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LiCS MISSION STATEMENT

Literacy in Composition Studies is a refereed open access online journal that sponsors scholarly activity at the nexus of Literacy and Composition Studies. We foreground *literacy* and *composition* as our keywords, because they do particular kinds of work. Composition points to the range of writing courses at the college level, including FYC, WAC/WID, writing studies, and professional writing, even as it signals the institutional, disciplinary, and historically problematic nature of the field. Through literacy, we denote practices that are both deeply context-bound and always ideological. Literacy and Composition are therefore contested terms that often mark where the struggles to define literate subjects and confer literacy's value are enacted.

Given its ideological nature, literacy is a particularly fluid and contextual term. It can name a range of activities from fundamental knowledge about how to decode text to interpretive and communicative acts. Literacies are linked to know-how, to insider knowledge, and literacy is often a metaphor for the ability to navigate systems, cultures, and situations. At its heart, literacy is linked to interpretation—to reading the social environment and engaging and remaking that environment through communication. Orienting a Composition Studies journal around literacy prompts us to investigate the ways that writing is interpretive as well as persuasive; to analyze the connections and disconnections between writing and reading; and to examine the ways in which literacy acts on or constitutes the writer even as the writer seeks to act on or with others.

At this time of radical transformation in its contexts and circulation, *LiCS* seeks submissions that theorize literacy at its intersection with composition and will prioritize work that bridges scholarship and concerns in both fields. We are especially interested in work that:

- provides provisional frameworks for theorizing literacy activities
- analyzes how literacy practices construct student, community, and other identities
- investigates the ways in which social, political, economic, and technological transformations produce, eliminate, or mediate literacy opportunities
- analyzes the processes and power relations whereby literacies are valued or circulated
- adds new or challenges existing knowledge to literacy's history
- examines the literacies sponsored through college writing courses and curricula, including the range of literate activities, practices, and pedagogies that shape and inform, enable and constrain writing
- considers the implications of institutional, state, or national policies on literacy learning and teaching, including the articulation of high schools and higher education
- proposes or creates opportunities for new interactions between Literacy and Composition Studies, especially those drawing on transnational, multilingual, and cross-cultural literacy research.

Editors' Introduction

The theme of most of the pieces in this issue is how--through writing--we navigate race, space, and time. Through paying attention to instructor positionality and to the frames we use to understand what we are doing--including what we *think* we are doing, and how we are doing it--these authors provide a clearer view of the contexts and questions we must ask to pursue both deep understanding of our work and linguistic justice.

In “When Things Collide: Wayfinding in Writers’ Early Career Development,” Carl Whithaus, Jonathan Alexander, and Karen Lunsford argue for new concepts for how we discuss writing. Specifically, they argue for the concept of wayfinding as an alternative to the study of transfer. In wayfinding, the focus moves from a view of what writers reuse and adapt from other rhetorical situations to what writers learn as they move across differing rhetorical situations over the course of a career or life. The authors study seven alumni who majored in writing/writing studies and are now working in careers to consider how wayfinding provides an avenue for mapping the complex and recursive movement of post-collegiate writers as they traverse between collegiate, professional, and personal spheres, spaces, and activities. Their rich interview data chronicles this crucial transition from college to the workforce. They find that alumni encounter the unexpected, navigate career plans and paths, and see beyond the boundaries of writing contexts. In each case, they explain how wayfinding illuminates the complex dynamics that shape writing and meaning-making. Ultimately, the value of this research comes from wayfinding’s ability to frame writing as both craft and vocation and for its key insights into how college writing curricula and instruction can prepare students to negotiate these transitions successfully.

“Brokering Community-Engaged Writing Pedagogies: Instructors Imagining and Negotiating Race, Space, and Literacy,” by Michael Blancato, Gavin P. Johnson, Beverly J. Moss, and Sara Wilder, examines how instructors teaching a service-learning course on Black literacies at a predominantly white institution approach the communities they work with and the role they and their courses play in these communities. The authors contend that while previous scholarship has examined students’ positionality in community-engaged writing courses, this scholarship “rarely focuses explicitly on how instructors engage race in their course designs or negotiate their own identities and positionalities in their pedagogies.” Based on interviews conducted with seven instructors about “how they negotiated the racialized spaces of the course,” Blancato, Johnson, Moss, and Wilder find that faculty approached class-community interactions in three different ways—immersing the class and its work within the community, holding class on campus and requiring students to conduct community-based research off campus, teaching on campus while asking students to engage with already established community networks on- or off-campus--“that illustrate diverse expressions of community and cultural brokering.” The analysis of instructor positionality offered in “Brokering Community-Engaged Writing Pedagogies” provides a model for how other programs can prepare faculty teaching community literacy courses for “‘brokering’ relationships across boundaries of race, place, and space.”

The book reviews in this issue are timely and relevant to our current moment—a moment when we, as scholars and teachers of literacy and composition, look toward creating a better future. We challenge ourselves to be better and do better in spaces inside and outside of the academy in order to represent and reflect the beauty and diversity of our world. The reviews highlight current scholarship in a field that is ever-changing.

In their review of Andrea Parmegiani's monograph *Using ESL Students' First Language to Promote College Success: Sneaking the Mother Tongue Through the Backdoor*, Stephanie Rudwick and Sana Jeewa describe the book as a "powerful contribution . . . to the fields of academic writing studies, translanguaging practices, TESOL, and culturally responsive pedagogy." Rudwick and Jeewa go on to say that Parmegiani's work is "hugely inspiring" and "innovative."

Next, Thir Budhathoki reviews April Baker-Bell's *Linguistic Justice: Black Language, Literacy, Identity, and Pedagogy*, describing it as a book that "pushes the boundaries" and "defies traditional generic confinements" of scholarly work. Situating his review of *Linguistic Justice* within the context of 2020, a year that saw a racial reckoning and the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, Budhathoki provides readers with important context for understanding the significant impact of Baker-Bell's work.

Keli Tucker reviews Mara Lee Grayson's *Teaching Racial Literacy*, describing it as "a worthwhile resource that goes beyond simple calls to action to offer instructors a comprehensive plan of action." As Tucker notes, this "plan of action" has the "potential to enact real changes in students' awareness of the racist structures and systems in which we live."

In the final book review for this issue, Edrees (Edd) Nawabi describes Robert Eddy and Amanda Espinosa-Aguilar's *Writing Across Cultures* as "the perfect balance between theory and practice," noting that it offers "just enough theory to qualify the Eddy Model as a pedagogical framework for First-Year Writing." The Eddy Model, as Nawabi notes, is an "intercultural communication model" that Eddy and Espinosa-Aguilar provide as a "framework for composition instructors."

This issue also contains a symposium essay by Harvey J. Graff, "The New Literacy Studies and the Resurgent Literacy Myth," that critiques "new literacies" and "multiple literacies" as part of what he sees as a resurgent literacy myth and an unyielding autonomous model of literacy. In this piece, Graff discusses the origins of New Literacy Studies, including his contributions to it, and his analysis of current trends. As a reminder to readers, symposium submissions are shorter essays that go through editorial rather than peer review; these essays extend discussions begun in the pages of *LiCS* or seek to prompt informal exchanges around issues, ideas, and methods of interest to readers of *LiCS*. Graff's symposium essay seems poised to prompt a fertile exchange around the origins and direction of literacy studies and emerging epistemic frames. We welcome submissions that respond to this essay.

Kara Poe Alexander, Brenda Glascott, Justin Lewis, Tara Lockhart, Juli Parrish, Helen Sandoval, and Chris Warnick

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When Things Collide: Wayfinding in Professional Writers' Early Career Development

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KEYWORDS

wayfinding; professional writing; writing through the lifespan; post-college writing; writing transfer; metageneric connections

Without a doubt, paying attention to writers' composing practices after college tells us much about how those practices, as well as writers' meta-cognitive development of knowledges¹ about their own writing, continue to evolve. Scholars in the field have been undertaking this work, particularly since, as Deborah Brandt argues in *The Rise of Writing: Redefining Mass Literacy*, writing is overtaking reading as the dominant marker of being literate in our society — becoming the primary “site of intellectual, moral, and civic development” (162). Much of the shift toward emphasizing writing ability as a powerful marker of intellectual development stems from the increasing sophistication required of workplace communicators paired with the social pressures to contribute meaningfully on social media platforms that now constitute a set of popular digital writing publics. Given such a context, scholars in composition and writing studies need to understand how post-graduate writers find their way as composers in *and across* increasingly complex domains.

More of our alumni than ever before—not just those in writing or humanities majors or even those who anticipate writing a great deal in their professions—are writing and composing more across multiple contexts. Studying such experiences across multiple contexts, not just in particular situations, should tell us much about the changing nature of writing in our alumni's lives and the experiences of alumni as they continue to develop as writers. We have chosen the concept of *wayfinding* to theorize the experiences of writers as they move among collegiate, professional, and personal activities: the individual sense of continuing potentiality of writing domains, rapidly changing job prospects and requirements, and writers' agency in dealing with the unexpected work demands and sometimes their own desires for what they want writing to do. These alumni articulate how

they perceive their evolving choices about the kinds of writing available to them, as well as their developing knowledges about writing in multiple domains during the early parts of their professional careers.

In the collection *The Lifespan Development of Writing*, Charles Bazerman, Arthur N. Applebee, and Virginia W. Berninger argue that the complexity of writing experiences and development has been underestimated. They call for researchers to study how long-term writing development occurs across changing contexts. Recent work, such as a special issue of *Literacy in Composition Studies*, has explored ongoing literacy development in aging populations, asserting that “studies of older people yield rich information about literacy learning and practice that is usually distanced from the contexts and motives of schooling” (Bowen). The lifespan model of writing development suggests an alternative to transfer or transition as a model. Within the lifespan model, understanding how writers develop is not a question about the transition from one context, such as schooling, to another, such as career. It is rather about the relationships among writers’ contexts and writers’ sense of their own development across contexts and time.

This stance changes how we as researchers approach the dimensions of writing and literacy development, and how those dimensions play across age levels, across time, and across contexts.

“While some writing abilities and knowledges about writing certainly develop in separate spheres, they also develop as part of a continual process that is far from linear and may be significantly more recursive than our current theoretical models account for.”

Along these lines, in our previous article, “Toward Wayfinding: A Metaphor for Understanding Writing Experiences,” we developed the concept of wayfinding out of our concern that dominant metaphors for studying writing experiences—worlds apart, literacy in the wild, ecologies and networks, and transfer—emphasized the development of writing skills, strategies, and habits of mind as occurring in discrete domains. While some writing abilities and knowledges about writing certainly develop

in separate spheres, they also develop as part of a continual process that is far from linear and may be significantly more recursive than our current theoretical models account for.

In this article, we continue to explore how wayfinding might allow us an opportunity to map what we have previously identified as writers’ “complex and recursive movement in and out of different territories, realms, spaces, and spheres of writing ecologies” (Alexander, Lunsford, and Whithaus, 121). And while we appreciate the forcefulness of models, such as transfer, that seek to account for the particular knowledges of writing that writers develop and move across contexts, we also hope that wayfinding will, as we say, attune us to the “potential transience of the contexts in which people write” and focus our attention also on writers’ “fluid ability to not only move among those contexts, but also to create their own niches” to enact and experience the kinds of writing important to them (124). Having offered some initial theoretical propositions in “Toward Wayfinding,” we have been collecting data from current students and alumni and developing a schema to understand the many stories that students and graduates tell about their writing lives. In this article, we focus

on accounts from seven alumni who participated in focus group interviews during 2018-19. These case studies feature alumni representing diverse identities, communities, and backgrounds found among students enrolled at campuses in the University of California system. After graduating, our participants moved around the country and now live on the East Coast, in the Midwest, as well as on the West Coast. They work in a variety of professions including advertising, consulting, education, journalism, and marketing.

We consider the ways in which these writers' accounts are shaping our development of wayfinding as not just a metaphor but a theoretical lens for approaching writing in a complex world. We offer examples of writers' navigating the transition from college to workforce—a frequently studied transition in our field. Using wayfinding as our theoretical lens, we pay attention to the ways in which writers trace the idiosyncratic paths they follow as they draw on knowledge and abilities from different and multiple writing ecologies. Writers draw from writing experiences that include far more than school-based ones. Moreover, focusing on writers' articulated sense of wayfinding honors what knowledges they are building about writing. Our participants appreciate the training they have received but also discover that what they anticipated in post-collegiate writing experiences has to be understood and revised through the unexpected knowledges they develop on the job and through other post-collegiate writing experiences. The examples they offer show us how alumni “find their way” and introduce three emergent themes in our ongoing analysis of wayfinding. Our participants describe their developing literacy journeys as writers: (1) encountering the unexpected, (2) navigating career plans and paths, and (3) seeing beyond the boundaries of writing contexts. In each case, we narrate how wayfinding helps us illuminate the complex dynamics at play as these writers continue to explore how writing is meaningful in their lives.

Transitioning Beyond College: Research from the Field

Work in the field on students' moving from college to post-collegiate writing domains often focuses on the extent to which current curricula can better prepare students for that transition. Data gathered from longitudinal studies of writers allow scholar-teachers to prompt curricular revision and innovation. We appreciate the creativity of such research, too, in its attempt to track the nuanced ways in which writers develop. For instance, Anne Beaufort's ethnographic studies of college writers moving into the world of work, *Writing in the Real World: Making the Transition from School to Work* and *College Writing and Beyond: A New Framework for University Writing Instruction*, constitute some of the most widely cited work in the field on this transition. The former book focuses on the development of writerly expertise that moves from collegiate to professional contexts and forms of writing, and the latter is an in-depth, longitudinal case study of one student making a comparable transition. For Beaufort, these domains constitute important pivot points as student writers move from college into careers.

Broadening the scope of such transitions to include internships, Neil Baird and Bradley Dilger report on how students perceive transfer across domains. Baird and Dilger focus on how student writers are often working in both school *and* job contexts simultaneously, creating opportunities

for recursive reflection on their development of writing knowledges as they find their way through different ecologies of communication. Studying such transfer is not easy, especially as researchers broaden domains of possible transfer. Doug Brent succinctly summarizes the challenge of studying such transitions in his article, “Transfer, Transformation, and Rhetorical Knowledge: Insights From Transfer Theory”: “If there is doubt about whether students can transfer their rhetorical knowledge and skill to neighboring academic disciplines—what would be known in learning transfer theory as (relatively) near transfer—there is even more doubt about whether they can do so to the professional workplace (far transfer)” (397). While Brent entertains such doubts seriously, he, like others, argues that curricula can indeed “encourage transfer” (398) by fostering reflection, mindfulness, and meta-cognition. However one approaches the idea of transfer, the navigation from collegiate to post-collegiate writing lives is an intense focus of study in the field.

As important as this work has been, we note how it focuses primarily on *curricula* and the impact they have on writing development. While we acknowledge the impact of such work, including that of Kathleen Yancey, Rebecca Nowacek, and Linda Adler-Kassner, we are drawn to the domains of learning about writing that lie not just within but *outside* formal curricular pathways—that is, ways of finding out about writing that are perhaps a bit more idiosyncratic. Even more so, scholars in the field are paying increased attention not just to transfer across formal curricular and professional domains but also to the complex cultural practices of communication and worldbuilding that inform identity, community, agency, and literacy.

In “Mapping the Questions,” Jessie Moore reminds us that too much of a focus on curricular and school-based learning fails to account for all of the ways in which writers learn about writing. As she puts it,

Existing studies primarily focus on academic contexts, overlooking students’ many non-academic activity systems. How do complementary, parallel, and intersecting activity systems impact students’ shifts among concurrent activity systems, as well as from school to professional activity systems? Do students have access to other tools acquired in other activity systems that faculty should encourage students to access to facilitate transfer in the academic activity system?

The work of Chris Anson and Paul Prior approaches the complexity of such questions. On one hand, they note how sedimented knowledges about writing form part of the bedrock of what students know about writing as they transition to post-collegial composing ecologies. This anticipated knowledge provides a framework for them to understand how writing processes work and the value of being aware of different rhetorical situations. On the other hand, anticipated knowledge can also lead to frustration or confusion when professional environments do not mesh with participants’ expectations, as professional writing researchers such as Patrick Dias, Aviva Freedman, Peter Medway, and Anthony Par as well as Anne Beaufort have demonstrated. Encountering the unexpected complicates the transfer of academic writing skills and strategies to professional and personal spaces, a complication already noted by Chris Anson in his auto-ethnographic study, “The Pop Warner Chronicles.” He argues that

[o]ur conceptions of transfer must understand writers’ experiences as involving much more

than knowledge of genre, content, rhetorical situation, or process. To them we must add less explored writerly factors such as language preferences, the degree to which certain habits and practices have become sedimented, and aspects of writers' identities, cultures, and prior experiences in particular communities. (539)

We concur that such sedimented habits and practices are vital to consider when attempting to trace writers' developments across multiple ecologies of composing, but we would add to that sedimentation the encounter with the unexpected that challenges the writer to adopt new identities or adapt their existing identities as writers.

One way to attend to these developmental paths is to consider how writers make connections across different writing situations and across extended periods of time. In "Inventing Metagenres," Heather Lindenman argues that writers forge "idiosyncratic, action-oriented metageneric connections" across different domains and that those emerging understandings of how genres work in different contexts maps out developmental processes not accounted for by transfer models of writing. Her argument is in part a methods argument. She suggests that composition studies keeps discovering how writers see differences between school-based writing and professional writing, because researchers keep asking them about how these situations differ from one another. Drawing on close analysis of her qualitative data, Lindenman points out how upper-division undergraduates apply, adapt, and extend their prior knowledge about writing when working in new contexts. This

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development of knowledge about metagenres, connections among genres, and writing for different audiences foregrounds how writers are making their own connections across writing situations.

Further, building on and extending earlier work around "student's right to their own language," scholars such as Carmen Kynard argue for curricula that not only include but re-vision themselves to honor the diverse experiences—and concomitant epistemologies—of diverse cultural groups. In her own classrooms, Kynard encourages students to "put some stank on their writing"—that is, to engage in the kind of writing that is *not* about "delivering a nice, tidy, clean product to a teacher, and composing a white self that has rid itself of racial emotion." While Kynard does not evoke the language of transfer explicitly, we can understand her pedagogical interventions as honoring the experiences and lives of her Black students by encouraging them to work, think, and write *across* the boundaries of school and home, so that cultural epistemologies come to impact and reshape writing in formal educational settings.²

Similarly, J. Estrella Torrez, Santos Ramos, Laura Gonzales, Victor del Hierro, and Everardo Cuevas, in "*Nuestros Cuentos: Fostering a Comunidad de Cuentistas Through Collaborative*

Storytelling with Latinx and Indigenous Youth,” consider a youth-oriented storytelling project that encourages Latinx and Indigenous engagement with children’s literature as a way to encourage them to write and publish their own collaborative narratives about *their* lives and experiences. Torrez, Ramos, Gonzales, del Hierro, and Cuevas understand such work as empowering young writers while also helping them “build relationships across linguistic, cultural, age, and educational boundaries” as they work with each other and their adult and university sponsors. Transfer in the light of such vital projects seems less like preparation for skills transfer and more like a complex move across multiple domains—professional, educational, community, and cultural.

