Have We Arrived? A Special Issue

We wrote the CFP of this special issue on hauntings, writing centers, and arrival during the height of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, when a regional writing center conference, the South Central Writing Center Association Conference, was canceled due to COVID-19 like so many conferences were in spring 2020. While all conferences are opportunities for community building, for open dialogue and exchanging of ideas, and learning from different perspectives, this conference felt particularly meaningful. After a series of racist incidents that occurred at a large, research university in Oklahoma, met with initial silence from administrators, students began demanding for racial justice across college campuses in the state. The conference at Oklahoma State, intentionally would have focused on the ongoing racism in writing centers, and the need to reckon both with the haunted histories of writing centers as entangled and complicit in and with policing practices and the desire to signal an arrival of a new present and new actor-agents. It would have provided a space of and for difficult conversations, in which people of privilege were to be faced with listening to histories of violence that higher education, and writing centers, have partaken in and created. Members of different communities were to discuss ways to move forward, in solidarity, and to acknowledge the difficulties of coalition building. In this region, and in the state of Oklahoma in particular, this was important and needed for the writing center community, with governmental leadership impacting higher education and silencing faculty, professionals, and students calling for racial justice, inclusivity for all marginalized communities, and equity work that has transformative impacts. This dialogue did not happen. Will it ever have arrived?

This special issue on hauntings, writing centers, and arrival comes at a time of continued uncertainty, exhaustion, and fear; as racial, social, and political unrest and the pandemic continues to upend our daily lives, with individuals and communities suffering physically, financially, emotionally, and spiritually. Many of us have grown tired of academic discourse; it remains intangible and disembodied while many are just trying to stay alive and keep others safe where they can. Not surprisingly, women faculty members, especially racialized and minoritized women and those from marginalized communities, have been most impacted by the pandemic, with an even stronger increase in “institutional care work” (“Gender, COVID, and Faculty Service”). Racialized and minoritized faculty and admins have been supporting vulnerable students (“Keeping COVID from Sidelining Equity”), as studies have shown that Black, Latinx, and Indigenous students have steep and disproportionate declines in student retention compared to their White peers (Excelencia in Education); online harassment and violence towards Asian American and Pacific Islanders has threatened the safety of students from this community at all-time rates during the height of this pandemic (Pew Research Center Survey); LGBTQ college students were nearly twice as likely to lose financial aid and 31% of transgender students reported they do not have reliable internet access or secure spaces to study and attend classes. COVID has exacerbated and shed light on racialized, minoritized, and marginalized communities in higher education, and how higher education is failing those in these communities and those working with them. For many, academic discourse is but a reminder of that which will never have arrived beyond the words etched into anti-racist, DEI, decolonial, and land acknowledgement statements.

In the CFP, the editors write, “How might we re-envision the writing center as a haunt/ed/ing and wound/ed/ing place, and re-envision the writing center narratives under the

lens of responsibility? What new stories might we gain through transformative listening and a more thorough understanding of what the work might entail for those invested in social justice and anti-racist work?" The authors of this special issue take on these questions in their essays, questions that feel all the more necessary to address as we stare at the numbers of people struggling, of people trying to survive, and we--the writing center community--are aware in ways in which the writing center can be a space of intervention, despite its haunted beginnings and entanglements. The articles in this essay address tangible ways forward, and through their narratives, through working with theories and methodologies, and posing new ways of thinking about the work that we do, this special issue reminds us of the importance of academic discourse, and what it can be and do for a community, especially a community feeling isolated and exhausted.

