

Photovoice as Methodology, Pedagogy, and Partnership-Building Tool: A Graduate and Community College Student Collaboration

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Participatory action research, photovoice, diversity, and immersive learning comprised the most important aspects of the Community Colleges and Diversity graduate course taught during the 2014 spring semester. This project involved eight graduate students, five community college students, three community college administrators, and one university assistant professor. Through a description of the course-based photovoice project, articulation of the findings, and a discussion about the project's larger impact as it related to students' educational experiences and community collaborations, this work provides evidence of the power of photovoice—employed as student-led participatory action research—as a research approach, pedagogical tool, and partnership-building device.

Keywords: photovoice, community college, graduate education, immersive learning, diversity

Introduction

In this article, we outline the experience of a course-based photovoice project. Through a description of the project, articulation of the findings, and discussion of the project's impacts, this work provides evidence of the power of photovoice. We position our use of photovoice within this student-led participatory action research endeavor as a (a) research approach, (b) pedagogical tool, and (c) partnership-building device. The platform for this course was a graduate-level course, *Community Colleges and Diversity*. This is the formal description of the course, as outlined in the course syllabus: [The course is] *Designed to focus on the forms and types of diversity that shape community college environments from the perspectives of students, faculty, and administrators, and to explore the implications this diversity has for pedagogical choices, organizational structures, advising strategies, and resource allocations.* Prior to the spring semester of 2014 when the course was first offered, I (faculty member leading the course; author one) applied for and was awarded a small internal grant to transform the class into an immersive learning experience. In essence, my doctoral assistant, the students enrolled, and I formed a research team that worked with a local community college to carry out a photovoice project. The learning outcomes associated with the project and outlined in the grant proposal were as follows: the graduate students will (a) be able to articulate all elements of the photovoice methodology; (b) be able to independently carry out all aspects of a photovoice project; (c) gain an understanding of the complexity, nuances, and diversity of the educational lives of community college students; and (d) deepen their knowledge of community colleges in a general sense.

An additional goal for the study was derived from our partners at the community college, including the Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO) and two community college staff members who coordinated the institution's Student Support Services (SSS) TRiO program, a program that "provide(s) tutoring, counseling, and remedial instruction to low-income, first-generation college students and students with disabilities" (The Pell Institute, 2009, p. 2). Our partners wanted to learn more about their students' relationships with campus agents, experiences and perceptions of poverty, and levels of financial literacy. These topics became focal points for our inquiry.

The class/research team worked together over the course of a 16-week semester, meeting as a group once each week. Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was granted for the study from both the host institution and the local community college. Students determined the learning process through their collaborations with one another, community college personnel, and the project participants. All students completed the required training related to research ethics, navigated the IRB processes, developed project logistics, and fostered relationships with community college students throughout the duration of the project. This photovoice project was one of several assignments in the course. Overall, the course engaged students in immersive, experiential, and real-world learning on multiple levels. Theoretical underpinnings of the course design included critical pedagogy (e.g., see the work of Henry Giroux), liberatory pedagogy (e.g., see the work of Paulo Freire), and feminist pedagogy (e.g., see the work of bell hooks).

Within a context informed by the above theoretical underpinnings and engaged through the participatory nature of photovoice, this course momentarily bridged the chasm often perceived to exist between universities and community colleges. The practice of fostering collaboration among students at two-year institutions and graduate students at four-year institutions supports the values and tenets of immersive learning, partnership-building, and increased understanding.

Literature Review

Teaching strategies that immerse students in a concept, connect them with resources outside of the course, and engage them in the process of critical thinking are among the numerous ways to elevate and meet learning outcomes tied to transformative learning (Mezirow, 1978). At Ball State University, immersive learning has become the moniker for such strategies (Selling, 2013). Immersive learning, wherein disciplinary knowledge is leveraged and demonstrated through active real-world problem solving, embodies several distinctive characteristics such as interdisciplinarity, student-driven teams, and high-impact learning experiences (Ball State University, 2016). Features of these immersive learning experiences often include service-learning, community-based learning, and experiential learning, which all emphasize out-of-class opportunities for students to learn (Lee, Kane, & Cavanaugh, 2015). Within the context of the *Community Colleges and Diversity* course, immersive learning meant collaborating with the nearby community college, which serves thousands of students in the region, and creating relationships between staff, faculty, and students. This immersive learning project has several implications for public scholarship, which are discussed later. In this article, we chronicle the immersive learning project carried out in a graduate-level course and discuss the project we initiated in order to better understand the experiences of a subset of community college students.