In an attempt to synthesize work across these different conversations, we recognize and value the impact that formal curricula can have on writers’ to address the difficulty of designing curricula to foster such transfer, but the work of Lindenman; Kynard; Torrez, Ramos, Gonzales, del Hierro, and Cuevas; and others prompts us to wonder if it is possible to approach the scene of transition generatively by focusing less on issues of transfer from one domain to another and more on processes of navigation and orientation across multiple domains. For instance, we wonder what happens when we consider how writers, after they have left their collegiate training, begin to draw from multiple domains of knowledge and experience about writing and communicating, sometimes in unexpected and idiosyncratic ways? Lindenman; Kynard; and Torrez, Ramos, Gonzales, del Hierro, and Cuevas remind us that writers are often far more creative in pulling and stitching together not just sources of inspiration but also concrete ways of making and communicating meaning *in a variety of contexts*. Transfer studies have tended to emphasize movement from curricular-based learning environments toward professional contexts. But Lindenman; Kynard; and Torrez, Ramos, Gonzales, del Hierro, and Cuevas, as well as the participants we describe in our study, have shown us powerfully how non-curricular contexts can spark creative and innovative approaches to complex literacy tasks. Moreover, as our participants move increasingly away from their college years, they often re-orient themselves towards new ways of writing, thinking, and feeling their way across unexpected domains of knowledge about writing, both to address writing tasks as well as to explore possibilities for writing that they hadn’t earlier considered—or thought possible. We call this complex process of orienting and re-orienting *wayfinding*.

In our study, the participants were asked to consider how their writing is developing, and this act of anticipation was certainly informed by the writing curricula they were experiencing or had experienced. At the same time, we will see in our discussion below how negotiating the paths between anticipated knowledge and the unexpected often produced tensions for our participants, prompting us to re-orient our own understanding of developing writing knowledges away from curricular and sedimented knowledge. At least two further dimensions of our participants’ discussion of their writing necessitate that we begin to think beyond transfer models. First, these participants are all alumni, talking about their writing practices three or more years *after* graduation; their understanding of writing has been impacted and shaped by multiple experiences that suggest less a transfer from one domain to another and more a complex ecology of recursive, expanding, multivalent, and unexpected encounters with writing. Second, these participants often talk about the choices that they have to make to respond to new writing challenges, as well as their desires to pursue

writing in different contexts, including personal, civic, and cultural; that is, they articulate an ever-developing and shifting sense of agency vis-a-vis their writing. Their responses, then, reflect their attempts to navigate consciously through a complex landscape of communicative practice, and the themes that participants highlight often signal how they are orienting themselves in that landscape.

We call this *wayfinding*—a concept that allows us to recognize some of the complexities that previous scholars have noted while also providing a way to map multiple transitions, transfers, orientations, reorientations, and recursivities in the writing experiences of students and alumni. In these landscapes, participants may seek established signposts by which they orient themselves to communicative practices; however, their accounts frequently emphasize serendipity and idiosyncrasy. As such, we hope to avoid promulgation of the “worlds apart” problem that Baird and Dilger identify while also mapping out a robust accounting of writers’ experiences.

The Wayfinding Project

Here we present several robust accounts from a pilot study we have conducted. We have found that these accounts of writing experiences map complex developmental paths that show us the navigations writers undertake in post-collegiate environments. The focus group interviews we report on in this article come from an IRB-approved study that we have been using to develop open-ended questions that ask participants to reflect on the following: their experiences with writing both in and beyond college courses; what they have learned about writing since graduating; what writing they have found meaningful; instances when they have employed different forms of writing to fulfill a purpose; and what conversations about writing they have shared with family members, co-workers, and friends.

To conduct this pilot, we sent an invitation to alumni lists from UC Davis, UC Irvine, and UC Santa Barbara. Twelve respondents volunteered to participate during the first year, and this article reports on the focus group sessions with these alumni. The focus groups met with two interviewers via Zoom, a digital conference platform. To maintain anonymity, only an audio recording of each focus group was digitally preserved and then later transcribed using the service Rev.com. Each focus group interview lasted between 30-60 minutes. We have been using a recursive, grounded-theory approach to identify and code for emergent themes that characterize this wayfinding. Here, we have selected and analyzed comments from seven of the twelve participants, as these comments best exemplify three of those emergent themes: encountering the unexpected, navigating career plans and paths, and seeing beyond boundaries. These telling cases reflect the physical distribution of our campuses’ alumni—who live from coast to coast—as well as the wide variety of professions, avocations, and personal goals that our alumni pursue. A limitation of the pilot project was that we did not systematically collect demographic information for the focus groups participants.³ Nonetheless, given that our campuses are designated Minority-Serving Institutions, the diversity of our participants reflected the racial and ethnic diversity of University of California students.⁴ Participants typically introduced themselves via their professional (writing) identities, and we follow suit in introducing them in the following paragraphs. The participants’ names are pseudonyms.

Two of the participants, Susanmarie and Wendy, work in education. Susanmarie is a high school French teacher. She talked enthusiastically about her AP French students, and we were particularly struck by her discussion of how she crafted short speeches for graduating seniors who had completed her AP course. Wendy is a curriculum developer working on K-6 math materials; when asked about her professional writing, she discussed how she developed “digital lessons with supplemental print components” for classroom teachers. As a writer, Wendy was aware of how moving across print and digital media impacted her and her readers in professional, personal, and civic contexts.

Another alumnus who explicitly discussed how writing for different media and using different platforms impacted his experiences as a writer was Daniel, a tech journalist. Daniel’s work involved writing about “technology and culture association with technology. So apps, start-ups, Facebook, Google, all that stuff . . . I have written on a lot of tangentially tech related topics including gaming, culture of gaming, and coding.” Kaya, who has worked in multiple positions in publishing, also found the different contexts for writing to be important, and while she was aware of the importance of media, particularly email, she also talked about how being perceived as “the writer” or “the English major” in work lead some to consider her “the comma girl.” She notes, though, that it’s really a passion for language that drives her stance towards writing and its importance. Kaya noted that one of her experiences post-college was learning “that people can see the language very differently.”

Two other participants, Teresa and Tim, work in advertising and marketing. Teresa is a copywriter for an advertising agency. She noted the tensions between writing professionally and writing for personal satisfaction; she said, “I think writing as a hobby was something I used to do before I started writing professionally. I think it’s really just my brain power shuts down after writing for work all day, but I used to try to write just for myself. I’m really bad at keeping up a blog, but I used to just write short stories, just things like that. But that’s really slowed down in the past five years or so.” Tim also

“Kathy saw her post-college writing as mostly professional, and in particular, she believed that her professional writing was ‘really based in research and analysis.’ She had worked for defense contractors and for non-profits. When recounting her work history, she traced a trajectory from ‘taking notes in meetings’ into the more extended analytic writing she was doing in her current position.”

spoke eloquently about the tensions of navigating among personal writing interests and writing as a major part of his career. Certainly workplace writing occupied a majority of his writing experience after graduating; however, Tim also discussed how connecting with family and friends via social media writing was meaningful to him.

Kathy saw her post-college writing as mostly professional, and in particular, she believed that her professional writing was “really based in research and analysis.” She had

worked for defense contractors and for non-profits. When recounting her work history, she traced a trajectory from “taking notes in meetings” into the more extended analytic writing she was doing in her current position. What was interesting is that she saw her early career work taking notes

and summarizing meetings as a direct precursor of the more advanced reports she was writing. She talked about how taking minutes was “trying to get high-level bullet points out of some of those [minutes], sticking with main ideas, and then creating some deliverables; more for the executive level internal with the company, then client facing. But it was a good segue into what I’m doing now.”

Although we are still in the early stages of much more extensive data collection, these initial interviews have provided telling cases that illustrate how alumni navigate multiple writing domains and career pathways, as well as how they continue to learn about writing. We turn now to an examination of the particular themes that have emerged out of our discussions with these alumni.

Encountering the Unexpected

Many of our participants described a sort of collision between what they anticipated and the actual writing they engaged in beyond their college courses. This collision created tensions, but the ways in which participants described navigating through those tensions show how anticipated knowledge and unexpected experiences shape an individual’s writing development, or their post-collegiate wayfinding in writing. If, as Bazerman, Applebee, and Berninger claim, “successful writing development cannot be defined as movement toward a standard” (381), then the participants in this project are helping us map how writing experiences, writers’ understandings about their own writing, and professional writing curricula require people to *find their way*.

Some examples offer a sense of the challenges created by the unexpected, as well as the possibilities the unexpected provides for developing new knowledges about writing. In one case, Susanmarie, who works as a high school AP French teacher, remarked at length about the challenges she faced when writing end-of-year speeches to deliver to her students. For her, such speech making was clearly amongst the most meaningful writing experiences she has had:

I would say it would be the speech that I write to my AP students at the end of every year. I’m the only French teacher, so they have me for three or four years; so, it’s hard to say goodbye.⁵

At the same time, Susanmarie noted that she had never learned how to write speeches in college, having taken no speech or communication classes. The unexpected need to produce and deliver a kind of writing that had not been taught prompted a creative turn to other media—hybridized media, we note—to develop some self-sponsored skills and strategies. Certainly this participant’s rhetorical ability to seek out appropriate models likely attests to her academic training, at least in part. She claimed to be proud of her academic writing, in particular a master’s thesis she wrote for her graduate work in French. On one hand, we might understand writing abilities here as mobile, constituting not a straight line from academic to professional writing, but one including a byway through analyzing, mimicking, and adapting televised speeches. In this case, then, sedimented abilities met changing needs. On the other hand, we recall that Susanmarie was responding not to a question about adaptability of prior knowledge but about her most *meaningful* writing experience. What interests us is how Susanmarie orients herself within and constructs her writing context, realizing that she needs to seek out models in an extra-curricular *and* extra-professional space to do

something with writing that is meaningful for her.

The unexpected also occurs in situations in which individuals not only need to address a new and unanticipated professional task but find themselves wanting to use writing to explore, confront, or communicate about a personal experience. Tim, also responding to the question about the most meaningful writing he had done, spoke movingly about the sudden death of his dog after he had moved across country to take a new job:

So I just relocated for my current role with my company [...] so the weekend right before I relocated, I got news from my family back home that our long term family pet, our dog, had passed away or had been put down because he was almost 18 so didn't exactly not see it coming. But anyway with this relocating and all that it was not really top on my mind so a couple days into being here in Philadelphia was just sitting in a café and it started to hit me. So I wanted to just kind of reflect on that and write something regarding that and also as part of being over here, I'm not a big social media person normally but I set up an Instagram account so I could keep in touch with my friends back home or back in Irvine, and so posted something or was trying to post something and I pulled some of the old photos of Shadow [who] was my dog.

Tim describes wanting more space and time to write creatively or personally; he had been an English major and, while enjoying writing in his new professional role in marketing, also derived pleasure from more creative forms of writing. The death of his dog, a loss exacerbated by his distance from family and friends, prompted him to turn to writing on a social media platform, Instagram. Composing becomes hybridized with pictures of Shadow in the creation of an impromptu memorial where this alumnus explores and shares his feelings. As in the preceding case, sedimented knowledges and identities become challenged by the unexpected, such as personal loss. Alumni use writing to express themselves and connect with others as well as for professional purposes.

Given the challenges of the unexpected, which include unanticipated needs to compose in particular genres or to address specific situations, we should not be surprised that some participants spoke of understanding writing as an ongoing form of inquiry, a modality that they use specifically to discover, explore, and generate thinking. Kathy was particularly eloquent when talking about the development and use of writing as a form of inquiry:

[W]riting became a learning tool for me. So instead of just writing what I had learned, I wrote to learn. So I would read, and I would read, and I would read, and I would read, and then I would take everything, put it together in my brain, reframe it, and write it out. And that helped me to actually figure out how to retain everything. So instead of just writing down notes of whatever it is you hear, whatever you see, you take stuff in, you internalize it, and then you can produce it in the form of writing—in a way that makes sense to you—because it's your composition, word for word. So that helped me really understand the power of writing and the power of, like I said, writing as a learning tool, instead of just as showing what you learned.

Writing-to-learn might appear to be primarily a college experience. But Kathy has carried this understanding of writing over into her work life and uses, for instance, a legal pad to make

copious notes and as a way of discovering connections. She suggests that sometimes she writes to communicate with others, but that sometimes she writes to connect ideas:

I would say writing directly translates to communication. I would think writing is connections. This is harder than I thought. I would say this. Sometimes you write for you because it helps you to make connections in your own brain. Or, sometimes you write for other people to help them make a connection between what's going on in your brain and what's going on out there. That's the answer.

Another participant described the use of bullet journaling to help her make “big decisions,” even if she knows what she would like to do. She finds it helpful for her to “put out multiple ideas” to see what her choices are. In the process, Kathy is showing us how our participants identify different tools of writing—and perhaps some tools that lie outside most typical curricular paradigms, such as legal pads and bullet journals—as crucial to their ways of orienting themselves around significant connections and points of decision.

“A compelling finding from our study has been the extent to which participants did not anticipate how valuable—and nuanced—writing abilities would be across multiple contexts, including professional and career pathways they had not considered or even imagined.”

The dynamics among our participants’ anticipated knowledge and unexpected experiences underscores Brandt’s; Bazerman, Applebee, and Berninger’s; and Anne Ruggles Gere’s calls for a holistic approach to understanding writing development over multiple years. Mapping the dynamics among anticipated knowledge, the

unexpected, and wayfinding allows us to illustrate how writing development during and in the ten years following college far exceeds what Bazerman, Applebee, and Berninger call testable skills. Examining the ways in which participants discuss these experiences extends current insights about how students’ and alumni’s writing develops over time and in relationship with education, career, and personal experiences. Our participants’ reports confirm Brandt’s claim that writing is “eclipsing reading as the literate experience of consequence” (3). Further, alumni’s accounts of post-college writing experiences trace contours of writing that are associated not only with work but also with a complex set of personal, affective actions and transactional activities.

Navigating Career Plans and Paths

A compelling finding from our study has been the extent to which participants did not anticipate how valuable—and nuanced—writing abilities would be across multiple contexts, including professional and career pathways they had not considered or even imagined. While some either planned on, or were already in, early career positions as professional writers, many were in the process of becoming social workers, psychologists, teachers, or professionals a range of other careers. In each case, writing occupied a significant amount of time while they were in school, and

then became important in terms of their workplace experiences. As they recounted these transitions, our participants themselves articulated different understandings of what writing means in different contexts, as well as how they oriented their career pathways accordingly. They ascribed different degrees of importance to these understandings of what writing means, depending on how people around them assessed their writing and came to value their writing abilities.

For instance, here's how Teresa, one of the alumni who worked in advertising and marketing, articulated the value of writing in a range of contexts, especially professional ones:

[I]t's so important to get the right words and the smart words out there, because it's such a crowded space that I am always trying to get what is that core, golden nugget and not wanting to skim on quality because I only have a limited amount of space.

Many of the alumni report writing regularly for their jobs, including emails, proposals, presentations, as well as writing for different "channels" and adapting one's writing to different channels, platforms, and mediums. Kaya, who worked in publishing, noted the extent to which good writing abilities have helped her stand out from others:

I think in my case in particular coming out of the English department at [...], going into a graduate program in publishing and writing, and then working in publishing for two years I was always surrounded by a lot of people who really knew what they were doing, really knew the power of a word, and a power of this well constructed sentence and the impact that that can have.

And then about three years ago I transitioned into nonprofit work and as soon as I kind of stepped into that arena suddenly the fact that I could string three sentences together became this deified skill, people were really impressed by it and I'm like, that's just writing.

For Kaya, writing is a professional skill that her co-workers valued. It's noteworthy that her ability as a writer was recognized both in publishing and at a non-profit. However, she notes a difference in how writing is seen in the two professional spaces: In publishing, writing is about "the power of a word, and a power of this well constructed sentence and the impact that that can have," while in the non-profit writing is more of a deified skill that is useful because it benefits the larger goals of the organization. Recognizing how writing is valued differently in different contexts is an important developmental step, and it is one that seems to solidify or gain depth and nuance following graduation.

For these young people, academic preparation laid important groundwork for helping them find their way through future writing tasks and challenges. For instance, understanding writing as a process has helped, even as those processes have had to be adapted to "real-world" contexts. This finding doesn't just bolster Brandt's claim about the "rise of writing" but also allows us to trace students' more nuanced development of their writing abilities, as well as their own understanding of their writing abilities, in post-collegiate environments. As we will see, that development encompasses both building on previous academic preparation and learning from non-curricular experiences.

Our participants' approach to audience offers a telling case in point. A skill that has become commonplace in many composition and writing curricula, audience awareness builds in complexity and nuance as these young people move through different writing ecologies, particularly professional ones. Indeed, for many of our participants (so far), good writing is characterized by attention to

audience that seems to cut across numerous writing careers and professions. With such acute attention to audience, then, the kinds of writing that these alumni have done, mostly professionally, seems more “pointed,” direct, immediate, and focused on getting a particular message across. Tim and Daniel both spoke to this issue. Tim, who works in marketing, noted that

One of the things as my roles have changed over the past couple of years that I’ve noticed change with my writing and my approach to writing is just being much shorter, much more to the point, just kind of as you enter certain roles you just don’t have time for various things and it’s just about how do you get the bare essentials of here’s what needs to be done, here’s who needs to do it across and maybe some of the niceties and things like that they go by the wayside because they’re just not that important in the grand scheme of things.

Likewise, Daniel, who is an active journalist, saw audience and message being impacted by time and time-pressures; he pointed out that,

[in] some sense, space literal short of word counts, but also, space timewise. Space in their schedule. Frequently pushed to get a piece, read it, process it, rewrite it in an hour, say, or even half an hour. And sometimes that was by editorial direction and sometimes that was personal prerogative. Say, if I was being paid per post.

As a journalist writing for a variety of online platforms, Daniel’s concerns were about audience, message, and time—and they reflect editors as a first audience and then the wider readership of magazines, newspapers, and online platforms. In fact, when asked about their own definitions of writing, participants seemed to locate audience awareness at the core of their definitions of writing. Expanding on her ideas about audience awareness, Kaya said:

I think like whether it is something on social media, if you’re writing something for work, if it’s just an email, if it’s a proposal, if it’s something like that you’re still trying to communicate a message and I think that’s at the core of the definition, at least in my mind.

