

5-2016

Stories of single mothers : narrating the sociomaterial mechanisms of community literacy.

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<https://doi.org/10.18297/etd/2441>

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STORIES OF SINGLE MOTHERS: NARRATING THE SOCIOMATERIAL
MECHANISMS OF COMMUNITY LITERACY

By

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B.A., Washington University in St. Louis, 2005
M.A., University of Louisville, 2011

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of the
College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Louisville
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in English/Rhetoric and Composition

Department of English
University of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky

May 2016

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A Dissertation Approved on

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my director, Bronwyn Williams, for his steadfast support and guidance. He not only helped me to keep pushing this project towards completion, but also was the kind of generous, insightful mentor that I aspire to be. His structured dissertation writing group was invaluable to my progress, and I am so grateful to its members, both past and present, for their support and feedback: Brittany Kelley, Stephanie Weaver, Jessica Winck, Megan Hancock, Hollye Wright, Ashly Smith, Amy Nichols, and Laura Matravers. You all are fantastic, and I'm going to miss you!

I want to thank Family Scholar House, especially Will, for being such an engaged partner in this project. Thank you for opening your doors to me, and thank you for the tremendously important work you are doing for the families.

I would like to thank my committee members for always pushing me to develop my argument and own my voice as a writer and researcher: Bruce Horner, Mary P. Sheridan, Karen Kopelson, and Kevin Roozen. And thank you, Bruce, for helping to get this project started.

I want to thank Debra Journet and Min-Zhan Lu for their wonderful teaching; the ideas within this dissertation sprang from your classes.

I want to thank all of the friends who were there to listen to me and reassure me that everything would be ~~okay~~ great, especially Jessie. I do not know what I would do without you, my lovely best friend.

And finally I want to thank my family – Mom, Dad, David, Brittany, and Connor – for all of the love, support, phone calls, encouraging texts, care packages, music, home-cooked food, and cute baby pictures. Thank you. I love you.

ABSTRACT

STORIES OF SINGLE MOTHERS: NARRATING THE SOCIOMATERIAL MECHANISMS OF COMMUNITY LITERACY

Kathryn Perry

May 13, 2016

In light of the increasing significance of community activist scholarship in Rhetoric and Composition and given the overwhelming nature of institutional educational inequity, my dissertation takes a close look at various and circulating kinds of literacy and the corresponding networks that shape these literacy practices at a community literacy organization. I conduct interviews with participants and staff at a local nonprofit called Family Scholar House (FSH) in order to gain a deeper understanding of each stakeholder's perspective on successful literacy. The richness of this research site requires an analytic approach that encourages equal consideration of the various social and material elements making up these literacy networks. I therefore employ frameworks from Actor-Network Theory (ANT) and Narrative Theory to analyze my qualitative research data.

Chapter One provides an overview of the relevant scholarship, arguing that my approach complicates previous literature on literacy by drawing attention to the diverse and shifting connections between material and social aspects of participants' literacy networks as they cross perceived school/work/home boundaries. Chapter Two introduces my methodology, drawing from feminist and ethnographic concerns about reflexivity and balance in the researcher-participant relationship. Chapter Three analyzes three specific

literacy moments at FSH: an application for government assistance, a financial aid appeal letter, and a fundraising luncheon. I identify the various actors/actants involved in the networks that surround these literacy practices in order to understand the relationship work that helps students navigate these literacy practices successfully. Chapter Four analyzes three FSH students' literacy narratives to demonstrate how students use their own singular writing identity as well as relationships within their lived networks to improve their literacy practices. The resulting new literacy narratives become actants within students' networks, thereby allowing students to imagine different futures for themselves and for their children, for whom they model these changed literacy habits. Chapter Five argues for a hospitable approach to literacy research and pedagogy, discussing how to balance the predictability and unpredictability of narrative that are necessary for students' literacy growth.

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CHAPTER ONE:
A NETWORKED CONTEXT FOR LITERACY RESEARCH BASED IN NEW
LITERACY STUDIES, BASIC WRITING, AND THIRD SPACE SCHOLARSHIP

Introduction

The notion of literacy as a social practice is a significant starting point for my project because I seek to uncover the various perspectives and attitudes towards successful literacy practices invoked explicitly and implicitly at the research site of a local nonprofit, and then to connect these perspectives towards literacy to a variety of factors within this site (such as relationships between people, between people and institutional policies, between people and material objects, etc). Investigating attitudes towards literacy in this way presumes that literacy is not a discrete, autonomous skill but rather is shaped by and shapes the multiple forces surrounding its use (social, material, historical, economic, etc), a productive perspective argued by many scholars over the past thirty years (Barton and Hamilton, Brandt, Heath, Street, and others). However, as several scholars have more recently pointed out, we have tended to lean too far towards the social nature of literacy practices and, in doing so, have neglected or simplified the material, global, and temporal dimensions of literacy (Brandt and Clinton; Tusting; Wysocki and Johnson-Eilola). In order to address a more complex view of literacy in my research, I draw on Actor-Network Theory because it enables a research framework in which all actors (human and nonhuman) are significant, particularly in their relationships with each other. Issues of social class and material circumstances as

they contribute to students', teachers', and administrators' notions of successful literacy are significant in backgrounding a study that will take into account diverse human and nonhuman elements that make up networks of literacy sponsorship. Research on basic writing and third space theory is also relevant due to the in-between nature of the particular educational nonprofit I'm examining. In what follows, I draw primarily on scholarship from New Literacy Studies, basic writing and third space theory, and Actor-Network Theory to demonstrate how several strands from these solidly-grounded ideas work together to shape the scholarly conversation from which my project emerges.

New Literacy Studies, the Social Turn, and Beyond

The implications of the social view of literacy resonate at Family Scholar House, the nonprofit at the heart of my research, because this organization relies on a complex web of social and material support to help its participants (working single parents) earn their college degrees. Issues of social class, power dynamics, and material circumstances are everywhere at Family Scholar House, and will inevitably influence the notions of successful literacy practices uncovered through interviews with both students and staff.

The notion that literacy is a situated, social practice has come to have far-reaching consequences and implications for those working in Rhetoric and Composition and elsewhere. Stemming from the turn away from positivist models of thought and towards socially constructed ways of thinking that arose across the social sciences in the 1980s, New Literacy Studies has come to represent a commonly accepted perspective on the nature of literacy. Though the body of NLS scholarship is quite extensive, particular and more recent takes on how we can use or alter the "social" angle of literacy are especially useful as I consider various approaches to literacy across community and university contexts. In what

follows, I will delve a bit into the history of NLS and then turn to newer scholarship in order to explore how it extends the social angle in ways that contribute to this project.

The powerful and continuous ubiquity of New Literacy Studies scholarship over the past thirty years stems from the strong grip that previous notions of literacy held – and continue to hold – over commonly held attitudes towards literacy. Brian Street, in defining “autonomous” versus “ideological” models of literacy, developed his theories in response to what were the canonical research studies at the time which emphasized literacy as an isolated, discrete, cognitive skill and created the “Great Divide” theory concerning the progression from orality to literacy (Goody and Watt, Ong). It is due to the spread and power of this previous view of literacy that the notion of literacy as social and situated has been taken ahold of and repeated by so many scholars across the past few decades. In other words, the firm grip that this “autonomous” view of literacy has left on education policies has resulted in the need for a continuous uphill battle for a view of literacy as social, not just to change how we think about literacy, but to change the old educational policies that tend to maintain that older, often damaging way of thinking about literacy (damaging in the sense that it forces us to consider students as deficient, and it results in assessment methods that cannot take into account the dynamic, changing nature of (and variety of) student’s literacy practices and life experiences). In fact, it’s important to recognize a tendency to over-use the social angle of literacy in order to counteract the autonomous perspective that still permeates most educational policies and practices. We need to seek a middleground in which we are able to recognize the wide variety of social and material factors influencing literacy practices. This project seeks exactly that kind of middleground by looking at different perspectives on successful literacy practices in a research site that exists at the intersection of university and

community, where the diverse array of people, beliefs, life experiences, and goals inevitably leads to diverse perspectives on what makes for successful literacy.

Goody and Watt, in “The Consequences of Literacy,” represent one perspective of literacy against which Street positioned himself by establishing the “ideological” model of literacy as more accurate and useful than the “autonomous” model of literacy. Goody and Watt emphasize the progression from orality to literacy and discuss the resulting effects upon culture. They argue that literacy changes the way people think and the way culture gets transmitted; while oral traditions must be concrete, the written words allows for abstraction and the ability to perceive inconsistencies in past cultural thought and behavior. Street points out that this sort of strict separation does not reflect the reality of the many sorts of oral and literacy practices and purposes they are put to. In fact, Street tends to characterize Goody and Watt’s deficiencies in terms of an inability to go out and prove their hypotheses through research because, firstly, it is impossible to find a purely literate or non-literate society, and, secondly, the sorts of claims Goody and Watt make would be difficult to substantiate, such as tracing the connection between a culture’s skepticism and its literacy or non-literacy (58). It is significant that Street employs this sort of critique because it is also a means of critique that could be used regarding Street’s own literacy research, which is difficult to replicate due to its specificity of location, experience, and analysis. One reason NLS continues to be discussed in new and different ways (Brandt and Clinton) is because the social and situated nature of literacy makes it hard to study due to the numerous and interconnected factors that must be taken into account.

Street, in order to contrast his approach to literacy studies with the previous views of literacy such as those of Goody and Watt and Ong, among others, defines the “autonomous”

model of literacy as it is practiced by such previous approaches to literacy as one which “associates [literacy] with ‘progress,’ ‘civilisation,’ individual liberty and social mobility. It attempts to distinguish literacy from schooling. It isolates literacy as an independent variable and then claims to be able to study its consequences” (2). He defines the “ideological” model of literacy as one which recognizes the social nature of reading and writing, the ideologies inherent in these practices, and the importance of examining other contexts outside of formal, educational ones that are traditionally associated with literacy (2). In order to fully appreciate the significance of this ideological model of literacy, Street applies it to his ethnographic research in the Iranian village of Cheshmeh. He puts the ideological view of literacy into practice as he analyzes the various literacies being learned and used, recognizing “a ‘mix’ of oral and literate modes” that represents the “socially contingent and changeable” nature of “texts” as well as the “malleability and flexibility in literacy practices” (144).

An implication for research based on this kind of social nature of literacy practices is the issue of an increasingly diverse variety of sites to research; if we aren’t only focusing on schooled literacy, that opens up many possibilities for research in terms of communities and institutions (Cushman, Grabill, Hull and Schultz, Mathieu, Peck et al). While this diversity of research possibilities is exciting and has great potential for expanding the research horizons, it also becomes difficult to balance the macro and micro, or to decide what to focus on in looking at literacy that is influenced by so many factors. Some responses to these research dilemmas have included perspectives on literacy that attempt to temper the overwhelming focus on its social nature, such as Brandt and Clinton’s argument for a consideration of literacy’s materiality and Parks’ claim that we need to examine the “resting places” of literacy practices, both of which I will examine shortly. Family Scholar House is an example

of the sort of nontraditional research site that an NLS perspective on literacy studies encourages because it occupies both community and university space and, as a result, has a diversity of people, roles, and kinds of work and support that take place there.

Barton and Hamilton offer another canonical look at the social and situated nature of literacy practices in *Local Literacies: Reading and Writing in One Community*, in which they trace the everyday, “vernacular” literacy practices of several individuals in Lancaster, England. The authors describe literacy as “best understood as a set of social practices; these can be inferred from events which are mediated by written texts” (8) and argue that “..literacy practices are more usefully understood as existing in the relations between people, within groups and communities, rather than as a set of properties residing in individuals” (7). The authors examine in depth the literacy practices of individuals, demonstrating the connections between each individual’s “ruling passions,” interests, and life experiences and his/her attitude towards and use of various literacy practices. Harry, for example, has an interest in World War II, and this interest, along with his tendency to perceive the world as made up of “educated” and “uneducated” people, are influencing factors in his literacy practices (85). This close examination of these individuals and their literacy practices represents a view of literacy as not only social but also local, as what literacy means and how it functions changes for each individual (and changes over the course of each individual’s lifetime). Perceiving the social nature of literacy allows the authors to develop a perspective on literacy as it functions as a community resource, and in how the relationship between an individual and his/her community allows for the use of literacy as a collaborative, community resource. This approach highlights the importance of grounding literacy research in local

contexts, and the need for similar studies in order to understand the varying complexities of literacy practices.

Brandt's approach to literacy is less explicitly centered on its social and situated nature; rather, she implies that perspective on literacy when she undertakes to study the literacy experiences across several generations of Americans and how those literacy experiences are influenced by economic and historical forces. Indeed, her definition of sponsorship – "Sponsors...are any agents, local or distant, concrete or abstract, who enable, support, teach, and model, as well as recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold, literacy" (19) – and its recognition that schools aren't the only sponsors of literacy is an example of the social view of literacy.

An important difference in how Brandt approaches the situatedness of literacy is that, rather than focusing primarily on the local circumstances of literacy practices as do Street and Barton and Hamilton, she situates literacy practices over time and as influenced by larger forces of economic and historical change. For example, as she discusses the literacy practices of different generations, she notes that in order to understand how their literacy practices changed, it was necessary to look at the

family economy, which includes a family's work history as well as enduring values and practices that are passed, as resources, to the young; and a wider regional economy, which carries broader histories of economic competitions, past and emerging, that influence opportunity for literacy in each generation.

(87)

For example, there is a significant difference between the 19th century Protestant influence on literacy that Genna May, who was born in 1898, experienced as a child and the literacy

experiences of Jack May, born in 1958, who grew up amidst a culture of increasing mass literacy and who, therefore, experienced a wider variety of kinds of literacy that were emerging as part of a wider consumer culture (77, 95).

An important implication of Brandt's work is the relationship between research and policy when it comes to institutional sponsorship of literacy practices. In other words, because Brandt demonstrates the deep connections between economic forces, educational institutions, and literacy practices, research that seeks to effect social change must take into account these kinds of connections. On the other hand, educational policy also must take into account the interrelatedness of these connections. Brandt writes: "A comprehensive literacy policy must include efforts to democratize access to the formidable wealth of technological and symbolic resources that cluster in schools, government buildings, and workplaces – in fact, in all of the nation's great foundries of literacy production" (186). In fact, the scope of Brandt's project is both a strength and limitation. She demonstrates the power of a taking a wide angle view on literacy: of looking at people's literacies as they change over time. But the way in which she lays out the kinds of relationships between literacy practices, literacy sponsors, and larger economic forces also limits the specificity of her argument. In incorporating Brandt's approach in my own research, I start with her quite relevant observations that "Now, sponsors of literacy are more prolific, diffused, and heterogenous" and that literacy practices and sponsorship are changing rapidly especially in light of technological advances (197). I respond to these observations with a project that, in fact, seeks out these heterogeneous sites of sponsorship by exploring literacy practices at Family Scholar House and partner universities. I also respond to the point about the rapid pace of change with research that seeks out definitions of successful literacy practices at particular

places and at a particular time, following Parks' assertion that we examine the "resting places" of literacy practices. Having identified these definitions of successful literacy practices, my research undertakes to explore the corresponding narratives which inevitably will demand a consideration of past and future in addition to present factors.

I take the ambitious interconnectedness of research and policy in Brandt's approach to literacy sponsorship as an example of the possibilities for change that I would like my own research to offer. In other words, while I don't expect this project to be able to investigate all of the deep connections between local literacy practices and broader socioeconomic forces, I do aspire to accomplish research that could contribute to a similar understanding of the complexity of literacy practices within the more limited context of my research sites.

One reason Brandt is able to have such a broad scope is that she spends little time discussing what literacy is; rather, she refers to literacy as a "resource," which allows her to treat literacy at once both materially and broadly in terms of how people develop it as a resource. So, another implication here is that how we decide to define literacy – whether in our teaching, research, or policy – influences what we can then do with literacy and how we can talk about it.

Other perspectives on literacy that have arisen from NLS, such as those considering the materiality and temporality of literacy, provide another way to consider the kinds of definitions of success and literacy at these sites, as well as how these definitions circulate, change or have changed over time, and are embodied in material forms. Deborah Brandt and Katie Clinton suggest that we may have gone too far in considering the social context of literacy practices, to the extent that we have tended to forget the materiality of literacy practices and that we must also recognize the "legibility and durability of literacy: its

material forms, its technological apparatus, its objectivity; that is, its (some)thing-ness” (344). The authors argue that “The perspective we are advocating would allow us to acknowledge the heavy hand literacy has had in building networks across time and space – in de-localizing and re-framing social life – and in providing the centralized powers by which larger and larger chunks of the social world are organized and connected” (347). Julie Lindquist, too, considers the power of literacy to function within both time and space in her work with the LiteracyCorpsMichigan project in which she asks students to bring in three “artifacts” that represent “their past, present, and future selves.” Interviews at this stage allow participants and researchers to identify potential narratives based on how the participants talk about their objects. This kind of literacy research – that considers literacy practices artifactually as well as how they develop over time – is an example of the sort of research that can produce the richest and most complex perspectives on participants’ evolving and multifaceted literacy practices.

Taking into account Bruce Horner’s warning that we must not perpetuate the autonomous model of literacy by taking each new literacy practice we argue for to be stable (“Ideologies”), this project follows Steve Parks’ lead in analyzing the “resting places” of literacy practices within a diverse and multi-literacied community organization like FSH:

Instead of thinking in terms of “distinct” literacies, our pedagogical goal within community partnerships should be to understand how any one “literate” moment is a resting point within a dynamic relationship between a series of diffuse literacy practices. The point is to study the process by which such resting places occur. Having done so, the work should then be to develop strategies that enable students and community members to negotiate amongst

these multiple practices as a means to produce a more ethical and equitable literacy system. (43)

One way to do this sort of analytic work of looking at particular literacied moments is to consider how we perceive literacies as occurring in both space and time. Both Horner and Karin Tusting address this issue, and Tusting writes “While the concepts of ‘events’ and ‘practices’ are key to our work, it is necessary to be continually aware that literacy practices emerge through the rhythmic repetition of similar literacy events. Constantly bearing in mind the temporal notion of literacy practices can give us a more flexible conceptualisation of what a practice ‘is’” (50).

In addition to various NLS perspectives on successful literacy practices, the body of scholarship on both academic and community literacy is relevant given that this project takes place at both community and university research sites. The approach to academic literacy as explored by scholars such as Theresa Lillis and Mary Scott, Mary Lea and Brian Street, and Bruce Horner helps ground my project because FSH exists in order to help students earn college degrees and, therefore, in order to achieve and practice academic literacies. Scholarship on community literacy is increasingly prevalent and relevant in the field of rhetoric and composition. Some, such as work by Ellen Cushman and Wayne Peck et al, focuses more on the community context and how literacy functions within that context. Others, such as scholarship by Tom Deans and Bruce Herzberg, looks at how writing can function within service learning curricula. Work such as that done by Jeff Grabill and Eli Goldblatt looks at academic literacy both within and beyond the university context, and thus most closely resembles the kind of research this project undertakes. Just as Grabill attempts “to make institutions visible in order to understand the context that give literate practices

meaning” (9) in order to then change those institutions, this project seeks to make visible the varied elements that shape literacy practices at FSH.

Rather than focusing exclusively on the community context (Cushman, Peck et al) or the college classroom context (Deans and Herzberg), my work looks at a site that represents both community and university stakeholders. By looking at the literacy practices at Family Scholar House, I can take into account the perspectives and relationship work of FSH students, staff, and local university writing program administrators in order to understand the intersecting contexts and their corresponding concerns. My project attempts to make productive use of the *relationships* between university and community literacy by extending the work of those such as Grabill through the use of Actor-Network Theory to examine potential connections (and ruptures) between university and community as they arise from rich moments of literacy practice. Ultimately, my research seeks a useful perspective on literacy arising from overlapping community and university contexts, one that blurs the perceived boundary between community and university and creates a heuristic for future locally-based, non-reductive literacy research.

Basic Writing, Social Class, and Third Space

My project deals with various individual and institutional approaches to successful literacy, particularly for vulnerable student populations who tend to be harmed by rigid notions of success and failure. There is a long history of scholarship on student identity and differences in language, culture, class, and the accompanying power dynamics, all of which, directly or indirectly, informs my work. Drawing on scholars such as Irvin Peckham and James Zebroski to shape my own approach to socioeconomic class in my research, I also invoke threads of basic writing and third-space scholarship as those bodies of work

contribute to the relationship between student identity and writing, particularly in nontraditional third-space spaces (spaces marginal to the traditional university classroom) such as Family Scholar House. The long-running tensions between different approaches to basic writing demonstrate the continuing relevance of such conversations in both university and community environments, particularly considering the continual push for new approaches to “remedial” composition such as Peter Adams’ Accelerated Learning Program at Community College of Baltimore County, a mainstreaming writing program that has demonstrated considerable success.

As Min Zhan Lu has pointed out already, some perspectives on basic writing view education as acculturation, difference and conflict as needing to be gotten rid of, and language as stable and unified. Lu calls for research that tries to “provide accounts of the ‘creative motion’ and ‘compensation,’ ‘joy,’ or ‘exhilaration’ resulting from Basic Writers’ efforts to grapple with the conflict within and among diverse discourses” (910). Stemming from this perspective in which differences are celebrated rather than erased, my project seeks to intervene in the sense that David Bartholomae describes when he argues that the basic writing conversation is now cementing reality rather than working to change it because the habit of seeing that basic writing’s legacy has left the composition field is one of binaries, of error, and of either/or. When he writes that “It is possible, it seems to me, to develop a theory of error that makes the contact between conventional and unconventional discourses the most interesting and productive moment for a writer or for a writing course” (19), this is where I see my research intervening. In seeking to discover how university and community partners define success and literacy practices, I hope to uncover a more dynamic, fluid notion of what successful/unsuccessful student writing looks like in different contexts and based on different

relationships. And, while I do not directly examine student writing in this study, the perspectives on literacy that I explore via Actor-Network Theory involve these ideological histories of specific, reductive views of student writing. So, the kind of conversation we've been having about basic writing has served the purpose of drawing attention to more effective approaches to student writing that don't reduce it to a view of error and deficit, but these conversations no longer carry the same momentum because of changing politics and institutional dynamics. *Changing the sites of research, therefore, will necessitate different kinds of conversations.* Family Scholar House, in the sense that it is a community-based nonprofit providing a diversity of support services all connected to its participants' experiences as college-degree seekers, will necessitate increased focus on the relationship between community and university partners – on emerging definitions of successful literacy practices as they are shaped by relationships within and between community and university partners, rather than maintaining a focus on classroom pedagogy within traditional university environments. In other words, it isn't just about opening up different sites for research in literacy studies, it is also about diverting scholarly conversations – such as those initiated by basic writing scholarship – in different, productive directions.

In what follows, I will delve a bit deeper into key basic writing texts in order to explore how their perspectives on student error and issues of socioeconomic class provide a necessary backdrop to this project. Basic writing has forced teachers and scholars to question the ways in which we perceive students and student writing and, while this questioning has led to rich discussions of pedagogy, the institutional component has been slow to catch up. In other words, education as an institution maintains the view of students and student writing primarily in terms of error, deficit, cognitive skills, and an urgent need for assessment, while

the alternative pedagogies that arose out of basic writing emphasize the multi-dimensional nature of students' lives and writing, the significance of local contexts, and the productive use of conflict and struggle (Hull and Rose, Lu, Rodby and Fox, Rose, Soliday, Sternglass).

Perhaps the most fruitful contribution basic writing scholarship has made to rhet/comp, and a significant one in terms of this project, is the richer, more complex perspective on students and student writing it has encouraged. Rose and Hull enact this kind of perspective in their analysis of one remedial student's response to a poem in "This Wooden Shack Place': The Logic of an Unconventional Reading" when they explore the influence this student's socioeconomic and cultural background has on his perspective and contrast his interpretation with the presumed and conventional interpretation of a middleclass readership. Rose also explores a more complex approach to remedial students and student writing in *Lives on the Boundary* by analyzing his own experiences as well as those of a variety of nontraditional and disadvantaged student populations (adult veterans, low-income elementary students, international college students, etc) and discussing the effects of these students' home lives on their learning experiences.

A key aspect of these rich approaches to students and student writing is that of socioeconomic class. At times invoked more quietly, such as Rose's description of one young student's depressed living situation in *Lives on the Boundary*, other times more directly addressed as in Rose and Hull's interpretation of the powerful influence Robert's class background has on his reading, the issue of class is an especially significant one for this project. Because I am using Actor-Network Theory in order to recognize a wider variety of elements surrounding a particular literacy practice, not only are students' material realities one of those elements, it's important to explore what factors contribute to these material

realities. In other words, it isn't just about – as Soliday argues – the implications for students who “lack” certain things, but also about the complex relationship between material realities, identities, and power dynamics.

Rose and Hull bring up social class in “This Wooden Shack Place” when they describe Robert’s reaction to the shacks in the poem. The implication is that Robert’s interpretation differs from the “conventional” interpretation because a “conventional” interpretation assumes a middle-class readership. In *Lives on the Boundary*, class is an underlying, if not always explicitly referenced, issue in many of his stories. Rose explains: “We set out to determine what a child knows in order to tailor instruction, but we frequently slot rather than shape, categorize rather than foster. And the poorer the kids are – the less power their parents have – the more likely are their chances of being, as Lillian put it, hurt about their intelligence” (128). The dominant approach evoked here is one that is more likely to harm students of a lower social class who have less power with which to fight the effects of the status quo that “slots” and “categorizes”.

Even Rose’s language evokes the materiality of these classed existences (including his own), in doing so positioning himself and his perspective in contrast with a status quo that ignores materiality except to assume that students have enough of it to succeed in school. The reason his rich descriptions stand out to us is because they aren’t what we expect from a text about remedial education. Our surprise reflects a dominant perspective of students who don’t succeed in school due to their own deficiencies of thought. Simultaneously, Rose’s evocation of these poor and working class lived realities makes us rethink the purpose of his alternative pedagogy; he isn’t just drawing our attention to what students lack (money, school supplies, parental support, etc), but also to what these students possess. He draws our

attention to their markers of class difference and then asks us to take a closer look at what these students have to offer.

As Soliday points out, we, as educators and scholars, tend to ignore social class. Though we have developed rich alternative pedagogies that embrace students' cultural identities, we tend to perceive students' social class in terms of what they lack rather than what they bring with them. While we recognize the problematic possibility of students losing their home discourses when they enter academia, "we don't say that buying books or a computer involves assimilation into dominant cultures" ("Class Dismissed" 734). Thus, one significant implication of the alternative pedagogies suggested by Rose and Rose and Hull is that of paying more attention to the material realities of our students.

Socioeconomic class is not a topic readily addressed by much Rhetoric and Composition scholarship. Given the often-implied yet rarely-stated significance of students' socioeconomic class on their classroom experiences in basic writing scholarship, I would like to draw explicit attention to the significant impact that both material conditions of socioeconomic class as well as personal identification in terms of class can have upon students' literacy practices. Social class is relevant to how this project approaches literacy because both the material realities of class (income, things people have or don't, transportation, childcare, etc) as well as the personal identities and social experiences of class (how one perceives one's place in the world and others' places) influence the literacy practices and attitudes towards literacy on both individual and organizational levels.

Many have contributed to the discussion of the relationship between student writing and student identity. Ivancic writes persuasively that "Writing is an act of identity in which people align themselves with socio-culturally shaped possibilities for self-hood, playing their

part in reproducing or challenging dominant practices and discourses, and the value, beliefs and interests which they embody” (*Writing and Identity* 32). Others have written of language and culture differences between students’ home discourses and those of the university, some arguing for these differences as the norm (Lu, Young) and others arguing that these differences are deviations from the norm (Delpit). I specify my own approach to students’ experiences with literacy in terms of socioeconomic class, while recognizing that, as Lave and Wenger describe the process of learning,

Participation is always based on situated negotiation and renegotiation of meaning in the world. This implies that understanding and experience are in constant interaction – indeed, are mutually constitutive. The notion of participation thus dissolves dichotomies between cerebral and embodied activity, between contemplation and involvement, between abstraction and experience: persons, actions, and the world are implicated in all thought, speech, knowing, and learning. (*Situated Learning* 51-2)

This back-and-forth between “understanding” and “experience” implies a simultaneous dissolution from and connection between the student’s identity (including her socioeconomic identity) and the learning experience itself (the literacy practice). It becomes necessary to continually remind ourselves of this “constant interaction”; in the case of this project, that reminder takes the form of attention to participants’ socioeconomic class, its markers (visible and hidden), and its relationship with other elements of the participant’s literacy experiences. I do recognize that race, gender, and class are three interconnected (and dynamic, fluctuating) categories that help to shape a person’s identity. I focus on class in this project because closely examining this specific aspect of a student’s identity as it relates to her literacy

practices is, first of all, something that not enough studies have done and, second of all, this will then open up opportunities for future research to ask questions and to make connections between this analysis of the sociomateriality of literacy narratives and other equally important aspects of students' identities such as race and gender.

In shaping a particular approach to socioeconomic class in this project, I draw on Pekham and Zebroski, both of whom recognize the complex relational and identity work going on within issues of social class. Peckham points to the danger of a deficit model in which teachers ask working-class students to adopt dominant discourse codes which “conflict with the working-class ethos” (68), but also points out that critiques of this deficit approach – which emphasize that “Different cultures are simply different” (36) – ignore the real socioeconomic inequalities behind classed discourses. In laying out the nuances of pedagogies that emphasize critical thinking and how working-class students might struggle with strategies such as “objectivity, multiple perspective, explicit language, stance, and dialogism” (68), he raises the danger in assuming that critical thinking is class-neutral. His careful attention to the relationship between language, discourse, and social class within the comp classroom context is an important model for my own approach to analyzing social class within the contextualized definitions of successful literacy practices.

Zebroski also points out the power that academic discourse has to exclude working class students, and his attention to the “emotional labor” anticipated/excluded by academic discourse may be significant for my project:

The labor of academic discourse includes certain attitudes, values, and feelings; that is, it includes certain kinds of emotional labor and like any discourse, it excludes many other types of emotions. This is one of the most

difficult, yet unspoken barriers of academic discourse for the student from the working class; the discourse comes packaged with certain expectations for emotional labor that are in conflict with the most hallowed parts of identity and affiliation. (541-2)

As Peckham does, I draw on Bourdieu's notion of habitus to inform my idea of "class," in which habitus is a "structuring structure" that shapes how individuals perceive their position in relation to others or, as Peckham describes class, "a system of social relationships within which people act toward each other as if the groups did exist – as in their minds, they do" (26). In other words, class isn't only about the materialities of an individual's life (income, possessions, education, etc) but also about how that person perceives herself occupying space in the world and how she perceives others occupying space in the world, a point of view which comes from a deeply internalized, and usually unvoiced, categorical sense of social hierarchy. This internalized sense of self-identity in relation to others becomes apparent when I analyze students' literacy narratives in Chapter Four, as the ways students perceive their own literate capabilities are deeply shaped by the social relationships of the networks they have passed through in the course of their lives. I will also return to the role of class in the conclusion as I discuss implications of change in students' literate identities for what Janis and Richard Haswell call the "hospitable" English classroom.

Considering that my project will examine a nonprofit organization at the intersection of community and university, my perspective will also be informed by third space scholarship. Third space, as written about by Grego and Thompson as well as Judith Rodby and Tom Fox, offers one way of understanding FSH considering that FSH provides a similar

distance from traditional academic environments that these scholars argue can allow students to maintain productive tension with more traditional academic environments. While Grego and Thompson, however, focus on the third space of the writing Studio course, my research will examine the kind of third spaces that arise both at sites such as FSH as well as between literacy partners in the course of various sorts of literacy sponsorship. Third space is a useful way to consider not only marginal spaces within academic environments, but also hard-to-define intersections of rhetorical work and public work, as suggested by David Coogan and John Ackerman when they describe the “rhetorical geographies” of particular scenes of public rhetorical work in their anthology, “The Public Work of Rhetoric: Citizen-Scholars and Civic Engagement.” In naming the various scenes of public rhetorical work, the authors write that “These scenes exist without us; they are rhetorical without our say-so; but we join them in a ‘third space,’ a space that is open, hybrid, resistant, and marginal” (9).¹ Rather than looking solely at one particular space, I will look at spaces that arise relevant to the lives of FSH students, spaces which are inevitably “open, hybrid, resistant, and marginal” due not only to the nature of FSH’s work but also because FSH students, in being low-income and single parents, already occupy identity space that tends to get labeled as “other.”

From a more institutional standpoint, Grego and Thompson discuss the experiences they have had with Studio courses and argue for the need to change the way we see teacher/student relationships as well as the way we see the role of composition in the university. Originating as a response to the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education’s decision to cut all basic writing programs, the Writing Studio became an

¹ They draw on Soja’s concept of third space, which differs from Rodby and Fox’s in that it is more focused on geographical space, especially in the city.

² As I focus my research on a symmetrical analysis of the social and material elements

alternative space in which the authors were able to explore a different, local approach to teaching writing.

In their theoretical approach to the idea of the Studio, Grego and Thompson invoke an alternative to the tendency of compositionists to rely on generalized theories of writing pedagogy and interaction: “what if we look at our knowledge as an open system, as an institutionally sited system, acknowledging the rhetorical differences represented by our students, by our teachers and staff, and by everyday realities, in order to illuminate the gaps in our knowledges at both local and global levels?” (22) In other words, they suggest that rather than relying on any other theoretical approach to student writing that has been advocated by other institutions and scholars, each university needs to look at their local spaces, histories, and relationships. The authors almost seem to disavow any kind of dominant approach to student writing, offering instead a pedagogical and policy approach that is built from the ground up at each local educational site. This perspective is similar to the sort of openness called for by Haswell and Haswell in their argument for a “hospitable” English classroom, a connection I will build upon in my conclusion chapter.

The alternative pedagogy that Grego and Thompson endorse is in response to what they see as broader flaws within the discipline of composition:

Academe’s own hierarchical temporal master narrative thus disfavors investigation of the institutional-rhetorical coherence of student writers’ work and thus constructs student writers’ frustrated responses to the truncated and conflated ways in which their work is assigned, responded to, and evaluated in the realm of the “affective” or “emotional” – not so much because their responses are illogical but because they ask for factors or features to be taken

into account that lie beyond the realm of the system as it has defined itself.

