

Reflective Cartography: Mapping *Reflections*' First Twenty Years

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Since its inception in 2000, Reflections has functioned as a site of synthesis for community-based writing pedagogy, service-learning, public rhetoric, and community-engaged research. Such a diverse range of influences leads to the formation of a journal that is ever shifting in its identity, scope, and mission. This complexity is what ultimately defines Reflections: a publication that constantly pushes the boundaries of knowledge creation and strives to remain receptive to topics and voices that are often excluded from other academic sources. The following collaborative article offers a content analysis of all publications in Reflections' twenty-year history (2000-2020). Though not exhaustive, this analysis highlights unique aspects of the journal's history, methods, non-traditional genres, pedagogical and disciplinary impact, and evolving interactions with power and privilege that have made it the public conscience for Writing Studies.

This article offers a map of *Reflections*.¹ Yet, maps are always more complicated than they seem.² In computer graphics, reflection mapping is a means of approximating what an image

would look like on a reflective surface. When an environment is changing, or the reflective surface is moving, it is difficult to render the way that reflective surfaces would capture these changes. We have found a similar difficulty in trying to map the contents of *Reflections*. Looking back at twenty years of *Reflections*, one finds contours that are familiar from issue to issue, but the journal has moved more than it has stayed the same. Tracing this movement has not been as simple as finding the points where service-learning is replaced with community-engaged writing and research. Rather, it has meant marking patterns and shifts in perspective, the ways that later issues have complicated earlier issues. Even more fundamentally, it has meant looking at the ways that the journal has sometimes led and sometimes grappled with the wider field of Writing Studies:⁹ calling for stronger connections between academic institutions and their communities, expressing a desire for a more public form of rhetoric, theorizing and assessing that more public form, pushing for more engagement with diverse communities, and critiquing the political limitations of simply engaging the public.

One of *Reflections*' consistent and ongoing contributions to Writing Studies is to document the full extent to which there are no hermetic educational spaces. The pedagogical implications of community-engaged writing can cut across communities and curricular boundaries. Since its inception, *Reflections* has offered readers a chance to measure the best practices of other scholars and other institutions and then to chart the possibilities for their own scholarship, their own institutions, and their surrounding communities. In Nora Bacon and Barbara Sherr Roswell's (2000) opening "Welcome to *Reflections*," they lay out a vision of writing instructors' roles in their own institutions that resembles the role of *Reflections* itself:

[W]riting teachers are among the early adopters who reach out to community members to establish service-learning partnerships and who take leadership roles on campus, explaining the why and the how of service-learning to their colleagues in other departments. And we, like our students, learn from experience. Having experimented with various models of community-based writing instruction for the past decade, we have learned enough to see that service-learning is more than good pedagogy: it's an

innovation with theoretical significance, one that challenges us to reexamine our thinking about writing, teaching, learning, community, service, poverty, privilege, responsibility, justice. Individually and collectively, we have found that our reflections on community-based writing instruction are provocative enough to warrant a new forum for sharing our insights and extending our inquiry. (1)

This is worth quoting at length because the point that this is a journal for “early adopters” making “provocative . . . insights” is perhaps the closest thing to a true north the journal has. It describes the contents of the last twenty years, a grounding for the journal’s purpose and publication history. It is perhaps fitting, then, that *Reflections* has never had the kind of institutional support that flagship journals in the field have enjoyed. “Early adopters” has also meant that the journal has been prescient regarding a number of key trends in the field (e.g., transfer, genre) and “provocative...insights” has meant that the journal can seem to be pushing in different directions from issue to issue, grappling with where the field should go. We believe this helps explain the significant number of special issues (fifteen) and themed issues (nine) that, together, account for over sixty percent of the journal’s publications.⁴ These special issues help important themes cohere, while also allowing the journal to clearly expand and explore different community engagements. The journal has also, even early on, recognized that there are limitations to, and tensions within, the ways that writing can traverse communities.

The attempt to “map” the journal is, then, still a useful one, despite its complications. It helps us see more than the extraordinary diversity of the journal. We can better see the contradictions contained within the journal, the connections between the journal and various parts of Writing Studies, places where the journal has led, and places where the journal could go.

APPROXIMATING AN IMAGE: HOW WE GOT HERE

This article is written in response to a very particular call from the editors of *Reflections* “seek[ing] one or more writers to review and analyze the abstracts of articles published in *Reflections* throughout its first 19 volumes for an article to be featured in the 20th anniversary

special issue of the journal.” Five authors from five institutions were selected for this project because of the project’s scope and timeline. The context surrounding the project was unique: we collaborated across four time zones while COVID-19 forced stay-at-home orders. By then, the goal of publishing this piece in time for the issue meant that we had six weeks to complete a draft for peer review.

Though a brief review of the compiled abstracts did provide some useful insight into the journal’s history (see Appendix B), we found this analysis insufficient. We determined that a more comprehensive picture of the journal required reading twenty years of articles, poems, book reviews, editors introductions, and calls for articles—a logistical challenge given the size of the archive and the project timeline. We divided the thirty-nine issues amongst ourselves and began reviewing the material in each issue, taking notes on noticeable patterns and trends. During our first meeting, we shared our initial analyses and induced a number of themes in *Reflections’* history. These themes crystalized over the course of our conversations and serve as the basis of the sections presented in this article. This is but one illustration of many possible interpretations of the journal’s twenty-year history. We expect that another group of authors, or a single researcher, or a whole graduate course could do tremendous work with such an archive. Our through lines are centered around the concepts of diversity in knowledge construction, sharing, and consumption across genres, spaces, and methods with keen attention to issues of power and privilege as represented in *Reflections*.

In the first section, “An Emerging Journal: A Brief History of *Reflections*,” David Stock shares a brief overview of the journal’s history to provide context for subsequent sections. In “Methodology and Methods in *Reflections*” Johanna Phelps explores, via an abbreviated analysis of methods and methodologies published in the journal, the many ways *Reflections* authors, editors, and readers understand knowledge construction. In the third section, “The Significance of Non-traditionally Academic Genres in *Reflections*,” Roger Chao discusses how genres, especially those we usually associate with operating outside of academic journals, are fundamental to understanding the significance of *Reflections* itself. In “Tracing the Relationship Between *Reflections* and Its Most Common Educational

Setting: First-Year Composition” Alex Wulff finds explorations of first-year writing to be woven throughout the journal. He notes with interest the ways that *Reflections*’ engagement with the space of first-year writing so clearly predicts the places first-year writing has gone in the past twenty years. In the final section, “Mapping Power and Privilege in *Reflections*,” Deb Dimond Young examines the many ways *Reflections* has engaged with questions of power and privilege throughout its twenty-year history, which provides a concluding frame for our analysis of the journal’s archive.

AN EMERGING JOURNAL: A BRIEF HISTORY OF *REFLECTIONS*

Newsletter Beginnings

The inaugural issue of *Reflections on Community-Based Writing Instruction* introduced Nora Bacon and Barbara Roswell as founding editors, with one editorial assistant, two design consultants, and no editorial board. More newsletter than academic publication (Mason, this issue), *Reflections* aimed to provide “a forum for scholarship on community-based work in college writing courses” that also facilitated “communication among service-learning researchers” (2000, 2). The journal announced a three-times-per-year publication schedule and a \$10 annual subscription fee, payable by check. Acknowledged institutional sponsors included Goucher College (Roswell’s home institution) and the Campus Compact Fund for National Disciplinary Associations. The following year, additional sponsors included a Corporation for National Service/Learn and Serve America grant and the CCCC Service-Learning and Community Literacy Committee (2001, 2). While *Reflections* in its current form bears no material resemblance to this inaugural issue, the first editors’ introduction lays out a modest but compelling—and enduring—vision for the journal. With this vision in mind, reviewing changes to the journal’s title, descriptions, calls for submissions, and editors’ introductions, especially incoming editors, reveals a surprising degree of coherence across what may otherwise appear as divergent developments in the journal’s history.

