prompt

a journal of academic writing assignments

Editor's Note

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I am very pleased to share this second special issue of *Prompt* on writing assignments engaged with social justice with our readers. Ann E. Green, Wiley Davi, and Olivia Giannetta have continued the editorial collaboration that produced special issue 5.1 to bring you the current issue. As was the case in 5.1, you will find in 6.1 a diversity of viewpoints and approaches to learning about and practicing social justice in a very wide variety of contexts. I hope these assignments help support new and ongoing efforts toward inclusive and anti-racist teaching across the disciplines and beyond the university.

I want to give a special thanks to Ann, Wiley, and Olivia for the care they have taken in working closely with each author whose work appears in this issue. The *Prompt* editorial team strives to bring an ethos of support and open dialogue to our work with authors, and this issue's special editors exemplify the deep attention and genuine care that characterizes academic editing at its best. The journal has been very lucky to have them helping with not just one, but two, special issues of our journal.

In terms of other developments with our journal, I am pleased to welcome three new members to *Prompt's* editorial board. They are:

Stephanie Kerschbaum, Department of English, University of Washington

Michael T. MacDonald, Department of Language, Culture, and Communication, University of Michigan, Dearborn

Jennifer Sano-Franchini, Department of English, Virginia Tech

I continue to be so grateful for the generosity of those who volunteer their time to ensure the success of this journal. That includes our board members, our editorial staff, our production team, and our reviewers. As we deal with the ongoing challenges of teaching, researching, and doing administrative work during a long pandemic, it is never lost on me that many people are taking time that they could be using in many other ways to ensure the success and quality of *Prompt.* I want to offer my deepest thanks to all of you.

Guest Editors' Note

Ann E. Green[1], Wiley Davi[2], and Olivia Giannetta[3]

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> There must exist a paradigm, a practical model for social change that includes an understanding of ways to transform consciousness that are linked to efforts to transform structures.
>
> —bell hooks, *Killing Rage, Ending Racism* (1995, p. 193)

> Only people with hope will struggle. The people who are hopeless are grist for the fascist mill. Because they have no hope, they have nothing to build on. If people are in trouble, if people are suffering and exploited and want to get out from under the heel of oppression, if they have hope that it can be done, if they can see a path that leads to a solution, a path that makes sense to them and is consistent with their beliefs and their experience, then they'll move. But it must be a path that they've started clearing. They've got to know the direction in which they are going and have a general idea of the kind of society they'd like to have. If they don't have hope, they don't even look for a path. They look for somebody else to do it for them.
>
> —Miles Horton, *The Long Haul* (1998, p. 44)

> You can blow out a candle
>
> But you can't blow out a fire
>
> —Peter Gabriel, "Biko" (1980)

Guest editing these special issues of *Prompt* over the last two years during the global pandemic of Covid-19 and the continuing pandemic of systemic racism has—paradoxically—given us hope. The writers, reviewers, and other editors at *Prompt* have made us feel like King's (1991, p. 8) idea of "beloved community," a new and more just and more equitable world, is possible. While the recent death of feminist and racial justice scholar bell hooks has dampened our hope (may she rest in power), we are heartened by the work contained in these pages that acknowledges students—and our—intersectional identities and work for justice.

This new issue has been crafted during a period of concern over "critical race theory" (CRT). CRT, an academic theoretical framework useful for understanding systemic racism, became a buzzword on conservative news outlets and, to our amazement, has led to legislation trying to combat (or prevent) the teaching of CRT in elementary and high schools. While the outrage about CRT is manufactured (critical race theory is taught in universities and graduate programs, not elementary schools), the manufactured outrage is evidence of how much more conversation we need about teaching social justice and unpacking systemic inequalities. However, the fuss over CRT also emphasizes the far right's concern with what bell hooks articulates above: there

is a connection between the transformation of an individual consciousness to systemic change. The assumption underlying the kerfuffle over CRT is that education can be transformative, and this assumption underlies the writing in this issue.

Given the value of self-reflection in social justice work, during our editorial process, we engaged in a series of conversations about the role of antiracism in publishing. We questioned gaps stemming from our privilege as white academics, and we engaged in dialogue with the editors of *Prompt* as we continued to diversify our pool of authors and reviewers. We recognize that critical self-reflection and dialogue must be ongoing processes, as we work to end systemic oppression of any kind, particularly the systemic racism that has permeated publishing.

In the spirit of this much needed work, the assignments in this issue focus on reflection—on encouraging students to reflect on their own identities in relation to issues of systemic injustice. In addition, we continued to ask authors to reflect on their own social identities and the role those play in crafting assignments and teaching for justice.

Haleema Welji's "Interrogating the 'Good' Muslim: Challenging Representations of Muslims through Linguistic Analysis" begins this issue with a fascinating assignment on stereotypes of Muslim and Islamic identity. A Muslim herself, Welji offers a nuanced approach that provides first-year writing students with a thoughtful framework for examining both ideas of the "bad Muslim" (Muslim as terrorist) and the "good Muslim" (Muslim as a "good American").

Following Welji's piece, Soyeon Lee's "Building Students' Literate Agency through Makerspace Activities in a Two-Year College" describes a multimodal assignment that engages students with creating objects in a "maker space." After students create objects, they analyze how their creations reflect their identities. Written in the context of a racially diverse student body, Lee's piece highlights how multimodal instruction can be effective in the first-year writing classroom. She also proposes ways that those of us without "maker spaces" can adapt such projects in our own contexts.

Two pieces, Beth Buyserie's "Languages of Power and Resistance: Future Teachers Writing for Social Justice" and Deanna Chappell's "Reading and Fighting Patriarchy: Book Groups and Young Adult Feminist Fiction," investigate how social justice assignments can be used in courses for pre-service teachers. Buyserie's "Languages of Power and Resistance" explores how a historically a conservative course, a course on grammar for pre-service teachers, can interrogate "normative language." Chappell argues that by encouraging pre-service teachers to read feminist young adult fiction and write about it, she is modelling feminist, anti-racist pedagogy for her students, pedagogy that they can take into their own classrooms.

In another multimodal assignment, Oscar Jerome Stewart, Geoff Desa, and Ian Dunham bring the arts into the business classroom as a means of moving students beyond a "for profit" world view and in order to promote environmental sustainability. "Widening the Lens of Business Education: Exploring Systemic (In)Justice Through Public Exhibitions of Student Art and Creative Writing," encourages students enrolled in a senior seminar course to reflect on sustainability and social justice.

Keisha Goode's "Socialization and Social Justice: A Reflection on Teaching and Designing a Sociological Theory Course," uses her experiences of refining a core course in sociological theory to diversify both the readings and the assignments. Illustrating how the course has evolved because of feedback from students, Goode models the reflective teacher-scholar that many of us aspire to be.

Jill Swiencicki and Barbara Lowe's "Teaching the Civic Deliberations over Monument Removals: Writing as Memory Work," uses an assignment from a team-taught philosophy and rhetoric class to argue for engaging students in understanding theoretical frameworks behind monument removal. Swiencicki and Lowe ask students to do complex critical thinking to unpack

their assumptions and then write about them. This timely piece will be helpful for any of us who wish to incorporate controversial, contemporary issues about race into our classrooms.

Finally, in "Integrating Metacognitive Practice as a Strategy for More Equitable Storytelling in Community-Based Learning," Marisa Charley explores how community-engaged learning from the Shepherd Program for The Interdisciplinary Study of Poverty and Human Capability at Washington and Lee University incorporates reflections on social class into their pedagogy.

Taken together, these articles give us hope. Miles Horton is correct in that without hope, we become "grist for the fascist mill." These teacher-scholars believe in their students and inspire hope in them, and we have been honored to learn more about how social justice writing assignments can inspire hope in different contexts. We hope you will be inspired by the hope in these pages as we work to stoke the fire of revolution in our classrooms and in our universities.

Peace,
Ann
Wiley
Olivia

Supplementary Material

For supplementary material accompanying this paper, including a PDF facsimile of the assignment description formatted as the author(s) presented it to students, please visit https://doi.org/10.31719/pjaw.v6i1.134.

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Interrogating the "Good" Muslim
Challenging Representations of Muslims Through Linguistic Analysis

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Abstract

In this assignment, students learn to critique the frequently stereotypical and problematic depictions of Muslims in media sources. Based on their own linguistic analyses of TV shows, movies, or political speeches, students build arguments about the messaging and judgment of Muslims in the United States. Close linguistic analysis is a powerful method to practice critical-thinking skills as students select and analyze evidence in order to construct original arguments. I select sources that challenge students to question and critique not just Orientalist and racist stereotypes of Muslims, but also representations that seem to be positive on the surface but subtly reinforce inequitable expectations of Muslims. This assignment allows students to explore some of the social justice issues facing Muslims in the U.S., such as the reinforcement of Islamophobia, the expectations to prove their allegiance to the nation, and the demand to conform to "good Muslim" expectations. Based on an exploration of their thesis statements, my analysis demonstrates that students used evidence from their sources to build arguments that condemn the perpetuation of stigma associated with Islam and Muslims. Additionally, many students critiqued media sources for subtly encouraging expectations that Muslims need to continually demonstrate patriotism and particular kinds of assimilation in order to be deemed "good" Muslims. Through this and similar assignments, students practice more critical perspectives on media and explore the challenges of representation through the perspectives of marginalized populations.

In the fall of 2018, a student group at Duke University invited a speaker to campus for a talk titled, "The American Muslim Identity: Patriot or Insurgent?" Although the speaker was described as "an American Muslim" and the child of Syrian immigrants, the talk prompted backlash from the university's Muslim Student Association (MSA). The MSA organized a teach-in to protest the event, stating that "we are tired of being told we have to 'choose' between being 'insurgents' and 'patriots.'" The MSA's reaction highlights two social justice and equity issues confronting Muslims in the United States: (1) they face negative stereotypes due to their religion and (2) they must prove (repeatedly) their allegiance to America in order to be accepted as part of a decent civilian public. These expectations reflect the idea that "good Muslims" are determined by virtue of their patriotism and assimilation, leading to the perception that outward expression of Islam is viewed as incompatible with Americanness (Alsultany, 2012; Mamdani, 2004).

The MSA's reaction echoes some of the key issues in teaching about social justice that are at the root of the assignment I present here: how do we help students feel co-suffering with marginalized groups of which they may not be a part rather than continue to think from their own limited perspectives? What ethical implications are tied to the representations of stigmatized communities? And how do we encourage students to think about the complexities of representation, including how superficially positive, sympathetic representations can still reinforce problematic stereotypes? While these questions can be explored with many marginalized groups, my assignment asks students to think critically about the representations of Muslims found in news and political media, as well as in popular TV shows and media created by Muslim Americans.

The vast majority of students in my class are not Muslim and were taught in education systems that do not convey the cultural, ethnic, and interpretational diversity of Muslims (Hirji, 2019). Rather, students' understandings of Islam are filtered through mainstream news and media. These largely Orientalist discourses often paint Muslims as violent, anti-modern, and uncivilized (Said, 1978). The issue of representation is not purely a matter of religious affiliation but draws on the way that the experiences of being Muslim are complex and differently shaped by context as well as by immigration status, race, class, gender, and ability. While the "good Muslim" who aligns with American values may escape some negative stereotypes, the existence of the "good Muslim" reinforces the looming existence of the "bad Muslim" (Alsultany, 2012; Mamdani, 2004). In my writing assignment, I curate an exercise that asks students to examine not only how Muslims are being represented, but to explore the equity issues in *what* the media expects Muslims to be and *how* those expectations impact Muslims.

To scaffold this assignment, I guide students through an analysis centered on issues of social justice by examining media portrayals of Muslims. For example, students practice close, linguistic analysis on a trailer for Season 4 of the TV show *Homeland* (cited in Stern [2014][1]). This analysis entails viewing the trailer multiple times and providing the opportunity to watch excerpts again on their own or in small groups. As they view, students pay close attention to how Muslims are represented. In forming their arguments, students cite particular images, text, musical lyrics, dialogue, or the juxtapositions of images in order to defend the representations they plan to argue. Theories such as Orientalism or arguments made in an assigned chapter from Evelyn Alsultany's (2012) *Arabs and Muslims in the Media: Race and Representation after 9/11* help deepen analysis. Through this exercise, students meet secondary objectives as they articulate and critique the overtly anti-Muslim messages and Orientalist tropes, including the white savior complex, the conflation of religion and culture, Muslim women as oppressed, and Arabs/Muslims as suspicious (reinforcing the "bad" Muslim that Alsultany discusses). Students point to the removal of the headscarf to argue how oppression and the white savior complex are triggered; they analyze the lyrics and tone conveyed by the music to argue about messages of the superiority of Western values. However, because the negative representations in *Homeland* are so blatant, this exercise teaches students how to watch, draw out evidence, and find themes to analyze as they practice linguistic analysis. But the exercise does not necessarily challenge their critical thinking about representation. For my assignment, I deliberately pick sources that complicate students' ideas about representation. On the surface, most of the sources seem to positively represent Islam and Muslims, encouraging deeper reflection on the difficulties entailed in socially just representations.

Language and Power: Course Context & Overview

This assignment comes from my 2017-18 Writing 101 course called Language and Power: Words as Actions in Shaping Social Identities. Writing 101 is a one-semester introduction to academic writing required of all incoming undergraduates at Duke University. Sections were capped at 12 to allow for discussion-based classes and individualized writing instruction (small group work and one-on-one conferences). Some of the main writing goals are to learn to articulate a position and situate one's writing within a specific disciplinary context. Instructors have autonomy to select the topics, disciplinary foci, assignments, and specific writing goals. In Language and Power, we use the discipline and methods of linguistic anthropology to explore the way language interacts with race, class, gender, and religion to reinforce hierarchies of power. The course teaches students to recognize the subtle ways in which interactions can legitimate or even heighten inequalities. From questions about "where are you *really* from?" to assumptions made about the intelligence of speakers of African American Vernacular English, language plays a key

role in marking who has and who lacks privilege. I root the course in the concept of language ideologies, as associations and stigmas attached to forms of talk are mediated by ideologies of language (Kroskrity, 2004; Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994). This includes beliefs in the existence and superiority of a "standard language" variety or the associations between one language and one nation. In the course, we examine how ideologies impact perceptions in contemporary media, including advertisements, TV, and the news. One of the underlying goals of the course is to help students be more critical of the media they ingest every day so that they can question and push back against injustices towards marginalized groups.

Course activities teach students to write arguments based on their own linguistic analysis. The readings model linguistic analysis as a tool to illuminate the relationship between language and social hierarchies, including William Labov's (1972) work on language and class distinctions, Samy Alim's (2004) research on the grammar of African American Vernacular English, and John Rickford and Sharese King's (2016) analysis of race and court testimony. Students also engage in peer workshops and individual conferences with the professor to strengthen their analyses and writing skills. The course has three major linguistic analysis-based writing assignments. In the first, students analyze the use of gender in Barbie's 2017 "Dads who Play Barbie" advertising campaign. The second paper, presented here, asks the students to examine representations of Muslims. For the final assignment, students select their own media sources and topic for analysis.

Setting up the Assignment: Language, Islam, and Justice

This assignment explores language, hierarchy, and Islam. We read a chapter from Inmaculada García-Sánchez's (2014) ethnography about Moroccan immigrants in Spain. García-Sánchez analyzes classroom interactions, including recorded peer tattling and the teacher's response. She breaks down the differences in the peer tattling targeting Spanish students versus targeting Moroccan students. She contrasts how Spanish school teachers quickly stop overt prejudice against the Moroccan students, but overlook peer tattling that can contain subtle racism and negative moral value judgments of the Moroccans that are not expressed towards Spanish peers and could easily be missed without close analysis (García-Sánchez, 2014). This reading highlights the importance of linguistic analysis to demonstrate the complexities of racism that go beyond overt forms.

To prepare for analysis of media, students read Alsultany (2012), who argues that media representations of Muslims immediately after 9/11 were surprisingly positive. However, these "good Muslims" not only emphasize the presence of the potential "bad Muslim," but also reinforce problematic discourses of American exceptionalism. As she describes, "the Other is portrayed sympathetically in order to project the United States as an enlightened country that has entered a postracial era" (p. 16). We also discuss Edward Said's theories of Orientalism, and this prepares the students for an in-class practice analysis and argument construction on *Homeland.* We close the unit with this assignment, which goes through peer review and the option for individual guidance during office hours.

For instructors adapting this assignment, there is room to engage more substantially with relevant social theories that will aid analysis and meet different course goals. I limited this topic to two 75-minute sessions to discuss García-Sánchez, Alsultany, and practice on the *Homeland* trailer. However, to help students develop more critical perspectives to guide the direction of their analyses and writing projects, I recommend more time for a stronger theoretical foundation. I also advise assigning excerpts of Said's (1978) theory of Orientalism. Additionally, an analytical tool like intersectionality would help students see how representations and treatments of Muslims cannot be reduced to religious affiliation but are inseparable from issues of race, class,

gender, and immigration status. Some readings which address intersectionality and the Muslim-American experience are Alsultany (2012), Khalid Beydoun (2018), and Su'ad Abdul Khabeer (2016). Racial tensions and anti-Black sentiments within the Muslim community are further compounded by the ways in which the "model minority" myth (Kim, 1999) can encourage expectations around assimilation for some segments of the Muslim population.

Analysis of the Final Papers

I taught 59 first-year college students across five sections of "Language and Power." After the project received IRB approval, 52 students granted permission to use their final papers in my data set (88% approval response rate). The goal of the research was to explore how writing pedagogy can be used to build understanding across lines of difference. The most popular sources included President Obama's (2015) national address following the San Bernardino mass shooting, and President Trump's (2017) speech at the Arab Islamic American Summit. Comedic sitcoms were also popular, including *Halal in the Family* (Mandvi et al., 2015). (The rest of the potential sources are listed in the assignment.) Since teaching this class, recent media created by Muslim Americans provides an opportunity for additional sources. Shows such as *Ramy, Patriot Act,* and *East of La Brea*, may serve as additional material, depending on access. Some are only available through paid services.

While the key goal of the writing assignment is to teach argumentative writing based on linguistic analysis, the assignment also serves secondary goals. Here, I focus on two secondary concerns, demonstrated in the MSA's reaction to the speaker in the opening anecdote: do students recognize the inequitable challenges faced by Muslims when it comes to representation, and can students articulate the complexities of representation faced by this particular population?

For the first concern, it did seem that all students articulated that Muslims face stigma through unjust and unfair representations, as evidenced in their titles, thesis statements, and/or conclusions. Regardless of how they used their sources and evidence, all the students argued that Muslims face unjust challenges due to stereotypes. However, I cannot separate this result from the fact that students may have been appealing to me as both the instructor and grader. All students were aware that my own research focuses on Islam and Muslims, and some may have known that I identify as Muslim American.

Further, I explored whether and how students articulated the complexities of representation. This was especially important as I read a few papers that recognized that Muslims are stigmatized but ignored how politicians and media (even by Muslim Americans) perpetuate the marginalization of minority groups by reinforcing the existence of the "bad Muslim" or through unjust expectations that Muslims must assimilate. While setting up a stronger theoretical foundation before the exercise may help, I found an in-class rehashing of aspects of Alsultany's article on the impact of the USA PATRIOT Act prompted a more critical look in many final drafts.

One way that students articulated complexities of representation was to embed multiple readings of the representation into their thesis statements, recognizing both positive and problematic interpretations. This was done in 22 of the papers (42%). For example, one student argued:

> Though much of the President's address focused on healing America through emphasizing our collective unity…President Obama *fails to include Muslim Americans* in this vision by creating a binary between non-Muslim and Muslim Americans and *calling on all Muslim Americans to hold themselves more accountable for preventing terrorist activity and organization.* (My italics for emphasis.)

The writer critiqued Obama's speech for the way in which U.S. Muslims are unfairly asked to prevent terrorism. They supported their thesis with explicit evidence from the speech that shows both the positive message as well as the expectations for Muslim self-policing and responsibility. For example, the writer quoted Obama saying, "we must enlist Muslim communities as some of our strongest allies.... [Extremist ideology] is a real problem that Muslims must confront." The writer argued that the inclusive "we" Obama had previously created now excludes Muslim Americans, and further argued that Islam is explicitly linked to terrorism, making Muslims responsible and obligated to combat something not related to their religion.

Students also demonstrated understanding complexities and consequences of representation by drawing on the "good Muslim/bad Muslim" binary, seen in 20 of the papers (38%). For example:

> Not only does the show reveal that there is a lack of... appreciation of Islamic culture in the United States, but it shows how this ignorance is perpetuated through stereotyping and *how this stereotyping creates pressure for Muslim Americans to assimilate and assert their American identity.* (My italics for emphasis.)

The author argued that *Halal in the Family*, a comedic sitcom about the day-to-day lives of Muslim Americans, challenged the societal ignorance about Muslims and the often easily perpetuated stereotypes about them. Additionally, the writer deepened their reflection with what those stereotypes do to Muslims—force Muslims to assimilate patriotic values if they wish to be considered "good," highlighting the inequitable expectations placed on Muslims.

Conclusion

Just as the reactions of the students in the MSA indicated in the opening of this article, representations of Muslims can have tangible impacts on Muslims. It is easy for representation to reinforce the idea that Islam is by its nature "un-American" or to unintentionally fortify the existence of the potentially "bad" Muslim. With this assignment, most students practiced questioning the power of media to potentially bias the treatment of an entire group. Their papers demonstrated the injustice of the expectations that Muslims must be either "patriots or insurgents" and critiqued its use in media representations, even those created by Muslims or that seem positive on the surface. This assignment demonstrates the importance of linguistic anthropology theory and analysis to think critically about the power of language to reinforce and also challenge injustice around us.

In reflecting on this assignment, I found it challenging to read those papers that praised politicians for "correcting" stereotypes about Muslims, while ignoring the surveillance of mosques and the deportation and arrest of Muslim immigrants (Alsultany, 2012; Beydoun, 2018). At the same time, the fact that the sources are complex and not overtly anti-Muslim provides space for students to develop unique analyses and interpretations. Overall, this assignment allowed students to step into the shoes of marginalized populations, if only superficially. Even as an in-class activity, linguistic analysis of media engages students, stimulates critical analysis, and teaches social justice. This activity can be adapted to a variety of topics, from the representation of LGBTQ+ individuals or the depiction of disabilities on TV. Bringing in case studies and practicing linguistic analysis or even a close reading helps students see the complexities of representation and reflect on their own biases and assumptions.

This assignment gives students the chance to think critically and empathetically about marginalization, leading to powerful impacts on how they watch and create media in the future. While teaching assignments that center controversial topics or marginalized populations can be daunting, the use of linguistic analysis can be a powerful teaching tool. Because students

are asked to cite explicit evidence for their claims, students most commonly take a stance of empathy and understanding for marginalized populations. These exercises shift the task of learning and empathizing onto all students; one by-product is that marginalized students feel seen in the classroom without being asked to "speak for" aspects of their complex and intersectional identities. Linguistic analysis activities have a lingering impact on students as they continue to think about their arguments: some develop them into bigger projects, and students even forward media sources to me (some positive, some problematic) that remind them of the course. It is through this type of assignment that students become more critical consumers and producers of media.

ASSIGNMENT

Language and the Representation of Muslims

Suggested length: 4-6 pages (not including works cited page or appendix. You may include transcripts in the appendix.)

    Reference Material: *The Craft of Research* chapters 7, 8, and 9

Assignment Details:

Description: This writing assignment will allow you to practice analytic skills to create an argument and explore the architecture of writing arguments. Building from the class discussion on the representation of Muslims, you will analyze media and linguistic data to make your own arguments about how language shapes, manipulates, and influences social identities.

    Assignment Purpose: The purposes of the assignment are to (1) learn how to analyze linguistic data; (2) practice constructing arguments by making claims and supporting them with evidence and reasons; (3) contextualize linguistic data in the social context; and (4) become more critical thinkers and writers.

    Audience: As all the issues below are contemporary issues, not much analysis through the lens of linguistic anthropology has been done. Your writing would be a contribution both to scholarly analysis but also to reflections on problematic and under-observed issues around the reproduction of social inequity and injustice. Imagine your audience to be smart, critical people, interested in contemporary challenges but not well versed in linguistic anthropology.

    Revising - Small Group Workshops: For this paper, you will receive feedback on your first draft from a small group of your peers. Groups will be determined in advance and you will post to the forum section of the course website.