(41)

In other words, Grego and Thompson describe a dominant “master narrative” that attributes students’ struggles to factors solely within the student’s control (the “affective”) as opposed to recognizing the fact that students are struggling with expectations imposed top-down by the institutional history and by the disciplinary identity of composition itself.

The alternative pedagogies and curricula suggested by these and other works arising from the basic writing conversation all emphasize the need for a complex, relational approach to students and student writing that, in order to help students succeed, must first actually see where students are coming from in terms of socioeconomic class, family and cultural background, and previous educational experiences. The material conditions required to enact this approach are so demanding that the institutional status quo has continued to maintain its one-dimensional, assessment-oriented approach to students and their writing. In light of this institutional lag, the least we can do as teachers is to enact writing pedagogies that give students opportunities to explore the connections between their life experiences and their writing with the hope that students can then take this perspective with them as they continue to struggle against a “sterile chronicle of assessments.” This is what I endeavor to do in this study of literacy practices at the nontraditional, in-between space of FSH. By considering the interrelated aspects of FSH students’ lives – including material conditions, social relationships, and entrenched ideological narratives of class and identity - and how these shape their past, present, and future literacy practices, my research draws on the goals of basic writing scholarship within the third space context of an organization at the boundary of community and university spaces.

Actor-Network Theory

Given this focus on the networks created by literacy sponsorship, my research uses Actor-Network Theory (ANT) to best examine and describe the relationships between various animate and inanimate actors. In order to approach the definitions of literacy and success – as each of those stems from a corresponding body of scholarship on literacy as a social practice (NLS) and success/failure as defined by basic writing and third space scholarship – Actor-Network Theory serves as a useful framework for analyzing the data itself.

Many studies that employ an ANT framework begin by pointing out ANT's inevitable ambiguity as a "theory." Richard Edwards, for example, in his analysis of educational curriculum, writes: "...to say that I am drawing upon actor-network theory (ANT) is a bit of a misnomer, given that there is no established body of theory and indeed many of the major proponents associated with ANT would refute the notion of a stable body of theory as they have at times refuted the terms ANT itself (Law & Hassard, 1999)" (26). Tara Fenwick writes that "it seems safest to refer to a reading inspired by ANT approaches as 'ANT-ish'" (95). Fenwick and Edwards suggest that "Perhaps the safest way to talk about ANT is as an array of practices for approaching complexity in the world and its problems" (*Actor-Network* iix). This is perhaps what makes ANT so compelling as a way of looking at relationships between the multiple, diverse, and shifting actors in any given educational context. The nature of ANT suits the nature of this research project: complex, unstable, and crossing perceived boundaries not only between the social and material but also between community and university.

Arising primarily from work by Bruno Latour, John Law, and Michel Callon, ANT attempts to redistribute perspectives on human and non-human actors so that there is “symmetry” between all elements in any given context. In ANT, nothing exists until it is in relation with other elements. As Law points out, ANT is only useful when it is in use “because it is not abstract but is grounded in empirical case studies” (141). And, in fact, most introductions to ANT attempt to describe it by narrating how it has been used in specific instances, from Callon’s work on the failure of the electric car in France (Callon “Struggles”) which, as Law explains, led Callon to ask “how can we describe socially and materially heterogeneous systems in all their fragility and obduracy?” (143), to his study on the relationship between scallops and fishermen (Callon “Some Elements”). Because ANT attempts to draw equal attention to the various elements of any given site of study, the notion of “translation” (Latour’s term) is particularly significant as it refers to how various entities act upon – and, inevitably, change – each other. Jan Nesper, in “Devices and Educational Change,” examines technological devices within an educational context in order to argue that these devices perform many different translations which have broad repercussions. Other studies examine how various networks within an adult educational site serve to enact the curriculum in surprising ways (Edwards), as well as look at broader policy-level networks of school reform (Fenwick). The ways in which various educational ANT-based studies approach their use of ANT represent a useful starting point for my project. As Nesper explains in her study of educational curriculum reform,

The point is that we need to understand “school change” as at least partly about the ways school practices are made mobile, and what and how they connect as they move. What are the structures of connections or linkages?

What materials are they made of? How do things change as they move? How do connections change with this movement? (368)

Other studies also discuss the usefulness of ANT in examining the shifting, complex, and ambiguous contexts of educational institutions, people, and practices.

As Fenwick and Edwards point out, “While in the past ten years there has been a wider proliferation of ANT-associated studies in literacy, curriculum, educational reform, policy and educational technology, there is as yet little published ANT-related research that explicitly explores issues of identity politics, inequities and exclusions” (*Actor-Network x*). Given the diverse educational context my research examines (Family Scholar House as a hybrid third space at the intersection of university and community) and the diversity of experiences represented within this educational context, I hope that my project will endeavor to address this lack of inequity-focused ANT research. Indeed, ANT is not without its limitations, specifically given what it may tend to elide in its symmetrically- and locally-focused lens. In performing my analysis of FSH student literacy narratives in chapter four, I draw on narrative theory and Janis and Richard Haswell’s work on authorship in order to delve deeper into specific actors and actants. ANT, given its nature as “an array of practices for approaching complexity in the world and its problems,” is well suited for a multi-pronged theoretical approach to literacy.²

² As I focus my research on a symmetrical analysis of the social and material elements making up FSH students’ networks surrounding specific literacy practices, and then follow this with more in-depth consideration of student’s literacy narratives, I do not explore issues of gender and race. In using ANT to identify the social and material actors surrounding specific literacy events, I am trying to shift the focus away from these students’ easily categorizable identities (such as, for example, female, black, low-income, single parent) to their lived realities. My analysis focuses less on issues of race and gender because I’m analyzing what seems to be important from the students’ perspectives.

As Law describes ANT, it is “descriptive rather than foundational in explanatory terms” (141), which makes a great deal of sense for a project that includes description of the “resting places” of literacy practices. Using ANT is one way to attempt to describe what’s going on by looking at the various actants and their relationships. Law identifies the major components of ANT as: “*semiotic relationality* (it’s a network whose elements define and shape one another), *heterogeneity* (there are different kinds of actors, human and otherwise), and *materiality* (stuff is there aplenty, not just “the social”). There is an insistence on *process* and its *precariousness* (all elements need to play their part moment by moment or it all comes unstuck)...” (146). Fenwick and Edwards point out that “ANT focuses not on what texts and other things mean, as in much qualitative research, but on what they do” (*Actor-Network* 8).

In my analysis in Chapter Three, I draw primarily on the ANT tools of: symmetry, by which I mean I try to approach all of the actors and elements in my research equally, giving symmetrical opportunities to each element to be significant within my analysis; and translation, by which I refer to the points of connection that are created when elements are translated into a particular network in order to accomplish a specific purpose. In terms of how I identify the networked elements to analyze, I begin with Law’s argument that “...thinking, acting, writing, loving, earning -- all the attributes that we normally ascribe to human beings, are generated in networks that pass through and ramify both within and beyond the body. Hence the term actor-network -- an actor is also, always, a network” (“Notes” 384). This is why I am not only focusing on the social elements of networks surrounding literacy practices, but also the material elements. In analyzing three specific literacy moments, I am able to understand how various actors/actants make up a network and

also how these actors/actants are also made up of networks. Regarding the need to interrogate how we are identifying networks of literacy practices, Clarke argues that

Employing the principle of generalised symmetry does not simply mean asking why literacy practices are accorded particular attributes in a network. It also means asking why is literacy there at all? This would involve reflecting on our own interests in constructing a particular network as the locus of enquiry into a 'literacy event' or as a network of literacy practices, and considering the position from which we observe and tell stories about these events and practices. (119-120)

By choosing three significant moments that involve literacy but that also involve other elements, I am working to employ a symmetrical approach in my analysis.

My analysis will follow Latour's conception of Actor-Network Theory in the sense that I want to describe the various actors and goings-on at FSH without starting with a particular angle. As Latour suggests: "The choice is thus clear: either we follow social theorists and begin our travel by setting up at the start which kind of group and level of analysis we will focus on, or we follow the actors' own ways and begin our travels by the traces left behind by their activity of forming and dismantling groups" (*Reassembling* 29). Latour emphasizes repeatedly that it is the actors doing the work and creating the language: "Actors do the sociology for the sociologists and sociologists learn from the actors what makes up their set of Associations" (32). In this way, it is the descriptions of key elements of FSH students' networks that may, hopefully, lead to a richer understanding of the whys and hows of successful literacy practices.

CHAPTER TWO:

METHODS

In the field of writing studies, much research on literacy is qualitative and draws on a variety of methods: case study (Barton and Hamilton), ethnography (Cintron, Heath, Street), and various combinations of methods. There are studies that examine literacy from different perspectives that reach beyond the traditional literacy-as-reading/writing notion, exploring digital literacy (Selfe), the mobility of literacy (Vieira, Nordquist), literacy and identity (Gee, Ivanovic), and literacy outside of the classroom (Cushman, Goldblatt, Grabill). With the increasing diversity of literacy research comes a corresponding need for attention to methodology in this research, not necessarily for the purposes of replicability, but so that we may more fully understand each other's work given its deeply local and contextual characteristics. To that end, in this chapter I explain my own research approach, narrating my research timeline and exploring the study within the space it shares with similar literacy work as well as discussing ethical dimensions and limitations. I begin by introducing the research site and participants.

Family Scholar House

Originating in a local organization called Project Women in 1995, Family Scholar House was created in 2008. Family Scholar House is a non-profit organization in Louisville, KY whose "mission is to end the cycle of poverty and transform our community by empowering families and youth to succeed in education and achieve life-long self-

sufficiency" (*Family*). (To get an idea of what FSH does, please watch this short video from the Family Scholar House YouTube channel:

<https://youtu.be/eyodchYI7pQ?list=UUZSKXdktekR1subN7Xqfe0w>.) And they're accomplishing this mission. FSH has four active campuses and is building a fifth. 100% of residents exit the program to stable housing, 77% to stable employment, and 63% continue their post-secondary education after leaving FSH ("Our"). FSH provides subsidized housing for its residential members and support services such as academic advising, financial aid advising, mentoring, life skills training, group workshops, tutoring, and more for both residential and non-residential members. FSH has developed relationships with local businesses and communities, including the several local colleges and universities where students attend. Some FSH staff also teach at these universities. The University of Louisville sends social work students to intern at FSH, and FSH children have access to childcare and educational programs offered in partnership with the university. According to their 2015 annual report, FSH funding comes from a wide variety of sources: local businesses and philanthropic organizations, government grants, and individual contributors. All FSH participants are low-income, the majority of them are female, and many have experienced domestic violence. The residential participants are also all full-time college students, as that is one of the requirements for living in a FSH apartment. To join FSH, participants must "be single; have a child, children, or be pregnant; meet low-income housing requirements; have a high school diploma or GED; have the desire to pursue a college degree" ("Join"). The waiting list to move into a FSH apartment consists of several hundred participants (these are "non-residential"), and they move up this list according to a point system in which they accumulate points by checking in every day and attending workshops (some of which are

mandatory such as the financial literacy workshop and the college accreditation workshop). As current FSH residents graduate and move out, wait-listed participants move in.

I offer this Family Scholar House 2014 Annual Report as an introductory example of the kind of work they do, where their priorities lie, and how this corresponds with my research data (<http://familyscholarhouse.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/fsh-2014-annual-report.pdf>). This annual report provides not only a brief but thorough glimpse of what the organization does, it demonstrates the rich intermingling of networked elements as seen in the report itself which corresponds with my subsequent description of these elements as seen within students' lives. First, the report is represented visually as a standard composition notebook, highlighting FSH's emphasis on education throughout all of their services. This parallels students' and staff's interview responses, in which they maintained a constant emphasis on their educational experiences and goals. Reading the annual report reveals a mix of different content and visual elements. The inclusion of both numbers (in terms of budget and success statistics) as well as narratives (from the CEO and participants), plus the inclusion of sticky notes with reminders ("study for english lit test on chapters 12-17" and "don't forget cooking class on thursday") mirrors the mix of topics in my interviews in which students and staff spoke not only of their own life and literacy experiences but also of their very real material circumstances and how these affect their current and future goals. The richly textured nature of the FSH annual report represents quite accurately the intricate web of interconnected work that goes on there.

In the course of my research, I interviewed six FSH participants, three FSH staff, and two local writing program administrators and have included below their bios (self-authored in response to my prompt asking for a brief bio including age, gender, race, socioeconomic

status, and education level) and pseudonyms:

Writing Program Administrators	
Name	Bio
Barbara	<p>Age 56 White female Upper middle class (though working class growing up in a Kansas farming community) First-generation college student 3 B.A. Degrees (English/Creative Writing, Psychology, Education) M.A. Degree in English Education PhD, Rhetoric Barbara is a scholar in the fields of Rhetoric and Composition (English) and Disability Studies.</p>
Lisa	<p>Age 41 Female Lives in the same working class neighborhood as five generations of my family First generation college BA in English MA in Lit ABD Rhet Comp Chair of English Department</p>
FSH Students	
Name	Bio
Elizabeth	<p>My name is Elizabeth I am 22 year old white female, I have graduated from high school and perusing a degree in elementary education. I am in the process of my second semester. I grew up in a middle class, but now am in the lower class. I am a resident at the Louisville scholar house and a single parent to a beautiful 2 year old boy. Before I found scholar house I was working 50 hour weeks at a daycare and was barely making ends meet, doing the same thing over and over every day. Now I have a huge amount of support from my family and the Scholar house. I went a semester right outside of high school and did terrible. The fall semester of 2014 I was able to bring my GPA up from a 1.8 to a 3.25. I don't believe I would have been where I am today without scholar house. It's a lot of hard work being a full time student, part time worker and a full time single parent. But I wouldn't have it any other way. I am doing everything I can to make sure my sons life and my own life of full of happiness, I am saving money when possible and being the best student and parent I can possibly be to make sure my son has a better life than I could even imagine.</p>

Vanessa	I am a 41 year old African American female. I am a domestic abuse survivor. I am a single parent considered to be economically living below poverty level. I used to be considered middle class economically, however, when I made the decision to flee from my abusive marriage, I became homeless, jobless, and destitute. I just graduated with my BA in December 2014.
Jane	White, 36, Female, low socioeconomic status, some college Single mom of two children persuing degree in English. Raised with two married college educated parents. Divorced and trying to support two children on student loans.
ChaRay	Let's use the name ChaRay (I have always loved that name). Short Bio: I am 25, I have an associates in Arts degree and I will graduate in May with a bachelors in communications. I am a black female, and I am considered, I don't make enough money, to which is why I depend on government assistance along the way. I have two boys (2,4). I will be the first person to graduate in my family. I am currently applying to grad schools. it's very choppy but I hope this helps.
Camille	(Never responded to request for bio)
Sofia	Hello, my name is Sofia. I am a 38 year old caucasian woman, who was born in New Albany Indiana, yet not raised there. I am a junior at the University of Louisville. I am studying in hopes of becoming a school teacher; my focus is working with students with learning and behavioral challenges. At this time I am living off student loans and government assistance. I am currently a part of a community that supports single parents whose desire is to go to school and graduate, whether it be an associates, bachelors, or master's degree. I am hoping to graduate with my bachelors in 2017.
FSH Staff	
Name	Bio
Rose	Rose is the Family Services Coordinator of Family Scholar House and has been with the agency for over eight years. Her position is focused on the coordination and delivery of family support services for low-income single parent college student families. In addition, she has specialized in health initiatives and financial wellness programming for adults and children at Family Scholar House. Participating in the Money Talks Initiative with Louisville Metro Government and other social service agencies, Rose facilitates Financial Empowerment training for the community. She earned the Masters in Social Work from the University of Louisville Raymond A. Kent School of Social Work and provides supervision to social work interns. She also earned the Bachelors of Arts in Sociology from the University of Louisville. Rose is 35 year old Filipino female from Louisville, Kentucky and enjoys giving back to the community.
LeAnn	I am a 29 year old, white female and a mother of two daughters. I am employed full time and attend school full time as well. My socioeconomic status is considered lower middle class. I have an Associate's degree from

	JCTC, a Bachelor's degree from U of L and am currently working on a Master's degree from Lindsey Wilson, School of Professional counseling.
Will	Will is the Academic Services Coordinator at Family Scholars House. His main focus is on the academic success of Family Scholar House participants. He earned the Ph.D. from Temple University and the Bachelor of Science in Geography from Murray State University. Additionally, he is an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Spalding University.

Research Narrative

I offer the following research narrative in order to start with an overview of the timeline and steps of my research process. These steps consisted of:

- 1) volunteering and building relationships; getting to know the organization and letting them get to know me,
- 2) identifying participants with Will's help,
- 3) emailing participants and scheduling interviews,
- 4) conducting interviews (prepping questions that encouraged participants to tell their stories, looking at different angles, and following the questions but also pursuing threads that participants raised),
- 5) transcribing the interviews, in full, as way to familiarize myself with the data,
- 6) analyzing data using grounded theory to identify affective moments in the interviews and to follow the voices of participants by looking for "I" phrasings and repeated themes that seemed important to participants.

I began volunteering at FSH in the summer of 2013, as I was preparing for my exams. I spent time in the front office, helping complete intakes and supervising participants' trips down to the basement pantry (for food, clothing, furniture, etc). I talked to the front office staff and interns, getting an overview of the organization and the people involved. I sat in on the month-long financial literacy workshop that was mandatory for all pre-residents, taking

general notes to familiarize myself with what FSH focused on and how they approached their participants. All of this was before I got IRB approval, so I knew I wouldn't be able to use my observations in my research, but this initial introduction to FSH was significant not only in laying the groundwork for my own understanding of the program but also in forming connections and relationships with FSH staff. One of the key lessons I learned during this time was the tremendous benefit of simply showing up regularly and being helpful. This approach was crucial in establishing trust.

I volunteered less frequently through the fall and winter as I took my exams. In early spring, as I was working on my dissertation prospectus, I reestablished contact with FSH and wrote up a brief, tentative research plan so that they could decide if they wanted to allow me to conduct my research there. Upon their approval and the IRB exemption, I talked with Will, my main contact throughout this whole process, about selecting participants for my interviews. After establishing that I was looking for students who were: a) from two specific, local universities, b) only women (because there are so few men at FSH, it would be difficult to maintain their anonymity), and c) represented a range of majors, we began what would turn into a lengthy process of identifying and reaching out to participants. Will would email me with names and email addresses, and I would then contact these participants to see if they were interested in being interviewed. By far the most time-consuming aspect of my research was contacting the women and then scheduling the interviews. Between June of 2014 and February of 2015, I completed six student interviews, three FSH staff interviews, and two university writing program administrator interviews. All interviews were audio-recorded and lasted between one and two hours. The interviews with FSH students and staff took place in the private office space of various staff members on the FSH main campus. The writing

administrator interviews took place in the private office space on the respective campus of each administrator. In all interviews, I began with more informal, general questions (see Appendix A for interview questions) to help make participants comfortable and establish an easy, conversational tone. I then progressed to questions more directly related to participants' literacy experiences, and ended with opportunities for participants to add any additional information.

During this time, I continued to volunteer at FSH, working primarily with the Director of Operations on a variety of tasks such as researching faster, cheaper internet options for the apartment complexes, calling all participants to determine their technological needs, contacting local businesses about donating computers, sorting donations in the basement pantry, and filing paperwork. I eventually transitioned to volunteering one evening a week as a writing tutor based on a need for this service that one of my interviewees had expressed.

Critical Ethnography and Literacy Research Methodology

In designing and conducting my research, I drew from the rich body of scholarship on critical ethnography (Brown and Dobrin, Cintron, Clifford and Marcus, Horner, and Rabinow), qualitative research in New Literacy Studies (Brandt, Heath, Street, Cushman, Barton and Hamilton), and relevant concerns of rhet/comp scholars regarding the ethical dimensions of participatory, engaged research (Chiseri-Strater, Kirsch, Newkirk, Sheridan, Sullivan). I designed my study with a few key concerns in mind: 1) representing participants' voices and concerns as fairly and accurately as possible, 2) developing a dynamic, reciprocal relationship with FSH over the course of the research, and 3) completing the dissertation within a reasonable timeframe. By leaning on critical ethnography - but not identifying my

study as such - and keeping in mind the concerns of feminist and participatory research, I modeled my project after previous literacy research such as David Barton and Mary Hamilton's *Local Literacies: Reading and Writing in One Community*, Ralph Cintron's *Angel's Town*, and Ellen Cushman's *The Struggle and the Tools: Oral and Literate Strategies in an Inner City Community*. Particularly, I followed these three studies' examples of taking a close look at specific instances of literacy – including the documents representing certain literacy practices – within the context of the surrounding local community. This balance of micro- and macro-examinations of literacy practices – considering the specifics of the actual practices themselves but also the broader contextual factors influencing these practices – is one of the primary challenges of literacy research. In what follows, I explore the theoretical underpinnings of my study, particularly how it aligns with and departs from existing literacy research.

Rhetoric and composition has been borrowing research methodologies from various disciplines since the field's inception. Among the recently trendy methodologies is that of critical ethnography, which arises from anthropology's conception of ethnography. In the past, the traditional form of ethnography as seen, for example, in Bronislaw Malinowski's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* and Claude Levi-Strauss' *Tristes Tropiques*, entails a careful distance between participants and researcher maintained primarily through objective rhetoric in which the researcher is mainly absent. These forms of ethnography also have the goal of conveying the objective truth of a culture in order to, according to George Marcus and Michael Fischer, “salvage cultural diversity” (8). The many problems with traditional ethnography have been a source of debate and a cause for transformation of the genre in anthropology for the past several decades (Clifford and Marcus, Rabinow). Issues such as the

crisis of representation arising from the social turn towards considering the constructed nature of reality, the need for more transparency in the representation of others, and the call for increased reflexivity on the part of the researcher have also been debated in rhetoric and composition studies (Brown and Dobrin, Chiseri-Strater, Horner, Sheridan, Sullivan).

The term “critical ethnography” has come to represent, for the most part, the version of ethnography that researchers in rhetoric and composition are performing. And, though there has been debate as to what counts as “true” ethnographic research in this crossover, the rich approaches offered by critical ethnography fit well within writing research. Mary P Sheridan describes the field’s tendency to borrow methodologies as productive, if done with care: “Because methods are not rigid things written about in books but flexible practices meant to be understood and adapted for present needs, we in writing studies should learn the histories of the methods we adopt, but we should also feel confident to adapt these methods so they are appropriate to our forums, uses, and practices” (“Making Ethnography Our Own” 82). As Sullivan points out, “It is understanding others on their own terms that weds the compositionist and the anthropologist in a problematics of writing and representation...” (“Ethnography and the Problem of the ‘Other’” 100). Brown and Dobrin offer an assortment of definitions of critical ethnography in the introduction to their collection, all of which take as their jumping off point the analysis of culture and then emphasize the use of language, rhetoric, and other means of communication within that culture with an ultimate goal of seeking some kind of social change based on the research (3-4). The authors suggest that “critical ethnography shifts the goal of praxis away from the acquisition of knowledge about the Other...to the formation of a dialogic relationship with the Other whose destination is the social transformation of material conditions that immediately oppress, marginalize, or

otherwise subjugate the ethnographic participant” (5). For the purpose of my own project, I also consider critical ethnographies that have a less explicit agenda when it comes to social action. If, as Cintron argues, “there are no critical ethnographies – none whatsoever, in any field” due to the entrenched nature of power imbalances, then we need to consider the form and function of those ethnographies (arising out of rhetoric and composition and other fields) whose purposes seem less directly related to changing the lives of their participants but that still contribute valuable and potentially life-changing knowledge (“The Timidities of Ethnography”).

With the overarching goal of conducting a study that aligned with a participatory research focus on participants’ voices and needs, I drew heavily from Ellen Cushman’s critical ethnography, which clearly comes from an activist standpoint. She writes that she hopes “the ethnographic exercise is one that fulfills our civic duties. The representation before you arrives from a dialogic flow of meaning exchanged through mutually beneficial relations where participants and I listened to and heard each other speak” (22). The collaboration and multivocality of Cushman’s text represent both strengths and potential limitations, and her focus on a particular, vulnerable population, while allowing her to explore their lives and literate strategies more richly, prevents her from perceiving the wider angle of power relations at work. Similarly to how Cushman engaged in reciprocal relationships with her participants (offering them rides, help with paperwork, etc), I also attempted to pay attention to the concerns that arose from the interviews. For example, as one student explained that there was a lack of evening support for writing, I began volunteering at FSH as a writing tutor one evening a week.

In Cushman’s study, she explores what participants do rhetorically to maneuver the

bureaucracy that permeates their daily lives, which tends to create a dichotomy between the participants and state workers. To try to avoid this binary, I interviewed both FSH students, FSH staff, and local university writing program administrators. A central component to Cushman's study is her description and analysis of how participants collaborated to share and acquire the literacy practices necessary to successfully negotiate institutional bureaucratic barriers such as housing applications and other social services forms. She writes: "...filling out forms is rhetorical: you present only that information that best persuades the caseworker to offer you the maximum allowance...always looking for the path of least resistance through what they saw as gatekeepers' mire of requirements, codes, and insidious attitudes" (77). In this and other moments of negotiation and interaction between community members and institutional representatives (whether in person or via paperwork), Cushman evokes a somewhat dichotomous "us/them" reality in which the community members' perspectives are deeply investigated and rhetorically analyzed while the caseworkers (among others) appear briefly and one-dimensionally in opposition to community members. It would be useful, though materially difficult, to explore the conditions that create this "mire of requirements, codes, and insidious attitudes". If Cushman's participants represent a vulnerable population – the "dragon's tail", according to Cintron – then what's missing is analysis of the power structure. As Cintron argues, "In sticking only to the perspectives of the vulnerable and dodging a simultaneous analysis of the operations of power, we lose the purpose of critical ethnography, which, I take it, is social change" (940). While I cannot claim that my study fully explores the "dragon's tail," I do take into account multiple perspectives, particularly as they appear through the lens of Actor-Network Theory which helps to forward a symmetrical analysis of power dynamics within a given frame of analysis. For example, in using ANT to

describe a variety of human and nonhuman actors surrounding specific literacy practices as students talk about them in the interviews, I am able not only to analyze how human actors manipulate documents such as the KTAP application, but also to analyze how the KTAP application mediates the human relationships surrounding its completion. The application's request that the student identify her child's father, for example, necessitates the human intervention of a FSH social worker to navigate the potential consequences of this identification on family relationships.

The collaborative relationship between Cushman and the participants comes across as one that manages to benefit all parties. Cushman describes ways in which she was able to lend her social status to the community members by, for example, getting them access to her university's computer lab, providing needed transportation, and offering her linguistic and cultural resources. She also notes that community members received 60% of the royalties from her book (37). Cushman herself was able to benefit from these relationships by being given access to places (such as a private mosque) and people she wouldn't have otherwise had access to, as well as benefitting from the research itself.

Limitations of this kind of collaboration, as both Horner and Kirsch point out, are the material, personal, and ideological difficulties and differences arising out of collaborative attempts. Kirsch explains that "Lack of time and interest, different educational backgrounds, work and family obligations, diverging expectations about the research project, as well as conflicting values, all can prevent or limit the kind of collaborative relations researchers hope to achieve" (*Ethical Dilemmas* 36). Also, the textual multivocality that results from this collaboration can be seen to have its own uses and limitations. While the vignettes and detailed voices of her participants do represent a more equal representation of participants

than other, traditional ethnographies in which participants' voices were absent, these sections are still written by Cushman and thus are filtered through her perspective. The alternative – of truly collaborative writing done by both researcher and participant – is, as Horner points out, materially difficult, and the various experimental forms that multivocality might take can come across as more difficult to interpret by the reader (“Critical Ethnography”). I take a more traditional approach in my study by incorporating substantial quotations from the participants in order to represent their perspectives.

While it's true that even these representations of participants' voices in my text have been filtered through me as researcher, in my analysis of the data I attempted to pay careful attention to which concerns seemed most prevalent and significant for the participants in the context of their lives by keeping track of how many times specific concerns or ideas recurred throughout their interviews. So, while I did keep in mind my own perspective and desire to consider an expanded, rich perspective on literacy and on those elements surrounding and supporting literacy, I also tried to consider what seemed most important about participants' lives and literacy practices based on their interview responses. For example, the notion of time, especially not having enough time to get done all that they needed to, appeared frequently. Not only was this an important theme for students, it also became a significant theme from my perspective as a researcher using ANT and considering time as an actant within students' networks.

In order to identify these most prevalent concerns as I transcribed and analyzed data, I drew from the longstanding tradition of grounded theory by taking as my methodological starting point the Listening Guide as developed by Carol Gilligan for research in psychology. With a sociology base in Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss's work, and further developed

by researchers such as Robert Emerson, grounded theory continues to be used by many in writing studies as a method of analysis that is context-based and in which the patterns of analysis arise from the data rather than being applied top-down (see Bob Broad, “Strategies and Passions in Empirical Qualitative Research,” Mary P Sheridan, “Making Ethnography Our Own,” and others). In the Listening Guide, Gilligan lays out three steps for analysis: in the first, the researcher listens for the plot, for patterns, and for relationships and missing pieces. This first step also requires the researcher to pay attention to her own perspective and responses to the participant, which fits my goal for self-reflexivity throughout my research process. In the second step, the researcher listens for the “I” voice of the participant, noting any “I” subject/verb phrases and listing them in order to uncover more information about the participant. In the third step, the researcher listens for other voices in order to identify how they fit in the conversation. The Listening Guide’s strength, especially for my project, lies in its use of “associative” rather than “deductive” methods of reasoning. In other words, rather than assuming specific ideas based on broader generalizations, the Listening Guide allows the researcher to follow the voices more freely and, therefore, to discover more complex, rich relationships between them (Kieglmann). As Gilligan points out, the Listening Guide responds to researchers’ “concerns about the ways in which a person’s voice can be overridden by the researcher and their cautions about voicing over the truth of another” (“On the Listening Guide” 255).

I took the principles of The Listening Guide as a starting place for how to approach my own data in this project. I began by reading each interview entirely through twice, highlighting pieces that seemed to form a plot, or storyline, to the interview as well as excerpts that represented a pattern for that participant. For example, in ChaRay’s interview, I

noticed as I read that she kept talking about time, specifically about not having enough time to get everything done and to work on her book. In coding her interview, I discovered that ChaRay talked about time 35 times over the course of her interview. So, in my next step, I went back and reread those highlighted excerpts to understand her attitude towards time and to pinpoint the other “voices” surrounding her voiced concern about a lack of time: her book project, wanting to be a successful author, prioritizing, other writing assignments, reading for pleasure, and texting friends. Recognizing the different manifestations of ChaRay’s concern with time helped me to understand the complexity of her life and literacy practices.

Given the Listening Guide’s focus on tracing a variety of voices, I looked especially for tension between the participant’s “I” voice and other implied voices. Sometimes these voices appeared as actual people in the participants’ narratives, such as the many times FSH staff came up during students’ interviews. Other times, these voices appeared as broader organizational or institutional factors, such as Barbara’s and Lisa’s discussion of the programmatic guidelines for writing assessment at their respective universities.

Given the Listening Guide’s emphasis on following and understanding the voice of the participant, in my analysis of the data I looked for places where participants expressed stronger emotions, both positive and negative. Some of these excerpts were more easily recognizable, as in Sofia’s interview when she talks about the lack of educational support during her childhood and says “I used to write songs, I used to love to - ...but due to the lack of support of my home, I didn’t pursue it, I stopped...and you see I’m getting a little emotional because, I think by your surroundings can either empower you or discourage you.” For those sections where affect was present but less explicitly so, I looked for things like repetition (of words and ideas, indicating that the participant is speaking about something

significant to her) and long pauses. I also read through the reflections I wrote after each interview, looking for moments I had identified immediately afterwards as seeming important. Often, these moments were examples of connections I felt were created between myself and the participant, and these connections usually came from a particularly affective experience. For example, after my interview with Sofia, I wrote:

She described herself as a perfectionist. There were several moments where I felt like we were able to connect through similar struggles with writing – like when I talked about trying to let go of the perfectionism and just write what comes to mind. I could definitely tell that there were times when she was struggling to answer a question and seemed very concerned to answer it correctly, or to at least understand the question. Then there were also times where she seemed to relax more and really get into what she was talking about, like talking about YA fiction, her lesson plan, being frustrated with the praxis exam, enjoying her cup of coffee in the morning and getting started on school work...

Based on this reflection, we can see how my own subject position as a literacy researcher and practitioner influences the kind of connection I make with Sofia. By going back to the transcript and looking at what created this connection, I was able to identify Sofia's significant fears about her timed praxis exam. The following excerpt represents that moment of connection over our shared perfectionism in writing:

K: Sounds like...all the thinking you're doing about the writing maybe gets in the way of the writing

S: For sure, yep, definitely

K: Yeah, that's...

S: Yes, it's a hindrance

K: I think, I mean I know I used to struggle with that a lot, when I was, especially in undergrad, I had to get out of the habit of agonizing, you know, sentence by sentence by paragraph...And I, and you're right, it's almost like a learning to trust yourself, that if you just let it come out

...

K: But it definitely takes practice because, I think especially for those of us who are perfectionists it's not our natural inclination, you know

S: Nope

K: To just let it go..laugh

S: I know, it's not, it's not

A few seconds later in the transcript, Sofia's emotions come through when she returns to the topic of her praxis exam:

And I was more focused on...laugh...I just, *gosh!*...Just thinking about it, I tell you, for my test it's the thing that I stress the most is the essays...And I am afraid of failing again...and my mind going blank, because you're, underneath I'm still thinking "30 minutes, 29 minutes, 28 minutes"

The exclamation ("*gosh!*") and her explicit reference to her fear ("I am afraid of failing again") indicate Sofia's strong affective response to this particular writing exercise, and by looking for affective moments such as this one (by using my post-interview reflections as well as coding the participant interviews for varying expressions of affect) I was able to analyze the patterns of Sofia's evolving literacy narrative through the interview.

Throughout my transcription and analysis of these interviews, I used ANT to identify human and nonhuman actors and actants surrounding literacy practices; however, I always did this via the voices of the participants I interviewed by following the Listening Guide principles (as explained above). So, while ANT is a theory that attempts to take an equalizing look at the social and material elements in any given unit of analysis, I examined these elements through the eyes of the people at FSH. I appreciate this balance of a more feminist, humanist approach to research data (by paying such close attention to participants' voices and working to convey the truths of their lives) with the more distanced, objective approach of ANT. By combining these perspectives, my research seeks a richer understanding of the factors shaping literacy practices *as they appear to matter to and influence* an underrepresented student population whose voices need to be listened to deliberately.

