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Abstract

The continuing expansion of digital service-learning is bringing emergent dynamics to the field of community engagement, including the challenge of fostering asset-based views of community partners in online spaces. "Online disinhibition" *(Suler, 2004)* can prompt harsh critique or insensitive language that would not have occurred during face-to-face relationships. Traditionally, the field of community engagement has drawn on asset-based community development *(Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993)*, which calls for relationship-driven, asset-based, and internally focused partnerships, to encourage ethical and positive interactions with community members. However, this theory was not originally intended for digital, text-based interactions. This article explores how aspects of asset-based community development might be enacted in online partnerships, in electronic asset-based community development (eABCD). A case study of a digital writing partnership between college students and rural youth is used to illustrate how students can be supported in asset-based, relationship-driven, and internally focused interactions in online service-learning collaborations.

Keywords: eService-learning, digital partnerships, asset-based community development, writing

Introduction

*O*ur online spaces are becoming increasingly multiple and more recently fraught with political tensions. Responding to another's thoughts for understanding and learning is less readily modeled than responding to be right, and algorithmic "filter bubbles" sort people into social silos. Even while digital interaction becomes a primary mode of communication, people often struggle to engage virtually across difference, as growing communication complexities impact the ability to see and value the full human behind the cyber-veil.

Against this backdrop, the field of service-learning is grappling with new challenges as the pedagogy traditionally enacted in face-to-face contexts is now appearing in digital spaces *(Kuh, 2014; Strait & Nordyke, 2015)*. "Online civic action and learning, as a space of community, challenges traditional assumptions of service-learning

to its core," Kliewer *(2014, p. 85)* asserted. The increase in distance learning, online education, and digital approaches to pedagogy has given rise to online service sites, and some students are completing service partly or entirely in virtual space. From communicating with nonprofit staff through wikis *(Walsh, 2010)* to completing a service-learning civic leadership certificate program entirely online *(Kliewer, 2014)* to digitally mentoring youth across the country *(Strait, 2015)*, these digital forms of service-learning provide a rich variety of engagement opportunities. Digital service-learning offers many benefits, as it may allow students to connect with community populations who would otherwise be isolated, such as rural or international populations who may be far from the university, and allow online distance-education students to experience service-learning regardless of work schedule, physical limitations, family responsibilities, or location *(Strait & Nordyke, 2015)*.

Yet as service-learning moves from community centers, youth tutoring programs, and nonprofit offices to wikis, e-mail, discussion boards, and Google Docs, important dynamics are shifting, raising questions and concerns for the field. Psychologists studying the differences between online and face-to-face communication have discussed the "online disinhibition effect" *(Suler, 2004)*, a reduction of self-regulation that occurs when communication becomes digital. As Suler *(2004)* explained, "People do or say things in cyberspace that they wouldn't ordinarily say and do in the face-to-face world" *(p. 321)*, which can lead to harsh critique, inappropriate self-disclosure, or insensitive language. Online disinhibition thus raises potential ethical concerns when students interact with community members online. To promote ethical and respectful community engagement, the field of service-learning has traditionally turned to asset-based community development *(Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993)*, an approach to engaging communities that is *asset-based*, highlighting a community's strengths; *relationship-driven*, grounded in personal connections with community members and connections between community assets; and *internally focused*, encouraging community direction of the partnership. Yet this approach was designed for face-to-face community-building, provoking questions about how asset-based community development could be enacted in virtual spaces. This article presents a framework for what we term "eABCD," or electronic asset-based community development, drawing from a study of a one-semester virtual partnership between college education students and rural middle school students. Digital communications between the college students, community members, and instructor were coded

for the three components of asset-based community development (asset-based, relationship-driven, internally focused), and this data was combined with middle school student survey data to offer initial recommendations on how ABCD might be used in electronic contexts.

Asset-Based Community Development

Asset-based community development arose as a response to widespread deficit views of low-income communities in community development programs. Service-learning scholars have noted the dangers of deficit views in engagement, explaining that emphasizing the needs of communities as a counterpoint to the strengths of the university is harmful to both students and community members *(Boyle-Baise, 1999; Mitchell, Donahue, & Young-Law, 2012)*. Deficit views can promote problematic stereotypes of community members as certain communities are portrayed in terms of their struggles *(Baldwin, Buchanin, & Rudisill, 2007; Schultz, Neyhart, & Reck, 1996)*, lead to noblesse oblige or "savior" mentalities in students *(Lowenstein, 2009)*, hide the deep intellectual resources of community members *(Saltmarsh, Clayton, & Hartley, 2009)*, and hinder best practice principles such as the idea that "everyone learns and everyone serves" *(Honnet & Paulson, 1989)*.

Scholars within the field of teacher preparation have taken an especially strong stance against deficit-oriented views of diverse communities, given the field's emphasis on preparing people to work effectively with students who represent a range of demographics and life experiences. Over 20 years ago, Zeichner *(1993)* argued that

> many teacher education students come to their preparation programs viewing student diversity as a problem rather than a resource, that their conceptions of diversity are highly individualistic (e.g., focusing on personality factors like motivation and ignoring contextual factors like ethnicity), and that their ability to talk about student differences in thoughtful and comprehensive ways is very limited. *(p. 4)*

Unfortunately, this problem persists. In large part this is due to what scholars in the field of teacher preparation refer to as *the demographic divide*, wherein a primarily White, female, monolingual, middle-class population of teacher candidates is responsible for teaching an increasingly diverse population of students. Not

only do these preservice teachers often feel unprepared to interact with students from diverse backgrounds *(Dee & Henkin, 2002; Sleeter, 2001)*, they also often hold tacit beliefs that children from diverse backgrounds—especially students who are poor or from minoritized groups—are not as capable as White students. Service-learning is often championed as one approach to encourage more critical understandings of diversity in the field of education and across disciplines *(Glazier, Able, & Charpentier, 2014)*, yet framing communities in terms of their needs as part of a service-learning project may actually reinforce deficit-based orientations—encouraging stereotypes and exposing community members to students who hold and act on deeply problematic views *(O'Grady, 2000)*.

