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From Chaos to Cosmos, and Back: Place-Based Autoethnography in First-Year Composition

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Abstract: This article explores the *scope*, *foundation*, and *application* of autoethnography in first-year composition and critical thinking classrooms. I broaden autoethnography's scope from Mary Louise Pratt's focus on colonial power dynamics to engage rhetoric, discourse, ideology, and materiality at large. I argue that indexing this broader conceptual scope to place-based education produces *four key pedagogical effects*: to increase students' *awareness* of assumptions and practices, their *engagement* with learning, their *opportunities* to encounter difference, and their *capacity* to effect change. Place-based autoethnography, in turn, spatializes writing theory by attending to student geographies. Two assignments—the "autoethnography" and "cultural artifact"—redevelop writing as a space between chaos (disorder) and cosmos (order). I suggest that writing functions as a way to take up space and endow it with place, or value. Mapping the effects and affects of cultural artifacts from their lives, students chart the meaningfulness of objects and discourses in their socialization, leading to the aforementioned pedagogical effects. Consequently, place-based autoethnography is uniquely situated to engage students (*and* teachers) with their lifeworlds.

> How do those students' different experiences in the sociospatial world walk in with them, and how can exploring this difference become the intellectual work of the writing classroom?
> —Nedra Reynolds, *Geographies of Writing*

> [A]utoethnographies increased students' sense of self and positionality in the world, mediated differences, and fostered compassionate classroom community. [...]These activities humanized the classroom space and shaped the students' collective identities.
> —Patrick Camangian, "Starting with Self"

> [I]f students have been enculturated into an ethic of shouldering responsibility for a shared place, into reasoned study and deliberation, and into a propensity to look beyond conventional wisdom for solutions to problems, that will certainly increase the odds that community will become a primary factor in our economic and political reckoning in the future.
> —Paul Theobald, *Teaching the Commons*

A Moment in Time and Space

In the hospital where Julianna's grandfather dies, she, at the age of eight, has her first vivid encounter with time and death and memory. She looks pensively at the watch her grandfather gave her, dwelling within a space and place unknown to her, juxtaposed between this life and the vague promise of another. Here, to the best of her recollection, she begins to dwell with a consciousness of our materiality and corporeality, a perception she will take with her into various academic discourses, and into a general philosophy of existence. Julianna, a critical thinking student of mine at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, writes this to me as part of her cultural artifact assignment, connecting personal reflection to the discursive concepts we have thus far explored, including conscientization, discourse communities, and here, most richly, introspection and individualized reality. As she reflects on entering more mature notions of time and space, I inhabit her discourse through words on a page, and through a picture of the watch her grandfather gave her before he died.

I begin with a watch, an ordinary object, because I wish to develop the extent to which such "cultural artifacts," as Nedra Reynolds explores in Geographies of Writing, are a "rich source for investigating people's relationships to place," and to consider "how subjectivity is shaped by *ordinary* and mundane landscapes, by *ubiquitous* visual images, and by *habitual* pathways" (43, emphasis mine). I wish to view the cultural artifact as a form of autoethnographic writing in the sense that each artifact constellates pieces of a student's self, culture, and place through the writing process. As such, cultural artifacts are miniature autoethnographies, small but significant fragments of a student's lifeworld. Digging into these fragments and their consequentiality, students discover how self, culture, and place are imbricated, and that this imbrication can be investigated by reflecting on and analyzing ordinary objects.

Because students' lifeworlds are made manifest in everyday things, cultural artifacts are windows into the discursive difference that teachers of writing desire to encounter. By *difference* I mean the diverse sociocultural and spatial worlds that students bring with them into the classroom: their experiences, artifacts, cultures, values, languages, ideologies, ways of being and seeing, and their visions for their futures. Although teaching involves the cultivation of skills, knowledge, responsibilities, capacities, and the like, understanding students and building effective relations with them in the classroom ensures that we go beyond assembly line or banking model education, that we take their individuality and diverse backgrounds into account. A teacher who encounters difference is better able to cultivate these traditional aspects of education due to a more intimate understanding of students' backgrounds and needs. More significantly for our present moment, however, a teacher who understands where students are coming from and where they are going is better able to include their backgrounds in the process of education itself. Bringing students' lives into the classroom creates more meaningful, resonant experiences with course material, such that students may find practical avenues to act on that material. We welcome students' lives into the classroom because we want to be more effective, responsible teachers. In turn, the worlds they bring with them transform our pedagogy, our relations with students, and the work of the university itself.

Beyond Reynolds' objective of "inhabiting place and encountering difference," related goals of spatializing writing theories have come to occupy much of composition's space, as Sidney Dobrin illustrates in Postcomposition. Dobrin attends to the spatiality of writing beyond process, beyond the moment we sit down and write. Writing, as such, is situated in and motivated by the environments we inhabit, and is also itself a kind of space wherein writers create order (cosmos) from a kind of disorder (chaos), or at least from a multitude of possible meanings. The traditional writing process—prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing—only partially describes the world of writing, its situatedness, and its mapping of meaning through a conceptual and mental space of its own. While Reynolds' and Dobrin's angles here may seem somewhat disparate, I will attempt to synthesize that inhabiting place and encountering difference has much to do with, and in fact depends on, our ability as compositionists to spatialize writing beyond recent metaphors of geography. Affording more space to our students through autoethnography, I argue, might further "unpack [the] spatial dimensions" of writing (Dobrin 33), thereby constellating writing, space, place, and difference into a productive exchange with unique pedagogical implications discussed herein.

This paper therefore links the spaces and places of writing with autoethnography as an avenue toward engaging with difference in and beyond the classroom. I argue that autoethnography may be productively situated in the tradition of place-based education for the expansive way in which this tradition attends to the influences of our environments on our ways of being, thinking, and writing. That is to say that these ways of being—the *difference* our students bring with them into the classroom—are effectively encountered through an autoethnographic writing process that engages place.

Yet difference is a two-way street. Not only is *place-based autoethnography* a way for teachers to encounter difference, as Reynolds and others desire, but it is also a way for students to open *themselves* to difference: the difference of their peers whose autoethnographies, when shared, demonstrate the ways in which ideology, political positions, religious beliefs, and so forth are shaped. My approach to autoethnography expands the autoethnographic tradition from Carolyn Ellis, Mary Louise Pratt, Linda Brodkey, and others. While the power of autoethnography is particularly useful for analyzing and negotiating colonial influences and power structures, I wish to broaden autoethnography by utilizing it more often in the classroom to analyze and negotiate discourse and ideology at large (much of which is indeed indexed to colonial power structures). A broader autoethnographic scope engages the material ways in which cultural artifacts gain meaning in our lives and shape our perceptions of the most seemingly mundane experiences.