Linguistic Data:

You can either choose from the following list or select your own (if you choose something not on this list, please discuss the source with me before proceeding):

- Political Speeches
  - President Trump's (May 2017) Speech to the Arab Islamic American Summit.
  - President Obama's (December 2015) Address to the Nation on the San Bernardino shooting.
- Other Media
  - *Halal in the Family* (2015) – a sitcom parody TV show about a Muslim family.
  - *Master of None* (2017) Season 2, episode 3 "Religion" – comedy show featuring Aziz Ansari (this source requires a Netflix account).

– *By the Dawn's Early Light: Chris Jackson's Journey to Islam* (2005) – documentary about the basketball player Chris Jackson/Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf who converted to Islam and refused to stand for the anthem.
– *All-American Muslim* (2011-2012) – reality show about Muslims in America.
– *Arranged* (2007)– a film about a friendship between two teachers, who are both going through the marriage process. One teacher is an Orthodox Jew and the other Muslim.

Research Question:

Analyze one of the media/political documents above and write a paper asking and answering a question about the representation of Muslims. You will need to design the specific question as you analyze and write.

Building your assignment:
Week 1 – Steps 1-5
Step 1: Transcription

Like we have done in class, start your linguistic analysis with a transcript. After you have viewed your data, transcribe the most relevant scenes/episodes or the places where you want to start/focus your analysis.

Step 2: Preliminary Analysis

Begin marking up your transcript with things that catch your attention, intrigue you, surprise you, or seem worth noting. You can create your own coding system; just remember to design a key for all the codes. Watch and re-watch the clip, each time adding codes/notes of things you notice. Some things to pay attention to may include: intonation, pauses, gestures, eye gaze, how objects are being used or not used, who speaks first, who speaks the most/least, how are people positioning themselves and others, who is aligning with whom, etc. I find this works best/easiest on a printed version with multiple colors to help you see layers of analysis.

Some ideas/question to keep in mind to guide you:

- How is "Islam" or "Muslim" used? What/who do those categories refer to and what do they mean? What are the implications of such labels?
- Who is automatically assumed to be Muslim and what associations does it come with? Which Muslims can "pass" and what does that allow?
- To what extent do the categories of Muslim and American overlap and under what situations? When do they NOT overlap?
- Which negative actions/activities are projected onto which social identities and how? What positive actions/activities are projected onto which social identities and how?
- How are pronouns being used ("us" vs "them"; who is included in "we")?
- How does the representation of Muslims in the data meet the broader context of Muslims in America? How does that social context impact your data?

Step 3: Develop a research question

Now that you have some preliminary analysis, draft a research question that you want to explore in the paper. Identifying something that surprises you is an effective way to start. What about the issue of representation do you want to explore? We will workshop research questions in class so that you get some support and feedback on this part.

Step 4: Building a thesis

Once you have a draft research question, continue your analysis in ways that will help you answer that question. This should lead you to a draft thesis. It is okay for your research question and thesis to change as you work. Refer back to the suggestions under step 2 to continue your analysis.

Step 5: Outline your argument

Outline your argument with the subclaims and evidence to support it.

Week 2 – Steps 6- 7
Step 6: Draft 1

Write the first draft of your paper.

Step 7: Peer review

In addition to whatever editing and revision processes that you find helpful, submit your draft to your small group for peer review. Read and comment on each of the drafts prior to the workshop so you are prepared to share your thoughts and suggestions during class.

Week 3 – Step 8
Step 8: Final revisions

Complete any final revisions and submit your final draft on the course website.

Structure of the argument: Begin with an introduction that introduces your data, sets up the context of looking at Muslims in America, proposes a question, mentions the significance of the question and ends with your thesis (your answer to the question).

The body of your paper lays out claims that elaborate on your thesis and are supported by reason and evidence. You will need to reference parts of the text from your data explicitly to support your arguments. You can do so by integrating excerpts of your transcripts (interactions), quoted lines or image stills from your data, just as the authors we read cite linguistic or visual evidence in their papers. Your analysis, coding schemes, theories, patterns you notice, analysis of word choice will also help you connect the evidence from the data to the thesis you are arguing. This may become the "reason" that supports some of your claims.

Your conclusion only needs a few sentences of summary. Use your conclusion to go further into why your argument is significant. Why is your argument important and worth knowing?

Citing sources: You may cite outside sources in your paper. Some of these sources may be course material to contextualize Muslims in America, or theoretical lenses by which to look at the data. They may also be outside sources to further the context in which you are examining your data. Include a Works Cited page for anything you cite.

Grading: Assignments are evaluated with a letter grade based on how successfully the paper analyzes the data, builds an argument, and reflects critical thinking and writing.

A successful essay will:

- Take a focused, arguable position articulated in a clear, identifiable, and significant thesis.
- Be clear and conceptually organized, which means that rather than listing points as you move from paragraph to paragraph, each paragraph should logically build from the previous paragraph and help to explain to the reader your thesis.
- Offer supporting evidence for all the claims you make, drawn from your linguistic data and your observations as well as your analysis of the material that explains how your observations are working to support your argument.

- Incorporate course theories and ideas to support your interpretation of political language and concepts of inclusion and exclusion.
- Situate your analysis in the context of the representation of Muslims.

Notes

[1] There are several versions of the trailer. The one I used can be viewed in Stern (2014).

Supplementary Material

For supplementary material accompanying this paper, including a PDF facsimile of the assignment description formatted as the author(s) presented it to students, please visit https://doi.org/10.31719/pjaw.v6i1.82.

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Building Students' Literate Agency Through Makerspace Activities in a Two-Year College

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Abstract

This article discusses how a makerspace-based assignment can cultivate the literate agency of students in English writing classrooms in a two-year college. The maker movement in education has been predominantly studied in business, science, and engineering fields and in four-year colleges. Networking translingual writing pedagogies and the maker movement, I devised a makerspace-based writing assignment as a scaffolding project to support students' analyses of their digital writing practices. I argue that this assignment, which emphasizes material processes of writing through "making" activities, can benefit two-year college students and offer links to social justice in multiple ways: it can promote students' access to the emerging trend of the maker movement and DIY fabrication culture; it encourages students from linguistically, culturally, and racially diverse backgrounds to better articulate their ideas by employing multilingual and multimodal resources; and it can help them build their literate agency and transfer the maker mindset to other rhetorical environments.

The Maker Movement in a Two-Year College Context

Scholars and teachers in higher education have advocated for "making" or "making practices" as an emerging pedagogy in literacy education, rhetoric and composition, and technical and professional communication classrooms (Koupf, 2017; Tham, 2021). Making, often broadly defined as "a process of creating something" (Hsu et al., 2017, p. 589), learning through technology (Dougherty, 2012), or a material activity of problem-solving (Tham, 2021), has not only been studied in STEM fields but also incorporated into writing and literacy classrooms. The 2005 start of that "maker movement" is often attributed to Dale Dougherty, founder of the *Make:* magazine in 2005 and "Maker Faire" in 2006; the movement includes any creating activities and embraces any makers who tinker with objects and materials that can lead to a solution to a problem. Thus, this approach has often been described as democratic, as it includes a wide range of people who approach technology to solve a problem, including underrepresented students and non-academic communities.

In this sense, the term "maker" is differentiated from the term "inventor" because it suggests that anyone who can tinker with things out of a "sense of necessity" as "cooks preparing food for our families, as gardeners, as knitters" (Dougherty, 2012, p. 11) provides "a positive cultural connotation" and promotes "many kinds of content production such as DIY (do-it-yourself) and crafting" (Breaux, 2017, p. 28). Furthermore, it emphasizes collaborative processes often observed in maker culture and uses open-source-based processes such as sharing "open-source hardware" and "digital fabrication designs" (Gershenfeld, 2012, p. 55). Thus, "the real strength of a fab lab [makerspace] is not technical; it is social" (Gershenfeld, 2012, p. 57). Similarly, Erica Halverson and Kimberly Sheridan (2014) described those who have maker mindsets as "people who are engaged in the creative production of artifacts in their daily lives and who find physical and digital forums to share their processes and products with others" (p. 496). While

emphasizing this collaborative aspect of the maker movement, scholars have also stated that the maker movement and making activities can cultivate creativity as reflected in the term "tinkering" that refers to material repurposing processes leading to both practical solutions and imaginative experiments (Koupf, 2017). As shown in these definitions, scholars have often pointed out that maker mindsets are multidisciplinary, collaboration-inducing, democratizing, and creativity-oriented.

At the pedagogical level, educators and researchers have examined how the maker movement has had transformative impacts on students, particularly students from minoritized groups, and how the maker movement has addressed the digital divide. Recently, educators have noted that makerspaces benefit students' learning in K-12 classrooms and higher education institutions by empowering students who have been underrepresented in STEM fields and by bridging the gap in accessing new technologies (Barton et al., 2017; Halverson & Sheridan, 2014; Hsu et al., 2017). For example, Barton et al. (2017) demonstrated how makerspaces have offered access to STEM education and "more equitable opportunities" (p. 28) for young African Americans and Latinos from marginalized backgrounds in makerspaces in which white, male adult-centered discourses have been dominant (p. 5). By integrating social justice paradigms into students' makerspace-based learning, their study foregrounds those who "remain[ed] silent in these making worlds" (p. 7). Marijel Melo (2020) also problematized the "persistent underrepresentation of diverse communities within makerspaces" (p. 59) and highlighted the material agency of students in first-year writing classrooms where makerspace activities can change power structures between teachers and students and promote "embodied, holistic learning" (Melo, 2016, para. 6). Echoing these social justice paradigms in the maker movement, I invited my students in first-year writing courses at Houston Community College to do on-campus making activities and analyze their makerspace experiences in the context of their diverse literacies across languages and modalities. In a one- or two-page paper, entitled the Makerspace Paper, students completed reflective writing on their making activities, and this brief writing was synthesized with their literacy analysis assignment.

Although the maker movement in two-year colleges has the potential to promote social justice by providing diverse student populations with access to tools, technologies, ethos, and a maker mindset, little research has discussed makerspaces in the lives of two-year college students. In their *Makerspace Impact* report, the California Community College (CCC) Maker Initiative (2019) illustrated how 24 community college makerspaces have focused on serving students and meeting their "career needs" (p. 3). This report emphasized much needed discussions of the maker movement across two-year colleges. However, by emphasizing the movement's potential to be connected to the job market and entrepreneurial opportunities, this experiment was limited to regarding students as "clients" for whom institutions need to "provide skills, experiences, and connections to prepare them for entrepreneurship and innovative careers" (p. 3). While this initiative democratizes makerspace discourses beyond four-year colleges and shows the direct impacts on the lives of two-year college students, the maker movement in the community college context has been understudied. As Patrick Sullivan (2015) aptly explained the two-year college teacher's responsibilities, "a purely vocational focus impoverishes and diminishes our mission and our work" (p. 343).

Literate Agency and Makerspaces

Taking up Sullivan's call for attention to the two-year college teacher's responsibilities and practicing these responsibilities through the emerging trend of the maker movement, I propose that making should align with students' sociocultural and material agency. I describe this sociocultural and material agency as "literate agency," in which students can assemble their

linguistic, cultural, and material resources across different contexts. The agency of students and their diverse resources across languages, contexts, and modalities have been theorized by many scholars. For instance, Bronwyn T. Williams (2017) demonstrated that literate agency is not a metrical ability to engage in literate activities but is dispositions in which rhetors and language users perceive their agency in interpreting rhetorical situations and adapting their prior skills, knowledge, and experiences. According to Williams (2017), literate agency can be defined as "the perception of agency, not just whether a person is able to read and write in terms of measurable skills, but whether she or he *perceives* agency and *feels* able to read and write in a given context, is crucial in how people respond to such situations" (Williams, 2017, p. 3). As shown in this definition, it is important to cultivate students' awareness of their literacies through sociocultural and material approaches to language and writing, in which "digital literacies, indeed all literacies, exist and develop within the context of complex and interrelated local and global ecologies" (Hawisher et al., 2006, p. 627).

To be conscious of this literate agency is even more important for students in first-year writing courses and developmental writing courses in a community college, who often cross linguistic and cultural borders as daily practices and need to deal with textual mobilities and language differences across diverse modalities (Blommaert, 2010; Canagarajah, 2013; Fraiberg, 2010; Guerra, 2015; Horner et al., 2011). To conceptualize these mobile literate activities, Canagarajah used the term "translingual literacy," defined as "an understanding of the production, circulation, and reception of texts that are always mobile; that draw from diverse languages, symbol systems, and modalities of communication; and that involve inter-community negotiations" (Canagarajah, 2013, p. 41). Responding to calls for pedagogical implementations of translingual literacy, Canagarajah (2013) has enacted translingual practices in his class on teaching second-language writing for advanced students by using the genre of literacy autobiography (p. 47). Such pedagogical methods based on translingual approaches further urge teachers and researchers to create multidimensional engagements that enable students in more diverse contexts such as first-year writing courses and developmental writing courses to experience the materiality, creativity, and performativity of meaning-making processes. Networking translingual literacy scholarship and the emerging maker movement, I designed on-campus makerspace workshops and making activities in the digital literacy analysis assignment as an extended enactment that can help students experience meaning-making processes through their diverse semiotic resources.

This scaffolding assignment, entitled "Makerspace Paper," is a part of the major writing project module centered on analyzing digital literacy in a first-year writing course. This digital literacy analysis module guided students to document their digital writing practices, engage in on-campus makerspace workshops, and reflect on their making activities to contextualize the social and cultural meanings of those activities in their daily academic and professional environments. Incorporating the Makerspace Paper assignment demonstrates how making activities can help writing instructors and students in first-year writing courses meet the core curriculum objectives (CCOs), particularly the goals of critical thinking and communication. Our CCOs articulate critical thinking and communication as abilities through which students synthesize information, develop inquiry-driven writing projects, and develop effective strategies of understanding and expressing ideas across modalities including written, oral, and visual communication. Drawing from sociocultural approaches to literacy practices (Gee, 1996; Prior, 2006; Street, 2003) and material approaches to writing pedagogies through making practices (Breaux, 2017; Melo, 2016; Melo, 2020), I revised my previous writing assignment (a digital literacy analysis project) to emphasize makerspace-based activities. Through this revision, I aimed to engage students in composing with multiple modalities by 1) exploring their digital

writing activities; 2) participating in doing makerspace workshops and making their makerspace objects; 3) conducting an interview with a peer student to compare their makerspace experiences with others' experiences; and 4) situating makerspace activities in their own literate landscapes. Students worked on multiple writing components, such as observation-based writings about their digital activities, a reflection paper on their makerspace activities, and an interview excerpt based on listening to others' making experiences and digital literacies, which culminated in an analysis paper that highlighted both digital writing and digital fabrication (or making).

Throughout this module, students observed their literate activities through translingual and multidimensional approaches and reflected on the social and material environments that constituted their literate landscapes. In their writing, students were also encouraged to use languages other than English for rhetorical purposes. This revised writing assignment benefits two-year college students and offers links to social justice by promoting students' access to the emerging trends of the maker movement and DIY fabrication culture. It encourages students from linguistically, culturally, and racially diverse backgrounds to better express their ideas by employing their multilingual and multimodal resources. The connection between students' diverse resources and making activities can help them build their literate agency and transfer the maker mindset to other rhetorical environments such as discipline-specific writing contexts.

Assignment Description and Institutional Context

Houston Community College is an open-admission institution that serves diverse student populations in terms of race, ethnicity, class, language, ability, and age. The Hispanic population makes up about 37% of the entire student body, while African American students make up 31%, white students 14%, and Asian students about 14% (Houston Community College, n.d.-a, p. 19). Also, this institution is known to serve the highest number of international student population (Houston Community College, n.d.-a, p. 13) among two-year institutions. Although data on race, ethnicity, language, or other demographic information of the students enrolled in Composition I courses I taught was not collected, students in the four Composition I course sections self-reported through their writing that they came from diverse backgrounds in terms of race, ethnicity, class, ability, language, and age. Out of about 95 students in Composition I that I taught during the fall semester of 2019 at Houston Community College, 22 students were enrolled in the co-linked English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) course and the Composition I course in the same semester.[1]

For the second major writing project in this course, students engaged in a digital literacy analysis module aligned with the scaffolding Makerspace Paper assignment. For the Makerspace Paper, students were encouraged to extend their literate landscapes into ones that were tangible and material across languages and modalities. Students started this Analysis on the Digital Literacy module by reading and discussing Danielle DeVoss et al.'s (2011) article "The Future of Literacy." In these discussions, students compared their own digital literacy to the four case studies in DeVoss et al.'s article. As part of the components of this module, students participated in doing makerspace activities and writing a Makerspace Paper in which they were guided to combine their responses to scholarly conversations on digital literacies and experiential making activities through new technologies. While doing makerspace activities, students learned software skills and navigated tool manuals (including 3D printers, vinyl cutters, and laser cutters) under the guidance of the directors and technicians of the on-campus makerspace.[2] Students signed up for one of three workshops to use 3D printers, vinyl cutters, or laser cutters, respectively. At the end of these 80-minute workshops, students were encouraged to fabricate a 3D logo, a wooden or plastic name badge, or a self-designed T-shirt. By reviewing this on-campus makerspace's mission statement that focuses on the ideation and creation processes of things

and then completing safety rule quizzes, students obtained a physical badge to become members of this facility. This procedure helped students start to shape the maker mindset and understand that this makerspace is for collaborations and DIY processes. The makerspace mission statement states that this space is for "providing a place to explore, imagine, and create combining a design thinking process with emerging technologies such as 3D printers, laser cutters, and CNC machines alongside traditional technologies to take ideas from concept to launch" (Houston Community College, n.d.-b). At the end of the workshop, students completed the Makerspace Paper assignment and connected their hands-on experience of the makerspace workshop with their reading of "The Future of Literacy." Students then conducted a peer interview with a partner who explored other tools in a different workshop. For example, a student who worked in a 3D printer workshop was matched with a student who tinkered with other tools in the vinyl cutter or laser cutter workshop. Comparing their own experience to those of their peers, students reflected on rapidly growing digital fabrication trends. The Makerspace Paper and peer interview assignments culminated in a 5-6 page major writing assignment titled Digital Literacy Analysis.

The process of the three workshops consisted of the makerspace director's overview lectures of tools, students' using tools to fabricate designs, and the lead technician's rubric-based assessments. After a 20-minute lecture, student groups navigated the fabrication process with the technician who oversaw the workshop. I shared an observation template and guidelines with students for them to document the procedures of their workshop activities and simultaneously describe their feelings and thoughts. While assisting with the three small groups, I often noticed that students helped each other.

To situate these making activities in the writing classroom, I was particularly helped by Gershenfeld's (2012) understanding of digital fabrication. He described digital fabrication, composed of "computer-controlled fabrication processes" (p. 44) including 3D printing, as a "new digital revolution" (p. 43) in that *anyone* can make anything beyond traditional manufacturing (p. 44). Although making includes other mundane and nonelectronic activities beyond digital fabrication, my aim for this assignment focused on connecting makerspace activities to students' diverse literate resources, which are often fluid across digital environments yet have been underrepresented in classrooms. I intended to integrate the sociocultural and material aspects of digital fabrication grounded in the maker movement to introductory writing classrooms with diverse student populations in institutions beyond STEM fields or four-year colleges.

Ima: A Case Study

Some of the workshop attendees, particularly local students who finished their high school in the Greater Houston area, indicated that they were already familiar with the 3D printer. However, groups of students, particularly international students co-enrolled in the paired ESOL class, reported that they had few experiences in handling these types of tools and were less familiar with the notion of a makerspace. Overall, most students responded to this assignment in creative ways. Although students used already prepared materials provided by makerspace technicians to facilitate the fabrication process, some student makers showed a wide range of different products by using their multilingual and multimodal resources. In these activities, students seemed to prototype visual components, such as typefaces, colors, and size, and different linguistic resources to express their identities.

To further investigate students' perceptions, I designed teacher-research interviews and had an extended interview with Ima (pseudonym)[3] after the semester ended. Ima shared extensive ideas and stories about how she designed her makerspace artifact.[4] At the time of the interview, Ima had finished her high school in Tanzania one year ago and pursued studying

STEM fields after completing core curriculums in this institution. Although her maker product was a T-shirt based on pre-structured workshop plans, her Makerspace Paper shows a rhetorical understanding of connections between this assignment and the linguistic, cultural, and material resources she could leverage in her other courses and future workplaces. In her Makerspace Paper, Ima wrote, "In their report case study, DeVoss [et al.] stated that for someone to make media literacy interesting, it depends on how a person interacts with the designs and his or her knowledge and ideas. There is no limitation on how to show ideas." Her understanding of material affordances (e.g., "it depends on how a person interacts with the designs"; "There is no limitation on how to show ideas") mirrors her emphasis on the importance of literate agency in expressing one's ideas. More specifically, she took into account the potential to use materials and objects, including vinyl, cloth, or a wooden or acrylic plate, to articulate her ideas and use them as effective rhetorical devices. In her Makerspace Paper, she also stated, "through vinyl cutting knowledge [my peer interviewee] can make T-shirts of her own and she can use her designing skills to create something lovely which can attract people's attention.... I'm proud that I know that I can physically generate whatever idea that comes in my mind using plastic." In her interview, she further shared her plan to acquire more experience in handling other tools beyond 3D printing and vinyl cutting in the on-campus makerspace and apply this knowledge to her other courses including biology to explain her discipline-specific notions.

The Makerspace Paper assignment seemed to strengthen Ima's inclination toward the maker mindset. While other students followed a demonstration provided by the lead technician and placed their names or other texts on T-shirts, she overlaid a giraffe image with a written word "TANZANIA." Ima explained that this creativity provoked the idea of a giraffe in her makerspace activity because in Tanzania giraffes became an important symbol (see Figure 1). She thought that it would be meaningful to include an image of Tanzania instead of her name. Her interview illustrated that this idea was also based on her embodied experiences: "Back at home, I passed through a national park whenever I went to school. On the way to school, we saw different animals. I remember I used to see giraffes, and the giraffe is on our money." After having an interview with Ima, I realized that she employed a giraffe image not simply as a typical icon of her original place. Rather, her T-shirt showed her ongoing "sedimentation" process, that is, the repetitions and recontextualizations of everyday language practices over time (Lu & Horner, 2013, p. 589). Her interview excerpts and reflections on makerspace activities suggest that her makerspace artifact can be seen as recontextualizing her sense of belonging. The T-shirt and the paper represent texts and images in a new academic environment.

Such maker mindsets and recontextualizing practices shown in Ima's artifact and interview suggest that material affordances extended by making activities seemed to enrich Ima's literacy repertoires. In her interview, her new literate world in the United States was often contrasted with her previous school life in Tanzania. She described how much her prior literate landscape was constrained by sociocultural forces and power dynamics. Ima explained that she was not allowed to express her ideas in Swahili and was required to use only English in Tanzania. In her interview, she stated that if students used Swahili at school they were penalized according to school policies. After finishing the Makerspace Paper assignment and other translingual pedagogy-based activities, Ima said that she came to value all her languages, including English, Swahili, and Pogoro (her tribal language), and developed the ability to shift between different languages and modes. Particularly, her material agency was observed when she invented an image of Tanzania and represented her identity with tools and objects: "We speak Swahili, We are here.... After ENGL 1301, I came to understand that it is a pride to think as a person who says, 'I belong to this place [Tanzania],' and share Tanzanian culture." Understanding her makerspace activity as part of her literate activity and situating this makerspace artifact in her

Figure 1. A screenshot from Ima's Makerspace Paper, which showcases Ima's vinyl cutting product. Photo by Ima.

literate landscape challenges a static view of academic writing, which sees students' ethos built in one specific academic place. This making activity allowed Ima to bring her homeplace to her coursework and represent her linguistic and cultural identity in non-written modes. Her case suggests that the design of this assignment through making activities can help students empower themselves by allowing them to incorporate their cultures and homeplaces. Furthermore it suggests that this assignment design can promote students' communicative skills and meta-level understanding of modalities by adding communication through tangible objects beyond written, verbal, and visual modes of communication.

Although she did not elaborate on a more nuanced understanding of rhetorical conventions and constraints in her other discipline-specific courses (e.g., the biology course she was taking alongside her English course in the same semester), Ima seemed to emphasize that the making activities could be generalized in other courses across disciplines and contexts. In her interview, Ima said:

> I think makerspace is about creating ideas. Creativity can be applied in other courses. For instance, I came to understand what I did for my Art Appreciation course, creativity can be used there. Creativity can also be used in biology. I took it last semester. I think I could use creativity there with tools in creative ways.