Asset-based community development *(Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993)* responds to the dangers of deficit views and disrespectful engagement by promoting an alternate approach: a framework for community development "which insists on beginning with a clear commitment to discovering a community's capacities and assets" *(p. 1)*. Asset-based community development (ABCD) works to foster connections between these strengths in order to address needs. ABCD was developed out of Northwestern University by John Kretzmann and John McKnight, and the approach is now used in many countries worldwide, popularized through the toolkit *Building Communities from the Inside Out (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993)*. The approach was created from door-to-door studies in which researchers spoke with residents about instances in which someone had made an improvement to the community, and through analyzing the community member narratives, the researchers distilled principles for effective development *(McKnight, n.d.)*. Though some service-learning scholars have raised concerns about how a focus on local strengths can distract from the need for structural change *(Stoecker, 2016)*, ABCD is widely adopted in North American service-learning scholarship and practice *(Deans, 2000; Hamerlinck & Plaut, 2014; Lieberman, 2014)*.

The first pillar of ABCD is *asset-based*, as the approach begins by identifying various assets in a community, often through in-person conversations with residents to create an *asset map*. These assets include resources in local institutions, such as businesses and libraries; associations, such as church choirs and cultural groups; and the gifts of individuals, including populations traditionally framed in terms of their deficits, such as youth and the elderly. These assets are connected in order to foster development. In face-to-face service-learning, asset-based approaches involve activities

that build from the strengths of community members, such as painting a mural designed by a resident artist.

In addition to being asset-based, ABCD is *internally focused*, which means it highlights local definitions, creativity, and control. In other words, community residents have significant input into the nature and process of engagement activities, aligning with service-learning's foundational Wingspread principle, "An effective program allows those with needs to define those needs" *(Honnet & Poulsen, 1989, p. 1)*. This may mean, for example, that community residents would be heavily involved in directing meetings to design the service-learning activities.

A third ABCD characteristic is *relationship-driven*, suggesting an emphasis on building relationships among residents, associations, and institutions. This involves personal investment and time spent nurturing interpersonal connections, as well as efforts to foster stronger links between various people and groups. Service-learning scholars frequently talk about the critical nature of relationality in community engagement *(Skilton-Sylvester & Erwin, 2000)*, and as community writing scholar Goldblatt *(2007)* noted in his chapter aptly titled "Lunch," engagement work is rooted in face-to-face interpersonal relationships.

The three ABCD components—asset-based, relationship-driven, and internally focused—are interlocking, as it is through relationships that assets can be identified and connected, and through an asset-based acknowledgment of a community's wisdom and leadership that internal control can occur. Yet these components were originally designed for face-to-face development work in communities, and many examples from Kretzmann and McKnight and others who use their work feature in-person conversations, on-the-ground programs, and shared meals *(Avila, 2014; Battistoni, Longo, & Morton, 2014; Snow, 2014)*. The growing trend toward digital engagement suggests that ABCD needs to stretch in new directions.

eService-Learning and Online Disinhibition

Online community engagement is a newer but rapidly expanding approach *(Crabill & Butin, 2014; Dailey-Hebert, Donnelli Sallee, & DiPadova, 2008; Strait & Nordyke, 2015)*. Dailey-Hebert et al. *(2008)* have defined *service-eLearning* as "an integrative pedagogy that engages learners through technology in civic inquiry, service, reflection, and action" *(p. 1)*. Given the exponential growth of digital learning, the field of service-learning is working to synthesize

community-based pedagogies with online education, through face-to-face service connected to digital or hybrid courses *(Guthrie & McCracken, 2010; Strait & Sauer, 2004)* or—the focus of this article—service that occurs online in conjunction with digital or brick-and-mortar classes *(Bourelle, 2014; Waldner, McGorry, & Widener, 2010)*. Online service-learning "holds massive potential to transform both service-learning and online learning by freeing service-learning from geographical constraints and by equipping online learning with a powerful and much-needed tool to promote engagement" *(Waldner, McGorry, & Widener, 2012, p. 123)*. Studies have suggested that eService-learning, even when the instruction and service are both entirely online, can have positive learning and community outcomes *(Waldner et al., 2010)*. Yet, as scholars have noted, electronic service-learning brings challenging dynamics around coordinating clear communication in online spaces *(Bourelle, 2014; Waldner et al., 2010)*; fostering critical service-learning, especially in contexts where digital communities may be centered on homogeneity *(Kliewer, 2014)*; effectively using technology to replicate the high-impact nature of in-person service-learning *(Kuh, 2014)*; and encouraging students to reflect on moments of discomfort when digital discord can often be deleted or ignored *(Alexander, 2014)*. Particularly noteworthy is the finding that "students may not feel 'connected' to the [community partner]. . . . In this situation, it may be difficult to foster an environment of 'teamwork' and collaboration, an essential element to a productive service learning experience" *(Waldner et al., 2010, p. 847)*.

Several scholars, in fact, have explored the challenges of building relationships in online education. Tu and McIsaac *(2002)* highlight the importance of social presence, defined as "a measure of the feeling of community that a learner experiences in an online environment" *(p. 131)*. Because the degree of social presence perceived by online course participants is dependent on the social context of the program itself, the nature and frequency of online communication, and the level of interactivity, successful relationship-building in virtual spaces must account for and negotiate the differing expectations of all participants. Establishing a welcoming digital environment is difficult, especially as public perception of virtual spaces is perennially marked by a sense of social *dis*connection and isolation *(Turkle, 2012)*.

Challenges such as these may be informed by an understanding of online disinhibition *(Suler, 2004)*, the lessening of self-inhibitions that occur when people interact in digital environments. Although disinhibition can have benign effects, service-learning professionals

may be particularly concerned about *toxic disinhibition*, which can provoke "rude language, harsh criticism, [and] anger" *(Suler, 2004, p. 321)*. In asynchronous online service-learning, students do not have to grapple with immediate responses to their actions, as community partners may not read or write back until later *(Suler, 2004, pp. 323–324)*. Furthermore, the absence of nonverbal cues, such as frowns, sighs, or body language that signals discomfort, can contribute to disinhibition as online service-learners may not be directly faced with the impact of their words on community partners *(p. 323)*. The lack of eye contact, in particular, can contribute to a sense of disconnection in online relationships, which allows negative emotions and comments to be expressed more freely *(Lapidot-Lefler & Barak, 2012)*.

Deficit views, coupled with toxic online disinhibition, can exacerbate online miscommunications and lead to harmful digital dynamics between college students and community partners. For example, in online partnerships between college students and youth, such as the collaboration in this article, online disinhibition may raise concerns that college students will be tempted to interpret the online actions of community partners through a deficit lens and respond in problematic language. It is much easier to assume that a late or low-quality online post signals laziness when a student isn't interacting directly with the community member. In addition, while giving feedback is often a fraught activity, a college student may be much more likely to write harsh criticism on a youth's paper when the youth is not standing there, looking anxiously at the college student while waiting for a response.