Generosity, Community, and Coalition Building

Of course, writing centers are not the only spaces feeling the loss of community and reckoning with haunted histories. All of higher education and the education system more broadly is suffering. In a relatively recent book, *Generous Thinking: A Radical Approach to Saving the University*, author Kathleen Fitzpatrick uses bell hooks work on community to frame her concept of generous thinking, and quotes hooks' work from *Teaching Community*, "One of the dangers we face in the educational system is the loss of a feeling of community, not just the closeness among those with whom we work and with our students, but also the loss of feeling of connection and closeness with the world beyond the academy" (hooks, *Teaching Communit*y). For many of us, there is disconnect between our academic worlds and the world outside; and when again, we look at the current statistics of students falling behind, of faculty and admin of color struggling, and how the pandemic has amplified racist tensions, class divides, bigotry, and misinformation, it is clear there needs to be a radical shift in how we talk with one another, and how we learn from one another. And while higher education, particularly higher education in the United States, is created from haunted histories, it is also possible that higher education, and spaces like the writing center, can be spaces that can rebuild communities. Will "community" ever have arrived? Fitzpatrick uses the term "generous thinking" to help us rethink and reconcile with higher education and what it can provide for communities within and beyond the academy. "Generous thinking is a mode of engagement that emphasizes listening over speaking, community over individualism, collaboration over competition, and lingering with the ideas that are in front of us rather than continually pressing forward to where we want to go" (4). Generous thinking does not allow us to ellide difference, but rather begin from difference, if we are to address the concerns of different communities; communities that do not necessarily always agree with one another on topics and concepts, that use different methodologies to arrive to similar conclusions, that have their own agendas and responsibilities; however, it is --now more evident than ever--that we need one another to make oddkin (Haraway) if we are to combat systemic inequities created under settler colonialism, which, for the purposes of this essay, we connect with capitalism and capitalist forces, particularly within the context of the U.S.

Universities and college campuses have always been sites of violence. They are inherently located on and are themselves wounded/ing places (see Till; Brasher et al.) Recent research has exposed the haunted histories of land-grant universities specifically, with a closer examination of The Morrill Act of 1862, which "granted expropriated Indigenous land to states in

order to fund universities. Indigenous territory acquired through lopsided treaties and outright seizures was funneled through the act to make advanced agricultural and mechanical education more widely accessible" ("How They Did It: Exposing How U.S. Universities Profited from Indigenous Land"). As many of us are aware, the very places and spaces in which we work and teach reside on stolen land--and those of us invested in accessible education have to wrestle with the violent past of the universities we do so work in. It has also been well-documented that U.S. universities supported the African slave trade through research and curriculum design ("The Long, Ugly History of Racism at American Universities") and it was not until 1954 with the Brown v. Board of Education that state schools were mandated to integrate Black students--and even then, it was not until the 1970s that segregation was completely abolished. Let us not then forget the poignant critique offered by Leigh Patel, building on the historian Craig Steven Wilder's observation, that the university is a central pillar alongside church and state that has allowed the settler colonial project to persevere (No Study Without Struggle). Higher education has always been immersed in and supported violence. That is its haunting past.

And we are still haunted by western ideologies and ontologies. Many of us are forced to ground our work in such thinking (as several of the authors in this collection discuss). Of Western ideology, specifically Western scientific thought, but a concept that dominates many of our disciplines (and we can see this most recently in the writing center field's push for empirical RAD research), much of our research and ways of being in academia remain rational, in objectivity (see Chilisa; Smith). Gloria Anzaldua writes, "In trying to become objective, Western culture made objects of things and people when it distanced itself from them, thereby losing touch with them." To do university work implicates all of us; we are all entangled, and thus it behooves us all to acknowledge that the institutions in which we work are haunted. The work that many of us aspire to do--education as liberation (Freire; hooks)--is hope as action. And while we recognize the creations of our universities as haunted, we are also aware that higher education continued further in the economic divide, and growingly evident with the Reagan administration. As Reagan's political career began in racist rhetoric and class divides, he was quick to admonish the Kent State protests, using higher education and "intellectual curiosity" as public enemies to a right-wing conservative agenda.