Photovoice as Methodology

Since its inception in 1994, the photovoice methodology (Wang & Burris, 1994) has been employed rather extensively within the areas of healthcare, homelessness, and education (Sutton-Brown, 2014). The photovoice methodology rests upon three theoretical underpinnings (Wang & Burris, 1997): (a) education for critical consciousness (e.g., Freire, 2007), (b) feminism and notions of voice (e.g., hooks, 1981), and (c) participatory documentary photography (e.g., Ewald, 1985; Hubbard, 1994). Additionally, photovoice has three major aims: (a) foster and nurture critical consciousness among participants; (b) make space for participants to document various aspects of their lives on their own terms; and (c) reach policy makers with the project's findings to enact change (Wang & Burris, 1997). Photovoice participants are given cameras and asked to document various aspects of their lived experiences through photography. These images are then used to elicit analytic discussion during focus groups or interviews with members of the research team, wherein participants narrate the personal significance of those images. Asking participants to create visuals in addition to spoken responses to interview questions and/or prompts creates a layer of richness within the data not possible through words alone. Moreover, photographs can generate visceral responses from consumers of the project's findings, which is important in connecting with policy makers. Photovoice projects typically conclude with an exhibition, which is the space where the findings often reach the policy makers. The use of photovoice as a methodological tool within this study served to involve participants in the research process and showcase their stories, while engaging the local community in the project through a photovoice exhibition.

Photovoice as Pedagogy

While photovoice is predominantly a research methodology, some scholars have explored its pedagogical applications (Chio & Fandt, 2007; Lichty, 2013; Schell, Ferguson, Hamoline, Shea, & Thomas-Maclean, 2009). Within the pedagogical applications articulated in the literature, students are typically positioned as participants rather than project facilitators. Students are positioned to take photographs (photo) and then narrate those images (voice), assigning meaning and interpretation (e.g., Chio & Fandt, 2007; Cook & Quigley, 2013). While the method is educational, especially in the context of learning about diversity (Chio & Fandt, 2007), in what ways can this repositioning promote learning, understanding, and empathy?

Within our project, we enacted photovoice as both methodology and pedagogy. For the graduate students involved, this meant learning from each other and from leading the research process, as well as learning from the co-facilitator participants involved in the study. Chio and Fandt (2007) argued that photovoice as a pedagogy effectively (a) diminishes the differences research tends to accentuate between experts and non-experts, (b) ameliorates the tendency for diversity-learning to draw attention to differences and objectify these differentiations, (c) provides a vehicle to afford participants authorship and agency, and (d) provides a compelling, critically reflective experience wherein students think and rethink their engagements with self and other. In addition to these outcomes, we assert that when engaged in the way we describe, another potential outcome is bridging gaps in understanding and fostering empathy. In our project, graduate students were paired with community college students with the objective to learn about their lived experiences. The pairs worked together to showcase the results of the study at the exhibition event. Throughout the project, the graduate students engaged in an introspective process of reflecting on their learn-

ing. The graduate students gained an appreciation for the complexities, nuances, and diversity of the lives of the community college students in a personal and authentic fashion. Through participation in the photovoice exhibition, community college students gained access to community and institutional leaders to personally share their stories and advocate for positive change. The outcomes of this pedagogical application affirm the assertions of Chio and Fandt (2007) noted above.

Community College: Three Essential Connections to Student Success

We turn now to the research topics included in our use of photovoice as methodology. Research within the community college sector has been minimal since the inception of its structure in 1901; however, there has been an uptick in research in recent years (Cohen, Brawer, & Kisker, 2014). Since the Great Recession in 2008, community colleges have garnered national attention (Boggs, 2011), which has triggered interest and research among scholars. Within higher education, recent policy shifts related to persistence, retention, completion, and performance-based funding have given scholars and practitioners a better understanding of what institutions can do to support their students' timely completion. Much of the discourse has centered on the interrelated roles of campus agents, poverty, and financial literacy in the lives of community college students. We focused on these three topics in our research project; a more complete discussion of the concepts and related literature is presented here.