There is a natural fit between The Listening Guide, Actor-Network Theory, and grounded theory. All three approaches require analysis that begins with the research participants' lived realities and concerns. However, because scholarship in critical ethnography and New Literacy Studies is growing increasingly complex and multi-layered, it can be difficult to recognize how researchers are basing their analyses in participants' lives. Take Cintron's *Angel's Town*, for example, where he describes his methods of "a project in the rhetorics of public culture" in this way: "as a somewhat new approach, one that adopts the fieldwork methods traditional to sociocultural anthropology and blends these with the cultural critique now common among critical ethnographers and theorists, and picks up as well ideas from an entire lineage of rhetorical theorists stretching to classical Greece and Rome" (xi). Cintron's work is impossible to replicate due not only to the rich mixture of ethnographic observation and rhetorical theory, but also to the nature of his relationship with

the community he studied. As with Cushman, the kind of cooperation between researcher and participants depends greatly on the researcher's point of access to the community and the ways in which he/she can interact with community members. While Cintron's relationship with these families was far from perfect (in fact, he highlights his own discomfort multiple times throughout the text), he was able to undertake this research because he lived in Angels' Town and participated in activist work that helped ease his entry into the community (8-9).

However, it's important to consider that replicability isn't always – or even often – the most important feature of ethnographic work, especially new and more experimental texts. Marcus and Fischer suggest that “Sympathetic readerships of experimental ethnographies scrutinize them, not with the hope of finding a new paradigm, but rather with an eye for picking up ideas, rhetorical moves, epistemological insights, and analytic strategies generated by different research situations” (41). In other words, while we might not be able to replicate Cintron's ethnography for its content and research, we can examine how he weaves together the various layers of ethnographic observation, reflection, and rhetorical analysis in order to think of new ways to approach our own scholarship within our own local circumstances. For this project, while I certainly used certain studies as models, and while I do want my research to initiate further conversations about literacy, I think it's important to recognize the validity of doing research in order to inspire further projects and directions rather than to inspire replication of that study. Also, given the nature of the genre of the dissertation, the primary aim is not to create a replicable study but, rather, to undertake a manageable, finite research project that functions as the doctoral candidate's initiation into his or her professional academic field. As Latour explains when he describes the purpose of the researched text,

Because this text, depending on the way it's written, will or will not capture the actor-network you wish to study. The text, in our discipline, is not a story, not a nice story. Rather, it's the functional equivalent of a laboratory. It's a place for trials, experiments, and simulations. Depending on what happens in it, there is or there is not an actor and there is or there is not a network being traced. And that depends entirely on the precise ways in which it is written—and every single new topic requires a new way to be handled. (*Reassembling the Social* 149)

In this way, my project resulted in a textual laboratory in which I combined methodological concerns and models, specific theoretical lenses, and, above all, the actual lived experiences of participants. Given my desire to analyze participants' literacy practices, especially how these practices and their attitudes towards these practices changed over time, the interviews produced data in which the primary narratives and themes centered on literacy and students' lives at FSH; my analysis of the data, based as it was in the principles of the Listening Guide and the symmetrical approach of ANT, has produced a project that represents a perspective on students' literacy practices arising from the current material circumstances and social relationships surrounding these practices because I was always looking for the connections (à la ANT) between these diverse and relevant actors and actants as voiced in the interviews.

Ethics

There are numerous ethical dimensions to qualitative research, such as issues of reflexivity, representation and multivocality, and reciprocation. Regarding reflexivity, Sullivan points out that “The reflexivity inherent in all ethnographic inquiry – the researcher's presence in the story she tells – is compounded for those of us who study acts of

literacy, for we are writers writing about writers writing... We are studying communities with which we already share some degree of membership...the literacy events of others...are inevitably framed in our own literacies” (“Ethnography and the Problem of the ‘Other’” 97). For Sullivan, it is imperative that the researcher recognize the fluidity of both researcher’s and participants’ identities in order to resist the “unitary authority of the ethnographic text because no single consciousness can hold sway” (108). In the course of conducting my research, I maintained a research journal in which I wrote reflections after every interview, including observations on the participants’ behavior as well as my own, thoughts on patterns emerging, and ideas for improvement. This helped me to recognize the changeability of every interview experience, and to become more aware of the different identities and needs of the participants as well as how my own behavior changed in response to the different participants. While I was, as Sullivan points out, a writer writing about writers writing, I was also a woman writing about other women, a grad student writing about undergrads, a white woman writing about white and black women, an upper-middle class person writing about poor, working, middle, and upper-middle class people, etc. Given the shifting multidimensionality of my identity and the participants’ identities, it becomes impossible to truly reflect on all of the ways in which we were interacting. It is my hope that, by using ANT to analyze literacy events at FSH as well as students’ literacy narratives, I am able to recognize the widely diverse actors, actants, and identities surrounding literacy in order to purposefully destabilize “the unitary authority of the ethnographic text.”

By emphasizing self-reflexivity we do run the risk, however, of turning it into another expected component of critical ethnography without examining the process itself, as Horner warns. He argues that we must see self-reflexivity not only as a textual element but also as a

practice with its own ideology; simply recognizing one's subject position as researcher does not neutralize that subject position, rather, it creates new ideological conditions of which to be aware. If we understand the material conditions accompanying such self-reflexive practice, then we will be better able to recognize the underlying ideology as well as consider the implications of such material conditions for our own research practices. For example, as I've argued previously, we cannot all occupy such dual positions as researchers and quasi-members of participants' communities. Knowing this, we can ask how we might enact self-reflexivity in our research given our unique positions within our research situations. My approach to this dilemma – of enacting reflexivity as an ongoing practice within the unique material constraints of our research sites – in this study resulted in continual reevaluation of my relationships with FSH and my participants, which I did via the keeping the journal mentioned above.

Regarding how we as researchers represent the participants in our studies, Kirsch argues that “Our long-term goals should always be to allow those we study to speak for themselves, to study their own communities, and to enter public discourse on their own terms” (“Multi-vocal” 198). While I agree on the significance of these goals and the need to help participants “speak for themselves,” that isn't always possible depending on the nature and constraints of the research. As we work towards these goals, creating multi-vocal texts, in which voices of participants blend with the voice of the researcher, can help us attempt to honestly and fairly represent those we are writing about. Kirsch cautions researchers as to the downfalls of multivocal texts, arguing that “They can disguise writers' continuing authorial control, they can fail to provide the theoretical and cultural context necessary for understanding the multiple voices emerging in a single text, they make new and difficult

demands on readers, they require tolerance for ambiguity and contradictory claims, and they easily become elitist and exclusionary” (“Multi-vocal” 193-4). With these concerns in mind, I stuck with the fairly traditional method of participant representation by including relevant quotations - and lengthy ones - in order to convey the participants’ voices, and by asking participants to write a brief bio (that I’ve included above). Ultimately, I see this project as the first step in my pursuit of more collaborative, participatory research, and I sought to represent participants as accurately and fairly as I could given the genre.

The desire for a reciprocal relationship between researcher and participants has been advocated by scholars such as Katrina Powell and Pamela Takayoshi, Patricia Sullivan, Gesa Kirsch, and Ellen Cushman. It is also a central component of participatory action research, which is becoming more prominent in the field of writing studies (Williams and Brydon-Miller). As Powell and Takayoshi explain, “This nonhierarchical, reciprocal relationship, in which both researcher and researched learn from one another and have a voice in the study, is informed by a feminist desire for eliminating power inequalities between researchers and participants and a concern for the difficulties of speaking for ‘the other’” (395). They recognize that this kind of relationship requires attention to the research context and to what goes on beyonds the bounds of the research context, as well as flexibility in negotiating relationships. Within the material limitations of my study, I enacted small pieces of reciprocity, such as volunteering in ways that FSH staff and students needed (and this, too, changed over time). I consider the conversations (the interviews) that I had with students, staff, and administrators to be, to a certain degree, reciprocal in terms of the things that we were able to learn from each other (and considering that what we learned was not exclusively limited to my vision of the research itself). For example, at the end of my conversation with

Lisa, she was talking about how she wished teachers had more time and resources for professional development and to learn from each other. She brought it back around to our interview:

L: But yeah, I mean, we grow from talking to each other. We both probably learned something from this conversation, right?

K: Oh tons

L: Or thought of a million ideas to go look up...These are the conversations that matter...That's what makes us better teachers, so we need more time to do that

Barbara took this a step further and asked me for a copy of the interview itself, because, as she put it when I asked her about the differences between successful student writing and successful writing programs, "I'd like to hear back what I've been saying because this has been really helpful for me thinking about this." And in my conversation with one student, Sofia, I was able to reflect on her experience as a full-time student and mom in a way that helped her to see herself modeling specific goals for her children rather than worrying about not being present for them:

S: This is why I have to study at 9:00, I'm not able to, I have to get this homework done, mama wants to get good grades just like you want to be successful or your teacher expects assignments from you just like my teacher expects assignments to be done by me

K: Yeah...and then what you're also doing is giving her that model of

S: I am, you're right

K: This is the role that school plays in my life and it's important...And so this

is why I have to do this and so she will have that growing up

S: Thank you...That's nice to see it from that perspective

As literacy researchers looking at local practices, we need to consider reciprocity in all of its potential forms, no matter how small, as this will help us to provide better examples for other scholars. I don't take this point of view in order to suggest that my own study was entirely reciprocal in the sense that the above scholars have advocated; the power dynamic was still weighted in my direction as researcher.

Limitations

Limitations of my project are as I've hinted above: the material limitations of time that accompany a dissertation project and which become particularly relevant when conducting a qualitative empirical study. Other limitations include the small sample size of FSH students and staff, as well as writing program administrators. This is, essentially, a case study which looks at a small slice of life and literacy at one particular educational nonprofit. This is a valuable slice, but is necessarily limited in its scope.

Another potential limitation is the inevitable narrow perspective of my own analysis, because it is just me analyzing all of this data. Perhaps this isn't really a limitation, because there is plenty of research out there that comes basically from one person's perspective on the data. This study, especially, feels like it would benefit from the perspective of multiple researchers - that collaborative co-authorship would be an important part of a project that values the consideration of all elements (via ANT). So, perhaps getting more input from my participants about my interpretation of their interviews would have been useful - though this, in and of itself, is difficult to achieve and also not always aligned with the concerns of participants given their extremely busy lives.

Overall, my methodological approach to this project represents my strong desire to write about the lived realities surrounding students' literacy practices. I draw on the relevant elements of critical ethnography, literacy studies, and feminist research methods, namely, fair and accurate representation of both participants' and researcher's perspectives, a reciprocal research relationship, and attention to the micro- and macro-components of literacy practices. My analysis followed the principles of the Listening Guide and the symmetrical approach of ANT to identify a wide array of relevant actors/actants, and the relationships between them, surrounding these literacy practices.

CHAPTER THREE:
IDENTIFYING THE RELATIONSHIP WORK OF LITERACY SPONSORSHIP IN
THREE MOMENTS OF TRANSLATION AT FAMILY SCHOLAR HOUSE

“Because this text, depending on the way it’s written, will or will not capture the actor-network you wish to study. The text, in our discipline, is not a story, not a nice story. Rather, it’s the functional equivalent of a laboratory. It’s a place for trials, experiments, and simulations. Depending on what happens in it, there is or there is not an actor and there is or there is not a network being traced. And that depends entirely on the precise ways in which it is written—and every single new topic requires a new way to be handled”
(Latour, *Reassembling the Social* 149)

Vanessa: Well I mean, FSH, we’re not regular college students, because there’s this cloud over us that says “If you do not go to school full-time, if you do not meet your monthly requirement, your GPA... You no longer have housing... This cloud... that does not go away, you understand what I’m saying... That is something that I have to carry with me to class around with me every second of the day

Kathryn: Right. It’s almost like you have, like everything’s connected all the time

Vanessa: Yes it is, it’s the domino effect... And so I have keeping, making sure that my mental illness is stabilized... So now I’m learning to address underlying health issues... To help me stabilize my mental illness... Being physical, I walk to class on days that I know I

just need the sunlight...however, some of those obstacles feed into me overcoming my obstacles when I'm writing as well, like I said...My graphic narrative..I got an opportunity, I get to walk to class..now I'm walking to class, so I'm overcoming, I'm helping stabilize my mental illness, right...I'm taking pictures...I'm doing an assignment for school...but I'm also taking care of myself in the process...Do you see so it all becomes integrated...So that's why sometimes it feeds into, they feed into each other...So they appear to be huge obstacles but sometimes when I'm overcoming one that helps me overcome another.

Introduction

In this chapter I will examine the work surrounding literacy practices within FSH students' lives, specifically the work of translation that students and staff are undertaking as they make connections between different aspects of students' lives in order to be successful at FSH. The diverse and fluctuating nature of the support that FSH provides means that I need to take an approach to my interviews that allows analysis of a complex web of factors influencing students' literacy practices and literacy events. Actor-Network Theory is the stepping off point for developing this approach. My main purpose in this chapter is to identify key moments of work, struggle, and transformation from the interviews and then describe what kind of translation work is going on within these moments. This will allow me to make connections in subsequent chapters between this work of translation, students' life/literacy narratives, and emerging definitions of successful literacy. I draw primarily on the ANT concept of translation, by which I refer to the points of connection that are created when elements are translated into a particular network in order to accomplish a specific purpose. I have chosen three specific moments of translation that revolve around literacy practices: the navigation of an application for government assistance, the process of writing a

financial aid appeal letter, and the experience of the annual FSH luncheon from the perspective of current and former FSH participants.

The three moments of translation on which I will focus my analysis recall Brandt's assertion that, "Just as illiteracy is rarely self-chosen and rarely self-created, the literacy that people practice is not the literacy they necessarily wish to practice" (8). I doubt most people desire to practice literacy by filling out an application for government assistance, writing a SAP appeal letter to regain their financial aid, or writing a scholarship essay and delivering it in front of hundreds of people. This is why these moments are particularly significant for this project; moments of struggle are moments in which many connections and relationships are created, sustained, and transformed, and these moments can tell us a great deal about the material and social realities of power surrounding literacy practices.

In conducting interviews with residents at FSH, I learned that most FSH participants appeared to be involved in networks made up of the following elements: school, work, home, daycare, FSH support services, and other support such as family members. Then there are the extracurriculars that vary, such as working for the campus newspaper, being involved in campus clubs, attending social events at FSH, church, and probably other things that didn't come up in interviews. It's important to recognize that when I say network, I'm not just talking about social networks. From an Actor-Network Theory standpoint, I recognize a variety of dimensions to these networks. For example, these networks include the material space and objects of each resident's apartment, such as Vanessa's bed where she does all of her schoolwork, or ChaRay's kitchen cabinets where she posts sticky notes to organize her life, or ChaRay's couch where she found her son reading late one night. These networks include FSH staff like Will and Rose who maintain relationships with participants in order to

help them succeed according to each participant's definition of success. These networks also include participants' own life histories that inform and shape how they interact with their present worlds, which we can see through so many moments in the interviews such as ChaRay's narrative of her grandfather's influence on her life, Elizabeth's point that she wants her son to be able to have the kind of life she had growing up, Vanessa's narrative of her flight from Texas to Kentucky to escape domestic abuse, her lack of confidence, and her subsequent growth at FSH and desire to found a nonprofit for deaf victims of abuse.

In this chapter I explore the nature of the networks within which FSH participants exist by analyzing three specific moments of translation which reveal the complex actors and actants being enrolled into these networks. I start from the common social constructivist perspective on the interconnected and fluctuating nature of any individual's identity and life experience (connected to the habitus within which that individual grew up, and fluctuating based on the varied relationships that make up any person's life). In an increasingly common move (see Brandt and Clinton, and Haswell and Haswell), I want not to turn away from this emphasis on the social, but rather to expand that perspective to consider material components and the undeniable power of any given individual within her network to shape the course of her own life. To do this I draw on Actor-Network Theory.

Actor-Network Theory as an Analytical Tool

Sponsorship

Barton and Hamilton, in *Local Literacies*, argue not only that "...literacy practices are more usefully understood as existing in the relations between people, within groups and communities, rather than as a set of properties residing in individuals," (7) but also that "It is necessary to develop ways of incorporating the unequal nature of many social relations into

understandings of literacy” (17). As scholars such as Brandt and Heath have argued, schools often perpetuate the unequal power dynamics of society at large by sponsoring literacy in ways that privilege those students whose families have been exposed to the mainstream, dominant academic literacy practices for generations. Brandt argues that “schools (along with other institutions), embed into their literacy standards and practices histories of economic transformation that not all of the students who must depend on the school have been a part of. Out of this discrepancy arise conditions of unequal access to literacy in the ostensibly democratic school” (204). Indeed, FSH exists in large part to counteract this particular educational tendency by providing students whom the education system has failed with the variety of support services they need in order to achieve success that is more readily accessible to “a white mainstream, whose children sit atop two, three, sometimes four generations of college education” (204).

I base the following analysis in this social and contextual view of literacy (Barton and Hamilton, Brandt, Street), particularly in Brandt’s notion of literacy sponsorship. She writes:

Sponsors, as I have come to think of them, are any agents, local or distant, concrete or abstract, who enable, support, teach, and model, as well as recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold literacy - and gain advantage by it in some way...Sponsors are delivery systems for the economies of literacy, the means by which these forces present themselves to - and through - individual learners. (19)

Brandt’s description of sponsors as “any agents” dovetails neatly with the ANT approach to identifying “actors” as human and nonhuman within a network. Much scholarship on literacy sponsorship, however, tends to analyze specific sponsors as opposed to looking at the

network of sponsors involved in particular literacy moments. Simmons et al critique the tendency of community literacy studies to focus on one specific literacy center which limits researchers' ability to understand relationships between broader forces and actors (283). One way to consider the relationship between literacy sponsorship and ANT's notion of translation is to reconceive our goal as researchers to describe the literacy *relationships* as opposed to specific "*agents*." In the words of W. Michele Simmons, Kristen Moore, and Patricia Sullivan as they describe how they use ANT to approach a civic engagement project, they follow "the actors and their relationships to one another...As we write up the research, we don't choose which of the many groups involved in civic engagement we will study, rather, we watch actors assembling and disassembling at any given time and find data in the traces of those assemblings and disassemblings" ("Tracing Uncertainties" 284-5). In other words, I follow the "traces" of literacy sponsorship that are manifested through the relationships surrounding particular moments of translation.

Rather than identifying specific literacy sponsors that might be either "local or distant, concrete or abstract," I pinpoint how the relationships among different actors/actants surrounding a literacy moment help to shape and are shaped by the power dynamics accompanying the translation of these actors into the network of literacy sponsorship. Also, rather than considering sponsors as "delivery systems for the economies of literacy," I focus on the situational relationships that arise around resting points of literacy in order to maintain a micro-focus rather than attributing pieces of my analysis to macro social forces. And of course, I am not following generational cohorts in order to trace the historical development of literacy within individual experiences. Not in this study, anyway (though I will, in subsequent chapters, look at the influence of childhood literacy habits upon FSH

participants' present and future literacy practices and goals). In what follows, I will identify the various actors/actants, their interrelationships, and the shifting power dynamics within three specific moments of translation surrounding literacy practices. First, I will explain my approach to the ANT concepts of networks, uncertainty, and translation.

Networks, Their Uncertainty, and Translation

For this project, the relevant aspects of networks as Latour and those using Actor-Network Theory theorize them concern the work being done in the formation of networks and the significant uncertainty involved in that work. Latour critiques the term “network” and its overemphasis when it comes to deciding how to use ANT, arguing that in addition to the importance of “being connected”, networks should draw attention to the actual work taking place: “Really, we should say ‘worknet’ instead of ‘network’. It’s the work, and the movement, and the flow, and the changes that should be stressed” (*Reassembling the Social* 143). In other words, while I use this chapter to describe the elements that make up FSH students’ networks, I do so in ways that focus on the relationships and the work that flows between elements along those relationships. Specifically, I analyze the relationship work between actors/actants involved in three moments of translation surrounding literacy practices/events. For example, as I describe the different people involved in the completion of an application for government assistance, I keep my analysis focused on how key relationships impact the application, and vice versa, how the document itself influences its networked relationships.

I draw on other researchers’ approach to ANT networks, specifically the notion that networks are unstable, rhizomatic, and tend to hide the multiple and varied interactions and relationships that go into their creation. Tara Fenwick acknowledges critiques of the term

network as “self-contained linear pipelines or reified engineered linkages,” and argues that “Networks are simply webs that grow through connections...an unspecified set of connected points or nodes with un-represented spaces among them” (119). Her recognition that this view of networks highlights their “precariousness and unpredictability” is especially significant for my analysis because, by analyzing three moments of translation, I maintain their significance as moments - as unpredictable and fluid. In choosing these moments, I follow several researchers’ ideas about how networks and translations tend to hide the complex work that goes into creating them. Fenwick et al point out that networks exist around a particular function and often hide the many people and activities that went into creating that function, using the example of “a textbook or an educational article” which “each bring together, frame, select and freeze in one form a whole series of meetings, voices, explorations, conflicts and possibilities explored and discarded” (101). The authors emphasize the fact that “these inscriptions appear seamless and given, concealing the many negotiations of the network that produced it” (101), a point I will return to as I discuss my approach to these three moments of translation. Based on these perspectives on ANT networks, I explore and identify the elements of FSH participants’ networks in order to reveal the variety of voices, relationships, material things, and *negotiations between them* (the translations) that tend to be obscured when we focus only on, for example, the end goal of FSH (graduation).

As I identify the networks at FSH, it’s important to point out the significance of their continuous uncertainty. Latour identifies five types of uncertainties in an ANT approach to social analysis: “the nature of groups,” “the nature of actions,” “the nature of objects,” “the nature of facts,” and the written text itself documenting the social analysis (*Reassembling the*

Social 22). While I accept Latour's categorization of these five kinds of uncertainties, I do not use them explicitly to structure my analysis. Rather, I take his argument in the inherent uncertainty of the things and relationships that make up the everyday world as a jumping off point. For example, as Latour writes about the need for the social sciences not to attribute specific actions with agency resulting from a given macro social force, he argues that we must begin "not from the 'determination of action by society' ...but rather from the under-determination of action , from the uncertainties and controversies about who and what is acting when 'we' act" (45). In other words, Latour argues that we never really know the motivation or cause behind any given action - to assume we do, for example, that a person buys Starbucks coffee based on the persuasive power of Starbucks advertising, is attributing an action to an existing, reified social force, and this does not allow us the freedom to analyze the actors and actions in the world in all of their diversity and on their own terms rather than our preconceived notions of specific social forces.

Latour indicates the need to recognize particular moments of hesitation where the reasons for action are unclear in order to avoid attributing the cause of action to a reified social force. He argues that researchers must "keep as their most cherished treasure all the traces that manifest the hesitations actors themselves feel about the 'drives' that make them act" (47). Rather than argue that my analysis needs to take into account those moments that stand out as particularly uncertain and unstable, I understand Latour to suggest that in fact everything is this way; as he writes, "we should paradoxically take all the uncertainties, hesitations, dislocations, and puzzlements as our foundation" (47). To perform an ANT approach to social analysis requires acknowledgment of the inherent uncertainty in any given network, and then to actually see how that uncertainty plays out in one's analysis. As

Simmons et al explain:

In its reliance on uncertainties as a heuristic, Latour's ANT insists researchers resist and refuse the assumed, the foundational, and the stable in systematic and rigorous ways. Because stability is exclusionary, Latour-like unstable portraits likely reveal connections otherwise obscured ... Latour's deployment of ANT teaches us to forge procedures - for example, mapping networks of relationships and moves - that allow us to investigate new materiality, nonhuman actants, and the assemblages (created or inhabited) in ways that do not follow the sociological bent of using macrocategories to interpret micro relationships (or vice versa). (278)

As a researcher using ANT, I, therefore, "resist and refuse the assumed, the foundational, and the stable" as I analyze moments of translation at FSH. I employ ANT in order to maintain a complex, ever-changing perspective on the multi-dimensions of literacy practices for a student population whose lives are also complex, ever-changing, and unstable. Given this emphasis on uncertainty, as Simmons et al point out, it is worth attempting to understand and lay out how to go about establishing this new research approach:

Since all of these uncertainties strategically destabilize research, we might ask, "where is the order?" or "which uncertainty when?" For Latour, answers reside in the tracing of practices themselves. Latour suggests researchers pursue the richness of uncertainties instead of making arbitrary determinations - before encounters - about how to structure and attempt to stabilize the research site. And in doing so, he helps us think about how to see research's goal as more dynamic than conclusory. (282)

In other words, I see my research as tracing the actors/actants involved in moments of translation in order to understand the relationship work going on between the different actors/actants and how this relationship work influences the literacy practices around which these moments of translation exist. And in tracing this relationship work, I am also looking at traces of power in the relationships and attempting to understand how power shifts and what that means.

I consider Latour's notion of translation as one way of identifying which particular moments to analyze within the networks that make up FSH students' lives. Translation occurs when actors/actants are enrolled into a network in order to accomplish a specific purpose. As Latour writes, translation is "a connection that transports, so to speak, transformations...the word 'translation' now takes on a somewhat specialized meaning: a relation that does not transport causality but induces two mediators into coexisting" (*Reassembling the Social* 108). In other words, Latour understands translation as the connection between actors in a network, and it is this connection that is responsible for bringing multiple actors together which results in a network (that then gets traced by the researcher). Because translation is the "connection that transports...transformations," this makes translations especially rich things to study.

From a broader angle, FSH itself provides momentum for all kinds of translations. FSH is trying to change the educational environment for a specific population by providing them what they need in order to access an education they would not otherwise be able to access. In other words, FSH is working to translate all of the actors/actants it comes into contact with (students, community members, donors, academic assignments, life skills workshops, etc) into this new network of educational change. Nespor, in "Devices and

Educational Change,” writes that “Teaching in formal educational settings assumes a web of relations linking teachers, students, schools, and content disciplines. *Changing teaching involves changing the translations that generate this web*. One way to do this is to work on single elements – for example, train better teachers or create better curricular materials” (emphasis added 5). FSH is providing the context for many translations that are all connected through the FSH mission. Translations are the links between actors/actants in a network. As Nesper puts it, “Networks are treated not as stable structures in static landscapes but as contingent effects of ‘translations’ – the term ANT practitioners give to the ‘displacement, drift, invention, mediation, the creation of a link that did not exist before and that to some degree modifies two elements or agents’ (Latour, 1994, p.32)” (2). In other words, FSH is attempting to change the translations – connections – between low-income single mothers and the influencing factors that make up their life networks for the specific purpose of getting a college degree. For example, FSH changes the connection between a participant and her government assistance application by inserting a FSH staff to help her navigate the document and the system successfully.

Drawing on both Mary Hamilton’s and Steve Parks’ articulations of the significance of looking at “moments,” I will describe and analyze three significant moments at FSH in order to understand the process of translation occurring within each moment. Hamilton, in setting up her ANT analysis of educational policy, writes: “Translation is achieved through a number of ‘moments’ as expressed by Callon. The use of the term moment implies both a freezing of chronological time sequence to hold up an event to close scrutiny and also ‘moment’ in the sense of a fulcrum of forces around which events turn” (45). Steve Parks, in discussing our flexible and evolving approaches to studying literacy as socially situated,

writes:

Instead of thinking in terms of “distinct” literacies, our pedagogical goal within community partnerships should be to understand how any one “literate” moment is a resting point within a dynamic relationship between a series of diffuse literacy practices. The point is to study the process by which such resting places occur. Having done so, the work should then be to develop strategies that enable students and community members to negotiate amongst these multiple practices as a means to produce a more ethical and equitable literacy system. (43)

In other words, the “resting places” represent a culmination of factors converging within particular moments in time and surrounding particular events, and ANT allows an equal consideration of the factors that make each moment a moment. Dorothy Smith emphasizes the importance of “seeing texts as occurring in locally developing courses of action, as in motion, as integral to coordinating ongoing action, breaking thus with texts’ deeply rooted and functional disposition to precipitate the reader out of time” (87) – this notion of analyzing texts in motion fits with Tusting, Parks, and Horner’s ideas of literacy and temporality, as well as the ANT perspective. In other words, I’ll use the idea of analyzing “moments,” which frequently revolve around specific texts, as a way of both freezing time and elucidating the forces that maintain these moments within the ongoing narratives that surround them.³

³ I refer to “moments” as well as “practices” as I analyze literacy at FSH because, drawing on work by Tusting, Parks, Horner, and others, I consider the relationship between literate moments and literacy practices to be dynamic. Literacy practices tend to be portrayed as static and widely representative of a particular kind of literacy (i.e. the academic essay, or extracurricular literacy generally), and this elides the differences

As I describe how translation seems to be occurring within these three moments, I find Hamilton's description of ANT translation particularly lucid and useful. She writes: "ANT has been called a 'sociology of translations' and the key process I will focus on is that of 'translation' whereby the messy complexities of everyday life are ordered and simplified for the purposes of the project at hand" (44). I read this to mean that we need to look at moments of a kind of unified coherence of purpose that masks complex tensions and differences. Hamilton draws on Sakari's articulation of translation to tease out the repercussions of power dynamics within translation:

Translation, as Sakari (2006) argues, is not a simple process of making equivalent two different but predetermined entities. It is, rather, a process of articulation - 'a poietic social practice that institutes a relation at the site of incommensurability [...] a process of creating continuity in discontinuity' (p. 75). The result is productively emergent, the smoothing of differences, the alignment and sequencing of a number of sub-projects, a set of differences held - precariously - in tension because, as Sakari again points out, 'translation is always complicit with the building, transforming or disrupting of power relations' (p. 72). (44)

In other words, translation is about relationship-making between distinct actors, about providing the opportunity for connection between various actors/actants that, by coming into contact with each other, change in all sorts of ways. In this chapter, I'm identifying particular moments of translation in which a variety of actors/actants seem to be working together

between specific moments of literate activity. I want simultaneously to draw attention to these individual differences by focusing on three moments and also to point out more generally applicable patterns in relationships (between actors/actants surrounding each literate moment) that these three moments highlight.

towards a common purpose (a purpose provided by the moment of translation as it creates opportunities for relationships), and in which there is some element of literacy at work. I then analyze the relationship work happening within these three moments in order to start on the micro-level and to avoid lumping particular motivations for these moments together and attributing them solely to macro social forces. I choose moments which appear to involve multiple elements - different people occupying different roles, different notions of literacy, bigger institutional aspects, along with material concerns and circumstances. I'm looking at moments which involve a constant balancing act in order to work towards the goals of that "work net." Another way to think about translation is to think about Vanessa's point about everything being connected – about the domino effect. Will also remarked on the "artful juggling" that FSH students seem to do with the many pieces of their lives. Translation is a way of looking at this artful juggling in action within a specific moment surrounding a literacy event; however, instead of considering that moment from solely the student's perspective, I examine the different actors/actants involved from each angle to more fully understand the changing power dynamics.⁴

As Sarah Read points out,

...for Latour the tracing of associations, or the 'peculiar *movement* of re-association and reassembling' (RS; emphasis added), is an explanatory

⁴ I acknowledge that it is impossible to identify all actors/actants within any given moment of translation – even within any given network. For the purpose of my subsequent analyses, I identify those actors/actants as they arose from my interviews with FSH students and staff that seemed a) related to specific literacy moments and practices mentioned in these interviews, and b) most relevant and significant to these students and staff in shaping their lives and relationships. A different researcher focusing on different concerns might identify different actors/actants, and this is both the strength and weakness of ANT (and a very good reason for further literacy research using ANT).

activity that describes the translations that induce two actors, two intermediaries, into coexisting (RS 108)...To trace or describe a translation means to understand how one thing becomes another thing through being interdefined or mediated by other entities in order to achieve a modified goal that suits both parties (PH 179). (256)

In other words, the key to translation is in tracing the movement - or work - that creates relationships between actors/actants as they're enrolled into a specific network with a shared purpose. And the way that translation takes power into account is by recognizing the fluidity of the negotiations between actors/actants and the mutability of agency in these relationships. As I describe and analyze the following three moments of translation involving literacy, looking especially for those "connections that transport transformation," I aim to keep this approach to power in mind and to trace the negotiations occurring between actors/actants, not in order to attribute power fully to one actor or another but to trace the shared and unstable signs of power to better understand the complexity of a given resting point of literacy.

I use the ANT concept of translation in order to a) reveal the mechanisms behind a specific literate moment, and b) analyze how these mechanisms make these students visible in specific ways and invisible in others. For example, I'm analyzing the pieces of the network surrounding the literate moment of translation that is an application for government assistance so that we can stop seeing these women as only "students" or only "single parents" but also in terms of their relationships and their individual perspectives. Kirsch argues that the core principle of feminist research methodology is that research needs to be *for* women, not just *about* women ("Ethical Dilemmas" 2-3). FSH is an organization run almost entirely by women, serving a majority female population. My feminist intervention in doing research

at FSH is one that recognizes the significance of gender, but opens up the analysis to other factors that shape participants' lives. I perform a feminist intervention by acknowledging that gender is not the only or most important aspect of these students' experiences, and by analyzing the factors surrounding literacy that seem significant to the participants themselves. Given the intense feminization of poverty, I examine literacy moments, such as an application for federal assistance, and take into account the variety of material circumstances, social relationships, and individual perspectives that are at work within this sort of literate moment but that we might not normally see given how the application tends to construct women in a particular, one-sided way, and this is my way of enacting a feminist approach to literacy studies research at the intersection of university and community agendas.

3 Moments of Translation

KTAP

"I would like to change my location. I would like to change my location...of where me and ____ lived..obviously I would like to change my financial situation, I don't want to be rich or lucrative, have this big career, that's not what I care about, but I would just like to be able to not be on government assistance of any kind"

-Vanessa, personal interview

"I am on welfare, and...I *hate* being on it...I feel like the system is abused a lot...Not that I'm abusing it, I'm using it for what it's there for, but I just really want to be self-reliant, independent...Be able to raise my son, teach him a work ethic and stuff like that, and know not to...if you want something you gotta work for it, you don't get it for free."

-Elizabeth, personal interview

“...I guess one thing I want to do, I want to be able to make it, you know? I would like, you know I feel like depending on these services are good, but they help, it’s easy to get comfortable, and you know to be stuck...Being assisted, like I get assistance and stuff, and it’s easy to get stuck there. But I want to be able to make my own money, you know, and be able to provide for my kids without any help and assistance from nobody.”

