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## ON THE PAGE AND IN OUR LIVES

Christina M. LaVecchia, Allison D. Carr,  
Laura R. Micciche, Hannah J. Rule, and Jayne E. O. Stone

*Is this really about revision?*

Early in our work on this volume, we had accepted abstracts that looked to be exactly what we asked for: reflections on revision. However, as the chapters began rolling in, they seemed also—in some cases quite prominently—to be reflections on collaboration, or composition, or identity configuration, or professional maneuvering. We loved the stories contributing authors were telling. They took us off the page, showing us children interrupting the scene of revising a grant to ask questions about God’s gender (Wallis-Thomas), a faculty of color detailing injurious mistreatment to recast a whitewashed narrative of their resignation (Martinez), a student-teacher collaborative approach to a traditionally top-down practice, drafting a letter of recommendation (Becker, Blewett, and Sohan). But, were these stories really about revision?

We began to question the assumptions we had brought into this project about how the moves of revision can be made visible. When we wrote the CFP, we thought “bits of or clips from actual text(s) in progress” would capture observable data, trace action in a scene, record activity in and around writing. Yet we began to recognize that the experiences of revising relayed by contributors often didn’t “stay put” or cohere around demonstrable examples. Revision wasn’t limited to textual change; it became a life activity, immersed in conversation, family life, collaboration, identity formation, years of thinking and rethinking, moments of conflict and resolution, problem-solving, political and social upheaval. Like air, revision seemed to fill all available space.

As the five of us talked on Zoom about the chapter submissions and emerging book (originally subtitled “Showing and Narrating Revision in Action”), we began to accept that seeing revision in action isn’t as simple and transparent a task as showing “bits or clips” would suggest. Just as revision moves, so too did our expectations as we took direction from our contributors, whose work urged us to honor revision’s vitality

through stories that immersed us in rooms, life circumstances, and practices where revision comes to life.

### ON STORIES

In foregrounding story, we are aware of writing ourselves into existing traditions. Storytelling has long been an accepted mode of knowledge-making in writing studies, owed largely to people of color who, as Victor Villanueva (2010) has written, combine “storytelling mixed with evidence of various other sorts” to demonstrate that “understanding humanity’s humanity can best be attained through telling our own stories of ourselves” (131). Indeed, BIPOC scholars have made a convincing case for story as method: story is central to Indigenous epistemologies, rhetorics, and practices and to nondominant cultures and discourses more broadly due in no small part to story’s ability to push back on master narratives and emphasize lived experiences and relationality.<sup>1</sup>

In her 2012 CCCC Chair’s Address, Malea Powell establishes that stories, always emplaced, “are anything but easy” (384). On the contrary, Powell insists, “When I say story, I mean an event in which I try to hold some of the complex shimmering strands of a constellative, epistemological space long enough to share them with you” (384). Illustrating the difficulty of this work, contributor Madhu writes about not fitting into stories of the discipline: “And when I have tried to articulate my concerns, I have felt subdued, shamed, and disciplined” (390). Over the course of the address, we come to see how “stories produce habitable spaces” (391), as Powell puts it. This powerful idea resonates with the work of Aja Y. Martinez (also a contributor to this volume). She has advanced a counterstory methodology, which “gather[s] and shape[s] data into counterstory contexts and characters” in order to “empower the minoritized through the formation of stories that disrupt the erasures embedded in standardized majoritarian methodologies” (2020, 3). Beyond framing story as a way to document and understand experience, counterstory theorizes racialized experiences, serving an activist function by “exposing stereotypes and injustice and offering additional truths through a narration of the researchers’ own experiences” (2020, 17). Turning an analytical eye toward such counternarratives, the recent special issue of *Journal for the History of Rhetoric*, “Americas,” functions as a polyvocal revision of “whitestream[ed]” (Cedillo 2021, 18) history and mythology of North American settler colonialism. It features, for example, discussion of the rhetorical nuances and cultural function of “the Talk” in African American households (Erby 2021),

racial scripts enabling and endorsing violence at the conclusion of the Mexican-American War (Cedillo 2021), and public performances of “haunting” to challenge public memory of colonial violence in Mexico (Fernandez 2021).