Put simply, for Daniel and Kaya, audience awareness *is* writing. They mark this insight about the centrality of audience awareness—their growing understanding of how audiences push and pull on writing situations and genre conventions—as a particular experience of writing while finding their way professionally. And as audience awareness becomes more complex and nuanced, these alumni’s understanding of themselves as writers also increases and evolves.

Like Daniel and Kaya, two of the participants in Lindenman’s “Inventing Metagenres” emphasized the importance of audience awareness. In one of Lindenman’s cases, Preston discussed how he used a “conclusion first” move “to appeal to an audience uninterested in a slow-moving academic approach.” Lindenman goes on to note:

Preston acknowledges that this “conclusion first” move looks different in different genres, but the common structure is the same, and the cause for the structure—the need to appeal to readers on a tight schedule or who may not read the whole piece—is consistent across instances.

Lindenman’s key point here is not only, or even mainly, that Preston is aware of his audience, but rather that he is making connections about how structures work across contexts and genres. Likewise, Lindenman’s participant Izzy describes how two very different pieces of writing develop

“illocutionary effect[s].” Izzy reports on a grant application and a Tumblr review of the play *Peter and the Starcatcher*. Her discussion reveals analytic connections that upper division undergraduates are already making across writing situations. In our study of alumni working post-graduation, writers appear to become even more aware of their own agency as writers who can shape others’ perceptions. These successful writers analyze their writing contexts, consider their audiences to have primary places within those contexts, and shape their writing accordingly.

Wayfinding occurs in very concrete ways as these young professionals consider next steps in their careers and ponder how writing will fit into—and transform along—those paths. Some participants described complicated pathways in their careers and in their development as writers. For these participants, universes of possibility are still open—living pathways, not dead ends or lost highways. Some of the focus group participants expanded on this idea of a wide range of potential, which seemed to reside in the act of writing itself. As Kaya eloquently put it,

So I think writing for me, even if it’s personal or if it’s something that I’m sending to other people, it’s a way for me to convey my thoughts more effectively and coherently, because I can plan it and edit it more. So usually, if I want to convey something very important, I will write it in an email to somebody, as opposed to call them or talk to them.

For Kathy, who has worked at a number of consulting firms, writing opened up other kinds of potential, specifically job and career pathways:

[T]he last couple of years especially, going through job applications, one of the things about having writing as a tool is that my writing precede me. So when I would step into a room and go through an interview or something like that, there was already this preconceived notion that they’ve read my cover letter, and I sound great on paper, and hopefully I show up just as well in person, and I can have that personal interaction with them; it’s kind of like a seat warmer. [Potential employers] had an idea that I was gonna be great for very specific projects that have really high stakes, and then they also felt like I was gonna be on the fast track, and not everybody goes into the company that way. Just because of the way I presented myself, I got that opportunity.

While career pathways open up for some participants, others describe creative writing projects in which they are clearly invested and through which they see potential to expand their own understanding of writing and what writing can do:

So it’s been about 10 years now that I’ve been working on this. It’s kind of my incubated baby that I work on every once in a while. It’s becoming less frequent the busier I get, but it started in a hotel room, on one of the little pads of papers that they give you and the little pens on the nightstand. So that’s where it started, and it’s grown into this—I don’t even know how many pages I’ve written—but it’s an enormous file, and I think that my writing has probably grown through this more than through academic writing in general because I want to refine every thing about it. Like I said, it’s like my incubated baby, so it continues to evolve. I’ve probably done upwards of 15 drafts of the first chapter of it. You know, it’s a point of relaxation for me. It puts me in a different frame of mind. So it’s been a really incredible experience, and you probably will never see it on the market, so don’t look for it.

But it's meaningful to me, and I think that it's helped my academic writing so much, because you get a lot of practice.

Kathy emphasizes that she's not transferring school knowledge to this project, but rather working the other way around. Her ongoing writing practice is an incubator that she describes as having a non-school start. It is an orientation, a lever, and a value that does not assume instructional goals, or even previous instruction; rather, Kathy's writing in this case is motivated by personal satisfaction, by an impulse to create.

At the same time that participants revel in their creativity and professional acumen as communicators, others noted what the copywriter Teresa identifies as a "danger" in writing: the ease with which it is publishable online:

I think the only thing that I would say, and this is something I've been thinking a lot about is how different the world is today and how writing is so accessible, and on the flip side, how that makes it so dangerous. I think now everyone can have an anonymous voice with social media. Everyone can publish with these self-publishing blogs. And I think because of that, it's even more important than ever before to be able to articulate ideas, to say what you want to say, and also take ownership of what you're saying.

Such "danger" necessitates the development of writing abilities, including the need to practice care and awareness when writing and publishing. Audience awareness is a key aspect in this development, but the development of writing abilities also reaches beyond just audience awareness and includes the relationship of writers with audiences. Given such accounts from alumni, we, as researchers, need to recognize that these potentials, particularly these forms of agency and creativity, are not only important but vital for students and alumni. As a concept, wayfinding encourages us to account for this process of navigating among professional and personal identities and desires.

Seeing Beyond "Boundaries" of Writing Contexts

In our focus group discussions, attention to issues of audience often pivoted into discussion about the differences between academic and non-academic writing, as well as how writers navigate unexpected opportunities to blend the two or cross genre boundaries in creative ways—experiences that contribute to these participants' agency, and identity, as writers. As Michele Eodice, Anne Ellen Geller, and Neal Lerner explore in *The Meaningful Writing Project*, it is important for students and alumni to imagine the writing that their future selves will do, as agency, personal identity, and writing contexts are intimately intertwined. As we consider how these writers blur the boundaries among different writing situations, the different "containers" for writing, we recall Lindenman's concept of metageneric connections. Lindenman's concept provides a way of explaining how writers work not only across different contexts, but also how they develop their own idiosyncratic understandings of writing. Her work resonates with how scholars in the field are increasingly pointing out the many ways in which radically divergent modes of composing and communicating actually have much to say to one another. In "DJs, Playlists, and Community: Imagining Communication Design through Hip Hop," Victor Del Hierro uses a case study of a hip hop community as a model for "creating,

curating, and maintaining the flow of information” (2). For Del Hierro, the range of creative, archival, and technical modes that intermesh to produce hip hop offers a powerful model for connecting professional, personal, and *inclusive* information and work practices. Del Hierro’s turn to hip hop is an unexpected but welcome move to argue how communities are engaged in the kinds of communication practices that can inform a range of complex practices across multiple contexts.

With such research in mind, we asked our participants explicitly about how they combined different kinds of writing to fulfill specific purposes. Teresa said:

I think for me, when I went through undergrad and graduate school for myself, writing was always how to get an idea across. And in the world of advertising, I quickly had to learn not only getting the idea across but getting it across to an audience, and also, within a container.

Wendy, who works as a curriculum developer, pointed out that her daily writing post-college had a range of audiences:

In my day-to-day, I will go between writing kindergarten content all the way through fifth grade content, and not typically in one day will I write for all six grades but I have. I have written for kindergarten and then bumped up and written for third on the same day, and then to that same degree I’m then drafting emails to colleagues.

For Wendy, such tasks were not single tasks with multiple audiences but rather discrete tasks with discrete audiences. Wendy had to recognize the boundaries of the different writing situations, particularly as they were defined by relationships with different audiences *beyond* the divide between academic/non-academic. Tim’s work in advertising gave him a particularly refined take on both seeing the boundaries of a writing situation—and seeing beyond them. He said,

So really just making sure that we were understanding who the audience is, not just in terms of what people they are but also what is their time constraint, what is their interests, what is the attitude or the tone that they might be approaching something with at that moment based on where it’s located or where they’re likely to come across that material.

Tim’s comments focus on audience and the time constraints of different audiences, and like Teresa, he sees time and attention as creating boundaries that serve as containers. His ideas about boundaries signal an awareness that effective writing often occurs in and through discrete forms and genres.

Awareness of one’s composing “container,” which can include platforms of communication, is important to these participants; even in personal communication, some participants think through rhetorical situations carefully. This awareness also extended to multimEDIATED composing platforms, where different conventions and expectations form in relation to particular technologies. Kaya’s knowledge of publishing and the publishing industry came into play here when she said:

It ended up being a situation where we had had enough awkward miscommunications that I sat down and talked to a friend about this and we realized that there wasn’t really an aggression behind her words, it’s just the way that she conceived the purpose of this message, of the text message. It was really just a means by which to communicate X, Y, and Z information and didn’t really have the rest of this baggage connected to it. So for me learning through weird trial and error that people have different emotional connection to

language and how they use it in their life was something that I hadn't really expected before because again coming out of this bubble where people view language in a very similar way, that way that I did.

Kaya here not only considers different composing platforms but also uses the metaphor of the "bubble" to signal her sense of containers and boundaries. Such interactions reveal some development of meta-reflective abilities with regard to the rhetorical situations enabled, or challenged, by both different communication platforms and different contexts for composing.

In addition to thinking about genres and containers, the participants were thinking about themselves as writers. One of the striking findings from the interviews was how participants articulated writing as a form of "branding." They saw "branding" as a way to navigate and understand the different rhetorical and creative purposes to which writing can be put. Teresa and Tim commented in particular on the relationship between writing and "branding" or other forms of business, corporate, or advertising communication needs. In these cases, writing becomes part of a larger communication project on which multiple people are working. Teresa said:

I work for an advertising agency, and so I sit on the creative department. I work with designers and together we create these visual and messaging stories for our clients. So, a lot of it is around branding, a little bit is around ad writing, but mostly it's helping brands unearth what those true authentic stories are to who they are as a brand and what is the best way to express that to the audience that they're targeting? So that's the poetic version of what I do.

Our participants reported having to navigate among expectations about writing outside of college and their actual experiences writing in those environments; in some ways, the ability to write allowed Tim to "brand" himself as *the* writer in his organization:

I had sort of a similar experience in my past role, or one of my past roles was being kind of sought out as, oh he's the guy with an English degree, right. Somehow that made me capable in a way that they weren't. It didn't really, I mean it does in some ways but really the English degree is more about critical analysis and being able to understand that kind of thing and this was more about just putting together, stringing together sentences, right. And it was really interesting to see people I guess struggle with what I would take for granted as such a basic thing. But they would make a point like, oh Tim's the person who will help you out with that.

Such responses highlight participants' nuanced and multifaceted understandings of what writing is; participants see it as both varying from context to context as well as having consistencies across contexts. Their answers suggest that these views are not contradictory but rather mutually supportive. Participants did not always understand what they were doing, but they muddled through it anyway. Wayfinding is a way of capturing this ongoing muddling.

Writing and Wayfinding

Given the importance of writing and literacy in a range of contemporary workplace, personal,

and civic environments, as well as the need to know more about the experiences of graduates “in the world,” scholars in the field are taking a longer view of writing development, challenging our field’s commonplace understanding that collegiate learning about and experiences with writing prepare students sufficiently for post-collegiate communication ecologies. Two of the key findings in Anne Ruggles Gere’s *Developing Writers in Higher Education: A Longitudinal Study* are that writing development is a continual learning experience (185-246, especially 185-192) and that it “precedes and extends beyond college” (247). In *The Lifespan Development of Writing*, Bazerman, Applebee, and Berninger have argued that writing development is an integrated part of learners’ life experiences and that a multidimensional approach to writing development that considers how individuals change over time may yield increasingly accurate and nuanced understandings of writing development. They argue for a change from current approaches that foreground understanding writing development in terms of performance in discrete and situated context(s) rather than writers’ development *over time*.

Many teacher-scholars in our field approach the challenge of understanding writing development over time from the perspective of what educators and writing instructors can do in the context of college courses to prepare students for what comes next. Christopher Jerde and Mark Taper, amongst others, advocate for intensive writing training, particularly in the sciences, as vital preparation for students hoping to enter scientific and technical fields; training in first-year composition is simply insufficient for the demands of the contemporary workplace. The emergence of writing majors has interestingly tracked these concerns with writing skills development, providing students

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opportunities to focus even more attention on writing and composing as central features of contemporary employment, not to mention personal and civic life. Christian Weisser and Laurie Grobman note that “[i]t should come as no surprise that writing, communication, and related activities are central features of a rhetoric of professionalism” amongst students they surveyed who had graduated from a professional writing major

(47). In line with such findings, and in response to similar kinds of studies and data, TJ Geiger and Kara Alexander, Michael-John DePalma, Lisa Shaver, and Danielle M. Williams have documented ongoing curricular changes to writing major programs, designed to keep track of evolutions in the writing lives of graduates. Most recently, Claire Lauer and Eva Brumberger trace how contemporary workplace writing involves revision and redesign depending on audience and delivery media; they ask how collegiate writing programs could better prepare students for these “responsive” workplaces where “writers must adapt to making meaning not just through writing, but across a range of modes, technologies, channels, and constraints” (635). We are mindful of these curricular needs, even as we are too early in our own data collection and analysis to posit what those curricular innovations

might be.

More compellingly for us, our participants described how they are exploring and discovering new knowledges about writing, particularly as they encounter the unanticipated and the unexpected. As graduates are finding their way, they are deploying a mix of sedimented and newly discovered abilities and knowledges, some developed out of necessity. A writer might certainly develop techniques in her college courses and use them when she is working as an advertising copy writing and developing ideas about both personal and professional writing as “branding” and as acutely aware of audience needs and expectations. At the same time, she might just as readily discard some writing techniques as too academic for the quick pace of her work. Wayfinding captures these participants’ experience of writing as it continues to develop across a lifespan. This ongoing development has several dimensions: the continuous potentialities in professional and personal forms of writing and writing situations, how writers deal with writing that crosses boundaries, and how writers encounter unexpected and serendipitous writing situations as creative rhetorical and personal opportunities.

Ultimately, wayfinding has allowed us to consider how an individual writer develops over time in multiple settings. Our research shows us the variety of ways that participants can signal their idiosyncratic use of metagenres, their innovative approaches to writing, and their development of new and even unexpected knowledges about writing. Focusing on their own articulated wayfinding allows us to identify how participants articulate those idiosyncratic knowledges—and, interestingly, what they orient themselves towards as they do so, whether those orientations are complex understandings of themselves as writers or complex understandings of when and how the boundaries of writing contexts work, hold, shift, blur, or transform. Sometimes these nuanced understandings of writing cultures may align with what we, as writing experts, would anticipate (i.e., the well-signposted, more traditional understanding of writing from our curricula). Sometimes, though, they surprise us, especially when participants are drawing on writing knowledges they have acquired in contexts often invisible to our curricula. Wayfinding focuses our attention on how writers consciously navigate and claim agency in the complex, albeit messy—and often idiosyncratic—paths they take in post-collegiate writing contexts. As we gather more data, we hope to trace more fully the dynamic processes of writing that continue to develop after graduation.

NOTES

¹ By using “knowledges” instead of “knowledge,” we emphasize that our participants offer various definitions of and approaches to writing across different contexts.

² See also the work of Adam Banks. In *Race, Rhetoric, and Technology: Searching for Higher Ground*, he asserts that any attention to the use of writing in complex digital spaces that does *not* take into consideration how race (and racism) shape normative uses of language is fundamentally damaged. More importantly, as Banks attests, scholars attentive to contemporary forms of writing, especially writing composed through digital platforms, should attend to the creative and innovative ways in which individuals and groups from varied cultural backgrounds use language and work through writing to share experiences, disseminate insights, and offer social and political critiques

³ The study also included an anonymous survey of current students (not reported on in this article) that piloted demographic questions regarding race/ethnicity, gender identity, languages, and educational history. We will draw upon our experiences with these questions when we launch the full study later this year, and we will collect such demographic data for our focus group alumni as well.

⁴ Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and Asian American Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI)

⁵ Quotations from the focus group interviews are occasionally edited for clarity. Ellipses in brackets indicate an elision in the transcription that we have made; ellipses without brackets indicate that the speaker has paused momentarily in talking. Words within brackets indicate edits for clarity.

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Brokering Community-Engaged Writing Pedagogies: Instructors Imagining and Negotiating Race, Space, and Literacy

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KEYWORDS

brokering; community-engaged pedagogy; literacy narratives; race; space; place

When a community-engaged writing course centers Blackness, Black literacies, and Black spaces, instructors of these courses, especially those at predominantly white institutions (PWIs), must consider their relationships to Black community spaces and the people who occupy them. Instructor positionalities play a large role in how they facilitate this community involvement, as an instructor's embodied positionality influences their understanding of and engagement with the intersecting conditions that materially situate Black literacies across racialized spaces. Literacy studies scholarship has long considered the relationship between community-engaged writing pedagogies and positionality by often asking, how do *students* negotiate their identities, their racial and class subjectivities, as they work across differences? (Davi, Dunlap, and Green; Dunlap, Scoggin, Green, and Davi; Espino and Lee; Green; Kinloch, *Harlem*; Lum and Jacob; Shah). And while we agree that inquiry into how students in community-engaged courses negotiate positionality in community and classroom sites is vital, we suggest a focus on how instructors negotiate positionality is equally important because these negotiations inform and support community literacy pedagogies.

Even though some scholarship focuses on instructors of community-engaged writing pedagogies (Druschke, Bolinder, Pittendrigh, and Rai; Leon, Pinkert, and Taylor), such work rarely focuses explicitly on how instructors engage race in their course designs or negotiate their own identities and positionalities in their pedagogies. Given that a large number of these courses are centered in racially and ethnically minoritized community spaces, this absence is troubling. To address this scholarly gap, in this article, we consider how seven instructors of "Literacy Narratives of Black Columbus" (LNBC), a community-engaged second-year writing course at a PWI, imagined the racialized spaces and engaged racialized places of the university and surrounding communities.

To examine the relationship among race, space, place, and identity, we deploy the concepts of community and cultural brokering, which offer a framework for understanding how instructors work with community members to forge connections between university and community spaces.

“We specifically define community brokering as the arranging of interactions between students and community members and cultural brokering as the sharing of community knowledge with students to enhance student-community interactions. Community and cultural brokering enable the community-engaged writing pedagogies we study, and while we discuss community and cultural brokering as separate acts, we acknowledge that they often take place simultaneously.”

Brokering, generally speaking, includes the work of imagining and facilitating interactions between university students and community members while building effective instruction and resources into a curriculum to encourage and support those interactions. We specifically define *community brokering* as the arranging of interactions between students and community members and *cultural brokering* as the sharing of

community knowledge with students to enhance student-community interactions. Community and cultural brokering enable the community-engaged writing pedagogies we study, and while we discuss community and cultural brokering as separate acts, we acknowledge that they often take place simultaneously. Although many traditionally understand brokering in the context of capitalistic relations as connecting producers of goods or services with potential clients, Steven Alvarez suggests broader social, academic, and intellectual benefits of brokering. He highlights Mexican-American children who act as language brokers between their Spanish-speaking families and English-dominant American institutions (e.g., schools, social services, etc.). While we do not share the same sociolinguistic context, we invoke Alvarez’s work on brokering when focusing on the connections instructors make between students and community members for education rather than profit.

