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Love Pedagogy: Justice, Mattering, and Care in and Out of the Classroom

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Love Pedagogy: Justice, Mattering, and Care In and Out of the Classroom

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Accepted in Partial Completion
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

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Master's Thesis

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Gabby Triana

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A Thesis
Presented to
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In Partial Fulfillment
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Abstract

In my project, I develop a teaching practice called "love pedagogy," which has no one definition or set of rules, but, rather, is an ongoing practice of justice, care, and community-building in education. I focus mainly on practices in the postsecondary writing classroom, but much of what I discuss can apply to other disciplines and education levels. Each of the four chapters focuses on a different practice that I see as key to loving students in the writing classroom; these practices include linguistic justice, discourse justice, radical care, and responsive teaching. To build a practice of love pedagogy, I draw from the work of scholars including, but not limited to, Bettina L. Love, April Baker-Bell, and bell hooks, as well as from my own experiences as a graduate student and first-year composition instructor. My project's aim is to work toward building learning environments grounded in anti-racism, social justice, equity, accessibility, community, and love.

Acknowledgments

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Thank you, thank you, thank you to the students I've worked with at WWU. Thank you for challenging me–like, a lot–and for trusting me with your work. Some of you might say that you didn't have a choice but to share your work with me for the grade, but it still means a lot to me to have read your words and heard your brilliant voices. I mean, I created this thesis because of and for you, so thank you for inspiring me.

Thank you to Matt and Maya, who mentored me while writing my undergrad thesis and have kept in touch with me, continuing to support and inspire me.

As with everything I do in life, I must thank my parents and sister, who are always cheering me on and showing me what true love looks like. Thank you for *everything*.

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“We must struggle together not only to reimagine schools but to build new schools that we are taught to believe are impossible: schools based on intersectional justice, antiracism, love, healing, and joy.”

- Bettina L. Love

Introduction: A Love Letter

Dear teachers, students, administrators, future Gabby, and other curious readers,

I started this project because, despite originally wanting to write a fictional novel-in-verse about a teenage Chicana girl (who was basically me) for my graduate thesis, I couldn't stop thinking about teaching–the ways I teach and the ways I've been taught. That's not to say I wouldn't have been able to do that in a fictional novel-in-verse (in fact, that would be cool as hell), but I just wasn't feeling energized by that concept or form. The project, the way I had been imagining it, wasn't working to answer the questions I keep grappling with and want to struggle to answer, or at least, begin to answer.

What are these questions?

Well, there are three big ones I'm starting with at the moment, but they lead to endless follow-up questions, some which I'll ask and explore in the following chapters. But, for now, here are the questions that I can't stop thinking about and I ask you to consider with me:

1. How can I (and other teachers) fight for linguistic justice in the writing classroom?
2. What does it look like to "build new schools that we are taught to believe are impossible: schools based on intersectional justice, antiracism, love, healing, and joy"?
3. What does it mean to truly love all students?

I quote Love in the epigraph and big question #2 because reading her book, *We Want to Do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom*, played a major role in helping me realize that I wanted to create a pedagogy project for my thesis–more specifically, a project on pedagogical practices based on love. While Love focuses mainly on K-12 education in her book, my project is more interested in love and mattering in higher

education. I'm writing from my current position as a graduate student teaching instructor (not a TA–I teach my own class and don't assist anyone) teaching Western Washington University's introductory writing course: English 101. That means I'm thinking through pedagogy specifically in a 4-year university writing classroom and tend to ask questions and use examples related to college writing pedagogy. That said, I think any teacher in any field can (and I'll go as far to say "should") think about these big questions with me.

As a grad student and instructor, I'm in the unique position of teaching classes and taking classes at the same time. I'm always in a liminal space of teacher and student, which can be super difficult but also super rewarding because both roles inform each other constantly.

My position is also unique because I teach one of the few classes that all WWU students are required to take, which is a prerequisite for many other classes. I essentially have 10 weeks to prepare students for the numerous writing situations they will encounter in college. A big task. One that I know tons of other faculty at WWU have tons of opinions about, which I can speak to because I know my boss, the Writing Program Administrator, gets angry phone calls and emails all the time, and I heard some of these opinions ("Sometimes, I wonder if my students learning anything in English 101?") at a Writing Instruction Support Retreat about six months ago.

I'm starting to digress into tangents, as I do, and trying to reel myself back in.

Okay, this is a love letter right? Maybe it doesn't feel so loving, but I promise I'm writing from a place of love.

I'm writing this letter and this project because I love the students I've had the pleasure of working with, both during my time teaching at WWU and my three years as a writing tutor at Central Washington University during undergrad. I may have only known students for a quarter, or a week, and then never seen them again, but I love them and their ideas. And I love my

teachers, past and present. I love Mrs. Erfurth, Mr. Harris, Maya, Matt, Jeremy, Lysa, and so many other teachers and mentors whose names I could fill a page with.

I love my friends and colleagues, who challenge me, laugh with me, encourage me, and are also on this complex journey as a graduate student instructor with me.

I love the authors who continue to inspire me even though we haven't met, many of whom you, dear reader, will see me in conversation with during this project.

And I am constantly practicing self-love, which I will spend a chapter talking about because, as hooks discusses, we teachers cannot care for our students if we don't care for ourselves.

So, yes, this is a love letter because this is a project about love. But that doesn't mean this project is full of joy and sweetness because, of course, love can be very difficult. It's not just a noun, but also a verb, and so it requires continuous action and reflection and adjustment. To love is to fight for ourselves and for each other. And, sometimes, to love is to fight with each other, in the sense of holding each other accountable and calling out harmful behavior.

Dear reader, I love you, but I'm not here to make you feel comfortable or safe. My hope is to challenge you but also myself because I've still got a whole lot to learn and so many ways I can do better. Love harder. Fight harder.

This project is a reflection on all that I have learned about writing, learning, and teaching. It's a scrapbook of my past and present, and it's a book of dreams for the future.

I invite you to join me in reimagining and building a future of love, not just in education but in the world.

Love, Gabby

Chapter One: Linguistic Justice

White Mainstream English (WME)

I recently had a conversation with a good friend, who is a fellow graduate student instructor, in which I told her I encouraged my ENG 101 students to write in the voice they feel is most authentic and comfortable for them. My friend told me that she wants to do the same but also wants students to be prepared to write in classes where they are required to write a certain way. I don't remember the exact wording my friend used, but I know she meant White Mainstream English (WME) because that's what educators typically mean when they expect "academic" or "formal" language. I tried to challenge my friend by saying something along the lines of, "I get that, but when we teach with that mindset we uphold the system of enforcing White Mainstream English," except with more awkward, on-the-spot language because I felt uncomfortable pushing against my friend and also had trouble 100% disagreeing with what she said. After all, my job is technically to prepare students for future writing situations in college, and those situations will often entail writing in WME.

