



Matthews, Mallory. "Landscapes of Distance or Landscapes of Intimacy: Language Construction, Voice, and the Narrative 'I'." *Plaza: Dialogues in Language and Literature* 4.2 (Summer 2014): 48-58. PDF.

Mallory Matthews

Landscapes of Distance or Landscapes of Intimacy: Language Construction, Voice, and the Narrative "I"

My Granny Ollie was the quintessential "packrat." She kept *everything*—pill bottles, empty milk cartons, yellowed newspapers from 1974, and even the occasional plastic butter container. I remember one Christmas sneaking up beside her in order to peek into her purse, only to find about five wadded up pieces of Kleenex instead of a huge pile of money or a wallet that I could pilfer. Folded up within these tissues were little trinkets and knick-knacks that my Granny liked to keep safe. It was her way of saving the things she thought her grandkids would enjoy. It was her way of preserving memory. The old pennies picked up off the ground and the loose buttons became her life narrative, and ultimately the beginnings of my own—a life situated in the intersection of poverty and desolation. My grandmother kept all of these things because to her they were useful. To her, they were small fragments of a greater relationship between necessity and purpose.

This balance between necessity and purpose was primarily constructed in the ways in which my Granny navigated physical landscapes. As a child growing up in the midst of the Great Depression and Oklahoma Dust Bowl, she was forced to live by the credo "waste not, want not." She was taught that everything had a purpose. She had an emotional and psychological attachment to the land because it was necessary for survival; it was the thing that could either save or destroy her. I used to be embarrassed at all the "junk" that had accumulated in her house—little did I know that "junk" was actually one of the most important parts of her life narrative, and ultimately my own.

Prior to finding autobiographical works by Alfred Kazin and Janisse Ray, I had falsely backlogged most life writing as unworthy of critical exploration and critical interpretation. I ignorantly assumed that all autobiographical texts were one-dimensional, and lacked an emotional and imaginative depth. How hard could it be to simply tell the truth about life? My misguided beliefs chalked autobiographical acts up to be too *easy* to write.

It took one book to completely change my mind—Janisse Ray’s *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*. I had an emotional epiphany while reading this raw, beautifully-crafted piece of literature. The narrative persona that emerged from Ray’s pages spoke to me in a way that nothing else has. Ray reminded me of my grandmother, almost eerily so. It was as if I was somehow reading my family’s life narrative through the stunning metaphorical connections to the land; it was as if my sweet, blue-haired Granny Ollie was telling me the story of my own family, the legacy of loss and the legacy of love. So many of my autobiographical memories are intertwined with those of my grandmother; so much of my existence is wrapped up in the stories that my mom used to tell me about her strength and solidarity in the face of nearly impossible odds. I couldn’t write my own autobiography without including this smart, courageous, and silently sassy woman. Because of reading *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*, I was forced to confront the nuances and oddities of my own family, and therefore, forced to confront the “messiness” of my own past.

I think my ignorance concerning the simplicity of autobiographical writing can be partially blamed on denial. It’s sometimes easier to read a piece of fiction because then one can escape one’s own reality. A foray into the imaginary and improbable landscapes of fiction grants readers a temporary reprieve from the tough, a pardon from the “messy.” Autobiographical memories complicate everything—our beliefs, our relationships, and even our notions of truth. Life writing and life *reading* is indeed very “messy,” but that is what makes it a worthwhile endeavor.

As much as we try to unpack this complex web of intersubjectivity and intertextuality, at the very core of all life narratives rests a fundamental truth. A human connection. We write to “speak” to people. We read in hopes that they somehow “speak” back to us. No matter the medium in which they occur, life narratives, and more specifically autobiographical acts, seek to offer connectivity to personhood through language construction. The ultimate goal of both writers and readers of life writing is to connect physically, emotionally, or ideologically to a particular text, and this is achieved through deliberate choices in language. It is this language construction, then, that becomes the determining factor in how readers interpret and identify with an author’s voice.

