teachers, community members—to accept responsibility for sustaining places that provide resources and cultivate the self’s attunement to responsibility” (134). Once given access to a report that complicated standard histories of the Denver, Colorado, area, their students wrote revisionary histories and planned events for public receptions and discussion of their work. That is, the students set the stage for relationship building surrounding their historical projects.

On a smaller scale, a similar impulse guided my steps to conceptualize mutually created and beneficial scholarly-lay relationships about local composition history. I reached out to individual scholars in my city who had worked regularly with nonacademic populations near my institution and whose research had left a clear local imprint. Thus began my work to see what it could mean for me to “cultivate [my] responsibility for others” (Micke et al.127). Or, to use Steve Parks’ description of community-engaged scholarship, thus began my “desire to place [myself] in the struggle to build a common framework for collaboration” (1). Having collected numerous stories from local community members, the scholars I studied had their own stories of academic-public engagement that I wanted to heed. While documenting the practices (literacy or otherwise) of nearby communities, they had built rich and often enduring relationships with the people who had made their work possible. I gathered takeaways from the scholars’ relationship building by meeting with them individually at a location of their choice and asking open-ended questions, embracing chances for my interviews to become

conversations. Our talks retained aspects of formal academic research, apparent in my IRB-approved consent letters and audio recordings. But generally, I let the scholars tell stories of their past and present engagements with nearby community members, and I endeavored to pinpoint what could transfer from their research milieu to mine. My underlying research question was, “what can compositionists learn from *non*-compositionists about linking scholarly research and local communities?”

Before I present my findings, however, I should clarify that I learned about the researchers whom I interviewed after having attended several well-attended programs that some of them had held around the city bringing together speakers and audience members from academic as well as nonacademic circles. One such event brought an internationally renowned folklorist and two anthropologists to the city to talk about their research at specific geographic and cultural sites and to encourage local mindfulness. Another event brought a series of writers, one of them a “found” author, to read from recent, locally published accounts of their interactions with our city—interactions with obscure city features, like an alley or a drainage ditch, that gained significance through the writers’ experiences. Yet another event brought together a sociologist who was studying Houston’s demographic trends and a journalist who had just published a book on the city’s thriving immigrant communities. Afterward, an audience member asked how we could learn from the new immigrant populations if we aren’t sociologists, folklorists, or journalists. The journalist commented that we all find ways, by blogging, writing, and so on, of “reaching out to hear other people’s stories” (Kolker and Klineberg), a point that resonated for me due to compositionists’ esteem of narrative knowledge to describe our field (Rosner, Boehm, and Journet) and to circulate concerns from community groups and marginalized individuals (Mathieu, Parks, and Rousculp; see also *Reflections’* special issue on military veterans, edited by Eileen E. Schell and Ivy Kleinbart).

Having attended event after event focused on topics of both local public and broader scholarly interest, I approached a folklorist who had co-planned much of what I had seen. With his permission, I used him to find other ethnographically inclined scholars in the vicinity—in

effect, doing what social scientists call snowball sampling. My initial contact and first interviewee, Carl, showed how the identity category *researcher*, rather than separating people, can support personally, professionally, and communally enriching relationship building.¹ His investment in a project to document stories of displaced Hurricane Katrina survivors suggests that the researcher’s relationship to the researched may extend beyond a single project’s conclusion, may reframe who can act as a researcher, and may involve unanticipated partners and communication channels. Like Daphne S. Cain who discovered, while living and working in the same hurricane-ravaged region, that she changed as a scholar and social worker when she listened to Katrina evacuees (29), and who found that her research could have unanticipated effects on herself and others (32), Carl complicated what it means to be a *researcher* by suggesting that locally invested research can transform everyone involved. And similar to Cain, Carl’s research story gives further shape to outcomes of post-Katrina renewal efforts of the kind documented in the 2008 Hurricane Katrina issue of *Reflections* (e.g., McDonald 14).

Carl had spent much of his early scholarly career publishing on folklore in medieval literature, though his fieldwork and publications also explored a range of North American cultural groups. His first experience linking his research to a specific nonacademic culture in Houston occurred in 1980 when he picked up a hitchhiker who taught him about zydeco music and informed him of a zydeco club in the city. Carl then went to the club, met the people, and grew more interested. Around the same time, he began to realize how vast and meaningful his university students’ familial and communal ties in Houston were. Some students came from nearby Francophone cultures; others came from distant Nigerian cultures. As he put it, the students “br[ought] the community in” and taught him: “I was noting these pockets of extreme cultural richness and that seemed hidden from the rest of the city. And they were—and they still are to a large extent.” He added, “It was the students who were teaching me all this stuff, and eventually I was incorporating more [fieldwork on community cultures] into my classroom.” Soon he had his students study underserved neighborhoods, local musicians, and Jewish harvest traditions, among other topics.

One factor that drew national attention to Carl's teaching and research on local cultures in Houston was his responsiveness to Hurricane Katrina, which brought thousands of emigrants from Louisiana into southeast Texas, where they formed new communities. After an administrator at his university asked faculty for ideas about how to contribute to disaster relief efforts, Carl contacted two folklorists he knew in the region about a proposal to train and pay displaced laypeople to interview and otherwise document the experiences of people like themselves. The proposal stemmed partly from Carl's observation that displaced Vietnamese groups in Houston were forming their own communication networks to guide incoming Vietnamese from the disaster area to a local Southeast Asia-oriented shopping mall instead of to official disaster relief centers. This development had historical dimensions, and it offered rich opportunities for scholarly assistance and guidance:

At [the] mall was the headquarters of an organization . . . that was founded for the people who were coming in as refugees from the fall of Saigon in '75 and had been a service organization. So those people [fleeing Hurricane Katrina] went straight to their own, to people who spoke their language and knew who they were. And there were 13,000 people in the parking lot of [the mall]. So all these people are telling stories. They're telling stories that are intensely evocative of all kinds of important things about life and Louisiana and so forth. But there were also lessons in these kinds of underground networks that existed in my own city.

After collaborating with fellow folklorists and receiving institutional support and national grants, Carl gathered "kitchen table stories" from the displaced people, many of whom he taught methods for documenting their experiences. The people in turn trained more newcomers to the city and worked with him to collect their stories in a vast recording project called *Surviving Katrina and Rita in Houston*, or SKRH ("Voices"). Their stories, collected largely by nonspecialists in the region, reached an international audience of both scholars and laypeople. (For more information, see the Houston Institute for Culture's website, <http://www.houstonculture.org/houston/SKRHphotos.html>.)

Before elaborating on the kitchen-stories model favored by Carl, I must note a contrast evident in his story of Katrina evacuees compared to the story of Katrina evacuees related by social worker Daphne S. Cain after Cain reflected on her Baton Rouge, Louisiana, work immediately after the hurricane. Cain found that students at Louisiana State University, where she taught at the time, "did not want to discuss the hurricane," but rather wanted to resume their usual routines and go on with life (30). So factors of time and rhetorical situation may partly explain the very different perspective, a pro-storytelling perspective, that Carl associated with the Katrina evacuees with whom he worked. Those evacuees shared not at all at once and in a classroom setting days after the disaster, but after Carl had established the financial resources to support a Hurricane Katrina-focused oral history project. Too, the oversimplified and damaging media narrative of New Orleans residents may have enhanced the motivation of some evacuees in Carl's project to share their stories.

In Carl's words, the kitchen-table-stories approach to interviewing is as follows: "Your job...as an interviewer is to surrender to the person on the other side of the mic and have them speak to you" as they would at their kitchen table, using their preferred terms. Instead of following a "questioning agenda," he wonders, "What does this person want to say?" He clarified that this "surrender" to the interviewee mattered particularly in the context of Hurricane Katrina because the survivors' stories had been "overwhelmed by this media narrative that was depicting [New Orleans residents] as deadbeats, criminals, and all sorts of other stuff. And so they wanted a chance to say how [to them] it really was. And some people wanted it for their grandchildren, and so forth and so on. But most of them said a version of 'we want people to know who we are.'" In addition to righting a perceived wrong done to their communities, the hurricane survivors conducting this research experienced personal and professional changes. To use Carl's words, they "healed" themselves through narrative and learned to act as "specialists of humanity." On a professional level, some of the evacuees went on to apply to graduate school, and some began attending conferences. Beyond this, many of the hurricane survivors maintained contact with Carl well beyond the end of their research project, leading him to open a Facebook account to keep in touch. The typical benefits of scholarly research

projects appeared, too, such as in positive recognition given to Carl's university. But the social ties and the personal and professional effects of this research project indicate an extraordinarily deep commitment to the displaced Hurricane Katrina survivors. From the beginning, Carl may or may not have felt an "*obligation* to support publicly the professional lives of those who ha[d] made [his] study possible," as John Lofty and Richard Blot put an implication of covenantal ethics (56, emphasis added). However, in ways that no researcher could have foreseen, Carl's collaborative work to document the stories of Hurricane Katrina survivors soon produced effects for people who until then had not considered themselves researchers and who may not have viewed research itself as personally significant.

OTHER RELATIONSHIPS AND COMPLICATING FACTORS

My second interviewee, a sociologist named Eve, focused on the advantageous position of the researcher to help laypeople share their stories. Additionally, Eve revealed how gender, physical and mental ability, and other identity-based factors can affect the researcher's relational moves when trying to serve lay populations. Early in her career, she had studied how U.S. military veterans at a VA hospital perceived their military experiences, work that she called activist research due to its practical and public uses. Many of the veterans whom she spoke with, men who suffered from mental health problems, didn't at first understand her role there, so they created a role for her—that of a cultural translator who could render their complicated personal experiences intelligible to a larger audience. She explained:

I went in as the sociologists doing a dissertation, and the *men*, having to try to incorporate me into their worldview somehow, decided that I was going to be the translator of their experience to the broader public. So *they* put me in that role, which I had not really thought about. But that's what my academic writing then became, a way not only of being a sociologist but of trying to help make sense of their experiences and bring it to the broader public.

When I asked her to elaborate, she responded, "[The veterans] saw themselves as not understood, and, you know, they didn't know what a sociologist was, so they had to come up with some way to make sense

of this, you know, little sociologist following them around—because I wasn’t a clinician. I wasn’t their therapist. I wasn’t there for that, and I was asking them all these questions.” Granted that the veterans did indeed speak to her for hours on end and gave her qualitative data that would support her later grant proposals for resources for rural veterans, but that data sharing happened on the veterans’ terms, not only with their language as was the case with Carl’s hurricane survivors who fought a powerful and damaging media narrative, but also with the veterans’ interpretation of Eve’s role in relation to themselves. The veterans’ construction of Eve’s role adds to what scholars across disciplines are learning about veterans’ openness to reimagining themselves (Schell and Kleinbart 10). Eve’s comments about the veterans’ constructions of *her*, and her resulting sense of herself as the “little sociologist following them around,” raise the possibility that a mix of credential recognition and identity factors like gender, and possibly age, shape the researcher’s relationship to those he or she studies.

Conversely, by the time Eve worked as a full-time sociologist in Houston, the situation reversed, with her academic status sufficing to pave the way for new academic-lay connections. Studying a community of Houston photographers, she interacted with the photographers as well with curators and photo festival organizers. In doing so, she found that she could tie their work to scholarly subfields like visual sociology and to her university’s visual studies program. And as a university faculty member studying a nonacademic (although specialized in this case) population, she could nudge her institution toward community awareness and involvement. Besides her networking strategy, her very position as a university-employed scholar studying local nonacademic populations proved valuable.

If age was a subtle barrier initially separating Eve from the military veterans whom she interviewed for her dissertation research, it played a central role in the recent locally focused research of my next interviewee, Frieda, an ethnomusicologist who had spent years studying culturally marginalized musicians in Europe. Frieda encountered new difficulties, among them a generational gap, when studying a group of younger avant-garde musicians in the city where we live because her age, as opposed to possibly concealable markers

like scholarly credentials, marked her as an outsider. Like Eve, Frieda had to get to know her possible research subjects on their own terms, which in this case entailed gradually entering the world of the the avant-garde musicians and discussing her scholarly research if or when prompted. Part of how she built rapport came through her musical playing and verbal interactions:

It was the strength of—the way that I was playing and interacting as a performer, which meant that I was getting invitations to come and jam at people’s houses. And these were not older people. They were like aged 30 at the time. And so it was quite exciting actually and unexpected that, you know, my personal interest would coincide, with a, kind of, at a certain level of sociability.

At any time, she had to be prepared to give what ethnomusicologists call a “cocktail-party explanation” of their work (see, e.g., Nettl), which meant “be[ing] ready with a lot of very short sentences to introduce ideas about music that are unusual and unexpected in many different ways,” this as a way to get people “comfortable and interested” in her research. Although an older academic, she maximized those interests that she shared with the young musicians, and she made her differences from them available upon request.

What the avant-garde musicians wanted from her, as a researcher, was a variant of what the other research participants wanted: visibility, presumably of a kind that they could co-control. In this specific case, the musicians sought “to be recognized for this [musical] project that they were involved in.” Frieda made this happen and generated data for her scholarly study by being on the ground, watching and interacting comfortably with nonacademic groups. For her to enter the community that she studied, a research step that composer Beverly J. Moss describes as having countless varieties (158), Frieda had to tailor her communication about her specialization area to them and help them in ways that they would recognize and appreciate immediately, including by performing with and doing programming for them.

My final two interviewees, sociologist Haley and folklorist Lenny, illustrate different ends of the critical and covenantal relational

moves that I draw from for my locally focused historical research. Haley was the most recent of my interviewees to enter her academic specialization area, sociology, while Lenny was completing his career in academe. Haley, who had studied homeless groups in the city, most boldly accepted critical theory and advocacy’s tenet of “promoting the needs and interests of those being researched,” to return to Lofty and Blot’s review of theories of moral behavior. For compositionists, an equivalent approach is critical ethnography, which encourages people to define their own experiences (Schroeder 54–55) with an eye toward exposing injustices in how the people are perceived or treated (Gorzelsky 73; Brooke and Hogg 117). My interviewee Lenny, meanwhile, showed the feeling of mutual obligation characterizing covenantal ethics—indeed, revealing striking outcomes of that sense of obligation, an extent of mutual involvement that I think many scholars in and beyond rhetoric and composition have not considered.

Haley, like Carl, Eve, and Frieda, underscored the theme of the researched, here homeless people, wanting to be heard:

I think especially when you work with underserved populations, you get a lot less barriers because they, the people, like, they want you to pay attention to them because they’re an underserved population They want to be seen. *They want to tell their story*. I mean, I have, for instance, homeless people tell me, like, “thank you so much. Like, no one has ever asked me this before.” (emphasis mine)

She observed that the same appreciation came from leaders of activist organizations whom she worked with, leaders who stand to benefit from free publicity. As this kind of point recurred throughout my interviews, I was reminded of the researcher’s power of selection, of identifying a population to study or a topic to investigate, in creating a platform for a nonacademic community to gain visibility.

Just as important as she planned and implemented her first study was Haley’s own social status. When she first contacted homeless shelters about her study, she attributed her confidence to her status as a grad student, explaining, “I guess it’s like the credibility of saying, like, ‘I’m not just some weirdo that wants to interview you people.

Like, I'm in grad school, and this is a project and, you know, it's going to change the world [*chuckling*].” Once she obtained a full-time faculty position at a college and completed research for a book that she coauthored, she discovered more about what institutional and disciplinary credibility meant to her:

I feel like there's something about having . . . the credentials and the facts that that research brings that allows me to be more convincing than someone that doesn't. So the fact that I not only understand it from the activist standpoint, but that I can then be like, “but it really is true as we found in this paper or as documented in this study that I've been a part of.” So it's almost like the research is a springboard for starting conversations, be those on the internet or in person or with coworkers or whatever, that gives me some legitimacy to make real improvements in the lives of people.

When I asked her for an example of “real improvements,” she explained that currently she is lobbying to expand her college's nondiscrimination policy in a way that reflects her book's argument. So throughout her research-based experiences, she found that her institutional and disciplinary affiliations legitimized her conversations with marginalized local groups and strengthened her advocacy for policy changes. Although some academics have separated their work from the work of activists and public relations specialists (see, e.g., Fish), Haley saw her scholarly work as also activist.

Finally, my interview with Lenny showed that one's research on a local nonacademic community can transform the research's significance and effects. As all my interviewees had said or implied, and as feminist rhetoricians especially have argued (e.g., Royster 281), scholarly research should help the people whom it concerns. But Lenny fleshed out what such help may mean in a way that takes the responsibility discussed by Lofty and Blot much further. Lenny's professional background was as follows: terminal degree from an English department although he took graduate classes from faculty specializing in folklore. Then, as a higher education faculty member in Houston, he taught composition and other English classes while his publications branched out to other areas. He began studying

local community members after he completed his dissertation and decided to write an article about a specific musical genre and for both specialized and lay readers. With this project in mind, he attended an academic conference where he met a photographer who had published books on the same musical genre. Remarking that the photographer's work lacked pictures of musicians from Houston, Lenny persuaded him to travel multiple times to Houston and photograph the overlooked musicians as Lenny interviewed them. Lenny enjoyed this interview process, and he thought the musicians did, too. It seemed to him that the musicians had been waiting for someone to say, "Tell me your story."

But it was Lenny and the photographer's next actions that invited the musicians to make new meaning from their interactions with Lenny and the photographer, in effect changing Lenny's relationship to their community and broadening the function of his research project. One such action taken by Lenny and the photographer was to give extra copies of their photos to the musicians and the musicians' family members. Lenny continued,

I realized how much this facilitated goodwill in the . . . community, because after interviewing them and photographing them, I would contact them months later and say, "I need to come by your house. I've got something to give you." And I'm taking these beautiful photographs And these people are just knocked away [sic]. They—a lot of them have been musicians their whole life, and they had photos of themselves but never photos like this. And they'd never had anyone take their photo and then give them high-quality prints.

This action departed from the custom of past scholars who had studied this community, completed their research, and promptly left, and it became one way for the musicians to stay involved in and attached to Lenny's book. Also, for the subsequent book launch, Lenny and the photographer hired a band, encouraged the musicians featured in the book to attend and pick up their copy of the book, and promoted the event on local radio stations. But what happened next surprised them all: their work itself became the community's "memory book."

Here I quote Lenny at length to illustrate the vastness of this literacy ecology:

We had about 400 people show up. [A book promoter] sold out his books. There were hundreds of people there. And the musicians were getting their books. And they didn't give a— and I say this with affection—[the musicians] didn't really care about getting my signature or [the photographer's] signature. They were going around to the other musicians to get their signatures on their photos like a high school yearbook. Laypeople were coming in, buying the book, and some of them, of course, were buying it and getting the author to sign it; some of them did care about that. But then they—they're in this room where most of the people in the book are right there in that room with them. And they're going around and getting people to sign it. And that led to something . . . that's just phenomenal. For years, I'd be out somewhere, and someone would come up and show me his or her copy of [the book], which was just full of signatures. I mean, I always told them the same thing: "Your book is more of a collector item than my copy" because I wouldn't have all those signatures in my book.

Lenny added, "It was almost like we [he and the photographer] were just riding a wave. It wasn't like we were powering this thing." To this day, the book circulates at performance venues in the city. Lenny's account recalls Richard Louth's story in the 2008 *Reflections* special issue of a Hurricane Katrina-focused blog leading to radio broadcasts and then to an anthology that inspired a larger National Writing Project-funded printing, enhanced visibility from the National Council of Teachers of English, a review in a prominent New Orleans newspaper, and further exposure. Louth wrote that his project "grew organically from blog to radio program to anthology as we realized how important the writing was and as we found new resources for making our work public" (29). My interview with Lenny fleshed out some of the social dimensions of a comparable publication, for Lenny stayed connected to the musicians in his book in concrete ways: he assisted some of them with personal matters, he received invitations to attend funerals in their community, and he recommended people from their community for local projects. Occasionally, he acted as a

middleman between the musicians and producers interested in their work. It is no exaggeration to say that he stayed involved in many of the community members' daily concerns and life-changing events.

A final point that I find valuable about Lenny's research in local communities is that it influenced his teaching of first-year composition. He encouraged his first-year composition students to interview local people and undertake research with unpublished materials. One student with family ties to the same community of musicians that Lenny had studied interviewed a romantic partner of a prominent Houston musician. Another student studied a psychedelic band in the area. Other students, building on their cultural backgrounds, studied topics such as Vietnamese weddings and a Vietnamese Catholic nunnery in the city. In sum, his students were producing "research-based nonfiction" on focused and little-known local topics, many of which overlapped his research area and generated insights for him: "Students who picked topics where I was doing things on my own, I could give them suggestions of whom to interview or where to look, and sometimes I referred them to things I'd already published and say, 'there's stuff in there.' But it also gave me insight on [research] I'd done or was doing." Moreover, his students accepted suggestions from him to circulate their work in their communities.

Whether rhetoric and composition scholars do research like that of Lenny and my other interviewees, I believe we too should examine how our knowledge transcends disciplinary boundaries and obtains new meanings and uses through its interaction with local community members, starting with general education students in first-year composition. We can do this even if initially we did not view our research as activist or covenantal in orientation and even if our disciplinary conventions focus us on archived texts before living people.

LINKING LOCAL RESEARCH ON COMPOSITION HISTORY TO NONSPECIALISTS

I conclude with a brief pedagogical application for those of us doing textual research. We in composition history have only recently begun bringing our archival research to the attention of first-year

composition students. For example, in her 2015 *College Composition and Communication* article, Wendy Hayden explains that her students read archival research tips from compositionists, analyzed archived documents from their college, and reflected on the politics of representation. As a result, the students revised their initial research questions, sidestepped easy conclusions, and articulated personal connections to their college's activist legacy. Based on their writing, Hayden advocates a writing-about-research approach to composition in order to "reconfigure how we think about a pedagogy for undergraduate research" (422). I, too, support a writing-about-research approach, but with the important caveats that the approach should let newcomers to research explore how research affects the communities and cultures in which they claim membership (thus extending the personal connection making that Hayden considers), and the approach should encourage newcomers to do different things with the research than the researcher likely expected. Much as the musicians whom Lenny studied turned his study into a sort of yearbook, first-year composition students might investigate new genres and uses for scholarly articles about composition history, particularly if the articles situate composition history in cities or regions known by the students. If not dealing with research in published form but with generative questions and in-process data collection, students can explore new audiences for and ways of using a given primary text. Whatever the practice's exact version, the point is for students to learn about what researchers do while using the students' own community affiliations to re-see a research project's possible goals and effects.

Each of the scholars whom I interviewed reveals ideas that this approach to first-year composition could take up. Though they interpreted their professional identities slightly differently, the cases of Eve, who studied prisoners, and Haley, who studied homeless people, encourage us to inquire into how our status as college faculty or students, people with official ties to disciplines or to higher education institutions, affects how authorized we feel to use primary or secondary texts about composition history. The case of Frieda, who traversed a generational gap between herself and a group of young local musicians, prompts us to entertain the possibility that in order for students to make texts about historical college student writing relevant to other people in the students' communities, the

students may first need to analyze social boundaries separating them from their communities’ leaders. The cases of Carl, who studied and eventually worked alongside hurricane survivors, and of Lenny, who studied another group of local musicians, give us starting points for working with the fact that traditional parameters placed around the concepts of *researcher* and *research project* may not—even should not—hold at all times, for all individuals in the surrounding literacy ecology. If we consider Carl’s case alongside Daphne S. Cain’s published account of her changing emotional outlook and research agenda after Hurricane Katrina, we see many possible degrees of connection between one who does research and one who is part of a researched community. First-year composition students as well as their instructors may occupy generative social spaces between the familiar categories of outsider and insider, higher education member and local community member.

More basically, we might approach our interactions with students about textual, historical research through questions like the following:

- What most interests or surprises our first-year composition students about primary historical texts from our academic institution or from another institution connected to the students’ communities?
- What stories do our current students or their community peers want to tell, as opposed to stories that established composition historians have already told about what it means or has meant to be a student or writer there?
- How can we and our current students relax the categories of *researcher* and *researched* long enough for us to inhabit both identities?

Research on composition history already connects to current undergraduate students and other community members particularly in the cities, neighborhoods, and regions where the research is focused. The challenge is for current students and other community members to see how, and then for these groups to see what we, as college teachers

and scholars, have overlooked about that information's importance. Long term, the challenge will be to grow our interactions outside university boundaries to the point of letting us understand how populations without college connections see, might see, and want to see their identities in relation to our institutions and research.

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NOTES

- 1 My first interviewee, Carl Lindahl, freely consented in writing to my using his real name. I used pseudonyms for my other interviewees.

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Writing our own *América*: Latinx middle school students imagine their American Dreams through Photovoice

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This study examines the intersection of the “bootstraps” American Dream¹ and the América envisioned by four first-generation U.S. Latinx sixth graders in an urban English Language Learners class. The students participated in a joint Photovoice writing and photography project about the American Dream with students from a liberal arts college and articulated the importance of the journey toward their dreams. Sharing their narratives and photographs in public forums, the students challenged the individualist American Dream discourse, underscoring a collective approach instead. The outcomes foreground previously-silenced voices and provide an example of culturally relevant pedagogy within a structured literacy curriculum.

*“Si el sueño de uno / es el sueño de todos / romper
la cadena / y echarnos a andar. / [T]engamos
confianza / pa’ lante mi raza / a salvar el tiempo
/ por los que vendrán”*

*[If one’s dream / is everyone’s dream / to break
free from the chains / and begin our journey. /
Let’s be confident / let’s move forward my people /
to save time / for those who are yet to come]*

*[our translation] (Blades, “Buscando
América,” 1984)*

INTRODUCTION

Legendary Panamanian *salsero* Rubén Blades' iconic "Buscando América" (1984) became the anthem for many Latinx in the United States seeking an *América* where they felt welcome to express themselves following decades of military dictatorships in their respective countries of origin (Gonzalez, 1987). Blades wrote "Buscando América" while living in exile from Panama in New York and his disillusionment with the abandoned Latin-American homelands and his adopted U.S. "land of opportunity" is a central theme in his lyrical, imagined *América*. Blades (1984) laments: "Te estoy buscando América / y temo no encontrarte / tus huellas se han perdido / entre la oscuridad" [I am searching for you, America / and I fear that I won't find you / your traces have been lost / in the darkness]. The melancholic tone echoes the lack of hope in the imagined *América* when life in the United States fails to live up to the expectations many Latinx had. "Buscando América" calls on Latinx to reflect on the strength of their common identity after centuries of oppression, "seeking out the solidarity of other *americanos*" (González, 1987, p. 254) in a *collective* way forward. This study examines the space between the "bootstraps" American Dream and the *América* sought by Blades by analyzing how four Latinx sixth-graders wrote their American Dreams in a joint project with college students that engaged the larger community in critical dialogue about issues of importance to the middle school students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Latinx and the American Dream

Historically, the American Dream has consisted of a belief that anyone can "bring themselves up from the bootstraps" and succeed by way of hard work and determination. Based on data from college students' reflections, Hauhart and Birkenstein (2014) define the American Dream in the contemporary context as "effectively, an empty basket into which any American can place his/her hopes and aspirations" (p. 369), which many times means economic and social mobility or related opportunities. However, Hauhart and Birkenstein (2014) noted that while this optimism held true at the abstract level, when the American Dream was analyzed at the individual level, students began to see potential barriers to reaching their dreams.

The individualist bootstraps American ideal is seen as early as Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography* (1793/1958), where he outlined his self-described virtues for the pursuit of moral perfection. Among these virtues were industry and resolution, which laid the foundation for subsequent Positivist economic and political beliefs related to discipline and productivity. Franklin used these virtues to solidify his legacy as a distinctly American self-made man through his technocratic pursuit of this ideal. Beach (2007) argued that Franklin's virtues also reshaped the American ideal such that "cutthroat competition only served to reinforce established forms of authority, hierarchy, and gross inequality by focusing . . . on the improvement of the individual by making him/her more marketable for the corporate workplace" (p. 157). Thus, in the late eighteenth century, the American ideal vis-à-vis Franklin became about wealth and upward mobility (Beach, 2007), which subsequently became the common interpretation of the concept.

James Truslow Adams first coined the term American Dream in *The Epic of America* (1931/2012), writing, "The very foundation of the American dream of a better and richer life for all is that all, in varying degrees, shall be capable of wanting to share in it" (p. 411). Although many interpret Adams' dream as individualistic à la Franklin, he actually treats the subject with a collectivist approach: "If we are entering on a period in which, not only in industry but in other departments of life, the mass is going to count for more and the individual less, and if each and all are to enjoy a richer and fuller life, the level of the mass has got to rise appreciably above what it is at present" (p. 410). Adams underscores the need for everyone to work together so that *all* may share in the prosperity promised by the American Dream, contrasting sharply with the competitive meritocracy espoused by Franklin (1793/1958), the American exceptionalism of Winthrop's famous "City on a Hill" imagery (1630) or the self-creation inherent in Manifest Destiny ideology vis-à-vis young Americans' beliefs (Hauhart & Birkenstein, 2013).

In "Public Schools and the American Dream," Hochschild (2001) examines access to the American Dream for Latinx. She writes that, for many, "[e]qual opportunity to become unequal, to succeed (or fail) because of what one does, not who one is, is a central part of

the American dream” (p. 35). On the other hand, Slater (1970) and Ehrenreich (2006) challenge the viability of this competitive culture, which either causes loneliness (Slater, 1970) or keeps the middle class from thriving because white collar opportunities inherent in the American Dream ideology are difficult to access (Ehrenreich, 2006). Hochschild (2001) echoes this realist interpretation, calling the American Dream “a brilliant ideological invention, although its realization is considerably less impressive” (p. 35).

While a largely idealistic American Dream persists for U.S. Latinx today (Berman, 2015; Cohen-Marks & Stout, 2011), how realistic is it? Perhaps paradoxically, research shows that Latinx are far more optimistic about achieving the American Dream than other major U.S. ethnic groups, despite being denied inclusion in the American identity in many contexts due to their ethnicity (Devos & Mohamed, 2014). To illustrate, Cohen-Marks and Stout (2011) surveyed residents in the Los Angeles area to gauge the optimism of various ethnic groups about their chances of achieving the American Dream. They found that “Latinos are almost six times more likely [than other groups] to believe they will achieve the American Dream if they have not already” (Cohen-Marks & Stout, 2011, p. 833). Likewise, a 2015 poll by the Aspen Institute and *The Atlantic* demonstrated that African Americans, Hispanics, and Asians were measurably more optimistic than Whites that the American Dream is alive and well (Berman, 2015).

Although Latinx may be more optimistic about the American Dream than other ethnic groups, Latinx identify themselves less strongly with an American national identity than Caucasian Americans, as shown by Devos, Gavin, and Quintana (2010). They found that Caucasian Americans and Latinx Americans perceived Latinx as less American than Caucasian Americans, although Caucasian Americans believed this more strongly than Latinx Americans (Devos, Gavin, & Quintana, 2010). In addition to unequal access to national identity, there are other barriers for Latinx to achieve their American Dreams, in particular the opportunity gap in American public schools (Cross, 2009; Irizarry, 2011; Jenkins, 2009; Menken & Kleyn, 2010). Moreover, Valenzuela (1999) called the U.S.-Mexican educational experience subtractive schooling, which “encompasses subtractively

assimilationist policies and practices that are designed to divest Mexican students of their culture and language” (p. 20).