-ChaRay, personal interview

“...You have to really be organized with your time...to get everything accomplished. I would say, it’s not so much school but it is the demands of everything, everybody...You know...that everybody has expectations of what they, whether it’s the government, you know... Because I get government assistance...They have requirements...And so it’s just, trying to juggle everything, I would say time...I always, I always say...I wish I had more time. So that would be the biggest challenge.”

-Sofia, personal interview

Single-Parent Students entering our program must meet the following qualifications:

- be single
- have a child, children, or be pregnant
- meet low-income housing requirements
- have a high school diploma or GED
- have the desire to pursue a college degree

-FSH website

The first moment of translation I want to look at closely involves a specific document: the Kentucky Transitional Assistance Program (KTAP) application. Here I examine the different actors and relationships that surround and create the fairly common moment at FSH in which students apply for government assistance. I take this “resting place” of literacy and look at the scope of actors involved. When I say I’m looking at the translation process at work within this moment, I mean that I’m focusing on how relationships are created, with whom, and in order to accomplish what purpose. I’m also looking at what actors/actants manifest power and how and with what consequences, rather than thinking about power in terms of a zero sum scenario where one actor/actant gains and another loses power.

The KTAP application represents a moment of translation because, similar to the SAP appeal letter which I’ll discuss in the next section, it represents a kind of continuity of purpose and process that comes from its power as an established institutional document and procedure, but this continuity hides the tensions, differences, and fractures that arise when FSH students apply for government assistance. The main tensions I will discuss here include the tension between needing assistance and being stuck on it, the tension in family relations, the tension between the KTAP applicant and her sponsor signing off on it, and the tension arising from the material circumstances and time constraints surrounding the application. Also important are the points of connection for relationship-making that KTAP provides opportunity for - primarily relationships between FSH students and staff.

Based on FSH’s eligibility requirements for students to live in FSH housing, we can see that students must “meet low-income housing requirements.” So if we are tracing the

power dynamics within the KTAP moment, we can see that the impetus for seeking government assistance comes both from the FSH and the HUD requirements which necessitate a low-income, which in turn means most students must seek assistance. This is not to say that FSH and HUD requirements are the cause for these individuals' low incomes, but that the requirements result in a specific low-income student population residing at FSH and that, combined with the full-time student requirement, frequently means that students need to apply for assistance to support their families.

KTAP falls under the purview of several, nested state organizations: Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services -> Department for Community Based Services -> Division of Family Support -> The Family Self-Sufficiency Branch. According to their website,

The Family Self-Sufficiency Branch helps low-income families in Kentucky with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash benefit program. In Kentucky, the cash assistance program is called the Kentucky Transitional Assistance Program (K-TAP). K-TAP provides a short-term cash benefit to families with children under the age of 18, or under age 19 if a full-time secondary student. Most adults who receive K-TAP must participate in a work activity. ("Division")

The maximum time limit an individual may receive KTAP is five years, which makes it a sensible fit for FSH students as they earn their college degrees (as Rose points out in our interview). I attempted to obtain a copy of a KTAP application, with no success. My understanding is that the only way to obtain an application for KTAP is to attend an in-person appointment with a KTAP worker. In a personal email, Rose writes: "I believe a

person must have an appointment with a KTAP worker at a Neighborhood Place. It's been a while since I've accompanied a participant to an initial visit, but the application is all done online with the KTAP worker.” Thus my analysis of the translation surrounding the KTAP application at FSH comes mainly from interview data as opposed to textual analysis of the application itself.

During my interview with Rose, the Family Service Coordinator at FSH, the KTAP application first came up when I asked her what kinds of writing she actually did with participants, such as filling out forms. Because all FSH participants are low-income single parents, KTAP applications are a common literacy practice as participants need financial assistance. KTAP came up again when I asked Rose about the common struggles and obstacles that participants dealt with. Her answer initially had to do with the financial difficulties participants are dealing with, and then she moved on to address other, related challenges that arise through the KTAP application and the process it entails. It became clear that the KTAP application is a very powerful document representing the state government, and it requires interventions and relationships in order for participants to successfully negotiate it on many levels.

The KTAP application in this moment is a nonhuman actant within the “worknet” surrounding FSH students and staff. Since I’m paying attention to a variety of actors surrounding a specific literacy moment, not just the people and not just the “social,” then I recognize the following actors/actants in the KTAP translation moment (the translation occurring as actors and actants are enrolled into a network that works to help FSH students succeed) as they arise from the way people talk about KTAP in my interviews:

- FSH students applying for KTAP

- FSH staff helping them to apply
- fathers
- children
- KTAP application
- KTAP workers
- KTAP sponsor who signs off
- Monthly deadline
- Income limit and other material circumstances necessitated by KTAP (including financial assistance given)

In identifying all of these actors and actants in this moment, we can also try to understand the goals of each actor/actant and how those goals play off of each other in the unfolding of the translation moment. For example, it seems that one goal of FSH students applying for KTAP is to be able to support her family while she is a full-time college student. Now, what that goal looks like for each FSH student applying for KTAP will differ, as some students may work full or part-time, some may have internships, and some may not work. Another goal FSH students have regarding KTAP is, at some point in the future, not to need to be on government assistance (see the interview quotes introducing this section). So there are, in fact, contradictory goals within this KTAP moment, and the unstable tension this analysis reveals points to the significance of the KTAP application as a powerful document precisely because it helps to crystallize the network of actors, actants, and their interrelationships and goals.

Part of the KTAP application's power comes not only from a very firm deadline that, if missed, means no assistance that month, but also from the fact that the KTAP document

requires acknowledging existence of the child's father, which then results in the state demanding that he pay child support, which then has all sorts of consequences on relationships (between the mother and father, between the father and child, etc). As Rose explains,

Because it is government assistance, the government's going to say "Well where is Dad? What is he doing? How is he involved?"...So that will push a person into child support... And so we have hesitation for people to get KTAP because they, because a lot of times what they think or feel is "Oh, by putting my child's father on child support he's getting, I'm getting him in trouble." And that's a feeling from both sides, mom's side and dad's side... And he might say, which is, these are statements that have been shared with us, like "Ok well then I'm not going to see my child anymore," or "I want visitation," or somebody gets physically assaulted because of this.

Submitting a KTAP application therefore has very real and potentially negative consequences on the family relationships. This highlights further tension in this translation moment, because FSH students may rely on KTAP assistance to support their families while they're in school, but at the risk of damaging relationships between mom and dad and between dad and kids. I don't necessarily want to argue that FSH students see this decision in this way - as choosing between earning a degree and maintaining positive relationships - but I do want to emphasize the potential for tension crystallized in this KTAP moment. What happens with this tension depends on the individual circumstances of each FSH student. Dorothy Smith argues that analyzing how texts are used by different people in a sequence of activities reveals the disjunctures between different realities, individuals' perspectives, and

institutional purposes that we wouldn't otherwise be able to see just based on analyzing texts alone. Drawing on Smith, even though we aren't able to know how a KTAP form gets read and interpreted down the road by a government employee, what we can see is Rose's interpretation of the consequences of varying interpretations of the KTAP form upon FSH students and their families. For example, Rose indicates that the father's different interpretation of KTAP's request for child support - that he's now in trouble with the state - can result in a change in his relationship with the mother and the kids. The power here fluctuates, with another potential scenario being that applying for KTAP could mean that the father does end up paying child support, which then helps the mother support her family and continue her education. Rose did not mention this scenario - in fact, she didn't discuss the material consequences of KTAP in terms of child support but rather focused on the relationships being affected. But I want to point out the variability of different versions of the KTAP moment of translation in order to emphasize the tenuous, continually negotiated nature of power here. KTAP provides the points of connection "that transport transformation", and the shape this transformation takes varies.

Mary Hamilton points out that "ANT asserts that the effects of power can be traced through assemblies, or mixtures, of objects, animals, people, machines, discourses and so on to which agency is delegated" ("Unruly Practices" 41-2). And it is only through looking at the *relationships* connecting these various actors that we are able to understand how power works within the translation process. As Sarah Read points out in her Latourian analysis of a child care program, the agency of these child care workers to implement material change based on state mandates "is coextensive with these powerful structures. Their agency is an effect of their association with the whole assemblage and their work to enact, maintain, and

extend it” (270). Thus ANT allows us to describe how the relationships between actors being translated into a network shape the ebb and flow of power within that network. We can see the interdependencies of power dynamics that develop out of relationships within the KTAP moment of translation in how Rose describes her relationships with participants as well as how she developed her coaching approach to these relationships.

Rose points out that participants need help completing the KTAP form, and that this help doesn't always come from the KTAP caseworker: “I always say to folks that it can really benefit you...with all the services that you can get under KTAP...but the challenge for folks is they may not get the best worker. There are some workers that are not so nice.” Rose becomes a helper for participants even though she isn't an expert in KTAP assistance, as she points out: “And I always tell them, ‘I'm not an expert in this, this is really something you'll need to check with your KTAP worker...They would probably be better for you to sit down, but I can sit down, we can kind of try to figure this out together.’” In fact, FSH participants are fortunate to have people like Rose and LeeAnn to help them navigate the KTAP application because of the relatively long-term, intimate relationships that develop between FSH students and staff. Rose points out that people applying for KTAP must find someone to sign off on their application, such as an employer or professor if they don't have access to FSH staff:

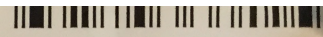
So if you're a person who, let's say you didn't have FSH to sign off...I have a relationship with the folks to sign off, no big deal...But if a person maybe has to ask a professor or maybe has to ask an employer to sign this, well that could be embarrassing to them because Oh, here I am wanting you to sign my form...And you're going to ask me, and now you're going to know that I

receive government assistance..

The potential embarrassment arising from applicants having to divulge private information about their lives and financial situation to relative strangers becomes an obstacle. And perhaps this remains an obstacle for FSH students, too, who may not all have strong relationships with FSH staff and who might not be comfortable sharing that information. Here, the points of connection that KTAP, as a moment of translation, allows for between the applicant and her sponsor can lead to unpredictable kinds of relationships and consequences. Just because translations are a “connection that transports transformation” doesn’t mean that this transformation is necessarily positive. In this scenario, where KTAP applicants must find a person to sign off or may still feel uncomfortable with the FSH staff, the consequences involve a shift in social capital where applicants may lose power specifically in the form of social capital because of the negative associations that accompany government assistance. The sponsor signing gains a degree of power because he knows more about the applicant’s life than he did before, and perhaps at least partially against her will. Both applicants and signers, however, are still ruled by the power of the KTAP application itself which necessitates their connection.

Rose gave me a copy of the Verification of Kentucky Works Participation, or PA-33 which, while not the same thing as the KTAP application, does give an idea of the kind of supervision required from a sponsor (such as an employer or teacher). This is the form that documents the work/educational activities of applicants every month and is signed by the “provider”.

KAR 2:370



VERIFICATION OF KENTUCKY WORKS PARTICIPATION

To the Participant: Take this form to your activity provider the first day you go to your **VOC** activity for ~~September~~ ^{August} **2014**. Be sure to complete the back of this form to request transportation for you will need for **November 2014** to participate in your activity. If this form is not correctly completed and returned by **October 5, 2014**, we cannot give you credit for your participation, pay for transportation for **November 2014**, or help with other items you may need.

[Redacted]
[Redacted] REG SMITH CIR
LOUISVILLE, KY 40208

Office Address:
908 W BROADWAY
LOUISVILLE, KY 40203

Participant Name: [Redacted]

Caseload Code: 04QK
SSN: [Redacted]

To Provider: Enter the number of hours for each day in **September 2014** for which the participant attends your activity, is excused from scheduled attendance, or did not attend due to a holiday. Enter the number of hours in appropriate box for each day: ATT (attended), EX (excused) and/or HOL (holiday). If you already have a daily attendance record that shows this information, you may attach a copy of your record and not complete the chart below. Enter comments for any excused absences. Sign and date this form. Give this form back to the participant on the last day of attendance shown on this calendar.

	Sun			Mon			Tues			Wed			Thurs			Fri			Sat		
WK 1	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL
WK 2	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL
WK 3	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL
WK 4	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL
WK 5	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL	ATT	EX	HOL

* Approved holidays are New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day.

Comments: _____

I certify that the hours entered above were completed by the participant.

Provider Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name of Provider _____ Phone: _____

Important Reminder to Participant: Make sure you complete the back of this form and return it by the **October 5, 2014** if you will need help with transportation costs in **November 2014**.

Based on this form, we can see that the provider must document the exact hours an applicant works each day, including absences and holidays, and the provider must also "enter comments for any excused absences." Just like a teacher tracking a student's attendance in

order to help determine her grade in the course, this level of supervision is close, precise, and shapes the financial situation of the applicant each month (the PA-33 must be completed each month). The form itself emphasizes the significance of the monthly deadline: “If this form is not correctly completed and returned by **October 5, 2014**, we cannot give you credit for your participation, pay for transportation for **November 2014**, or help with other items you may need” (original emphasis). It’s also interesting to note the multiple temporal dimensions to the form; it documents the applicant’s participation of the past month and also considers transportation needs for the next month. In other words, this form exerts a continual power over the applicant and her sponsor across time.

The PA-33 form, along with the KTAP application, also represent the functionings of power in terms of Foucault’s panopticon, which is a useful frame of reference when using ANT because of its focus on the mechanization of interrelationships. Regarding the panopticon, Foucault writes, “It is an important mechanism, for it automatizes and disindividualizes power. Power has its principle not so much in a person as in a certain concerted distribution of bodies, surfaces, lights, gazes; in an arrangement whose internal mechanisms produce the relation in which individuals are caught up” (202). Thus, we need to analyze the network of actors and actants to understand their relationships, and therefore the function of power, within that network. Considering the power that KTAP has to identify (and therefore *make visible*) the single mothers (and their children’s fathers) applying for assistance, we can see the panopticon’s visibility trap in action: “The Panopticon is a machine for dissociating the see/being seen dyad: in the peripheric ring, one is totally seen, without ever seeing; in the central tower, one sees everything without ever being seen” (228). FSH students cannot see the surveillance of those behind the mechanism of government

assistance, while the KTAP application forces applicants into visibility.

Time also functions as an actor in the KTAP translation moment, because the firm KTAP deadline imposes time-sensitive constraints upon the individual completing the application. Time also appears as an actor in Rose's example of difficulties that participants might have in applying for assistance; she points out that "if you don't turn in that paperwork on time your benefits get cut off," which then means that person has to go to an appointment to reapply: "You also have situations where, and you may see this both for KTAP and Section 8, where they say, they send the letter and say "Hey, you have an appointment on Dec 4th at 11:00." Well that just so happens to be my math class." In this example, the high-stakes constraints placed upon this participant by her school and by the state require her to juggle her time in ways that allow her to successfully receive her benefits and to successfully pass her math class. As Sofia pointed out above, time is her biggest challenge: "And so it's just, trying to juggle everything, I would say time...I always, I always say...I wish I had more time. So that would be the biggest challenge." There is tension in this moment of translation due to the potential conflict between a student's material circumstances and the KTAP time constraints. The same material constraints that push a student into government assistance - full-time college coursework, lack of income, children to support - can also make it difficult to jump through the necessary hoops to receive the assistance.

KTAP also creates tension between a student's need to be on assistance and the trap of getting stuck on it and stuck in poverty. Not only must participants follow the application guidelines and deadlines, they must do so despite their discomfort and strong desire not to be on government assistance. As LeeAnn and Rose both point out, the very nature of government assistance requires FSH participants to remain in a very low income bracket to

be eligible to receive this assistance. LeeAnn articulates this best:

I think there's a point in everyone's life when you're on government assistance and you are low-income, that you sort of realize, it's like an epiphany, the system is meant to suppress me... Instead of help me, sort of... I mean, even if that's not entirely true, you do realize that at one point... I have to stay low-income in order to receive these benefits... you know you're broke, you know you're low-income, you're very aware of all this stuff while you're here... But if you try to do anything to better yourself right now, it's going to hurt you more than help you

In this scenario, the KTAP document seems to take power away from participants by limiting their opportunities for employment. Simultaneously, however, the government assistance provides opportunities by giving recipients income. And in fact, the power of the KTAP document is what necessitates Rose's intervention by helping students navigate the system:

...there are so many different barriers that come into play in helping a person get out of poverty... And, it's just helping our folks be strategic about that... And that's where I hope that I can help them... KTAP is only a 5 year program... And it's ideal right now because you're in college, and you're only going to be in college for, hopefully about 5 years... And so I can help them, let me help you navigate this system and that you understand it well enough to take away some of the stressors that you could potentially experience. And if there is a relationship issue with dad, let me help you have a better conversation with dad so he can understand... That it benefits him too... And ultimately it's your decision, you know, because I have people who get

KTAP, it doesn't work for them, and they would rather work, and that's fine...So it's really case by case.

We can see here that the KTAP moment of translation provides the opportunity for a relationship between the FSH student and Rose, and it is this relationship specifically that helps the student to successfully navigate the KTAP application in ways that reduce the negative consequences (on her family relationships, for example). If we look at the nature of the relationships between students and FSH staff surrounding the KTAP application, it seems that they are on the same page in terms of their attitudes towards assistance. What I mean is, students don't want to be on assistance but see its necessity at this stage of their lives, and the FSH social workers understand this (as seen in the above interview excerpts from Rose and LeeAnn).

Of course, it's also true that the nature of the student/social worker relationships at FSH are shaped by other actors/actants, as well. Both social workers emphasize their goals to maintain flexible, open relationship with participants - they want to be there in any way that participants need them without prescribing specific goals or actions for participants. They are coaches, as Rose explains:

And I really take the approach...of coaching with our families...Seeing that our families are the experts, or the parent is the expert in their life...That I'm not here to tell them what to do...So I think that approach is really helpful for rapport-building...and again giving that person the tools and feeling that 'Hey I can take care of this situation'."

When I asked Rose where she learned this particular coaching approach, she said:

I got introduced with coaching...not at the Kent School but actually through

Women4Women, which is an organization here in town...So I was trained in coaching, or encouragement coaching...Through a person at Women4Women, and it was just like...'this feels right, this is definitely the approach that I would be using not only in my professional setting but in my personal life'.

So looking at the KTAP moment of translation, we see that the KTAP application creates a point of connection for a relationship between the FSH student and Rose, and that Rose builds this relationship through a specific “coaching” approach that she learned at a different organization, an approach that she uses not only professionally but also in her personal life. By identifying different actors/actants and tracing their dynamic and intertwined relationships, I am attempting to enact the kind of open, fluid research that Simmons et al emphasize is key to ANT: “For Latour, answers reside in the tracing of practices themselves. Latour suggests researchers pursue the richness of uncertainties instead of making arbitrary determinations - before encounters - about how to structure and attempt to stabilize the research site” (282). I recognize Rose’s particular coaching approach as an important actant in this moment of translation - even if it is tangential to the elements that are more directly involved in the KTAP application - because not only does her “encouragement coaching” shape the developing relationship between Rose and the FSH student and their work together on the KTAP application, but this coaching approach operates within a wider scope and creates points of connection to other pieces of the interviews (where, for example, FSH students have emphasized their own independence within the program).

The ways in which students and staff work together to navigate the government assistance process evokes Cushman’s argument that members of a particular African

American community use communicative skills to successfully maneuver dominant institutions while simultaneously resisting the status quo ideology that these institutions represent. She argues that “Residents craft, deploy, and retool language skills so that they appear to conform to “mainstream” values, even as they are critiquing them” (*The Struggle* 68). Cushman also explains that though it’s easy to interpret the results of these struggles (like getting evicted) as evidence that the system maintains power and status quo remains unchanged, it’s important to see what’s really going on in these daily struggles in order to understand that there is “linguistic strategizing” and “detailed analyses of power structures by those who negotiate them” and that these are evidence of “individuals’ critical awareness” (167). In this same vein, both FSH students and staff are aware of the power of the KTAP application as it affects their financial and social situation and relationships, and they sustain relationships with each other in order to strategically navigate the system of power.

It is the uncertainty and tension represented in the KTAP document (the tension between needing assistance and that same assistance requiring applicants to stay poor, tension between needing assistance and needing strong family relationships, etc) that necessitates these working relationships between FSH students and FSH staff. So, another way to look at the KTAP moment in terms of translation, in light of the notion of translation as “a process of creating continuity in discontinuity”, is to recognize the seeming continuity and strength of these relationships and then to look at what lies beneath those relationships, namely, the reasons that those relationships exist. If translation is a “connection that transports...transformations” (Latour 108), then the KTAP application as a moment of translation is a point of connection between all of the involved actors/actants that supports potential transformations of those actors/actants via the relationships created by this point of

connection. As Latour argues, “So, the word ‘translation’ now takes on a somewhat specialized meaning: a relation that does not transport causality but induces two mediators into coexisting” (108). In other words, KTAP does not cause transformation; rather, the KTAP application induces the relevant actors/actants into coexisting, and it is the relationships arising from this coexistence that have the potential to transform those involved.

The most significant negotiations of power in this moment of translation seem to lie in the relationships between the people involved in this translation moment. It initially seems as though the KTAP document itself has the most power, because the students and staff are working to navigate the document successfully and there are material consequences on students’ lives. Perhaps another way of looking at power is to argue that the KTAP document has the present power - in the present conditions of students lives as they’re on assistance - but it’s the students who have the power over their future (their potential) because they are using the KTAP assistance in order to work towards the kind of future they want (a future in which they are not on assistance). In other words, power shifts over time and between actors/actants within a given translation.

Another way to look at power in this moment is through Bourdieu’s “habitus.” Bourdieu writes:

Because they tend to reproduce the regularities immanent in the conditions in which their generative principle was produced while adjusting to the demands inscribed as objective potentialities in the situation as defined by the cognitive and motivating structures that constitute the habitus, practices cannot be deduced either from the present conditions which may seem to have provoked

them or from the past conditions which have produced the habitus, the durable principle of their production. They can therefore only be accounted for by relating the social conditions in which the habitus that generated them was constituted, to the social conditions in which it is implemented, that is, through the scientific work of performing the interrelationship of these two states of the social world that the habitus performs, while concealing it, in and through practice. (*The Logic of Practice* 56)

Bourdieu argues that we cannot understand why we do things based on the present circumstances which may lead to these practices nor based on the past circumstances which led to the habitus that currently shapes our practices. He suggests that we have to connect the “social conditions” that created the habitus that led to our practices to those social conditions in which the habitus currently performs, or that we must connect past and present social conditions that shaped/shape our habitus (and therefore our actions and practices and ways of being in the world). This comparison of past and present social conditions is what I am attempting in my overall project. Here, in my analysis of these three moments of translation, I’m focusing on the relationship work going on in these specific moments. In this chapter, by using the ANT concept of translation, I am looking at the present conditions/actors/actants that surround literacy practices at FSH and that contribute to shaping these practices, as well as shaping the habitus that produces them. In other words, the relationship work surrounding the KTAP application (and the SAP appeal letter and the luncheon) provides opportunities for FSH students to change how they imagine their futures. Rather than focusing on what Bourdieu calls the “social conditions,” which strikes me as what Latour would call a too-easy and static reification of the motivations of actors, I’m looking at the present relationship

work within these three moments of translation. In subsequent chapters, I will look at past conditions/actors/actants surrounding FSH students' past literacy practices such as childhood literacy habits, family support or lack thereof, etc.

SAP

The SAP (Satisfactory Academic Progress) appeal letter is a letter that students must write if they didn't take or pass enough courses in a semester, end up on academic probation, and lose their financial aid. They are trying to convince their school's financial aid office to reinstate their aid. In other words, the SAP appeal letter is a powerful document that directly influences a student's educational and financial situation. It is also a document that, within the networks I'm examining in these interviews, structures interactions between college administrators and students (in Lisa's case) and between the FSH academic advisor and participants (in Will's case). Because it mediates these different relationships, the SAP appeal letter represents a moment of translation arising from a specific literacy practice. Some of the actors/actants surrounding this translation moment include:

SAP appeal letter

FSH student

FSH academic advisor/college administrator or teacher

Financial aid office

Circumstances contributing to student's loss of financial aid

Circumstances surrounding student's return to school/renewal of aid

I recognize the SAP appeal letter as a moment of translation in part because it came up in two separate interviews, thus indicating its significance in multiple contexts involving multiple actors/actants. I also see the continuity of the SAP appeal letter (as Sakari pointed

out above, how we need to be looking for the discontinuity behind those smooth, continuous moments) existing in the ubiquity of the SAP appeal letter. Its power is in its very name and how frequently and easily it gets evoked across contexts - the fact that SAP exists as the process that all students who want to reinstate their aid must attempt. I would imagine that other students and teachers are talking about and working on SAP appeal letters in similar ways in different colleges - when googling “SAP appeal letter,” six of the first nine results are from six different university websites. In a sense, the fact that I am able to talk about the SAP appeal letter and its significance in broad enough strokes to understand its purpose and function, but also in specific enough terms to apply to these examples at FSH and JCTC indicates its power as a continuous process that masks tensions and differences and also provides points of connection between students and staff, between personal narrative and academic discourse, and between students’ past, present, and future experiences and ambitions.

The SAP appeal letter first came up in Lisa’s interview when I asked her about the kinds of writing for which students sought her help. After saying that her students of course brought in their writing from her course, Lisa mentioned that the SAP appeal letter was another common piece of writing she saw from students. She explained that “So there are all these ways that they can be put on academic probation. So... a *huge* amount of our students are on academic probation...So they are often bringing in SAP appeal letters...SAP letters, to get feedback and assistance and help on.”

Both Lisa and Will described how they worked with students to help them write successful SAP appeal letters. Lisa points out that, while the SAP appeal letters need to be in “a pretty professional, business-letter format” and that “it needs to be really really good to at

least impress them and keep them reading,” the problem is that “Most of them lose no matter how well written that letter is because the regulations are so tough... If you don’t have the reason and the...documentation and the whatever, recommendation letters and stuff like that, that’s not going to happen.” Lisa’s comments speak directly to Will’s insights regarding the SAP appeal letter and the need for the student to provide convincing evidence within a clearly-articulated narrative. Will first brought up the SAP appeal letter in response to the same question I asked Lisa about what kinds of writing students brought to him for help. What’s interesting in Will’s response to this question is how he framed the SAP appeal letter compared to other kinds of writing. He started off by saying that of course students would bring him their class papers, and that he would help them with “proofreading, helping them learn how to edit their own papers... Those kinds of things. Discussed research, how to use JSTOR, how to use academic search premier, those kinds of resources. How to browse the library for books...”. Then he goes on to describe how he works with students on the SAP appeal letter as different from these other tasks:

W: But I also...the crisis of the SAP appeal often is a place in which we do a lot of

K: Yeah it sounds like an emergency type..

W: Yeah I mean it becomes very critically important...And so that often becomes a place where I see a lot of writing and working with students, the back and forth of revising and thinking through what do you mean here, do you need to have some more evidence to support your claim here, those kinds of writing things

In other words, Will does more actual writing and revising work with students on the SAP

appeal letter as opposed to other, more typical academic assignments because of the urgency and the high stakes of the SAP appeal letter. The tensions highlighted here consist of the need for the student to clearly articulate her story in an evidence-driven way, and the institutional requirements this story must meet to be successful. These tensions exist due to the material circumstances necessitating a student's financial aid as well as the those that led her to lose this aid, and the story that Will helps students to tell is one that explains these circumstances and makes the student more completely and fully visible (rather than only seeing the student as a person who failed a course). The SAP letter as a moment of translation creates connections between all of these actors/actants, and these connections share the purpose of transforming the student (from former to current student). Here, as with the KTAP application, the relationship work occurring between Will and the student, and between Lisa and the student, is what impels the success of such a transformation.

Will explains how to approach the SAP appeal letter in this way:

“What we want to do is describe the problem that got you, you know, what was happening... What steps I've taken to remedy the thing that caused the problem... And then, because of this problem, I didn't meet certain guidelines, at what point and what steps will I take now to be in compliance with those guidelines.”

He also emphasizes the need for evidence to support this narrative:

“Yeah. And then the additional is then gathering...so I had a car accident and I couldn't..I had a car accident and I was in the hospital for a month, well let's get a note from your doctor or medical records or hospital records to verify..provide warrant for the conclusions you're drawing.”

This evidence Will references becomes another actor within the SAP moment of translation, in which a successful appeal letter must contain real-world references to the student's problem and solution. Similarly to the KTAP moment, here the SAP appeal letter seems to also maintain most of the power just as the KTAP document helped to structure the relationships surrounding its completion. Because the SAP appeal letter is successful if it follows specific guidelines and format, it also helps to shape the relationships surrounding it (relationships between Will and the FSH student). However, unlike the KTAP application, the SAP appeal letter may vary widely from student to student based on their individual situation. It may also vary based on the actual written narrative created by the student (and with help from Will). So, in that sense, the power of the SAP appeal letter also comes from the student writing it because she is the one telling her own story. And, just as several FSH students pointed out in interviews, sometimes their most successful writing experiences were with more personal narratives because, as Elizabeth says, "It was something that was coming from me...no one could tell me if the story was right or wrong." There are thus opportunities for tension between the student's narrative of her experience and the SAP conventions that requires strong evidence to support this narrative.

Will's discussion of the kind of writing involved in the SAP appeal letter is another element in the SAP appeal letter moment of translation that points to the relationship work that this moment provides the opportunity for. Will associates the SAP appeal letter with characteristics of "good writing," specifically defined as not only involving certain elements, but also as involving a recursive writing process:

"So in some ways, this process is a chance to do writing. I mean you're gathering evidence... You have a thesis, you have evidence, you have

conclusions...So while we're clearly working on being successful on the SAP appeal...We're also kind of going through this writing-revision-rewriting-rerevising-rerewriting kind of process that...That good writing - That's involved in all good writing."

Will indicates that in the SAP appeal letter, writing means "you have a thesis, you have evidence, you have conclusions," a notion of writing that draws on particular academic conventions, conventions that we might tend not to associate directly with the personal narrative that the SAP appeal letter also requires. In this sense, there is potential tension between the personal narrative and the academic discourse conventions needed to accompany that narrative in order to be successful. Will also emphasizes the process involved in "good writing": "this writing-revision-rewriting-rerevising-rerewriting kind of process," and it is this process that also represents the opportunities for relationship work between FSH students and staff arising from the SAP appeal letter moment of translation. It's important to note that Will refers to "*we're* also kind of going through..." (emphasis added), emphasizing the "we" of the relationship between student writer and academic advisor who together work through the recursive process of writing the SAP appeal letter.

In other words, here we see not only the power of the SAP document, but also the power of a specific approach to successful writing via notions of specific academic conventions as well as a recursive writing process. We also see a moment of translation when the SAP appeal letter becomes a part of this broader network whose purpose is to help FSH students succeed in college, and vice versa, when this particular approach to successful literacy gets translated onto the immediate purpose of the SAP appeal letter.

The fact that the SAP appeal letter came up in both interviews - with Lisa and with

Will - as a common example of the pieces of writing that they each work on with students indicates that the SAP appeal letter exists in the context of their relationships - between Lisa and her students, and between Will and his advisees. The students bring their SAP appeal letters to them for help in making these letters successful, and this help comes about through the relationships, just as the KTAP application help came about through the relationships between Rose and FSH students. So although the letter itself (and its accompanying guidelines) appears to maintain the most power in this scenario, it is in fact the relationship work surrounding the letter that has the most significant consequences on the success of the letter in the broader context of the student's life. And similar to the KTAP moment of translation, while the SAP appeal letter has power in the present moment (because students and Lisa and Will are all working on this letter), the students are the ones keeping a firm grip on their power over their futures. By writing a SAP appeal letter at all, students are attempting to return to college and to keep their future options open for wherever their potentiality may take them. The SAP appeal letter creates points of connection between a student's past, present, and future by leading students to narrate their past experiences and explain their present plan of action, all in order to transform their potential futures.

Will also points out that a successful SAP appeal letter might not correspond with the most ambitious of a student's goals. When I asked him about how he defined successful writing in the writing he worked on with students, he referenced the SAP appeal letter again immediately, saying "Are we going to win?", but then going on to qualify that:

If your plan is, well from this point forward I'm going to get a 4.0 every semester... That's fantastic, but is that what you want to commit to? That you're going to commit to getting this 4.0 every semester?... Or do we want

to propose a plan that, so, I've had a .7 GPA, henceforward I want to have a 2.5 every semester...I think that if you're the 1.7, you got a 1.7 GPA...And you say please extend the probation of my financial aid one more semester and I'll get a 4.0, my guess is, having never served on the SAP committee, my guess is the SAP committee thinks that's pretty unreasonable...so point 1 is I want to win this appeal...Point 2 is am I proposing a realistic scenario

The two goals that Will points out here, of winning the SAP appeal and proposing a realistic scenario for academic success, are interdependent in more ways than one. Basically, a student cannot be academically successful without winning the SAP appeal first. And in order to win the SAP appeal, the student must demonstrate a reasonable connection between past educational problems/behaviors and future goals (thus the significance of the 2.5 goal rather than the 4.0 goal for the .7 GPA student). The complex relationship between these goals indicates the kind of uncertainty that Latour points out as being a necessary part of an ANT analysis. The tension between the pragmatic, demonstrable GPA goals and the more ambitious GPA goals is another tension that is navigated by the relationship between Will and the FSH student. We can see this tension in how Will talks about his approach to creating these goals: "So, as opposed to I'm going to get all As, well, that would be fantastic, I mean you'll see me cheering up and down the hallway if you get a 4.0, but do we want to propose a plan because one I think it's probably maybe more reasonable." Will highlights his enthusiastic support for his students and their ambitious goals, and then points out the need for a more "reasonable" plan that is more likely to be approved by the financial aid office. The SAP appeal letter provides the potential opportunity for relationships and relationship work - such as the relationship between Will and the FSH student and the kind of relationship

work that Will expresses here as he describes his approach to a student's goals - that could "transport transformations" such as the transformation of a non-student into a student. This transformation is unpredictable because it is based on tensions between a variety of actors/actants (between the student's material circumstances and academic goals, between the student's need to tell her story and the appeal letter genre conventions requiring evidence to support this story, for example) and because it comes about via relationships such as the relationship between Will and the student. This unpredictability is necessary in moments of translation such as the SAP appeal letter because it demonstrates the complexity of students' lived realities, especially in the context of larger institutional processes which revolve around money (and, therefore, power) and that are still mediated by relationship work and the work of individual student narratives. I want to highlight again the significance of this relationship work in transforming a student's habitus, or the way that they perceive themselves and their potential futures. There is also a significant connection here to recent research on the power of writing and rewriting our personal narratives to change our behavior.⁵ I will examine the power of narrative and its relationship to students' literacy practices more in-depth in subsequent chapters.

