

REVIEW ESSAY

CAJUN ENGLISH SPEAKERS AND ARKANSAS DELTA STUDENT ORAL HISTORIANS: PATHS FORWARD FOR ENGAGING WITH LANGUAGE MYTHS AND COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

Nora McCook

Jolliffe, David A., Christian Z. Goering, Krista Jones Oldham, and James A. Anderson, Jr. *The Arkansas Delta Oral History Project: Culture, Place, and Authenticity*. Syracuse UP, 2016. 264 pages. ISBN: 978-0-8156-3466-9.

Stanford, Nichole E. *Good God but You Smart!: Language Prejudice and Upwardly Mobile Cajuns*. Utah State UP, 2016. 360 pages. ISBN: 978-1-60732-507-9.

Literacy learning and literacy practices reflect social, political, and economic contexts. These influences on speaking and writing— orality and literacy—have long been deployed in schools to shape youth identities into adult members of society. As scholars of critical literacy and writing studies argue, writing teachers must come to

terms with the language ideologies that make certain white, middle-class varieties of English dominant in literacy instruction (see Street; Heath; Smitherman; Elbow; Canagarajah and others). Nichole E. Stanford's 2016 *Good God but You Smart!* makes a strong contribution to writing pedagogies and literacy research by highlighting the role that language ideologies play in propping up exploitive economies with Cajun English speakers as a provocative case study. David A. Jolliffe, Christian Z. Goering, Krista Jones Oldham, and James A. Anderson, Jr. present a five-year University of Arkansas-sponsored outreach initiative in a rural and economically depressed region of the state in *The Arkansas Delta Oral History Project* (2016). Their combination of critical pedagogy of place, authentic intellectual work, and youth cultural studies offers an exciting path forward for community-based teaching and university/community literacy partnerships.

These literacy researchers and college-level writing instructors examine different ends of a central tenet of literacy studies: Literacies only have value because of the meanings that people in particular social, economic, political, geographic, and historical contexts attach to them. Stanford investigates the sources of Southern Louisianans' willingness to "self-censor" their Cajun English in speech and writing, and Jolliffe et al. bring a set of university literacy practices—oral history research—into a region of Arkansas that historically has been disconnected from the flagship university at the opposite end of the state. Both works document dynamic rural Southern literacies that intersect with histories of exclusion and protest. In doing so, both of these works present strong cases for the theories and pedagogies they enlist to unpack literacy learning today. These two books should make their way into studies of literacy, rhetoric and composition, and community literacy for several years to come.

All five authors envision a more dynamic curriculum and inclusive pedagogies with robust opportunities for student choice and critical examinations of the past. For Jolliffe and his colleagues, students engaging in authentic intellectual work and youth cultural studies within a critical pedagogy of place creates alternatives to

modern K-12 curricula that omit creative arts classes and extra-curricular activities. Stanford makes plain a need for recognizing that code-switching does not exist in writing classrooms in which many students' languages do not have social, economic, and political power equal to privileged "academic" discourses. Rather, Stanford argues writing classrooms already demand, and therefore should be upfront about, teaching "code censoring" with Paulo Freire's vision for teaching injustices in the "world" through literacy instruction (the "word").

The richness of both studies is the cases they present, wherein readers may dive deep into Stanford's linguistic and economic history of Cajun English and glimpse the vivid historical perspectives gained by Arkansan students. Stanford provides more theory and historical background with some specific implications for classroom writing pedagogy, and Jolliffe et al. build a case for particular theories and pedagogies to inform community-based teaching and community literacy projects. The latter work devotes more space to discussing the experiences, practices, and student work from their Arkansas Delta Oral History Project (ADOHP) with the aim of making their engagement pedagogies applicable to future practitioners.

