Lift Every Voice: An Anthology of Contemporary Student Writings on Race

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The fields of composition studies and writing across the curriculum (WAC) have long taken interest in social justice and the teaching of writing. Issues of access, inclusivity, and equality pervade our scholarship and are central to the work we do both inside and outside the academy. Race is one salient social justice topic urging our attention, especially in light of recent instances of police brutality against individuals and communities of color in the United States, as well as recent examples of white supremacist rhetoric against minority groups across the country. These events call writing program administrators, WAC directors, university writing specialists, and faculty to ask important questions: What should be our role within our respective classrooms and institutions to address ongoing instances of racial violence, privilege, and disparity? How can we as scholars in composition studies and WAC help faculty in the disciplines to integrate writing projects about race, especially if these faculty do not feel comfortable with the topic or do not believe that it is related to their academic expertise? What does it mean when we try to take on this work across the university's writing curriculum?

This article explains one university's response to these questions through a writing-across-the-curriculum initiative. Specifically, we describe a WAC effort organized by an assistant professor in the School of Business, an assistant professor of English and director of university writing, and the executive director of academic support programs at one university to solicit, compile, edit, and publish an anthology of contemporary student writings about race. The edited collection was created for use in university courses, student programs, and faculty development activities such as workshops and trainings. This article provides suggestions for other educators to adopt the anthology form for developing similar student-based collections of writing, whether on the topic of race or other exigent themes. For our anthology, students from both graduate and undergraduate programs were encouraged to submit original essays, articles, research papers, poetry, short fiction, photography, digital artwork, and other compositions created in their coursework or outside of school for personal and civic purposes. Topics suggested for submission included local stories or issues involving race and privilege; personal experiences of racial inequality, prejudice, or privilege; historical perspectives on race relations in the United States; and proposals for promoting equity among citizens. We eventually titled the collection *In Living Color: An Anthology of Contemporary Student Writings on Race*. (Hereafter,

we refer to it throughout this article as the *Anthology*.) We believe the *Anthology* is a relevant and important contribution to composition studies and writing across the curriculum studies. The collection offers an innovative WAC initiative that brought together faculty, staff, and students to craft a compilation of writing that could be used by and for our community, as well as secondary schools and other institutions of higher education.

In this article, we first situate the *Anthology* in conversations with scholarship on three salient themes in composition studies and WAC studies: (1) social justice, activism, and race inside and outside the writing classroom; (2) debates about the nature of what, exactly, we are charged with teaching college students to write; and (3) questions about how to integrate writing programs and campus writing initiatives with institutional mission. Next, we provide a narrative of the *Anthology*'s origins, and we further offer a methodology for completing the project, which we refer to as "grounded anthology development." Building on the work of Strauss and Glaser, our grounded anthology approach began with the student submissions, rather than with a preconceived structure, theme, or set of genres. Only after we had a corpus of work did we begin sifting for patterns, unifying factors, discordant notes, parallels across disparate genres and contexts, and opportunities for commentary and contextualization through scholarly framing texts and pedagogical scaffolding. This approach can be adapted to the particular missions, contexts, and constraints of other institutions that might benefit from creating similar anthologies on the topic of race or other sociopolitical concerns on their campuses. In the discussion of implications for the field, we describe the *Anthology* as an example of a WAC project that addresses race directly and invites the campus community into the process of writing and reading about race and social justice together. Further, we argue that this *Anthology* presents an example of a cross-campus initiative that bridges different purposes for writing: academic, personal, and public. We contend that college-level writing should teach and promote student writing that crosses these boundaries, and we offer this *Anthology* as a sample of how such work can be done. Finally, we describe the *Anthology* as a means of concretely enacting the university mission, and we hope it inspires other institutions with similar missions and values.

Literature Review: Situating the *Anthology* in Composition and Writing Across the Curriculum Studies

Social Justice, Activism, and Race in Composition and WAC Studies

Concerns with social justice and politics have been endemic to composition studies throughout the history of the field. As Jonathan Alexander and Susan C. Jarratt assert, "One could argue that the field has been turned toward the social from its very

inception" (526). The authors go on to explain how "the social turn" has increasingly moved compositionists' attention to issues of social justice with, for example, the work of Mina Shaughnessy in the 1970s to address the needs of underprepared students and the work of James Berlin and other scholars influenced by critical cultural studies in the 1980s and 1990s; this social turn intersected with other external disciplinary influences such as ethnography, Alexander and Jarratt argue, to move the focus of composition beyond the classroom (526–527). Such interest has developed into "the language of 'publics' to mark a space of engagement between students/educators and communities" (Alexander and Jarratt 527). Some examples of recent scholarship influenced by this disciplinary interest in public and community engagement include Rose and Weiser's *Going Public: What Writing Programs Learn from Engagement*, Ackerman and Coogan's *The Public Work of Rhetoric: Citizen-Scholars and Civic Engagement*, Kahn and Lee's *Activism and Rhetoric: Theories and Contexts for Political Engagement*, and Frank Farmer's *After the Public Turn: Composition, Counterpublics, and the Citizen Bricoleur*. A desire to address the social and public aspects of discourse is thus a well-documented feature of contemporary composition studies.

Just as composition studies has increasingly garnered attention for the world beyond the classroom with which we encourage students to engage, scholars in the field have grown increasingly aware of the linguistic and cultural challenges faced by diverse bodies of students who come into the classroom from that world, and the often mostly white faculty responsible for their instruction. Patricia Bizzell points out that rhetoric and composition scholarship has a history of addressing literacy acquisition of academic discourse in relation to English Language Learning, gender, sexual orientation, and race (177). The particular challenges in acquiring academic discourse faced by students outside the sociocultural majority led to the creation and development of important policy documents such as the Committee on CCCC Language Statement's "Students' Rights to their Own Language," which calls attention to the need for educators to respect the home cultures, languages, and dialects of students from a wide variety of backgrounds.