Research has shown that first generation immigrant Latinx graduate at higher rates than second and third generation immigrants (Irizarry, 2011; Valenzuela, 1999), which may explain the fact that Latinx continue to be optimistic, particularly immigrants from Latin America. Yet when U.S.-born Latinx enter the U.S. public education system, their high hopes are quickly dashed by a lack of cultural understanding by authority figures in schools, such as teachers and administrators (Blanchard & Muller, 2015; Irizarry, 2011). Despite these challenges, the number of Latinx students to enroll in college immediately following high school has been slowly increasing (Fry & Taylor, 2013). Although these figures appear positive, Fry and Taylor (2013) are cautious in deeming them so. Their report demonstrates that although Latinx are enrolling in colleges at higher rates than white students (69% versus 67%), their higher education selections are not equal to those of white students: “Hispanic college students are less likely . . . to enroll in a four-year college (56% versus 72%), . . . less likely to attend a selective college, less likely to be enrolled in college full time, and less likely to complete a bachelor’s degree” (p. 5). Thus, even though Latinx students who have recently graduated are going to college at higher rates than in 2000 (49% in 2000, 69% in 2012) (Fry & Taylor, 2013), a stark distinction exists between the educational levels attained in higher education between Latinx and Caucasians (Blanchard & Muller, 2015; Irizarry, 2011).

Despite the fact that the opportunity gap has been identified as one of the main issues in the American education system today, it has proven difficult to close for several reasons. Cross (2009) writes, “[i]nstead of creating policies to alleviate racial, linguistic, and class subordination/discrimination [to lessen the opportunity gap], attention is instead diverted to the threat of a *new* deviant group that is a drain on society and that should be feared.” She also explores the cultural tension that Latinx experience while in the U.S. public education system. As is widely acknowledged, the U.S. public education system subscribes largely to middle class Anglo-centric culture and leaves little room for Latinx to have their cultural heritage explicitly included, and thus *valued* (Ayala, 2012; Cross, 2009; Hill & Torres, 2010).

The exclusion of Latinx culture from American classrooms (Ayala, 2012; Cross, 2009; Hill & Torres, 2010) also impacts whether or not Latinx students feel that their teachers value them and their educational experience (Blanchard & Muller, 2015; Irizarry, 2011; Valenzuela, 1999). As reported by national K-12 education writer Motoko Rich (2012), Latinx and other non-white students do not read or have access to many stories that feature a protagonist of their own ethnicity in schools as they do of stories with white protagonists (Rich, 2012). He concludes that not seeing their own culture in children's books discourages young Latinx readers and foments an early disinterest in reading (Rich, 2012). Similarly, Rubin (2014) wrote that "ELA [English/Language Arts] teachers must be willing to connect with Latinx and choose literature that reflects the students' own lives, families, and personal histories" in order to break the school-to-prison pipeline by engaging students in their own educational experience (p. 225).

Another potential barrier is a lack of communication between Latinx parents, many who come from another cultural context, and American public schools, which subscribe largely to a White, middle-class culture. Mena (2011) underscored cultural issues many parents face when they immigrate for economic reasons, including working multiple jobs, learning English, and adapting to the American education system, all of which can contribute to communication breakdowns between parents and public schools. Ryan, Casas, Kelly-Vance, Ryalls, and Nero (2010) found that engagement efforts that take into account cultural orientations more positively affected outcomes than did those that focused on getting students and parents to extrinsically value education. Similarly, Gonzalez, Borders, Hines, Villalba, and Henderson (2013) researched effective ways for the schools to engage Latina/a parents in students' educations, concluding that personal invitations to the family, parent-driven support roles, and flexible scheduling to account for limited time led to further parent engagement and thus better outcomes for students.

As a result of the aforementioned barriers, Latinxs continue to be the lowest academic achieving ethnic group based on their selection of colleges and performance on standardized tests (Fry, 2010). Despite the high school dropout rate of Latinx students dropping from 28%

in 2000 to 14% in 2011, Latinxs still have the highest dropout rate when compared with African-Americans and whites (Fry & Taylor, 2013). Likewise, Hill and Torres (2010) have argued that access to the American Dream for Latinx is more complicated for later generations of immigrants, who “arrive in the United States with a strong belief in the American Dream, a strong work ethic, and high aspirations for their children. However, after a generation or more in the United States, the possibility of achieving the Dream and the sure pathway of education become elusive” (Hill & Torres, 2010, p. 106). Hill and Torres (2010) also argued that Latinx students are less likely to be in a college-preparatory track in schools than other groups.

Irizarry (2011) attributes this phenomenon at least in part to the silencing of Latinx students’ voices in the American education system. After two years operating an after-school program in one American high school with a high Latinx population and developing relationships with Latinx students, Irizarry (2011) writes, “[T] hose with the most to gain from meaningful changes in policy and practice, namely youths themselves—are typically rendered silent in discussions and policy debates regarding the achievement gap” (p. 1). Latinx students also frequently reported incidences of racism in disciplinary actions (Irizarry, 2011). In response to the silencing of young Latinx voices with regard to their education (Irizarry, 2011), it is useful for American educators to implement models of education where critical thinking is valued over a “banking model” (Dewey, 1938; Freire, 1970/1990). Latinx students would, instead, be supported by educators who shape their teaching around critically thinking about students’ role in the current society in a culturally relevant way that engaged not only students, but the greater public, in substantive ways (Giroux, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1992).

Photovoice and Service-Learning as Public Pedagogy

Two ways to navigate linguistic, cultural and academic barriers is through Photovoice and reciprocal service-learning partnerships based in principles of public pedagogy (Giroux, 2003; Sandlin, O’Malley, & Burdick, 2011). Photovoice is a creativity-based, participatory writing and photography approach for students’ voices to be heard by students photographing, analyzing, and writing about personal representations of a chosen topic to share in a public

forum. First developed by Wang (1999), Photovoice has three goals: “to enable people (1) to record and reflect their personal and community strengths and concerns, (2) to promote critical dialogue and knowledge about personal and community issues through group discussions of photographs, and (3) to reach policymakers” (p. 185). This technology has been subsequently applied with youths to express how they wanted to change their communities (Wang, 2006).

In addition to its public health roots (Wang, 2006), Photovoice has recently been employed to engage urban youth in explorations of academic motivation and literacy practices (Marquez-Zenkow & Harmon, 2007; Marquez-Zenkow & Harmon, 2009). Through writing and analysis of their own multiple literacies, the high school students' work in their study revealed that real-world applications of writing not only motivated them in their literacy class, but in other aspects of life, and the collaborative work with other students also provided rich learning experiences (Marquez-Zenkow & Harmon, 2007). Moreover, Marquez-Zenkow and Harmon (2009) determined that “teachers [must] allow youth to share stories,” as the results of their research led the teacher-researchers to “more often integrate issues of schooling and social justice—including analyses of our communities' tenuous relationships to school—into our curricula” (p. 583). Consequently, students engaged their larger communities and even their own teachers in a new public discourse (Giroux, 2003) as a result of an open-ended Photovoice project similar to the American Dream partnership analyzed in the present study.

Like Photovoice, service-learning seeks to stimulate a yearning for its participants to create social change (Wade, 2007). In service-learning pedagogy, classroom learning is connected to service experiences in deliberate ways, the most important being structured reflection that allows for a deeper understanding of social issues in context (Boyle-Baise, 2002). For example, the American Dream is often described as individualist, one person working their way up the socioeconomic ladder. Yet Seider, Gillmor, and Robinowicz (2010) challenged their students' concept of the American Dream through service-learning. After participating in a service-learning project, several students realized that to make the American Dream accessible to all, they must work together as a collective (Seider, Gillmor, & Rabinowicz, 2010).

Likewise, Boyle-Baise (2002) touts the impact of service-learning, arguing that a co-taught service-learning program in an existing curriculum allows participants to break down cultural barriers.

Both Photovoice and service-learning pedagogies support an idealized curriculum, or educational experience (Pinar, 2004), which should promote “self-reflexive, interdisciplinary erudition and intellectuality” (pp. 2-3) rather than standardized practices, which “demote teachers from scholars and intellectuals to technicians in service to the state” (p. 2). Likewise, as Giroux (2003) wrote, “Schools should provide students with possibilities for linking knowledge and social responsibility to the imperatives of a substantive democracy. Education is not training, and learning at its best is connected with the imperatives of social responsibility and political agency” (p. 9). The project analyzed here offers an example of how one teacher engaged in interdisciplinary erudition (Pinar, 2004) by using service-learning and Photovoice as public pedagogies (Giroux, 2003) that pushed a standardized curriculum beyond itself so that “knowledge, subjectivity, and society [were] inextricably linked” (Pinar, 2004).

METHODS

Context of the Study

The project chronicled in our study utilized Photovoice as a means of communication and critical analysis for first-generation American Latinx students in a school where Spanish as a home language was not openly valued. To attempt to mitigate this issue, the Photovoice project was embedded in a service-learning partnership with a 300-level undergraduate college Spanish course about U.S. Latinx, with Photovoice as a vehicle through which both groups of students wrote their own American Dreams. Through this co-construction of knowledge (Dewey, 1938; Freire, 1970/1990), participants shared their hopes and concerns about reaching their American Dreams with external stakeholders from school administration and the local community, engaging in public pedagogy (Giroux, 2003) about issues that mattered to them.

The middle school class at the heart of this project was made up of 22 sixth graders, 18 who consented to participate in the study. Five consenting participants were classified by the school as English

Language Learners (ELL): four of Mexican heritage (who are the focus of the present study) who had been in long-term ELL (more than five years) and one Pacific Islander; of the non-ELL participants, six were Caucasian and seven were African-American. The partner school is located in an urban area of 150,000 people in the state's third largest school district. In the past two decades, the city attracted thousands of newcomers due to the demand for meat processing and manufacturing work, particularly Hispanic (im)migrants of Mexican and Guatemalan descent, as well as Bosnian (late 1990s) and Burmese (2010-present) refugees. The city has a sizeable historical African-American population that dates to the Great Migration. Both the African-American and recent migrant groups settled mostly in the East side, while Caucasians historically lived in the West. One of four middle schools, the partner school is the district's second most diverse. According to publicly available data, 76.9% of the district's students are ethnic minorities, including 56% African-American, 16.8% Hispanic, and 3% Asian. 91.2% of students received free and reduced lunch in the 2011-12 academic year, an increase from 78% in 2004. The school has been consistently low achieving; the local newspaper labeled the district's high school a "dropout factory" in 2011, with 40% of students failing to graduate. Graduation rates, however, improved greatly in the last ten years, reaching 77% in 2011.

The service-learning course from the partner college consisted of nine Spanish majors and thirteen minors, all from the Midwest, studying areas such as English/Writing, Education, International Relations, Psychology, and Pre-Med. Three had spent a semester in a Spanish-speaking country, and all had studied abroad for a month (Costa Rica or Mexico) in the previous four years. Twenty students were Caucasian, one was biracial, and one was Asian-American, and all students consented to participate in the study. For the college student outcomes from this project, please see Montgomery et al. (2014). The liberal arts college of fewer than 1800 students is located in a small town less than 40 minutes by car from the middle school.

The Community Partnership

The ELL teacher was herself a refugee from another country who had come to the United States in the late 1990s in search of safer and better opportunities. The co-constructed, multidisciplinary literacy

project in her classroom centered on a community partnership during a middle school language arts block. The writing process was of primary focus in the literacy curriculum, including exposure to diverse genres, development and application of academic vocabulary, and visual literacy. Middle school students studied literature related to the American Dream, including Sandra Cisneros' *The House on Mango Street* and Langston Hughes' poetry, as well as photography by Dorothea Lange. Both groups used a modified Photovoice methodology (Wang, 1999) by taking and sharing photos about their American Dream. As part of their regular literacy curriculum, students learned photography techniques and analyzed photos using multiple perspectives during several drafting sessions. All students wrote culminating narratives to contextualize their photographs for three public events, one at the middle school, one at a local college of education, and one at the liberal arts college. The school's parent committee co-funded the events. Throughout the semester, a celebratory pizza party and trip to the Ballet Folklórico de México served as community-building activities.

The ELL teacher and college professor developed their partnership over several years; this was their second semester-long collaboration. The 300-level undergraduate course *Latinos in the United States* was taught in a Spanish program with the following objectives: "to foment critical dialogues about the Latinx presence and influence in the U.S. from various perspectives . . . [and to] attempt to challenge and analyze the stereotypes and beliefs presented both in the media and in the dominant discourse" (Course syllabus, 2012). The Photovoice partnership took place for 100 minutes each Thursday in the public school. Tuesday's traditional college class meeting (also 100 minutes) consisted of: structured reflection linking the field to academic content; student-led discussions about the day's texts; and preparations for the next partnership meeting.

The research team consisted of the ELL teacher and college Spanish professor, two university Education professors (literacy and social studies methods), a university supervisor, and an undergraduate student. As white researchers working with predominantly multicultural students from various ethnic and national backgrounds, the research team acknowledged its positionality in relation to

inherent authority and biases throughout the project (Worthman, 2016). The team attempted to moderate this positionality by co-creating the project with the ESL teacher, a former refugee and fellow research team member, deferring to her classroom goals and experiences with this particular group of students before proceeding.

The research team, including the teacher, chose the American Dream as the project's focus because they believed it would provide a flexible framework through which to do interdisciplinary literacy work with both groups and allow for student input to guide the project's progress. They created an open-ended cross-curricular project that worked within the established program, and like Worthman (2016), "facilitated quietly the writing and discussions of the [participants], and only when requested provided [our] perspective as outsider[s] whose legitimacy was left to the [participants] to decide" (p. 50). An adapted Photovoice (Wang, 1999) pedagogy was chosen for the co-constructed collaboration, meeting both the college course goals and the highly structured public school literacy curriculum. To co-design, co-teach and co-organize the Photovoice project, the team met before the partnership and communicated often by email.

Research Questions

This study explored two main questions: (1) How would sixth-grade Latinx ELL students conceptualize the American Dream in an open-ended Photovoice collaboration with college students? (2) What are the implications for educators and policymakers of interpreting the American Dream through the lens of these first-generation American Latinx students?

Data Sources

The focal data comes from student Photovoice narratives and photos, draft materials created during the fourteen-week partnership, audio recordings of each one-on-one partnership work session, field notes and memoranda from the research team, and a follow-up interview with each sixth grader. The study received IRB approval from both institutions on the research team.

Methods of Data Analysis

The first participant, Hernando, was chosen at random from all consenting participants, independently coded, and analyzed by research team members. The research team met to identify emerging themes about the American Dream from Hernando’s data. Themes were cross-checked and verified by research team members and refined before analyzing five randomly-selected students using content analysis of qualitative research methods (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990). Finally, analysis of data for the remaining sixth-grade participants was conducted. After completing analysis of data from all sixth-grade participants, four themes emerged: 1) freedom/opportunity to pursue an American Dream; 2) the process to its pursuit; 3) access to achievement of that dream; and 4) the importance of the collective in individual dreams. Data from the four consenting Latinx students demonstrated common themes related to the American Dream in the U.S. context, and the content analysis yielded compelling results that we believe add to the discourse in the field. The four Latinx participants and their college partners are described in Table 1 in alphabetical order by pseudonym.

Table 1: Latinx Sixth-Grade Student Participants

Name (pseud.)	Demographic Information	Brief Photovoice Photo Description	College Partner, Background
Ana	Female of Mexican descent born in the United States, long-term ELL*, urban	Atlas page from the school library. The slightly blurry image presents a small map of North America and an enlarged map of Mexico in the center. To the side are pictures of a pyramid and a beach resort, respectively.	Biracial female, urban

Hernando	Male of Mexican descent born in the United States, long-term ELL, urban	Close-up view of the engine of his mother’s car. The photo is slightly blurry. The engine shows the dirt and grease of an older vehicle.	Caucasian female, rural
Liliana	Female of Mexican descent born in the United States, long-term ELL, urban	Wide view of a neighborhood street near her home with potholes in the pavement. There is a car in the distance, a stop sign mid horizon on the right, and the yard in the foreground has chain link fencing.	Caucasian female, suburban
Néstor	Male of Mexican descent born in the United States, long-term ELL, urban	Marker board with a large, hand-written, red “A+” in the center. Around the letter grade are four written words/phrases: 1) Literacy; 2) Math; 3) Reading; 4) $2 + 2 = 4$.	Caucasian female, suburban

** Long-term ELL is defined by the district as a student in the ELL program for longer than 5 years.*

RESULTS

The American Dream as a Journey, or Camino

The following explores the most salient emerging theme from the four Latinx sixth-grade students' data—the journey, or *camino*, to their self-defined American Dreams, as a lens to analyze these students' positions in a larger socio-cultural and educational context. Of the four Latinx students, the two females explicitly developed their Photovoice narratives and photographs around a physical journey to Mexico to visit and reunite with family, while the two males focused on the academic or professional journey that would allow them to achieve their dreams of becoming a teacher and engineer, respectively. Notably, all students focused on either those who would help or accompany them on their journeys, those whom they would help after achieving their dreams, or both. Each student's Photovoice data will be presented, followed by a discussion of how writing and sharing their American Dreams informs the public and educational community about the barriers facing Latinx in the United States.

Ana

Ana's photo is of an atlas page from the school library. The slightly blurry image presents a small inset of North America and an enlarged map of Mexico. The image represents her desire to travel to Mexico to reunite with what she calls her "other family" and introduce her brothers to the "home" culture they have never known (Audio session, 10/23/2012).

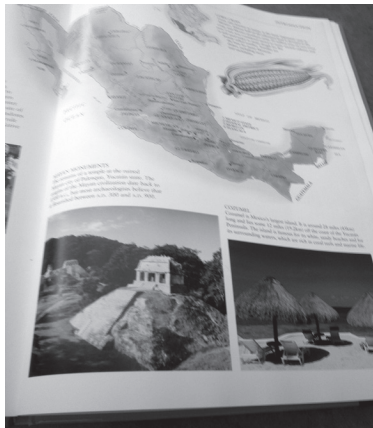


Figure 1: Ana's Photovoice Image

Ana initially focused on her academic goals in relation to her American Dream, photographing the school greenhouse to express her desire to be a botanist because of her favorite science course. However, after analyzing her photos, Ana was dissatisfied, and she asked to photograph something else. She explained in her post-project interview: "I chose that one because it's not like the other ones. . . . This . . . picture [referring to the photo she eventually chose] [is] the only one that talks about my family" (Interview, 12/13/2012).

Ana, who was born in the United States but lived seven years of her childhood in Mexico, introduced her Photovoice image with the following: "this represents . . . where I came from. My American dream is to travel to Mexico with all of my family if I have the opportunity. Also, I want to spend time with my family that lives in Mexico" (PV narrative, 11/28/2012). She shaped her American Dream narrative specifically around her brothers' inability to access Mexico due to her family's mixed documentation status. As she wrote, her favorite places, including a waterfall, could be useful means to transmit her knowledge of her family heritage to her brothers who do not have the same access that she has. Moreover, by choosing the atlas, Ana framed her American Dream in a collectivist perspective rather than the dominant individualist perspective, focusing on her family as the impetus. She wrote: "When my family is able to go to Mexico, my brothers will experience where they came from. They will be able to see all of the different styles of clothing and the different types of foods Mexico has to offer," adding "I think it would be really fun to share these places with my brothers" (PV narrative, 11/28/2012). When asked in the interview about her last trip to Mexico and why her brothers did not go, Ana replied, "They didn't want to go because like my brother came here to the United States when he was like 1 or 2 years old. My other brother was born here like three years ago." She added, "So they didn't [go] because my mom wasn't sure like my baby brother was going to like be comfortable in the car and so my mom was like maybe next year he might go with you" (Interview, 12/13/2012).

Throughout the semester, Ana never explicitly stated whether her brother was undocumented or not, and it was not clear from any data source whether she knew. Yet the real barriers she faced defined

her American Dream. The findings presented here suggest that Ana shaped her American Dream Photovoice project around her entire family's difficult or impossible *camino* (journey) to their Mexican homeland. She wanted to share her cultural capital with her siblings to try to break down the barriers that exist for them, namely that they had been unable to travel with her to Mexico, so that her family in the United States can be reunited with what she calls her "other family" in Mexico. Ana echoed this sentiment in conversations with her college partner: "I wish, like, one day, all my family here in the United States can go visit our other family in Mexico" (Audio session, 10/23/2012). A week later, Ana repeated: "I wish once my whole family and I could go to Mexico and like celebrate with our other family there, that is there, and so like, I could see like my aunties, grandparents, cousins, and my uncles" (Audio session, 11/01/2012). By creating a dichotomy between her U.S. family and her "other" Mexican family over the border, Ana problematized the fracturing of the *gran familia* discourse central to a traditional Mexican family, and her American Dream Photovoice project offers a potential solution—a journey to Mexico that unites *all* members of her family.

Ana concluded: "In order to achieve my American Dream, I have to work hard and stay dedicated to my dream. I know that it's not going to be easy but it is still important" (PV narrative, 11/28/2012). At the same time, she doubted if her dream would be possible: "I wonder if that dream will come true and if it will be hard" (Audio session, 11/01/2012). For Ana, the map she photographed and analyzed in her narrative acts as both a physical and metaphorical delineation of the difficult and unpredictable *camino* that awaits her as she works toward her collective American Dream of crossing borders more freely and reuniting her fractured family.

Hernando

Hernando's American Dream was to become an engineer and work for NASA. His Photovoice project centered on his academic success through hard work, professional aspirations in engineering, and the resulting empowerment to assist others in reaching their dreams. He photographed his mother's car engine to express his interest in building and designing things.

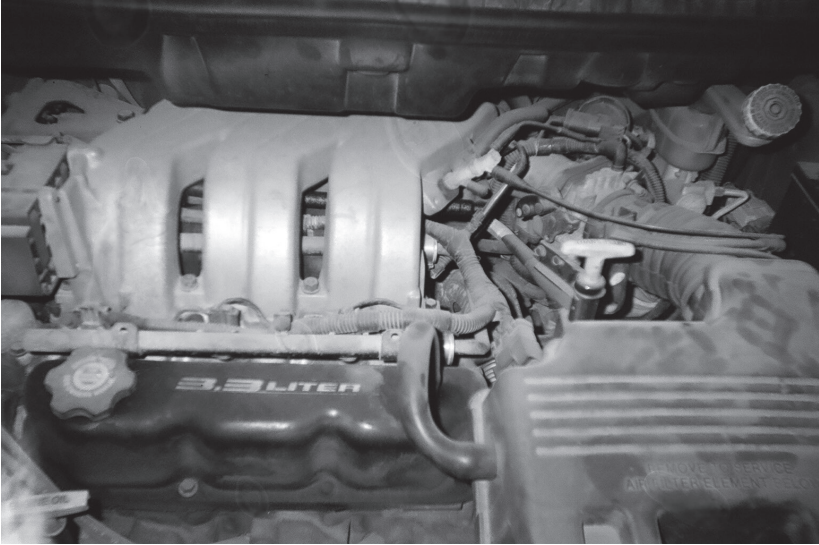


Figure 2: Hernando’s Photovoice Image

Despite his ambitious goals, Hernando’s Photovoice photo foregrounded the process, or building blocks—learning how an engine works—, rather than the final product, such as photographing a space shuttle or the moon. His focus on the process, along with his (seemingly) disengaged demeanor and resistance to participation early in the project, surprised and led one researcher to draw incorrect conclusions about Hernando’s initial Photovoice image: “When I approached the group . . . Hernando was quick to show me his photo. It was an engine of a car (close up).” The researcher noted, “I asked him if his dream was to be a mechanic, to which he reacted in a huge, confident smile. ‘No, an engineer’. I had assumed that his dream was more humble than it was” (Field notes, 10/23/2012). This demonstrates deficit thinking on the part of the researcher, despite prior experience working with Latinx in these types of partnerships.

Hernando’s framing of his American Dream project around its building blocks not only mirrors the steps of a complex engineering system, but also demonstrates his awareness of the collective group who will help or be helped along the way and the difficult process ahead. When asked in the follow-up interview why parts of his dream were like an engine, he responded: “[F]irst comes school and stuff . . .

then you have to learn how to do anything and then you can . . . tell other people how to do it and they can probably do it, their American Dream” (12/13/2012). In his narrative, Hernando examined this process: “By learning how to work with many parts, I could figure out how rockets work and how they are made. By learning this, I can work for NASA someday.” He also wrote, “I want to help people, and by doing this I can help discover water on other planets so that people can live there” (PV narrative, 11/28/2012).

The difficult journey to fulfill his dream also emerges as a dominant theme in Hernando’s Photovoice narrative: “I will accomplish this dream by working hard, writing, and pay[ing] attention in school. . . . This is important to me because I think it is fun and I could help someone someday” (11/28/2012). The effects of achieving his dream, particularly being capable of helping and teaching others, became a motivation for Hernando’s individual American Dream. Significantly, he also underscored the American Dream project and his partner’s role in helping him as an example of how he’d like to help others someday (Interview, 12/13/12). He wrote: “It is important for me to be able to help someone someday so that I can help other people accomplish their dreams to become engineers, so they can do the same. I want to make history” (PV narrative, 11/28/2012). Despite his understanding of the difficult path ahead, Hernando was cautiously optimistic, writing: “My American dream seems like a fairy tale, but it is real life, and it will become a success someday” (PV narrative, 11/28/2012).

Liliana

Liliana’s American Dream was to travel to Mexico and visit her grandparents, as well as travel in general around the world to experience new places. Her image is of a modest urban street intersection. Trees line the street and the yard in the foreground has chain link fencing. There are potholes in the pavement. One street leads away and another veers to the left. The image of a road is both a literal and figurative expression of Liliana’s American Dream: it is this road that she will have to traverse to travel Mexico and the world, but the stop sign is symbolic of all of the barriers that she recognizes to achieving her American Dream.



Figure 3: Liliana's Photovoice Image

To describe her American Dream, Liliana wrote, “The road represents travel because no matter where you are going or how you are getting there, first you have to start on the road” (PV narrative, 11/28/2012). For Liliana, embarking on a journey meant that she could see her family in Mexico for the first time in six years (Audio session, 11/15/2012). She realized that she needed to start somewhere to achieve her American Dream and she also knew that there would be many obstacles to overcome. She wrote, “The obstacles that the stop sign represents can vary from person to person, and are unique to every adventure” (PV narrative, 11/28/2012). Some of the specific barriers that Liliana mentions are economic; she considered transportation, lodging, food, and clothing expenses as important whenever one makes a journey (PV narrative, 11/28/2012). Liliana also cited the language barriers to travel (Audio session, 11/8/2012). While Liliana’s understanding of the resources necessary to travel to Mexico is fundamental to her framing of the roadblocks along the way, she also expressed the complexity of her American Dream. In her narrative, Liliana wrote: “Even though my American Dream is challenging, I will study and also work hard to make my American Dream true” (PV narrative, 11/28/2012).

In the project, however, Liliana also underscored how she would need help from others to reach her dream. She wrote: “Sometimes you might not have enough money to get a plane ticket and you need to find a place where you can sleep for the night. You might not know anyone there and you won’t have anybody to talk to except for yourself” (PV narrative, 11/28/12). Although Liliana knew that studying would help her journey and she thought her American Dream would be possible, she also noted that her dream may not come true. She pondered the stop sign with her college partner and said, “The challenges that the stop sign may represent is that you may not be able to go to the places you want to go” (Audio session, 11/8/2012). This demonstrates a depth of understanding uncharacteristic of the “pull yourself up” rhetoric typical of the American Dream, in which individual and collective efforts may not be enough.

Liliana also hinted at further barriers to her American Dream like family legal status and financial hardship and it was difficult for her to discuss her photograph:

Liliana became noticeably upset while working with [her college partner] and did not appear to understand or want to complete the activity about choosing photos . . . Liliana began to cry about the photos when she spoke about seeing her grandparents in Mexico and then seemed to calm down. [The researcher] spoke with [the teacher] about getting Liliana to see a counselor if she was still upset about the project. (Field notes, 10/23/2012)

In the end, Liliana participated, writing a powerful narrative that received the most praiseful tweets at the public gallery events. Despite the seemingly optimistic narrative, Liliana’s class demeanor and response to a pre-writing prompt tell a more complex story that underscores the somber tone of her Photovoice photo: “I wonder if I will make it” (Pre-writing, 11/01/2012).

Néstor

Néstor’s American Dream was to study mathematics in college and become a math teacher, or soccer player, but his true passion was for education, the focus of the majority of his narrative and interviews. He staged his image with his college partner, with a marker board

with a red A+ written in the center. Surrounding the A+ were the words and phrases: 1) literacy; 2) math; 3) reading; and 4) $2 + 2 = 4$. Néstor believed that earning high grades was key to achieving his American Dream of teaching others in the future.

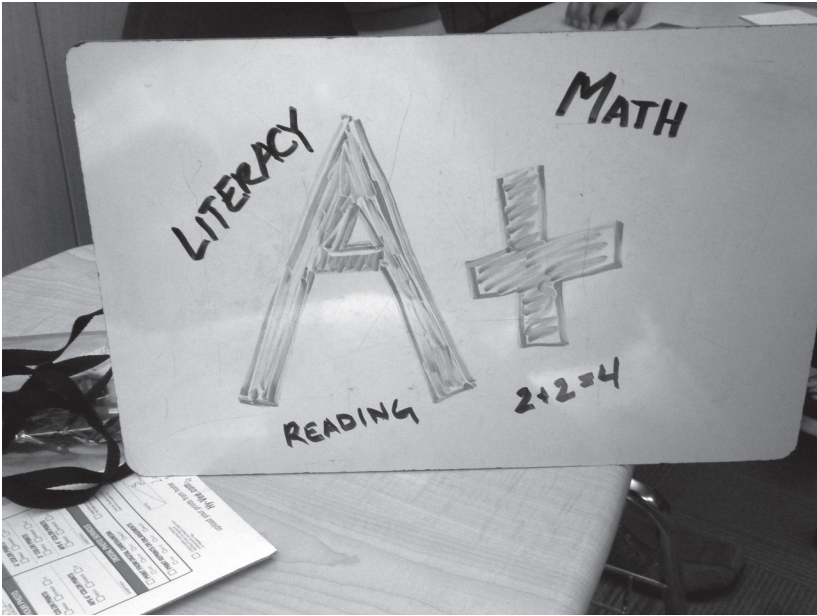


Figure 4: Néstor's Photovoice Image

At the start of the project, Néstor was unenthused about the partnership, one could even say resistant. By the end, he became significantly more excited and more involved. When it seemed like he would not be able to come to the middle school gallery event and share his narrative due to his catechism class, he was noticeably sad (Field notes, 11/01/2012). Moreover, Néstor seemed as though he would cry when he realized that his college partner was not able to attend the class following the gallery night due to illness (Field notes, 11/29/2012). Throughout the project, Néstor developed a bond with his college partner and was thrilled to be on the college's campus for the visit. He had even made a card, which he forgot, for his college partner.

Throughout his narrative, Néstor emphasized the steps toward achieving his American Dream of being a math teacher. He wrote, “For me the American Dream is to go to college and to be a good student. It also means to get an A+ in all of my classes.” Néstor continued, “This chance to go to college will help me get a successful job. . . . I want to be a math teacher in my American Dream because I like math and because I can teach other kids to become better at math” (PV narrative, 11/28/2012). This passage demonstrates that Néstor reflected on the path to enter the field of teaching, emphasizing good grades, dedicated hard work, and attending college as integral, which certainly resonates with the traditional, individualist bootstraps narrative.

However, one of the most enlightening and nuanced parts of Néstor’s American Dream is that it did not end with him landing a teaching job; the main achievement of his American Dream is educating others, contingent on the following: “I want to do well in reading class. Doing well in reading class will help other people understand what I say. It will help me read clear[ly] to the students in my class when I’m a teacher, too.” He added, “I want to make sure they [the students] understand what I’m saying. The students can then do well on pre- and post- tests and pass with good grades” (PV narrative, 11/28/2012). Although Néstor already thought about how he wants to impact the lives of children once he becomes a math teacher, the foundation of his American Dream is based on the path he will need to take to make it; Néstor realized that working hard to develop his own literacy would let him effectively communicate with future students to ensure their own success. Thus, Néstor views his own success as both individual and collective, recognizing both his hard work and that of his teachers in their own educations.