Two overarching questions guide our research on brokering:

- What kinds of interactions do instructors imagine happening between community members and students?
- How do instructors’ positionalities and relationships to Blackness and Columbus’s Black communities influence curricular decisions in community-engaged courses?

With these questions, we investigate the roles that instructors see themselves playing when talking with potential community participants, developing their assignments, choosing readings, and offering students feedback and support. Examining the ways instructors balance the imagined spaces of Black community literacies and the materialized places where such literacies are enacted enriches our understandings of literacy expertise, community/university relationships, difference within and beyond the classroom, and the possibility of reciprocity in community-engaged writing courses.

We argue that instructors vary in how they imagine the spaces of this course and broker the interactions between and among students and community members; we identify three approaches that illustrate diverse expressions of community and cultural brokering: 1) physically embedding

the class, and, therefore, students in the community; 2) maintaining the place of the classroom on campus but requiring students to “go out into the community” (leave campus) to collect narratives; and 3) maintaining the traditional campus classroom space while suggesting students access the community through pre-existing networks be they on campus or not. Each approach demonstrates how instructors grapple with challenges and respond to opportunities created by the racialized and spatialized boundaries of their community-writing courses.

Below, we expand these claims and outline the three approaches to cultural and community brokering that emerged from our study. First, we briefly explain the LNBC course and the importance of space and place as concepts within the curriculum. Second, we describe our methods and introduce the instructors whose interviews inform our analysis and our understanding of cultural and community brokering. Third, we analyze instructor interviews to explain how instructor positionality influences the approaches to brokering community-engaged writing courses that emerged from our research. Based on our research, we argue that faculty and staff who teach and/or train other instructors to teach community-engaged writing courses should consider instructor positionality and “brokering” relationships across boundaries of race, place, and space as major foci in course preparation.

THE SPACES AND PLACES OF THE LITERACY NARRATIVES OF BLACK COLUMBUS

LNBC is a service-learning designated general education (GE), second-level writing course that asks students to collect, analyze, and digitally curate literacy narratives from Black community members in Columbus, Ohio.¹ LNBC students work in small groups (sometimes led by embedded graduate student “team leaders”) and collect literacy narratives through qualitative audio and video interviews with Black community participants. Students then collaboratively transcribe, analyze, and curate those narratives into digital exhibits that tell stories of literacy practices in particular Black communities. The course culminates in a Community Sharing Night in which students share their exhibits with community participants and invited guests. In the course, students often travel beyond the physical places of the university campus and connect with communities that often are not their own and, perhaps, are beyond their comfort zones. By facilitating student research on the varied literacies of Columbus’s Black communities—groups of people as varied as Black hair stylists, educators, dancers, veterans, poets, activists, and LGBTQIA folk, among others—the course disrupts existing understandings of literacy, and students rethink where knowledge is created and whose literacies are valued (Kinloch, *Harlem*; Kynard; Selfe and Ulman). In doing so, students and instructors, through careful engagement with Black communities, imagine and recognize how literacies shape and are shaped by spaces and places inflected by race.

From 2010-2013, LNBC was physically taught at Ohio State University’s African and African American Community Extension Center (CEC) located in the historic Near Eastside Columbus Black community also known as the King-Lincoln District.² A part of the Department of African and African American Studies, the CEC has existed since 1972, and it moved to its current building in the

heart of the King-Lincoln District in 1985. As its mission, “the CEC strives to provide academic and community education opportunities for its Near Eastside neighbors and the greater Central Ohio community . . . [CEC] **invite[s]** collaborations and dialogues focused on the diverse experiences of African Diasporic people in Columbus communities, at Ohio State, and throughout the world” (“Our Mission,” emphasis in original). As Thomas Albright, Judson L. Jefferies, and N. Michael Goecke suggest, “The CEC’s goal was to help uplift the Black community by providing educational and other opportunities that enhance the life chances of those who live, work, play and attend school on the near eastside” (41). Much of the programming and activities of the CEC, then, directly addresses the needs of nearby residents. Though connected to the university, the CEC is deeply embedded in the King-Lincoln District.

In 2013, the LNBC course stopped meeting at the CEC in the King-Lincoln District and moved onto Ohio State’s main campus. The move from CEC was prompted in large part because some CEC administrative staff were concerned with the amount of CEC resources, especially staff time and space, that the LNBC course required. This move, initially from the CEC to main campus’s Hale Hall (a building that houses the Office of Diversity and Inclusion), changed the relationship between the course and the King-Lincoln neighborhoods. The initial move created a stronger connection to the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and Hale Hall, a space where many Black students spend a great deal of time studying and “hanging out.” Eventually, however, the course moved out of Hale Hall and is now regularly taught in Denney Hall, the building that houses the Department of English (a predominantly white space).

Moving the course from its initial location in the CEC to various locations on the main campus affected the ways instructors imagined students and community members’ engagement in the course. Because the King-Lincoln District is no longer the focal site of LNBC, students are more likely to explore other sites in Columbus and start to understand that Black Columbus is not monolithic, that a plural conception of Black communities is more appropriate than a singular notion of *the* Black community. On the other hand, the visibility of the course in community spaces and among community groups surrounding CEC began to diminish. The physical location of the course on the predominantly white campus emphasizes the whiteness of Ohio State and the precarity of Black people on the campus.

We intentionally outline the spatial shifts of LNBC because we recognize the dynamic influence space and place have on learning, literacy, and positionality. We follow previous literacy studies scholars in conceptualizing “space as a social product and process” (Leander and Sheehy 1), investigating “how material settings come to be realized as social spaces” through discursive practices (Leander and Sheehy 3), and recognizing that “relocating composition teaching and learning to public sites also means critically attending to issues of space, place, and the geographies of writing” (Holmes 19). In our analysis, “space” and “place” are distinct concepts where “space” is abstract and often imagined and “place” is a realized, materialized point; however, we recognize that space and place are often overlapping. For example, we refer to LNBC instructors wanting to highlight the literacy diversity of Black community spaces through curricular planning and also encouraging student investigations of literacy practices in particular Black places like the African

American and African Studies Community Extension Center (AAASCEC, or CEC) in Columbus's Near East Side. These distinctions, certainly, become blurred. Through our analysis, we capitalize on that blurriness when demonstrating social-cultural understandings of space; embodied experiences within places; and the ways critical literacy pedagogies address these tensions for teachers, students, and community members. We suggest the work done in the LNBC class brokers boundary crossings from imagined Black spaces to physical places of community literacy practice.

Disrupting students and instructors' "spatial practices" (Sheehy) through community-engaged writing pedagogies can generate opportunities for learning; however, the work involved in crossing intellectual and physical boundaries can often be challenging to both students and instructors (Blancato, Johnson,

Moss, and Wilder). Instructors of the LNBC course served as brokers to varying degrees when facilitating meaningful community engagement. They sometimes performed the role of community broker by arranging interactions between students and community members. Other times,

“By imagining Black spaces and engaging Black places, students can build a critical understanding of literacy in Black communities as socially and spatially situated; thus, in their pedagogical decisions, instructors imagine and facilitate spatialized and racialized practices and interactions.”

instructors became cultural brokers, offering their own knowledge about relevant community practices. Of course, students and community participants also took on the roles of community and cultural brokers. In fact, course goals include guiding students toward learning opportunities that center the expertise and knowledge of Black community members who serve as cultural brokers for their own communities. We focus on the community and cultural brokerage of instructors to offer readers insights into how instructor identity and positionality influences their community-engaged writing pedagogies.

By imagining Black spaces and engaging Black places, students can build a critical understanding of literacy in Black communities as socially and spatially situated; thus, in their pedagogical decisions, instructors imagine and facilitate spatialized and racialized practices and interactions. This work is especially important in light of insights from Black feminist geographer Katherine McKittrick: “Space and place give black lives meaning in a world that has, for the most part, incorrectly deemed black populations and their attendant geographies ‘ungeographic’ and/or philosophically undeveloped” (xii). Building on McKittrick, Eric Darnell Pritchard insightfully writes that “space and place assume a more self-conscious or deliberate role in people’s literacy lives” because the “construction or reconstruction of a place or space enables them to feel safer about particular literacy practices” (90). Following McKittrick and Pritchard, we understand space and place as key to understanding how Black literacies function and how they are valued for the community participants who contribute narratives to the LNBC project.

METHODS

This article presents findings from a larger qualitative study of faculty, staff, students, and community members involved with LNBC. Here we focus on instructors' perspectives and use interviews with LNBC instructors to understand how they negotiated the racialized spaces of the course. Our data set consists of interviews with all instructors who taught LNBC at Ohio State between 2010-2018:³

- Emily, a white female English professor who co-designed LNBC;
- Thomas, a white male English associate professor who co-designed LNBC;
- Beverly, an African-American female English associate professor;
- Jason, a white male English graduate student;
- Tanya, an African-American female English graduate student;
- Michael, a white male English graduate student; and
- Gavin, a white male English graduate student.

Three of the four co-authors (Beverly, Michael, and Gavin) taught LNBC between 2013-2018.

When interviewing instructors, we organized our questions into five categories: background about the design of the course, pedagogical goals of the instructor, the role of civic engagement in the course, the role of identity in the course, and course outcomes. Additional questions were created for Emily and Thomas, the original designers of the course, about their initial vision and hopes for LNBC. After transcribing interviews, we took an iterative, inductive approach to data analysis. We individually conducted a first round of open coding for major themes. We then conducted two more rounds of coding to refine our codes. As we refined codes, not surprisingly, "Race" and "Space" emerged as two especially significant and connected categories. Our coding led us to theorize how instructors imagined racialized spaces in the course.

THREE BROKERED APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY-ENGAGED WRITING PEDAGOGIES

Using "brokering" as a conceptual framework, our data analysis yielded three general approaches to how instructors imagined and brokered connections between the classroom and community spaces in this course: **embedding the course in the community**, **going out into the community**, and **relying on student networks**. Each approach afforded different opportunities for cultural and community brokering by course participants—instructors, students, and community participants. As we present each approach, we engage the following key questions that emerged from our analysis:

- How do instructors understand and experience the boundary crossing from university into community spaces?
- How do instructors critically examine the ways that these spaces are racialized, along with the knowledge that is valued and the literacies that are practiced in them?
- How does the way that instructors imagine and narrate movement across boundaries stem from their own identities and positionalities?

Approach 1: Embedding the Course in the Community

The first approach, “embedding the course in the community,” relied on the initial physical placement of the LNBC course in the CEC as well as the joint efforts of the CEC with Emily and Thomas, the course co-designers and initial instructors. In particular, Emily and Thomas, both tenured white faculty, collaborated with and relied on Paulette—the CEC’s senior outreach program coordinator and an African-American woman with community ties. In her interview, Emily identifies her guiding question for the course: “How do we make . . . connections outside the university that might help students also think about the importance of literacy not just within the university but throughout their lives?” Emily continues, “We started the course trying to serve the needs of . . . trying to get closer to communities and serve their needs and starting with Paulette and the African-American and African Studies Center.” Paulette sought programming that was not a one-time “in and out of the community” research project. For her, the LNBC course seemed to represent a commitment to the area and the CEC. She explains, the CEC “was connecting the community to the university resources, but also bringing the university resources and things to bear on the community and developing that kind of relationship between the two.”

Thomas, who had previously worked with Paulette, relied on that connection to provide him and Emily entrance into the CEC. With Paulette’s support, expertise, and community connections, Emily and Thomas set up meetings with community members months before offering the course about how the course could serve potential community participants. Paulette served as the first community broker for these early iterations of the course, providing support in the community space and providing connections to community members that Emily and Thomas, who spent little time in the CEC, did not have.

Students participating in initial course sections travelled about six miles from Ohio State’s predominantly white campus to the CEC. Locating the course in the heart of a Black Columbus community—full of Black-owned businesses, social agencies, churches, and residences—laid the groundwork for a reciprocal relationship that invited community members who lived in the neighborhood to participate as “community liaisons” (Emily’s term) and generated the kind of community programming Paulette sought. These community liaisons attended every class at the CEC and served as community and cultural brokers by arranging meetings between the students and other community residents and providing insights to students on their research sites. Students, therefore, didn’t just read about the history and life of this neighborhood; they were immersed, at least during the class, in the Black spaces and physical places of their community participants. As community brokers, the liaisons helped students negotiate entrance into homes, churches, and other community settings for literacy interviews.

The brokering work provided by community liaisons was critically important for Emily and Thomas, who emphasized the necessity of being situated within Black communities. Thomas acknowledges the influence of physical and geographical place on the experience of his course for students: “They were in a space that celebrated African-American heritage visibly . . . the displays on the walls—the community events that were advertised there.” Thomas reinforced the value to students of being surrounded by Black images, people, and activities that celebrated Black life. Emily

focuses on the value of immersion in these Black community spaces in a different way when she describes places where students collected data: “They went into people’s homes. You know some of the greatest interviews were right in people’s homes and just talking to them and their kids. And there’s nothing more racialized, personal, I guess, than a home But they also went into bars. They went into churches. They went into community centers, libraries, all of which in the context of Columbus were very racialized in that context of a culture.” From Emily and Thomas’s viewpoints, students understood the relationship among literacy, race, and culture filtered through the CEC, neighborhood residents, and neighborhood places. This “embedding the course in the community” provided students a necessary visible context for understanding the literacy practices of the community participants who were interviewed. More importantly, for Emily and Thomas, being embedded in the community was an important contributing factor in students learning about the complexities of Black literate lives. Their imagining of Black spaces required placement in historically Black places.

Emily and Thomas’s courses, like all LNBC courses, culminated in a Community Sharing Night. Emily describes this event as a place for students to “celebrate the people with whom they had worked, and to invite everybody from the people with whom they have worked, to their friends and relatives . . . and neighbors and to enjoy the time together.” While sharing a meal, typically from a local Black-owned restaurant, community members saw their literacy stories recognized and commemorated. Approach 1 offers one additional benefit unique to the other approaches: locating the Community Sharing Night in the neighborhood where interviewees lived, which improved access for community participants and liaisons to attend the event.

Considering who benefited primarily in Approach 1 is a complicated task. Paulette expressed interest in seeing a course taught in the CEC that would center the community, but only after Emily and Thomas approached her with the possibility of offering a service-learning course. Paulette’s support was crucial to cultivating partnerships and introducing the CEC to LNBC participants in the early iterations of the course. Paulette sought, in her words, “to get the Extension Center exposure and recognized on campus, as well as in the community, and get those two groups talking and interacting.” Her interview suggests that her goals for increased recognition of the CEC and interactions between community members and the university were met.

Community participants also benefited from these early versions of the course. They requested that Thomas work with students to create hard copies of interviews that church organizations could use to preserve oral histories. In Emily’s course, community participants asked to learn the process of recording and editing interviews so that they could archive oral histories themselves. Emily explains, “A lot of [the participants], especially for family purposes and for church purposes and for community purposes, were interested in learning how to use recorders, digital recorders, movie cameras, sound recordings to preserve family history, church history, a history of community groups.” By joining the course as community and cultural brokers, many community participants took the opportunity to strengthen their “digital literacy” skills. The LNBC course provided the technological knowhow and resources to preserve the histories of these community groups.

Approach 1 also offered benefits to students, as they interacted with community liaisons who,

by sharing their community and cultural knowledge, expanded students' notions of space, place, and literacy in Columbus to meet the learning objectives of the course. These learning objectives included developing written communication, analytical reading, critical thinking, and oral expression skills. By making the primary analytical content of the course interviews with community members, Emily also emphasized learning objectives that were not codified in her syllabi. Emily describes how she wanted students "to conduct a decent conversation and interview and to really dig into a particular topic and find out what they could from individuals about that topic and especially a topic where everybody has expertise and goals and practices that are interesting." In other words, Emily asked students to apply conversational and interview skills so that they could uncover the expertise and knowledge held by community participants. These goals are not unique to Emily's LNBC course. In fact, each one of the approaches we discuss in this article gives students opportunities to reconsider expertise and develop effective interview skills.

Approach 2: Going Out into the Community

Moving the course from its initial location at the CEC to classrooms on Ohio State's Columbus campus facilitated a large shift in the curricular design of the course and prompted the development of different approaches for imagining and brokering relationships between classroom and community. No longer was the course offered in a building across the street from Black-owned businesses or around the corner from a predominantly Black residential neighborhood dotted with Black churches and a Black-owned bookstore. No longer were there residential-based, community liaisons in every class session. This shift between physical locations materially impacted the ways instructors imagined Black spaces.

After the transition to Ohio State's campus, for three of the instructors—Beverly and Tanya, the two Black women instructors, and Jason, one of the four white male instructors—it was especially important for students to collect literacy narratives from Black community members outside of the university. Beverly, Jason, and Tanya instituted a "going out into the community" approach that reimaged how to emphasize the value of Black community spaces as an important lens through which to examine the literacy narratives students would collect. These instructors required students to conduct interviews in the community and invited community members and scholarly experts as guest lecturers in their classes. Beverly, Jason, and Tanya hoped having students physically in Black communities would disrupt the usual space of the classroom. Students in Beverly's classes conducted interviews in Black dance studios and Black businesses in traditionally Black neighborhoods. Students in Jason's class went to poetry readings sponsored by Black poets and held in a Black community place. Tanya offered extra credit to students who attended a Black arts festival (for which she secured complimentary passes) in the King-Lincoln District. By asking students to enter mostly unfamiliar Black places, these instructors aimed to also disrupt students' thinking about how particular literacies are valued in different spaces. The notion that art and dance, for example, are literate acts was a disruptive notion for Tanya and Beverly's students.

Beverly, a tenured associate professor, emphasizes that, in constructing the course, she wanted students to go into Black community spaces so that they developed "a respect for the knowledge

that comes out of these community spaces and a recognition of the level of talent and the history of literacy that exists.” For Beverly, going to predominantly Black spaces should prompt students to see “Black communities as rich literacy sites,” to see that knowledge doesn’t just come from books in the library, and to “think about [Black] people as experts and resources.”

Jason, a creative writer and MFA student, focused his LNBC course on the literacies of Black poets in Columbus. He required student attendance at local poetry readings and hoped that visiting poetry readings put on by the local community of Black poets would prompt students to see and think about race and literacy differently. The Black poetry scene in Columbus offered an especially rich site in which students could see literacy practices at work. Jason acknowledges the strength and history of this community:

Specifically Columbus is a city that has had a very organized poetry community outside of the university. And a lot of the leadership in the organizing in that community over the last 20 years at least has really been done by Black people and with a specific eye, I think, towards creating spaces that are really either like . . . rooms full of Black people doing poetry with other Black people and for other Black people or at least spaces that are sort of diverse and safe and comfortable for people of color.

