Diary as Literature

Through the Lens of Multiculturalism in America

Edited by
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Independent Scholar

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Acknowledgements

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Introduction: Diary as a Quasi-Literary Genre

Angela R. Hooks, PhD

Independent Scholar

The idea to curate this book derived from the roundtable session The Diary as Literature Through the Lens of Multiculturalism in America for NeMLA 2019 conference. That roundtable discussion was the result of two courses I taught: one at Ramapo the College of New Jersey for 2018 spring semester by the same name, and the other at St. John's University as Literature as a Global Context. The concept to teach diary as literature sprouted from my passion for diary writing and grew into a scholarship about the history, methods, and rhetorical context of keeping a diary. Throughout three decades I progressed from writing in a diary to teaching others to write in a diary, to bringing the diary into the classroom to researching the lives of other diary keepers, and reading other people's diaries—published and unpublished— to writing my dissertation about diary writing. My dissertation specifically focused on Black women diary writers because their diaries had been "lost through sabotage" and "rarely published."[1] However, through the lens of multiculturalism this collection expands the historically marginalized voice, illustrating how diary-keepers find their expressive language, explore their identity, and understand themselves, their intimate relationships, and the world around them using the diary. The mix of diary voices, side by side, document and demonstrate how social pressures and literary practices affect people despite race, culture, creed, or pedigree. For the readers of those diaries, there remains a hidden meaning or intent behind the entries only the diarist can explain thus blurring the lines between private thoughts and public information.[2] As a result, the reader becomes interested in the life of the diarist, sometimes beyond the diary pages. Other times, the reader must simply accept what the diarist has written without interpretation and let the diary characterize the writer. For example, in the diary of William P. Woodlin, he does not record his personal memories only the observation of the war. Therefore, the reader of his diary will not learn about his family life before the war.

Just as the diary voices vary, the essays differ, as well. They are both academic and creative non-fiction essays to appeal to both a scholarly audience and

the mass public. While academic writing is intellectually driven and a logically ordered process, creative non-fiction writing is holistic in which the writer offers a sense of self and identity, their emotional orientation to their writing and the creative process is similar to the diary writer—autobiographical. For example, my essay "Diaries of Me, Myself and Grandma" gives a first-person account of my desire to find and read my grandmother's diaries as a sense of self and conversation with my grandmother. The blend of academic and creative non-fiction writing illustrates how the diary can be cross-disciplinary in the field of humanities. The writers in this collection are graduate students, instructors, professors, historians, and artists studying, teaching, and writing about literature and history from the post-colonial to the contemporary era. We are, in terms of the blurred boundaries of literature, literary anthropologist intrigued about people, signs, and text reading and analyzing other cultures and the product of that culture through the lens of the diary.

To fill the void in the diary as literature genre this anthology offers a wide range of formats and categories based on diaries from the Civil War to national and international travel and diaspora to family diaries and writing lyrics while in prison. Since the diary is an autobiographical text, this collection looks at diaries as ethnography, memoir, and letter writing, as well as the diary in the novel consequently, diary as a quasi-literary genre. Although each essay focuses on different types of diaries and formats, different time periods each diary is connected. They reconstruct fragmented stories of diverse communities and cultures in America from the nineteenth century to the contemporary moment exposing that no one has an easy life. Each diarist has a way of fleeing time hoping their "book will let each day live beyond its midnight, let it continue somewhere outside its place in a finite row of falling dominoes."[3] Each diarist wrote with an audience in mind—first for themselves, and then for someone else offering a narrative continuity. Thomas Mallon claims, "that no one every kept a diary for himself. In fact, I don't believe one can write to oneself for many words more than get used in a note tacked to the refrigerator, saying "Buy Bread." Before another sentence is added becomes a psychological impossibility; the words have a start going someplace. Your "you" may be even less palpable than mine, but someday," even "a hundred years from now, going through boxes in an attic…an audience will turn up."[4] For instance, when Emilie F. Davis, a freeborn woman sat down to write in her pocket diaries,1863-1865, she did not write for an audience. However, a hundred years later, her diaries were discovered, read, edited, and published first by Judith Giesberg, a professor of history and then by Karsonya Whitehead, a professor of African American Studies. Both editions were published in 2014, *Emilie Davis's Civil War: The Diaries of a Free Black Woman in Philadelphia*, and *The Notes From a Colored: the Civil War Pocket Diaries of Emilie Frances Davis,* respectively. The publication of Davis's pocket diaries supports White-

head's claim: "The moment you record something on paper; that record has the potential to find its way into the hands of others—even if it takes years to get there."[5] Although Davis's pocket diaries were private and personal, before the mid-nineteenth century, men and women's diaries were semi-public documents. Mothers left their diaries where the family could read them, sisters co-wrote diaries, fathers wrote notes in their daughters' diaries and female friends exchanged diaries while men published theirs.[6]

When teaching this course Diary as Literature Through the Lens of Multiculturalism in America, it required a definition for multiculturalism. Therefore, multiculturalism was presented as the sociocultural experiences of underrepresented groups who fall outside the mainstream of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and language. Multiculturalism reflects different cultures and racial groups with equal rights and opportunities, equal attention and representation without assimilation. In America, the multicultural society includes various cultural and ethnic groups that do not necessarily have engaging interaction with each other whereas intercultural is a community of cultures who learn from each other, and have respect and understand different cultures. For this reason, *Diary as Literature* offers the same intercultural community with different types of diaries and purposes.