Both works should reach broad audiences of educators but are especially relevant to college and high school writing instructors. *Good God* follows a vibrant critical line of inquiry into language diversity and literacy instruction in and beyond schools and hence offers particular value to students and scholars of literacy studies, composition, and critical pedagogy. Scholars working on issues of race, language ideology, diverse language and literacy practices, and comparative school, home, and community literacy practices will find Stanford's direct engagement with major works in these fields illuminating. Stanford sets out to reach "local Louisianans" as well as rhetoric and composition scholars (28). *The Arkansas Delta Oral History Project (ADOHP)* speaks to an audience of educators, administrators, and community members—particularly those in rural areas of the U.S.—who might design an experiential or service learning project with high school or college students (the

project out of the University of Arkansas worked with both). Both have insights into social dynamics of students' learning and practicing academic and home literacies in historical and regional contexts.

Stanford presents a cogent critique of the economic basis for language ideologies in homes and classrooms, which is appropriate for a case study of Cajun English speakers' experiences with school-based language biases. *Good God* is less detailed about paths forward from oppressive regimes of literacy instruction and language ideology promulgation. But this is less a drawback as it is an imperative for future literacy theorists and instructors to propose new practices for engaging with diverse language speakers based on Stanford's challenges, theories, and documentation of how language ideologies become entrenched in school systems as well as communities. These beliefs take root most stubbornly, according to Stanford, in the homes (through mothers, in particular) of non-dominant language speakers. By contrast, Jolliffe et al. emphasize the broad strategies that the University of Arkansas teaching team and their high school-based collaborators deployed to help students create dynamic oral history-based performances and other literacy products. Though *Good God* and *ADOHP* focus on somewhat different contextual details surrounding the literacy and language practices they document and produce, readers may find in these texts a harmonious pairing of in-depth critical analysis (Stanford) and wide-ranging engagement and activism (Jolliffe et al.). Both explore rural, racially diverse, and linguistically non-dominant communities in the South.

Stanford's *Good God but You Smart!* is a critical writing and literacy studies project that draws upon social theories, linguistics, and Cajun history to address language and literacy myths and ideologies. Stanford not only considers the implications of her work for writing classrooms but also diverges from other case studies of language groups to recognize home and community influences on language choices. This study casts a wide net of purveyors of language ideology but firmly points to the root causes of the "anxiety" underlying Cajun English speakers' language beliefs: economic

sorting and oppression. Thus for Stanford, teachers, students, and families all accept and perpetuate practices and beliefs that harm learners and ultimately reinforce economic and concomitant linguistic oppressions. *Good God*'s greatest strength is Stanford's persistent rebuke of the practices of and apologies for privileging one variety of English over the diverse languages in U.S. classrooms both historically and today.

Like several rhetoric and composition theorists whose work crosses into literacy studies (e.g., Deborah Brandt, Suresh Canagarajah, and Ellen Cushman) Stanford engages her case study as both a researcher and a member of the community she investigates. Nichole Stanford grew up in Opelousas, Louisiana, "one of the larger rural Cajun towns" (29). In her Introduction to *Good God*, she discusses her home and school experiences, where a complex combination of fraught family dynamics and family members' encouragement motivated her to read, code switch, and get through high school and into college. Stanford pursued graduate education at the University of New Orleans and then the City University of New York for rhetoric and composition. She had mixed feelings, however, about teaching writing given her past experiences and ongoing study of minority language speakers' subtractive literacy instruction. *Good God* extends from Stanford's doctoral research on South Louisiana, "SouLa," where she grew up, the history of "not entirely voluntary" choices speakers of Louisiana French and, more recently, Cajun English faced in homes, schools, and changing Cajun and Southern economies.