Given the potential dangers of deficit views and online disinhibition in digital service-learning, service-learning practitioners may need to actively promote asset-based engagement, reimagining ABCD for online contexts. To do so, we offer a study of an eService-learning project in which college students collaborated digitally with middle school writers.

Study Context

The study detailed here involves examination of a digital community partnership in which college education students responded weekly to the writing of rural middle school students through an online collaboration platform. Similar service-learning partnerships exist elsewhere, such as the partnership described by Phegley and Oxford *(2010)* involving preservice teachers and rural high school students. The partnership studied here emerges from a long-

standing school–university partnership within a highly collaborative and justice-focused teacher education program.

University Program and Students

The service-learning project was embedded in a teacher education program at University of Nebraska-Lincoln, a public research university in the Midwest. The program is explicitly committed to fostering justice-oriented educators, with participating faculty in the English and Education Departments meeting monthly to discuss the program and to coauthor articles, such as this one, as a way to foster a coherent programmatic vision. The program runs on a cohort model, involving two cohorts of 25 students each that operate in parallel structure. The first-year (junior) cohort is immersed in more theoretical courses, including Composition Theory and Practice, Reading Theory and Practice, and Linguistics for the Classroom Teacher; the second-year (senior) cohort translates theoretical knowledge into wide-ranging applications through methods classes and student teaching. The service-learning project described here occurred in the writing pedagogy class during the first semester of the junior year, meaning that students were just beginning to apply education theory and were newly exposed to the program's social justice focus. Following national demographic trends *(Villegas & Lucas, 2004)*, the majority of the preservice teachers in the class were White and female. Most had no previous experience with online instruction in a teaching role.

The Service-Learning Partnership: Online Writing Exchange

The online writing service-learning project has been a yearly fall activity since 2008, with the goal of connecting writers from very different communities. The partnership was initiated by author Robert Brooke, who is an English faculty member, and author Jennifer Troester, who is a middle school teacher, through their network with the Nebraska Writing Project. Author Rachael Shah, another English faculty member, continued the partnership when she began teaching Composition Theory and Practice. Although previous partnerships had also involved urban high school students, the fall 2016 service-learning project linked each college student with two eighth-grade students at a rural middle school located 4 hours from the university. In their interactions with secondary writers, the college students were encouraged to take on a "coach" role of "more experienced writer." The partnership aimed

to develop preservice teachers' ability to respond effectively to student writing while providing secondary students with regular individualized feedback that was more detailed than a classroom teacher could typically provide, to support students in practicing deeper revision. The college and secondary teachers hoped both sets of students would increase their audience awareness as they wrote for an audience beyond their classrooms.

The partnership began with an introduction post by college and secondary students, offering background information on hobbies and interests. Then, once a week for 10 weeks, the secondary students posted a piece of in-progress writing using Google Docs, along with an "author's note" to provide background on the piece and ask specific feedback questions (see Appendix A for the author's note handout given to the middle school students). The college students responded virtually with comments, informed by class readings on writing pedagogy, and the instructor offered feedback via e-mail to the college students about their commenting strategies. A culminating reflection project challenged the college students to write a case study that synthesized analysis of a secondary student's writing development with writing pedagogy scholarship.

Methods

Partnership texts from fall 2016 were collected and coded for ABCD strategies. With IRB approval, texts analyzed for the study included introduction posts written by the college students, college students' comments on middle schoolers' writing, written instructor feedback about college students' comments, instructor and college student e-mail communication about the project, and the reflection case study paper in which the college students analyzed the writing development of their middle school partners in light of scholarship on writing pedagogy. These texts were coded using Dedoose software for the three components of asset-based community development (asset-based, relationship-driven, and internally focused).

Although this partnership text analysis is the main data source, a limited amount of data was also collected from the community partners. With IRB approval, a survey was distributed to 13 middle school students who participated in the 2016 partnership, and 10 of the 13 who initially agreed completed the survey. The survey asked about youth perspectives on the partnership, including questions geared toward each of the three components of ABCD (see Appendix B). The survey was administered in fall 2017, using

opportunity sampling to identify students who were still at the school, accessible for contacting, and willing to participate with parental consent. Author Jennifer Troester, the partnering middle school teacher, offers her analysis of these surveys and the writing exchange in this article. Her insights are informed by her master's thesis *(Troester, 2015)*, which examined the community impact of the fall 2013 online writing partnership through surveys and short-answer questionnaires of 45 eighth-grade students. Together, these data sources shed light on how ABCD can be enacted in online spaces.

Study Analysis: Supporting Students in eABCD

The analysis of partnership documents revealed several strategies students used for enacting asset-based community development electronically, as well as areas in which college students had trouble creating healthy collaborations, given the particular dynamics of digital service-learning. The college students in their case studies described struggling to understand their partners' thought process "from the other end of a computer," finding it difficult to express their points without face-to-face conversation, and feeling unmoored as they were unable to know how their comments were being received. They were aware that this medium posed challenges for the youth as well, especially in the vulnerability required to share writing without a face-to-face relationship. One college student wrote to her partner, "Writing is personal. The fact that you have been sharing your writing with me (a digital stranger) is so trusting of you." So many of the tools that would normally facilitate the creation of trust and rapport, like smiling, eye contact, in-person small talk, or a warm tone of voice, were simply unavailable.

One theme that emerged in light of this struggle, cutting across all three facets of ABCD, was the centrality of language. This partnership was heavily text-based, with participants communicating through type. With text as the sole medium for the partnership, participants gained heightened awareness of the power of words as action. Several students made connections between the online partnership and a resource from their linguistics class, *Choice Words: How Our Language Affects Children's Learning (Johnston, 2004)*, that highlighted how even small phrases can significantly shape power dynamics. Johnston, drawing from linguistic theory, explained that all language conveys not just surface-level content, but also information about how the speaker views the listener and their assumed relationship. He gives examples of how phrases like "Any questions?

