Coda

Composing New Learning Legacies

“I made a series of discoveries about myself in relation to my family, my community, and our society. I gained a deeper sense of purpose and meaning as an educator and as a writer.”

—Francisco Jiménez, The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child, p. 115

“I began to feel again the presence of that unknown history.”

—Diane Glancy, Pushing the Bear, After the Trail of Tears, p. 187

Envisioning Next Steps

One core premise of this book has been to affirm that cultural resources from the past shape our social actions today. An extension of this basic point has demonstrated how archives (literal repositories of cultural records) and Archives (in a more cumulative sense of culture-in-the-making) can inform current public scholarship. More specifically, I have argued that counter-narratives about cross-cultural teaching from past historical contexts can exercise social power as learning legacies. They provide rich cultural resources to support proactive teaching and civic engagement today.

Undergirding this proposed framework for revitalized liberal arts education has been a belief in the epistemic value of collaboration. When privileged knowledge-makers (including university faculty, museum educators, and social organization leaders) connect with allies who have often been underrepresented in the academy, valuable culture-making occurs. When we work together to apply resources embedded in records of past learning legacies—like the examples explored here from the turn of the twentieth
century—we open up dynamic pathways to social justice. In such teaching/learning partnerships, we can create new counter-narratives, new stories that claim agency through shared activism. Thus, through recovery of past learning legacies and application of their lessons, those of us engaged in liberal-arts-oriented scholarship and teaching show that our work does matter, now and for the future.¹

What, then, might further applications of this book’s argument look like, going forward? In this Coda, I invite readers to envision their own projects, in and beyond the classroom. To help seed such possibilities, I point out some options for teaching and scholarship that elaborate upon this book’s framework. As a first step, I describe a few approaches I’m using in my own courses to build on the arguments in Learning Legacies. I also forecast several research opportunities derived from the book’s concepts. And I outline one just-emerging civic engagement initiative—GlobalEx—that I’m involved in with students, faculty, staff, and community partners. Finally, I reemphasize this book’s assertion of writing about learning legacies as, itself, a productive way to merge teaching and scholarship. I share all these examples not as blueprints to follow but rather, like the historical cases treated earlier, to encourage readers’ own endeavors.

Because I’ve blended a personal story with more traditional scholarship throughout this book, I should note here that I’m completing this Coda in a specific (auto)ethnographic moment. By the time this book reaches readers in “finished” form, some possibilities I describe here may have come to productive fruition—or at least a budding stage. Others may remain only as hopeful opportunities for future collaborations.² Like Jane Addams and her heirs at the Chicago museum bearing her name, I affirm the concept of ever-unfinished business as a reality of shared cultural work. Also, I realize that the particular time when I’m revising this Coda, in the summer of 2016, is shaping specific ideas I have about my future teaching, scholarship, and community engagement: how, for instance, could we live in the United States right now and not be noticing the rhetoric of presidential politics? So consider this a fluid story.

Revising Dominant Narratives

As noted above, one goal of Learning Legacies has been to affirm the special benefits we can draw from studying past texts that emerged from intercultural teaching situations where counter-narrative rhetoric took center stage. Because I’ve focused here on the “counter” or oppositional aspects
of those cases and their associated texts, readers may be feeling by now that I don’t recognize the productive possibilities residing within more dominant narratives. It’s true that, in my own classroom, I often make counter-narratives a central part of my teaching. But I also emphasize how canonical cultural resources are necessary to explore. In practice, in fact, I often pair the two interactively, as referenced in chapter 2, where I described teaching writings from the *Spelman Messenger* in dialogue with highly traditional poetry by one of TCU’s early women educators, Ida Jarvis. In that pairing, I facilitate in-class discussions by asking students to mark linguistic, gender-oriented connections between those two archives of women’s texts; these conversations also spotlight how *Messenger* authors made strategic use of lyric poetry conventions even as those same early Spelman authors also exercised resistant rhetorical agency.

One reason I employ curriculum that places traditional cultural resources in dialogue with oppositional ones is because I want students from underrepresented groups to feel they can claim control over canonical material—that they can “own” it and capitalize on its heritage. Here, as in other aspects of my teaching, I draw on the example of Kenyan/US-based author and scholar-teacher Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, who blends personal mastery of canonical figures like Shakespeare and William Blake (whom he first studied in colonial schools) with advocacy for indigenous languages and cultural forms. I see my commitment to curricular linkages between canonical and counter-narrative texts as a fundamental refashioning of the Carlisle-type agenda, a revision of the “banking” models like E. D. Hirsch’s *Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know*. New learning legacies that bring dominant narratives and counter-narratives together can capture valuable aspects of established archives—but also critique and reconfigure them. We can empower all our students to see the potential that traditional cultural narratives still hold for opening access to collaborative agency, provided they are reformulated to serve an inclusive rather than a hierarchical vision. By inviting students to consider these texts as routes to social agency, we help bring the liberal arts’ role in public culture to the forefront. Let me briefly cite one example of how I’ve used a cluster of such texts in courses by placing, at the center of a “learning legacies” venture, a short autobiographical narrative by Francisco Jiménez, *The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child*.

When introducing students to Jiménez’s *The Circuit*, in classes ranging from American literature surveys to young adult literature introductions, from my “American Identity” seminar and writing classes to courses
in multicultural literature, I zero in on his closing episode’s engagement with the Declaration of Independence. As one of American culture’s most foundational narratives—a fertile site for considering how writing itself can both embody and invite social action—the Declaration is especially important to study with students who have felt politically marginalized. It’s equally useful, though, as a resource for building self-critical empathy among privileged social groups and, as immigrant teacher Hilda Satt Polacheck found in her Hull-House leadership of a naturalization course, for promoting a sense of possibility among those transitioning from marginal identities to more enfranchised ones.

I’ve found that a historicized reading of the Declaration gains enhanced classroom potential when positioned within intertextual, cross-cultural dialogue. For example, for many years I have had students read the Declaration alongside the 1848 “Declaration of Sentiments” and literally underline ways that the nineteenth-century women’s statement of principles both echoed and revised the eighteenth-century one. Additionally, as my students’ responses to The Circuit’s treatment of the Declaration have shown, comparative interpretation that questions the class-based, racial and ethnic differences associated with the document’s place in American Archives is equally essential.