Good God but You Smart! dismantles "linguicism" using social and economic theories, national and local historiographies, interview archives, and survey data. Stanford leverages Pierre Bourdieu's concept of "legitimate language" into a theoretical framework for unpacking historical processes of language engineering and bias reproduction at interpersonal, institutional, and state levels. The introduction makes Stanford's case for examining home-based language beliefs and experiences in her case study population: South Louisiana Cajuns. She appeals to both of her target audiences (rhetoric and composition scholars and Louisianans) by drawing

connections between major literacy narratives in rhetoric and composition by Victor Villanueva, Jr., Richard Rodriguez, Mike Rose, Keith Gilyard, and Vershawn Ashanti Young to her own brief narrative of “pivotal language decisions” (24) as a girl and young woman navigating volatile home and school experiences. All of these stories lead to the claim that “other pressures” besides schools and teachers “are involved in most people’s decisions to assume the hegemonic perspective on language inequality” (24). Stanford notes that her book is only able to answer her first research question: “Why do we comply with language inequality?” (30). As the introduction proposes, her own experiences, those of members of her family, and other rhetoric and composition scholars’ own testimonies point to people and spaces outside of schools for impacting decisions to adopt dominant language and literacy practices. The rest of *Good God* documents the answer to “why we comply” using the stages of language legitimation proposed by Bourdieu, considering both local and national contexts for language codification and normalization through “coercive” and “intimidating forces” (49-50). Stanford’s convincing use of Bourdieu makes it hard to believe that more researchers in rhetoric and composition have not applied “legitimate language” to college-level writing instruction. *Good God* will hopefully address this gap in the field.

The book is impactful as a whole but equally valuable in chapter excerpts. Readers interested in Stanford’s application of Bourdieu along with Antonio Gramsci’s theory of hegemony to language dynamics in U.S. schools and communities will particularly appreciate Chapter One, “Sexy Ass Cajuns: The Complicated Reasons We Comply” and the “Theoretical Framework” section. In these seven pages, Stanford presents her case for seeing Bourdieu’s legitimate language as a central component of hegemony with the crucial addition of James C. Scott’s theory of private and public transcripts. Any critical educator who wishes to explore concepts of status quo and the possibility for resistance in their classrooms would do well to teach this section of Stanford’s book. Taken from *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, Scott’s is an underused

but capacious theory in Stanford's book that explains part of why challenges to dominant (language) ideologies rarely impact hegemonic practices: They do so only in private exchanges instead of disrupting public markets of attitudes. Stanford would underscore the Marx-Bourdieu emphasis on "markets" here; throughout *Good God*, she illuminates connections between language and economies. Chapter One also introduces the current public transcript of Cajuns through media depictions of stereotypical, postcolonial "others," whose images Stanford connects to Edward Said's *Orientalism*.

With the core framework of Bourdieu and Gramsci on language and economics in place, Chapter Two reads against the popular understanding of the "democratic" development of American English and a U.S. educational system. "Bas Class: Cajuns and the U.S. Class System" shows historians' accounts of the elitist and exclusionary strategies of Noah Webster, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin, all traditionally thought to champion access to idealized American dreams and experiences. Instead, "Bas Class" finds these founders consciously planning language and imagining schools that privileged a northeastern dialect and perpetuated propertied, male inheritance of the dominant social structure. This rebuke leads directly to scholars' critiques of academic discourse in rhetoric and composition and literacy studies as preserving the same population's language and literacy practices. If Webster codified an American legitimate language, then the academy "protects" it. The chapter also details Cajun history, which includes colonial immigration to North America, forced removal and ethnic cleansing in the eighteenth century by British colonials, and a multi-continent diaspora leading some to settle the then Spanish wilderness of today's Louisiana. This striking story of Acadians and Cajuns in America, which continues over the remaining chapters, joins other historical case studies of violence and language instruction in laying bare the high cost certain groups have paid to join the so-called "Standard" American English discourse community. Stanford introduces Cajun languages and histories to rhetoric, composition, and literacy studies, where her work should join conversations

with historical research by Janet Cornelius, Heather Andrea Williams, Jessica Enoch, and Erica Abrams Locklear.