Let's start with these" *(p. 55)*, "Thanks for straightening me out" *(p. 57)*, and "Would you agree with that?" *(p. 59)* position the listener in an active role and create a relationship of joint inquiry rather than control. The college students in many cases brought this intensive focus on specific language choices to the online partnership, a focus that was reinforced by the instructor through class discussions and feedback on the students' commenting strategies. As one student wrote in her case study, "Educators must be sensitive to every word they type when that is the only contact with students." This awareness of language was an important starting point for pursuing all three aspects of eABCD—asset-based, relationship-driven, and internally focused—as small choices in written language became a primary medium for enacting each strategy (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: eABCD Language Moves

Asset-Based	
Offering praise	Example: There's wonderful sensory details here. I really felt like I was in the scene, feeling the same things.
Using strengths as base for growth	Example: The point is to practice. As a bow hunter, I'm sure you understand how important practice is (by the way I am still really impressed that you can do that).
Acknowledging strengths dominant society may frame as deficits	Example: I love how you incorporate Spanish into this writing! It makes it special to you and your story and gives the piece a strong feeling of how your family life is!
Internal Focus	
Responding to digital community preface statements (such as Author's Notes)	Example: In your author's note, you asked about transitions, and I think…
Stating intention not to control	Example: In my opinion, the most important part of your writing is your voice, so I will try my very best not to steamroll your writing in any way. In the end, it is your writing.
Highlighting personal subjectivity	Example: Something that I think you should focus on in your next revision is the organization of your piece. What is that most important information that should come first? To me, I would think describing what he did in the military should come before how he felt after he left it.

Note: Continued on next page

Explicitly affirming community agency	Example: I loved seeing which of my comments you chose to take and which you felt you didn't need to. That is one sign of a great writer: being able to pick and choose what critiques you want to apply to your own writing.
Incorporating choice	Example: Would you rather have the whole thing in your perspective, or have the whole thing from your mother's perspective? I think there are very good reasons for either choice!
Relationship Driven	
Beginning with introduction posts	Example: "I am From" poems
Offering relevant relational comments	Example: I also got picked on when I was little. I had a hard time making friends for a really long time, I'm sorry that it happened to you as well.
Blending personal connection with tasks	Example: One thing that I would like to hear more about are your emotions about leaving Ceresco. I moved a couple times when I was little too, and I always HATED moving. Was it hard moving?
Taking a posture of learning from community members	Example: I'm a terrible cook so I'd love to hear more on this! Maybe it would help improve my cooking, haha!
Remembering and referring to personal details from community members	Example: I appreciated how your essays showed your personality: your high regard for your friends, your homesickness for Colorado, and your love for playing videogames.
Using relational emoticons and salutations when appropriate	Example: :-D
Stating the relationship is valued	Example: I'm excited to get to know you, and hopefully together we can learn more about writing.

Asset-Based

Traditional ABCD focuses on assets in a physical neighborhood, such as the strengths of individuals, the local choir, and the park. These strengths are often discovered through *capacity inventories*, questionnaires usually administered face-to-face and geared toward identifying resident skills and interests *(Kretzmann & McKnight, 2003)*. Although such inventories could be administered digitally, college students in this partnership achieved a similar purpose by drawing on personal digital texts like introduction posts and narratives to inductively build an understanding of the strengths of the community members—including writing strengths

as well as other skills and interests the students wrote about in their pieces.

College students enacted an asset-based approach through online commenting on community member writing, which heavily featured praise, with marginal comments that highlighted effective descriptive words, pointed out where the reader was moved by the writing, and celebrated sophisticated thinking. The instructor affirmed this asset-based stance when it appeared and prompted students when praise did not appear; for example: "One thing to work on is making sure to include enough positive comments (e.g. Jalina's comments are almost all suggestions/critiques), and making sure the positive comments are just as specific as the suggestions (e.g. what makes Alberto's first paragraph 'great'?)." Prompting for asset-based approaches appeared more frequently early in the partnership, when the college students were learning the eABCD dispositions needed for the collaboration. The instructor also supported a positive view of youth writing by encouraging a "sandwich model" for feedback paragraphs: constructive criticism located between statements of specific praise. Thus, the sandwich model served as one strategy for structurally building an asset-based focus into online communication, a strategy that was often augmented by other asset-based, relationship-driven, and internally focused tactics.

One particularly effective strategy for eABCD that the college students initiated was using the strengths of the youth as a launching point for further growth. For example, one college student suggested a young writer develop a point as well as she had done in a previous strong paragraph. College students also used this strategy with strengths beyond language. Drawing from knowledge of an eighth grader's hobbies, one writing mentor wrote: "The point is to practice. As a bow hunter, I'm sure you understand how important practice is (by the way I am still really impressed that you can do that)." In engaging assets, the college mentors often tapped and acknowledged a wide range of strengths.

Notably, the college students also built from strengths that dominant society frames as deficits. For example, in response to a personal narrative by a young bilingual writer, a college student wrote, "I love how you incorporate Spanish into this writing! It makes it special to you and your story and gives the piece a strong feeling of how your family life is!" Other college students responded to personal narratives about food insecurity, separation from parents because of immigration status, and family members dangerously crossing the border with notes that moved beyond the

writing itself, acknowledging the "wisdom" and "motivation" of the young writers and their relatives. "I think this shows a lot about how strong your family is," one university student wrote, "and how persistent they are to provide for their family." Factors like English as a second (or third!) language, families with mixed citizenship status, recent immigration to the United States, and family structures beyond a two-parent household—all things that *could* frame youth through a deficit lens as "at-risk"—were often refigured as generative sources for writing, thinking, learning, and personal strength. This stance aligns with Kretzmann and McKnight's *(1993)* ABCD commitment to the strengths of stigmatized groups, as their book includes sections specifically on tapping the capacities of youth, seniors, people with developmental disabilities, and welfare recipients. They write, "The most powerful communities are those that can identify the gifts of those people at the margins and pull them into community life" *(p. 28)*.

Occasionally, students did slip into more deficit-based views of the young writers, worldviews made visible in the reflective case study essays, which provided opportunities for gentle redirection. One early draft included these sentences: "Of the two writers, Gustavo had the most noticeable issue with grammar. In his introductory essay, he told me his parents were originally from Guatemala. Reading through his drafts, the lack of mastery of the English language was quite obvious." After an instructor comment that raised questions about the assumptions behind these words, the revised last sentence read as follows: "Reading through his drafts, it became quite obvious to me that Gustavo was taking on the ambitious task of attempting to master another language." Especially by the final drafts, many of the case studies explicitly discussed the importance of asset-based framing, particularly in light of how dominant narratives delegitimize the writing of certain students based on race, class, home language, and other factors. Acknowledging the impact of asset-based language choices in responding to community members online, one student wrote, "The privileging and marginalizing of students' writing voices and choices spills over into how students see themselves as writers. . . . The act of writing (like all acts involving language use) is a socializing and identity-forming act." The student continued, "This commands a genuine partnership." Given the stakes involved, a true asset-based approach involves not only recognizing community members' strengths, but creating space for community members to exercise control and agency in using those strengths, and this leads to the next facet of eABCD: internal focus.