While story can be revisionary and politically potent, it can also be a means for teacher-scholars to narrate the ordinariness of professional work: writing, learning, teaching. For example, Tom Waldrep’s edited collection, *Writers on Writing* (1985), features first-person essays by writing scholars that respond to the question, *How do you write?* Contributors narrate their writing practices, often noting that they don’t use strategies they teach in their own classes, and generate insights about writing that travel across differing experiences and localities. Fifteen years later, in another edited collection, Richard H. Haswell and Min-Zhan Lu called for “oral narratives from the field, stories that are actually told in the classroom, in the halls, over the tutor’s table, in committee rooms, on street corners, over the kitchen table, wherever” (2000, 227). The resulting book, *Comp Tales*, features 108 essayists and eleven chapters that “show how storytelling indeed works in collaboration to define and redefine relations and issues central to the field” (2000, x). More recently, the Digital Archive of Literacy Narratives, established in 2007, continues to collect stories about learning to read, write, and communicate from both the discipline and the public. These collections form a central (and well-traveled) methodological orientation for writing studies that constructs story as located, experiential, and cultural and as a form of situated knowledge-making.<sup>2</sup>

Narrative has also been a familiar tool by which teacher-scholars inter-rogate and navigate their professional roles. *Kitchen Cooks, Plate Twirlers and Troubadours: Writing Program Administrators Tell Their Stories* (1999), edited by Diana George, includes narratives about administrator life that detail bouts with anxiety, divorce, overwork, and emotional instability. In a similar vein, essays in *What to Expect When You’re Expected to Teach: The Anxious Craft of Teaching Composition* (Bramblett and Knoblauch 2002) use humor and empathy to help new teachers in the field gain perspective on the challenging, upsetting, and sometimes gratifying experiences familiar to new teachers. In doing so, the editors hope that new teachers will feel less alone as they encounter bumps along the way. *Women’s Ways of Making It in Rhetoric and Composition* (Ballif, Davis, and Mountford 2008) and *Stories of Becoming: Demystifying the Professoriate for Graduate Students in Composition and Rhetoric* (Lutkewitte, Kitchens, Scanlon 2022) likewise use story to illustrate what challenges and advancement look like from different—though not consistently inclusive—professional

and personal locations. And beyond the permeable edges of writing studies as a field, narrative or storytelling is a trusted method in sociology, medicine, and interdisciplinary contexts, one that strives to complicate the landscape within which officials, advocates, and communities make decisions.<sup>3</sup> In all, this body of research ties narrative to a range of embodied experiences, a linkage that plays out across this volume.

We embrace story and its multiple, entangled, and often denigrated traditions as important context for this project. Far from new and far from belonging to one single tradition, story allows for multivocal accounts, functions as a tool for describing revision's relationality to everything else, invites embodiment into the conversation, enables theorizing to make larger claims, and brings to light experiences that might be hushed, suppressed, or otherwise privatized. Because they describe being somewhere, stories tell us what something feels like from a location, a body. And stories are forged, never relayed preformed—their telling, a reflective and creative act from which the teller and audience can learn. Story makes room for internal and external factors that come to bear on revising, allowing feelings and storage boxes and years of rethinking to resurface and stick around. Stories intentionally place value on the holistic quality of revising as a lived bodily experience as well as a process of word and image work.

### ON REVISION

Because revision is so elusive, narration becomes essential for revealing what happens, particularly off the page. That said, chapters within do contain revision's artifactual presence—marked-up sentences from drafts, excerpts from reader reports, screen grabs, text messages. These instances act as cues that help writers find their way back to revising in situ and forward to revision stories. But though it opens that shimmery, fleeting epistemological space (Powell 2012), narration doesn't guarantee we're getting the whole story. Indeed, while contributors in this volume share some stories—certain and obvious to their tellers—that follow a clear arc, other revision stories struggle to be told at all, never quite coherently answering “what's the story here?” Fittingly, then, embedded in the development of this volume is the failure of a totalizing, stable representation of revision (we think of cover art contributor Ian Golding on this point—revision is pesky, maybe even impossible to visually represent). The fact is that most often writers compose without preserving their process (maybe unless they're being studied) and without retaining or even having access to what they did when they

were doing it, in the moment or retrospectively. Revision and its traces often disappear.