Relationships with campus agents. A decade of research focused on a small, private liberal arts institution revealed that the relationships between college students and campus agents (e.g., faculty, staff, administrators) impacted degree selection, engagement in campus activities, and their development as students (Chambliss & Takacs, 2014). The same relationships may be transferred to community colleges (e.g., Karp, 2011; Nitecki, 2011). The study of college student persistence and related concepts (e.g., retention, completion, attrition, drop out, departure) has been a major focus of higher education researchers for more than four decades (Habley, Bloom, & Robbins, 2012). Prevailing persistence models such as Tinto's (1975, 1987, 1993) explain persistence and drop out rates. Tinto's (1975, 1987, 1993) model, along with many other models and theories of student persistence (e.g., Astin, 1984), was based on residential, four-year institutions and first-time, full-time students enrolling directly from high school. Despite this, researchers have consistently drawn upon and empirically tested these models when conducting studies within community colleges (e.g., Latz, 2015). This contestation of his earlier work opened space for Deil-Amen's (2011) work, focused on the socio-academic integrative moment which "can be used to describe opportunities for specific instances of interaction in which components of social and academic integration are simultaneously combined" (p. 72). Socio-academic integrative moments can serve as lynchpin events, giving students a unique form of integration most efficacious in bolstering persistence within the community college sector. Such socio-academic integrative moments generate social capital, something that is a deficit among at-risk students, including those from poverty (Diel-Amen, 2011; Levin, 2014).

Poverty. It is no coincidence that more than one-fourth (26%) of all community college students fall into the low-income category, in comparison to one-fifth of students enrolled at four-year institutions (Horn & Nevill, 2006). Community college tuition is often only a third to half of what is charged at public four-year institutions (American Association of Community Colleges, 2016). Two-year institutions have been regarded not only as a way out of poverty (Valadez, 2000) but also as a determinant factor in whether a student will successfully complete a post-secondary

degree (Deming & Dyanarski, 2009). The reality of such a symbiosis is meaningful given recent growing emphasis on degree attainment standards as predictors of institutional funding through performance-based funding models, which ultimately and unfortunately affects student access (Mullin, 2012). Moreover, a community college student's lack of financial resources can be an impediment to continuous enrollment, success while enrolled, and persistence to graduation.

Financial literacy. Although degree completion is part of the goals of the community college experience, community colleges have also been concerned with the financial literacy skills of their students, especially those who are academically underprepared (Perin, 2013). Regarded as a critical component of 21st century college education (Jagman, Lewis, Nunn, & Walter, 2014), financial literacy, as defined by the 2008 President's Advisory Council on Financial Literacy, is seen as

the process by which people improve their understanding of financial products, services and concepts, so they are empowered to make informed choices, avoid pitfalls, know where to go for help and take other actions to improve their present and long-term financial well-being. (p. 9)

Such a view of financial literacy deems the outcome a requirement for all college students. Community colleges have supplied students with financial empowerment programs like the Financial Empowerment for Student Success (FESS) initiative to improve students' financial capabilities (Broun, Austin, & Bryant, 2014). Financial aid counselors guide students through complex processes while facilitating awareness of concepts that previously may not have been explained (McKinney, Roberts, & Shefman, 2013). In sum, the relationship between poverty and financial literacy is cyclical. This cycle will continue unless change agents step in and make feasible, thoughtful, and equitable interventions wherever possible.

Methods

The purpose of our photovoice project was to understand community college students' relationships with campus agents, experiences with and perceptions of poverty, and levels of financial literacy. In total, 10 individuals comprised the research team engaged in this project. Specifically, the research team consisted of the seven students registered for the course (one doctoral student and six master's students), two doctoral students not enrolled in the course, and the professor. We partnered with a local community college, and in collaboration with the institution's Senior Student Affairs Officer (SSAO), we decided to work with students involved in a TRiO Student Support Services program, a federally-funded initiative. After discussing possibilities and obtaining input from both the SSAO and the TRiO staff members, we decided to carry out a photovoice project focused on the three topics discussed above. Community college staff members collaborated with the graduate students in the course to develop research questions, review the institutional review board proposal, and recruit participants. As co-facilitator participants, students enrolled at the community college played an instrumental role in the generation and dissemination of findings.