Internally Focused

Kretzmann and McKnight *(1993)* stress that healthy community development is directed by community members themselves, rather than imposed by outsiders: The focus of decision making should be internal to the community. In the online writing exchange, one tool for keeping control as much as possible in the hands of community members was author's notes. Author's notes place writers in the position of analyzing their own work and identifying the feedback needed rather than allowing the responder to control the feedback. In their most schematic form, author's notes consist of three statements by the writer intended to guide responders to give advice that will be useful to the writer:

1. What's the status of the draft? (e.g., brainstorming, a first draft, an exploratory draft, a highly polished piece evolved through many revisions?)
2. What is the writer thinking about the draft? (e.g., likes/dislikes; devices or approaches being tried; worries)
3. What kind of response does the writer want? (e.g., pointing to strengths; suggestions for places to expand; questions the reader had while reading; particular grammar support)

These three statements, when provided with full metacognitive awareness of the writer's place in the writing process, are incredibly powerful for facilitating discussion. They are a means of providing each person with full control over the discussion of their work, making sure that the topics discussed are related to the writer's stage in the writing process and the writer's wider rhetorical goals for the piece *(Brooke, Mirtz, & Evans 1994)*. Author's notes also serve to support writers in learning how to control their own growth, as they gain vocabulary and habits for identifying the response that would be most useful to them. In the words of one of the university students, an author's note "allows students to advocate on behalf of their drafts and set goals." Author's notes were especially important because the partnership was digital. As one student detailed,

> Since I could not sit down and chat with Blayne, I could not ask her where her mind was when she was writing. Thankfully, this limitation also posed opportunities that may be harder to come across in-person. She wrote author's notes with questions before every piece she wrote, so I could use those to guide my suggestions. . . . Having my only contact through online documents became an advantage in the sense that I could polish

> my reactions to her writing and tailor those reactions
> to fit her questions and needs, especially in responding
> to author's note questions.

In other words, author's notes became a tool for not only addressing the communication limitations of an online partnership, but actually sharpening the focus on the community member's goals.

Not all online service-learning partnerships center on writing, but the basic structure of an author's note can be adapted for a variety of digital settings: before an online interaction with service-learners, community members have an explicit opportunity to give background information about what they are working on, their context, and their goals, and to express what kind of response or interaction from the service-learner might be most useful. This statement should then shape the digital event.

In the online writing exchange, the youth posted an author's note at the top of each piece, and college students frequently relied on these notes to guide feedback. Sometimes the college students inserted a comment after each question in the author's note in direct response, and sometimes the feedback paragraph at the end of the paper drew on the author's note. A typical comment was, "In response to your transition question, you use the word 'also' a lot to start off your paragraphs. What other transition words do you know that would work in place of 'also'?" When college students ignored the author's note in their response, the instructor pointed this out, turning their attention to the community-identified areas of interest (e.g., "Also, try to respond to the key questions in the author's note when possible. It looks like this student was concerned with organization. What did you think about the organization?").

Another important area for internal focus had to do with the way feedback was framed, in ways that either controlled the writing and made changes for the community member or positioned the young writer as an active creator. In traditional ABCD, the "three questions" ask ABCD facilitators to identify what community members can do themselves, what they can do with the support of an institution, and what the institution must do *(Duncan, n.d.)*. The emphasis in answering these questions is that institutions or outsiders should not do things that community members can accomplish independently or with support. Over the course of the partnership, the college students gained in their ability to allow the young writers to control their own writing, rather than making improvements for the writer. Some college responses, especially early in the semester, included phrases like "Insert a comma

here!" "Merge this together into one sentence for better fluency!" and "This might fit better near the beginning as the second paragraph"—all interactions that told the community member what to do. In e-mail responses, the instructor emphasized that research shows fixing errors for students is not only ineffective, it also erodes ownership *(Weaver & Bush, 2008)*. Responses that better modeled an eABCD approach, which became more frequent later in the semester, left more space for community member agency. As one college student described, "My comments were usually in some question form . . . [and] I tried to structure my comments in a way that the ultimate decision of what to include could be interpreted to [fit] the writer's voice and goals." Here, this student echoes the questioning strategy in traditional ABCD, as the ABCD toolkit notes: "Asking questions rather than giving answers invites stronger participation" *(Collaborative for Neighborhood Transformation, n.d. p. 3)*.

Students repeatedly acknowledged in reflection papers that the absence of in-person, real-time collaboration made it difficult to cede control in this way, but they found several useful strategies. Consider how the following statements allow for internal focus:

- "Something that I think you should focus on in your next revision is the organization of your piece. What is that most important information that should come first? To me, I would think describing what he did in the military should come before how he felt after he left it. Try it out and see what you think!"

- "I noticed that you change perspectives in the first paragraph. In the first sentence, you use your own perspective, but from the second sentence on, the whole narrative is written from your mother's perspective. Would you rather have the whole thing in your perspective, or have the whole thing from your mother's perspective? I think there are very good reasons for either choice!"

- "My whole class was excited to find out that you all posted your blogs so that we could see your finished pieces. I loved seeing which of my comments you chose to take and which you felt you didn't need to. That is one sign of a great writer: being able to pick and choose what critiques you want to apply to your own writing."

- "In my opinion, the most important part of your writing is your voice, so I will try my very best not to steamroll your writing in any way. In the end, it is your writing."

College students directly addressed their intent to pursue internal community control ("I will try not to steamroll . . ."), framed their suggestions as opinions rather than objective truth ("To me"), posed choices ("Would you rather . . ."), hinted that the final decision rested with the community member ("See what you think!"), and explicitly stated that they did not expect the community members to agree with all suggestions ("That is one sign of a great writer: being able to pick and choose which critiques . . ."). These language moves may be useful to other service-learners in digital collaborations, especially in asynchronous or text-based interactions that limit the potential for power-sharing in real-time, conversational collaboration.