Bacon and Roswell (2000) introduce *Reflections* by noting increased interest in service learning among US colleges and universities, especially among writing instructors. The editors see such interest as resonant with “our profession’s historical commitments” to a holistic

and social view of learning and teaching writing that has “power to effect personal, practical, and political change” (1). Referring to nearly a decade of experimenting with “various models of community-based writing instruction,” Bacon and Roswell describe service learning not only as “good pedagogy” but also as “an innovation with theoretical significance, one that challenges us to reexamine our thinking about writing, teaching, learning, community, service, poverty, privilege, responsibility, justice” (1). Speaking for a collective of scholars and practitioners, the editors conclude “that our reflections on community-based writing instruction are provocative enough to warrant a new forum for sharing our insights and extending our inquiry” (1).

Interchangeable use of community-based writing and service learning is repeated in the journal’s initial request for submissions, which casts a fairly wide net: research on teaching practices; theoretical discussions of community-based writing instruction; explorations of service-learning and composition studies scholarship; and related book reviews. The comparable length for article submissions (1,000-2,500 words) and book reviews (1,000 words) suggests a nascent academic journal focused on featuring scholarship, circulating resources, and connecting scholars, especially emerging scholars, interested in service learning as an emerging subfield in composition studies (2000, 4). A year later, the call for submissions includes a new feature: Classroom Samplers, 1000-2000-word descriptions of exemplary curricula with accompanying theoretical perspectives (2001, 2). This feature helps distinguish teacher research from more theoretically or methodologically grounded research, thus advancing the journal’s emerging scholarly profile. This issue also includes a website sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English, which presumably linked to service-learning resources for writing instructors curated by Tom Deans (Mason, this issue).

The journal’s first title—*Reflections on Community-Based Writing Instruction*—indicates an effort to give equal attention to community engagement and teaching writing. However, given the journal’s novelty, purpose, and audience, it is not surprising that service learning and teacher research feature prominently in early issues. But it is incorrect to assume that *Reflections* began as a service-learning journal. As Bacon and Roswell (2000) indicated, the journal’s impetus was to

use good pedagogy to prompt a rethinking of composition studies' foundational assumptions and practices regarding writing, teaching writing, and a host of related key concepts, including community, service, and justice. The nature and explicitness of such rethinking varies throughout the journal's history, but the mandate to do so is linked to the journal's founding, which makes critical engagement with service learning a realization of, rather than departure from, the journal's initial vision. Indeed, critical perspectives on service learning and community literacy appear as early as the third issue: in her introduction, Bacon (2001) highlights the need for more rigor in service learning research, including more "theoretically grounded research questions," "careful research design" (3) and "a wider array of methodologies," particularly qualitative research (5). That issue also features an interview with Ira Shor, who describes his efforts to propose and develop "comprehensive writing program[s]" such as Critical Literacy Across the Curriculum and Critical Literacy Across the Community programs, which include service learning (Ashley 2001, 8). Further, starting in this issue, the word "instruction" was dropped from the journal's title (see Appendix A), suggesting an early effort to decenter classroom-based writing instruction in favor of extracurricular contexts and audiences as the focal point of *Reflections*.

Several early issues are missing front and back matter, and some are missing entirely⁵, but noteworthy changes are nonetheless evident. Aside from additional modifications to the journal's title, an early special issue on prison literacies (Winter 2004) features writing by community partners and community members (namely, incarcerated individuals). This effort marks a significant moment in the journal's emerging identity as a fully invested partner with and sponsor of community writing, rather than an aspiring academic journal about community-based writing instruction; additionally, this issue appears to be the first of fifteen special issues in *Reflections*' first twenty years.

Between Community Literacy and Public Rhetoric

In less than a decade, *Reflections* shows signs of a maturing journal with greater emphasis on community partnerships and community writing. The next available issue with front matter (2007) includes an updated journal description and call for submissions that features

two new keywords—writing and community literacy—signaling the journal’s primary areas of inquiry, and an invitation for submissions that focus on literacies of diverse communities. Additional changes include a slightly longer peer review process (six to eight weeks), a request for 100-word abstracts to accompany submissions, a notice that articles are indexed in major bibliographies (ERIC and MLA), and that the journal belongs to the Council of Editors of Learned Journals—all indicating that *Reflections* is no longer a grassroots newsletter but an established, if still emerging, academic journal. Yet, this academic profile does not come at the expense of its commitment to community work and community partners. A lengthy acknowledgements section following the journal description and written by Barbara Roswell and Adrian Wurr (2007) includes recognition of scholars, teachers, and leaders in academic settings and “in community associations,” “youth development organizations,” and other non-academic organizations who helped inspire and shape the content featured in the issue (1).

Reflections’ emphasis on community partnerships becomes especially evident during Steve Parks’s editorship. In his first issue, Parks (2008) demonstrates critical engagement with the term “community” and characterizes the journal as a home for those pursuing “community literacy studies,” “service-learning” and “engaged scholarship,” which reflects an effort to promote the community side of university-community partnerships and the journal’s orientation towards growing subfields in Writing Studies (1). Reminiscent of Bacon and Roswell’s (2000) introduction, Parks (2008) identifies recent US events as prompting the field to “rethink” not only our understanding of community but also “our identities scholars, teachers, community members, and citizens,” and to subsequently “revise [our] pedagogical, scholarly, and programmatic commitments” (1). Parks pledges to continue *Reflections*’ historical emphasis on supporting *and* representing “the full scope of intellectual work” in university-community partnerships by continuing to publish work that “demonstrate[s] the variety of voices, genres, and styles that mark community literacy” (2). This emphasis is clear in a revised journal description and call for submissions, which introduces language that signals the journal’s interest in publishing a variety of genres, including non-academic genres produced by or with community members, as well as work by emerging scholars. In line with this

impulse to increase access and diversity, Parks foregrounds the social justice aspect of the journal's founding mission.

Parks' tenure as editor marks an important shift in theorizing community for *Reflections* and for community-engaged work in the discipline of Writing Studies. Guest editors Ellen Cushman and Jeffrey T. Grabill's (2009) introduction to a special issue titled "Writing Theories/Changing Communities" extends Parks' (2008) initial critique of the term community. Cushman and Grabill's (2009) efforts to complicate undertheorized terms, such as community and service, that are central to *Reflections*' mission preface the eventual foregrounding of public rhetoric in the journal's title. Cushman and Grabill argue that cultural rhetorics, understood as a subsection of public rhetorics, offer a more rigorous theoretical framework for guiding community-based work than community or service learning. The guest editors describe their special issue as highlighting "theoretically rich, data driven, pedagogically nuanced approaches to community engagement" (17). A few years later, with the departure of Parks as editor and the incoming editorship of Diana George, Cristina Kirklighter, and Paula Mathieu, the journal undergoes substantial changes that resemble efforts to invigorate the journal's theoretical grounding by integrating current disciplinary knowledge beyond composition studies.

Under the new editorship of George, Kirklighter, and Mathieu (2012), the journal's subtitle is revised to *A Journal of Public Rhetoric, Civic Writing, and Service Learning*, and the journal description includes public rhetoric as a new key term. Further changes indicate less emphasis on publishing the variety of community-generated genres (e.g., stories, essays, artwork) that appeared during Parks' editorship. The editors attribute this shift in part to the emergence of other journals focused specifically on community literacy and service learning, namely the *Journal of Community Literacy* and *Undergraduate Journal of Service-Learning and Community-Based Research* (2). But they also describe it as an effort "to more clearly define the journal's ambitious vision" (2). In an effort to differentiate *Reflections* from similar venues and to align it with an academic discipline (i.e., rhetoric) that would presumably increase the journal's academic legitimacy, sharpen its intellectual focus, and capitalize

on a current area of scholarship, George, Kirklighter, and Mathieu understandably saw public rhetoric as a clarifying, encompassing, and enriching conceptual framework to advance the journal's ongoing engagement in community-based work.

While some readers may interpret this turn to public rhetoric occurring at the expense of an emphasis on community, it may be more accurate to consider this shift as a culmination of prior editors' and contributors' theorizing about how to best enrich and advance community-based work. Admittedly, the abrupt and unexplained departure of editors George and Mathieu after one year may have inhibited the realization of public rhetoric to adequately reframe *Reflections'* community-engaged work. Yet, under Kirklighter's four-year editorship (2013-2017), *Reflections* continued to feature an eclectic array of academic and community-based work from a variety of participants, suggesting that an emphasis on public rhetoric did not interfere with the journal's ability to fulfill its founding mission.