But *attempts* to capture revision—through storytelling, through retrospective recreation—prove illuminating. These attempts represent choices authors make to tell their revision stories in one way and not another and to create meaning from experiences that might otherwise have seemed too mundane to recount or too unconnected to be considered relevant. What results in this collection is a wide range of revision stories. We see contributors become nostalgic and grateful when thinking about revision (Medina), and we see them become hyperaware of linearity in order to make sense of revision as a temporal act (Duffy). Others tie revision to morality and ethics (Becker, Blewett, and Sohan; R. Sánchez) and to lifespan or career arc (Harris; Wenger). We see dependencies on others or the desire for others to get involved (Comi and Russell; Hidalgo) and revision as frustratingly other-focused (Golding). We see revision constructed as an act of resistance (Harris; Martinez) and a form of accommodation (Basgier; Garcia). And we see revision as craft, woven into cultural and personal life (Fulford and Frigo; Sills and F. Sánchez; Wallis-Thomas), imbricated in design (Shivener), and re-lived as an act of personal inventory (Tellez-Trujillo; Wallis-Thomas). These dizzying differences consolidate around the idea that revision takes shape on the page and in our lives and in places in between. Given revision's everywhere-and-nowhere quality, this volume explores, among other things, how it can be seen or represented.

We believe that showing the hard-to-represent holistic quality of revising serves academic writers of all varieties. Nancy Sommers (1980, 1992), Wayne Peck (1990), and Alice Horning (2002), among others, have concluded from their research that writers are oftentimes eager to revise but don't know how to do it or can't muster the follow-through. The chapters in this book, which illustrate how professional writers in writing studies revise (or don't!) in all of their situated messiness, serve as mentor-texts. They carry the potential to illuminate strategies of persistence (or resistance) that advance writing and thinking, whether advancement results in radical, discrete changes or no change at all in one's texts. Contributors narrate revision from various locations: writers across the life cycle, writers of color, writers with disabilities, novice and veteran scholars, collaborative teams, writing program administrators, advanced graduate students, and faculty across rank and institution type.

As editors, we too come to this project with stances defined by our positionalities and professional locations. Between the lot of us, we connect with multiple identity descriptors, some of which include cisgender,

white, mixed-race, middle-class with family roots in the working-class, woman, heterosexual, pansexual, Midwesterner, single mother, mother, spouse, and disabled. As well, we occupy various professional locations: full, associate, and assistant professor, qualitative researcher, graduate student, past and current directors of various institutional programs. The seedling for this book was planted in communication between Jayne and Laura, and once it was clear the idea had deep roots, the other three editors—frequent collaborators—agreed to participate. Each of us has different connections to the intellectual work of this volume, but more than anything, we like to work together; we like seeing what ideas bubble up when we put our heads together or, as the case may be, knock heads on our way to (imperfect) agreement.

When it comes to our own revision practices, like our contributors, we refuse to be limited by track changes. In fact some of us are “page-avoidant,” working on ideas or noodling on a problem in the Drafts section of our email accounts (“emailing isn’t writing”), or away from screens entirely, penciling in the margins, while others need to talk through in-process writing, relying on the company of writing groups, running pals, or even just jabber-jawing it out on a voice memo. Others can’t or won’t talk at all about what we’re working on. We revise while our kids nap, or in notes tapped out in the parking lot during weekend errands. Some of us are deadline-oriented, while at least one of us feels most capable of revision while the deadline for something entirely unrelated is bearing down. Like most writers, we have highly particular and maybe even somewhat neurotic rituals for what we do with our excised leftovers and who gets the first look and when. We revise on long walks or, frustratingly, while staring at the ceiling at 4:15 a.m. We have Big Feelings about revising. Maybe something we agree on: writing is only revision. We are revising before the cursor even blinks on a new document, and we are revising even when the project is in the rearview mirror.