Photovoice as Methodology and Pedagogy

The research team engaged the community college students in participatory action research

(Kemmis & McTaggart, 2003) using photovoice (Latz, 2012; Wang & Burris, 1997). Photovoice provided the opportunity for the students to take photographs in response to several prompts (Appendix A), and allowed the research team to gain insights into student experiences by providing them with an opportunity to speak on their own terms during the interviews (Appendix B). Photovoice was the vehicle for participants to elaborate on and analyze significant experiences in their lives. The ultimate outcome sought was increased support for the community college students by policy makers from both inside and outside of the institution.

Participant Recruitment and Data Analysis

Three recruitment e-mail messages were sent to the entire population of students involved in the SSS program ($N=160$) early in the spring semester; seven students opted into the project. Each participant was paired with a student enrolled in the graduate course based on scheduling priorities as participants expressed interest in the research. Each pair had an initial meeting in which participants were briefed on the project, provided with a disposable camera, given prompts to guide their photography (see Appendix A), and asked to sign consent and photograph release forms. During a second meeting, each pair engaged in a photo-elicitation interview (Harper, 2002), discussing the meanings of the images in the photographs (see Appendix B). Five pairs persisted to the interview stage; two implicitly withdrew from the study by not turning in their camera. Students in the graduate course transcribed the interviews verbatim, and each transcript was coded using a provisional coding approach (Dey, 1993; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Using this approach, codes are “developed from anticipated categories or types of responses” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 144). We used the three focal topics of the study as the framework for the provisional codes. We then themed the data (Saldaña, 2013) and arrived at the findings articulated below.

As part of the course requirements, the graduate students created research memos in which they chronicled their engagement in the photovoice project, thereby making their reflections more visible and easily shared. Cox (2012) provided insights on how to approach the memo writing process when guiding neophyte researchers through the inquiry process. These memos could also be understood as in-process formative assessments, wherein the students’ learning and burgeoning tacit knowledge about the methodology and the community college students with whom they were working was made more apparent. At the close of the semester, each student in the course composed a reflective essay regarding whether they had achieved the learning outcomes set forth at the start of the course.

Findings

The immersive learning research project initiated within the *Community Colleges and Diversity* course yielded several findings. We begin this section with a description of the photovoice project findings, then briefly discuss our photovoice exhibition, and conclude with an assessment of student learning outcomes.

Photovoice Project Findings

Relationships with campus agents. During the interviews, participants discussed the

traits and attributes necessary for effective institutional agents and specific instances of when they had positive or negative interactions with institutional agents (i.e., socio-academic integrative moments).



Figure 1. A photograph meant to demonstrate that it is important for a community college institutional agent to be available to students.

One participant's photograph, as displayed in Figure 1, depicted an important attribute of an effective institutional agent: he or she should be available to students. Being available to students is an important attribute for institutional agents. Regarding this image, the photographer/participant said, "Being available was very important to me. I have come across professors who have not been available, and it is very hard to keep track of everything."

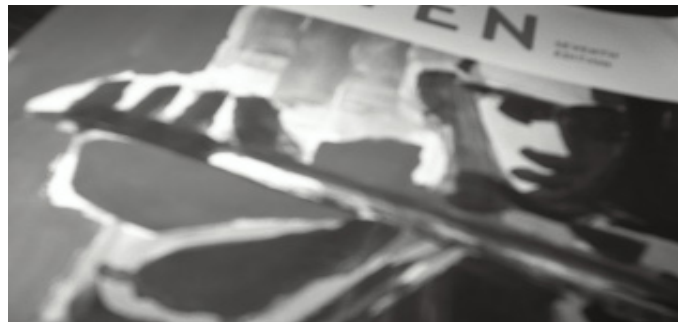


Figure 2. A photograph meant to convey that it is important for a community college institutional agent to listen to students. It should be noted that this particular participant requested the images be printed in black and white.