For Jason, it was important that students go out into the community to better understand the rich history of how Black poets in Columbus created venues that celebrated and nurtured its members’ literate practices. We get some insight into how students critically examined the places in which the poets compose when Jason explains, “There was a lot of explicit discussion in our interviews of processes of composition and how one conceptualizes oneself as a reader and as a writer. And specifically in terms of race, what does it mean to be a Black reader, a Black writer, what does it mean to be a person of mixed race reading and writing?” Jason imagines the students coming to a deeper understanding about how racial identity may influence one’s reading and writing practices.

Tanya, a doctoral student in rhetoric, composition, and literacy, explains that her course on the literacies of Black visual artists engaged students in discussion about the expertise of visual artists beyond the university and about knowledge production in Black spaces:

What does it mean to gain expertise when many voices are not a part of that knowledge production and training? And so in the course we talked quite a bit about gentrification and zoning and how that impacts learning and the experience of Black visual artists . . . basically who is being represented in certain spaces, who is not being represented in certain spaces, what that then means for their experiences and whose voices are represented . . . you know this is knowledge production in the academy or universities but also this knowledge production happens in spaces beyond the walls of Ohio State. Especially among Black communities.

We see Tanya emphasizing the knowledge production her students are engaging in as members of the academy and the knowledge production in Black communities as well. In order to see knowledge production in Black communities beyond the walls of Ohio State, Tanya asked students not only to collect literacy narratives from Black artists but also to attend events featuring the work of Black visual artists in Columbus. As with Beverly and Jason, it was important to Tanya that students move

off campus to experience a level of discomfort that might prompt them to think differently about where knowledge comes from and who makes knowledge.

The narrative of “going out into the community” reinforces the geographical and cultural separation between the University and Black Columbus, suggesting a binary and perhaps reinforcing a “suspicious” distinction between university and community spaces that Valerie Kinloch critiques. By analyzing the interplay of literacies deemed “out-of-school” and “school-sponsored,” Kinloch suggests, “We can have critical conversations on why spatial conflict, contact, and difference continue to divide and separate people, places, and institutions” (159). Instructors using the “going out into the community” approach asked students to critique these distinctions between university and communities and how race complicates these spatial relationships. Tanya explains: “I think that it is important for students to confront what it means to be in a Columbus where its population or its general population is not represented in the institution that they’re learning from and gaining their expertise.” Each of these instructors imagined “going out into the community” as a mechanism for examining the relationship between race and literacy in Black Columbus’ imagined spaces and real places. Thus, students examined texts—church sermons, poetry, hairstyling, dancing—as literate artifacts seen through the lens of race as well as gender, sexuality, and other markers of identity.

To facilitate their students’ movement into Black community spaces, all three of these instructors engaged in initial brokering of interactions between community members and their students by laying the groundwork for students’ community-based interviews. This brokering involved instructors meeting community members as part of course planning, assigning and discussing readings about literacy and race as well as the history of the communities, inviting community members as guest lecturers, practicing interviewing strategies, arranging for student attendance at community events, and connecting students with potential community participants among other scaffolding activities. In many ways, these instructors took on the work of the now absent community liaisons who were present in Emily’s and Thomas’s classes. The brokering roles that instructors took on grew, for the most part, out of their personal and professional lives coming together.

Beverly had been a long-time resident in a predominantly Black Columbus neighborhood, attends a Black church in a Black residential area, patronizes Black hair salons and other Black-owned businesses, and though not a native of Columbus was comfortable with her knowledge of many Black Columbus neighborhoods and community members. She facilitated students’ entrance into these spaces through her experiences and resources. For example, for the LNBC course focused on Black dance, Beverly met with a Black dance professor at Ohio State who had not only graduated from the same Historically Black College as Beverly but who had also taught Beverly’s freshman roommate at that college. This professor guest-lectured in Beverly’s class and met with Beverly before the course started providing her with an overview of the Black dance community. In addition, Beverly attended church with members of one of the city’s Black dance companies. It was attending this dance company’s performance at a historic Black Columbus high school that sparked Beverly’s interest in the relationship between Black dance and literacy. In her sections, she arranged a series of class speakers from the Black dance community and connected students with Black business owners through her personal network. Beverly, because of her situatedness within Black community spaces,

took on the role of community broker.

In Jason's case, his personal connections to the Black poetry scene in Columbus helped provide knowledge and direction to his students. Jason, a poet, had spent a great deal of time involved in the off-campus poetry scene in Columbus, including the community of Black poets. Jason's ability to connect his academic community, through his role as teacher, with Columbus's community of Black poets, emphasizes how this course and Jason's own desire to connect across differences with a group with whom he shared a passion and skill for writing, allowed him to perform the role of community and cultural broker. In the process, he called on his experience with and knowledge of this community. Jason asked students to learn from this community by attending readings in addition to interviewing community members. Jason's identity as a poet, therefore, situated him as a community broker whose connections in poetry communities helped students gather literacy narratives. As a cultural broker, he offered students information about the work and history of Black poets in Columbus even though he did not share a racial background with the poetry community to whom he introduced his students.

Whereas Jason called on his experiences with and knowledge of the Black poetry community in Columbus, Tanya used her connections with Black visual artists to facilitate and structure student interactions with the Black visual artist community. Tanya arranged for her students to attend the Creative Central Fest (CCF) in the King-Lincoln District, and she encouraged them to speak to artists there. She also leveraged her friendship with a visual artist to set up a reciprocal partnership between this artist and her students. Specifically, the artist attended several class sessions and worked with students who composed writing projects for her gallery showing in a local museum, including her artist bio and descriptions of her individual pieces. Tanya's brokering of this partnership resulted in students not only collecting literacy narratives from Black visual artists, but also engaging in writing *for* a member of the community (Deans) and engaging in a reciprocal relationship with at least one visual artist. Attending the festival, talking with artists, and writing for an individual artist moved students out of their "comfort zones" and provided local contexts for community-engaged research and writing.

Beverly, Jason, and Tanya recognized the opportunities and challenges offered by students leaving campus and entering community spaces that nurtured and celebrated Black literacies. They felt it was important for students to actually see literacy in action—in the dance performances, barber shops, poetry readings, and visual art displays—in addition to interviewing community members. Each of these instructors drew on personal experiences and existing community relationships when facilitating the interactions they imagined between students and communities. As community brokers, they hoped students would recognize the rich knowledge developed and practiced in Black community spaces as well as recognize and critique the ways that their predominantly white university was itself also a racialized space: in other words, rethink the university and community spaces and the literacies attached to them through a critical lens that sees race, place, space, and literacy as inextricably bound. In many ways, all three instructors appeared to see their versions of LNBC and the students' research as offering a corrective or a revision of the literacy lives presented in popular narratives—often focusing on Black illiteracy.

When we reflect on the benefits and challenges of Approach 2, we begin with LNBC's move from the CEC to Ohio State's main campus. The shift in physical location emphasized the obvious racial differences of the communities. These three instructors, by virtue of repeating the "going out into the community" language, positioned the university and their students as different from or in opposition to Black Columbus. Whether their students shared identities or interests with community partners (and some did), Approach 2 instructors appeared to see their students having to cross boundaries and negotiate differences in their views about knowledge production, literacy practices, and life experiences. In addition, Approach 2, while missing the immediate connections that came along with being physically situated within the King-Lincoln District, provided an opportunity for these instructors to emphasize the complexity of Black Columbus communities.

However, Approach 2, like the other approaches, required the instructors to deal with challenges. One of the major challenges with Approach 2 was engaging in reciprocal relationships between LNBC stakeholders. We see a varied, multi-tiered and sometimes complicated approach to reciprocity. Some acts of reciprocity benefitted individual community participants, some benefitted the specific community groups or sites, and others benefitted larger local communities. For example, while Tanya's students collected literacy narratives from multiple visual artists, she negotiated with one artist for whom her students would compose a bio and descriptions of her artwork for an upcoming museum exhibit. This act of reciprocity demonstrates Deans's *writing for* a member of the community while the other acts of reciprocity in Tanya's class centered on *writing about* the community. In fact, most of the projects would neatly fall into Deans's *writing about* category.

We see another tier of reciprocity when Jason and Tanya, by requiring their students to attend community-sponsored poetry and art events, provided new audiences for their respective community participants' work. Beverly's requirement that students collect literacy narratives in the community spaces resulted in an unexpected payoff in the Black dance community, as expressed by the executive director of one of the dance companies: "participating in the LNBC projects gave us [members of the Black dance community] an opportunity to talk to people" [outside their circle], something she suggested was much needed. While this "benefit" was identified during the Community Sharing Night, it could represent an act of reciprocity that potentially benefits Black dancers in their desire to speak to a broader community. Yet, this act was not easily identifiable as a direct benefit to the individual community participants. And we question the validity of claiming it as reciprocity. Approach 2 points to the range of opportunities for reciprocity to occur and forms that it may take. We acknowledge, however, that with the exception of Tanya's negotiation of reciprocity with one visual artist, the other acts of reciprocity in Approach 2 were not easily identifiable as directly benefiting the community participants. How did they benefit the community participants, if at all? This is always a question for community-engaged courses, especially those that resemble oral histories more than service learning.

Approach 3: Accessing Communities Through Student Networks

A third approach—accessing communities through student networks—emerged from interviews with Michael and Gavin, two white male doctoral students in rhetoric, composition, and literacy.

Whereas Emily and Thomas's approach embedded the course in the community, and Jason, Beverly, and Tanya required that students go out into the community, Michael and Gavin's approaches did not necessarily require students to leave campus or enter unfamiliar places but rather imagine parts of the predominantly white university campus as Black literacy spaces. These two instructors adopted an approach to community-based instruction that relied, to varying degrees, on students' own relationships and points of contact to gather interviews from Black community members.

Michael and Gavin's approach to community-engaged instruction depended, primarily, on students having shared interests or existing connections with Black communities in the Columbus area. It is worth noting that both instructors taught the course on campus after it was moved from the CEC. Michael was asked to teach the course on fairly short notice, and therefore, he had a limited amount of time to do the kind of pre-course community brokering that other instructors could do. Both Michael and Gavin, like Tanya and Jason, had previously been involved in Emily or Beverly's sections of LNBC as graduate students. Also, as mentioned earlier, Michael and Gavin, like Jason and Thomas, are white, male-identified instructors, but, unlike Jason, they did not have long-established connections to Black Columbus communities. These factors contributed to their bottom-up approach to the course, in which students became the primary brokers for community members. Instead of facilitating interviews for students or consistently bringing in community liaisons to help cultivate community-based relationships, Michael and Gavin placed greater responsibility on students to negotiate whom they would interview and where those interviews would take place.

Michael's version of the LNBC course asked students to reflect on their own personal interests and social connections before reaching out to community members for interviews. This, of course, was different from the ways previous instructors built the course around specific themes and particular Black communities. This decision led to students gathering interviews from a diverse range of Black communities and spaces around Columbus. Michael explains how his diverse class of students chose the community members whom they interviewed:

I had two Black military veterans in my class, and they expressed interest in working with Black veterans in the Columbus area. I had students who had connections to St. Stephen's Community House. And so those students decided that they wanted to work with Black staff members at St. Stephen's Community House and interview them about their literacy practices. I had STEM students who wanted to have conversations with Black STEM students here at Ohio State about their literacy practices. And then the final group was made up of a couple of artists who expressed interest in working with visual artists in the Columbus area . . . Black visual artists in the Columbus area.

Michael hoped that by interacting with members of a wide range of Black communities, the students would develop a deeper appreciation of the "plurality of Black voices with different perspectives on the world, different perspectives on American society, and different perspectives on literacy." Michael privileged the students' interests and points of contact, whether those contacts were physically located on or off campus, in Black neighborhoods or not. As he suggests, most of the students did "go out into the community," based on their own connections and interests. In this way, Michael's approach does not appear all that different from previous approaches we've discussed.

However, he did not occupy the role of community broker, nor did he rely on community liaisons to make connections for students. Most student groups formed based on their performance of the role of community broker for themselves. With Michael privileging student interests and contacts, he also imagined his classroom as a space where the students' intersectional identities—as Black military veterans or artists, for example—expanded the classroom out to the community.

While students taking on the role of community brokers proved valuable for most, Michael suggests some students had an easier time taking on the roles of community brokers for this educational experience than others. He contrasts the experiences of the Black veterans in his course who interviewed Black military veterans in the community with the STEM group who, while racially and ethnically diverse, had no Black students. According to Michael, “The conversations that the Black military veterans were able to record of other Black military veterans, they seemed much richer. There were more details there. Whereas the interactions that took place . . . with Black STEM students felt a little bit more forced.” He attributes this difference in interview quality to the students' own community member status. Michael explains that for the STEM group, “interviewing the Black students, the environment just wasn't as organic. It's like ‘we're being forced to interview people in this community’ rather than ‘we are a part of this community.’” It is ironic that shared disciplinary backgrounds did not create a strong enough bridge between the STEM interviewers and STEM interviewees. The points of difference between the experiences of the STEM students and the Black veterans demonstrates how racial identity and experiences enable certain students to become community and cultural brokers more easily. Michael sees these “points of difference” as opportunities for connection.

Gavin similarly relied on students making connections between their own interests and the community members they interviewed. Like most of the other LNBC instructors, Gavin identified a Black community group from whom students would collect narratives. His section of the course “specifically worked with Black LGBTQIA communities of Columbus,” thus focusing on sexual identities rather than occupation or professional trade (dancer, barber, minister, etc.) and was approved as an ad hoc elective for the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies program. Following Eric Darnell Pritchard, Gavin aimed to teach students how to recognize phenomena like “literacy normativity” (28) as well as “restorative literacies” (33) in the narratives of Black LGBTQIA Columbus communities.⁴ And while the course afforded Gavin the opportunity to teach content in his research specialization of “Black and Queer rhetorics and literacies,” he “let [students] define themes that they want to ask about.” In other words, Gavin offered broad parameters for qualifying community participants, but students themselves determined their research topics and questions following specific instruction in Black LGBTQIA histories as well as qualitative research methods. Students, then, pursued a wide range of topics related to Black LGBTQIA literacy, including “social media and Black LGBTQIA identity,” “coming out stories as literacy events,” and “the intersections between race, sexuality, and spirituality.”

Like Michael, Gavin did not require students to “go out into the community” off campus to collect narratives. Yet, while most of the students in Michael's class ventured off campus, students in Gavin's class mostly stayed within Ohio State boundaries, seeking out Black community spaces within

campus. Gavin was not intimately familiar with the Black LGBTQIA community in Columbus. His most sustained interactions with the community came from his earlier experiences as graduate student and technology assistant in Emily's and Beverly's sections, respectively. His limited knowledge closed off some paths (Approaches 1 and 2, for example) but opened up another path for Gavin and the students to engage Black LGBTQIA students and learn about the development of Black LGBTQIA student communities in a predominantly white space (the Ohio State campus). While Gavin did not emphasize moving into Black geographical neighborhoods or community places, he built on his existing networks and invited a panel of Black LGBTQIA community activists—whom Gavin had previously interviewed as part of Emily's LNBC course—into dialogue with his class. He also assigned readings and videos that provided cultural context for students and required attendance to a talk on Black LGBTQIA literacies by Eric Darnell Pritchard happening on Ohio State's campus. In that sense, he brought “the community” into his classroom and provided important cultural background for the class and the students' projects. We can look at Gavin's use of the panel as an act of community brokering—connecting students with community members—wherein the activists themselves functioned as cultural brokers who could provide cultural and community insights that synthesized course readings, viewings, and lectures with the local community's experiences.

Because Gavin imagined his LNBC class as situated on the Ohio State main campus, he made the racialized spaces of the university prominent in his thinking about his LNBC course:

[W]e're at a predominately white institution, and I don't think many of our students, especially our white students, take the time to consider subjectivity outside of their own. And, so what this course provides is that opportunity to really dig deep and understand, or at least attempt to understand or attempt to listen to the ways the people have to navigate their daily lives through certain practices certain literacy practices that are probably quite different than their own.

Gavin notes that none of the students belonged to Black LGBTQIA communities but that this outsider status may have positively contributed to their educational experiences. The teacher was not positioned as a community broker; instead, students took on the role of community broker by finding and building connections through their on-campus and local networks, which mostly occupied geographical and physical places on or around Ohio State campus such as the student union, library, classrooms, dorms, and neighborhoods. Having students act as community brokers encouraged them to be “more perceptive and better listeners” to people who have different cultural backgrounds and life experiences. Given the independence the students had, the networks that grew out of students' connections centered individuals who were on campus and “in that college age—18 to 24ish.” Gavin's positionality and experiences as a white, cis-gay man new to Columbus obviously impacted his ability to imagine the places and spaces of this course. Unlike Approaches 1 and 2, Approach 3 did not define Black Columbus as a place necessarily beyond the university campus. Nonetheless, as Gavin explains, a group of mostly white cis-heterosexual students learned about Black LGBTQIA literacies from Black LGBTQIA people in the university community. This “learning from,” again, highlights the importance of understanding communities as experts, not simply research subjects, as well as demonstrating how our understanding of certain physical places

as white and cis-heterosexual can be transformed into Black LGBTQIA spaces through community literacy work.

Michael and Gavin's interviews illustrate several successes and challenges that come with instructors relinquishing the role of community broker. Students admirably stepped up when asked to find and record interviews, though some students had an easier time than others accessing Black community spaces to complete the coursework. The communities these students engaged were ones in their immediate vicinity and comfort level. But this comfort with these places does not negate the important work of investigating difference through literacy and race. In fact, we argue, this kind of comfort, just like the discomfort emphasized in interviews reflecting the "going out" approach, can complicate the ideas LNBC aims to address; that is, this work also reinforces Kinloch's troubling of suspicious distinctions. Students, for example, can understand the overlapping nature of raced spaces: entering a Black student's dorm room—a Black place—that simultaneously exists within the predominantly white space of Ohio State's campus. Given Michael and Gavin's own positionalities, their imagining of the classroom and community spaces dictated how students established a framework for negotiating movements across boundaries.

Michael's approach, encouraging students to imagine their shared identities and interests with community members, made a point to question the ways certain shared identities are complicated by racial and spatial difference. Take, for example, the group of STEM students interviewing Black STEM students. Michael's note that these interactions seemed forced and inorganic reveal something crucial about the ways we imagine shared values and experiences within certain academic disciplines. Whether these interviews with community members become rote work or develop into dynamic interactions may depend on students finding common touchpoints in their engagement with others and valuing differences in the experiences of others. This approach suggests that the bonds that lead to successful community brokering extends beyond vocation. LNBC offers interviewers the possibility to understand how race and space can inflect one's experience within a field.