Among the prominent and pressing social, public, and political issues to which writing instructors and scholars turn their attention, the topic of race is an important area of scholarship and teaching in rhetoric and composition. Numerous scholars in composition studies have made race central to their work in a variety of ways. Such research includes works that document and address the struggles and inequities both inside and outside the classroom for people of color in the United States (see, for some salient though by no means exhaustive examples, Banks; Bruch and Marback; Clary-Lemon; Cushman; Gilyard; Kinard; Martinez; Prendergast; Pough; Powell; Richardson; Villanueva; and Young, Barrett, Young-Rivera, and Lovejoy). Other scholars in rhetoric and composition have worked to make race itself the course

content about which students are required to write, putting the topic of race at the center of the composition curriculum. For example, Dianna Shank has researched the effects of using race as a topic for writing prompts in the classroom, and she reflects on the opportunities and challenges inherent to teaching with this approach. Daniel Barlow advocates for getting students to write about race as a means to create "productive discomfort" about students' own sometimes simplistic and uncritical ideas about multiculturalism and racial relationships (443–444). In all, an array of scholarship in the field interrogates issues of race, privilege, and oppression—both in the public discourses surrounding race, racial injustices, and racial disparity in American society and in the courses we teach.

While there is a long-standing tradition of focus on race and issues of diversity in composition studies generally, there has traditionally been less sustained attention on race itself as a topic within WAC scholarship. In "Black Holes, Writing Across the Curriculum, Assessment, and the Gravitational Invisibility of Race," Chris Anson surveys existing literature in WAC to point out the relative dearth of attention to race therein (15–17). Anson goes on to explain that this elision of race from WAC is not part of a purposeful choice on the part of WAC scholars and practitioners, but is rather due to "various historical, political, and disciplinary forces [that] appear to have filtered race and diversity from central consideration in the WAC movement" (20). Such reasons include the added complexity involved in trying to address race in a single WAC workshop model (still a popular and often-used mode of WAC faculty development). Another reason, he contends, is fear about how addressing political and human-based issues of race and diversity in WAC initiatives might be perceived by various disciplines, particularly those outside the humanities, arts, and social sciences (20–22). He explains ways to envision making diversity more visible in WAC assessment initiatives, and he calls for "increased research and pedagogical activity in WAC, assessment, and diversity" (26–27).

WAC scholars have since heeded this call in assessment and other areas of writing instruction across the disciplines. In the 2016 edited collection *Performing Antiracist Pedagogy in Rhetoric, Writing, and Communication*, which grew out of a 2013 special issue in *Across the Disciplines*, editors Frankie Condon and Vershawn Ashanti Young issue the following charge for writing instruction: "So long as racism persists in any form . . . those of us who teach and who are committed to the creation of an increasingly just society will need to choose whether and how we address racism in our classrooms" (10). In her contribution to *Performing Antiracist Pedagogy*, Mya Poe asserts, "Integrating race in WAC practice has the potential to address very real teaching problems that are experienced by teachers across the curriculum. For this reason, I believe it is essential that we ground discussions of race in local contexts and in ways that have specific meaning for teaching writing" (101). Other recent projects that

have taken up the task of increasing attention to racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity in WAC include Inoue's *Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies: Teaching and Assessing Writing for a Socially Just Future* and Zawacki and Cox's *WAC and Second Language Writers: Research Towards Linguistically and Culturally Inclusive Programs and Practices*. As illustrated later in this article, our *Anthology* project continues this work of making race and ethnicity more central to WAC/WID efforts.

Writing in the University: Scholarly vs. Personal, Academic vs. Public

At many institutions, the purposes and types of writing that students do in composition courses, WAC programs, and writing-in-the disciplines (WID) programs can be a contentious issue. For years, practitioners in our fields have asked, is our primary responsibility to teach academic writing? Writing for the workplace? Writing that allows for personal reflection and expression? Writing that encourages civic engagement and the public sphere? Within composition studies, Ellen Andrews Knodt explains there is "wide disagreement among composition programs and faculty about the goals to be achieved in college writing programs. In recent years, many college writing programs have come to serve many purposes" (146). One facet of this tension in composition studies centers on traditional academic, scholarly discourse vs. personal reflective writing. Citing Joseph Harris, Linda Adler-Kassner explains the possible origins of this debate within composition studies:

> Joseph Harris suggests that the discussion of emotion's appropriateness might, in fact, be rooted in the split that became evident in the 1966 Dartmouth conference between a model that positioned English (and writing) as a subject focusing on "the experiences of students and how these are shaped by their usage of language," and one that saw English as an academic discipline, a body of knowledge. . . . Long associated with work that is "expressivist," some have dismissed scholarship that explicitly invokes emotion as overly (and overtly) sentimental, personalized, and anti-scholarly. (24–25)

Today, this debate continues. Some scholarship advocates for the teaching of standard academic discourse, including, for example, the work of Douglass Brent on the importance of teaching the traditional research paper. Others advocate for a return to personal writing in the college classroom to engage students more deeply with the material (Peckham). Similar to the scholarly vs. personal writing tension, compositionists also find themselves stretched between a focus on teaching writing that looks inward to the kinds of writing produced for the academy, and a focus on writing that looks outward to the public sphere, such as courses grounded in service learning and community engagement.

As in composition studies, questions about what and for whom college students should write also pervade WAC/WID studies. Within and across disciplines, the divide between the academy and the public in disciplinary research writing was not always as stark as it is today. Historical projects as disparate as Bazerman's *Shaping Written Knowledge* and Applegarth's *Rhetoric in American Anthropology* recall that research in a variety of fields was once something that often happened by and for the public. Only later did calls for professionalization and specialization form more rigid boundaries between the academy and the public. These changes placed disciplinary knowledge-making squarely on the academic side of the border. The effect of establishing academic institutions as the rightful provenance of disciplinary research has led to an increased emphasis in teaching the conventions of academic discourse to students, often to the exclusion of other kinds of writing. Of course, examples of WAC projects exist that are focused on writing by and for the public, and for civic purposes, such as David Joliffe's scholarship on the connections between WAC and service learning. Yet, much of the literature in WAC focuses on writing in and for the academy. Steve Parks and Eli Goldblatt have noted this trend and called for an expanded notion of WAC beyond the teaching of academic writing. And Michelle Hall Kells argues, "[T]raditional models of WAC too narrowly privilege academic discourse over other discourses and communities shaping the worlds in which our students live and work" (93). Kells puts forward a model of "Writing across Communities" that transcends the privileging of academic discourse to include the influences of students' own myriad discourse communities. She goes on to ask,

> What might WAC look like if we concerned ourselves with not only the discourses our students acquire in the classroom, but the rhetorical resources they bring to the university? What might WAC look like if we open the conceptual umbrella to include engagement with a broad range of cultural, civic, and professional discourses? How can we map the challenges students confront in the university? Even more importantly, how do we include students in the meta-discursive process of inventing WAC? (97).