Another participant photographed a book entitled *Listen*, depicted in Figure 2. Along with being available to students, listening to and being transparent with students is also crucial. The photographer/participant noted "just a listening ear is the most important thing [*sic*] I—I value in a faculty member. They have to be transparent too." Other important traits or attributes of institutional agents included being supportive, personable, and enthusiastic; demonstrating consistency; and providing information and guidance.

These ideal attributes are often antecedents to salient socio-academic integrative moments. One participant told a story about not looking forward to an early morning, first year experience course held in the summer. However, the faculty member made the experience a positive one. She said, "I love him [faculty member]; he's awesome. And it [the course] just made me appreciate the [educational] journey more because of his enthusiasm." This participant went on to explain how her positive relationship with this faculty member continued after the course was over. This

is an example of a powerful socio-academic integrative moment catalyzed through an institutional agent's traits and attributes.

Poverty. Participants described differing perceptions of poverty, although all responded that living in poverty meant living with a lack of needed resources. The lack of resources was a consistent thread woven throughout narrative descriptions of selected photographs. Some participants elaborated on their own experiences with poverty. In other cases the narrative was much less personal and invoked an objective cognitive awareness of poverty within the community. Within this theme the images chosen and the descriptions were demonstrated by the approach portrayed in Figure 3 below.



Figure 3. A photograph of a bicycle parked outside of a building.

One participant photographed a random bicycle. The interviewee observed the following about those lacking basic resources: “they don’t have vehicles, you know, you have people walking. You have people, you know, not having the means to purchase them [*sic*] a car so they have to do it [travel in another way]”

Understanding poverty was also described as part of a significant lived experience. One participant detailed a time when she was a child and her family was waiting at the welfare office.



Figure 4. Photo of the welfare office the participant remembered visiting.

The description for Figure 4 was personal and emotive: “There used to be a bench, and I used to sit on the window and watch all the people come in and just tell myself I am never going to be here.” This student vividly captured and explained the experience of avoiding and pushing against a life of poverty in just one picture.

Financial literacy. Participants offered insights about perceptions of financial literacy, which were linked to their understanding of poverty and living without resources. However, the participants were less focused on the lack of resources than they were on the concept of financial stability and economic independence.

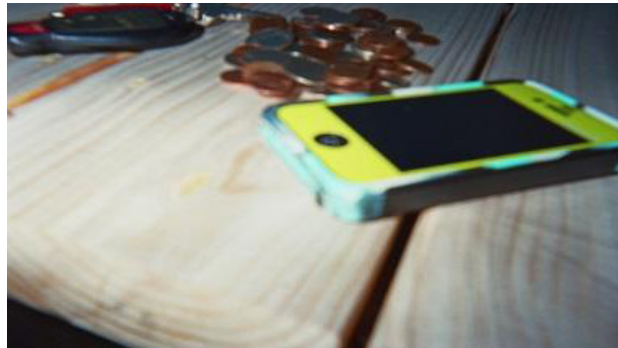


Figure 5. A photograph of a phone, change, and set of keys.

This participant’s photograph (Figure 5) was a representation of financial stability: “Financially stable means to me is...being able to afford a phone bill and a car, insurance and a lot of other bills and still have a little bit of extra money on the side.” This understanding of financial stability seemed to be a recurring response from participants. Another participant connected the concepts of financial stability and financial literacy, “because if you don’t have an understanding, you know, if, you know, how to deal with finances, you know, how are you gonna [*sic*] be financially stable?” The concepts of financial literacy and financial stability were understood to be mutually dependent on one another.

Related to financial stability was the capacity to weather financial storms and difficulties. This concern was easily understandable, given the economic difficulties faced by many in recent years.



Figure 6. Participant’s photograph of a winter storm.

One participant took a photograph of a winter storm and used it to illustrate his concept of financial stability. This respondent offered: “Well, to me, financial stability is being able to weather

the storms. You don't have to be rich. Just stable." The interviewee concluded: "It's being able to take care of my family through the storms." All participants identified ways in which education could help them obtain a greater sense of financial stability. This does not mean that financial difficulties will not come; participants indicated an expectation that this education will help them to weather these times when they do occur.