Luncheon

The FSH annual luncheon represents a slightly different kind of moment of translation than the KTAP and SAP moments. But, like the KTAP and SAP moments, the luncheon came up in two different interviews, from the perspectives of a current and a former FSH participant. The FSH annual luncheon contrasts with the KTAP and SAP appeal letter

⁵See Tara Parker-Pope's New York Times article, "Writing Your Way to Happiness," in which she references multiple studies that demonstrate the positive short and long-term benefits of expressive writing, particularly for college students struggling academically.

moments of translation in the sense that the luncheon is a larger moment involving more people and, while there is a specific document that plays a key role, the luncheon itself (as an event) does not center on the scholarship essay of a FSH participant in the same way that the KTAP and SAP experiences do revolve around the KTAP and SAP documents. However, based on the interview data, both of the luncheons from Jane's and LeeAnn's perspectives do center around those scholarship essays. For Jane, she experiences the speaker reading hers, and for LeeAnn, she experiences reading her own essay. So, while the luncheon itself might not revolve around FSH students reading their scholarship essays, in Jane and LeeAnn's narratives, the ways they experienced the luncheon did center on listening to/reading those specific literacy moments. Another way to look at the luncheon as different from the KTAP and SAP moments is to consider that in the luncheon moment of translation, a wider variety of actors/actants is more visible (consider the large space of a hotel ballroom, where the luncheon is usually held, and all of the different people present). In the KTAP and SAP moments, we don't necessarily see all of the actors/actants involved in completing those documents. It's important to consider moments of translation such as this luncheon that appear to be less directly tied to a literacy event, and also appear to more visibly involve more actors/actants, in order to get a more complex sense of how ANT helps us to identify the many relationships involved in enrolling actors/actants into a network. Similarly to my analysis of the KTAP application and the SAP appeal letter, analyzing the luncheon as a moment of translation helps to recognize the tensions between various actors/actants as they become enrolled into the FSH network and enter into relationships with each other.

Considering the luncheon within the bigger picture of FSH, its main purpose is as a fundraiser for FSH. Keeping in mind that we are looking at moments of translation that

appear continuous and stable but that actually hide tension and differences, what contributes to the sense of continuity is the span of time these luncheons have been taking place (17 years), and the familiarity of the fundraising luncheon as a genre. It is held every year with various speakers, including FSH participants. The luncheon used to consistently include the scholarship winners, but since they began awarding more scholarships (one scholarship per each of the 4 campuses), FSH has stopped having scholarship winners speak (but still include a participant in the speaking program). When I spoke informally with a FSH staff member about the luncheon, she emphasized that they allow and encourage as many FSH participants to attend as would like to, with no limit. These luncheons, therefore, are not only significant opportunities for FSH fundraising in the community, but also opportunities for FSH participants, community members, and donors to mix with and learn from each other. As Rose points out, she considers one of FSH's strengths to be how the organization integrates with the local community: "We want to be a part of the community, we want our families to feel part of the community. And I think we've done really well with that. We've come in..and we still maintain the relationships with the neighborhood, with the community neighborhood organizations." If we consider the relationship work going on at this luncheon, then we have relationships being created and sustained between FSH and the local community. There is also relationship work happening between FSH students and staff attending the luncheon, as we can see via both Jane's experience as an attendee and LeeAnn's experience as a speaker.

When I first began writing about the luncheon, I thought that both Jane and LeeAnn were talking about the same luncheon experience; in other words, that Jane had attended the luncheon at which LeeAnn gave her speech, and that this speech had inspired Jane. Needless to say, I was pretty excited from a research perspective to uncover such a crystal clear

moment of connection across two interviews! A few weeks later, however, I discovered that in fact Jane had attended the 2013 luncheon, while LeeAnn spoke at a much earlier luncheon. I decided to stick with my analysis of the luncheon(s) as moment(s) of translation, though, because it does represent a significant demonstration of the interrelated relationships surrounding an event at which many actors/actants are translated onto a shared purpose.

Jane

When I asked Jane about how the FSH support services had affected her life, she mentioned specific events (rather than describing the FSH support in more general terms as some other participants did), and she focused mainly on the annual FSH luncheon. She attended the luncheon in 2013, when she had only been at FSH for a couple of months. She starts her description by pointing out the several VIPs who attended, such as Michael Phelps' mother who was the key speaker, the Mayor, and a prominent local news anchor. Jane said that she had been sitting at a table in the back of the room with Will, noting that "it was kind of a strange environment so I was comfortable" in the back of the room, when another FSH staff moved her up to a front table with the Mayor, Michael Phelps' mother, and the owners of a partner building company. The experience of sitting up there and listening to a former FSH graduate (who Jane hadn't realized was a FSH graduate because, as she put it, "I didn't know that she had been a Scholar House resident, she looked just like all the other bigwigs around, you know?") speak about her experience seemed to have a significant impact on Jane, as she narrates:

Jane: And so that was kind of the point where I was like I could do that, you know, I could graduate from here and be up there, giving the speech...saying how successful...I mean, she's like a, she has her MA in social work

K: What was it about that specific experience that led to that kind of revelation?

Jane: Well, umm...just I guess because I had just gotten into the program, and the fact that, I felt *chosen*, you know...They chose me, they pulled me out of my comfortable seat...with Will and put me up here to represent...this program

Jane goes on to describe how the former FSH participant's speech affected her:

K: What was it about her that made her, sounds like she came across as successful. What was it...

Jane: Yes, she looked successful. Well, she told her story, how she was homeless and had these children and...was single, a single mother, and she even cried...you know because I would cry if I had to, be that personal in front of all those people...So she's come from, she was just like me, you know...And then to be where, and then the program helped her, and to be where she's at today...You know, why couldn't I do that?

K: Yeah. It's kind of, actually reminds me of the biography, like, you can see yourself in other people

Jane: Right, right, related to it. I could relate to her.

This combination of getting into FSH in the first place, of being chosen to move up to the front of the room (and, subsequently, being asked to give tours of FSH apartments and getting involved in other ways), and of listening to a successful woman tell her story (a written narrative given as a speech, which demonstrates the significance not only of literacy at FSH, but also of the performance of literacy in front of donors contributing to its

sponsorship) which was so similar to Jane's led to Jane's realization that she, too, could succeed. For Jane, the luncheon as a moment of translation allowed her to have experiences and form relationships that then led to her increased confidence and desire to succeed. The fact that Jane had to leave her comfortable seat in the back of the room and move to the front VIP table meant that she was pushed outside of her comfort zone, with the result that this spatial change then helped Jane to project herself into the participant's shoes and to imagine her possible future success as a FSH resident.

The luncheon here, for Jane, represents a specific moment of translation in which the combination of diverse actors/actants, while it created tension (note how Jane recalls that they "pulled me out of my comfortable seat" to move to the front table), created opportunities for transformative relationships to develop. We have the relationship between Jane and the FSH student speaker which, although Jane doesn't mention actually talking to this woman or developing a relationship with her, is still significant because of the connection that Jane sees between her own life and experiences and potential future and this woman's life, experiences, and realized future. Other relationships include those between Jane and the FSH staff who moved her up to the VIP table and who also encouraged Jane to get more involved with FSH by leading apartment tours and other things.

LeeAnn

We see a similar luncheon from another participant's perspective in my interview with LeeAnn, a current FSH staff member who used to be a participant. For LeeAnn, the luncheon came up initially when I asked her about achievements when she was a participant, and then again later when we were talking about examples of successful writing. She wrote a scholarship essay describing her experiences at FSH, won \$500, and was chosen to speak at

the annual FSH luncheon. LeeAnn talks not only about how her essay was successful writing, she also talks about the luncheon experience pushing her out of her comfort zone because she had to give her speech in front of hundreds of people. The fact that both Jane and LeeAnn describe the luncheons in terms of their effects on their levels of confidence is evidence that this moment of translation works similarly for both women; the translation occurs in ways that create “connections that transport transformation,” in this case, a transformation of confidence and self-perception that occurs through the performance of literacy.

LeeAnn first describes the luncheon in terms of her achievements at FSH:

...the Eugenia Ford Powers scholarship is something they do here every year, and it was a \$500 scholarship and everybody writes an essay...And they pick one essay, and that person wins the scholarship. And I think the essay was about..I can't even remember...how going to school was going to better the life of your child, or, you know something along those lines...And I wrote an essay and I won, like they picked *me* out of *all* these people to win this scholarship...But then I had to read my essay in front of like 800 people at the luncheon so..laugh...And that wasn't very fun! I was super nervous. I think that's another achievement, just a personal achievement, is I used to be very very shy in high school, wouldn't talk in front of anybody...And get very nervous and being here and having to be the more authoritative person, figure, and doing orientations for FSH when the new residents...That helped me tremendously...And I feel like I'm able to talk in front of a small crowd...So that was just a huge personal achievement for me.

She then brings up that scholarship essay again when I asked her about examples of

successful writing that she's done.

LeeAnn: I mean I think the scholarship, the essay that won me the scholarship...I would say that was pretty successful...I mean, for the most part, unless I'm lazy, I try to make all my writing..laugh...not successful but just, *mean* something I guess...Or to meet the requirements of whatever assignment it is...But that one I think it was successful, for *me*, because it came with a huge incentive... But it also...I think the reason why it was successful, it's not like I was being judged about the grammatical part of it or "does it meet the requirements of this this and this and this,"...It was more just like an open essay talking about an experience...And for me, I've always been somebody who can write something down..laugh...and make it sound ten times better than I can when I'm talking about it...and just to be able to get my thoughts and my feelings and my experience out there on paper, and have it formed into this...story, I guess...That I could share with other people, I think that's what made it successful for *me*...

K: Yeah it sounds like you're talking about it in terms of being successful in different ways, successful because it was a scholarship and you had the 500 dollar reward...And then it sounds like also part of being successful was...being able to communicate your story

LeeAnn: Yeah, like to share it with staff and other participants...And then 700 people..laugh...that wasn't the fun part at all..laugh...yeah just to know that I'd done something that was worth something, you know, I had written this essay and it was about me and my life and college and how this is going to

help me and my child...And for people to think that that had some value and to give me something for it, that was successful for me

It's important to point out some of the contradictions between LeeAnn's goals within this moment of translation. She wrote the scholarship essay with the goal of winning the \$500, and also with the goal of writing a meaningful story about her experience that she could share with other people. When she talks about the experience of reading her essay at the luncheon, however, LeeAnn refers to her discomfort several times: "But then I had to read my essay in front of like 800 people at the luncheon so..laugh...And that wasn't very fun!," and "And then 700 people..laugh...that wasn't the fun part at all." So we have LeeAnn's desire to share her story with others - in writing - but also a reluctance to share it aloud with such a large group of people. When she reflects on her luncheon speech, though, LeeAnn also points out the growth resulting from that and similar public speaking experiences at FSH that allowed her to transition from being "very very shy in high school" to being "able to talk in front of a small crowd," which she describes as "a huge personal achievement for me." I would argue that this FSH luncheon experience stands out as an important moment of translation for LeeAnn because it's a moment where we are able to see these contradictory, changing goals and, as Latour reminds us, it's "the traces that manifest the hesitations actors themselves feel about the 'drives' that make them act" that we need to watch out for.

We can also see how FSH serves as a literacy sponsor by providing students the opportunity to write scholarship essays such as LeeAnn's. FSH sponsors these literacy practices which then lead to the transformations taking place at the luncheon (both Jane's and LeeAnn's boost in confidence); but both the literacy practices and participants' transformations are caught up in the luncheon's overarching purpose (and power dynamics)

as a community fundraiser. And for LeeAnn, it was important that she wrote down her narrative for the scholarship essay because, as she put it, “I’ve always been somebody who can write something down...and make it sound ten times better than I can when I’m talking about it.” In other words, the literacy practice of writing her story was well within LeeAnn’s comfort zone, while the performing of this narrative was well outside of her comfort zone and led to her transformation. We can see how literacy sponsorship in the example of the luncheon relies on a network of literacy practices, relationships, and actors/actants in order to promote the growth of FSH individuals and the growth of FSH as an organization.

The luncheon also represents the kind of experience that LeeAnn says she aspires for with participants - to be able to help them especially because she has been through what they are going through. When I asked her about her goals when working with participants, she named three:

that they can come to me with anything, I want to be that person that they know that without a doubt they can bring up whatever’s going on and talk to me about it... also to, probably for them to realize that I’m not going to do it all for you..We can talk about it all day and I’ll give you advice and suggestions or whatever, but you also have to get out there and do this on your own...Another big goal is helping them to realize yeah, you have a lot going on, but I was in your position, I got through this... With very little outside support, and family support, so I feel like if I can do it you can do it...sort of like empowering them...

LeeAnn says, “if I can do it you can do it.” This is exactly what Jane took away from listening to the participant’s speech: “she was just like me, you know...and to be where she’s

at today...why couldn't I do that?" I want to emphasize that in this moment, although they are recounting different luncheon experiences, both LeeAnn's and Jane's goals fulfill each other - LeeAnn's goal of connecting with current participants and sharing her story, and Jane's goal of achieving what LeeAnn has achieved. I think this happens here because looking at the luncheon as a moment of translation means that we are looking at a moment where all actors/actants are enrolled into the much larger goal of maintaining FSH's success, so that the goals of those actors are also aligned with this bigger goal. I'd argue that the reason I can perform this analysis of different luncheons - in other words, analyzing the actors/actants across time and space - is because of a continuity in the FSH mission that manifests in actors/actants across contexts and time. Prenosil, in looking at how to use Latour to analyze power relations, argues that

Like Foucault, Latour is interested in describing the way that the mediation of power changes over time. Indeed, for Latour, material-semiotic power mediates all things, including time. Unlike Aristotle and much like Heidegger, for Latour, time is always measured and generated by the change in actors at local sites. The humans and nonhumans that populate the world compose time through their interconnected deployment of agency, and temporal coherence is only achieved through a coordinated and pervasive exercise of power that disciplines humans and nonhumans to march in Gregorian step (MC 72-74).
(109-110)

The combination of actors/actants within the FSH luncheon "compose time through their interconnected deployment of agency," with the result that similar luncheons involving

similar actors/actants maintain a coherence across time.⁶

In terms of the negotiations of power taking place at the luncheon, it seems as though, on the one hand, the FSH luncheon takes power away from Jane and LeeAnn in the sense that FSH staff moved Jane to the VIP table (away from the place she was comfortable), and in the sense that FSH staff had LeeAnn give her scholarship speech in front of hundreds of people, which she was very uncomfortable doing. In these instances, Jane and LeeAnn didn't really have control over these experiences. They were both made visible by mechanisms of power that work to make the FSH luncheon a successful fundraiser, mechanisms that are not necessarily even articulated to the FSH students involved in the luncheon. But then it also seems like both Jane and LeeAnn gain power because they gain confidence - by doing this difficult thing, they gain confidence in their abilities. And this is, I'd argue, the main reason why both of them brought up the luncheon in their interview responses. As Prenosil points out, Latour "...studies the available means of establishing coagency, power that is always achieved through imminent material-semiotic actors in a network," and this power "...is always a tenuous thing; the available means of establishing agency can easily slide sideways on a purportedly potent actor or collective" (109). I agree with Prenosil's take on how ANT allows us not only to think about power as distributed among human and nonhuman actors, but also to recognize power as unstable, which we can see in this luncheon moment of translation. He goes on to suggest that

ANT is an ideal theory for moving forward with rhetorical research into

⁶ This approach to time differs from how I've written about it previously, to which I attribute Simmons et al's point that as ANT researchers we must "forge procedures" and seek to destabilize our research. In other words, each moment of translation may necessitate a slightly different analytical approach depending on the nature of the practices, actors, and actants involved.

power because it does not reduce the agency of any actor to any other unless one actor has fully leveraged another, and even here, as we have seen, ANT is dubious as to whether or not a complete reduction is possible. It is especially useful for tracing the subtle and not-so-subtle acts of power among humans and nonhumans that produce political effects, broadly conceived. (110)

So, the conflicting goals/power dynamics are exactly the thing that led to this luncheon moment being a moment of translation - the uncertainty that Latour emphasizes, the fact that translation is the “connection that transports...transformations,” transformations such as Jane’s and LeeAnn’s transformations. The FSH luncheon is a moment of translation that allows for the sorts of connections and relationships that Jane and LeeAnn experienced that then led to their personal transformations. So on both the micro and the macro scale, the FSH luncheon is a moment of translation - the micro as seen from Jane’s and LeeAnn’s perspectives, and the macro from the perspective of FSH as a nonprofit organization attempting to maintain itself within the local community and to raise money to support its ongoing mission. And let’s not forget the actants that play roles in this translation. In addition to the actors - the people and their relationships - there are also actants such as the space in which the luncheon takes place (the fact that it’s in a large hotel ballroom is significant because the physical space allows for these potential connections by allowing all of these people to be in the same room at the same time, listening to and experiencing the same event). Also, consider actants such as LeeAnn’s scholarship essay, the physical appearance of the former FSH speaker at Jane’s luncheon which impressed her so much...and money as an actant, too, even though it’s not as visibly present. According to a blurb in the FSH newsletter about the 2014 luncheon, individual tickets cost \$75, while whole tables cost

\$750, and there were also raffle tickets available to purchase. In a sense, money as an actant is what allows all of the other actors/actants to come together for this experience. The luncheon provides the opportunity for LeeAnn to be transformed by giving her speech, and for Jane to be transformed by moving up front and listening to a similar speech. The luncheon is another moment of possible transformation (like KTAP and SAP) for FSH students as they travel their paths toward success (paths that FSH guides them down). And those luncheon transformations are very much made possible through the physical space and the physical bodies - the embodied experience of the luncheon in which Jane moved up front and LeeAnn spoke in front of hundreds of bodies.

Conclusion

Because I recognize networks at FSH in the Latourian sense of assemblages involving a diversity of human and nonhuman actors and actants, and because these networks are constantly being (re)formulated and (re)assembled and embody the uncertainty that daily life is imbued with (though this uncertainty can get hidden when networks stabilize over time, or when we jump to analysis that reifies the “social” elements contributing to network formation), in this chapter I have undertaken an analysis of the relationship work of literacy sponsorship at FSH within three moments in which literacy appears as one element of a rich translation opportunity involving multiple actors/actants that meet and form connections. All three moments - an application for government assistance, a financial aid appeal letter, and the FSH annual luncheon - involve some form of literacy and, significantly (especially in the ANT terms of symmetrical analysis of human and nonhuman elements), all revolve around money. Money dominates the purpose of each moment, in the sense that the KTAP application is seeking financial assistance for its applicant, the SAP appeal letter is seeking

renewal of a student's financial aid, and the annual luncheon is primarily a fundraiser for FSH (and, also significantly, the former participant who narrates her luncheon experience was reading her scholarship essay that won her five hundred dollars). Drawing on the social approach to literacy sponsorship that recognizes broader forces underlying specific literacy practices (stemming from Barton and Hamilton, Brandt, Heath, and Street, among others), I recognize financial need as a dominant thread linking these three moments. I also recognize broader forces such as the institutionalized requirement that citizens be credentialed as literate (with the stamp of the college degree) before they can be employed, and the consequent belief in the power of education to change lives as examples of larger forces at work within these literacy practices at FSH. ANT, in its focus on the local circumstances, does not readily allow for such recognition of broader influencing factors on literacy sponsorship. I view this not as a limitation of ANT; the same way that I do not view the wider view of social forces as a limitation of work on New Literacy Studies and literacy sponsorship. Rather, the focus of each of these perspectives on literacy points to their mutual interdependence. Literacy is a complex enough phenomenon that we need multiple approaches to our research of it.

Acknowledging the broader forces at play here, I argue that the financial thread that unites these three literacy moments is important not only because it dominates, but because it does so relatively invisibly. Unlike a purchase at Starbucks, for example, money is not actually present in each moment. The invisibility of money in each translation moment is a strong indication of where power lies. Those who are invisible - who blend in - are usually

the powerful ones, while those who stand out (whether by choice or not) tend to lack power.⁷ We can see this happening in the KTAP moment, because the KTAP application names (singles out) those who don't have money (or power) like the mother, and also the father by naming him and soliciting him for child support. KTAP makes the parents visible, but not necessarily by choice. And when considering the dynamics of the luncheon, both Jane and LeeAnn become quite visible in that experience. Jane because she gets moved up to the front VIP table, and LeeAnn because she wins the scholarship and must read her essay in front of the luncheon audience. This audience remains less visible (they are, by nature, "the audience" and therefore nameless in this moment) because they spent money to buy seats. So, power in the luncheon moment also has to do with the relationship between money and physical space.

In using the ANT concept of translation to examine the networks of literacy sponsorship surrounding these three moments, I have been able to trace the relationship work taking place between human actors as well as nonhuman actants. All of this relationship work, I argue here and will argue in subsequent chapters, allows FSH participants to change how they perceive their own lives and how they imagine their futures: the relationships between Rose and FSH participants as they affect/are affected by the KTAP application, the relationships between Will and FSH participants that surround the SAP appeal letter, and the relationships between FSH participants, staff, and donors at the luncheon. Literacy

⁷ I owe this insight to a thought-provoking Facebook comment from Ben Wetherbee, in response to my Facebook query: "How do you recognize power?" which stimulated a 37 comment discussion that really helped me to rethink how I was approaching power in this chapter. Other insights include, from Harley Ferris, "I also think about power in terms of who is able to walk away"; from Rachel Gramer, "I'd also add: who can walk away without losing what's meaningful to them"; from Kenny Smith, "I don't think it's helpful to think about power in terms of 'less/more,' which makes it seem like a zero sum game"; and from Laura Dickinson, "The person with more money."

sponsorship at FSH becomes not only about the literacy practices themselves (practices which, as demonstrated in these three examples, are not exclusively ‘academic’ or ‘extracurricular’ but are multifaceted, pragmatic, and significantly related to finances), or even about the goal of “life-long self-sufficiency” that these practices help achieve, but about the relationships and negotiations unfolding around even the smallest literacy event, where those relationships and power dynamics come from, and how they then keep on playing out within these actors’ lives and networks. I will continue to attempt to align my analysis with these students’ lives in subsequent chapters, tracing patterns in their literacy practices over their lifetimes to emphasize the complex translation/relationship work as well as the connections between students’ lived literacy practices and university administrators’ definitions of successful literacy. While in this chapter I have focused on three moments of translation surrounding literacy practices in order to understand the relationships between the diverse actors/actants making up each moment (especially the relationships between FSH students and FSH staff as they negotiate these literacy practices), in Chapter Four I will turn towards FSH students’ literacy narratives in order to more fully understand and trace students’ past, present, and future literate identities as they are mediated by the ANT networks they have passed, are passing, and will pass through. My project moves from moments to narratives, from understanding how students are *seen* to understanding how students see *themselves*. And, from there, to wondering how students can imagine their futures as students in our writing classrooms.

CHAPTER FOUR:
TRACING STUDENTS' NETWORKED LITERACY PRACTICES OVER TIME, OR
CONNECTING SINGULARITY WITH POTENTIALITY THROUGH NARRATIVE

Introduction

In this chapter, I will describe and analyze FSH students' changing literacy practices and their changing attitudes towards these literacy practices by using narrative theory and Haswell and Haswell's work on potentiality and singularity. Similarly to how I used moments of translation to examine the networks of human and nonhuman actors/actants surrounding literacy practices, here I also undertake an analysis that recognizes a wide variety of elements at work within and around literacy narratives. By analyzing the way students structure their literacy narratives, I can trace the influence of the various ANT networks that students pass or have passed through that help to shape these narratives. And, as in the last chapter, the actors/actants in these networks are diverse, including material and social components like the couch the ChaRay's son stays up late reading on, bookshelves, a lack of money, homelessness, timed writing exams, family support or lack thereof, book club friends, FSH relationships and community. I argue that students, by drawing on the support of FSH, create new literacy narratives that allow them to imagine different futures for themselves and their families. By reintegrating their new literacy narratives as actants within their networks, students are able to imagine different futures. For this reason, it is important that these new literacy narrative are at least somewhat unpredictable in order to demonstrate

true potentiality, a key point to which I will return later on. I use the term “literacy narrative” in this chapter despite the fact that, in the interviews, I did not ask students specifically to convey their literacy narratives. The change over time that I will lay out in this chapter, starting with students’ childhood literacy practices and extending to their current literacy practices, is change that I have observed myself as a researcher reading and rereading these interviews.

Here, I differentiate between narrative as an element of students’ networks and narrative as a structuring tool similar to habitus that allows students to understand themselves and their lives. For example, the narratives of students’ past literacy experiences become part of students’ present networks. Their stories become actants within their networks. And, vice versa, the way that students tell their literacy narratives is shaped by their present networks. Essentially, I discuss narrative from the perspective of how narrative structures how we experience time - so, narrative as a structuring structure that allows us to analyze change/status in our habitus over time - and narrative as a story, a kind of tangible thing that joins the many other tangible things that make up these students’ networked lives (as I described in the previous chapter).

It’s also important to point out that the stories I tell, as researcher, about the FSH students, and the stories they are telling, as participants, are not going to be the same, but are also interdependent and both heavily influenced by the broader networked narratives of our times. As Bruner points out, in *Ethnography as Narrative*, “My position is that both Indian enactment, the story they tell about themselves, and our theory, the story we tell, are transformations of each other; they are retellings of a narrative derived from the discursive practice of our historical era” (149). In other words, the story participants tell and the story

the ethnographer tells rely on each other, recreate each other, sustain each other through a relationship and, in the same vein, both the participant and the researcher are “shaped by the dominant narrative structures of our times” (150).

For three FSH students, Camille, Sofia, and ChaRay, the narratives of their literate lives demonstrate change in their literacy practices and in their attitudes towards these practices, change that appears when we compare their youth literacies to their current literacies. But these stories also demonstrate some continuity, as students maintain singular threads of self that connect their past, present, and future. ChaRay, for example, has maintained an approach to writing in which she dislikes being forced to write; Sofia talked about enjoying writing songs as a child; and of course it’s likely that there are things about their literacy practices that didn’t come up in the interviews and that there are other common threads across their lifetimes. It is the change, however, that my analysis emphasizes here. As Karen Tusting argues, to avoid portraying literacy practices as static we must consider the relationship between literacy and time:

The past and future are emergent in the present; and in the same way, literacy practices are emergent in and constructed in present events. Constructions of how literacy practices have been in the past, and how they will be in the future, will change as the present emerges, and are themselves relative to the point of view of the observer. So, while regularity can be observed in the repetition of literacy events, it is possible that both the events and people’s experiences of these literacy practices change over time. (39)

To highlight changes in literacy practices in light of the relationship between time and the complex networks students move through, I trace the literacy narratives of three FSH

students.

Camille, whose parents died when she was an adolescent and who was raised by her older siblings who partied all the time and did not create an environment supportive of education, dropped out of school at 16. She later got her GED and returned to school with the goal of becoming a social worker and working for CPS. Based on her interview responses, she is currently quite active in seeking help with her writing, particularly collaborative help from the writing center, her instructor, and her family members. She plans on transferring to a different school, and her primary concern about the switch is the kind of writing support this new campus may offer.

Sofia grew up in poverty, moving in and out of different homeless shelters, and academics were not a priority in her family. She credits her substance recovery at Wayside, during which she began reading the Bible, with starting her transformation into a wider reader which she continued through a group of girlfriends who exposed her to diverse perspectives and reading materials. Her current concerns with writing have to do with what she feels is a lack of knowledge, skills, and experience, which she ties directly to the lack of literacy support in her childhood. She wants to become a faster, more comfortable writer, especially for the timed praxis exam that she must take for the college of education (and which she has failed several times). She also wants to learn specific knowledge, such as the function of adverbs and particular written phrasings.

ChaRay has always loved to write for herself, such as poetry and short stories in high school, but dislikes being forced to write. She is currently working on a book about her life experiences, specifically about having kids young and then succeeding in getting her education. She loves being published (from handing out copies of her short stories as a child,

to writing for the UofL newspaper, to writing her own book). Her current writing concerns have to do with wanting her book to be “perfect” - to express her own story in her own words - and with wanting her book to inspire at least one person to continue her education.

In what follows, I begin by laying out my theoretical framework of analysis which combines narrative theory and work on authorship. I will then trace the arc of each student’s literacy narrative, analyzing them for (dis)continuities and digging into the significance of their changing literacy practices/attitudes over time. Narrative structures how we experience our literate lives, and the stories we tell about our literacies work as actants within the various ANT networks we pass through. By tracing the narrative continuity of our literacy stories over our lifetimes, we can see the shifting influence of different networks as we pass through them.

Narrative Repetition as a Structuring/Structural Element of ANT Networks Surrounding Literacy - Maintaining Potentiality via Singularity

Janis and Richard Haswell write: “Authoring, the human inner act of making texts, is the one term that most unites the four divisions of English studies - composition, literature, linguistics, and creative writing. Yet in English departments authoring is currently a remarkably black box” (*Authoring* 1-2). I turn to Haswell and Haswell’s work on authoring because of concerns I voiced in the literature review and in the previous chapter about our field’s tendency to reify the “social” and to attribute various motivations behind and conditions of writing to an amorphous cloud of social forces. As those who use ANT have argued (and others, of course), this conception of the “social” does not always help us to better understand the world. In using Haswell and Haswell’s work on potentiality and singularity in authorship, I offer a tweaked alternative to the social cloud, but not one that ignores it entirely or dismisses it out of hand. Rather, I suggest that our analyses must take

into account the rich interplay of a student's individuality in authorship, the influential social relationships, and the material conditions that, together, help to shape her composing. And in considering this interplay over time - over the lifetimes of these three women as they are narrated within the interviews - I take a simultaneously wide and narrow look at literacy. It's important to recognize what this interplay looks like within the real lives of an underserved population of students for whom successful literacy and education does not take place without the scaffolded support of FSH - in other words, the context of this research necessitates consideration of the intersection of a student's life experiences with this support network.

In this chapter, I use both narrative theory and Haswell and Haswell's work on authorship to trace students' literacy narratives over time, focusing particularly on Paul Ricoeur's framing of narrative as a structuring device for how we experience our lives as well as Haswell and Haswell's use of potentiality and singularity. They use the terms "potentiality" and "singularity" to describe how students approach the work of authoring texts. In a nutshell, potentiality projects forward and describes a student's potential for growth, while singularity looks back and describes a student's uniqueness based on her past. Haswell and Haswell write that potentiality is "Preserving the integrity or continued capacity of one's talent...an author's potentiality is not something that is acquired and then used up like a wad of money. It is an ongoing capacity for creative work that needs to be constantly protected and nurtured" (*Authoring* 20). Singularity, on the other hand, "becomes evident by looking not ahead, but back—for writers and readers back to their prior experience, family make-up, habitual language style, or accomplished life work. For the English profession singularity means, among other things, that since the history of each and every student is

unique, each and every text and interpretation a student produces is unique” (108-9).

Singularity and potentiality exist in a circular relationship in which a student’s potential is motivated by her sense of herself as a singular author, and vice versa, in which a student’s singularity arises from her continuously maintained potentiality. The authors go on to argue that “The true end of potentiality is potentiality” (42), so that rather than a teacher aiming to help students complete an assignment or acquire a skill, the teacher only attempts to help students maintain their potentiality over time. Lifelong learning, if you will. The entire point of potentiality is growth and change.

If we consider that singularity refers to a student’s past, and potentiality refers to a student’s future, it becomes convenient to incorporate narrative theory’s approach to the relationship between past, present, and future. This is why I draw specifically on Ricoeur’s work on the relationship between narrative and time, because he gets into the deep connections between narrative structure and temporality, as he explains: “I take temporality to be that structure of existence that reaches language in narrativity and narrativity to be the language structure that has temporality as its ultimate referent. Their relationship is therefore reciprocal” (165). Similarly to how ANT does not take for granted the cause and effect relationship between elements in any given unit of analysis, but rather analyzes their simultaneous and interdependent relationships, Ricoeur approaches narrativity and temporality from this mutually developing and integrated perspective.

The first point to understand from Ricoeur’s “Narrative Time” is the idea that “...narrative does more than just establish humanity, along with human actions and passions, “in” time; it also brings us back from within-time-ness to historicity, from “reckoning with” time to “recollecting” it. As such, the narrative function provides a transition from within-

time-ness to historicity” (174). I understand Ricoeur to be arguing that narrative not only allows us to be present in time – to function within time and to “reckon with” time – it also allows us to look back on our experiences in time, to “recollect” time. The second point I find relevant here is his emphasis on the paradoxical nature of the idea that, while historicity prioritizes the past, “*the primary direction of care is towards the future*. Through care, we are always already “ahead of” ourselves” (177). Here, Ricoeur defines care as the ways in which and reasons for which we exist and act in the world. Taken together, I read these two points to mean that narrative structures our presence in time and our reflection back on time, and that while narrative allows for a historicity that privileges the past, the narratives in which we are continually present are always oriented towards the future. We, by the very nature of our existence in time, are always oriented towards the future, but are also always reflecting on and recollecting our past moments in time. This orientation towards the future becomes particularly relevant at FSH because of the multigenerational focus of their work; FSH places a great deal of emphasis on the education of FSH children and preparation for their future success.