When I teach The Circuit now, in the context of learning legacies and cross-cultural exchange, I prompt students to pay careful attention to Jiménez’s rhetorical repurposing of the original historical document. Such analysis requires a scaffolded engagement with the earlier chapters that prepare readers for the irony contained in the Declaration’s fulsome language, in relation to the central character’s (Francisco’s) lived experiences in US society. Francisco and his family have survived the dangerous passage from Mexico only to encounter the challenges so many immigrants still face economically, socially, and politically. The young protagonist, clearly based on the author’s own life, has struggled, and generally succeeded, at mastering the content of traditional public education, despite his family’s constant relocations on “the circuit” that migrant farm workers travel. Then, just at the moment when he’s reciting the Declaration, with pride, in a school performance, la migra arrives. The reason? To deport family members not born within the United States, including Francisco and his brother Roberto. And yet, rather than reject the idealized vision of this familiar historical document, Jiménez invites readers to revise it: he reconfirms its central values while also seeking ways of resolving its contradictions through social action. What kind of action?
Along the way, leading up to this climactic scene, *The Circuit* has woven in examples of self-critical empathy and associated support for immigrants like Francisco’s family—support given by several US-born, fully enfranchised characters, such as the schoolteacher who first nurtured his ability as a writer and an employer who provided a job opportunity, however modest (i.e., school custodian), for his brother. Solidarity that emerges from self-critical empathy, as Jane Addams demonstrated, and as Hull-House museum director Lisa Lee so thoughtfully observed, can be enacted in patient, yet pivotal, ways. That is, what Addams called “disinterested virtue” in her biography of Julia Lathrop, and what Lee termed “radical empathy,” is achievable through interactions that need not be overtly revolutionary in order to promote long-term social change.

In fostering others’ hopes of achieving such a progression toward social agency, one similar to Jiménez’s own transition from illegal child immigrant to university citizen-professor, his “A Note from the Author” resonates with the Archive-to-action framework of *Learning Legacies*. Accordingly, his “Note,” a narrative reflection on reconstructing a familial archive, becomes a focal point of my classes’ discussion of his text. Jiménez recounts how his hopes to acquire advanced education were eventually enabled through a graduate fellowship at Columbia University. He describes how his mentor there, Andrés Iduarte, led him to craft a thesis that also served as the start-up text for *The Circuit*. That is, like Jane Addams nurturing Hilda Satt (Polacheck), Iduarte spurred Jiménez to begin writing a counter-narrative through artistic expression grounded in personalized historical research. Although intervening years of teaching and administrative service slowed his progress, Jiménez, also like Polacheck and her researcher-editor daughter Epstein, gradually assembled the book-length autobiography of *The Circuit* by persistently building a personal archive situated within a larger historical context:

> In writing these stories, I relied heavily on my childhood recollections, but I also did a lot of background research. I interviewed my mother; my older brother, Roberto; and other relatives. I looked through photographs and family documents, and listened to corridos, Mexican ballads, that I had learned as a child. I also went to different places in the San Joaquin Valley where we had lived in migrant labor camps: Bakersfield, Fowler, Selma, Corcoran, Five Points. I visited museums in those towns and read through newspapers from that era. (*Circuit*, 114–15)
Significantly, as Jiménez explains, construction of the archival knowledge he sought wasn’t easy: “Unfortunately,” he explains, when consulting “newspapers from that era” of his family’s migrant experiences, “I found little or no information or documentation in those sources about migrant farm workers.” However, even though he was “disappointed,” this very gap in the cultural record “convinced [him] even more that [he] should write [his] book.” That is, in terms of this book’s central concepts, I’d say he came to understand the potential counter-narrative value of his own story, even as he recognized that it also reaffirmed some beloved aspects of what’s often termed the “American dream.” By retrieving what he could, he built a tentative archive, and his effort helped him “recall other experiences [he] had forgotten with the passage of time.” This process, in turn, enabled him to position his individual archive within a broader cross-cultural Archive all of us can now access through his writing:

Looking back at those childhood memories from an adult point of view, I made a series of discoveries about myself in relation to my family, my community, and our society. I gained a deeper sense of purpose and meaning as an educator and as a writer. (115)

By applying the inclusive “our society” to his revisiting of an archive-to-action process, Jiménez also stakes a claim for himself, his “family,” and his particular “community” to be recognized as belonging to the larger social structures from which some would still exclude him. Indeed, he asserts in a stirring final paragraph, his counter-narrative, partly by virtue of its engagement with the dominant narratives of US culture, can help others fulfill their own aspirations. After all, Jiménez reminds his readers, the “back-breaking labor” of “migrant farm workers and their children” that “puts food on our tables” is indispensable to the larger national society: “Their courage and struggles, hopes and dreams for a better life for their children and their children’s children give meaning to the term ‘American dream.’ Their story is the American story” (116). Like the purposeful pronoun slippage in “our society,” in these closing words, The Circuit uses rhetorical shifts to “our tables,” juxtaposed with “their children and their children’s children,” to locate Jiménez’s authorial voice on both sides of the equation at the same time, and thereby to embody discursively in his own language a very “American dream” of social mobility. This narrative of authorship, especially when read intertextually, stakes a clear claim of belonging based in archival recovery and Archive-making.
As a scholar-educator who seeks to nurture intercultural connections among students, I teach his narrative of familial archive-building alongside his Declaration-framed final episode by asking my classes to unpack specific linguistic linkages across multiple texts. Further, I apply a version of the lesson I learned from visiting Deborah Mitchell’s elementary school researchers in downtown Atlanta (chapter 2). I urge students to describe what archives from their own family histories come to mind as they read, and how they might recuperate such records to serve as resources for future learners, as Jiménez has done. Furthermore, while *The Circuit* has long been a staple for my teaching, recent statements from political figures like Donald Trump have opened up additional points of narrative/counter-narrative interaction. These controversial texts can be set in dialogue with witty yet pointed ripostes like former Mexican president Vicente Fox’s self-portrait tweet with a Trump tie imported from China, as well as satire on the Trumpian “wall” from *Saturday Night Live*. Such textual juxtapositions—including ones selected to offer a very balanced historical view—help students see and critique the rhetorical dimensions of all such writings, including Jiménez’s astutely crafted appeal to affect through a personal story. All in all, the cluster of teaching resources represented by this growing constellation of texts also exemplifies how exchanges between dominant and alternative narratives often lead, over time, to mixed-message Archives—to complex cultural resources containing internal contradictions. Where, we can ask, do students choose to position themselves, from their own stories and toward their own social actions, within this evolving, ever-unresolved Archive?

Creating a Cultural Rhetorics Curriculum

If the angry intensity of Trump’s recurring “wall” threats has brought a challenging new dimension to this particular set of narratives, other stories have been offering up a very different call to social action, one envisioning diversity as a resource for promoting critical empathy. At a time when student voices all across the nation have been calling for a strengthened commitment to inclusiveness on campus, I have been looking out for learning legacies that might bring both “traditional” American value systems and the heritage of proactive civil rights leadership together in hopeful conversation. One text I’m now developing for classroom use resides in song.

