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Editors' Introduction

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Editors' Introduction

*Isabel Baca and Paul Feigenbaum, with
Vincent Portillo and Cayce Wicks*

With the current issue of the *Community Literacy Journal*, we are pleased to welcome two scholars to our editorial team. Dr. Isabel Baca of the University of Texas at El Paso has taken a position as one of our journal Co-Editors, and Dr. Sherita Roundtree of Towson University is our new Acquisitions Editor.

The contents of the issue reflect the kinds of serendipitous moments that occur every now and then in journal editing, as when a section of an officially non-special issue almost feels like a special issue. This particular serendipity spotlights independently submitted pieces on public memory and the ethics of storytelling. In **“You Call It Honor, We Call It Dishonor? Counterstorytelling & Confederate Monuments in Isle of Wight County, Virginia,”** authors Brooke Covington, Chief Rosa Holmes Turner, and Julianne Bieron demonstrate how counterstorytelling functions in places of ordinary democracy. Through a case study of a public hearing regarding a local confederate monument in Isle of Wight County, Virginia, Covington, Holmes Turner, and Bieron illustrate how the use of storytelling supports citizens' interpretations of confederate monuments. Informed by critical race theory, and employing counterstorytelling as a methodology, these authors position storytelling as a practical form of racial countermemory, analyze citizens' narratives, and explore counterstories as “persuasive tools used by ordinary people to support their social justice aims.” In addition, by engaging with counterstorytelling, Covington, Holmes Turner, and Bieron model collaboration and reciprocity in community-based scholarship.

Erin Brock Carlson explores how archival digital storytelling can develop students' understanding of place. In the article **“I Have Always Loved West Virginia, But...?: How Archival Projects Can Complicate, Build, and Reimagine Place-Based Literacies,”** Carlson describes an archival digital project between multimedia writing students and a local history center in West Virginia. Focusing on the Battle of Blair Mountain, an important event in labor history, Carlson argues that such digital projects “can lead students to place-based narratives that could be a source for increased levels of critical literacy and in turn, sustained political and material change.” With the students' digital project, Carlson further conveys the value of archival research and the importance of ethical storytelling.

We also offer a retrospective on the first five years of the Writing Innovation Symposium (WIS), which has taken place annually at Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin since 2018. Spearheaded by WIS co-founder and “Chief Capacitator” Jenn Fishman, **“Capacitating Community: The Writing Innovation Symposium”** engages various questions about what it means to build community within a locally situated convening space that has over time extended its outreach to a more national stage. The engine of this showcase is a dialogic mélange of recollections, in-

sights, and connections offered by twenty-nine WIS participants from both academic and nonacademic backgrounds. The piece concludes with Fishman's "narrative recipe" inviting readers to build their own small conference communities.

This issue's Project and Program Profile features Randi Gray Kristensen's piece "**JAMAL: Adult Literacy Decolonizing Knowledge and Activism in 1970s Jamaica.**" In this profile, Kristensen describes the difficulties and disruptions that took place while developing and staging a community play with members of a poor and working-class Jamaican community. The article focuses on Jamaica Movement for the Advancement of Literacy (JAMAL), which sought to promote literacy amongst everyday Jamaicans through classes, playwriting, and stage performance. Kristensen builds upon the scholarship of Beverly Bell (*Walking on Fire*), arguing for the importance of exposing and resisting ongoing forces of colonization. Finally, Kristensen's profile adds to a growing body of scholarship that speaks to the needs of decolonizing knowledge within the field of Caribbean Studies.

For our Issues in Community Literacy section, we offer space for contributors to analyze, reflect, and/or complicate ongoing challenges associated with the work of community literacy. For this issue, contributors explore a range of concerns that include disability justice, payment for community writing, and queer zine publishing in the South. In our first piece, "**Rhetorical Considerations for Missy, an LGBTQ+ Zine at the University of Mississippi,**" Tyler Gillespie reflects on his experience working as an advisor for the University of Mississippi's "first creative publication for/ by LGBTQ+ students and allies." Examining the zine's development through the lens of literary practices within LGBTQ+ communities, Gillespie aims to "add to conversations on the ways educators and other stakeholders can help such students create spaces for community-building and counterpublics in their localized contexts."

In the collaborative essay "**Payment in the Polity: Funded Community Writing Projects,**" Audrey Simango, Matthew Stadler, and Alison Turner explore how their role as RAES (Reader/Advisor/Editors) for the The GOAT PoL (The Geopolitical Open Atlas of The Polity of Literature) bring to light a complicated issue in community literacy: money. They delve into the intricacies surrounding the role of money in their work as RAEs and in other funded community-writing projects, and they explore how small payments to individual participants impact the community writing process. Using their experience with The GOAT PoL, the authors probe questions concerning power and privilege in community-engaged publishing and propose that the exchange of money could perhaps "deepen and enrich" the "polity of literature."

In the final piece of our Issues section, "**Access as Praxis: Navigating Spaces of Community Literacy in Graduate School,**" Millie Hizer reflects on her experience as a disabled graduate student navigating community literacy spaces. Hizer uses her lived experiences as a beginning framework for exploring the intersecting challenges that "graduate student labor conditions and a lack of institutional support" create to form "significant barriers for disabled graduate students looking to engage in community literacy projects." Building on "Ada Hubrig's theorization of *disability justice informed community literacy*," Hizer proposes an "access as praxis" approach, which seeks to bring "visibility to the barriers preventing disabled graduate students from

meaningfully engaging in community engaged work.” By presenting three unique perspectives on a range of concerns important to community literacy, this Issues section demonstrates the complexity of the affordances and constraints of community-engaged work.

Our Book and New Media Review section, edited by Jessica Shumake, includes three reviews of books that we believe will be of interest to readers of the journal. This issue also features our third publication of “Coda: Community Writing and Creative Work,” as edited by Kefaya Diab, Chad Seader, Alison Turner, and Stephanie Wade.