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Editor's Preface & Acknowledgments

Ashley Ruderman  
*University of Kentucky*

Catherine D. Gooch  
*University of Kentucky*  
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disClosure Volume 25: Transnational Lives

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University of Kentucky

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Lucía M. Montás, Hispanic Studies
Pathmanesan Sanmugeswaran, Anthropology
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Jonathan Tinnin, English

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Ashley Ruderman

Copy Editors
Margaret Coppala & Alyssa Mertka

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disClosure Editors
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University of Kentucky
Lexington, KY 40506-0027
disclosurejournal@gmail.com

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2015-16 Editorial Collective

Matt Bryant Cheney is a PhD Candidate in English at the University of Kentucky. His broader research interests include 20th and 21st Century US Literatures, Critical and Social Theory, The US South, and Comics Studies. He is the Coordinator for the 2017 International Conference on Narrative. His published work has appeared in *The Georgia Review* and *Critical Insights: The American Comic Book* (Salem Press, 2014).

Lauren Copeland is a doctoral student at the University of Kentucky in Gender and Women’s Studies. Her research focuses on LGBT activism in the Middle East. She is particularly interested in the experiences of queer women in Palestine, Israel, and Lebanon as well as issues of identity, violence, and nation building.

Originally from Lima, Peru, Yorki J. Encalada Egúsquiza is a PhD student in the Hispanic Studies Department. His research focuses on female migration, bilingualism and coming of age fiction along the Mexican-American border. He holds a Masters degree in Spanish and a Bachelors degree in Middle Childhood Education.

Catherine D. Gooch is a PhD Candidate at the University of Kentucky, where she specializes in African American Literature. Her current research examines literary and cultural representations of the Mississippi River, focusing specifically on the River’s relationship to black artistic production, labor, and economics in twentieth century African American Literature.

Agata Grzelczak is a PhD candidate in Hispanic Studies at the University of Kentucky. She holds MA degrees in Ethnolinguistics from Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland, and French and Francophone Studies from UK. Agata’s dissertation explores the representation of migrants and mobility in Spanish-Argentine audiovisual co-productions.

James William Lincoln is a PhD student in Philosophy at the University of Kentucky. His specializations include ethics, social, and political philosophy. His research explores the intersection of normative ethics and social/political justice, the role of emotions in moral epistemology, the works of Herbert Marcuse, and is concerned with understanding our our political/ethical obligations to the intersectional individual in virtue of performative social constructions.

Joshua D. Martin is a PhD candidate in the Department of Hispanic Studies at the University of Kentucky. His research interests include the representation of masculinity construction, urban space, and violence in twentieth century Latin American and U.S-Mexico border literature.
Sheryl Felecia Means holds a bachelor’s in English from Spelman College. She is currently a doctoral candidate in the Educational Sciences program, Philosophical and Cultural Inquiry track through the College of Education at University of Kentucky. She is presently engaged in research concerning race, identity, and education in Salvador, Brazil.

Originally from Miami, Florida and raised in the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua, Lucía M. Montás studied at the University of Florida where she received a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish literature and a minor in Education. In 2009, she graduated with a Masters degree in Spanish literature from the University of Florida, and from 2009-2013, served as Lecturer of Spanish at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga where she taught Beginning and Intermediate Spanish. Currently Lucía is ABD in the PhD program in the Department of Hispanic Studies at the University of Kentucky and writing her dissertation on female urban narratives of the Dominican Republic.

Ashley Ruderman earned an MA in English and a certificate in Social Theory at the University of Kentucky prior to starting her doctoral work in the Gender & Women’s Studies department. Her research examines cultural representations of lesbian criminality in relationship to state surveillance practices from the mid-century to present.

Pathmanesan Sanmugeswaran holds a BA Hons. Sociology (Jaffna), an MA Anthropology (Madras), a certificate in Applied Anthropology in Development Process (Rome), and is a PhD student in Cultural Anthropology (University of Kentucky) and a lecturer in the Department of Social Studies at The Open University of Sri Lanka. He has also conducted ethnographic field work in India, Lexington, Rome, and Sri Lanka.

Anna Stone is a doctoral student whose interests include Irish literature, and 20th century British and American poetry.