Chapter Three picks up from the story of early American language codification to detail the normalizing function of schools for speakers of Louisiana French in the twentieth century. “I Will Not Speak French. I Will Not Speak French’: The Grand Dérangement de la Langue” tracks how Cajuns continued to stay removed from surrounding economies but were forced to adopt the legitimate language through a 1921 “French Ban” in Louisiana schools. Stanford and her Louisiana historian predecessor, Shane Bernard, did not locate any explicit laws or written commands prohibiting French in schools, but Stanford mines archives of twentieth-century articles, interviews, and letters, which attest to harrowing encounters over children’s language use in schools amidst local school reforms. Students’ responses to being punished for using French in South Louisiana schools ranged from scarring to welcoming of instruction in more mainstream, privileged English. These former students were clearly aware of the relationship between language and “class or work” (133). Stanford asserts, “schools are the bridge between the language codification process of the nation builders and families” (124). This chapter presents schools as “reproducing” not challenging “the existing social structure” (128) and shares stories of how Cajun students—along with many other language minority groups in the U.S.—learned to accept their own language as illegitimate. “Schools play an enormous role in normalization,” as the dominant force of “coercion” in Bourdieu’s model, “but the intimidating pressures outside school—families, protecting their children, the job market, hegemonic stereotypes, and deeply rooted censorship practices—compelled Cajuns to protest their own language in schools” (157). Cajun students learned to censor in schools but the pressure to do so extended beyond classrooms.

“Don’t Blame Teachers (Not Too-Too Much): The Limits of Classrooms,” Chapter Four, calls into question teachers’ abilities to respond adequately to language and class inequalities because of both the limited impact they have on norms beyond the classroom and because it is difficult to avoid reproducing social stratification

through language and literacy instruction. This chapter will likely ruffle some writing and language arts instructors, especially those who subscribe to progressive pedagogies. It even takes aim at major literacy initiative sponsors—including the Walton Foundation, which funded the ADOHP. As Stanford proposes, “education reforms and even most seemingly progressive pedagogies are simply more effective forms of normalizing students to inequalities. Redecorating, not restructuring” (166). As challenging as calling into question well-meaning pedagogies is for readers, Stanford’s argument is worth the self-examination it requires. She echoes Lisa Delpit’s concern that enlightened process-based writing pedagogies failed to make specific mainstream academic writing moves available to students who were not familiar with academic literacy and language practices or expectations. Stanford does not simply want teachers to be more like Angelina, her five-paragraph-essay wielding, savvy code-switching family member who could teach the “practical” tools for signaling academic insidership while also recognizing that these were designed “rules and systems” (161). Instead, the compromise Stanford offers is an important step for writing teachers even if it belies the significance of its departure from current multilingual pedagogies. Writing instructors who, like Delpit and Angelina, teach privileged forms of writing should teach code *censoring*—not “code-switching” or “code-meshing”—with attention to power and language dynamics through critical pedagogies. Code-censoring best reflects the actual demands of hegemonic language expectations and the process of normalization. As Stanford’s research has directly examined, language censorship is a fairly explicit demand of dominant/legitimate language learners and their families. Teachers do not soften their decisions to teach comma splices and subject-verb agreement by calling this writing strategy “code-switching,” which amounts to “respectfully exclud[ing] the student’s home discourse and get[ting] on with teaching the legitimate one” (179). Stanford presents survey data from first-year writing instructors in South Louisiana colleges, most of whom seem fairly confident that code-switching is the agreed-upon pedagogical response to Cajun students’ writing. Stanford leaves

no room for lessening the blow of knowingly teaching code censoring by calling it other names or for excusing ourselves for teaching mainstream academic discourse simply because we want students to have access to privileged codes. Recalling the historical school reforms in the prior chapter, she firmly challenges the current trend of translingual pedagogies: “This progressive attitude toward error is being institutionalized because it suits the economy” (203). One counter-example she provides is Min-Zhan Lu’s famous 1994 article, “Professing Multiculturalism,” which shows in-class negotiations of written language use as a way to make code-meshing decisions clear to students without demanding self-censoring. “[A]nything we teach,” Stanford concludes, “we [must] teach with a critical sociopedagogy, inviting students to develop and practice their agency” (211). This chapter provides Stanford’s clearest and best-supported recommendation for change.