In “Glory,” their stirring anthem for the *Selma* film that chronicled a turning point in the civil rights movement, John Legend and Common si-
multaneously resist and recuperate elements of dominant American learning legacies. One strand in the song references the nation’s tendency to see itself as allied with freedom and justice; its belief that some conflicts are righteous; and its dedication to united, symbolic action for communal good. On that level, Legend’s lyrical storyline (re)claims a familiar American narrative for black culture. Yet an ironic interplay between Legend’s voice (which references those traditions in a conventional melody) and Common’s rap counter-narrative (pushing back in both form and content) forcefully calls out inconsistencies around those very ideals. Thus, “Glory” creates a cross-cultural remix. Celebration and critique combine to sing hope.

For instance, Legend’s voice begins with a seemingly straightforward assertion that “One day, when the glory comes / It will be ours.” And this strand in the story-song later predicts that, though “Victory isn’t won” yet, still “we’ll fight on,” until we can “cry glory.” Meanwhile, Common’s tough rap counter-punch invokes “Sins that go against our skin.” Since “Justice is juxtaposition in us,” Common’s counter-narrative avers, “Justice for all just ain’t specific enough”: the iconic heroine Rosa Parks had to assert her quiet protest as she “sat on the bus” and, today, “we walk through Ferguson with our hands up.” With neither lyrical strand sufficient in itself, but both conjoined to claim access to America’s mythologizing narrative of glory through rhetorical “Juxtaposition,” this song exemplifies the adaptable staying power of counter-narrative as a productive compositional form in our current day.

Encouraged by such telling examples of rhetorical pragmatism in popular culture, and drawing on my own recent research for this book (as humanities scholars often do to enrich our teaching), I’m preparing a new course. I want to introduce undergraduates at my majority-white university, where so many of our students come from relative privilege, to the social significance of counter-narrative texts like “Glory.” One strand running through the syllabus will foreground rhetorical representations of minority American learners and teachers—that is, of intersections between racial identity and views on the “right” educational content for members of different race groups in the United States. I envision setting visual imagery like the fists-up photograph of recent black women graduates from West Point in conversation with speeches by Frances Harper, autobiographical essays by Anna Julia Cooper, and journalism critiquing exploitation of black athletes in university settings today—as well as stories from the Spelman Messenger and Spelman’s Founders’ Day performances.
Besides tapping into this book’s examination of links between civil/civic rights and education, I want my new course to address cultural rhetorics associated with current citizenship debates, particularly the place of immigrants in American society. I will assign reading sequences to position Jane Addams’s descriptions of her evolving settlement teaching next to Hilda Satt Polacheck’s written memories of such Hull-House-sponsored learning opportunities for that era’s urban immigrants. I will locate both those women’s cross-cultural teaching narratives alongside anti-immigration rhetoric like political cartoons stereotyping Chinese arriving in California during the same time period and Gilbert Gonzalez and Vivian Price’s award-winning *Harvest of Loneliness* documentary on the 1942–64 bracero “guest worker” program. And I’m developing an assignment whereby students will seek out examples of cultural rhetorics depicting sites of, causes behind, and impacts from various transglobal migrations going on today.

Beyond analyzing others’ counter-narratives, however, I also plan to have students in my new course create learning legacies of their own. Texts like *The Circuit*’s “A Note from the Author” can serve as inspiration, through its call for previously disenfranchised people to claim the very cultural resources and Archive-making practices that have so often excluded them. Along those lines, during the spring semester of 2016, I experimented with the final project assignment for a graduate seminar I was teaching on the rhetorical history of “American literature” as a field. Basically, I invited the class to take the reins of their own learning and create personalized projects—curricular learning legacies—aligned with our semester-long questioning of boundaries and processes that have defined (and sometimes constrained) “American literature” as a cultural resource.

Throughout the term, we studied trends that, across the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, have shaped the way “American literature” has been conceived, produced, and packaged within the academy, both in scholarship and in curriculum. We examined the interplay between forces John Guillory has described in *Cultural Capital* and the multifaceted expressive forms of American literature itself that have claimed varying positions within curriculum, and we connected those shifts in curricular content to changes in dominant American value judgments in different historical periods. For example, we asked, what social forces have contributed to feminist recovery of women’s writing—a process that certainly has changed the contents of American literature anthologies, courses, and other measures of value, such as doctoral exam lists? Similarly, how and why has memoir recently exerted increasing visibility on bestseller lists and in academic
studies of genre in our field? In shorthand, we said, what do “selfies” tell us about life-writing’s rise in the academy, and vice versa?

In different stages of the course, we paired up various entries from *Keywords for American Cultural Studies* with relevant primary texts. We noted how various “keywords” (that is, core concepts) that have come to the forefront of scholarship over the past decade or so (such as “diaspora,” “ethnicity,” and “border”) have led to (and reflected) corresponding productivity in new primary texts. In that vein, we read Louise Erdrich’s *The Roundhouse* and Sherman Alexie’s *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* as well as recent poetry by Native authors alongside Indian/First Nations work in cultural rhetorics by scholars like Lisa King and Malea Powell, as referenced in chapters 4 and 5 here. Thus, we considered how frameworks like “sovereignty” have carried over from scholarship into literature and vice versa. We juxtaposed secondary texts like Aimée Césaire’s *Discourse on Colonialism* with his play riffing on Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* and with Maryse Condé’s *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem*; we read Kenneth Warren’s *What Was African American Literature?* alongside Percival Everett’s *Erasure*.

One goal of the course was to observe ways that the shifting archive of scholarship in American Studies has helped generate new “literary” (and pop culture) texts, and vice versa; that is, we cast research and aesthetic production as interactively connected. One implicit dimension of this examination into how literary fields operate culturally involved asking ourselves how both archives—which are sometimes cast as separate bodies of “primary” and “secondary” texts—could be sites of intervention for us all, and how those very processes of intervention could allow us to reposition American literature field-making as a collaborative public enterprise.

A number of students embraced the chance to reexamine and extend our course’s questions by creating final projects consistent with themes in the *Learning Legacies* framework. Thus, for example, Sofia Huggins and Mayra Guardiola collaborated in shared study of Isabel Allende’s *Island Beneath the Sea: A Novel*, with each student focusing her analysis in light of scholarly traditions whose growing archives of research resources she had been exploring individually—feminist eco-criticism for Mayra and transatlantic studies’ “take” on race history and slave narratives for Sofia. Combining their respective interpretations to address a different section of Allende’s novel each week, they produced a month-long series of conversational YouTube videos. That is, these two adventurous young scholars transformed a record of their emergent learning into a public legacy text about studying new American literatures dialogically.
That mini-archive now invites others to join the collaboration by adding to the online discussion.