In *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*, scholars Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson argue that “voice as an attribute of the narrating ‘I,’ then, is a metaphor for the reader’s felt experience of the narrator’s personhood, and a marker of the relationship between a narrating ‘I’ and his or her experiential history” (79). The critical instrument of the narrative voice then becomes the primary lens in which meaning-making occurs for both the writer and the reader. As both readers and writers of life narratives, we make sense out of experience, history, truth, and memory through the complexities of visual, spoken, and/or written language. In my analysis, I will focus on the autobiographical narrative of Janisse Ray, but will also look at two other texts—Will Self’s essay “Walking to New York” and Alfred Kazin’s 1951 book *A Walker in the City*. These three particular texts allow readers to acknowledge not only the complexities of the individual authors, but also the intricacies of subjectivity, truth, and space, and how those things work both for and against each other.

Because life writing is so incredibly personal and interwoven with historical authenticity, memory, and experience, the successes (and failures, I argue) of authors like Ray, Kazin, and Self rests in their ability to create a narrative intimacy or a narrative distance through the spaces in which they occupy and with which they interact. Both the physical and psychological landscapes in which these three authors situate themselves become the primary locales of emotional attachment or detachment for readers. Thus, their ability to create a believable and authentic narrative persona hinges on their rhetorical capabilities. As Smith and Watson suggest in their scholarship:

If an 'I's narration is to serve the purposes of testimonial life writing, it must promote an identity whose authenticity is sufficiently persuasive, compelling and transformative to make its truth manifest and credible to readers. ("Witness" 593)

On the surface, Kazin, Ray, and Self's texts seem to be very similar. All three authors discuss the ways in which place has shaped, and continues to shape, their identities. All three authors also seek to navigate through these spaces in order to embark on a "quest for identity, and a search to find that urgent commingling of blood and soil" (Self 48). However, I will argue that while Kazin and Ray successfully create unique narrative personas and narrative voices that "walk" through both urban and rural landscapes and allow their readers along for the journey, whereas Self keeps his readers at a distance through deliberate choices in language. It is precisely these choices in language that determine whether the identities that Smith and Watson speak of are authentic and compelling, or instead unpleasant and distant. Because Self primarily describes scenes of estrangement during his time in London and New York, he makes certain rhetorical choices that alienate his reader, thus mimicking the landscape he describes.

Although though Kazin writes about his home on the outskirts of New York City while Ray writes about her country life in rural Georgia, both authors are able to successfully bridge the distance between the narrated and narrating "I" through their vivid presentations of autobiographical memory and metaphorical connections with the landscapes that surround them. Readers are able to connect to *both* urban and rural landscapes because of the ways in which Kazin and Ray situate themselves on the *insides* of their respective life narratives, ultimately impacting the ways in which they construct and re-construct their identities.

"Self" Loathing: Sarcasm as a Rhetorical Tool for Narrative Distance

Inflected with distinctive rhythms or cadences, idioms, tone, and styles of speech, and shaped by rhetorical strategies, voice has charge that calls the reader to some kind of relationship with the story and the narrator. (Smith & Watson, *Reading Autobiography* 79)

In his essay "Walking to New York," Will Self leaves his home in London and embarks on a journey of individual and familial discovery, hopeful of "sutur[ing] up one of the wounds in my own divided psyche, to sew together my American and my English flesh"

(14). He travels through London and New York, making superficial observations about the exterior architecture and history of buildings, and how these buildings (and surrounding communities) have decayed due to the quest for consumerism and commodification. Self uses beautifully constructed syntax and diction to paint a lyrical portrait of this place he calls home—"The foolish purchasers of Barratt Homes' apartments...will instead live out their mortgages confronted by this crumbling, acid-corroded behemoth" (22). He is able to recognize how this landscape has changed in the hands of greed and wealth, yet he fails to discuss how this has changed *him*. He confronts the metamorphosis of place on a surface level, but he does not confront the metamorphosis of personhood more intimately.

To create a psychological distance, Self remains on the *outside* during his walks in London and New York; he becomes an observer in the truest sense. Self admits "I am the reverse commuter for while they head from the suburbs into the city centre, I pack my briefcase and walk to work on the periphery; it's there that I stake my claim, mine my words" (26). He is a psychogeographic journalist in the purest sense—reporting only what he sees, never really dialogically discussing what he feels.