As our methods and implications sections show, the *Anthology* project offers one answer to Kells' important questions.

Writing Initiatives and Institutional Mission Alignment

A growing body of scholarship in composition studies explores the essential relationship between writing programs/initiatives and institutional mission. As Kristine Johnson points out, academics tend to define "mission-driven institutions" as private and religious, but she asserts that "all institutions are guided by a mission" (69). Elizabeth Vander Lei and Melody Pugh explain, "WPAs can leverage institutional

mission to enhance writing programs but also . . . can contribute to the continuing evolution of the mission at their institution" (106). In other words, understanding and drawing on institutional mission can be mutually constitutive and beneficial for writing programs and for universities. In his introduction to *A Critical Look at Institutional Mission: A Guide for Writing Program Administrators*, Joseph Janangelo asserts that "mission can guide institutional action by asking everyone to work together for a shared purpose" (xii). Writing about the "shared purpose" of community engagement and civic responsibility valued at many universities, Dominic DelliCarpini theorizes that mission can act "as centripetal force, pull[ing] those individual acts into the orbit of the overall intended ethos of the institution" (5). Institutional mission, then, can be seen as an essential way of framing WAC/WID initiatives at particular colleges and universities, and we describe below how mission called for and shaped the *Anthology* project on our campus.

Origin Story on the Development of the *Anthology*

Before describing the origin of the *Anthology* itself, it may be helpful to say a bit about the institution where it developed. Founded in 1863, La Salle University is a small, co-educational Catholic school in the tradition of the Christian Brothers of St. Jean Baptiste de La Salle, patron saint of teachers. The university is located on an urban campus in Philadelphia, PA. The 2016–2017 enrollment included 3,947 undergraduate students and 1,728 graduate students for a total enrollment of 5,675 ("La Salle University"). The student body is composed of racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse students, mostly from Philadelphia and the surrounding region. Total number of faculty include approximately 570 full-time and part-time instructors. The mission statement attests, "As a Lasallian university . . . La Salle promotes excellence in teaching and scholarship, demonstrates respect for each person, nurtures mentoring relationships, and encourages authentic community. . . . All members of our community are called to maintain a heightened sensitivity to those marginalized within society as they practice civic engagement . . . and contribute to the common good" ("La Salle University Mission Statement"). Social justice towards "those marginalized in society" is embedded deeply in the university's ethos and is intrinsic to the activities and events that inspired the *Anthology*.

The idea for the *Anthology* was conceived through three sources: an oratory contest on campus centered on race, student writings on race that emerged in La Salle University assistant professor Karen Reardon's Business Law and Ethics courses, and the work of an interdisciplinary campus committee working to promote awareness about racial injustice. First, during a campus Speech and Spoken Word Contest, sponsored by La Salle University's Multicultural Center to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds gave

impassioned presentations of their own original writings about race, service, social justice, and the meaning Dr. King's work still holds for us today. Sadly, Karen observed that students were speaking to a very small audience. She, and later we, began to wonder how we might build a larger audience for their rhetoric.

Inspiration for the *Anthology* further came from students' writings in Karen's Business Law and Ethics courses at the undergraduate and graduate level. When offered a choice of writing topics in these classes, both white and minority students often wrote about race in response to learning about anti-discrimination laws and affirmative action policies or in response to contemporary events such as the killing of Trayvon Martin and, ultimately, to other events that followed and collectively gave rise to the "Black Lives Matter" movement. The students' writing—from black, brown, and white students—showed a keen interest in and insights about their own lived experience and that of others with issues such as employment discrimination and affirmative action, as well as encounters with police and the criminal justice system. Their sentiment was important—too important it seemed to be consumed merely by an audience of one instructor in exchange for a grade. With student agreement, Karen began to collect these writings.

Not long after Karen began collecting student writing, an ad hoc faculty/staff committee formed in the weeks following the St. Louis County grand jury's decision against indicting Darren Wilson for the death of Michael Brown. During the initial meeting in December 2014, the group considered how we might respond across disciplines on our campus to teach about the occurrences in Ferguson, Staten Island, Cleveland, and other places where similar police shootings happened, as well as other instances of individual and systemic racism in the United States. The committee, which came to be known as "The Ferguson and Beyond Committee," was a grassroots effort that grew out of informal conversations among faculty and staff on our small college campus. At the Ferguson and Beyond meeting in December 2014, Karen floated an idea that had grown out of the writing assigned in her Business Law and Ethics courses and had incubated through her experiences with the campus oratory competitions that were powerfully engaging, but woefully under-attended. She proposed a book collection of our own university students' writings on race, which could then be adopted as a primary or supplemental course text in university classes, seminars, and workshops. That suggestion resonated with the committee attendees, who represented a broad cross-section of faculty and staff and who enthusiastically endorsed the idea. The chair of the Integrative Studies Department was present and suggested that Megan Schoen (an assistant professor of English and the director of university writing) and Jaime Longo (the director of academic support programs and a rhetoric and composition scholar) assist Karen with the *Anthology*'s publication. Megan and Jaime both accepted this charge and volunteered to join Karen in pursuing

the project. At that point, the three authors began discussing in earnest the idea for an edited collection. We launched development of the *Anthology* shortly thereafter.