Ricoeur draws on Heidegger’s notion of repetition in order to suggest that narrative allows us to maintain a constant connection to who we used to be and to who we may become:

Each person transmits from him- or herself the resources that he or she may ‘draw’ on from his or her past...In this way, each of us receives him- or herself as ‘fate’ (Schicksal). Repetition is ‘going back [der Ruckgang] into the possibilities of the Dasein that has-been-there’ {p. 437). *And thanks to repetition as fate, retrospection is reconnected to anticipation, and*

anticipation is rooted in retrospection” (178, emphasis added).⁸

The idea that narrative provides this deep connection between past and future - “retrospection” and “anticipation” - matters particularly in light of the narrative arc of students’ literacy practices over their lifetimes. The way that students narrate these stories is similar to how Ricoeur describes work by Augustine and Proust as models for narratives in which the ‘hero’ journeys into himself. He writes:

The quest has been absorbed into the movement by which the hero - if we may still call him by that name - becomes *who he is*. Memory, therefore, is no longer the narrative of external adventures stretching along episodic time. It is itself the spiral movement that, through anecdotes and episodes, brings us back to the almost motionless constellation of potentialities that the narrative retrieves. The end of the story is what equates the present with the past, the actual with the potential. The hero *is* who he *was*. This highest form of narrative repetition is the equivalent of what Heidegger calls fate (individual fate) or destiny (communal destiny), that is, the complete retrieval in resoluteness of the inherited potentialities that *Dasein* is thrown into by birth. (182)

This particular approach to memory in the purpose of narrative is a productive one for analyzing these three students’ literacy stories. In other words, I trace students’ literacy practices and attitudes towards literacy over their lifetimes (as they’ve told stories and

⁸ Here, we can draw a connection between how Ricoeur describes Heidegger’s notion of repetition and Bourdieu’s notion of habitus, since both are founded on the idea that we follow a set of founding principles of behavior deeply ingrained and repeated over our lifetimes. These “basic potentialities inherited from our past” are Bourdieu’s habitus. And this habitus that gets repeated and received “in the form of personal fate” is what also allows for our potential futures.

anecdotes in the interviews). Students are narrating how they became who they are, or how they became the literate selves they are now. This fits in with the idea of potentiality, namely, that these students are becoming their potential that they've maintained over their lives (potentiality that they have maintained due to their singularity). Ricoeur's notion that "the highest form of narrative repetition" equals fate means it is also the equivalent of potentiality. Memory becomes the means by which the narrative plot advances, and it advances further into discovery of the self. The memories that students use to tell their literacy narratives are made out of all of the elements of networks they've been moving in and out of throughout their lives. The narratives students weave from these memories become part of their current FSH network.

This conception of repetition as fate - of who we were predicting who we will be - may seem to represent a static view of human agency. If we are continually receiving our past selves as our personal fate, how can we ever change? I want to insert a caveat here; first of all, we can and do change, and second of all, we change through our relationships and the relationship work (as discussed in the previous chapter) that make up our lives. Considering the fact that we are surrounded by others who are also enmeshed in their own individual repeated narratives, the only thing that can change these narratives is a connection with others. Ricoeur recognizes the significance of this: "...narrativity, from the outset, establishes repetition on the plane of being-with-others...The narrative of a quest...unfolds in a public time. This public time, as we saw, is not the anonymous time of ordinary representation but the time of interaction. In this sense, narrative time is, from the outset, time of being-with-others" (184).

If narrative is, as Ricoeur argues, a "time of being-with-others," similar to how

potentiality can/must be nurtured by others (specifically, for Haswell and Haswell, teachers), then this extends the analysis I made in the previous chapter about the significance of the relationship work surrounding those three moments of translation. It is this relationship work that enables the change in literacy practices (and attitudes towards literacy) that I will describe in this chapter, and I argue that relationship work is inherent in the narratives we use to structure our lives (to tell our ‘lifestories’) and that, as Ricoeur points out, it is the relationships and the “time of being-with-others” that makes narrative possible. Given that it is through the repetition of our own narratives that we receive ourselves as fate/potentiality, it’s also significant that this repetition is never exactly the same over time. As Alistair Pennycook argues, small variations in language sediment into change over time. Similarly, variations in our narratives - which stem from our singularity and the networks we’re constantly negotiating - result in a slow change in ourselves over time. This change then forms a new narrative that becomes a new component of our networked lives, and it can allow us to imagine different futures for ourselves.⁹

The main point to take away from all of this theory is the idea that the past and future are continually connected, and that we cannot examine students’ past literacy practices without also looking at potential future literacy practices, and vice versa, that we cannot imagine potential future literacy practices without examining their past literacy practices. Haswell and Haswell demonstrate this connection between singularity (past) and potentiality

⁹ From this perspective, longitudinal research of literacy practices makes the most sense if we really want to see how students and their writing change over time. See Julie Lindquist’s “Time to Grow Them,” and Marilyn Sternglass’ “Time to Know Them” for examples of this research.

(future), and Ricoeur argues for this connection between past/future through narrative.¹⁰ Not only can we see the change in a student's literacy over her lifetime by looking at her narrative arc, we can also examine the connections between the structure of her literacy narrative and the various ANT networks she has passed / is passing through. And vice versa, we can also examine how her literacy narrative becomes an element within these networks.

Three Student Narratives

Camille

The stories that Camille tells in her interview demonstrate a shift over her lifetime in her attitude towards education. The shape of her literacy narrative not only reveals her approach to literacy over her lifetime, it also reveals how her current FSH network influences her literate identity in the sense that her stories reveal the influence of FSH's emphasis on education and lifelong learning. The shape of her literacy narrative also reveals the influence of the actors/actants in different networks that Camille has moved through throughout her life. And, in turn, the stories she tells herself about her literacy and education become actants within her current network at FSH.

Camille points out that because her parents died in a car accident when she was an adolescent, she was raised by her siblings and very little attention was paid to school. She even links her quitting school as a teenager to her parents' deaths. When I asked her when her attitude towards school changed, she replied:

I would say probably when I was in the 7th grade...I got tired of people saying 'I feel so bad for you, I'm so sorry'...I probably left home at 17 and moved to

¹⁰ Bourdieu writes that we have to compare past and present social conditions that generated a habitus in order to, I would argue, understand one's present and potential future practices (since, as Ricoeur points out, we are continually oriented towards our futures).

Indianapolis because nobody knew me in Indianapolis...so I didn't have to feel, hear 'Oh I'm so sorry that ____ passed away' - that was my mother - or, 'you look like her'.

Camille points out several times how her siblings raised her after her parents died, and that no attention was paid to education, leading to her dropping out of school when she was 16: "And I was like, I don't know why I don't use punctuation, but...It just wasn't, installed or enforced in me when I was younger...My older brothers and sisters raised the younger of us so I got to stay in the house that my parents bought but..nobody really cared about school, we got to party a lot..laugh."

Drawing on the ANT approach from the previous chapter, if we consider the networked elements involved in Camille's childhood educational experiences we can see how the social relationships of her siblings as well as the way she experienced her parents' death within the social realm both affected her attitude towards school. Her siblings' "party" scene and lack of educational support contributed to Camille's decision to drop out, and then her desire to get away from people's sympathy and attention led to her move to Indianapolis. The fact that Camille chooses this as the starting point from which to describe her childhood literacy experiences draws our attention (as researchers) to the significance of these actants/actors in shaping the networks she was in at the time.

Also, Camille's singularity arises in part from these childhood experiences - just as any individuals' uniqueness comes from the various lived experiences that come together to make up her life and her personhood. Camille's literacy narratives express her distinct singularity as a literate being, the same way that all of us tell stories about ourselves in order to make sense of who we are as individuals. What's interesting is how her educational

trajectory has changed over the course of her life, especially compared with the seemingly more static attitudes towards education shared by her siblings. Camille points out the differences in her and her siblings' approaches to education:

Academics wasn't such a big deal and even now...2 of my sisters swear I think I'm better because I'm going to school and I was like, I don't feel like I'm no better than any of y'all...I just, I want more, I don't want to be at...a company for all these years and I never show no growth...I want to do something more with my life. I told you I want to go into juvenile justice, I want to help young people...And I can't do that without an education.

While Camille's attitude towards her education has shifted over her lifetime based on her interview responses, we also must look at this from the other angle - that based on her current FSH network which emphasizes education so strongly (it is a requirement for her current living situation that she be enrolled in college full-time), the narrative Camille tells about her literate identity is shaped by all of the elements in her current network. Just as narrative is a structuring structure through which we can analyze how Camille's literate identity has transformed over time, narrative is also an element of the FSH network and shaped by that network.

Given this initial introduction to Camille's educational experiences, if we take a closer look specifically at how she approaches her writing we can see evidence of her attempts to preserve her own potentiality as a writer. In this sense, potentiality becomes a similar notion to that of "success," particularly because potentiality is focused on the future and on ways to create and preserve opportunities for future growth. But potentiality doesn't only mean "success" because, as LeeAnn and Rose point out, participants also are driven by

a *lack* of support and by knowing what they *don't* want. By performing what Bourdieu calls for - a comparison of the past and present social conditions that produce the habitus - we can attempt to understand Camille's writing and reading practices and their motivation. It's important to understand these because understanding the narrative trajectory of a student's literacy allows us to connect the narrative dots of past, present, and future rather than, as Haswell and Haswell suggest some literacy research does, only using students' past literacy narratives to understand their present experiences in our classrooms. This narrative approach to understanding how students maintain their potentiality via their singularity not only helps us to see connections between the student as a whole and their literacy practices, it also helps us begin to move past literacy, as this social turn is starting to do, in the sense that we recognize that it's never just about the writing and reading. Now that plenty of scholarship has recognized this, it's time for us to develop new schemas/approaches/heuristics for exploring all of the "stuff" behind the literacy, such as the socioeconomic factors, living conditions, family history, etc.

Camille spends a fair amount of time during the interview discussing her writing, specifically her struggles with writing, how she seeks out help, and her concerns about future writing struggles when she transfers. The particular strategies she describes primarily involve seeking help from others; she goes to the Writing Lab, seeks help from her instructors, and brainstorms off of other people. These collaborative strategies are reminiscent of the previous chapter's emphasis on the relationship work that goes into each moment of translation. Similarly to the support provided by Rose, Will, and all of the networked elements within the luncheon, Camille's support network surrounding her literacy practices is diverse.

K: ...you said you think your writing has improved from 2011 to now...what

is it that feels...?

C: I mean, my spelling is a whole lot better...I will catch myself. I didn't used to proofread, I would write and just turn it in... Now I'll read over what I wrote and when I read it I'll be like ok, well that doesn't sound right

K: What made that switch, what was it, was it a class or the Writing Lab or...what made you..

C: The Writing Lab and My ENC91 teacher, Laura...she was like, a lot of it is just proofreading you just need to go back and proofread and see if it makes sense to you in your head...And when I do go back and proofread I'll be like no, it doesn't, but..my daughters, they tell me I need to learn how to text smaller because I text the whole word out...And they are trying to teach me abbreviations, and I was like, that's what's wrong with literacy, we abbreviate everything...I was like I'm trying to get smarter...laugh

In this excerpt, we can see how the networks influencing her literacy practices also shape, in turn, how she approaches literacy with her own children. Camille has received help with her writing from both the Writing Lab and a specific teacher, Laura, leaving her with strategies that she continues to use to improve her writing. The fact that she recognizes the discrepancy between the strategies that these resources have taught her and how her daughters want her to text indicates the far-reaching influence her educational networks have within her life, and the complexity of other actors and actants within other life networks.

Her instructor, Laura, also taught her how to “mindmap,” a brainstorming strategy:

Miss Laura taught me how to mindmap, so I'll put it in the middle and draw lines from it...And circles of ideas so I'll know what the paragraphs are going

to be about...She told me that because she was like once you know what you're going to write about now, think about other things that has to go with that, you know what I'm saying...So you'll know what you want to write about because...typically a professor wants anywhere from 2 to 10 pages, you know what I'm saying...And if I just use what's in the middle of the circle I'm not going to get no 10, no 2 pages out of it, I might get 1 paragraph, so...She's...once I've got an idea, she was like, now you have to think about it...with the circle we'll draw a branch and write something there in that branch and maybe something will branch off of it and then...It gives me a foundation for what I'm going to write about.

I find this particular example of the mindmapping strategy to be a fascinatingly organic representation of how ANT networks and narrativity work together in these students' literacy narratives. Here, Camille is literally mapping out a network of her ideas, just as ANT allows us to map out the various actors/actants and their relationships within a particular network. What Camille is also doing here is preserving the potential for her future writing; she is writing down her ideas in a way that will allow her to have enough to write about for the assignment. Camille is mapping networks in order to maintain her potentiality for future work.

The way Camille talks about her writing, she doesn't exclusively focus on her struggles with punctuation. She brings up the mindmapping as one approach to brainstorming ideas, and then she also mentions brainstorming with other people:

So I brainstorm off of a lot of people...like one of my other ethics papers were, I want to say Socrates said it..."to know the good is to do the

good”...And I couldn’t figure out how to get it started...So I had my nephew come down here from Atlanta, and his friend come with him, and different people..I’d be like, so what would you say if somebody asked you...But I had to bounce that off of people because I was like, I don't’ know what he wants me to write, and then so I just wanted to hear other people’s perspectives...And I was like Ok, so I know what I’m going to talk about..laugh

These other people include her children, as she demonstrates when I ask her about a piece of writing she considers to be successful and she describes an assignment about Kafka’s Metamorphosis.

But..I just, that was just a weird story to me so I couldn't relate to it...it wasn’t until my 13 year old told me about, it’s called a dung beetle or something...That they just pick up poop and they take it home, they pick up poop and they take it home...And she had read that with me, my 13 year old, and she was like, so the guy lives like a beetle..he goes to work and he comes home, he goes to work and he comes home, so he turned into a bug...So she was like, so write about how...you’re supposed to have, at some point in your life there should be some kind of fun, you know what I’m saying..it isn’t all about...Just work work work.

It is in talking with her daughter that Camille is able to find an angle to the story that she can relate to and from which she can write. I want to point out here that the networked relationships help Camille succeed, and that she is preserving her own potentiality as a writer by seeking out this collaborative help. Haswell and Haswell describe this kind of ongoing

potentiality as “Maintained potentiality”, in which

an entity constitutes or furthers a framework for creative work that needs room and encouragement to keep healthy and growing...it is defined by its ongoing creation of actualizations, and by its ability to absorb and transform outside forces. It is our term for the capacity of Edelman’s human brain that grows as it “reategorizes” itself in ever-new response to an ever-changing world of experience... (*Authoring* 41)

Camille is maintaining her potentiality as a writer by seeking out help from her networked relationships of support. In this way, I want to add to Haswell and Haswell’s focus on singularity (which feeds potentiality) in terms of a writer’s strengths as an individual. I want to suggest that singularity includes a writer’s weaknesses as an individual, as Camille demonstrates. She is aware of her particular struggles with writing - of her singularity - and she works to maintain her potentiality as a writer in ways that address this singularity. When she describes her reasons for leaving FSH and transferring to Campbellsville, she emphasizes that she wants to be more successful in school and that she can do that by taking fewer classes at once (FSH requires a full-time course load of 4 classes). This decision similarly reflects Camille’s impetus to maintain her potentiality as a student. And, in reflecting on her narrative from an ANT perspective, we can see how her current FSH network influences the stories she tells about her literacy. The fact that FSH requires 4 classes, which Camille feels is too many for her to be successful at, leads to her decision to transfer out of the program, which leads to her concerns about continuing to receive strong writing support.

Regarding her writing, she refers to the help she has received at JCC and worries about getting similar help when she transfers:

I understand, she was showing me where I needed to make those breaks and...like I said it helped me and that's probably one of my fears about going to Campbellsville but Will said we're going to go to a tour, I want to know what is their Writing Lab like...Because it's actually, Campbellsville is across from StonyBrook so it's in a building, it's not like JCC or UofL, they rented some space so I was like, will I have all the opportunities that I have at JCC but physically, even with CPS helping me pay for school, I still don't think I'll be able to afford UofL or Spaulding which, you know what I'm saying...They do have excellent writing centers and all that, especially UofL...They have a nice writing center but I can't afford their tuition...That'd be my only thing that's going to be bad about Campbellsville if they don't have a Writing Lab because...if I have to pay out of pocket I will pay out of pocket to have somebody help me with my writing.

Camille wants to be successful in school and so has decided to transfer out of the FSH program, but is concerned that the support network won't be as strong. We can also see in this excerpt the influence of material actants within Camille's educational network, namely, her lack of financial resources that keeps her from attending either University of Louisville or Spaulding, both of which she knows has strong writing support. Again, Camille's awareness of the kind of writing support she needs demonstrates change in her literacy narrative over her life.

So, what we see happening here is that Camille is developing a new narrative about her life and her writing identity based on the networked support she uses. In other words, she turns the structuring narrative into the story narrative through her interactions with the social

and material resources and relationships by which she is surrounded. I see evidence of this new narrative in how Camille describes a successful writing assignment. When I asked Camille about an example of a successful piece of writing, she mentioned the Metamorphosis paper she wrote recently for a lower-level comp course. She said:

“But I was really surprised that...I didn't think I was going to do so well on that paper, and I got an 88 out of 100 so that's not bad to me...I guess I would say that Metamorphosis paper was probably one of my most successful papers because I didn't think I was going to do as well on that paper...And an 88 was good to me! Laugh”.

The fact that Camille is herself surprised by the grade she got on this paper indicates her growth as a writer. It isn't the grade itself that demonstrates her potentiality. It's her surprise at the grade. Haswell and Haswell argue that unpredictability “is an essential ingredient of potentiality. If an outcome is totally predictable, then it makes more sense to say that a person had the readiness for it than the potential. The trouble is that even more than potential learning, unpredictability badly fits the framework of college courses. Rather it is predictability that upholds institutional teaching” (*Authoring* 101). In other words, they suggest that if we are able to predict a student's literacy and learning, that suggests that the student was already ready to perform in that way, meaning that there was no preservation of potentiality or growth of singularity. The fact that Camille is surprised by her successful writing is a sign of unpredictable growth, and this is the kind of growth that we want to prepare students to achieve in our writing classrooms.

We can also see Camille's new narrative when she describes the change in her attitude towards education:

I'm happy they moved quitting school to 18, whereas when...I'm 36, you could quit at 16, so you know what I'm saying...And that was one of the first things I did, I was like I don't like school anyways, so I quit...But I mean now at 36 I realize why it was important that I should have stayed in school...just toughed it out...But like I said, I notice the mistakes I made back then with my nieces and nephew...I hold them to that standard, you know...you're going to school I'll do anything in the world for you. I'll go get the moon, but if you're going to give up on school then, you might as well ask somebody else...And my 3 kids know there's no option, you're not to quit school. We are going to get education, that's your key for success, so...

Camille not only imagines a new future for herself in which she finishes school, she also imagines new futures for her children in which they, too, get an education. Let's recall Ricoeur's point that "*the primary direction of care is towards the future*. Through care, we are always already "ahead of" ourselves" (177). So, given that our life narratives are continually pointing forward towards our futures, then Camille's new narrative becomes another piece of her network and helps her to continue to move forward towards this differently-imagined future.

Camille's shift in attitude towards education didn't simply happen out of nowhere. As she explains:

K: Ok..so it sounds like there was a shift in middle school...away from school

C: Right

K: And then there was another shift in 2011

C: Where I wanted to go back *to* school

K: Yeah!

C: Right..laugh

K: What was it in 2011 that made you turn around again?

C: So when I come over here to Kentucky, y'all don't have a patient-to-staff ratio, so... a nurse at any point in time, they shouldn't have it but they can have anywhere from 20 to 40 residents...And with an aide you might end up with 12 to 22 residents and nurses were short so they would cut residents short, you know...elderly people do take their time getting out what they want...So a lot of the nurses I met here just used to aggravate me and I was like I know I'm just as smart as them to be a nurse, but like I said after I started going to school and I learned of different degrees I was like really, I want to be a social worker..laugh

In other words, Camille moved to a state without a limit on the patient-staff ratio, and discovered that her work as a nurse's aid became increasingly stressful. She then went back to school for nursing and realized she wanted to become a social worker. The material circumstances and relationships within her network as a nurse's aide shaped her approach to her own education, in that she saw that she could become a nurse and improve her working conditions.

Sofia

Sofia goes even more in depth in her discussion of how her childhood influenced her literacy habits. She cites a number of factors that influenced her childhood literacy: "first of all, not being able to afford very many books...The library wasn't a thing that we did, we moved a lot when I was younger, I was in and out of homeless shelters...2 foster homes..So

we were constantly on the go and moving.” She says that because her family moved frequently and because there was a lot of stress, “academics was...on the lowest of the totem pole.” She says her mom was “doing what she was taught,” that it was a “generational curse” and that her mom “never read, she couldn’t read.” Sofia links this lack of family support directly to her literacy practices, both as a child and an adult. When I asked about her reading and writing experiences as a child, she said:

I used to write songs, I used to love to - ...but due to the lack of support of my home, I didn’t pursue it, I stopped...and you see I’m getting a little emotional because, I think by your surroundings can either empower you or discourage you...So I think part of it again when you’re growing up...if you’re discouraged and not supported that can...push you away from writing or reading.

As an adult, Sofia reflects back on her lack of support for reading and writing and the potential physical effects on her adult brain:

When we’re really little, the myelin sheath...that’s like this sponge that just grows and develops as it takes in all this...I didn’t get that when I was little...so sometimes I wonder if that has somewhat of an effect on me...as I’m older, because that wasn’t stimulated, engaged...it wasn’t...I didn’t have all this learning going on around me...it was bad learning...so I wonder if as I’m older I have to work harder.

These moments of reflection (and the act of reflecting is key here - the fact that these interviews required participants to reflect indicates that such reflection is truly necessary in order for teachers, researchers, and students to understand their literacy habits) represent the

work that Sofia is doing in order to reconcile her past literacy experiences/family support with her current situation and future goals, and in order to tell the story of her literacy experiences. The narrative that Sofia tells about her literacy traces the connections between her past childhood literacy experiences and her present challenges with writing and learning. This literacy narrative is shaped by the actants/actors within the networks she has moved through, such as, as a child, the financial hardship and homelessness and her mother's lack of educational support. In this same vein, Sofia's more recent adult networks have also contributed to her literacy identity, as I will explore. (It's also important to note that her major is in early education, so she has a particular knowledge base that prompts her to see her life in this way. And, perhaps, her own childhood experiences prompted her to pursue this career.)

Sofia also describes her transition from not reading much as a child (due to lack of family support and material living conditions that didn't provide those opportunities) to reading a great deal (and broadly) as an adult. She credits the transition to her recovery process at Wayside ("I'm actually a recovered delivered alcoholic drug addict"), and to reading the Bible and from there expanding to other spiritual books and then to even more genres, which she attributes to her group of girlfriends:

When I started just getting this amazing group of girlfriends, and they were talking about things they were reading or discussing or their knowledge, I was like, I want that...I was hungry for it, and I just began doing it, I just decided hey, I'm going to go to the library and get a book, or my girlfriends gave me, I'm like Hey I want to check that book out, and I just started having myself read

...

I have a group of friends that are just very different, and sometimes we'll have book exchanges...So we'll get together and we'll share books, so I have a friend who was an English, was a Spanish teacher...So she would bring in different cultural things...And then I have other friends, they're like art and music therapists, so they'll bring, they have a very different perspective..and like interest in books and so it broadens my perspective

From Haswell and Haswell's perspective, we can see that Sofia's reading transition is her potentiality manifesting itself; as she is exposed to new ideas and perspectives via her recovery/book club, she is also able to imagine a different potential future for herself (indeed, a different version of herself, one that reads widely and cooks healthy foods and gets good grades). Throughout her interview she emphasizes her self-sufficiency and her independence, and this, too, is an example of her potentiality becoming realized. Here, Sofia's change in reading habits is evidence of her potentiality; going from reading very little as a child to reading widely as a young adult, this unpredictable change in her literacy practices demonstrates her potentiality and results in a new narrative of her literate identity, a narrative in which she is able to develop "good habits," as we see in the following excerpt:

And I loved it, and I just basically started doing things on my own. I just decided I'm going to make this happen, I'm going to, like, start cooking. I never cooked, and then I'm like, I want to start cooking for myself so I just started cooking homecooked meals at home...And these were habits that I wanted to form for myself, these are the things that I wanted to start doing that seemed just wholesome and

good...And...so, reading...I want, I just...there are so many things out in the world that I want to learn or I want to experience.

Drawing on ANT from the previous chapter, it is also apparent that the worknet of Sofia's relationships (Wayside, her girlfriends, and even FSH) provides impetus for her changed literacy habits (she reads more). Just as the social relationships arising from the KTAP, SAP, and luncheon moments of translation provided opportunities for FSH students to grow and imagine different potential future for themselves and their children, so here do Sofia's relationships (that are part of her ANT networks) instigate her personal and literate growth. And, recalling Ricoeur's point that "...narrativity, from the outset, establishes repetition on the plane of being-with-others...In this sense, narrative time is, from the outset, time of being-with-others" (184), the repetition of Sofia's literacy narrative over time changes due to her experiences of "being-with-others". In other words, Sofia's habitus changes over time as she is influenced by those around her in ways that alter her potentiality and make her more aware of her own singularity as a literate being.

Following (one possible) arc of Sofia's literacy practices - from her unstable childhood, to her transition into recovery and continuing education - I see connections across these times in her life. Indeed, Sofia herself makes these connections when she hypothesizes about her current writing challenges stemming from her lack of support as a child. Sofia talks about wanting to improve her writing skills, and she gives specific examples of things she thinks she doesn't know how to do but that she could learn - this stems from talking about her difficulty with the praxis timed exam, how she takes longer to write and how she has trouble starting the timed essay bc she doesn't know which ideas are more important.

Sofia explains specifically how she wants to learn more writing skills:

K: So how would you, and we've probably touched on this so we don't have to spend a whole lot of time on it, but how would you describe your attitude towards your writing? How do you feel about your writing?

S: I feel inexperienced...I feel, sometimes I feel like I manage to just somehow get by...I think it takes skill...And just this certain way of thinking to write good... I should say write easy..laugh...Again, I believe I have to put a lot of work into it, and again I really actually would love to brush up on my skills, particularly with writing, actually

K: When you say you want to brush up on those skills, what..how do you see that happening, what do you want to change?

S: I want to understand...I can write a sentence but, I still struggle with adverbs, I know what a verb is, I know what a noun, but I still struggle with, I know what an adjective is, but I still struggle with those concepts and definitions...But..I just don't have a lot of knowledge...With just punctuation and...[long pause]...yeah, I would just like to learn more, and I think that would actually allow my papers to be even better quality...If I knew how to use those things more, I mean I could even be a little more creative, you know...Like for instance, let's say you want to talk about 3 things, you say "first let's talk about" or how to begin, right?...If you have particular 3 topics, or 3...ok, talk about these 3 things, there's different ways you could present that, right?...You could say first, secondly, etc...And there's other ways, you know?...It's understanding your options, too...What are my options, not just this way, what are some other options in how I could write this to change it

around a bit or, rather than, or even make it sound like you're a little more knowledgable...I think it shows in your paper, in your writing, you can show someone how, like wow, they really, they used this and this particular they know their stuff...

Just as Camille's awareness of her needs as a writer (getting collaborative help from her teachers and family members) represent her preservation of her potentiality via her awareness of her singularity, so here does Sofia's recognition of the specific knowledge and experience that she lacks as a writer point to her self-awareness and her desire for growth (potentiality). However, Sofia, unlike Camille, does not yet have concrete strategies in place for dealing with her concerns about her writing. While she has created a new narrative of her reading identity, as I noted above, she is still working on creating a new narrative of her writing identity. She is, however, working on developing a plan to improve her writing skills. Her identification of specific skills and knowledge that would help her to write more easily and quickly represents her way of imagining a different kind of writing identity for herself. She stays very inwardly focused in the interview, demonstrating an awareness of her emotional struggles with writing, as we can see below:

K: So I think we were talking about challenges that you deal with when you're writing

S: Oh yeah...I think part of it too is I do...Ok, my praxis...laugh..oh gosh...My writing essays...so the brainstorming part, right...Writing thoughts down, I have trouble with that. I have trouble deciphering what exactly, what's most important? What should I write, what should I focus on...I know people who can write up a good paper in 30 minutes to an hour...It would

take me 5 hours

...

S: But yeah, I think brainstorm – but when I was asked to write this paper, I, it's like I want to go on and start writing but then I start thinking too much...I'm already thinking...I'm thinking too much...Could it be just an option of trusting myself and just start writing my thoughts down...I don't know, that scares me...Because I don't have confidence in that

We can see here how the elements of her current network(s) influence the stories she tells about her literacy. She talks about her writing in terms of her praxis exam because she has failed it several times and is worried about how to pass it. In fact, her primary focus when she talks about her writing is time; in talking about her praxis exam, she focuses on the timed element of it and not having a writing process in place that allows her to successfully use her time. In talking about a paper she considers to be successful, she describes an assignment that she put a great deal of time and effort into:

I think so, I mean, my lesson plan I believe was very successful...I believe it was success – first of all I put a lot of time and effort to it...And I believe I did that very well because I revised it, or, and edited it constantly..laugh...So I felt good about that because I spent so much time and I wasn't lazy about it...I believe that's why it was of good quality

So, for Sofia, she connects her lack of childhood literacy support to her current feelings of inexperience in her writing, which manifest in a specific concern about the time factor: taking longer than she would like to complete assignments, investing a lot of time into her writing, and not knowing how to tackle the timed praxis exam. In this sense, we can see that

it isn't just about the social relationships in a student's network that have the most impact on her literacy narrative - it's also about material constraints such as time. Sofia points out the connection between her inexperience and the time it takes her to write, and says again that learning specific skills might help her improve her writing process:

I don't think writing is one of my best fortes...It just takes more time for me...And I think it's the whole cognitive thinking process I do... And I...but part of it, I believe, is a lack of experience...And a lack of knowledge, definitely, like you said, being able to utilize techniques, like the brainstorming... Or...actually I think even taking a class would benefit me immensely...Probably with writing...to get more of an idea of how to bring your thoughts together and put them on paper... Or how to find what you're looking - rather than just being overwhelmed by all of this information...How can that improve your ability to put things down on paper as well as crunch - reduce time, actually, in writing a paper...Because it amazes me again how someone can finish a paper that I would do in an hour...Or 30 minutes, and get an A on it...really good grade...And I have to work really hard...To get a good grade.

Sofia's recognition of her lack of experience writing and her purposeful desire to learn specific writing knowledge and technique demonstrate her attempts to maintain her potentiality as a writer. She makes the connection between her lack of literacy support as a child and her current struggles with writing. Another way to describe this connection is her singularity, or her uniqueness, and this singularity leads her to identify specific approaches to improving her writing. Another way to look at this is using Bourdieu's suggested tact of

comparing past and present social conditions that create(d) the habitus in order to understand specific practices (such as literacy practices and attitudes towards literacy). The social conditions of Sofia's childhood did not support her literacy practices, whereas the social conditions she currently lives in (including FSH, her recovery at Wayside, her book club, etc) provide a strong, rich network of relationships that support her literacy practices. This arc of change leads to different imagined futures, or to potentiality being realized through singular experience. Because, even as we are continually receiving ourselves as fate - repeating our own life narratives over and over - our fate/narratives change as they are shaped by the networks we move through.

A brief example of how the narratives we tell ourselves and others are shaped by/shape the networks we move through arose towards the end of my interview with Sofia. She was talking about how she wished she had more time to spend with her children instead of focusing so much on school:

S: This is why I have to study at 9:00, I'm not able to, I have to get this homework done, mama wants to get good grades just like you want to be successful or your teacher expects assignments from you just like my teacher expects assignments to be done by me

K: Yeah...and then what you're also doing is giving her that model of

S: I am, you're right

K: This is the role that school plays in my life and it's important

S: Yeah

K: And so this is why I have to do this and so she will have that growing up

S: Thank you

K: Yeah

S: That's nice to see it from that perspective... Yeah, what I see is choosing, choosing between my child and sch –

K: No, no, but then it's actually

S: But it's not, it's teaching them

As Sofia tells her story to me, she conveys her perspective which is concerned with not spending time with her kids; but when I hear it, I hear a different perspective, that of providing a specific kind of role model for her kids by focusing on school. When I point this out to her, she is able to see her narrative from a different angle, so that rather than “choosing between my child and [school]” she is “teaching them.” And this part doesn't come across in the transcript, but I remember that she had a big smile on her face during this part of the interview. I remember the look in her eyes when she heard what I was saying back to her - dawning realization and relief. This is how our stories change as we tell them to others.

ChaRay

ChaRay, a young FSH student who has always loved to write for herself and is working on a book about her life, tells a narrative of her literacy experiences that traces a constellation of somewhat contradictory experiences and approaches to literacy throughout her life. She attributes her love of reading to her mother, but also mentions that she disliked some of the books she was made to read in school. And similarly with her writing, she talks about writing short stories and poetry from a young age, but she also talks about hating English, struggling with grammar, treating her high school English teacher badly, and disliking being made to write. By looking at this narrative arc, we can see how ChaRay continually receives herself as fate, or repeats her literacy narrative in similar ways

throughout her life, but also how she preserves her potentiality in ways that allow for change. We can also see how ChaRay's literacy narrative reveals tensions that arise from the diverse and sometimes conflicting actors/actants within her network - art mirrors life, or her experiences with and attitude towards literacy reflect the networks she is moving through throughout her life and their inherent contradictions.

It's useful to consider these contradictory experiences with writing in her life using Haswell and Haswell's notion that students have the right to reject the writing that teachers want them to do - that they're exercising their potentiality by choosing NOT to do things. ChaRay talks about how she hates being made to write, having deadlines, writing about things that aren't interesting to her. As opposed to writing her book (or her poetry or short stories as a child), which she chooses to do and which expresses her singularity as a person and author, and which maintains her potentiality as a writer. There's also tension in how she talks about her reading habits - she says she used to love reading growing up and attributes it to her mom also loving to read. But then she says she didn't enjoy reading that she was made to do for school (or she came to enjoy it), and that her grandfather made her read the Bible. Similarly to how Camille's singularity has to do not only with that which she succeeds at but that which she knows she struggles with, so here is ChaRay's singularity also made up of all of her diverse, potentially contradictory literacy experiences.

Regarding things ChaRay struggles with in her literacy practices, she describes being bad at grammar. The way she brings this up is interesting because she begins by describing an essay contest she won in high school before transitioning by saying "I hate English":

I think there was one assignment where we did for class, like, I think we talked about like the perfect Christmas...and it was an English class and I got

published in a local paper down there...I think I got like a hundred dollars

K: Wow

C: In high school

K: Good for you

C: Yeah, I was like, surprised

K: Was that like an essay contest?