Néstor further defined his American Dream in his final interview, distinguishing between communicating in English and in Spanish, ultimately privileging English over Spanish. In response to a question about why communication is important, Néstor responded, “Because I speak two languages and I need to talk with more clear English than Spanish because people will not understand me talking Spanish, so I have to talk in English more often” (Interview, 12/13/2012). Later, Néstor affirmed that English was important, but he viewed Spanish

as “not that . . . important. . . [b]ecause we don’t need that language like in school because we need to talk to the teachers in English” (Interview, 12/13/2012). Due to the continual encouragement to speak English and the discouragement to speak Spanish in the school, Néstor believed that distancing himself from Spanish, and perhaps even Latinx culture, was crucial for him to have the opportunity to teach and impact others in the American education system.

DISCUSSION

The data of the four Latinx middle school students analyzed here underscore two themes related to their journey, or *camino*. First, their presentation of the difficult path and potential barriers to achieving their dreams offer insight into the students’ beliefs about their challenging educational and economic futures. In their American Dream projects, all four students foreground education as the difference maker: the resulting economic empowerment would allow Ana and Liliana to overcome (some of) the barriers to reunite their families separated by the border; Hernando’s education as an engineer would allow him not only to solve social problems, but also to pave the way for his family to achieve their dreams; Néstor’s effort to overcome what he perceives as a linguistic barrier in education by communicating in English would empower him to educate future generations. Despite being born in the United States and being in ELL since kindergarten, all four sixth graders were unable to score proficient on the district’s English test to move into the regular curriculum for sixth grade, which raises questions about the various ways the education system and society had failed them.

Second, the students’ dreams involve individual attainment, but only as a necessary component of a larger, collective American Dream. In fact, the Photovoice data of all four students suggests that their American Dream is not “mine,” but rather, “ours,” and involves their families, teachers, classmates, and even future students. The students’ concepts of “our” American Dream are situated within a context that transcends the student and their unique cultural and geographical locations: for Ana and Liliana, the *camino* crosses borders and generations, uniting separated families and sharing vital cultural heritage would give their community strength; for Hernando and Néstor, succeeding on the challenging path would forge the way

for the next generation. Ostensibly, the four Latinx students' data interrogate key questions found in Blades' imagined *América* three decades earlier: the collective strength to search for optimism in difficult times and, as Blades (1984) proposed, "Let's be confident / let's move forward my people / to save time / for those who are yet to come" [our translation].

Finally, like the "disappeared" or gagged *América* depicted in Blades' "Buscando América," the aspirational *América* described by the sixth graders is borderless in theory. However, data analyzed here demonstrates the students' critique of barriers (both physical and abstract) imposed by a marginalized position in American society, whether linguistic, racial or socioeconomic. Their Photovoice projects demonstrate that they are indeed cognizant that their voices are silenced and of the challenges they will face along their *camino* toward their respective American Dreams, with all questioning whether their dreams can be made reality.

CONCLUSION

This joint Photovoice project in a reciprocal service-learning partnership between middle school and college students challenged both youth and young adults to interrogate the seemingly ordinary American Dream concept in a novel way. In the end, it was due to one courageous ELL teacher's creation of a space within a standardized curriculum that co-constructed learning flourished and less recognized voices were heard by the public. The project's approach resonates with the Latinx Critical Theory (LatCrit) approach of Solórzano and Yosso (2002), which "suggest[s] that we must recognize and address the lives of students of color who are often the objects of our educational research and yet are often absent from or silenced within this discourse" (p. 46). With these goals in mind, the Latinx students chronicled here wrote their *own* American Dreams, which challenged the individualist "bootstraps" discourse by demonstrating that Franklin's meritocracy (1793/1958) did not necessarily apply to their current situations. Their marginalized voices engaged over 600 community leaders, politicians, and school officials in public pedagogy (Giroux, 2003)—with the students as teachers—through public gallery events and, moving forward, the public at large through scholarly outlets.

After a debriefing with the teacher at the end of the school year, it became clear that the Photovoice collaboration had concrete implications for two sixth-grade students in particular: Ana and Hernando. The teacher shared that after spending seven years in the ELL track, Ana was the only one in her ELL cohort to pass the English proficiency exam and be able to join a regular curriculum in seventh grade. With regard to Hernando, on the first day of the partnership, the teacher told one researcher that he “hates writing”; in contrast, when asked in the follow-up interview about what he liked about working with his college partners, he said: “I really didn’t like to write a lot but now I like to write stuff” (Interview, 12/13/2012). Another concrete outcome became evident at year’s end, when Hernando was slated to repeat sixth grade. However, when the teacher presented his Photovoice writing and unsolicited praise from an email to the principal about Hernando’s photo and narrative by a community member, particularly how well he fielded questions at the middle school gallery night, the school decided to promote him to seventh grade. According to the ELL teacher, both students’ confidence and classroom engagement had also increased greatly during and following the American Dream project, which she attributed directly to our collaboration. Unfortunately, the teacher moved to another state that year and the partnership was discontinued after several years of ongoing collaboration. The field coordinator worked with the middle-school students for two years beyond the Photovoice project with other teachers, including on projects parallel to ours.

The data analyzed above demonstrates both the concrete and catalytic (Lather, 2003) values of the partnership and study. The reciprocal structure of this collaborative literacy project between higher education and public schools and its outcomes provide an example of how to not only teach literacy creatively in a structured curriculum (Pinar, 2004), but also how to engage and privilege silenced voices in a public discourse (Giroux, 2003) in a culturally relevant way (Ladson-Billings, 1992). Fernández (2002) posed an important question about researching Latinx students: “What gets left out, then, if we do not hear students’ voices?” (p. 45). In this case, the Latinx students’ Photovoice narratives and photos answer that question for us.

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NOTES

The term America(n) is often used in Latin America and by Latinx in the United States to refer to the Americas, with many rejecting its use to refer solely to the United States. With this in mind, we use the terms America(n) to explore the American Dream concept only in this specific context.

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Name It and Claim It: Cross-Campus Collaborations for Community-Based Learning

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This article describes the value of cross-campus collaborations for community-based learning. We argue that community-based learning both provides unique opportunities for breaking academic silos and invites campus partnerships to make ambitious projects possible. To illustrate, we describe a course “Writing for Social Justice” that involved created videos for our local YWCA’s Racial Justice Program. We begin by discussing the shared value of collaboration across writing studies and librarianship (our disciplinary orientations). We identify four forms of cross-campus collaboration, which engaged us in working with each other, with our community partner, and with other partners across campus. From there, we visualize a timeline, turning from the why of cross-campus collaborations to the how. Finally, we underscore the need to name and claim—to value and cultivate—cross-campus collaborations for community-based learning.

For those of us involved in public rhetoric, civic writing, and service learning, collaboration is what we do. Whether educators, community organizers, nonprofit leaders, writers, or activists, we recognize that *we need others*. We seek to build “bridges” (Peck,

Flower, and Higgins) and “networks” (Getto, Leon, and Getto-Rivait), and we act on shared responsibility to communities for many reasons, not the least of which being “because we live here” (Goldblatt). Despite valuing collaboration, our understanding of this essential ingredient of social justice work becomes limited when we conceive of it simply as a single, bi-directional partnership. Conversations about campus-community partnerships, for instance, have emphasized the inward/outward relationship of working between and across organizations (from school to community and, in reverse, from community to school). Such language has been incredibly important for helping educators recognize that we need to learn and receive, as much as teach and give. In other words, collaborations need reciprocity—an argument made by my community writing scholar-practitioners (e.g., Cushman; Flower; Mathieu; Parks and Goldblatt; Rousculp). While critically important, this language has also enabled educators to look outward, off campus, without doing important inward-looking reflection. Identifying and partnering with internal campus collaborators can strengthen and help sustain campus-community partnerships over time, while also changing the educational contexts that block collaborative engagement.

Toward painting a fuller picture of the many relationships that enable community-based learning, we highlight the need for a multitude of reciprocal collaborations, including and especially those within one’s home institution. That is, to support and sustain community-based learning, we (educators and activists) also need cross-campus collaborations, or those internal to K-university schools or other organizations. As Cheryl Hofstetter Duffy argues in “Tapping the Potential of Service-Learning,” faculty—and we’d broaden this to include all educators—“should look for ways to recognize and utilize the contributions of all parties involved, members of the community *as well as members of the academy*” (11, emphasis added). Truly, cross-campus collaborations (or those with members of the academy) are needed for more intentional, robust, engaged, and lasting infrastructure for community-based learning. Cross-campus collaborations provide relational networks, teaching tools, funding, and other support. Such infrastructure is especially important for justice-oriented teaching, scholarship, and activism, as the more people and programs involved, the more institutional investment stands behind what is too-often discounted as an

individual's personal work. Further, such infrastructure provides the connections, resources, and commitments that can make community-based learning truly capacity-building and sustained practice, for as Myles Horton reminds us of any community organizing or justice-based work, we're in it for "the long haul."

To make this argument, we describe the role of cross-campus collaborations in offering a community-based learning course titled "Writing for Social Justice" in partnership with the YWCA Southeast Wisconsin. This course was (and will continue to be) offered as an upper-division, special topics course in Writing-Intensive English at Marquette University (Milwaukee, Wisconsin). In addition to studying central concepts of (in)equity, (in)justice, agency, power, and rights, this course provided students with opportunities to practice and enact "writing for social justice," with special attention to racial justice. Specifically, we partnered with the YWCA's Racial Justice Program, and based on their needs, created short videos to promote Everytown Wisconsin, a week-long leadership camp for teens. These videos highlighted participants' experiences with the camp, explained the nature of an "anti-oppression summer camp," and helped the YWCA both recruit teen participants and report their success to funders. These videos are now in use by the YWCA, and they can be found online in Marquette's Institutional Repository, where interested readers can also learn more about the course and view the full syllabus: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/english_4210/>.

To teach and create videos, the two of us—a faculty member in writing studies (Beth) and a librarian and coordinator of Marquette's Digital Media Studio (DMS) (Elizabeth)—partnered before, during, and after the course. We worked together (1) to plan, offer, and teach in-class workshops and out-of-class conferences; (2) to design, model, and scaffold video assignments; (3) to pilot a course tutoring program for undergraduate peer mentoring; and (4) to engage in other cross-campus collaborations that further strengthened our learning and relationship with the YWCA. We share these four forms of collaboration *not* as a framework or template for all collaborations to follow, but in order to highlight the variable ways in which collaborations can unfold. Local needs, institutional contexts, and other characteristics necessitate varied and new (as in new to

local context, even if not truly *new*) innovations. What we hope to underscore is the importance of explicitly *naming and claiming* the role cross-campus collaborations play in community-based learning.

To explain further: within educational contexts, we are typically siloed within disciplines, departments, and units on campus (e.g., Tett; Thorp and Goldstein). When such a silo effect is countered (and it too-often is not), this countering emerges through talk about interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary learning: from paired course offerings to digital humanities centers to new research institutes. Notable examples range from George Mason's Center for History and New Media to HASTAC (Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory, with hubs located at Duke University and the Graduate Center at the City University of New York). This turn to interdisciplinary learning, then, centers cross-campus collaborations *within academic contexts*. When community members are brought into conversation with such interdisciplinary initiatives, it is typically as audience members for academic programming—not in the collaborative partnerships we seek to build through community-based learning.

At the same time and in dialectic tension with interdisciplinary initiatives, movement toward community engagement typically brings a single instructor, course, or program into relation with community members/partners (e.g., Deans; Duffy). Such movement invites ongoing attention to collaboration, reciprocity, and mutual learning. Like efforts to break academic silos, these efforts break university bubbles. Still, the turn to community-based learning centers collaborations *within the community*, crossing the university and community divide, and largely ignoring other campus units. When other educators, students, or university-affiliated folks are brought into community-based learning, it is, again, typically as audience members for academic programming—in many cases, to learn about innovative course designs or new campus initiatives. Hence, community-based learning largely ignores cross-campus collaborations, just as cross-campus collaborations largely ignore community-based learning.

By making a call to “name and claim” cross-campus collaborations *for* community-based learning, we argue that community-based learning both (1) provides unique, multiplicitous opportunities for breaking academic silos and (2) invites, if not requires, campus partnerships to make ambitious projects possible and worthwhile. To illustrate, project-based work like video creation often necessitates a multi-part infrastructure with both campus and community partners, which we describe in this article. Everything from logistical dynamics (e.g., how to schedule and where to record interviews) to technical skill-building (e.g., how to record and edit interviews) to core conceptual, relational, and emotional learning (e.g., why racial justice work is needed) relies on a number of successful partnerships. In our case, the DMS, a service of Marquette’s Raynor Memorial Libraries, emerged as a primary campus partner, and the partnership not only supported the course but also allowed the DMS to initiate the course tutoring program that has expanded the DMS’s offerings and carried forward to other cross-campus collaborations.

In what follows, we begin by discussing the shared value of collaboration in writing studies and librarianship—that is, across our two disciplinary contexts. We then turn to the case of our collaboration, identifying four forms of collaboration, which engaged us in working with each other, with our community partner, and with other partners across campus. From there, we visualize our timeline, turning from *the why* of cross-campus collaborations to *the how*. Finally, we step back and consider the lessons learned from our case, which underscore the need to name and claim—to value and cultivate—cross-campus collaborations for community-based learning.

THE SHARED VALUE OF COLLABORATION IN WRITING STUDIES AND LIBRARIANSHIP

Many scholar-activists engaged in community writing acknowledge the importance of cross-campus partnerships, even if we don’t name them as such. Within writing studies, for example, Tiffany Rousculp describes the importance of departmental, administrative, and student allies on her campus to the funding, creation, long-term vision, and staffing of a community writing center. Ellen Cushman,

Thomas Deans, Linda Flower, Eli Goldblatt, Jeffrey Grabill, Michelle Hall Kells, Paula Mathieu, and Steve Parks, among others, describe the many collaborations that emerge and surround any successful and sustained campus-community partnership. They articulate what Wayne Campbell Peck, Linda Flower, and Lorraine Higgins name in their now-historical piece “Community Literacy”: that is, the work of community literacy “creates bridges and allows for productive working relationships among people of difference” (201). Conversation, community organizing, shared inquiry, and mutual aims are all essential ingredients to community writing work, and we appreciate the many scholars who have underlined the central role collaboration plays in connecting campus and community. What we hope to contribute to these conversations is the explicit naming of cross-campus collaborations as necessary for engaging and sustaining campus-community partnerships.

Libraries and librarians also find cross-campus collaborations at the core of our work. On most campuses, libraries are well positioned to act as a hub for collaboration. Like compositionists who administer campus and community writing programs, librarians have advocated for almost every iteration and variation of the collaborative process: the need for collaboration with faculty, among colleagues, with students, in partnership with community members and organizations, as administrators, and with other campus entities (e.g., ACRL, “2010 Top Ten”; ACRL, *Value*; CLIR; Gashurov and Kenrick; Jaguszewski and Williams). In fact, libraries rely, thrive, and survive on collaboration. As is suggested throughout reports from both the Council on Libraries and Information Resources (CLIR) and the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), engagement with campus partners is integral, if not the only way, in which libraries can position ourselves within educational innovation. Current conditions, such as budget cuts, changes in publishing, and creation of digital content, speak to both the necessity of cross-campus collaborations and the importance of reciprocity within collaborations.

Like the goal of achieving reciprocity in service learning partnerships, cross-campus collaborations must benefit all partners. Libraries’ involvement in service learning courses offers an opportunity for students to see libraries and librarians “in a new light” (Herther 387).

As librarians abandon tired library instructional models and instead scaffold practical skills-building, we find new ways of relating that are relevant to students and community members. Librarians have wrestled with our role in community-based learning, asking how best to support courses where much of the learning takes place out of the classroom, and where, in turn, many of the information literacy needs take place out of the library (Riddle). Additionally, community-based learning courses bring new informational literacy challenges as projects extend beyond more traditional research assignments, such as seminar papers, literature reviews, or analytical essays. Genres of community writing from brochures and grant reports to web materials and videos (in our case) invite further divergence from traditional library instruction and inspire new pedagogical collaborations, leading those of us in libraries to embrace expanded campus—and, increasingly, community—roles.

With these changes in mind, many academic libraries have embraced the role of *resource* for supporting creative processes aligned with the “Maker Movement” (“Trends”). We see a shift within libraries to supporting creation and innovation and to moving students beyond consumers of information (ACRL, *Framework*). At Marquette, this shift is taking place through the Raynor Memorial Libraries’ Digital Media Studio (DMS), which Elizabeth coordinates.¹ The DMS is one of many media labs and makerspaces that are now housed within academic and public libraries. Among notable examples are North Carolina State University’s Digital Media Lab, YOUmedia at the Chicago Public Library, and the Chattanooga Public Library’s 4th floor space. Essentially, as libraries become homes of digital media studios, literacy, equipment, and instruction, libraries are able to offer a new array of support for digital scholarship and composing that can easily support community writing projects. And libraries are also able to benefit from such collaborative projects when students, faculty, and community members make relationships with the library that extends beyond a single project or semester. Like writing courses and programs, libraries are well positioned to be collaborators: not only do librarians have a history of engaging in cross-campus collaborations,

1 At Marquette University, the Digital Media Studio (DMS) is now the Digital Scholarship Lab (DSL Lab), which we explain in the article’s conclusion. This shift seeks to acknowledge the growing use of and need for institutional support to incorporate digital tools and methods within research and teaching.

but we also have new resources and seek new opportunities to be involved in community-based learning.

THE CASE OF OUR COLLABORATION

Not only do writing studies and librarianship similarly share the value of collaboration, but the two of us (Beth and Elizabeth) have been collaborating since we came to Marquette and identified shared commitments. With a collaborative relationship already in place, in 2014, we began to consider possibilities for the course “Writing for Social Justice.” Broadly, this course engages students in considering how we, as communicators, can intervene into injustice and bring about more equitable relations. Students consider the impact of writing, literacy, and rhetoric on the world: on changing ourselves, others, and institutions. We engage not only in the *critique against* injustice, which involves many critical readings and efforts to develop shared language and frameworks, but we also engage in the *critique for* justice, which involves learning about justice-oriented work already taking place (e.g., by nonprofits like the YWCA) and joining in that work. (For more on the needed pairing and dialectical relationship of *critique against* and *critique for*, see Rasha Diab, Thomas Ferrel, Beth Godbee, and Neil Simpkins’s “Making Commitments to Racial Justice Actionable.” To summarize the argument: we need visionary and positive articulations of justice to make the work truly *actionable*.)

With these aims in mind, Beth met with Martha Barry, Director of the YWCA Southeast Wisconsin’s Racial Justice Program, who identified a concrete need the course could address. Specifically, the YWCA needed short videos of just 2-5 minutes in length to help promote Everytown Wisconsin, the YWCA’s summer leadership camp for teens (YWCA, “Everytown Wisconsin”). After identifying this project, the two of us (Beth and Elizabeth) began discussing what role the DMS could play. The DMS was already equipped to support video projects and offered equipment, space for student collaboration, software tutorials, and consultations. DMS staff was also willing to consult and co-teach with instructors and had facilitated equipment and software orientations, typically in a single class session. At this point, however, the DMS had not engaged in long-term, semester-long collaborations and had never supported a community-based learning course. We realized that, to make such a course work,

the DMS would need to be more deeply involved: from planning assignment sequences to co-teaching new media skills to providing scaffolding and support for students throughout the semester.

Additionally, although “Writing for Social Justice” was an upper-division course, it had no prerequisites, and students could be expected to have little or no prior experience creating videos. Even those who might have composed videos for other courses would not have done so for a community partner, and indeed, during the course, students noted the increased stakes of creating for a real and public audience (and not just to fulfill a course assignment). We knew, therefore, that we would need to scaffold students’ rhetorical and technical learning—alongside other important conceptual, relational, and emotional learning—in order to create videos for our community partner.

In response, we approached our collaboration as co-teaching and engaged in four forms of substantial and sustained cross-campus collaboration:

Co-teaching in-class workshops and out-of-class conferences:

We co-taught one day each week (1/3 of class meetings) as “tech days” and met frequently with students one-with-one and in small group conferences. Both involved students *directly* with staff from the DMS, Marquette’s Service Learning Program, and the YWCA’s Racial Justice Program in addition to the two of us and colleagues in the course. In this way, co-teaching and community-based learning worked together to communicate the importance of relational, reciprocal, and multiple (internal and external) networks.

<p>Co-authoring and co-creating an initial video assignment: Realizing that students would need practice before creating videos for the YWCA, we planned assignments to scaffold student learning. An initial assignment involved creating videos of just 90 seconds, reporting something of “critical importance” from readings. In addition to collaboratively conceiving of the assignment, we co-created assignment instructions in a 90-second video, following the same form. In this way, we engaged in video creation and co-authoring ourselves, practicing what students would do for the YWCA.</p>
<p>Co-developing a course tutoring program: By receiving a Seed Grant from the Service Learning Program, the course contributed financially to the DMS piloting a course tutoring program. In turn, this program allowed DMS undergraduate tutors to spend time getting to know the course context, the students enrolled, and the YWCA. The peer tutor attended in-class workshops, provided technical support and feedback, helped students videotape interviews, and offered other support as needed. Of the many ways in which we collaborated, our efforts toward developing this course tutoring program were perhaps the most reciprocal, as the DMS could see direct benefit as well.</p>
<p>Collaborating with others: In addition to three primary ways in which the course and DMS collaborated, we also worked closely with the YWCA staff and with former Everytown Wisconsin participants, their parents, and volunteers who served as camp staff. And we collaborated with others across campus, including the Service Learning Program; the Center for Teaching and Learning; and Marquette’s Digital Programs, another unit within the Raynor Memorial Libraries. These multiple collaborations added resources, institutional support, and the ability to share our work.</p>

Figure 1: Four Forms of Substantial and Sustained Cross-Campus Collaboration.

In total, these multiple types of collaboration allowed us to collaborate deeply: weekly throughout the semester and in times before and after the course. “Writing for Social Justice” helped us think about collaboration, develop methods for working together, and connect with other campus and community partners that have set up continued and future collaborations. Next, we’ll discuss

these four forms of collaboration toward revealing more about our case, specifically, and toward illustrating the value of cross-campus collaborations, generally.

(1) Co-Teaching In-Class Workshops and Out-of-Class Conferences.

As collaborators, the two of us relied on and trusted each other's knowledges and disciplinary expertise, which we could share through in-class workshops and out-of-class conferences. Co-teaching allowed us to foster an "ecology of feedback"—language we draw from ecocomposition, as Tiffany Rousculp, Sidney I. Dobrin, Christian R. Weisser, and others understand it. This ecology of feedback involved rich and interconnected conditions and relations in which students asked questions of and sought feedback from multiple people: from each other, from undergraduate peer tutors, from faculty and staff, and from folks on campus and in the community. And we, too, benefited from this rich ecology of feedback: learning from each other, reflecting throughout and beyond the semester, and setting new goals based on student input.

In addition to providing both us and students with many opportunities for feedback, the workshops and conferences allowed us to teach technical, collaboration, and research skills. These skills were not taught isolated from the critical and justice-oriented approach to the course, but instead, were taught to make possible our intervention (i.e., our videos for the YWCA). To begin, we co-taught digital media skills, including storyboarding, audio, lighting, video composition, visual design, and video editing. We also focused on collaboration skills, such as managing long-term projects, working through conflict in a group, co-authoring, listening to others, sharing and backing up data, and revising with the audience in mind. Additionally, we co-taught a number of research-based and methodological skills needed to conduct interviews with participants, counselors, and directors of the YWCA's Everytown Wisconsin. These included writing interview scripts, conducting semi-structured interviews, and selecting relevant and representative quotes. These various skills were taught in a just-in-time model (e.g., Novak, Gavrin, Christian, and Patterson) of sequencing in-class workshops with out-of-class assignments and ongoing conferences, making what could be seen as too much new material integrated with the larger projects and

purposes of the course. This teaching, therefore, connected with the larger course structure and assignment sequence, which we also collaboratively created.

(2) Co-Authoring and Co-Creating an Initial Video Assignment.

In addition to co-teaching, we thought together about the larger course structure and collaboratively created an initial video assignment that would provide students with practice before creating videos for the YWCA. We hoped this first assignment would be low stakes and build students' confidence, as it was shorter, more informal, and only for our in-class audience. Also, to give ourselves experience with the format and the tasks we were asking students to undertake, we created the assignment as a video itself, titled "What's This All About? A Short Video about Making Short Videos": <http://publications.marquette.edu/english_4210/6/>.



Figure 2: *What's This All About? A Short Video about Making Short Videos.*

Complemented by the syllabus and a fuller assignment sheet, this first video assignment—what we called the “critical importance video”—asked students to engage deeply with key concepts such as bias literacy, linguistic prejudice and rights, and Iris Young’s five faces of oppression. Moreover, the process of creating this video assignment allowed us to deepen our working relationship and to practice collaborative teaching before being “live” with students.

This initial video project proved useful for helping students synthesize conceptual and technical learning: in fact, students struggled as much with what to highlight from their readings as they did with the many facets of video production. It also proved useful for helping students see that videos require time (days to weeks of advance time) in a way that many assignments do not. Specifically, students whose videos were still raw/rough knew so and reported in class what they wished they had done differently. They wished they allowed more time, for example, to rewrite their storyboards once they realized they had over-planned content, to add music once they realized the tone/feel wasn't communicated, or to re-record audio once they realized it was too quiet. In contrast, the students whose videos were very polished and well-received by the class had, without exception, began their projects earlier, conferenced with the two of us and with DMS peer tutors multiple times, and spent time revising before rendering (finalizing) their videos. Beyond the benefits associated with each of us having created a video, this assignment also helped us (students, DMS peer tutors, and the two of us as well) to practice giving feedback. The initial videos led to informed questions and meaningful conversations about what to keep in mind going forward, as co-authoring groups began creating videos for the YWCA.

(3) Co-Developing a Course Tutoring Program.

In addition to the pedagogical partnerships involved in co-teaching and co-creating assignments, another crucial dimension of our cross-campus collaboration involved the piloting of the course tutoring program. The DMS already offered consultations for students working on multimodal assignments, but we realized there would be benefit of having an undergraduate peer tutor dedicated to the course. Our hope was that students would come to know this tutor well and would, therefore, be more willing to schedule out-of-class consultations. In turn, the tutor would know the course context, community-based learning, and importance of delivering quality final products to the YWCA. Luckily, our hopes came true.

With the support of a small grant—financial resources provided by another collaborator, the Service Learning Program—we were able to cover the additional costs of having a tutor attend in-class workshops, offer one-with-one and small group conferences, and

be “on call” during filming. This accessibility proved instrumental in helping students troubleshoot technical issues as they emerged. For example, during an interview, when students forgot to complete a sound check, the tutor was able to identify and correct the issue before too much footage was lost. To recapture the lost footage, DMS staff was able to provide the necessary tools and space for re-filming. Tutors also helped groups with “cleaning up” audio from secondary footage provided by the YWCA and supporting cloud-based storage options. Students in the course appreciated having the course tutor as another point-of-contact throughout the semester.

Now this course tutoring model is another resource that the DMS offers alongside equipment check-out, orientations, drop-in consultations, and other in-class instruction. Though other schools may have long-established course tutoring programs, especially associated with writing centers or multimodal studios, this model is new to Marquette and holds much promise for cross-disciplinary and campus-community collaborations. Peer mentoring adds another layer to cross-campus collaboration, as we consider collaboration not only among programs or between faculty and staff, but also with and among undergraduates. We look forward to continuing to innovate within this model when we next teach “Writing for Social Justice.”

(4) Collaborating with Others.

The ongoing and close collaborations between the course and DMS facilitated a number of other collaborations: both with our community partner (the YWCA) and with other campus partners, including Marquette’s Service Learning Program, the Center for Teaching and Learning, and Digital Programs. In some ways, the nature of the video project and the work of digital scholarship led to these collaborations. For instance, we invited and held collaborative feedback sessions and then a screening of the final videos, which brought together folks from the course, the DMS, the Service Learning Program, and the YWCA. These sessions were important not only for students to learn about the audiences and impact of their work, but also for multiple people across campus and community to meet and interact around the project. And initial connections made during these feedback sessions have nourished other collaborations: for instance, the YWCA now has two interns they identified by

working with staff from the Service Learning Program, staff who were introduced in these meetings.

Collaborations also emerged through excitement for digital scholarship, something our university (like many) is working to foster. The Center for Teaching and Learning became interested in the course and invited Beth to speak with other faculty about our project-based approach to community engagement. And another unit with the Raynor Memorial Libraries, Digital Programs, approached us about showcasing the final videos. Digital Programs supports scholarly communication and maintains the university's institutional repository (IR), or e-Publication. Digital Programs Coordinator, Rose Fortier, suggested publishing the final videos and course materials and provided the publishing platform: http://epublications.marquette.edu/english_4210/. Partnering with Digital Programs allowed us to talk about deeper issues of digital scholarship, such as open access publishing and alternative copyright licenses. Students participated in conversations with the YWCA staff and community members (teens, parents, and volunteers involved in Everytown Wisconsin) about what it would mean to make the videos publicly accessible in the e-Pub. A consensus emerged that additional publicity for the camp (through publically accessible videos) was welcome.

The three videos—targeting audiences of teens, parents/guardians, and the public/potential funders—now live in Marquette's e-Pub and in a YouTube channel created for the course and shared with the YWCA. We hope interested readers will view these videos to get a deeper understanding of Everytown Wisconsin and the collaborations needed for such a project.



Figure 3: One of Three Final Videos Promoting Everytown Wisconsin.

The decision to include videos in Marquette's e-Pub led us back to *core* issues of responsibility, reciprocity, ownership, agency, and access. The relational work necessitated by/for video creation concretized key concepts of the course and engaged us thoroughly in the act of "writing for social justice."

THE TIMELINE OF OUR COLLABORATION

We have presented the case of our collaboration to name and value cross-campus collaborations for community-based learning. The four forms of collaboration, we hope, highlight the ways in which cross-campus collaborations can be cultivated and grown over time. Even when primary partnerships emerge, many additional relations support and strengthen the work. We must recognize, therefore, not only the value of collaboration (which writing studies and librarianship share), but also the values of pairing planning with openness, focus with expansiveness, clear commitments with revision and rethinking. With these values in mind, we share the timeline of our collaboration to show how the multiple forms of co-teaching, co-creating, and co-developing occurred throughout the semester schedule. We share this timeline *not* as a roadmap for others to

follow but as a visualization for getting into the “nitty gritty” of one case of cross-campus collaboration—that is, for imagining how this work takes place week-to-week with both foresight and emergent developments.

As indicated on the syllabus (which is accessible online for interested readers), we approached this community-based learning project through four stages: (1) *orientation*, early in the semester; (2) *planning/design*, around midterms; (3) *development/drafting*, with intensive work through the second half of the semester; and (4) *revision*, toward the course’s conclusion. In many ways, having this plan in place and having drafted timelines and plans (i.e., frontloading efforts) allowed for a more emergent experience as we improvised within the four stages. With frequent check-ins, we made sure we were making progress but also allowed for unexpected situations from scheduling conflicts and lost data to the continued need to shake up/off normalized discourse and to emotionally and critically process what arose from learning. Figure 3 illustrates the overall organization of this collaboration among the course, DMS, and YWCA:

Semester Timeline	In-Class Instruction and Support	Out-of-Class Instruction and Support	Collaboration with Community Partner
Week #1		Writing about technology concerns and expectations.	Visiting the YWCA Southeast Wisconsin for an orientation to their Racial Justice Program, to Everytown Wisconsin, and to the staff whom we worked closely with throughout the semester.
Week #2	Introduction: Introducing the Digital Media Studio staff, resources, and cloud-based storage options.	Reading short texts, and watching online videos prior to each in-class tech day.	
Week #3	Scriptwriting and storyboarding: Introducing the video assignments and different tools for planning and organizing video projects.	Meeting with the course instructor and the DMS staff prior to the first assignment (critical importance video) being due at midterms.	Obtaining still images and already-recorded video footage from the YWCA.
Week #4	Video composition, framing, and lighting: Generating a list of best practices as a class (based on instructional videos watched prior to the workshop), and composing frames using high-definition video cameras.		Planning to conduct interviews with past participants of Everytown Wisconsin.
Week #5	Audio: Discussing audio recording best practices and available tools, and practicing recording and importing audio from several devices.	Forming co-authoring groups to plan and create videos for the YWCA.	Working closely with the DMS to solve logistical concerns for recording interviews with community members
Week #6	Editing: Practicing editing with different software, focusing primarily on how to back-up and export projects.	Meeting as groups during and outside of class sessions and with the course instructor and DMS staff (Elizabeth and the course tutor).	(e.g., identifying interview space, video and audio equipment, and storage options).
Week #7	Fair use and copyright: Reviewing creative commons, ways to find and identify public domain images and sound, and the university's policies for social media and online video.	Planning to conduct interviews and to process/incorporate previously recorded video footage and still images after midterms.	