Methods: Grounded Anthology Development

Our "grounded anthology" approach has its roots in the work of sociologists Glaser and Strauss. (See also Glaser; Strauss; and Straus and Corbin.) They articulated a grounded theory methodological approach to research that suggested that, particularly in exploratory studies, researchers would be wise to let themes and theory arise from (be grounded in) the data and not be theory driven. Such grounded research does not aim to test "hypotheses" per se, but to generate them. Inspired by this model, we proceeded by soliciting and collecting our data—the student writing and artwork—with minimal guidelines about genre or content beyond the broad topic of "race." We wanted to allow the *Anthology's* thematic organization and teaching questions to emerge inductively from our students' work, rather than deciding what about race was important to students or what we as educators thought they should know. Following Maxwell, we applied a "contextualizing analysis" to our student submissions; rather than sorting texts into "categories independently of context," by, for instance, separating all the poetry submissions into a single section, we sought instead to "look for relationships that connect statements and events within a context into a coherent whole" (79). As we sorted through student submissions, we asked ourselves, "What center of gravity begins to appear?" (Doheny-Farina and Odell 527). This process was iterative, and we discarded or recast several possible "centers of gravity" before settling on the contextual relationships that ultimately shaped the *Anthology*.

We approached this project with what Kamberelis and Dimitriadis call "creative syncretism—a) blending research strategies from ostensibly different approaches to research, (b) integrating approaches to form new and productive hybrids, (c) assembling constructs from multiple theoretical perspectives to frame new problems in new ways, and (d) even moving strategically across heretofore incommensurable epistemological boundaries" (156). While we don't claim that we've managed to accomplish (d), our attempt at employing a grounded anthology approach applies existing strategies to new ends. Our goal in applying this grounded anthology methodology was to develop a process that allowed us to "create a *coherent* design, one in which the different methods fit together compatibly and in which they are integrated with the other components of [our] design" (Maxwell 81, original emphasis); the process needed to be fluid enough to allow for unanticipated genres and content, but still needed to result in an anthology that could serve as a toolbox for engaged classroom conversations about race. Only after we had identified several "centers of gravity" did the *Anthology* cohere into an articulated whole, including a commentary framework by scholarly contributors and a set of pedagogical scaffolds to make these centers of

gravity recognizable and more easily teachable. By necessity, this articulated whole is inflected by our campus context, as well as the disciplinary backgrounds and biases of the editors. The risk and reward of employing a grounded methodology is that an identical dataset in the hands of two different researchers will result in two different sets of inductive codes; by extension, an identical stack of anthology submissions in the hands of another set of editors would result in different "centers of gravity." This, as a software developer would say, is a feature, not a bug; our organizing principles are not set in stone and are not the only possible lenses through which to interpret the data (see Coffey and Atkinson 32–37). The key to the use of effective grounded (anthology) theory, then, is to clearly establish the methodological components used to frame the analysis while acknowledging that a different set of components could result in an equally viable end-product.

To that end, we relied on four methodological constructs: (1) attention to institutional mission, (2) iteration, (3) development of conceptual categories through an inductive approach, and (4) framing of local meaning. While the specific details of these considerations are ultimately local, we would argue for the necessity of addressing these broad categories through a project plan for any administrator or committee seeking to replicate this project or pursue something similar.

Centering the Anthology in Institutional Mission

In designing and executing the process for the *Anthology*, our project team was cognizant of the project's resonance with our institution's mission and heritage and the ways in which that tradition serves as a critical "center of gravity" for any campus conversation on social justice. La Salle University is part of an international network of educational institutions chartered by the Brothers of the Christian Schools, a Catholic order founded by Jean Baptiste De La Salle in 1694 and dedicated to providing quality education to underserved populations through elementary schools; middle schools; high schools; colleges, universities, and technical schools; and youth and family services agencies. There are more than 1,000 Lasallian institutions in over 80 countries serving nearly 1,000,000 students. The international Lasallian network includes almost 1,700 De La Salle Christian Brothers and more than 85,000 "lay partners," many of whom are not Catholic or Christian. Lasallian educational institutions provide direct service to many children and families living in poverty, but also provide "indirect service" via more affluent high schools and universities, in which students are challenged to investigate and work to change structural causes of injustice. La Salle University is distinctive for blending both forms of service: nearly forty-five percent of our students are Pell-eligible, but we also serve many students from affluent suburban enclaves whose experiences with poverty and racial diversity prior to college have been limited to community service projects and immersion trips.

The *Anthology* emerged from a campus community that is implicitly (and increasingly explicitly) steeped in Lasallian critical pedagogy. Our university mission, our broader Lasallian heritage, and the Catholic Intellectual Tradition of which we are a part all call our faculty and staff to push students out of their comfort zones and to focus on structural causes, not symptoms, in ways that are consistent with Freirean critical pedagogy. While Lasallian critical pedagogy is not well-known outside of Lasallian institutions, it is both consistent with and considerably older than the social turn in composition. In "Lasallian Pedagogy: Who We Are Is What We Teach," John Crawford, FSC, explains,

> Lasallian pedagogy must and does continue to open the eyes of the community of the school to the greater needs of others. It encourages students to find practical ways to meet needs, while also opening their eyes to the greater dimensions of injustice . . . Action for justice, grounded in the Lasallian tradition, is an integral part of its pedagogy. (18)

Importantly, in the context of the *Anthology*, this action for justice is not limited to the classroom. In an address titled "Together for Mission," Luke Salm, FSC, argues,

> For many young people today the university is their last chance formally to address the major questions concerning the meaning of their existence, to recognize the seeds of destruction in society and themselves, to become aware of the major inequities in social and political life, to appreciate the futility of a life centered on pleasure, wealth, and power. To lead students to address these concerns is the responsibility of *every segment of the educational community*. (3–4, emphasis added)

Álvaro Rodríguez Echeverría, FSC, argues even more bluntly for the need for critical pedagogy both within and beyond the classroom:

> Education for justice should not be merely a specific subject area but a common thread that runs through the whole curriculum. This common thread should be reinforced by daily practice within the school. It is important to create a kind of micro-climate which offers an alternative, miniature model that does not support the anti-values which society often presents to us: market worship, corruption, fighting, competition, and consumerism. It is important that within the school there exists an experience of justice in which values, such as solidarity, communion, and participation are top priorities. Otherwise the school runs the risks of duplicating the system and preparing students for a society of privileges, training them in a competitive struggle where there is no solidarity. (50)

Thus, to situate the *Anthology* within our Lasallian Catholic and university mission, we sought submissions from two Christian brothers who might connect the *Anthology* to the mission of both the religious order and the university. One brother, a member of our Board of Trustees and a longtime director of a Lasallian youth and family services organization, connected the mission's call to work for justice to personal expressions of persistence, resistance, and survival; the other brother, La Salle University's Vice President of Mission, anchored the *Anthology* in the Lasallian heritage of "a public theology of hope and justice" as a form of education for justice. These prefaces serve to situate the students' voices within the international and historical framework of Lasallian critical pedagogy and to remind readers that these voices are not just aligned with the mission but demonstrate ways in which students have operationalized the mission in their academic and personal lives.

