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AUTOETHNOGRAPHY SPECIAL ISSUE II

Guest Editor Christopher N. Poulos

INTRODUCTION: Worlds of Meaning, Identity, and Contradiction

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Christopher N. Poulos

Locating Community, Memory and Meaning-Making in the Performative Gap: An Experiment in Aesthetics, Autoethnography, and the Ethic of the Unfinished

Rebecca M. Kennerly 1

This essay introduces a close-to-the-bone layer of sound/experience that emerged while in-field and in memory, as I risk revealing what Pollock (2006) calls "going under," a process which "folds back on the researcher-subject, catching her in . . . processes of transformation" (pp.327-328). Following Bowman (2002), I become "lost in my own back-yard" (p.349), as I chase (listen for) the spectral voices of the dead. Accidentally on purpose, my work with roadside shrines turns me around, teaches me (you, us?) how (where, when) to listen, to hear the call of the living, to respond anew to the call home, even as I attempt to write myself elsewhere.

Becoming an Alien

Sook-Young Lee 31

This is an autoethnographical account of an LPR (Lawful Permanent Resident) in the U.S. who has gone through a series of cultural and personal transformations between two cultures. In this particular essay, she explicates three critical episodes that forced her to accept the tensions between her "self" and "others" in claiming her identities. Through telling and retelling her experiences of culture firsthand, she delineates her transformations from denial to anger, from refusal to acceptance, from object to subject, and from chaotic confusion to orderly uncertainty, in her ongoing journey from somebody that belongs nowhere and to somebody that claims everywhere.

The Segmented Assimilation Approach to Immigration and Adaptation: I am the “New Second Generation”

Charee Mooney 53

The segmented assimilation approach is a sociological theory that examines the assimilation outcomes of second generation immigrant peoples, or those born in the United States with at least one foreign-born parent. This is the story of how I, a Vietnamese immigrant child, researched segmented assimilation as I grappled to understand why other immigrant children seemed to be on so many different life paths. This is also the story of how I avoided and then attempted to confront and reclaim my lived experiences. In the process, I realized that family solidarity and support have always been my reason and my purpose.

Walking with Grandma Through Cancer and Caregiving

Mindi Ann Golden 73

This autoethnographic account employs Continuity Theory to examine my experience caregiving for my grandmother in the last year of her life. Little is known about grandchildren as caregivers. I use the routine of walking at the beach with my grandmother to frame my caregiving journey. Our walks implicitly reflect a desire and drive for continuity in the context of profound change. I explicitly discuss internal and external continuity across various contexts and situations throughout my year as a caregiver.

Communicating Worry: An Intrapersonal Perspective

Linda Vangelis 93

Existing social science research on worry generally takes a psychological slant, focusing on categories and characteristics of worry, and the reasons people worry. Some of the current literature also provides strategies on how to cope with worry. This essay extends the current research by offering the reader insights into the intrapersonal communication of this emotion. This article is an autoethnographic, layered account of the author's lived experience as a worrier. Through the use of episodic vignettes, the author explores her thoughts and feelings while in the throes of a cycle of worry, offering the readers a glimpse into the everyday, ordinary experiences of worry.

Contradicting (My)Self: An Autoethnographic Exploration of Whiteness, Heteronormativity, and Masculinity

Brandon D. Stow 109

This piece utilizes performative writing, poetry, and autoethnographic personal narrative to explore tensions that emerge from the clash between my “academic identity” as a critical scholar and my subject position as a heterosexual white male. These pieces focus on interrogating social, cultural, and political systems of power utilizing performance autoethnography as a tool with which to deconstruct whiteness and heteronormative privilege. This piece offers an in-depth, performative gaze at what the critical negotiation of whiteness looks and feels like on the level of lived experience.

When the Personal Becomes Professional: Surveillances of a Professor's Eating Disorder Personae

April Chatham-Carpenter 125

Four personae are presented as ways in which I act out my role as a professor studying eating disorders: (a) a former anorexic, (b) a seasoned professor, (c) a concerned, yet controlled, mother, and (d) a partner of my eating disorder. Using autoethnography, I present the internal wrestling match I go through on what to expose about myself as a scholar. In doing so, I experience a surveillance type of watching from various audience members, including myself, and this puts the anorexia back in my face again as a possible option. I reveal the myth of controlling one's research or one's body in our self-presentations as autoethnographic scholars.

Food for Thought: The Imagination-Intellect and the Role of Empathy

Mary E. Weems 149

This auto/ethnographic essay expands upon my imagination-intellect theory (See: Weems, 2003) by exploring the role of empathy in developing a social consciousness, which is its fifth component. In it, I describe my creative process and discuss the various degrees of empathy I've experienced. It includes three creative writings as exemplars of the kinds of empathy I continue to explore in my work and to facilitate with teacher education and other students at the university and k-12 level.