The Makerspace Paper assignment seemed to strengthen her dispositions toward maker mindsets (Halverson & Sheridan, 2014) and awareness of the transferability of creativity-oriented making activities from writing-intensive courses to other courses.

Other students' artifacts also allowed me to observe their emerging literate agency in which they leveraged their diverse resources across contexts. For example, a student in a vinyl cutter group pressed "Honolulu" to present part of her home culture. This student further detailed the differences and similarities of the learning paths of the case study participants found in "The Future of Literacy" and her own experience in creating a T-shirt by connecting a computer with the vinyl machine. Other students in the vinyl cutting group put greetings in Japanese or used words that are related to their workplaces or out-of-school cultures. As Johnathon Mauk (2003) points out, for students in two-year colleges, "each day, the campus, for them, was something to get *through*" (pp. 371-372). Mauk (2003) argues for spatial and embodied approaches to teaching writing and emphasizes that teachers should acknowledge students' lives across places and

help them build what Edward Soja referred to as a "third space" (as cited in Mauk, 2003, p. 378), which "offers a lens for understanding the intersection of materiality, action, language, and consciousness" (p. 379) and is often located at the "juncture between academic spaces … and students' daily lives" (p. 380). Ima's case aptly shows how a sociocultural understanding of the maker movement at the pedagogical level can serve as this type of an intersection at which students can assemble different languages and cultures and thereby build their literate agency. This makerspace as a third space can help students, particularly students whose languages and cultures were underrepresented, employ their multilingual and multimodal resources and construct their agency and sense of belonging.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Development

Further research is necessary to examine the intersection between literate agency and the maker movement and its implications for social justice. It should be noted that it is hard to generalize these findings based on a case study that relies on one individual student, however significant this case may be. Ima's case indicates that studies based on more substantive data are needed to investigate the connection between empowering underrepresented diverse students and integrating makerspace-based activities in writing courses. For example, in a future iteration, I will conduct a comparative research study by recruiting student groups from courses without makerspace-based assignments and from courses with makerspace-based assignments purposefully to examine the perceptions of writings and makerspaces activities of the students and the impacts of varied social factors. Also, it should be acknowledged that it may be challenging to create the maker mindset and connect it with students' linguistically and culturally diverse resources to build their literate agency within one semester or through a scaffolding assignment. Admittedly, the maker mindset and literate agency will be a more embodied learning process only when students iteratively experience trials and errors within multiple projects. To better situate making activities in first-year writing courses, further studies of scaffolding assignments, reading materials, and makerspaces in the context of literacy analysis are needed. Such studies could make organic connections between this emerging mode of communication and the core curriculum objectives required in general education courses. Lastly, making processes are entangled not only with students' awareness of their material affordances at conscious levels but also with their affective and variant processes that might be more involved in "noncognitive" and pre-conscious processes (Smith, 2017, p. 125). Thus, it will be important to consider students' dispositions, perceptions, emotional, and affective dimensions (Beck, 2019, p. 178) when this revised Composition I digital analysis assignment is offered again.

What I suggest for instructors who teach courses other than composition or rhetoric is that this introductory makerspace assignment be developed into a more discipline-specific or theme-based project. These pedagogical takeaways can be applied to other upper-division writing in which monolingual students tend to be more dominant in terms of student populations, because monolingual students also have diverse cultural resources and are encouraged to develop their creative negotiations across registers, genres, and modalities under disciplinary constraints. Furthermore, teachers in institutions that are not yet equipped with on-campus makerspace facilities can still consider integrating this assignment by thinking of other places such as libraries or laboratories for alternative maker programs. Those programs could include any initiatives such as special interest groups on making, faculty committees for the maker movement, and student-led maker fairs in which student participants can communicate their ideas and access tools in whatever limited ways (see Beavers et al., 2019). Lastly, as remote learning becomes more prevalent in higher education in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, makerspace-based assignments can be further developed through mobile virtual workshops in which students can

experiment with digital designs such as 3D modeling and 2D vector designs.[5] Although digital designs are not accompanied by physical fabrication stages and the ensuing consideration of material factors in virtual modes, mobile makerspace workshops could encourage students to start building the maker mindset and prototype their designs with tools to expand their literacies.

Conclusion

In short, the Makerspace Paper assignment and this reorientation of the maker movement into writing courses beyond STEM fields can promote students' access to the emerging digital fabrication trends across disciplines and foster students' literate agency by having students reflect on their linguistic landscapes and explore others' making activities. The makerspace-based assignment presents the possibility of addressing social inequalities in which students who have differences in ability, class, race, culture, and language are often marginalized, by recognizing the diverse linguistic and cultural resources that students already have in their everyday lives and thereby cultivating their literate agency across modalities.

ASSIGNMENT

Scaffolding Assignment: Makerspace Paper

I. Make a Digital Literacy Product

In the Digital Literacies and Makerspace module, you will visit the Makerspace Studio at Houston Community College and participate in a workshop module under the guidance of the instructor and the program director. In this module, you will explore how people do languaging by using a wide range of multimodal communication tools including 3D printing machines, laser cutting, and vinyl cutting machines.

You will sign up for one activity among three options (3D printing or laser cutting or vinyl cutting) depending on your own interest so that you can have firsthand experiences in fabricating a tangible item (i.e., a digital literacy product), by using tools and technologies in the Makerspace Studio. Before you come to this workshop, you will complete a Canvas module (Introduction to the Studio) and quizzes. For your reflection, you will jot down what you observe and take photos of specific moments and significant items during the workshop.

II. Write Your Reflection

After finishing the workshop, you will create a workshop report (Makerspace Paper) on the Innovation Module session, which will be submitted on Canvas. You will include your observations, findings, and reflections on your experiences in this workshop and connect your experiences to one or two of the case studies in "The Future of Literacy" in your Major Paper 2. In this brief writing, you will include two components: one descriptive paragraph and one or two reflective paragraphs (minimum 500 words) and one photo/figure you took in the workshop as a piece of visual evidence. To generate ideas for your Makerspace Paper, you might ask the following questions:

Descriptions

- What activities (3D printing or laser cutting or vinyl cutting) did you participate in?
- What happened in this workshop and your activity session? You will describe the events in an organized structure (chronologically or thematically, etc.).

Reflections

- What are the similarities and differences between your chosen case study from "The Future of Literacy" and your own experiences in Makerspace?
- What new findings did you get from these experiences?
- What remaining questions do you have?
- What implications do your experiences have for "The Future of Literacy"?

III. Connect Your Makerspace Paper to Major Paper 2 "Digital Literacy Analysis"

In the following class meeting, you will conduct an interview with your partner as an interviewer and contribute to your partner's interview as an interviewee to share your experiences in the Makerspace session. In Major Paper 2, you will incorporate your own reflections in your Makerspace Paper and others' experiences (interview transcripts) as supporting details for your responses to "The Future of Literacy."

IV. Potential Questions for Your Peer Interview after Makerspace Activities
Literacy Environments

- What kind of literacy materials/environments did you have in your formative years or do you currently have (maps, books, magazines, subscriptions, computers, laptops, tablets, apps, and so forth)?
- What kind of digital devices or social media do you use to talk with your friends or family about something?
- Do you use digital media to write emails or a journal on your own time?
- How many hours do you spend for your self-sponsored (or non-academic) reading and writing?
- To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement that digital environments have changed our way of thinking, reading, speaking, and writing?

Reflections on Digital Activity Workshops (Makerspace sessions)

- What kind of ideas did you have in mind after completing Makerspace workshops?
- Can you share any ideas about it in this interview?
- How would you connect this workshop experience to your own digital environment or products you have created, if any (e.g., your workplace, smartphone pages/applications, self-made web pages and multimodal/digital projects, etc.)?

*Be mindful that you will not force questions to prove your preliminary hypothesis. Let your interviewee lead his or her stories and make your data shape your thesis. You will collect a few moments from you and your peer's experiences to examine the current literacies in digital fabrication environments and reflect on the social meanings.

Major Assignment: Analysis on Digital Literacy

Use standard MLA formatting (one-inch margins all around, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt.). Each page should be numbered and include your last name and the paper needs to include a heading.

For your second major assignment, you will analyze digital literacies of youth by integrating reading materials and reflecting on your experiences in doing digital platform-based activities. Drawing from the concepts and case studies of "The Future of Literacy," you will conduct your own mini case study on digital literacies, i.e., collecting evidence from observations of your own

activity and your peer's experiences, via personal interview. By using the collection of evidence, you will explore how digital environments have changed your and others' everyday lives and what implications this change might have for our classrooms in secondary or post-secondary institutions.

This assignment will be composed of three parts: introduction (and thesis), summary and response ("The Future of Literacy"), case studies on your experiences and your peer's experiences (with a focus on their makerspace activities), and discussion/reflection. You will transcribe a one-minute interview audio recording from the interview with your peer and describe your findings.

You might start this project with some constructive questions: How do people read, write, and make something new in digital environments? What kind of digital communities do you or they belong to? What digital activities are you/they doing and what changes do they show, compared to previous literacy activities? After actively listening to and recording your peer's experiences surrounding experiences of digital activities and experiences in makerspace sessions in particular, you will be able to see a certain pattern from their stories and your stories such as daily digital literate practices and experiences in makerspace workshops (for 3D digital printing or laser cutting or vinyl cutting) in different contexts.

For this assignment, you will majorly use "The Future of Literacy" and the *They Say I Say* handbook. You can choose languages other than English for your rhetorical purposes.

Unit Timeline

- Week 1 Day 1: Entering into Major Paper II, Reading due: DeVoss et al. "The Future of Literacy"; Discussing digital literacy practices. Finding your interview partner and setting up a guiding hypothesis
- Week 1 Day 2: Prewriting, Writing summary-response paragraphs
- Week 2 Day 1: Reading Due: *They Say I Say*, Chapter 4 "Yes/No/Okay, But"; Makerspace IDEAStudio Quiz due; Makerspace Workshop day (*we will meet at Makerspace IDEAStudio)
- Week 2 Day 2: Conducting a peer interview with your partner
- Week 3 Day 1: Makerspace Paper Due; Transcribing interviews, Analyzing your interview data, observations, and experiences
- Week 3 Day 2: Turning Makerspace Paper into your Major Paper II
- Week 4 Day 1: Major Paper II Due, Doing peer review
- Week 4 Day 2: Reflecting on Makerspace Paper and Major Paper II

Notes

[1]After a co-requisite model was implemented in public higher education institutions in Texas in 2017, students who did not meet the standard score of the Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA) of English have been encouraged to take a developmental writing course as a co-linked pair course along with their first-year writing course during the same semester. Under traditional models, those students were required to pass remedial courses to enroll in college-level courses.

[2]For more details about on-campus makerspace tools, see Lee (2020).

[3]This study was approved by the HCC Institutional Review Board (Study #13112723-0001).

[4]Three students responded to my recruitment email. An attempt was made to schedule interviews with the other two students but was not successful. In many cases, students in two-year colleges work part-time or full-time and are likely to have complexities in their lives and academic paths. It should be noted that they might not have been able to participate in this research study as much as they intended due to external factors.

[5]For more examples of virtual makerspace workshops, see Lee et al. (2020).

Supplementary Material

For supplementary material accompanying this paper, including a PDF facsimile of the assignment description formatted as the author(s) presented it to students, please visit https://doi.org/10.31719/pjaw.v6i1.90.

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Languages of Power and Resistance
Future Teachers Writing for Social Justice

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Abstract

This research assignment asks preservice undergraduate secondary education teachers in an applied grammar class to engage in a two-prong research project: a multimodal, interactive "poster" and a research paper that together explore the pedagogical possibilities for engaging with World Englishes in middle and high school classrooms. The prompt invites students to consider social justice and equity at the level of language. The assignment draws on both antiracist and queer pedagogies and examines the relationships among language, power, and resistance to linguistic oppression in the classroom. As students work through the assignment, they enact real-life stories of historical and contemporary figures from around the world who were forced to speak a colonizer's language and resisted linguistic oppression. They then read articles focusing on Black Language, Indigenous languages, and World Englishes, which serve as touchstones for their own research.[1] Although designed for a grammar pedagogy class, the assignment can be modified for multiple disciplines; at the end of the article, I provide several examples of how teachers outside English might modify the assignment for their own disciplinary contexts.

The Languages of Power and Resistance research assignment presented here asks students in a 300-level Applied Grammar for Teachers course to consider equity at the level of language. As we learn in class, the unquestioned norm of teaching and privileging only standard English in classrooms is often grounded in whiteness, which minimizes, rejects, and dismisses ways of speaking and knowing privileged by communities of color, global English speakers, and Indigenous peoples. In disrupting the power dynamic of equating a standardized English with literacy, the prompt encourages students to research and reflect on how they, as future teachers, might value and foreground students' home languages in their classrooms.

Seeking to go beyond mere appreciation, the assignment requires students to address concepts of linguistic power and resistance in their pedagogies. As June Jordan (1988) explains in her classic article, "Nobody Mean More to Me Than You and the Future Life of Willie Jordan," the connections between one's mother tongue and education are critical and life-giving. In foregrounding the importance of Black English, Jordan says, "our language is a system constructed by people constantly needing to insist that we exist, that we are present" (p. 367). Several decades later, April Baker-Bell, in critiquing white supremacist language practices and focusing on Black Language as a means of knowing the world, argues that the study of Black Language is key to antiracist pedagogies. As Baker-Bell (2020) asks, "How do we move beyond traditional approaches to language education that do not view students' racial and linguistic identities as interconnected?" and "What is the purpose of a language education if it cannot be used for various sorts of freedom or save students' lives?" (p. 7). This understanding of language as a life-giving practice is both the inspiration and goal of this assignment. As Gloria Anzaldúa (1999) stresses in *Borderlands/La Frontera*, "I am my language" (p. 81). For Anzaldúa, language cannot be separated from identity, which means that teachers committed to social justice must seek multiple ways of privileging students' languages, knowledges, and lived experiences as part of their antiracist pedagogical practices.

As a white teacher who speaks a standardized version of English, I recognize that I am complicit in the very linguistic oppression that I wish to challenge. My commitment to an-

tiracist pedagogies is, due to my positionality and language use, always at risk of tokenizing what I wish to honor. Therefore, as a queer teacher, I intentionally draw on queer theory, which, when combined with antiracist pedagogies, provides me with multiple approaches for challenging normativity—the unquestioned expectations that maintain power and inequity—in the classroom. In describing queer possibilities for the teaching of grammar, Stacey Waite (2016) emphasizes that "Grammar itself is built on dominant norms and cultural assumptions" (p. 82). Because whiteness, including white language practices that maintain inequity, is so often the unquestioned norm in the teaching of English (Baker-Bell, 2020; Jordan, 1988), I frame this assignment within the context of a course that weaves together both antiracist and queer pedagogies, following Baker-Bell's (2020) call "that an antiracist language and literacy education has to be intersectional" (p. 3). As such, this assignment seeks approaches for disrupting normative white ways of teaching grammar so that my future students—and myself—continue to act on calls for social justice via language and education.

Prompt Overview

For twelve years, I taught a 300-level Applied Grammar for Teachers course, taken primarily by Secondary Education students in English and History at my former institution, a Predominantly White, Research I institution on Nez Perce lands. Because grammar classes, as well as composition classes, are often rightfully critiqued for perpetuating a form of language that privileges and perpetuates whiteness and normativity in writing (Baker-Bell, 2020; Haussamen et al., 2003; Smitherman, 1999/2015; Waite, 2016), I intentionally designed this course to examine how unquestioned standards of language are often used to exclude and maintain linguistic inequity; in other words, I frame this course to examine the relationships among language, knowledge, and power. Although the Council of Writing Program Administrators no longer specifically includes the examination of language, knowledge, and power as one of its outcomes for first-year composition (Dryer et al., 2014), I explicitly apply the learning outcome to our grammar and pedagogy class as a way to critique traditional grammar's connection to whiteness and normativity—as well as to highlight all languages' "articulation of the possible, even at the level of grammar" (Waite, 2016, p. 85). This framework of language, knowledge, and power provides the class with a means of understanding English's role in colonizing land, language, and ways of knowing (Smith, 2012); allows us to explore concepts of code meshing and the power of Black Language (Baker-Bell, 2020; Canagarajah, 2006); and engages us in pedagogical practices of resistance to linguistic oppression (Christensen, 2000). This focus on language and power, rather than applying only to grammar, composition, or education classes, is adaptable to multiple disciplinary courses, particularly those that foreground social justice as a means of seeking equity in the classroom.

    To facilitate this crucial work, I designed a two-pronged research project for our undergraduate grammar pedagogy class: a multimodal, interactive "poster" and a text-based research paper, which together provide students with opportunities to research the relationships among language, power, and resistance. For this assignment, students research how they might address linguistic power—including both oppressive power and the power to reclaim one's language for survival—and make space for resistance to linguistic oppression in the classroom. They research the histories and grammars of a variety of World Englishes (inspired by Canagarajah [2006] and Smitherman [1977]), ways of foregrounding students' home languages through culturally relevant pedagogies (e.g., Baker-Bell, 2020), and the connection between Indigenous Languages and ways of knowing (Smith, 2012). This social-justice approach to language foregrounds equity, challenges students and teachers to rhetorically listen to their research (Ratcliffe, 2005), and asks students to apply their findings to their future teaching.

Classroom Context

Throughout the undergraduate course, the future teachers and I explore multiple definitions of grammar and language, emphasizing the rhetorical and communicative possibilities of both. Rather than present grammar as an unbending system of rules, we question the notion that Standard Edited English[2] and academic discourse are linguistically neutral, and we examine how grammar and language are structurally influenced by systems of power, including those maintained by racism, colonization, social class, sexism, and other forms of oppression (Baker-Bell, 2020; Canagarajah, 2006; Christensen, 2000; Smith, 2012; Smitherman, 1999/2015). We begin the course by reading the Conference on College Composition and Communication's (1974/2015) Resolution on Students' Right to Their Own Language, which "affirm[s] students' right to their own patterns and varieties of language" and rejects the "attempt of one social group to exert its dominance over another" (p. 19). We pair this text with Geneva Smitherman's (1999/2015) article on "CCCC's Role in the Struggle for Language Rights," where we reflect on not just her content but her rhetorical use of language, sentence structure, and punctuation. We also discuss the concept of World Englishes (Canagarajah, 2006) to emphasize how language, grammar, and usage are always rhetorically situated—and influenced by power, systems of oppression, and opportunities for linguistic resistance.

A frequent objection to such an approach to grammar, one that de-emphasizes and questions the prestige and seeming neutrality of standardized English, is that students simply engage in a writing free-for-all, where "anything goes"—a racially- and class-coded critique that assumes users of multiple and non-standardized Englishes are not or cannot be rhetorically intentional in their writing. Instead, as with any rhetorically-informed writing-based course, we emphasize revision for audience and purpose. The course assumes that language is fluid and rhetorical, highly dependent upon the connection between speaker/writer, audience, and context (Jordan, 1988). Therefore, we resist the notion that texts written in anything other than standardized white English are incompatible with successful communication and instead rely on experimentation and multiple Englishes to emphasize *rhetorically-effective* writing (Canagarajah, 2006; Christensen, 2000; Smitherman, 1999/2015). As such, the course pays careful attention to sentence-level communication for whichever languages and varieties of English the students choose to write in, either for this class or future audiences.

Admittedly, most students enter the class wary of grammar. Even for those who tend to speak and write a standardized form of English, grammar has often been used simply to point out the errors in their writing, rather than framed as a strategy for rhetorical communication (Micciche, 2004). Our focus on pedagogy allows us to explore how even the smallest units of language might be employed for social justice aims. We do this by analyzing our everyday use of grammar and punctuation, focusing on authentic texts ranging from tweets to protest posters. We experiment with writing rhetorical fragments, considering when a fragment might be more effective for our audience than a complete sentence. As such, while we learn various grammar conventions, we also create sentences that intentionally break the "rules" to convey our message. Students become human sentences, with each student being given a different word on a color-coded index card, to learn about parts of speech and syntax. As students move around the room to create and manipulate different sentence structures, they both identify the boundaries of language *and* illustrate the fluidity of language.

As a class, we use this activity and other kinesthetic and visual activities to consider "sentences differently—as having more available possibilities than we initially imagined" (Waite, 2016, p. 85). We also discuss how "syntax, the structure of an idea, leads you to the worldview of the speaker and reveals her values" (Jordan, 1988, p. 367). In these activities and throughout the course, we use not only standardized English but also Spanish and Black Language to demon-

strate the multiple ways grammatical concepts, such as verb tense, possession, and intentional repetition, can be effectively communicated (Baker-Bell, 2020; Haussamen et al., 2003; Jordan, 1988; Smitherman, 1977). And since we complete not a single worksheet in the course, choosing instead to privilege authentic language and reading contexts, students have considerable time to apply course concepts to their own writing. By the end of the course, students may not love grammar, but many have reported that they and grammar are now friends—and that those who strive to use their writing for social justice can be more intentional in their message.

Project Beginnings and Pedagogical Approaches

This social-justice-based research project began over a decade ago when a student in my course remarked that they simply did not believe in the validity of multiple Englishes. This comment concerned me, as I thought I had set up the course to emphasize the lived experiences and knowledges of their future students who would speak, write, and negotiate multiple languages and Englishes. Upon reflection, I realized that while we had until that point already discussed linguistic social justice and equity in language, as well as read several articles that discussed the concept (Canagarajah, 2006; Smitherman, 1999/2015), none of my major assignments required students to research the history or theory of a particular language or variety of World English. Therefore, students could interpret our language and power discussions as mainly a side note in the curriculum, and they would sometimes wonder when we would get back to the "real" content of the course: "neutral" and "correct" grammar.

To challenge this misperception, I created this research assignment, which I begin by asking my preservice teachers to participate in Linda Christensen's (2009) Linguistic Tea Party, described in *Teaching for Joy and Justice*. In this activity, students read and role play the linguistic experiences of nearly 20 historical and contemporary figures from around the world, including queer mestiza Gloria Anzaldúa (1999), who employed Chicana Spanish to "overcome the tradition of silence" and reclaim the pride in her language and identity (p. 81); Kenyan writer Ngugi wa Thiong'o, who writes in his native Gikuyu to resist the colonizing influence of English and to encourage other African writers to write in their native languages; Irish language activist Damien O'Donovan, who in the 1920s fought for Irish independence and the freedom to speak Irish; Siletz elder Bud Lane, who teaches his tribal language as a way to preserve both the language and tribal culture; and Molly Craig who, as a mixed-race Aborigine in 1930s Australia, was stolen from her home and forcibly taught that her native language and culture were inferior. (Her life also inspired the movie *Rabbit-Proof Fence* [Noyce, 2002].) Collectively, these and other stories feature people who were forced in the name of education to speak English, who were physically abused for speaking their own language, who speak and write only in their native language to validate its legitimacy, and who research and teach their languages to uplift the people in the community. These stories of linguistic power, oppression, hope, and resistance are the heart of this project, inspiring research beyond an academic exercise, moving instead toward an applied social justice project that privileges lived experience.

To support this five-week research project, students and I engage in a weeklong research forum where we read several texts on language and power. Students admittedly find it challenging to narrow a topic as large as "language and power," so this research forum is key to helping them narrow their focus and understand how other language scholars have approached similar topics. Each semester, I provide a bank of readings that the students select from (refer to prompt below), so each semester our research forum changes depending on the students' interests. Our readings usually include Anzaldúa's (1999) "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" from *Borderlands/La Frontera*, which examines how her multiple languages are connected to her identity as a queer mestiza; the opening chapter of Linda Tuhiwai Smith's (2012) *Decolonizing Methodologies*, which

traces the connections between imperialism, history, and writing for Indigenous peoples; se-
lections from Geneva Smitherman's (1977) *Talkin and Testifyin*, which describes the linguistic
roots and grammatical patterns of African American English; and Vershawn Ashanti Young's
(2011) "Should Writers Use They Own English?," a text written in both African American English
and standardized English to argue for the benefits of code meshing. Since language and power
are broad topics, reading these articles as a class allows us to challenge our assumptions and
examine the possibilities for student research. While some students use these readings to frame
their own research, others use our forum as a springboard to pursue other avenues of inquiry.