Good God pursued the first of Stanford’s questions, “Why do people comply with language inequalities?” She does not fully answer her other more action-oriented questions: “How do we resist? How do we change the hegemonic language myths that our families believe and push on us?” and “How do we change the socioeconomic circumstances that require us to sort ourselves and each other by language into distinct social classes?” (30). After providing readers with “code censoring” in the previous chapter, the conclusion is somewhat less satisfying as a “next steps” directive for readers, but it does identify four dominant language myths that we should recognize, avoid, and call out when we see them deployed in and beyond classrooms. These myths “correspond to some of the most important U.S. socioeconomic myths: the myth of classlessness, the laissez-faire myth, the manifest destiny myth, and the democratic process myth” (218). As with admitting our demands for code censoring, identifying language myths can “strip away the veil of meritocracy and the euphemisms for class and race inequality” (231). Following a similar strategy to Chapter Four, the conclusion, “Beyond Classrooms: Debunking Language Myths,” not only wants teachers to recognize language ideologies in action (via myths and demands to censor) but also pursue a critical

pedagogy and Freire's conscientization to chip away at complicity with unequal economies.

The clearest implications of this work are, first, that scholars of language diversity and critical educators should change how they understand—and name—code-switching. Second, Stanford boosts Bourdieu's, Gramsci's, and Scott's importance for theorizing writing and language instruction while also turning scholars' attention to family pressure on code censoring. Third, this book adds Cajun English to Shirley Brice Heath's Piedmont Carolina language learning and Canagarajah's Sri Lankan school children's resistance to English instruction as a case study that reminds U.S. instructors of historical violence through language instruction and intolerance of language diversity. Stanford's Cajun English speakers present complex responses to language ideologies including concession and resistance. Fourth, *Good God but You Smart!* should also enter the canon of literacy scholarship that theorizes the language beliefs and school and social pressures on learners from their own linguistic backgrounds. Finally, this work exposes gaps in composition studies that future theorists must take up, and Stanford has laid the groundwork for new pedagogies that don't sidestep the harsh realities of language ideologies.

If Stanford addressed problematic teaching practices in schools, Jolliffe et al. are concerned with what is absent from high school curricula. With his colleagues, Jolliffe recounts a collaborative community-based literacy project with its institutional and social, historical, and geographic contexts, theoretical underpinnings, and outcomes. In this case the outcomes are intriguing student projects and offshoots of the oral history initiative. The book also makes a concerted effort to inspire more projects like this by trying to head-off objections (lack of funding, too locally specific to be widely applicable) with the goal of promoting a rich co-curriculum amidst testing-focused schools. *ADOHP* is as rich as *Good God* but takes up an approach different from the multi-chapter historical and theoretical framing of *Good God*. Jolliffe et al. provide historical contexts and pedagogies in conversation with student work and the specific interactions and initiatives of the ADOHP in the

Arkansas Delta. The authors model the collaborative process of conceiving, developing, and reflecting on a community-based project between university students and a large rural region of their state. Appalachian literacy scholars Kim Donehower, Charlotte Hogg, and Eileen Schell propose in the foreword to *ADOHP* that “[w]hat we can most gain from reading this book is the kind of attitude required to undertake such work” (x). These scholars also suggest that readers consider ethical questions such as “What do ‘literacy scholars and teachers owe to the regions where we teach?’” and “What do our students owe to the regions where they learn?” (vii). Equally fruitful is the question of how the combination of pedagogies can be applied to address ethical issues for community-based teaching, learning, and community input and impacts. Taking any of these practice-focused questions as entry points into *ADOHP*, the answer Jolliffe et al. offer is to develop meaningful community partnerships and try it out, but pay attention to preparing students to work with community partners and students’ potentially oversimplified views about the past.