Obviously, not all institutions have a mission that explicitly calls their faculty, staff, and students to enact social justice. Our goal in emphasizing the ways in which the *Anthology* is aligned with La Salle University's mission and heritage is not to suggest that such projects can only work within the context of an explicit, mission-based call for community engagement and education for justice. Rather, we argue that such projects are most effective when they can be clearly grounded in a university edict of some kind, such as a strategic plan or department/program mission, or linked to a trend within a disciplinary community.

Using Iterative Invitation to Collect Submissions

Soliciting student work was an iterative process that unfolded over the course of eighteen months. We crafted our invitations carefully, wanting to cast a wide net rather than having students self-exclude because they thought their work did not fit the call for submissions. Through each iteration of outreach, we looped in more potential contributors and more potential teaching partners for the finished *Anthology*. We used four overlapping and recursive strategies for encouraging student participation. We accepted submissions up until the date the manuscript was being reviewed in the summer of 2017 for publication during the 2017–18 academic year.

Online Submissions. First, we investigated options for collecting submissions. We wanted to avoid paper submissions, if possible. We also wanted to choose a platform that would allow us to collect multimedia submissions and that would allow us to gather application information (name, contact info, etc.), as well as consent to publish submitted work. After trying several options (including SurveyMonkey and Qualtrics), we decided to use La Salle University's course management software (Canvas). Interested students were added to a Canvas "course," which included informational modules about the project; when they were ready to submit, they completed

a "quiz" (unfortunate, but uneditable, wording) with the application questions, ending with the ability to upload a file. The clinching factor was Canvas's ability to accept multiple file types, which allowed us to collect JPGs of artwork or MP4 student films. Students were asked to complete a release and license through Canvas evidencing their agreement for the submitted writing to be edited and published as part of the *Anthology*. The release included an acknowledgement that the publication would not result in any compensation to the student author or faculty editors and a statement that any proceeds from the publication would be given to La Salle University in support of mission-oriented initiatives.

Blast Outreach. We designed one email outreach to faculty and one email outreach to students, encouraging interested students to contact us to be added to the Canvas course. This blast message was sent to each respective mailing list approximately three times each during Spring 2015, Fall 2015, and Spring 2016. We also posted announcements on our university web portal and posted digital flyers to both the portal and the digital signage kiosks around campus before closing the window for submissions.

Targeted Solicitation. In addition to our blast messages, we began some targeted solicitation of faculty and students. First, we reached out to the faculty who had attended the ad hoc Ferguson and Beyond Committee meetings to ask them to encourage likely candidates to submit work. Then, we scoured the University Catalog for the previous four semesters to seek undergraduate and graduate courses that identified race in the title of the course or that engaged topics that might include discussions of race (Public Health Nursing, for instance). We then sent tailored emails to the faculty of each course indicating that their students' work might be particularly germane to the *Anthology* and asking the faculty members to encourage students to apply. Faculty from the departments of Religion, Fine Arts, Communications, Global Studies, Sociology, Philosophy, Foreign Languages and Literature, Leadership and Global Understanding, and Business Law, among others, nominated student work for inclusion.

Campus-Wide Awareness. In addition to the blast emails and digital signage, we attended university workshops that dealt with issues of race to share information about the *Anthology* to encourage submissions. We also approached the director of our campus's Explorer Connection, a co-curricular unit designed to incorporate mission-inflected programming into our campus culture through workshops, dialogue series, and guest speakers. After discussing options for partnering with the Explorer Connection programming, the three *Anthology* collaborators agreed to present an interactive workshop on the project.

Following a pedagogical strategy borrowed from another colleague in our School of Business, we structured the workshop to promote the *Anthology* and to generate additional submissions as a "gallery walk." The space for the workshop was staged as an art gallery, modeled after the concept of a poetry gallery conceived by management educators Van Buskirk and London (2012). We displayed student writing on the walls of the room, including selected passages of longer works. Participants were invited to roam the "gallery" much like they would at a museum and to choose one that resonated with or challenged them, and to bring that piece into a table conversation with a small group of fellow attendees. Participants were invited to read that piece aloud in small groups and to share reactions and perspectives if they felt comfortable doing so. The exercise concluded by inviting all participants back to the full group to share thoughts, feelings, and take-aways for action and awareness. We thanked everyone for their participation. The workshop was well-attended by both faculty and students and offered another opportunity to solicit additional submissions.

Development of Conceptual Categories: Identifying Our "Centers of Gravity"

In addition to publication in the eventual *Anthology*, we also offered small monetary prizes for the strongest submissions from the first round (Spring 2015), funded by the Explorer Connection program, which aims to connect students across disciplines in conversation around critical contemporary issues, and by the university's service learning program. We did not determine anthology selection criteria up front, because we were uncertain what types of submissions we would receive. Consistent with our decision to employ a grounded anthology methodology, we also decided to approach award selection in a similar way, permitting award categories to emerge based on the submissions we received, rather than imposing those categories from the start. Initially, we gravitated toward a more traditional grounded theory approach, fracturing our "data set" in genres and choosing award recipients accordingly. After thoroughly reviewing the original group of submissions, we identified four categories: academic research, personal essay, poetry, and multimedia. We honored one submission in each category with a prize. By taking this broad approach, we were able to collect writings on a wide variety of topics that demonstrate how extensive and multifaceted our issues with race on campus (and in the US) truly are. The submissions we received after that initial round of awards were consistent with those categories, although ultimately we revisited our inductive approach to the data set.