Through Reagan's administration, higher education was seen as a private good rather than a public service, and education was "for profit." (Berrett). The "neoliberal" university with its focus on workforce skills, yet at the same time, exploits labor from contingent faculty, such as those working in writing centers/programs (Bousquet; Nayden, Gardner, Herb; Monty) and graduate student labor (Madden et al), has also shaped the way we conduct ourselves in our academic communities, through teaching, and through our work. The field of writing studies is indicative of such thinking as we advocate for disciplinarity (Boquet, Lerner, Malenczyk): what we have to offer society is through our individual expertise rather than through a shared commitment of learning, of helping others feel they belong, of listening to others to be better, since we remain right in our own convictions and expertises. Fitzpatrick writes,

> The best of what the university has to offer lies less in its specific power to advance knowledge or solve problems in any of its many fields than its more general, more crucial ability to be a model and a support for generous thinking as a way of being in and with the world. It's for this reason that those of us who work in those institutions must take a good hard look at ourselves and the ways that we engage with one another and with the

> world, in order to ensure that we're doing everything we possibly can to create ways of thinking we'd like to see manifested around us. (5-6)

As the university recognizes and reconciles with our pasts and presents, there are spaces on campus, the writing center as one, that can model ways forward to create community--if we are to accept the great responsibility that work entails, and what it would mean in terms of our own commonly accepted pedagogies, policies, and practices. Community can often be read, often because it is, as a reductive term or a "nice" phrase; community can often deflate difference. However, borrowing from Spivak's concept of strategic essentialism, Fitzpatrick argues that community is one of the more important useful organizing tools for those of us wanting to do social justice work more broadly to use as a way to embrace differences, embrace dischord with one another, as we work towards solidarity and coalition-building. And while strategic essentialism is surely not enough--Joy Ritchie reminds us it should only ever be a temporary point of departure-- it is key and important for those of us in writing centers to dwell on, as this CFP asks the community to rethink the "well-meaning rhetoric" that allows for many of our [white] bodies to applaud ourselves for saying the right thing. Community work is *difficult* work. As bell hooks teaches us,

> All too often we think of community in terms of being with folks like ourselves: the same class, same race, same ethnicity, same social standing and the like…I think we need to be wary: we need to work against the danger of evoking something that we don't challenge ourselves to practice…To build community requires constant vigilant awareness of the work we must continually do to undermine all the socialization that leads us to behave in ways that perpetuate domination.

We ask readers to turn to the essays in this collection through this lens of community and coalition-building; to recognize that these readings might challenge us; that we might not agree with the ideas posited from the authors; but that we come to this collection ready to work through generous thinking and a commitment to community as we rethink our responsibilities in writing center work. Fitzpatrick writes, "Generosity is as much connected to the mutual recognition and honoring of differences, perhaps especially when they cannot be resolved,as it is to our continuing determination to be in community together" (33). As we reckon with our pasts and presents, and recognize the ways in which we are implicated in perpetuating oppression and domination, we also must recognize our differences, how some of us have "inherited hard histories" (Haraway) more than others, and work together even if we might not always be in reconciliation, to move forward for inclusion and equity work that so clearly needs to be done, even in such spaces. As Audre Lorde teaches us, "Without community there is no liberation. But community must not mean a shedding of our differences, nor the pathetic pretense that these differences do not exist." As we are in a time now that asks us to rethink our communities, as many feel isolated through quarantining and the mass loss of life we have experienced (some communities more than others), as many do not have access to the virtual communities built, we are in a new space to rethink responsibilities.

Jim Corder wrote that "we are always standing somewhere in our narratives when we speak to others or ourselves" (17). The implied *where* is significant here as it stands at the nexus of all our past/present and future selves. Where will we choose to stand? Perhaps, it depends on a specific question. "What do we want from each other after we have told our stories," Audre Lorde asks in, "There are no Honest Poems about Dead Women." Perhaps, then, before we can imagine the arrival of "community" we must practice friendship otherwise.

Corder was concerned not with community, for it is an instant example of putting the cart before horse, but rather friendship: how are we to be present with, see, embrace, know, and hold another in mind (23)? *How are we to live in-common with each other, to welcome each other in our everyday lives of chance encounters, and to love each other [where]ver we may be* (see Garcia and Cortez)? Similarly, Frantz Fanon placed emphasis on friendship: "I…want only this…That it be possible for me to discover to love [another], wherever [they] may be" (231). Perhaps, what we are talking about, and what we must commit ourselves to rethink, is our obligation to an ethics of responsibility. The implied *where* is significant here as well. So often left unquestioned is the very place in and from which responsibility is being proposed. The *where* is the place where one's "I am," always already wedded to one's "where I do and think," is constituted. Towards such ends, we must rethink responsibility.

