Editor’s Preface and Acknowledgements

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Modou Dieng, born in Saint-Louis, Senegal, articulates his work around questions of multiple identities as related to nation, race, and culture.

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Editor’s Introduction

Intimacy studies has, in recent years, become an interesting and extremely productive interdisciplinary site of inquiry in the humanities and social sciences. This issue of disClosure, “Thresholds,” has somewhat of a privileged vantage point from which to judge recent developments, simply because some of the canonical texts of intimacy studies have been around long enough for numerous other scholars to comment on these works and redeploy many of the original theories of intimacy.

While positioning itself within intimacy studies, however, “Thresholds” also seeks to expand this mode of intellectual engagement by publishing new works that not only rely on classic theories of intimacy but also challenge them, while incorporating new theories into the overall investigation of intimacy.

When we began this endeavor, we were quite curious to see what submissions we would receive, wondering to what degree intimacy had become a solidified field of study and in what ways this quasi-discipline was still forming, still unaware of itself and the seemingly always expanding implications of its questions and positions. What we have found is that much is still up for grabs in intimacy studies and that, while certain texts do indeed find their ways into countless bibliographies, there is certainly little in this discipline that produces an overarching theory or pretends to set an unimpeachable agenda. It is clear, however, that intimacy studies has at its center people, individuals and groups, who are both enlivened and troubled by their quests for and rejections of love, sex, friendship, family, and community. Intimacy studies thus reveals the complications of these interconnections by highlighting the agents of intimacy and the intersubjective dynamics of our relations to one another.

We have chosen “Thresholds” as the issue title for a number of reasons. The obvious connotation is of newlyweds’ crossing into their first matrimonial dwelling. More than this, however, thresholds are the spaces through which the boundaries that accompany any individual or collective pursuit or negotiation of intimacy can be traversed. Thresholds are also limits—limits we may choose never to cross and limits from which there may be no return; these are limits that intimacy bespeaks and tests at all times. In intimacy, then, the idea of thresholds points up that we are, in many ways, simultaneously solitary, dyadic, and collective beings, always on the verge

thresholds

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of new possibilities of friendship, love, and community, and yet inevitably facing circumstances that would jeopardize these moments.

It is our hope that “Thresholds” provides a thorough sense of the exciting depth and breadth intimacy studies has come to offer as a mode of social theory. With these new possibilities of social-theoretical engagement in mind, I welcome you to “Thresholds,” the fifteenth issue of *disClosure: A Journal of Social Theory*.

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Thanks also to the editorial collective of this issue, including my assistant editor Brandon Absher, who at all times has been available to help. I look forward to helping him, in turn, should he need any assistance with his issue of *disClosure*, which will appear next year. Collective members Steve Buttes, Beth Connors-Manke, Larry Erickson, Jorge González del Pozo, Garrett Graddy, Andrew Moreman, and Michael Tilley have all been a pleasure to work with, and their dedication to this issue is a testament to the success of interdisciplinary scholarship and cooperation.

*disClosure* also owes a world of gratitude to copyeditor and layout editor Anna Laura Bennett, who has invested limitless energy and countless hours of her time to ensure that this issue of *disClosure* is the very best that we can produce.

Lastly, thanks to all of the “Thresholds” contributors. We value the opportunity to present their intriguing and important work in this issue.

—SEAN DUMMITT