But what is the cost of "preparing" students for their future in academia and the "professional" world, when that means trading their native dialects and ways of speaking for a language historically spoken by middle to upper class white Americans?

Well, in 1974, members of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) created a resolution called, "Students' Right to Their Own Language," where they write, "Since dialect is not separate from culture, but an intrinsic part of it, accepting a new dialect means accepting a new culture; rejecting one's native dialect is to some extent a rejection of one's culture" (8). Moreover, instructing students to trade their native ways of speaking and writing for

WME perpetuates white supremacy, anti-Blackness and racism, and linguistic oppression. I know that might sound harsh, and it should. Because even though teachers who want to prepare their students–to offer them a tool for "survival" in academia–are coming from a place of good intentions, they can still create harmful consequences.

When we (and when I say "we," I specifically mean writing teachers, but that doesn't mean other educators and administrators are exempt) teach students that WME is the standard in school and in the workplace, we teach them that other ways of communicating and speaking are not academic or professional. We teach students who speak Black Language–a term that scholar April Baker-Bell uses "intentionally in [her] scholarship to acknowledge Africologists' theories that maintain that Black speech is the continuation of African in an American context"–and other non-WME dialects that their voices do not have a place in the classroom and, thus, the university. We teach those students that their voices don't matter, and if students feel like their voices don't matter, how will they be able to feel like they, as people, matter?

I, myself, grew up feeling like my identity marker–Mexican-American, particularly the "Mexican" part–was a dirty word. There are tons of reasons for this, from the way that American news media portrays Mexicans and Mexican-Americans to the racist jokes and comments I received from peers while growing up. But it was also because of my own family. I remember saying, when I was around the age of 12, that I wanted to wear big hoops and have a Spanish accent, which I think was my way of wanting to feel more Mexican. My mom told me something like, "No, you don't. That won't

My mom and I (2002)

get you far." Her own father was taught to speak English in order to succeed in the U.S., which is the main reason my mom doesn't speak fluent Spanish and didn't speak it with me growing up. That's internalized linguistic racism. My mom and I both have grown since then and are still, everyday, working to unlearn and heal from internalized racism. But it's hard to unlearn a lifetime of being taught that my identity and the language of my ancestors is inferior. And, likewise, teaching at the post-secondary level is difficult because most students have already spent around 12 years being taught that there are ways of speaking and knowing that are privileged in education.

How 101 Students are Thinking about Writing

In a 1:1 conference, an ENG 101 student admitted, "I don't understand how this is an English class," when I asked her how the coursework is working for her and how it could be better. When I asked her to say more, she pointed out that the major project we were working on at the time was a podcast project. She implied that a podcast is not a project you do in an English class. Similarly, another student, in a separate conference, said something along the lines of, *it's different than what I expected in a college in class. There's less writing than I thought.* Again, I asked if they could say more about what they mean, and they explained that they had to do more writing in high school–particularly thesis-driven essay writing. They then went on to say that the writing in ENG 101 feels more "fun" and "meaningful," and they specifically mentioned free-writes–where students try to write without stopping or editing for X minutes–being helpful. After talking through that, they voiced their realization that there's not necessarily less writing in our ENG 101 class–there are just different kinds of writing and feelings associated with writing than what they had been used to previously.

These conversations with 101 students tell me that students associate college and, more specifically, academic writing, with thesis statements, "research" (which is a word I'll unpack more in Chapter 2), and a writing style that is "formal" and devoid of emotion.

Another ENG 101 story: after transitioning from their podcast project to an OAT (an essay where they **observe** a place, **analyze** their observations, and **theorize** about this place), I began a conversation on the difference between writing an introduction for a podcast versus an OAT–or any similar research-based essay they've encountered in school. I made a Venn diagram on the board and wrote down words and phrases voiced by the students. Some words they used to describe podcast intros were: casual, conversational, creative, and entertaining. Then, for the research essay side, students used words like: grounded, thesis, and formal. I pushed them to further explain some of these words–for example, I asked students to say more about the word "formal" and what kind of language they think of when they hear that word. They said "long words" and "synonyms." I can't say I was surprised by their responses; they were just further proof that students are taught that WME–which often includes those "long words"–is the appropriate dialect to use in academic and formal settings. Moreover (see–I've always been trained to write in WME to the point that it is part of my natural writing voice now), students shift their ways of showing up when they write in a genre like podcasts versus in an OAT or research essay. An example of "showing up" is how students present themselves—how they alter their voices and research practices—in a project like the OAT, in which their voices I hear every day in class seem to disappear to make way for a voice that uses "long words" and sources they deem "okay" to use ("not Wikipedia," they tell me when I ask them how they've been taught about sources in the past). This side-story is my way of saying: most students aren't used to academic writing being associated with creativity, authenticity, entertainment, and conversation.

As much as I'm often tempted to, I don't often go into long conversations about WME and linguistic justice with students. 1) 10 weeks is such a short time for a class, especially a class meant to prepare students for the rest of their time in college, and there's already so much I want and need to fit into our schedule to help them develop projects that both meet the 101 program criteria and make them feel proud. 2) I'm still learning histories of linguistic oppression and practices for linguistic justice myself, but that is just a copout. I'll always still be learning, after all.

To work toward linguistic freedom, instructors (including myself!) need to have conversations about language, including the violent history of enforced ways of communicating in the U.S., more broadly, and in the academic institution. I know these discussions can be uncomfortable—clearly, because I'm still nervous to try and start them. I think, at least for me, the way to work past this feeling of discomfort is to embrace vulnerability and honesty. I'm thinking of times that I've felt the need to talk to students about recent tragedies in the world, like mass shootings, and I was honest with them about how I'm not sure what to say or how to talk about such difficult topics but that I'm doing my best. The fear is always that students won't meet my vulnerability well—which, for me, looks like them basically giving me blank stares or (possibly) worse, with anger or irritation. That hasn't happened to me yet, though, and I've had plenty of times where I tell students that I'm showing up to class low-energy because of awful events that have happened in the world. Every time, I've had at least one (but usually more) students thank me for being honest and talking about hard things, and sometimes they're vulnerable with me in return. I think being vulnerable and honest invites others to do the same—it builds a sense of trust, which is necessary for critically conscious talk.