Rethinking responsibility of Writing Center Work

The authors in this collection all ask us to rethink responsibility and move beyond mere "benevolent rhetoric," if we are to reconcile with the haunted pasts of the institutions we work in and our own implications with systemic inequities and racism in the work that we do. Much of this work will ask readers to embrace humility and to accept, too, that sometimes we are the problem. It is this acceptance of admitting to being wrong; of acknowledging our perpetuations that can lead to real activism in our spaces and in our work in the writing center communities. As Sara Ahmed writes, "Activism might need us to involve losing confidence in ourselves, letting ourselves recognize how we too can be the problem. And that is hard if we have a lifetime of being the problem" (9). Losing confidence in oneself might be difficult for many of us, especially as we are ingrained to be "experts," when we enter our academic spaces--and yet it, accepting an orientation of acknowledging "you are the problem," that can lead to forming what hooks calls, "beloved community," created not on the eradication of difference, "but by its affirmation, by each of us claiming the identities and cultural legacies that shape who we are and how we live in the world." Such community might ask for many of us, especially those white, cisgender people, to admit their legacies are built on haunted histories; and these histories and ideologies have shaped and informed our ways of thinking, and our ways of talking and thinking about writing.

As editors, this issue has challenged us in thinking about our own editing practices, and we thank the authors and all of those we worked with in embracing difficult conversations in order to form stronger coalitions within the writing center community. We've too had to think about ways to revisit our own responsibilities in writing center work, and what activism might look like in an issue like this, and how that might mean we, as editors, needed to recognize when we were wrong. Authors pushed us in their stories and experiences and through their research methodologies; ideas and theories posited by the authors in this collection are not always in agreement. However, all authors in this collection speak to activist work and the need for equity and inclusion as action in our spaces, not simply as words; in this sense, we see a community of thinkers and doers, aiding in dismantling White Supremacy and capitalism in the spaces that are part of such systems. As editors, we agree with scholar-editors Kelly Blewett, Christina M. LaVecchia, Laura R. Micciche, and Janine Morris on their commitment to editing as inclusion activism: "Our thinking about inclusion is connected to a recognition that we learn with and through others. In that sense, inclusion signals a responsibility one feels toward community, a sense that we are better when "we expands, gets challenged, and modified over time" (281). We too "ask the field to reconsider what factors determine the quality of research and writing in

our field and how they might be in danger of being shaped by White Supremacy" (289) and we look forward to the dialogue that will come from this particular issue, its own community of scholars and writing center practitioners, who are part of expanding and challenging the work done in writing centers. To that end, we encourage all readers and scholars in the field to read and utilize the "Anti-Racist Scholarly Reviewing Practices: A Heuristic for Editors, Reviewers, and Authors," a necessary document articulated by Lauren E. Cagel et. al.

Much of this CFP asks us to rethink arrival, and to ask WC practitioners and scholars to move from more than just mission statements that call for inclusion to ways of doing and being activist. Part of such doing and being of activist work is to learn from those who do not belong, because the institution was never created for them in the first place. Sara Ahmed writes, "But think of this: those of us who arrive in an academy that was not shaped by or for us bring knowledges, as well as worlds, that otherwise would not be here. Think of this: how we learn about worlds when they do not accommodate us. Think of the kinds of experiences you have when you are not expected to be here. These experiences are a resource to generate knowledge" (*Living A Feminist Life*). Many of the authors in this issue come from the standpoint of "arriving" in an institution that was not shaped from them; through their knowledge, we learn about ways to expand and make more inclusive exclusionary structures in the worlds we reside in.