Submitting, screening, and responding to critical importance videos.		
Week #8	<p>Workshops: Offering support, feedback, and in-class consultations during weekly workshop days.</p> <p>Whereas Elizabeth (the DMS coordinator/librarian) co-taught classes in weeks #2-7 and participated in giving feedback in week #8, the DMS course tutor was present and available for consultation these weeks.</p>	<p>Receiving feedback from the YWCA on initial plans, scripts, and storyboards.</p> <p>Conducting and filming interviews with YWCA staff and participants of Everytown Wisconsin.</p>
Weeks #9-12	<p>Meeting in required group conferences with course instructor and the DMS staff.</p> <p>Meeting in additional/optional conferences, and collaboratively troubleshooting throughout filming and editing.</p>	<p>Getting feedback from YWCA partners, and then revising to meet audience needs.</p>
Weeks #13-14	<p>Video editing workshops and feedback sessions: Offering support with video editing, and giving feedback on drafts. Supporting co-authoring groups as they revise, render, and finalize videos.</p>	
Week #15	<p>Screening and delivering final videos to the YWCA's Racial Justice Program.</p>	

Figure 4: Semester Overview and Timeline of Cross-Campus Collaboration.

As this figure illustrates, the depth of our collaboration spanned the full semester (beginning before and stretching beyond the course), joined in-class and out-of-class activities, and closely involved our community partner. This plan emerged as we identified skills and concepts (from storyboarding to an understanding of copyright and fair use) that students would need to successfully create videos for the YWCA. And it aimed to build students' rhetorical flexibility and communicative competences, while allowing students to deepen their understandings of social and racial justice through other components of the course, such as readings, in-class activities, reflective writing, contemplative practices, and visits to the YWCA.

While the many components of the course may seem like “too much,” they contribute to a sense of interconnectedness that aligns with collaboration and that helps students shake up/off inherited ways of operating in schools (Godbee). What we found (and what students reported) is that the multiple, interlocking pieces of the course helped us imagine new ways of being, thinking, and acting in the world. These new ways engage the *critique against* injustice and the *critique for* justice, and they help us to commit and make actionable commitments to social justice. After all, these various collaborations—cross-campus and campus-community—are aimed at intervening into inequity and bringing about a more just world. Like other advocates of social justice education (e.g., Adams and Bell; hooks), we believe that education must be “more than an intellectual activity” (Goodman 33); it must engage our whole selves, cultivating more mindful ways of thinking-being-acting in the world. To make change, we need cross-campus collaborations, as they secure institutional investment for building, sustaining, and growing justice-oriented work.

THE ARGUMENT FOR CROSS-CAMPUS COLLABORATIONS

We certainly are not alone in recognizing how community-based learning and other community writing work create the need for engaged infrastructure, as this work involves “complex systems of activity and value” (Grabill 26) that necessitate “chains of agencies that ‘get things done’” (20). Just as scholars have long noted the need for reciprocal, reflective, and responsible campus-community collaborations (e.g., Cushman; Deans; Flower; Mathieu; Parks and Goldblatt; Rousculp), so too must the infrastructure-building

(including the infrastructure internal to educational institutions) be mutually beneficial. As we hope our case illustrates, cross-campus collaborations are important to the process of building more intentional, robust, engaged, and lasting infrastructure. And we believe this infrastructure has the potential not only to strengthen community-university partnerships, but also to help those of us within educational institutions break down academic or disciplinary silos. When part of ongoing community engagement, cross-campus collaborations can make possible both cross-disciplinary and community-based learning.

Further, these collaborations respond to and innovate within local contexts. To ensure continued collaborations, the work needs to be exciting to all the parties involved, and this excitement can or perhaps often stems from producing new ways of working, new ways of relating, and new ways of building together. What may be innovative in one context may be old news in another. In our case, the development of a course tutoring program for the DMS was innovative for Marquette and something that could benefit the DMS and its future campus and community partners. Similarly, the DMS's contributions to "Writing for Social Justice" showcase new (well, new for us) models of co-teaching, embedded librarianship, and peer mentoring that can benefit members of the English Department and other departments and organizations as well.

What would be difficult to achieve in a single class became possible by having many people involved, who together were brainstorming, troubleshooting, revising, and rethinking. Toward reciprocity, the DMS benefited by being able to pilot the model of course tutoring and expanding to departments that have not previously worked with the Studio. For instance, since collaborating with "Writing for Social Justice," the Digital Media Studio was able to support a 90-student lecture within the sciences and a deeper collaboration with the First-Year Writing Program, two lessons in scale that wouldn't have been possible without first supporting one course so intensely. One lesson learned, for instance, is that whether a small seminar, a large lecture, or a multi-section curriculum, it is important that the DMS tutors are closely acquainted with the assignments. Our support of larger courses has relied heavily on walk-in hours and tailored out-of-class

workshops instead of the more intensive in-class instruction and scheduled conferences. When peer tutors are prepared by knowing assignments and course objectives, then they can better serve students regardless of the course structure or delivery.

Another lesson is the importance of flexibility and adaptability. Even though we planned for several weeks before and reflected regularly throughout the semester, unexpected situations arose, which led to the DMS offering more resources than initially planned. For example, when our YWCA partners determined that Marquette would be the best place for filming interviews, the DMS offered space and staffing. Though Marquette is centrally located in Milwaukee and accessible by multiple bus routes, making it an geographically desirable for campus-community relations, it is also largely a closed campus. Community members cannot gain access to the library without leaving ID cards at the front desk or being accompanied by people affiliated with Marquette. Though students were assigned the role of welcoming and accompanying community members into the library, students were also falling down on this responsibility, failing to greet our YWCA partners when they arrived on campus. DMS staff recognized this problem and assigned a staff person to wait in the library lobby, making sure that community members were welcomed upon arrival. In this example, as in many others from our collaboration, the DMS took real responsibility over the shared community-based project. Students, in turn, came to see logistical coordination as part of social justice work. Truly, the DMS became a full partner-in-learning, interacting with and strengthening ties with our community partner, the YWCA, as much as other members of the course.

Bigger than any one lesson, however, has been the year-long expansion and transition of the Digital Media Studio to the Digital Scholarship Lab. With this name change comes an intentional effort to dissolve disciplinary silos around digital media, scholarship, and library pedagogy. By supporting faculty in the use of digital tools and methods both in scholarship and teaching, the DSLab is networking faculty with similar pedagogical and research interests across departments and colleges. The DSLab is now designed to be a hub, a widely accessible space that cultivates and encourages cross-

campus collaborations. For example, since becoming the DSLab, we have partnered with Marquette's Writing Center to offer workshops on research posters; these workshops draw a wide, cross-disciplinary audience of undergraduate, graduate student, and faculty researchers. As the DMS becomes the DSLab, we continue to seek collaborative opportunities, across departments and with other campus units. This expansion includes a new shared space and even closer ties with Digital Programs. The physical proximity to this partner invites yet more collaboration with Digital Programs, including opportunities to further promote an open access platform for distributing student media. This partnership provides the infrastructure we're advocating for breaking down disciplinary silos; making research and resources broadly, publicly accessible; and strengthening campus-community partnerships as well as public relations.

Whatever local innovations may be, our case of cross-campus collaboration indicates the importance of not "going it alone," as we are able to build better together. In the process, we are able to raise the local visibility of what that we're doing and that we'd like to see done. And we are able to ask our institution to look inward and to change the self, when working outward, with others. It is not that we are advocating for entirely new course structures or failing to recognize the important collaborative work that many educators already value and do. Instead, we are advocating explicit attention to the role cross-campus collaborations play in community-based learning: that is, to "name it and claim it." In this way, we remember what James Porter, Patricia Sullivan, Stuart Blythe, Jeffrey Grabill, and Libby Miles remind us: "Institutions R Us: we made 'em, we can fix 'em" (611).

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The Role of Narrative in Student Engagement

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*Since I began teaching a course titled *Writing in the Community*, I have been fascinated with how narratives deepen students' service-learning experiences. In their article "Narrative Learning in Adulthood," M. Carolyn Clark and Marsha Rossiter say that stories "draw us into an experience at more than a cognitive level; they engage our spirit, our imagination, our heart, and this engagement is complex and holistic." Narratives give broader context to students' service, foster critical consciousness, help students believe they can make a contribution in their own communities, and contribute to making service-learning a transformative experience, all outcomes that remind us of the importance of the humanities in forming active citizens.*

You could say my teaching career began in the leisurely nights spent as a child listening to my mother or father reading. The rise and fall of their voices as they read first nursery rhymes and Dr. Seuss, then much later *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* and *The Mysterious Island*, instructed me in the rhythm of language and the love of story. Eventually, I followed those internalized voices

to an MFA in Creative Writing program and began teaching fiction and poetry writing courses as an adjunct in the English Department of the nearby university. I left that for a full-time job as editor of a magazine; when I returned to teaching seven years later, it was to take a teaching job in a rhetoric and composition department.

The love of story came with me but not until I developed a “Writing in the Community” class did I see the way that story—narrative—could provide critical context for experiential learning. I had not expected students to respond so powerfully. At its most basic, narrative is an account of an actual or fictional event or sequence of events. In this class, the reading and writing of narrative deepened students’ service-learning experiences, helping them move from simply fulfilling a requirement to becoming passionate, engaged members of the community.

Those of us working in the humanities can’t fail to notice that students are increasingly being guided toward STEM majors. Funding and institutional support tend to accrue to those majors as well. Arguing for the value of the humanities in his article “The Humanities and Citizenship,” Professor of Humanities at Brigham Young University George Handley said, “If the humanities matter at all, it is because they shape our imagination, and habits of mind in turn shape our actions” (55). My experience with this class is a reminder of the significant role the humanities can play in forming active citizens.

In 1994, Ernest Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, proposed a “New American College” connected to the community and committed to improving, in a very intentional way, the human condition. Many universities have since adopted engagement as part of their mission and promoted service-learning as a way for students to interact with their communities. My university is a good example. Its mission statement reads, “We are a community committed to preparing students to be educated and enlightened citizens who lead productive and meaningful lives.” Just last year it added this vision statement: “To be the national model for the engaged university: engaged with ideas and the world.” Majors from engineering to education to communication now offer courses that require a certain number of service hours.

I created the Writing in the Community course in 2008. Rationale for this offering in our department of Writing, Rhetoric and Technical Communication came from the push to give students the opportunity to put writing into practice in the community and from the principles of public rhetoric, i.e. writing to effect change (Couture and Kent, 2004). In designing it, I tried to utilize a critical service-learning approach. Service-learning is generally understood as community service that is tied to classroom learning goals (Jacoby, 1996). Extensive research supports the idea that service-learning can be transformative for students, helping them acquire everything from empathy and leadership skills to higher grade point averages (Astin & Sax, 1998), but critics have challenged the idea that all service-learning is equally valuable (Neururer & Rhoads, 1998, 329).

Traditional service-learning emphasizes person-to-person service to address problems. Rice and Pollack (2000) and Rosenberger (2000) describe critical service-learning as academic service-learning with a social justice orientation. Yan Wang at Milwaukee Area Technical College and Robert Rodgers at Ohio State University conducted a study in 2006 that showed that “service-learning courses in general had a positive impact on students’ cognitive development, while service-learning courses with a social justice emphasis appeared to have more impact on students’ cognitive development than those without a social justice emphasis” (2006). Tania Mitchell, the service-learning director for the Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity at Stanford University explains,

While individual change and student development are desired outcomes of traditional and critical service-learning, critical service-learning pedagogy balances the student outcomes with an emphasis on social change. This requires rethinking the types of service activities in which students are engaged, as well as organizing projects and assignments that challenge students to investigate and understand the root causes of social problems and the courses of action necessary to challenge and change the structures that perpetuate these problems (Mitchell 2008, 53).

The basic framework of Writing in the Community is 20 hours of community service, texts by or about leaders of social change, a

student-led seminar, a writing project for the community partner, weekly short writing assignments, and a final personal narrative paper in which students put the pieces of the course together for themselves to articulate their meaning.

One of the first tasks in *Writing in the Community* is to choose community service sites. Our town, Harrisonburg, VA, has a population of 52,000 with especially large Hispanic and Mennonite communities. It is a designated refugee resettlement site due to the availability of jobs in the poultry industry, so it also has growing Iraqi and North African populations. Students in the public schools represent 47 countries of birth and speak at least 48 languages, everything from Arabic to Tigrinya (Enrollment Statistics, 2016). The poverty rate, excluding university students, is 15% (Juday 2016), whereas the state average is 11.8% (State 2010-2014). As the county seat, the city provides many services to residents, so students in the class have over 100 community partners from which to choose. They have volunteered at the local animal shelter, the Children's Museum, the homeless shelter, a free legal aid organization, the elementary schools, and many others. They choose their sites for a variety of reasons.

One student, Alexa, who volunteered at the Bridgewater Retirement Facility, wrote:

Last Christmas Eve, my grandfather lost his battle with congestive heart failure. It was probably the hardest thing I've experienced thus far, and I'm still dealing with it everyday....

I spent the majority of my winter break at hospitals, nursing homes, and ultimately funeral services. I suppose I wanted to work at a retirement community to connect with active senior citizens. It would be a way for me to forget how his sickness changed him and remember how active and energetic he once was.

Community service is the backdrop for the reading and writing students do and acts as a unifying element throughout the course,

with students reporting regularly on their work through class discussions and written assignments.

Early on, the class discusses the meaning of community and what communities the students belong to. Most identify family or the university as their primary community. Few feel any sense of belonging to the Harrisonburg community, so the first assignment is a “community mapping” assignment. This involves going with a partner on a walking tour of downtown Harrisonburg, taking notes and photos, talking to people, and reporting back through a visual presentation for the class. This could be a slide show, a Prezi, a video, or some other means.

Students doing community service often have little knowledge of the local community where they will be doing their service. The goal of this assignment, then, is to get students learning more about Harrisonburg and identifying some of its strengths and weaknesses. The assignment asks them to observe the architecture, diversity, city services, green spaces, and outreach to students, on the assumption that the more they know about the city, the more they will want to be involved in it. In addition, this assignment helps students understand the connection between rhetoric and community, showing the way issues arise out of specific communities.

The readings for the class vary, but the most recent class used autobiographies of Gandhi and Martin Luther King (compiled from their own writings), *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson, *Mountains Beyond Mountains* by Tracy Kidder, and *Nickel and Dimed* by Barbara Ehrenreich. We have also used *The Long Loneliness* by Dorothy Day and *Dead Man Walking* by Sr. Helen Prejean. These are all narratives by or about leaders of social change, utilizing the subjects’ own voices as much as possible, showing how leaders use rhetoric to effect change. Any number of other books could have been chosen. I chose to focus on an overview of community and social justice issues, but a course focusing more on local issues, for example, might choose readings or even collect narratives related to the history of the area. Recently, two JMU colleagues, Sean McCarthy from the School of Writing, Rhetoric, and Technical Communication and Mollie Godfrey from the English Department, completed a year-long project with

their “Representing Black Harrisonburg” class celebrating the life of pioneering African American educator and former slave Lucy F. Simms and the school named after her.

The Simms School served African American students from all over Rockingham County, VA, from 1938 to 1965. Students spent spring of 2016 gathering archival material from libraries and family collections to create a permanent exhibition: “Celebrating Simms: The Story of the Lucy F. Simms School,” to be housed in the original school building. As part of their work, students also gathered narratives of community members who had attended the school. These narratives provided important context, serving as historical records but also bringing to life the issues of race, community, and social inequality at the heart of the exhibit. This course easily could have gone back further to include slave narratives or reached forward to include a book on Thurgood Marshall, who argued before the Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education* that segregation was a violation of the 14th Amendment. The ruling in that case brought about the desegregation of schools like the Simms School, and Marshall went on to be named a Supreme Court justice.

Mitchell (2008) discusses the role of readings in service-learning:

Readings can often invoke voices or experiences not heard or realized in service, and raise questions and inspire dialogue that can lead to deeper understanding. The readings and concepts covered in a critical service-learning course should bring attention to issues of social justice and concepts of privilege and oppression (55).

The advantage of narratives is that they present issues as complex and multidimensional. They can be interpreted in a variety of ways, depending on a person’s own history. They are not prescriptions for practice but “material to think with” (Dyson, 2002), which makes them exceptional pedagogical tools. Narratives often help students grasp issues in the community in new ways. For example, after reading Barbara Ehrenreich’s description of living on minimum wage in the book *Nickel and Dimed*, Kerry, who volunteered at Second Home, an afterschool daycare center, wrote,

Nickel and Dime also brought my attention to the extreme poverty right here in Harrisonburg. One of the teachers told me a story about driving kids home from Second Home and feeding them because they had not eaten all day...Much of this financial struggle comes from the minimum wage jobs the parents hold that do not provide enough money to support a family. It is one thing to read about poverty and another to see it in the lives of the people right in your community. Reading *Nickel and Dime* has made me aware of the vastness of poverty in America.

Narratives are particularly effective in presenting students with alternate ways of seeing the world and their place in it. *Mountains Beyond Mountains* contains a scene where Dr. Paul Farmer sees a fellow doctor getting ready to return to the U.S. from Haiti: “But aren’t you worried about not being able to forget all this? There’s so much disease here.”

“No,” the doctor said. “I’m an American, and I’m going home” (2004, 80). Farmer realizes that although he is American also, he has had a fundamental shift in the way he views himself. After living with and being involved in the struggles of the Haitian people, he no longer sees himself primarily as an American but rather as a human being. This seemingly subtle change has radical implications. The community we identify with is the community we feel responsible for. This passage is one of many that make students think about how they identify themselves. Meghan wrote,

When I signed up for my community service with refugee resettlement, the volunteer application had two options: student or community member. I remember thinking, “Why can’t I be both?” And throughout the semester, this class has taught me that it is indeed possible to be both.

Narratives pose sometimes uncomfortable challenges to long held opinions, for example, belief in the fairness of the criminal justice system or the amount of progress in race relations. They open up inquiries about social issues; power dynamics; and cultural constructions of race, gender, and sexual orientation. By raising questions, the texts act as catalysts for students’ own evolving

narratives and impact the way they view the community at all levels, from local to global. Reflecting back on one of the texts, Katie, for example, exhibited a shift from concrete thinking in black and white terms to understanding the complexities involved in justice and truth when she wrote:

Dead Man Walking sparked many emotions and led to some heated debates over the course of a few class periods. Initially, I think each one of us had some sort of opinion on the death penalty. By the time we finished the book, many of us, including myself, felt like we couldn't take a firm stance. For me, this was one of the first times in my life that I had been so outwardly challenged in my own beliefs. I had always been a proponent of the death penalty, but after reading this book, I can definitely see the other side of the argument.

It is the stories of the inmates in *Dead Man Walking* that shake students to their core. "Human beings are the creatures who tell stories," say M. Carolyn Clark and Marsha Rossiter in their article "Narrative Learning in Adulthood" (2008, 61). Storytelling is an integral part of being human. In the classroom, stories make learning more interesting and engage students on a spiritual and emotional as well as intellectual level. In her 2015 British Library lecture "On Liberty, Reading and Dissent," lawyer Shami Chakrabarti said, "As a recovering lawyer, I have always known the power of great storytelling, whether of the factual or non-factual variety, of truth-telling in moving people, sometimes more profoundly, than mainstream politics or even the law."

In the movie *Motorcycle Diaries*, which students watch during the semester, two young medical students, Che and Alberto, take a transformative motorcycle trip from one end of South America to the other (Salles, 2004). A turning point for the protagonists is when they begin meeting South Americans from different countries and hearing their stories. "I felt the world changing," Che remarked, "or was it us?" At the end of the movie, the protagonist swims across a river that divides a leper colony from the rest of the town, symbolizing his crossing of social and economic boundaries. Narratives help us care about other lives, feel solidarity, and develop empathy.

Without the backdrop of the narratives, community service can be simply an assignment to dispatch as painlessly as possible. Narratives help students make connections to broader legal and ethical frameworks, say Audrey Osler and Juanjuan Zhu in their article examining the role of individual and collective narratives throughout history in struggles for justice (2010). A student who volunteered at the Harrisonburg Free Clinic, for example, was introduced by Paul Farmer in *Mountains Beyond Mountains* to the idea that health care is a basic human right. This led to an examination of the UN Declaration of Human Rights and an understanding of how local issues are connected to global issues.

It is important for people to experience life as a continuum with a past and a future. Narratives help students do that (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). Reading about the lives of others, they can view themselves in a historical context. The struggle for equal treatment under the law carried on by Gandhi in India is not so dissimilar from the struggle for equal treatment carried on by members of the LGBT community or the Black Lives Matter movement in the United States today. Prisoners that Sr. Helen Prejean meets with on death row have some of the same issues as prisoners in the local jail. And if the service students are doing sometimes seems insignificant or tedious, it can achieve significance by association with a larger idea. They are not just working in a food pantry, for example. They are working to combat one of the three major problems in the world according to Martin Luther King: poverty, racism and violence. A student named Sara wrote:

This feeling of wanting to make some impression on the world after learning about figures such as Dr. Farmer and Sister Prejean is what made service so vital to this course. I enjoyed my volunteer work that I did with the Special Olympics, and definitely learned many things from the experience. All of the people we have read about started their journey by serving their community, whether it was accidental with a set purpose. To me, this shows the vast importance of providing service in any way possible. I believe that it is most definitely a joint relationship in that both parties learn from each other, which we have discussed in class together. I also volunteered in a fifth grade classroom for a day, which was

a great experience. The entire class was Hispanic, with a couple students barely knowing English, and the school is in a low-income area. The teacher came into the year knowing very little Spanish, and it was also her first year of teaching, which proved to be obstacles for her as well as the students. However, I saw that she embraced their differences, and there was so much learning going on for both her and the students that far exceeded what you can learn in a textbook. This was great to see for me since I am an education major. Furthermore, the situation reminded me of Dr. Farmer and Greg Mortenson's experiences of providing education while interacting with a different culture.

Narrative can go even further than providing context. It can take students beyond understanding to action. Osler and Zhu (2011) say,

In adopting narrative as a pedagogical tool, we are inviting teachers and students to make links between their experiences and those of strangers in distant places, including links between these strangers' struggles for justice and their own. Narratives, used in this way, can be used to advance justice and human rights through education. The links that students are able to make between their own struggles and those of the subject of the narrative not only support recognition of our common humanity, but also may inspire action for justice and human rights.

The writing students do are just as important as the readings. Throughout the semester, they compose weekly two-page writing assignments. Some are reading responses. These are purposely exploratory, opportunities for students to reflect on any aspects of the readings that strike them. A student last fall, Kerry, wrote,

The writing assignments made me reflect on the books and activities on a personal level and evaluate how they had impacted me... This made me more vigilant and proactive in being aware of how the readings and discussions affected me. It made me think. Not just about the correct answers for the quizzes but about the significance of what I was reading. Because I felt I had the freedom to connect my work in this course to myself personally, I became more open and willing to accept the ideas and thoughts

I was learning about. This is what made my journey in the class so different from any other class.

Other writing assignments ask students to imagine a day in the life of someone at their service sites, compose a letter to a death row inmate (they can choose whether or not to mail it), and take on a writing project *for* their community partner.

During the semester, without realizing it, students are composing their own narratives, revising or affirming their world views and personal philosophies. What kinds of people will they be? What do they believe? Value? Aspire to? The course does not try to tell students what they should get out of the readings, writing assignments, and service. The final paper asks them to make those connections for themselves; it asks them to put all the elements of the class together in a personal narrative that describes their class journey. Where did you start from and where have you arrived? What have you seen along the way? Where will this lead you?

The final papers frequently reveal a change in attitude from the beginning of the class to the end. This is directly connected to the narratives they have both read and composed. Noelle wrote:

My journey in this class has been so much different than I ever expected. Starting the semester, I assumed that it would be like most classes. I would read a few books, write a few papers, learn some good information, and move on. What I didn't expect to happen were the lasting changes it has made in me.

People use narrative to make sense of their experience. Transformative learning is the process of "restorying," changing one's story when the old one no longer makes sense (Kenyon & Randall, 1997). In describing what he learned in the class, Justin wrote in his final paper:

I will take what I have learned in this class and apply it to everyday scenarios for the rest of my life. I already find myself listening in when I hear someone mention capital punishment or the Civil Rights Movement. The rhetoric and writing I was

exposed to in this class will propel me into a world outside of reading BuzzFeed articles and school newspapers; I will insist on reading actual accounts and more conceptual information. Most importantly, I will act on social change. These books have given me the foundation to support my arguments and ideas to the point where I can show leadership. I have supported social change for quite some time now, and now I am committed to improving the world around me through writing, speaking, and demonstrating.

Through the combination of narrative and service-learning, this student has acquired a sense of agency and a conviction that his contribution is important. The value of this cannot be overstated. In a recent interview, journalist Bill Moyers spoke of the importance of the willingness to be involved in the democratic process:

Ninety-six percent of the [American] people believe it's "important" that we reduce the influence of money. Yet 91 percent think it's "not likely" that its influence will be lessened. Think about that: People know what's right to do yet don't think it can or will be done. When the public loses faith in democracy's ability to solve the problems it has created for itself, the game's almost over (Drier, 2014).

Are there any downsides to the use of narratives in a service-learning class? Certainly, there are pitfalls, as I have discovered. Leaders like Gandhi and King can make students think, "I can never be like them. They were exceptional." Or, "I can never hope to accomplish anything important. All I'm doing is visiting a nursing home once a week." Sarah started off feeling inadequate compared to the people she was reading about, but by the end of the class she had come up with her own idea:

I know that I will never be able to make the same impact as [the people we are reading about]. I know that I do not have the patience to visit with death row inmates, the knowledge to go to Haiti and build a clinic, or the courage to end racism. However, I wrote down this note about a month ago: My ultimate dream is to start a non-profit organization that distributes books to all children in need around the world. I want to combine my love of

reading with my passion for service. I know this will take a lot of hard work, but I will not give up.

Students can also become disillusioned when they discover that their heroes are actually human and imperfect. Gandhi had troubled family relationships. King had extramarital affairs. Does this invalidate their work? No. They were human. In fact, this can lead to useful discussions about things like the pitfalls of giving aid and creating dependency, the problems of paternalism in service, and the need to thoroughly investigate organizations before contributing to them. One semester we were in the middle of reading a book by Greg Mortensen when Jon Krakauer went on *60 Minutes* to charge that Mortenson's nonprofit Central Asia Institute had been misusing funds and significant parts of his books were fabricated. I was embarrassed that I had assigned this book (parts of which had turned out to be fraudulent) and was afraid discovering this would undermine the whole class. Actually, it led to some of the best conversations of the semester and provided an important dose of reality. Not every good cause is what it appears. I brought in manila envelopes for students to send back their copies if they chose to do so with notes to the publisher. At the end of the semester, Katie wrote,

The importance of reputability and media coverage wouldn't have come up in discussion if it weren't for this scandal, and I think it would have been naïve of us, as educated individuals to have completed this course without addressing those issues.

Now I introduce every class to the website *Charity Navigator*, which provides information on how charities use funds.

In the end, why narrative and service-learning work together so well is mysterious and simple at the same time. After focusing on the overwhelming, impenetrable problems in the world in so many of their classes, students can be tempted to throw up their hands in despair and conclude that it is not worth trying to solve these problems. At a minimum, narratives show them concrete examples of people who have had the optimism and determination to tackle big problems. They do much more than that, though, and function as

valuable tools in fostering critical consciousness in a service-learning classroom.

Stories have always been a way for cultures to pass on values and identity. The stories we possess as a culture are a great richness that we owe it to our students to pass on. And then the classroom can offer them a safe space to reflect on those stories. At the end of his long journey in *Motorcycle Diaries*, Roberto said, "Something happened, something I have to think about for a long time... I'm not the same me I was" (Salles, 2004). Narrative helps make service-learning that kind of experience.

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Inception to Implementation: Feminist Community Engagement via Service-Learning

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This article offers both a theoretical underpinning and a case study of practice as exhibits of a more democratic community engagement praxis for rhetoric and composition educators.

The case study featured in the article suggests re-positioning the importance of collaborative and democratic engagement as the cornerstone of successful community engagement work. While the case is situated in technical and professional communication, it affords an interdisciplinary representation of community engagement.

Keywords: community-campus partnerships, democratic engagement, feminist community engagement

This article¹ offers a model of feminist community engagement that suggests a reorientation of towards the implementation of service-learning in university-level writing courses. Heeding recent calls in community engagement literature, this article frames community engagement as a means of engaging *with* communities, rather than *for*

1 This work was funded by [author's institution] Office of Community Engagement and Partnerships and approved by the [author's institution] Institutional Review Board.

communities; alongside this theoretical shift, teachers and communities need models of successful feminist community engagement. While this article features a case contextualized by technical and professional communication, the findings are generalizable to courses taught in college writing, broadly construed. This model is intended for writing programs and faculty, such that they may engage with their communities to affect net benefits for community partners, students, and faculty.

SITUATING THE WORK

Before discussing the case, I correlate feminist community engagement praxis with college writing and communication courses as a method of democratizing course design. The case, a study in collaborative course design and technical documentation development, suggests that while this method may be effective in many ways, it affords great opportunity for further development. The roots of this approach can be tied to the work done by Holmes and presented in *Reflections* in 2011.

At the outset I throw by the wayside predominant charity models of service-learning that reinforce the hegemony of the university within the wider community (Stewart and Webster, 2011; Mitchell, 2008). Instead, this case builds upon a justice-oriented approach to community engagement (Iverson and James, 2014), one that seeks to address the causes of inequality and injustice instead of offering temporary reprieve for the results of systemic societal injustice.

To help articulate the definitional aspects of service-learning and community engagement throughout this piece, I suggest thinking of community engagement as the “methodology” that undergirds the implementation of service-learning as a pedagogical “method.” Community engagement has broader epistemological commitments than service-learning and falls more in line with the term civic engagement, which is increasingly represented in both community engagement and writing studies literatures.

The course used in this case was an upper-division technical and professional communication course delivered to undergraduates in the Southeastern United States. Because the case discussed in this

article is based on the experience of co-constructing and co-teaching a technical and professional writing course, it is contextualized largely with literature from technical and professional communication and community engagement.

OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE

In 2001, Nora Bacon published a prescient observation in *Reflections*, suggesting that, among other, expected shifts in service-learning scholarship and research, readers should be attuned to the increasing importance of community perceptions and impact. In a 2004 *Reflections* special issue on service-learning and professional communication, Blake Scott noted three recurring themes in his meta-analysis; one of these was the significance of reciprocal, sustained partnerships. This article is situated not only by these two observations but also the heavily theorized turn towards the democratization of community engagement.

In technical communication specifically, community engagement via service-learning clearly complements pedagogy (Crabtree and Sapp, 2002). Community engagement acts as a buffer for pre-professionals. In the 2004 *TCQ* special issue on civic engagement, Ornatowski and Bekins (2004) articulate this harkening to technical and professional communication's historical foundations. The theoretical frameworks presented in the 2004 issue helped solidify civic engagement and its manifestation as community engagement and service-learning, in technical and professional communication. The approach has only gained traction since then; it is also alluded to in the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing's recent CFP for the 2016 conference focusing on citizenship and advocacy. The vitality of service-learning and democratic engagement is clear in this document. The importance of these positions related to ethics and critical praxis are validated in work by Hopton (2013) and manifested in textbooks for undergraduates such as the one by Bowdon and Scott (2003).