The second title in the Syracuse University Press’s Writing, Culture, and Community Practices series, *ADOHP* opens and closes the book in Jolliffe’s authorial voice. As the first Brown Chair in English and Literacy at the University of Arkansas, Jolliffe was granted three million dollars from the Brown Foundation and Walton Family Charitable Support Foundation for salary and programming (9). With these funds, Jolliffe launched the Arkansas Delta Oral History Project, or ADOHP, in the 2006-7 academic year.

Unlike Stanford’s work, *ADOHP* may best serve its readers taken as a whole. Chapters One and Two, and Six provide institutional, regional, and theoretical contexts for the project and then possible ways of implementing variations of the core tenets of the ADOHP in other communities. These framing and take-away chapters will be immediately useful to those thinking about developing or revamping an engaged learning project. Yet it’s difficult to recommend skipping Chapters Three-Five, which present and further contextualize excerpts from students’ projects. The book’s main strengths are the articulation and application of pedagogical

goals, its theorizing of student projects as epideictic, its vivid snapshots of projects and Delta history, the attention to limitations including students' uncritical nostalgic responses, and the depiction of rural community engagement work. However, in balancing depth and breadth, the text stretches a bit thin to present student work, context for their historical inquiries, how-to ideas for implementation, and a brief nod to Critical Race Theory. Some readers may also be concerned that there is only implied assessment of the project (the student work chapters discuss how the projects presented show hallmarks of the pedagogical goals of youth cultural studies, authentic intellectual work, and critical pedagogy of place). Additionally, the multimodal nature of students' projects is difficult to capture. Finally, the authors raise some odd caveats about race and language, which make it clear that this is a ripe area for further consideration of the critical community-engaged pedagogies ADOHP deploys and of complications that arise when a majority white university teaching team engages with rural black communities several hours away to help students research their history and culture.

The introduction and Chapter One situate the ADOHP as “a regional literacy project” and “ambitious high-school-to-college articulation initiative” (23) with its goals, plans, and responses by participants and instructors. The first aim that the ADOHP team pursued in the project's development was the “straightforward question”:

[W]hat happens when you ask high schools students from small towns in the Delta to select a topic that they think is essential to the history, heritage, and quality of life in the region and then, mentored by University of Arkansas students, read, talk, and write about the topic as oral historians and “essayists,” in the broadest sense of that term? (xvi)

The next chapter presents regional historical context of the Delta in the eastern and southern part of the state, over five hours away from UA-Fayetteville, as part of David Jolliffe's path from Brown

Chair to implementing the ADOHP. Beginning with “The Delta: Former Economic Breadbasket Now in Decline,” the history is partial but upfront about the major complexities of Jolliffe’s work. The “My Immersion in the Delta: Traveling the Site from Day One” section offers bulleted paragraphs summarizing Jolliffe’s major surmises from his 2005-2006 excursions to develop partnerships in the Delta. This directly follows a section on “The Delta, the University’s Diversity Initiatives, and ‘Your Work with Those Kids.’” Both sections provide crucial backstories to the ADOHP’s response to Jolliffe’s perceived charge to build connections with hard-to-recruit students, a message that Jolliffe describes as, “If I could do something in the Delta, it was suggested, the university, which constantly waged an uphill battle to diversify its student body, faculty, and staff, would be grateful” (10). These sections portray a vivid but struggling region with a local narrative of decline and ongoing interrelated racial, education, and economic challenges that also features strong religious identities and “family traditions” (13). Jolliffe notices the privatization of schools in the Delta wherein public schools are predominantly black (more so than Delta county populations) and rapidly losing rich opportunities in “literacy co-curriculum,” such as “student newspapers, literacy magazines, speech and forensics teams, yearbooks, and drama programs” (19). This vision of the Delta and its literacy education setting sets up the particular emphases of the ADOHP on drama and the book on students’ work in the areas of religion, food, and race.