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As I write in Google docs, red lines slice
the page. The Editor suggests “need to” instead of “got to.” Doesn’t like
when I fragment. When I was a tutor, we taught students
that a sentence is a complete thought, but what does it mean for a thought
to be complete? And why must students
think to completion? Let ‘em share their beautiful
fragments, fuller
than any independent clause. The cause:
enforcing White Mainstream English. The effects:
loss, loss, loss.

The Problem with Code-Switching

When instructors teach students to slip out of their native dialect and into another dialect when communicating in their coursework, they are teaching code-switching. That is what my friend (from earlier) and many of my colleagues teach–to write in WME when writing for audiences like professors, administrators, and other figures from “professional” and “academic” worlds.

Literary critic and legal scholar Stanley Fish is a proponent of code-switching, which he supports in the third part of his three-part *New York Times* column “What Should Colleges Teach?”: “You’re not going to be able to change the world if you are not equipped with the tools that speak to its present condition. You don’t strike a blow against a power structure by making yourself vulnerable to its prejudices” (para. 12). To use Audre Lorde’s language in her essay, “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House,” Fish is essentially arguing that students must use the master’s tools (in this case, WME) to make it through the master’s house (in this case, education or, specifically, the university) and change the master’s house. I’m going to go out on a limb and say that my colleagues who promote code-switching have a similar view

that students need to learn WME to survive college and the professional world. There's definitely some truth to that. Take me for example–I learned to write in WME from my high school English teacher, Mr. Harris, in his 11th grade honors and 12th grade AP Lit courses, and, using this language, I wrote an essay that won me a full-ride scholarship to a 4-year university. I'm not saying that my writing style alone won me that scholarship–that would be a gross dismissal of my ideas and passion for education that came through in that essay. But I think I have learned how to communicate–how to structure my sentences and use rhetorical appeal–in a way that grants me access to the university and its resources, which, in large part, means writing in WME. This "survival" tool can provide survival and success only to a certain extent, though. Plus, what have I, a Chicana woman, sacrificed through code-switching? What do Black folx, Indigenous folx, and folx of color sacrifice when they code-switch? How about others?

Baker-Bell argues against code-switching, specifically for Black students. Similar to what I'm saying about the limits of code-switching, Baker-Bell writes, "I have also heard teachers promise Black children that code-switching will help them get into college and earn a college degree. Ok! So give up your culture and your language in favor of achieving, at best, a house, a car, and a whole lot of college debt?" (30). Code-switching has helped me receive funding and has also aided in me getting into grad school, but it doesn't promise that I'm going to achieve my personal dreams or even achieve white American hetero visions of success (house, car, solid income, happy family, etc.). Code-switching may promise survival in college courses, but it doesn't promise thriving or, even, basic survival. Baker-Bell worked with students at Leadership Academy and facilitated various activities and conversations around how people think about language, and in one particular conversation about code-switching, she writes, "The students pointed out how Trayvon used White Mainstream English when he said "What are you following

me for?" and that did not protect him from being murdered" (30). Sadly, the example of Trayvon's death is one of many real-life examples where Black folx spoke in WME and were still murdered by police or other people. WME doesn't protect Black, brown, and other folx of color from police brutality, racism, and hate. WME doesn't even always protect students within the confines of the university or the classroom. There's this idea some instructors have that teaching WME "levels the playing field" and helps students have a more equitable chance at "making it" in college. But code-switching doesn't speak to other types of racism, inequity, and other barriers that many students face in classrooms and on campuses. And, again, asking students to code-switch to WME means asking them to give up an aspect of their cultures and identities–to give up their voices.

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What Should Teachers Teach? *(A Found Poem after Stanley Fish's* "What Should Colleges Teach?")

I became alarmed at the inability
of instructors to find out their students–
their words I found
myself in a quarrel with academy
and composition and grammar
you can tell when you're being
taught a foreign language have we lost
our language? Core
curriculum: please let it include
writing everything under
the sun

If Not Code-Switching, Then What?

In my senior year of undergrad, I wrote a capstone project on inclusive writing assignments in the humanities classroom, and I was also thinking about linguistic justice. I find it so special to have this document of where I was at with my pedagogy journey during that time. I had just read *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* for the first time and was being introduced to composition texts like "Students' Right to Their Own Language" while working at my school's Writing Center. I sometimes cringe when reading writing from this time because I've changed some of my opinions since, like how I'm trying to replace "Standard American English" with "White Mainstream English" in my vocabulary. I also was touching on just one piece of anti-racist education, as I focused mainly on writing assignments, and I'm now trying to expand that idea into questions of how learning communities, as a whole, can be more anti-racist and equitable. So, in some ways, I feel like my undergrad thesis needs to be completely reworked. But, how cool is it that I keep returning to this same topic with new knowledge and opinions?

Another term I was introduced to during undergrad is "code-meshing," which I read about in "Should Students Use They Own Language" by Vershawn Ashanti Young, who goes by dr. vay. Like me, dr. vay voices some issues with Fish's claims about what writing teachers should teach and points out the harms of code-switching. dr. vay's proposed solution is what he calls code-meshing, which "blend dialects, international languages, local idioms, chat-room lingo, and the rhetorical styles of various ethnic and cultural groups in both formal and informal speech acts" (114). Rather than encouraging students to drop their everyday ways of speaking and use WME in the classroom, code-meshing encourages students to combine the different ways of speaking they use. dr. vay's writing style in "Should Students Use They Own Language" is an example of code-meshing–as he blends what Baker-Bell calls Black Language with

terminology from linguistics and education fields. He explains that the teaching of code-meshing "do include teaching some punctuation rules, attention to meaning and word choice, and various kinds of sentence structures and some standard English" with the goal to "help reduce prejudice" (Young 116-17). Some aspects of code-meshing, as dr. vay describes it, resonates with how I try to approach teaching ENG 101. I also encourage "attention to meaning and word choice," and, more specifically, have students focus on ways they can be more specific about what they mean either by giving more examples or taking a vague word like "community" or "people" and clarifying *which* community or *which group* of people is their focus. I'm not sure about some of those other areas dr. vay mentions though. Right away, reading "punctuation rules" and "standard English" makes me feel uneasy. I can literally *feel* the hesitation in my body. But, before I jump to conclusions, I ask these questions: what kinds of punctuation rules need to be taught? Whose rules? And do students need to learn "some" standard English? Why?

I think dr. vay's proposition is a step in the right direction, and I do think it's coming from a place of love and inclusivity, but I think we teachers and students can take an even bigger step. Hell, we can reinvent the path entirely.