While this special issue comes out in a time of exhaustion and unrest, in which systemic inequities are heightened and made more visible, we are aware too this issue comes out in a time in which there is great divide, and in which it seems as if rhetoric is failing us, and perhaps, too, our academic discourse. The authors in this issue show us what our scholarship can do and be: as spaces to build solidarity through sharing different ideas, of recognizing and reconciling with haunted histories that have paved ways for problematic presents, and asking readers to rethink their responsibilities, some perhaps more than others, as we work to build solidarity and coalitions, albeit in institutions and structures that were created out of exclusion; we ask readers to attend each piece with generosity and humility, which asks us to acknowledge our differences (and not put them aside) and put away any initial reaction to be right, but to orient oneself to learn from being wrong.

An Overview of the Articles

We were excited by the submissions we received to our initial call, and to see the diversity of voices and work we received from those in the writing center community. The authors in this issue range from junior scholars to more senior scholars, all discussing the need for inclusion work in our writing centers from different perspectives and orientations at a wide range of institutions. asking readers to dwell with difference. We were particularly excited to see the collaborative works, learning from the dialogue that is occurring between directors and administrators and peer tutors. We see these authors responding to where the writing center field is currently, through our focus on haunted and violent histories, a questioning of arrival, and asking the field to move beyond rhetoric to the doing and being of justice work. We were also excited by the intersectional work showcased in this special issue, with articles discussing racial justice, linguistic justice, disability justice, and queer and gender justice.

Jasmine Carr Tang's article, "Asians are At the Writing Center," discusses the epistemic erasure of Asians and Asian Americans at the U.S. writing center, drawing on Women of Color

feminisms and *theorize in the flesh* (Morgan and Anzaldua). Through a self-reflexive close-reading of a personal story, Carr Tang unpacks a tutoring session that brings up issues of power, race, embodiment, consent, and agency; with an extended discussion of Asian American history and cultural politics, she provides a powerful lens of how white supremacy works on Asian Bodies at the writing center. We see this piece speaking to recent calls made by writing center practitioners/scholars Neisha Anne Green, Wonderful Faison and Anna Trevino, and Kendra Mitchell and Robert Randoph. Tang's article shows "how recognizing and acknowledging that white supremacy and imperialism are intertwined, we will then be in a better position to identify and name the extent of violence (epistemic and otherwise) happening at our centers" (Tang XX).

Authors Sonya Barrera Eddy, Katherine Bridgman, Sarah Burchett, Juan Escobedo, Marrisa Galvin, Randee Schmidt, and Lizbett Tinoco, in their article, "Arriving, Becoming, Unmaking: Stories of Arrival at an HSI Writing Center," also acknowledge histories of colonial violence, as they interrogate the physical space their writing center resides, and the regulatory role of the writing center as an educational space part of a settler-colonist project, "to discipline and subjugate" (Eddy et. al). Through intentional story-telling and the collective sharing of stories from BIPOC tutors and staff, the authors showcase the importance of relationships and relation-making in resisting the settler-colonist project of the university, and how "the relationships are themselves disruptive of our complicity…and it is through these relationships that we chip away at the standard language ideology enforced outside of the center (Eddy et. al XX). Through co-constructed knowledge of both directors and tutors, the authors in this piece and their dialogue embody the importance of "unmaking" and acknowledging privileges and powers as tutors and writing center practitioners, as they examine SLI practices and move towards linguistic and racial justice (Baker-Bell).

In the article, "Todos Estos Cuentos," Catalina Benavides powerfully uses the stories of her experiences as a Latina woman, narratives drawn from memories, to invite BIPOC writers and tutors to "feel empowered all the spaces they are in, but especially in the spaces where there aren't many people who look like them" (Villanueva)" (Benavides). Benavides discusses her experiences with Critical Race Theory and Latina feminism, and how these theories have led her to recognize the importance of storytelling, of sharing memories from her lived experiences, "stories of experience," to combat racism in education, as she has been and is a victim of racism in education. Critically examining one particular white space, the academic conference, Benavides powerfully discusses, through memory-telling, hearing Spanish from the keynote speaker: "No te dejes. Literally it translates to "Don't allow yourself" but what it really means is "Don't allow *them* to do what *they* want against your wishes. Stand up for yourself" (Benavides XX).