In addition to historical and institutional contexts, Chapter One also delineates the structure of the ADOHP, students’ responses to the project, difficulties the teaching team and student participants faced, and the responses to these challenges. The project worked with high school teachers and administrators to find ways that student oral history projects could reinforce multi-disciplinary course materials. Once the partnership was established, the University of Arkansas group team-taught a college-level colloquium course in the spring semester simultaneously with the high school partners. The entire group of University of Arkansas students and teachers

and various Delta-based high school students and teachers met face-to-face three times during the spring semester: first in the Delta to kick-off the mentoring relationship between high school and college students; then in Fayetteville to train for theater production, socialize, and team-build at local theater performances; and finally for a concluding celebration of student performances based on their oral histories in Helena, Arkansas. Challenges mainly entailed high school students' lack of enthusiasm in the online asynchronous chat, which the university students facilitated. The teaching team resolved to "teach the University of Arkansas students a bit more about the effects of the myriad differences between them and their high school mentees, to enfranchise more fully the voices of the high school students from the Delta, and to put all participants on a more even teaching and learning ground" (42). The chapter ends by sharing how an assigned reading from Ruby Payne's *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*, a "page-to-stage" workshop for students during the Fayetteville trip, and "direct instruction" helped the ADOHP respond to these challenges. In the end, Jolliffe et al. remind readers that this was a necessarily "messy" process, which is "how endeavors like this must behave" (53).

Chapter Two makes an important contribution to scholarly conversations and offers suggestions for practitioners of experiential learning projects. The authors point to their interpretation of students' projects as engaging in epideictic rhetoric commemorating Delta culture and values as the main theoretical intervention that the book offers (54). The chapter as a whole situates their arrival at epideictic rhetoric within a rich confluence of theories and pedagogies and an equally important cautiousness towards facilitating uncritical "nostalgia." Their review of and connections between such theorists as James Paul Gee, David Guenewald, and Ursula Kelly among many others is worth reading as a whole, but it leaves readers with terminology and concrete teaching and learning objectives—as well as a reading list—that can invigorate any teacher's work with students on documenting and working with communities and place. Most notably, the chapter and book theorize

that students performed authentic intellectual work informed by youth cultural studies and a critical pedagogy of place.

Chapters Three-Five present works created by students that deal with topics of religion, food, and race. The chapters situate this student work as evidence of the claims made in Chapter Two that students were engaging in three current strands of pedagogy as well as deploying epideictic rhetoric. The structure of these chapters is an introduction to the topic, more specific historical contexts to set up each of the students' research (three student projects per chapter), the students' interview questions (or selected examples), excerpts from the interviews, and all or part of the students' final creative projects based on their interviews. The projects are fascinating even with the limitations of experiencing them through print rather than live performance. The authors' analysis of how students "write themselves into" the stories and pasts they learn about and must evaluate rather than simply report about their findings is convincing, although I found myself wanting to see a separate publication of the students' projects—perhaps with multimedia capability—so that the student and community-member voices could stand more prominently on their own. Two student works that stood out were a student's long-form journalism story about her interview with a local barbeque guru and an interview and poetry response to a student's project on women's church hats. The entire chapter on race is also intriguing for its history of Delta organizing and resistance and brief excerpts of complex student work. (It also reveals some discomfort by the authors who provide a curious disclaimer about "balance" in perspective, admit the ADOHP's "far from perfect" work on race, and finish this chapter with a suggestion to engage Critical Race Theory in the future.) Instructors who embark on oral history projects like this will be able to give their own students a glimpse of the contexts, interview questions, and diverse projects that students can create with these chapters.