Foregrounding Community Engagement in Writing and Rhetoric

In their first editors' introduction, Laurie Grobman and Deborah Mutnick (2018) look backward to advance *Reflections* in ways that echo its original mission. Citing Bacon and Roswell's (2000) introduction to the inaugural issue, Grobman and Mutnick acknowledge subsequent editors' efforts to promote the multi-faceted work of "community-engaged writing" in ways that have situated the journal "at the forefront of change in the field"—the subfield of community writing as well as the larger discipline of composition and rhetoric (2). When introducing their second issue, Grobman and Mutnick (2018-2019) identify two reasons for revising the journal's title as *A Journal of Community-Engaged Writing and Rhetoric*: first, to "reach a wider audience" (1) and emphasize "the journal's *raison d'être*," namely community-engaged writing; and second, to continue sponsoring research and scholarship in the subfield of community writing (2). The revision, which marks a return to the journal's second title (*Reflection on Community-Based Writing*) with an integration of the rhetorical turn in the journal's fourth title (*Reflections: Public Rhetoric, Civic Writing, and Service Learning*), reflects a synthesis of the journal's initial mandate and recent history. The revised title also clarifies *Reflections'* primary and secondary disciplinary affiliations—

community writing; writing and rhetoric—and its effort to integrate both in mutual, recursive processes of knowledge-making and world-making.

Grobman and Mutnick's editorship also marks revisions to the journal's description that further refine, develop, and advance *Reflections'* founding mission. Their introduction to the second issue (2018-2019) includes a description/call for submissions that differs dramatically from previous versions. Aside from mentioning scholarly research articles, the bulk of the call describes publishing a variety of community-based work, from project and course profiles to personal essays and interviews, as well as various other genres produced by participants in community-engaged writing projects and partnerships (4). A more robust online presence has resulted in additional information about the journal's scope and vision. The journal's description online indicates a focus on “how community-based writing projects 1) contribute to our knowledge of theories, practices, and uses of writing and rhetoric; and 2) alter traditional pedagogy and research practices of composition and rhetoric and allied fields” (“About”). The journal encourages submissions from “anyone”—community members, faculty, students, activists—involved in service learning, community literacy, or community writing (“Welcome”). This emphasis evokes Bacon and Roswell's (2000) original vision for the journal, Parks' emphasis on community, and George, Kirklighter, and Mathieu's efforts to align *Reflections* with the discipline of rhetoric. The editors' vision statement, also online, reflects a renewed commitment for *Reflections* to function as “a platform . . . for a critical dialogue on social and economic justice” and to highlight the “confluence of heightened political consciousness and community writing's dynamism” in the current age (“About”). The journal's affiliation with the Coalition for Community Writing in 2017 and its shift to open-access with Volume 18.2 Fall/Winter 2018-2019 further indicate the journal's centralizing focus on community activism.

These recent revisions constitute an integration of the journal's founding impulses and its dynamic history, adapted for current exigencies. This synthesized focus rings true to *Reflections'* mission and speaks to its ongoing strength: working at the margins (or

frontiers) of discipline and community, the journal has maintained its hybrid academic/public status in ways that promote boundary crossing, coalition building, and empowerment for marginalized and emerging voices. When oriented to the journal's founding vision, this partial mapping of *Reflections'* history reveals a subtle, surprisingly consistent through line amid the journal's dynamic development.

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS IN *REFLECTIONS*

In *Reflections*, knowledge-making and sharing takes many forms. The journal is situated within a discipline that tends towards largely qualitative inquiry with methods that include autoethnographies, surveys and interviews, and teaching narratives. Following the trends in Writing Studies, *Reflections* extends the methodological egalitarianism identified by North in 1987 and exhibits a commitment to methodological pluralism (Kirsch 1992), wherein all methodologies and methods are not simply tolerated—they're welcome. Throughout this section, I refer to "methods" as the set of tools that allow researchers to collect and/or analyze data. Methodology is the framework that helps researchers determine what methods to use. One's methodology is informed by, among other things, world-view, perceptions of the possibilities and roles of research, and training. Many Writing Studies researchers are trained within a paradigm of knowledge construction that values qualitative inquiry; this is exhibited in *Reflections*, too. The published articles spanning the journal's history suggest that, rather than a prioritization of a particular paradigm or methodological orientation, contributors, reviewers, and readers value principled engagement with communities, in both the construction and narration of knowledge making. Authors of the more traditional articles published in *Reflections* share and contribute to knowledge via a variety of methods and methodologies, mirroring what other authors in this article note as a welcoming, non-traditional, and diverse community of inquiry and knowledge making.

In its twenty year history, *Reflections* authors who've published more traditional academic articles in the journal tend towards a few cohering strategies to share their work with the world: rhetorical analyses, hermeneutic and theory-building work, ethnography and autoethnography, institutional critique or review, and teaching

narratives and reflections. All of these are squarely situated in qualitative methodological frameworks and familiar to the broader field of Writing Studies. The articles included in the discussion below either include overt discussion of method or were reviewed by two authors and determined to fit within one of the following general categorizations. The array of methods and methodologies in *Reflections* are a testament to how the journal has acculturated its authors and readers to knowledge-making practices.

Authors such as Bellino (2008), Maltz and Manter (2010), and Cloud (2016) conducted forms of rhetorical analysis on particular artifacts and experiences. This theoretical work is common in the journal's special issues, and such articles are often balanced with other articles with research and/or narratives focused on pedagogical practice within the same issue. Dovetailing the theoretical and practical methods is a strategy that exhibits praxis as core to *Reflections'* work and concordant with what appears concurrently in community engagement scholarship (see, for instance, Iverson and James (2014)).

Importantly, too, *Reflections* is home to many hermeneutic articles that (re)theorize crucial concepts in the practice and purpose of community engagement and civic education. With foci such as the framing of the term service-learning (Marilynne Boyle-Baise 2007), such methods include critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Lewis 2019) as well as critical race frameworks (Catchings 2019). Similarly, in work like Kirklighter's (2009) largely hermeneutic inquiry, Lynch-Binie's 2010 personal narrative with labor organizing, and Thacker's 2014 narrative combined with theoretical analysis, the analytic and personal are woven together throughout the journal's history to build a series of reflection narratives imbued with theory and the practice of lived experience. These articles parallel the representation of the dialogues and interviews Roger discusses in this article and the foci of robust, democratic, and reciprocal partnerships Deb shares. Such positionality extends into the methods authors have used and reify a particular collaborative effort at knowledge construction.

Qualitative methods such as ethnography (e.g., Pimentel 2009; Gorzelsky 2008; Malin 2010; Hall 2015) and autoethnography (e.g. Wells 2016) are articulated clearly in some articles and implied in

others. Many articles contain a mix of multiple qualitative methods, such as Gorzelsky et al.'s 2009 critical theoretical work that is combined with ethnography. Similarly, several publications in the early years of the journal drew upon multiple methods associated with qualitative paradigms, such as participatory action research (Crabtree and Sapp 2004) and critical stakeholder theory (Kimme Hae 2004). The prevalence of such methods in the *Reflections* archive speaks to the power of individual experience in sharing and building knowledge. Trimble's 2009 discussion of student ethnographies suggests the multi-layered strategies for building knowledge with citizen-partners through auto/ethnographic methods, too.

Institutional/program histories and/or critiques appear, too; some are presented as ethnographic. Examples of such work can be seen in Holmes's discussion of her FYC program revision at Elon with community partners (2009) and Loudermik Garza's 2007 discussion of Texas A&M's professional and technical communication program's identification and valuation of diverse literacies. Baca's (2007) narrative discussion of her program's history falls into this loose category of institutional and programmatic discussion, as well. Similarly, Rupiper Taggart's 2005 article served as a precursor for such genres and married institutional critique with theory to negotiate the complexities of localism in community engaged initiatives. Again, this particular facet of the journal maintains a close connection between rigorous theoretical framing and qualitative methods.