My engagement with place-based education and autoethnography—in conjunction with my students' autoethnographic work—offers one way we might sharpen our pedagogical attention to space, place, and difference. Consequently, writing place-based autoethnography is an *agency endowing process*. That is, it locates, illustrates, and offers pathways for the negotiation and resistance to codes, customs, and ways of being that animate power dynamics, inclusive of students and teachers. More than negotiating power, place-based autoethnography develops

students' capacity to take a fuller account of their engagement with place—with its influence on their character, learning, and wellbeing. Students map the diversity and difference of their places, which teachers and other students then experience through autoethnography, an assignment which becomes a space of writing in itself, a space where difference is encountered and inhabited toward productive pedagogical effects.

Locating Composition's Place

Growing out of anthropology, *place* describes "centers of felt value" where biological and other needs are met, where individuals identify safety in surroundings, physical and mental (Tuan 6). Place is what space becomes once it is "endowed with values," making the two concepts interdependent (Dobrin 36). Though the street where I grew up, for instance, is in many ways just another a street—a stretch of pavement in the labyrinth of suburbia, more or less identical to thousands around it—as a child I made "the strange space turn into neighborhood" (Tuan 140), into the place I learned to roller-skate, to befriend neighbors, to interact with the world in the discourse of squirt gun fights and block parties. It was safe. It was home. But before it was home, it was space; it was "that which allow[ed] movement," that which could be "transformed into place" with time and memory and thought (Tuan 6).

Place is value, the formation of cosmos (order) from chaos (disorder). It is for this reason that composition studies has taken up space and place theories as avenues toward developing critically conscious citizens capable of recognizing how and where values, discourses, and ideologies take root. Recognition does not guarantee critical analysis or negotiation of difference, but it at least makes such developments possible. "For us," Robert E. Brooke writes, "the goal of place-conscious watershed education is to develop an understanding of these physical relationships so that young citizens can imagine themselves as belonging to the place and acting productively within it" ("Introduction" 37). That is, place situates students as citizens and contributors in their communities. Place reveals and animates the connections that students might otherwise not see, thereby encouraging deeper connections to places, their significance, and their potential.

In composition, we have only recently adapted spatial and place-ial theories to go beyond the more social concerns of postprocess theories (Otto 143). Such theories have elucidated that space and place are as much a part of composition as they are a part of social anthropology and geography. In Postcomposition, Dobrin connects Tuan's thoughts on space and place to writing, in that if space allows movement, and "place is pause," then in between is writing: a technology with which we "take up space and endow it with place-ness" (38). Writing shapes space. It is for this reason that Walter Ong dubs writing a "consciousness-raising and humanizing technology" (31) that "separates being from time" in a sort of pause where writers can reflect and reshape reality (28).

Yet because writing is public, interpretive, and situated, writing must be indexed to the environments in which it takes place (Hawk 75). A place-based theory, ecocomposition continues to be a useful way of "reconceiving writing as part of an ever-changing ecological system that includes textual forms, channels of distribution, interpersonal interactions, cultural norms, and institutional arrangements," thus expanding our attention to place (Scott 349). Autoethnography expands ecocomposition in this regard, insofar as autoethnography enables writers to examine "the relationships between [themselves] and their surroundings" (Otto 143). If ecocomposition encourages students to "explore how their identities have been composed by such places and vice versa," autoethnography might join these critical, cultural, and place-ial aspects of writing around specific assignments (Brooke, "Introduction" 37). Not only do students, I will show, connect more deeply and critically with their places through autoethnography, but the difference of their places is brought to the forefront of their writing and thinking. First-year writing and critical thinking classrooms, then, stand to gain from place-based autoethnography's power to integrate multiple subfields and goals in composition studies.

To conclude our overview of current movements in composition studies, we might recall Reynolds' and others' desire to tap into the "spatial imagination" of college students in writing classes, evidenced in the epigraph, in order to explore "the sense of place and space that readers and writers bring with them to intellectual work of writing, to navigating, arranging, remembering, and composing" (176). We might ask whether this desire has something to do with the traditions of composition and critical thinking which conceive writing architectonically "as a structuring of a space of meaning, a meaningful place that opens up particular possibilities of thought, feeling, and action while at the same time foreclosing other possibilities" (Worsham 31). This paper explores the spaces of writing through the places of students, and vice versa—a thoughtful relationality, I argue, effectively developed through place-based autoethnography.

In this article, I hope to show that a sharper turn towards autoethnographic writing might help accomplish both the goals of Reynolds and Dobrin, who reflect current trends in composition studies. *First*, I provide an overview of the autoethnographic tradition in relation to my approach. *Second*, I provide a more specific overview of autoethnography

pedagogy that impacts my own. *Third*, I offer specific details on my critical thinking course and the autoethnography assignments. *Fourth*, I make two pedagogical moves in autoethnography: to broaden both autoethnography's *scope* and *foundation*, which I link to *four* key pedagogical effects, including the encountering of difference. *Finally*, I conclude with some remarks on place-based autoethnography and its overall uses and implications. Throughout this article I draw on students' autoethnographic work with the recognition that much can be realized and spatialized through a "ubiquitous symbol," insofar as it is precisely through ordinary objects (books, toys, souvenirs, keepsakes) that students perform the autoethnographic work of situating themselves within their cultures and physical spaces. Images of ordinary artifacts, in turn, communicate this sociocultural and spatial entanglement to teachers and students effectively, enabling difference to be encountered and inhabited. As Bachelard writes in *The Poetics of Space*, a single image can "react on other minds and in other hearts, despite all the barriers of common sense, all the disciplined schools of thought, content in their immobility" (xix).

Theorizing Autoethnography

When I first began utilizing autoethnography in the classroom, including cultural artifacts on student discourse communities, desocialization was my intent.{1} In the context of a critical thinking class, this focus seemed appropriate. Having also been influenced by James Berlin's work in *Rhetorics, Poetics, and Cultures*, I believed such desocialization might lead students to "negotiate and resist" the cultural codes embedded in "hegemonic discourses" (124). Yet, as time went on, I realized that not only was I encountering identity and discourse in my students' writing, I was encountering, to a greater extent, difference.