Relationship-Driven

The final component of ABCD, relationship-driven development, undergoes some significant shifts when moving to online spaces, as traditional ABCD relational strategies like sharing snacks, filling downtime with informal conversation, going door-to-door, or reading nonverbal cues are no longer available in the same way. Instead, the college students and instructors had to find alternate ways to foster relationships between college and middle school students, and between students and other community assets.

One strategy was introduction posts that included personal information and a "Where I'm From" poem *(Christensen, 2009)* that featured details about the students' backgrounds. These introductory moves attempted to build what one college student described as a "personal foundation," reflecting, "Students will neither feel comfortable sharing their writing nor take revisions seriously if there is not an established trust and relationship with the person giving the feedback." The college students responded to the introduction posts by identifying points they had in common with the youth, a practice that can increase relationality in service-learning collaborations *(Shah, forthcoming)*.

Additionally, throughout the semester, the college students interspersed task-oriented comments with relational comments. Consider the following feedback, for example, which blends personal connection with writing advice:

> One thing that I would like to hear more about are your emotions about leaving Ceresco. I moved a couple times when I was little too, and I always HATED moving. I never wanted to leave the old house and all my neighbors and friends. I've never left a town before though!

> Was it hard moving? Did you miss your old school, your old friends, your old house? Those details would really help make your story even more relatable!

Other comments were purely relational: One college student responded to a paper on a middle schooler's father by revealing that her dad was also a construction worker. Shared sports interests, notes about pets, and upcoming travel to Mexico all made their way into the margins of Google Docs. In response to a paper that revealed social struggles, one university student wrote, "I also got picked on when I was little. I had a hard time making friends for a really long time, I'm sorry that it happened to you as well."

Sometimes, however, college students struggled to respond appropriately to personal revelations from community members online. Perhaps because the online disinhibition effect made it harder to recognize the person behind the draft, occasionally the college students missed opportunities for relational communication. For example, in the margins of a paragraph in which a young person revealed experiencing food insecurity, one service-learner offered the following: "Make sure you watch out for run on sentences! See if you can maybe break this sentence down into multiple different sentences." Instructor feedback often focused on supporting students in enacting relationality online, specifically around difficult moments shared by community members, in comments such as

> Quick reminder to connect to students on a personal level, especially when they share personal challenges. For example, while you're completely right that there's a dialogue punctuation problem when Becca mentioned being laughed at, how might you empathize and offer grammar feedback, rather than only respond to that painful moment with a grammar tip?

This feedback to service-learners was designed to highlight the importance of relationality to the instructor and the partnership as a whole, as opposed to only focusing on content-related responses.

An additional relational strategy college students used was crafting responses that scrambled power dynamics between the university students and community members by positioning the college students as learning from the youth. For example, "I'm a terrible cook so I'd love to hear more on this! Maybe it would help improve my cooking, haha!" One university student graciously

responded to a middle schooler's spelling correction of her work with, "I just looked it up and it turns out that backup *is* one word! Thank you for pointing that out!" These responses worked to counteract a paradigm in which "knowledge flows in one direction, from the boundaries of the university outward to its place of need and application in the community" *(Saltmarsh, Clayton, & Hartley, 2009, p. 8)*. To create a more reciprocal partnership for collaborative knowledge production online, college students need to use language to actively create digital relationships that position the community members as cocreators of knowledge.

College students also referenced personal details from youth in later communication, communicated explicitly that they were excited about the partnership, used friendly emoticons, and composed in letter format for a more personal feel (one student signed feedback "Your pal"). There were also a few instances of university writing mentors working to connect the youth to other assets in their home communities (e.g., "If you haven't already shown her [your grandma] your work, I would highly recommend you do so. She would be so proud!"). Although small, these strategies also fostered relationality.

Overall, several students wrote of being surprised at how well they were able to create a relational connection via computers— they built these relationships with the specific language choices of both college and middle school students. As one university student wrote in a farewell to the young writer, "I heard your voice come through your writing very strongly. Even though we haven't had time to discuss your writing face to face, I feel as if I've met you several times." Online service-learning does not mean abandoning the relational connections that are often at the heart of experiential learning with community members; it just means shifting relational strategies to connect in a different way.

Community Partner Perspectives

Asset-based community development is rooted in community capacity-building, so community perspectives and community impact are a key piece of examining ABCD strategies. Middle school teacher and author Jennifer Troester argues that the partnership's impact on students' writing will last a lifetime. When beginning the online writing exchange, some eighth-grade students felt unsure and intimidated about sharing their writing with college students who they felt were superior to them in writing. This feeling quickly dissipated: One student noted, "I am no longer hesitant to

submit my own writings for critiques," and another student commented, "Before this experience I was nervous to share my ideas with others but having them listen and give me feedback made things easier." Throughout the exchange the eighth-grade students became more analytical of their work when writing author's notes and after receiving feedback as they revised their writing. This is apparent from one student's description of the experience:

> The online writing exchange had a big impact on me. This really helped me better understand the skills you need to be a good writer. Having the older college student give us advice was very helpful because of the fact that they have way more experience.

In addition, this exchange of ideas follows student writers beyond the online writing exchange itself. One student commented, "The writing exchange impacted my writing by allowing me to see what I needed to work on. It allowed me to find my voice and make it stronger." The feedback students receive in the eighth-grade writing exchange has a positive influence on their writing even after the exchange is over. As another student wrote,

> Something that impacted me on the online exchange writing was that I am a better writer than I was before we did this. These kids are older and know what they are talking about, so I took their advice and now use it in my writing [even a year later]. For example, some feedback they gave me that was helpful was to give more description in my writing and now I try to use that to examine my word choice after I'm done writing to see if I could be using stronger words.

Giving eighth-grade students the chance to analyze their writing and present it to an authentic audience who will give them feedback allows them to understand the process of writing and to operate like true writers themselves. It also motivates the eighth-grade students to revise their writing and learn new skills they will use in the future. This real-world opportunity to share through peer review improves the effectiveness of student writing.