Many *Reflections* articles over the past two decades are teaching narratives or classroom practice buttressed by data collected and analyzed through qualitative methods common in Writing Studies: surveys, interviews, and artifact collection with/from students. In *Reflections*, interviews with partners and/or key stakeholders are also represented. For instance, in 2009, Rogers published findings from her dissertation project interviewing teachers who worked with incarcerated individuals. And pedagogical research on the practices of community engaged teaching have always been a cornerstone of the journal. Early in the journal's history, three articles in particular employed empirical methods such as questionnaires (Redd 2003) and a Campus Compact measurement tool (Kendrick and Suarez 2003); together, the early and comprehensive use of many pedagogical

inquiries serve as a springboard for future research and inquiry. Like many *Reflections* authors before and after her, Edell (2007) relied on contributions from participants who were not “students” in the traditional sense, but rather were learners in Edell’s program. Similar styles of scholarship and methodological choices, many more closely associated with university classrooms, can be seen in articles such as those by Bingham and McNamara (2008), Nall and Trauth Taylor (2013), Wetzel (2013), and Handley (2016), and robust data collection using strategies from the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) is seen intermittently (e.g. Wurr’s pilot and comprehensive study featured in the Fall 2009 issue). Such data collection efforts are ethically complex and generally adhere to disciplinary guidance.⁶ The nuance of involving students and partners in research, especially when professors or faculty often embody a default positionality that is provided deference, is mitigated to some degree by the inclusion of student authors (e.g., Grobman, Kemmerer, and Zebertavage 2017) and student writing with attribution in many publications in *Reflections*’ history. While the field of Writing Studies is saturated with such narratives, *Reflections* is an outlet for readers interested particularly in the impact of community engagement on *all* communities, not only classroom communities.

Based on what is included in the journal’s article archives, it is apparent that the past twenty years of *Reflections* has been a commitment to principles and praxis illustrated via qualitative methodologies. Inherent in any decision about knowledge construction and consumption are implied methods and methodology/ies. Overt discussion of these matters informs readers’ understanding of authors’ positionality and axiological commitments. We may take it for granted, as readers of *Reflections*, that we share similar commitments to the editors, reviewers, and authors. As we think towards bringing more readers, writers, and practitioners into our community of inquiry, transparency regarding our methods and methodology is always something we should extend to our audience.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF NON-TRADITIONALLY ACADEMIC GENRES IN *REFLECTIONS*

One of the most unique features about *Reflections* is how the journal presents its focus on service-learning and community engagement to

its audience. Even a brief glimpse into the journal's history reveals a diverse range of genres published over the years; although *Reflections* primarily puts out academic articles, the journal also provides a space for creative pieces such as poetry and drawings as well as deeply personal reflections and narratives. There is even a set of instructions for a game focusing on nonprofit management that teachers can facilitate in their classrooms (see Eli Goldblatt's "Enlightened Self-Interest Game" in the Spring 2012 issue). As David's historical overview indicates, the journal has a history of diverse leadership that strive to highlight both academic and community-centered issues told from the perspective of individuals who are directly embedded within them. Thus, it should come as no surprise that the published genres reflect such a diverse range of voices and experiences. While the support for non-traditionally academic genres⁷ certainly exemplifies *Reflections*' inclusive practices, I want to build on Heather Lang's contribution in this issue's roundtable and argue that there is a larger, rhetorical impact to the journal's decision to publish nonacademic works alongside their academic texts. More specifically, the addition of these non-traditionally academic genres influences how *Reflections* readers perceive and conceptualize not just the journal itself but service-learning and community engagement as fields of research and study.

As a field, Writing Studies has long conceptualized genres as being much more than categories or classifications. Scholars like Carolyn Miller (1974) argue that genres have a social function as well; in her seminal article "Genre as Social Action," Miller suggests that genres assist authors and audiences alike by creating recurring rhetorical situations and subsequent responses. In doing so, genres construct moments where communicants can then predict the appropriate conventions and reactions. Building off of this theory, Anis Bawarshi argues that genres are "rhetorical ecosystems," a cyclical force that mediates our social relationships and actions, which in turn reproduces certain situations and conditions: "[t]hrough genres, our typified rhetorical actions reproduce the very recurring environments that subsequently make these rhetorical actions necessary and meaningful" (2001, 73). In the context of community engagement, genres hold significant weight in that they help teachers and students understand the various discourse communities with which they engage, on not only a textual level but

an ideological one as well. Scholars like Thomas Deans would argue this affordance is extremely valuable to composition pedagogy; in his *Reflections* article “Genre Analysis and the Community Writing Course,” Deans contemplates a question he once asked his class: “[i]f, I posited to students, we understand partner nonprofit agencies as discourse communities to which we apprentice ourselves, don’t we need to understand those contexts before stepping into them as writers?” (2005, 8). The recurring situations and responses produced by a genre offer insight into the values, attitudes, and ideals of its participants—all necessary contextual knowledge for effective participation in any discourse community.

We can, therefore, gain much insight into *Reflections* and its authors and readers by examining the variety of genres the journal has put out over the years, especially the ones that are underrepresented in traditional, peer-reviewed academic publishing. Although *Reflections* publishes a variety of texts, there are three genres that stand out due to their frequency. The first is the narrative, in which authors share a personal, first-hand account of an experience or event. Published 117 times over the course of the journal’s history, these narratives are often written chronologically and contain observational details as well as lessons and experiences that the author took away from the experience. For example, in “Civic Engagement and New Media,” Michelle Albert (2010) shares her story of leading a multimodal civic engagement course, beginning with the exigency for creating the course, student reactions, and her assessment of how the course was received. In addition, narratives often provide a glimpse into composition pedagogy in non-traditional learning environments or during unique circumstances. In “A Narrative on Teaching, Community, and Activism,” youth minister Tim Lee (2011) reflects on his experiences in establishing One Black Man, a community organization dedicated to improving the literacy of young African-American males in Chicago, while “Writing the Blues: Teaching in a Post-Katrina Environment” tells Gwen Robinson’s (2008) experience of teaching a first-year writing course at Xavier University in New Orleans, Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina.

Another commonly published genre in *Reflections* is poetry, which has appeared twenty times over the course of twenty years.

These poems, some following a rhyme scheme and some not, add an emotional element to the social issues covered by the journal. Since its inception, *Reflections* has published two special issues focused on prison education, and while the academic articles in each issue highlight the systemic issues plaguing U.S. prisons, it is the combined eleven poems from both issues that allow readers to *feel* the repercussions of those issues and the toll they take on prisoners. The inclusion of poetry offers a unique perspective for readers, especially when academic discourse often over relies on appeals to ethos and logos and undervalues appeals to pathos. However, as Laura Micciche argues, “emotion is crucial to how people form judgments about what constitutes appropriate action or inaction in a given situation” (2005, 169), thereby making these poems invaluable in terms of helping readers understand the stakes involved in certain social and community-based issues.

Finally, the journal has a long history of publishing dialogues between two or more authors, appearing forty-six times since *Reflections*' inception. These dialogues are depicted in a variety of formats: interviews (“‘Where is the Finish Line in the Race Race?’ An Interview with Dr. Edward Peeples” in volume 18, issue 2), email exchanges (“A Conversation About Literacy Narratives and Social Power” in volume 9, issue 3) or a transcription of a conference panel (“De-centering Dewey: A Dialogue” in volume 9, issue 3). More importantly, these dialogues also involve a multitude of voices, including those that are often left out of many traditional academic journals. For example, “‘At-Risk’ of What? Rewriting a Prescribed Relationship in a Community Literacy Nonprofit Organization: A Dialogue” captures conversations between Cherish Smith and Vani Kannan (2015), two college students who worked at the same NYC-based community literacy nonprofit. Other dialogues involve activists conducting “on-the-ground” research, such as Kathleen Kerr’s (2012) “*Dreams Deferred: An Alternative Narrative of Nonviolence Activism and Advocacy*,” an interview with documentary filmmaker Jennifer Hitchcock, who traveled to Israel and the West Bank to learn more about the complexities of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. These conversation-oriented genres, though not as formal as traditional academic essays, represent what Steve Parks calls “a sense of mutual listening and response,” (2010, 1), an interaction he argues is the exception rather than the norm. Aaron Zimmerman (2018/2019)

reiterates this position in his interview “‘Everyone Is a Writer’: The Story of the New York Writers Coalition,” arguing that listening helps to humanize the speaker, something especially important for the voices that are often limited, silenced, or on the margins of our society.

