

# Editors' Introduction

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**A**s we prepare to publish our second issue as coeditors of *Reflections*, we find ourselves pondering the semantics of names, the power of design, and the importance of circulatory reach. We began our term as editors with several questions: whether the title of the journal accurately expressed its evolving mission, whether the website was agile and modern enough to reach a wider public, and whether it was feasible to become an open-access journal. It is with a greater appreciation for the modalities and complexities of the world of publishing that we are delighted to announce the renaming of the journal to *Reflections: A Journal of Community-Engaged Writing and Rhetoric*, the redesign of the website (many thanks to our new website editor Heather Lang), and the movement with this issue to open access (print subscriptions will be honored through 2019).

Our two main concerns have therefore been first to reach a wider audience and build

support for the important community-engaged writing that is the journal's *raison d'être*, and second to continue to cultivate research and scholarship in the fast-emerging subfield of community writing. It is thus with great pleasure that we proudly introduce a thought-provoking mix of articles, a course profile, a dialogue, interviews, and a book review in this issue.

The volume opens with Georgina Guzmán's "Learning to Value Cultural Wealth Through Service Learning: Farmworker Families' and Latina/o University Students' Mutual Empowerment via Freirean and Feminist Chicana/o-Latina/o Literature Reading Circles." In Guzmán's community-engaged writing project in her Chicana/o-Latina/o Literature course at California State University Channel Islands (CSUCI), students read and discuss Chicana/o-Latina/o literature with farmworker families living in low-income farmworker housing tracts in Oxnard and Camarillo, California. Guzmán's analysis of these reading circles emphasizes the reciprocal exchange of knowledge and the benefits that reciprocity created for both the students and the community members.

North and east of California at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, professor Rachel Bloom-Pojar and graduate students Julia Anderson and Storm Pilloff also address the surging anti-immigrant sentiments, rhetoric, and government policies in the United States through the course "Community-Based Writing with Latinx Rhetorics in Milwaukee." The authors' course profile presents three perspectives on the course, which they present as one example of centering Latinx communities, activists, and scholars for graduate study in rhetoric and composition. Bloom-Pojar notes that cowriting this profile with the Anderson and Pilloff "helped [her] reflect on the strengths and areas for improvement for the course" (37).

In "Linguistic Pluralism: A Statement and a Call to Advocacy," Ligia Mihut likewise confronts the normalization of hatred and bigotry in the United States with a syllabus statement she developed on linguistic and cultural pluralism. Communicating Mihut's "beliefs about diverse language repertoires and their value in the writing classroom," the statement "can function as a social justice text both

in and beyond the classroom by circulating in local and global, online and physical networks and communities" (67).

"Beyond Management: The Potential for Writing Program Leadership During Turbulent Times" by Casie Fedukovich and Sue Doe also reflects the temper of the times. They argue for a new vision of writing program administer (WPA) leadership that embraces the relation between the WPA and the wider community in a politically tumultuous period marked by rise of hate speech and nationalistic, xenophobic rhetoric on the one hand and questions about academic freedom and faculty and student rights on the other.

Given the increasing significance of this kind of community-based work within and beyond the walls of academe, we invited four early career scholars to reflect on their transition from graduate students to professorial and administrative positions in higher education. In "Early Career Scholars' Encounters, Transitions, Futures: A Conversation on Community Engagement," Megan Faver Hartline, Vani Kannan, Charles Lesh, and Jessica Pautsek recall how they discovered community literacy and found a home for themselves in the field as emerging scholars and teachers. Having already contributed to the field's growth as students, they are in a unique position in this transitional period of their careers to share a vision of its future, which they argue must focus on "building alliances and finding our 'coalitions of the willing' that can be part of creating a more humane environment" (146).

In keeping with this self-reflexive turn of taking the pulse of the field itself, we also look at the state of community writing projects unaffiliated with higher education in a featured interview with Aaron Zimmerman, founder and director of the New York Writers' Coalition (NYWC). In "Everyone Is a Writer': The Story of the New York Writers' Coalition," Zimmerman recounts the coalition's origins in 1999 when he started a workshop at a housing residence in Brooklyn for low-income working people, formerly homeless people, and people with HIV/AIDS. From there, NYWC grew to sponsor public and partner writing workshops. Echoing other voices in this issue, Zimmerman concludes, "It's become more and more vital that we hear from all people, not just the select few, as a counter to the

deep divisions that are being exploited by those who seek money and power” (179).

Next, we hear from Xavier Maciel, a student at Pomona College, in an interview with Jens Lloyd titled, “‘I Never Intended It To Become a Symbol of Resistance’: An Interview with Xavier Maciel about the Sanctuary Campus Movement.” As Lloyd puts it “... the sanctuary campus movement stands out as one of the most ambitious responses to the growing sentiment in the United States that direct action must play a more prominent role in our political lives” ( ). In his interview with Maciel, Lloyd discovers a web of writing surrounding online sanctuary petitions that circulated after Donald Trump’s election in 2016. Says Maciel of a list he created to document the various petitions, “It took off like wildfire. In a week, fifty schools had jumped on board. The rest is history” (154).

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*Reflections* seeks submissions for Volume 19, Issue 2, Fall 2019 (drafts due August 1, 2019). *Reflections* publishes scholarly research articles (18-30 pages); brief profiles of community-based writing and civic engagement organizations, partnerships, programs aimed at disseminating information and sharing models from which other faculty, scholars, and administrators can benefit; brief project/course profiles of community-based writing and civic engagement that are not developed into research articles but address course objectives, logistics, obstacles, successes, and ideas for further iterations of the course; undergraduate research articles; reflective or personal essays that contribute to our collective understanding of the subfield’s scope and definition; interviews; and a variety of genres produced by project participants that often emerge from community-engaged writing partnerships. Submission information is available on the *Reflections* website at [reflectionsjournal.net](http://reflectionsjournal.net). Look for an announcement about access to our new portal through Open Journal Systems for the submission and review process.

We are pleased to be publishing two special issues, 19.1 in spring 2019 and 20.2 in fall 2020. The call for proposals (CFP) for the spring 2019 special issue on “Prison Writing, Literacies and Communities,” guest

edited by Tobi Jacobi and Wendy Hinshaw, is now closed. Coming 15 years after *Reflections* published its first special issue on prison writing, the spring 2019 issue promises to be outstanding, based on the enthusiastic response to the CFP—a welcome sign of resurgence of interest and involvement in prison education.

An early call for proposals for the fall 2020 special issue, “Rhetorics of Reproductive Justice in Public and Civic Contexts,” guest edited by Maria Novotny, Lori Beth De Hertogh, and Erin Frost, is open for submissions (proposals due September 1, 2019). Both special issues offer a timely focus on vital matters of concern as sites of writing, research, and action within the compass of community-engaged writing and rhetoric.

Looking forward, we will be announcing plans for the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary issue of *Reflections*, Volume 20, No. 2, Spring 2020.

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