

# LUMINOUS LITERACIES

# ADVANCES IN RESEARCH ON TEACHING

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ADVANCES IN RESEARCH ON TEACHING VOLUME 36

**LUMINOUS LITERACIES:  
LOCALIZED TEACHING  
AND TEACHER EDUCATION**

EDITED BY

**MARY F. RICE**

*University of New Mexico, USA*

And

**ASHLEY K. DALLACQUA**

*University of New Mexico, USA*



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## ABOUT THE EDITORS

**Mary F. Rice**, PhD, is an Assistant Professor of Literacy at the University of New Mexico. Her research uses material/new material lenses to study digital literacies and identities. She is also the author of *Adolescent Boys' Literate Identity* (Emerald, 2011) and the editor of *Exploring Pedagogies for Diverse Learners Online* (Emerald, 2015).

**Ashley K. Dallacqua**, is an Assistant Professor of Literacy at the University of New Mexico. Her scholarship focuses on multimodal approaches to literacy, particularly teaching and learning with comics.

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## ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

**Mark R. Bailon** is pursuing his Master of Business Administration after receiving his Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education. He is interested in multimodal literacy with a special interest in digital literacy and gaming. Mark will utilize his experience, learning, and passion to build and understand the rise of esports and competitive gaming.

**Damon R. Carbajal** (he/el) is a gay, queer Chicana educator, scholar, and activists. He holds a BA in Secondary Education, an MA in Chicana/o/x Studies, and a certificate in “Race” and Social Justice from the University of New Mexico. His work aims at recentering lost voices in educational spaces with a focus on social justice pedagogy.

**Rachel Goar** is a wife and a mother of two beautiful daughters. She has called New Mexico her home since she was three years old. She has been a general education teacher for nine years. She recently received her Master of Arts degree and discovered a passion for critical literacies.

**Miles Madison Harvey**, PhD, is a middle school Media Literacy Educator, Esports Coach, and Adjunct Instructor at the University of New Mexico.

**Eli Henley** is a Freelance Artist living in Albuquerque, New Mexico, engaging in photography, film, music, mechanics, and construction.

**Michelle Jewett**, PhD, has worked with students and teachers in K-12 schools and college classrooms for over 23 years.

**Rick Marlatt**, PhD, is an Associate Professor of English Language Arts and Literacy at New Mexico State University. His work bridges the fields of teacher education, creative writing, digital literacies, literature study, and sociocultural theory.

**Natalie Martinez**, PhD, (K’awaika-meh) teaches at the University of New Mexico. Her copublications include: *Indigenous Wisdom (2012-2017*, Indian Pueblo Cultural Center) and *Indigenous New Mexico* (pending, Indian Education Division, NMPED). She has also published a curriculum guide to *An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States for Young People* (2019) and a dissertation, *Secondary Schooling and Indigenous Pueblo Youth: Dynamics of Power* (2011).

**Richard J. Meyer**, PhD, has been an educator for over 45 years. He is a Regents’ Professor Emeritus from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, and

continues activist work with *Working Families Party*, *Bend the Arc*, and *Uniting to Save Our Schools*, of which he is one of the founding organizers (USOS).

**Monique Montoya** was born and raised in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She attended the University of New Mexico and graduated in May 2020 with her Bachelor of Special and General Education with a concentration in English. Montoya currently teaches 9th grade Special Education English Language Arts at Rio Grande High School.

**Ashley Nowikowski** is a Math Teacher in Albuquerque Public Schools. She graduated with a BSEd from the University of New Mexico. She has a passion for LGBTQIA+-inclusion and representation in schools. Her interests include reading young adult literature, exploring New Mexico, and creating safe spaces for all students.

**Bridg Ovitt** is a PhD Candidate at the University of New Mexico in the United States. The focus of her studies is in writing development. She has taught English and History at the secondary level in Albuquerque, New Mexico for over 20 years. She lives in Albuquerque with her husband and two daughters.

**Lucretia E. Penny Pence**, PhD, taught at the secondary level for 18 years and was a teacher educator for 20. She is Associate Professor Emerita at the University of New Mexico.

**Isabella Perea** is a PhD Student at Arizona State University in Tempe. Prior to pursuing her doctorate, Isabella earned two degrees (BA and MA) from the University of New Mexico. Isabella has worked with young adults in many settings, including the juvenile justice system and as a middle school teacher.

**Brittany R. Raymond** is a Language Arts Teacher in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She has a Master of Arts degree in Curriculum and Instruction with a concentration in Trauma and Resilience in Educational Spaces. She is passionate about creating student-centered opportunities to address trauma and build resilience in the classroom.

**Rebecca M. Sánchez**, PHD/MFA, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Teacher Education, Educational Leadership, and Policy at the University of New Mexico. She teaches courses in social studies education, social justice, and curriculum development. She seeks to expose students and teachers to the place-based social studies of New Mexico.