I'm still not completely sure what that reinvention looks like–that's where I need help from co-conspirators–but I think part of it is letting go of the notion that students need to learn some or any WME. Instead of enforcing a single dialect in academic spaces, teachers might try facilitating critical discussions on the connections between language, race, and power. Baker-Bell uses what English education scholar Davena Jackson calls "critically conscious talk," which is "where teachers and students question, interrogate, and dismantle dominant narratives that contribute to Black people's racial suffering" (81). So too would writing classes benefit from critical discussions about how linguistic oppression, in particular, works to perpetuate anti-Black

racism, anti-Indigenous, and anti-POC racism. I, myself, have not attempted these conversations in the 101 classroom–truthfully, I still feel out of my element, in terms of guiding difficult conversations. But, I realize, no matter how much I read and learn about anti-racist pedagogy, I need to accept that I will always feel uncomfortable talking about racism and oppression, as I should. Racism and oppression are not comfortable, and the least we educators can do is start interrogating, with our students, how these forces operate in our respective fields.

Plus, maybe teachers need to not only ask what we should be teaching, but how *we* should be learning. Rather than talking about how students need to be writing, we need to talk more about how we should be reading our students' writing. I think this involves taking personal initiative to read more kinds of voices–to read works written in Black Language and recognize that this is a legitimate language system with rules. To read works written in other English dialects, like Appalachian English. Works by Chicanx and Latinx authors that blend Spanish and English. If we can't understand what a student is trying to say in their writing, this could be a sign that maybe the student needs to spend more time with "attention to meaning and word choice," but it could also be a sign that we need to improve our reading comprehension skills by diversifying the texts we're reading. And if that brings up discomfort, I understand–it is a lot of work–but I challenge you to ask yourself where that discomfort is coming from? Where do you feel it in your body? Why do you think you feel that way? If we can question and consider before we jump to conclusions about how to teach, I think that will be how we start reinventing the path. But to begin shaping and actually walking down the path, we must not only be teachers but learners–learners of writing pedagogy and, more importantly, learners of our students and their voices.

Chapter Two: Ways of Knowing

In my second quarter of grad school, I took a Chicanx literature course. For the final project, we had two options: to create a "critical" project or a "creative" project. I was delighted by the fact we had these options because I had expected to be required to write a 10+ page literary analysis paper, which I didn't want to do, especially in a class about literature written by and about folx who look like me. I ended up writing a hypertext poetic memoir, building upon the Chicanx feminist theory we read in class and, of course, my own experiences and knowledge around being Chicana.

Fast forward to the next quarter–the university holds their annual ScholarsWeek, which is a week-long series of presentations by students who were nominated and chosen to share their work. In a meeting with the Chicanx literature professor, she told me something like, "I wanted to nominate your project for ScholarsWeek, but it wasn't academic." I didn't bring it up in the moment, but I was hurt by this statement because it made me feel like my experiences–my lived and embodied theory–and my poetic writing aren't as valid (in an academic context) as learned theory and "analytical" writing. Knowing that professor, I know she didn't mean to imply that my experiences are less valued than knowledge you can read in a book, or that poetry is beneath analytical writing. She just had a specific understanding of what kind of work belongs in an academic space like ScholarsWeek and didn't think my work fit into that space.

Now, this professor is on my comprehensive exams and thesis committee, which means she read the above account in an earlier draft of my thesis. In the margins, she wrote, "I'm so sorry," and I know she means it. I felt really bad, knowing that it was probably difficult and painful for her to read that, but sometimes we must make others uncomfortable, and be made uncomfortable ourselves, to learn and grow together. I know that this professor has since taken

part in changing the guidelines around comprehensive exams for MA in English students, to where they can now write in whatever genre, mode, or medium they choose. I'm not saying I'm responsible for that change, but I like to think that I at least played a part, however big or small, in encouraging that professor to rethink what is considered academic, theoretical, analytical, and the other words that come up often in an MA in English program.

I tell this story not to call out this professor or make her look bad. I love her–she has inspired me a ton and provided me with so much support throughout my time in grad school. But I use this story as one example of the kind of thinking that permeates the university, and once permeated my own mind–the kind of thinking about what counts as valid, credible knowledge and who gets to produce this kind of knowledge.

Just like how there are different ways of speaking and writing, there are also different ways of knowing. Different ways of producing, storing, and using knowledge.

Embodied or Lived Knowledge

One important way of knowing is embodied knowing–as in, knowledge that the body has learned. Lorde speaks to this kind of knowledge in her essay, "Poetry is not a Luxury," when she writes, "These places of possibility within ourselves are dark because they are ancient and hidden; they have survived and grown through the darkness" (36). When she says "ourselves," she's speaking specifically about Black women and femmes and the ways that their bodies carry history and are resilient. This makes me think also of Marianne Hirsch's theory of "postmemory," which "describes the relationship that the "generation after" bears to the personal, collective, and cultural trauma of those who came before — to experiences they "remember" only by means of the stories, images, and behaviors among which they grew up"

("An Interview with Marianne Hirsch"). The example that Hirsch uses in her book is the intergenerational trauma that is carried from Holocaust survivors to their descendants, although these descendants didn't experience the Holocaust first-hand. The descendants still carry the history and trauma of the Holocaust to the point of it feeling like they, themselves, remember the Holocaust.

I've also come to think about postmemory in terms of my own family history. My grandpa, a Hispanic and Native American man, was taught to speak English both by his parents and in his schools, in order to "succeed" in the U.S. This linguistic oppression still haunts me, and I grieve for the way Spanish has been lost in my family.

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> I'm writing this in a notebook from New Mexico (where my ancestors have lived for centuries), though the words will travel to a Word Document and into a printed copy. Like my words, I move across spaces, watching myself twist this way and that, like hair or clay.
>
> In English 101, we TAs teach that "writing looks and works differently in different places." People do too. I did. I do, but I'm trying to abandon my chameleon ways. I want to shape the spaces I'm in, to behave how I want to behave.
>
> professionalism = white
>
> I wear hoop earrings that graze my shoulders and blue eyeshadow to go teach. My accessories of resistance. Taking up space with my personality, my personhood.

> I've been building my family tree on Ancestry. I'm in the early 1700s now, and my mom's side–the Chavez side–is still in New Mexico. Is this why my bones ache for a place I've never lived?

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I've also inherited other types of knowledge from my family and environment. Both my parents are incredible cooks and cook a diverse range of food, from Mexican to Thai to German and tons else in between. My dad is also an avid fisherman and gardener, which means he sources a lot of what we consume. My mom is the queen of fermentation, pickling, and making jams and syrups. I know a lot about food—how to prepare it, how to catch it, how to ferment or pickle it, and how to build community with it. I learned from practicing with my family. There's a vast body of knowledge I carry because of who I am, who my family is, and what our history is like, but going on about that would result in a whole other project.