One feature students in the seminar pointed to as cutting across all their end-of-course projects was a willingness to “counter” views of literary Archives (as enacted in curriculum) being determined (solely/mainly) based on ahistorical measures of aesthetic merit. In addition, they contrasted their new view of an ever-evolving Archive of “American Literature” with perceptions about a stable canon. By reenvisioning our work as a broader culture-analyzing and culture-making enterprise, they found, the seminar situated individual texts within a fluid field of social action and thereby encouraged their own sense of individual and collective agency for future shaping of that same dynamic field. Tightly contained archives of “what we should study” shifted to become contingent Archives of ongoing intervention. As an experiment in curriculum, the course itself will bear additional revision. But as a first step, it has surfaced productive approaches for linking literary study with cultural rhetorics—and historical analysis of this academic field with creative generation of new public voices in that landscape.

Researching New Archives’ Growth

Beyond empowering individual students as interpreters and creators of new narratives, and beyond specific curricular innovations, this book will further demonstrate its own value as a cultural resource when new scholarship based in its interpretive framework appears. As the case studies here have demonstrated, social movements accrue enhanced power through purposeful use of shared language—a process facilitated when rhetorical pragmatism is deployed to promote cross-cultural learning. Just so, for example, we’ve seen how Spelman, Hull-House (previously as a settlement, now as a museum), and the NMAI all carry out proactive intercultural stewardship through context-oriented storytelling. So one way to extend the Learning Legacies framework would be to examine how such sites’ narrative-making strategies are being put to similar use in different social contexts today.

Proactive resources to support social action are available in the Archives of multiple cross-cultural teaching sites from the past. While the previous chapters each began by delving into archives with long histories, a worthwhile extension of this book’s argument could immerse, instead, in a nascent archive of current activism. Tapping into just-developing counter-narrative archives could enable us to track their transitions from margin to
center, from exploratory storytelling to efficacious blending of narrative and argument, and from loose coalitions to strong collaborations.

Let me cite an example of one just-emerging archive of learning legacies I hope to investigate in the days ahead. As referenced in chapter 3, Lisa Junkin Lopez, formerly associate director at the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum, recently accepted a position as director of the Juliette Gordon Low Birthplace (JGLB) in Savannah, Georgia. When I caught up with Lisa in a May 2016 conversation, I could hear her excitement about new work being developed to usher Girl Scouts who visit the site toward a strengthened sense of personal agency. In line with the biographical heritage of Low herself, with the national organization’s vision for the site’s potential impact on visitors, and with progressive museum practices she had been applying at Hull-House, Lisa is collaborating with staff there and at the national headquarters to integrate new opportunities for girls’ active learning into the birthplace. To illustrate, she passed along a description of the redesigned library. This updated exhibit was curated (by Cindi Malinick, chief executive of cultural resources for Girl Scouts USA, and Estevan Rael-Gálvez, an independent consultant) before Lopez’s arrival in Savannah; in fact, its vision was one factor persuading her to make the move from the JAHHM to the JGLB. Literacy as a route to agency is at the heart of visitors’ engagement with the library in this reformulated space. “Girls Writing the World: A Library Re-imagined,” a one-page overview prepared by the museum staff, explains how the library has shifted its material/spatial and verbal rhetoric away from its previous framing. Before the revision, the exhibit presented “a southern gentleman’s library,” which “communicat[ed]—tacitly or actively—that reading and writing are the purview [only] of educated men.” Now, through its new design, the library’s identity has indeed been reimagined:

Victorian rosewood bookcases that have long graced the room now hold books written by, for and about women on themes of memory, knowledge, poetry, imagination, and wisdom. These books span many cultures and time periods, and visitors are encouraged to examine books rather than simply admire them through the glass. Another bookcase reveals Juliette’s love of literature and its role in early Girl Scouting with fiction and nonfiction publications for Girl Scouts and writings by Juliette, her mother and grandmother. . . . An interactive table features audio and video content celebrating women and the spoken word through speeches, poetry, storytelling,
and song. . . . When girls visit with their troops, they are prompted to write a poem that they may choose to share while standing beneath an artistic installation of a “Poe-tree,” which represents Juliette’s favorite literary genre. . . . 13

One of my first follow-up research trips after submitting this manuscript will be to the birthplace both of JGL and of US girl scouting—referred to as “the Birthplace.” To build upon the model of Learning Legacies, I hope to explore representative content from the texts girls have composed in the library and to observe occasions of these writing processes in action. I’m also eager to hear from Birthplace staff about how they perceive this new exhibit as an indicator of where the museum itself can go, in the future, to promote engaged learning. What, we might ask together, is the long-term potential of writing-to-learn activities at the Birthplace? How can those composing options be scaffolded for maximum learning impact? In particular, what types of writing, under what conditions for connecting with the Birthplace’s meanings, might be most effective as a bridge to social justice projects?

Given this book’s focus on women’s cross-cultural teaching, addressing such questions in the context of the JGLB setting seems highly appropriate. One challenge facing such public sites, after all, is the need to bridge between historical eras that are far removed from young visitors’ own life experiences and the goals that such institutions aspire to address. If “girls’ culture” today is far different from the context of founder Juliette Gordon Low’s lifetime, there are, nonetheless, potential connections to be made via both the Archive of the founder’s and the Girl Scout organization’s history, as a foundation, and newly made archives of girls’ authorship created at the site. 14 Hopefully, learning legacies of the past, in this case, can help generate new ones.

Another vital archive for scholarly interpretation of cross-cultural learning today resides in the #BlackLivesMatter (BLM) movement. 15 Using social media to reach across spatial divides, BLM leaders build community. Also, by directing their writing to audiences beyond those already committed to their goals, BLM activists cultivate expanded coalitions. Their storytelling invokes critical empathy toward new alliances, so their compositional archives invite scholarly analysis organized around Learning Legacies’ main concepts.

To apply this book’s mixed methods for researching BLM’s stories, we would need to access multiple entry points into its ever-expanding digital
and performative archive. We would need to interpret historically situated instances of this community’s online rhetoric; to engage from a learner stance in shared reflection with its leaders; to locate the movement’s activities within larger social networks; and then to tease out relationships among all these interactive elements of engagement. Exploring the cross-cultural public work of #BlackLivesMatter across time and within specific contexts, we could then identify particular learning legacies from its rhetorical efforts to construct shared knowledge and political commitment. That work, in turn, could support expansion of its goals into other contexts. As in earlier chapters of Learning Legacies, we might begin with a representative cluster of texts from the movement’s record of cultural work—as specific as a string of associated tweets, perhaps. To illustrate, let me reference “The Disruptors,” a 2015 CNN online feature story about the coalition’s leaders.