Self uses sarcasm as a rhetorical defense mechanism. It's as if he wants his readers to get close enough to visualize the spaces he inhabits, but not close enough for readers understand and empathize with how these places shaped (and continue to shape) his identity. His harsh tone and crass language also creates a definite distance. Phrases such as "I struggled like the quadriplegic I then was" and "there was a retarded kid called Phil" (32-3) further add to the emotional distance created between the perceived persona of the writer and the expectations of the reader. Self seems to literally and metaphorically amble in and out of childhood reminiscences while still traveling in London, instead of *fully* enveloping himself (or his readers) within his autobiographical memory. After his friend Nick Papadimitriou joins him on his psychogeographic stroll, he briefly presents readers with some insight into a relationship that means something to him—"Nick and I, our arms companionably linked in those of our adolescent selves, look down at the plastic bottle, caught by an eddy"(Self 37). However, these sporadic moments of recollection and nostalgia aren't enough to solidify his connection to place. Recollections such as these are too few and far between to truly establish himself as an authentic narrative "I." The concept of home becomes lost in Self's narrative because of the disjointedness of his autobiographical memory.

By remaining on the *emotional* outside throughout most of his journey, Self fails to create a voice of connectivity or intimacy. Self even acknowledges this preference to remain emotionally unattached to the locations he is walking through—"I won't get very far if memories, dreams, and reflections continue to obscure this bright, late November morning" (25). If, as Smith and Watson suggest, "memory is thus the source, authenticator, and destabilizer of autobiographical acts," then Self's purely *observer* persona fails to provide a deeper level of connectivity in autobiographical acts (*Reading Autobiography* 22). He seems to treat emotional memories as something to be discarded easily—"gummed up with memories and referentia, my very psyche not only feels sticky, but thickening by the yard" (Self 23). His purposeful, sarcastic tone creates a narrative distance that undoubtedly

alienates some of his readers, perhaps to demonstrate how the effects of consumerism and commodification have alienated the landscape(s).

Through the use of complex syntax and purposeful diction, Self does an exceptional job of *telling* the story, but a rather unexceptional job of *relating* the story. By situating himself as a “solitary walker,” Self ends up exactly the person he sets out to be—“an insurgent against the contemporary world, an ambulatory time traveler” (15).

Kazin: The True Quest for Self

Because language registers play...subjectivity itself is dialogical; it is always an effect of the process of social interaction. All of us become conscious of ourselves through the languages available to us in the social groups to which we belong. An individual’s language is thus permeated by other people’s words. (Smith & Watson, *Reading Autobiography* 81)

The narrative persona portrayed in Alfred Kazin’s *A Walker in the City* is decidedly different than that of Will Self’s perceived persona. As a narrator, Kazin situates himself on the *inside* of his respective narrative through inviting language and an easy-going, reflective tone. He not only walks in and around his community, but allows the reader to walk *through* them in tandem, thus allowing the reader to connect with his individual narrative voice. We are allowed into his personal spaces—his kitchen, his bedroom, his favorite hangouts. We are allowed to not only *see* the personal, but experience the personal right along with him.

A huge part of Kazin’s success as an authentic narrative voice is due to the fluidity between his adolescent autobiographical memory and his present-day thoughts. He is able to include so many aspects his former self without becoming too nostalgic; he manages to characterize the people in his life in a way that makes them seem so familiar and so comfortable, even in the absence of overindulgent dialogue. If an individual’s language is permeated by other people’s words, as Smith and Watson suggest, then readers are immediately able to establish connectivity in language through the dialogic nature of Kazin’s narrative. Unlike Self’s brief snippets of human interaction that never really manifest into substantial moments, Kazin allows himself to fully envelop space, people, and memory:

When I returned home after three, the warm odor of a coffee cake baking in the oven and the sight of my mother on her hands and knees scrubbing the linoleum on the dining room floor filled me with such tenderness that I could feel my senses reaching out to embrace every single object in our household. (Kazin 52)

By using richly crafted sentences and vivid sensory details to describe those people and places closest to him, Kazin is able to create an identifiable and trustworthy narrative persona. Even at a young age, it seems as though Kazin is conscious of his family’s social and class standing not only in his neighborhood, but also within the greater context of New

York City and the United States, yet he never lets his family's otherness negatively dictate the direction of his quest for self.