The point I'm trying to make is that the body remembers history and environment and, thus, carries knowledge that we can't always make sense of in our minds. I don't mean to split the brain and body because, of course, they're connected, but I know that my body sometimes reacts to situations or stories in ways my brain can't fully articulate. Hirsch's theory of postmemory is helpful for not only for understanding the possibilities of memory but also of knowing. Students have experiences, lived and inherited, that are valid sources in their writing. This entire project I'm writing is an example—I'm not only drawing from secondary sources but also from firsthand experiences the classroom, and both kinds of sources are useful.

Moreover, I don't need to rely only on reading books on education or food or the linguistic oppression of Chicanx and other Latinx folx to understand these areas of knowledge. These theories and practices are already in my body. That's not to say that I shouldn't still read

and learn more, but it's to say that I have knowledge in me that's just as real, valid, and valuable as what's in a book. So, I want teachers and other gatekeepers to honor my embodied knowledge the same way they would honor knowledge from books written by scholars in the field.

Discourse Justice

In *As We Have Always Done* by Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, a Nishnaabeg scholar, Simpson writes about how, in Nishnaabeg culture, knowledge comes from community, family, the land and its inhabitants. She defines "theory" as "an explanation of a phenomenon" and explains that, within Nishnaabeg thought, "'Theory' is generated and regenerated continually through embodied practice and regenerated continually through embodied practice and within each family, community, and generation of people" (151). Theory, according to Simpson, is not just knowledge read in a book or learned at an academic conference, but is spiritual and based on relation. When I re-read "Land as Pedagogy," the chapter from which I'm quoting, I think about the implications of requiring students to use "academic sources" or "theory" to support their claims in college classes. As I've been doing throughout this book, I question the word "academic."

What counts as academic and who gets to make that call?

In my own experiences as a student in writing classes, I've come to learn that "academic" often means written by "experts" in the field–people with lots of degrees and, often, teaching professions in the field. Academic sources are also typically peer-reviewed. These are the kinds of sources you find on online databases like JSTOR, EBSCO, Taylor & Francis, etc. So, "academic" sources are written by authors who have the means and access to publish their work in journals. What I'm trying to say is, requiring students to use "academic" sources means

requiring students to use only sources written by people in positions of privilege. Just because those authors have the privilege of having attended universities and published in academic journals doesn't mean they're more intelligent or credible than people whose expertise comes from experience and lived knowledge. By enforcing the use of "academic" sources, using a narrow definition of what "academic" means, teachers enforce a Western, white system of thought. They discount other cultural ways of thinking and researching. Also, only citing authors from online databases and other containers considered "academic" can lead to a narrow pool of voices. Cherokee Nation scholar Daniel H. Justice explains where building this kind of echo chamber can be problematic:

> Always citing the same small circle of voices is both harmful to the health of the field and disrespectful to the many fine scholars and writers whose work informs, enhances, challenges, and complicates our broader conversation. It's also a political choice that too often silences the less empowered and enfranchised, who are often the ones with the most trenchant understandings. (242)

As Justice implies, critical research practices are necessary for ensuring that marginalized voices are part of the conversation–this not only makes for a more anti-racist and decolonial practice, but also makes for a more complex, interesting conversation than engaging with only one group of people. I'm not trying to argue that teachers shouldn't require their students to use peer-reviewed sources or that privileged authors should be discounted. These authors also have unique expertise and can be helpful to cite; I just mean that there are other kinds of experts other than people with degrees and a list of publications. This is another discussion I think needs to happen among teachers and their students in writing and research classes. Just as "critically conscious talk" about language and writing practices are crucial, so are critical discussions on research, discourse, and citation practices.

Chapter Three: Radical Care and Community

During my second quarter in grad school, I attended a Zoom meet-and-greet with the English Department faculty. Like many Zoom meetings from the past few years (and, let's be real, experiences in general), it's a bit of a blur. I don't remember what the moderator's question was, but I remember that Jane Wong, a poetry professor, said something like, "The most radical thing we can do in the university is care for others." That sentence has stuck with me ever since and really framed my teaching philosophy and, well, general life philosophy.

Now, the idea of caring being radical might seem silly–like, it's so simple to care, right? I don't think it is, and certainly not in the university, where academic competitiveness and isolation are encouraged. Sure, in classes, there's a lot of collaborative work. But I've competed against my friends and colleagues for grants, awards, and project mentors even. And, although we work collaboratively in class, our comprehensive exams and theses are completed individually. I'm not a faculty member, technically, so I don't know exactly how that position looks, but I imagine their work is pretty isolated too, outside of department meetings and occasional gatherings.

Caring for Students

I think many of my undergrad students are isolated too–actually, I know they are, because I remember one student coming to my office hours every week and crying about how alone they felt. And another student spent their quarter writing about the experiences of being a Black student struggling to find belonging on WWU's campus. Although many first-year students live on campus with access to community, they don't always know how or feel confident enough to seek these communities. Or, they just don't feel like they belong in a community. As a Chicana

student who has always felt like they don't belong with white people or fellow Mexican-American people (because I don't speak Spanish), I can relate somewhat to the feeling of being alone or not belonging to a community. However, I had a lot of support during undergrad–I had multiple advisors (one in the Honors College, one in English, and one in education), eventually faculty mentors who introduced me to internship and conference opportunities, and luck. I happened to end up in a very social dorm my first year in college where I met a lot of friends. All that's to say, I was privileged to have a lot of people in my corner and to know where to go for academic, well-being, and extracurricular support. Not all students are privileged in this sense. Not all students know where to find support or have someone in their corner batting for them.

Teachers shouldn't act as therapists or parents or friends because those aren't our roles–it would be inappropriate and unethical to cross those boundaries. However, we can help our students feel comfortable talking to us, and, from there, we can direct them to resources they need outside of class. In my experience, that comfortability comes from how students feel in my classroom. Knowing all their names and making myself available through email and office hours are the bare minimum for helping students feel like they can talk to me. But there are so many, sometimes small, details that can help students feel comfortable. I notice, in my quarterly course evaluations, students often comment on two things: my approachability and the classroom environment, or "vibes," as students would call it. Here are some quotes from students, copied and pasted from the Google forms (for some reason, fixing the formatting didn't feel right), that stand out to me in terms of trying to understand the ways students feel cared for:

> I really like how open and available you are. Knowing your professor cares about you is really nice and takes away so much stress. (Fall 2021)
>
> I'm glad you responded fast to emails and are willing to sacrifice personal time to meet with us to help during projects (Winter 2022)

> I really appreciate you!! You've been so lovely. You are always so open and honest, and I feel like I can be myself in this class :) (Spring 2022)
>
> You were the most supportive professor I had this quarter. I was never scared to communicate with you and always felt like you had my back. I definitely dreaded coming to this class less than my others so thanks! (Fall 2022)
>
> gabby was great and super nice I have never felt comfortable going to office hours before this. (Winter 2023)

I promise I'm not including these comments just to flex (though I have to admit, I find them extremely validating and heartwarming) about my teaching. But I find these comments useful for gaining insight into what kinds of practices help students feel supported and comfortable in the class, and each of these comments is just one example per quarter (during my time at WWU) that I pulled from a number of similar comments. Also, for context, these comments were in response to the last question in my evaluation form: "Anything else you'd like to share about your experience in this class?" Some students don't respond to this question at all, but many students do and respond similarly to the above comments.