The positive student comments from the 2016 partnership echo results from a survey conducted in 2013 with 45 middle school students *(Troester, 2015)*, which revealed that the majority of students felt the partnership increased their capacities. When

asked their level of agreement with the statement "After taking part in this Online Writing Exchange, I can now better analyze my own writing," 80% of eighth-grade students "strongly agreed" or "agreed" and 20% were "neutral," with no one disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. In addition, the eighth-grade students were asked to rate the following: "After taking part in this Online Writing Exchange, I am more aware of writing for an audience rather than just writing for a grade." In response, 74% of students "strongly agreed" or "agreed" and 26% were "neutral," with no one disagreeing or strongly disagreeing *(p. 4)*. Self-reported student improvement was reflected in a jump in state writing assessment scores, which middle school teacher Jennifer Troester attributes in part to the online partnership. As reported in her 2013 study, the percentage of students scoring proficient or exceeding writing expectations in her small rural district was 73% in 4th grade and 74% in 11th grade, but in the 8th grade class, all of whom participated in the partnership, 85% had a proficient or exceeding writing expectations score. Although Troester's writing pedagogy certainly played a role in this jump, she suggests that the regular in-depth, individualized feedback on student work that her middle schoolers received through the partnership, along with the consistent opportunity for a real audience beyond the teacher, supported her students in achieving this higher level of writing proficiency.

The electronic asset-based community development (eABCD) strategies that the college students utilized may have contributed to this positive impact. To begin, youth often remarked in their 2016 surveys about the asset-based approach the college students employed. For example, when asked generally about what comments were most helpful, one student replied, "The most helpful feedback was when my person told me that she thought I was a good writer, and that I have the potential to take my writing to the next level." Students reported that the positive comments made them "feel comfortable with the [college] student." Students also mentioned relationality, describing the importance of being "kind" and "open." One young writer noticed how her college student blended relationship-driven responses with feedback, writing, "[The college student] would take things that I wrote about and make comments on them to connect. For example, I talked about my excitement going to a concert, and she would talk about her own excitement and experience [with concerts], mixing in helpful detailing tips with those." Even several months after the partnership ended, this student was able to recall the specifics of the concert comments, demonstrating their relational impact.

And finally, the youth were also able to articulate strategies the college students used to encourage internal focus and make sure the eighth graders felt as if they were in the driver's seat of their own writing process. One middle schooler wrote, "Some things that my person did for me was by saying, 'You could consider this, or maybe try this,' instead of saying, 'You need to change this, etc.'" Another youth noted, "Nothing was ever demanded, it was always suggested. They really understood how maybe we chose the specific word for a reason, or maybe we want our story to sound that way." The college students worked to communicate that the young authors had creative power over their work, trusting the intentionality of the youth. In particular, the eighth graders noticed that their partners did not make direct changes to the work: "What the college student did is put constructive advice on the comments instead of deleting stuff that we had worked on and putting stuff that they thought was good in." Keeping their comments to the margins of the paper was a way for the college students to spatially decenter their own ideas and keep the middle schooler's voice in the forefront. In this sense, internal focus was strong, as the college mentors worked to give advice while leaving the power in the hands of the eighth graders.

And in fact, one eighth grader asked for even more internal focus in a survey response. When asked about advice for future college students participating in the partnership, she replied, "Some kids need the criticism to be 'sugar coated'. Others like me want the cold, hard truth. . . . Do not be afraid to ask the person whether they want it straight out or not." As this student noted, internal focus can extend beyond the content of feedback received to how that feedback is communicated. While this internal control strategy of asking community members about communication style preferences was not used by any of the college students in the 2016 partnership, this is another strategy that could be added to the eABCD toolbox. Another potential tool for increasing internal control is involving the community members in assessing the college students, an approach that we initiated in our fall 2017 partnership. Feedback sheets filled out by the middle school students impacted the college students' final grades. [See Shumake and Shah *(2017)* for a theoretical rationale and description of this process as it appeared in a pilot secondary writing partnership.] Increasing community partner control of collaborations is a delicate task that can appear in a variety of forms, from small language choices to the structure of partnership design.

As the youth identified, the college students drew on asset-based, relationship-driven, and internally focused strategies to engage in community development online. Ultimately, these strategies led to a partnership that had a positive impact on not only the experience as a whole but also on the students' writing skills. This is illustrated in the following student's comment:

> The impact that the online writing exchange we did last year with the UNL students had on me was more than I had expected. At first I expected them to be grammar wizards and that their responses would be bossy and structured, but instead personally, I found them to be extremely helpful and sincere. I was lucky enough to have a partner who never really told me everything was wrong, but instead said how I could make it better. In doing so, it allowed me to still keep the voice and some of the specific word choice I had in my writings unique and personal without the feeling that it might be incorrect.

Using the eABCD strategies, the college-aged student was able to connect with this student by creating a safe space to share, focusing on how to improve the writing rather than pick it apart. This made the younger student able to feel that he was being mentored and not criticized. This partnership built on eABCD strategies created a foundation for an exchange of ideas where eighth-grade students could experience the writing process and learn the skills of a true writer without fear of judgment or shame. It motivated younger students to practice the skills suggested without losing their voice.

Recommendations for Fostering eABCD

Based on these findings and themes, we offer several recommendations for instructors to encourage electronic asset-based community development. These recommendations stem from the particular context of our secondary–college writing exchange, so these suggestions will not be transportable unchanged to all varieties of eService-learning. However, we hope the themes discussed here will become a starting point for conceptualizing asset-based community development in online spaces.

1. Explicitly discuss with service-learning students the importance of careful language choices in online communication, as language does not just communicate content,

but shapes the relationship. Discuss samples of online communication for the power dynamics implied by particular words, and practice answering sample communications before responding to a real community member online.

2. Practice with students how to identify and build from the assets shared by community members for the specific online partnership. For example, discuss e-mail interview questions that might highlight the strengths of a nonprofit staff member, or model how to provide asset-based comments on a community member's blog.

3. Provide digital opportunities for community members to control the feedback, support, or interactions they are involved in (e.g., through an author's note or posted statement about the community member's goals for the interaction).

4. Encourage initial digital communication focused solely on relationship-building and ongoing relational (not just task-oriented) interactions integrated with regular partnership activities.

5. Host a class discussion on how to build rapport in online spaces, tailoring the discussion to expressions that would be appropriate for the particular partnership (e.g., emoticons, choice of e-mail salutations and valedictions, warmth of tone, etc.).

6. Follow online communication between students and community members (e.g., have access to Google Docs, read wiki updates, watch screencasts of meetings) with an eye toward instances where online disinhibition or deficit views might be negatively impacting the partnership. Provide specific, regular feedback to students on ways to better implement asset-based, internally focused, and relationship-driven strategies virtually, along with guidance on correctly applying discipline-specific knowledge to the partnership. As Kuh *(2014)* noted, "Feedback is perhaps the most powerful pedagogical prompt in an educator's toolbox" *(p. 95)*.