In other words, there’s nothing systematic about how we revise. Writing researchers would likely feel affirmed reading this, as most work on revision finds it to be plenty inscrutable or elusive. In 1981, Ann E. Berthoff advanced what she called a “tendentious” claim: “revision is poorly taught, or is not taught at all, because composition teachers and composition textbook authors often do not know how writing gets written” (1981, 20). Just a few years later, accomplished scholar David Bartholomae, who clearly knows how to get writing done, characterizes revision as an opaque process that involves “pushing at the first sentence” and then finding that ten pages later he is “following a line

of thought that was repressed in the first writing” (1985, 24). Naming it “one of the great secrets of our profession,” Nancy Sommers says of her own approach to revision: “I take lots of showers, hot showers, talking to myself as I watch the water play against the gestures of my hands” (1992, 28). More recently, in Christine Tulley’s *How Writing Faculty Write*, Thomas Rickert speaks of revision as the most central experience of academic writing: “The most inventive material you will ever come up with comes from working with revising a draft. Typically, my greatest insights will come from that and forcing myself to go back and do various forms of revision, but it always comes from working out a problem that I wasn’t aware was a problem yet” (Tulley 2018, 26). We’re provoked by academics’ cagey ways of describing revision over the years and see this volume as an attempt to *say more*.

While the role of revision in writing classrooms has long been a preoccupation of teacher-scholars, no single book in the field features academic writers’ discussions of their own revision processes and experiences, as this volume does.<sup>4</sup> Books on scholarly writing praxis, written for a wide audience in the discipline, focus on rhetorical moves (Harris 2017) or physicality and behaviors during writing (Perl 2004). Others feature self-reflective first-person essays that interrogate instructional practices of response (Lunsford and Straub 1995) or narrativize academics’ own writing processes (Waldrep 1985). Revision is also addressed, to some extent, by a growing body of professionalization scholarship that attempts to demystify membership in the academy, though in tantalizingly brief terms (Gallagher and DeVoss 2019; Tulley 2018). For example, Tulley overviews the perspectives of her interviewees—academic writers whose work is well known in the field today—summarizing that, overall, they find enjoyment and pleasure and discovery and deep engagement in revising a text, though by no means ease (26). Like ours, these books invite writing studies professionals to draw insights from detailed descriptions of writers’ processes and experiences. We also acknowledge two landmark texts on revision. Donald M. Murray’s *The Craft of Revision* (2012), now in its fifth edition, features short, digestible sections and exercises to aid writers at different levels. And Alice Horning and Anne Becker’s *Revision: History, Theory, and Practice* (2006), is part handbook, part history, and part pedagogical guide. These texts, like ours, show revision through both observation of textual changes and narration of writers’ experiences while doing it.

As Charles Bazerman notes in his preface to Horning and Becker’s edited collection, *Revision: History, Theory, and Practice*, teachers have developed “many tricks” to help students revise, and still students revise

“shallowly” (2006, xii). Acknowledging the limits of pedagogical methods, Bazerman concludes that teachers need more than “tricks”; we also need “to teach our students something beyond the writing process itself, to develop the underlying knowledge and awareness that need to be brought to bear on revision” (xiii). Developing awareness that includes and goes beyond laboring over a text is one of our goals in this book, though we do so by focusing on the revising experiences of writing studies professionals, rather than that of students. We want to know what revision feels like to accomplished writers. Do we understand just how much identity is entwined with revision acts? Do we know what kind of mindset helps writers face protracted timelines typical when revising academic work? As these questions suggest, we have more to learn about revision as a holistic practice and set of labors, and we can’t access all of that through artifactual evidence alone. In this sense, revision stories are essential forms by which writers can tell us about revision as a radically contextualized, distributed practice.