The comment about my willingness to "sacrifice personal time" is interesting because I don't feel like I go above and beyond in terms of availability. I have my two office hours a week, and I typically respond to emails on weekdays between 9am and 5pm (as I put on my syllabi), so it's not like I'm sacrificing so much personal time. Maybe what this student is picking up on is how much I reiterate, every class, that I'm available in office hours and *want* students to come visit me if they're at all struggling or overwhelmed. And I am quick to respond to emails if I'm able to at the moment. That just goes to show that reminding students that you, the teacher, are available and wanting to help can make students feel more comfortable with and supported by you. That's one method I think other teachers could try, if they aren't already. Otherwise, I think

just being a friendly face and voice in the classroom goes a long way. I remember, when I was an undergrad tutor, we learned in our training how important it is to smile and be extra friendly in our tutoring sessions because we might be the only smile that student sees that day. When I teach, I try to remember that I might be offering the only kindness or support students are receiving in their lives. I say hello when they enter the room for class, I say their names–either to call on them in whole class discussions or when I'm walking around during small group work–and try to talk to every student at least once in each class session, and I try to be as energetic and excited as I can about what we're doing (which I've also received positive evaluation comments about). Something big I've learned while teaching ENG 101 (and just being an adult human) is that I'm not responsible for managing other people's energies, even students, but I can manage my own energy, and I've observed that boosting my own energy is often contagious in a learning community. It seems so simple, but friendliness and kindness go so far in caring for students. Further, really knowing and seeing students, as individuals and as valuable members of the learning community, means the world.

A student's drawing in response to a question one of my colleagues left on the board before my class: "Gabby's students – what's your favorite part of ENG 101?"

Caring For Ourselves and Each Other

As I begin to write this section, I can't stop hearing RuPaul saying, "If you can't love yourself, how in the hell are you gonna love someone else?" That saying is really a theoretical framework for this section because the same goes for teachers: if teachers don't take care of

themselves, how in the hell can they care for their students? bell hooks writes about this in *Teaching to Transgress*, and she says that "teachers must be actively committed to a process of self-actualization that promotes their own well-being if they are to teach in a manner that empowers students" (15). I definitely feel what hooks is saying, now that I'm nearing the end of my first two years of teaching. I've found that working with students who are struggling, sometimes with my class and sometimes with issues outside of class, can require a lot of emotional labor. I'm thinking of one student, in particular, who came to my weekly office hours mainly to vent about the difficulties of transitioning from living at home to on campus with strangers. Now, in hindsight, I probably should've encouraged her more strongly to visit the campus counseling center or somewhere where she can get professional mental health support, but it was my first quarter teaching, and it seemed like this student didn't have many other people around campus that they trusted. But, my point is that I needed to be on my self-care A-game in order to maintain my energy and ability to help support this student, and the same has happened for other students. I will say, I've gotten better about boundary-setting and directing students elsewhere when they come to me with problems not related to class, but it's still true that I must ensure my own well-being to be in a mindset where I can support students' well-being. And setting boundaries is a huge part of self-care–there's a balance to be found in supporting students while protecting one's own time and emotional energy, as a teacher.

How self-care looks depends on the person and what they need, but I think, in addition to setting boundaries, there are some universal ways teachers can take care of themselves. A large part of self-care involves community–making sure that you feel connected to the people in your circle, whether that's friends, family, teachers, or other community members. In grad school, my friends and cohort members have been a huge part of my survival. There have been days where I only move my body because one of my friends invited me to the gym and days where I'm not motivated to grade or do homework, and my friends and I work together. I would not have made it through grad school if it weren't for my friends–not only have they helped motivate and inspire me through school, but they've made me laugh so hard I feel like I might cry, and those joyful moments matter so much when it comes to self-preservation and my embodied knowledge. And, as Audre Lorde so wisely says, "Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare."

Friends from my cohort and me after a grad student reading organized by us and for us

Asking my teachers for help has also been a major part of my community-based self-care; it may seem so simple, but asking for help is one of the harder lessons I've learned in higher education and has made such a big difference. So, that's one nugget of advice I can offer those of you who try to do it all on your own: don't be afraid to ask for help and support. How can we teachers expect our students to seek help and support if we don't practice that ourselves? Of course, not all teachers are also students, like I am, so they might not have quite the same kinds

of support or resources as me. But, asking for help might mean asking friends, family, colleagues, and bosses for help.

One beautiful thing about this age of technology and the internet is that those of us with access to Internet and electronic devices also have access to a larger community. One community that I found after reading Love's *We Want to Do More Than Survive* is the Abolitionist Teaching Network (ATN), which has a website full of resources, including guides to abolitionist teaching and grants for "agitators." The ATN website even has a tab called "Radical Self Care," which is so fitting and delightful to see. Under this tab, you can often find events that support self-care. For example, I'm on the website in April of 2023, and there are a series virtual events for "healing, wellness and inspiration," hosted by educator and artist Noor Jones-Bey. What I appreciate about this series, from what I read on their website, is that they have multiple events offered exclusively to BIPOC people, which I think is so important since BIPOC folx (at least in my own experience as a brown person) require different kinds of self-care and preservation than white folx. This series also offers free tickets to those who need it. And this is just one example of the types of community support that is available because of the Internet. How incredible it is to have options for connecting with educators across the U.S. who are also trying to practice radical self-care and care for others!