As we see in Self's essay, New York City can easily become a place of distance and a place of lost intimacy because of its sheer size and almost impenetrable population, yet Kazin is able to isolate himself and those around him as autobiographical subjects, encompassing multiple levels of subjectivity. He is able to make the most populous city in the United States seem like a quaint, small town. He is able to make the people in *his* life seem like they could easily be the people in *anyone's* life, thus establishing a true narrative closeness:

Then a long line of naked electric bulbs hung on wires above the newsstands and hot dog stands in the arcade, raw light glittering about the flaky iron rust, newsboys selling the Evening World, the smell of popcorn and of frankfurters sizzling on the grill. (Kazin 106)

Unlike Self, Kazin seems to relish his memories, and in turn, uses those as catalysts in further developing a unique narrative voice. Kazin weaves in and out of the historical and experiential instead of standing on the outside, which allows readers to navigate through their own personal connections with these particular moments. Kazin authenticates memory and experience as useful tools in emotional, spatial, and ideological connectivity through his choices in language. Kazin uses a beautiful description of a trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art when he was a school-age boy to connect the "old" New York City to his "new" version—"dusk in America any time after the Civil War would be the corridor back and back into that old New York under my feet that always left me half-stunned with its audible cries for recognition" (96). Instead of situating himself on the periphery of his memories, Kazin narratively envelops himself in those moments, and thus bridges the divide between the narrated "I" and the narrating "I"—what Smith and Watson distinguish as the "subject of history and the agent of discourse" (*Reading Autobiography* 73). As Kazin's work so eloquently suggests, it is entirely possible to successfully narrow the gap between the experienced and the experiencing.

As we see with Kazin, through conscious authorial choices in language and rhetoric, authors of life narratives exhibit their relatability and reliability through voice. In order for an autobiographical act to connect on an intimate level with readers, it must allow them access to the inside, to the personal. Kazin is able to do exactly that. He becomes not only a walker in the city, but a participant in the inner-workings of the city, a contributor to a collective concept of home.

Finding our own "Junkyard": Landscapes of Purpose

This concept of relationality, implying that one's story is bound up with that of another, suggests that the boundaries of an "I" are often shifting and permeable. Relationality invites us to think about the different kinds of textual others—historical, contingent, or significant—through which an "I"

narrates the formation or modification of self-consciousness. (Smith & Watson, Reading Autobiography 86)

Intersubjectivity is what makes autobiographical writing and autobiographical reading interesting and enjoyable, but also worthy of critical exploration and evaluation. There are no fictitious worlds in which to get lost; there are no magical trains to Hogwarts to board in order to escape reality. Emotional and psychological connectivity to a person's autobiographical memories lies in the language he or she constructs; therefore, language becomes the authenticator of voice and a mobilizer for memory.

Like my grandmother, Ray believes in the symbiotic relationship between landscape and identity, and thus was able to narratively convey the varying degrees of culturally accepted ideas of physical and emotional interdependence. As a memoir of place, *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* becomes “necessary cyclical, and as metaphors, ceremonial and healing. In seeking always a reconnection with the natural sources of language, [Ray] demonstrates that we rewrite ourselves even as the land changes ceaselessly” (Armitage 136). It is through this recognition of the regenerative power of both nature and self that Ray establishes herself as a legitimate and believable narrator:

I was not afraid of my father when he got sick. He was simply unavailable to me. He was in a place none of us could reach; not even all of us collectively could pull him back. His body was at home, he'd lost his mind—for the first time I knew the two of them to be separable. (Ray 78)

More than merely a regional commentary on poverty and mental illness, Ray's narrative explores the ways in which individuals situate themselves as embodied subjects, both *in* and *among* the spaces they inhabit. Ray's personal and ecological memoir metaphorically connects the land to the person, the person to memory—“Connecting the language of direct experience to that of the poetic or imaginative becomes a matter of reading the land, admitting to a wordless wonder that perpetuated her search for understanding through different sources of knowledge or wisdom” (Armitage 125).

For Ray's written narrative, and even for my family's oral narrative, it seems as though landscape and place become a symbolic space of interaction and co-dependency. Much like my grandmother's, Ray's identity development was directly correlated to the ways in which her family had to utilize every available resource that the landscape offered. They didn't have access to medical supplies; their greatest ally was ingenuity and craftiness —“If we missed and sliced our knees and feet, Mama would tear bandages out of clean white sheets, doctor us with an old-time tree salve called Balsam Peru, and tape us up” (Ray 18). I vividly remember my Granny walking out into her garden and snapping off a piece of an aloe vera plant, and gently rubbing it onto one of my many brutal sun burns. She had a profound appreciation and affinity for plants and animals of every kind because she was able to discern how useful they are—just as the junkyard proved to be physically and spiritually useful for Ray and her family.