Photovoice Exhibition

The culmination of the collaborative project came in the form of a photovoice exhibition at the end of the semester. The research team organized the event, invited students and faculty from the community college and their four-year university, advertised the event via multiple media outlets (e.g., fliers on campus, at the city library, and in the downtown city area, campus emails, newspaper ads, and via Facebook, Twitter), and engaged in an evaluation of the photovoice exhibition. A major goal of the exhibition was to attract a broad and diverse audience to learn about the project itself and engage with stories of the students involved in the research (i.e., community college and graduate students). The exhibition took place on one of the community college's campus locations. Approximately 60 guests visited the exhibition and interacted with the research team and two of the community college student participants who were able to attend and share their stories in person. We viewed the exhibition as another site of inquiry and carried out an evaluation related to its impact; however, discussion of that evaluation is beyond the scope of this article.

Graduate Student Learning Outcomes

As a required part of the *Community College and Diversity* course, the graduate students composed research memos and reflective essays on their experiences with the project. Two salient excerpts from those essays are presented below, in which students evaluated their achievement of the following learning outcomes: (a) be able to articulate all elements of the photovoice methodology, (b) be able to independently carry out all aspects of a photovoice project, (c) gain an understanding of the complexity, nuances, and diversity of community college students' educational lives, and (d) deepen their knowledge of community colleges in a general sense.

Excerpt 1:

The immersive learning project was one of the most rewarding and exciting academic ventures I have been involved in during my time at Ball State University. It allowed me to hear a personal experience of a community college student with many similarities and difference[s] from my own education story, develop rapport with the same student, and see the project play out from beginning to end. The desired outcomes of the project were: students will be able to articulate all elements of the photovoice methodology, students will be able to independently carry out all aspects of a photovoice project, students will gain an understanding of the complexity, nuances, and diversity of community college students' educational lives, and students will deepen their knowledge of community colleges in a general sense. My experience in this project, undoubtedly, allowed me to accomplish all of the desired outcomes and gave me memories and research experience I will carry into

the future and use, both personally and professionally.

Excerpt 2:

I learned much during this immersive learning project. First, I was able to understand the sometimes tedious process to facilitate a project of this complexity. Getting a proposal approved by the IRB was a critical step in the beginning. Next, I was provided an hands-on experience with photovoice by teaming up with [a community college] student to complete the photovoice project. Being active and engaged with what I was learning helped me to understand the significance of not only photovoice as a form of research, but also community colleges in the higher education realm.

The graduate students in the course learned that photovoice offered numerous and often long-lasting advantages for individuals, institutions, communities, academic researchers, policy makers, and community members. Based on the graduate students' research memos and reflective essays, the immersive learning approach resulted in students meeting the learning outcomes espoused for the project.

Discussion

Here we recast the findings against the relevant extant literature. Mounting evidence of the importance of socio-academic integrative moments (Deil-Amen, 2011) within the educational journeys of community college students gives encouragement for researchers to continue investigating the process. In addition, participants in this study provided institutional agents with a set of attributes deemed most important to them, which also serve as a foundation to professionally catalyze socio-academic integrative moments. In light of the national discourse on college completion (Bailey, 2012; Habley et al., 2012) and the ways in which community colleges have been implicated in that discourse, this finding cannot be emphasized enough.

Community college students can experience poverty through both an objective awareness of what a lack of resources means (e.g., limited choices in transportation) as well as a deeply personal engagement with the lived experience (e.g., waiting at the welfare office). Levin (2014) proposed a trait framework as one potential way of understanding nontraditional community college students, a significant element of this framework being socioeconomic status. The possession of any one of the traits identified in this study's framework was identified as an impediment for community college students to academic progress often experienced in traditional students. A disproportionately high number of minority and underrepresented students occupy the lowest rung on the socioeconomic status ladder in these institutions.

Consequently, financial literacy emerged as a topic in which the community college students were acutely interested. Their experiences demonstrate a need to understand and have awareness of the ways in which advancing their own financial literacy can assist them as they enter or re-enter the workforce. Not only is such learning critical, it is crucial to stabilizing a financial future while pursuing educational endeavors.