I can't talk about care and community without thinking of Audre Lorde's words, which have guided me constantly through my journey in education. In *Sister Outsider*, Lorde writes about liberation for the oppressed, particularly for Black folx. She says, "Without community there is no liberation," which are words that apply to educational freedom as well (112). Without community, change cannot happen in schools. When teachers work in isolation, they cannot work toward the liberation of their students–this means not only working together, as colleagues

and co-conspirators, but also working with students. Both Lorde and hooks reference Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, in which Freire writes that pedagogy of the oppressed is "a pedagogy which must be forged *with*, not *for*, the oppressed (whether individuals or peoples) in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity" (48). Freire speaks of students when he says "the oppressed," but the same idea goes for other marginalized communities. When I talk about loving and fighting for each other, I'm talking about fighting alongside Black students and teachers, Indigenous students and teachers, students and teachers of color, LGBTQ+ students and teachers, and other communities whom the university is not built for. On the mobilizing and co-conspiring of communities, Lorde writes, "The fact that we are here and that I speak these words is an attempt to break that silence and bridge some of those differences between us, for it is not difference which immobilizes us, but silence" (44). Similarly, Freire emphasizes the importance of critical thinking and dialogue, which are the key to educational liberation. And, to quote another writer, Prisca Dorcas Mojica Rodríguez, who has really helped shape me and made me feel less alone when I started grad school at a primarily white institution, "Freedom is not a destination; it is a communal journey" (8).

I thank these writers for inspiring me to work on overcoming my silence, as someone who grew up shy and still struggles to speak up because I worry I'll be wrong or make people upset or say the wrong thing. But Lorde is right in that silence is our enemy, as teachers, activists, friends, lovers, and our many other roles in which we collaborate and love. Caring and loving means having difficult, critical conversations with each other, laughing and spending time together, standing up for each other, and fighting alongside each other.

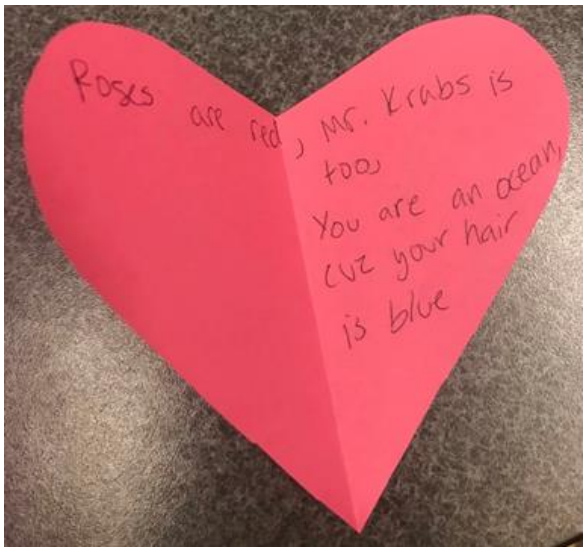
Chapter Four: Loving Students

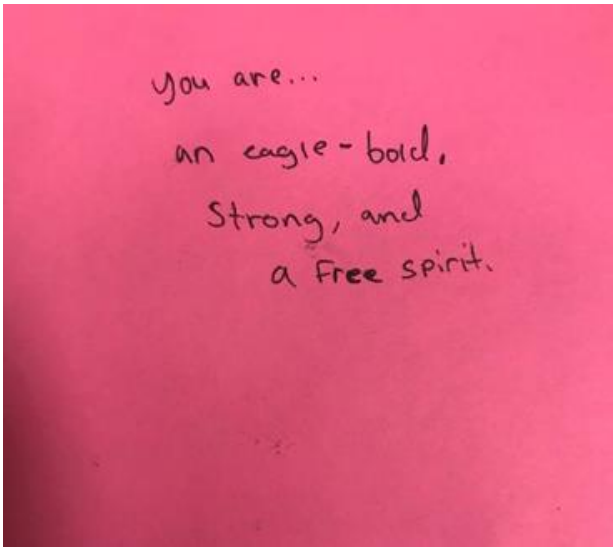
On Wednesday, February 15th, 2023, I dreaded teaching in the hours before class. I had just found out that two days prior, three students at Michigan State University were killed and five injured by a gunman. I felt so sad. But, I also felt exhaustion and numbness creeping in—I had already taught multiple times after mass shootings in the U.S. and lived through numerous more. I didn't feel like having to get up and go to work during this terrible time. It also felt silly to teach XYZ statements (XYZ statements are topic sentences for their projects) in the wake of such a tragedy, especially a tragedy involving other university students. I showed up to class and felt compelled to talk to the students about what happened and how I was showing up to class, so I sat down with them and spoke honestly. I asked them to meet me where I'm at, and meet each other and themselves where they're at.

And I told them something I realized while trudging to class—what we're doing together in ENG 101 is not silly, even when there are big, terrible things happening in the country. To imagine, collaborate, and create *is* important work, and it's the type of work we must do if we're going to build a better world. So, I stuck to my plan for the 15th and taught XYZ statements and other brainstorming activities. Toward the end of class, I could feel that a lot of students were still hurting and exhausted, so I decided to try something that I thought might spark joy and love, even a little bit.

Inspired by an activity in my grad poetry class, I taught students what a metaphor is and reasons writers might use this device. I asked them to write a poem that begins with "You are" and creates a metaphor. I heard laughter filling the classroom, as students wrote, and I watched them gift each other poems at the end of class. We read them outside in the sunshine. Every

person left with at least one poem, including myself (see images below), given to them by someone else. My heart felt a little lighter after, and I think that the students' hearts did too.





The above images are of poems that two students wrote for me. Although they are brief, and the first one more on the silly side, these poems mean so much to me. They are a reminder of my students' kindness, goofiness, and creativity. I only wish I had screenshots of the poems they read aloud for each other–for the lovely things they had to say about classmates they had only known for about three weeks at that time. These poems are examples, for me, of love in the classroom. My responsiveness to the students is also part of how I teach from a place of love.

Love in the Classroom

In a meeting with my thesis committee where we discussed my draft of this book, one professor asked me what I think about the students who are really hard to love. Truthfully, I hadn't really thought about that fact because I was so immersed in this idea of love pedagogy, which can sometimes get too idealistic if I'm not careful. But that professor brings up such an important point, because the fact is that I don't necessarily like all my students. For example, there was one particular student–a white male–I had one quarter who sometimes talked to his

friends while I was talking and would make little petty comments about something we were doing in class. These were minor offenses; after all, I can't even remember any of the comments he made. I just remember how they made me feel. Defensive. Annoyed. Hurt.

It's safe to say I had a lot of trouble liking this student, let alone loving. I still wanted him to do well and pass the class, so in that sense, I cared about him, but I wasn't upset about not having him in class anymore when the quarter ended. So, what do we do about those students who we're fine with not seeing again, who we have trouble loving?

First, I think it's very natural to not like people. That's just reality–it's hard to click with every single person you encounter in life. So, I don't think there's any need, as a teacher, to force yourself to like students who are disrespectful or narrow-minded or whatever trait might lead to dislike. That said, I think it's possible to find ways to still love a student.