C: Yeah it was! I think it was like my junior or senior year in high school, and, but as far as like, I hate English, also though because I don't get the grammar concepts, it's just so hard for me to...know how to...what word goes, like "where" w-h-e-r-e or w-e-r-e you know. I have a hard time with trying to do that, so...With my book I'm going to need an editor because my grammar is shot...Like I got the idea, I will write it down, but I just can't focus on the correct grammar aspect

This juxtaposition of winning her high school essay contest with hating English because she doesn't understand the grammar represents a tension that continues throughout ChaRay's narrative. She points to this tension herself when she describes how she used to treat her high school English teacher:

...because especially in high school I was the trouble kid. And my English teacher, we did not get along...I don't know if you had them back in high school, but you used to have the phones on the wall because they're going to call the office if you did something...I stole the phone...She would know I would steal the phones, like, if her phone went missing, "ChaRay, can you give me back my phone" eventually she would get it back but I would always

hide it. I was such a bad in high school...My English teacher probably thought I wasn't going to be nothing. And that's fine, I don't care, but it's just sad because I treated my English teacher like crap. So, I guess if I would have paid attention maybe I would have learned the grammar, laugh, I don't know, but it is what it is. *But I really, for somebody who likes to write, I treated her not the best way any student should treat their teacher.* (Emphasis added)

This tension is also reflected in the stories that ChaRay tells about not enjoying being required to write pieces for the Cardinal student newspaper and for her internship with a local radio station:

...but even taking Campus Media, which is the class that I write for The Cardinal for, I *hate* writing it every week now...I guess because it's for a class...my heart's not in it, and I don't want to write an article for you every week. But The Cardinal, I loved it, because I loved the topics I was given. And I don't know if it's the same now but I feel like because I'm graded for it and I know I have to do it with the Cardinal..last year I didn't have to but if I didn't want to write for you that week I didn't have to write. But because now I feel like I have to write which I do for a grade, or, you know, I fill that assignment...Ok, let me say it this way, if I feel like I have to do it, then I don't want to do it. I don't like being made to write.

K: Ok

C: And I used to blog...and it wasn't for myself it was for _____ with Beat96...I used to blog for her, and she would always give us a topic to write about. I liked it at first, but knowing that I had to blog every single day, I

began to hate it. I don't like being made to write...If I feel like writing, good, if I don't, then I don't want to write.

ChaRay's narratives show the real life tension that is ongoing within her networks. For example, she has to do assigned writing/reading for school because school is such a large piece of her FSH network. And she admits that she wants this part of her life; she is proud of her education and wants her story to inspire others, but at the same time she doesn't like everything about school such as being required to write. So, just as Bourdieu asks us to compare the past and present social conditions that produce our habitus, so here we're looking at how ChaRay talks about her past and present literacy experiences in order to see the tension she reveals, tension that comes from the change she is currently undergoing in her life, change coming from networks she is moving through like FSH. There is also tension between wanting to finish her book and not having enough time to do it - in other words, her narratives reveal the tension that arises from the sometimes conflicting actors/actants within her network, like how school and kids and all her other activities compete for her time.

ChaRay brings up the issue of not having enough time repeatedly throughout our interview, especially when we talk about things she struggles with and her strong desire to finish her book.

K: So, number 11, the obstacles and struggle that you have when you're doing writing, for a college class, for when you're working on your book, what do you struggle with?

C: Time. Prioritizing.

K: Yep

C: Time. I don't, I keep saying, I don't have the time, in actuality, I do have

time. I have time to do whatever I want to do, but I don't prioritize it enough to make it as important thing, I should put, set time for, so it just doesn't get done when I think it should be done.

...

Because I always wanted to be an author, but like, with kids I feel like I don't have time and I know I keep saying that but time is very important...And I guess if I learned how to prioritize, which I should work on, then I would be able to be a successful author. I don't want to be *just* an author, you know...

ChaRay's emphasis on not having enough time to write - in other words, the angle of this particular literacy narrative - demonstrates how her narrative is shaped by the many material aspects of her network: her kids, school, and other things that make up her everyday life. Her recognition that she needs to prioritize her time in order to finish her book indicates that she is putting herself in charge of making the changes necessary for her to continue writing her book. ChaRay recognizes what she has to do in order to preserve her potentiality as an author so that she can express her singularity through her lifestory.

ChaRay doesn't only rely on herself when it comes to changing her writing; she describes getting help with her book from the Writing Center:

At the Writing Center they, something I found very helpful when I went, to categorize my ideas so like...I would sit down and make a list of all the ideas I want to talk about, I guess like bullet points or whatever...But then I make other bullet points inside each one and talk about how I can make that one better...And, which I forgot all about this in high school they tell you to do a topic sentence and you got to do your other sentences under it...And I guess

you summarize up at the end, and I forgot all about that but when I went back to the Writing Center they reminded me “oh you should do this and it makes more sense” and that way I’m able to organize my thoughts, which I’m horrible at, like, my paper, my book is all over the place, but the Writing Center has gave me ideas on how to organize it, you know... Yeah, and I just started that which is kind of sad but now I guess it’s more helpful as well because now that I, I guess the Writing Center, I can’t remember his name, but the man there he called it like “word vomit” so I guess that’s what I did initially was word vomit

Here we can see how ChaRay was able to get help from the Writing Center with organization, which she admits to being “horrible” at. Similarly to how Camille sought help from her instructors and family members regarding brainstorming, ChaRay seeks help from others with the organization of her thoughts and writing. This is another example of how the networks FSH students move through shape the ways they approach their literacy practices, especially when it comes to the social relationships with other people that help them to improve their writing. Once again, these collaborative strategies are reminiscent of the previous chapter’s emphasis on the relationship work that goes into each moment of translation. Here, also, we can see how ChaRay’s awareness of her strengths and weaknesses as a writer show how she is using her singularity to preserve her potentiality.

Other people are also a significant component of ChaRay’s literacy experiences in the sense that she has a strong desire to share her writing, to publish. The idea that she loves to be published recurs throughout ChaRay’s interview (in the Cardinal student newspaper, her Christmas essay that won \$100, her short stories that she gave to people as a child, and of

course her book). In addition to the significance of sharing her story with others, this desire to publish is an example of singularity because being published is another way of saying “Here, look, I am the (only) author of this piece of writing, it has my name on it.” And, indeed, ChaRay emphasizes this when she talks about publishing her book and says: “If they have like 2 or 3 out there, with my face on it on the back cover, and my names [I think here she holds up an invisible book and smiles at it].” So, the type of writing that appears to be most significant in ChaRay’s life is the writing that she has control over as a unique author.

ChaRay’s book is also key here, in the sense that it represents a “lifestory” as Haswell and Haswell describe:

A lifestory is the narrative we create and tell, to ourselves and to others, of our individual trek across the small stretch of years so far allotted to us, from recollected past to anticipated future. It accounts for who we are and what we hope to become in terms of what we have done so far in our life.... As we would put it, lifestories are the narrative expression of potentiality and its in-transit fusion of currency, continuity, and singularity. (*Authoring* 161-3)

The way ChaRay describes her book fits with Haswell and Haswell’s description of a lifestory: “Well, it’s about us, like how me being a single mom and being able to graduate from college, because where I’m from everybody’s just having babies, and I probably would have had more babies by now if I’d stayed where I was at.” She talks about wanting to convey her own experiences to convince other parents out there that they, too, can continue their education. ChaRay’s book is an expression of her singularity, in that she wants to use her unique story to connect to others who face similar struggles but who might not yet be able to imagine the kind of future that ChaRay is now able to imagine for herself. And the

kind of future she can now imagine for herself is directly related to the fact that her own story had an unpredictable twist. As she points out above, she could have easily stayed in her hometown and continued to have babies, but instead she moved and now her lifestory is also moving in a different direction. Haswell and Haswell point to the fact that, in telling a lifestory, "...the primal motive of the author to retell—and the crux is in the iteration—is always a need, however faint and liminal, of the author to change his or her life" (172). In writing her book, not only is ChaRay expressing this need to change her life (through succeeding in getting her college degree), she is also trying to help others change their lives. ChaRay's book is an example of Ricoeur's argument for the significance of narrative as a "time of being-with-others," since she tells her lifestory as an act of being with others, of helping others change. It also represents Ricoeur's perspective on the function of narrative in connecting the past-present-future via narrative repetition. ChaRay points out her desire for her book to inspire others:

C: And it's not even just for me, I hope if I can inspire at least one person just not to give up their education then I've done my job.

K: So it's almost like the book is successful if you're communicating with somebody else?

C: I guess so. I just want somebody like, I don't care whatever age you are, to be like "Oh I want to finish my education, I can do this"... That's how my writing, my book will be successful... If I can encourage one person.

ChaRay's book literally becomes an actant within others' networks because, as she points out, she wants her story to "inspire at least one person just not to give up their education." So, not only does ChaRay's new literacy narrative become an actant within her own lived

network (in the sense that her desire to finish her book leads her to rethink how she prioritizes her time, how she wants to be a successful author, and even how she uses resources like the Writing Center), it becomes a potential actant within the networks of others who have experienced similar hardships.

The way that ChaRay approaches her writing process indicates, similarly to Camille and Sofia, her attempts to maintain her potentiality and her recognition of her singularity in her writing. For example, for ChaRay, when she says she wants her writing to be perfect, she means that

It has to sound right to me... Has to sound right, has to flow right, I have to say what I got, what I want to say, like I don't care if somebody says "oh this shouldn't belong" but if it's a part of my story I feel like it should belong and it's going to stay in there...I want to say what I have to say in my writing. If I can't say what I have to say, there's no point in writing it.

For ChaRay, the primary motivation of writing her book is to express her singular lifestory as best she can. Not only does she want to do this in order to inspire others in her situation, but to show those people in her life that she has been able to be successful, as we see in this moment of her interview when we're talking about the English teacher: "...Like I said she never held a grudge at me, she helped me. And whenever I am get published, I'm going to send her a copy! I'm like look, I was the baddest kid in your class, but look what I did." Here, similarly to the point that Rose and LeeAnn make in the previous chapter about how FSH students use the adversity and low expectations others have of them to motivate themselves to succeed, ChaRay also uses this tension in the networks she has passed through to maintain her potentiality as a writer. Her negative treatment of her English teacher

becomes motivation for her to succeed in publishing her book and demonstrating the change she has undergone. ChaRay recognizes the surprising twist in her story when she says she will send her English teacher a copy of her book in order to highlight the turn from being “the baddest kid in your class” to “look what I did.” This unpredictable turn of events is evidence of ChaRay’s potentiality because she is contradicting the direction of her past literacy narrative and growing in new directions.

At the end of the interview, I asked ChaRay what she wanted to change about her life, and in addition to talking about self-sufficiency and financial independence, she said this:

Can I say another thing I want to change? I don’t even know if this is beneficial to what you want to do, but I’d like to change me being shy. I probably, it’s already going to be a characteristic of my personality or whatever...But I feel like being in this FSH and writing and interviewing people, I feel like that’s helping me be not as shy....And I would like to really change that, because I feel like being shy sets you back a lot, like if I just stay in my little shy box or shy circle...Then I’m just like, I wouldn’t have got the interviews done, I wouldn’t have wrote those articles...And I wouldn’t even be here talking to you...So that’s something I’m working on, and a couple years from now I’d like to say I’m not shy. Or not as shy.

In ChaRay’s response, we can see the influence her specific literacy experiences have had on her personal growth. In doing this writing and interviewing for the Cardinal, and being in FSH, she has become less shy and more able to talk to people and step out of her comfort zone. In other words, these literacy experiences have allowed her to imagine different futures for herself - ones in which she is less shy. As she is influenced by the

networks she passes through (like FSH, like the newspaper, etc), they change her and change her narrative, too, which we can see when she says “I wouldn’t even be here talking to you.”

Conclusion

In analyzing Camille’s, Sofia’s, and ChaRay’s literacy narratives, I have demonstrated not only how the ANT networks they’ve passed through have shaped their narratives, but also how these narratives become actants within their networks. The change in these narratives over their lifetimes is evidence of how students work to maintain their potentiality - not just as literate beings but as people - by recognizing and allowing to flourish their singularity - again, their singularity as literate beings and as people. I have written much about these students’ past and present literacy practices - about how their childhood literacy practices and networks contributed to the structural arc of their lifetime narratives. I want to end by discussing the potential futures of these three students, particularly in terms of their children. This may seem like a surprising direction to take at this point but, as I noted in the introduction of this chapter, children are the impetus for FSH.

First, based on my own experiences volunteering at FSH, I want to point out the heavy emphasis on FSH children’s educational trajectories. Kids are encouraged to be thinking about college, as evidenced through: the posters hung up in the computer lab with a checklist of college readiness tasks for each high school grade, caps kids are given that say “Class of _____” indicating their future college graduation year, and a wide variety of educational activities. The FSH network completely immerses its children in educational discourse and goals.

This emphasis, naturally, appears in the interviews as well. The narratives that FSH students tell about their own literacy become actants in their children’s networks. Just as I

pointed out to Sofia that she was modeling the importance of education for her children, so too does Sofia undertake to prepare her kids for learning, as she explains:

I want them, here's what I want to do. I want to provide for them opportunities to explore... Try different things... like with my daughter, I guess what I hope for the future is for them to... have been given many opportunities and kind of build that intrinsic motivation in them... To want to learn, or to want to... understand the importance of writing and communication... And how to write... I think as well to prepare them for their future as they get older... Because there are expectations... And requirements if you want to succeed academically or in certain professions, so, I do have this thing where I do correct, or constructively criticize at times... Just having her do things, practice... It's really practice practice practice, build good habits

In contrast to Sofia's lack of childhood literacy experiences, here she is making sure to provide those opportunities for her own kids. The literacy narrative that Sofia tells herself influences how she raises her kids. The fact that Sofia talked about lacking experience and wanting to learn more specifics about the how-to of writing is evident here, where she talks about how "It's really practice practice practice, build good habits." That Sofia's narrative has changed over her lifetime leads her to be able to imagine different potential futures - not only for herself, as we saw when she spoke about gaining more writing experience, but also for her children. She can plant the seeds for these imagined futures for her kids by using her own literacy narrative as an actant in her children's educational networks.

ChaRay emphasizes the importance of reading for her two young sons:

We got a bookcase and everything which we got from FSH, it's filled with

books, anytime they have a book sale we'll buy a book that we can take home, I'll take them cause I'm going to read to them...I like it and my oldest one he loves the caterpillar books so I don't need to read that to him he reads that to me...And he can't even read, but he would, I guess cause the teacher read it so much he knows it word by word and he will tell you, and I'm just like go ahead you want to read it again?...He used to be up at, when he was younger he would sit up on the couch and I wouldn't even know he was up it would be 10 o'clock at night and I didn't even know he got up out of the bed, but he'd be on the couch reading a book, I'm like really? I'm like well, at least you're looking at the pictures

...

Yeah they love reading, when I get out the Scholar House program I'm going to find a nice library for them to go to , we're going to check out books every day...I definitely want to do that, hopefully they'll have a book club too that my kids can go to, if not then I'll start one of my own...I just think, especially for kids, learning how to read and write is very important for them...So I want to instill that. Like instead of watching Spongebob and all that all the time, No you going to sit here and read a book. The other day, "I want to watch TV," "No you don't, we're going to go in your room and read, that's what we're going to do".

This emphasis on reading reflects ChaRay's own literacy narrative, because she talks about how "I used to love reading, I think I got that from my mom, she would always be someone with a book." Also, the kinds of things that she wants for her children in terms of reading are

shaped by the FSH network they're currently living in - namely, the bookshelves that they fill with books, and the children's book club that ChaRay says she will start if she can't find one. This reflects FSH's toddler book club that was mentioned in several of my interviews as a wonderful resource for the students' kids.

Camille, when she talks about her children, conveys a complex picture of her desires and worries for them. As I discussed previously, she holds her children as well as her nieces and nephews to a high educational standard:

But like I said, I know, I notice the mistakes I made back then with my nieces and nephew..I hold them to that standard, you know...you're going to school I'll do anything in the world for you. I'll go get the moon, but if you're going to give up on school then, you might as well ask somebody else...And my 3 kids know there's no option, you're not to quit school. We are going to get education, that's your key for success, so...

Of her three children, she says that her middle girl does the best in school, taking AP classes and writing poetry and songs: "Like I said the middle child, she's just a go-getter, I told her I'm going to be always looking for you when you turn 18..laugh...She read about it she wants to experience it...she read some book about New York and she was like, can we go to New York?" Of her oldest daughter, Camille points out that

I'm happy she got her writing experience over here in Kentucky versus in Indiana...Because, granted Indiana requires you to have more credits to graduate, but Kentucky teaches you more where she's able to function and deal with college a lot better being that, you know, I do understand I had that gap, but I went to Indiana's high schools... And she did 9th grade in Indiana

but 10th 11th and 12th over here...And it was totally different but she's actually prepared for college, you know what I'm saying...I tend to be like, Oh my God, when they say write 5-8 pages, and she don't care, she be like, Ok..laugh

And of her youngest, her son, Camille describes their struggles with his learning disability and Asperger's, talking about the different tutoring they've done and indicating that she has both hopes and fears for him:

I mean I feel like my kids are on the right track...I don't know what God holds for my son, he might just be behind, you know, they say boys develop later than girls so it might hit him somewhere...but he was like, he wants to be a police officer so he thinks he don't need a whole lot of reading for that...I was like, I think you got to be able to read to be a police officer...We'll have to set up something for you to meet some officers.

Based on how Camille talks about her children and their education, we can see the influence of her own literacy narrative. For example, her own negative experience in Indiana schools leads her to be happy that her eldest daughter was able to finish high school in Kentucky. She directly contrasts her own fear of 5-8 page papers to her daughter's more laid-back response to them. And her concern for her son manifests when she says she'll have to introduce him to some police officers so that he can understand the importance of reading in that specific career, similarly to how Camille herself realized the significance of continuing her education in order to no longer be constrained by the difficult material conditions of being a nurse's aid.

I draw on these examples of Camille's, Sofia's, and ChaRay's potential futures as they appear in the interviews in order to tangibly connect the narrative arcs of these three

students throughout the chapter. Their changed literacy narratives, which are the result of the networks they've been moving through, reveal how they preserve their own potentiality within educational contexts by becoming aware of and making use of their singularity; Camille seeks collaborative help with her writing to help with her brainstorming and proofreading, Sofia reflects on her struggles with the praxis exam and links them to her inexperience with literacy as a child, and ChaRay writes her own life story in order to inspire others in similar situations to pursue their education. The networks they've been moving through appear through the structure of the narratives that these students tell about their literacy practices, and, in turn, these literacy narratives help to shape their current and future networks as well as those of their children, as I described above.

By using narrative theory and Haswell and Haswell's work on authorship, my analysis counters the instability of ANT networks by tracing the ways in which these three students pass through them, as is made visible in the literacy narratives they tell. The reciprocal relationship between narrative as revealing the networks and narrative as also shaping the networks allows us, as researchers, to work towards a richer understanding of students in the full contexts of their lives. It also helps us to see how students are changing by following the narrative arc of the ways in which they preserve their potentiality by recognizing their singularity. Just as those three moments of translation in the previous chapter allowed us to understand the mechanization of power through specific literacy moments in terms of how students were made (in)visible, so here do Camille's, Sofia's, and ChaRay's narratives reveal how they see themselves based on the networks they are passing/have passed through.

In my concluding chapter, I will further explore the significance of unpredictable

change and growth in students, their literacy practices, and our writing classrooms and programs. As I pointed out previously, Haswell and Haswell explain how “unpredictability is an essential ingredient of potentiality. If an outcome is totally predictable, then it makes more sense to say that a person had the readiness for it than the potential. The trouble is that even more than potential learning, unpredictability badly fits the framework of college courses. Rather it is predictability that upholds institutional teaching” (*Authoring* 101). I would add here that, in the context of these three students and considering the networks they are moving through, this necessary unpredictability of their futures arises from the networks as ANT perceives them - made up of diverse actors/actants, fluctuating, and experienced differently by everyone involved in them. As Latour emphasizes, “Really, we should say ‘worknet’ instead of ‘network’. It’s the work, and the movement, and the flow, and *the changes* that should be stressed” (143 emphasis added). Networks, or worknets, are by their very nature changing and unpredictable, producing unpredictable effects on those involved. Considering writing classrooms as networks, then, how do we take advantage of this mutability in order to create opportunities for unpredictable growth and new literacy narratives for our students?

CHAPTER FIVE:
REFLECTING ON UNPREDICTABILITY AND HOSPITALITY IN LITERACY

In my interview with Will, one of the academic advisors at FSH, he mentioned several times the “awe” that he has for the FSH students he works with, many of whom consistently maintain a 4.0 GPA while balancing single parenthood and other responsibilities:

The one thing that just strikes me, I said this earlier and again, it predates my working here...is this amazement, I mean just really...amazing, amazing, amazing people. Just in terms of integrity and desire and passion, and the best parts of ambition, you know...I’m just amazed, amazed, awe-inspired by my students who walk through my door...What I was thinking as I was thinking about single parents is their ability to..the number of things they’re juggling...and well..they’re not just juggling but it looks almost artful.

I bring up Will’s strong reaction to his students’ successful juggling to highlight two key implications: 1) by asking how students are able to juggle everything in their lives, we are better able to understand the rich networks they are moving through and the relationships they are developing to help them with that artful juggling; and 2) by paying attention to Will’s “amazement,” we can see how the narratives of these FSH single parent students are divergent from the educational and life narratives we typically expect to see from this student population. It is by digging into that awe and amazement (and here I’m not only talking

about Will's awe and amazement, but also about the attitudes that students have towards their lives and literacies – consider the numerous examples from Chapter Four of students whose literacy practices and approaches to literacy have changed and are changing) and the reasons behind it, that we can understand the implications of the stories that students tell themselves about their literacy practices. In the course of this project, I have analyzed the relationship work surrounding specific literacy moments, explored the trajectories of students' changing literacy narratives, and linked these changes to the diverse networks surrounding their literacy practices. This complex approach to literacy sponsorship has allowed me to paint a more vivid picture of the literacy practices at an organization at the intersection of community and university and to analyze the significance of a diversity of actors/actants on students' literate self-perceptions and growth.

In this concluding chapter, I first discuss the implications for an approach to literacy research that recognizes the singularity of each individual's act of authoring. I then analyze the relationship between potentiality and unpredictability within FSH students' literacy narratives, and I end with thoughts on how teachers, scholars, and students can create hospitable spaces for learning and growth in literacy.

When I began this project, I saw a need for more research into the rich, local contexts of literacy practices. As covered in Chapter One, literacy research has undergone a tremendous transformation over the past several decades as scholars have argued for the socially contextual and ideological nature of reading and writing, moving the conversation from one about literacy as a skills-based, ideologically neutral and necessary tool for individual and societal advancement to one about literacy as not only shaped by broader sociocultural forces, but also as redefined even beyond the bounds of traditional reading and

writing to include multimodal, digital, extracurricular, and community literacy, among many others. Given this turn towards the social, my study takes up recent calls for research that, while recognizing broader social, cultural, historic, economic, etc. forces that influence literacy, examines site-based, local contexts of literacy in order to pay attention to the complex relationships between a variety of social and material actors within a specific site (Brandt and Clinton, Pahl and Rowsell).

I also saw a need for community-based research, given not only the increasing attention paid to community literacy and community engagement within the university, but also based on the success of community organizations like Family Scholar House in improving the lives of those who tend to slip through the cracks of our larger institutions. In a sense, the broader social forces that New Literacy Studies recognizes are still at work in the local context of FSH; because this population of low-income single parents are being failed by an educational system that makes it nearly impossible to be poor, a single parent, and a full-time college student, FSH intervenes in order to help this population become educated, productive citizens. The material constraints of this broader, classed narrative about educational success appear throughout my project. As I noted in Chapter One, class has to do not only with material realities, but also with how people perceive themselves in relation to others, which can also mean that students are only seeing themselves in certain ways (or only seeing themselves as they believe others do).¹¹ I recognize the material realities of this FSH student population via socioeconomic class when I use ANT to identify the actors and actants surrounding specific literacy practices in Chapter Three, and I examine students' self-

¹¹ For example, Jane associated the luncheon speaker's success with the fact that she "looked just like all the other bigwigs around." Her subsequent recognition that this woman had been in Jane's situation made it easier for Jane to imagine herself being similarly successful.

perceptions when I analyze the changes in their literacy narratives in Chapter Four. This project seeks to strike a balance between recognition of the macro social forces and the micro material conditions. Among these social forces is the narrative that literacy and education are the pathway to success, in addition to the capitalist narrative of a good citizen being defined in terms of their economic productivity (FSH emphasizes, among other things, the number of students who graduate and go on to become homeowners). While this project does not attempt to identify or explain the relationship between these cultural narratives/forces and these students' literacy practices, it is important to place my research within this bigger picture because it is a picture that helps shape the smaller pieces: the literacy practices.

In order to make this turn towards the local specifics of literacy practices, I use Actor-Network Theory, narrative theory, and Haswell and Haswell's work on authorship. ANT allows me to perform a more symmetrical analysis of the actors/actants surrounding any given literacy practice/moment and the relationships between them by focusing on the concept of translation (as the connection that is created between multiple elements in a network as they are working together towards a shared purpose). Focusing on the literacy narratives (and the narrative structure) allows me to consider individual students' experiences with literacy over their lifetimes. Haswell and Haswell's work provides a perspective on how the singular identity of each student contributes to how she performs the act of authoring a text.

Rethinking the Literacy of Student Authors

My research offers an alternative approach to students' literacy practices, one that, although it recognizes the significant contextual forces surrounding any given literate moment, focuses on the connection between individual students' literacy practices, the

relationship work surrounding those practices, and the literacy narratives leading to and arising from students' embodied literacy practices. The notions of students' singularity and potentiality are central to this approach. Haswell and Haswell's work on authorship begins from a place in which they recognize the singularity of the act of authoring; however, rather than seeing this as a departure from the recent tendency to analyze the sociocultural forces contributing to how we, as individuals, make meaning, Haswell and Haswell describe the need for research into the actual, singular act of authoring: "A writer is unlike any other writer and a reader unlike any other reader, because only one person fits inside her or his skin. Especially writers know this, and, as we will soon show, that knowledge of individual uniqueness moves them to write" (*Authoring 2*). They argue that scholarship on authoring has, for the past many years, either focused on the "social" on one end or "text and response" on the other, without paying much attention to the act of creating a text that lies in between. Haswell and Haswell argue that "In the current identity box, there seems to be no sanctioned space where the potentiality of students can form a singular self that resists identification" (7). Here, I do not believe they are arguing that we need to revert exclusively to this notion of a singular self, but that we must recognize it in ways that fit with the way we have been talking about social and community identities as a field. They offer the notions of singularity and potentiality - as I explored in Chapter Four - as opportunities to rethink how students approach the act of authoring:

The implications of the authoring-potentiality-singularity paradigm lead in very different directions. If teaching vests authority in authoring, students will be recognized more by their promise than their performance, will be encouraged to develop personal distinction rather than group affiliations, and

will be affirmed in their inner dignity rather than in an “identity” assigned by the culture at large. (8)

As I argued in Chapter Four, considering students’ singularity (their individual sense of self based on past life experiences that makes any act of authoring unique) and potentiality (their unique sense of what they are and could be capable of writing in the future) allows us as teachers and researchers to better understand the relationship between students’ identities and their literacy practices. This perspective also provides students the opportunity to gain a fuller understanding of how and why they write the way they do. As we see in the stories of Camille, Sofia, and ChaRay, they use their own awareness of their singular strengths and struggles with literacy in order to preserve their potentiality and improve their writing.

Camille talks about her lack of educational support as a child, and describes how now she not only sees the importance of education to change the lives of herself and her children, she also seeks out help with her writing through the resources that FSH helps her become aware of (like the Writing Lab, and even her own family members). Sofia also describes the change in her reading and writing throughout her life, from a lack of literacy in her childhood home to exploration of wider genres and contexts for reading arising from her recovery program and sustained by her book club. She discusses specific ways she wants to improve her writing in order to pass the praxis exam, showing an awareness of her singular struggles with writing and a developing understanding of how to maintain her potentiality as a writer. ChaRay’s awareness of her singularity manifests in her desire to finish her autobiographical book in order to share her story with others like her who are struggling to complete their education; in other words, her singularity manifests through helping preserve others’ potentialities.

Singularity and potentiality matter in terms of how we, as scholars, study literacy.

They provide us with a way to think about the individualized acts of authoring and the potential for future creative activity and growth that previous literacy research has tended to elide in its focus on the broader cultural, historical, economic, etc forces surrounding contextualized literacy practices. We are more easily able to connect the act of authoring – of performing literacy and creating texts – with the resulting narratives that students then carry with them through and beyond our classrooms. These are the narratives that preserve students’ potentiality. The connection between acts of literacy and the resulting mobile narratives is hugely significant because this is a connection that assessment has been attempting to convey, both successfully and unsuccessfully. We evaluate student writing in our courses to try to understand the growth (or lack thereof) that comes from a sequence of authoring acts. So, singularity and potentiality matter not only for literacy research in the sense that it gives us a way of analyzing individuals’ present literacy practices - as they come from singular past experiences and connect to potential future practices – but also for writing pedagogy. As writing teachers, perceiving students as singular authors and valuing the potential they are sustaining in our courses for future growth – potential that is maintained via narratives students create about the literacy they practice in the course – rather than focusing solely on students’ present performance gives us a rich, human, and temporally flexible approach to assessment.

Unpredictability in Literacy Narratives vs. Predictability of Narrative Structure

As I argued in Chapter Four, potentiality requires unpredictability because, as Haswell and Haswell point out, “If an outcome is totally predictable, then it makes more sense to say that a person had the readiness for it than the potential” (*Authoring* 101). If learning and growth is unpredictable, that indicates that students are truly enacting their

potential. (Unpredictability does not always mean positive growth, however; think about the growth that can come from unexpected failure.) Unpredictability is also essential for a student population whose predicted futures, according to the status quo and existing infrastructure, consist of failure. Poor single parent students are not expected to succeed academically. According to a study by the Institute for Women's Policy Research, 53% of parents vs 31% of nonparents left school after 6 years without a degree. Low-income parents are 25% less likely to earn a degree than low-income nonparents (Nelson). To resist this narrative, this student population needs scaffolding that provides them with opportunities for unpredictable, unexpected growth. The question then becomes, where does this unpredictability come from?

If we consider this question in the context of FSH, we see how FSH creates the potential for unpredictable change by combining a wide variety of material and social support for students. Basically, you are more likely to get unpredictable growth when you have a network in which many diverse elements are working towards a shared purpose. As Latour points out, "Really, we should say 'worknet' instead of 'network'. It's the work, and the movement, and the flow, and the changes that should be stressed" (143, emphasis added). Networks, or worknets, are by their very nature changing and unpredictable, producing unpredictable effects on those involved. Students at FSH change their self-narratives as a result of their interactions with these diverse networks, and their new stories are re-integrated into their networks. During her interview, Sofia shared that her happiest moment of the day was drinking coffee by herself in the morning and getting started on her schoolwork. This sort of moment could not happen without FSH childcare, the subsidized apartment, donated furniture, KTAP financial support while she is in school, academic advising, and a host of

other resources.

But, our classrooms are not FSH. We cannot provide students with the same diversity of support as the FSH community. So, I want to step away from this question for a second.

Last October I attended the inaugural Conference on Community Writing out in Boulder, Colorado. One of the keynote speakers was Paul Feigenbaum from Florida International University, and he gave a wonderful talk about community-university partnerships in which he explained that community writing was facing a choice. Community writing is facing a choice between what he called the “beautifully tactical but unpredictable encounters with serendipity” that tend to characterize community-university partnerships, and the more structured, formal infrastructures that could help to maintain such partnerships but that may disrupt the natural flow and spontaneity of these relationships. He asked us, “What would it mean to build engaged infrastructure that cultivates a flow milieu even while connected to institutions that tend to disrupt it?” In his question, and in my question about how to create opportunities for unpredictable student growth in our classrooms, I see a broader question: how do we balance institutional stability and stable heuristics for predictable learning that result in specific outcomes with serendipity, flow, unpredictable relationships and growth? How do we balance safety and risk?

This is obviously a very big question, with lots of possible answers. So let’s return to students like Camille, Sofia, and ChaRay and ask, “where do we see safety balanced with risk? Where do we see a seesaw of predictability and unpredictability?” I see predictability in the narrative structure itself – when Camille talks about her literacy, we see the inherent narrativity unfolding in the connections she makes between her past, present, and future literacy practices. I see unpredictability in narrative as a thing, as a story – so when Camille

is surprised by her *Metamorphosis* paper, that demonstrates how important it is for students to realize that their narratives can change, can be unpredictable. That, in fact, the new literacy narratives they create for themselves should look like nothing they thought they were capable of. In other words, we can use the stability of the narrative structure to help students create opportunities for spontaneity, flow, and joy. We can see this unpredictable growth in Sofia's expanded reading habits as an adult, growth arising from the increasingly diverse networks of literacy she becomes part of as a recovering addict and then member of a book club.

ChaRay's unpredictable literate growth appears when she herself points out how she plans on surprising her high school English teacher, whom she treated badly, with a copy of her book; the surprise arises from the shift from behaving badly in high school English to then writing a book about her life experiences as a single mother. For students who grow up with a particular and confining view on what they can/will achieve in their lives, especially academically, it matters that they have access to networks through which they can gain an alternative perspective (such as the FSH network). The stability these networks offer, combined with the stability of narrative as a way of structuring how we see our lives and how we understand the connections between all of the different aspects of our lives, allows students like Camille, Sofia, and ChaRay to develop the relationships that help them to see themselves differently. The consistent narrative structure within stable, diversely supportive networks help FSH students to retell the narratives of their literate identities in unpredictable ways.

We saw in Chapter Three how the relationship work that the FSH network provided opportunities for helped students to navigate specific literacy practices that, without the rich perspectives of the FSH community, tended to make students visible in narrow, reductive

ways. If we consider the variety of actors/actants in the three moments from Chapter Three (KTAP application, SAP appeal letter, and FSH fundraising luncheon), we can see how the predictability comes from the actants that belong to the more well-established, institutional angles in these moments. The KTAP application represents a predictable, reductive view of students who are applying for financial assistance; the SAP appeal letter represents a standardized procedure by which students attempt to regain their financial aid; and the FSH luncheon is a longstanding fundraiser. I am not necessarily arguing that predictability is bad; rather, it is important to have a balance of predictable and unpredictable factors. These predictable literacy structures help students to gain the assistance they need in order to complete their college degrees; the unpredictability of the relationship work surrounding these literacy practices helps students to use this assistance in ways that help them see the fuller picture of their identities and lives rather than simply accept the reductive ways these standardized, regulated, institutionalized processes portray students.

Unpredictability is also inherent in the classroom environment – in the interactions and growth between teacher and student. Because, although our classrooms might not resemble the resource-rich environment of FSH, we each carry within us a lifetime of singular experiences. In the meeting of student and teacher, each learns from the other's singularity. So, let's take up Haswell and Haswell's call for hospitable classrooms and writing programs in order to create space for spontaneity and risk.