At the conclusion of the course, graduate student reflection essays illustrate that the learning outcomes for the project were met. Photovoice as both a research methodology and a peda-

gical strategy proved effective in practice. Schell et al. (2009) said “We strongly encourage other instructors to experiment with [p]hotovoice [as pedagogy] and other visual techniques to encourage critical thinking, enhance social learning, and expand our ideas of how we can create knowledge and convey understanding” (p. 348). Our work answered this call, and we found the process to be equally beneficial.

Conclusion

This course-based photovoice project provides a unique example of how photovoice can be used as a methodology, pedagogy, and partnership-building tool. Publicly engaged scholarship provides a platform for research with people and communities. Projects like the one shared herein are likely to instill the value of shared responsibility in students and campus partners (Booker, Montgomery-Block, Reyes, & Onyewuenyi, 2011). Tying community colleges and four-year institutions together in collaborative, mutually-beneficial partnerships offers one meaningful strategy for expanding access to educational opportunities and ultimately fostering parity and equity in today’s world.

Photovoice also presents a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between the two-year and four-year educational experience. This project placed graduate students most familiar with the four-year context in direct contact with at-risk community college students. The reflective essays by the graduate students also build capacity for critical thinking and experiential learning while developing research skills (Schell et al., 2009). This project gave graduate students the opportunity to confront their own pre-conceived notions of community college students by making personal and meaningful connections with them.

This project capitalized on the opportunity to strengthen the relationship between two local institutions. Meaningful partnerships can develop as community college faculty, staff, and administrators consider the value of collaboration with four-year institutions. Not only are bonds strengthened with faculty members across institutions, community college students are introduced to graduate students in a meaningful way. Just as the graduate students benefited from confronting their stereotypes of community college students, the community college students also experienced growth and benefited from connecting with students at a very different stage of education.

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Appendix A: Photography Prompts

1. What have been the most important relationships you have had while attending [institution]?
2. What do your family and friends think of you being in college?
3. What is the one most important trait a faculty or staff member could have to help you in your academic journey?
4. What obstacles do you face in achieving your academic goals at [institution]?
5. What, in your opinion, determines wealth?
6. What does having financial stability look like to you?
7. What does social class mean to you?
8. What are the differences between social class groups?
9. How do you see social class playing out at [institution]?

Appendix B: Interview Script

[SCRIPT] Thank you for agreeing to meet with me for this interview. As you know, I am interested in understanding your experiences as an individual involved in the TRiO Student Support Services Program at [institution]. This interview will last approximately 60 minutes. Do you have any questions before we begin the interview? Let us begin.

Opening Interview Questions

1. How do you identify in terms of race/ethnicity and gender?
2. What is your age?
3. What is your major or educational goal?
4. Where are you in the educational process (e.g., second semester)?
5. Tell me about your career plans.
6. Tell me about your educational journey at [institution] so far.
7. What have been some significant highs and lows during your time at [institution]?
8. What are the best parts about attending [institution]?
9. What are the most challenging parts about attending [institution]?
10. Is there anything further you would like to share with me at this time?

Engagement with photos vis-à-vis prompts:

1. What have been the most important relationships you have had while attending [institution]?
2. What do your family and friends think of you being in college?
3. What is the one most important trait a faculty or staff member could have to help you in your academic journey?
4. What obstacles do you face in achieving your academic goals at [institution]?
5. What, in your opinion, determines wealth?
6. What does having financial stability look like to you?
7. What does social class mean to you?
8. What are the differences between social class groups?
9. How do you see social class playing out at [institution]?

Closing Interview Questions

1. What was being a part of this project like for you?
2. Did you learn anything about yourself and/or others through this project?
3. How did you decide what to photograph?
4. Was the project difficult for you? Why or why not?
5. What was your favorite/least favorite moment throughout this project?
6. Did you enjoy being a part of this project? Why or why not?
7. What was it like for you to talk about your images?
8. Have you ever done anything like this before? Explain.

9. Do you plan to have involvement in the photo exhibition?
10. May I contact you in the future if there are questions or need clarification about your images or interviews?

[SCRIPT] Thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate your willingness to engage in this photovoice project with me. If you should have any questions about this research project, please be in touch at any time. My contact information is included on the consent document. Thank you again, and please have a great day.

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