Remember what I said in the introduction about how love isn't always sunshine and rainbows? Love doesn't just mean showering someone with affection. Love can mean challenging a person but also meeting them in the middle. One time, I had a student who just didn't want to adhere to the (I must say, very loose) constraints I put on their topics–they could choose any place they want to work with as a topic, as long as they can move into or out of that place (whether that mean physically visiting the place or finding a way to access an emotional place like nostalgia). The student wanted to do his project on a place from his hometown 14 hours away and wouldn't be able to move in and out of that place. At first, I felt annoyed that he kept pushing back against what I asked of him, when I felt like my instructions already allowed for a lot of freedom and creativity. What I realized, after days of fuming and a chat with the Writing Program Director who offered me some potential options, is that maybe I'm the one who needs to rethink my constraints. I also had other students wanting to work on places that they

couldn't access, in my perspective, which made me feel more like the problem was with me and not with the one student. I asked every student during class to free-write about what "access" and "observation" mean in terms of their place, and this led to even more critical thinking around "place" as a concept and what it means to move in and out of spaces. I met students in the middle by honoring their interests while challenging them to meet my assignment requirements in creative ways. Even now, I still feel annoyed with that first student who challenged me because there were multiple other times when he pushed back against requirements and didn't seem interested in hearing my reasoning for those requirements. I'm not annoyed at being challenged because I think that's a vital part of being a teacher, but it's one thing to challenge someone and another thing to shut down everything they say, which is what it felt to me like this student was doing. That said, I tried my best–through responsive teaching practices–to help this student feel like their ideas, and they as learners, matter. I tried to find another way to love them, even though I admittedly struggled to like them at times.

Loving students in the classroom is something I've been talking about in every chapter so far–encouraging students to write in their authentic voices and draw from their embodied knowledge is part of loving them in the classroom. Responsiveness is another big part of love. When I respond to what students are interested in or what they seem to need, that shows that I'm listening to them and seeing them. I still have blind spots, of course, but I try my best to really honor each individual voice and do my best to make sure each student feels like they matter in our learning community.

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The best feeling is when I hear the hum of students, but it's more than hearing. I can feel their energy glowing in the room– a palpable. How lucky am I to witness such magic?

A photo taken by an ENG 101 student for an activity where they take a photo to tell a story about our class

Love Outside the Classroom

Like I said in Chapter One, learning to write in WME won't guarantee survival, not in the university and definitely not outside of it either. Even teaching linguistic and discourse justice won't protect students outside of the classroom. As Love says, in her chapter "Educational Survival,"

> No type of pedagogy, however effective, can single-handedly remove the barriers of racism, discrimination, homophobia, segregation, Islamophobia, homelessness, access to college, and concentrated poverty, but antiracist pedagogy combined with grassroots organizing can prepare students and their families to demand the impossible in the fight for eradicating these persistent and structural barriers. (19)

When I first read this sentence, I remember sitting with it for a minute. I felt a tightening in my stomach, not because I disagree but because this single sentence really challenged my thinking in a difficult way. For the past few years, my research has focused on how to build an antiracist pedagogy that accounts for all of the listed barriers above. I've focused solely on the classroom. That's not a bad thing, of course, but reading Love's book made me realize that advocating for students means not only building a more engaging and inclusive curriculum but also fighting for them outside of the classroom, which can look a lot of different ways that I can't even exactly

detail because I'm still figuring out how that might look for myself. I'm currently in the stage of figuring out where I want to focus my energy because the reality is I can't be involved in every advocacy movement, at least not to my full capacity. But, a big part of this has been learning about what kind of advocacy work is happening locally. As a teacher, I also have access to efforts happening on campus–for example, I joined a Social Justice, Equity, and Inclusivity workgroup which is comprised of faculty and students from the WWU College of Humanities and Social Sciences, which has been a great opportunity to collaborate with people in other fields with experiences so different than my own in order to better understand how to make the school and learning environments more just, equitable, and inclusive, which is what I care so much about. I think finding opportunities like that on campus is so important, and it's equally important to know what kinds of opportunities are happening in the community off campus. Helping make communities safer and more accessible is such a crucial part of loving students.

Not a Conclusion: Further Questions and Invitations

As I've been reading through the previous chapters and preparing to share them with you, I've worried a lot. For one, sharing writing with others is incredibly vulnerable, which is why I feel so honored to be a writing instructor who gets to read students' words. I'm also worried that I didn't do *enough*. I knew, going into the project, that I wasn't going to answer every question and solve every issue related to writing education–of course I wasn't. Yet, I find myself thinking I was, perhaps, too broad or too idealistic or too claim-heavy with not enough sources cited. The more I think about it, though, the more I realize that this voice in my head is not my own. As a student, I've learned that my ideas can't be too big and can't stand alone–they must be backed up by people who have more credibility than I do. Now, sometimes that may be true. There are times–and I teach this in ENG 101–where ideas might be so broad and vague that they're not quite understandable to the reader. And, there are times when it helps to bring other voices into the conversation, that way there are multiple perspectives. But, just because my ideas are hopeful and daring does not mean that they are "too big" or in the clouds. To explore these ideas, I've consulted many sources–not just scholars in the fields of education and writing studies, but also my students, my colleagues, and my own stories. Each chapter is full of sources. I say all of this more for myself than for you, reader, but I think this is another great example of how American education teaches students to think and write in white mainstream ways.

So, I *have* done enough, for now. I deem it "enough" because I did as much as I could with what I know right now. There are still many questions to answer and issues to solve in the world of education, and I'm going to keep working to answer and solve as I learn more. I'm sure, in even five years, I'll look back on this project–the same way I now look back on my undergrad thesis–and find numerous gaps in my research and ideas that need reworking. That's the work of

a teacher, and, I think, of every human: to keep exploring, rethinking, and creating. Stasis is the enemy of education.

I've been told many times that "things move slowly in education." As in, change happens slowly in education. Well, I don't accept that.

I invite my fellow teachers to join me in picking up the pace of education, in trying to find the gaps and shortcomings of our knowledge, our curriculum, and our actions.

Sometimes, I feel despair because of the horror and tragedy happening in this world–as in, the Earth, but also the academic world. I feel like there's so much out of my control, and there is. But, focusing on all that's out of my control does nothing but strengthen the cycle of anxiety and exhaustion in my body. All I can do–all any of us can do, I believe–is focus on what we can control. That may seem depressing and small-scale. At least, it did to me for quite some time. However, I now find it empowering to focus on what I can control, which is a lot. I can read, I can reach out to people for conversation, I can donate my time and other resources (when available), I can write, I can yell, I can demand, I can imagine, and I can love. There's so much I can do. So much each of us can do, especially when we collaborate and co-conspire.

Please join me in doing.

Please join me in loving.

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