Isaac Wang's article too draws on and discusses Critical Race Theory, albeit differently than our previous author, in his article "Critical Race Theory Will Not Save Us: Towards Localized Storyings of Race, Colonialisms, and Relationships." In this article, Wang writes, "As writing center practitioners of color, we must ask whether the map which has been set before us, the master's tools that have been placed in our hands (Lorde), is conducive to moving towards relations that are truly decolonized. While our theories of race are useful, they often center whiteness and a white response to issues of race. We can no longer tacitly bow before the primacy of western epistemologies and ontologies" (Wang XX). Wang suggests that writing

center practitioners of color move towards a grounded understandings of race and coloniality that are situated in community, local context, and storying practices and he uses his own storying of living and growing up in Hawaii and his great-grandfather's history, and the colonization what we now call the state of Hawaii, to provide models for the writing center community.

Hidy Basta and Alexandra Smith, however, show us how Anti-Racist theories, drawing from scholars such as Vershawn Young, April Baker-Bell Neisha Anne Green, Frankie Condon, and Asao Inoue, have been important to their work in the writing center, as they discuss ways in which they have put theory into practice as they dismantle White Language Supremacy within the institutional framework. In their article, "(Re)envisioning the Writing Center: Pragmatic Steps for Dismantling White Language Supremacy," the authors share the work they have done in their center for other centers to draw on; this piece shows the work that is committed to doing Anti-Racist work in these spaces, as well as the constant negotiation and conflict one might face institutionally in doing such work. This piece is particularly helpful for writing centers wanting to form staff education and faculty outreach centered on Anti-Racist pedagogy.

"Listening Across: A Cultural Rhetorics Approach to Understanding Power Dynamics within a University Writing Center" foregrounds storytelling and lived experience of writing center staff as they examine and investigate the internal power structures of the writing center. Authors Marilee Brooks-Gilles, Varshini Balaji, KC Chan-Brose & Kelin Hull share positionality stories (Cedillo & Bratta) from their different institutional and social identities to "practice there-ness" (Riley-Mukavetz) to create what the authors call a "listening across framework." As the authors write, "Through listening again and again, we began to understand the ways our experiences in the same community differed; we began to understand each other's motivations and choices…These practices allow us to understand our experiences in interlinked ways rather than isolated ways." Through their positionality stories and their "listening across framework," the authors in this essay provide methodologies and frameworks to address issues of community in our spaces and to the multiplicity of identities, stories, voices, and experiences and how we are always in flux.

Hadi Banat discusses the complications with identity and listening in his piece, "Crossing through Borderlines of Identification and Non-Identification: Transforming Writing Center Response to Faculty Outreach." Banat's essay uses ethnographic fieldwork observations that he collected during his term as Purdue Writing Lab Workshops and WAC Coordinator; he writes on the complicated position he was in as a WAC Coordinator, as he discusses entering the faculty offices to listen to their concerns with his own visible identity markers. Banat writes that "the erasure of my Palestinian identity, incessant forms of marginalization, and experiences of domination I have witnessed throughout my life" set him up for transformative and intentional listening to change the culture of WAC outreach work. Drawing on Krista Ratcliffe's work on rhetorical listening, and his own experiences with identification and non-identification, and the emotional labor and toll this takes, Banat discusses the complications of transformative work as a person "on the margins," and asks the WC community difficult questions about the labor we require from those of marginalized positions and identities.

Kathryn Valentine, too, discusses the difficult and complicated work of and on listening in her article, "Listening to the Friction: An Exploration of a Tutor's Listening to the Community and Academy." Valentine writes, "For my purposes, listening to the friction focuses on how tutors'

listen to what haunts writing in the academy and therefore what haunts writing center work. Situating “listening to the friction” within community listening (Garcia; Lipari), this article explores the listening of one writing tutor in a qualitative study Valentine conducted to understand and learn more on listening from the perspective of tutors. Valentine writes on the responsibility that comes with listening to the friction, interrogating the white privileged positions many of us take in the writing center, as well as paying attention to the community languages and literacies of those othered by the academy racially and linguistically, as well as those from marginalized communities. This small, localized study at an HSI offers the writing center community much to think and dwell on as we teach listening in our spaces, and expand our understandings of communities.

