

Editor's Introduction

Laura Gonzales¹

¹ University of Florida

Since joining Reflections as Editor in December of 2022, I've been learning first-hand how much work and collaboration goes into producing an academic journal. As a community-engaged researcher and practitioner, I approach editorial work as a community-sustained endeavor. Every piece of writing you engage with in this issue was made possible by a team of people: 1) The authors, their community partners, their institutions, their families and support networks; and 2) Our team—the reviewers and editorial board, as well as Associate Editor Heather Lang, Assistant Editor Alexander Slotkin, Design Editor Heather Noel Turner, Book Review Editor Romeo García, and Copy Editor Victoria Scholz. All of these people contributed their expertise, time, resources, and labor to bring you this issue, and to maintaining and expanding the legacy of Reflections as a community-driven journal. I'm so grateful to be a part of this team, and I invite you to join us by contributing your expertise by sending us submissions, serving as a reviewer, and/or writing to us to share an idea for a special issue. We are here and are very excited to keep pushing Reflections' innovative work forward.

This issue contains 6 brilliant articles that illustrate innovation and care in community-engaged writing and rhetoric. We open with “Black Leadership and Shared Humanity: A Profile of Generative Reciprocity for Racial Equity” by Mary Brown and Phyllis Mentzell Ryder. Our lead article demonstrates the power of collaborative efforts toward racial justice that continue sustaining communities within and outside the University. As Brown and Ryder describe, “we offer an in-depth look at how a Black-led nonprofit, Life Pieces to Masterpieces (Washington, DC), stepped up to the challenges of 2020 – the devastation of the pandemic and of yet another wave of anti-Black violence. We place this story alongside scholarship about democratic education and the value of generative reciprocal relationships.” Tracing their ongoing collaboration over multiple years, Brown and Ryder provide frameworks for centralizing racial and power dynamics in academic and non-profit collaborations. As the authors make clear, “in the journey to equity and shared humanity, concepts like generative and transformative relationships need to account for the tremendous weight of systemic racism; this can be accomplished by explicitly centering the experiences and epistemology of Black communities.”

Next, in “On (the Limits of) Reciprocity: Navigating Shared Identity and Difference in Community-Engaged Research,” McKinley Green demonstrates how notions of reciprocity can shift in community-engaged research when the identities of the researcher and the community partners overlap. As Green argues, “current conversations around reciprocity often presume a tacit level of difference between researchers and communities that they partner with, and that this unstated premise of difference obscures practices of reciprocity that emerge when academics and communities share similar identities or social locations.” Green

draws on research and collaborations with “Youth and AIDS Project (YAP), an AIDS-serving organization with services developed for young people located in Minneapolis” to detail his development of “two forms of reciprocity—deprioritizing academic outcomes and relational sustainability—that emerge when researchers work with their home communities or when their positionalities overlap.”

Extending conversations about reciprocity, positionality, and racial equity, in “Are You Going to Get in Line?: Black Administrators Navigating and Negotiating White Cultural Norms,” Joan M. Blakey, Stephanie Payne, and Brittany Hammonds “share their experiences navigating and negotiating the White patriarchal dominance at two large, Southern, predominately White institutions (PWIs).” As two Black administrators at a PWI and a Native American administrator from the Lumbee Tribe, the authors provide reflections and strategies detailing their experiences within their institutions. As the authors explain, for Black, Indigenous and Women of Color navigating institutions, “failing to adhere to White cultural norms often leads to reprimanding, isolation, demotion, minimization, or termination of anyone operating outside these norms.” The authors identify, name, and trace white cultural norms often practiced in institutions, and they provide other possibilities for how these norms could be dismantled to make space for non-white experiences and expertise. This article is critical for anyone working at an institution that can benefit from decentralizing Western white practices and perspectives. The authors’ stories and reflections can also be extremely beneficial for Black, Indigenous, and Women of Color navigating these institutions in isolation.

Our issue also includes reflections on research projects intended to highlight the importance of identity, positionality, and racial equity in community-driven work. First, in “Reflections on North Korean Community-Based Research,” Chae Yeon Kim reflects on her “year-

long experience as a South Korean researcher conducting a community-based oral history of North Korean migration." Through this reflection, Kim rightly concludes that "research, in its current form, does little to benefit the people whose entire lives are summarized into words on a page. We must do more, and we can do more."

In "Removing Barriers to Academic Medicine for Underrepresented Minorities," Peter Averkiou outlines the practices that were put in place to improve recruitment and sustainability efforts at his new community-based medical school. Through this discussion, Averkiou presents a model for medical school training that emphasizes the need to "foster the creation of compassionate physicians who are keenly aware of their role in their social environment."

Jonathan M. Marine closes out the issue by pointing to an interesting place of public writing—latrinalia. As Marine argues, "bathroom graffiti is an important but often neglected source of public writing and rhetoric that aligns with contemporary conceptions of composition theory and holds pedagogic potential for the teaching of writing." Marine traces latrinalia research and research on spatial practice to surface important implications for writing researchers and teachers.

I'm so grateful to see that this issue of Reflections continues a long tradition of highlighting innovative work, centralizing community care, and valuing interdisciplinarity. Reflections is home to research that moves across disciplinary and institutional boundaries to highlight important work being conducted in our communities. I look forward to continuing to share and expand community-engaged writing and rhetoric research through this collaborative effort.

About the Author

Laura Gonzales is an assistant professor of Digital Writing and Cultural Rhetorics at the University of Florida. She is the Vice President of the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing and the editor of *Reflections: A Journal of Community-Engaged Writing and Rhetoric*.

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