The junkyard as a location of survival and interdependence, then, becomes more than a mere geographical site; it also “includes the national, ethnic, racial, gendered, sexual, social and life cycle coordinates in which narrators are embedded by virtue of their experiential histories from which they speak” (Smith & Watson, *Reading Autobiographies* 42). My Granny’s family existed in much the same way—resourcefulness was born out of necessity. If you took something from the land, you made damn sure one used it. As a memoir of desire and as a commentary on interconnectedness, Ray creates a “metaphorical site for the interpolations of time and space, the stratigraphies of memory, dream, imagination, but, perhaps most of all, witness—a geography of self in natural communities for the full meaning of ecology” (Armitage 136).

Early in the narrative, Ray acknowledges that “away from home, we were ashamed of the junkyard” (29). Through her autobiographical memories and recollections of the junkyard, readers are able to see the ways in which Ray distinguishes between the narrated and narrating “I.” As a narrating “I” reflecting on memories of her childhood and adolescence, Ray is confronting the subject of history while “occupying multiple, at times contradictory, subject positions” (Smith & Watson, *Reading Autobiographies* 73). As a child, she is aware of both the usefulness of the junkyard in providing for her family, yet she is also aware of the cultural shame that comes with living in such a place. Regardless of the stigmas and stereotypes associated with living in a real-life junkyard, Ray confides in her readers by confessing a certain vulnerability located within the landscape and her own shifting psyche:

Something in me seeks the pure amazement I had that day as a girl: the sweet-faced wonder of enough berries to feed Appling County, a plenitude advertised by our purple-stained mouths, amid a beauty too reckless for return. What is left of this mythic terra incognita is a map I cannot follow. I have not stopped trying to go back. (Ray 64)

Like Kazin, Ray is able to directly situate herself *in* and *among* autobiographical memory. She resists naiveté and refuses to play a victim of circumstance, yet even her adolescent self is able to recognize multiple levels of subjectivity in her family and in herself. She becomes an embodied subject through the recognition of the power she holds as a human being, as a female, as a child, and as a lover of nature.

Ray is also able to firmly establish differences between *location* and *position* through this autobiographical recollection. While Ray and her family may be located on the *inside* of a junkyard, they are simultaneously positioned on the *outside* of cultural norms and expectations. For Ray and her family, the junkyard was home—a home which allowed both physical and mental landscapes to manifest in direct accordance with nature and the surrounding environment. When they travel outside of this space, normalcy begins to dissolve in favor of social and political views of what a home should look like:

The junkyard, then, was all we knew. We knew nobody else lived like we did, but we didn’t know how they lived. We knew they were wasteful and threw

perfectly good things in the garbage, which ended up at our house. We thought that meant they were better than we were. (Ray 29)

The junkyard is a powerful, spatial metaphor in itself—it can serve as both an agent of healing and of disgrace. *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* is distinctly rural and distinctly Southern. The nuances of language and the complexities of space in Ray's narrative are drastically different than those of Kazin and Self's urban landscapes, yet she is able to settle readers into a familiarity through an intimate relationship with the physical landscape. She makes even a junkyard feel like home.

Conclusion: Communities of Collective Remembering

...I felt like I was being pulled into some mysterious and ancient clan that claimed me as its own simply because I had been born a block away. Whether I agreed with its beliefs or not, I belonged; whether I assented to its rights over me or not, I belonged; whatever I thought of them, no matter how far I might drift from that place, I belonged. (Kazin 45)

Janisse Ray and Alfred Kazin employ multiple modes of remembering in *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* and *A Walker in the City*, further establishing the validity of their narrative personas while allowing for a positive interpretation of perceived truthfulness. Unlike their psychogeographical counterpart Will Self, who isolates himself through sarcasm and verbosity, they are able to firmly establish connectivity and intimacy with readers through precise and deliberate language. Ray incorporates family photos, family stories, folklore, and richly-woven metaphorical descriptions in order to create a master autobiographical *and* familial narrative. She situates herself as an environmental authority not through scholarship or research, but through the shared experiences of her family lineage and physical interaction with the landscape. Similarly, Kazin invokes an intense emotional belonging to his mental and physical landscapes through intimate access to himself and the family that shapes his identity; he is able to successfully blend the old with the new, the past with the present.