#### HOW THIS VOLUME MOVES

When we say revision *moves*, we mean this in its full grammatical multiplicity: kinetically, existentially, emotionally. Revision moves in the sense that it means differently to each contributor; revision moves writers, draws something out of them. Revision self-propagates, almost with a life of its own, within and beyond a writer’s control: a new perspective on this idea over here reverberates all around, nudging adjustments both small and large. It involves moves that are not always discrete but that accumulate to create change or difference. Revision moves, too, can be acts of refusal or of negotiation, prompting one to reconsider, stall, stand one’s ground, flip the script, abandon an idea, go back to the original phrase or draft or stance, chuck it and start over. Considering all of this, perhaps we should have anticipated the problem that greeted us in the middle stages of compiling this volume: we couldn’t figure out how we wanted it to be organized.

As a group, we were hyperaware of what particular organizational choices or structures would convey about our subject, and we were likewise sensitive to how individual chapters might resonate differently based on where they were positioned. We spent hours on Zoom talking through various organizational structures, even plotting on a shared Padlet so that we could physically move chapters around in order to identify connections or provocations. We talked ourselves into and out of half a dozen different schemas, each of them bringing distinct themes

and connective threads into view. Our original organizational structure (from the CFP and prospectus for the publisher) categorized revision stories based on textual genres under revision (scholarly, institutional, and self-advocacy), but in the course of our conversations we balked at the staid nature of these categories and, moreover, found them increasingly permeable with some chapters making sense in multiple places. At one point, feeling defeated, we resolved to roll with the original proposed structure and to exert destabilizing pressure with interchapters (yep, revision is often surrender, sometimes taking us right back to where we began). Finally, though, recalling our own delighted surprise at the manner in which contributors' narratives shouldered the energy and drama of processes that are so often obscured from view, we realized the structure, too, ought to mimic the drama of revising, at turns absorbing, alienating, thrilling, frustrating, and tedious. With this goal guiding us, we found a progression that felt more intuitive, one that created a sense of movement throughout. Revision, as our contributors remind us, isn't tidy or a separate, discernible stage. Why should a collection of revision stories attempt to be otherwise?

In lieu of conventionally organized and demarcated sections, we arrived at five loose, porous sets of chapters that build on and talk to one another. Headnotes—each written by one of the editors—form connective tissue between the sets, making our associative logic explicit and inviting readers to look for other connections. The volume begins with writers who express (relative) certainty about the work of revision; they approach revision with surety, knowing what they will and will not abide. Joseph Harris describes his decision not to revise an early version of what became *Rewriting: How to Do Things with Texts* (2006; second edition 2017); Alexandra Hidalgo details collaborative revision as the only way to find her film project's premise, hone her narrative voice, and ultimately move the documentary forward; and Aja Y. Martinez's counterstory shows the determination of her composite character, Alejandra Prieto, to use revision as a way to unmask the racism, harassment, and institutional apathy that leads so many BIPOC scholars to resign their positions or leave academia altogether.

Martinez's chapter interlaces personal and political stories, urging revision of institutional norms, while making clear that identity is on the line even in the most mundane of texts: a resignation letter that would ordinarily only be seen by a few administrators. In this way, her chapter serves as a complementary segue to those in the second set, which use revision to explore author identities in the context of often obscured professional discourses. For example, Ellery Sills and Fernando Sánchez

describe the process of revising job market materials as akin to shifting and revising one's professional identity. Likewise, Kelly Blewett and Vanessa Sohan, along with one of Kelly's former students, Cameron Becker, take as their focus an occluded genre—letter of recommendation drafts—accessible to internal university committees but not to a wider field of readers. The authors contend that collaboration between writer and candidate can empower candidates to co-construct their scholarly and professional identities and thereby attain a degree of control over how they are represented. Another institutional high-stakes genre, the annual review, is Christy I. Wenger's focus. She details her efforts to make space in her review for documenting writing program administration, which involved revising her university's boilerplate form to foreground and validate a central aspect of her career.