A series of narrative profiles, “The Disruptors” posited a connection between writing in social media to support the “rallying cry: Black lives mat-
ter” and the ongoing collective enterprise embodied in its slogan, “A movement, not a moment.” In this single online essay, we find one intriguing counter-narrative archive of that larger movement—a small story in itself, yet relevant to the Learning Legacies framework, as signaled in the “Disruptors” title as well as the rhetorical features of its profiles. Along those lines, CNN’s feature report noted: “These activists reside outside traditional institutions and power structures,” with some of the most fully engaged being “better known by their Twitter handles than their real names.” Yet, as if to amend its own initial characterization of #BlackLivesMatter as only loosely organized, CNN’s essay then laid out thirteen story-portraits of movement leaders. These brief but incisive profiles, reminiscent of story portraits presented in the Spelman Founders’ Day performance, highlighted their subjects’ strategic efforts at network-building through language. Whether in online spaces, through oral exchanges, or via appropriation of more traditional genres, CNN’s account indicated, the stories crafted and circulated by these BLM leaders have fostered shared energy and social agency.

In this book’s framing terms, I view the CNN essay as demonstrating how these disruptor-authors use counter-narratives to promote social justice, while simultaneously assembling an archive of learning legacies toward discursive institutionalization of BLM itself. Resisting assumptions about political leadership as best articulated through traditional venues such as print text or formal speeches sanctioned by long-established organizations, #BlackLivesMatter asserts a revisionary rhetoric in part by where its stories of activism so often appear—in social media and on the street.

Therefore, within this story saluting youthful BLM leaders, CNN’s online report both recognized and contributed to an emerging Archive of action residing in alternative public spaces. Thus, as one step toward “organizing the Black Youth Project 100,” CNN observed, BLM leader Charlene Carruthers (also a writer for the #SayHerName campaign and an advocate for increasing the minimum wage), helped facilitate a Chicago-based team responding via “digital town halls” to the verdict absolving George Zimmerman in the Trayvon Martin case. Similarly, as “The Disruptors” essay outlined, DeRay Mckesson has acted on his belief that “social media highlights stories that otherwise would go unnoticed.” He quit his job as an administrator for the Minneapolis Public Schools to travel the country while contributing op-ed pieces to diverse outlets and acquiring so many online followers that his tweets regularly spawn trending hashtags. Along related lines, CNN’s account captioned a photo of Johnetta Elzie with her assertion that social media have enabled “black people to control the narrative
by telling their own stories.” To illustrate her point, the profile highlighted her mapping of police violence in a sophisticated database. And, in another salute to compact storytelling’s ability to marshal organizational strength, “The Disruptors” chronicled how New York’s Michelle Taylor used Twitter to assemble twenty-five leaders in twenty-five cities to set up over one hundred vigils after Michael Brown’s death in Ferguson, Missouri.

By merging astute use of today’s media tools with on-the-scene activism, the movement leaders introduced to readers through CNN’s story bring together counter-narrative composing in popular publication spaces (reminiscent of Jane Addams’s writing for broad audiences in her day) with the kind of street-level, on-site engagement that Hull-House colleague Ellen Gates Starr chose as her own primary route to civic engagement. In that vein, within this single CNN story on BLM, we can identify recurring language as forming a purposeful connective tissue to support the movement’s ongoing institutionalization. That is, both the web-based narrative itself and the rhetoric it identifies with the leaders being profiled are illustrative of, and also contribute to, a growing archive whose still-evolving discourse is becoming a culturally constitutive Archive of shared agency.

Beyond close reading of such texts, another useful methodology for interpreting this burgeoning archive could take its cue from Franco Moretti’s distant reading. As advocated by Moretti and others affiliated with the Stanford Literary Lab, distant reading uses quantitative analysis aided by computational modeling to study literature. While other scholars working under the rubric of what’s sometimes termed “digital humanities” have developed such projects as making the scattered archives of individual writers and even larger literary movements available in online spaces, Moretti’s vision represents a more radical affiliation between “big data” analysis and the study of literature. That is, he advocates assembling huge archive-like databases of language from literary texts and then using quantitative approaches to find meaning within and across that data. By way of such toolkits as corpus linguistics computer programs, distant reading can produce visually oriented, quantitatively conceived analytical records drawn from huge archives of text—for example, diagrams of repeated terms and depictions of cross-text connections shown as building networks of idea exchange. Therefore, using Moretti-style “distant reading” could help us track BLM’s narrative networks in multiple directions.

An admitted downside of Moretti’s method, though, is its tendency to underemphasize the rhetorical goals and impact of individual texts or even particular writers’ oeuvres. So, to incorporate a more mixed-method, rhe-
torical approach that draws on the *Learning Legacies* framework, we could add a step beyond distant reading’s pattern identification to characterize argumentative aims and methods repeated across multiple textual exchanges in various public venues. We could then analyze links between these rhetorical features and particular genres and subgenres being employed. Then, too, we could look at comparable rhetorical features and strategies from related cross-cultural contexts, both to better understand the public work of BLM so far and to identify potential techniques the movement could adopt and/or adapt in the future. Along the way, by connecting BLM discourse analysis to other case studies of learning legacies like the ones in this book, we could do comparative work aimed, ultimately, at enhancing the rhetorical efficacy of the movement itself as a call to social action.

Here are some tentative observations along those lines, drawn only from the limited material of the CNN report. In the counter-narratives of the BLM-affiliated authors profiled there, in their ongoing calls for racial progress, I hear echoes of the early *Spelman Messenger*. Like such *Messenger* storytellers as Nora Gordon and Carrie Walls, these #BlackLivesMatter writers insist upon rights to full citizenship for themselves and their communities, and they do so in part by claiming the race-based intellectual authority that resides within their own arguments. For instance, in a tweet of June 10, 2015, as CNN’s account notes, DeRay McKesson positioned himself within a heritage of discourse affirming black identity while also acknowledging the challenges he faces daily because of his blackness: “I continue to talk about race because race continues to impact my life & the lives of those who look like me.” Meanwhile, in such rhetorical pragmatism as Johnetta Elzie’s data analysis of police brutality patterns, or DeRay McKesson’s addresses to broad audiences online, or Michelle Taylor’s decisive coalition-building, I note parallels with strategies like the *Hull-House Maps and Papers*, and Jane Addams’s tactical deployment of speaking engagements to convey her theories of action, and the settlement’s use of Hull-House theater performances to foster cross-cultural networks. Furthermore, in the use of accessible language sites like Twitter, Instagram, and blogs, as well as in the CNN feature’s emphasis on oral exchanges from #BlackLivesMatter gatherings, I see links to the oral storytelling practices and performance texts for communal learning within Native educational traditions. Overall, texts circulating through this current social movement seem to be deploying genre features developed by other counter-narrative practitioners over time—honied for specific exigencies of their own but available, still, to rhetors speaking from similarly marginalized positions.
today. For instance, the concept and exercise of rhetorical sovereignty as articulated by Native scholars could prove useful to BLM.