Yet even before *Technical Communication Quarterly's* special issue in 2004, Robert McEachern (2001) argued service-learning problematizes the technical communication classroom in unexpected ways. McEachern's article noted the struggles nonprofits face when working with students. Like Matthews & Zimmerman (1999)

before him, McEachern's article greatly informed the space in which service-learning evolved in technical and professional communication programs.

McEachern offered a representation of "nonprofit organizations" as objects of study, objects for use. Instead of being intrinsically valuable and independently meaningful, these spaces were granted meaning through technical and professional communication's assessment of them, so that scholars and practitioners can pre-empt the "problems" they "will encounter in their projects." Here McEachern re-focused on academic frustrations, constructing a narrative of service *for* and not one of learning *with*, much as Dubinsky did in the introduction to *Reflections* 2004 special issue on service-learning in professional communication. The remainder of this section suggests that championing a new narrative, one of working *with* rather than *for*, is fundamental to embracing feminist community engagement theories. This approach promises the possibility of more just, honest, democratic praxis.

The utility of community engagement projects within technical and professional communication relies on the premise that certain projects necessitate or indicate, as a wise option, practice within the community (Dubinsky, 2004; Crabtree & Sapp, 2002; Eble & Gaillet, 2004; Cargile Cook, 2014). Recent scholarship in feminist community engagement more specifically (Iverson and James, 2014; Costa and Leong, 2012) suggests that novel, critical approaches are necessary to enhance existing community engagement initiatives; this is, for them, true across disciplines. The work of the past decade, they argue, still fails to offer the critical lens that cracks open the greatest potential in community engagement. In particular, these scholars task practitioners and researchers to question the "best practices" for service-learning, as a classroom application of community engagement. Such calls transcend disciplinary boundaries; in this way, community engagement praxis, a marriage of theory and practice, provides a multidisciplinary space to investigate what returns are provided to communities that host institutions of higher education.

In 2009, Stoecker et al. published *The Unheard Voices: Community Organizations and Service Learning*. The book was released as the

largest (at the time) assessment of “unheard voices” of community partners. Bolstered by a number of articles appearing shortly before and after in the *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* (e.g. Curwood et al., 2011; Stanton, 2000; Sandy & Holland, 2006), as well as disciplinary specific journals (e.g. Blouin and Perry, 2009), it grew increasingly apparent that service-learning scholarship’s attendance to innovation in meeting community needs, occurred by examining them *in disciplinary situ*, with some cases offering generalizable heuristics.

Yet, recent scholarship in technical and professional communication related to service-learning focuses on disciplinary representation (Cargile Cook, 2014) or adaptation to online environments (e. g. Bourelle, 2014). Little theoretical work has been done to push service-learning in technical and professional communication courses beyond the framework developed in the early 2000’s. Yet when community “needs” are determined by faculty and student interests, the work of service-learning is more learning-oriented than community-oriented. While community partners are engaged participants in these representations of service-learning and community engagement, they are not, by these more recent critical examinations, true “partners.” Feminist community engagement challenges us to do better work *with* the communities with which we learn and serve.

Paralleling discipline specific literature focusing on community engagement and service-learning are feminist community engagement praxis models (Iverson and James, 2014; Costa and Leong, 2012; hooks, 1994). These models apply a variety of critical lenses in efforts to heighten awareness, embrace diversity, and encourage inclusion of traditionally underrepresented voices. Costa and Leong (2012) suggest that such an approach requires we attend to the “epistemologies that underlie civic engagement discourses and projects as well as the pedagogical processes by which they are instantiated.” These discourses are imbued with power and embodied in pedagogy. It is in these narratives that this present project finds greatest affinity. Specifically, the case I describe in this article troubles notions of what it means to democratically and reciprocally partner with a nonprofit organization through pedagogy.

This project rests on the underlying warrants of feminist community engagement praxis. Namely: alignment of civic engagement with activism (Bisignani, 2014); Fraser's (2001) framework for social justice based upon recognition, redistribution, and representation; the necessity for humility in successful reciprocity (Noel, 2014). And finally, a complex relationship with the term "community," which remains relatively nebulous in both in practice and in press (Iverson and James, 2014).

With these tenets in mind, the notion of community engagement, as achieved via service-learning, is problematized by the very nature of the act of engagement. Engaging with community recognizes difference *and* reinforces it. The notion that service-learning "bridges" the divide between campus and community dictates that a divide exists and implicitly suggests that students are not members of these communities.

As narrators of our own strategic pedagogy, technical communication scholars can recognize the innate privilege they possess in dictating partnerships with community. Service-learning is a traditionally "top down" model that conveys power through invitation to participate (Hartley et al., 2009; Butin, 2010). Traditional service-learning models create an obvious power differential: campuses will find positions for their students; nonprofits and government organizations, on the other hand, will have needs met by students only if the course objectives dictate. Literature on service-learning often reinforces and reiterates the dominant account of the university as *instigator* and *investigator* of service-learning (Scott, 2004; Bekins and Ornatowski, 2004; McEachern, 2001; Turnely, 2004).

In the interest of examining the traditional model and working to implement some version of feminist community engagement, the case discussed below describes a course built "from scratch." From inception to implementation, my partner Allison, and I, worked together to construct the course while observing the ways in which we worked together. We worked to test our own ability to shift the university-dominated narratives of service-learning.

BACKGROUND

In April 2014, Allison, the executive director of a youth-focused nonprofit, and I were awarded funds to co-construct an upper division proposal writing course for the coming Fall semester. During the course development process, we examined how feminist community engagement could be enacted, pushing the boundaries of course development and design. Allison and I were curious: Could we build, collaboratively, a course from the ground up? Would this be a model of successful feminist community engagement? Could we reframe our (academically rigorous) courses to ensure the needs of our community are instantiated in our course development, delivery, outcomes, publications, and professional growth?

With these questions in mind, our goal was to develop a collaborative course between my institutional home and LE, a local, South Florida nonprofit run by Allison. LE serves youth ages 5-17 with a variety of athletic, musical, and academic support outside of the school system. As the organization continued to evolve after receiving its 501(c)3 designation, Allison, LE's Executive Director, was looking for ways to support the successes of the youth-based programming. Funding from the University of South Florida's Office of Community Engagement and Partnerships gave us the opportunity to build a new proposal writing course from the ground up, *together*. Nationally, courses like these are offered across disciplines; they are frequently delivered with a community-engaged component.

Yet the novelty of this approach is the philosophy that service-learning courses can be most effective when co-constructed, with collaborative and invested partners. Allison and I investigated what this looks like in practice. Our work exhibits how service-learning practices in writing and communication courses can embrace feminist community engagement theories to build honest, just, democratic praxis. We worked to break the perpetuation of power differentials in an environment that traditionally defines the campus as better equipped than its community. These deficit narratives continue to be perpetuated in a tenuous pedagogical space; legitimization efforts plague service-learning pedagogy, and it is fraught with concerns about academic rigor (Abes, Jackson, and Jones, 2002). Now more

than ever, feminist community engagement practices can enhance and re-shape the top-down models of service-learning.

The hope was to build a model to frame and re-orient service-learning initiatives collaboratively during the summer of 2014, as opposed to something that occurs as an addendum to syllabi. My goal was to collaborate with Allison as a co-instructor to ensure that the course met both LE's expectations and needs. This model, when translated across disciplinary, geographical, and spatial boundaries, is a novel heuristic for faculty and partners.

The reasons we embraced this approach and proposed the project were twofold: First, we were deeply invested in examining the discourse of university representatives as they worked to build relationships off campus. Second, as a practitioner, I also believed such an approach should be enacted. The result was a collaborative experimentation with new practice, grounded in a criticalist approach to community engagement.

Allison and I went about the business of developing and deploying our proposal writing course. The themes shared here were gleaned from our observations related to how the course evolved over the summer months, transitioned into implementation, and concluded as we reflected on outcomes. We also developed and deployed a survey for students three times in the semester. These anonymous surveys were brief and asked questions regarding students' perceptions of their relationship with Allison and myself, as well as their understanding of their role in the course. Finally, we collected reflection documents throughout the semester.

I do not suggest that these results are comprehensive nor would I claim that the findings have been triangulated to provide a firm understanding of how co-construction takes place. Instead, I offer the highlights of the project and suggest its allegiance with cutting edge praxis in service-learning and community engagement. These pedagogies and efforts are, I suggest, a compelling method to promote, orient, and enact justice in our communities.

RECURRENT THEMES

The year-long engagement regarding this specific course provided four primary “take-aways,” or themes, relevant to reconceptualizing community engagement with a feminist orientation. I present these as an autoethnography for the purposes of clarity and brevity, and because this best represents the enactment of this work.

First, *traditional modes of communication did not lead to the partnership originally envisioned*. How we are connected to partners, even before we formalize a partnership, speaks volumes to the ways in which we are able to work with them. For scholars working actively with nonprofit partners, adopting this attitude/disposition may seem obvious. I solicited information from my campus’s office of engagement, requesting partners for the project but was largely stymied in my early search. I did not learn about LE and Allison’s needs until I sent notification to the faculty in my department asking them to pitch the course to their upper division students. A colleague replied, and it was then that I learned about LE and Allison’s need. In fact, the strategic communications and partnership building language presently advocated by best practices in engagement heuristics brought me only parties interested in students already trained and willing to write a proposal, rather than students learning about seeking funding opportunities and developing proposals. I needed a partner willing to build the course to best fit their organization’s needs, rather than a partner who would simply host students for service hours. Allison and I needed to ensure the course still provided a structured learning environment for students. Many potential partners were taken aback by this request; they have been trained by universities to expect a specific type of partnership.

In our early communications, Allison exhibited a willingness to work with me, recognized tight deadlines, and embraced the challenge of difficult conversations about our power dynamic. These initial conversations—over the phone, via email, and in person—laid the foundation for our collaborative work. Reflecting on these communications in comparison with my previous more “directive” service-learning projects, highlighted how fragile a space early communications can be for new partners. Presenting opportunities to one and other, rather than a faculty member or instructor offering

an opportunity to a community partner, is a fundamental component of this co-construction approach. Therefore, careful use of language and a nuanced mindset regarding this design are important.

Second, *assets are relative*. Instructors and researchers committed to healthy community engagement praxis should already be aware that an asset-based approach, which I suggest is grounded in humility, is increasingly vital to successful community engagement work (Noel, 2014). My positionality in this project was nebulous. In reality, I was someone unsure of the local needs, communities, and nonprofits. My assets were a classroom and at least ten upper division technical writing majors. This is what I was able to offer, along with my professional experience in writing proposals.

What I had to offer was not appealing to many of the larger nonprofits in South Florida, especially those with established resource development programs. However, my assets were appealing to LE, a grassroots nonprofit that had, at that point, not pursued grant or foundation funding.

Established in 2011, LE “is committed to saving 1,000 youth a week through various sporting, artistic and academic programs.” As a relatively new organization, LE was sustained by the generous support of volunteers and is staffed by one full-time individual, Allison. When we began our communication in April of 2014, her needs were explicit: skilled writers to help build a fiscal base for programming via proposal writing. Indeed, prior to our first communications, Allison had already developed a handbook to guide interested students willing to serve as proposal writers for her organization. Therefore, LE’s infrastructure for effective collaboration was already present *prior* to the request for partnership. Moreover, LE has a vibrant, committed volunteer base. Individuals were willing to act on behalf of Allison to ensure she was not overwhelmed by the project, in addition to her full-time responsibilities. Before beginning our formal partnership, our assets and abilities were developed into a written document, which served as a touchstone for us throughout the project.

Third, *crafting the syllabus components together profoundly influenced the shape of the course*. Recognizing syllabi as a codification of

the university's infrastructure (Webb et al., 2007) and shaping it collaboratively with Allison, was a major way of fracturing a dominant technical document to include a traditionally unheard voice. Before we co-taught the course, we built it together. Allison and I looked through textbook options; neither of us had taught such a class before, so we collected knowledges from our communities to co-construct the most technical document of the course- the syllabus.

We built the course schedule with the knowledge that Allison would be out on maternity leave for a portion of the semester; we constructed the reading schedule so that students would have both theoretical knowledge of the genres, as well as historical knowledge of LE, before their work began in earnest. We spent Wednesday afternoons during the summer discussing the document, editing language, and revising deliverables and due dates. As a technical communicator, co-authoring this document was a clear way to enhance our traditional models of service-learning with a feminist community engagement praxis. Sharing the authoring responsibilities of this document sends a clear message regarding the course design, purpose, and model.

Finally, the use of *“co-teachers,”* rather than *teacher and community partner, profoundly shaped students' experiences.* Early in the semester, in surveys disbursed each month, students consistently continued to affiliate with myself, presumably as a representative of the university, rather than with Allison, whose spatial situatedness was apart from traditional notions of higher education. While this is in part due to the spatial reality of the course (physically located on campus), students were given ample course time to spend off-campus. They continued to express confusion about the purpose of the service-learning component until we offered reflection questions prompting them to relate their work to, at that point, obvious structural inequities in their community.

For us, a defining moment was mid-semester; I had known my partner for twice as long as I had known my students. Many students were claiming Allison was not communicating with them or not sharing the information they needed. Allison and I spoke easily about these frustrations, and I gave the class the following analogy: I am one

parent; Allison is the other. We communicate more often with each other than with you. We know what you say to each of us.

This influenced students' grades and production, too. For instance, while I thought certain groups produced technically excellent work, Allison felt the work was not steeped in the narratives of her organization well enough to truly convey the organization's need and approach. Therefore, the students' work did not fully represent LE's work and stories.

Students began to recognize we were not simply non-directive in many respects; we also eschewed the traditional models of community engagement pedagogy they had read about early in the semester in preparation for their learning experience. As students realized the nature of Allison's and my partnership, they responded with greater deference to Allison's instructions and approach to revisions.

REFLECTIONS

No piece on community engagement would be whole without reflection. As a service-learning instructor and community engagement scholar and researcher, I offer three thoughts as to how we can continue to marry service-learning as a practice and community engagement as a theory to embody whole, honest praxis. These reflections, along with the tentative suggestions that grow from them, are, I hope, generative.

First, this article is not co-authored. Allison, my partner, who engaged in the development and implementation of this course, has neither the time nor the need to publish in an academic journal. This note warrants a comment or two on the methods by which academics who engage in research and scholarship on service-learning and community engaged pedagogies are disadvantaged. It seems best to have articles such as these co-authored; if Allison and I are true collaborators, shouldn't we be publishing together? But this mere suggestion discounts the importance of certain capital to our nonprofit partners. Depending on the institution, faculty must recognize when too much is being asked. We must recognize that

the credibility of publication often does little, if anything, for our partners.

The moment of requesting a co-authored effort on this article was the moment when I read my partner's reaction and took a step back. The concern, and philosophical struggle, over whether this article would be epistemologically less valuable without the nonprofit partner's co-authorship, was a drawn-out and fraught process. Ultimately the traction Allison gained by building the course was the sort of capital and investment most valuable to her. Wider name recognition at the institution and in the community, as well as access to interns, grants, and an understanding of the course development process, were what she needed and the sort of capital desired.

Second, it should be noted that ultimately, as the instructor of the course, I finalized the decision on which partner to work with over the summer to develop the course. Some feminist community engagement practitioners suggest, "community collaborators should be intentionally chosen for their ability to expose students to disenfranchised populations" (Seher, 2014); this is a perspective with which I do not agree. For here again is the threatening power of the university: the ability to *choose* is a luxury our grassroots and nonprofit partners do not share with us. They rarely get to decide which students to host, which courses they'll partner with, what needs will be met. While it can be argued that this is the nature of nonprofit work, the very fabric that undergirds community engagement and service-learning in the university directly contradicts this debasement or othering of the work done outside of academia or for-profit sectors.

For this case, there was no shortage of interested parties. However, given the opportunity to build a course collaboratively again, I would certainly be examining this process. Institutional power in choice draws the project further from its roots. What does it mean when instructors and faculty make the final decisions about the organizations with which they partner? As a tentative answer, perhaps we should look at Offices of Community Engagement and Partnerships or Centers for Community Engaged Learning, as the go-betweens, the advocates for nonprofit agencies in the community.

Perhaps these campus-based entities can act more as fair brokers for the development of truly democratic partnerships.

Finally, while I believe this case could be a template of sorts for a number of programs and courses, I remain aware of the particular situatedness of this privilege: to teach a class on proposal writing, with a willing and engaged partner and invested students with access to higher education. The fundamental tenant of this approach is that service-learning initiatives can lose sight of broader community engagement aims. One method of rectifying this is to embrace the diverse representations nonprofit partners bring to course development and implementation. This course was the first of its kind in terms of construction and implementation at my institution. While the work to *build* the course was not funded, the work to *implement*, as well as *research* the class, was financially supported. Spending between five to ten hours a week on preparation and research during the summer months allowed for a smooth roll out of the course. Moreover, I worked with two other nonprofit partners, with Allison's support, to ensure her organization was not overwhelmed with well-meaning students. Generally, the front-end preparation, agreement upon pedagogy, guest speaking, reading materials, and site visits made for a largely uneventful and mostly enjoyable semester. It was during the summer months, too, that my theoretical knowledge of community engagement greatly increased, which enabled me to articulate my position in relation to present technical and professional communication representations of community engagement and service-learning, thereby justifying the need for course co-construction.

BROADER IMPLICATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The case presented here and the literature in democratic community engagement, are applicable to scholars working in writing studies, broadly construed. Yet building such praxes is an endeavor born of (largely) North American constructions of service-learning. Steeped in this understanding is a particular belief about what service-learning and community engagement initiatives look like for institutions of higher education in America. We should consider how our courses can transcend concerns of the locality of service-learning narratives, while envisioning methods of collaborative course construction that

extend beyond one's university, city, state, and national boundaries. Walton (2013) suggests there are a number of options to begin examining civic engagement in praxis. These are sensible places to continue exploring collaborative projects that enhance and amplify partners' voices.

I hope engaged practitioners and researchers—in both local, national, and international contexts—keep the following forefront in their mind: the importance of beginning projects with an asset based approach rather than a deficit model (Gorski, 2011); a belief in the “value of collaborative and justice-based community engagement” (Mena and Vaccaro, 2014); and a recognition of the importance of initial interactions between partners. As Noel (2014) notes, universities are fairly criticized for dominating the service-learning agenda and usually only superficially impact communities. Moreover, at an institutional level and an individual level, university representatives should “[reject] the unidirectional, top-down approaches that all too often characterize university-community interaction” (Hartley et al., 2009). The implications of this are broad. It requires service-learning practitioners find the tenuous balance between pursuing an engaged curriculum and allowing community-driven needs to surface. We must recognize need in all partners without diminishing assets, and practice humility and openness in the pursuit of partnerships.

Engagement efforts undertaken without considerable project development and management, or lacking regular self-reflection and assessment, merely reify the discourses that disempower communities. As good citizens ourselves, engaged in justice-oriented work, we should revolt against our ability to create a space for student learning at the expense of partners. This is simply a reassertion of the hegemony of the university, a reiteration of colonialism. We can instead harness the history of community engagement and service-learning to embody democratic engagement. We can utilize our affiliation with these histories to reinvigorate engaged pedagogies both within our field and across disciplines.

Because the field of service-learning more generally is fraught with questions about validity, assessment, value, rhetoric, and meaning, the applications of the pedagogy within disparate disciplines can

be an exercise in adapting to constant change. Institutionalized service-learning efforts are evolving due to new constraints on funding, the necessity to show impact, and the requirements to assess productivity; like institutionalized service-learning, disciplines situated in the humanities are facing similar concerns. Herein lies the problematic nature of how we embrace service-learning and community engagement pedagogies. When embraced to articulate productivity, meaning, fiscal importance, and community impact, community engagement is simply a tool rather than a mindset.

Awareness of our language, awareness of our motivations, and awareness of our goals—of our rhetorical situation as educators, theorists, and practitioners—allows us space to embody new feminist engagement ideals. Reflection ensures that whatever our engagement activities are, we've undertaken and developed them with awareness and attunement our partners in learning: our students, our community, and our peers. This puts us in a position, with insight from our partners, to assess whether these efforts are productive, pedagogically sound, and meaningful for all involved.

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One Billion Rising: Theorizing Bodies, Resistance, and Engagement in a Campus Stop Violence Against Women Movement

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“Walk out, dance, rise up, and demand an end to violence,” serves as a prompt for One Billion Rising, Eve Ensler’s Global V-Day: Stop Violence Against Women Movement. One Billion Rising asks women and those who love them to gather in dance, protest, and voice in a globally staged effort to demand an end to gender-based violence. This essay analyzes a One Billion Rising installation with particular focus on ways a campus community engages with and understands personal trauma as impacted by publicly staged trauma movements. Cvetkovich’s (2012) “public feelings” project and Berlant’s (2011) “cruel optimism” provide a theoretical framework to consider ways One Billion Rising constructs private bodies as representations of public opposition to violence and its aftermath. Closing thoughts consider how reproducers of civic engagement and resistance, and those most intimate with sexual violence and its trauma, interact with the One Billion Rising charge.

INTRODUCTION

Walk out, dance, rise up, and demand an end to violence. This sentence served as a prompt for *One Billion Rising* (OBR), marking February 14, 2013

as the fifteenth anniversary of Eve Ensler's V-Day: Stop Violence Against Women Movement. *One Billion Rising* asks women and those who love them to gather in dance, movement, protest, and voice in a globally staged effort to demand an end to gender-based violence. Conceptualized by author and feminist activist Eve Ensler, known widely as playwright of the *Vagina Monologues*, and choreographed as an arm to her well-established V-Day Stop Violence Against Women movement, *One Billion Rising* seeks to move the earth, leveraging women and men's collective strength, numbers, and solidarity across borders. V-Day asks: "What does one billion look like" (*One Billion Rising*, 2016)? On February 14, 2013, it was orchestrated to look like a revolution (*One Billion Rising*, 2016). But what does a revolution in dance, performed inside a relatively small, rural, academic community truly resemble? How are forms of identity and embodiment contested, negotiated, and/or transformed inside a campus uprising as part of a larger global register? And how do we, as promoters of civic engagement measures, and those intimate with sexual violence and its trauma, personify this *One Billion Rising* charge? Elation, power, and solidarity engendered the spirit of our *One Billion Rising* activities. Waking to our oppressed and unchanged realities, trauma and despair hijacked our post-*One Billion Rising* morning. One day. One movement. One ensuing finale: Gender-based violence lives on.

This essay maps a *One Billion Rising*, Stop Violence Against Women, flash-mob dance and open-mic poetry reading performed at a comprehensive, four year, public college situated in upstate New York. The paper highlights multiple points of encounters to this *One Billion Rising* project which bridges diverse disciplines and activist platforms to an installation of Ensler's transnational *One Billion Rising* initiative. While *One Billion Rising* is now on the backside of its fifth year, I focus this writing on Ensler's first, 2013 *One Billion Rising* prompt. This 2013 milestone marks the launching of the *One Billion Rising* campaign and a critical moment in time when this first *One Billion Rising* movement intersected our campus teaching-to-praxis work. Writings on feminism and popular culture (Douglas, 2010; Zeisler, 2008) help inform the piece, but I focus the gist of my scholarly analysis on trauma movements using Cvetkovich's (2012) "public feelings" project and Berlant's (2011) "cruel optimism" as theoretical lens. I turn to Cvetkovich's (2012) and Berlant's (2011) writings on personal and public feelings as a means to interrogate

ways activism in academia can construct and perform private bodies as representations to national resistance to public trauma that is staged in gender-based violence movements. I am interested in ways a campus community interacts with activism such as V-Day's *One Billion Rising* prompt and how we make meaning out of our performed roles a part of a larger stop gender-based violence register. Paper conclusions include implications for practice in engaging a *One Billion Rising* event as orchestrated across disciplines and divisions within higher education.

One compelling caveat to my *One Billion Rising* analysis and salient to using the 2013 rising as a focus for this writing: In early fall 2012, while most in our rural campus community unwittingly slept, a female freshman was murdered in her residence hall at the hands of her visiting boyfriend. This tragedy preceded and inescapably veiled our *One Billion Rising* motions. As we walked out, danced, and rose en-masse on February 14, 2013, we symbolically rose for all victims and survivors of gender and intimate partner violence, but we rose with purposeful resolve for an auspicious young life stolen at our doorstep. "*She is us, we are her*" reverberated in our campus classrooms and hallways, forever changing the institutional fabric and memory of where we live and work. In a political movement penetrated by its cause, this local trauma falls at the fulcrum of this *One Billion Rising* chronicle, and it largely informs and directs its scholarly reach. Bridging theory with praxis, I consider the body and its politics as a site of theoretical analysis and deploy a cross-discipline interpretation that bridges the intersections of feminist activism with trauma movements. Performing the feminist subject across disciplines, I examine how Ensler's *One Billion Rising* prompt functions as part of a violence against women campus engagement effort. How does a publicly performed dance resistance, smacking up against lived violence, both revel in and coopt women's bodies? And where does personal and campus trauma, raw in intensity, locate itself within a national and globally staged trauma movement? Speak. Write. Demand an end to violence. These are my words. I rise in voice for those who cannot, particularly, one young woman whose taken life now incites my work.

V-DAY ONE BILLION RISING AND VIOLENCE

September 2012. A fall semester. Promising. New. A female. A freshman. A swimmer. A death. While many on our campus were stunned by a student murder, a college woman killed at the hands of her boyfriend is an all too common tragedy. Around the globe, physical, sexual, and psychological abuse afflicted on women and girls cuts across income, class, and cultural lines (Ensler, 2010, 2007; United Nations, 2015; Valenti, 2012, 2008). While we know gender-based and intimate partner violence is not a female only phenomenon, data underscores women as most susceptible. One in six American women compared to one in thirty-three men will be victims of sexual assault (RAIN, 2016). College students are especially vulnerable. Women 18-24 who are enrolled in college are three times more likely than women in general to suffer from sexual violence (National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2015). Historically, unequal power relations between women and men make systematic violence against women a universal phenomenon (Brownmiller, 1975; Freedman, 2013; Katz, 2006; Valenti, 2016, 2008). Violence against women is so widespread that experts couch it as a normal aspect of women's experiences (Bevacqua, 2000; Brownmiller, 1975; Buchwald, Fletcher and Roth, 1993; Katz, 2006; Levy, 2008; Levy, 2005; Valenti, 2016, 2008). This normalizing of violence institutionalizes societal practices that sustain what we know as rape culture (Buchwald, et.al., 1993; Katz, 2006; Levy, 2008; Valenti, 2016, 2008). Media outlets of television, music, and advertising, in sexualizing women and girls, further fuel their objectification, which serves to reproduce rape behaviors that make women increasingly vulnerable (Douglas, 2010, Levy, 2005; Zeisler, 2008). The World Health Organization (2016), in a purposeful review of the prevalence of violence against women, determined intimate partner sexual violence as persistently prominent. UN Women (2015) with the World Health Organization (2013, 2016) characterize violence against women as a global health problem of epidemic proportions that intersects all corners of the globe and that limits women's societal interaction. Higher education, as a ladder for social mobility and a tool for change, positions college communities as strategic in engaging with and disseminating knowledge that fights violence.

Eve Ensler, playwright and sexual assault survivor, is a well-known champion of the violence against women crisis. Using literature and performance, Ensler has helped raise awareness about gender-based violence, seeking to bring safety and freedom to women worldwide (Ensler, 2007; Regine, 2010). Beginning in the United States on Valentine's Day 1998, Ensler engineered the first V-Day event to demand an end to violence against women and girls. The most prominent and enduring project to Ensler's V-Day movement is *The Vagina Monologues*, a play Ensler wrote and choreographed that enacts answers to the question, *if your vagina could talk, what would it say?* (Kracov-Zinckgraf, 2013). Performed in staged monologues, and a frequent backdrop to college activism in raising awareness about gender-based-violence, the play has brought voice and visibility across a range of often cloaked issues spanning taboos around women's sexual pleasure to atrocities common to women and girl's sexual abuse (Ensler, 2007; Kracov-Zinckgraf, 2013). These powerful productions fused the pretext of performing the *Vagina Monologues* from a celebration of women's sexuality to a movement to stop sexual violence (Ensler, 2007; Kracov-Zinckgraf, 2013). V-Day, since its early inception, has cast a global reach and is a common fixture to campus and community based educational programming aimed at stopping gender-based violence. Each year, on or around February 14, women from around the world stage *Vagina Monologues* productions to generate intellectual and financial capital that goes toward stopping violence against women and girls (V-day, 2014). This often includes taking a public stand against rape, battery, incest, female genital mutilation, and sexual slavery (V-Day, 2014). It also means taking a stand against violence that frequently unravels behind closed doors of homes and college parties, concealed by outer markings of relationships that are seemingly stable and consensual. V-Day's February 14 target, a day the United States hallmarks by love and romance, is purposeful in staging alternate Valentine's Day celebrations that recognize and expose the pervasiveness of intimate partner violence

V-Day has spiraled into a global movement with many grassroots activists grabbing onto its center. College campuses have been strategic here, frequently translating the V-Day message into multiple student-life events that seek to break tacit silences shrouding relationship violence. Ensler (2007) explains, "V-Day provides a path to action

through benefit work...around the world to sustain an infrastructure that keeps the V-Day network of millions of activists linked, informed, and engaged across the globe” (p. 172). In February 2013, the V-Day movement, in conjunction with its 15th anniversary, launched *One Billion Rising*. The impetus behind *One Billion Rising* circles back to the reality that one in three women will be impacted by violence in their lifetime, which translates to over one billion women globally (One Billion Rising, 2016). Now on the heels of its fifth year, the *One Billion Rising* movement has introduced permutations in theme: *One Billion Rising for Justice* (2014), *One Billion Rising for Revolution* (2015 and 2016), and *Solidarity Against the Exploitation of Women* (2017), but violence against women and girls has only escalated in reach and proportion. The *One Billion Rising* movement continues to grow, yet sadly, so does its cause and its casualties. Unavoidably, both personal and public trauma seep out of the V-Day, *One Billion Rising* charge, placing gender-based violence and its ensuing trauma in a social and cultural frame.

TRAUMA: PUBLIC AND PERSONAL FEELINGS

Ann Cvetkovich (2012, 2003, 1992) uses the word trauma strategically; she argues that trauma, as named and inescapably located in social and political arenas, links emotion with politics. Cvetkovich (2012, 2003, 1992) similarly considers trauma, not only as a consequence directly experienced by trauma survivors, but importantly, as experienced by those who circulate around incidences of trauma, and who, in these potentially unforeseen but still vulnerable roles, are marked by trauma that spills into these peripheral spaces. I turn to Cvetkovich’s (2012, 2003, 1992) interpretation of trauma and its public feelings dimension because of explicit recognition of ways trauma bleeds into those who intersect trauma victims and survivors, our campus community experiencing the murder of a female freshman as example, and also, in ways that capture how personal and local responses to public trauma, our *One Billion Rising* campus movement as example, can better inform various public displays of activism as part of a larger trauma movement.