For the research forum, students divide themselves into small groups, selecting the article
their group wants to read more closely. While the entire class does a detailed skim of all the
articles, each group's chosen article is the one they will more closely analyze and informally
present to the class. For their forum presentations, students summarize the author's main
points, provide a historical overview (if relevant), and highlight the author's discussion of power
and resistance. Students note the author's use of language and how their use of language signals
their primary audience (Jordan, 1988). Since this is a research project, we also spend considerable
time highlighting the various types of sources that the author cites: academic peer-reviewed
sources, yes, but also interviews, podcasts, posters, tweets, and other examples of authentic
language used in everyday contexts. As part of our process, we discuss why the author likely
chose to include such a range of sources for their own article. This discussion not only allows us
to begin brainstorming possible sources and source types for their own research project, but it
also challenges students to actively seek sources written by people, often authors of color, who
are from the language community they will be studying. Lastly, the group highlights the article's
potential connections to pedagogy and the teaching of grammar, challenging themselves to
apply more theory-based articles to their future classrooms. After each group presents, the
students switch groups and synthesize the articles. In these new groups, students brainstorm
possible research questions for their upcoming projects. They consider research questions that
foreground theory or historical context, pedagogy, or a combination of theory and pedagogy.

The Assignment: A Multimodal Poster and Research Paper

By providing so much preparation for the research project, many students recognize that
our social justice research project is the cornerstone of our 300-level Applied Grammar for
Teachers course. Their prompt, a two-part research project entitled Languages of Power and
Resistance, takes its lead from the articles we read and asks students to research and analyze
the relationships among language, power, and resistance in a variety of historical or cultural
contexts; additionally, the prompt asks students to consider how they might apply their research
to their future teaching or communities. As mentioned above, students present their findings
through both a multimodal, interactive poster and a research paper. While most students apply
their research to their future pedagogies, others apply their research toward individual or
community opportunities for resistance against linguistic oppression. Their recommendations
for change often focus on small, everyday aspects of language and power, which many students
believe makes their ability to enact change more immediate and sustainable.

For the poster—a term I define quite broadly to signal a format beyond a traditional essay—
students are encouraged to design a project that is both interactive and creative in order to
introduce their classmates to their area of research. Students have produced paintings, games,
storybooks, and collages, in addition to digital presentations that embed audio and video clips.
Any format is acceptable, provided the student can engage their classmates and facilitate a
10-minute, small-group dialogue. The goal is to educate and motivate an audience, as well as to
discover new pedagogical possibilities for teaching about language and power. Rather than serve

as artifacts to guide them in their presentations, their posters should encourage their classmates to apply concepts of language and resistance to their future teaching, local community, or daily use of language. As such, these interactive posters often inspire students to research more aspects of a topic—and to more intentionally consider their future students—than they would have with just a traditional paper. While the paper itself is often written as a "traditional" essay, students are not required to follow a standard format or make a specific claim. For example, in keeping with queer theory, students can explore what they might not know about a concept and why they cannot know it (Waite, 2017). This option to highlight what they might not know about language, resistance, and racial identity also provides space for students to reflect on their positionalities and lived experiences as part of the research process.

Regardless of their approach, I encourage students to incorporate any variety of English or language that is rhetorically effective for their argument. Students decide which language(s), Englishes, or dialects to use, quote, and/or cite in order to best communicate their research. They also carefully select their intended audience, as not all students want to use the same language for all audiences. Importantly, I do not insist that students use a non-standard variety of English, as I recognize that not all students want to use their home language with a white teacher who speaks standardized English. Students who are not heritage or cultural learners of a language or version of English are asked to cite speakers/writers of these languages, rather than risk appropriating or disrespecting a language or culture with which they do not identify.

Sample Student Responses to the Prompt

As I outline in the prompt below, students have considerable agency in designing this project. To help them focus, I encourage these future teachers to consider the kinds of texts or historical events that they will likely teach, or strive to teach, as they revise a curriculum to foreground social justice and equity. Once students identify a text or event to teach, such as a novel with multiple varieties of English, their results are often deeply personal and engaging. For example, many students have researched the Englishes they speak or that are most likely to be spoken by their future students, such as Black Language and Spanish-influenced English. Some students research the rules and cultural contexts of these languages; other students research the pedagogical possibilities for teaching multiple Englishes in their future classrooms. Other students, cognizant of the fact that they will be teaching on Indigenous lands, have conducted initial research on the language spoken by the local tribe; they have also researched the violent histories of colonial schools—and how Indigenous peoples employ language as a means of sovereignty (Smith, 2012). Other students have examined young adult novels by authors of color and researched possibilities for honoring and foregrounding the characters' mother tongues. These approaches, students have found, promote social justice by dialoguing on race and identity among young adults.

Still other students have taken different approaches. Notably, one student's project focused entirely on visual images of language and power as they researched the history and agency behind various LGBTQ pride flags, including the lesser-known transgender, bisexual, pansexual, and genderqueer pride flags. Another student submitted a poster with hand-drawn images of people who had the word "Silenced" written over their mouths, surrounded by a variety of quotations that discussed the power of language. In a similar vein, several students have created protest posters to communicate their message, accompanying their posters with written research projects that described the battles various Indigenous people and people of color have historically waged—and continue to fight—for equity in language and education. Some students argue for the continued teaching of standardized English in schools but in a way that acknowledges the variety of students' home languages. One future elementary school teacher

researched possibilities for incorporating language and power into a K-5 curriculum. Provided students engage thoughtfully with the material, I encourage all approaches that explore the relationships among language, power, and resistance.

Challenges and Future Considerations

Throughout the years, I have admittedly faced a variety of challenges with this assignment. I often spend considerable time introducing students to the authenticity of World Englishes (Canagarajah, 2006; Smitherman, 1999/2015). Even when this information is well-received, the topic is vast enough to make it difficult to fully comprehend in one semester. Ironically, a more current challenge is that some students, often those who self-identify as progressive, now simply agree with the premise that all varieties of language should be respected. My new challenge is to find ways to encourage students to go beyond simple respect of a language and to more critically consider concepts of equity and social justice. What, we now ask, might their classrooms actually look like in order to engage in this work? What challenges do they need to be prepared to face? What models can they rely on when resisting and navigating those challenges? In what ways can they continue to be leaders or allies, and what work must they do in order to respectfully acknowledge and navigate their positionality in terms of language, race, class, gender, and sexuality? Given our predominantly white institutional status on Indigenous lands, these questions are important as students continually reflect on the connections between language, power, and resistance.

As I continue teaching this project as a scholar of queer composition pedagogies, I plan to draw more intentionally on queer theory to strengthen the connections between language and social justice. In *Dreads and Open Mouths: Living/Teaching/Writing Queerly*, Aneil Rallin (2019) questions what we lose when a queer curriculum is framed within normative outcomes and standards. In my teaching of multiple Englishes, I have admittedly emphasized the fact that *all* languages are rule-based to highlight their legitimacy, as well as to (I now realize) "justify" their presence as a subject of study in our class. To be clear, we need to continue teaching an in-depth study of the syntax and conventions of multiple Englishes as part of an antiracist pedagogical practice. As Baker-Bell (2020) emphasizes, "many ELA [English Language Arts] teachers leave their teacher education program without knowing that Black Language is a rule-based linguistic system that includes features of West African languages and has roots as deep and grammatically consistent as Scottish, Irish, and other world Englishes" (p. 6). That said, while languages like African American English are indeed rule based and have established patterns (Baker-Bell, 2020; Jordan, 1988; Smitherman, 1977), I do not want to unintentionally emphasize the rules—or the norms—as the main reason that the language is valuable and worthy of study. Instead, I want to better emphasize the historical significance of the language, the speaker's ability to resist oppressive systems, and the cultural importance of the language itself in a social justice classroom. By simultaneously studying a language's conventions while also questioning our emphasis on rules and norms, I continue to seek queer approaches to the teaching of grammar that also foreground antiracist pedagogies.

Possibilities for an Interdisciplinary Audience

Although this prompt was designed for an Applied Grammar for Teachers course, this assignment can easily be altered for other disciplinary contexts. Business, science, or mathematics, in addition to the humanities and social sciences, can all examine how the language of our respective disciplines reinforces systems of oppression. Teachers can ask their students to research ways that disciplinary languages have been used to colonize, racially oppress, and

normalize genders and sexualities—and to research possibilities for resistance and agency. For example, what do contemporary scientists and mathematicians need to consider as they apply their content to justice-based statistics? How might, for example, quantitative Indigenous methodologies (Walter & Andersen, 2013) or queer quantitative methodologies (Patterson, 2019) challenge disciplines to (re)consider aspects of language and power? After acknowledging the continued reality of these oppressions, students can research possible ways that scholars and activists have reclaimed their disciplinary language and created space for resistance—and then begin contributing to such social justice projects themselves. In response to ongoing global conversations on language and racial justice, teachers in all disciplines must continue to find new and thoughtful ways to highlight the racial and structural injustices in our communities and classrooms, foreground students' lived experiences, and continue the important work of teaching critical reading, writing, researching, and thinking.

Conclusion

At its core, this project asks students to consider equity at the level of language and explore how language intersects with power bolstered by racism, colonization, sexuality, and social class. As I write this essay, the world is engaged in two global conversations: the COVID-19 pandemic and the worldwide protests over the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless other Black people who have died because of white supremacy. While the pandemic feels like a new conversation, the conversations around colonization and racial injustice are not new. Yet all language, from the global conversations to the smallest grammatical units, shapes epistemologies, transmits power, and serves as means of resistance to these ongoing oppressions. Teachers and students dedicated to social justice and equity can focus on language, power, and resistance as one way of contributing to the structural changes that we critically need.

ASSIGNMENT

Languages of Power & Resistance Research Project

English 326: Applied Grammar for Teachers

> *As teachers, we have daily opportunities to affirm that our students' lives and language are unique and important. We do that in the selections of literature we read, in the history we choose to teach, and we do it by giving legitimacy to our students' lives as a content worthy of study.*

> —Linda Christensen, "Teaching Standard English: Whose Standard?," 2000, p. 102

Context

As future teachers, editors, writers, and citizens, how do we "affirm… students' lives and languages"? I argue that this process is much more complex than simply appreciating a student's home language. What do we have to know about how language is used? How might we consider issues of power? And to help address student agency, how do we discuss issues of resistance? It is relatively easy to say that we will honor all languages, but it is much more difficult to put this concept into practice. Rather than "ensuring" that you will know how to incorporate these concepts into your classroom, this research project will help you think about the complexities of language, power, and resistance, and consider your subject position, including what you know and what you *don't* know.

Assignment Focus

As students, you have a lot of freedom in how you want to complete this assignment and what the results will look like. I ask two guiding questions below, and you're free to pick either of them—or come up with your own (but please check with me first if you create your own).

Guiding questions (focus on one): *How do you, as a teacher, address concepts of linguistic power and resistance? How do you value students' home languages in the classroom?*

Possible *General* Ideas—You'll Want to Be More Specific

- Research a variety of World English; connect the histories or grammars of this language (and the people who speak it) to the classroom.
- Examine how Standard Edited English connects to power. How might the classroom challenge that power rather than replicate it? What avenues of resistance do students have?
- Connect language, power, & resistance to race, sexuality, (dis)ability, class, and/or colonization.
- Consider a novel or other text you want to teach, and what linguistic background you and your students should have in order to best understand the text.
- Research concepts related to code-switching/code-meshing; consider power, privilege, and assimilation in your research.
- Research stories of resistance and hope.

Final Format

A 4-6 page paper due Week 11 *plus* a "poster" due Week 10. The poster may be hard copy or digital, and you must be prepared to present it to a small group of students in an interactive way. I expect that a good chunk of this project may include more summary/analysis than argument. However, at some point, I would like you to come up with some sort of argument/angle/proceeding questions for us to consider. *Do* consider how these concepts relate to the classroom/profession in order to apply your research to a specific context. As always, remember that you may decide to write in a variety of English (or codemesh with another language) that is most rhetorically appropriate for your audience and purpose.

Additional Requirements and Due Dates

- Cite all sources (at least three; at least two have to be scholarly) using MLA or APA.
- Include a brief paragraph describing your rhetorical situation and the feedback you'd like.
- Due dates:
  - Interactive Poster—Tuesday, Week 10
  - Peer Review of Written Project—Thursday, Week 10
  - Final Draft of Written Project—Tuesday, Week 11

Research Forum (to prepare for Research Project)

Forum #5 [online discussion post] asks you to select, read, summarize, and respond to one of the articles below (on Blackboard). Here's a brief introduction to each of the articles:

- Black English, Ch. 1 by Geneva Smitherman: This is Chapter 1 of Smitherman's *Talkin and Testifyin* where she traces the linguistic roots of African American English from Africa.

- Black English, Ch. 2 by *Smitherman*: In this chapter, Smitherman outlines some of the grammatical patterns of AAE. (You only need to read one chapter by Smitherman.)
- "Language Diversity in Teacher Education and in the Classroom" by Arnetha F. Ball and Rashidah Jaami' Muhammad: This chapter outlines approaches to language diversity for preservice teachers. This chapter talks about language diversity broadly, rather than focusing on a particular variety of English.
- "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" by *Gloria Anzaldúa*. In this chapter from *Borderlands/La Frontera*, Anzaldúa examines how her languages are connected to her identity as a queer mestiza.
- "Student Documentary in Hawai'i Pidgin": This article addresses the historical background of Hawai'i Pidgin, as well as describes a documentary that students created to communicate the strengths of Hawai'i Pidgin.
- "Should Writers Use They Own English?" by Vershawn Ashanti Young. Young connects language and racism as he defines and argues for codemeshing as a linguistic resource that benefits everyone. To emphasize his point, Young's writing codemeshes African American English and Standard English.
- "Imperialism, History, Writing, and Theory" by Linda Tuhiwai Smith. In this first chapter from her book *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Smith, of the Ngati Awa and Ngati Porou Indigenous peoples of New Zealand, traces the connections between imperialism, history, and writing, arguing that Indigenous peoples must "recover our own stories ... [and] language" (p. 40).

Note: For the Forum, you may not have time to finish your entire article, and that's okay—but do try to read most of the article or make a detailed skim of the article. Remember, this Forum is just to get you started with your research, to promote thinking and discussion. You may decide not to use this article in your research; you might also decide to research a completely different subject.

Notes

[1]Black Languages, World Englishes, and Indigenous are capitalized according to scholars April Baker-Bell (2020), Suresh Canagarajah (2006), and Maggie Walter and Chris Andersen (2013).

[2]Scholars and organizations refer to and interrogate the concept of Standard Edited English via various terms, including Edited American English (Conference on College Composition and Communication Committee on Language Policy, 1974/2015), White standards of English (Jordan, 1988), Metropolitan Englishes (Canagarajah, 2006), standardized Englishes (Greenfield, 2011), and White Mainstream English (Baker-Bell, 2020). I introduce my grammar students to many of these terms, not only so that they are familiar with them, but so they can analyze which ones strive to be neutral and which ones acknowledge English's role in colonization and white supremacy. Due to the range of terms used, I vary my usage in this article, depending on the context of my argument. For example, here I refer specifically to Standard Edited English since that is one term many of my students will encounter in public K-12 schools. This term, as we discuss, acknowledges differences between oral and written language, but still fails to acknowledge the connections between language, racism, and racial identity.

Supplementary Material

For supplementary material accompanying this paper, including a PDF facsimile of the assignment description formatted as the author(s) presented it to students, please visit https://doi.org/10.31719/pjaw.v6i1.88.

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Widening the Lens of Business Education

Exploring Systemic (In)Justice Through Public Exhibitions of Student Art and Creative Writing

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Abstract

This article describes and reflects upon a student art project assignment and accompanying issue-advocacy written piece that allows students to explore topics of social justice and environmental sustainability in a business and society senior seminar course. The process of producing art and creative writing allows students to critically reflect on current business ethics concepts that are relevant to their interests. The art is displayed in a gallery exhibit, allowing for further intellectual exploration as students explain their work to others. The learning outcomes of this art project are two-fold. First, students and faculty develop a greater sense of liberatory consciousness, a social identity-shaping mechanism that extends beyond disciplinary boundaries. Importantly, as faculty, we learn a great deal from our students, particularly during the art exhibit. Second, students develop competency in, and a passion for, issue advocacy about important social and environmental issues. Ultimately, this assignment inspires students to become future leaders in professional organizations that are ethical, inclusive, and environmentally sustainable.

> The plain fact is that the planet does not need more successful people. But it does desperately need more peacemakers, healers, restorers, storytellers, and lovers of every kind. It needs people who live well in their places. It needs people of moral courage willing to join the fight to make the world habitable and humane. And these qualities have little to do with success as we have defined it (Orr, 1991, p. 54).

How does a business student, instilled with the maxim that profitability is the only viable definition of success (e.g., Devaney, 2007; Jensen, 2001; Khurana, 2010), thrive in a world embodied by the above call for courage? How do we guide students in their fight for a world that is both habitable and humane? Even as corporations and business schools advocate for more ethical, stakeholder-based approaches to business, these same institutions perpetuate logics of efficiency and meritocracy that exacerbate inequality (Amis et al., 2020). In our courses on business and society, we wrestle with these questions every day. We offer this paper as a reflection on our ongoing teaching journey in addressing the paradox of stakeholder capitalism embedded in current business practice.

In the sections that follow, we describe how we came to introduce liberatory consciousness as a counterpoint to teaching about competitive business strategy. A liberatory consciousness-based lens critiques existing structures and their orientation to inequities, increases awareness of our complicity in such structures, and fosters commitment toward a more equitable and just society (Love, 2000). Within this framework, we offer an art-project assignment as a humble antidote. The assignment consists of a student-driven work of art and a supporting creative

written piece. Each student creates a social-justice themed art project that is displayed in an art gallery. In the accompanying written component, students explore the topic(s) as a form of personally meaningful advocacy. Student responses suggest that this assignment challenges their default assumptions about business and prepares them to become engaged, questioning citizens with voice and agency.

In reflecting on our own identities as teachers, we find that these art assignments have helped to re-center and clarify our priorities away from the individually centered worldview so common to corporations and business academia, and instead toward a collectivist, societally- and ecologically-focused curriculum (Verbos et al, 2011). This process helps us as educators to acknowledge the "political, ethical, and philosophical nature" of management education and aims to "bring values into the classroom" (Grey, 2004, p. 180). The students' artwork renews our awareness, appreciation, and motivation to address systemic and structural inequities. The illustrative examples we provide at the end of this manuscript in Figures 2, 3, and 4 highlight the quality and power of such an assignment, which has implications for teaching social justice in the classroom in the contexts of the global pandemic, climate change, and the George Floyd Uprising against racism.

A Paradox in Business Education

Business school curricula emphasize management practices that match industry requirements and are driven by industry requests (e.g., Fotaki & Prasad, 2015; Ghoshal, 2005; Hühn, 2014). While these practice-based requirements may change rapidly in accordance with the rhetoric of an efficient, meritocratic competitive marketplace, the underlying inequalities and injustices remain persistent (Amis et al., 2020). As critical educators, we are heartened by declarations of business leaders who, echoing the words of critical business professors (e.g., Freeman, 1984), champion the importance of stakeholder-based capitalism[1] (Business Roundtable, 2019). However, a recent analysis found that those same proponents have done no better than other companies in protecting jobs, labor rights, and workplace safety during the pandemic, maintaining practices that foster racial and gender inequality, and resisting changes for environmental rights (Ward et al., 2020).

This failure highlights the paradox of business education (Bunch, 2020). Even when attention is directed toward stakeholder communities, recommended courses of action are often framed within existing metrics and organizational structures that reinforce systemic discrimination. This crisis of legitimacy is highlighted by the economic devastation following the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing movement against racial injustice, both of which have collectively "posed the first test of the lofty words proclaiming a kinder form of capitalism" (Goodman, September 22, 2020). The crisis also exposes the limitations of business school values: efficiency, economic growth, resource-constrained mindsets that drive utilitarian cost-benefit thinking, and a capital-driven marketplace as the preeminent solution to societal ills.

Our reflections suggest that the roots of this paradox lie in a reliance upon a vocational-based curriculum (Reynolds, 1999) that, in taking the above values for granted, emphasizes increases in capital accumulation over the development of a liberatory consciousness. The content and process of education both matter in shaping students' critical thinking about values, their formation of career objectives, and their subsequent career trajectories. While business courses may be well-intended, they are subsumed by a maxim that individual success is the conclusive achievement. The meritocratic and technocratic mindset that success (implicitly economic success) is dependent solely on merit, hard work, and technical competence, ignores inequitable outcomes in society that are byproducts of structural inequality and systemic racism (Bertsou & Caramani, 2020; Chetty et al., 2014). What does that do to a student's developmental process?

If few opportunities for independent critical thought are presented, the student, eventually a business professional, will rely on the default: profit maximization to the detriment of other societal values (Giacalone & Wargo, 2009). More concretely, students who internalize these closely held business assumptions may find themselves actively at odds with the world-changing capabilities needed to respond to stakeholder needs, including awareness of climate change and urgent demands for social justice.

Moving Toward a Liberatory Consciousness in a Business School

To embrace a liberatory consciousness is to first recognize that the status quo is systemically inequitable. The social movements that protest against systemic racism and unequal treatment of essential workers during the global pandemic recognize, for example, that the status quo is incompatible with equity and justice (Love, 2000). As a team of management educators, we understand that structural change is a difficult goal when students (and teachers) are constrained by a doctrine of capital accumulation as the "north star" in all actions. For example, while business students rate "intelligence," "charisma," and "responsibility" high among characteristics of worthy leaders, they consistently rate "empathy" and "service" as the lowest desirable characteristics (Holt et al., 2017). A traditional business curriculum is largely incompatible with the values necessary to bring about social justice.

How, then, can we create curricula in service to a liberatory consciousness, where students have the opportunity "to analyze events related to equity and social justice, and to act in responsible ways to transform society" (Love, 2000, p. 130)? How do we guide students toward critical thinking, embedded and embodied within their own experiences of justice and community? Critical thinking, or "reasonable reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do" (Ennis, 2015, p. 32), is a key citizenship skill that students have historically developed in college (Benjamin et al., 2013). Yet, Steedle and Bradley (2012) find that among seven primary fields of academic study, business students score among the worst on the Collegiate Learning Assessment Problem Task, an assessment that evaluates critical thinking and writing skills.

Business classes that attempt to develop critical thinking and engage students' moral consciousness fall at two ends of a spectrum: business and society courses that focus on stakeholders and social responsibility, and service-learning courses that focus on experiential learning through community engagement (Godfrey et al., 2005). However, business and society courses typically emphasize case studies and readings that rely on frameworks that maintain the primacy of current business practice and the centrality of organizational survival. There remains a disconnect between how students understand class material and their personal relationships to organizations in their communities.