Reynolds, in examining place, notes that "personal artifacts surround you and that you can tell a story about many of the items," such as "clothes, books, photographs," and other items, which "represent a meaningful time and place" (163). If one goal of composition is to encounter difference, perhaps we might do so through student places enmeshed in these items of value. Moreover, if "writing can be inhabited," then perhaps it is through writing that we can encounter difference (163). Thus, in this section I explore autoethnography in relation to *place-based autoethnography*: autoethnography which intertwines culture and ecology, offering avenues toward difference, as well as critical consciousness. Place-based autoethnography, in other words, is an archaeology of value wherein the entanglement of matter and meaning is both visible and productive for writing and critical thinking pedagogies. By *archaeology of value* I mean that autoethnography excavates the history of value embedded inside artifacts—the material histories of values, ideology, and practices unearthed through self-reflexive writing.

The autoethnographic tradition largely begins with Carolyn Ellis's work, which defines autoethnography as "an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno)" (Ellis et al. 273). Whereas ethnographers write about the cultures they examine, autoethnographers examine themselves inside their own cultures. In this way, autoethnographic stories "are stories of/about the self told through the lens of culture. Autoethnographic stories are artistic and analytical demonstrations of how we come to know, name, and interpret personal and cultural experience" (Adams et al. 1). Autoethnographies are ways for cultures and individuals to give accounts of themselves on their own terms.

Since Karl Heider coined "autoethnography" in 1975, the autoethnographic tradition has grown considerably (Hanson 186). Ellis, Adams, and others stress autoethnography as a way to tell stories and culturally analyze experiences, merging biography and ethnography (Ellis et al. 276). That is to say that "when researchers write autoethnographies, they seek to produce aesthetic and evocative thick descriptions of personal and interpersonal experience," while simultaneously using "personal experience to describe and critique cultural beliefs, practices, and experiences" (Ellis et al. 277; Adams et al. 1). For interdisciplinary communications scholars like Ellis and Adams, and especially for anthropologists, autoethnography often involves researchers observing themselves inside the culture they observe in an effort to take into account their own assumptions and experiences.

My approach to place-based autoethnography owes much to Mary Louise Pratt. In her 1991 "Arts of the Contact Zone," Pratt defines an *autoethnographic text* as one in which "people undertake to describe themselves in ways that engage with representations others have made of them" (35). For Pratt, autoethnography negotiates representation within colonial power dynamics. In this way, autoethnography documents one's positioning within a contact zone. It reveals, charts, and traces existing power relations between cultures. Yet autoethnography is also a contact zone in itself—a site of "*cultural mediation*"—a form of writing which negotiates power relations through the writing process. Autoethnography is a contact zone not only between cultures, but also between students and teachers (40). Where there is power, there is the potential for autoethnography to reveal and negotiate that power. Thus, the primary goal of autoethnography has been to mediate power constituted in and through various relationships.

Pedagogical Approaches to Autoethnography

Pedagogically, autoethnography has been a tool for helping students become “more conscious of society as a whole, in particular their subjection to an unjust world,” which extends into the classroom space with their teachers (Camangian 199). For Camangian and others, autoethnography in the literacy classroom means “[p]reparing students to engage one another in humanizing, caring ways,” requiring that students be “honest about who they are, what they stand for, and how their behaviors are either empowering or disempowering, both personally and collectively” (201). From Camangian’s point of view, citing Allen Cary-Webb, autoethnography “inspires [students] to reach out and speak for themselves, to generalize from their own experiences by teaching students to (1) name their hardship, (2) contextualize it, and (3) activate themselves and others” (184). Here, the focus is the hardship of one’s own experience, often informed by colonial power dynamics, which can be explored and mediated in the classroom through autoethnography’s self-reflexive approach to culture and power. Autoethnography, in this sense, is *therapeutic* in addressing trauma, its effects, and its solutions (Ellis et. al 280). While Ellis insists in her “Response to Critics” that autoethnography is not “[j]ust therapy,” there is no doubt that much self-reflexive writing, including autoethnography, empowers healing (376). Healing is not the principal goal of autoethnography, but it can be a productive effect.

Autoethnography also informs critical pedagogies. Stephen P. Banks and Anna Banks suggest that autoethnography provides a way “to inculcate and model a critical attitude and self-disclosiveness in our teaching and learning, not just with our students and colleagues but also with our institutional administrators” (236). Autoethnography enables teachers and students to critically attune themselves toward their teaching, learning, and educational interactions. In this way, “[d]oing autoethnography is more than a research method; it is a way of living,” a way of navigating and evolving our daily interactions in more effective, ethical ways (Adams et al. 20). Consequently, ethnography in general has profound implications for the way we narrate and negotiate discursive practices and their effects (Brodkey, “Critical Ethnography” 171). For this mode of writing shows, as Brodkey writes via Foucault, how “discourses speak us” (“Critical Ethnography” 171).

When joined to the principal concerns and methods of Freire, Giroux, McLaren, hooks, and others’ critical pedagogy, I argue that autoethnography develops composition studies’ theoretical and pedagogical breadth.{2} Autoethnography allows students to become “co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher,” fulfilling a key goal of critical pedagogy (Freire 263). In my course, students take up the course vocabulary—drawing from rhetoric, composition, and critical theory—in mapping the meanings of their artifacts, which they in turn share with the class and myself. This process puts their places in dialogue, such that each student’s artifacts show me something different about place, something new about how students map meaning.{3} Consequently, autoethnography allows teachers to study theory and pedagogy “in relation to student autobiography” (Shor 128). That is, autoethnography allows students’ stories (autobiography) to come forward within the cultural and critical lifeworlds (autoethnography) which shape them, furnishing content by which teachers navigate theory and pedagogy.

In productively meshing with critical pedagogy’s concerns, autoethnography enhances our ability to encounter “students’ different experiences in the sociospatial world” that, as Reynolds’ epigraph states, walk with them into the classroom (162). Because these differences are significant to students’ experiences in and perceptions of the world —with respect to and beyond power dynamics—the reach of autoethnography’s significance is far and wide. Therefore, I would like to take advantage of our current educational platform to further reach students, to listen to their stories, their narratives, and to invite them to “map places meaningful to them,” as Reynolds encourages us to do, thereby inhabiting their places, their difference (162). Since we likely cannot, in the composition classroom, travel in person to our students’ places like ethnographers do, we might have students bring difference to us as autoethnographers. It is in inhabiting these places, I believe, that we might develop more capacious, productive, and well-rounded theory and praxis.