Jonathan Tinnin is a PhD Student in the English department at the University of Kentucky studying sanity narratives in Victorian novels and literary magazines published in asylums in 19th-century Great Britain. He maintains an academic interest in digital humanities, Victorian and Modernist poetry, and detective fiction.
Editor’s Preface & Acknowledgments

Catherine D. Gooch & Ashley Ruderman
EDITORS-IN-CHIEF, UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

In honor of the 25th anniversary of disClosure: A Journal of Social Theory, we compiled a unique assortment of reflections, scholarly articles, interviews, art, and creative pieces that embody the interdisciplinary nature of the Social Theory program at the University of Kentucky. The 25th volume tackles the expansive—and important—topic of “Transnational Lives.” Our team-taught course, ST 600, explored what it meant to live transnationally. This journal continues the conversation by asking: How do definitions of home and belonging change for individuals living transnationally? What does cosmopolitanism mean in the 21st century? And what are the larger, far-reaching implications of migration and immigration both in the U.S. and abroad? The pieces in this journal answer these questions and more, as authors address topics from globalization to transnational religious identities. The articles and creative pieces we’ve included address different facets of our monumental theme, “Transnational Lives.”

To celebrate disClosure’s 25th anniversary, we offer reflective pieces from two UK faculty members. Dr. Ted Schatzki and Dr. Arnold Farr have supported the Social Theory program since its creation and still remain involved today. Our digital platform also allowed us to incorporate visual pieces. We feature Lexington based artist Lina Tharsing’s stunning collection, Making a New Forest, as well as articles and interviews that use vibrant images in their analyses. The “Transnational Lives” issue of disClosure strives to embody the interdisciplinary nature of UK’s Social Theory program, and the dynamic artwork and images we’ve included are fundamental to this inclusive approach.

This issue also features a critical conversation with the Committee on Social Theory’s Fall Distinguished Speaker, Dr. Mahmood Mamdani, in which we discuss neoliberalism, globalization, and the state of higher education. Following this conversation are interviews with four scholars who were invited to the University of Kentucky for the Committee on Social Theory’s Spring Lecture Series. The interviews with Drs. Nina Glick Schiller, Otto Santa Ana, Floya Anthias, and William Nericcio explore key topics related to transnationalism, such as cosmopolitanism, intersectionality, migration, media representation, xicanosmosis, and stereotypes. Their insights present a multifaceted approach to understanding “Transnational Lives,” and awaken readers to notice how issues of transnationalism are pervasive, common, and more influential than we might think.

We are grateful for the University’s commitment to Social Theory over the past twenty-five years. The resources and infrastructure required to support an academic journal are many, and we recognize the important contributions made by the Office of the Vice President for Research and the College of Arts and Sciences. Without their generous financial support, this volume would not be feasible.
Work on this volume commenced under the leadership of Dr. Marion Rust, whose term as Director of Social Theory ended this semester. As director, Dr. Rust supported disClosure’s transition from print to digital publishing, which allows our journal to be accessed by scholars around the world. We recognize her dedication to Social Theory over the past four years, and thank her for her guidance. Dr. Rust’s willingness to trust our vision for the twenty-fifth volume truly allowed us to make this journal our own. We have benefitted from the encouragement and support of Dr. Jeremy Crampton, who will proceed as the new Director of Social Theory.

Drs. Cristina Alcalde, Steven Alvarez, Francie Chassen-Lopez, and Ana Liberato proposed “transnational lives” as a capstone ST 600 course. Their expertise in and out of the classroom helped us publish a truly interdisciplinary journal, and we thank them for their vision. Dr. Chassen-Lopez must also be recognized for her role in supporting the collective as faculty advisor. The guest scholars who visited UK last spring not only enriched our class discussion, but also generously committed to interviews. We thank Drs. Floya Anthias, Nina Glick Schiller, William Nericcio, and Otto Santa Ana for supporting disClosure. Dr. Mahmood Mamdami’s visit in the fall added a new dimension to our journal, and we thank him for taking time to meet with us. We recognize and thank Dr. Karen Rignall for making this interview possible.

Several individuals shared their expertise with us over the past year. Casey Hibbard transformed our ST 600 interviews into podcasts, all of which can be accessed on the Social Theory website. Adrian Ho, Director of Digital Scholarship at UK Libraries, responded to our technical and legal questions with the upmost patience and care. We thank Jami Wardlow at bepress for her technical assistance, and Michelle Del Toro for securing meeting space for us on campus. Social Theory Research Assistant and former disClosure editor, Eir-Anne Edgar, generously offered her advise on procedural matters. Additionally, we thank former editors Lydia Shanklin Roll, Grace Cale, and Rachael Hoy for their willingness to answer our many questions. Undergraduate copy editors Margaret Coppala and Alyssa Mertka played key roles as we assembled the journal, and we thank them for their time and commitment to disClosure.

Last, we recognize and thank our dedicated editorial collective, whom we collaborated with over the past three semesters. It has been wonderful to work with a wide range of promising scholars. We share every success of the 25th volume of disClosure with you.