While service-learning classes offer first-person experiences (e.g., Grobman, 2017) that can act as gateways to liberatory consciousness, these courses are hard to scale because of student-faculty ratios, resource priorities, and administrative overhead (Kenworthy-U'Ren, 2008). To bridge the gap between classroom learning and active community engagement of service learning, we move toward a critical pedagogy that bridges the chasm between class and practice. An example of our critical pedagogy is a class art project. Art projects offer students an immersive opportunity to bridge critical concepts (e.g., stakeholder management) and the students' own internalization of collective liberation, human flourishing, and personal and social healing.
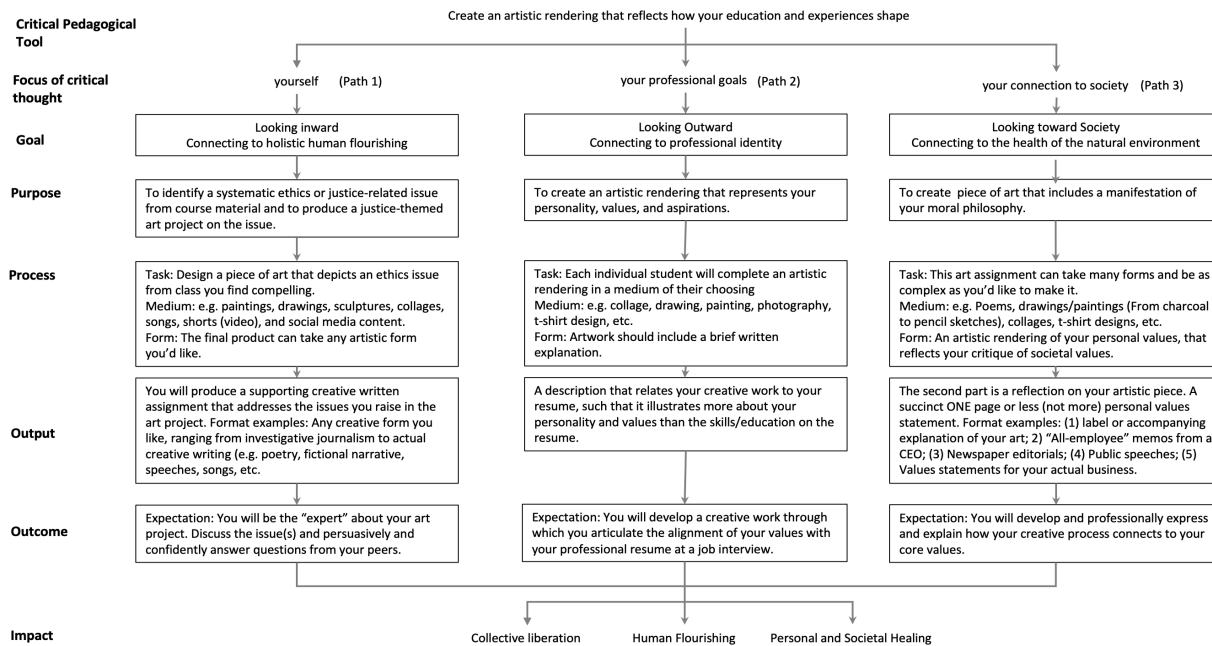
	your self (Path 1)	your professional goals (Path 2)	your connection to society (Path 3)
Critical Pedagogical Tool	Create an artistic rendering that reflects how your education and experiences shape		
Focus of critical thought	yourself (Path 1)	your professional goals (Path 2)	your connection to society (Path 3)
Goal	Looking inward — Connecting to holistic human flourishing	Looking Outward — Connecting to professional identity	Looking toward Society — Connecting to the health of the natural environment
Purpose	To identify a systematic ethics or justice-related issue from course material and to produce a justice-themed art project on the issue.	To create an artistic rendering that represents your personality, values, and aspirations.	To create piece of art that includes a manifestation of your moral philosophy.
Process	Task: Design a piece of art that depicts an ethics issue from class you find compelling. Medium: e.g. paintings, drawings, sculptures, collages, songs, shorts (video), and social media content. Form: The final product can take any artistic form you'd like.	Task: Each individual student will complete an artistic rendering in a medium of their choosing Medium: e.g. collage, drawing, painting, photography, t-shirt design, etc. Form: Artwork should include a brief written explanation.	Task: This art assignment can take many forms and be as complex as you'd like to make it. Medium: e.g. Poems, drawings/paintings (From charcoal to pencil sketches), collages, t-shirt designs, etc. Form: An artistic rendering of your personal values, that reflects your critique of societal values.
Output	You will produce a supporting creative written assignment that addresses the issues you raise in the art project. Format examples: Any creative form you like, ranging from investigative journalism to actual creative writing (e.g. poetry, fictional narrative, speeches, songs, etc.	A description that relates your creative work to your resume, such that it illustrates more about your personality and values than the skills/education on the resume.	The second part is a reflection on your artistic piece. A succinct ONE page or less (not more) personal values statement. Format examples: (1) label or accompanying explanation of your art; 2) "All-employee" memos from a CEO; (3) Newspaper editorials; (4) Public speeches; (5) Values statements for your actual business.
Outcome	Expectation: You will be the "expert" about your art project. Discuss the issue(s) and persuasively and confidently answer questions from your peers.	Expectation: You will develop a creative work through which you articulate the alignment of your values with your professional resume at a job interview.	Expectation: You will develop and professionally express and explain how your creative process connects to your core values.
Impact	Collective liberation	Human Flourishing	Personal and Societal Healing

Figure 1. A process model to interrogate systemic (in)justice in business and society through making creative works of art and reflective writing.

Critical Pedagogy in Service of a Liberatory Consciousness

What does liberatory consciousness look like in practice? In our experience, it shows up as varied combinations of a fumbling and humbling vulnerability. Instead of structuring courses around values in service to capital accumulation (e.g., utilitarianism and capital growth toward a market society), we grapple with the civic and moral conditions of our curriculum by inviting skepticism into the classroom as well as an earnest co-creation of knowledge with our students (Giroux, 2010; Shor & Freire, 1987). This critical pedagogy acts in direct support of a liberatory consciousness by creating a dialogue between students and instructors to understand the causes of inequity and injustice (Giroux, 2010).

In preparing course readings and assignments, we reflect on whether our course materials center on the values of human flourishing, collective liberation, and societal healing. Human flourishing, for example, is an expansive value that is the basis for student development of moral virtues and reasoning about the wellbeing of humanity (McKenna & Biloslavo, 2011). Collective liberation recognizes that we are all bound together in a beneficent mutuality. It is about the liberation of people from vast inequities toward collective human flourishing (Crass, 2013) rather than individualized success based on socio-economic privilege or fallible notions of merit (Guinier, 2015; Sandel, 2020). To value personal and societal healing is to recognize an organization's duty to restorative and reparative justice, which involves acknowledging and taking responsibility for the harm organizations have caused (Davis et al., 1992). Instances of organizational harm are as recent as the harm that frontline workers have faced during the pandemic, as continuous as the financial industry's exclusionary and discriminatory lending practices, or as long-lasting as the seizure and occupation of indigenous lands for industrial development.

Widening Your Lens: Advocacy through Art—a mechanism to "do" critical pedagogy

As an example of critical pedagogy in practice, we developed a student art project, Widening Your Lens: Advocacy through Art. This assignment encourages students to interrogate systemic (in)justice within organizations and to explore paths toward more equitable and just organizational power structures where members become bound together in a beneficent mutuality. The project consists of a work of art and a supporting creative written piece. Generally, each student creates a work of social justice-themed art related to course topics. We display this work in an art gallery. The written component is a chance for students to explore topics as a form of advocacy. (See Figure 1 for each of our unique approaches to the process.[2])

To our surprise, we found that preparing for the art exhibition was itself counter-hegemonic to our prior training in neoliberal educational norms. Such norms dictate that professors deliver knowledge to students as passive receptacles of knowledge (Ayers et al., 2009). Even when teaching extended beyond passivity and toward discovery, student knowledge was often evaluated within teacher-centered rubrics and frameworks. We offered pedagogical taxonomies (e.g., Bloom) linearly to our students (Doughty, 2006; Starbird & Powers, 2013), such that the acquisition and formation of knowledge became a passive act. Instead, our art assignment requires students to take responsibility for each other's learning. We challenge our students to become experts on the topic of their art so that they can teach others. Learning via an art exhibit is itself a critical pedagogical approach for business students who are otherwise attuned to completing assignments for which grades are easily quantifiable and that are highly individualistic and competitive. Instead, students work collaboratively to develop creative, meaningful projects. Figure 2, for example, became the basis for that class to organically learn about and discuss the construction of gender roles. What is often part of our formal curriculum instead emerged from the students themselves, through collective sensemaking and a liberating mindset.

We found that part two of the project, the written assignment, offers a critical approach to business education in three ways. First, we challenge our students to reject conventional business education goals of objectivity and information sharing to instead embrace values, morality, issue advocacy, and activism (e.g., through such tools as the teaching of ethos, logos, kairos, and pathos techniques). Students respond with impassioned writing about issues they find deeply meaningful. Second, we encourage students to reject typical business-writing formats (reports, case studies, and other informational forms). Students respond by writing creatively, in the form that best conveys their goals and their learning, ranging from investigative journalism to poetry, narratives, speeches, songs, and other forms. Third, we encourage students to explore the acquisition of knowledge not as an accumulation of specific facts but as the deployment of strategies and reflective tools that allow them to acquire, interpret, and make sense of the world. Rather than prescribed expectations of "right" and "wrong," students feel empowered to develop value-based decision-making frames to guide them as professionals (Arce & Gentile, 2015). Students respond by embracing the challenge of becoming experts on topics.

Notably, by taking away the burden of finding "correct" answers to social justice dilemmas, students felt more comfortable expressing vulnerability and uncertainty in their findings. In reflecting on the original paradox that "good" business intentions for stakeholder communities reinforce systemic discrimination upon those *same* communities, we think that the art assignments help by explicitly replacing strict, preconceived metrics with emergent, community-generated alternatives. Figure 3, for example, titled "Passport to the Future," allowed for a wide-ranging class discussion about whether housing is a human right, a market commodity, or something else. We found no "right" answer here, only well-developed arguments supported by

Figure 2. First Student Art Example: "Gender-less Future." The student who developed this art piece played a key role in helping our class think beyond the gender binary and in imagining workplaces that didn't erase gender but increased our capacity to celebrate broader gender identity and expression. Such an expansive understanding of gender is inextricably tied to human flourishing and Human Rights. In class, we read about and discussed at length issues of gender discrimination in the workplace. One of our class activities was to imagine, in groups, what workplaces without gender discrimination would even look like. This illustration stemmed from that assignment. It was drawn on simple fine art paper and framed for the class art exhibit. The art included a supporting memoir problematizing the piece's title, reflecting on how we reinforce gender norms, and advocating for some of the ways we can fight against those norms.

Figure 3. Second Student Art Example: "Passport to the Future." In one of our classes, we spent time considering what a cooperative economic future might look like. In this class, we read about cooperative economics in the context of the Black Panthers (Bloom & Martin, 2016). The conversation inspired a Malcolm X-themed work of art to symbolize hope toward a vision for collective liberation. The work included an accompanying fictional speech from Malcolm X on how the leader might respond to today's affordable housing crisis in the United States. This work was created on a 4ft x 4ft piece of 1-inch-thick wood via CNC (Computer Numerical Control) machining. CNC machining uses a computer-controlled carving tool to remove material from a block of wood to create the image.

the teachings of figures such as Malcolm X. Similarly, Figure 4, an art piece titled "Child Labor and Covid 19," led to deep, student-led critiques of utilitarian arguments in favor of child labor and toward an understanding of education as a human right. In both cases, student learning and contemplation about corporations and human rights was far more robust than would have been the case in traditional management classrooms.

Overall, we have found that our students develop and express a voice as they wrestle with their understanding of systemic causes of, barriers to, and solutions for organizational-based injustice. Students develop critical, systematic explanations for organizational (in)justice, which often run contrary to mainstream business school culture. Students articulate ideas on cooperative economics, reparative justice for historically marginalized communities, and inclusive prosperity. While students embody the values articulated within a stakeholder-based framework, they also hold true to their own communities and to their sense of social justice.

Future Directions and Concluding Thoughts

Humans so far have generally deified and aligned with the "king" of the jungle or forest-lions, tigers, bears. And yet so many of these creatures, for all their isolated ferocity and alpha power, are going extinct. While a major cause of that extinction is our human impact, there is something to be said for adaptation, the adaptation of small, collaborative species. Roaches and ants and deer and fungi and bacteria
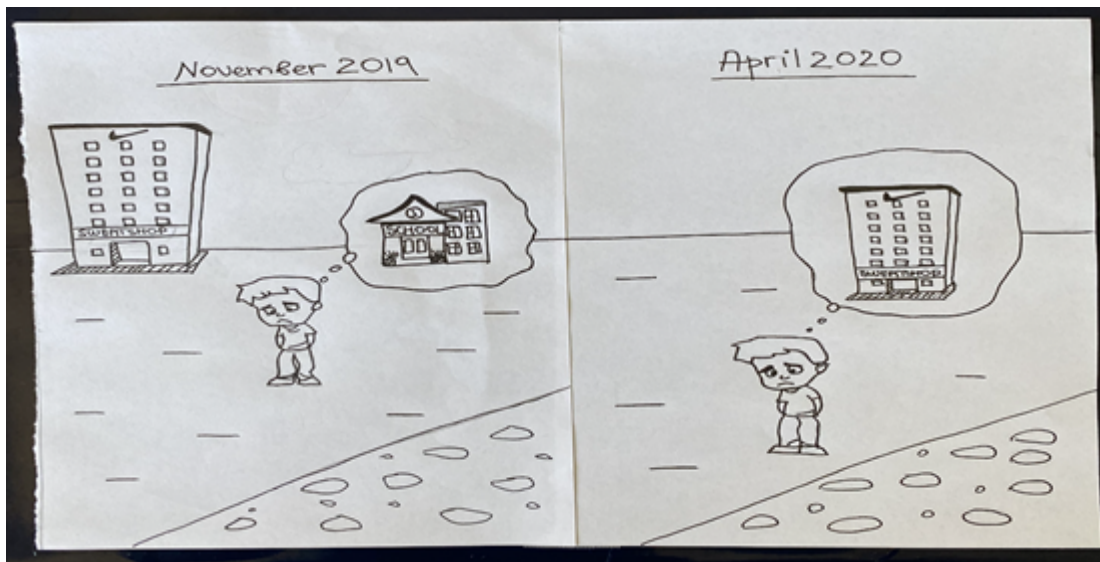
Figure 4. Third Student Art Example: "Child Labor and Covid-19." In one of our classes, we talked about ethical dilemmas and the limitations of cost-benefit thinking. After reading an article on out-of-work garment workers in Bangladesh, this student offered a cynical counter to utilitarian calculations of cost and benefit, arguing against trickle-down economics, and for education as a higher moral absolute. Ink on paper. This work was hand-drawn on an 8.5x11 piece of paper. Developed during a business and society class during the pandemic, the work included an accompanying personal reflection on the value of education, and economic struggle during this time. The narrative extended into a broader focus on the struggles of children who are forced to work. Artwork by Saida Safiullina.

> and viruses and bamboo and eucalyptus and squirrels and vultures and mice and
> mosquitos and dandelions and so many other more collaborative life forms continue
> to proliferate, survive, grow. Sustain. (brown, 2017, p. 4).

As we write this essay, the global pandemic and the Floyd Uprisings of the summer of 2020 have made business schools across the United States take stock of their priorities, values, and culture, and consider just how seriously they value Black lives. As cisgendered, male, Black, brown, and white professors in business schools, we grapple with the limitations of our own training and the positionality offered by our privilege. Our personal and professional identities are no longer separate and distinct but are reflected in the Black, brown, white, low-income, international, mind-expanding intersectional diversities, hardships, and achievements of our students across the spectrum. The art assignment is a small step in this ongoing journey to become "liberation workers," educators who "practice intentionality about changing the systems of oppression" around us (Love, 2000, p. 129).

Moving forward, we can do more to make the assignment more liberating. We can, for example, continue to think about student access to art materials. We have considered a class survey of materials needed so that we can secure them ahead of time. We have experimented with having the art project in-class and providing students with basic art supplies (markers, paint, canvasses, glue, for example). We can also think more about incorporating art from students with disabilities, such as those with visual impairments. Though we aim to create a class culture that already provides accessibility (e.g., syllabi and assignment access for students with visual impairments), there is more to do here.

In our exploratory surveys, only eight percent of student responses indicated that the artwork made them think of productive work. This underscores the dichotomy between a social-justice perspective and the pervasive business education framework, in which "productive

work" is socialized as something other than human flourishing, collective liberation, or personal healing. This dichotomy begs a deeper question: what does it take for liberatory work to be seen as productive work? And, more compellingly, what does it take for "productive work" in business schools to also be liberatory? As a small example, we need to think about how our preconceptions of productive work—in terms of rigor and quality—are confounded in students' written issue-advocacy statements. Despite encouraging multiple written formats, we find ourselves conforming to common expectations of written text (e.g., grammar and formatting) that privilege students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds or simply those who are better at writing in the ways we as instructors are trained to evaluate, thereby perpetuating a systemic, structural inequity that is both rigid and outdated. How can we make written formats of the project liberating for students who have been told they aren't good writers since they were young? How do we allow space for written projects via social media in the same way that we do for traditional essays? Possibilities abound for our personal growth as facilitators of this journey toward greater liberatory consciousness.

Challenges continue as the pedagogical methods in a face-to-face classroom are different from an online social justice pedagogy. Online instruction has historically been antithetical to social justice-based pedagogy, as it has exacerbated gaps in success between students across socioeconomic backgrounds. In particular, Black, brown, and low-income students consistently underperform in online courses (Protopsaltis & Baum, 2019). Yet, our reality in education is that virtual learning is inevitable.

Encouragingly, technological advancements and instructor commitment make it possible to embody a liberatory consciousness through assignments such as a virtual Widening Your Lens project. Across our courses, we have implemented a virtual art project in 16 classes with over 500 students since the pandemic forced our university online. We experimented with different online platforms that allow students to present their work to each other virtually. Further, we find that conveying issue-advocacy or activist work virtually through social media platforms is often second nature to our students. Will this take them on different career trajectories or encourage them to act as agents of change? While too early to tell, it is heartening that our students have used the consciousness developed in our classes to change us, their instructors, and to participate in the chorus of voices speaking out against racial and environmental injustice, toward greater, shared humanity.

ASSIGNMENT

Sample Assignment Description: Personal Values Art Project

Path 3 from Figure 1: Create an artistic rendering that reflects how your education and experiences shape your connection to society.

Deliverable: This project consists of:

1. An artwork that connects a topic from this semester with your own values and ethics.
2. An artist statement: A one-page write-up of the topical issue, a reflection of how your own values connect to this topic. We will hold an art gallery style exhibition online for the first part of the session in Week 15.

Purpose of Project: a. To develop and express your core values. b. To learn to professionally express and explain ideas.

Theme: Business, Society and the Environment in the time of Covid-19. The coronavirus pandemic has been a complete part of our daily lived lives. From lockdowns and shelter-in-

place, to job losses, job changes, family concerns, health concerns, travel concerns, and every conceivable re-allocation of priorities, our world suddenly changed. Online interaction has become more important than ever. The weaknesses of government, the cruelties of business, and the inadequacy of just-in-time global supply chains are made clear when the whole world stops.

At the same time, there have been moments of hope and inspiration. Healthcare and emergency workers work heroically under extremely stressful conditions. Proactive government leadership helped flatten the curve in countries around the world and has taken courage. Proactive business leadership that accommodates employee hardship takes a willingness to look beyond the short term. Many small businesses have shown a deep commitment to their local communities. The rallying cries of protest movements: Black Lives Matter have offered us glimpses into the strengths of individuals, community and a hopeful future.

This semester, we looked at the relationships between business, government, society and the natural environment. Topics included: The Corporation and its Stakeholders. Corporate Social Responsibility. Business and the Local Community. Business and Ethics. Business and Globalization. Business and the Natural Environment. Business and Public Policy. Technology, Society and Privacy. From this vast list of topics, think about a specific topic/concern that resonated with you. How might you showcase your personal values in relation to this topic? How might you represent this topic, and create a personally meaningful work of art?

Part 1 (5%): Part one is an artistic representation of your professional values statement. This piece of art should be a reflection on our class activities/topics so far and should include a manifestation of your moral philosophy. This assignment can take many forms and be as complex as you'd like to make it. By creating an artistic rendering of your professional values, you give your workplace values more thought and take the exercise seriously. The end result can be whatever you'd like it to be. Students have created: Poems, drawings/paintings (From charcoal, watercolors, crayon, to pencil sketches), collages, digital artwork, sculpture, paper-mâché sculptures.

Note: Please use materials you have at home, at your disposal. You are in no way required to go to a store or to purchase additional materials. You can create digital artworks, spoken word pieces, poems, collages, or other forms that utilize the tools at hand.

Deliverable 1: A picture / A video of your artwork to be uploaded to our course LMS by 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday December 1.

Grading Rubric for Part 1: Personal Values Art Project

- 5 pts: Creativity and time well spent.
- 3 pts: solid effort, low in creativity.
- 0-2 pts: half-spirited effort.

This rubric is intentionally centered around 'effort' rather than any perception of 'objective quality.' In the weeks leading up to the art project, there will be instructor consultations, peer discussions and prototype offerings in small groups, that will help indicate the expected level of effort and thought to be put into your art-project.

Part 2 (5%): The second part is a reflection on your artistic piece. The assignment is a succinct one-page personal values statement. You should cite a specific topic in the text *and* at least two other reference sources in your reflection. Please use APA format for the citations. The format of the assignment can vary. Students often submit assignments in these forms: (1) a label or accompanying explanation of your art; 2) "All-employee" memos from a CEO; (3) Newspaper editorials; (4) Public speeches; (5) Values statements for your actual business.

Deliverable 2: Your artist statement will be due on our course LMS by Friday December 4 at 5:00 pm.

Grading Rubric for Part 2: Personal Values Statement

- 5 pts: Professionally written with no spelling/grammar errors. Clear references with citations. Identifies & convincingly articulates two or more moral frameworks to guide decisions.
- 3 pts: Professionally written, but with spelling/grammar errors. Clear references with citations. Identifies & convincingly articulates a moral framework to guide decisions.
- 0-2 pts: Unclear, haphazard writing. Spelling/grammar errors. Lacks references with citations. Moral framework guiding decisions is unclear.

Notes

[1] Stakeholder capitalism advocates that business leaders engage with the complex, challenging, and interdependent world of customers, employees, suppliers, communities, and shareholders, rather than focus on shareholder primacy.

[2] A version of this figure in high-resolution PDF with readable text is available as supplemental material to this article.

Supplementary Material

For supplementary material accompanying this paper, including a PDF facsimile of the assignment description formatted as the author(s) presented it to students, please visit https://doi.org/10.31719/pjaw.v6i1.93.

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Reading and Fighting Patriarchy
Book Groups and Young Adult Feminist Fiction

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Abstract

In a course whose goals are to unmask patriarchal structures and understand the difference between patriarchy, misogyny, and sexism, students read young adult (YA) feminist novels and critiqued them in light of their new knowledge of issues in education, gender, and politics. In the context of a term-long project, students were asked to write a synopsis of their chosen book, and an analysis of how the author illustrates gender-based oppression and young people's resistance. Using Manne's (2018) definition of patriarchy as an overarching structure, students recommended their books in a series of reviews for distribution to local middle and high school libraries.

Introduction

> I believe that the truth about any subject only comes when all sides of the story are put together, and all their different meanings make one new one. Each writer writes the missing parts to the other writer's story. And the whole story is what I'm after.

—Alice Walker, *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens* (2011)

Inspired by Kate Manne's (2018) *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny*, and Roberta Seelinger Trites' (2018) *Twenty-First-Century Feminisms in Children's and Adolescent Literature,* I engage my Equal Opportunity: Patriarchy class in critical thinking about sexism, resistance, and the subtle ways biases creep into our lives, and what it means that even when we are working against the patriarchy, we are inscribed within it. The course and the Book Club assignment create authentic writing opportunities, contribute to the community, and promote reading for enjoyment. The course is housed in the Department of Education Studies at the University of Oregon. The Department of Education Studies at UO offers degrees and licenses for students seeking to teach elementary and secondary education. The theory behind this course is radical intersectional feminism.

By employing Manne's (2018) definitions of structural patriarchy, misogyny, and sexism in young adult (YA) analyses of our novels, I nudge my students toward a deeper understanding of the many ways systems of oppression work to keep some of us in safe places of privilege. Manne defines misogyny as "the law enforcement branch of the patriarchal order" (p. 88) and sexism as that which "serves to justify these [gender] norms – largely via an ideology of supposedly 'natural' differences between men and women" (p. 88). Students are at different places in the social justice continuum, so this work can be challenging. They come with their own identities and biases, and I bring mine. Their pre-class reflection assignment lets me know where they are on the spectrum of social awareness, and some things always surprise me. In this class group, we had at least one white female student who felt that she had never been discriminated against, and that patriarchy had not touched her personal experience at all. We also had several members (white and Latin@x; male and female; one Native woman graduate student) who came in fired up and ready to talk about intersectional identities. Differentiating course content,

including varying my own practice, speech, comments on papers, etc., especially for a group like this, is at the heart of teaching social justice topics.

Intersectionality and Whiteness

Equal Opportunity: Patriarchy addresses the role of oppression in its many forms, as enacted in our educational institutions. This course is one piece of a teacher education program that explicitly emphasizes the social justice work of educators; all students take an introductory Education and Social Change course and also a course on critical media literacy and media that helps students identify and resist the common tropes that inform our identities as teachers. By the time they take Patriarchy, they are ready to closely examine the injustices in schooling processes across multiple dimensions (e.g., racism, homophobia, colonialism, poverty). The overarching goal of this course is to unmask patriarchal structures. We work to understand the differences between patriarchy, misogyny, and sexism by problematizing, analyzing, and synthesizing the literature and various theories which examine patriarchal norms. By looking at multiple forms of oppression and they ways they intersect, students analyze current issues in education, gender, and politics to become familiar with the ways in which patriarchal values and norms are replicated and maintained. They learn to identify real-life instances of patriarchy, misogyny, and sexism in the schools where they are currently student teaching or volunteering, which informs their theoretical learning in the classroom, and vice versa.