In light of such intertextual connections, we might also apply a comparative approach to pursue pedagogical and methodological questions that the CNN narrative itself only implicitly raises. For example, how can a particular teaching text (or a classroom “lesson plan”) be fashioned from multiple archival resources that are still acquiring additional layers of meaning, including through the very process of intertextual narration itself? How can effective new learning legacies be composed when their impact depends on complex, even contradictory, discursive materials continually circulating in the culture of this moment? Such questions are essential to examine through broad-based scholarship in an era when the venues for public exchange are increasingly accessible and fluid, yet simultaneously more complicated to navigate. In such a dynamic communications environment, how might an aspiring cultural steward best construct and circulate pragmatic public rhetorics grounded in attentive Archival study?

As noted in prior chapters, studying Native storytelling as a constructive educational practice grounded in counter-narrative rhetoric has helped me begin to address such questions. Here in this Coda, having presented the series of case studies that formed the central sections of this book, I have been taking a more comparative approach. Thus, I would suggest, to fully mine the example of current counter-narrative rhetorics like #BlackLivesMatter, we stand to enrich our analysis by considering parallel texts from Native activists who have, similarly, documented histories of oppression and their continued repercussions while also envisioning alternative models of social justice for our own time. Cherokee author Thomas King provides us with an especially efficacious text to study as a model that bridges between storytelling and theorizing for cross-cultural teaching.

In *The Truth About Stories*, scholar-writer King uses understatement to assert narrative’s power to inspire ethical action. Telling and retelling stories from his personal life and from the Archive of indigenous traditions, King repeatedly ends these individual narratives with a comment to readers that seems to belie any confidence in Native/First Nations rhetorical pragmatism. Here, for instance, is the close of his first chapter:

Do with it [the story] what you will. Tell it to friends. Turn it into a television movie. Forget it. But don’t say in the years to come that you would have lived your life differently if only you had heard this story.

You heard it now. (29)
Despite this apparent reluctance to claim assured ethical impact for his “native narrative,” King does celebrate that potential through verbal accretion. Building moral force as his stories mount up across the various sections of his book, partly by braiding candid self-critique together with story-illustrated references to cultural theorists from non-Native contexts, King’s message ultimately cannot be missed. *The Truth About Stories* enacts a learning legacy. Consider his closing story, a poignant self-indictment of his “failure” when “Sympathy. Comfort. Understanding” might have helped two friends navigate their adopted daughter’s fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD). After John and wife Amy separated due to the husband’s escalating frustration, King tells us, John supposedly didn’t fault the author for pulling back precisely at the couple’s time of greatest need. But King’s narrative shows that he blames himself. The end commentary of this chapter, also the final one of the collection, pushes readers to confront the ethical arguments embedded in this story and the others in King’s book through a refrain established earlier in the text:

You can have it if you want. John’s story, that is. Do with it what you will. I’d just as soon you forget it, or, at least, not mention my name if you tell it to friends. Just don’t say in the years to come that you would have lived your life differently if only you had heard this story. You’ve heard it now. (167, emphasis in original)

King’s tone may seem far removed from the frequently assertive postings of #BlackLivesMatter, which issue far more direct calls to self-critical empathy and action. But in both cases, moral energy accumulates gradually, as storytellers purposefully shape their own archive of narrative artifacts. Resonating through intertextuality that reinforces specific verbal tools such as irony and direct address to readers, both counter-narrative voices also remind audiences that the social issues being addressed have arisen from another *lived* archive—a legacy of oppression still evident in too many cross-cultural relationships today. In King’s case, for instance, by the time we read of adopted child Samantha’s FASD, we have already encountered a layered sequence of stories documenting the suffering of Native peoples at the hands of white imperialism, including how alcoholism’s assault on indigenous communities can be traced back to settler-colonialists’ introduction of the problem into tribal communities. This counter-narrative rhetoric pushes us to see whites’ historically based moral complicity in the disintegration of John and Amy’s family. Similarly, once we’ve recognized
the recurring connections between black people’s enslavement generations ago and the inescapable heritage of that oppression, then the individual accounts in #BlackLivesMatter’s online postings carry cumulative weight. What’s up to us as readers, in both cases, is how (and whether or not) we will use this Archive toward the kind of productive responses represented by CNN’s aspirational story-portraits in “The Disruptors.” Will these counter-narratives move us to purposeful interventions? And what forms might that action take?

Preparing Students for Rhetorical Citizenship

As we imagine potential avenues to agency accessed by reading a text like Thomas King’s, we should also consider the possible social impact of writing such stories. In that context, as educators, presumably charged with preparing our students for active citizenship, we need to ask: Does learning to enact such storytelling generate greater self-critical empathy and associated capacity to become a community leader? And further, assuming these interconnected activities are mutually reinforcing, how can our teaching of reading and writing “skills” support students’ growth as participants in intercultural networks, as builders of communal learning legacies, and, more specifically, as makers of counter-narratives?

With these questions in mind, as a teacher seeking to enable students’ cross-cultural civic engagement, I want to know more about the prior learning experiences of young leaders such as those profiled in CNN’s #BlackLivesMatter story. Intriguingly, imbedded within the profiles of CNN’s report, I see an implied link between the educational backgrounds of those young leaders and their current cultural work. Michelle Taylor was trained as a social worker. Brittany Packnett had a career as a third grade teacher and, later, as the director of the St. Louis chapter of Teach for America. Shaun King, raised in rural Kentucky, is a Morehouse graduate. Ashley Yates, CNN reports, “became politicized as a teenager, when her aunt introduced her to the writings of James Baldwin, Sonia Sanchez, and Assata Shakur.” Who were Ashley’s other teachers, including those at the University of Missouri? Who, at Morehouse, given that institution’s heritage as a molder of black male leaders, may have helped inspire Shaun toward activism, and how? Which teachers (including peers) encouraged Umi Selah when he “joined the student government at Florida A&M” and “co-founded a coalition for justice” there? Were there university-based mentors for these young leaders’ learning about how to craft their current social media counter-narratives? I hope so.
I am currently seeking to act on that hope by supporting a student-led project called GlobalEX. As I write this Coda, in the summer of 2016, this initiative is still in its infancy. It has grown out of a still-developing cross-cultural collaboration. While I was serving as acting dean for the Honors College, two energetic students—Brian Niebuhr and Ryker Thompson—came to my office one afternoon to pose a cluster of interrelated questions. How, they wondered, could the social boundaries between TCU’s increasing numbers of international students and the US-based majority be blurred? What kinds of structured experiences might we create to support bridge-building between those groups? And, assuming we could carry out such a project, how would we assess its impact?