**Annmarie Sheahan**, PhD, is an Assistant Professor of English at Western Washington University. She taught high school in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where much of her scholarship and community work remains centered. Annmarie's recent publications can be found in the *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *English Journal*, and *Race Ethnicity and Education*.

**Gloria A. Valderrama Polo** is an English Language Development Teacher for Albuquerque Public Schools. She holds an MA in Art Education and an MA in Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies (LLSS) with a Bilingual Education concentration from the University of New Mexico (UNM). She is currently a third-year doctoral student in LLSS with a concentration in Literacy at UNM.

**Don Zancanella**, PhD, is an Emeritus Professor at the University of New Mexico and former chair of the Conference on English Education. At the University of New Mexico, he was chair of the Department of Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies and program coordinator for Secondary Education.

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# LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

<i>Mark R. Bailon</i>	University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico
<i>Damon R. Carbajal</i>	University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico
<i>Rachel Goar</i>	Los Lunas Public Schools, Los Lunas, New Mexico
<i>Miles Madison Harvey</i>	University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico
<i>Eli Henley</i>	Freelance Artist, Albuquerque, New Mexico
<i>Michelle Jewett</i>	Central New Mexico Community College, Albuquerque, New Mexico
<i>Rick Marlatt</i>	New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico
<i>Natalie Martinez</i>	University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico
<i>Richard J. Meyer</i>	University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico
<i>Monique Montoya</i>	University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico
<i>Ashley Nowikowski</i>	University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico
<i>Brigid Ovitt</i>	University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico
<i>Lucretia E. Penny Pence</i>	University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico
<i>Isabella Perea</i>	University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico
<i>Brittany R. Raymond</i>	Albuquerque Public Schools, Albuquerque, New Mexico
<i>Rebecca M. Sánchez</i>	University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico
<i>Annmarié Sheahan</i>	Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington

- Gloria A. Valderrama Polo* Albuquerque Public Schools, Albuquerque,  
New Mexico
- Don Zancanella* University of New Mexico, Albuquerque,  
New Mexico

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*Rachel Rickard Rebellino*, Bowling Green University, Ohio

*Eileen Shanahan*, Eastern Kentucky University, Kentucky

*Amanda Sladek*, University of Nebraska–Kearney

*Mark Stevens*, Fairfax County Public Schools, Virginia

*Connor Warner*, University of Utah

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# **INTRODUCTION: HONORING LOCAL LITERACIES AND LOCAL LITERACY PRACTICES**

Mary F. Rice and Ashley Kaye Dallacqua

Like many in the United States and abroad, students and teachers in New Mexico inherit a legacy of colonization – where school policies imposed by dominant groups have been working to strip away their language and culture. By many accounts, these efforts have been more than successful (Spring, 2016). As a consequence, teachers in New Mexico do their work in the face of a national narrative that they and the children they serve are simply not good enough – especially in reading and other aspects of literacy (Nott, 2015). Folded into this narrative is a larger story that teachers all over the country are dispensable, despite the fact that many areas report dire shortages (Einkel, 2019). Under such conditions, it is no wonder that literacy teachers experience great anxiety as they strive to grow and develop as professionals (Mahmoodi-Shahreabaki, 2017). Teacher education practices that focus on the local curriculum for teachers as well as students are increasingly important (Rice & Dallacqua, 2018). In our context of New Mexico in the Southwestern United States, localizing meant embracing visual and multimodal frames, challenging the colonial narratives operating in the state, honoring the multiple languages, and indeed reconsidering all the ways in which dominant views of race, class, sex, gender, religion, and more could be updated.

The chapters in this book share examples of teachers and teacher educators using local knowledges to illustrate the practical of curriculum making (Schwab, 1969). Instead of painting a dark picture, the authors seek to illuminate spaces that “...promote practices which both expand and legitimize students’ literacy toolkits” (Lizárraga & Gutiérrez, 2018, p. 41). As editors, we present layers of literacy stories from a set of dedicated educators from diverse races, cultures, languages, gender and sexual identities, educational positions, and life experiences. These teachers and teacher-educators share narratives about experiences in teacher preparation courses, classrooms, and community spaces in New Mexico. More than an “ah ha” moment, educators share moments when they made striking connections, understood new ideas about their students, came to understand the context of their teaching in ways that truly altered their practice, and interrogated their assumptions about what must be (Rice, 2020). In these pages are deeply personal experiences that impact how teachers across the state read, teach, and engage with literacy. Their work highlights thoughtful, critical choices in literacy practices that reflect a diversity of identities in New Mexico. In

so doing, these educators present counternarratives to literacy knowing and learning in places with extensive colonial histories (Milner & Howard, 2013). These narratives provide vivid demonstrations of what literacy is, how literacies are positioned in communities and contexts, and how literacies come alive as they are taught.

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