

A Letter from the Editor

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Writing and Objects, Objects in Writing

The significance people attach to objects and the way in which they mediate relationships has always been central to anthropology. This issue of the Unfamiliar aims to explore the relationship between people and objects through the process of writing, and questions how people experience, talk, and write about objects, and how anthropologists' understandings about people, places, and culture, as well as the way they write about them, are entwined with the objects they see, hear, touch, smell, and interact with. The contributors to this issue all explore this relationship by engaging with the objects of their research in a very creative and critical way, showing how even things one would not necessarily consider 'objects' become such through their affective presence and/or intrinsicness to transmitting ideas. These objects can be concrete or diffused as illustrated in the submissions by Wu, Chen, and Morán; they can be detached from or become part of human actors as shown in Trembath and Mewburn's article; and they can unite, separate, order, and shape attitudes towards groups and people as demonstrated in Fradejas-García's reflective piece on fieldwork. All in all, objects are shown to be inseparable when thinking and writing about human relations and anthropologists' work in eliciting various cultural and social phenomena, so we hope that this issue of the Unfamiliar would be an enjoyable read, which pushes us to think more about how we write and represent the objects of our study.

But before we move to the articles we would like to thank the Unfamiliar team and the University of Edinburgh Library Learning Services for their incredible work in making this journal possible. Perhaps it is no coincidence that this issue focusing on 'representation' also marks a transition point for our journal with the new Version 3 OJS look and modern design. With this issue we also welcome our new editors Elizabeth Hurst, Alice Nagle, and Lindsay Randall, who put a lot of effort in its making, and we are certain that they will do an absolutely fantastic job moving the Unfamiliar Journal forward. After four years of working in the journal, and with a new Unfamiliar team gradually forming, Hakon Caspersen and I have decided to step down from our position as executive editors. We hope that by passing on this, often stressful but extremely satisfying, work to our successors and their new team of talented, dedicated, and resilient young scholars the journal will greatly benefit from their fresh ideas and enthusiasm to make anthropology more accessible. We are leaving them with a renewed journal platform and a website, which we strived to give a more modern look and read, but still preserve our journal's mission and direction. For much of what we have accomplished we have our designer Christine Wu to thank, and we express our sincere gratitude to her for making our vision possible and keeping up with our, often quite too many, demands. We sadly, however, have to say goodbye to Christine as well, as she too is stepping down from the Unfamiliar. We thank her for leaving us with such a wonderful journal, splendid issue, and visually stimulating photo essay, and we wish her all the best in her future work and studies. Having said that, we leave our readers to the contributions of this issue, and capable hands of our new team, who will continue to present anthropological research in a more accessible and creative way, without compromising its academic and scientific value, and giving justice to the people whom we write about.

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