Both seen and unseen, trauma lies at the center of violence, suffusing movements that challenge its offense. Cvetkovich’s (2012, 2003, 1992) conceptualization of trauma helps crystalize the wave of

emotions overlaying much of our campus *One Billion Rising* activities. As we rose in dance on February 14, 2013, the conflating of personal and public emotion both lifted and oppressed our *One Billion Rising* work. The trauma of a student murdered on our campus in early September 2012 hovered in corners of our minds, and the reality of this trauma, still raw in its intensity, added a solemn tenor to our activities that day. Conversely, *the One Billion Rising* dance we would collectively perform was lively and full of symbolic promise as a cross-disciplinary civic engagement endeavor. These opposing feelings of loss and celebration complicated our staged activism: How do we solemnly mourn as corporeal beings but use our bodies to celebrate our activist efforts? Similarly, our emotional range, from joy to despair, complicated our activist response: Can we hold tightly to our emotive despair while we perform as enlivened dancers? Reading and living this campus emotional expanse, I sought a feminist framework that conceptualized this collective incongruence. “The personal is political,” coined in the 1970s and a frequently used adage common to feminist activism, resonated loudly in authenticating recurrent ways women’s subjugation is rooted in public spheres of social and political power (hooks, 1994; Fassin and Rechtman, 2009). But the phrase left me wanting in a theoretical reading of our campus *One Billion Rising* activities. There is implicit analogy to the personal is political and Cvetkovich’s (2012, 2003, 1992) trauma language. Both capture ways personal experience, violence as case, have social and political ramifications, and similarly, both claim foci that illustrate ways violence on bodies, as a point of corporeal and emotional impact, moves within and around structures in private and public locations. Extending the socio-historical ground to the personal is political, Cvetkovich’s (2012, 2003) theorization of trauma is means to harness ways feelings as personal and public can anchor the basis for what is political and social (Fassin and Rechtman, 2009). This theoretical scaffolding of sorts allows us to scale the matrix of person, place, and discipline that was our *One Billion Rising* undertaking, and to do so deploying a critically informed lens. In short, Cvetkovich’s (2012, 2003, 1992) conceptualization of public trauma movements and the ripple of trauma that seeps into and impacts victims and survivors of these casualties, operationalizes the personal is political of *One Billion Rising* in a theory-to-praxis approach.

STAGING: MIXED FEELINGS PERFORMED

Our 2013 *One Billion Rising* collaboration comprised diverse scholarly perspectives that cut across disciplines and college units, bridging divisions of academic and student life. Laying out the details of our *One Billion Rising* event helps illustrate some of the many nuances to this interdisciplinary collaboration, and with this, some of the ensuing challenges to its endurance as a campus engagement and activist model. Women and Gender Studies with Student Affairs, Theatre and Music Studies, Art, Dance, and English, each often isolated in their own corners of knowledge, and similarly, each protective of their hard-earned disciplinary ground, came together in body and mind to conceive of, assemble, and enact a day of dance and poetic activism as a stand against gender-based violence. Cvetkovich (1992) emphasizes the difficulty in transforming pain and suffering into sustainable political action, particularly across differences, because the impetus to unite may be transient or externally imposed. This thinking recognizes ways the interdisciplinary nature of our campus inspired *One Billion Rising* effort, while rooted in shared intent, was not easy to realize or necessarily organic to our otherwise separate academic work. Despite our collective grief as a campus and our common higher education mission, unique units and disciplines were performing as one in the mix of varied orientations and commitments. This disparity is important to bear in mind as we consider ways personal and local activism plays out as part of larger activist movements and ways our campus interacted with the *One Billion Rising* call. Three widely populated flash mobs, an early morning rendition with 35-40 dancers in the college library lobby, a noon staging with over 75 dancers in the Student Union food court, and an afternoon finale¹ with over 150 dancers in the Fine Arts atrium were emotionally commanding in movement and voice. A graduate student in the Department of Dance creatively choreographed our flash mob dance movements to the score of Aretha Franklin's (1967) "*Respect*," and each of the three flash mobs that we performed were energized and rousing while also solemn and profound in their *One Billion Rising* intent. The multidisciplinary lenses that engineered the day inspired unity in encounter: Rise in dance along with us and you rise in dance to stop violence against women. "[College Name] Breaks the Chain," our campus invented slogan, inscribed event posters, Facebook pages,

1 Video link to the afternoon flash mob finale <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dsPmtw4FLHg>

YouTube video, and thousands of small round pink stickers, printed and distributed broadly to all those who joined our “Rise in Dance” activist call.

Elation flowed out of and around each flash mob performance. Dozens of faculty and staff moved alongside hundreds of students, most strangers to each other in their ascribed campus roles as otherwise lived outside our *One Billion Rising* surge. Transgressing anonymity, a sense of camaraderie and excited chatter preceded each flash mob and the enthusiasm of moving with others in public performance created a theatrical dimension that was bursting in energy and verve. Coordinated into the flash mob planning, many dancers wore pink T-shirts, and this intentional sameness in dress projected external markers of collective solidarity. This sway of multiple pink torsos constructed a buoyant mood that matched the flush and flourish of sensationalized fanfare that performed the day. An evening open mic poetry reading closed the *One Billion Rising* event. Readers, musicians, and audience members gathered in an intimate campus coffee shop where several contributed affecting poems, evoking still raw memories of sexual assault and its aftermath. Violence and its associated trauma, confronted in Ensler’s *One Billion Rising* call, incited our movement, which captured a critical mass of “we can overcome” presumptions. But when the dancing, music, and poetry subsided, who and what had we moved? And what would become of the multidisciplinary points of encounter to our campus engagement efforts? In the iconic sensation of the day, creeping behind well-choreographed bodies united in a global campaign, came an unsettling sense of failure. That evening, on the backside of our *One Billion Rising*, our social media feeds broadcast several local and national accounts of rape and sexual assault, reminding us that violence was everywhere. Sadly, as darkness followed night, those of us intimate with lived violence and gender oppressions felt beaten by our cause. Despite our well populated and multidisciplinary surge of activism, where we moved a campus to rise up in dance as a stand against gender and intimate partner violence, we knew then that we hadn’t really changed the lay of the land.

Cvetkovich (2012) asks, “How can we, as intellectuals and activists, acknowledge our own political disappointments and failures in a way

that can be enabling? Where might hope be possible” (p. 1)? This is a pivotal question for this *One Billion Rising* analysis, particularly, as diverse players in a campus movement staged as part of a larger fight against violence and gendered oppressions and with raw and subjective loss preceding and encapsulating our personal and civic engagement efforts. Hundreds of otherwise uninformed campus citizens dancing resistance to gender-based violence was impressive. But the transitory nature of this activism disillusioned us, and our disappointment in this temporality in the mix of mourning a student’s death, intensified in the monumental but fleeting passage of the *One Billion Rising* stage. This emotive despair juxtaposed against shiny representations of dancing for a cause captured an intriguing dimension for analysis. Perhaps we can locate hope in trauma, and that trauma itself, in this instance, trauma complicated by a sensationalized, public display of joyful dance in the face of tragedy, can motivate change (Fassin and Rechtman, 2009). Borrowing Cvetkovich’s (2012) thinking, we dig into the negative emotions that a student’s murder evoked and use this as a lens to examine the social and political complexities that grew out of our campus *One Billion Rising* interactions. As a Women and Gender Studies scholar, I am seemingly well-versed in paradigms that fight corporeal violence that power abuses place on bodies. Such is paramount to Women and Gender Studies activist arm. But in the escalating pervasiveness of such violence, we must also fight the violence that furtively creeps into our minds where empowered activism meets accumulating despair. And we must similarly consider ways multiple perspectives, here, diverse academic disciplines and campus life units with unique knowledge bases, coalesce to leverage an activism that is enduring in its local and global reach. *One Billion Rising* notwithstanding, we must cross-pollinate our academic and political work with representations that do justice to social meaning in enduring ways (Cvetkovich, 2012).

Strength can emerge from our disappointments. In this way, I locate hope and potential empowerment on the backside of a tentatively engaged campus *One Billion Rising* campaign. Cvetkovich’s (2012, 2003) trauma discourse is strategic here, where she connects the personal effect of feeling bad about sexual trauma to larger public expressions around trauma. But Cvetkovich (2003) affirms that trauma connected with sexual violence is often subverted in its public visibility and significance as compared to traumas society

recognizes in national tragedies of war or genocide. The gender divide in incidences of sexual assault, and the seemingly private sphere under which these crimes repeatedly occur, account for this slippage in public awareness and accountability (Cvetkovich, 2003). Still, possible agency growing out of our *One Billion Rising* activities is partly about lifting the unseen importance of fighting gender-based violence into larger and more prominent social and political frames. This rings true in facing the trauma of a student murder that brought our campus to the *One Billion Rising* register and in reconciling the post traumatic effect that the waning activism of a cross-disciplinary *One Billion Rising* campus installation actually produced. That Ensler introduced interactive dance as a permutation to the V-Day movement, leverages this more public engagement initiative, in essence, constructing a performance platform where despair in sexual trauma can hypothetically merge with joy in dance to produce a stage for enacting social justice (Dodd, 2011).

BODIES AND RESISTANCE

Jackson & Shapiro-Phim (2008) note how dance enables historically disparate fields multifaceted opportunity to intersect, and similarly, emphasize the significance of dance as a social movement device in confronting abuse and injustices. As we situate the public feelings dimension of Cvetkovich's (2012, 2003, 1992) trauma work alongside artistic expression in dance, we find ourselves in multidisciplinary ground that complicates our reach. Human rights and gender justice work, of which *One Billion Rising* is a part, provides a backdrop for the sociopolitical center that drives violence against women activism. But the personal and public pieces of this activism, particularly the challenge to transition a campus trauma into sustainable political action as part of a global movement to stop violence, also helps set up a working critique that informs our post *One Billion Rising* reflections. That we see and search for meaning in our disappointment while also recognizing campus potential to create community around loss is what brings pen to paper as we place our mixed experiences with *One Billion Rising* into a larger academic dialogue (Dodds, 2011; Fassin and Rechtman, 2009). This bears intersection with Berlant's (2011) writing on cruel optimism as located in a sociopolitical context, where she describes a latent hope-in-failure perspective engendered in crisis-response activities, *One Billion Rising Stop Violence Against*

Women, as example. Berlant (2011) theorizes this shifting hope-to-despair corollary as inventing a space of group sovereignty united by a cause that revitalizes political activism that is otherwise fleeting in its endurance, largely drowned out by the pervasive white noise of its public and at times stagnant repetition. In fighting violence against women, it is easy to be worn out by the reiteration of staged activism itself as we repeat the motions of resistance again and again only to face recurrent violations. And it does not escape us that those most vulnerable to sexual violence and its aftermath are largely the ones performing resistance motions. But as Cvetkovich (2003, 2009) argues, and Berlant (2011) affirms, if we move closer to this trauma, really perceive and experience its negative depth, then we can better know and arm ourselves against its offence. Seeing a campus struck by and acting up against violence only to retreat in subsequent commitment to the crusade is our *One Billion Rising* dance montage of hope meeting despair. This duality frames what Berlant's (2011) describes as "cruel optimism."

Both Cvetkovich's (2012, 2003, 1992) public feeling project and Berlant's (2011) cruel optimism thinking bridge the darkness that kindles resistance itself with the empowerment that grows out of mobilizing others around a cause. In this way, *One Billion Rising*, operating at both a campus and global level, provides a focused but multidisciplinary movement, which sheds light on ways art fuses into and reifies civic engagement and human rights activities (Berlant, 2011; Lengel and Warren, 2005). This allows us to see ways private experiences with trauma, violence on bodies as illustration, can translate into public displays of discontent, such as rising up in choreographed unison to stop violence. In our *One Billion Rising* flash mob example, which galvanized diverse campus constituents to move alone and assembled as a group, dance functioned as both political and civic and singular and communal, and these intersections helped cultivate these activist and disciplinary dualities (Lorber and Moore, 2006). Although powerful in import, this same bridge that united multiplicities of resistance in voice and movement can similarly appear discordant when read as a working utility to social change. This is true when campus activism slaps up against unchanged realities, as bodies that enact resistance movements remain vulnerable to the very oppressions they fight.

Cvetkovich (2012; 2003, 1992) argues that a political agenda, I use *One Billion Rising*, must align private and public spheres in ways where private or personal experiences as separate from public life are also understood as central to public life. Fundamental to this analysis are ways *One Billion Rising* both elevated our college community in an en-masse rising of dance—its public and political dimension — but as we acknowledged epidemic levels of violence and loss surrounding and following our *One Billion Rising* installation, it also depressed our ideologies—its personal and emotional dimension. But Cvetkovich (2012, 2003, 1992) reminds us that the personal is political precisely because it is constructed as not being political — that is —that bodies as apart from the political cannot be wished away by an act of consciousness raising that is political; they can only be altered by material and social transformations. In this way, practices designed to re-politicize the personal, such as *One Billion Rising*, remain only a symptom of the separation of public and private spheres versus the cure to gender-based violence. The impact and limitations of social movements and how this is accomplished on campuses is germane to this analysis.

The political and emotive dualities that trickled out of our *One Billion Rising*, illuminate a critique that is salient to campus-staged activism that seeks to promote civic engagement around a social justice cause. Popular culture has, in many ways, sensationalized the *One Billion Rising* prompt, and this branding of Ensler's V-Day movement trickles down into campus installation efforts. V-Day's global reach and its artistic, mass produced appeal, focused a spotlight on *One Billion Rising* and its stop violence against women movements. This prevalence in *One Billion Rising* is impressive, and its wide reach strategically bolsters and sustains an important global movement. But this pervasiveness, as public staged dance intersects common and routine spaces, hypothetically touches occupied corners that are inadvertent and uninformed (Washington, 2004). While these touch-points widen the scope of who and how we fight gender violence, it is critical to note that those who inadvertently join in public movements that are political do not necessarily assume political or public voice. Similarly, accidental participants jumping on board a public staging of activism do not necessarily understand or possess sensitivity to the political purpose pushing the activism forward (Washington, 2004). In effect, as students and faculty and a constellation of other campus identities

entered into spaces of performance framed by our campus *One Billion Rising* flash mobs, they entered along firmly established parameters in college positions and functions that eventually splintered back into compartments of difference. While we united around a campus trauma, absent of ways to unify and endure the cause, we propagate what is fleeting gain versus sustainable community engaged progress (Ginsberg, 2008; Washington, 2004).

Walk out, dance, rise up, and demand an end to violence built incredible momentum on my campus. But in a monolith of a single day, this surge of bodies played out as a series of multiple pink dots plotted on a larger map where each dot operated independent of the dots around them. The dots did join together with temporal unity, and they similarly intersected across disciplines and units of campus life. But this momentary harmony did not translate into lived praxis that sustains an appreciation of or commitment to the stop violence cause. As I circle back to our campus trauma, a college freshman murdered by a visiting boyfriend only a few weeks into the semester spurred a surge of civic engagement activities rooted in a stop gender -based violence movement. As a mechanism to engage a campus traumatized by violence, the *One Billion Rising* prompt and its dancing center carry magnetic pull. But interaction with the *One Billion Rising* cause among campus constituents was short-lived, marking a measure of meaningful civic engagement that falls horribly short. In fact, many faculty, staff, and students who gathered and rose as part of our *One Billion Rising* flash mobs accrued a false sense of accomplishment, walking away from each flash mob with the sense that the rising itself, and participation as a dancer in the moment, altered the world. Perhaps it did on a small scale that held us all in brief solidarity. But arguably, those who carry the torch of the *One Billion Rising* movement did not find themselves better armed, and most who engaged in the rising returned to a largely under-informed campus space. Sadly, absent of the tragedy of murder at our feet, our 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017 *One Billion Risings* have progressively waned in spirit and numbers.

Turning back to February 14, 2013, on the morning following our large 2013 *One Billion Rising* events, national news headlines broadcast the death of 29 year old South African model, Reeva Steenkamp,

fatally shot by her athlete boyfriend, Oscar Pistorius. This tragedy on the tails of a movement rooted in stopping intimate partner violence is not the failings of *One Billion Rising*, nor the retreating endurance of its civic engagement outcome, but rather, symptomatic of the stark realities that a very pink, dressed-up, *One Billion Rising* performance potentially obscures among campus citizens, who rise in dance but remain unfamiliar with the movement's purpose and cause. Similar to 2013, tragic aftermaths paralleled our campus *One Billion Rising* flash mobs, both in 2015 and 2016, where women died at the hands of intimate male partners. Most recently, in a neighboring picturesque community, a boyfriend murdered his longtime girlfriend, a 38 year-old emergency room nurse and mother of three who also was the sister of one of our own campus administrators. Victims and survivors of violence are people who we know, although it is easy to stroll casually by or away from a campus staged *One Billion Rising* dance and think, this is not happening here, to me, in this space. In fact, as institutional memory goes, many campus members today are unaware of our September 2012 trauma, a freshman, a swimmer, a daughter, a friend, whose murder shook a college community into a multidisciplinary rally around a stop violence cause.

THEORY TO PRAXIS

What can we make of this *One Billion Rising* analysis and its scholarship contribution to ways community engagement influences our teaching and research practices in higher education? *One Billion Rising's* symbolic energy does engender reminders of how a campus community can rally behind a cause. And in *One Billion Rising* lay opportunities for multiple disciplines and areas of student life to challenge power structures that construct and deploy violence. These are important take-aways as we consider our roles as faculty and staff whose higher education work seeks to engage students in ways that promote individual freedom, democratic societies, and social justice causes (Cravey and Petit, 2012). Undeniably, this skillset is increasingly important to helping students develop competencies in areas of global navigation, and similarly, is salient to social justice concerns in support of human societies common to learners across geographies of person, place, and discipline.

Faced with the trauma of a student murdered at the hands of her visiting boyfriend, staging a campus-based *One Billion Rising* is a strategic maneuver in a civic engagement plan that seeks to fight intimate partner violence. But to make that engagement enduring needs more than a campus tragedy and its aftermath and more than a seductive “Stop Violence Against Women” campaign manufactured to mass appeal (Douglas, 2010; Zeisler, 2008). Some of the pitfalls here miss the mark on pedagogy by falling into the vortex of staging a global performance that relies on corporeality that merely presumes versus informs rationality (Collin, 2010; hooks, 1994). These are largely knee-jerk reactions that are transitory versus lasting. They do help us cope, but in the end, not really. This is true of our own campus efforts, where we often find ourselves broadly positioning civic engagement prompts preceding knowledge about the purpose and meaning of sustained engagement efforts. But I would argue that this reactive response and the urgency to leap-in are largely true on a more global scale. While well-intended, *One Billion Rising’s* ceremonial fanfare and its outer veneer, construct images of campus accord that imagine endurance beyond the wave of the day. The encroaching sensationalizing of *One Billion Rising* overtakes the injustices and remote remedies behind it. Without reading behind the slogans, outward *One Billion Rising* facade, despite its well-articulated atrocities, tends to hide the structural and systematic gender wrongs that transgress it. Similar to numerous fights for women’s equality, advocacy against gender wrongs presumes well-heeled outcomes to overturn them (Collins, 2010; May, 2015; Mohanty, 2003; Rupp, 1997). Analogous to Berlant’s (2011) hope meeting despair tenet, much educational work lay ahead to craft civic engagement efforts that intersect gender equality outcomes.

Our campus community’s waning response to *One Billion Rising* is emblematic of the difficulties feminist activists face in sustaining meaningful local-to-public civic engagement outcomes. And the reluctance in fighting gender-based violence here is in many ways a metaphor for the skepticism that overshadows the fight for gender equality on a larger scale (Launius and Hassel, 2015). Growing dispassion among a campus hit by violence underscores these contentions, yet missing in our 2013 and subsequent *One Billion Rising* events is formal assessment of the activism beyond our participant observation. We do not know, for example, if partaking in our *One*

Billion Rising flash mobs or poetry reading -- as dancers, readers, or observers -- increased awareness about sexual assault and intimate partner violence, or, if those who engaged in our call to action, even if tentatively, might be more apt to step up as future bystanders in defense of victims and survivors of sexual assault (Banyard, 2008). Those familiar with assessment work in higher education can appreciate the need for more systematic follow-up as we look to guide future programming efforts here and in a broader gender justice arena. Strategically, as we seek to stop violence and our repetitive need to act up against these crimes, focus groups and questionnaires that explore ensuing impact of a locally mounted *One Billion Rising* campaign would serve the campus and the larger movement well. Related, we must examine our own roles as college citizens as we study gender inequalities under which dating violence unravels, and we must examine our own roles as societal members as we seek to reconcile gender codes that applaud dominance and aggressiveness common to the hyper masculinities that spur violent behavior (Katz, 2006; Pascoe and Bridges, 2016). Standing at the fulcrum where a local campus shoulders a larger political movement, we must extend our reach beyond ourselves both without and despite the weight of our own trauma.

Broadening our private to public discourse on *One Billion Rising* sits at the nexus of a global epidemic where violence against women is rampant. But in our campus-situated introspections, we can easily eclipse this intersectional perspective. Feminist movements outside the United States hold critical insight. Many Western feminists have attempted to universalize women's rights and goals, often speaking without permission for citizens in other countries (Fernandes, 2013; May, 2015; Mohanty, 2003; Rupp, 1997). This casting of "one feminist" reproduces a cultural imperialism that distances versus bridges difference. V-Day and its *One Billion Rising* charge do make space for diversity of experience and expression while still establishing an accessible, common purpose where distinct women and men are able to form collective coalitions. And Ensler's V-Day and *One Billion Rising* campus implementation arm is sizable in engaging young voices in both local and global endeavors. But *One Billion Rising's* Westernization in bodies and form, despite its very visible iterations in global reach, is inescapable -- and with this --potentially exclusionary and oppressive (Fernandes, 2013). Crenshaw (1997)

underscores that the power of a movement lies in the hands of those who create the activism under which they mobilize themselves and others. As we understand sexual violence and global movements to overcome personal and public trauma, an intersectional lens as a reach beyond our own corporality is paramount (Collins, 2010; hooks, 1994; May, 2015; Mohanty, 2003). Borrowing Crenshaw's (1997) thinking, "The struggle over incorporating difference is not a petty or superficial conflict about who gets to sit at the head of the table. In the context of violence, it is sometimes a deadly serious matter of who will survive and who will not" (p. 488). The 2013 slogan, "[Campus Name] Breaks the Chain" fractured a moment. But only for a moment.

SHE HE THEY US

Sustaining civic engagement across a campus and erasing gender-based violence both locally and globally is too much to expect of one coordinated uprising. This is a given. But generating future engagement within and around a stop violence cause is not an unreasonable outcome for a multidisciplinary, cross-divisional campus undertaking that grows out of an annual and repeating V-Day *One Billion Rising* prompt. Crenshaw's (1997) ownership contention, that the power of a movement must be organic to the movers within it, rings true for higher education practice. The points of encounter between person, place, and discipline in orchestrating a campus-based gender-based violence movement needs an organic center to live beyond its own temporality. This becomes Berlant's (2011) cruel optimism and Cvetkovich's (2012) public feelings in practice where campus structures that instigate bodies to rise up against patriarchal oppressions, absent of intrinsic agency, subside in their activist and emotive impact. A publicly performed dance resistance, smacking up against lived violence, has both private and public dimension. As Cvetkovich (2012, 2003, 1992) argues, straddling feelings as personal and public can anchor the basis for what is political and social. Both capture ways our interdisciplinary and cross-divisional work must build stronger bridges across difference so that we are not just performing a day of duty as corporeal subjects, but rather, we are, in our corporeal performance, catalysts to a larger cause that pushes against tendencies to recoil back into our protected and partitioned corners of academic life. We must endure beyond ourselves and our

place. We must see into and reach behind the manufactured picture. We must.

A public four-year college. September 2012. A fall semester. Promising. New. A female. A freshman. A swimmer. A death. She is us. We are her. She or he or they tragically will be our tomorrow. Ensler's V-Day *One Billion Rising* movements do matter. I will champion a *One Billion Rising* campaign on my campus in 2018; it will be my sixth time around the bend. In the tenor of Berlant (2011), I likely will be empowered and disillusioned by this effort, but I unequivocally will not give up. Despite this resolute reduction in a pledge to carry on, we must be vigilant not to be seduced by promises of change in placards and bodies that merely perform resistance. Without intentionality and across college commitment, campus-staged *One Billion Risings* and movements like it confirm an iconic feminism that repeats itself in the face oppression while only temporarily disrupts the traumas that necessitate its activist call.

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Subalternity in Juvenile Justice:

Gendered Oppression and the Rhetoric of Reform

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The proportion of young women in the juvenile justice system has increased substantially since the nineties, yet the rhetoric surrounding them remains under-studied and under-critiqued. The oppressive nature of this rhetoric thwarts the achievement of gender equity in juvenile justice, undermining the reforms that have been recommended over years of research. The following analysis examines this rhetoric for the ways in which it silences women and furthers gendered oppression in system; it also offers critical cautions regarding existing approaches to gender-responsive programming. By acknowledging the subalternity of young justice-involved women, further studies and community collaborations can be taken up to close the distance between the actual experiences and knowledges of young women and the rhetorical constructions of them that have long informed policy, programming, and daily interaction.

*“Who are you
You now-grown teenager
Who are you
Who is afraid to look in the mirror
because of what she might see”*

—N., an incarcerated teen woman whose writing appears in *Call Me Strong*

“[W]hatever point is made about such a low-status group gains credibility, validity, and reliability only as it can be redefined through the lives and contributions of others more credible, more legitimate, and more salient.”

—Jacqueline Jones Royster, *Traces of a Stream*

I began working with young incarcerated women in 2012, when I was invited to be the Writer in Residence for the young women at a detention center in Ohio. While I knew the work would take me into new territory as a writer and scholar, I was unprepared for the consistency with which the participants in my workshops wrote about experiences such as sexual assault, domestic violence, sex work, imprisoned parents, mental illness diagnoses, and cutting. Brittany¹ demonstrates this in a poem to her father:

*Dad, why do you hate us,
your flesh and blood
Don't tell us
that you will dress us
up like prostitutes and put us
on the corner. Don't beat us
like you would a man on the street” (Breaking Out of Silence).*

As I daily combed through their poems, I was alarmed at how tempting it became to allow my role with these writers to slip into that of mediator, mouthpiece, missionary.

So each evening of that first week-long writing workshop, I returned to my hotel reeling from my own emotional reactivity, anxious to replace it with concrete (if generalized) knowledge about the women with whom I was working. I spent hours hunched over my computer, beginning what would become years of research regarding young justice-involved women. I quickly discovered that a “history of physical or sexual victimization is one of the most common characteristics of girls in the justice system” (Sherman 21), and that young women

¹ As in the books in which these poems originally appear, I use the authors’ first names or initials only.

are more likely than young men to suffer from mental illness and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).² I also learned that, despite the dozens of studies and reports since the nineties describing specific attributes and needs of young justice-involved women, little responsive action has been taken to address those needs (Watson and Edelman ii). More subtly, their lives are circumscribed discursively as well as physically: their experiences always depicted and “validated,” as Royster describes above, by juvenile justice authorities, lawyers, and/or researchers whose rhetoric further silences the women they wish to help. For example, the words of young justice-involved women are almost wholly absent from scholarly literature about them; more troubling, their voices even in poetry and other creative arts are often stripped of power by the pity they engender in well-intended listeners, by patronizing interpretations of their statements as mere self-expression, and/or by the simple fact that their works are rarely seen or heard beyond the walls of detention centers or diversion program facilities.

While scholars in rhetoric and writing studies have addressed the rhetoric surrounding “at-risk” youth and adult women in prison,³ young justice-involved women have remained under-acknowledged and under-studied in the field. This is a devastating gap in public rhetoric research, given that the juvenile justice system’s failure to

2 In a report for the Federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), Francine Sherman writes, “Research from the Oregon Social Learning Center shows that while 3 percent of boys in their study had documented histories of physical abuse, 77.8 percent of the girls had histories of abuse” (Sherman 21). In addition, “[o]n every scale, delinquent girls studied by the Oregon Social Learning Center had more significant mental health problems than boys—over three-quarters of the girls in the study met the criteria for three or more DSM IV Axis 1 diagnoses” (23). Sherman also cites a study of detained youth which “found that girls had higher rates of psychiatric disorders than boys—nearly three-quarters of girls met criteria for one or more psychiatric disorder and rates of depression and anxiety disorders were particularly high among girls. Notably, girls are more likely than boys to be diagnosed with more than one mental health disorder, often a mental health disorder with a substance use disorder” (23). This data is not meant to imply that reform for young detained men is unnecessary, or even that it is less urgent. It does, however, clarify that equitable treatment of young women requires that the system attend to gender disparities rather than simply maintaining a system designed for males.

3 See Tobi Jacobi, Meghan Sweeney, Ruby Tapia (see Solinger et al), Wendy Hinshaw, and Adela C. Licuna, among others.

address women's needs is due at least in part to women's subaltern status in the system and to pervasive rhetorical constructions of them as other. I argue that young women in the justice system will not be given equitable and humane care until that system faces—and reforms—its long history of infantilizing, neglecting, and othering them. I thus offer the following critique, beginning with a delineation of the oppressive circumstances in which many young justice-involved women live, followed by an analysis of the extent to which their ways of knowing are disqualified and dismissed by the rhetoric of those in positions of power. Finally, I offer critical cautions regarding gender-responsive programs: problematizing recidivism as a benchmark for success and critiquing the use of indoctrination and empowerment rhetoric as means of addressing oppression. By acknowledging the subalternity of young detained women, further studies and community collaborations can be taken up to close the distance between the actual experiences and knowledges of young women and the oppressive rhetorical constructions of them that have long informed policy, programming, and daily interaction.⁴

*I would like to make people happy,
help the world be better to live in.
Try to talk to others to make sure that they're ok.
And try to be a positive person
to anyone in need of it.
I would like to heal people
from their pains and their suffering
So that they won't have to be angry
anymore.*

—from *Shine Through*

I should first note that I approach this analysis with no small amount of wariness; as Gayatri Spivak has argued, intellectuals who wish to “give silenced others a voice” often fail to recognize the opacity of their intercessional work and the heterogeneity of the “others” whom they seek to represent (Leitch 2193). Such failures result in a “benevolent effort” that “merely repeats the very silencing it aims to

⁴ The present work is but a starting point for the continued analyses, collaborative and iterative program designs, and thorough evaluations that are ultimately necessary for reform.

combat” (2193). I recognize the possibility that this endeavor could do the same, particularly as I am inevitably present as observer and intercessor. Furthermore, as William Banks has discussed in his work on embodied writing, I am unable to avoid bringing to this inquiry my own experiences of domestic dysfunction; indeed, the violence inscribed on my body may inform the significance I place on young women’s abusive histories as determinative and powerful (25). I am also aware that my many personal, often emotional interactions with young incarcerated women cannot but color my understanding(s) of them. Nevertheless, despite my misgivings, the absence of young women’s voices in public conversations about justice, childhood adversity, and education demands the risk I take now in presuming to illuminate the unexamined rhetorics that perpetuate their oppression. In an effort to better expose this problematic and inevitable *speaking-for*, several poems by young women I’ve met in juvenile detention appear throughout the piece. My hope is that these highlight my observational standpoint: offering recurring reminders that the women of whom I speak are individuals with their own opinions, goals, knowledges, and beliefs regarding their circumstances.⁵

Landscape

*I am a dark, lifeless forest
bare branches and rolling fog in every corner
I like being dark and cold sometimes
I keep to myself usually
I am a cloudy sky
and a wet, broken branch smushed into the mud
sometimes I go unnoticed
but that’s ok
I am a dark lifeless forest*

—from *Know Me*

⁵ The use of published poems allows young women’s voices to be present in this research despite confidentiality protections that typically limit descriptive research among young incarcerated women. While I support such protections, I do worry that they discourage researchers from conducting studies that rely heavily on firsthand interaction and information; one result is the near-absence of young women’s voices in the literature about them. An increased demand for input and testimony could lead to collaborative research practices that protect the privacy of justice-involved youth while inviting and better utilizing their knowledge and feedback.

THE STATE OF OPPRESSION

The othering of young women who enter the juvenile justice system begins before they are arrested, and in fact, is often the cause of their arrests. For example, young females are more likely than males to be detained for minor offenses and technical violations (Sherman 11), indicating that juvenile (mis)behavior is defined and punished in terms of gender. Similarly, parents are known to “have different expectations about their sons’ and daughters’ obedience to parental authority” (Zahn et al, “Violence by Teenage Girls” 7), and “[t]he use of the juvenile justice system by families in chaos in an effort to remove their daughters from their homes or to obtain services for them has been noted in the literature” (Sherman 35). In other words, young women are often punished not for criminal behavior per se but for a level of aggression or “unruliness” that fails to conform to traditional gender expectations (Sharpe and Gelsthorpe 195-196, 200). Indeed, “some professionals mistake expressions of gender-nonconformity (through choice of hairstyle, clothing, mannerisms, and name) as rebellious behavior to be corrected” (Majd, Marksamer, and Reyes 2).

