

How much importance do you place on storytelling in terms of narrative and the broader endeavor of impact on composition pedagogy?

Selfe: I think that we naturally tell stories, we share them with each other, but we are not naturally good storytellers and we don't always compose stories, or stories are always composed, but we are not always conscious of how we compose them and why we compose them and in what ways we compose them. I think that literacy narratives as an assignment helps students think about how literacy narratives are composed, how they're related, how identity is mixed up in the telling of a story, how details of stories are selected and arranged, and then interpreted by tellers and audiences. I think that kind-of instruction in storytelling is important for everyone because stories are so much a part of our lives, in business and in the workplace, in organizations, at home, personally, so yes I think that's important.

Ulman: Just another example, this is a second-year course but Cindy and I regularly incorporate work on oral history and the DALN. I try to stress to my students that the DALN might be the specific archive that we are working with, but I want them to also reflect on the fact that it is giving them the chance to learn how to work with primary materials, to understand that some primary materials are created, rather than say found as an epiphenomenon of census taking or some other government process that generates data about people but they're also situations in which, primary sources, they can actually have a hand in helping people create primary sources for understanding literacy. I teach them about the difficulties of integrating somebody else's voice into your own voice as an interpreter, especially when you have available a recording. So my students do digital exhibits of narratives that have a lot of text in them and they think about how do you weave into your own text somebody else's speech, but they also weave in clips, video clips so I mean there are all sorts of affordances that narratives and these digital narratives present for composition pedagogy. The problem of how you generalize from this kind-of data because the DALN is not a random sample of anything, it's a convenient sample and so you're not going to generate predictable findings from an analysis of these kinds of materials and we can talk about that – What's the value of heuristic analysis, of raising questions, of going in with a more open mind to a body of sources than hypothesis testing, which has its own strengths but, yeah, I think it has all sorts of affordances when we are both teaching students to compose but also to study to think...

Selfe:...think critically, there's also the practice that working with these narratives, if you write about these narratives and you provide video or audio or composed hybrid projects in some sort of conversation with alphabetic texts what's the relationship between the mediated bits of video and audio and the alphabetic bits of texts. I guess they are all mediated in some way, but how do you present those pieces so that they are all related to one another so that the total of the conversation is greater than the individual parts. How do you generate meaning from those parts, and I think students are going to have to do more and more of that kind-of work in a digital culture and the DALN provides a great way, and an interesting way, an engaging way of thinking about how to combine meaning, how to make meaning from combined bits of video, audio, and alphabetic text. The other thing it helps provide, that I found astoundingly rich thanks to Brenda Bergerman's work, is the opportunity to teach students captioning, and teach them about accessibility, and the limits of accessibility, the limits of how written text is accessible, but also the limits of how video or audio is accessible without additional dimensions that allow individuals to get at texts in the way that they need to or want to. So one of the best things to

use the DALN for is to help graduate students for instance, learn how to caption video that they might be thinking about using in classes.

Ulman: And not just graduate students, my undergraduates caption everything they use or everything they help people record, and that's true, that's something that...

Selfe: ...it brings accessibility to the floor...

Ulman:...It's just that this is sort-of a perfect match, you could say, well, the way I present that to my students is sort of stepping a rung higher on the ladder of abstraction and saying this just really teaches us about the normative aspect of any medium, that's it's assuming some norm, some sensory channel that the audience has and it's an assumption you can't make if you're trying to make your materials as widely available as possible and so I have them go through a little exercise that tries to show them how various kinds of media assume a norm, and yeah that's, I think a part of composition pedagogy as well, understanding your medium.

Selfe: And that's not a bad thing to teach undergraduate students ever.