Dear Melinda & Editors,

I have completed revision of my manuscript. In order to most easily and clearly demonstrate how my revisions have addressed reviewer concerns, I have pasted the reviewer comments below. My response to their comments follows in bold. I hope that this format will be clear enough for you.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to participate in the revision process.

Morgan Chesbro

Reviewer Comments #1

I have several questions about the analysis of narratives. First, the author writes, “Following transcription, I combined quotes from in-depth interviews and information from interviews and observations into one cohesive story for each participant.” Elsewhere, the author wrote, “I then wove the information I had gleaned into stories to complete the narrative analysis.” This seems to be the entire explanation of the data analysis process.

**The explanation of data analysis has been significantly revised (pp. 10-12).**

I’m not sure how quotations were selected; what were the criteria? What was weeded out – and why? What information was gathered from interviews – and again, what were the criteria for selection?

**Description of quotation/information selection added (p. 12)**

Then, the author writes, “I have chosen to conduct a narrative analysis, that is, to tell the stories of my participants, rather than an analysis of narratives, which uses only pieces of their stories as evidence.” And yet, the narratives seem to use only pieces of their story – and very little at that. There were several hours of interview and observation time – and yet the actual narratives can be read in a few minutes. I am still surprised that the actual narratives total less than 3 pages. This leaves me with the impression that:

a. The data analysis was shallow rather than thorough (and did not allow for alternative narratives, contradictions, complexity) or,

b. The author “cherry-picked” information that made for a good story.

I am not adverse to “creative non-fiction” but the pieces used to construct this non-fiction just are not evident. The author uses a separate section to introduce each student separately, with notes about home life and information from the interviews. Why not incorporate this information into the narrative stead, so the reader learns about each student through the narrative?

**I fear that this reviewer may over-estimate the amount of data collected in two hour-long interviews with each participant, particularly once irrelevant pieces are removed, such as when a participant goes off on a tangent or an interview question simply does not yield the relevant information it was expected to. Nevertheless, I have attempted to add acknowledgment of contradictions, to explain how the data was distilled to combat the “cherry-picking” perception, and added some to the narratives, though not much.**

**I chose to keep participant descriptions separate, as weaving that kind of information into the narratives could feel awkward, since the narratives are meant to be stories told in Harley and Bryce’s “natural settings” and they would not be apt to reveal such information in those settings.**

While the small sample size is troubling, I believe a thorough explanation of the process of data analysis (how the interviews, emails and observation were coded, sorted, combined), together with a more complex and nuanced narrative, would compensate.

**Addressed above**

At the very least, the author should spell out the process of data analysis thoroughly so that others might have sufficient information to replicate the study.

**Addressed above**

Reviewer Comments #2

This article uses a narrative analysis strategy to give voice to a group—rural, agrarian students—that is not represented in most of the academic literature. The researcher discusses two rural, agrarian participants’ experiences in college and found that the students tend to seek out other students who are like them for socialization. I think the population is worthy of study and the idea of viewing personal literacies is interesting. Having previously recommended this same article be revised and resubmitted, and taking into account the revisions made by the author, I recommend that this article be Accepted. The author has addressed (or at least considered) most of the major comments about the paper and I believe it is a stronger article.

In conclusion, I recommend that this article be accepted because the author has addressed the comments from a prior round of review.

**No revisions recommended, so no action taken based on Reviewer 2 comments**

Reviewer Comments #3

This is a useful contribution to an area of research that is still sparse at best. The author demonstrates awareness of the relevant extant work as I know it (including the most recent work available) and effectively positions the current project within the literature.

The design/methodology limits the transferability of the findings some, but the author acknowledges those limits and doesn't over-reach what can reasonably be concluded from the work.

The design would be strengthened by the use of one or more credibility techniques (e.g., member checking, peer debriefing, independent audit, triangulation). The author may have utilized some of these strategies and just not noted it in the narrative. If so, I would strongly recommend adding a section explicitly describing the use of credibility. If not, I would do so now, revise the findings (as needed), and add a description of the techniques utilized (in the methodology section most likely).

**A section on credibility has been added (p. 13) to acknowledge steps to enhance credibility that were originally taken, but mistakenly left out of the manuscript.**

I would not recommend publication until the author takes appropriate steps to enhance credibility. This is especially important given the small n.

**Noted above**

One other note: I would encourage the author to present the sampling process as purposeful or purposive sampling. Survey and convenience are the strategies for getting at the purposive sample, sure, but the present description (especially the use of convenience sampling) suggests as lack of intentionality that is not really there (i.e., I think the author's sampling strategy is perfectly appropriate for the project; the current description does not do it justice).

**“Purposeful sampling” has been added in both the abstract and p. 13.**