Brian, whose family had hosted several exchange students during his high school years, emphasized that these queries did not represent a wish to “look after” international peers, as if they were somehow less capable academically (quite the contrary, he noted) or uninterested in forming social ties with others from beyond their own homelands. Rather, he stressed, we should be proactively promoting ways that “domestic” students could learn from international ones—so that the two groups might create shared knowledge about each other and about global issues of importance to all.

As a member of the university’s Discovering Global Citizenship faculty and staff committee, originally formed in conjunction with our Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) on global learning, I was eager to address these questions collaboratively. We initiated a conversation with staff leaders of the International Student Services team—John Singleton, Liz Branch, and James English. Soon, our inquiry had moved from tentative conversations to formation of a student leadership team, with four members coming from our campus’s current international cohort and four from the “domestic”/US side. Looking to encourage sustainability beyond a pilot year, students who came on board were all, save one, freshmen. Throughout spring semester 2016, we met regularly. The task we set for ourselves was to envision a pilot program aimed at incoming first-year students in the class of 2020, to launch in fall 2016.

As lead facilitator, Brian began each meeting by revisiting the goals we established in our preliminary discussions and continued to refine over time:

- To provide domestic students with international experience on campus, promoting “Local-Global” learning;
- To promote international students’ ability to share knowledge about their home cultures;
• To encourage collaborative learning and reporting on that learning through shared experiences.

By the close of that semester, we had a timeline of activities projected for fall and a to-do list for everyone involved (students [both US-based and international], faculty, and staff) to address, in subgroups or pairs, over the summer. We had tapped several additional project partners from around campus—such as the New Media Writing Studio, whose staff will help us create and maintain an online storytelling space. We had envisioned a structure that would recruit a mix of international and US-based students, then place them in teams of four. Each team, we planned, would move through two stages of shared knowledge-building, first about each other and about global resources on campus and in the metro, second about localized versions of global issues.

In stage one, called EXplore, teams will collaboratively decide on two activities to carry out together as a step toward constructing a “third space” of cross-cultural inquiry, blending their diverse perspectives. These shared learning activities could be as simple, initially, as attending a university-sponsored lecture or film on a global topic together, or visiting a local consulate, or meeting up for dinner with an alumnus who had held a Fulbright Fellowship to hear about the program’s structure. In stage two, teams will move to shared social action as each group chooses a particular issue to research in depth in collaboration with community partners (EXchange phase). In a third step (EXtend), every team will develop a strategy for sharing their new knowledge publicly, with campus and community audiences: approaches for this stage might include hosting a forum, giving a performance, or mounting an exhibit. And, for the TCU students, a culminating goal will be to create team-made stories documenting their own learning. Using a web-based reporting space, we aspire to create a start-up archive of learning legacies, a cultural resource for community members within and beyond the university—one that will expand in succeeding years as the project renews itself annually with new participants.

By the time you (my readers) hold this book in your hands, or encounter this text on a screen, we imagine that the GlobalEX project will be well on its way to intercultural storytelling. With the “EX” designating progressive stages of exploration, shared experience, and civic exchange, all of us involved in this pilot project hope you will “google” into our archive via TCU’s New Media Writing Studio, then adapt what you find there to start imagining community-building projects of your own. In line with the
Learning Legacies framework I have been presenting here, I suspect you’ll see some counter-narrative features in the project’s records of work. Situated in a social space outside of a formal academic curriculum, GlobalEX aspires to resist disciplinary constraints, overcome the tight limits of typical school calendars, and undermine the prescriptively performative expectations for students associated with having to earn grades. Organized to operate through a students-leading-students model, some stories will likely be more detailed, vibrant, creative, and thoughtful than others. Some will probably be more clearly grounded than others in the GlobalEX project’s stated goals. But if only a few achieve a stance of critical empathy, if only a few compellingly “story” collaborative social action, if only a few are positioned to enable readers’ applications in other contexts, then, we think, the pilot will have been successful. In any case, we invite you to examine GlobalEX for yourself.

Writing New Stories of Cross-Cultural Learning

By now, assuming you’ve read this far, it’s doubtless become clear that I hope this book has generated a viable learning legacy of its own. To act on that legacy’s aspirations, one venue would certainly be the classroom, so I’ve tried at various places throughout the text to offer up conceptual models that can operate in diverse instructional settings. In this Coda, I’ve gone a step further: I’ve described several specific teaching applications, from individual “lesson-plan” to syllabus-construction level. Another pathway for applying the book’s core content, as suggested in the section just above, would extend students’ (and educators’) shared inquiry and new archival production into the larger community through collaborative projects along the lines of GlobalEX or the Keeping and Creating American Communities program revisited at various points earlier.

A third approach to producing learning legacies entails rethinking scholarship—that is, embracing narratives about collaborative learning and stories about cross-cultural teaching as vehicles for creating academic knowledge. Although I’m hoping the book, as a whole, has successfully demonstrated this pathway, I want to close by honoring two role models whose examples of disseminating learning legacies in their own writing have been especially helpful to me—Sabine Smith and Diane Glancy. I’ll reference mentor texts from each below.

First, let me address a question about the organization of this Coda itself. Why end with writing about writing? For one thing, writing our own
learning legacies helps us accrue experiential authority to enable our students to do the same. That is, consistent with principles I’ve internalized through the National Writing Project, if I want to nurture students’ abilities as writers in particular genres, I need to be a writer too, working in the same forms I am asking students to employ. And as educators, wherever we work—classroom or museum, service organization or informal community group—one of our primary roles is to prepare our students for civic engagement, an ongoing enterprise for which activist literacies are essential. Therefore, based on the case studies I’ve explored in this book, I am now cultivating my own and my students’ capabilities for creating and deploying new counter-narratives, for generating new archives of social action, and for extending the most productive Archives that are already around us, awaiting our efforts to delve into them for everyday use.

If I want to hone my ability to write in such a way, I need to give time to (and carve our professional space for) that priority. Recently, when re-reading notes from my interview with Lisa Lee, former director of the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum, I came across her comments about Addams and Ellen Gates Starr choosing different foci to claim civic leadership themselves. According to Lee, Starr was more committed to “hitting the street,” marching with striking women garment workers, for instance, whereas Addams was more inclined to publish a compelling narrative about such demonstrations and their implications. Lee’s observation resonated with Addams’s own account, in her Twenty Years at Hull-House text, of struggling to find a balance between doing settlement work and writing about it.