It is through language and rhetorical choices that the Ray family's junkyard and Kazin's interpretation of the "big city" become both private and public sites for remembering. Because memory is a "means of passing on, of sharing a social past that may have been obscured, thereby activating its potential for reshaping a future of and for other subjects," Ray and Kazin are able to take a personal act of remembering and transform it into a fundamentally social and collective act (Smith & Watson, *Reading Autobiography* 26). The narrative personas in their respective narratives are reliable and authentic precisely because of this intersubjectivity among memory, history, and identity, and the ways in which they blend and merge the narrated and narrating "I."

Ray and Kazin do something magical in these texts. As narrators, they acknowledge that we constantly and consistently move in and out of communities of memory, yet both authors are able to ground themselves as individuals in these various communities through an intimate relationship with the land and the people that inhabit that land. Kazin and Ray

are able to root their personal histories and the histories of their families in the very landscape into which they were born—"this is the homeland that built us. Here I walk shoulder to shoulder with history—my history. I am in the presence of something ancient and venerable, perhaps of time itself, its unhurried passing marked by immensity and stolidity, each year purged by fire, cinched by a ring" (Ray 69). Because of unflinching and unwavering access to the personal, Kazin and Ray allow readers to *belong*—to place, to people, to history, and to memory.

Works Cited

- Armitage, Shelley. "Shared and Shifting Land(scapes): Making Memoir and Personal Ecology in the Pajarito Journals of Peggy Pond Church." *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 27.3 (2006): 111-139. Academic Search Complete. Web. 17 Nov. 2013.
- Fivush, Robyn, et al. "The Making of Autobiographical Memory: Intersections of Culture, Narratives, and Identity." *International Journal of Psychology* 46.5 (2011): 321-345. *Business Source Complete*. Web. 4 Oct. 2013.
- Gutierrez, Emilio Martinez. "Memories Without a Place." *International Social Science Journal* 62.203/204 (2011): 19-31. *SocINDEX*. Web. 7 Oct. 2013.
- Kazin, Alfred. *A Walker in the City*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1951. Print.
- Knez, Igor. "Autobiographical Memories for Places." *Memory* 14.3 (2006): 359-377. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 27 Sept. 2013.
- Mellon, James G. "Urbanism, Nationalism and the Politics of Place: Commemoration and Collective Memory." *Canadian Journal of Urban Research* 17.1 (2008): 58-77. *SocINDEX*. Web. 28 Sept. 2013.
- Pasupathi, M., E. Mansour, and J.R. Brubaker. "Developing a Life Story: Constructing Relations between Self and Experience in Autobiographical Narratives." *Human Development* 50.2/3 (2007): 85-110. *ERIC*. Web. 5 Oct. 2013.
- Ray, Janisse. *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*. Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 1999. Print.
- Rishbeth, Clare, and Mark Powell. "Place Attachment and Memory: Landscapes of Belonging as Experienced Post-Migration." *Landscape Research* 38.2 (2013): 160-178. *Business Source Complete*. Web. 28 Sept. 2013.
- Russell, Lynette. "Remembering Places Never Visited: Connections and Context in Imagined and Imaginary Landscapes." *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 16.2 (2012): 401-417. *OmniFile Full Text Mega*. Web. 4 Oct. 2013.
- Self, Will. *Psycho Geography*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2002. Print.
- Skowronski, John and Richard Walker. "How Describing Autobiographical Events Can Affect Autobiographical Memories." *Social Cognition* 22.5 (2004): 555-590. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 7 Oct. 2013.
- Smith, Sidonie, and Julia Watson. *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*. 2nd ed. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2001. Print.
- . "Witness or False Witness?: Metrics of Authenticity, Collective I-Formations, and the Ethic or Verification in First-Person Testimony." *Biography: An Interdisciplinary Quarterly* 35.4 (2012): 591-626. *MLA International Bibliography*. Web. 18 Nov. 2013.