The inclusion of non-traditionally academic genres like narratives, poems, and dialogues not only affects the perception of *Reflections* as an academic source but also influences our conceptualization of service-learning, public rhetoric, and community engagement on a macro level. That is, when these genres are read alongside the journals’ academic pieces, audiences gain a comprehensive look into the values, ideals, and attitudes that govern these discourse communities. For one, their inclusion demonstrates an appreciation and recognition of the various processes involved in service-learning and community work. Often, the public only sees the final product, whether that be student-created resources or a collaborative project. Yet, much of the labor required to facilitate an effective service-learning course or public-facing project is often invisible or behind the scenes. By publishing genres like narratives and dialogues in which authors have an opportunity to reflect and unpack their experiences on a certain topic or event, readers of the journal get a much more holistic view of community engagement. In fact, these genres help to construct a more authentic picture of community engagement in that authors are often transparent about not just the successes of a project but its failures as well. For example, in her narrative “Courage, Commitment and a Little Humility: The Path to Civic Engagement,” Jennifer Kidd (2008) focuses specifically on the shortcomings of an experimental course she taught at Old Dominion University. In publishing genres that allow authors to showcase all the various stages and dimensions of their community-based work, *Reflections* upholds the idea that we can learn just as much from our pedagogical failures as our pedagogical achievements.

The presence of these non-traditionally academic genres also humanizes the content that is discussed in each issue. While the syntax and structure of academic articles offers scholars the ability to meticulously break down a research topic, there is the possibility that such a formal discourse can fail to capture the emotions involved

in the social issues that *Reflections* addresses. Often, these genres document an experience that would simply not resonate the same had it been composed in standard English; in the poem “Fieldnote,” Steven Alvarez (2013) depicts a brief conversation between two fourth-grade girls, Lili and Maria. As they talk about their home and school lives, their fluid synthesis of English and Spanish phrases also simultaneously reveals the social and cultural implications of codemeshing. In doing so, the audience comes to understand the importance of codemeshing not through analysis but through personal, lived experiences.

Finally, I want to echo Lang’s argument in the roundtable when she states that the journal’s decision to publish a wide variety of genres “expands our notions of what might count as evidence, knowledge, or data.” Similar to Johanna’s analysis of critical methodological approaches in the previous section, the presence of conversations and creative writing in a recognized peer-reviewed journal like *Reflections* demonstrates past and present editors’ awareness that meaning making and knowledge building often occurs in informal ways, from undervalued sources. Academic discourse often acts as a barrier of entry for many writers, despite their wealth of knowledge and expertise. Thus, by providing a space for non-traditionally academic genres, *Reflections* makes the argument that authors ranging from incarcerated prisoners to undergraduate students all have some experience that contribute to our field.

In addition, dialogues and interviews exhibit the organic, collaborative method of meaning making, a process that all scholars go through yet is often excluded from the final drafts of academic articles. However, there is rhetorical value in showing the audience the entire process; in the aforementioned dialogue between Smith and Kannan, they initially discuss their thoughts and concerns about the community literacy organization at which they both worked, before coming together and agreeing on a call to community organizations to consider alternate methods for teaching literacies and composing mission statements. The format and structure of the conversation allow readers to trace the exigency of their call for action, as Smith and Kannan work together to reflect on their experiences. In doing

so, the audience has a much clearer understanding of their concerns and the rationale behind them.

Anne Ruggles Gere's (1994) well-recognized essay, "Kitchen Tables and Rented Rooms: The Extracurriculum of Composition," champions the notion that learning often occurs in non-traditional settings where the participants' passion makes up for the lack of institutional support or recognition. I would argue that *Reflections* and its blend of traditionally and non-traditionally academic genres continues to carry that torch. While genres like narratives, poems, and dialogues are still underrepresented overall in academic publishing, *Reflections* proves they capture a side of our field – all the emotions and imperfections – that just cannot be represented accurately through academic jargon.

TRACING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN *REFLECTIONS* AND ITS MOST COMMON EDUCATIONAL SETTING: FIRST-YEAR COMPOSITION

While non-traditional genres are central to *Reflections*, most of the journal has directly engaged educational spaces. If one were to attempt to create a curriculum map of the classes, courses, and learning opportunities explored in *Reflections* for the past twenty years, the map would be incredibly eclectic and diverse. I can think of no other journal that has published such curricular diversity in the same span of time. There are articles that directly discuss curriculum and pedagogy in easily identifiable places (first-year writing courses, advanced writing and rhetorical courses, literature courses, high school language arts classrooms, elementary school classrooms, writing across the disciplines courses), but there are also higher education capstone courses that are incredibly unique, prisons, writing groups, reading circles, literacy support programs, and an incredible number of community partnerships and partners who would push the orientation or scale of our map well past the point of usefulness. There is such extraordinary diversity that many of the articles are unique, almost to themselves. This is, it seems to me, as it should be. *Reflections* is the kind of journal where pushing boundaries and looking for new directions is an ongoing editorial commitment.

For all the diversity in *Reflections*, perhaps the educational space explored most often in the journal is first-year composition in higher education. A majority of the issues have at least one piece on community engagement in a first-year writing classroom or program. I want to focus on the first issue of the journal, which is largely about first-year composition courses, as a lens through which we can view what was to come. This has some limitations, as I am privileging the first issue, but only to suggest that first-year writing is one of the sites where it is possible to trace some patterns and threads running through the journal's history.

It is true that first-year writing has been privileged throughout the pages of *Reflections*, but it is also interesting to note the ways that *Reflections* has put pressure on the term "first-year" in composition studies. Is it really a "first-year" composition course for an incarcerated writer taking her "first" composition course inside a prison, but after testing out of what would have been her first two composition courses outside the prison? This is the case for Alissa Knight's article "(Re) Defining Literacy" (2019) and other pressures on the term "first" and "first-year" exist in other issues.

Even still, *Reflections* has, from its beginnings, been interested in the place of community engagement in first-year composition classrooms—and the limitations found therein. In fact, the first issue almost reads like an unnamed special issue on first-year composition and what the journal at the time called service learning. The first three articles in the first issue, and four out of the five in that issue, cover first-year composition courses in some way. The broader issues raised seem prescient in many respects today. Published before the "public turn" in Writing Studies, the entire first issue marks out ways that the public can be engaged by Writing Studies courses. The issue as a whole seems to suggest that community engaged writing might be a way to link high school and first-year writing curriculum, though it does so obliquely.⁸

The first issue of *Reflections* asks questions about community engaged writing that have stayed with the journal: Does community engagement foster student success? Are first-year writing classrooms the right place for community engaged curriculum? What can first-

year students offer to communities? What do communities offer first-year writers? How do we measure or assess the benefit to students and community partners? What kind of institutional support is necessary to make community engagement curriculum work?

The first article in *Reflections*, after the introduction and an interview with Tom Deans marking the CCCC's commitment to service-learning, is Mary Vermillion's (2000) "Community-Based Writing Instruction and the First-Year Experience." Vermillion looks closely at the need to balance student success and engagement in a first-year composition course focused on community engagement. She is, essentially, making an argument that community engagement in first-year composition is a 'high-impact practice' a full six years before the term would be coined by George Kuh and go on to become a dominant focus of higher education administrators. In this way, she focuses on the first-year composition course as a site concerned with retention, the first-year experience, and student success in the overt ways that have increasingly become central to scholarship on the composition side of rhetoric and composition. The citations in Vermillion's piece are divided between primary sources from her institution, student success and first-year experience sources, and broader engagements with service.