Autoethnography Assignments

The “cultural artifact,” illustrated earlier through Julianna’s watch, is an autoethnographic assignment which makes meaning from place. For this assignment, I ask students to print an image of an object (the authentic object or its representation) that has played a role in their socialization. Below the half-page image they reflect for a half-page on how the object socialized their identity in some way, tying *two class concepts*, terms, or authors into their analysis from the course material, readings, and themes (Appendix). *Five artifacts* are assigned across the quarter system, averaging an artifact per two weeks. Students share these artifacts with each other in class, either by exchanging the written artifact or verbally discussing it. They are expected to discuss what material from the course they were able to apply, and what the artifacts and course material on the whole showed them about their socialization, ideology, and so forth. The realization may connect directly to a particular discourse community of which they are a part. In this

case the artifacts may be used as a springboard for the final autoethnography on an entire discourse community. Or it may be a more isolated incident, such as a book that had a particular impact. A student might use the term "socialization," then, or "ideology" (both a class theme and key term) when discussing a particularly influential book or film. They might refer to Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space*, a section of which I teach, in referring to their first home as a space of stability. The goal is to tie the class language on rhetoric, discourse, ideology, and materiality to their own cultural objects.

The *portfolio* at the end of the quarter includes a *cover page*, *"Dear Reader" letter*, *five cultural artifacts* with any revisions (only final drafts receive a grade), one rough draft and one final draft of the 8-10 page *autoethnography* on a discourse community, and *two peer review worksheets* (we do an anonymous, in-class peer workshop one week prior to the due date). Here is a breakdown of the basic components:

- *Cover Page:* displays a self-portrait of the student accompanied by a unique title.
- *Dear Reader Letter:* one page letter which explicates the student's overall growth and change in the course relative to the material and writing assignments, and to the student's writing and critical thinking practices specifically.
- *Cultural Artifact:* half-page image and half-page analytical reflection of how an object has contributed to the student's socialization.
- *Autoethnography:* 8-10 page paper narrating and analyzing how a discourse community—with attention to its codes, customs, and ways of being—has contributed to the student's socialization.
- *Peer Review Worksheets:* basic review sheets which ask the reader to evaluate the writer's paper, its capacity to engage readers, and its application of course material.

Of these assignments, the 8-10 page autoethnography is the most critical. The assignment begins this way: "To clarify, you are being asked, as would be done within any ethnography, to observe someone (in this case yourself) inside a culture, to record what you see, and to hypothesize about meaning and understanding just as all the researchers and writers whom we have read have done." Here is where we take the student's story, where we take autobiography, and dig deeper into the questions of being, where we rise to our depths, where we not only shape place, but investigate how place is shaped through culture, discourse, rhetoric, ideology, and materiality. Although these are the broad themes my autoethnography assignment addresses, autoethnography lends itself to any number of frameworks. Because my themes are sufficiently large, however, it is up to students to decide whether their autoethnography hones in on cultural assumptions, for example, or the effects of race, gender, class, and sexuality, or the effects of opposing or clashing discourses, where two or more cultural backgrounds contend for the student's values, practices, and so forth.

Broadening Autoethnography, Broadening Difference

My course themes—discourse, ideology, rhetoric, and materiality—*broaden* autoethnography's scope by attending to themes that are inclusive of, but also transcend, colonial power dynamics. That is, students may address, as many students have, the influence of Western hegemonies over the developing countries from which they and/or their families originate, but many students also have focused on a particular school, religious institution, or community group whose discourse has shaped them. Invariably, the effects of these discourse communities are discursive, ideological, rhetorical, and material. Broadening the scope of autoethnography in this way expands students' reflection on and interaction with their discourse communities.

I should clarify, however, that "the goal of critical research," as Brodkey writes in "Writing Critical Ethnographic Narratives," is not to replace one ideology with another, but "to point out the ideological warranting of history" (71). While Brodkey's critical ethnography here focuses on the themes of "corporate texts" and "corporate histories," her vision recognizes (auto)ethnography's potential as a tool for transformation, whether that transformation involves institutions or individual lives (67). Ideology, then, becomes warranted through institutional frameworks which reproduce both its ideology and its justification. The difference in my approach is that the investigation of ideology, discourse, and the like transcends institutions and corporate histories, and includes the broad swath of socio-spatial worlds that walk into the classroom with students. These worlds may include corporations or cultural hegemonies, but it is up the students what discourse(s) they will bring to the forefront.

One productive effect of broadening autoethnography's pedagogical scope is that autoethnography becomes a

window into *difference* for both students and teachers: different places, cultures, values, perspectives, practices, and the like. Returning to Julianna's watch, let us consider part of her reflection on the object itself in its place-ial context, which signifies her "entrance" into time:

> That day in the hospital was my first experience with death. It becomes clear now that my need to always wear a watch with a second hand, to hear that basic ticking, has become equivalent to my heart beating. On that day, I was not counting up to my grandfather's death, or counting up to the moment where I could play. On that day, the 8 year old me began to count the seconds of her life, and began to acknowledge that there is an end to it. The watch that I wear on my wrist does not simply tell time, but it tells me that I am blessed with the gift of still having time.

Even though I have my own socialized conceptions of time, I have never quite experienced time like Julianna has. Her time is different, and so is her place. I have never been in a hospital staring at a watch my grandfather gave me before he died thinking of time and death and memory. But through Julianna, now I have (to the best of my ability). And in this small sense, I have encountered difference through inhabiting her place. In doing so, I have allowed her experience to walk in with her to the classroom, and to become the content of the classroom itself—content for the application of composition studies, our classroom discussions, and course direction.

In many ways, the difference encountered here harkens back to Linda Brodkey's article, "Writing on the Bias," where she states that we write to make sense of the world, as Julianna makes sense of time. Without bias, without perspective, "language is only words as cloth is only threads" (546). Julianna's memory and philosophy of time is her perspective, her bias, her contribution to the conversation, invoking Kenneth Burke's parlor metaphor. "A bias," Brodkey continues, "may be provided by a theory or an image or an experience or an ideology," and here it is an image of something real: a watch that communicates a perspective on time, one different than my own (546). In my classroom, autoethnography provides a window into bias, a window into difference I might otherwise not encounter. By expanding the scope of autoethnography, we expand the scope of inhabitable difference. The diversity of this difference will be illuminated with further examples in the following sections.