We know that the majority of our teacher candidates are white women (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017) and that they come from different places of privilege within the identity "white woman." White women sometimes lack the critical framework that separates strong social justice work from charity efforts motivated by pity or by white savior syndrome (Fasching-Varner & Mitchell, 2013). One goal of our program is to help white students to address racism, white supremacy, and whiteness. White people need to reflect on their own identities and consider how their positionality informs what they see and do not see; they need to carefully and critically evaluate their own assumptions in light of their own experiences and backgrounds. They need to make meaningful family and community connections across lines of race, class, and gender and adapt their mandated curricula and standards to address local needs (McGregor et al., 2019).

We in the service-learning and community-based learning world hope that our work can help students develop a more critical lens (Bruce, 2018; Falcón & Jacob, 2011). We know it will be difficult for white dominant culture students to overcome the many negative emotions they feel in their interrogation and disinvestment in whiteness, including guilt, grief, shame, and melancholy. Matias (2016) points out that upon learning that one's identity is based on a false sense of superiority, many students feel "cheated, angry, and depressed" (p. 110). Scholars including Duncan (2002), Helms (1990), and Leonardo (2009) have also pointed out some of the many ways white students and teachers put up blockades to ease their discomfort and uncertainty when they find the knowledge of their own commitment to whiteness "percolating to the level of consciousness" (Leonardo, 2009, p. 112). Though this course focuses on patriarchy, we know that the nature of intersectional oppression prevents one problem from being isolated and "solved" by itself. Therefore, we explore readings that acknowledge and explore the complicated relationships between sexism and racism, sexism and settler colonialism, sexism and homophobia, sexism and ableism, etc.

Student Teachers as Readers: Fake it Until You Make It

"You cannot be a good teacher of literacy if you don't read" (Powell-Brown, 2003, p. 285). Bixler et al. (2013) surveyed their teacher candidates at the beginning of the semester and found that "at least 50 percent of them admit that they rarely read for pleasure, do not like to read, or have a hard time 'getting into' or 'sticking with' a book" (p. 235). Powell-Brown (2003) counsels her teacher candidates who do not identify as readers to " … fake it 'til you make it. In other words, make yourself read anyway" (p. 285). I have learned from Christensen (e.g., 1989) and the English and writing teachers with whom I've collaborated, that students can get excited and motivated when they are writing for a "real" audience. The Book Club assignment ends with a celebration and meeting with local librarians and teachers who receive the reviews that students have produced. This gives students an authentic readership (teachers and librarians) for their work, encourages them to creatively present their books, and engages them in thoughtful analysis of the values embedded in the young adult novels and sci fi/fantasy novels they selected.

I bring feminist fiction into the teacher education classroom (often to the chagrin of non-readers), and I also honor my students' needs and wants when designing assignments. They always want to do something that directly applies to their teaching, so while I don't agree with the prevailing utilitarian view of college education as a ticket to a job, I do attempt to make every minute we are together, and every assignment, engaging and important to them.

Of course, I bring my own goals to each class that I teach. I want to connect with my students through our common experiences in classrooms and our shared struggle with the oppression in our institutions of education (including our own university). I want them (us) to have fun working collaboratively, as teachers do "in the real world." As a reader myself (and mom of two teenagers), I had already read several of the selected novels, and I was able to use examples from them in our class discussions. I modeled the project by completing my own version of it. I wanted students to be inspired to put something of real value out into the world, and I wanted to show and tell these future teachers that there are many ways to interact with students, and to demonstrate strategies that de-emphasize the sameness that the process of institutional schooling too often demands. At the end of the project, I wanted students to reflect on what they learned and think about how their own thinking may have changed.

Lesson Planning and Execution

In our theoretically heavy program, students sometimes fear that they will be unprepared to do the actual work of teaching. In my classrooms, I develop assignments that might be adapted for middle school and high school students; exploring YA literature and the messages in popular fiction gives beginning teachers strategies for analyzing literature with their own students, as well as experience writing a rubric. The writing prompt asks students to think about how young adult novels contribute to social justice work. The assignment models culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP) and amplifies sometimes-marginalized voices. This emphasis on diversity—both among the authors and the students—encourages everyone to bring themselves fully to their work. I hope they take the knowledge created within this classroom community back to their families and home communities.

Given the rapid pace of YA literature's recent r/evolution, it is important to bring in librarians at the beginning of the course in order to introduce students to the growing field and to talk in general about their libraries' resources and services. Best of all, each of the guests brought a pile of books! Every student had selected "their" novel by the end of the second week.

Book Club is threaded throughout the entire ten-week quarter. Students break into groups of three, and each member chooses a different YA feminist novel. Each student reads all three

novels chosen by the members of their group. They then meet over three or four weeks to discuss the books. Students are wholly responsible for scheduling and conducting book club meetings and facilitating their discussions. Because students wanted additional guidance, we co-created a document called "What to do in Book Club" that discusses expectations for behavior and participation. Students also received a rubric to evaluate each other's and their own Book Club work.

As we read Manne (2018) and other theoretical readings alongside our novels,[1] I encouraged students to apply elements of class discussions to the characters, plot, and incidents in their novels. Based on our learning from *Down Girl* and other course readings, we co-created a rubric in order to evaluate the novels as feminist books. Each student wrote a synopsis and a review of the book for an audience of middle and high school teachers and librarians. After a week of workshopping each other's writing, and a couple optional crafting days to work on the covers, we were ready for the end of the course and our "publishing party."[2] Finally, I compiled our reviews, rubrics, and artistic representations into a book for each school library in our three neighboring school districts. (These are available online at LiberatingEducation.org.)

Conclusions and Reflections

Two of our books produced particularly strong reactions from students. I was pleasantly surprised by one group's reaction to *Some Places More Than Others* (Watson, 2019). *Some Places More than Others* is set near us in Portland, Oregon. The female lead character, Amara, wants more than anything to visit Harlem to meet her father's New York-based family, including her grandfather. In a three-person affinity group for men talking about patriarchy, three male-identified students applied Manne's (2018, p. 47) conceptualization of "care work" to their critique of the book and wondered: "is Amara being pressed into a role as the emotional underlaborer within the family?" Based on Manne's criticism of male need for, and expectation of, care from females, the group wondered: "does this include a daughter who tends to the rift between her father and his father, ultimately helping them do the emotional work of reconciling and healing?" The three male-identifying students were able to understand a very subtle manifestation of patriarchal systems through their reading of Amara's story. Without a harsh light being pointed at them as men, they identified with Amara and her family and came to understand the subtle yet pervasive role that caretaking plays in upholding the subordination of women.

The Hate U Give (Thomas, 2017) was one of the first books claimed by a student in the class (from my own collection, before the librarians even arrived!). The movie (Tillman, 2018) was a box office success and reached millions of people, including many of my students. The group of young white American women who read the story of Starr Carter, her Black community, gang violence, and protests against police brutality, did not have an easy time with the book. Like many white feminists and liberal white folks, the students struggled to identify with the strong Black female character. Starr's story centers around the murder of her lifelong friend Khalil by a white police officer during a traffic stop. But despite the clarity of the situation in the book, white students deflected their guilt and shame in what Bonilla-Silva (2019) and Matias (2016) call "white emotionality." We see this in real life in the discourse around the ongoing Black Lives Matter movement, in the wake of the killing of George Floyd and the trial of Derek Chauvin.

The next time I teach this course, in addition to reading the Combahee River Collective Statement (Combahee River Collective, 1978), I will offer additional readings on intersectionality, particularly femaleness and Blackness. Patricia Hill Collins would be helpful (e.g., Collins, 1990, 1996, 1998) or perhaps a chapter from Collins and Bilge (2016).

Social Studies is always fertile ground for social justice readings, so it is easy for me to imagine offering a social studies methods class that would include a similar project. A series of

historical fiction books related to or focused on social justice issues would make a lively addition to a middle or high school history class. A few classic titles spring immediately to mind—*Bud Not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis (1999), *Code Talker* by Joseph Bruchac (2006), *Farewell to Manzanar* by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston and J.D. Houston (1973), and *Tipping the Velvet* by Sarah Waters (1998). Perhaps a high school teacher working on a 20th century history lesson about conflict in the Middle East could assign one half of the class to read *Persepolis* (Satrapi, 2000) and the other half *The Breadwinner* by Deborah Ellis (2000)—to compare and contrast the viewpoints of different authors and the characters they create, coming from their own places of relative privilege and marginalization.

We all learned a lot about ourselves and each other by engaging in a public-facing book group project. And it was fun. I hope folks will want to build on it and adapt it to fit their students' and the community's needs. I can imagine this in fourth or fifth grade classes, with the "big kids" talking to younger folks about their books—whatever the topic—to demonstrate how cool reading is! Of course, high school students could do a book group series on most any subject—and the size of the groups could be varied, from pairs to a whole-class reading of two or more books, perhaps over the course of a semester or a whole year. The possibilities are *literally* endless.

ASSIGNMENT

Book Reviews for Libraries & Classrooms

This assignment serves multiple purposes. (1) It should be fun— "Not all fun is learning, but all learning should be fun" (Art Pearl, always). And plus, "If we couldn't laugh we would all go insane" (Jimmy Buffet, 1977). (2) It gives you a chance to practice your new analyzing-the-patriarchy skills and to flex your patriarchy-smashing chops on a real-life young adult literature. (3) You will hopefully find something you will be able to use in your classes in the future. (4) You will DEFINITELY learn how to critically evaluate what you use in your classes in the future.

We will assemble everyone's book reviews into a resource for current teachers and school librarians, who I'm sure don't have time to read 20+ YA novels and will be grateful to hear your perspectives and recommendations.

You will complete this assignment individually, but you are encouraged to share, discuss, troubleshoot, with your reading group/book club members and classmates. We'll also have a class period to work with art materials in the classroom.

Your final product will be FOUR 8 1/2 x 11 pieces of paper (separate, not two sided). The first will have some kind of artistic visual representation of your novel; the second will have the basic information listed below (and other info you decide belongs in "basic info"); the third page will have your written review, including all of the elements listed below, and perhaps others, but no more than one page; finally … the fourth page will have the YA Feminist Fiction rubric and your comments about the book in relation to the rubric's categories.

Basic Info and Written Review (draft): due Tuesday Week 8 in class
Final Project due Thursday Week 10 in Class for SHOWCASE!!

Basic Info

Title: Author: Publisher and Year:

Main Character & brief description: (e.g. Joanna, a 16-yo trans-girl who lives with her strict dad and goes to a (very!) traditional school since last year when they moved to a small town.)

Supporting Characters & brief descriptions: (e.g. Dad, also known as Jim, also known as Mr. Gordon, a single dad who loves his child but cannot seem to understand what he calls "this whole being a girl all of a sudden thing" and "Roxie" Joanna's BFF and #1 fan, furry, long tail.)

Setting (in narrative style, not a list): include place, time, descriptions (you can quote from the book!). You can note the season or change of seasons, add depth to your description by showing how the setting is important to the development of the character or how it is otherwise effective to the development of the story.

Story summary: (*with spoilers*—don't leave something to surprise the teacher when they are reading the book together with their whole class!)

Your Review

Why this book is a great feminist novel for young adults (or not, using our rubric to explain):

- What interpersonal elements of sexism/misogyny/patriarchy are addressed in the novel? How are they portrayed?
- How are sexists/misogynists and their survivors/victims and resistors portrayed by the writer? What about bystanders? Upstanders? Authority figures such as teachers, other school people, parents? What stereotypes or tropes are upheld? Which are questioned / upended?
- How is structural patriarchy portrayed and addressed in the novel? Would this be a good book to use when talking to teenagers about patriarchy? What about misogyny and/or sexism?
- How does this book fit in with our larger work as social justice teachers? In other words: how does it help us, and our students, understand the intersectional nature of systems of oppression? ** You can and should refer to readings from class (using APA style of course!) as I will be making a References page for the end of our final product. But avoid being too wordy/philosophical. We don't want to put more work on our colleagues!

Notes

[1] I chose *Down Girl* as our main reading even though I was fully cognizant that Manne does not fully engage with Black Feminist standpoints, Indigenous Feminist epistemologies, and Latin@x feminist work. Manne (2018) acknowledges this herself: "A limiting factor for my authority is my own (highly privileged) social position and the associated epistemic standpoint..." (p. 12) while maintaining that her analytical approach to misogyny "leaves room for the diverse range of ways misogyny works on girls and women given their intersectional identities... (p. 21). Supplemental readings included Arvin et al. (2013), Perales (2013) (on Anzaldúa, 1999), and Combahee River Collective (1978). I also shared current writings from the radical feminists I follow on my own, as they were applicable, (e.g. Gurba, 2020) and some humorous takes on the very serious issues we were examining (e.g. McGuire, 2020).

[2] Modeled after Writers Workshop's community celebrations of student writing (Calkins & Harwayne, 1991).

Supplementary Material

For supplementary material accompanying this paper, including a PDF facsimile of the assignment description formatted as the author(s) presented it to students, please visit https://doi.org/10.31719/pjaw.v6i1.80.

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Socialization and Social Justice
A Reflection on Teaching and Designing a Sociological Theory Course

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Abstract

Students are often told that social justice is both the ideal and the reality to which they should strive and contribute to as scholars and citizens. However, they are often not given the space—or the challenge—to grapple with what social justice means to, and for, them. This paper shares the design of an upper-level sociological theory assignment, Socialization as an Investigation of Social Justice Response Papers, that aims to do just that. The course units and theoretical texts are detailed, along with the response paper scaffold assignments, with special emphasis on a structured peer review process aligned with the assignment rubric. Now that the course has been taught nine times, memorable student contributions to the course, along with an excerpt from the most memorable student response paper, are shared with the aim of inspiring faculty modification, particularly in the social sciences.

Introduction

SUNY Old Westbury's mission is grounded in a commitment to civic engagement and social justice by creating an environment that demands academic excellence, fosters intercultural understanding, and endeavors to stimulate a passion for learning and a commitment to building a more just and sustainable world ("Mission & Vision," n.d.). These principles are institutionalized in the college's curriculum and programming and are referenced in nearly all official college communications. When I arrived at the college in the Fall of 2014 and was tasked with teaching an upper-level Sociological Theory II course, I began the first day by prompting students to respond to a single question: What does a socially just world look and feel like to you? The long silence, and palpable feelings of bewilderment and hesitation, made clear to me that while the principle of social justice is commonly held and shared as a goal among the campus community, students had not had many opportunities to grapple with the actual meaning of social justice—much less, as I was asking, what it looks and feels like to them.

On that day—my very first day at the college—I scrapped the generic reflection paper assignments I had originally planned and instead crafted the Socialization as an Investigation of Social Justice Response Papers. These two, six-to-eight page papers center students' socialization as the point of entry for them to grapple with social justice. Civic engagement is, after all, just one way students may operationalize social justice. The sociological theory assigned in the course is their tool with which to do so.

Course Design

The sociology department gave me the flexibility to design the course as I saw fit, including the theorists and corresponding assignments, so long as it aligned with our program's learning outcomes. As such, in designing the course, the guiding questions for me included the following: How will the theories I assign enable students to reflect upon how their socialization informs their foundational understanding of social justice? How will the theories I assign enable students

to reflect upon their socialization as both sites of privilege and oppression? Ultimately, how will the theories I assign enable students to reflect on our college's mission centered on social justice and civic engagement?

I had used Bobbi Harro's (2000) "Cycle of Socialization" in prior Introduction to Sociology courses and found it useful in introducing students to the concept of socialization. The Cycle visually represents that we are born into a specific set of social identities and that they predispose us to unequal roles into an "oppressive system." Harro describes this process as pervasive, consistent, circular, self-perpetuating, and usually invisible (Harro, 2000). I used the Cycle as a source of inspiration for Socialization as an Investigation of Social Justice Response Papers in Sociological Theory II, in which students focus on the "Institutional and Cultural Socialization" portion of the cycle. Institutions may be churches, schools, television, etc.; and cultures may be practices, song lyrics, languages, social movements, etc. In no way are these institutions and cultures exhaustive; instead, they are used as inspiration to spark students' brainstorming on what has had the greatest impact on their own socialization.

Then, I decided on four course units:

- Unit 1: Sociology of Knowledge—How Do We Know What We Know?
- Unit 2: Sociology of Identity—Who and What Constructs Who We Are?
- Unit 3: Social Constructions of, and Interactions between, Race and Class
- Unit 4: Social Constructions of, and Interactions between, Gender and Sexuality

Collectively, the units meet the aims detailed in the college's course description; individually, each unit enables students to reflect upon key social justice-grounded questions: Whose knowledge is canonized? Whose experiences do dominant knowledge systems reflect? Whose experiences are ignored or deemed inferior? How are race, class, gender, and sexuality social constructs that privilege the experiences of some while oppressing others? Admittedly, these questions are ones that I wish my professors had reflected upon—and asked students to think about—while I was pursuing my doctorate in Sociology, and instructed us, as students, to do the same. As a Black woman, I needed and wanted to see myself reflected in the discipline and have Black sociologists be intentionally and seriously studied. In order to operationalize social justice as a concept, students must first grapple with some of these fundamental questions. I must do the same.

Course Readings

In the first semester teaching the course, I identified the theories to be assigned for each unit and did not seek student input. I had a list of "non-negotiable" theorists in mind. That is, I considered these theorists essential to meeting the assignment and course learning objectives. For each reading, I gave an "Introduction to the Theorist" lecture which highlighted key aspects of their identities and biographies to help students understand that theories emerge from lived experience. I also assigned guided reading questions for each reading. I facilitated in-class assignments such as individual writing reflections, text rendering, and group discussions ("Text Rendering Experience," 2021). I have continued these same practices each time I have taught the course. However, while I was pleased with students' engagement with the theorists in the Fall 2014 semester, my teaching philosophy places primary value on student input in course design, and I did not honor that at the time.

I have taught the course nine times since Fall 2014 and have, each time since, incorporated brainstorming exercises during the first week with the intention of understanding topics, ideas, concepts, theories, and theorists that are of interest and importance to my students. Sociological Theory I, the first required theory course for the major, focuses on what is described

as "canonical theories." Students are introduced to the work of Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim. Each of these theorists are white European men. I challenge students to think about how the sociological canon is defined and from whose voices we have not yet heard. I welcome and encourage interdisciplinary contributions, especially Critical Race, Feminist, Queer, and Disability Theories.

Two student contributions have been most insightful. I had originally thought that W.E.B. Du Bois, a sociologist and the first African-American to earn a doctorate from Harvard, was taught in each section of Sociological Theory I. Yet, students lamented that his work was not consistently introduced in each section of the course, so I incorporated *Souls of Black Folk* (1903/1986) and *Dusk of Dawn* (1940/1986) into Unit 1, which led to substantive conversations about systemic racism and knowledge erasure in disciplinary canonization. Another contribution came from an Indigenous student who expressed not feeling seen and represented in the Sociology curriculum. This was especially salient because she was a student in my course during the height of the Dakota Access Pipeline protests in 2016. She brought the contribution of Gloria Anzaldúa's (2012) *Borderlands/La Frontera*, also incorporated into Unit 1, which led to substantive conversations on the intersections of epistemology and colonialism. The readings are curated by students and me, thus contributing to a greater sense of buy-in and accountability. The diverse selection of readings reflects both a diverse student population and my direction as the professor; notably, to date, I am also the only Black faculty member in the department. (A complete list of unit readings is available in Supplementary Material.)

Response Paper Assignments

Response Paper 1 corresponds to Unit 1 and Unit 2. The central questions for Response Paper 1, grounded in the unit titles, include: How do you know what you know? What has had the greatest impact on who you are? Response Paper 2 corresponds to Unit 3 and Unit 4. The central questions for Response Paper 2, grounded in the unit titles are: What has had the greatest impact on your understanding of race, class, gender, and/or sexuality? Students have the flexibility to focus on a single identity (e.g., race or class) or focus on multiple identities (e.g., race, class, and gender).

Both papers are scaffolded:

- *Scaffold Assignment 1*: Institution(s)/Culture(s): Theorist and Institution(s)/Culture(s) Brainstorm
- *Scaffold Assignment 2*: Conference to Discuss and Finalize Theorists and Institution(s)/Culture(s)
- *Scaffold Assignment 3*: Submission of Complete Final Paper Draft in Peer Review Group
- *Scaffold Assignment 4*: Submission of Peer Review Feedback in Peer Review Group
- *Scaffold Assignment 5*: Submission of Final Version

Students complete Scaffold Assignment (SA) 1 in class. They identify (a) two institutions, (b) two cultures **or** (c) one institution and one culture from Harro's cycle (or another that has had the largest effect on their socialization) **and** the two theorists (one from Unit 1 and one from Unit 2 for Response Paper 1; one from Unit 3 and one from Unit 4 for Response Paper 2) that have been most important to them. Then, I reserve a week of class time for each student to have a twenty-minute conference with me where I ask them to explain their brainstorm. This is SA 2. My role in these conferences is to listen to their ideas, offer suggestions, help clarify their theoretical application and conceptualization of social justice, and support them in drafting a rough outline of their paper. While I do provide an assignment outline, I allow students the

flexibility with which to order their theoretical application. I consistently remind students that this is their assignment, and I want them to have as much flexibility as possible, while meeting the assignment learning objectives.

SA3 and SA4 represent the peer review process. Using Blackboard Groups, I place students in groups of no more than four. Each group represents a variety of skills in theoretical application, concept development, and writing. Students post a complete draft of their paper (excluding a references page) in their reer review group and then reply to each group member using the provided peer review feedback questions. The questions reflect the criteria in the assignment rubric. Though often hesitant at first, students really enjoy this process. It helps to clarify their ideas and make overall improvements to their papers before final submission, SA5.

The paper has always been scaffolded but, over time, I have modified the assignments. At first, I did not include the twenty-minute conferences but have conducted them every time since. This opportunity to listen and connect with students is essential to the process. It also provides substantive direction, in the form of an outline, to guide the writing of their first draft. I have also modified the Peer Review Feedback Questions nearly every time I have taught the course to better support and train students in how to answer the questions and offer substantive feedback. Using a prior assignment, I even do an in-class practice session to instruct students on the peer review process. I highly recommend this.

Student Responses

Teaching this course, and navigating students through these assignments, is a privilege. Each time, it feels like a transformative learning experience. Students' personal reflections of the criminal justice system and mass media as agents of socialization into systemic racism; family and religious practices as agents of socialization into toxic masculinity; schools and New York City subways as agents of socialization into ableism; schools and family as agents of socialization into heteronormativity; and schools and churches as agents of socialization into colonialism are just some of the most insightful paper topics.

The most memorable paper was written in the spring of 2017:

> Growing up and living as a Black man within this morally derelict society is a difficult existence. Living within this darkened body, I am surrounded by numerous obstacles and assailants. These struggles range from an oppressive regime that seeks to attack and destroy the Black body and mind via state/reactionary forces, to a social incoherence amongst those who share my struggle, but not my history. In schools and the mass media, dangerous and abusive images of Black people are produced and widely disseminated. Within Black communities, capitalist state violence is distributed to subvert and exploit Black people. These images and racist myths are developed and distributed to maintain and shamefully justify a white supremacist, patriarchal, and capitalist system of violence. All at the expense of Black people, and at the expense of my own existence.

> Black children are made to believe that they are solely targets of the state's gun, that their value is only within what can be taken from them, such as what we produce, what we contribute to society, our welfare, or our very lives. We are more than what we've been made out to be. We are not the stepped-on shadows of white people. We are a force, we are an aspect of history, and we are an international community. If we do not challenge the material and ideological conditions of our oppression, if we divide ourselves due to the historical distinctions between U.S. and Caribbean slavery, as I have been forced to deal with, we will forever be shackled. In this paper, I will discuss my socialization, as a Black man, via mass media and schools in the United States using the theories of Antonio Gramsci (1970) and

Michel Foucault (1980)....

