

admire, and I think maybe one day I will be like them. There's so many people I could name, people I meet on the street. I admire Mark Lyons, who does immigrant work in Philly, stands in front of the police as they try to arrest people and take them to the detention center. If I could be like Mark Lyons one day, then, I would say, "There." Then I would have done something, and I would feel proud of myself.

**I think you are being humble. You have done a lot. There is a quote from Paula Mathieu in *Tactics of Hope* about the "radical insufficiency" of all of our acts. I feel like she was talking about how not to get burned out as an activist and how not to feel hopeless because there are so many problems and they are so big, and it is so hard to change them. I think she had a really good discussion about how not to lose hope, which I guess was part of the point of the book.**

I mean this as a compliment, but you could almost turn her book into a quote-a-day calendar, a Mathieu inspiration moment every day. She is a brilliant writer.

**Is there anything else you wanted to add about anything?**

I began by saying that I didn't enter the field through composition and rhetoric scholarship, and it was very difficult for me to find people that I drew upon for the work that I do. But really, knowing the graduate students I work with now, I have immense hope in this next generation of comp/rhet scholars. They have a much larger proactive vision of what we can be— particularly when I think of the dissertations and the projects and the way they approach the field. It is the greatest thing when you see what is coming. I entered the field through something else and found a way, but I am really excited about what the next generation of folks are about to produce.

## Author Bio

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## Book & New Media Reviews

**Saul Hernandez, Intern**

Georgia College and State University

**Ryan Cresawn, Intern**

University of Arizona

### *From the Book & New Media Review Editor's Desk*

**Jessica Shumake, University of Arizona**

In a recent literacy collaboration with Sunnyside High School students and teachers in Tucson, Arizona, I had the privilege to read and offer feedback on students' scholarship applications and personal statements for college. One student brought her academic transcript to our session because she was hoping she could explain to critical readers the reason for a low grade in one of her classes. I asked her to tell me a little about the class in which she received the low grade so that we could integrate her experience into her personal statement. The story the student shared stopped me cold.

"We got a new teacher that year," she stammered. "The teacher was from Iowa and was much harder than our previous teacher who went on maternity leave." The student continued to explain that most honors classes at her high school were taught very much like the regular sections of any given class. However, the new teacher from Iowa was adamant that honors students needed to have additional challenges, assignments, and homework. The student admitted sheepishly that she "just couldn't meet the teacher's standards and expectations" and barely squeaked by with a D in the course. The student also shared that the teacher left the position after one year, but before resigning told the class that her decision to leave was based on her observation that the students in her classes were not academically prepared to be successful in college and that she would never allow her own child to attend a school in the district. The inappropriate forthrightness on the part of the teacher from Iowa cast a shadow over the student's perception of herself and her readiness for college. A 750-word personal statement is a net whose mesh allows many hardships to slip through in the interest of concision. Fortunately, this issue's keyword essay and review writers are less constrained in their ability to reflect upon educational access and efforts to write one's way out of constrained mindsets and situations.

The overriding theme in Maria Conti's review of David Coogan's *Writing Our Way Out* is the importance of listening to the voices of incarcerated writers as their citizen-selves are produced when they critique "the severely flawed systems

that govern their daily lives.” Anthony Boynton’s review likewise takes a stand for historically marginalized communities to examine how Linda Spears-Bunton and Rebecca Powell’s *Toward a Literacy of Promise: Joining the African American Struggle* invites scholars and teachers of the rhetoric of social change to embrace critical literacy as a “humanizing force and a vehicle for political participation and citizenry.” Finally, this issue’s keyword essay “Place-Based Literacies” by Rosanne Carlo explores recent scholarship in urban and rural literacy studies to highlight how community literacy researchers and practitioners are actively shaping and transforming the social and ecological realities of their neighborhoods and institutions through non-dominant “world-making and world-revealing practices.”

## Keyword Essay: Place-Based Literacies

**Rosanne Carlo**

College of Staten Island (CUNY)

Practicing community outreach and research—alongside writing community scholarship—requires an attention to place in the present, as a literal site of practice with material conditions. It also requires an attention to place in the past and future, as an imaginary as well as historical engagement of what a place once was for people and what it has yet to become. Literacy work is, as Paulo Freire describes, a “constant unveiling of reality” (8) toward the end of creating “revolutionary futurity” (10). Explained in more concrete terms, when “people develop their power to perceive critically *the way they exist* in the world and *with which* and *in which* they find themselves” then they can begin to transform their reality, both ecologically and socially (Freire 9). Community work and scholarship continually unveils reality to change and shape it, and this process is a form of place-making.

It is hard to separate the words of education and community scholars from the locations through and in which they write; location is not a backdrop for abstract theories of literacy, but it is the source of those investigations. For example, rural Nebraska and its prairie shapes Robert Brooke’s reflections on place-conscious education as a way to create responsive citizens (*Rural Voices: Place-Conscious Education and the Teaching of Writing*); Harlem’s crowded streets after a show at the Apollo are the rhythms behind Valerie Kinloch’s arguments for a critical stance toward gentrification and loss of black culture (*Harlem on Our Minds: Place, Race, and the Literacies of Urban Youth*); and the urban community college campus with an open admissions policy—its students formerly academic outsiders, now moving from their worlds of work, to home, to school—underlie Ira Shor’s calls for a critical pedagogy that works to transform social inequalities (*Critical Teaching and Everyday Life*). It is not hard to think of several other place-based writings and educational theories in composition and community literacy scholarship.

This discussion of community literacy work and place reminds us of how Anne Ruggles Gere drew attention to the “extracurricular”—or places beyond the university—where we find literacy at work. In her article, now over twenty years old, she writes, “They [writers] may gather in rented rooms in the Tenderloin, around kitchen tables in Lansing, Iowa, or in a myriad of other places to write their worlds. The question remains whether we will use classroom walls as instruments of separation or communication” (91). The answer, if I can be so bold as to claim one, is now here—the “extracurricular” is becoming the curricular as more educators are advocating for place-based literacies under names like service-learning, place-conscious education, ecomposition and ecopedagogy, and urban and rural literacy studies. These subfields, of course, are not one in the same as they draw on