Place-Based Autoethnography

Felipe de S. Ferreira provides a useful, recent definition that imbricates socio-cultural and ecological factors, worth quoting at length:

> Place-based autoethnography: this pedagogical intervention merges autoethnography as a narrative that problematizes the situatedness of self in social contexts (Spry, 2001) and place-based pedagogies in an effort to facilitate qualitative inquiries of self and subjectivity (including inner work) in relation to larger socio-cultural *as well* as ecological contexts. Self narrative storytelling can help members of learning communities to come to grips with the dynamic and intersecting qualities of their sociocultural, spiritual, and ecological identities while emphasizing a relational, systemic view of the place where the learning is happening. (1)

This definition emphasizes a wide array of entangled factors—physical, mental, spiritual, and environmental—which weave together relationally. Consequently, place informs how autoethnography is written, and what is written about. Place-based autoethnography narrates and contextualizes subjectivity as a response to the complex intra-action of these and other factors. Without attention to place, the autoethnographer risks muting the places which compose the self.

Place-based education thus affirms, strengthens, and develops autoethnography's location in place. The self (*autos*) cannot write (*graphia*) the culture (*ethnos*) without place (*plateia*). Place-based autoethnography affirms that being, as Heidegger writes, is always being-there. Being is tied to location. Culture, then, is an insufficient context for attending to the fullest scope of influence on each being. Because place-based education indexes place to the public, environment, ethics, and community learning, among other factors, it is a productive place to locate autoethnography.

Place-based education and autoethnography share a core objective in facilitating student *awareness*. In *Place-Based Education*, David Sobel writes that "one of the core objectives [of place-based education] is to look at how landscape, community infrastructure, watersheds, and cultural traditions all interact and shape each other" (13). Place-based education leads students to become more conscious of their world, and of how and why they act the way they do (Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater 1-2). They attend to the "invisible web of behaviors, patterns, rules, and rituals" that

govern language and behavior and "unpack their own cultural baggage," their subjectivity and assumptions (Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater 3-7.) In reflecting on and critiquing their ways of being, students are to "think differently about the meanings and significance of space and those related concepts that compose and comprise the inherent spatiality of human life: place, location, locality, landscape, environment, home, city, region, territory, and geography" (Soja 1). In the end, students are guided to realize the "effect and influence" of their environments (Berry 3). They become aware of the "simultaneity and interwoven complexity of the social, the historical, and the spatial, their inseparability and interdependence" (Soja 3).

Autoethnography is uniquely suited to facilitate this awareness. For it is in "everyday objects" that we learn about our own customs, codes, influences, and traditions (Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater 126). The portfolio, as I have said, contains five cultural artifacts: everyday objects which signify the influence of environment on students' lives. We can think of a "portfolio as a cultural site," one which—over ten weeks in my course—symbolizes each student's place, each lifeworld (Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater 2011, 204). For each artifact, students incorporate at least *two key terms*, concepts, or ideas from our course material. The cultural artifact—a half-page image of the artifact with a half-page, single-spaced reflection—introduces students to the influence of place, of everyday sights, sounds, smells, and relationships.

The portfolio begins with a "Dear Reader" letter, which is useful for showing the effects of these autoethnographic assignments. Here, students reflect for a single-spaced page on their growth in the course. Their feedback demonstrates autoethnography's effectiveness in achieving the *four effects* I mentioned earlier. For convenience and clarity, I have outlined feedback here from several students pertaining to the goal of *awareness:*

- Frank: "I must admit that this [the autoethnography] has been one of the most eye-opening and introspective pieces of work I have written in a very long time. It has allowed me to be completely open, to show who I am and how I think, and convey my thoughts and beliefs to a fellow human being."
- Jennifer: "Prior to taking this course, I did not think that a single object could influence my life, much less my identity, in such a huge way. ... These assignments have allowed me to better understand myself. I have evolved from thinking that I have complete control over who I am to understanding that I have been influenced by everyone I have met, my education, and my surroundings."
- Sarah: "[T]his is perhaps the first time I have ever really given myself an opportunity to delve into and study what I now believe are my deepest layers and is the first time I truly understand the impact that my social, political, and familial environment has on me... [This course] made me more aware of the forces of ideology."

These responses are typical of students at the end of the quarter and representative of the growth in awareness that can occur over ten weeks and across five artifacts and the final 8-10 page autoethnography essay on a discourse community with its own artifacts, codes, and customs. Each letter confirms the self-reflexivity of the autoethnography assignments. This "introspective" genre of writing enables students to "better understand" themselves, as the students write, making them "more aware" of ideology and the forces around them. Such awareness is the first condition of developing "an understanding of rhetorical agency," and thus a way to reshape their interactions with place (Martens 68). The assignments, in turn, undermine the myth of the liberal subject, independent and self-contained—a myth which place-based education combats (Theobald 31; Hardin 73). They emphasize that all knowledge and practices are situated (Martens 64). In the end, the assignments help students "preserve teachings and artifacts from the past," to learn from their places, traditions, and effects (Berry 35).

In this way, broadening the uses of autoethnography and utilizing expansive and productive course themes enables students to investigate their relations to place on a largely level playing field. Because autoethnographic writing does not inherently privilege one culture or discourse over another, each student has an equal opportunity to understand the effects of place, and to navigate place more meaningfully and consciously. While it is true that the *tools* offered to students to navigate place—certain readings, themes, and key terms—may benefit some backgrounds as opposed to others, the autoethnographic process itself (locating self within culture and place) puts students on equal footing.

My assignments and general pedagogy build an accessible path for students to narrate, investigate, and excavate the meanings of place insofar as it is the *students* who decide which places to study and what they mean. As their teacher, I impose limits neither on which places *count* and which don't, which meanings *matter* and which matter less. Although I decide the course material and write the syllabus, I relinquish control over these and others factors to students so that they are as free as possible to give voice to their backgrounds, stories, and futures within the constraints of the course's context and rhetorical situation.