As Wenger illustrates, making space for ourselves in academic cultures is years-long painstaking and deliberative work. Similarly, the writers in the third set narrate ways of making space via scholarly publication; they pull back the curtain to show us the collaborative, emotion-rich experiences of writers in the midst. We begin with Rich Shivener, who narrates what he calls the "affective swells" of revising print articles into chapters of a digital book, a process that is populated by the voices and perspectives of designers, editors, and reviewers. Forming a horizontal mentoring relationship, Dana Comi and Alisa Russell describe how they came to rely on one another's feedback as they transformed seminar papers into first publications. Addressing feedback offered during the manuscript review process, Raúl Sánchez describes the importance of reviewer feedback geared toward revision, cautioning against "dick-ish" behavior characterized by critique that values toxic judgment over writer-centered feedback. As if providing an example of the fruits of R. Sánchez's call for generous, revision-minded feedback, Cruz Medina discusses how productive editorial intervention enabled him to revise a piece on the decolonial potential for multilingual writers into an award-winning article.

As Medina's essay illustrates, some revision experiences resonate well beyond the text at hand. The chapters in the fourth set similarly show scholars struggling to protect their vision for their work while accounting for countervailing pressures in revision. Mike Garcia describes the work of drafting an antiracism statement with his writing center staff against the backdrop of attempts to chill or censor such speech by state governments. Garcia's narrative shows how he and his team must compose with the knowledge that infelicitous readers will be looking for nefariousness where it doesn't exist. How can they create a statement,

knowing some readers' responses pose a real risk? While such responses might be politically motivated, uninformed, and easy to dismiss, the material dangers accompanying them can't be. Also measuring the weight of the outside world on their collaboration, Collie Fulford and Stefanie Frigo describe a writing project completed in the midst of cascading external traumas, warped by review, and finally revised under the auspices of "radical adaptability." Set against the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing brutal murders of people of color by police officers, the narrative foregrounds the well of trust at the foundation of their relationship, which allows for a writing process that can withstand the strain of personal, professional, and societal turbulence. Rounding out the set, Christopher Basgier's description of the drafting and revision of an institutional curricular document recalls the surprising tension of personal investment and labor involved with the creation of a text which, on one level, serves as a vehicle for the values and priorities of a discipline (specifically its emissary WPA) while at another level must account for competing institutional stakeholders and which will ultimately exist as an "authorless" text.

The stakes remain high for authors in the fifth set, and the resolutions to their stories uncertain. The long-term pathways described by Will Duffy, who focuses on changing definitions of "collaboration" across his writing, demonstrate how publications and ideas (like definitions) often evolve over years and are shaped by collaborators, circumstances, emotion, and the contributions of reviewers and editors. Hard-fought paths forward also characterize the story told by Jule Wallis-Thomas, who, like Garcia and Fulford and Frigo, keenly feels the encroachment of the exterior world as she revises, but in her case it is the (at times welcome) interruptions of family that tie into the rhythms of revision as her writing moves and stalls. Indeed, for Wallis-Thomas the interruptions of life threaten to overtake and stymie revision entirely; as a result, the resolution of her revision story remains elusive. Frustrated revision, and the (inability) to tell stories about revision in the first place, also characterizes the chapter by Karen R. Tellez-Trujillo, who is still discovering what she has to say as she ponders her inability to finish a project she began as an undergraduate. Some things, she learns, cannot be revised. Finally, in his artist's statement, Ian Golding considers how revision and its perpetual motion is difficult to visually depict. He recounts how his revisions to the collection's cover illustration unfolded alongside exchanges with the editors, in some ways echoing the resistance to revision outlined by Harris in the opening chapter. After his revisions veer the cover image away from where we (the editors) wanted it, he doubles

back to an earlier, less “finished” (to his eye) version that to us captured the affective spirit of the collection.

Finally, Jessica Restaino offers an afterword that meditates on revising alone after the death of her collaborator and on the challenges in a current project of revising with someone who is present and pushing back. She further considers how revision is oftentimes messy or non-productive and does not always lead to tidy conclusions—observing, in the words of her mentor, that sometimes the work of revising is to find a door where there once was a wall. This is a fitting ending for the volume, for it illustrates the ongoingness of writing and revising and the new learning experiences we are presented with as we move through life and career stages.

