Editor’s Preface and Acknowledgments

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Welcome to this, the eighteenth issue of disclosure: a journal of social theory. The response to this year’s theme, WAR, was almost overwhelming for a small editorial collective. We received exemplary submissions from professors and graduate students, from academics and artists, from sociologists, anthropologists, architects, historians, creative writers, poets, and literary scholars. Presented here are nine of these lessons in War (and Peace), from a range of scholarly and artistic perspectives. We hope you enjoy these submissions for the important intellectual, creative, emotional, and/or ethical work that each does on its own; but, more importantly, we hope that they work together against War by subjecting it to a coordinated attack on many different fronts.

The submissions presented here range from histories and personal narratives to discursive readings of War in its many guises. In “Japan’s Haunting War Art,” ASATO IKEDA traces the post-war fate of a seized collection of senso-ga, Japanese propaganda war paintings, and finds these paintings’ continuing significance in their (unsteady) role in collective memory, mourning, and healing. BRONWYN WOOD recounts her family’s frightening ‘ten days in a war zone’ and uses their harrowing experiences to reflect on how teachers might go about “Educating for Peace through War.” In “Xerxes in Drag,” M. MELISSA ELSTON screens the major motion picture 300 for evidence of its complicity with contemporary American pro-war rhetorics and discursive techniques of racial Othering. JEFF GRIFFIN finds “The State of Exception in Film” by demonstrating how Bush’s War on Terror is reflected and refracted by two moving pictures: the monster movie Cloverfield and in the popular television show 24. By weaving interviews with prison guards, statements from American soldiers, and official U.S. documents together with the fiction of J.K. Rowling, KATHY MAC finds that “Omar Khadr is not Harry Potter” after all; but the resonances between a fictional boy wizard and a very real boy imprisoned at Guantanamo are rather striking. Finally, DENNIS DUFFY’s “Among the Missing” mirrors Ikeda’s article by recounting the history of a monumental memorial to Canada’s WWI dead and its continuing, though unstable, role in national mourning and memory.

Because the atrocities of war always exceed what can be said—or written—about it, the above procession of articles is interrupted by artistic, creative, and poetic interventions. First, we offer selections from the 2006 exhibition “War: Artists Respond” at the Dougherty Arts Center in Austin, TX. Artist LEO ECKROTH’S introduction contextualizes the show for us, and introduces pieces by CAROL HAYMAN, CHRISTOPHER HAYNES, CLAUDE VAN LINGEN, and CINDY DEBOLD, as well as an example of his own work. Next, we reproduce the poetry of DRAGICA RAJČIĆ, translated by David Dollenmayer. We get a sense of Dragica’s strength and humor in Holly Fulton Osborn’s introduction; with her poetry she manages to find love, hope, and even some peace amidst and after the catastrophes of war. As personal expressions from the heart and the gut, these poems reveal the textures of War, reminding us that War involves mind, flesh and emotion. And, in her auto/biographical piece “Something He Couldn’t Write About,” SHARON D. RAYNOR shares photographs and entries from her father’s Vietnam War diary with us; her story of getting to know her father through his diary is also the story of how he came to be a troubled veteran of a brutal war.

All of these creative insertions work to express some things about War that cannot be said otherwise, important things that exceed scholarly re-presentation and analysis. The danger of academic musings about War is that they can all-too-easily stray from the on-the-ground horrors and bloody acts of violence that we must—absolutely must—remember. All of the submissions printed therein manage, we believe, to avoid this pitfall by attending to embattled materialities, bodies, ideas, and emotions, as well as the wartime and peacetime discourses that allow for the continuing possibility of War... or, someday, for its impossibility. War, of course, is discursive and deadly. Our intention was to capture this dual—yet always horrible—nature of War by presenting its histories, its present manifestations, its disturbing imageries, and the hopeful creativity it can sometimes leave in its wake.

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-James Looney and Karen Kinslow, 2009

EDITORIAL COLLECTIVE MEMBERS: Ben Blandford is a PhD student in Geography at the University of Kentucky. His research interests concern urban and cultural geography as well as urban planning and public participation. Holly Fulton Osborn is a Ph.D student in English at University of Kentucky. Allison Harnish is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Kentucky. Her research interests include the social and environmental consequences of resettlement/migration, the gendered and generational dimensions of deforestation, and the political ecology of development in sub-Saharan Africa. David Hoopes' research focuses on 19th and 20th century Hispanic literature as it relates to the Atlantic World. His current research focuses on the literary representation of Spanish Galician migration between the years 1840 and 1930. Karen S. Kinslow suggests that war is inside of us, which is not to say we don't affect one another. James Looney is a PhD Candidate in Geography at the University of Kentucky. Vanessa Nelsen studies problems of race and identity in contemporary Latin American literature. Currently, she is a PhD candidate at Emory University. Derek Ruez graduated from Earlham College and is currently completing his M.A. in sociology at the University of Kentucky. He is interested in thinking about collective memory, social movements, and the prospects, promises, and perils of large-scale social change. Mitch Snider holds a Master's degree in Geography from the University of Kentucky. He is interested in gender, migration, and identity.

ASATO IKEeda

JAPAN'S HAUNTING WAR ART:
Contested War Memories and Art Museums

WAR ART

Janson's History of Art: the Western Tradition, one of the most popular introductory art history survey textbooks in North America, covers twentieth-century art in three chapters—"Toward Abstraction: The Modernist Revolution, 1904-1914," "Art between the Wars," and "Postwar to Postmodern, 1945-1980. With remarkable gaps between 1914 and 1919, and again between the early 1930s and 1945, the book reproduces common discourses about war and art: art becomes irrelevant when people are at war. Contrary to this assumption, however, war has been the subject of art from ancient periods to the present day. The Second World War unquestionably generated a great quantity of art both during and after the war as a result of the unprecedented scale of official art production in many nations, including the United States, Britain, Canada, France, Italy, Russia, Australia, and Germany. Japan was certainly no exception: artists produced propaganda war paintings, sensō-ga in Japanese, which mediated Japan's militarist ideology and provided justifications for what was called the Great East Asian War. The production of propaganda war paintings is a generally neglected field in art history, but even more overlooked is the post-war history of such paintings. What happened to sensō-ga after the