The assignments also help to widen "the context of all intellectual work and of teaching—perhaps to the width of the

local landscape," wherein students take notice of everyday taken-for-granted objects, spaces, schools, institutions, and the like (Berry 39). In this sense, place-based autoethnography augments the posthuman emphasis in rhetoric and composition of late by attending to the nonhuman, but humanly impactful, range of factors that affect who we are, and thus both how and what we write. Casey Boyle states that rhetorical practice involves "a more expansive body of relations than can be reduced to any individual human" (552). The same is true for composition practice.{4} And while attention and awareness to these human and nonhuman relations is only the first step, it is an unmistakably necessary step. As Susan Sontag writes, "Pay attention. It's all about paying attention. Attention is vitality. It connects you with others. It makes you eager. Stay eager" (qtd. in Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater 388). Through place-based autoethnography, students attend to their places and artifacts, and take the first step toward a more conscious, critical interaction with place.

Second, when indexed to place-based education, autoethnography positively impacts students' *engagement with learning*. Wendell Berry notes that "[w]ork must 'take place'" (34). Learning is no different. It is for this reason that Brooke, via Sobel, argues that "children and young adults learn best when they actively connect their schoolwork to local concerns, when, that is, their schoolwork matters to them and to the community around them" ("Suburban Life" 2). The local environment serves as an effective starting point to engage student learning, especially when there is an "overwhelming feeling of disconnection" between suburban students in particular and their seemingly "ahistorical" environments ("Suburban Life" 26, 13). Like Reynolds, place theorists look for ways "to bring students' lives into the world of the classroom," thereby making learning relevant (Christensen 68), for it is only when students go beyond their desks that they can break down the "Berlin Wall" between academia and the world (Sobel 2, 4, 10).

Among the assignments one could assign to make learning engaging, Linda Christensen suggests that "[n]arratives are a good place to start" (68). Christensen notes how "students enjoy writing narratives. Telling stories from their lives opens opportunities to talk about meaningful, important, sometimes life-changing events with their classmates" (61). Place-based autoethnography combines the personal value of narrative with the critical value of analysis. In making "students the subject of their own education" (Christensen 2), autoethnography engages students in the learning process, despite the difficulty of my course readings and the critical intensity students must employ in engaging deeply and thoughtfully with their places. Once again, their feedback in the "Dear Reader" letters illustrates the productive effects:

- Frank: "Initially, I had planned to complete this work in less than three hours. It has since been more than a week and I have realized that although this work was assigned to me due to the constructs of our education and classroom experience, I have never had an assignment as close to my heart and my life as this."
- Jennifer: "In the end, I don't mind that this class and portfolio were difficult to get through. This portfolio is something that I am actually quite proud to showcase because it represents my transformation throughout this course and my ability to become a more critical thinker."
- Mark: "I have learned a variety of new things in this class. I was introduced to the master philosopher Heidegger, which brought me to tears at points. I started off this class thinking that it would be a lot of work for minimal reward. I was right about the massive amount of work, but I did gain an immense amount of knowledge from this class. I was allowed to think critically, to actually write with my intellect and not with the ideas of others... [The] autoethnography epitomizes my expansion of perspective."
- Sarah: "[The course] required a tremendous amount of hard work. I was challenged beyond belief in this course ... but it was definitely very rewarding... I had enrolled myself into one of the most rewarding classes I had ever taken."
- Jenny: Reading and analyzing Thoreau in her artifacts and autoethnography, Jenny writes, "Thoreau actually inspired me to take walks whenever I can. In fact, I've been walking to school more often and have been taking brisk walks around my neighborhood."
- Sonia: "I began to write on my own and took great pleasure in doing so."
- Terry: "I am starting to appreciate reading and writing, both of which I neglected in high school because of how mundane and structured everything we read and wrote was."

One theme in particular unites these letters: *difficult* yet *engaged, rewarding learning*. Four of these seven responses state that despite the course requiring a "tremendous amount of hard work," as Sarah writes, it became one of the "most rewarding classes," she continues, precisely because the assignments are close to the *hearts* and *lives* of students, as Frank concludes.

These responses are typical of “Dear Reader” letters. As such, autoethnography may function, in addition to narratives, as “one of the few opportunities for students to write or talk about their lives in school,” thus engaging students by connecting learning to their lifeworlds (Christensen 61). The result is a more effective, lasting learning that transcends institutional walls. After connecting learning to life, “the classroom becomes richer,” whereupon “learning can begin” (Christensen 152).

Third, when indexed to place-based education, autoethnography becomes a way for both teachers and students to *encounter difference*, and thus fashion more responsible responses to lifeworlds that exceed our biases and frameworks. Bachelard writes, “the real beginnings of images, if we study them phenomenologically, will give concrete evidence of the values of inhabited space” (5). Images—images of *artifacts*, in this case—are windows into difference.

We have noted through Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater how everyday objects tell us something about a person’s beliefs and practices (126). Brooke reminds us via Linda Flower that the “process of encountering difference in the multiplicity of urban people ... is, finally, a model for social action” (“Suburban Life” 24). That is, awareness of difference is an insufficient condition for action. One must *encounter* difference personally to effectuate awareness. “We are guided,” Brooke writes, “by Flower’s cogent definition of community literacy as a ‘rhetorical practice for inquiry and social change’ that arises from ‘an intercultural dialogue with others on issues that they identify as sites of struggle’” (“Introduction” 39). I suggest that autoethnography is productively situated within place-based education precisely because it is an avenue toward dialogue with difference.

Because I have discussed autoethnography as an avenue toward difference through Julianna’s artifact, let me provide just one additional example. This difference is shared not just with me, but with two additional students in a peer review workshop in class. In addition, students share their five artifacts with one another throughout the quarter, giving each student a chance to encounter the difference of their classmates through images and dialogue. Ultimately, as David Gruenewald writes, “For critical pedagogues, the ‘texts’ students and teachers should ‘decode’ are the images of their own concrete, situated experiences with the world” (“Critical Pedagogy” 5). Place-based autoethnography, which draws on the critical pedagogy of Freire and others, accomplishes this task; it is an effective platform for sharing, encountering, and decoding students’ “texts.”