## CODA

What you are reading is best understood as a revision in progress. A late-stage, heavily revised draft, to be sure, one passed around so many times (tallying over 1,400 large and small changes, in fact<sup>5</sup>) that we have lost the ability to see individual fingerprints. Yet, there remain other ways it could have been written, other ideas we could have explored, other details to which we could have drawn your attention. This is where we have landed, for now. Not stasis, not the final word, rather, a temporary calming of the tides or tremors activating revising’s moves, just enough to scan the horizon for the next wave.

## NOTES

1. For just a few recent exemplars, see Hillery Glasby, Sherrie Gradin, and Rachael Ryerson (2020) on the use of storytelling in queer Appalachia; Alexandra Hidalgo, Catheryn Jennings, and Ana Milena Ribero (2021) on the “constellative” pull of stories for making meaning in cultural rhetorics; Stephanie L. Kerschbaum (2015) on the need for “critically recasting [compositionists’] anecdotal relations” about disability; Lisa King, Rose Gubele, and Joyce Rain Anderson (2015) for a recent discussion of the centrality of story to Indigenous rhetorics; Carmen Kynard (2014) for a narrative inquiry of African American literacies, rhetorics, and resistance; Ruth Osorio (2021) for storying as method and as a form of activism for motherhood in the field; and Jacqueline Rhodes and Jonathan Alexander (2015) for a multimodal, rhizomatic approach to scholarly memoir.
2. Narrative-based research that foregrounds voice, experience, and perspective in writing studies includes works by Mike Rose (1989), Keith Gilyard (1991), Mary Rose O’Reilly (1993), Victor Villanueva (1993), Linda Brodkey (1996), Joseph Trimmer (1997), Duane H. Roen, Stuart C. Brown, and Theresa Enos (1998), Thomas Newkirk (2002), and Donald Murray (2003), among many others.
3. For example, in medicine, Rita Charon has advanced narrative medicine as “infused with respect for the narrative dimensions of illness and caregiving” that

- “bridg[es] the divides that separate the physician from the patient, the self, colleagues, and society” (2001). Projects like the Patient Revolution (n.d.) and the RELATE Lab (n.d.) have taken this call further, harnessing the ability of story to empower individuals and transform care practices and systems. And empowerment is central to Carla Rice and Ingrid Mündel’s work at the University of Guelph’s ReVision Centre for Art and Social Justice. The Centre collaborates with “urban Indigenous, Inuit, Queer, nonbinary, trans, and disability-identified artists and communities” to enable “story-making methods to (re)author identities and selves,” which have the power to “create systemic change” (2018, 212). As Rice and Mündel assert, “the stories produced through this methodology may be pedagogical and impactful, not in teaching people the correct or right way to think, feel, or act but rather in expanding possibilities for living in/with difference” (213). Taking a cue from this rich activist research, we believe revision stories can expand possibilities for writers by showing the diversity of revision behaviors and experiences and by making visible real practices rather than idealized ones.
4. From Peter Elbow and Pat Belanoff’s three levels of revising and collage approach (2002), to the promotion of peer review feedback groups, to the role of teacher feedback in student revising, teacher-scholars in the field have been studying, assigning, and guiding revision for quite a while now. Some conduct qualitative research to explore how writers do it (Ballenger and Myers 2019; Lindenman, Camper, Jacoby, and Enoch 2018; N. Sommers 1980; Witte 2013) and others have suggested pedagogical strategies to coach it (Feltham and Sharen 2015; Harris 2003; Lunsford and Straub 1995; J. Sommers 2014). In a recent essay, Bob Mayberry describes revision’s presence in the discipline as “pervasive” and “built into the composition curriculum” (2022, 159). It’s true. In composition curricula across the nation—or in textbooks published during the past four decades (e.g., Axelrod, Cooper, Carillo, and Cleaves 2022; Giles 2010; Graff and Birkenstein 2021; Harris 2017)—revision is an accepted part of what we say we teach as a discipline.
  5. The unseen revision paths toward the “final: introduction” you read here include two different Google Docs, 1,492 tracked “edits” (as of 1:43 p.m. on August 23, 2022), and many dozens of (often dialogic) comments, quips, jokes, tangents, compliments, questions, and disagreements shared amongst our team.

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