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Editor's Preface

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SELF/STORY
Editor's Preface
-Eir-Anne Edgar and Tim Vatovec

Telling our stories and understanding the stories of others is formative. The process of narrating our lives helps us make sense of disconnected events, emotions, and our connections to others. The study of self, story and narrative reveals the ways in which the divisions between high and low culture have eroded. Perhaps this explains the attraction of reality television, the success of the seemingly mundane as expressed in the blogosphere, or a myriad of other quasi-voyeuristic activities, such as the rise in importance of the Facebook status. The pleasure of telling stories and listening to or reading others’ stories bridges the gaps that separate us from one another. This edition of disClosure explores the theme of self, story and life narrative in a variety of areas, disciplines, and media.

Creating this preface for the twenty-first edition of disClosure provides us, the editors, with a sense of how this edition’s story has evolved. Self, story and life narrative is a broad topic, and also one that attracted a variety of scholarly, creative, and artistic submissions from all over the globe. We were fortunate to receive submissions that trouble the notions of narration; that ask questions about authenticity and truth; that give us a fresh look at a practice that is as old as mankind itself. The Spring Lecture Series of the Committee on Social Theory gave our Collective an opportunity to discuss many of these issues with some of the leading scholars involved in Social Theory. Drs. Sidonie Smith, Keith Knapp, and Terry Castle explore topics such as narrative and authenticity; social theory and academic practice; and the future of intellectual pursuit in their interview discussions. In this edition, you will find scholarly articles that examine the links between national identity and personal history, authority in autobiography, fragmentation, and a host of other topics. Self/Story also includes a wealth of poetry, prose, and vibrant visual art. As with any life story, the narrative of the twenty-first edition of disClosure is linked with the stories of others who create, question, and challenge. We hope you enjoy this story – we happen to think it’s a great read.

Acknowledgments

In compiling and completion of this issue of disClosure would not have been possible without the assistance of Rebecca Lane and Jeff Zamoñtry, the editors of last year’s issue. We would also like to thank Dr. John Erickson for the ongoing support he provides as our faculty advisor, along with the guidance Dr. Suzanne Pucci has offered as the current head of the Committee on Social Theory at UK. As with each issue, this year’s edition is an extension of the team-taught, interdisciplinary course offered each spring by the Committee, which is centered on providing different perspectives on a common theme. Last year’s course, entitled “Self/Story: Perspectives on Life Narrative,” co-taught by Dr. Jeremy Popkin (History), Dr. Marion Rust (English), Dr. Richard Smith (Psychology), and Dr.

Matthew Wells (Modern & Classical Languages, Literatures and Cultures) was the guiding theme for this issue. Many thanks to Naomi Norasak for all of her work on behalf of the Committee on Social Theory and disClosure. Finally, we would like to thank the members of this year’s Collective, and wish Richard Parmer and Tom Loder luck in compiling the 2013 issue on Security.

Collective Members

Eir-Anne Edgar is a Ph.D. candidate in English at the University of Kentucky. Her research focuses on feminist, queer, and African American texts of the Cold war era and issues of American citizenship. Her article on Charlotte Perkins Gilman and the novel Herland can be found in the spring 2011 issue of World Literary History. Eir-Anne’s article discussing the television show “RuPaul’s Drag Race” and issues of drag performance and authenticity appears in the fall 2011 issue of Studies in Popular Culture.

Tim Vatovec is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Geography at the University of Kentucky and is a past recipient of the Graduate Certificate in Social Theory. His research interests include rural preparedness issues, cultural landscapes, and social theory.

Wendy Cawthron is a Ph.D. student in the Department of English at the University of Kentucky. Her research interests include literature of the Left, labor studies, and social movement rhetoric.

Craig Crowder is a Ph.D. Candidate in the University of Kentucky’s Department of English. His research interests include literature of the Left, labor studies, and social movement rhetoric.

Tom Loder is a second year master’s student in the Department of Geography working under Tad Mutersbaugh. His interests include political ecology and economy, natural resources, agriculture and feminist and rural geographies. Currently he is working on a project involving biogas production on dairy farms in Vermont. For his Ph.D. he hopes to explore natural resource and energy issues in the United States/Canada and/or Brazil. Tom will serve as the co-editor (with Richard Parmer) of the forthcoming issue of disClosure on Security, expected spring 2013.

Heather McIntyre Originally from a small town in West Virginia, Heather McIntyre is a second year Ph.D. student studying American literature at the University of Kentucky. The majority of her research focuses on the manners in which gender identity, religious identity, and sexuality converge in Appalachian fiction.