Juvenile women are also disproportionately blamed and charged for occurrences of violence in their homes. Because of mandatory arrest laws for domestic violence, “law enforcement first responders may consider it more practical and efficient to identify the youth as the offender”—regardless of who (daughter, parent, or other) actually initiated a violent incident within the home (Zahn et al, “Violence by Teenage Girls” 7). This is deeply troubling, because such an expediency-driven approach is likely to punish victims rather than perpetrators. The literature has long shown that young women in the justice system have high rates of domestic victimization; in fact, this was reiterated in 2015 when an Annie E. Casey Foundation study reported that “girls’ problem behavior, in contrast to that of boys, ‘commonly relates to an abusive and traumatizing home life’” (Saar et al 12).

Studies have also “found that adjudicated girls had higher rates of clinical diagnoses of major depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, separation anxiety, and disruptive disorders than adjudicated boys. Furthermore, girls had significantly greater rates of physical, sexual,

and emotional abuse and greater rates of physical neglect than boys” (Zahn et al, “Violence by Teenage Girls” 12; Baglivio et al) (see Figure 1). Any of these issues can be exacerbated by the experience of detention, which often reenacts abusive patterns and encourages further isolation from communities and families (Sherman 24, “Gender Responsiveness” 9).



Figure 1. Sexual abuse rates and ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) scores in juvenile justice, by gender (Saar et al 8).

Distressingly, the above issues disproportionately affect young women of color. For example, young Black women face disproportionate rates of disciplinary action in schools, which leads to justice involvement via the school-to-prison pipeline (Sherman and Balck 16). In addition, society’s deeming of “middle-class, heterosexual, White femininity as normative” (Collins 193) often causes the behavior of young Black women to be perceived as deviant: “as disruptive to the order of a (supposedly race- and gender-neutral) social structure” (Morris 22); this often results in criminalization. Once they become involved with the justice system, young Black women face discriminatory treatment; they are “nearly three times as likely as their white peers to be referred to juvenile court for a delinquency offense,” and “20 percent more likely to be detained” (“Girls and the Juvenile Justice System”).

Young Native-American women experience similar inequities in the justice system. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) reports that in 2013, “American Indian and Native Alaskan girls were 40 percent more likely [than their white peers] to be referred to juvenile court for delinquency, [and] 50 percent more likely to be detained” (“Girls and the Juvenile Justice System”). Additional racial disparities are difficult to analyze, because “many jurisdictions do not fully disaggregate data by race and ethnicity” (Saar et al 35). As a result, the extent to which Latina and Asian youth are represented in the juvenile justice system remains unclear. Indeed, the fact that they are often inaccurately identified, thus “inflat[ing] the numbers of white youth,” is further evidence of the system’s failure to recognize and address racial and ethnic disparities (35).

Young women also face discriminatory treatment based on sexual preference and gender identity. This often begins with lack of acceptance in family and school environments, which increases the risk of justice involvement “and negatively impacts their cases” (Majd, Marksamer, and Reyes 3). Non-heterosexual young women are “about twice as likely to be arrested and convicted as other girls who engaged in similar behavior” (“Girls and the Juvenile Justice System”); once convicted, detention facilities are “particularly dangerous and hostile places for LGBT youth,” as biases and lack of training result in abuse, isolation, and/or misclassification in housing (Majd, Marksamer, and Reyes 5).⁶ These data indicate that, despite an increase in studies of young justice-involved women, there is still too little understanding of how “layers of girls’ identity bear on their social contexts and drive their behavior” (23).

In summary, young women often live in abusive and oppressive situations about which they cannot speak and *be heard*. Young LGBTQ+ women and women of color are often deemed deviant or disruptive due to white heteronormative expectations regarding female behavior, and young women in general may develop habits and behaviors designed to protect and defend themselves—behaviors

6 “Once in the juvenile justice system, LBQ/GNCT girls report higher levels of self-harming behavior and are more likely to be discriminated against, become targets of violence and sexual victimization, and be placed in isolation” (Sherman and Balck 23).

that are later criminalized and used to further delegitimize their voices. Indeed, studies show that “[the most common crimes for which girls are arrested—including running away, substance abuse, and truancy—are also the most common symptoms of abuse” (Saar et al 9).

*My heart is like a moon
and it shines just like the evening blues.
My heart is like a beat,
because it beats and beats
until you hear my sadness
loud and clear.*

—from *Shine Through*

DISQUALIFIED KNOWLEDGES

Given the distressing nature of the above information, and given the urgency with which advocates often wish to respond, we must take a critical view of how information about incarcerated teen women is rhetorically presented and to what extent this presentation may perpetuate the very issues it reveals. As I’ve mentioned, literature about young justice-involved women rarely employs those women’s own words to describe their conditions, needs, or values.⁷ The young women with whom I’ve worked are well aware of the absence of their voices in the discourse about them; they recognize when and how they are defined by those whose perceptions have been deemed legitimate. As Shana writes, “They say we’re whores [...] / They say we’re immoral [...] / They say I will be successful. / They say I am brave [...] / They say I’m a failure / They say I’m worthless” (*Know Me* 50). While many studies rely to some extent upon self-

⁷ This may be due in part to the difficulty of obtaining facility and IRB approval; in fact, inclusion of young women’s narratives in the present work was precluded by these constraints. However, the field’s seeming lack of interest in obtaining firsthand accounts is concerning. Two notable exceptions include Holsinger and Holsinger’s 2005 study of African American and White girls in the system, which indicated “a willingness and capability on the part of incarcerated girls to help shape policies that adequately address their needs [...] There are lessons that can be learned from ‘listening’ to the girls” (236). In addition, Morris’s *Pushout* “demonstrates through narratives the importance of...decreasing the institutional and individual risks that fuel mass incarceration and our collective overreliance on punishment” (14).

assessment among adjudicated young women, these assessments are later compiled, codified, and “translated” by experts who re-present the young women’s observations within the context of “qualified” knowledge. As acknowledged in my introduction, the present work itself participates in a form of compilation and translation.

This absence of young women’s voices in discourses about them is particularly striking in results published by the Girls Study Group: experts convened by the OJJDP to “assess current knowledge about the patterns and causes of female delinquency and to design appropriate intervention programs” (Zahn et al, “Causes and Correlates” 1;). The Girls Study Group published seven in-depth analyses from 2008-2013; not one includes a quote from a young woman served by the Juvenile Justice System.⁸ Similarly, a meta-analysis of studies regarding “Detention Reform and Girls” from the Annie B. Casey Foundation offers only one short quote from a young woman potentially impacted by such reform; ironically, the quote states that “they [the juvenile justice system] take your voice away” (Sherman 21). In fact, although the Casey Foundation document includes twenty-three pages of information about “promising gender-responsive programs,” it offers no evaluations or perspectives from participants in these programs. In juvenile justice literature, even narratives of particular young women’s experiences often appear to have been inferred based on juvenile records, rather than presented in their own words; this is a means of further homogenizing and codifying women’s experiences.⁹

Winter Describes Me Best

*the winter is pretty and bright
but it is also a really hard season
the wind, the hail, the snow*

—from *Breaking Out of Silence*

8 See Zahn et al “The Girls Study Group;” Zahn et al, “Causes and Correlates;” Zahn et al, “Violence by Teenage Girls;” Hawkins et al; Huizinga et al; etcetera.

9 For examples, see the “Sarah” narrative in “Better Solutions for Youth” (1) and the “Tamika” narrative in Sherman (45-47).

The most troubling aspect of this silence may be the literature's apparent inability to recognize it as such. I have yet to see a report or study that mentions its own neglect of young women's voices or that attempts to explain or justify this neglect. Thus young women are not merely excluded from discourses about them; they are excluded to such an extent that no one recognizes the omission. It is therefore clear that young women's ways of knowing are, in Foucault's words, "disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated: naïve knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy" (82). According to Foucault, we must resist this disqualification by bringing subjugated knowledges to the fore, combining them with "erudite knowledges" to create a genealogy of conflict—"a painstaking rediscovery of struggles" (83). In gender-reform efforts within juvenile justice, this means elevating and relying on the direct voices of young justice-involved women in any studies and publications that purport to represent them. When we do not, we risk further silencing the very women we seek to assist.

THE OTHER-ING OF JUVENILE WOMEN

In addition to disqualifying their knowledges, delineations of "problems" among young women in the justice system, including my earlier discussion, risk forcefully ejecting them from a normative discourse in which they already lack power. For example, studies and reports about young justice-involved women often render them non-normative (1) as daughters and siblings, given high rates of family abuse; (2) as people, given high rates of mental illness, PTSD, and learning disabilities; (3) as young people, given their involvement in the juvenile justice system; (4) as women, given aggressive behaviors that transgress gender norms; and even (5) as juvenile offenders, in that they are women. This raises a critical issue in gender-reform rhetoric: that consistent calls for equal treatment and gender-responsive programming have resulted less in an equitable system than in additional public depictions of young incarcerated women as "unique," "different," and/or "special" participants in the juvenile justice system.

For example, the OJJDP has published "Why Are Girls' Needs Different?" along with many girl-specific reports (Zahn et al); the National Council on Crime and Delinquency released "Girls Do

Matter;” and the Physicians for Human Rights created a list of “Unique Needs of Girls in the Juvenile Justice System.” Such careful gender differentiations result in part from the fact that the U.S. Juvenile Justice System was originally designed to meet the needs of male offenders (Watson and Edelman 3). This original design continues to be perceived as the “normal” system against which accommodations for females require special arrangements. In fact, The Berkeley Center for Criminal Justice has stated that funding for gender-responsive programming in juvenile justice is difficult to find due to “the tyranny of numbers. There are more boys than girls in the juvenile system and where the numbers are, that’s where the money goes” (“Gender Responsiveness” 8). The implication is that because women are in the minority, the meeting of their needs can be deferred; it is elective or conditional.

Young detained women are often aware of this deferral; in one facility in which I conducted a writing workshop, participants thanked me many times every day, telling me this was their first experience of a program or activity being offered “to girls.” For months, they said, they had watched “the boys” walk down the hall to various activities while they “were stuck in [their] pod.”¹⁰ When I asked facility staff about this, they confirmed that even programs that were designed for both males and females, such as learning how to train shelter dogs, had been relegated to male participants due to lack of funding and staff.

Years of insisting upon young women’s “unique needs and experiences” has perpetuated the notion that men are the norm against which women are judged to have “special needs.” Of course, as detailed above, young women’s experiences and needs *are* often quite different from those of young men. However, acknowledgements of gender disparities must result in a reassessment of “norms” within the juvenile justice system, *not* in reassertions of young women as anomalous others whose presence in the justice system is notable primarily because it requires accommodations from a male-defined system. The latter approach only decreases the possibility that young

10 Many detention facilities are constructed with multiple “pods” that include several individual cells opening to a shared/common room. While such facilities generally require several pods to house males, the relatively small number of female inmates can often be housed in a single pod.

women will receive equitable treatment in arrest, sentencing, and juvenile justice programming.

In addition, highlighting the “unusual” properties of young justice-involved women as a gender group too often obscures the significant impact of women’s intersectional experiences of oppression. Despite evidence that race, sexuality, and gender identity influence justice decisions and confinement (Holsinger 235), the juvenile justice system has not consistently been held accountable for gathering and disaggregating data that enables truly intersectional understandings of young women’s circumstances.¹¹ Meanwhile, researchers and justice system employees should be aware of the extent to which our calls for this accountability may rely on or contribute to the delegitimization of young women’s knowledges and experiences. For example, as a hetero white woman in academia without a criminal record, I have at times sensed that my advocacy for descriptive intersectional juvenile justice research is heard and considered precisely because I myself am read as normative. Those of us with privilege should indeed use it to dismantle oppressive structures; however, if our perceived legitimacy is achieved primarily via contrast with those for whom we advocate, we unwittingly rely on the ongoing delegitimization of those whose experiences deserve respect, study, and action. As bell hooks has written, “[often] this speech about the ‘other’ is also a mask, an oppressive talk hiding gaps...Often this speech about the ‘other’ annihilates, erases” (208).

When I Wear a Mask

*I give in to peer pressure
and sometimes I have to fight
in order to have people trust me
Sometimes I am not a leader
I am a follower. I be mean
to people so that I can look tough
So no one will think that I'm scared*

11 Following community-based participatory research (CBPR) and critical pedagogy methods, this “understanding” must also be discussed with and confirmed by the young women under study, to help ensure that any published “interpretations” of their stories and data are accurate in their view (Israel et al 180, 190; “Education for Critical Consciousness” 37).

*I have to show them I'll do anything
for my family and friends. I walk around
mad sometimes. Sometimes I don't
like acting tough
But I have to be, for my siblings
cause if I don't who will?*

*I feel I have to wear a mask
for random people
but if I took it off
they'd see a very smart
and nice girl*

—from *Know Me*

GENDERED DISMISSAL

Unfortunately, even when young women in the justice system *do* speak about their ideas and experiences, their voices are regularly dismissed—due in large part to popular rhetoric within the justice system that defines young women as “difficult.” This is evident in an article by the Director of Projects for the National Center for Juvenile Justice, which opens with a simple lament: “No one wants to work with girls” (Griffin 1). The article is an attempt to counter the common view that “girls” are “the monsters of the juvenile justice system” by explaining the effects of PTSD on their behavior (1). But adolescent women on both sides of a jail’s walls are regularly accused of being overemotional, dramatic, and manipulative, based on “conventional beliefs that girls and women are untrustworthy” (Chesney-Lind and Irwin 45).¹² This widespread negative discourse is at least partly responsible for many arrests of young women (28); once they are in the justice system, the bias has far-reaching implications for sentencing, treatment by staff, and the denial of rehabilitative opportunities (Schaffner 9).

In fact, the negative discourse about teenaged women is so powerful that, in daily practice within juvenile detention centers, it effectively

¹² Chesney-Lind and Irwin further note that “[b]eing mean, nasty, petty, and entirely incapable of meaningful friendship is just one more mainstream message announcing how ‘bad’ girls and women are” (45).

overrides the justice system's accumulated knowledge about mental illness, PTSD, and abuse histories. For example, a study of probation officers' views of girls revealed that even when officers know that young women's paths to detention are affected (if not determined) by experiences of abuse, poverty, and/or pregnancy, they fail to respond in practice by addressing these issues. Instead, many admit to believing that young women are making up stories. One probation officer told researchers,

They feel like they're the victim. They try from, "Mom kicked me out" to "Mom's boyfriend molested me" to "My brother was sexually assaulting me." They'll find all kinds of excuses to justify their actions. Because they feel if I say I was victimized at home that justifies me being out on the streets. (Gaarder, Rodriguez, Zatz 557)

Many officers "recognize that girls have problems due to their histories of victimization but do not respond in sympathetic ways, instead writing the girls off through gendered stereotypes and treating the victimization and manipulative behaviors as independent realities" (Gaarder, Rodriguez, and Zatz 560). A participant in one of my workshops articulated this dismissive response, writing, "What if I told you my mind wasn't right, / would you tell me it's a phase until it's too late?" (*Shine Through* 35).

I have also encountered this gender bias in conversations with detention and probation officers, who regularly tell me they "don't like working with girls," or that "there's just so much drama in the girls' unit." In these disclosures, the use of the word "drama" suggests that young women's situations, behaviors, and complaints are not taken seriously; the young women of which they speak are "merely" teenaged girls being (dramatic, emotional, manipulative) teenaged girls.

i am a road

*in the middle of nowhere
i have cracks but can still get you
where you needa go.*

*i am also a meadow
calm & beautiful
and I just keep on going.
i have a lot of room for you.*

- from *Know Me*

The refusal to take young women seriously has also been apparent in detention staff's responses to young women's poetry. For example, after seeing a poem in which a writer described having raised herself without help, a detention officer (DO) noted to me that this individual "makes a lot of things up."¹³ Later, upon reading a poem in which the same writer expressed determination to be a better mother to her baby boy, another staff member replied, "Yeah, we'll see."¹⁴

Thus even when young women in the justice system are given a place and time in which to voice their experiences, they are not heard. Their knowledge is always already dismissed by accusations that they are merely emotional, deflecting blame, or manipulating staff; such dismissals are especially common among young women of color and LGBTQ+ women.¹⁵ Yet because staff members occupy positions of power, their interpretations of young women's words almost always determine the official and/or institutional response(s) to them.

13 In the workshops I conduct, at least one DO is always present in the room. Because workshop participants see DOs daily and develop relationships with them, they often invite the officers to read their poems. The DO(s) may also walk around the room, asking to read writers' work.

14 I do not wish to suggest that detention staff are always careless or cold toward the young women with whom they work; on the contrary, I've had the privilege to work alongside staff and detention officers who exhibit an openness to and understanding of young women (and their complex situations) that have deepened over years of work in the field. Nevertheless, the impact of (what are often implicit) gender biases within the juvenile justice system—even among those who mean well and who work hard to help youth—cannot be denied.

15 See "The State of Oppression," above.

My Heart

That broken lamp that got fixed
That bottle of memories
That teddy bear you kept but hate
That vase that is thinner than paper

—from *Call Me Strong*

DESIGN, EVALUATION, AND CRITICAL AWARENESS

In response to the juvenile justice system's failure to adequately address the needs of young women, many facilities and external organizations have established programs and initiatives to fill gaps in gender-responsive offerings. Given the extent to which young women have been oppressed and silenced, critical analysis of programming approaches is necessary to prevent further oppression under the rhetorical guise of philanthropy and/or empowerment. Thus in this final section, I consider four ways in which programming efforts within juvenile justice may unintentionally perpetuate the oppression of young women. This is meant not to dissuade agencies or volunteers from supporting, creating, and/or facilitating juvenile justice programming, but rather to spur innovative, culturally-sustaining pedagogies by cautioning against uncritical interventions.

1. The Reign of Recidivism

The OJJDP's "Model Programs Guide" lists the prevention and reduction of crime, violent behavior, and detention as its first mark of "program efficacy." While such a gauge is apt for an agency whose purpose is to prevent juvenile delinquency, it risks "impoverish[ing] the idea of education" and of the arts by subordinating them to a single institutional goal (Sweeney 255). More broadly, it rhetorically undercuts the many other benefits young women could receive from quality interventions. With recidivism as their primary focus, juvenile justice programs are likely to meet young women's needs only when (or insofar as) doing so serves larger institutional concerns such as regulating behavior, preventing rebellion, and increasing participation in the economy.

Of course, young women generally do not wish to be incarcerated, and to this extent, attempts to reduce recidivism do advance participants' own goals. In addition, programs that are *not* set up specifically to serve institutional concerns are unlikely to receive court or facility access and support. Therefore, best practices for gender-responsive programming in juvenile justice must accommodate the material and institutional constraints (such as a focus on recidivism) under which interventions are designed. But they should also include approaches based on critical and culturally sustaining pedagogies,¹⁶ social justice youth development, and radical healing¹⁷—particularly when working with young women of color. The creative pursuit of such practices will allow programs and their designers/administrators to accommodate institutional interests while avoiding the strict equation of program success with the perpetuation and enforcement of conforming behaviors and speech acts.

Sometimes I'm Afraid

*That you will turn your back
I'm afraid I will give up completely
I'm afraid you won't understand
I'm afraid I will break
Something I'm not ready for.
I'm afraid I will be nothing
I'm afraid no one will ever really
know me.*

—from *Breaking Out of Silence*

-
- 16 According to Django Paris, “[t]he term *culturally sustaining* requires that our pedagogies be more than responsive of or relevant to the cultural experiences and practices of young people - it requires that they support young people in sustaining the cultural and linguistic competence of their communities while simultaneously offering access to dominant cultural competence” (95).
- 17 Youth development expert Shawn Ginwright defines *radical healing* as a pedagogical and developmental approach “which builds the capacity of young people to act upon their environment in ways that contribute to well-being for the common good. This process contributes to individual well-being, community health and broader social justice where young people can act on behalf of others with hope, joy and a sense of possibility [...] When black youth are conscious of the root causes of the problems they face, they act in profound ways to resist and transform issues they view as unjust” (85).

2. A Failure of Confidence

In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paulo Freire offers a critique of well-meaning individuals in positions of power who, in their attempt to “move to the side of the exploited,” fail to leave behind “their prejudices and their deformations, which include a lack of confidence in the [exploited] people’s ability to think, to want, and to know” (60). As noted above, most studies and reports regarding justice-involved young women fail to incorporate their voices, opting instead to speak for them. This choice betrays a lingering belief that young women are incapable of speaking (to) their own oppression(s), and it risks reducing young women to “objects which must be saved from a burning building” (65). Those who work with justice-involved young women can show confidence and solidarity by inviting young women’s participation in program development, arranging for in-depth program evaluations, and seeking personal narratives and firsthand descriptions of individual needs.¹⁸ As Freire argues, an educational or political program that fails to respect the perspectives of the oppressed will not have positive results; in fact, “such a program constitutes cultural invasion, good intentions notwithstanding” (95).

The lighthouse

*I am the strong wind
I'm the high waves coming
to take over my family
I am the storm
protecting my family
I'm the moving waves
trying to motivate my family
I'm the high water
taking care of my family
I'm the wind
pulling all of us together*

18 Despite the acknowledged lack of these elements in the present work, my hope is that this discussion increases demand for first-person accounts, and argues convincingly for the improved representation of young women in juvenile justice programs and publications. By recognizing that these changes are critical to the equitable treatment of young justice-involved women, those of us who work in the field can creatively and collaboratively endeavor to improve programs and practices.

*I'm also the lighthouse
bringing light to my family's eyes!*

—from *Call Me Strong*

3. Indoctrination as Oppression

Unfortunately, reliance upon young women's input is often hindered by the perception that their involvement with the justice system is evidence of a *lack* of knowledge—or at least of an inability to adopt normalized views and behaviors. While this perception is not always (technically) false, it takes condescension and lack as its starting points for interaction with young women. When combined with institutional equations of reduced recidivism with program success, such starting points may lead to programs centered on training young women in normalized views and behaviors, rather than on developing critical consciousness. Ultimately, such training moves young women not from disempowerment to agency, but from one oppressive situation (such as abuse, unaddressed mental illness, poverty) to another (corrections system) to another (psychological, educational, and/or social indoctrination). Indoctrination-oriented programs, often based on a perception of “middle-class, heterosexual, White femininity as normative” (Collins 193), are particularly oppressive for young women of color and LGBTQ+ women. In addition, any young woman's success in such environments may come at the cost of suppressing her sexual, cultural, and/or ethnic identities. Yet women are incentivized to pay these costs, because those who assimilate are labeled by institutional and societal structures as “successful”: reformed, transformed, convalesced. They therefore find both literal and metaphorical doors opening for them based on their achievements in acquiescence, which may condition future self-subjugation.

I have regularly witnessed subtle (and likely unconscious) methods of indoctrination during my writing sessions, despite my active promotion of safe expressive writing spaces. For example, detention officers regularly celebrate young writers for poetry that expresses belief in God, dedication to school, praise for parents, and/or remorse for poor choices. By contrast, poetry that describes abuse, drug use, romantic love, self-destructive habits, or disappointment in parents

is regularly second-guessed by staff. In one workshop, a writer was applauded by several officers after reading a poem in which she states, “I am learning about God because he is my all and my savior” (*Shine Through* 56). A few minutes later, a writer in the same workshop was asked by an officer to change a poem about her hurting heart (22), first by taking out an “offensive word” it contained, and then by “adding something hopeful.”¹⁹

Further examples of an indoctrinating approach can be seen in the criteria used to evaluate effective juvenile justice programs. In addition to decreased recidivism, criteria include pro-social behavior, lack of pregnancy, “school engagement, school satisfaction, and grades” (“Determining What Works” 281). In other words, programs are “effective” if they successfully teach women how to achieve a hegemonic definition of female adolescent success. Such teaching by the youth “corrections” system is another way in which, as feminist theorist Susan Bordo has described, “female bodies become docile bodies—bodies whose forces and energies are habituated to external regulation, subjection, transformation, ‘improvement’” (Bordo 2362). Moreover, because young women are rarely consulted to develop program goals and parameters, and because their vulnerable positions compel their compliance, it is far from clear that achieving hegemonic female adolescent success is actually desired by young women. Even when it is, researchers cannot know to what extent this desire is itself driven by emotional dependence or habitual deferral, versus by critical consciousness followed by deliberate, personal choice. The indoctrinating approach can be counteracted by collaborating with young women in the development of programs, evaluation measures, and culturally sustaining practices.

4. *Empowerment Rhetoric.*

Empowerment rhetoric in juvenile justice programming, particularly among creative writing and arts initiatives, is immensely popular—

19 To be clear, interactions between DOs and writers are often beneficial; as mentioned in note 10, participants often know the officers and invite them to read their work. When they do, the writing can provide staff with insights about the young women in their care. However, while this officer likely meant well, her response contributes to indoctrination and assimilation by suggesting that certain thoughts, feelings, or experiences should be censored. This impedes young women’s expression, and may hinder open and trusting participation.

with many programs claiming to “give youth a voice” in their lives and communities.²⁰ This rhetoric is problematic in that, as Jamila Lyiscott has noted, youth “woke up” with a voice; they do not need “some salvific external force” to “gift them with the privilege to speak.” While the *dissemination* and/or *amplification* of their voices could indeed provide a legitimate benefit to young justice-involved women, these actions are often absent in creative arts programming. The art and written work produced by justice-involved youths is rarely studied for what it reveals about its writers, their oppression, and/or systemic issues, nor is it strategically disseminated to community leaders, local educators, policy makers, or the public.²¹ The ethical risk here is that, if “giving youth a voice” is a program’s stated goal, young women may believe their concerns and stories will be heard and considered—while the justice system (and the public) continue to effectively disregard their needs. Regrettably, when juvenile justice programs *do* publicize the work of their participants via documentaries, performances, or books,

20 For example, see the emphasis on girls’ “authentic voices” in “Containment and Resistance: Girls’ Writing in the Juvenile Justice System” (Briggs); rhetoric throughout “InsideOUT Writers (IOW) Fact Sheet;” and a workshop at the MacArthur Foundation conference devoted to “[g]iving youths a bigger voice in juvenile justice reform” (Gately). Also, note the following quotes: “[A] rarely-heard voice in juvenile justice: the girls themselves” (Corbally); “57 texts that give voice to the reflections of young people in detention” (“Juvenile In Justice”); “Youth offenders will also have more of a voice in the new system” (Highfield); “The Media Awareness Project exists solely for the purpose of empowering youth by giving them a voice!” (“The Home of Youth Voice”); “a sustainable program that will give dozens of youth the chance to find their voice” (Brouwer); “youth should have a voice in the decisions that affect them” (Willison et al); “Voices UnBroken nurtures the inherent need in all people to tell their stories and be heard”; “WritersCorps has given young people a voice since 1994” (Simonton); “It is my hope that these pieces celebrate the urgent voices of incarcerated youth” (“Free Me Fast”); “Empowerment teaches girls to use their voice, to speak for themselves” (“Chapter 2”); “we help young people connect with their creativity, strengthen their voices, and confidently express their ideas” (“Words Within the Walls”); etc.

21 Notable exceptions include a 2003 effort by PACE Center for Girls, Inc that led “roughly 500 girls under the supervision of the state juvenile justice system” to protest at the Florida state capital “against funding cuts to community-based programs for girls in the juvenile justice system” (“Pace Center for Girls; Watson and Edelman). Also, *The Beat Within*, based in San Francisco, widely publishes writing and art from youth in the juvenile justice system; however, I was unable to determine its circulation or its rates of female involvement. Some JJS programs strive to get participant work disseminated via publications, radio, video, and/or live performances; these too present possible exceptions to this critique.

audiences and readers often respond to it with pity or benevolent condescension. By doing so, they assume a position of power relative to the writers and artists, thus invalidating the notion that “having a voice” is axiomatically empowering or even desirable.

Given these realities, the “voice-giving” of gender-responsive programs may be rhetorically disingenuous. Creative courses and workshops are accurately represented as efforts to teach communication skills, provide opportunities for therapeutic self-expression, create safe spaces for difficult conversations, and/or improve group dynamics among participants. But these significant and worthy goals should not be confused with “giving youth a voice,” which suggests a dialogic exchange rarely offered to juvenile offenders.

To Prisoners

*I hope you realize that you are worth way more
Than people controlling your life. The truth is
in your hands, and you are the only one
who can set it free.*

—from *Know Me*

Empowerment rhetoric without follow-through again reveals a lack of confidence in young women to insightfully inform the policies, practices, and programs that impact their lives. Quality research, programming, and juvenile justice reform require that the voices of young women be actively, consistently sought—not merely for personal expression or audience sympathy but for serious dialogue, mutual learning, critical analysis, policy input, and the transformation of oppressive structures. In arts programming, this work can begin with culminating performances for external audiences—during which facility staff, city government leaders, and/or local educators witness young women sharing their experiences. Publication and active circulation of young women’s written work could also ensure

that it makes its way to those who can effect change.²² Increased investments in social justice youth development and in the cultivation of civic agency in juvenile justice programming would help young women develop a voice in their communities. Finally, those who study gender inequities in the system could invite young justice-involved women to be fellow researchers in assessment, program design, implementation, analysis, and/or evaluation.

CONCLUSION

The continued increase in studies about juvenile women indicates a genuine, increasing concern among researchers, government agencies, activists, and the public about young women's visibility in the justice system. It also marks society's rising level of disturbance regarding inequitable treatment and its growing motivation to pressure policymakers and funding bodies to improve conditions for young women. However, precisely because this level of oppression can engender urgent and emotional responses from relatively privileged individuals, its rhetorical representations often elicit missionary impulses and/or the confirmation of unexamined biases. In addition, the urgent need for equity in the justice system can give rise to well-intended programs and measures that ultimately perpetuate oppression. Ongoing critical awareness is therefore necessary to identify and alter discourses that inadvertently support the very conditions by which many of us are rightly appalled.

I have shown that the subjectivity of young justice-involved women is always already obscured by their sociocultural positions. Young women come into the system particularly vulnerable; once "justice-involved," they can be further victimized by the system's isolating, authoritarian environment. Even if they are not, they too rarely find help for the issues that influenced their involvement. Rather, when young women voice their needs or experiences, their words are regularly dismissed due to powerful rhetorical constructions of

²² The performance and/or publication of personal material should always be optional. When young women have preferred not to read their work during programs in juvenile facilities, we have found other poems or quotes for them to read, or involved them in other roles (such as the emcee). When publishing young women's work in print or online, always obtain their permission first. Be sure to use pseudonyms (that they choose), initials, or first names only when circulating their work.

teenaged women as manipulative, cruel, or over-emotional (Gaarder, Rodriguez, and Zatz 560); this has been particularly true for women of color and LGBTQ+ women. On the rare occasions young women find sympathetic ears, their words are valued only to the extent that they represent self-expression or a therapeutic benefit; they typically are not perceived as capable (or worthy) of influencing policy, programming, or society. In such subaltern conditions, there is no possibility of speech. Young women's interests are acknowledged ("heard") only when they are codified and translated by authorities whose knowledges are qualified by the hegemony. Moreover, the language used by these authorities further subjugates young women by repeatedly marking them as "other."

In his foreword to Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Richard Shaull describes Freire as being driven by the conviction that "every human being, no matter how 'ignorant' or submerged in the 'culture of silence' he or she may be, is capable of looking critically at the world in a dialogical encounter with others" (32). This same conviction regarding young justice-involved women must be assiduously cultivated and enacted so that we consistently open ourselves to learning from them: acknowledging their deserved roles as "students-teachers," (80), as women to whom we are accountable, as our partners in a "courageous dialogue" (128). By noting the extent to which young justice-involved women have been muted, it is my hope that this analysis initiates an energetic effort within and beyond the juvenile justice system to seek, study, and disseminate young women's voices. Doing so is necessary not only to improve their wellbeing, but also to inform and transform our own conceptions of justice, and to help create a better and more equitable system for all of us.