The piece also established *Reflections* interest in publishing writing assignments and course documents as they relate to narratives about service learning. While there has been less of this in more recent issues, it is a thread running through the journal and was a regular feature of early issues. Assignments are more likely to be narrativized in more recent issues. The kind of full-length inclusion that one might find in *Prompt* (which began in 2016), is now largely absent from *Reflections*. Most recently, one is more likely to see the graphic representation of assessment data than the graphic representation of assignments and course documents. I believe there are several trends that explain this shift:

1. Conferences and other journals offer the field opportunities to share assignments and curriculum in ways that were not as robust when *Reflections* began twenty years ago;

2. The field has, more broadly, become increasingly concerned with assessment and so *Reflections* has increasingly featured articles assessing the impact of community engaged writing and;
3. The “Public turn” in composition and rhetoric has meant that scholars are increasingly interested in documenting community engagement beyond the classroom.

Even still, the classroom remains a central site in *Reflections*. In the most recent issue, Chris Iverson’s (2020) “The Long-Term Effects of Service-Learning on Composition Students” begins to assess community engaged curriculum’s impact on students as life-long learners with students’ own accounts of their classroom experience, Christine Martorana’s (2020) “The Muted Group Video Project: Amplifying the Voices of Latinx Immigrant Students” focuses on a particular assignment, with suggestions for further wider applications, and Jeffrey Gross and Alison A. Lukowski’s (2020) “Writing for Advocacy: DREAMers, Agency, and Meaningful Community Engaged Writing” is the type of course profile that dominated the first issues of *Reflections*. So, even as the journal has increasingly sought to engage public rhetorics, it has continued to engage the classroom experience of community engagement.

Another course profile in the first issue, Hannah M. Ashley’s (2000) “True Stories from Philadelphia” discusses assignments and classroom interactions meant to mark successful engagement with students in a first-year composition classroom, but with more focus on the needs of community partners than on first-year student success. In Ashley’s words, the senior citizens literacy program she writes about was “designed to meet a real community need. Philadelphia offers no other literacy program geared specifically toward older adults” (2000, 10). She overtly emphasizes the impact of the program on the community, though she relies less on direct assessment of this impact than will be found in later work in the journal. It is interesting to chart the increasing need to document or assess directly. For instance, Lisa Mastrangelo is deeply self-conscious about the limitations of indirectly measuring impact and achieving some kind of reciprocity in her 2004 article “First

Year Composition and Women in Prison: Writing and Community Action.” More current issues make much more stringent demands on this sense of reciprocity. While there are several articles that make the case that having the community measure the impact of community engagement needs to be a central component of this kind of scholarship, perhaps Jessica Shumake and Rachael Wendler Shah make this case most starkly in their 2017 article, “Reciprocity and Power Dynamic: Community Members Grading Students.” Shumake and Shah make the case that community members should score and grade students on their contributions. While Ashley is not pushing for this kind of assessment in the first issue, she does tell what would become a familiar story in the pages of *Reflection*: the community engaged program that did not succeed in adequately supporting the community, at least without revisions. Using her reflection on the program to reveal assumptions and biases that had to be corrected, she addresses the difficulties she had implementing a curriculum that looks like something we would now call Writing About Writing.

The importance of addressing “a real community need” is equally present in the next article in the first issue, Michael John Martin’s (2000) “Merging Voices: University Students Writing with Children in a Public Housing Project.” Martin’s piece is about students working with a population not found in most traditional higher education spaces, but it is also about the genres utilized to work with these children. While genre is highlighted frequently, Martin and other authors in *Reflections*’ first four volumes do not draw explicit links between genre as a social function and genre analysis to community engagement, but by 2005 Tom Deans was publishing “Genre Analysis and the Community Writing Course” in volume 5, issue 1. As Roger points out in the previous section, Deans’ article—an examination of which genres to use in first-year composition courses versus upper-level courses—marks a clear point where the “genre turn” in rhetoric and composition became an important consideration in community engagement.

The extensive use of special issues has allowed the journal to widen, and sometimes accelerate, its exploration of genres and how those genres fit into first year composition. In the Fall 2009 issue, the journal published Karyn Hollis guide to “Desktop Publishing for Community

and Social Justice Organizations,” but Fall 2010 sees the journal fully embrace multimodal forms of social engagement—including social media. In their introduction to the issue, editors Brian Bailie and Collette Caton do an outstanding job of marking the importance of social media to future community engagements and Laurie A. Britt-Smith’s “Txt Msgs 4 Afrca: Social Justice Communities in a Digital World” looks at ways to bring social media into the first-year composition classroom. Digital forms of writing have remained a thread through the journal with Stacy Nall and Kathryn Trauth Taylor’s Spring 2013 “Composing With Communities: Digital Collaboration in Community Engagements,” Jen England’s Fall 2016 “Sustainable Worlds, Sustainable Words: Using Digital Games to Develop Environmental Awareness in Writing Classrooms,” and Kristi Girdharry’s Spring 2020 “#BostonStrong/BostonStrong?: A Personal Essay on Digital Community Engagement.” The journal has also, at times, used book reviews to mark connections to composition’s broader investment in bringing multimodal forms of composition into the classroom. While social media in particular has only been a thread running through the journal since 2010, it seems increasingly likely that social media will play an even larger role in *Reflections* as it moves forward.

Returning to the first issue, it is interesting that both Hannah M. Ashley and Michael John Martin are writing about community engagement programs that have lost funding, and the only institutional home that could be found for the programs was in first-year composition. First-year composition is a second choice for both authors who were involved in previous iterations where upper-level students received more extensive training to work with their community partners. So, does community engagement belong in first-year writing, or is it only a match based on institutional requirements and limitations? Both authors eloquently defend their programs against this criticism. Yet, they both use the specifics of their programs and institutional context to craft their defenses.

Pushing beyond institutional limitations and the contexts of particular programs is sometimes the work of those in different institutions running different programs. Over the course of *Reflections* history, the journal has sought to balance the need to report on “early

adopters,” or even early developers, pushing up against institutional limitations, and the need to assess the impact of community engaged pedagogy more broadly. Cathy Sayer’s (2000) “Juggling Teacher Responsibilities in Service-Learning Courses,” which follows Martin’s article in the issue, is all about the difficulties of securing institutional support. While Sayer has an interesting critique of team teaching, she is most forcefully arguing that institutions must support service-learning. Practitioners cannot create meaningful programs without that support.

The first issue ends with a unique section called “Research Spotlight” that was meant to highlight forthcoming dissertations in the field. In that section, Adrian Wurr (2000) reports on “The Impact and Effects of Service-Learning on Native and Non-native English Speaking College Composition Students,” which is the first of his many contributions to *Reflections*. It is also a direct attempt to quantify and assess the impact of community engaged curriculum in first-year composition classrooms. While the other articles have longer time horizons to the programs they discuss, Wurr’s measurement and data collection is far more robust. Here, it is clear that the initial editors of *Reflections* understood that assessment would increasingly need to be part of the journal’s output. The variety of assessment instruments that have been featured in *Reflections* in the past five years has been especially interesting, and especially focused on ways to map how privilege can be monitored or revealed in community engaged settings. In the Fall/Winter 2018 issue, Georgina Guzmán, in her article “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,” used reflective writing and assessment meetings with community partners to chart ways that “cultural deficit logic” (18) operated within the reading circles she facilitated. Of course, *Reflections*’ commitment to examining power and privilege runs deeper than assessment.

MAPPING POWER AND PRIVILEGE IN *REFLECTIONS*

In their edited collection, *Culturally Engaging Service-Learning with Diverse Communities*, Delano-Oriaran, Penick-Parks, and Fondrie (2018) argue, “[e]xperiences of historically and presently racially

marginalized and underrepresented groups should provoke a critical awakening to scholars and practitioners in Institutions of Higher Education to adopt high-impact pedagogical practices that attempt to eradicate or dismantle institutional injustice” (xix). This consciousness of power and the desire to dismantle unjust systems is deeply woven throughout other foundational works on critical service-learning and community-engaged writing by scholars like Bacon, Eyler and Giles, Haussamen, Hertzberg, Jacoby, Roswell, and Wurr. The examination of power and privilege is so deeply rooted in community-engaged writing pedagogy that the first editors of *Reflections* chose to address it in the inaugural issue, noting a commitment in community-engaged instruction, “to a vision of teaching and learning which addresses cognitive, affective, and social development, to a vision of writing which recognizes its power to effect personal, practical, and political change” (Bacon and Roswell 2000, 1).