Social justice, then, is the complete social re-imagination of racist images and media perpetuated in mass media and schools. This requires a revolutionary body of the working class and oppressed people around the world that challenges the roots of white supremacy, patriarchy and capitalism. Social justice tears asunder a system developed from the bondage and objectification of Black people. Social justice replaces practices and ideas of repression, punitiveness, and subversion with community, restoration, and camaraderie between fellow people and cultures.

Focusing on the intersections of race and gender, this student's paper is a reflection on schools and mass media as significant agents of his socialization, incorporating theorists Antonio Gramsci (1971/2012) and Michel Foucault (1977/2012). I think about this powerful paper often, particularly as I prepare my classes each semester.

Three former students of mine have served as teaching assistants because they enjoyed the experience and want to support their peers in the course. I had two former students, based on response papers theorizing their socialization of racial injustice through the Black Lives Matter Movement, lead and participate in a committee to design a two-day, interdisciplinary Teach-In during the spring 2017 semester where faculty, staff, and students offered open classes, workshops, and performances. Additionally, I have supported many students in using these assignments as inspiration for senior seminar projects and application essays for graduate degree programs and law schools. The primary limitation of this assignment is that because there are four course units, two response papers—each with five scaffolded assignment—the course is fast-paced within a standard 15-week semester. With the exception of peer-reviewed academic journal articles, students were assigned excerpts from books as opposed to complete books which would have, ideally, led to more substantive and nuanced theoretical applications.

Suggestions for Further Development

I encourage faculty, especially in the social sciences, to modify and develop this assignment, keeping in mind that key elements of power, privilege, oppression, and justice are centra—no matter the discipline. The theoretical application component, for example, could be modified for other disciplines. Again, social justice is a concept that students must grapple with in order to make it accessible and operationalized. At the end of the semester, I take excerpts from students' social justice conceptualizations in their response papers and put them on a handout to identify themes and commonalities, but also consider reflect upon the various meanings people hold when theorizing the college's mission of a more just and sustainable world. I learn so much from my students each semester. Now, the world is experiencing two, interconnected, public health pandemics of COVID-19 and a reckoning of legacies of systemic racism. As the world grapples with what social justice means, an assignment such as this one provides meaningful opportunities to do this important work.

ASSIGNMENT

Social Justice Response Papers

Learning Objectives

In each of the required two, six-to-eight page response paper assignments, you will:

- identify the institutions and/or cultures that have had the greatest impact on an aspect of your socialization;
- apply sociological theory to your reflections of your institutional and cultural socialization;
- formulate what social justice means to you, based on your experiences; and,
- write a complete draft of your paper, and evaluate at least two peers' papers in a structured peer review process, before your final submission.

Assignment Overview

SUNY Old Westbury's mission is grounded in a commitment to civic engagement and social justice by creating an environment that demands academic excellence, fosters intercultural understanding, and endeavors to stimulate a passion for learning and a commitment to building a more just and sustainable world (State University of New York College at Old Westbury Mission Statement). You are often told that social justice is both the ideal and the reality to which you should be striving, and contributing to, as scholars and as citizens. However, you are often not given the space-and the challenge-to grapple with what social justice means to, and for, you. These papers aim to do just that.

Bobbie Harro's "The Cycle of Socialization" visually represents that we are born into a specific set of social identities and that they predispose us to unequal roles into an "oppressive system." Harro describes this process as pervasive, consistent, circular, self-perpetuating, and usually invisible (Harro, 2000).

You will focus on the "Institutional and Cultural Socialization" portion of the cycle, which details institutions and cultures. Institutions may be churches, schools, television etc., and cultures may be practices, song lyrics, language etc. In no way are these institutions and cultures exhaustive; instead, they are used as inspiration to spark your brainstorming on what has had the greatest impact on your socialization, and ultimately your conceptualization of what social justice means to, and for, you.

There are four units in the course:

- UNIT 1: Sociology of Knowledge—How Do We Know What We Know?
- UNIT 2: Sociology of Identity—Who and What Constructs Who We Are?
- UNIT 3: Social Constructions of, and Interactions between, Race and Class
- UNIT 4: Social Constructions of, and Interactions between, Gender and Sexuality

You will produce two six-to-eight page response papers, each of which are scaffolded.

The first response paper corresponds to units 1 and 2. The central questions, grounded in the unit titles above, are as follows: How do you know what you know? What has had the greatest impact on who you are?

The second response paper corresponds to units 3 and 4. The central question, grounded in the unit titles above, are as follows: What has had the greatest impact on your understanding of race, class, gender and/or sexuality? You have some flexibility here to focus on a single identity (e.g. race or class), or focus on multiple (e.g. race, class and gender). This is *your* theoretical application of your socialization; you know best.

Our work in Unit 1: Sociology of Knowledge: How Do We Know What We Know? and Unit 2: Sociology of Identity-Who and What Constructs Who We Are? has been designed to prepare you for this assignment. The central questions, grounded in the unit titles above, are as follows: How do you know what you know? What has had the greatest impact on who you are? What does social justice mean to you?

Unit 1: Sociology of Knowledge-How Do We Know What We Know?

- Anzaldua, G.(1987). *Borderlands/La frontera: The new mestiza.* Aunt Lute Books.
- Foucault, M. (1977/2012). Truth and power. In C. Calhoun, J. Gerteis, J. Moody, S. Pfaff, & I. Virk (Eds.), *Contemporary sociological theory* (3rd ed., pp. 305-313). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed.* (M. Ramos, Trans.), Herder and Herder (Original work published 1968)
- Gramsci, A. (1971). On hegemony. In C. Calhoun, J. Gerteis, J. Moody, S. Pfaff, & I. Virk (Eds.), *Contemporary sociological theory* (3rd ed., pp. 237-250). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Smith, D. (1990). The conceptual practices of power. In C. Calhoun, J. Gerteis, J. Moody, S. Pfaff, & I. Virk (Eds.), *Contemporary sociological theory* (3rd ed., pp. 398-406). Wiley-Blackwell.

Unit 2: Sociology of Identity-Who and What Constructs Who We Are?

- Blumer, H. (1969). Symbolic interactionism. In C. Calhoun, J. Gerteis, J. Moody, S. Pfaff, & I. Virk (Eds.), *Contemporary sociological theory* (3rd ed., pp.62-74). Wiley-Blackwell.
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- Goffman, E. (1956). Presentation of self in everyday life. In C. Calhoun, J. Gerteis, J. Moody, S. Pfaff, & I. Virk (Eds.), *Contemporary sociological theory* (3rd ed., pp.46-61). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Mead, G. H. (1934). *Mind, self, and society: From the standpoint of a social behaviorist* (C. W. Morris, Ed.) University of Chicago Press.

For this assignment, you are required to apply **two theorists,** one from Unit 1 and one from Unit 2. Application includes a general introduction into each theorist's main ideas; a connection of the dots between your experience and some of the theorist's key concepts; and, incorporation of direct quotations to support your discussion.

Paper Outline and Rubric

I will speak with each of you regarding the outline for your *specific* paper, but the *general* format is as follows:

- an introduction that is creative and engaging, concluding with a thesis statement that specifies the institution(s)/culture(s) and theories to be explored in your paper;
- an autobiographical sketch that provides substantive detail to convey to the reader why the institution(s) and/or culture(s) you will develop in your paper have shaped your response to the paper's central questions;
- a discussion and theoretical application (incorporating direct quotations) of institution(s)/culture(s) # 1;

- a discussion and theoretical application (incorporating direct quotations) of institution(s)/culture(s) #2;
- a discussion of what social justice means, given the previous explorations of theoretical application to socialization; and,
- a thoughtful conclusion.

Please see the assignment rubric.

Scaffold Assignments
- *Scaffold Assignment 1*: Institution(s)/Culture(s): Theorist and Institution(s)/Culture(s) Brainstorm
- *Scaffold Assignment 2*: Conference to Discuss and Finalize Theorists and Institution(s)/Culture(s)
- *Scaffold Assignment 3*: Submission of Complete Final Paper Draft in Peer Review Group
- *Scaffold Assignment 4*: Submission of Peer Review Feedback in Peer Review Group
- *Scaffold Assignment 5*: Submission of Final Version

Peer Review Instructions
1. Click on "Peer Review" on the Course Navigation Panel. This will take you to your Response Paper I Peer Review Group. You'll see the "Group Properties," which is a Group Description with each group member's name and "Group Tools," which includes the Group Discussion Board. You will work in the Group Discussion Board for this peer review.
2. Create a new thread in your Group Discussion Board. Upload your paper as a Microsoft Word attachment or PDF.
3. Read each of your group members' papers in their entirety. Once you have done so, reply to their post answering the Peer Review Feedback Questions below. These questions are aligned with the assignment rubric, which I use to evaluate and grade the final version of your paper. Please answer these questions in a constructive manner. These questions will help your peer produce an "exceptional" final paper, per the assignment rubric. Please **clearly label** your responses to the questions:
   (a) What do you observe as the most interesting and engaging components of the introduction?
   (b) Please, cut and paste the author's thesis statement that identifies the institution(s) and/or culture(s), along with the two theorists, to be addressed in the paper. If you are unable to identify it, please indicate that. This is very helpful to the author!
   (c) Does the autobiographical sketch illustrate why the institution(s) and/or culture(s) to be explored in the paper are most impactful to the author's socialization? What are your recommendations for how the author may improve the autobiographical sketch? Please, explain.
   (d) Would you characterize the discussion of Institution/Culture # 1 as clear, informative and substantive? Please, explain.
   (e) Would you characterize the discussion of Institution/Culture #2 as clear, informative and substantive? Please, explain.
   (f) Does the application of theorist #1 generally introduce the theory, incorporate key concepts and adequately apply the theory to the writer's autobiography? Please, explain.
   (g) Does the application of theorist #2 generally introduce the theory, incorporate key concepts and adequately apply the theory to the writer's autobiography? Please, explain.
   (h) Which two theorists have been introduced in the paper?

(i) In a paragraph, discuss your understanding of the author's conceptualization of social justice. Please, write a complete paragraph as it should be clear to you, having read the paper. If it is not clear, please communicate that.

(j) Does the conclusion adequately "tie-up" the paper, i.e. revisiting key points from the introduction, autobiographical sketch, theoretical application and social justice conceptualization? What does the paper need to better conclude the paper? Please, explain.

(k) Is the paper a complete six-to-eight pages of text? A reference page is not text. NOTE: You will need in-text citations and a references page for the final version of the paper.

(l) Other thoughts/comments: Please share any other constructive thoughts/comments you have on the paper.

4. When you receive feedback on your paper, please review it and incorporate as you see fit. Review the assignment rubric and submit the final version of your paper via "Response Papers" on the Course Navigation Panel. Please do not submit in your peer review group!

Supplementary Material

For supplementary material accompanying this paper, including a PDF facsimile of the assignment description formatted as the author(s) presented it to students, please visit https://doi.org/10.31719/pjaw.v6i1.92.

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Integrating Metacognitive Practice as a Strategy for More Equitable Storytelling in Community-Based Learning

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Abstract

Storytelling is a practice that is critical for the communication of lived experience, the development of empathy, and for the creation of a rich sense of collective being. While essential, it is also deeply complex and fragile—fraught with potential for marginalizing and stereotype-confirming rhetoric. In community-based learning, and throughout the field of Poverty and Human Capability Studies, storytelling is often employed in the context of reflective practice. Understanding student reflection as a pivotal opportunity for the exploration of more equitable storytelling resulted in the development of an assignment which employs a metacognitive approach to student learning. This prompts students to call to the center their more difficult experiences and assumptions, as well as the social and political structures impacting the ways they understand these encounters. Expanding on foundational literature on reflective practice in service and community-based learning, this assignment points to a need for the addition of metacognitive practice as a widely implemented tool for exploring inequality and bias in narrative reflections. The assignment resulting from integrating metacognitive reflective work produced student writing that was increasingly rich, complex, and appropriately self-critical of their narrative approaches.

Academic Context

The stated mission of the Shepherd Program for The Interdisciplinary Study of Poverty and Human Capability at Washington and Lee University is to "understand and address the causes and consequences of poverty in ways that respect the dignity of every person" (Shepherd Program, n.d.). In addition to the service-learning course for which this particular assignment was developed, coursework in the program includes a gateway course (POV101: Introduction to Poverty Studies), a credit-bearing internship experience (POV453: Shepherd Internship), and a capstone project. Students combine these foundational courses with those offering different disciplinary approaches across campus that encourage them to create their own academic and vocational pathways, often resulting in the completion of a Poverty Studies minor.

The practice of living our mission through teaching and learning has taught us that it is impossible to achieve this mission within the confines of the traditional classroom alone. Rather, we must be continuously seeking strategies for addressing issues of inequality and marginalization in ways that do, indeed, "respect the dignity of every person." This compels us to regularly facilitate student experiences that include dialog-across-difference, and to unceasingly challenge our sense of where expertise may lie. Particularly in courses that focus on this part of our mission as a student learning objective, a more radical approach can be taken with regard to discussion and practice around who holds knowledge, and in turn power, as the educator. The nature of this coursework requires students to explore the value of lived experience, professional practice, and other sources of intellect that are not considered traditionally academic, including

storytelling. One such course is POV102: Introduction to Community-Based Learning for Poverty Studies, a course that facilitates learning that includes respectful and responsible engagement in the larger community as a means of understanding and dismantling systems and structures of power and privilege.

Past strategies including community partner co-teaching, community partner office hours, and regular engagement with clients from vulnerable populations, have all proven valuable in expanding the scope of respectful student learning in the broader community. Still, student learning through traditional assignments seemed to produce work that was incomplete in terms of exploration of implicit bias, power, and privilege in the context of students' own thinking. Even as they employed the strategy utilized in many service-learning theory texts, considering "What? So what? Now what?" (Eyler et al., 1996) as it relates to their community-based experiences, students were infrequently participating in the larger analysis of the impact that their own identities, experiences, and upbringings had on their response to each of these foundational questions. Inevitably, students' ability to employ more equitable narrative strategies that reflect appropriately critical self-analysis in their recounting of their experiences and the stories shared with them was significantly impacted by this shortcoming.

Critical Reflection and Storytelling

In the 1990s, as service-learning gained momentum at institutions of higher education nationwide, Janet Eyler, Dwight Giles, and Angela Schmiede (1996) published *A Practitioners Guide to Reflection in Service-Learning: Student Voices and Reflections.* In addition to compelling testimonies about the powerful nature of reflective practice as the deepest point of connection between student experience in the broader community and the learning goals of a course, the text outlines "Four C's" of reflection in service-learning, include assuring that reflective practice is continuous, connected, challenging, and contextualized (Eyler et al., 1996). In my own experience implementing this model in the classroom, students indeed achieved the objective of weaving connections between their community and service-based experiences and the overall goals of the course. Still, my interest in rooting this student learning more deeply in the mission of the Shepherd Program with a focus on facilitating learning that promotes "respecting the dignity of every person," left me with a desire to explore the shortcomings of this model in relation to the ability of our students to self-reflect on the elements of their identity and lived experience that informed the ways they recounted and analyzed their experiences.

Student recollection, articulation, and analysis of their experiences in the broader community are inextricably tied to the notion of storytelling. One such iteration of this emerges as students share narratives of their own experiences with community partners and clients. While they consider the ways in which what they have learned could improve the impact of their respective agencies on targeted populations, students often failed to acknowledge the role that their identities and experiences played in their conceptions of this "improved" impact and what strategies might help to achieve it. A second iteration of storytelling emerges during student reflections in the classroom and in written work, during which students share recollections of powerful stories that were shared with them. Subtle and largely unintended judgements snuck pervasively into student work as they once again overlooked what informed their perception of the world. Indeed, storytelling is inherent in reflective work—regardless of how it is included or whom it is about—when students do the important work of lifting up the experiences and narratives of themselves and others for deeper analysis and more explicit connection to their own learning goals.

Careful attention to not just storytelling, but what informs the way stories are told, is required to address the perennial issues around power and privilege in this work. In light of

this, I suggest that we as practitioners consider adding something of a fifth "C" to the work of Eyler et al. (1996): (meta)Cognition. Metacognitive analysis has the potential to elevate reflective work by not only repeatedly calling students to evaluate and reevaluate their thoughts and experiences, but to go further in requiring students to explore the very process of this evaluation as deeply informed by experiences and identities. In turn, I believe this practice holds the potential for generating more respectful, informed, and authentic work.

In order for students to value this essential and inherently difficult work, it has been critical for me to make explicit the connections between storytelling and power. As Chimamanda Adichie (2009) shares in her now viral TED Talk "The Danger of a Single Story,"

> It is impossible to talk about the single story without talking about power. There is a word, an Igbo word, that I think about whenever I think about the power structures of the world, and it is "nkali." It's a noun that loosely translates to "to be greater than another." Like our economic and political worlds, stories too are defined by the principle of nkali: How they are told, who tells them, when they're told, how many stories are told, are really dependent on power.

Sharing this talk with them each term helps to offer a particular focus on the questions of respectful and responsible engagement with vulnerable populations, and encouraging students to analyze both their experiences, and the very process of their own meaning-making.

As storytelling is central to reflection, and reflection is central to student learning in service and community-based learning, I became deeply interested in the ways it might be possible to address elements of power in the storytelling inherent in reflection-based assignments in POV102. Rooting assignment design in the desire to facilitate this work led me to explore the use of metacognitive practices, which promote the ability of our students to employ strategies for giving dimension to the lives of individuals whose narratives can be flattened by systemic inequality and social injustice. Further, insofar as employing these strategies may promote more equitable and thoughtful articulations, students have begun to understand reflection and writing as subversive and important tools, understanding their work as possessing the potential to incite movement towards a more dynamic and respectful community-based learning experience in higher education.

Assignment Design

In POV102, a one-credit service-learning course, students are asked to complete a final paper that guides them through communicating their learning around poverty, marginality, and human capability. In an effort to walk with students through their own reflective practice in such a way that metacognitive analysis can be thoughtfully supported, the assignment is broken up into three main elements: a pre-writing tool, a completed draft, and additional post-draft considerations intended to encourage analysis of the role stereotypes, identity, and privilege play their thinking. These post-draft considerations were significant in encouraging a metacognitive approach more generally, but the specific guiding questions were also developed through my own exploration of their repetitive use in my own commentary on past student work.

Having taught this course for several years, I found myself regularly having to prompt students to center their own assumptions and biases, as well as their role in further perpetuating particularly damaging rhetoric. It was my hope that encouraging this would sharpen students' ability to engage in both charitable and critical reflection on the development of systems of oppression in and beyond our institution. Lastly, as an interdisciplinary program, encouraging and facilitating repeated self-analysis seems to possess the potential to embolden students to

synthesize learning from across multiple academic disciplines in such a way that they might highlight, for themselves and their audience, the importance of inter-and-transdisciplinary learning.

Assignment Implementation

This assignment was used twice during the 2019-2020 academic year, with minor adjustments between uses that were reflective of my own learning around how to best encourage and support metacognitive work. I initially offered the assignment to students for independent work, but student feedback made it apparent that more active instructor engagement, and potential peer influence, could improve outcomes. Upon my second offering of this assignment, students were required to complete the pre-writing activity in class, their initial draft outside of class, and the post-draft considerations once again in class. This approach seemed to first impact students' confidence in their own ability to produce thoughtful and high-quality written reflections by providing them with a high level of support as they developed thematic choices and initial rhetorical strategies. Secondly, it offered students an opportunity to attempt the more targeted metacognitive work independently, to then be employed and explored in the substantive classroom-based discussion of the experiences and strategies of their peers.

The impact of this second outcome was considerable, in that it resulted in explicit discussions of the privilege and power that are inherent in how we share stories, particularly those related to vulnerable populations. Students grappled with questions about their own analysis and writing, as well as what shaped it, largely in response to the vulnerability that was cultivated by students sharing their responses to the post-draft considerations. As soon as one student bravely acknowledged the ways their own identity and privilege impacted their analysis and articulation of an experience, others followed.

These discussions led to profound evolution of student thinking. One such example was in the movement from one student's desire to provide nutritious food to those experiencing food insecurity, to their exploration of the deeply intimate and complex cultural relationships that people have with food and how that might impact services. A second student articulated that their previous understanding of the behaviors of youth as related directly to the upbringing provided by parents and guardians had been challenged, pushing them to consider the ways public educational systems promote opportunity for some and not others. Overall, students were able to deepen and complicate their own understanding of their experiences in the broader community in concert with their own identities, upbringings, and relationships with others and the world. As a result, they provided more dynamic, nuanced reflections that acknowledged elements of power and privilege in substantial ways.

Successes, Limitations, and Future Use

While no doubt having a significant positive impact on student learning, writing, and discussion, there are elements of this approach that demand further consideration. First, in an effort to deepen students' ability to connect individual experiences and behaviors with larger stories and structures of oppression and power, I plan to return to the work of Chimamanda Adichie (2009), who shared later in her talk on "The Danger of a Single Story," the following:

> The Palestinian poet Mourid Barghouti writes that if you want to dispossess a people, the simplest way to do it is to tell their story, and to start with, "secondly." Start the story with the arrows of the Native Americans, and not with the arrival of the British, and you have an entirely different story. Start the story with the failure of the African state, and not with the colonial creation of the African state, and you

have an entirely different story.

As students begin to see themselves as storytellers in their reflective work, and deepen their understanding of the implicit power therein, I hope to encourage students to explore where in the larger narrative of lived experience throughout history they are beginning. Including questions that prompt students to explore what story is being told in their work, to whom this story belongs, and how even unintentional dismissal of its prior chapters can cause harm. Students will be called not only to consider the larger narratives belonging to vulnerable and/or historically oppressed populations, but also how their understanding of the beginning of their own stories impacts their own process of making meaning.

Despite the many apparent benefits of this assignment design, one shortcoming of the practice of metacognition in student reflection which requires further consideration is the tendency of metacognition to still ultimately affirm one's own understanding of their thinking. While the structure of moving the post-draft work to a classroom-based experience couched in purposeful discussion proved fruitful for students who felt otherwise unable to access this level of analysis, it was nonetheless limited in its ability to provide students with the more critical perspective that is offered through external analysis and feedback. Future use of the integration of metacognitive work in this and other assignments necessitates continued exploration around how to fully understand implications of this shortcoming, as well as potential strategies for mitigating its impact in student learning, which could include structured peer review, one-on-one discussion between the draft and post-draft elements, or the use of in-class time to address post-draft concerns.

ASSIGNMENT

Central Question(s): Develop and share a narrative on your experiences with your agency and the population it serves— what do you want people to know?

Assignment: Introduce your agency, the issue area it addresses, the population it serves, etc. Recall our discussions in class around storytelling, voice, and advocacy. Use both critical and charitable lenses on your own experiences and writing to develop a narrative-employing reflective piece about your engagement in the [region] this term.

Pre-Writing Tool: Consider using the questions below as a pre-writing tool to help you examine more deeply your own thoughts before you begin composing your response. One method for doing this is to set a timer (10-20 minutes) and focus on exploring these questions for the duration of the time.

- Who is your target audience? Why? What strategies might you use to communicate with them on complex issues of inclusion, equity, and justice?
- Why is this story important? What do you want others to take away?
- How is the way you tell this story important with respect to the particular individuals with whom you have interacted?

Post-Draft Considerations: Once you have completed your initial draft of this paper, return to your pre-writing method to consider the following:

- What are the things that are *not* being said in your draft? In what assumptions might they be tied up?
- How are you addressing "the danger of the single story"?
- Does your draft clearly demonstrate your considerations around how to respectfully and responsibly share your story of engagement?

- How can you call to the center of your narrative some of your liminal experiences?

Organization: Students should integrate anecdotes from your own work and your studies (including relevant statistics and quotations from 101 and 102 readings or other research).

Citation: Use parenthetical citations for any POV101 or POV102 course readings or other research.

Title: Include a title that is both interesting & relevant to the paper topic/thesis.

Format: 4-6 pages, typed, double-spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman word document

Research: POV101 & POV102 readings & community-based anecdotes.

Supplementary Material

For supplementary material accompanying this paper, including a PDF facsimile of the assignment description formatted as the author(s) presented it to students, please visit https://doi.org/10.31719/pjaw.v6i1.89.