As a white male, I cannot pretend to fully understand many of my students’ diverse backgrounds and experiences. Autoethnography draws me closer. In doing so, it allows me to better understand my students’ places and become a more attentive, helpful, and broadminded teacher of writing and thinking. In Jennifer’s final autoethnography, “The Rise of My Feminist Views,” I encountered one student’s very different lifeworld. She writes,

> I was about thirteen years old when I realized that the reason my mom told stories about growing up in Mexico was not because she wanted me to be a typically Mexican girl like her, but because it was what she did not want that for me... It was acceptable for men to dominate women, it was right for women to do all the housework, it was the men that controlled the women. I did not want any part of it.

Jennifer writes that she chose liberal studies as her major because she wants “to make an impact on people when they are younger,” to be able to “influence a whole new generation of people who will be able to question society instead of just accepting it.” She concludes, “I want to be the voice that my mom thought she never had. She deserves that, I deserve that, and all women deserve that.” This autoethnography was shared with two students in the peer workshop, and reviewed not principally for grammar, but for *effect*. Students are asked to respond to whether or not the writer clearly conveyed the experience of each discourse community with vivid images, moments, and scenes; to whether the significance of the discourse for the writer is clear; to whether the course material is clearly connected and purposefully applied.

For me, and for at least the two students who read this autoethnography in class, there is no question that the autoethnography was an *opportunity* to encounter difference. I received Jennifer’s paper two years ago, yet the difference stays with me and allows me to better understand the sociospatial world that Jennifer walked into the classroom with—that all women walk in with. Jennifer’s places became clearer to me and other students, less blurred by distance. Therefore, I support Camangian’s broader conclusion that

> autoethnographies increased students’ sense of self and positionality in the world, mediated differences, and fostered compassionate classroom community. Beginning the year with autoethnographies urged students to intellectually analyze their own perceptions and practices while the oral communication cultivated understanding across perceived differences. These activities humanized the classroom space and shaped the students’ collective identities. (187)

That autoethnography is a window into difference seems self-evident. What is less evident are the *effects* of encountering difference, which I now turn to.

Fourth, when indexed to place-based education, autoethnography helps develop students into *critical, responsive citizens*. This goal is largely achieved through the self-reflexivity of autoethnography in general, and partly through encountering difference. Autoethnography, in turn, ensures that education exceeds job training by attending to critical writing, thinking, and communicating. As Berry states, “One of the gravest dangers to us now ... is that we will attempt to go on as before with the corporate program of global ‘free trade,’ whatever the cost in freedom and civil rights, without self-questioning or self-criticism or public debate” (19). The critical pedagogy of Shor, Giroux, and others is quick to reiterate this concern, stating that educational institutions provide “the spaces and conditions for prioritizing civic values over commercial interests (i.e., they self-consciously educate future citizens capable of participating in and reproducing a democratic society)” (Giroux 137). Educational institutions are certainly not an ideal space. Neither are they the only space in which effective learning occurs. However, “[i]n spite of its present embattled status and contradictory roles, institutional schooling remains uniquely placed to prepare students to both understand and influence the larger educational forces that shape their lives” (Giroux 137).

Place-based autoethnography works precisely toward this end with positive effects. As Gruenewald writes, “Democratic action research begins when children and youth start investigating their own familiar places, identifying issues, analyzing them, and then planning and implementing some sort of action” (“Foundations of Place” 640). Yet students need space and time for investigation and analysis. Paul Theobald critiques our society as “a society with no facility for ethical deliberation, a society with no sense of place or community, a society, therefore, marked by unmatched levels of criminality and violence” (133). I agree with Theobald’s general critique, but we should not say that there is “no facility for ethical deliberation” so quickly—as Giroux, Freire, and others remind us. Brooke agrees that “education needs to help students become more effective citizens” (“Suburban Life” 1). He adds that students ought to have a “vision for the future, that is, a critical, informed idea of what [their] place can become and how it can contribute” (“Suburban Life” 31). Educational institutions thus can and should be one key “facility for ethical deliberation,” tying critical thinking and writing to space, place, and the future.

There are many approaches to these critical, action-oriented goals. Susan Martens designs writing marathons to “help suburban students and teachers become more thoughtful and engaged citizen-writers” (43). Flower structures into her classroom “a way to become a diverse, deliberative local public” (qtd. in Brooke, “Introduction” 40). “As a result of inquiring deeply into our suburban place,” Mary Birky Collier concludes, “my students took many significant steps toward becoming participatory citizens, even advocates for their community” (138). Cathie English’s work with ethnographies “brought about [student] awareness of the economic realities and the influence of suburban sprawl on this exurban community” (199). Due to these positive effects, we can situate the classroom as a *thirdspace*, “a space of radical openness” wherein students actively think about and contribute to their worlds (Soja 14).

Place-based autoethnography contributes to this productive tradition of shaping students into informed, reflective, and participatory citizens who *act* on their learning, as students’ “Dear Reader” letters illustrate:

- Jason: “The artifacts and autoethnography assignments in your class allowed me to fully take in the material on critical analysis and apply it to my own experiences. After the course, I can see a great of deal of development in myself and I really appreciate what it has helped me through.”
- Jennifer: “I began to look at society through a different lens and started to analyze every advertisement I saw... This class has promoted me to think more about my socialization and how multiple forces have combined to produce who I am today. Through these assignments, I was able to think critically about these multiple forces.”
- Sarah: “[The course] made me more aware of the forces of ideology... I try to limit the time I spend on social media, my laptop and phone, and I try to ‘therapize’ myself in ways other than retail.”
- Jenny: “[The course] opened my eyes to further see the deceiving nature of ads and their ability to manipulate our subconscious desires... . By becoming aware of this fact, it actually curbed some of my appetite for wanting new things... Hence, I’ve been trying to be more grateful for what I have already.”
- Terry: “I am planning on studying abroad in Greece this summer (in which I hope to implement some of the Rational Flâneur ideologies that we talked about in his class)... [I am] actively trying to see through all the ‘fog’ that our capitalist and production based world clouds our minds with.”
- Mark: “Most classes nowadays, or the education system as a whole, does tend to put an extremely strong emphasis on education simply being a means to obtaining a job and making money... this class reminded me

to take advantage of the college education I've been blessed to pursue, and to learn not to pass classes for graduate school, but to learn for the sake of knowledge and wisdom.”

- Grant: “You exposed me to a perspective outside of engineering and the ‘hard’ sciences that became too pervasive to ignore. I am now interested in studying international cultural relations, means of production, colonial influences, political economy/ecology, and a whole manner of things that branched out of looking into topics from your class.”
- John: “I found that when ignoring technology in general I became happier for the latter parts of the experiment... I ended up starting to read books off of my bookshelf (I've built up quite a collection that I never got around to) and really enjoyed myself.”