During the Spring 2017 semester, as we reviewed the array of student work, we began to codify our selection criteria and our organizing principles. We had submissions ranging from one-page poems and drawings to academic research papers (the longest of which is about fifteen pages long) to short personal essays to a short student film. In terms of selection for the *Anthology* itself, the only submissions we

eliminated from contention were ones not even tangentially relevant to questions of race. We accepted submissions with race and diversity broadly defined, rather than narrowly focusing only on issues of black and white. For example, some submissions focused on challenges faced by Hispanic Americans, while others addressed the issue of Native American sports mascots. As we continued to review submissions, we began to move away from a strictly genre-based categorization and instead began to cluster work around unifying themes, which then became unit titles. "Wake Up! We Have a Problem" coalesced around forthright and sometimes challenging assertions of the racism students have experienced or witnessed. "Prejudice and Discrimination: Beyond Black and White" offered space for students to interrogate Islamophobia; discrimination against Hispanics, Asian-Americans, and Native Americans; and anti-immigration policies. In our final unit "Hope: Finding the Inspiration, the Tools to Fight On," students write about movements and resources, such as non-discrimination laws and Affirmative Action policies that are designed to represent efforts by our society to remedy past inequities and level the playing field. This unit also gave voice to calls for action, for students, by students.

While it would be impossible in this article to provide glimpses of each of the conceptual "centers of gravity" that we settled on as organizing principles, we have included some *Anthology* selections below to illustrate three of those organizing principles. The first, an entry from the "Being 'Black'" unit, is an excerpt from a poem titled "Color Me Black" written by undergraduate student Tamar Noisette:

> Color me black,
> Brown to be specific
> Like Mike Brown
> Another Man down, man down on the floor
> And Once more There's one more
> Skeleton added to the cold closet
> Of injustice . . .
> It's just this
> System of corruption
> That gets these spirits up in flames
> Burning to the core
> With those battle scars and sores
> That our brothers and sisters first handedly witnessed
> As victims
> And they won't let us forget to remember
> A past so devastatingly dismembered
> That's still trying to be put back together
> By the blood . . .

> The bloodshed from just talking
> The blood loss from only walking
> The bloodbath they gave for marching
> So you can call me Martin
> Like Trayvon or Dr. King
> Same thing because of the color of their skin
> That meant something
> But at the same time meant nothing
> They were black.
> And when they died that's what we were to dress in
> And so we go on mourning
> Morning, noon, night . . .

The second, from the "Prejudice and Discrimination: Beyond Black and White" unit, is an excerpt from the introduction to a research essay in Psychology, written by graduate student Jehanzeb Dar:

> In light of increasing Islamophobic sentiment, policies, and incidents, including the recent murders of three Muslim students in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and the murder of a Muslim teen in Kansas City, Missouri, the rights, safety, and well-being of Muslims is a serious concern for mental health professionals. As stated by Haque and Kamil (2012), studies have found Muslims reporting "decreased self-esteem and increased psychological stress post 9/11" as a result of Islamophobia, therefore making it crucial for mental health professionals to "explore and understand the social, cultural, and political context of Muslim clients." Furthermore, it is critical for clinicians to become advocates for Muslim communities. Specifically, mental health professionals need to educate themselves with basic knowledge about Islam, participate in outreach work to build trust and alliances, and be active in causes that challenge Islamophobia. While there are certainly many ways counselors can advocate on behalf of Muslims, (1) education, (2) outreach, and (3) anti-racist activism will be focused upon in this paper. . . .

The third is an excerpt from a reflection by Michael Ryan, a fourth-year BA/MBA student. Ryan's piece, which appears in the final unit, "Hope: Finding the Inspiration, the Tools to Fight On," was written in Karen's Business Law and Ethics Class which inspired the *Anthology*:

> Thanks to the statutes and cases that have contributed to the development of a consistent view on "Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964" there have been several great affirmative action policies enacted across the country.

The difference between equal opportunity and affirmative action in the workplace has been made clearer. Most importantly, it is understood why, despite our heavily capitalistic business environment where free will to hire and fire as you please is viewed as valuable, affirmative action policies still take hold in our business environment. Before studying in-depth the concept of affirmative action, I was skeptical because like many others, I felt as though it was reverse discrimination for someone like me. After studying what affirmative action truly means, I understand why those policies are so important. Affirmative action policies are not only great for the minorities they assist, but they also enhance the overall environment of our business world. Diversity is great for businesses and in such a team based, fast-paced business environment, it is important to have a workforce that is made up of people from all walks of life.

Framing through Local Experience and Expertise

Because the *Anthology* is an interdisciplinary project, and because it focuses on subject matter to which both contributors and readers have strong emotional responses, we wanted to be mindful of the larger theoretical framework on the study of race and racism. As we sought connective relationships between student submissions, the resulting clusters of work both echoed and challenged scholarly work on race and racism. Thus, to situate the *Anthology* within disciplinary conversations across the university, we sought framing narratives from faculty who provided context to this student work through the lenses of their specialty areas and/or their personal experiences. For example, a senior faculty member in Sociology framed the work through Critical Race Studies and current events; a Public Health faculty member emphasized the role of race and racism in health disparities; and a faculty member in Management and Leadership highlighted the challenges facing those who strive for diverse workplaces. In addition to strictly disciplinary framing, two faculty members offered personal narratives: one from a Foreign Languages faculty member who reflected on the personal and career implications she has faced as a person of color and one from a white faculty member in the Social Work department who acknowledges the privilege of that racial status—a status not shared by her spouse and adopted children.