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Writing as Memory Work
Teaching the Civic Deliberations over Monument Removals

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Abstract

Social justice goals are usually sought in civic or community settings in which stakeholders represent competing frameworks about what is just, good, and true. Modeling for students a way to identify these competing frameworks, and then intervene in deliberations to achieve just ends, is the focus of our assignment sequence. We examine civic deliberations over removing racist public symbols in this assignment for first-year students enrolled in linked rhetoric and philosophy courses. We read broadly in theories of public memory and civic identity, examine in depth one community's deliberation, and reflect on public symbols in our home communities. The final joint assignment asks students to identify the principles that should guide deliberations about contested public symbols. We found that the assemblage of ideas that the students select from these pre-drafting activities shapes what they think is possible in the work of social justice; in other words, their own standpoint enables and limits what they see in the assemblage of ideas, sometimes limiting the arc of social justice insights and solutions, and sometimes unleashing it. For this reason, reflective writing is a necessary entwined process, one that can develop better awareness of how students' epistemic norms shape their ability to imagine social justice ends. To most fully realize social justice knowledge, students must not stay bound within the contours of particular deliberations or inward reflection. Instead, assignments must enlarge the context, asking students to make bigger inquiries into history, context, and relations of domination.

Course Context: A Monumental Moment

St. John Fisher, our small, liberal arts college, requires that first-year students fulfill their writing requirement across two linked courses that examine a single topic from different disciplinary perspectives. In this learning community, our 100-level rhetoric and philosophy courses examine how communities deliberate over a social justice problem: how they identify a problem to confront, the language and practices they use to confront it, the values and beliefs that undergird their aims, and the ways they respond to alternative and opposing stakeholders. We encourage students to use writing to discover social justice pathways through the thicket of the deliberative process. Indeed, much of social justice work occurs in a deliberative space of diverse interests, investments, and identifications. In the heterogeneous spaces of the school board, the town meeting, or the legislative session, participants hold different and competing orientations. As solutions to problems are proposed, those proposals inevitably disrupt and even threaten the identities, realities, and attachments of some stakeholders. Such is the ideologically diverse reality in which social justice aims are acknowledged and implemented.

We first conceived of this assignment in 2018 when we watched communities contest their racist public monuments in the wake of the murders in Charleston in 2015 and Charlottesville in 2017. We taught the assignment again in a less deliberative, more activist context of the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis in 2020. In both iterations, our students were in overwhelming solidarity with the Movement for Black Lives (BLM). This surprised us, as our students are

predominantly white, often coming from rural and suburban areas within 200 miles of campus (S. Lederman, director of freshman admissions, St. John Fisher College, personal communication, September 21, 2021). By 2020, the solidarity these students felt shifted from the safety of class discussions and college essays, to acts of public visibility, as they blacked out their Instagram feeds, attended BLM protests, wore BLM-themed t-shirts and masks on campus, and publicly called out the white supremacist and racist assumptions of peers and family members. Students were eager to engage in the question of how to stay oriented to social justice outcomes within a contested, deliberative space.

Halfway into the semester, we combine our classes and introduce a joint assignment that asks students to "identify what principles you think could help guide the conversations that communities have about their contested public symbols." We scaffold this assignment by examining a community deliberation over a contested mural; engage in critical reflection on contested spaces in their home communities; and apply readings on racism, identity, and public memory drawing from the fields of cultural rhetoric and feminist pragmatist philosophy. Tracking the spectrum of ideological affiliations at play is complicated. To help with tracking, this assignment sequence emphasizes the use of graphic organizers in identifying and summarizing ideological affiliations, which helps students compare and synthesize ideas from course readings. Such a method uses writing for the transfer of social justice knowledge and offers students a new way to identify, listen, and self-reflect on their own antiracist stance.

The Learning Community Course Structure

In the learning community, students examine a complex social problem from two different disciplines. The comparison helps students see how disciplines and standpoints shape what we see as a problem and forms our methods for negotiating difference. The two disciplinary perspectives also highlight how we identify and address our blind spots, and what we see as action and a just remedy. Together the courses ask: how can a philosophical tradition help us consider the ways that identity, the self, and power converge in civic deliberations? How can a rhetorical tradition help us explore the ways discourse reflects ideological affiliations and also offer imaginative ways to remake social relations? How might our assessment of these conflicts be more complicated than a binary between justice and injustice? Rather, how can we unearth skills, practices, and processes to gain awareness of epistemic entrenchment—of others and our own—and consider a more just world?

By mid-semester, these separate areas of study converge to meet our cultural moment, addressing instances of murder and violence against African-Americans, and reckoning with events that include reconsidering racist public murals, monuments, and flags. We begin our shared course meetings with readings about public symbols that help us understand space and temporality. Political geographer Karen Till (2012) coined the term "wounded cities" to describe how forms of violence may appear sudden and discrete, like the Charleston massacre, but that in truth, work over a period of many years, "and continue to structure current social and spatial relations, and as such structure expectations of what is considered 'normal'" (p. 6). She notes how residents are wounded by state and dominant social-political practices and seek to transform structures of inequality and recognize people's lived realities within public settings (p. 5). Till describes civic wounds as "complex temporalities" of trauma, history, and material devastation, sustained through "intergenerational relations and silences" (p. 6). Political geographers Joshua F.J. Inwood and Derek Alderman (2016) contend that these wounds cannot simply be erased by removing their public symbol avatars; they describe this as historical and geographical erasure with the goal of forgetting the past and moving forward without doing the reparative work that truly moving forward requires (p. 11). Reading Till and Alderman immerses students in a new

notion of civic time and civic responsiveness within it.

Communities working to heal wounded spaces must engage in what Till (2012) calls "memory work" to care for the wounds that structure their relations, taking "responsibility for the failures of the democratic state and its violences" as they work to "imagine more socially just cities through place-based practices of care" (p. 7). Such work is a "reaching out toward something other than the self" (p. 8) in ways that "build self-worth, collective security, and social capacity" (p. 7). Christina Sharpe (2016) posits the term "wake work" as engaging in modes of artistic production, resistance, consciousness, and possibility for living amidst ongoing racial trauma (p. 11). Wake work is an analytical, poetic concept that connects the legacy of enslavement with ongoing structural racism. Students read about it as a mode of "inhabiting and rupturing" instead of enduring state violence and surviving subjection (p. 13). Memory work and wake work help students identify slavery's past in the current acts of injustice of the present (p. 18). The work of Erin Genia (MAPC Metro Boston, 2020) (of Sisseton-Wahpeton Dakota ancestry) asks us to reconsider the category of public space altogether, moving students from our settler-colonial assumptions to examples of decolonizing space and place with our memorial acts. We examine Genia's (2019) Dakota pride banner "Resilience" for an example of how public art can inhabit and rupture public space, can call up a history of structural racism, and imagine just relations.

Analyzing Civic Deliberation

Our joint class sessions apply our readings to consider a controversy that had been ongoing since the 1960s but came to formal, deliberative process in 2019: whether the mural, "Life of George Washington," should be removed from the San Francisco high school that bears his name (Lam, 2019; Pogash, 2019). The mural was painted by artist and member of the Communist party, Victor Arnautof, as part of the Depression-era public works project in 1935, and is one of the fourteen murals that line the entryway and first floor of the school (Lam, 2019). The mural was a point of discussion in two ways. We worked closely with artifacts written by the major stakeholders in this deliberation: interviews with current and former students of the school (Asimov, 2019; Moyer, 2019), Indigenous leaders, historians and artists, and elected school board members. We watched videotape from the open comment periods of the school board meetings, read open letters produced by art historians ("Open Letter on the Proposed Destruction of a Mural Cycle," 2019), and worked with a variety of other texts to understand people's assumptions, attachments, wounds, and joys surrounding the mural ("San Francisco Mural Controversy," 2019).

The case deliberation offered students a point of departure to research the public symbols in their home communities. We asked students to do a bit of internet digging, talk with family and friends, and write a short description of a contested symbol and any deliberative process and outcome, as well as their reactions and opinions. A student from Toronto, for example, wrote about a main thoroughfare in his neighborhood: Dundas Street. Henry Dundas, a nineteenth-century Canadian MP, sponsored legislation that extended the transatlantic slave trade in Canada, and the recognition of this history in the wake of the George Floyd killing prompted a 2020 effort to change that street name. The student, a white settler Canadian, was adamant that the street name be changed. Another student examined the controversy over the Columbus Circle area in her hometown of Syracuse, New York, where Italian Americans and Indigenous groups—who used to be at an impasse over removal of the Columbus Statue—are now finding common ground. From high school mascot changes to the persistence of the Confederate flag in rural western New York, students identified controversies in their localities and explored the ways place is signified, and identities are developed around and against places.

Making Meaning with Graphic Organizers

Prewriting for the essay includes graphic organizers (charts that serve to compare articles) and provide scaffolding for the project. First, students charted the philosophical and rhetorical arguments the cases discussed. (See Figure 1.) Over the span of a week, students completed the chart in small groups. Having already studied the feminist, pragmatist, and antiracist visions of Jane Addams (1902/2002), George Herbert Mead (1934/1972), María Lugones (2003)(1989/2003), and Kwame Anthony Appiah (2018) in their philosophy course, students considered how the social nature of the self and individual and community (tribal) identities impact their ability to imagine inclusive and creative solutions to community-based conflicts. Students also consider how they are (or are not) present with and to others in their communities.

A second, collaborative charting activity used the analytical tools from the rhetoric course. Palczewski, Ice, and Fritch (2016) note that symbolic action is "expressive human action, the rhetorical mobilization of symbols to act in the world" (p. 7). In focusing on symbolic action, we analyzed the words and images deployed by each stakeholder that represent their position on the mural. Bitzer's (1968) notion of the rhetorical situation helped students identify the ways stakeholders expressed the timeliness of their arguments and adapted their message to appeal to different audiences. Kenneth Burke's (1966) notion of terministic screens helped students see how words and images screen—or select—a given reality, but also repress, mute, and even erase competing realities to advance their claims. And Toulmin's (1958/2003) methods of analysis allowed students to focus on the underlying assumptions of stakeholder claims that revealed their ideological allegiances. Through these rhetorical approaches students were able to find patterns in stakeholder uses of symbols and discovered quickly that, no matter what group was deliberating, and in what city, five positions emerged:

(a) remove the symbol from public view;

(b) remove it and place it in another, fuller educational context;

(c) keep the symbol but add a fuller context;

(d) keep the symbol as is; or

(e) create new art in the spirit of antiracist social relations.

Students created a chart that helped them track how predictable and competing stakeholder identities, opinions, beliefs, and values emerge and vie for dominance. (See Figure 2.)

The charting activities are tools of invention, a step toward the joint essay. They help students develop a stance they might need to tackle in the prompt, one that Maria Lugones (2003) refers to as the attenuated, one poised to "witness faithfully" by moving "with others without falling into a politics of the same …; without mythologizing place; attempting to stand in the cracks and intersections of multiple histories of domination [and] resistances to dominations" (pp. 6-7). Through charting and the discussions it prompted, students would imaginatively explore the perspective of others and, thereby, entered into the complexity of these cases, gaining a sense of not only the possible just outcomes for each contested issue but, more holistically, a sense of the qualities of a just process, regardless of the situation. The charts allowed students to identify and put into words what perspectives might be underrepresented, or which ones align, or which ones erase and denigrate the assumptions underpinning other perspectives. This prewriting work requires students to confront their own assumptions. Students who initially assumed that a socially just solution was clear, perhaps insisting that the mural or statue be removed because of the depiction of slavery and the death of Indigenous people, found their understanding and their own views more complicated once they immersed themselves in a fuller understanding of histories, assumptions, and stakes. Our hope was that, even if the student retained their

original position, their understanding and reasoning for why they held it would become more complicated than what a binary, good/bad analysis might otherwise produce.

Supporting Student Work, Assessing the Assignment

Students begin with drafting the joint essay by synthesizing philosophical principles of social justice and comparing the rhetorical moves stakeholders make in deliberations on public symbols. Eventually they are ready to make a claim about what communities should keep in mind in such deliberations. Making the claim and supporting it involves a level of metacognitive awareness in which students are able to anticipate the positions that they will hear but not shrink them into caricatures or stereotypes. From this position, they are better able to carefully respond to the complexities of identity, understand how ideology entrenches roles, and make a series of rhetorical moves designed to achieve social justice outcomes. For example, students may write their essays as a series of questions, the aim of which is to address sedimented ruts in deliberative exchanges. They may write their essays in a procedural mode, setting up ways that stakeholders can engage in activities to promote sympathetic understanding, or their essays might be declarative and didactic, explaining how standpoint constructs knowledge and limits it. Each of these requires what George Herbert Mead (1934/1972) called "reflexivity," what Jane Addams (1902/2002) called "working with," and what Maria Lugones (2003) called "attenuated agency." The point in all cases is to enter into the context of the situation where diverse perspectives might better be seen and engaged.

Students examine their charts to assemble perspectives, concepts, and proposals in order to determine what communities should keep in mind. By making these assemblages, students process social justice ideas through affiliation, allegiance, and amplification. The assemblage of concepts that the students select shapes what they think is possible in the work of social justice, enabling what they see and what remains invisible, sometimes limiting the arc of social justice insights and solutions, and sometimes unleashing them. Till (2012) offers helpful framing to understand the different conceptions of social justice our students offered. Till distinguishes between first generation rights, in which she includes individually focused rights like political rights, and second and third generation rights, in which she includes rights that might be seen as more communal in nature, like the right to peace among people and the right to a healthy environment (p. 8). Students with a more communal sense of social justice embraced second- and third-generation rights, and were more likely to draw on, for example, María Lugones' (2003) idea that we are all "mapped" into our social environments and that our position on these maps is either with or without power. Students with "unleashed" notions of social justice wove this mapped understanding into their analysis, noting the importance of including, even privileging, voices that were without power on the shared map as central to achieving social justice. One student developed a theory of deliberation inspired by his idol Mohammed Ali and his adage "float like a butterfly, sting like a bee." The student argued that advocates for social justice need to understand how to modulate rhetorical strategies to be heard, to influence, and to make an impact. Students tended to conceive of social justice as historically informed and communal in nature, fully embracing the social nature of the self explored in both of our courses.

Some students clung to a conception of human rights that tended to be more singular or individual in nature. These students did not seem to be as historically informed by the systematic nature of racism in our country, though this was a featured area of study in our learning community. Students with more limited, individually focused notions of social justice, failed to factor in the "asymmetries of power" that Lugones (2003) highlights, and instead tended to assemble their analysis by placing every voice on equal footing. Some even flipped the scales and pushed back against communal responses that may have privileged the historically silenced

voices, thus affirming individual rights considered in isolation and without consideration of long-standing, historical power relations, as well as structural racism and other forms of disenfranchisement. In her analysis of mayor Mitch Landrieu's (2018) description of his rationale for monument removals in New Orleans, one student insisted that, in the course of community deliberation, the white supremacist voice was not heard and therefore the process was flawed, ultimately being unjust to the white supremacists.

As Inwood and Alderman (2016) point out, there is a tendency in deliberations to want to "address symbols of a racist heritage without challenging the foundational histories and geographies of racism" (p. 10) and therefore there is a "cordoning off of the degree to which white supremacy might be challenged" (p. 183). These students who resist the arc of social justice as communal in nature are reluctant to center social justice wounds in the historical facts of slavery. Such an act of memory politics is an attempt to:

> 'Fix' time and identity by deploying the material and symbolic qualities … to close off public discussion by bounding time through place while others seek to keep open the process of historical reflection through dialogue, changing landscape forms, and community capacity-building. (p. 7).

Going forward, it will be important to spend more time on the rhetorical features of memory politics, as students learn to identify such deliberative moves, as well as the underlying assumptions they carry, deepening their understanding of the barriers and opportunities for achieving social justice. They must do this not only in reference to the stakeholders in the cases they are analyzing, but also by reflecting on their own ideological predilections.

Through additional metacognitive work, we must offer students opportunities to gain awareness of their own positionality and preconceived ideologies. We hope that this work helps students come to see how their own positionality may have influenced what they could see, what they could not see, and how they may have weighed and filtered the information they assembled. While we offered this opportunity at the beginning and end of the assignment sequence, we did not sufficiently thread in formal moments for reflection throughout the process. Without metacognitive work, the well-meaning, yet relatively privileged, student body at our institution was not likely to fully realize the power and privilege dynamics that inform the cases we examined.

This assignment reveals many hard truths about social justice work. Social justice outcomes are some of the most difficult to achieve because they involve the ceding of entrenched power and systemic, structural shifts toward inclusion that require support, education, and care for all those involved. Socially just insights and outcomes are usually not achieved by fiat, in a single, unanimous decision that left all those involved feeling equally heard. They are usually hard-won through processes and practices that involve the (re)creation of individual and community identities, that include previously silenced voices, and that lead to the creation of new and shared meanings and values. Social justice work thus involves not only attention to outcomes but also to methods, processes and identity-building. As Till (2012) argues, human lives "move, interact and engage with others through complex temporal and spatial pathways" and, as they do so, "the symbolic and material places they make also become part of their bodies-selves-environments" (p. 6). Thus, the "social" in social justice work is not only the work of striving for just outcomes; it is identity, relationship, and emotional work as well. If successful, such work will create "normative anchors" in communal deliberations that encourage the seeking of broader, intergenerational rights and justice (p. 8). Participating in such deliberations can lead one to see the social webs and historical ecologies that such symbols are part of, from red-lining, to failed urban renewal and planning, and entrenched segregation (p. 9). An important insight

for teaching is that our assignments must develop sympathetic understanding—in ourselves and in others.

ASSIGNMENT

Teaching the Civic Deliberations over Monument Removals

Joint Essay Assignment

Joint Essay: 1500 words, MLA format, Works Cited. Two peer workshops required. One group draft conference with Dr. Lowe or Dr. Swiencicki.

The purpose of this assignment

Should a confederate monument be displayed in a city park? Should a college dormitory be named after its donor who was a slaveholder? These are questions that communities across the U.S. are asking of themselves. Such questions get at the heart of how we understand our past, how we represent it in the present, and how we use symbols to assert our communal beliefs, values, history, and aspirations.

For this essay, please identify what principles might help guide the conversations that communities have about their contested public symbols. To do this, use the readings from both our first-year learning community courses (rhetoric and philosophy), as well as the cases we have studied of cities that have made decisions about their public monuments, murals, and street names.

The learning goal

This assignment helps you recognize, assess, and respond to the multiple standpoints that make up a given social justice problem. Social justice outcomes are often achieved by participating in tough deliberations in which competing outcomes are at play. When community members deliberate about what to do with, for example, a confederate monument in their town square, they each do so with different assumptions about what is good, true, and just for their community. Learning to identify these underlying value assumptions can help you understand how ideas align and prevail, or diverge and lose force. They help us see places of incommensurability in deliberation, or when points of comparison and compromise are not yet possible. And they help us see where to direct our energy in building bridges among differing perspectives toward the goals of equity, inclusion. Understanding the perspectival nature of reality means we can become more aware, ethical users of language, and work more intentionally toward social justice.

Why you are prepared to do this

Your training in our two, linked courses (rhetoric and philosophy) prepares you to identify and examine social justice actions. In our rhetoric class, you have been studying the ways that symbols (words, images and artifacts) reflect and create beliefs and values, and are representative of larger ideologies. In our philosophy class you have been studying the work of American pragmatist, feminist, and progressive thinkers who engage questions of social justice relating to structural inequality, power and privilege, and potentials for identification and empathy across differences.

Your audience

The audience for this essay is your learning community professors and classmates. Assume that we have read all the relevant sources on your Works Cited page. Use "I" in your essay and draw on relevant classroom discussions, your analysis of the charts, and the theories we have read to

support your argument.

Your essay will be evaluated on how well it…

Identifies what communities might consider when deliberating about their contested public symbols; supports those claims with analysis of the language and ideologies of stakeholder perspectives from the rhetoric class; supports those claims with theories from your philosophy course; reflects on what you have learned about your own ethical investments in these issues; and organizes and connects the above elements, and attends to the style and craft of writing.

Scaffolding Activities Building to Joint Essay

1) Gateway Activity: "The Life of Washington" Mural

This mural is titled "The Life of Washington," (see one of the thirteen panels of the mural below) and it hangs in the front hallway of the George Washington High School in San Francisco, CA.

> **(Editor note: The image used in the author's assignment is not included here as *Prompt* does not have a copyright license to it, and it's not clear that the use here would be a fair use under U.S. Copyright law.** Detailed images of the mural, and in particular, the image the authors included in the assignment, are available in Cherny (2019).)

It was painted by artist and member of the Communist party, Victor Arnautof, as part of the Depression-era public works project in 1935, and is one of thirteen other murals that line the entryway and first floor of the school. In small groups, study and discuss this mural using some of the following questions:

§ Did your town, school, or neighborhood have controversial public symbols? What did you learn from observing or participating in discussions about them? How were conflicts resolved? Were the outcomes socially just, in your view?

§ What argument does the mural seem to be making about Washington? About power and nation-building?

§ Imagine how different groups in the community would experience this mural. Brainstorm a list of groups and imagine their arguments about this mural, and where those arguments come from.

§ We will watch two, 10-minute news segments which feature the school board's decision to remove these murals, and we will discuss whose perspectives prevailed in the deliberations.

§ What in your personal experience informs your feelings about what should be done, if anything, with this mural?

§ Is it socially just to allow "Life of Washington" to remain? What research would you need to do to be able to answer that question?

2) Charting Philosophical & Rhetorical Perspectives

See Figure 1 for the chart students use to identify concepts. It is shown in its correct size and context in the original assignment description (see Supplementary Materials).

3) Charting Diverse Perspectives

See Figure 2 for the chart students use to identify perspectives. It is shown in its correct size and context in the original assignment description (see Supplementary Materials).

Charting Social Justice Concepts					
	Key words, phrases, and concepts that help us think about public memory and racism	Define key words, phrases and concepts	Quotes that support the definitions offered (Include page numbers)	Implications of these concepts for understanding social justice and public memory	Apply these insights to one of our cases to help assess the deliberations
ERIN GENIA					
JANE ADDAMS					
CHRISTINA SHARPE					
GEORGE HERBERT MEAD					
MARIA LUGONES					

Figure 1. Chart students use to identify concepts.

4) In-class brainstorm activity: Identifying your conclusions and observations

We have examined how San Francisco's George Washington High School community has grappled with their controversial mural. We have also briefly examined cases from your home town, and elsewhere in the U.S. (New Orleans, LA, and Charlotte, SC). This is a case study method, where we examine how a similar problem is deliberated across different contexts. It helps us compare and contrast perspectives within each case, and then compare those perspectives and outcomes across different cases. We can then recognize patterns in deliberations that stall social justice outcomes, as well as discussions, practices, and arguments that develop and create social justice outcomes.

We have worked in small groups and completed presentations on two charts—one that helps us compare the rhetoric of different perspectives on monument removal, and one that uses feminist pragmatist and antiracist philosophies to assess different perspectives on monument removal. Examine these charts and see what patterns, insights, and trends emerge in the ways different perspectives approach the issue of racism and public symbols. What lessons can we learn from the patterns, trends, and insights you have charted?

Your charts will likely reveal your sympathies: With which perspective do you align yourself?

Charting Diverse Perspectives				
Prevailing Perspectives (Driving question?) What should be done with public symbols that have a racist past?	**Symbolic Action** What do those who take up this position think about the connection between symbols and community identity? (Include case name, perspective, page number, etc.)	**Rhetoric** What words and phrases do they use to represent their position? What persuasive strategies do they employ? (Include case name, perspective, page number, etc.)	**Ideology** What are the prevailing ideologies reflected in their language and approach to symbolic meaning? (Include case name, perspective, page number, etc.)	**Value** Who/what matters most to those who take up this position? What is the underlying assumption about justice in their position? (Include case name, perspective, page number, etc.)
REMOVE monument removal and elimination				
REMOVE + remove to new, improved educational context				
REMAIN monument remaining in place, as is				
REMAIN + monument remaining in place with new, educational/descriptive context				

Figure 2. Chart students use to identify perspectives.

Where do you find your sympathies diverging from a particular group or decision? Identify the arguments, actions, and assumptions made about public memory that you feel should serve as a guide to how communities should deliberate and make decisions about the symbols they display and care for.

5) Joint Essay Assignment
6) Post-Essay Completion Reflective Memo
250 words, to be completed in-class before essay is submitted

What are you learning about how your beliefs and values shape what you think is socially just? In what ways might awareness of these things impact your understanding of your own beliefs and values? What are you learning about the aim of social justice in community problem-solving?

Supplementary Material

For supplementary material accompanying this paper, including a PDF facsimile of the assignment description formatted as the author(s) presented it to students, please visit https://doi.org/10.31719/pjaw.v6i1.86.

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