For scholar-teachers committed to the public humanities today, finding a balance between doing activist cultural work and writing about it is just as difficult. So I don’t have a magic formula for achieving that balance. I’ve come to understand that collaborative writing, enacted in various configurations, is one way to integrate social action and authorship. Collaboration is time-consuming in itself, of course. But, to see its benefits, we need only look at examples like Jane Addams Hull-House Museum curators’ shared reporting on their site-based cultural work, the annual performances at Spelman’s Founders Day, or recent publications like Survivance, Sovereignty, and Story (emerging over time from collaborative pedagogy workshops by a network of Native scholars). And I can also point to individual role models whose negotiation of this mandate to write via collaborative pathways about their own learning legacies guides my own efforts.

One is Sabine H. Smith, with whom (along with Federica Santini) I co-edited Bridging Cultures, a volume of essays by expatriate women academics
about finding their place in the US academy. Each essay addresses both personal and institutional frameworks of action for “bridging cultures.” Sabine’s story achieves especially notable rhetorical power. Consistent with gendered traditions that link the domestic and the political, she courageously positions her own intercultural learning within a complex familial context. Thus, her essay describes a cross-generational conflict connected to her German father’s role in, and view of, World War II. In a vivid account of dialogue typical of her uncomfortable visits home, she invites readers both to empathize with Germans seeking to re-vise their personal histories in relation to larger historical narratives and to draw from that complicated learning legacy in ways that will support social justice. These are the very Archival resources she excavates to inform her own cultural stewardship for students in her US classroom today. When Sabine describes her public scholarship projects—such as joining a Holocaust Studies teaching team in Israel or leading students from Atlanta through site visits to former concentration camps—we come to recognize how this scholarly work embodies both a personal and a communal counter-narrative. For me, her writing model is an equally inspiring benchmark, urging me to take on challenging contexts of intercultural learning, as well as to share stories, from a self-critical stance about those experiences.

Along related lines, I’ve written earlier in this volume about Diane Glancy’s impact on the Keeping and Creating American Communities project through her teaching about Pushing the Bear. To affirm, here, the longstanding influence of her role model as guiding my writing as well, let me describe my takeaways from two of her more recent narratives. A prolific author of fiction on Native themes, Glancy is also a thoughtful analyst of her own composing processes and of ways that her texts address both literary/aesthetic and educational goals. Her multigenre Designs of the Night Sky and the “Afterword” to Pushing the Bear: After the Trail of Tears, volume two of her Removal narrative, are prime examples.

In Designs, Glancy has created Ada Ronner, a librarian in the Manuscripts and Rare Books Library at an Oklahoma college, and has given this unconventional teacher figure imaginative access to voices from the Native past. Archives, for Ada, become accessible voices shaping what Michel de Certeau calls the practice of everyday life. As Glancy notes in her “Preface,” “The novel is a weaving of contemporary voices with several old texts, such as the historical journal of the Cherokee Removal from the South–east to Indian Territory (present Oklahoma).” Ada’s story also integrates events from that “turbulent history of a tribe and the survivors of that history still
caught in turmoil” (xi–xii). This novel’s braiding together of diverse textual forms enables Glancy to raise questions about the relationships between oral and written culture, between books and historical documents, between special collections and public access, between story and lived experience, between author and audience, between the science of formal history and the magic of communally composed words, between culture-making and natural forces like “designs in the night sky,” and between artifacts of all kinds and our ways of understanding them. Ada’s brand of scholarship—a stand-in for Glancy’s with its commitment to communal epistemologies?—embodies a counter-narrative type of knowledge-making, an approach more open-ended and interpersonal than academic, in the traditional sense. Creating a story that is also about the importance of stories and communal storytelling for cultural stewardship, Glancy in this novel conveys a larger agenda for her own work as an author-teacher and, potentially, for others who would write in the service of community-building while, always, encouraging other voices to join in.

Glancy knows such work is difficult. Her account of her process for producing the two Pushing the Bear counter-narratives, which reclaimed Removal history through Native storytelling, takes readers along from her early inquiry to her composing stages. Accordingly, her “Afterword” to the second volume of that writing project begins by reflecting back on her girlhood learning about the Trail of Tears when she visited her father’s people in Oklahoma. She relocated there after college, she says, and then “began to feel again the presence of that unknown history” (187). To access individual stories that might open up that suppressed cultural heritage, Glancy attended an outdoor drama in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. (That anecdote, for me, conjured up memories of my own family’s attendance at “Unto These Hills” in western North Carolina, both as a child with my parents and as a parent with my daughters, a generation later.) She also “visited research libraries and eventually drove the nine hundred miles of the trail, from New Echota, Georgia, to Fort Gibson, Oklahoma, which was called Indian Territory at the time.” Glancy’s emphasis on how “passing over the land” enabled her “to hear the voices of the people in [her] imagination” (187) reconfirmed, as I was writing this book, that an archive can be far more varied in its make-up than the stereotyped portrait of musty documents encased in a library. Her associated explanation that this imaginative step from travel into “giving voice to history” nurtured my own sense of how multifaceted study of a place-based archive (whether Spelman’s Sisters Chapel and quadrangle, Hull-House’s dining room, or the NMAI’s soar-
ing architecture) can open up deeper layers of a cross-cultural Archive. In Glancy’s case, her combination of seeing a performance about the Removal, visiting traditional research libraries, and retraveling the trail herself prepared her to assemble a “communal first-person” viewpoint for her first volume of *Pushing the Bear*, “the one-as-all, as opposed to Western culture’s emphasis on the individual” (188). Her inquiry for the second volume was similar. That is, her research for *After the Trail of Tears* affiliated this account with her “other books of historical narrative,” such as the *Stone Heart* story of Sacajawea and the recovery of Kateri Tekakwitha’s personal history (193) in *The Reason for Crows*. All in all, her reflective memoir of process conveyed a lived-in-place and traveling-across-time commitment to nurturing communities today.

Glancy’s culminating image for this “Afterword” on composing “a created voice into historical narrative” comes to her readers as a photograph—a picture of a “rock” that she picked up “at Fort Gibson, the arrival point” that was also the beginning for *After the Trail of Tears*. With this anecdote, Glancy asserts the most humble artifacts’ concrete yet imaginative contribution to composing a learning legacy. Through her “picking up” image, she suggests that, with care, any of us can begin connecting to valuable Archives, both in and across time and space.

Like Thomas King’s *The Truth About Stories*, Diane Glancy’s accounts of narrative-making stop short of claiming a direct social efficacy for such writing. Both of those author-activists leave the doing of cultural work (even if inspired by their storytelling) up to their readers. So here again, a student grateful for others’ guidance, I will follow their lead. If you, like those wise mentors, want to move from Archive to action, from counter-narrative study to the purposeful shaping of future social history, from recovering learning legacies to composing and circulating your own, then I hope the stories I’ve shared here will help you find your path.