For some frames, we chose scholars whose research focuses on race and race relations; in others, we looked for scholars with personal connections to issues of race. This strategy functions as a best practice in two ways. Because our ultimate goal was to be able to use the *Anthology* as a pedagogical tool in classes, having faculty contributions allows for a more in-depth analysis than student work may be able to provide, while still incorporating a campus-based voice. By deliberately seeking out

faculty from all three schools within La Salle University (Arts and Sciences, Business, and Nursing and Health Sciences), we aimed for disciplinary breadth and relevance across the curriculum. In this case, offering theoretical frameworks from multiple disciplines also serves as a reminder to readers that the student voices within the *Anthology* are slices of experience within those frameworks and allows faculty using the *Anthology* as a teaching tool to have students locate individual works within the broader frameworks.

As noted, faculty from across the disciplines contributed frames, including the following excerpt from Charles A. Gallagher, professor of Sociology and scholar of Critical Race Studies:

> We are at a crossroads regarding race relations that is unlike any other in American history. There is a belief, borne out in many examples that people of color are making great strides. Compared to 100 years ago this is true. But on many social and economic fronts this progress has stalled and in some instances like school integration actually reversed. We have a vision of our nation, one that neatly conforms to a deeply held conviction in equality that co-exists with systemic institutionalized racism and most recently the rise of far-right political and social movements.

Reaction to the Anthology

While we cannot speak to how audiences external to La Salle University will receive the *Anthology* because it is pre-publication, we can speak to its internal reception through the production process and the reaction of a few external colleagues whom we asked to comment on the work. A faculty member from another institution, public in nature, validated the collaborative nature of the work represented by the *Anthology* by serving as a respondent to a paper we presented on it at the 2016 Conference on College Composition and Communication. In doing so she made valuable suggestions as to how the anthology approach might benefit other institutions, including those that are public and with vastly different missions than La Salle University.

We did ask a few faculty from other institutions to read and comment on the *Anthology*. Dr. Brian Jones, Professor of Sociology & Criminology at Villanova University, captured his reaction with these words that grace the back cover:

> The elephant in every college classroom is race. This volume does three things. First, it dares to broach this taboo subject. Second, it shows the elephantine nature of race by illustrating how it looms over the lives of students, faculty and all Americans. Third and most significantly, *In Living Color* is a

how-to manual for discussing race in a sensitive, honest and productive way. You and your students need this book.

Dr. Honora Werner, OP, Associate Professor and Director of the Doctor of Ministry in Preaching Program at Aquinas Institute of Theology, shared this:

> As I read *In Living Color: An Anthology of Contemporary Student Writings on Race*, I found myself wishing that I were teaching a course in college theology, history, sociology, literature, psychology or music! I would love to have had such a resource on hand for students as I constructed a unit or even a course on issues relating to race and other forms of discrimination. The essays and poetry are provocative and evocative, challenging and enlightening. The additional material provided by the faculty including both essays from their specific disciplines and suggestions for using the material in each unit make this a most valuable book. I highly recommend its use. Doctors Reardon, Schoen, and Longo deserve our gratitude for this contribution to conversations that we desperately need.

Internally, student authors have responded with pride that their voices will reach a wide audience and that they will be able to lay claim to the status as a published author. Students expressed appreciation that faculty thought their writing important enough to be the subject of such work. In particular, students of color expressed feelings of inclusion, affirming for them that they were at an institution where they felt they belonged and were being heard.

Faculty received the idea of the *Anthology* with great interest. We rightly call them co-creators, since the project is unlikely to have taken flight without such encouragement. Since its inception, the *Anthology* has sparked conversation and advanced interest in the active pursuit of cross-disciplinary collaboration among faculty. Other faculty reacted with skepticism and questioned its academic value, including how it might be used in the classroom. Up until the eve of publication, faculty across the university learning of this initiative largely have responded affirmatively to requests for contributions. A few persons invited to contribute, including a high-profile scholar on race at another institution, declined to make a contribution citing time constraints and other priorities. We cannot know if that represented dissonance with the approach taken here, which is not wholly scholarly but incorporates opinion and personal expression on the sensitive subject of race. Others, including one faculty member long laboring in the peace and justice field and another junior faculty wondering if her scholarship was being noticed by others at the university, indicated that they were honored by the inclusion of their writing. Largely, faculty expressed gratitude for the effort to connect their work with that of others, including students, having

felt isolated in pursuing what they believe is important work on issues of race and racial reconciliation.

Dead Ends and Roadblocks

While assembling the *Anthology* went more smoothly than we could have antici-pated, we encountered some dead ends and roadblocks. As we mentioned earlier, the international Lasallian network includes nearly one thousand institutions worldwide; there are six other Lasallian schools in the metropolitan Philadelphia area where our university is located (one elementary and middle school, two high schools, and three youth and family services agencies that include high school coursework). Five of these institutions primarily provide direct service to low-income students, the majority of whom are students of color; the sixth, an affluent private high school, uses the indirect service model. Initially, we were galvanized by the possibility of being able to include juried selections from each school (chosen by representatives from the respective schools, so as not to create more work for ourselves). Unfortunately, multiple attempts at outreach went nowhere, and we had to abandon that option. Nonetheless, such attempts to partner with additional educational institutions that share a common mis-sion might have better results at other universities and therefore be worth pursuing.

The invited contributions from faculty posed another challenge. While one con-tributor submitted her reflection quickly, other contributors struggled to find time away from their regular workloads to draft their submissions. The timing of such a request and the ability to be flexible on deadlines might make the difference between a desired contributor's willingness to join the project. Building in such flexibility would be a beneficial practice, we believe, for anyone undertaking a project similar to the *Anthology*.

The three author-collaborators also confronted workload and workflow chal-lenges, as the *Anthology* is a project we have taken on beyond our regular responsibili-ties. Because we work in different areas of the university, we have been fortunate that our individual busy times have not overlapped too much, and so when one person has had to periodically step back, the others were available to step in. We see this fact as one of many key benefits of a cross-disciplinary collaboration such as the *Anthology*.