You Don't Know Me

*You know why?
Because you don't know what I go through.
You don't know what I'm capable of.
You don't know how I think.
You don't know what I'm facing.
You don't know how much I hold in*

—from *Shine Through*

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Review:

Thomas Ehrlich and Ernestine Fu. *Civic Work Civic Lessons: Two Generations Reflect on Public Service*

**Kathryn Yankura
Swacha,**
Purdue University

C*ivic Work Civic Lessons: Two Generations Reflect on Public Service* by Thomas Ehrlich and Ernestine Fu is a reflective, intergenerational examination of the key skills and attitudes necessary to engage actively and productively in civic work. The authors, Thomas Ehrlich and Ernestine Fu, are fifty-seven years apart in age. Throughout the book, they reflect on their unique experiences with civic engagement from two different generations and perspectives. A graduate of Harvard Law School, Ehrlich held public-service positions in the President John F. Kennedy and President Jimmy Carter administrations as well as worked in academic administration. At the time of the book's publication, Ernestine was an undergraduate at Stanford University and had recently started her own non-profit organization.

Ehrlich and Fu's main goal in co-authoring *Civic Work Civic Lessons* is to encourage young people to become more civically engaged, particularly in politics and public policy (in

terms of genre, the book is a type of ‘how-to’ or ‘lessons-learned’ text, intended for a general, mainstream audience. It would be most useful to assign to students as an introduction to civic work or service-learning, alongside similar texts such as Peter Levine’s *We Are the Ones We Have Been Waiting For* and Stephen Preskill and Stephen D. Brookfield’s *Learning as a Way of Leading: Lessons from the Struggle for Social Justice*. The authors also maintain that their book contains lessons for any reader interested in civic work or interested in mentoring young people to engage civically. They note: “We believe that our democracy requires men and women of all ages and all walks of life to find their own civic paths and to pursue them with determination, compassion, respect for others, and humility about the limitations of their own perspectives” (xii). The book offers seven “lessons” for civic engagement, based on the authors’ own experiences, which they propose can help young people to find and pursue civic work that is both meaningful to them and beneficial for the public good. These seven lessons, which are also the chapter titles, include:

1. “Role models, mentors, and teachers are key in civic work”
2. “Civic work should serve the public interest”
3. “Focus on the big picture in civic work—but don’t forget the details”
4. “Motives to engage in civic work are always mixed”
5. “Moral leadership is essential to civic work”
6. “Clear goals must be set in civic work”
7. “Civic work should be its own reward” (v).

A final chapter discusses how to leverage technology for the future of civic work. These chapter titles and “lessons” reflect the conversational, upbeat, ‘how-to’ tone of the book overall.

Civic Work Civic Lessons enacts the tenets it promotes in that the book is itself a partnership. Each chapter begins with an introductory section written by Ehrlich and Fu, which summarizes both authors’ experiences regarding that lesson. Then, each chapter is separated into two sections, one written by Ehrlich and one by Fu. This structure allows the book to perform the very type of collaboration that it endorses in that each author asserts a clear, unique voice

while also establishing a unified message. This structure also offers a comprehensive view of how each lesson might apply in different types of civic engagement. As Ehrlich's experience is primarily in government, his sections emphasize how each lesson applies to politics and public policy. As Fu comes to civic work through her experience starting a non-profit and her commitment to volunteering, her sections show how each lesson operates in more social settings. Although not a scholarly work, *Civic Work Civic Lessons* can provide scholars interested in intergenerational engagement with an informal perspective regarding the differences in civic engagement across the generations.

In their respective sections, Ehrlich and Fu recount anecdotes from their personal experiences and reflect on what those experiences taught them about how and why to conduct civic work. For example, in the chapter on the importance of mentors, Ehrlich explains how his parents were his first role models for civic engagement due to their commitment to political participation and volunteering. Fu recounts how her high school music teacher served as an early mentor for her non-profit, Visual Arts and Music for Society, which supports high school students to share their musical and artistic talents with people in need.

The book's conversational tone makes for easy reading—the book reads as if you are chatting with two friends. As such, *Civic Work Civic Lessons* could provide undergraduate students in service-learning courses with a good introduction to some of the motivations, goals, and tenets of civic engagement. Although the book does not discuss service-learning directly, several of its “lessons” are applicable to service-learning contexts, such as setting clear goals and learning from mentors. The book could also provide undergraduate service-learning students with a model for generative reflection, as the authors do a good job throughout their prose of drawing lessons and making larger connections from their personal experiences with civic engagement. Thus, select chapters of the book could be assigned to provide service-learning students with strong models of reflection. Students might, for example, structure their reflections according to a ‘lessons-learned’ model, in which they describe their service-learning experiences and then critically reflect on how they

might generalize a lesson for civic work from those experiences, as exemplified by the book.

It is important to note, however, that *Civic Work Civic Lessons* does not address many of the complexities of civic engagement argued for by service-learning and community engagement scholars over the past ten years. For example, with its emphasis on service—either public service or volunteer work—the book does not engage the issue of how to establish reciprocity and equity among civic partners, taking rather a more *noblesse oblige* approach. Through its primarily positive and sometimes patronizing tone, the book does not engage any unintended effects or consequences of aiming to ‘serve’ others. As such, the book could provide an opportunity to discuss and analyze with students how they might approach ‘service’ with more attention to reciprocity and collaboration than the book offers. To be fair, *Civic Work Civic Lessons* does not aim to take a critical stance but rather to offer an inspirational and pragmatic reflection on the importance of civic engagement. Thus, despite these shortcomings, *Civic Work Civic Lessons* offers a unique perspective through its attention to generational differences in how people contribute to the public sphere and the common good. The book’s faith in democratic, civic participation offers a refreshing read, particularly in our current moment of increased political and social division and apathy.

Kathryn Yankura Swacha will be graduating this year with her PhD in English from Purdue University. Her research focuses on health and medical rhetorics, methodologies for community-based research, and service-learning pedagogies.

Review:

Octavio Pimentel. *Historias de Éxito within Mexican Communities: Silenced Voices*

Shane Teague,
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I n much traditional discourse on success, there is an undercurrent of objectivism. Pseudo-empirical conceptions of economic success, which grant economics an undue status as an objective metric by which to measure cultural superiority, tell the comfortable, the wealthy, and the privileged that some cultures are just better by virtue of their production. This false objectivity justifies the reification of White European American (WEA) values and only those values by reducing time-honored ideas about success in certain communities to excuses for those communities' poor performance and, as in the extremely regrettable case of the present day in the United States, using that incongruence between definitions of success to subjugate and demonize those communities' who do not share WEA values.

The ethnocentrism of the right, particularly that of the new, hardline rightwing—who are overwhelmingly unreceptive to frank, honest discussion of race and class—makes

submission to WEA success narratives mandatory and reaffirms worshipping monetary gain as the sine qua non of American life. The mindset of the assimilationist right is ultimately a dualistic way of thinking. Understanding and combating this mindset is all the more important today for students, teachers, and private citizens alike, given the events of the 2016 presidential campaign and just the first three months after the election of the 45th President of the United States. *Reflections* readers do this work in their private and professional lives, and, as such, *Historias de Exito within Mexican Communities: Silenced Voices* could become a very important activist text, allowing scholars and educators to counter this dualism, to pluralize our discussions of success, and to counter the fallacious narrative that success is only found in economics. Pimentel disrupts ethnocentric points of view on latin@s, positing that success, in effect, has no objective measure. While the text may not lend itself to being taught, per se, *Historias* should be required reading for scholars working with populations in latin@ communities.

Historias should inspire some deconstructive work on and reassessment of the success metrics engrained in the national identity of the United States. As Victor Villanueva suggests in his foreword to *Historias*, some of our imagined national identity will need to be troubled to move beyond simplistic notions of success. To accommodate stories that include those metrics and narratives derived from latin@ communities, Villanueva asserts that we have to attempt to “understand how a man who is described as a good man (buena gente) and hard worker (buen trabajador) but is nevertheless jailed and deported can be a success” (xii). The fact that this condition, that of Luis, one of Pimentel’s interviewees, is a material reality experienced by a human is enough to trouble the binary of success vs. failure due to its poignant illustration of latin@ incongruence with WEA ideals. Luis is unsuccessful on their terms because he has not achieved financial excess; on his own terms, however, he meets his family’s needs, provides his children with educational opportunities, and works hard. Adding this nuance to discussions about success is precisely the labor that Pimentel undertakes in *Historias*.

Historias begins troubling WEA conceptions of success by confirming that there are other metrics against which to measure

it and also by providing two concrete instances in which success is measured subjectively by different cultural standards. Rather than defining latin@ success and failure in WEA terms, as the degree to which latin@s submit to poverty and poor performance, as much conservative discourse does, *Historias* reveals how latin@ communities have traditionally defined success for themselves. In doing this work, Pimentel and his research participants have begun to publicly counter the prevalent narrative of deficiency that follows latin@s throughout their lives. Ending this rhetoric of deficiency, paying attention to these *historias* from the latin@ community, is more important now than ever before, given this year's populist dragging of latin@s in the media. *Historias* does the work of ending this narrative, but more public work will need to be done in order to finally halt the latin@ deficiency narrative.

The public work to be done and the angle that Pimentel takes on the public presentation of latin@ success is precisely why *Reflections* readers should give *Historias* their attention and should incorporate its ethos into their research, classrooms, and community outreach. Pimentel and his study participants demonstrate the inadequacy of—the calculated racism of—the WEA narrative about latin@ success while simultaneously positively arguing against the centrality of WEA success narratives. Put another way, Pimentel explores the flip side of the ethnocentric, fallacious argument that centralizes WEA ideas about success in the first place, in turn illustrating the inadequacy of WEA ideas. In either case, *Reflections* readers working with latin@s or within latin@ communities can benefit from reading and integrating Pimentel's work because it provides a means to demonstrate and encourage the pluralization of success narratives and, pivotally, a means to do the same without degrading the individualistic ideals intertwined with American identity.

Consider the story of Quetzin. Quetzin owns and operates a very successful food production business in Salt Lake City. Quetzin started from virtually nothing with a \$10,000 loan in 1997. Though he obtained a B.A. and completed a year of law school in Mexico, when he came to the United States, there was little in the way of opportunity waiting for him. Now, two decades later, Quetzin's business is a multi-million dollar company. Quetzin has achieved the American

dream, but Quetzin himself does not personally define success as achievement of monetary gain. Instead, Quetzin's definition of success is multi-faceted and intricately intertwined with his culture and familial history. To Quetzin, success is defined by how many people he can help and how he can help them, how hard he works, and his family's well-being. While Quetzin would be considered a capitalist success, his own attitudes about success run counter to the inherent individualism in traditional capitalist success stories.

Telling stories like Quetzin and Luis' is of great importance today, as latin@s are vilified in the media and fast capitalist ideals about success become more and more engrained in the fabric of American life. Pimentel's *Historias de Éxito* provides two examples of pluralized success stories as well as a way to explore and pluralize narratives of success from the cultural standpoint of the latin@. Maybe most importantly, *Historias* demonstrates the plain fact that, although latin@s may define success differently from White European Americans, this diversity of definitions can and should exist in the United States today if for no other reason than to help us all avoid the dualistic thinking of the generations that came before us.

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Review:

Kevin A. Browne. *Tropic Tendencies: Rhetoric, Popular Culture, and the Anglophone Caribbean.*

Romeo García,
Syracuse University

In a departure from localism, disciplines such as rhetoric and composition have found themselves between abandoning a singular/totalistic universal story and rushing to instantaneous interconnections (Massey 14). What has been evidenced in recent scholarship on globalism, however, is that the rhetoric of scale is the globe and that descriptions of people are made within these claims rather than the *ideologies of scale* and politics of *scale-making* (Tsing 347-348). Scholars have re-imagined the common local and global distinction as a dialectical relationship (Pred 1077-1078). Still, there persist generalizations for talking about place and culture, risking the erosion of the local culture and the production of homogenized global spaces (Cresswell 8).

“We is people” reverberates throughout *Tropic Tendencies* as Kevin Browne illuminates how Caribbean people acknowledge the past but do not remain there. For those of us who are people of color and/or teach marginalized communities, this idea of acknowledging our

past but not remaining there is a powerful one. For Browne, public rhetoric is central to his argument that

Caribbean rhetorical performance is a vernacular response, a “practice of judgment and a critical redress” that is the result of “invisibility and silencing” (3). The Caribbean community has the capacity to cultivate a collective ethos capable of critical redress. To prove this, Browne explores the practical use of Caribbean public rhetoric and Caribbean public expression.

Browne’s project proposes to heighten our understanding of what is at stake for the Caribbean people. He reveals how public rhetoric is about people, performativity, and the systems of difference they are situated in and by (Sheller and Urry 214). It is about how time, place, culture, and history mark the black body as “bearer of abject subjectivity” (Sharpe 182) but also about how the Caribbean people express unwillingness to be “contained by that position” through vernacular traditions that exhibit critical re-invention (Hall 202; Baldwin xii). The presence of Caribbean rhetoric and its practical use for community expression and assertiveness, again, allows Browne to explore the efficacy of Caribbean rhetorical performance and the possibility of a Caribbean ethos. This work begins in offering a different interpretive account of Caribbean rhetorical tradition and performance, as opposed to Russian dialogism, one that considers Caribbean desired citizenship that bespeaks democratic impulses (15; 167). Browne’s animation of the interplay of place, knowledge, and meaning-making, which positions ways of being, seeing, and doing to enactments of Caribbeanness that are dialectical and deliberative, substantiates a claim for a Caribbean vernacular ethos.

Comprised of five central chapters, Browne’s topic-oriented ethnography and rhetorical analyses of Caribbean rhetoric, tradition, and performance situates an epistemological framework of traditional practices that “persist and enable meaningful identification with others who share a stake in the effort to be seen and heard” (7). Browne is adamant, “No attempt was made to cover the vastness and depth of Caribbean culture...Nor have I attempted to provide a complete catalog of expression” (161). Yet, re-conceptualizing rhetorical terms such as *doxa*, *metonym*, and *epideixis* into the

“dialectical vernacular” context, *Caribbean carnivalesque*—a “means by which Caribbean people can define the(ir) world and a lens through which they can see it” (8)—is interpolated across sites as a means of redress and method of creolized rhetorical (re)invention. Caribbean carnivalesque, as an epistemological framework, comes to personify a claim made throughout the chapters. “We is people,” is contingent upon the interplay of effective discourse of rhetors and the disposition of audiences to be receptive and engaged. Caribbean carnivalesque is public (and visual) rhetoric and is “desirous of democratic consequences” (12). Following his introduction, a corrective to Caribbean misrepresentations (chapter 1) and discussion of the parameters of Caribbean discourse, expression and (re)invention (chapter 2), Browne brings attention to several sites (e.g. performance, texts, and cyberspace) where “extant traditions” persist with varying rhetorical modes (code-switching, wordplay, etc.). These sites exhibit how collective identification can be carried out by Caribbean discourse and how rhetorical traditions and performances can be sites of memory that register a collective vernacular ethos.

I am interested in how Browne brings into focus what anthropologists Anna Tsing refers to as *scale-making projects, ideologies of scale, and friction*. *Scale-making* is exhibited in the “interplay of how Caribbean people make meaning and what they make of those meanings” (Browne 12). Browne asks the reader to look at the carnivalesque activity through the use of masque (materially and symbolically), as a form of doxa and vernacular epideictic, which “ties its adherents to the region” and implicates the audience, as spectators and judges, “to give an account of themselves” (20; 23). This type of public rhetoric and display of Caribbeanness plays out in *scale-making* projects such as proto-calypso and prophetic calypso (chapter 3) that “break silence” and “maintain noise” by provoking social responsibility, awareness, and action through tradition and innovation (90). Then, there is chapter 4, where Browne focuses on Earl Lovelace, a Caribbean author, who forwards a conception of ethos (and self-definition) by invoking memory (116) to enable audience members to “recall the legacy of emancipation” and be engaged in “more productive inclusion in contemporary democratic life while simultaneously negotiating the constant threats of erasure” (123). There is also chapter 5, where Browne focuses on chatting, cariblogging, and video sharing in cyberspace that are “largely underwritten by a carnivalesque

imperative” (129). In each instance, the rhetorical enterprise of the carnivalesque, more than a trope and beyond carnival, is both a personification of historical bodies and space and a representation of (re)invention that plays out in the practice of culture (12; 28).

The Caribbean carnivalesque, representative of “shifting situationalities of everyday life” and related to “region and its descendants,” must be understood in and on a people’s own terms (12). What becomes clear is how important body-graphical, geo-graphical, and mobile-graphical cultural displays of expressions are to being seen and heard. Browne notes, “We perform out of a history—or, more accurately, a memory of history—that has shaped our identity” (162), which “functions as an articulation of collective agency and cultural intention, existing in conflicting or oppressive situations as the expression of a realistic desire for successful participation in contemporary society” (7). The Caribbean identity is itself a cultural claim (e.g. *ideology of scale*) about locality, regionality, and globality (“The Global” 472). Browne does not forward an argument of homogeneity or monolithic societies. As geographer Allan Pred notes, “the purely or ‘authentically’ ‘local’ has very probably never existed. Even under the most isolated of circumstances,” but, “local differences persist for there is nothing which is literally ‘global’” (1075; 1077). As Browne situates place, knowledge, and meaning-making practices within a Caribbean cultural and political economy, whose definitional struggles over meaning in which they participate in characterizes the region, enactments of Caribbeanness reveal the possible critical regional-to-global interactions and illuminates the potential for a collective Caribbean ethos.

The idea of *friction*, not as a “synonym for resistance” but rather that which “gets in the way of the smooth operation of global power” and “refuses the lie that global power operates as a well-oiled machine” (*Friction* 6) is an important one in *Tropic Tendencies*. There is a “great tendency to characterize Caribbean culture solely in terms of resistance,” Browne argues (28). This is a cautionary tale. Both the academy and Western conceptualization of agency, as exhibited with resistance and subversion, at times fails to consider a community’s intentions and desires for citizenship and democratic participation. Browne writes, “all performances remain, to some degree, subject

to hegemony” and homogeneity is resisted “through the conscious practice of difference” (161). Difference matters. The idea of *friction* in *Tropic Tendencies* makes it so the regional to global critical interaction is acknowledged and seen as productive to a collective ethos shaping and shaped by meaning. The pedagogical imperative we find ourselves pursuing, vis-à-vis, often revolves around implication, receptiveness, and participation. Browne reminds us that we must understand the Caribbean community’s struggle over creating meaning on its own terms. This is central to the efficacy of community-building and even coalitional building.

Tropic Tendencies does not outright propose a decolonial agenda. But, for those who are interested in de-colonizing, Browne’s critical work does demonstrate how place (and geography), knowledge, and meaning-making constitute body-graphical, geo-graphical, and mobile-graphical cultural displays of expressions. This much is part of the political and ethical project of decolonizing. Decolonizing is not a metaphor nor should it stand as an occasion to further academic desires. A focus on enunciations, the loci of enunciations, and its local histories serves as a reminder of not only where, but how the “repressed” are saving themselves. Browne’s concept of Caribbean carnivalesque, tied to region and descendants, reveals the complex and dynamic ways vernacular public rhetoric is used and towards what ends. Browne writes, rhetoric “involves the probability of persuasion rather than the certainty of it” (6). This much indicates the limitations and strengths of such an epistemological framework. In the complicated work of rhetoric and decolonizing, there is never certainty.

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Review:

Clare Oberon Garcia, Vershawn
Ashanti Young, and Charise Pimentel
(Eds.). *From Uncle Tom's Cabin to The
Help: Critical Perspectives on White-
Authored Narratives of Black Life*

Edward Santos
Garza,
*St. Edward's
University*

When the film adaptation of Michael Lewis's *The Blind Side* premiered in November 2009, I was five months removed from high school, where I played a season of football. My attention was piqued by the story of athletic triumph, of racial triumph. But as I encountered more about the film, I became uneasy. Maybe it was Sandra Bullock's embellished southern accent. Probably, though, it was the film's poster, showing her silhouette walking alongside that of Quinton Aaron, who portrays Michael Oher, the black teen Bullock's character takes in and guides to football stardom. Even as the film won Oscars, there remained something untrustworthy about it, something in the way the poster depicted Bullock next to Aaron's lumbering, faceless body, evoking Lenny from *Of Mice and Men*. It all made *The Blind Side* seem like another film whose purpose was to make Americans feel absolved, via altruism, of the vast inequity of their country. Into such uneasiness steps *From Uncle Tom's Cabin to The Help: Critical Perspectives on White-*

Authored Narratives of Black Life, edited by Clare Oberon Garcia, Vershawn Ashanti Young, and Charise Pimentel.

This collection sets out to subvert the unexamined, mainstream praise of works such as *The Blind Side*, Kathryn Stockett's *The Help* (which eight of the text's fifteen chapters focus on), and older, more traditionally canonical pieces. In limiting their scope to white-authored narratives, Garcia, Young, and Pimentel promote distinctly racialized frames of reading familiar works, frames that undercut their (the works') statuses as progressive commentaries on American race relations. *From Uncle Tom's Cabin to The Help* emerges as a collection that is as well-researched as it is passionate, filling a gap in race studies and providing a template for similar texts. At a time in which subversive commentary, especially by writers and educators of color, is being marginalized across the U.S., this text reminds its audience of what such thought looks like—and of what it can do.

Any review of this collection has to start with how it appraises *The Help*. Stockett's novel gets rightfully skewered from every angle, from the critical race theorists to the feminists to the historicists. In "Taking Care a White Babies, That's What I Do': *The Help* and Americans' Obsession with the Mammy," Katrina Dyonne Thompson situates the novel's black female characters within the archetype of the mammy, seen in nineteenth-century figurines well through *Gone with the Wind*. Likewise, in "When Folks Is Real Friends, There Ain't No Such Thing as Place': Feminist Sisterhood and the Politics of Social Hierarchy in *The Help*," Shana Russell powerfully highlights Stockett's tone-deafness by evoking the experiences of her (Russell's) mother:

My mother and other black women like her were not looking to Kathryn Stockett to reveal an uncertain truth about a history they did not get to choose. The problem of white authorship, then, is not an inability to tell our story on screen. It's a refusal to follow these fictional narratives into the mundane spaces, like my mother's kitchen, where they are given life. (81)

These examples illustrate how, for all of its good intentions, *The Help* utterly misunderstands the lives of black people in its time.

Stockett's novel emerges as a blithe, even nostalgic text tainted by misinformation and a simplification of black perspectives.

Of the non-*Help*-related articles, Pimentel and Sarah Santillanes's "Blindsided by Racism: A Critical Racial Analysis of *The Blind Side*" is the most powerful and thoroughly researched. The authors challenge the film's white-savior narrative, its willful colorblindness, and, perhaps most importantly, its preference for philanthropy over a conversation about the systemic, unequal structures of U.S. society, structures making it possible for someone like Michael Oher to experience such desperation. As they themselves put it:

Rather than illuminate the social relations of power that create and sustain racial inequities, the narrative in *The Blind Side* (re) produces a color-blind racial ideology that is ahistorical and devoid of a sociopolitical context. As such, the life outcomes we see in *The Blind Side*...appear to be outcomes that simply and directly result from individual choice and responsibility. (208)

What truly distinguishes Pimentel and Santillanes's article is how prominently the words of Oher himself figure. In *I Beat the Odds: From Homelessness, to The Blind Side, and Beyond*, the National Football League veteran details the discrepancies between the book/film and his life, pointing out, among other details, that he played and studied football long before his adoption (198). (In the film adaptation, his white saviors need to teach him the basics of the game.) He adds that Lewis never consulted him during the drafting process, instead relying on other sources (197). Driven by the ethos of Oher and the authors themselves, "Blindsided by Racism" is not only a fine contribution to race studies, but it's also a companion piece to Oher's memoir itself. One imagines the two texts complementing each other well in a course involving Critical Race Theory.

All of this isn't to suggest the collection's authors want white artists to stop depicting black lives altogether, be it in novels or elsewhere. For example, in "'Must the Novelist Ask Permission?': Authority and Authenticity of the Black Voice in the Works of Eudora Welty and Kathryn Stockett's *The Help*," Ebony Lumumba praises Welty's rarely studied photography, characterizing the writer as a rather responsible

chronicler of her milieu. Welty deliberately acted, as Lumumba puts it, “within her voyeuristic role in an effort to ensure that the [black] communities and situations she observed remained authentic and untainted by her outsider presence” (31). Likewise, Karen A. Johnson endorses aspects of Quentin Tarantino’s 2012 film *Django Unchained*, calling it a “counterhegemonic...production of slavery” (212). Such chapters speak to this collection’s overarching goal of fostering constructive dialogues around these texts. Lumumba, Johnson, & Co. don’t want to outlaw those who produce art cross-culturally, but rather to engender in them a more critical consciousness, an awareness of perspective.

Besides its wisdom, *From Uncle Tom’s Cabin to The Help* lastly offers a rich, interdisciplinary template that can be adapted by others in race studies. Its voices come from various fields across the humanities, each possessing a facility with Critical Race Theory. As its lineup illustrates, such a text can showcase the work of both emerging and established thinkers of color. Though not all ethnic groups have recently had to navigate a *Help*-like phenomenon, this collection is a fine blueprint for combating one.

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Review:

Harry C. Boyte (Ed.). *Democracy's Education: Public Work, Citizenship, & The Future of Colleges and Universities*

Erin Brock Carlson,
Purdue University

Reflections on the intricate relationships between labor and intellectualism, jobs and vocations, and institutions and communities are woven throughout Harry C. Boyte's edited collection, *Democracy's Education: Public Work, Citizenship, & The Future of Colleges and Universities*. This 27-chapter book is a product of the American Commonwealth Partnership, an intra-institutional project initiated to re-theorize the role of higher education in a contemporary democratic society. While the collection features a host of different arguments, it succeeds in placing these voices in vibrant conversation with another, encouraging readers to construct their own opinions on democracy's place at all levels of education.

In his introduction, Boyte positions citizenship in between labor and intellectual endeavors, which have historically been separated (9-10). He argues that this gap can be bridged by re-conceptualizing citizenship as work and provides three ways to aid this shift:

community-building, vocational and civic professionalism, and the democratization of public work (15). After offering a brief history of civic engagement in the university setting, Boyte urges us “to recall and translate to the twenty-first century a democratic story of higher education and education broadly at the vital center of America” (p. 29). Emphasizing the communal nature of this call, this collection features voices ranging from administrators to community agencies. Such a collection of viewpoints is refreshing for community engagement scholars in rhetoric, composition, and literacy studies, as we continue to search for more representation of community partner feedback in our own projects (Kimme Hea & Wendler Shah, 2016).

The book’s five central sections focus on different types of stakeholders (policy makers and presidents; faculty; students and alumni; and community members and organizers), bookended by chapters that contextualize the claims made in the core of the book. The first section explores overarching democratic narratives that expand some of the claims made in the introduction, while the last two parts of the book situate civic engagement work in larger institutional structures—specifically calling for the establishment of civic engagement as a fixed strategy of higher education, rather than an outcome retrofitted to an institution’s mission. Despite the varied visions of the relationship between education and democracy, the heart of this collection rests upon the notion that we must position education as “a great civic vocation, a vital form of public work” (29)—a positioning that only continues to increase in relevance.

The collection is precise in its content, developing the concerns that Boyte points out in his introduction: shared problem-solving within communities, the development of a workforce interested in public affairs, and the expansion of democracy through everyday work. These themes are not new to theories of democracy, as seen in both John Dewey’s concern with the development of the Great Community and Alexis de Tocqueville’s discussions of labor and education (theorists referenced by a number of authors in the collection); however, contributors take up these themes in new ways. For example, Romand Coles and Blase Scarnati, in “Transformational Ecotones: The craftsperson ethos and higher education” (Chapter 10), lament the separation of labor and democracy, arguing that we

should frame careers as vocations intimately linked to our needs as social creatures, using the metaphor of the craftsman to advance their argument. (Interestingly, there is no mention of *techné* or *praxis*, concepts that would enhance this conversation). They draw upon “engaged democratic pedagogy” (p. 119) which positions teachers, students, and community members as builders of collaborative community infrastructures: one of the three major ways to change citizenship Boyte puts forth in the introduction. These discussions of agency and action that involve multiple stakeholders, embodying the spirit of reciprocity, are undoubtedly valuable for teachers invested in public and community rhetorics.

Another central theme of this collection is the potential for public change through the linkage of civic and vocational aspirations. According to Boyte, creating curricula that position jobs as careers, or better yet, callings, encourages us to see work as undeniably public. John Spencer’s “Reflections of a Civic Scientist” (Chapter 22) argues that a democratic frame must be placed onto research, asking us to acknowledge that scientific findings are, indeed, political and should be publicly accessible (p. 213). Though this approach is undoubtedly powerful, it is also often difficult to enact; one of the strengths of this volume is its acknowledgement of the difficulties faced by individuals in higher education who wish to forward this mission. In Chapter 11, KerryAnn O’Meara explores the trajectories of an under-appreciated social sciences faculty member and a celebrated hard sciences researcher, commenting on their vastly different destinations. She acknowledges the tension that faculty may feel between their scholarly pursuits and community work, in turn, urging us to root out any bias against public-facing scholarship in our own institutions (p. 130).

Seemingly in response to these complexities, other chapters provide examples of civic engagement models that have successfully democratized public work. Robert Bruininks et al.’s “Institutionalizing Civic Engagement at the University of Minnesota” (Chapter 6) directly engages with this concern on both a theoretical and practical level, offering their institution’s efforts as an example of sustainable engagement. The authors write that community engagement can be used as a strategy to advance educational missions, positioning it as

“a source of new vitality, resources, and renewal of American higher education” (p. 90), making this the chapter that most clearly echoes Boyte’s claim in the introduction that civic engagement ought to be an embedded strategy, not an end-goal. They also emphasize the importance of creating metrics for evaluating community engagement on such a scale—a need referenced in literature across our field (Bringle & Hatcher 1999; Feldman, 2009; Kendrick & Suarez, 2003).

Several chapters in this book hold valuable lessons specifically for instructors committed to service learning. Scott J. Peters’ “A Democracy’s College Tradition” (Chapter 2) details the history of land grant colleges, suggesting that asking “political” questions about the purpose and legacy of land grant institutions is one method we can use to develop community engagement programs on these campuses (p. 48). Most notably, he advocates that all institutions locate themselves within larger narratives of democracy. Other contributors, such as David Hoffman (Chapter 15) and Peter Levine (Chapter 21), discuss their work with student-driven initiatives and on STEM-heavy campuses. Both of these chapters explore the possibilities for experiential learning to foster skills that can be transferred to other scenarios, creating engaged and prepared citizen-professionals. Though none of the contributors focus explicitly on writing or rhetoric, many of these chapters echo long-developing conversations in our own field about pedagogy, reciprocity, and institutional influence (Baca, 2012; Cella, 2013; Deans, 2003).

At the end of the anthology, Boyte offers strategies to foster more collaborative understanding of engagement, all of which re-position the university as a *member* of the community, rather than just a *partner*. He calls for “a common table” where all stakeholders can address contemporary problems and introduce solutions (p. 265), which resonates with the work of community literacy scholars like Linda Flowers, Ellen Cushman, and Steve Parks. Ultimately, Boyte’s collection provides insight as to how civic engagement is being discussed across academic fields; additionally, the collection’s focus on developing sustainable models of civic engagement is timely, given the uncertain future of higher education. This collection would be particularly useful for anyone interested in interdisciplinary engagement work, given the range of programs and positions

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discussed in the book, as well as individuals interested in implementing programs in their own communities and institutions, due to the plethora of examples provided in this anthology. The perspectives expressed in *Democracy's Education* are incredibly powerful and could serve as transformative lenses for scholars in writing studies and related fields who view civic engagement as an integral part of their work.

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