Ms. Hollis and Reviewers,

Thank you for taking the time to review my article, “‘More Than Just Farmers’: Rural Agrarian University Students’ Sense of Community.” I greatly appreciated the reviewer comments, and carefully considered them in revising my manuscript. I have addressed each of the comments in the order they were provided to me. For your ease of reference, I have placed the reviewer comments in italics, followed by the ways in which the comment was addressed.

I appreciate your willingness to allow me to revise and resubmit.

Respectfully,

Author

*Narrative research is an appropriate choice, but think about the overarching idea of narrative (beyond just analysis) as it applies to this content. There is a narrative here too about ties to the land—so the issue is about identity and co-constructing personal narratives as well. I think this might be a better introduction as opposed to the personal essay-style beginning as it is now.*

The idea of a narrative about ties to the land fascinates me. However, after constructing such an introduction, I found that it really did not fit this paper about social literacies. Therefore, I kept the original introduction as it introduces the issue of varied perspectives, as well as serving the purpose of making the reader aware of my own personal vestment in the issue.

*In terms of the literature, I elaborate more on the specific characteristics of place. Authors such as Berry (The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture) and Malpas (Place and Experience) may help you further define the notion of place.*

Berry’s work, though not incorporated into the article, was a fantastic recommendation for my line of research. I greatly appreciate the recommendation. However, you will find that Malpas has been newly incorporated into the theory of place literature review.

*A clearer Conceptual Framework would give this piece more direction and focus. The author provides both social literacy and place as a potential theoretical framework. I think that only one of these is needed. More description is needed in the discussion to explore how the narratives provide a discrepancy between the expected place (university) or expected social literacies and the participants’ experiences in their agrarian places.*

I must respectfully disagree with the reviewer’s recommendation that either social literacy or place should be used exclusively. Given that social literacy is inherently place-bound, choosing only one as a vehicle for interpreting the experiences of the participants would be virtually impossible.

I did address the need to more clearly explicate the contrast between the participants’ home place-based social literacies and the expected college/non-agrarian literacies. You will find additional descriptions of these contrasts in the discussion section, beginning in the first discussion paragraph.

*In terms of the Method, more details are needed to describe the data-collection processes: what types of questions were asked, how long were the interviews, what was the researcher observing when they conducted observations. If developing appropriate social literacies is a key finding, perhaps observations in other social interactions are also necessary. Also, more description is needed to understand how the author constructed the creative non-fiction from the data. Did the author transcribe the interviews? What did the author do with the observational data? How did the author manage conflicting data from the various data sources?*

Many details of data collection, including sample questions, interview length, and observation descriptions, have been added to the Methods section. I also more carefully explained how I created the narratives for the Findings section.

*In terms of the findings, more information is needed about the university context and the participants' home context. Perhaps the narratives can also contain some contrasting conversations that provide a richer illustration in how 'farm kids' are different from 'city kids'. The idea is good, but more details are needed to make the argument more convincing. The actual findings section is very short—these narratives could have more of an impact if they were extended a bit. Also, one seems to be all based on interviews, and the other is more of interactions (I’m guessing) based on observation. Could you combine these strategies so that both kinds of narrative are represented?*

In the Location and Selection section, I added a bit more information about the university setting, as well as information about the participants’ homes in the Participants section. However, I am extremely limited in how much I could add by my IRB. I hope that what I have added will suffice.

At the end of the methods section (p. 12) I explained why the two participant narratives take such distinctly different forms. Although both narratives were based on interviews and observations, I chose narrative formats that would reflect the personalities of the participants.

Narratives have been slightly extended, although I would respectfully disagree with the assertion that longer narratives would have more impact. Still, I do see the benefit to adding some details and interactions to the narratives, and so I did extend the narratives.

*Define “them” at the bottom of page 3: “It is equally important that educators see such home-based knowledge as useful in the classroom and do not attempt to stamp them out . . .”*

Changed to “stamp out non-academic language”

*I think assumptions and language about “ties to the land” as described on page 4 should be mediated somewhat—this seems to privilege a kind of work and we do not know exactly who feels ties to the land and why.*

Emphasis was changed to livelihoods dependent on the land, as my intent was certainly not to indicate that only farmers have “ties to the land.”

*Who is “our” on page 6: “ . . . indicating a discomfort for literacies unlike our own . . .” Consider changing to “literacies unlike THEIR own” on page 6.*

“Our” was changed to “their.” Thank you for catching this typo!

*On page 9, I would remove that the South has a more distinctive identity than any other region in the US. This is a personal opinion and seems out of place (no pun intended!) in a literature review.*

I completely agree with this comment. While the source cited asserted that the South had a more distinct identity, the comment had no place in this paper. It was removed.

*You mention “other interactions” on page 12—what were these?*

Clarified to “email exchanges.”

*I think giving College Town a different pseudonym might help with the narrative flow and effect.*

“College Town” was replaced with “Smithville” for the sake of readability.

*There is the issue of preference and choice that isn’t totally accounted for yet. What if, for Harley, he just didn’t like farming, and that’s why he chose to do something different in college? The hallmate seems like a coincidence, really—it’s not clear that he sought out agrarian friends on purpose, although maybe with more data that will come out—and later in his narrative, he does seem to prefer rural kids, but it’s not really clear why yet. Also, at the end of page 17, farming is not his career, and this suggests that it is.*

On page seventeen, I have clarified that the reason his family had to position him for success in college is because Harley chose not to return to family.

In both the Findings and the Discussion sections, I have clarified that Harley did, in fact, seek out agrarian friends, even though his hallmate was a coincidence.

I am not quite certain what the page 17 comment from the reviewer referred to, exactly. However, I have altered the wording at the end of the first Conclusion section (now on p. 19) to read “whether or not farming is their career” in an attempt to clear up this confusion.

*You say, “therefore, though their physical location is the same as that of their urban native counterparts, their sense of place is markedly different,” but you don’t have data to compare the sense of place of urban or suburban students and their sense of place too. This finding isn’t really supported by this particular study and sample.*

Removed.

*The implication that professors should help students seek out like-minded students seems impractical, but I do think the findings suggest that being aware of one’s identity and style of social interaction and personal literacies—something that certain faculty could support—might make the community-formation more likely and possible. The possibility of encouraging students to spend time with others who are like them seems as if it could have the opposite effect—further separating them from others and destructing rather than constructing positive and inter-group social interactions.*

I have reworded much of the conclusion to clarify that I actually meant for agrarian students to interact in meaningful ways with non-agrarian students, rather than just with other agrarians. I also altered the Implications for Educators to be more practical.

*Check APA rules for subheadings. They all seem to be at the same level now, but some should be at a “lower” level because they fall under other subheadings (such as Literature Review)*

The headings are now corrected.

*The citation for Anzano is wrong—it is actually Azano.*

Corrected.