7. Invite students to share difficult online interactions during class, in order to provide opportunities for the class to brainstorm together how to respond in ways that are asset-based, relationship-driven, and internally focused. Digital community member interactions can also be scheduled

during class time (if the class is face-to-face or synchronous) to provide real-time support.

8. Assign ongoing (not just summative) reflection assignments that will offer insight into how students are taking up asset-based or deficit-based views, and offer comments that redirect toward eABCD worldviews when needed.

Conclusion: The Exigence of eABCD

Battling deficit views of communities is highly complex and nuanced work, and no simple list of recommendations will "solve" the problem of how pernicious discourses shape students' and instructors' worldviews and interactions with community members. Yet the task of preparing students to engage openly and respectfully with a diverse range of community members online has perhaps never been more urgent, not only because of the digital expansion of service-learning, but also because of the changing textures of our culture. Digital social discourse can liberate our less constructive and rhetorically insensitive natures, and online disinhibition can make it easy to dismiss or demean those we may not identify as belonging to our social "tribes."

In this context, service-learning faculty have the opportunity to nurture *different* digital dispositions. The data showed that many of the college students in the partnership, for example, made small shifts over the course of the semester in responding to community members, changing from error hunting and slaying to conversation-based response, from solely task-oriented to relationship-infused work, from seeking to direct the words of others to creating space for others' voices. As they reported in their case study reflections, the college students gained a more nuanced understanding about fostering cyber climates conducive to engaged, exploratory, risk-taking communication across difference.

As illustrated in this study, these students demonstrated strategies that can be used to enact the themes of asset-based community development digitally, as well as areas where deficit views and online disinhibition can pose challenges for students working in online service-learning. This study contributes to the nascent field of eService-learning, addressing gaps in the literature on how foundational theories of service-learning can be adapted for online engagement. However, this study involves a relatively small and homogeneous sample, and it focuses on a single partnership. More research is needed on effective digital dynamics in community partnerships, particularly in a wider range of eService-learning part-

nerships. For example, areas in which additional research would be useful include synchronous partnerships, in which there is less time to think or revise communications; online forum moderation, in which large numbers of people participate and relationships may not be ongoing; and partnerships with nonprofit staff rather than directly with community members, in which power dynamics may be significantly different due to education levels and professional role. Furthermore, traditional ABCD's focus on physical spaces in addition to individual and associational strengths invites deeper exploration into how eABCD can draw on the strengths of digital spaces. And finally, this study focused primarily on individual community member development, whereas traditional ABCD privileges connecting members with similar interests to produce change, which opens questions about how digital engagement can facilitate connection and collaborative action.

As service-learning's focus on building engaged citizens shifts to take into account the forms of digital citizenship that are rapidly becoming central to civic life, scholars and practitioners have opportunities to deeply consider what postures and ways of being can be nurtured in digital service spaces. When students see themselves as part of a virtual community network that builds on the rich assets, internal agency, and relationships of community members, they are better equipped to be competent communicators and ethical decision-makers looking for opportunity wherever they go.

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Appendix A: Author's Note Handout Given to Middle School Students

Explanation & Expectations for Author's Notes

An Author's Note helps you analyze your writing. It also helps your readers have some direction for the feedback you need. An Author's Note, oral or written, gives responders the crucial context they need to know how to respond. It should include three sorts of information.

1. A statement of where the text is in the process of development (first draft, ninth draft, based on an idea I got last night, an attempt to fix the second half by switching it to dialogue, etc.).

2. Your own writer's assessment of the piece (I like this about it because . . . I am worried about this about it because . . .).

3. Any general sort of response you want, any specific questions you want answered. (For example, "Today I think I need Support and Encouragement because I feel fragile about this piece." "Please tell me how you imagine the narrator of this scene, because I'm trying to create a specific kind of voice here and I need to know what kind of voice you get." "I'm worried about how I describe my grandmother here, so I want you to tell me how you imagine her from what I give you.").

Author's Notes are the primary way to focus on the specific feedback you, as writer, need to improve your writing. Consequently, in writing author's notes my advice is to provide as much information to readers as you can, and then to experiment with what response to ask for.

Personal Narrative Author's Note: Format & Questions

Begin with something like: This week we started our personal narratives. We talked about writing about a moment in time when we learned a lesson or learned something about ourselves.

Next paragraph: (In this paragraph tell specifically what you like about your essay and what you feel you need help with).

Last part: Now list four questions you want your readers to address in their feedback. You may choose from the following or write questions of your own.

- Do I have an excellent lead that hooks my audience? If so, what do you like about it specifically. If not, how could I make it better?

- Do I have a good conclusion that wraps up my thoughts about the lesson learned?

- Is my essay well organized with a solid topic sentence and three main ideas with supporting details?

- Can you hear my "voice" throughout the essay? If not, how could I change it?

- What do you think of my word choice? Where could I add more detailed, vivid, and/or natural language?

- Do you feel my essay is clearly focused, and makes you feel like you're experiencing this moment in my life with me?

- Are there mistakes or inappropriate choice in usage?

- Do you feel like this is a solid personal narrative? If not, how can I make it better?

Appendix B: Survey Given to Middle School Students

Online Writing Exchange 2016

Thank you for agreeing to answer the following questions about the online writing exchange from the 2016 school year. I appreciate your honest answers. Please elaborate so we have a solid understanding of your thoughts. I know this was a year ago, but please do your best to answer the questions fully. Thanks again!

1. What impact, if any, did the online writing exchange have on your and your writing? Think about the six traits of writing (ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions) along with anything else you can think of. Be specific.

2. What kind of feedback about your writing from the college students was most helpful? Do you remember any specific comments that you received?

3. What did the college student do—or what should they have done—to build a relationship and make you feel comfortable sharing your writing online?

4. What did the college student do—or what should they have done—to help you build off your strengths as a writer, as opposed to just criticizing?

5. What did the college student do—or what should they have done—to make sure they weren't taking control of your writing or doing it for you? How did they keep you in the driver's seat as author? (Think about how they made comments—how did they do this without doing the writing for you?)

6. What advice would you give to college students who are participating in a writing exchange, or the instructors setting up the writing exchange? In other words, since the objective is to help you become stronger writers, what could we do to better make that happen?

About the Authors

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