Like Michael, Gavin's use of the "student networks" approach did not produce the kind of reciprocity that other approaches facilitate. For Gavin, a strong emphasis was placed on learning about Black LGBTQIA communities before learning with them. Because of the particularly sensitive nature of talking with community members about the intersections of race, sexuality, and literacy, Gavin concerned himself with offering students not only a deep context in the histories and languages of Black LGBTQIA literacies but a vocabulary for addressing these "taboo" topics with fellow students. Course texts and assignments, then, addressed issues like chosen family and queer kinship, queer spirituality, Black LGBTQIA representation in media, and local histories before students approached community members to request interviews. By leaning into the networks students could readily broker themselves, Approach 3 allowed for this kind of introduction to the specific languages and literacies of Black LGBTQIA communities while also leaving space for students to pursue issues relevant to the individuals sharing their literacy experiences. Approach 3, unlike Approach 1 and 2, places an increased burden on students to develop their networks to find community members willing to participate in the interview process. When the students have these existing connections, Approach 3 offers an opportunity for students to bring personal interests, friends, and family

members into their learning experiences. When students do not have these connections, the interview gathering process can become much more challenging and unnatural. However, this approach helps instructors, students, and community members reimagine the university as a space that encapsulates the diversity of the Black experience through discussions of literacy as well as looks toward future action made more possible through the sharing of stories.

CONCLUSION

Through the LNBC course, we see how the positionalities of instructors influenced the degree to which they imagined and negotiated the roles of community and cultural brokers who facilitate, for students, access to community members and their cultural knowledge. Examining how instructors designed, implemented, and reflected upon the LNBC course prompted our reflection on the ways that this particular course asked instructors (and later students) to both define and negotiate boundaries between university and community, particularly in considerations of race, space, and place. While we don't make a value judgment about whether one approach was more effective than the other—especially given other contributing factors like instructor rank, course location, and material resources—we acknowledge that each approach sets up a different relationship among instructors, students, and community participants; offers different opportunities for brokering; and gives rise to different challenges when considering reciprocity.

The first approach, *being embedded in the community*, relied on the physical location of the course in a Black community space. This approach provided students opportunities to see literacy as it is practiced in community spaces. Even more important, it included community members who participated as community brokers—facilitating student access to other community spaces and setting up meetings with community members—and as cultural brokers, providing insider knowledge. Emily and Thomas, the two white senior faculty who designed the course, relied heavily on a key Black community member, Paulette, and her role as both community and cultural broker, to help them gain entrance into community places where they saw a value in embedding the course. This approach focused more on the literacies that function within Black Columbus spaces and specific places while not centralizing the relationship to the University. In Approach 1, embedded community liaisons were situated as co-teachers who had a sustained expert role in a class situated in their home communities. Community liaisons developed relationships with instructors and students and connected them to the liaisons' communities. Liaisons (and other community participants) also took the opportunity to use and learn about the digital tools and resources available in the LNBC course to suit their needs. Thus, this approach offered an opportunity for reciprocity while centering the expertise of community liaisons and relying on community liaisons to act as both community and cultural brokers.

The second approach, *going out into the community*, still emphasized the importance of being in community spaces, but the boundaries between the predominantly white university spaces and Black community spaces were more defined and emphasized. Whereas the first approach featured Paulette and other community members as community and cultural brokers, this approach required

that instructors do community and cultural brokering work. In this second approach, instructors' positions in and ties to local Black communities proved major assets for how the instructors imagined and situated their versions of LNBC. By connecting students with Black communities and requiring them to visit particular places, these instructors—Beverly, Jason, and Tanya—built on their community and insider knowledge and connections to broker university-community boundaries. Approach 2 emphasized the differences between Ohio State as a predominantly white racialized space and place and those Black community spaces and places in which students collected literacy narratives. This approach, much like Approach 1, highlights crossing distinct boundaries—linking literacy practices with the practices within physical locations—for example, Black hair and nail salons, Black churches, and the CEC itself.

Finally, the third approach, *relying on student networks*, positioned students as community brokers. As in the other approaches, instructors did some brokering work by inviting community members to class, assigning relevant readings, and facilitating discussion to help students consider literacy as a concept inflected by race and space. Unlike other approaches, this approach relied much more on students' points of contact with Black communities, influencing the spaces and places of the course and the ways that Black communities were conceptualized. "Community" became less tied to geographical neighborhoods than in the first two approaches. The boundaries between predominantly white university spaces and Black community spaces were much less emphasized than in Approach 2. In Approach 3, although students might not have felt the discomfort of crossing into unfamiliar places, they confronted how the community members they interviewed might experience and navigate even familiar spaces differently. The third approach, used primarily by two white, male instructors, points to how instructors imagine the spaces and places of LNBC when they have fewer connections to Black communities.

The three approaches that emerged from our interviews show us, yet again, just how important understanding race, space, and place is when designing community-engaged courses and brokering relationships between students and communities. More specifically, our analysis prompts further reflection on the influence instructors' race and positionality has when developing such a course. For example, the second approach depended very much on the deep roots and connections that the instructors had within Black communities. These deep roots and connections, for the most part, are also tied to the race of the instructors. Of the three instructors who were most embedded in local Black Columbus communities, two—Beverly and Tanya—are Black women who had either lived in Black communities or were embedded in strong Black networks. The third, Jason, as we highlighted earlier, is a white male poet who had sought out and established deep connections to the Columbus Black poetry community before having the opportunity to teach LNBC. These were the instructors who took on the role of both community and cultural brokers. Clearly, LNBC is not dependent on being taught by Black instructors. Of the instructors who've taught the course, only three are Black. For instructors like Gavin and Michael, white instructors who had few ties to Columbus's Black communities, it was important to support student brokering through course readings, guest speakers, discussion, and assignments, and to be flexible and in constant communication with students who were doing their own community brokering. Our analysis of these three approaches

suggests that the instructor's race, as well as the instructor's situatedness in racialized spaces and places, plays an important role in how LNBC is designed and executed.

As we discuss above with each approach, determining whether LNBC, in its design and execution, benefitted community participants is complicated. Our analysis shows that the physical location of the course, the role of community participants, and the depth of connections between instructor and Black Columbus communities seemed to contribute to how strong and visible the reciprocal relationships were. While some reciprocal relationships were built around specific community participant requests, other reciprocal relationships focused on broader (and sometimes vague) community values as defined by academic goals, such as the value of archiving some of the narratives in an instructor-designed open access, digital archive of literacy narratives or the digitally-curated student projects. Community partners did not request the archive nor the student projects though many were delighted with the students' video presentations. Clearly, then, one of the major questions to arise out of this project is how to make LNBC more responsive to community participant needs.

The approaches that arose from our analysis illustrate how instructors grapple with challenges and respond to opportunities created by the racialized and spatialized boundaries of community-engaged writing courses. Moreover, our analysis demonstrates how important identity and positionality are in enabling instructors to imagine and navigate the complexities of race, space, and

“By unpacking the relationship between instructor positionalities and course approaches, we encourage other instructors to reflect on the contexts in which they themselves offer community-engaged writing courses, particularly at PWIs.”

place in their courses. Institutional status, community relationships, creative interests, and other identity characteristics all influence how instructors imagined and taught LNBC. By unpacking the relationship between instructor positionalities and course approaches, we encourage other instructors to reflect on the contexts in which they themselves offer community-engaged writing courses, particularly at PWIs. Further, extending Alvarez's concept of “brokering” to consider the creation of university-community connections (community brokering) and sharing of cultural knowledge (cultural brokering) within and across racialized spaces provides a useful conceptual framework for instructors of these courses. Rather than presenting our approaches as models for community-engaged teaching, we suggest that instructors consider how their identities and positionalities allow them to facilitate educational community interactions inflected by race, space, and place.

NOTES

¹ We recognize an important difference between “service learning” and “community-engaged” as descriptors (Morton; Deans). We use “community engaged” in this article because students don’t necessarily provide a direct service to community partners in this course. Rather, students and instructors engage with community members through projects more akin to community-engaged research and oral history projects.

² The area was referred to as Bronzeville as early as 1938 and renamed the King-Lincoln District in 2001 as part of a community restoration initiative. The latter names reference the presence of the Martin Luther King, Jr. King Arts Complex and the restored Lincoln Theatre, both within walking distance of the Community Extension Center. It is also often referred to as the Mount Vernon area.

³ Emily and Thomas have retired, and all interviewees who were graduate students at the time of the interviews have completed their degree programs. After data collection was completed, two more graduate students, a white man and an African-American woman, taught the course in 2019 and 2020 respectively, and a Latino postdoc taught the course in 2021.

⁴ Pritchard defines literacy normativity as “the use of literacy to create and impose normative standards and beliefs onto people whom are labeled alien or other” (28). An example of literacy normativity might include “targeting people for violence if they read LGBTQ-themed books. To counter literacy normativity, Pritchard calls for “restorative literacies,” or “the application of literacies for self- and communal love manifested in a myriad of ways and across a number of sites and contexts toward the ends of making a life on one’s own terms” (33).

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The New Literacy Studies and the Resurgent Literacy Myth

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The roots of the once “new literacy studies” lay in the 1960s and spread in the 1970s and 1980s. By the early 2000s they were ascendant, with new journals like *Literacy in Composition Studies* and significant presence in journals, book publications, conference sessions, and course catalogs. The transformation of our understanding of literacy remains far from complete, and fundamental lessons remain to be learned.

Accelerating in the twenty-first century, the same period witnessed the contradictory trend toward an uninformed battle between new literacies and old ones, and the endless proliferation of “multiple literacies.” The different bodies of writing and publicity seldom acknowledge each other. To a considerable degree, both the “new” and the “multi-literacies” are marketing campaigns serving corporate profit-making with the promotion of degrees, certificates, courses, consultants, how-to books, and now apps. The conflicts and contradictions are insufficiently appreciated.

I date the foundations of the new literacy studies in the ground-breaking revelations, critiques, and reform proposals in the classic books by Paul Goodman, *Growing Up Absurd* (1960) and *Compulsory Miseducation* (1964); Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970); and Jonathan Kozol, *Death at an Early Age* (1967), among others of that exciting time.

Socially and culturally, there was a relatively small step to a next generation influenced by this literature but more academic. I helped to pioneer it with *The Literacy Myth* (1979, and subsequent historical works), a study of nineteenth century Canada in comparative perspective. Other authors followed in a series of interrelated books that together created a new field of study and interpretations of literacy in theory and practice.

These constitute a collection of now-classic works across disciplines: psychologists Sylvia Scribner and Michael Cole, *The Psychology of Literacy* (1981); anthropologist Shirley Brice Heath, *Ways with Words: Language, Life, and Work in Communities and Classrooms* (1983); anthropologist Brian Street, *Literacy in Theory and Practice* (1984); and compositionist Deborah Brandt, *Literacy in American Lives* (2001). Each derived from original research in historical or personal sources or ethnography. Together they form an intellectual foundation with international influence (see, among others, Galvao et al. and Duffy et al.)

From a wide range of approaches and disciplinary orientations, the new literacy studies revised what I designated as “the literacy myth” with concrete research, clear logic of inquiry and interpretation, evidence, comparisons, grounded criticism, new hypotheses, and novel theories. The “literacy myth” dated from antiquity but was articulated and promoted by the “invention” of alphabets, especially the Greek alphabet; the diffusion of the printing press and movable typography; progressive elements of the Renaissance and Enlightenment; nineteenth-century institutional school reforms; and twentieth-century presumptions of the essentialist demands of modern civilization.

The “literacy myth” presumed *the unique and innate power of “literacy by itself.”*

With no need for documentation, qualification, or definition, literacy held *limitless power regardless of individual, collective, or historical context*. Literacy was synonymous with progress, illiteracy with *stagnation and decay*. Remediation for individuals or groups was never presumed likely. When defined at all, literacy meant “reading and writing” with the level of ability unexamined. A later generation would deem literacy in this mythical conception to be essentialist and universalist, a false value, and the confusion of untested inherited ideas with any documented reality. To many, this was an excessively overdetermined form of “modernization theory.”

The “mere possession” of literacy was presumed to lead to *superiority and advancement*. Lack of literacy represented an all but *irreparable limitation*. Individuals, age groups, gender groups, racial and ethnic groups, tribes, territories, regions, nations, and even continents were *labeled essentially as superior or inferior*. Literacy and illiteracy, reciprocally, stood as both cause and effect.

As I summarized in 2010, “The Literacy Myth refers to the belief, articulated in educational, civic, religious, and other settings, contemporary and historical, that the acquisition of literacy is a necessary precursor to and inevitably results in economic development, democratic practice, cognitive enhancement, and upward social mobility” (“The Literacy Myth” 635).

By reference to myth, I did not argue that these foundational assumptions were completely false. If that were the case, the “myth” would never have achieved its hegemony. To the contrary, the new literacy studies reformulated our understanding by demonstrating across time and space that literacy always reflects the conditions of its transmission and practice: its specific contexts. Literacy is never a “neutral skill”; it is always historically determined and value laden. It always requires definition and contextualization. (See Graff and Duffy; Graff, “The Literacy Myth”; Graff, *Literacy Myths*; Graff, *Searching for Literacy*. See also, for example, Black and Yasukawa; Druick.)

Heath, Street, Scribner and Cole, and Brandt all elaborated my arguments, with separate paths, independent orientations, and their own emphases. Heath introduced us to Trackton, a Black community, and its neighboring, more prosperous, white community. Over the course of a multi-year ethnography, she demonstrated that the presumption of inherited and transmissible deprivation was prejudicial and false. She also revealed the divergent literacy orientations of the two communities.

For Street, literacy is never “autonomous.” More often it is “ideological.” He showed this in his ethnographic research in Iran and in his critiques of prevailing ideas including those of anthropologist Jack Goody and medievalist Walter Ong.

Cross-cultural experimental psychologists Scribner and Cole compared the dynamics of learning literacy and then using their abilities in a region in Africa. Although they hesitated to unsubscribe from all tenets of literacy’s independent attributes, they emphasized the power of context.

In her examinations of different kinds of writing, Brandt documented the importance of values, writing formats and traditions, and practices. Each of us revealed the customs and practices of our own disciplines as well as our shared concerns.

Review of the scholarly and higher-educational domains demonstrates the striking influence of the new literacy studies by the 1980s and 1990s. There was a visible effect on many disciplines and fields within them. These included social history and history of education; educational studies

including foundations, teaching, and learning; composition studies; and various specializations within each of the social sciences. Publications and curricula support my view.

Yet the replacement of the literacy myth by the new literacy studies was never complete. There is reason to believe that the influence of the new literacy studies has been diminishing. This question demands more complete study.

My review of the past decade or so suggests an undeclared and insufficiently noticed conflict between the new literacy studies and the resurrected myth in the form of proliferating “new literacies” and “multiple literacies.” The latter represent Street’s autonomous literacies as they evoke the independent power of reading and writing in numerous forms of “literacies” and “skills” in the face of “illiteracies” old and new.

Almost never are these literacies related to foundations in reading, writing, or sometimes arithmetic. Typically, their interconnections and shared contexts of both learning and practice are ignored. Tellingly, their literature almost never cites the new literacy studies’ founding and subsequent works. Instead, the literature of the “new,” “many,” and “multiple literacies” acknowledges few empirical or theoretical studies. The literature reflects the state of this field. It is dominated by lists of “literacies,” literally 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 13, and 20 in a rapid online search. The variable listings of “literacies” are extraordinary. These “literacies” have boundless claims; essential or transformative are among the milder ones. The different “literacies” are seldom compared, interrelated, or evaluated. Of course, all “encompass a wide range of skills . . . all of which are necessary to succeed.”

Many of these proliferating “new literacies” derive from formal organizations founded to promote and sell them, figuratively and literally. Many claim to replace the ever “dying” domain of print. Some repeat the most traditional practices of basic reading and writing (and sometimes arithmetic). Some repeat the outmoded notion of “functional literacy.” Most of them resemble illogical, unfounded metaphors rather than reputable literacies. There is no self-awareness, self-criticism, or admission of multiple contradictions. Despite a half-century of the new literacy studies, these “literacies” proliferate in violation of all its tenets.

Astonishingly, they include reading and writing literacy; functional literacy; writing literacy; prose literacy; document literacy; content literacy; disciplinary literacy; visual literacy; scientific literacy; ecological literacy; numerical literacy; quantitative literacy; data literacy; digital literacy; coding and computational literacy; multimodal literacy; technological literacy; critical literacy; balanced literacy; media literacy; news literacy; informational literacy; game literacy; civic literacy; civic and ethical literacy; multicultural literacy; financial literacy; health and financial literacy; early literacy; developmental literacy; health literacy; mental health literacy; emotional literacy; emotional/physical literacy; agricultural literacy; and recreational literacy.

A sense of chaos, incoherency, and redundancy derives directly from these lists of “many literacies.” Among the complications is the blurring of the lines between scholarship and education, on the one hand, and promotion and sales, on the other.

Of the lengthy listing of “literacies,” I draw special attention to a “new literacy” recently promoted in a full-page advertisement in the August 3, 2021 edition of *The New York Times*. This is a form of financial literacy touted as “FL4ALL.” In an original formulation that blends elements of

cheerleading with the work of a flailing ad agency, this awkward promotion dubs financial literacy as FL, a first in the murky annals of “multiple literacies” rhetoric.

FL4ALL derives from a group of banking and financial institutions and one online “education academy,” with other corporate “partners.” Neither the ad nor the uninformative website shows any familiarity with new literacy studies or multiple literacies. No thought is given to how FL relates to reading and writing or other forms of literacy. FL is never defined. The poorly composed text misappropriates language from the civil rights movement. It makes many boasts about the need and value for FL4ALL. It quickly descends into contradictions. Its promises and prose are a caricature of several hundred years of the literacy myth. Matters of learning and practice do not occur to these marketers peddling a fabricated product.

Writing and composition often straddle the line between literacy as an integrative form of reading and writing in specific contexts of learning and practice, and composition as writing alone. The latter by itself does not qualify as an old or new literacy or one of “many” literacies. This often purposeful confusion is part of a license to exaggerate, promote, and sell writing or composition.

A contemporary example is the Global Society of Online Literacy Educators (GSOLE), according to its website “an inclusive organization of teachers, tutors, and administrators across ranks, all working to improve access to quality literacy education at all levels.” They advance this goal through virtual conferences, webinars, and an “online certification” program. This virtual world is solely concerned with writing and composition but chooses “literacy” for its name and its sales pitches.

