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*To the teachers and students of The Anchor School, for letting me
into your classroom; to my dad, for teaching me to kayak;
and to Susan, who supports me through everything.*

PREFACE

If you have found this book while looking for an instructional manual on kayaking, please put it back down. This is not that kind of book. Here, kayaking is used solely as a metaphor for learning in a classroom setting. Though I have done my best to accurately describe the kayaking terms used here, I am by no means an expert, and my kayaking knowledge should be taken with a large grain of salt. But if you are interested in social justice education, queer pedagogy, critical literacy, and critical mathematics, this book may be of interest. This book also serves as an example of a post-critical ethnography and will be of use to pre-service and in-service teachers, as well as teacher educators and researchers, as an example of enacting multiple critical pedagogies in a middle school classroom.

When I started my doctoral program, I thought I knew exactly what I wanted to study. However, on meeting my new cohort these ideas began to shift and resulted in the study detailed in this book. Bryan Fede and I first began talking about our interests in our first semester, and we were surprised to realize that there were some interesting parallels between queer pedagogy and critical mathematics. Both fields valued questioning, critical thought and went hand in hand with social justice pedagogy. As we investigated the overlaps together, we had the idea to combine our interests and the seeds of our class at The Anchor School were sown. Over the next few years, we continued to develop our ideas, adding in another of my research interests as an English educator: critical literacy. This became *Math for a Cause*, an elective course for middle school

students, which we co-taught with Morgan, a classroom teacher, in the fall of 2014. The following chapters describe my post-ethnographic study of the course and analyze the impacts on student learning.

As previously stated, kayaking is used as a metaphor for student learning throughout this book; chapters are subtitled for aspects of kayaking, mostly for maneuvers a river kayaker completes along their journey. No knowledge of kayaking is required to follow along, as each chapter begins with a classroom anecdote followed by an explanation of the term. There is also a glossary with definitions of all terminology. It is my hope that this metaphor allows readers to see the dynamic actions that occur in a classroom, and that this terminology helps educators and students visualize their learning processes in a new way. This metaphor allows us to understand learning as movement, as students and teachers are always active participants in the classroom. I hope it queers your expectations.

Kirkville, USA

Summer Melody Pennell

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There are many people who helped me along the way and without whom this book wouldn't exist. First, I'd like to thank Morgan and the students in our class at The Anchor School for allowing Bryan and me to co-teach a social justice math class, especially one where we figured out the curriculum as we went. She trusted us with her students and her classroom and allowed us to employ a flexible teaching style that would frustrate many, and I will be forever grateful for her generosity and enthusiasm for social justice teaching. Similarly, a large thanks go to Bryan Fede, my co-researcher. When we met in our first seminar as doctoral students we thought our interests were opposite, and it was such a great experience to learn together how we could combine my interests in queer pedagogy and critical literacy with his in critical mathematics. I could never have imagined mathematics having a large part in my work, and my research is richer and broader now because of our collaboration. My advisor, George Noblit, was a great source of support throughout this process. Without his advice, humor, pep talks, and general encouragement I would have been lost. Because of George, I have gained an academic family and had many wonderful opportunities. I can only hope to be half the advisor and mentor he is. My other doctoral committee members were invaluable throughout my time at UNC. Cheryl Bolick's guidance led me to The Anchor School in the first place, and her mentorship and friendship helped me both in and out of her class. Jim Trier gave me experience working with pre-service English teachers and always

invited me to share my work with his students, which was encouraging to a new academic. Sandra Hughes-Hassell allowed me to co-teach my first class on social justice at the Master's level, which was a great opportunity to first put my ideas into practice. Silvia Bettez's course at UNC-G was my first in-depth investigation into social justice pedagogy and also introduced me to queer pedagogy, which has now become a large focus of my career. I am forever grateful for all of you.

I would also like to thank my community of scholar-friends. There are many friends who have helped me over the years as we have grown together. Ashley Boyd (whose book was very helpful in writing my own), Alison LaGarry, and Hillary Parkhouse, you three have been the dream team. Ashley, many extra thanks to you for reading a full draft of this book, and sometimes several drafts of some chapters. Your comments helped me finish with confidence. Mandy Bean, Tim Conder, Esmeralda Rodríguez, Katie Baker, Juan Ríos Vega, Cody Miller, Dani Parker-Moore, J. Montana Cain, Eldrin Deas, and Omar Simpson, your friendship and work have supported and challenged me in the best ways. Many of you have patiently listened to me as I have worked through this book-writing process. I am thankful to my Truman family for their support and embracing me as their colleague. I am especially grateful to Rebecca Dierking, Sara Day, and Sarah Mohler for our writing dates which allowed me to work on this book and get instant feedback when I needed it.

Last but not least, I want to thank my family for their continuous support. My partner Susan is my biggest supporter, and her librarian skills were much appreciated when making the index for this book. She feeds me and puts up with many random book comments, which came up no matter what we were discussing, and happily celebrates every writing and professional milestone. Everyone should be so lucky to have a partner like you. A big thanks also go to my dad, Dennis Pennell, who patiently read all of the kayaking descriptions and offered feedback and corrections. Whatever I got wrong about kayaking here is all my fault. My mom Diana is also a constant source of support, and I owe my critical eye to her and my dad's parenting, which included criticizing commercials and pointing out when things were presented in a way that skewed knowledge. Thanks to my sister Tegan, brother-in-law Noah, and Odin and Odessa for your love and sense of humor. To the Swogger family, thank you for welcoming me into your lives and giving me more nieces

and nephews to buy books for and compete for the spot of favorite auntie. To my chosen family, including Layla Aldousany, thank you for your friendship and love. And lastly, to Cat-Megan and Neville, thank you for the cuddles and inspiring me to take breaks with your modeling of relaxation.

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