These responses touch on different outcomes of the course material and assignments. All eight responses indicate the application of the course beyond the classroom, which is evidently responsible for their engagement and enthusiasm.

Jason’s response links the assignments to his own experience, and ultimately to personal growth and change. Jennifer writes that the course helped her to think “critically about these multiple forces” that influence her daily life. Sarah and Jenny both reflect on technology and capitalism, showing an attention to their own attention: to where their desires come from—from media, technology, consumerism, and so forth. As we have said through Brodkey, the course ideal is not to replace students’ ideology with another ideology, but to increase their awareness and capacity to change (if they so choose). Both Sarah and Jenny show this change. Sarah limits her time with media, and Jenny curbs her acquisitive desires. After John tries a personal experiment—avoiding all social media for two weeks, and limiting other forms of technology use—he begins to read books on his shelves. Here, he “became happier” and “really enjoyed” himself. Mark learns that education exceeds job training. One must, he writes, learn “for the sake of knowledge and wisdom.” And Grant, as he informed me years later, changed his major from engineering to anthropology in part due to the topics and assignments from my class. Each student applies the course material and assignments to their own lives precisely because there is no other way to approach autoethnography. This opportunity for the application of learning, I believe, is ultimately responsible for their engagement and success.

Education, Theobald writes, should help students to be “enculturated into an ethic of shouldering responsibility for a shared place, into reasoned study and deliberation, and into a propensity to look beyond conventional wisdom for solutions to problems” (159). Place-based autoethnography—by linking students with their places, by affording opportunities to dig into the significance of everyday things, by demanding incisive thought into the structure of our motives, desires, and behaviors—is one effective mode of writing and thinking which enables education to live up to its potential. “There are no radical ideas motivating community-oriented pedagogy such as this,” Theobald continues, “just deep thinking about what education is for and how teachers can best facilitate the construction of significant student understanding” (146). The same is true for autoethnography, which inevitably circles back on the communities from which subjects emerge. For, if we want schools to be more than “factories for cynicism,” if we want students to both “critique the world” and *act* in the world, my students illustrate that autoethnography effectively shapes awareness into action (Christensen 259).

Shaping Place, Spatializing Writing

In my students’ work there are unmapped places wherein students take space (chaos) and transform it through their own archaeological work into place (cosmos). Returning to Dobrin and Tuan, writing functions as a moment of pause between chaos and cosmos where writing shapes place (Dobrin 36). “[W]riting is a type of cosmos,” Edward Said writes, a place which is continually reshaped and reformed against the background of perpetually evolving lifeworlds (qtd. in Bartholomae and Petrosky 3). Both the practice of writing and the subject who writes change inside the space of writing. Therefore, we might delve deeper into autoethnography to “unpack [the] spatial dimensions” of place and writing itself (Dobrin 33).

Autoethnography is a “placemaking” technology, to borrow Richard Marback’s term—a tool for making sense of the world (Reynolds 141). With this tool, students not only craft value from artifacts and discourses (shaping space into place), but they also create new opportunities for change (shaping place back to space). The autoethnography, as a *place* of a value and a *space* for action, shows students that “the power of a body to affect other bodies includes a ‘corresponding and inseparable’ capacity to be affected” (Bennett 21). Students are not independent, unaffected agents in the world, but deeply affected and entangled beings. They must notice, as my students have, what forces affect their intradependent lifeworlds. In attending to and negotiating these forces, students learn that their places and discourse communities are, adapting Thomas Rickert’s language, “mutually involved and evolving vectors of

material and discursive force" (90).

Through my small project on autoethnography evolves something much larger: a critical nexus between writing, the university, students, and theories and practices of space, place, and critical democratic pedagogy—to name a few connections. Orbiting autoethnography, I have discussed, are opportunities to increase student *awareness* of social and material forces, their *engagement with learning*, and their *capacity to enact change*. Place-based autoethnography, in turn, spatializes the writing process by attending to students' geographies. Finally, place-based autoethnography provides both teachers and students with opportunities to *encounter difference* by inhabiting students' places.

Appendix: Class Materials

1. Syllabus (PDF)
2. Portfolio (PDF)
3. Dear Reader Letter (PDF)
4. Cultural Artifact (PDF)
5. Cultural Artifact Example (PDF)
6. Autoethnography (PDF)
7. Autoethnography Example (PDF)
8. Peer Workshop (PDF)
9. Reading List (PDF)

Notes

1. The concept of "desocialization" I work with stems from Ira Shor's *Empowering Education* (1992), defined in part as "questioning power and inequality in the status quo; examining socialized value in consciousness and in society which hold back democratic change in individuals and in the larger culture" (129). Note that desocialization is still socialization, but a type of socialization we might call "critical socialization": a socialization critical of itself. (Return to text.)

2. See especially Henry Giroux's *On Critical Pedagogy* (2011), *Neoliberalism's War on Higher Education* (2014), Peter McLaren's *Pedagogy of Insurrection: From Resurrection to Revolution* (2015), and bell hooks' *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (1994). (Return to text.)

3. Nathaniel Rivers, in "Geocomposition in Public Rhetoric and Writing Pedagogy" (2016), develops *geocomposition*—"[r]hetoric and composition tied to place through locative media" (602)—in order to illustrate the extent to which "[r]hetoric is in place and place matters" (585). Rivers has his students travel beyond the classroom, marking, mapping, and interacting with their locations through GPS technology. One goal is to have students develop "an embodied situational awareness of public space while cultivating the rhetorical skills necessary to navigate and negotiate that space with others" (579). Also illustrated is the "material rootedness and consequences of particular values," which aligns with my uses of autoethnography (585). In this way, my work dovetails into a series of diverse attempts to locate composition geographically. (Return to text.)

4. One could go into endless depth on the connections between rhetoric and composition in relation to the posthuman turn. In short, writing in my view is one of the most meaningful and impactful places where rhetoric takes place. In the case of place-based autoethnography, writing charts and maps the rhetorical connections between human and nonhuman and their mutual affectability, making visible the relations which formulate subjectivity from and through community and ecology, thereby revealing to students and teachers the lifeworlds that we attempt to welcome into the classroom, to inhabit, and to make productive in the pursuit of effective, responsible communication. (Return to text.)

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