Readers who think that these problems are scattered or isolated and not a major concern need only to turn to two sources, one popular and the other seemingly scholarly. The first is the magazine *Psychology Today*. On April 13, 2021, William R. Klemm, Ph.D., “Memory Medic,” addressed his own version of “The Literacy Myth.” With no familiarity with literacy studies in any recognizable form, his literacy myth is the “under-educated college graduate,” because of lack of civics, revisionist history, and confusion of education with indoctrination. The answer is “Socratic teaching.” Nothing is defined, including literacy. (See also Peter Toohey, PhD, “How Do You Feel If You Can’t Read?”; Dana S. Dunn, PhD, “Thinking about Psychological Literacy: How Psychologically Literate Are You?”; Frank J. Ninivaggi, MD, “Literacy Rampage: So You Wanna Be Literate?”)

The second is the 2020 *Routledge Handbook of Literacy Studies*, edited by Jennifer Rowsell and Kate Pahl. Across forty-two chapters, it is anachronistic and incoherent. Few contributors are among the most active literacy scholars. The “many literacies” fill chapters that range from “Rural Literacies” and “Urban Literacies” to “Looking Good” and “Immaterializing Literacies.”

There is no overall structure, organization, or logic to the collection. Major omissions include the history and comparative anthropology of literacy, two of the foundations of the New Literacy Studies, as well as composition and writing studies and developmental reading studies.

If one presumably crucial chapter symbolizes the problems, it is James Paul Gee’s Chapter 2, “The New Literacy Studies.” Gee begins, “‘The New Literacy Studies’ (sometimes just referred to as the NLS) names a body of work that started in the 1980s,” and ends by contrasting NLS with “A related and slightly later movement, which we can call ‘The New Literacies Studies’” (p. 1, 8).

In between, Gee misses critical aspects of the origins, development, and fate of the New Literacy

Studies. One author at a time serves simplistically and inadequately to cover entire disciplines, for example, Shirley Brice Heath or Brian Street. Historical studies join composition studies in near total exclusion. For example, the only one of my own books that is listed is the 1979 *The Literacy Myth*, despite the fact that Gee reviewed *The Legacies of Literacy* (1987) in the *Harvard Education Review*, Vol. 58, No. 2 (1988), confusing historical with social science studies.

Despite the development and institutionalization of the New Literacy Studies, the gross exaggeration of the power of literacy by itself continues, outside of any meaningful context including foundational reading, writing, and in some cases arithmetic. Often tied to commercialization, the effort to gain credibility by proclaiming anything and everything a “literacy” carries on. The temptations and the appeal are too great. More than four decades after its formal identification, the literacy myth continues to compete with established, trusted research and understanding.

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Book Review *Using ESL Students' First Language to Promote College Success: Sneaking the Mother Tongue Through the Back Door* by Andrea Parmegiani

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Andrea Parmegiani's first monograph provides a compelling account for how utilizing the first language of language minority students (LMS) can play a fruitful role in their learning success at the tertiary level. *Using ESL Students' First Language to Promote College Success: Sneaking the Mother Tongue Through the Back Door* already suggests by its title that the persistence of monolingual English-only learning ideologies continue to marginalise second language learners in the United States. The fact that "sneaking in" of the mother tongue is needed makes us wonder how much of multilingualism as "the new linguistic dispensation" (Singleton et al.) has actually arrived at some colleges in the US.

This insightful book provides strategies for using the mother tongue as a resource in spite of sticking to monolingual orientations. These strategies emerged from a translanguaging program the author created by linking some of the ESL courses that he taught to Spanish composition courses for native speakers. As part of the link, he participated in the Spanish class as a language learner/participant observer to learn more about his students' primary language and literacy practices and to create more opportunities to translanguaging. Built around a case study of this program, this book provides a wealth of practical examples of how welcoming the mother tongue can help LMS to take ownership of English and succeed across the curriculum through the medium of this language.

Rich in qualitative and quantitative data, this book is of interest to any lecturer teaching LMS at an English medium institution, but in particular to college writing and academic literacy teachers who are eager to put academic success within reach of linguistically diverse students. While the study explores in depth the learning needs of a specific student population (recently immigrated Latinx students attending a community college in the US), the findings are relevant for other learning contexts where linguistic diversity coexists with English hegemony. This book builds on studies on bilingual education and culturally responsive pedagogy carried out in primary and secondary schools by showing the benefits of these pedagogical approaches for writing instruction and academic literacy development in post-secondary education. The empirical data presented shows that even among college students, there can be a transfer of literacy skills from their first to the second language if the mother tongue is used as part and parcel of a student-centered approach that values students' identities and cultural capital. To enhance this approach, Parmegiani suggests the notion of bidirectional learning (36), or the idea that English instructors should make the effort to learn their students' language. Educators cannot build on the linguistic-cultural resources students bring to the

classroom, he argues, without taking the time to familiarize themselves with these resources. He also shows that learning Spanish from his students helped reduce power asymmetries in the classroom and created fruitful opportunities for translanguaging practices where students were also able to resume roles of language experts .

The monograph is structured in five main chapters, excluding the introduction, which spans only a few pages but provides significant self-reflective details about Parmegiani's positionality as an LMS who has come to own English as an additional language. This first section "problematizes the notion that the United States has ever been a monolingual English-speaking country and addresses the issue of hostility toward linguistic diversity" (xiv). Chapter 1 begins with a historical review of language politics in the US, leading to a discussion of the current achievement gap and how it affects the Spanish-speaking population. The chapter concludes by detailing challenges and predicaments these LMS face throughout their educational careers in the US. Parmegiani calls on educators to tap into the broad linguistic resources these students have, instead of focusing on what they might lack.

In Chapter 2, the theoretical backbone of the study, Parmegiani provides the conceptual framework for understanding the implications of linguistic inequality for teachers of a dominant code (Standard English) with a dominant set of discourses (academic literacy). Drawing from Bourdieu's theory of the "linguistic market" and Gee's Discourse, he argues that LMS need to be provided access to the dominant language in order to succeed academically and professionally and fully participate in a society that is English dominated. At the same time, he also provides an comprehensive review of research on bilingual education and translanguaging studies to dispel the notion that learning how to acquire English academic literacy entails excluding the mother tongue from the learning process. Drawing on culturally responsive pedagogy, he warns against putting students in a "subtractive schooling" situation, where the acquisition of the language of power is presented as incompatible with the language that is a primary marker of identity.

In Chapter 3, Parmegiani begins the case study by narrating his translanguaging writing program as an embodiment of the pedagogical vision he outlined in the previous chapter. His story includes his strategies for dealing with monolingual orientations while pushing for linguistic diversity and a reflection on his initial motivation for taking in the Spanish class, a choice that led to the development of his bidirectional teaching approach. His narrative is set against the backdrop of Bronx Community College, a Hispanic-serving institution whose mission to "transform lives" is short circuited by the harsh socio-economic realities that shape the lives of many students.

Chapter 4 is the empirical basis of the monograph. Through the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods and analysis, Parmegiani provides a nuanced account of how his bilingual pedagogic implementations, while small-scaled, allowed students to attain higher academic success. Traditional metrics such as course pass rates, retention rates, and average GPAs showed that students who had the opportunity to use the mother tongue as a resource in the translanguaging writing program outperformed students who did not. Qualitative data collected through ethnographic observations and in-depth interviews showed the reason behind this better performance from the students' perspective. In particular, students' voices put a lot of emphasis on how the mother tongue supported the creation of a "safe space" and a "support system" (102) that facilitated English acquisition.

Students also mentioned how the translingual approach helped them master new vocabulary and unfamiliar college writing expectations.

The final chapter discusses the limitations of the study and its applicability to other learning contexts. This discussion includes suggestions for starting similar programs in universities at other Hispanic-Serving Institutions and schools where a sufficient number of language minority students share the same mother tongue to link first and second language writing courses. It also offers various strategies for applying translingual and bidirectional approaches to teaching. The book ends with an autobiographical note in which the author reflects on his personal experience in terms of appreciating diversity. In evoking the transformative powers of his teaching methods, he points to the ability to get close to his students, “in spite of fundamental differences in social identities markers that have a tendency to divide and antagonize humanity” (132). In his own words, he found “a place of closeness” with his students “where the common denominator we share as human beings was palpable” (132), to an extent that the learning process could be appreciated.

The monograph is a powerful contribution in applied linguistics and specifically to the fields of academic writing studies, translanguaging practices, TESOL, and culturally responsive pedagogy, and its lucid writing style is accessible to graduate students and junior scholars. Because it is based on data collected in the US, the study might not reflect many challenges occurring through English-medium tertiary education in postcolonial societies such as South Africa, where the reviewers' work is located. However, the dual position of teacher and language learner that Parmegiani navigates is hugely inspiring from a more general pedagogic perspective. The shifting of power relations within a classroom and the giving of agency to students can serve as important learning and teaching tools in many educational contexts. This monograph reflects a teacher's deep concern about the development and success of his LMS in an English hegemonic academic environment. Parmegiani's book is innovative and likely to have a positive effect on pedagogic measures for LMS in the United States.

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Book Review *Linguistic Justice: Black Language, Literacy, Identity, and Pedagogy* by April Baker-Bell

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2020 was an unprecedented year for the entire world but more so for the US, where COVID-19 killed far more people than in any other country and caused widespread unemployment, food insecurity, and homelessness. What is more striking is the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on minority, immigrant, and low-income populations. These disparities question the notion of post-racial America and call for a long and difficult journey toward social justice. Moreover, 2020 will also be remembered as a year of inflammatory political rhetorics, extreme polarization, and racial tensions. Recurrent deaths of Black people at the hands of law enforcement resulted in protests and riots across the country. Published during such tumultuous times, April Baker-Bell's 2020 monograph, *Linguistic Justice: Black Language, Literacy, Identity, and Pedagogy*, shows how language and racism are intertwined, makes a strong case against the anti-Black linguistic racism affecting millions of lives both inside and outside the classroom, and offers an Antiracist Black Language Pedagogy as a way to deal with linguistic injustice. Throughout the book Baker-Bell introduces Black Language Artifacts as a part of the antiracist pedagogy where Black experience and Black culture are used as a resource for learning. Bringing together theory, history, culture, pedagogy and activism, Baker-Bell aligns with the mission of social justice movements like Black Lives Matter and calls for action to create classrooms where Black students' linguistic and cultural resources are valued and imagines a world without anti-blackness, where another George Floyd doesn't get killed despite his repeated plea—"I cannot breathe"—in "Standardized American English."

Chapter 1, "Black Language Is Good on Any MLK Boulevard," provides context for the book, drawing on Baker-Bell's personal experience of growing up in Detroit and developing literacy that was immersed in Black language and culture. Although she grew up speaking Black English, she doesn't remember having her speech corrected either by her teachers or parents. However, she occasionally noticed her parents trying to "sound more white" by code-switching while talking over the phone (1). But gradually, she started to hear criticisms of Black Language as inferior and inadequate from the teachers at school. Interestingly, even though Michigan State, and Detroit in particular, was an epicenter of Black language research, scholarship, and activism, it was not until Baker-Bell began to teach English Language Arts at a high school in Detroit that she became fully aware of language politics. There she had to negotiate the school administration's preference for White Mainstream English and her students' need and right to speak their authentic language that they used at home and in the community. She realized that with the kind of teacher training she had received, the teachers would keep "reproducing the same racial and linguistic inequities [they were] hoping to dismantle" because there was an assumption that students entering English Language Arts class by default speak White Mainstream English (4). Further exploration of the issue revealed that most

language classrooms were more like “cultural and linguistic battlegrounds instead of havens where students’ language practices were affirmed, valued, and sustained” (5). Even after nearly half a century since the adoption of Students’ Rights to Their Own Language (SRTOL) resolution by Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) and a slightly different version of the same resolution by National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) in 1974, there are teachers who believe that code-switching dismantles white supremacy, or even worse, who belittle and punish students for speaking Black language. This, Baker-Bell says, is because many teachers “do not realize that standard English is a byproduct of white supremacy” (6). Such revelatory moments motivated Baker-Bell to enter “the language wars”—a phrase she borrows from a veteran linguist Geneva Smitherman whose pioneering work on Black language she admires (4). The rest of the chapter explains Baker-Bell’s choice of terminologies, like Black Language and White Mainstream English as both rhetorical and political moves; lays out the main argument that linguistic and racial hierarchies are intertwined; proposes a linguistic justice framework as a way forward; and outlines the remaining chapters.

In Chapter 2, “What’s Anti-Blackness Got to Do With It?” Baker-Bell introduces Anti-Black Linguistic Racism as a framework and explains how it operates through research, scholarships, and pedagogies to affect Black students. The solution she proposes to confront this framework is Antiracist Black Language Pedagogy. Building upon the complex experience of her students, who use Black Language as a vital resource in their communities and classrooms while they experience Anti-Black Linguistic Racism in the same spaces, Baker-Bell argues that “policing of Black Language and literacies in schools is not separate from the ways in which Black bodies have historically been policed and surveilled in U.S. society” (12). Yet many people do not see this connection and insist that Black people should continue to use the “Standardized English” to resist the hegemony of the same. However, this is not going to work as Audre Lorde famously said, “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house” (Lorde 107; also, qtd. in Baker-Bell 12). According to Baker-Bell, linguistic racism is “supported and maintained through institutional practices” with the help of what Rosina Lippi-Greene calls a “standard language ideology” that often goes unquestioned (14). The US has a long history of linguistic racism that is further entrenched by policies like English-Only and fueled by the rise of anti-minority, anti-immigrant political rhetoric in the last few years. Moreover, Anti-Black Linguistic Racism is not just an “examination of white linguistic hegemony and how it informs Black students’ language education”; it is more about “the dehumanization that Black Language-speakers endure when using their language across multiple contexts” (20). That is why the traditional eradicationist and respectability language pedagogies do more harm than good to Black students who inherit a unique historical legacy of enslaved Africans separated by language, later “dispersed in the United States” and “intentionally denied access to literacy by law” (64). Therefore, an Antiracist Black Language Pedagogy that places Black language at the center is the need of the hour.

In chapter 3, “Killing Them Softly,” Baker-Bell argues that researchers and educators must listen to Black Language speakers’ voices and engage their perspectives to get the counterstories that deconstruct the dominant narratives. This chapter opens with a student’s testimony of how destructive anti-Black language pedagogies can be to students’ self-confidence and sense of being. Baker-Bell foregrounds the stories of the Black students she worked with and calls them

“counterstories because research, theories, and pedagogies on Black Language education are not very inclusive of Black students’ perspectives” (39). This is one of the strongest parts of this book, where Baker-Bell asks readers to consider Black students’ stories to understand the impact of dominant language ideologies and Anti-Black Linguistic Racism. Based on Baker-Bell’s research at Leadership Academy, a high school in Detroit, this chapter focuses on her first Black Language Artifact titled “Black Language and Identity.” This artifact “was designed to initiate a conversation about Black language and White Mainstream English at the same time of unveiling the students’ initial attitudes toward both languages” (42). In fact, a major part of Baker-Bell’s contribution is to create a pedagogy that relies on Black Language Artifacts and foregrounds Black culture and experience as an integral part of the learning process. Baker-Bell uses composite character counterstorytelling as a critical race methodological tool that puts interview transcripts, field notes, artifacts, and research memos together to create “a coherent narrative that captured and provided a thorough depiction of how the students at LA [Liberty Academy] understood their linguistic realities” (44). They are woven together with the writer’s interpretation, reflection, and theoretical insights from other scholars. They show how traditional eradicationist and respectability language pedagogies are inadequate to address the deep-seated Black linguistic racism, linguistic double consciousness, and their material consequences in the lives of Black students: hence, the need for the Antiracist Black Language Pedagogy to teach historically marginalized Black students.

The title of the fourth chapter, “Scoff No More,” refers to Carter G. Woodson’s point about how Black students were made to “scoff” at their mother tongue and Geneva Smitherman’s Critical Language Awareness pedagogy that aims to develop students’ critical consciousness about language politics. In this chapter, Baker-Bell focuses on praxis, showing how she used Black linguistic consciousness-raising as a part of Antiracist Black Language Pedagogy on the ground. Using the remaining six Black Language Artifacts and some ethnographic snapshots, Baker-Bell asks the readers to consider why it is “pivotal for Black students to learn about their own linguistic backgrounds” and how the students begin to “critically interrogate and consistently resist white linguistic hegemony and Anti-Black Racism” (64). Many Black students who have unconsciously internalized white linguistic hegemony are not aware of the history of Black language. The carefully designed artifacts were used to transform the history of Black language into an easy learning experience for the students and familiarize them with the grammatical and rhetorical aspects of Black language along with the intricacies of language, race, power, agency, and action. Baker-Bell discusses the results of this pedagogy in Chapter 5, “Black Linguistic Consciousness,” where the findings indicate a significant growth in the students’ Black Linguistic Consciousness as evidenced by the character counterstories that do not show the presence of “ambivalence and internalized Anti-Black Linguistic Racism” that was found in the first attitudinal assessment (96). However, this doesn’t mean that Antiracist Black Language Pedagogy is a panacea for all deep-rooted problems, as some students continue to show linguistic double consciousness. Baker-Bell reflects on her own experiences working with the students and about the things she could have done better. This self-reflective element further enhances her ethos as a researcher and writer. She concludes this chapter with a note that this pedagogy is equally useful to other language groups and white students who “are

more likely to perpetuate Anti-Black Linguistic Racism and uphold white linguistic hegemony” (100).

Chapter 6, “THUG LIFE: Bonus Chapter: Five Years After Leadership Academy,” offers additional insights into the role African American literature could play in Antiracist Black Language Pedagogy to dismantle Anti-Black Linguistic Racism. Although literature plays an important role in developing critical consciousness, an explicit discussion of language is not always a part of the study of literature dealing with linguistic racism. In fact, literary works provide “a rich opportunity for students in English Language Arts classrooms to examine how language and race inform identity and experience” (103). The recent rise of young adult African American novels could be useful in putting “current racial and linguistic realities in conversation with the critical analytical tools” and working toward a robust Antiracist Black Language Pedagogy (103). Baker-Bell shares the artifacts from a course *Linguistic (IN)Justice: A Black Counterstory of the English Language* that she taught to preservice English Education students, an interview with a student, and details of THUG LIFE events where THUG is an acronym for Angie Thomas’ 2017 young adult novel *The Hate U Give* that they read in the class. Both Baker-Bell and Thomas are inspired by the rapper Tupac Shakur’s concept of THUG LIFE that strongly criticizes the white supremacist capitalist system. Baker-Bell presents these pedagogical ideas as examples that can be implemented, altered, or taken as an inspiration to use literature in the service of linguistic justice rather than as a prescription.