Hospitality as a Way In

Following the paths of other scholars who have called for literacy pedagogy and research that challenge the current assessment-obsessed culture and offer alternative approaches (Alvermann *Reconceptualizing*; Elbow *Everyone Can Write*; Newkirk *Holding*;

and Williams “Are We Having Fun,” “Dancing with Don,” and “Standardized Students”), Janis and Richard Haswell offer an hospitable approach to the college writing classroom that celebrates difference and risk-taking. They begin with a traditional definition of hospitality: “An act of generosity and charity, yes, but traditional hospitality is also an act of courage, transgression, disruption, resistance, or rebellion. And it is always a site for learning” (*Hospitality* 6). They then propose a radical definition of hospitality as it can transform the English classroom through, mainly, 1) the equivalence and transience of the roles of host/guest (in other words, teacher and student are open to switching places), and 2) a complete openness to the unknown, indeed, recognition that the only way to truly learn is to open one’s singularity up to others’ singularities and to unpredictable potentiality. This kind of hospitality is not, the authors point out, easy: “We are asking that teachers stop depending upon given expectations of uniformity and given constructions of identity and fully accept difference, an ungiven transformation – mysterious or not, documented or not – that could be traumatic indeed” (50). They explain that hospitality of this kind can enable potentiality; student and teacher can grow beyond themselves by being exposed to those who are “Other” and different from each host/guest’s own interior singularity. The authors draw on Levinas to argue that it is only through this kind of exposure to and acceptance of extreme difference that student and teacher can learn:

Hospitality is simply one model of that relation of the self with the Other, which cannot be imagined beforehand, for the student’s world is not contained by the teacher, nor is the teacher’s contained by the student. All teaching is initiated from the exterior, not the interior, says Levinas (1969), bringing to the teacher or to the student more than he or she contains (51). Only the

absolutely foreign – the student different in age, gender, cultural background, experience, politics, religion, ethnicity to the teacher, and the teacher different in age, gender, cultural background, experience, politics, religions, ethnicity to the student – can instruct (73). And hospitality is one of the few intuitive social practices that fully accepts the absolutely foreign. (46)

This kind of openness invites the unpredictable and recognizes that, in fact, the unpredictable is necessary if student and teacher are meeting each other in the true sense of the guest/host relationship that Haswell and Haswell's definition of hospitality requires: "As in the alchemist's hope of lead transformed into gold, the outcome of the mixture of Same and Other, host and guest, is unpredictable and unaccountable, 'fully mysterious'" (50). The unpredictability of these hospitable encounters resembles the desired unpredictability of students' literacy narratives as I have described them previously - both represent transformative learning and change that cannot follow a predictable path if it is to have lasting meaning (if it is to fulfill students' potentiality).

I see some significant connections between Haswell and Haswell's approach to hospitality and Actor-Network Theory, especially as I have been using ANT in this project. Consider that ANT asks for a symmetrical view of the components of any given unit of analysis; it focuses on the relationships rather than the people or things by themselves; it does not assume any specific cause or motivation for the situation being analyzed but rather looks at the goings-on that turn it into a situation. Hospitality is all about the host and guest having an unpredictable relationship, which is also the main idea behind translation: translation is not about actors/actants doing specific things, but rather about actors/actants coming together and forming relationships because they are working towards a shared purpose. Student and

teacher come together in the classroom, not in order to accomplish a set number of pre-determined tasks or goals (ideally), but to connect and form a relationship that hopefully leads to engagement, learning, and transformation on both the part of the student and the teacher.

FSH is, according to Haswell and Haswell's definition of hospitality, a natural fit for this hospitable relationship between host and guest. FSH is a host for FSH students who become guests welcomed into the FSH residences and support spaces. This relationship is temporary, however, as students graduate and move out. The authors point out that, in fact, it is often the spaces on the margins that are best suited for hospitality because in more mainstream spaces, the significant gap between haves and have-nots makes it difficult for hospitality to be equivocal and reciprocated:

Without reciprocity the host-guest relation becomes fixed, degenerating into condescension or exploitation on the part of the host, begging or parasitism on the part of the guest (Rosello 2001, 167). It is no accident that true hospitable space often is located between the interstices or on the fringes of social power, in 'the margins of society, where it is offered by hosts who have a sense of their own alien status' (Pohl 1995, 136).

(Hospitality 27)

FSH exists as a kind of third space, which is, as Ackerman and Coogan point out, "a space that is open, hybrid, resistant, and marginal" (9), all terms used similarly by Haswell and Haswell to describe hospitable spaces. And, as Haswell and Haswell point out, "In the traditional literature...hospitality is offered by marginal figures – the isolated cottage couple, the elderly, the widower, the recluse, and the poor. Above all the poor" (*Hospitality* 61). FSH

students are poor, and even the nonprofit status of FSH as an organization represents an alternative to the mainstream for-profit business.

Within this marginal space, however, FSH is a regulated and controlled environment: students must meet particular requirements to enter the program, and then they must maintain full-time student status, keep up a specific GPA, and complete several other mandatory requirements. The predictability of the FSH system and rules resembles the predictability of the narrative structure; within these predictable structures, students are able to shape their own life stories and literacy practices according to the singularity that these safe, regulated spaces allow them to explore (and, indeed, these safe spaces on the margins help to connect students to the resources they need to change their life narratives - it is because FSH exists on the boundary between university and community that FSH staff can help students access a wide variety of FSH, university, and community resources). Similarly, Haswell and Haswell point out that the expectations of hospitality create a common ground, or a predictable heuristic, from which host and guest can interact in unpredictable ways:

The hospitable classroom, if it is just, must be out of control...Each classroom, each new learning room, each new novel or paper topic assigned, each new occasion of reciprocity between singular persons requires a new interpretation. Each encounter, each context requires a rethinking of who is free to give enough, who is free to receive enough and, most important, 'who has enough power to define freedom' (Rosello 2001, 174). The only certainty in this complex, asymmetrical, risky, peregrine, marginalized space is host and guest sharing the same intuitions about hospitality itself. (*Hospitality* 58)

While the host and guest "sharing the same intuitions about hospitality itself" might seem

fairly likely at a site like FSH - where students and staff are familiar with the idea of risk-taking as a necessary part of the everyday challenges of living and learning - this shared approach to hospitality might be more of a stretch in a traditional English classroom.

Indeed, the kind of hospitable classroom for which Haswell and Haswell advocate seems extreme in some ways. Above, they describe the hospitable classroom as “out of control” and requiring a “new interpretation” for each interaction and assignment. This sounds, on a practical level, impossible and exhausting (although it could very well be that once a hospitable habit is developed, these things become easier).¹² The authors recognize the inherent contradiction in asking teachers to resist the uniformity of the institutionalized system that has hired them, and admit that such a request might be

Especially traumatic for scholar-teachers who make their living in the current academia of accountability, predictive testing, uniform conduct codes, total quality management, fixation on performance, syllabuses with grade standards preposted publicly online, tenure files with exhaustively documented paper trails, and classrooms with seating packed for efficiency like an airline cabin or a military barracks. We are rashly asking that employees hired for totality work for infinity. (*Hospitality* 50-1)

In addition to the challenge, from the teacher’s perspective, of creating this kind of open, unpredictable learning space within institutional confines, we need also to consider what we are asking of students. This kind of learning environment is, in all likelihood, different from what students are used to. And while asking students to enter a different sort of space and to

¹² This kind of interaction is not new to writing studies: consider the work of writing centers, in which tutor and student meet anew on a daily basis and must bring these “new interpretations” to each interaction.

attempt a risk-taking approach to learning is a potentially rich, productive pedagogy, we cannot ignore the challenges that students may face in adapting to it, especially students whose socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds might not have prepared them for such a radical classroom. As Peckham points out, working-class students might struggle with strategies such as “objectivity, multiple perspective, explicit language, stance, and dialogism” (68), and he raises the danger in assuming that critical thinking is class-neutral. In other words, in these radically hospitable classrooms, we need to maintain a constant awareness of and reflection on what students seem to struggle with and why. This fits with the purpose of the hospitable classroom, in which teacher and student meet each other as strangers with everything to learn from each other.

Based on the responses of FSH students in the interviews, however, we need to consider the power of pedagogy that seeks to understand what gets students excited about literacy. Indeed, over the past seven years of teaching writing and reading composition scholarship, I cannot count how many times I have come across the idea that students write (and learn) best when they are interested in and personally invested in the process and its outcome. Even in these interviews with FSH students, several mentioned needing to be interested in the writing to be motivated to get it done. ChaRay said, “So I feel like I have to care about the subject I’m writing about...Or at least interested in a tiny bit...If I’m not interested I feel like it’s harder to get it done”. This may seem like an obvious notion, but what happens when we consider what this idea looks like in Haswell and Haswell’s hospitable classroom? It becomes about more than just letting students choose their research paper topics. Based on Haswell and Haswell’s definition of hospitality, joy needs to become the focal point of the hospitable classroom experience:

...one of the results of instituting hospitality in the English classroom is an increase in enjoyment. The connection of change, teaching, and joy isn't so surprising when we remember a larger relationship, that of change to learning itself. True learning, no different from true hospitality, entails change. True learning – that is, learning that stays learned – is accompanied by the most basic motivation of humans, what in the 1800 Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* Wordsworth (1800, 255) called 'the grand elementary principle of pleasure.' 'Only in enjoyment,' agrees Levinas (1969), 'does the I crystallize' (144). (*Hospitality* 164)

In other words, enjoyment is central to true learning which requires change, and this change, in the hospitable classroom, comes from open-minded encounters of teacher/student, host/guest. This change also requires a letting-go on the part of the teacher, as Haswell and Haswell point out:

The more they shape their courses in the image of hospitality, the happier they are. Some of this comes from shedding old frustrations, frustrations due to false expectations. Paper after paper, students don't change in their writing. What else should we expect?... Week after week, most of our students appear unenthused about the reading, the topic for discussion, or the next assignment, and only a few catch fire. What else should we expect, if everyone's potential, the power source for future change, is unique, singular, and by definition unknown? And there is a relief and a joy in walking into every class or starting every student conference asking not, 'Do I have the knowledge to teach the students?' but rather, 'What do these students know that I want to

learn?' (174)

Just as Paul Feigenbaum asks us to locate those moments of joy and flow within university-community partnerships rather than focusing on the problems, Haswell and Haswell ask us to 1) enter the classroom prepared to let go of control and learn from students, and 2) actively seek out the singular joy - the thing that students are cultivating that will allow them to grow in unpredictable ways - in each student's literacy experiences.

What does this look like in the classroom? And what could this look like in community-university partnerships? Regarding the English classroom, Haswell and Haswell argue for a version of trust between student and teacher that is enacted when teachers "surrender" to student writing. Rather than pretending, along the lines of Elbow's believing/doubting game, this act of surrender is instinctual and immediate: "The unconditional host does not believe or disbelieve the stranger before opening the door; the surrendered reader does not judge the text before responding to it. In both cases, the act of reception is unpremeditated" (*Hospitality* 91). Rather than jumping straight to judgment and criticism, as we tend to do with student writing, we need first to open the door and surrender to the strangeness of it. Haswell and Haswell argue that this risky act will help teachers to understand students and, ultimately, to better teach them:

Surrendering helps teachers see what students haven't done and can't do on their own. It doesn't ask students to be better aware of audience but to read their own writing and become aware of what *they* have been unaware of. The responsibility in the response of the teacher-reader is to ask, truly ask, the student what the student doesn't know. Advance in writing will come when the teacher and the student locate what neither knows. (98)

In other words, by surrendering to student writing and fully immersing ourselves in students' perspectives, we can help students to learn "what the student doesn't know." By doing this we help students, via the same kind of relationship work between Rose and Will and their FSH students, to maintain their potentiality in order to create unpredictable narratives of their lives and literacies. The tricky part is that students may not actually create these narratives in our classrooms over the course of a semester or two. This kind of learning does not necessarily have concrete results; as the focus is on potentiality, or the potential for future change, then the kind of learning that leads to growth in potentiality does not always show that growth in the present which, of course, fits badly within the current framework of writing classrooms and programs that inevitably rely on some type of assessment of the learning that takes place over a semester. We need to be having more conversations about what assessment looks like that isn't necessarily semester-based nor tied to grades and numbers. We need to devise ways to assess the connection between students' individual acts of authoring and the literacy narratives they carry with them beyond our classrooms because, as I mentioned above, these are the narratives that help students to maintain their potentiality.

Haswell and Haswell conclude their argument by describing the hospitable classroom as a place where teachers and students are

applying the ordinary tactics of traditional hospitality – friendly welcome, generous offering of assistance, openness to others, free exchange of information and other gifts, allowance of privacy, sacrifice of elbow room for others, setting aside of social rank, acceptance of difference, mutual respect, unforced talk, willingness to learn from strangers, acceptance of the unpredictable. (*Hospitality* 181)

If I were to propose a specific heuristic for unpredictability and joy in our writing classrooms, research, and community engagement, this would be it. For now, anyways. I have struggled to come up with something concrete - a list of steps, a formula - to leave in these last pages that will help others who are doing similar work to have guidelines to follow. Here is what I offer, based on Haswell and Haswell's call that we engage in the "ordinary tactics of traditional hospitality," and based on my experience with this project.

- 1) Incorporate daily reflection into your teaching and research. It's one thing to say you're going to be more open to student differences, to surrender more readily to student writing, to listen to and accept a community partner's agenda, etc, but without regular and frequent reflection, it is quite difficult to do it (and to know that you are, in fact, doing it).
- 2) Provide daily opportunities for student reflection, as well. Continually ask the questions that get students thinking about their literacy, both its past, present, and hoped-for future, questions like: What was hard/enjoyable about this piece of writing? What resources and/or prior knowledge did you draw on to write it? What do you feel is missing from this writing, or what would have helped you to know while writing it?
- 3) Switch roles with students, regularly and explicitly. Provide opportunities for students to teach each other (and you) based on things they feel expert in/gain enjoyment from.
- 4) Create space for relationship-building in the classroom or community partnership (through things like peer review, group projects, one-on-one and group conferences, and by asking each other what we want to learn and accomplish and how we hope to do so).

5) Have fun! Locate the joy.

In addition to these steps for creating hospitable classrooms, research spaces, and university-community partnerships that allow for unpredictable relationships and growth, there are several directions for future pedagogy and research based on the issues this project has explored. Although what I have written here may always feel unfinished, given the nature of doing qualitative research with a dynamic group of community and university participants, this project is the start of not only a research trajectory pursuing community engaged work, but also the start of research on the nature of the stories we tell ourselves about literacy. To continue this research, we must first engage in more local, site-based research so that we can all be developing these heuristics and sharing our methods for literacy research. We need to undertake more research that looks at a variety of interrelated factors surrounding literacy practices, especially research that considers how these socio-material actors/actants shape and are shaped by the power dynamics within any given site. We need to be seeking out the joy - in our own teaching and research - and helping our students to look for things that bring them joy and make them want to learn. We need to seek out the unpredictable and the surprising, whether that is in students' writing and literacy growth or in terms of our own approach to teaching and research. Because, just as students like Camille, Sofia, and ChaRay have created new literacy narratives based on supportive networked relationships, so can we create new narratives of our own literate identities as teachers and scholars. We need to surrender to students' perspectives, and this applies not only to surrendering to student writing in the classroom, but also surrendering in the sense that ANT asks us to surrender, as researchers, to the dynamic and mysterious goings-on within our research sites. Finally, we need to try to let go of control, as frightening as that may be, because it is in those

unpredictable, joyful moments that true learning can take place.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Questions for FSH Students

1. Could you tell me a little bit about yourself? Your name, age, where you work and go to school, your hobbies...
2. How would you describe your overall experience at FSH?
3. Could you describe your typical day? What takes up most of your time? What are your favorite and least favorite things you do every day?
4. What kinds of writing do you do on a daily basis?
5. What kinds of reading do you do on a daily basis?
6. Tell me about the kinds of writing and reading you did growing up.
7. How would you describe your children's writing/reading experiences? What do you want their writing/reading experiences to be like in the future?
8. Describe the sort of writing you do for your college courses.
9. Describe a typical writing experience – for example, do you write in your home, at the FSH computer lab, or elsewhere? On a laptop, tablet, phone, paper? How much time do you spend on a writing task?
10. Can you tell me a little bit more about a specific writing task you had to do for one of your classes? How did you feel about it? Did you think it was successful? How do you know when you've succeeded at a college writing task?
11. What obstacles and struggles do you have when writing for your college courses?
12. How has your experience been with all the different kinds of support that FSH provides? How would you say the diff kinds of support have affected your life? as a student? Do you think this support from FSH influences your writing and reading?
13. How would you describe your attitude towards your writing?
14. What is one thing you'd like to see changed in your life?
15. Are there things I haven't asked about that you'd like to add? Anything you've thought of as we've been talking?
16. Would you be interested in sending me what you consider to be your most and least successful papers? Plus the assignment sheets, and teacher feedback if you've got it.

Interview Questions for FSH Staff

- Could you tell me a little bit about yourself? Your name, age, how long you've worked at FSH, your hobbies...
- How would you describe your overall experience at FSH?
- Could you describe your typical day? What takes up most of your time? Favorite/least favorite parts of your day?
- What kinds of writing do you see from students and discuss with them? This includes writing for college courses but also writing in other contexts, like filling out paperwork, writing online, writing to communicate with others, etc.
- What are your goals when interacting with students?
- What do students seem to struggle with in their experiences with college writing? With their academic experience more generally?
- What is one thing particularly that you see students doing to overcome obstacles with writing?
- How do you know when students have succeeded at a college writing task? How do you define successful writing at FSH?
- What kind of impact do you see FSH having on students' writing experiences? On students' lives more generally?
- How do social class and gender factor into FSH students' experiences in school and at FSH?
- What kinds of students end up being successful at FSH, and how does FSH help them?
- What is one thing you'd like to see changed about FSH?
- Are there things I haven't asked about that you'd like to add? Anything you've thought of as we've been talking?
- Would you be interested in sending me programmatic documents that represent FSH's approach(es) to literacy, such as mission statements, workshops handouts, and other significant forms that you interact with with students?

Interview Questions for Writing Program Administrators

- Could you tell me a little bit about yourself? Your name, age, how long you've worked at JCTC/UofL, your hobbies...
- How would you describe your overall experience at JCTC/UofL?
- Could you describe your typical day? What takes up most of your time? Favorite/least favorite parts of your day?
- Could you tell me what you know about Family Scholar House?
- What kinds of writing do you assign or see assigned in your courses?
- What are the most important outcomes you see for your writing program courses? How do you see these outcomes as defining literacy within the university context?
- What kinds of writing do you see from students and discuss with them?

- What do students seem to struggle with in their experiences with college writing?
- How do you know when students have succeeded at a college writing task? How do you let students know?
- How often and in what context do you discuss with students their lives outside of the classroom?
- How do social class and gender factor into your students' experiences in the writing program courses?
- What is one thing in particular that your program helps/doesn't help students with in regards to their writing?
- What is one thing that you'd like to see changed about your writing program?
- Are there things I haven't asked about that you'd like to add? Anything you've thought of as we've been talking?
- Would you be interested in sending me programmatic documents that represent JCTC's/UofL's approach(es) to literacy, such as course outcome statements, syllabi, assignment sheets, etc? How directly would you say JCTC/UofL students' writing experiences are shaped by these institutional documents?

APPENDIX B

For IRB Approval Stamp

Informed Consent Document

Tracing Meaningful Practices of Success and Literacy Within and Across
University/Community Partnerships

IRB Assigned Number: 14.0455

Investigator(s) name and address:

Dr. Bronwyn T. Williams (principal investigator)
Bingham Humanities Building
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40292
bronwyn.williams@louisville.edu

Kathryn E. Perry (co-investigator)
Bingham Humanities Building
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40292
Keperr03@louisville.edu

Possible Research Sites:

Family Scholar House
403 Reg Smith Circle
Louisville, KY 40208

University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40292

Jefferson Community and Technical College
109 East Broadway
Louisville, KY 40202

Phone Numbers for Subject to Call for Questions:

Bronwyn Williams—
Kathryn Perry—

Introduction and Background Information

You are invited to participate in a research study. The study is being conducted by Dr. Bronwyn T. Williams and Kathryn E. Perry, a Ph.D. candidate in Rhetoric and Composition. The study is sponsored by the University of Louisville, Department of English. The study will take place at Family Scholar House, University of Louisville, and Jefferson Community and Technical College in Louisville, Kentucky. Approximately 8 subjects will be invited to participate.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine how community and university partners define successful academic literacy practices, specifically by looking at Family Scholar House (FSH) and two universities at which its participants attend: University of Louisville and Jefferson Community and Technical College. Through this investigation, I plan to study the attitudes towards academic writing as expressed by students and staff at FSH as well as those expressed by faculty and administrators at UofL and JCTC. I am interested in understanding more about how students negotiate academic literacies at the university level. This study is part of my dissertation project that examines definitions of successful literacy practices in light of recent discussions about relationships between university and community stakeholders.

Procedures

Participants in this study will be interviewed individually at least once by the co-investigator. The interviews will last approximately one hour. The interviews will consist of open-ended questions formatted to encourage a conversational exchange between the participant and the co-investigator. The research project will take place during 2014 at FSH, UofL, and JCTC.

Potential Risks

There may be risks in this study in your possible discomfort in answering personal questions about your writing and/or teaching experiences. There may also be unforeseen risks.

Benefits

The information collected in this study may help you to better understand the ways various community and university stakeholders understand literacy, as well as the various approaches to literacy taken by the different organizations involved in the study.

Compensation

You will not be compensated for your time, inconvenience, or expense while you are in this study.

Confidentiality

Total privacy cannot be guaranteed. Information collected from this study will be used to complete the co-investigator's dissertation. If the results of this study are published in

presentations or print, pseudonyms will be used. Participants will decide on the pseudonym used.

Your personal identifying information will be removed from all materials generated from this study.

While unlikely, the following may look at the study records:

- The University of Louisville Institutional Review Board and Human Subjects Protection Program Office
- Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP)
- Office of Civil Rights

Audio files and transcripts of your interviews will be kept on a password protected computer.

Voluntary Participation

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate, you may decide to participate in any specific portion of the research or decline to answer any specific questions in the interviews. You may withdraw from the study at any time.

Research Subject's Right, Questions, Concerns, and Complaints

If you have any concerns or complaints about the study or the study staff, you have three options.

You may contact the principal investigator at _____.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may call the Human Subjects Protection Program Office at 502-852.5188. You can discuss any questions about your rights as a research subject, in private, with a member of the Institutional Review Board (IRB). You may also call this number if you have other questions about the research, and you cannot reach the study doctor, or want to talk to someone else. The IRB is an independent committee made up of people from the University community, staff of the institutions, as well as people from the community not connected with these institutions. The IRB has reviewed this research study.

If you have questions or complaints about the research or the research staff and you do not wish to give your name, you may call 1.877.852.1167. You will be given the chance to talk about any questions, concerns, or complaints in secret. This is a 24 hour hot line answered by people who do not work for the University of Louisville.

This paper tells you what will happen during the study if you chose to take part. Your signature means that this study has been discussed with you, that your questions have been answered, and that you will take part in the study. This informed consent document is not a

contract. You are not giving up any legal rights by signing this informed consent document. You will be given a signed copy of this paper to keep for your records.

Signature of Subject/Legal Representative

____/____/____
Date Signed

Signature of the Person Explaining the Consent Form
(if other than the Investigator)

____/____/____
Date Signed

Signature of Investigator

____/____/____
Date Signed

List of Investigators

Dr. Bronwyn T. Williams (principal investigator)

Kathryn E. Perry (co-investigator)

Dear [Name],

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study that I am conducting for my dissertation. This study is being sponsored by the Department of English at the University of Louisville under the guidance of Dr. Bronwyn T. Williams.

I am interested in understanding more about the ways students negotiate academic literacies at the university level. In terms of this specific study I plan to examine how community and university partners define successful academic literacy practices, specifically by looking at Family Scholar House (FSH) and two universities which its participants attend: University of Louisville and Jefferson Community and Technical College. I am inviting you to participate in this study. I would like to conduct an interview and a follow-up interview if needed to discuss your experiences with college writing, specific instances of your successes and struggles with writing, and how you see FSH's role in supporting your academic literacy practices. I will also ask for you to share any relevant writing samples such as papers you may have written for a college course. Through this investigation, I plan to study the attitudes towards academic writing as expressed by students and staff at FSH as well as those expressed by faculty and administrators at UofL and JCTC. This study is part of my dissertation project.

The study will take place between September and December 2014. I will interview you at your own convenience at FSH. Your time commitment would take the form of the interview mentioned above.

You can reach me by phone or email to further discuss the details of this research study.

Please let me know if you are interested in participating, so that we can arrange to meet. Your participation is completely voluntary.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to answering any questions you may have concerning this study.

Sincerely,
Kathryn E. Perry
Ph.D. Candidate in Rhetoric and Composition
University of Louisville

CURRICULUM VITA

Kathryn Perry

EDUCATION

University of Louisville, expected graduation: May 2016

Ph.D., Rhetoric and Composition

Dissertation: *Stories of Single Mothers: Narrating the Sociomaterial Mechanisms of Literacy in a Community-University Partnership*

Committee: Bronwyn Williams (chair), Bruce Horner, Mary P Sheridan, Karen Kopelson, and Kevin Roozen

University of Louisville, May 2011

M.A., English, Concentration in Rhetoric and Composition

Thesis: "A Novice Teacher's Reading of Composition Scholarship: Towards a Relational Approach to Writing and Learning"

Advisor: Min-Zhan Lu

Washington University in St. Louis, May 2005

B.A., English and French

Study Abroad: Université de Toulouse Le Mirail, Toulouse, France (Fall 2003-Spring 2004)

PUBLICATIONS

"Responding to 'Inside Voices' and Voices of Common Places: An Ethnographic Angle."

JAC 34.1-2 (2014): 133-138. Print.

"Responding to Branding via Writing Assessment." *JAC* 32.3-4 (2012): 738-742. Print.

"The Movement of Composition: Dance and Writing." *Kairos* 17.1 (2012). Web.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

"Literacy Sponsorship as a Process of Translation: Using Actor-Network Theory to Analyze Power within Emergent Relationships at Family Scholar House." *Composing Feminist Interventions: Activism, Engagement, Praxis*. Eds. Kristine Blair and Lee Nickoson. Proposal Accepted, Manuscript Under Review.

TEACHING & RESEARCH AREAS

Community Literacy and Literacy Studies; Composition Theory and Pedagogy; Ethnography and Ethnographic Methods; Qualitative Research; Narrative Theory; Actor-Network Theory; Translingualism and Theories of Language Difference; Writing across the Curriculum/in the Disciplines; Creative Nonfiction

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“Why These Stories?: Tracing Narratives of Successful Literacy through the Voices, Relationships, and Material Practices of a Community-University Partnership.” *Conference on Community Writing*. Boulder, CO. October 2015. Accepted.

“Actor Network Theory as In(ter)vention: Connecting Material and Semiotic Threads across Community-University Literacy Sponsorship.” *Computers and Writing Conference*. Stout, WI. May 2015.

“Reader as Writer, Self as Other: The Dialogic Function of the Abject Narrative in Toni Morrison’s *Sula*.” *Popular Culture & American Culture Association Conference*. New Orleans, LA. April 2015.

“How Do We Imagine Literacy?: Redefining Literacy Sponsorship across Community-University Partnerships.” *College English Association Conference*. Indianapolis, IN. March 2015.

“Dancing and Writing, Together: Expanding Definitions of Literacy via Multimodal Scholarship.” *Watson Conference*. Louisville, KY. October 2014.

“‘The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled’: Reimagining Literacy Sponsorship at a Nonprofit Community Organization.” *Rhetoric Society of America Conference*. San Antonio, TX. May 2014.

“The Social and Pedagogical Significance of Narrative Continuity in the Freedom School Curriculum.” *Conference on College Composition and Communication*. Indianapolis, IN. March 2014.

“The Care for Human Actuality: How Past, Present, and Future Narratives Function in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and Resulting Implications for Slow Research.” *Watson Conference*. Louisville, KY. October 2013.

“Reconsidering ‘Practicality’ in FYC: Towards a Relational Approach to Writing and Learning.” *Conference on College Composition and Communication*. St. Louis, MO. March 2012.

“The Discourse of the Contact Zone: Politics of Language in Service-Learning Composition Curricula.” *Watson Conference*. University of Louisville. Louisville, KY. October 2010.

“‘The Living Center of the Problem’: How to Understand Student Narratives in *Lives on the Boundary*.” *Conference of the Kentucky Philological Association*. Eastern Kentucky University. Richmond, KY. March 2010. Best of Section.

HONORS AND AWARDS

Honorable Mention, Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship Competition. April 2015.

University Fellowship, University of Louisville. August 2011 - June 2015.

Best of Section, Conference Presentation at Kentucky Philological Association. March 2010.

The National Society of Collegiate Scholars, Washington University Chapter. 2002 - present.

TEACHING

University of Louisville, 2010-2014

ENG101: Introduction to College Writing (4 sections)

ENG102: Intermediate College Writing (2 sections)

ENG105: Advanced College Writing for Freshmen Honors (2 sections)

ENG306: Business Writing (1 section)

University of Louisville, 2009-2010

Writing Center Tutor

- Performed a discourse analysis of several recorded tutoring sessions, focusing on the communicative purposes of body language

Atlanta, GA, 2007-2009

Appelrouth Tutoring

SAT and ACT Tutor

- Tutored 16 students with an average SAT score increase of 200 points

Kamaishi, Japan, 2005-2007

Japanese Exchange and Teaching Program

Assistant Language Teacher

- Designed and taught 14 EFL classes per week concerning grammar and cross-cultural communication

Washington University in St. Louis, 2005

Writing Center Tutor

- Designed a survey for international students to evaluate their experiences as Writing Center clients

RESEARCH AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE

Assistant Director of the BizComm Writing Lab, 2015-2016

College of Business

University of Louisville

- Consult with business undergraduate/graduate students to improve professional communication skills
- Copyedit business faculty manuscripts
- Coordinate workshops and presentations on business communication, emphasizing coherent writing assessment from student and faculty perspectives

Research Assistant, 2013-2014

Dr. Bruce Horner, Endowed Chair in Rhetoric and Composition

University of Louisville

- Compiled research on history of translingual terms and the Accelerated Learning Project
- Copy-edited book manuscripts, articles, and a French conference presentation
- Coordinated timely manuscript revisions by communicating with each chapter author
- Coordinated visiting scholar arrangements for the Symposium on Language Difference and Writing Pedagogy

Digital Media Assistant, 2012-2013

Dr. Mary P. Sheridan

University of Louisville

- Compiled annotated bibliography of digital pedagogy materials
- Researched and wrote budgets for construction of two digital media labs
- Investigated local and national grant options in planning for a digital media summer camp
- Collaborated with Department of Education and Office of Community Engagement in preparation for digital media summer camp

Admission Counselor, 2008-2009

Savannah College of Art and Design

Atlanta, GA

- Built relationships with students by phone, e-mail, and in-person to discuss financial aid and programs of study
- Evaluated 530 student files for admission

Conflict Resolution Program (CRP) Intern, 2007

The Carter Center

Atlanta, GA

- Composed weekly news updates regarding the post-conflict peace building process in Liberia

- Collaborated with staff to create and edit draft donor report explaining the use of \$506k in rebuilding the Liberian judicial system
- Contributed to leadership of weekly CRP meetings; presented and discussed research on mental health and healing processes in developing countries

SERVICE

Co-Editor, 2014 – Present
Kairos PraxisWiki

Peer Mentor, 2012 - Present
English Department
University of Louisville

Peer Mentor Coordinator, 2012
English Department
University of Louisville

PhD Student Representative and Treasurer, 2010-2012
English Graduate Organization
University of Louisville

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

“Digital Composing and Student Research,” 2014
Invited Presenter, Composition Program
University of Louisville

Research Network Forum, 2013
Conference on College Composition and Communication
“Literacy as Social Practice and Material Object: Tracing Student Literacy Narratives Over Time”
Las Vegas, NV

Grant Writing Workshop Participant, 2013
University of Louisville

Graduate Teaching Academy Participant, 2012-2013
University of Louisville

Digital Media and Composition Institute Participant, 2012
The Ohio State University

Celebration of Teaching and Learning Participant, 2012
University of Louisville

Watson Symposium Participant, 2009, 2011, & 2013
University of Louisville

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Rhetoric Society of America – University of Louisville Student Chapter
National Council of Teachers of English
Modern Language Association
College English Association
Pop Culture Association

LANGUAGE AND TECHNOLOGY

Language Highly proficient in French, proficient in Spanish, conversational Japanese

Technology Co-edit the PraxisWiki section of Kairos, soliciting, developing, and editing content and design on a wiki platform
Created a personal website to foster professional identity and pedagogy
Proficient in audio and video editing; created multiple educational and scholarly videos at DMAC
Proficient in teaching with technology; regularly facilitate student multimodal projects

GRADUATE COURSEWORK

Composition Pedagogy

Teaching College Composition (Joanna Wolfe)
Politics of Language in the Study and Teaching of Composition (Bruce Horner)
Work in English (Bruce Horner)

Theory

Writing Center Theory and Practice (Mary Rosner)
Composition Theory and Practice (Min-Zhan Lu)
Revision: Theory and Practice (Min-Zhan Lu)
Contemporary Theories of Interpretation (Karen Kopelson)
Critical Theory and Literacy and Composition Studies (Bronwyn Williams)
Narrative Theory and Composition (Debra Journet)

Rhetoric and Literacy

History of Rhetoric II (Carol Mattingly)
Thomas R. Watson Seminar (Min-Zhan Lu, with visiting scholars Suresh Canagarajah, Brian Street, and Ralph Cintron)
Perspectives on Literacy (Carol Mattingly)
Rhetoric of the Civil Rights Movement (Stephen Schneider)

Research and Methodology

Archival Research Methods (Susan Ryan)
The Work of Ethnography (Debra Journet)
Research in Composition (Debra Journet)

Literature and Creative Writing

Teaching Literature (Beth Boehm)
Toni Morrison (Susan Griffin)
Rhetoric of Race in Medieval England (Andrew Rabin)
Creative Writing I (Kiki Petrosino)
Creative Nonfiction: Practice and Pedagogy (Bronwyn Williams)

REFERENCES

Bronwyn Williams
Professor, Director of the Writing Center
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University of Louisville
315 Bingham
Louisville, KY 40292

Bruce Horner
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