Implications: Significance of the *Anthology* for Composition and WAC Studies

We see the *Anthology* as a continuation of recent projects to make race and diversity more visible in WAC scholarship and practice. In the face of ongoing spates of white supremacist demonstrations and violence against minorities, these projects grow ever more necessary. The *Anthology* grounds discussions of race in our own local context, as Poe advocates (101). Moreover, while the examples of WAC scholarship described

in the literature review above discuss the importance of considering race in WAC curriculum and instruction, the *Anthology* extends this work by bringing together actual texts produced by students themselves on the topic of race. The *Anthology* allows students to explore—in their own voice, and through a wide variety of genres—their experiences with and understandings of race, racism, and systemic privilege. If composition and WAC studies are student-centered fields, then putting student discourse itself at the center of conversations about race is a powerful means of getting students to engage with these issues.

Moreover, in response to discussion about what kinds of writing should be taught in higher education, projects such as the *Anthology* demonstrate that colleges and universities can create initiatives that foster and encourage multiple types of writing simultaneously. Initiatives such as the *Anthology* show that campus-wide edited collections and similar projects can draw from numerous academic courses and programs as well as students' own writing composed outside of school, bringing together a vast array of written communication that can become a powerful testament to the importance of many writing types and purposes. The collection includes academic writing such as research papers and essays completed during coursework, but also personal, self-sponsored writing of various kinds. Additionally, the *Anthology* includes a variety of genres (e.g., poetry, non-fiction essay, and academic research essay) and modes (e.g., traditional alphabetic text, images, and a link to a film). The topics of racism, oppression, violence, and privilege are deeply political and public, but they are also very much part of the lived, personal, daily experiences of our diverse student body. While no single writing course or writing-intensive class within a university can provide students with opportunities to compose such a wide range of texts for such an array of purposes, a collection such as the *Anthology* allowed our university to showcase and encourage this diversity of textual production. The *Anthology* further offers these writings for our campus community to read, discuss, and put in conversation with each other. Initiatives such as the *Anthology* can thus bridge the scholarly and the personal realms of writing, as well as the academic and the public spheres, at the levels of both production and reception. Perhaps most importantly, the *Anthology* "include[s] students in the meta-discursive process of inventing WAC" (Kells 97) by amplifying students' own voices as texts to read, discuss, and further write about.

A final way that the *Anthology* speaks to the fields of composition studies and WAC/WID lies in its work as a writing initiative that manifests institutional mission in real and visible ways. In our case, the "centripetal force" (DelliCarpini 5) of a social justice mission within the Lasallian Catholic tradition pulls many campus and community projects into orbit, including the *Anthology*. The collection furthered the institutional mission by supplying a concrete text that explores issues related to the mission, a text that could be used in a variety of academic and non-academic

settings and programs across and beyond campus. The book enabled us as a community to develop a shared text to express thoughts and questions on some of our most widely shared and deeply held beliefs about social justice, racial inequality, and the need to address problems arising from racial disparity today. Moreover, the *Anthology* elevated awareness about student writing on campus, the student writing programs (such as the programs administered by Megan and Jaime), and the work that professors across the disciplines were doing to use writing as a tool for thinking and awareness-raising about important issues (such as in the Business Law and Ethics courses taught by Karen). Compiling the text therefore helped to foster discussions related to the core institutional mission of social justice while also reinforcing an institutional valuing of writing itself.

Conclusion

At the time of this writing, the manuscript *In Living Color: An Anthology of Contemporary Student Writings on Race* is undergoing final preparations, with the hope of publication during the 2017–2018 academic year. The intention is to publish the *Anthology* as a hard-copy book in a limited print run. (The student film, which is posted online, will be represented in the book as a series of still shots, a brief explanation of the film by the director, and a link to the online version.) We are in the process of marketing the book to our colleagues at our university, at other Lasallian universities and colleges, and additional higher education institutions that might have similar commitments and be interested in using the *Anthology* for their own purposes. Our wish is that the book will be adopted for a variety of courses, faculty development initiatives, student organizations, and campus and community events at our university and beyond in the years to come. We also plan to produce future scholarship that follows up on the reception and uses of the collection.

This *Anthology* represents one university's response to recent and ongoing conversations about the complexities of contemporary race relations in the United States, and it offers our attempts to address these sociopolitical concerns in ways that align with composition studies, WAC studies, and our own institutional commitment to social justice. The project's creation brought together a wide range of faculty, staff, and students across our university community in pursuit of this common goal. We argue that the *Anthology* serves as an example to other educators with like-minded commitments who wish to develop similar responses by allowing and encouraging students to reflect on issues of race, systemic racism, systematic oppression, and racial privilege through their writing. Further, the *Anthology* encompasses the breadth of purposes and environments for which college students can compose, underscoring the many different reasons and venues for writing—from scholarly to personal to political, from academic to public. Moreover, our "grounded anthology development" method puts

forward a model that can be adapted for anthologies on the topic of race, or other topics of importance at different institutions. The model we developed evolved organically and in response to local needs and conditions. It is not meant to be a universal model for producing anthologies of this sort, but our strategies and structures may well serve as best practices for writing programs, WAC/WID initiatives, interdisciplinary programs, and university communities that are looking to amplify student voices on a variety of topics.

Race is just one of many important social and political themes on which such an anthology could be based. As such, our project could be a model for other grassroots WAC initiatives like ours, but on different topics. It could also provide a guide for a project on a different topic in a more formalized WAC/WID program. For example, a university might pick an interdisciplinary theme of significance on its campus and invite students from certified Writing Intensive (WI) courses to submit writings for an edited collection. The most exigent circumstances on your campus may not be related to race. Maybe your campus is a hotbed of protest around North Carolina's HB2 "bathroom bill." Perhaps a student on your campus is dragging a mattress around with her to protest the university's lack of response to campus rape allegations. Maybe your university's state funding has been slashed so much that your Spring Break was canceled in an attempt to finish courses before faculty and staff layoffs begin. Maybe students at your college are being regularly stopped to prove their immigration status. Perhaps your school has a visible population of Muslim students who are experiencing harassment in response to terrorist attacks in the United States and around the world. There are many potential Anthologies out there in response to what is happening on your campus, around the country, and around the globe. With many possibilities at hand, we hope this *Anthology* serves as an inspiration for universities seeking to forge connections between campus writing initiatives, institutional mission, and the world's deepest current needs.

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