In sum, *Linguistic Justice* is a book that pushes the boundaries in many ways. It defies traditional generic confinements by weaving together “theory, history, culture, activism in a multimodal, interactive teaching-learning curriculum undergirded by Anti-racist Black Language Pedagogy” (Smitherman xvi). Likewise, it blends Baker-Bell’s personal attachment to the topic with research and rich ethnographic details. She has walked a fine line between the personal and the professional in the way that her positionality and lived experiences add authenticity to the content without compromising intellectual rigor. The theoretical clarity of Black Linguistic Racism, that it is not just about language but is more about the dehumanization of Black Language speakers, distinguishes this book and provides a more humane touch at the same time. The strongest part of the book, in my view, is where Baker-Bell puts Black students’ voices at the center. Instead of falling into the trap of cultural relativism, she puts Black language, culture, and the speakers’ voices and experiences on equal footing and lets them speak for themselves. Although she uses the word *decolonial* only once, her entire project has a decolonial undertone. So *Linguistic Justice* can be interpreted as an act of epistemic delinking that “change[s] the terms and not just the content of the conversation” (Mignolo 459). The book has a specific focus on Black language, but its linguistic justice framework can be adapted to other contexts like writing studies as well. Finally, Baker-Bell mentions how her framework could be useful to white students and other linguistic groups, but a little more discussion in this direction would benefit the readers who do not exclusively work with Black students.

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Book Review *Teaching Racial Literacy: Reflective Practices for Critical Writing* by Mara Lee Grayson

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In the introduction to her 2018 monograph *Teaching Racial Literacy: Reflective Practices for Critical Writing*, Mara Lee Grayson describes the tumultuous setting against which the book originated: the police murders of Eric Garner, Michael Brown, and Tamir Rice had captured national attention, and protests had erupted across the country in response, led by activists calling for change, accountability, and unambiguous recognition of the fact that Black Lives Matter. Grayson wrote then, “Racism is not new, and while it had perhaps been pushed beneath the surface of public discourse, it has not reemerged now so much as it has simply made itself more visible to the general public” (136). In the summer of 2020, racism once again made itself more visible following the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police and the murder of Breonna Taylor by Louisville police. For many educators, the months of protests that followed were accompanied by a keen appraisal of our own complicity, resulting in a surge of interest in antiracist pedagogy. Instructors seeking guidance in implementing antiracist literacy instruction have an already significant body of work from which to draw, including texts by such scholars as Vershawn Ashanti Young, Frankie Condon, and Asao Inoue. Despite a few drawbacks, Grayson’s *Teaching Racial Literacy* is a worthy extension to this canon, providing both actionable strategies and a robust theoretical foundation.

Grayson began working to develop the racial literacy curriculum described in *Teaching Racial Literacy* after having observed how conversations around textual analysis of narrative song lyrics in her Writing through Literature course turned organically to conversations around race and injustice, and later noticing a correlation between these discussions and improvement in her students’ writing. Grayson approaches the resulting book as a teacher-practitioner, arguing that a racial literacy curriculum can not only increase students’ awareness of racial injustice but also improve classroom engagement. Chapter 1 lays out Grayson’s framework of racial literacy for critical writing instruction, but not before foregrounding an important rebuttal to the longstanding and still-circulating contention that composition can be taught from a neutral standpoint, one which need not take into account the ways that ideas about language and race are mutually sedimented. Tracing the long history of linkages between composition and work toward equity, Grayson situates racial literacy as a natural extension of literacy pedagogy, and it is from this orientation that she approaches the racial literacy framework. Drawing on previous racial literacy frameworks developed by sociologist France Winddance Twine and legal scholar Lani Guinier, Grayson’s version outlines practices that connect critical social awareness with foundational writing skills. The framework asks students to “decode race and racism, comprehend the historical and contemporary structures of institutional racism, interpret individual examples of racism and racialism, critique inequity, respond to injustice, and communicate with classmates of similar and different experiences and understandings of the world”

(7). Thus, Grayson argues, despite its prefix, racial literacy is less about incorporating new content pertaining to race or introducing new literate practices, and more about asking students to use the traditional tools of literacy in ways that allow for interrogation of racist structures and systems and help students better understand their own power in dismantling those systems.

Grayson describes the adoption of the racial literacy curriculum as a recursive process of “active, continual observing, interpreting, questioning, and communicating” (15), one in which instructors are just as implicated as students, and Chapter 2 offers useful suggestions for how to plan and prepare before beginning this process. Assessing instructor positionality and developing a practice of critical reflexivity are essential, as is remaining responsive to student needs throughout. Grayson also provides advice for navigating different institutional and geographical contexts, and guidance for adapting the curriculum to a variety of instructional contexts, including first-year writing, advanced writing, and interdisciplinary courses, even briefly attending to how the curriculum might be implemented in courses that do not explicitly teach writing. Anticipating potential problems, Grayson counsels, is key to successful implementation of the racial literacy curriculum.

The remaining chapters describe how the racial literacy curriculum looks in practice. Chapter 3 makes recommendations for selecting and writing about racial literacy texts, while Chapter 4 contains an in-depth look at utilizing narrative song lyrics in particular. Chapter 5 centers the embodied and affective dimensions of racial literacy work for both teachers and students, including an important section on navigating fraught emotional and discursive territory. Here, Grayson describes how including students in the process of collaboratively designing a framework for classroom discussions, then guiding them in building a foundation of emotive capacity through practices such as counternarrating and attentive listening, will better equip them to tolerate and productively engage with any negative emotional responses they may experience. In Chapter 6, Grayson explicates the importance of positionality in racial literacy, suggesting activities such as a positionality cluster and a racial autobiography to help instructors guide students toward greater consideration of how their and others’ situatedness impacts perspectives on and beliefs about race. Chapter 7 provides instructional strategies for navigating conversations about race, including dealing with white fragility and including the voices of marginalized students in safe and thoughtful ways. Finally, Chapter 8 discusses helping students move their literate practices beyond the classroom and into civic engagement, and Chapter 9 addresses obstacles specific to secondary educators, such as dealing with parental interference and the constraints of mandated curricula. The book concludes with an appendix containing additional references and resources for both instructors and students.

As literacy instructors seek out guidance for antiracist pedagogical practices, it is crucial to aim a critical lens toward any texts that are taken up in that effort, and while *Teaching Racial Literacy* is a rich and worthwhile resource, a few caveats must be put forward. First, while the book frequently notes the importance of helping students become aware of their own positionality, the implications of whiteness on instructors’ ability to implement the racial literacy curriculum are not fully addressed. The omnipresent microaggressions, resistance, and outright bullying met by BIPOC teachers arguing for curricular change or talking about race in the classroom are well-documented by Staci Perryman-Clark, Carmen Kynard, and many others. However, in *Teaching Racial Literacy*, the vast

differences in the obstacles BIPOC teachers and white teachers might face is elided into a relatively short section on instructor positionality in Chapter 2, which has the effect of downplaying the gravity of this problem. Given the degree to which whiteness functions as a barrier to racial justice, greater attention to its impact, and particularly to the need for white instructors to act as accomplices to their colleagues of color, would have been warranted. Likewise, the prevalence of antiblackness in literacy instruction is not given adequate consideration. As April Baker-Bell has since cautioned in her 2020 book on Black linguistic justice, “a transformative approach to the language education of Black students cannot acquiesce to whiteness or side-step anti-blackness. These approaches are not transformative nor are they antiracist” (31). Her call for an Antiracist Black Language Pedagogy was amplified soon thereafter by the CCCC position statement on Black linguistic justice, which declares, “We cannot say that Black Lives Matter if Black Language is not at the forefront of our work as language educators and researchers!” (Baker-Bell, Williams-Farrier, Jackson, Johnson, Kynard, and McMurtry). The implications are clear: literacy instruction that purports to be antiracist must not only contend with antiblackness, but also center Black students’ rhetorical strategies, discursive practices, and ways of languaging.

Nevertheless, if complemented by other resources that address these concerns more extensively, *Teaching Racial Literacy* has much to offer. The potential hazards of discussing race and racism in the classroom have caused many instructors to avoid it altogether, and the strength of *Teaching Racial Literacy* lies in its wealth of actionable strategies for talking, reading, and writing about racial justice. Grayson anticipates and addresses many likely obstacles and concerns throughout, presenting the adoption and implementation of the racial justice curriculum as an achievable process, and the strategies she offers are thoughtfully designed to be applicable to anyone incorporating critical writing into their courses. For both new and experienced instructors, *Teaching Racial Literacy* is a worthwhile resource that goes beyond simple calls to action to offer instructors a comprehensive plan of action, one that has the potential to enact real changes in students’ awareness of the racist structures and systems in which we live.

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Book Review *Writing Across Cultures* by Robert Eddy and Amanda Espinosa-Aguilar

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If Asao Inoue's 4Cs 2019 speech marked the beginning of a new chapter in composition studies, Robert Eddy and Amanda Espinosa-Aguilar's *Writing Across Cultures* would be one of the first rhetorics to represent the values moving the field forward: radical inclusivity, adaptability, and thoughtfully proposed *praxis*. Composition instructors at all stages of their academic career would benefit from reading this 246-page rhetoric that is forward thinking: quick to acknowledge the future of the professions first-year writing students are preparing for along with the changing demographics of US classrooms. At the center of this forward-thinking rhetoric is Eddy and Espinosa-Aguilar's focus on racial identities and white privilege. This rhetoric's primary purpose is to prepare future professionals to deal with issues of race, power, privilege, and authority in the writing process in their desired careers. Adding to that primary purpose, *Writing Across Cultures* prepares writers to identify, analyze, and evaluate the relationships among language, knowledge, and power, then synthesize those findings with their own writing habits and preferences. *Writing Across Cultures* utilizes the Eddy Model in its structure for the text, where each chapter represents a stage in the framework Eddy and Espinosa-Aguilar offer. In employing the Eddy Model of Intercultural Experience, an intercultural communication model Eddy has been using for decades, this text accomplishes its purposes by proposing a framework for composition instructors to use with plenty of example assignments, instructor notes to students, and student samples to show the Eddy Model in action.

With the end goal of adaptability in mind, the Eddy Model, which is the driving force of *Writing Across Cultures*, is a recursive, six-stage process that both covers and guides the target audience, composition instructors of all levels of experience, through the behavior, intercultural experience, and writing processes developed for each stage. The stages of experience mark an individual's progress through this framework: Preliminary, Spectator, Increasing Participation, Shock, Adaptation, and Re-Entry. Each stage is marked by behaviors and writing practices that are familiar to all composition instructors. The Preliminary Stage is marked by vague ideas of approach and deciding on invention strategies through brainstorming sessions. The second stage, the Spectator Stage is where students must interact with others in the class to identify false starts, misunderstandings, and oversimplifications in a first draft. In the Increasing-Participation Stage, students must understand interactions in class, developing more confidence in their credibility within the target community. In the fourth stage, students must create a role acceptable to the class by conquering their fears of change and writer's block in The Shock Stage. As the writer enters the fifth stage, The Adaptation Stage, the self becomes the center of communal responsibility as the individual must choose where in the spectrum of assimilation, resistance, separation, and pluralism they will fall. Finally, writers are in The Reentry Stage when they conduct purposeful reflections that identify, analyze, and evaluate

their process as they begin again in the Preliminary Stage. In developing this six-stage process, Eddy and Espinosa-Aguilar map out a framework for the difficult critical thinking process involved in authentically adapting to academic discourse, where composers can choose from a spectrum of assimilation, resistance, separation, and pluralism based on self-analysis and self-evaluation.

Eddy and Espinosa-Aguilar begin with the text's goals, themes, motivations, and challenges within the Eddy Model and its creation in the Introduction. In Chapter 1, "Home Culture(s), Academic Discourse, Critical Reading, and the Eddy Model of Intercultural Experience," the authors acknowledge the difficulties of intercultural communication, emphasize the importance of critical reading strategies, and summarize the stages in the Eddy Model. The authors take the reader through the "Entrance to the Preliminary Stage" of the Eddy Model in Chapter 2, which emphasizes invention and prewriting techniques that value metacultural awareness through the Eddy Model and its parallel, the Kluckhohn Model, an intercultural communication process similar to the Eddy Model. In Chapter 3, "The Preliminary Stage, Part 2: Prewriting Using the Eddy Method," the authors use the invention methods developed in Chapter 2 to compose a brainstorming draft and to practice reflection. The reader will enter "The Spectator Stage" of the Eddy Model in Chapter 4, discussing prewriting tactics with peers and entering into academic discourse through a working draft. Eddy and Espinosa-Aguilar are quick to point out that the Spectator Stage may be full of false starts, which is why writers enter The Increasing-Participation Stage in Chapter 5, "The Increasing-Participation Stage: Working Drafts and Revision." This stage of the Eddy Model is focused on "organic revision" that emphasizes full engagement with the target culture where "writers must become dual ambassadors, knowing when to talk and share and when to listen and keep silent" (10).

Chapter 6, "The Shock Stage: Writer's Block and Fear of Change," explains The Shock Stage, which acknowledges the fear every writer has in changing and adapting to the culture they wish to enter and offers techniques to guide writers through their revision process. The authors suggest role-playing for revision as a writing activity for student authors to combat writer's block in The Shock Stage, providing students' work and instructor responses to make these strategies accomplishable and practical. Chapter 7, "Convincing the Audience by Using Edited American English," focuses on writers' adaptation to Edited American English and best practices in adapting to academic discourse, where we see some refreshing honesty, disagreement, and reflection in Espinosa-Aguilar's argument for code switching and Eddy's stance in code meshing. The authors take the reader to Chapter 8, "The Adaptation Stage," which develops the ability to identify, analyze, evaluate, and eliminate undefined abstractions, logical fallacies, and unexamined alternative explanations in order to work towards the final draft. Chapter 9, "The Reentry Stage: Future Compositions and Dissonant Voices," takes the reader to the final stage of the Eddy Model, The Reentry Stage, which asks writers to reflect on the ways they are balancing their home culture with their target culture, specifically with how and why knowledge systems create and disseminate truth(s). Eddy and Espinosa-Aguilar offer their final reflections in Chapter 10, "Cultural Meshing or Switching in Poly- or Intercultural Writing Classes." Both Chapters 9 and 10 are the most forward thinking chapters of this rhetoric, explaining the benefits for both instructor and student reflections as they begin again at The Preliminary Stage in this recursive framework and discussing what this intercultural communication process means for

the minority majority of the future.

This book strikes the perfect balance between theory and practice, offering just enough theory to qualify the Eddy Model as a pedagogical framework for First-Year Writing, while presenting enough examples to see how participants in the Eddy Model develop writing strategies that emphasize adaptability. The Eddy Model describes the tumultuous challenge first-year writing (FYW) students face in having their identities shaped and reshaped in order to adapt to academic discourse, while offering practical steps to make FYW students engaged communicators, not just a product of detached processes. There are more than twenty activities within *Writing Across Cultures* that scaffold in ways that should be familiar to most composition instructors. The topics for these activities vary in the skills students practice and the difficulty level. For instance, one activity asks the writer to reflect on their key cultural assumptions, while another activity identifies and evaluates the use of logical fallacies. Eddy and Espinosa-Aguilar pair every stage of the Eddy Model with student samples, and the authors provide detailed notes, feedback, and analysis so the reader can identify specific areas of growth in students' writing. In doing so, *Writing Across Cultures* helps composition instructors at all stages of experience through thoughtfully proposed *praxis*. Beginner composition instructors can develop strategies to identify and evaluate growth in students' writing in cross-racial and cross-cultural contexts, while more experienced composition instructors can add effective strategies for cross-cultural and cross-racial communication to their toolbox through the Eddy Model.

Writing Across Cultures represents the inclusivity and democratization that marks the social justice turn in composition studies after Inoue's 4Cs speech. While most rhetorics look at the past to shape composers' strategies, Eddy and Espinosa-Aguilar aim towards a future of empowerment and freedom, "acknowledge[ing] student rights to their own language and to ideologically position themselves" (20). The entirety of the text focuses on inclusivity and democratization, but Chapter 10, "Cultural Meshing or Switching in Poly- or Intercultural Writing Classes," challenges readers and future writers to reflect on their own racial identities and white privilege as scholars and teachers. Specifically, Eddy and Espinosa-Aguilar present a set of thirteen questions for the reader to reflect on; questions like "How do I romanticize whiteness?"; "Has my teaching perpetuated the exploitation of people of color by reifying myths, such as saying things are getting better over time?"; and "In attempting to become more intercultural in complex multiracial settings, how should I alter my critical gaze?" force the reader to reflect on their identity as a composition instructor and how it relates to their racial identity and/or their white privilege (205). In doing so, the Eddy Model of Intercultural Experience uncovers the unconscious and habitual processes culture has conditioned composers in, while giving people the freedom to choose the polycultural ethos they wish to occupy with a keen sense of what and how they're negotiating their language and, therefore, their identity in various rhetorical situations. The resulting radical inclusivity and democratization from *Writing Across Cultures* is what makes this text particularly important and timely for the future of composition studies because it gives writers the ability to make informed decisions on the ways in which they adapt to various rhetorical situations while having continuously to reshape their identity to practice *ethos* in different knowledge-structures.

Finally, what makes this text particularly unique is its refreshing honesty, reminding the

reader of the difficulties and contradictions that come with teaching composition. Throughout this book, Eddy and Espinosa-Aguilar embody the careful consideration of and sensitivity to various positionalities composition instructors must take on in order to empower composers to authentically adapt. The authors respond to student writing in different ways, they disagree with each other, and they openly admit the difficulties and complexities of teaching composition courses in 2019. The authors particularly disagree on how to handle adaptation to Edited American English in Chapter 7. Espinosa-Aguilar values code switching because it promotes the credibility of the author in academic contexts, while Eddy believes in code meshing because it maintains the writer's authentic adaptability, as long as it is purposeful and effective. The honest reflections throughout this book, especially in the final chapter, make the reader understand that difficulties and failures are part of the ongoing process to teach and to adapt, and that's okay. This honesty is particularly helpful for beginner composition instructors as they themselves go through the Eddy Model, adapting to this level of academic discourse. For the more experienced composition instructors, *Writing Across Cultures* is a strong reminder that composition instructors constantly need to evolve.

Ultimately, this book accomplishes its main goal of proposing a *praxis* for teaching First-Year Writing Courses that embody a commitment to the complex needs of social justice and a polycultural future. For any composition instructor teaching in 2021 and beyond, this rhetoric is a must-read. *Writing Across Cultures* strikes the perfect balance of theory and practice to help the reader best understand this framework. Most importantly, this rhetoric encourages writers to critically analyze and evaluate social actions and how they relate to their racial identities and white privilege, then make an informed decision from a spectrum of assimilation, resistance, separation, and pluralism in how they wish to proceed. In 246 pages, Eddy and Espinosa-Aguilar offer a perspective to a conversation that will undoubtedly continue in the years to come. In ten years, when scholars trace the history of composition studies, *Writing Across Cultures* will stand out for representing the values of the Social Justice Era of Composition: radical inclusivity, adaptability, and strong *praxis*.

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