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Editor's Preface and Acknowledgements

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thresholds



disClosure
a journal of social theory

editorial collective

no. 15

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Matt Weir, *The Death Drive*,
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Contributors

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Brian Connors-Manke recently had a dream in which the world wasn't hell-bent on destruction, but then he woke up, and needed to take some pictures for therapy.

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

Sean Dummitt is a PhD student in the Department of English at the University of Kentucky. His research interests include twentieth-century American literature as it intersects with issues of intimacy, sexuality, gender, and space. He is editor of *disClosure* 15.

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William S. Haney II received his PhD from the University of California, Davis. He has taught at universities in the United States and abroad and is currently professor of English at the American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. His most recent book, *Cybercultures, Cyborgs, and Science Fiction: Consciousness and the Posthuman* (Rodopi, 2006), argues that the first-person experience of pure consciousness may soon be under threat from posthuman biotechnology.

Jay Ladin holds the David and Ruth Gottesman Chair in English at Stern College of Yeshiva University. His first collection of poems, *Alternatives to History*, was published in 2003 by Sheep Meadow Press; Sheep Meadow will bring out his second collection, *The Book of Anna*, in spring 2007. With the assistance of an American Council of Learned Societies fellowship, he is currently completing a critical study of the emergence of American modernism and a third book of poetry.

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Virginia Poundstone is an artist and designer who was born and raised in Lexington, Kentucky, schooled in Manhattan, and now lives in Brooklyn.

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J. Michael Tilley is a PhD student in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Kentucky. He specializes in both nineteenth-century philosophy and social and political philosophy. His dissertation addresses the relationship between the individual and the community in Kierkegaard's social philosophy.

Matt Weir is a visual artist who lives and works in Louisville, Kentucky.

Jennifer Wilkinson teaches in the Department of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Sydney. Her interest in intimacy has grown out of her PhD study of the public sphere and her postgraduate teaching concerns, ethics, and private life.

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

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*.

Acknowledgements

I would like first to thank this editorial collective's faculty advisors, Andy Doolen and John Erickson, for their time and expertise in all matters we have faced in the production of this issue. Thank you also to Committee on Social Theory Director Virginia Blum for her endless support of *disClosure*. Without her mentorship and advocacy, *disClosure* would not be possible. I thank the faculty members who, along with Virginia Blum, co-taught Social Theory 600 in spring 2005: Mary Anglin, Suzanne Pucci, and Richard Smith. For continued funding of *disClosure*, I thank the Executive Vice President for Research, the Graduate School, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Student Government Association, and the Committee on Social Theory, all at the University of Kentucky. Their financial support is vital to *disClosure*, and I am grateful for their contributions.

Sincere thanks to Marcia England, editor of *disClosure* 14, "Incarnations," for promptly and generously answering all questions about journal publication. Her support has been integral to the entire production of this issue, and she is owed endless gratitude.

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