The final chapter offers ideas for adapting aspects of the ADOHP in other contexts. Two appendices provide the ADOHP's initial introductory email to their identified high school partners (teachers

and administrators) as well as the “ADOHP Student Manual” for conducting interviews. Chapter Six, entitled “Rural Sustainability: Outgrowth and Extensions,” paints broad strokes for the initiative’s impact and turns again to narrative to provide backstories to two current spinoff initiatives in the Delta and two initiatives in other rural locales. As the authors state, the final chapter seeks “to urge educators in all regions to consider the possibility of replicating and possibly extending the work of the ADOHP” (200). Although they suggest that the ADOHP had less impact as “an economic revitalization project,” the authors quickly point to what Jolliffe refers to as “The Augusta Miracle.” Community leaders in the small Delta town of Augusta solicited Jolliffe’s help, as he was meeting with them about ADOHP work, in what grew into a multifaceted initiative that ranged from trainings for preschool parents to a book honoring local veterans. That project emerged from the community’s idea that “a revitalized economy would follow from an improved educational system and the better quality of life that such an improvement conduces” (201). While literacy scholars and historians would argue with the local committee’s reliance on this myth (see Graff; Kantor and Brenzel; Street; Heath; Maynes; and even Stanford for the complex and varied impacts schools have on economies and communities), the resulting project is impressive in its range and responsiveness to local concerns involving literacy in direct and indirect ways. The authors of *The ADOHP* may not be prepared to outright claim that rural literacy initiatives and university partnerships can lead to economic revitalization, but this prominent example makes it clear that others—including their readers—may still pursue this aim. The final profile of other projects is the current iteration of the ADOHP, Students Involved in Sustaining Their Arkansas (SISTA). This project reverses the order of high school and college students’ “working with”; here high school “SISTA fellows” spend a year developing a proposal for their own community project with University of Arkansas students. Perhaps most immediately, this chapter offers language and examples that project designers

might cite as they pitch initiative ideas to potential partners, funders, and administrators.

The paths forward are plentiful, as the diverse student projects from prior chapters and locally situated examples of projects in Arkansas and elsewhere attest. Two cautions appear clear from the book as well. In the ADOHP and other projects highlighted in Chapter Six, students struggled to first conduct effective interviews and then to go beyond nostalgic responses to the oral histories they collected. Depending on the initiative, critical pedagogies of place and, as the book briefly acknowledges, critical race theory can be built into the project design—particularly through assigned readings and reflections. However, interviewing skills clearly need further consideration by project developers and perhaps future oral history, community-based learning, and youth cultural studies researchers. *The ADOHP* offers promising diversely applicable theories and related practices for community literacy projects through the rich combination of authentic intellectual work, critical pedagogy of place, and youth cultural studies. Educators, community partners, and administrators should be encouraged to adopt the concepts and strategies in the book in ways that make sense for their own communities and students. The three interrelated pedagogies ADOHP introduces and applies in its assessment of student work should become more prevalent in studies and practices of community-based learning.

If Stanford and Jolliffe et al. were to read each other's monographs, I imagine they would see a common interest in centering the voices and experiences of learners in rural Southern communities. Jolliffe and team might find a new lens to frame the Delta students' work with and through home and school languages (as well as literacies). How do multimodal and multivocal projects disrupt the legitimate language's grip on school literacies? Stanford would likely notice ways that students involved in the ADOHP wield the oral history tools that their teachers and University of Arkansas instructors introduce to them for their own chosen projects and entry points into their communities. In addition to authentic intellectual work and epideictic rhetoric, ADOHP students

are engaging in and sometimes challenging public transcripts about the Delta using private (and actual) transcripts from local residents. At the interstices of these two works are questions such as, “How can we name, define, and teach literacies to students with frank attention to histories of schools and language instruction as well as diverse community-based knowledge and experiences?” “Which theories and pedagogies generate space for learners’ agency in literacy decisions and in affecting change?” Separately and together, these books invigorate current discussions of community literacy projects, language diversity in writing classrooms, and critical theory in teaching writing. Both should be treated as powerful additions to writing and literacy studies’ discussions of inclusion through schools and through outreach and engagement initiatives.

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