Galen Bunting’s essay also asks the writing center community to rethink our staff education to make our spaces more inclusive through LGBTQ initiatives and SafeZone programming. In this article, “Tutoring, Minus Bigotry! LGBT Writers, SafeZone Tutors, and Brave Spaces within the Rural Writing Center,” Bunting addresses the political climate of Oklahoma and the exclusionary laws and policies against the LGBTQ community that continue to make the state and education systems unsafe, and in fact, violent spaces for this community. Recently, the Oklahoma governor, Kevin Stitt, signed House Bill 1775, a bill that prohibits mandatory diversity training for students in Oklahoma’s public universities regarding gender identity, sexual orientation, and sex stereotyping for students (Human Rights Campaign). The first of what many claim will be many anti-LGBTQ bills passed by the state legislature. Bunting addresses the haunted and local history of anti-LGBTQ policies in Oklahoma as he focuses on the importance of investigating the potential of the rural writing center as a brave space, affirming the rights and dignities of LGBTQ students and tutors coming from educational spaces that have historically denied their existences and rights.

In Karen Moroski-Rigney’s essay, “Seeing the Air: Neurodiversity & Writing Center Administration,” Moroski-Rigney challenges, however, performative inclusion work in the writing center, as she discusses how neurodivergent members of the writing center community are regularly denied arrival in such spaces. In this article, Moroski-Rigney discusses how everyday programming, mentorship, strategies and pedagogies, and expectations and policies for hiring and employment are ableist and neglectful of disabled members of the academy and discusses the need for access-intimacy in our field and in our work. Drawing on her own narrative and weaving scholarship throughout her narratives, she writes, “We can move towards access intimacy by listening to and believing one another--and by creating space for others like me to come forward in their truths, and ask for what they need. This means openly talking about disability (whether visible or invisible) and meaning it when we say we want to accommodate” (Moroski-Rigney XX). This essay asks the writing center community to once again revisit their inclusionary rhetoric and to do the work of inclusion work in a reconstruction of policies and practices that are ableist and that have historically excluded disabled bodies, brains, and BodyMinds.

While many of the articles discussed physical spaces and experiences in the writing center, Eric Camarillo’s essay, “A Parliament of OWLS: Incorporating User Experience to Cultivate Online Writing Labs” examines the online spaces, specifically writing center websites (and he acknowledges the difficulties of defining what an OWL is) through an Anti-Racist lens. Camarillo writes, “Webpage designs, algorithms, coding--they all come from real, live people

who made choices about what to do and how to do it…So, as we discuss race and technology and racism on our (web)sites, I invite you to pay attention to the real consequences of apparently objective choices." (Camarillo XX). This essay asks the writing center community to interrogate and explore their own use of OWLS and their work in digital spaces to see how we bring in past/haunted histories of whiteness into our online sites; with a focus on user perspective through an Anti-Racist lens, we can begin restructuring our online sites to make them more accessible and inclusive for those who use them--important work now as we continually move more and more to online work.

Columns: Where the Writing Center Field is and Where It Needs to Go

Once we received the article submissions, the editors of this issue wanted to create a space where we could invite scholars in and beyond WCs to contribute to the special issue, in the hopes that this issue will start a cross-dialogue and conversation in related fields. We asked scholars with different backgrounds and at different institutions to explore the question, "Where is the writing center field currently? And where does the field need to go?" These shorter think pieces address a wide-range of topics such as writing centers at HBCUs, Black Women WCDs working at PWIs, to disability and writing center work; all essays showcase, again, the need for coalition-building and an acknowledgement of the differences in our communities, while we all work towards combating white supremacism in our spaces and the need for our field to do more, in our scholarship, in our collaborations, and in our everyday work. Rachel Stark and Kennedy Essmiler discuss the impact the 2020 SCWCA conference had on them in their column, "Transformative Listening: Making Lived Experiences Visible," as they were beginning their educational journeys in the writing center, and recognizing where both the field, and their writing center needs to go as they learned from this conference that was canceled.