A vital step in understanding systems of power is the recognition of privilege, or the often unacknowledged and unrecognized social hierarchies that provide some groups with greater access to unearned power and resources (McIntosh 2007). There are two significant ways *Reflections* has contributed to our ever-changing understanding of power and privilege in community-engaged writing. First, contributors have examined the pedagogical implications of community-engaged writing as a tool for empowering students and helping them to recognize systemic power structures and their impact within the community. Second, editors actively resisted systems of institutional power by welcoming and amplifying voices not often heard in academic journals and by expanding the methods used to create and communicate knowledge.

Reflections articles discussing privilege in community-engaged pedagogy focus on a wide range of issues such as the need to recognize the way White European American cultural practices impact the teaching of writing and reinforce marginalized status for students of color (Pimentel 2013); the need to examine service-learning partnerships from the perspective of the student, the instructor, and the partner to ensure reciprocity (Redd 2003); and the need for culturally relevant public writing assignments (Medina 2013). Notably, the Spring 2007 featured a special issue guest edited

by Adrian Wurr (2007) focusing solely on the “rhetorical, ethical and practical issues inherent in negotiating difference when interacting with the ‘Other;” (3) allowing the journal to dive even deeper into questions of power and opportunity in community literacy programs.

Other *Reflections* authors have pushed back on the idea that all service-learning students come from a place of privilege in the first place. For example, in her article, “Keep it Real: A Maxim for Service-Learning in Community Colleges,” Michelle Navarre Cleary (2003) discusses designing service-learning courses for students who reflect the characteristics of the people being served more than the people doing the serving. Terese Guinsatao Monberg (2009) continues this discussion a few years later with her article, “Writing Home or Writing *As* the Community,” where she examines the unique and challenging experiences of service-learning students volunteering within their own communities. Both authors call on readers to recognize the privilege often assumed in service-learning pedagogy, but not always present. They challenge readers to recognize that not all students need to be introduced to the concept of systemic power and discrimination through service-learning and community-engaged courses. Many students already have an intimate, experiential knowledge of such structures and have much to add to the conversation, if their perspectives are welcomed and honored.

Moreover, the journal has also acted to dismantle privilege in academic journals by using its pages to amplify marginalized voices. This critical consciousness was built into the journal’s structure in part through an openness to nonacademic genres and a commitment to seeking work from partners and community members. As Roger discusses earlier in this article, *Reflections* created space for diverse voices and genres not always heard in academia, continually calling attention to privilege in knowledge creation and the question of who is allowed space to speak in academia, all while actively dismantling exclusionary structures.

In their article “Are We Still an Academic Journal?” included in this issue, Steve Parks and Brian Bailie (2020) reflect on their efforts as editor and associate editor, respectively, to ensure all those involved with community-engaged writing—instructors, students, community

partners, and participants—had an equal opportunity to discuss their experiences. For Parks, the journal needed “[d]ifferent voices, different languages, different designs” (76).

The expanding definition of who can create knowledge and how that knowledge can be communicated is seen most frequently in the many special and theme issues produced throughout the journal’s history. For example, the first special issue was published by guest editors Tobi Jacobi and Patricia O’Connor in Winter 2004 and focused on prison literacies. In the foreword, Jacobi (2004) points out that writing instructors have long valued the individual voices of their students, encouraging them to tell their own stories. She argues it is vital to extend that opportunity to incarcerated students, holding space for inmates to speak for themselves (2). That single issue features twenty-eight pieces of prison writing examining a wide variety of topics and providing myriad perspectives on the prison experience. “Democracia, pero ¿para quién?” or “Democracy, but for whom?” was published in Spring 2019 and brought much-needed attention to community-engaged projects that address immigration and migration. It was also the first to publish bilingual work, again, creating and holding space for community-engaged writing participants to share their experiences in the language(s) that best express that experience.

Inviting community-engaged writing participants to speak for themselves also expands the boundaries of knowledge created in the journal, providing instructors and practitioners vital information to improve their practice. For example, the most recent prison issue published in Fall 2019 featured an article by Christopher Malec, a participant in the Exchange for Change program at the Dade Correctional Institution in Florida. Malec (2019) describes the program from his perspective, including a discussion of issues with recruiting participants and the challenges volunteers face working in the prison system. Sharing his perspective provides valuable insight for an instructor or practitioner looking to work within the US prison system.

While I found extensive engagement with questions of power and privilege in *Reflection’s* twenty-year history, I entered this project

expecting to find a clear connection between the language used and the discussions of privilege within the journal. A journal that has used five subtitles in twenty years is clearly concerned with specificity of language. I was surprised not to find clear connections, as the terms “service-learning,” “community-engaged,” and “community-based” were used interchangeably throughout the journal’s history. Shifts in terminology appear to be linked more to the changing focus of the journal and discussions in the larger field than to a statement of critical consciousness.

Looking at article titles provides one way to understand changes in the terminology used in *Reflections*. I wanted to map terms used in article titles with various points in the journal’s history. The journal’s subtitle changes provided a logical examination point since the subtitles were chosen by editors shaping the vision of the journal. As David already established, the editors discussed the importance of language in introductions and calls for proposals, so it was interesting to see how that translated to article submissions. In the first three iterations of the journal (see Appendix A for subtitles and dates), article titles use the term “service-learning” forty-two times and “community-engaged” or “community-based” only eight.⁹ There was a major change of focus in the journal with the change in subtitle to *Journal of Public Rhetoric, Civic Writing, and Service Learning*, and with it, a change in terminology. Only six articles published in all fourteen issues used the term “service-learning” and four used “community-engaged” or “community-based.” We see a balancing between service and community-based descriptors, but the change in direction for the journal toward a more rhetorical foundation means these words almost disappear entirely. What is not clear, however, is a link between terminology and the journal’s work addressing power and privilege.

Drilling down to article content rather than the titles shows authors wrestling with questions of institutional power in many ways, but without consistently connecting the semantics of service- or community-engaged learning with that power. For example, Crabtree and Sapp (2005) discuss their decision to dismiss “charity-type” project models in favor of reciprocity (10). In that same issue, Kimme Hae (2005) invokes Adler-Kassner, Crooks, and Waters’

(1997) call to reject assumptions of “do-goodism” in service-learning (55). Bateman (2010) also rejects the assumption that service-learning must be charity and promotes a model where universities and community partners enter into, “a more mutually enriching interaction among civic agents” (92). All of these authors engage with a greater conversation about the unequal power dynamics between institutions and community partners, but they don’t critically examine the role language might play in those relationships. There are, however, occasional attempts to engage with the language of power and its impact on the terminology used to describe the field. For example, Phelps-Hillen (2017) explains why she explicitly rejects “charity models of service-learning” in support of a “justice-oriented approach to community engagement” (114), but that sort of linguistic examination of power is not seen consistently across the journal’s history.

However, connections between terminology, power, and privilege in the journal may be becoming more explicit, reflecting a shift in the larger discipline. The four most recent issues, headed by editors Laurie Grobman and Deborah Mutnick, see a clear shift in article titles, with three using “service-learning” and three using either “community-engaged” or “community-based.” One of those articles, “The Long-Term Effects of Service-Learning on Composition Students,” uses the term “service-learning,” but begins with a detailed review of the evolving thoughts on power and terminology in the field and in the journal (Iverson, 2020). This change in terminology reflects Grobman and Mutnick’s own work, as they used the phrases “community-engaged” or “community-based” writing twelve times in their first introduction to describe both the field and the issue. “Service-learning” was used only once, and that was in a quotation taken from the inaugural issue of *Reflections*. The discussion introduced in their first issue continues into their second, reinforced by the most recent name change: *Reflections: A Journal of Community-Engaged Writing and Rhetoric*. In a recent interview, Grobman explained the changes in terminology were intended to align the journal with shifting discussions in the field, including changes in CCCC’s “Statement in Community-Engaged Projects,” and to narrow the scope of the journal.¹⁰ In their writing, Grobman and Mutnick do not connect the name change and the shifting terminology explicitly to questions of power and privilege, but they do call for the journal to continue

the “reflective, critical community-based” work that they believe is necessary in our chaotic world (3). The shift from service-based terminology to community-based terminology seems to indicate a desire to return to the journal’s roots, while also calling for more critical analysis of the ways community-engaged work is itself entwined in community power systems.