Richard Parmer Originally from Roanoke, AL, Richard earned his BA in English and History at Presbyterian College and his MA at East Tennessee State University. He is currently a Ph.D. student at the University of Kentucky, where he studies ecocrit, gender, and sexuality in early American and Appalachian literature. He will serve as co-editor of the forthcoming issue of disClosure on Security (with Tom Loder), spring 2013.
Don Adams is a Professor of English at Florida Atlantic University, where he teaches modern literature. He is also an occasional visiting lecturer at two universities in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. In all of his creative and critical work he is concerned with the self as story and identity. His most recent work has been published in The Gay and Lesbian Review (essay article on Ronald Firbank) and Hyperion: The Future of Aesthetics (essay article on James Purdy). A larger work, Alternative Paradigms of Literary Realism, was published by Palgrave in 2009.

Chris Barry is an independent artist and scholar from Australia (Melbourne/Victoria). He is affiliated with The University of Melbourne, where he completed his doctoral research in 2009. His Faculty was The Victorian College of the Arts & Music. The cover art image, Untitled (Self-Portrait), comes from the series Displaced Objects (1986).

Lee Skallerup Bessette holds a Ph.D. and is currently an Instructor in English at Morehead State University. She has published on translation, Canadian and French-Canadian/Québécois literature, science fiction, and Caribbean literature in French and English and has edited a book of essays on Quebec writer Anne Hébert. She has presented on everything from teaching literature to the direction of higher education. Her current research includes the use of technology and social media in teaching writing and literature, as well as a more traditional project on the works of Haitian author Dany Laferrière.

Lori D'Angelo earned her MFA from West Virginia University in 2009. Her work has appeared in various journals including Word Riot, Drunken Boat, and Stirring.

Catalina Florina Florescu earned her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from Purdue University in 2007. Her works analyze the multifarious manifestations of the writing process, with a special emphasis placed on the idioms of pain and suffering. Over the years, she taught Mythology, Latin, Writing and Literature at Purdue University, Rutgers University, and St. Peter’s College. She is currently teaching at Stevens Institute of Technology and Hudson County Community College. For her outstanding results, she has also been awarded fellowships granted by Purdue Research Foundation and Modern Language Association’s International Bibliography Program. Her first book, Transacting Sites of the Liminal Bodily Spaces, was published in 2011. In addition to her academic work, which has been published in book chapters and peer-reviewed journals, she has written two plays, Transitional Object and Three as in Tri-angle or the Aftertastes of Life. Her memoir, Inventing Me, will be soon released in Romania. More information about her work can be found on her blog: http://catalinaflorescu.blogspot.com.

Jane Grellier coordinates the First-Year Communication Program in the School of Media, Culture and Creative Arts at Curtin University, Perth, Western Australia, which provides academic literacy courses to 2,000 first-year students each year in the Faculties of Humanities, Science and Engineering. Jane is currently working on a Ph.D. involving auto-ethnographic research of first-year students' experiences and responses to learning. Her research interests are in reflective practice, academic literacies, and the teaching of writing.

Nicholas A Henson is a Graduate Teaching Fellow in the Department of English at the University of Oregon, Eugene.

Paul Hetherington is Associate Professor of Writing at the University of Canberra, Australia, and Chair of the Writing Research Cluster in the Faculty of Arts and Design. He has published eight collections of poetry, including the verse novel, Blood and Old Belief (2003) and It Feels Like Disbelief (2007). He edited and introduced the final three volumes of the National Library of Australia’s four-volume edition of the diaries of the artist Donald Friend, was founding editor of the quarterly humanities and literary journal Voices (1991–97) and is one of the founding editors of the international online journal Axon: Creative Explorations (2011–). His poetry prizes include a Chief Minister’s ACT Creative Arts Fellowship and volume four of The Diaries of Donald Friend was shortlisted for the Manning Clark House 2006 National Cultural Awards.

Danizete Martinez is an Assistant Professor of English in the Department of Language and Literature at University of New Mexico, Valencia Campus. Her scholarly interests focus on Chicana/o identity and cultural production within literary studies.

Joy Denise Scott is currently working on her Ph.D. in the Social Sciences at Curtin University. Taking an auto-ethnographic approach, her research revolves around her teaching and living experiences in the Shanghai academic community as cultural border-cropper and in-betweener. Joy is also a sessional academic in the First-Year Communication Program in the School of Media, Culture and Creative Arts at Curtin University, Western Australia.