Karen Keaton Jackson's "Coach Prime and Me: Deion Sanders' Impact on My Academic Self" discusses perhaps a surprising topic: NFL football, and ways in which Coach Deion Sanders embodies "leveling the playing field." Keaton Jackson calls for institutions with an abundance of resources and healthy budgets to actively collaborate and engage in quality professional activities and research with those who do not. Following this thought-provoking piece, Neisha Anne Green and Frankie Condon, in their piece, "CORNERSTONE," discuss the need for white writing center folks to get out of the way to build Anti-Racist centers designed by and for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, and committing to the hard work of being Anti-Racist accomplices. In "Making and Taking Up Space as a Black Woman at a Predominantly White Institution," Talisha Haltiwanger Morrison discusses her experiences as a Black Woman at a PWI and the emotionally and physically exhausting work of being a Black Woman WCD doing racial justice work in her center, and explores why she continues to do such work even when her body says "enough," to make more spaces for Black Women.

Randall Monty discusses right-wing efforts to control education in conservative states and highlights policies that include banning Critical Race Theory; Monty posits that the field of writing centers are in a contentious spot, but is hopeful that our field can provide a template for not only future WC scholars, but for those in other disciplines as we work towards equity and inclusion work that legislature is trying to deny. Bethany Meadows and Trixie Smith, in their essay, "Myth Busting the Writing Center: A Critical Inquiry of Ideologies and Practices," discuss the common mythical themes we, as a field, continue to hear at conferences and gatherings,

about the writing center and provide discussion of the rejections of such themes and tropes, as well as posing questions and places for further inquiry. We appreciate their acknowledgement that even when the field was being created, and narratives were forming, there was always push at “best practices” and what the writing center is and is not. M. Melissa Elston, Nicole Green and Adam Hubrig provide a more specific essay on “grand narratives” (McKinney) that have excluded certain bodies in their essay, “Beyond Binaries of Disability in Writing Center Studies,” through binaries that permeate WC scholarship currently, flattening discourse surrounding disabilities and erasing the experiences of multiply marginalized disabled members of the writing center community. Beatrice Mendez Newman writes on the writing center as a site of instruction, and not just one of support, as she emphasizes that writing instruction and mentorship of writers does not always happen in the writing classroom in her column, “Counterstory in the Center: Replacing Privileged Pedagogy with Brave Teaching of Writing.” Wonderful Faison and Anna Trevon’s piece, “Where We’ve Been & Where We Are,” is a powerfully reflective piece on conversations the two authors have on meeting students where they are and building just writing support for those students, particularly those at minority serving institutions, such as HBCUs and HSIs; this piece reflects on the transitions they have both made as they discuss where the field is at.

These column pieces invite the community to dialogue, to respond, and to talk back to this issue and the issues the authors address. We would be remiss to not acknowledge some gaps in topics covered by these column pieces, such as responses from those working in Tribal Colleges, scholars addressing LGBTQ and gender issues, concerns raised by multilingual writers, and international students facing increased risk at our institutions. These gaps are reminders of the work that is required in inclusion work, and the difficulties that arise with coalition-building, some of the gaps are due to the difficulties with inclusion activism in editing work and the need for us to change the way our academic work looks like, and how we discourse with one another; these gaps are important for us, as editors, to own and recognize, as we continue with a commitment to the *work* in inclusion work, and address inequities within our own communities. We are hopeful that the column pieces allow for such dialogue to happen.

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We thank the authors of both the articles and the column pieces for their labor, for their work, and for their honest assessment of what the field needs to do, particularly as we are, to quote one author, in a contentious space right now, during a pandemic that has shed light on the severe inequities that continue to impact the work. While we acknowledge the exhaustion most of us feel during this moment, we encourage the community to engage with this scholarship in generous ways, and to enter with us in a bigger dialogue about reconciling with violent histories and rethinking our responsibilities in rebuilding the work that we do.

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