Grobman and Mutnick have also maintained the journal’s long commitment to dismantle academic power structures. Along with the name change came a move to online open-access, expanding the potential audience for *Reflections* and removing barriers to access. The movement of the journal to an open-access, online format actively dismantles power structures and reduces privilege by making the knowledge created and distributed through the journal accessible to anyone with a computer and internet, anywhere, at any time.

Questions of power and privilege are forever shifting, but they are always present. Since we began writing this article, our country has exploded with massive, wide-spread protests against police brutality and murder of Black Americans like George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Tony McDade. These acts of violence and resulting protests remind us once again that systems of power run deep and are extraordinarily difficult to dismantle. As Grobman and Mutnick (2020) state, “[t]he work of community-engaged writing and rhetoric both exposes paths to justice in ways that distinguish it from many other disciplines and reproduces the same inequities that pervade life in and out of the academy. In other words, our small but growing field is rife with both possibilities and limitations...We must recognize the limits of what we’ve accomplished and the urgent need to do more and to do better” (6). Mapping the first twenty years of *Reflections* has demonstrated questioning and dismantling power and privilege is at the heart of the journal’s mission; that history must now provide a foundation for future community-engaged scholars and partners to continue the fight.

CONCLUSION

Reflections has a twenty-year history of pushing the boundaries of knowledge creation in the field of service learning or community-engaged writing, making it extremely difficult to create even a partial

mapping of the journal's history, let alone its future. Further, the journal's financial support has varied widely and has been largely determined by editors' institutional affiliations and community partnerships. This fluctuating structure greatly increases the number of people who shape the field of community-engaged writing. Allowing the journal to engage with a diverse array of editors and editorial styles also leads to a more dynamic view of who is a knowledge-creator and what styles of writing can be used to communicate that knowledge. This can be seen in the wide variety of methods, genres, and authors published in the twenty-year history of the journal. As Alex points out, this expanding definition of knowledge-creator also leads *Reflections* to live out a core tenet of critical service-learning: reciprocity. Inviting community partners to collaborate in knowledge creation democratizes writing pedagogy in a manner not often explored in more composition-focused journals.

In all these ways, *Reflections* has shown a deep and abiding commitment to wrestling with issues of power and privilege in community-engaged writing and rhetoric. This twenty-year history should serve as a call for all readers to continue that work. We are called to look for ways that community-engaged pedagogy can help students better understand systemic power structures that privilege some and marginalize others. We are called to follow in the work of Cleary (2003) and Monberg (2009) and recognize that students often have much to teach us about systemic power and privilege, and their insight and life experiences should be recognized and valued. We are called to critically reflect on the ways community-engaged work is enmeshed in community power systems, sometimes empowering and sometimes marginalizing. We are called to question academic power structures that narrowly define who can create knowledge, what knowledge is valued, and how knowledge can be shared. In the words of bell hooks (1994), "[t]he classroom remains the most radical space of possibility in the academy" (12). For twenty years, *Reflections* has taken that idea and expanded it beyond the classroom, helping scholars and community partners ensure it remains so.

ENDNOTES

- 1 We refer to the journal using the abbreviated term *Reflections*, mindful that the journal's title or subtitle has changed five times in twenty years (see Appendix A).
- 2 The indexical nature of maps means that history and politics can be obscured by things as simple as scale and relief. Additionally, there are different traditions for mapping and map making. For an interesting critique of traditional, two-dimensional western map making, see Kelli Lyon Johnson's 2019 article in *Studies in American Indian Literature*, "Writing Deeper Maps: Mapmaking, Local Indigenous Knowledges, and Literary Nationalism in Native Women's Writing."
- 3 Throughout this piece we refer outward from the journal towards scholarship in broader and adjacent disciplines. The most common reference point is the field of Writing Studies. When we refer to these fields, we are referring to what's articulated in the U.S. Department of Education's Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code designation for 23.13 "Rhetoric and Composition/Writing Studies." Like Elliot et al. (2015), we refer to "Writing Studies," we are referring to all the fields subsumed within 23.13: 23.1301: Writing, general, 23.1302: creative writing, 23.1303: professional, technical, business, and scientific writing; 23.1304: rhetoric and composition; 23.1399: rhetoric and composition/writing studies, other. We hope this designation does a reasonable job of acknowledging a good bit of the vast network of scholars impacted by scholarship published in *Reflections*.
- 4 Special issues are designated as such in editors' or guest editors' introductions, whereas themed issues are not.
- 5 While all issues of *Reflections* are now available on the website, several issues were unavailable to the authors at the time of writing.

- 6 Such as the CCCC Statement on the Ethical Guidelines for Conduct of Research in Composition Studies
- 7 In the context of this project, I utilized two criteria to determine whether or not a source was non-traditionally academic: (1) the appearance of sections typically found in an academic genre, such as a literature review, an appendix, or a Works Cited section; and (2) the intended audience(s) as induced from the discourse and language used by the author in composing the text. I recognize that the process for evaluating academic genres is far more nuanced than what is represented in the above criteria; however, given the time constraints of this project, I ultimately felt it was sufficient to provide an initial level of analysis.
- 8 The only article that does not deal with first-year writing in the issue is Kathy A. Megyeri's "Infusing Service-Learning into the Language Arts Curriculum" (2000).
- 9 I did not include book reviews for this study, since the authors could not control the titles used.
- 10 Laurie Grobman, in discussion with the author, May 31, 2020.

APPENDIX A:
CHANGES IN *REFLECTIONS* JOURNAL TITLE, 2000-2020

Reflections on Community-Based Writing Instruction (Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 2000)

Reflections on Community-Based Writing (Vol. 2, No. 1, Fall 2001)

Reflections: A Journal of Writing, Service-Learning, and Community Literacy (Vol. 2, No. 2, Spring 2002)

Reflections: Writing, Service-Learning, and Community Literacy (Vol. 4, No. 2, Spring 2005)

Reflections: A Journal of Public Rhetoric, Civic Writing, and Service Learning (Vol. 11, No. 2, Spring 2012)

Reflections: A Journal of Community-Engaged Writing and Rhetoric (Fall/Winter 2018-2019)

APPENDIX B: FINDINGS FROM PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF ABSTRACTS

Aside from simply reading the abstracts for the traditional academic articles in the preliminary analysis, we compiled them to conduct some quick analyses. At the time of data collection, fourteen articles did not have abstracts but did have an introductory paragraph which served this genre purpose. These were included for the analysis so as not to lose swaths of data from specific years. These are some insights we gleaned from this preliminary review. For the analysis, we removed common stop words: a, about, an, and, are, as, at, by, can, for, from, how, I, in, is, it, of, on, our, that, the, their, these, they, this, through, to, with. The AntConc “Word List” tool is a simple analysis that ranks the occurrences of words. The ranking and frequency of words can be seen in the figure below. The rank and frequency (number of occurrences) for words with fifty or more occurrences can be seen below, next to a word cloud generated only by the text of the abstracts, which exhibits how commonly terms are used in relation to others. Together, this basic analysis exhibits how the many goals of the journal manifested in its published abstracts:

Rank	Freq	Word
1	287	community
2	242	students
3	231	writing
4	179	learning
5	169	service
6	132	article
7	124	literacy
8	114	we
9	97	work
10	86	university
11	74	rhetorical
12	71	project
13	69	based
14	68	course
15	67	student
16	66	new
17	66	social
18	64	essay
19	64	public
20	63	research
21	62	education
22	61	which
23	60	between
24	59	compositi
25	57	engageme
26	57	have
27	56	who



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