In *Bulletproof Diva, Tales of Race, Sex, and Hair*, the author, Lisa Jones, describes how she invented multiculturalism and intersected cultures as a black child born in New York City to a Jewish woman and a Black man. Jones sported an afro, braids, accidental dreadlocks, and the Farrah Fawcett flip in the name of culture and identity. She ate potato kugel and boiled chicken in her Jewish aunt's kitchen because Aunt Fannie was "the only Jewish relative who didn't disown my mother for marrying a black man."[7] She attended a high school in Chinatown, lost her virginity to an Italian drug dealer, and dated his black son. Jones illustrates how she crossed cultural boundaries with music and food. She writes: "The kid introduced me to Jimi Hendrix and sushi. I gave him Chaka Khan and Caporel's Spanish-style fried chicken." She read: "Wole Soyinka, William Carlos Williams, and Gloria Anzaldua"[8] to acquaint herself with the political activism of a Nigerian memoirist, the poems of a multicultural doctor and writer, and the isolation and anger of marginalized Chicana poet. She learned that cultural pluralism was an "everyday life led by thousands of Americans, black, yellow, brown, red and yes, even white." Similar to Jones's intersecting cultures the essays in *Diary as Literature* connect and explore multiculturalism and intercultural relations of African-Americans and Irish-Americans soldiers during the American Civil War experienced, the Afro-Cuban diaspora, and the travel adventures of Black woman from American, as well as the sorrows of a teacher in rural Ohio and the traditions of a Bengali immigrant in New York City, along with the narratives of mixed-race barriers

of a biracial men and a rapper's musing while in jail. As Virginia Marecsca's quotes in her essay, "Mixed-Race Memoirs: Uncovering Color Blind Multiculturalism," "The United States can work to shatter social constructs by sharing personal experiences that speak to our common humanity, exposing, and eschewing an American multiculturalism that is rooted in white supremacy to celebrate a multiculturalism that embodies respect for all races."

Literary genre boundaries blur therefore *Diary as Literature* focuses on diary writing as a quasi-literary genre that includes published and unpublished diaries, oral diaries, diaries as memoir writing, diaries in the novel, letters, and travel literature. Thus, the book is divided into three sections: Diaries of the American Civil War, Diaries of Trips and Letters of Diaspora, and Diaries of Family, Prison Lyrics, and a Memoir — a marginalized voice that has not been homogenized.

On Diary-Keeping

The essays in *Diary as Literature Through a Multicultural Lens in America* focus on personal writings from the nineteenth century to contemporary era. The personal writings are considered diaries within the quasi-literary diary genre, which includes letters, memoirs, autobiography and the novel. Because these diaries reflect race, ethnicity, gender, and class, I want to offer some theoretical context about diaries to create a thread that weaves the diaries in this collection together despite their differences: form, content, function, and time period.

This is not a complete history of the diary genre but a brief overview of its origins because over four centuries the diary in America has shifted and evolved from spiritual matters of clergy to introspection of the ordinary person. Mallon explains the diary began with the late sixteenth century reformed clergyman in East Anglican as a means of magnifying godliness, examining their conscience, and preparing for an encounter with God in prayer and communion.[9] Evidence points to East Anglicans exchanging diaries with Puritan for the edification of each other, a Christian principal throughout the Holy Writ. The exchange of diaries for edification shifted to a Protestant art form during the mid-seventeenth century. The Non-Conformist charted their spiritual progress in the diary as a space for self-discipline, self-judgement, and self-watching purposes. Therefore, when the practice came to America the habit of diary keeping was no longer confined to the clergy but practiced by lay people, settlers, free, and enslaved Black Americans — people who wanted to discover who they really were, their inner lives. The diary evolved into what journal guru Ira Progoff described as a space to gain awareness about diverse areas of your life, connect to the real self, making possible our subjective experiences.

Despite its beginnings or its continent or time period, diaries remain a means of expressing oneself in writing, and its creation is based on the culture or the community at that historical moment. The diary has become a dialogue with history and that history has been reconstructed within the pages of the journal written in first person with chronological entries and dated pages. The dated page helps the diarist pinpoint a moment in their life and what is going on in the world around them, such as civil wars, travel journeys, family matters, and literary achievements. Writing down memories gives the diary-keeper both an emotional and actual experience of what has happened as they remember it. Within these pages, the diarist decides purpose and language, technique and frequency.

Theoretically, I suggest that the act of keeping a diary began with the commonplace book, as a means of "excerpting and note-taking."[10] A book to write down all the knowledge a person has acquired from books, mentors, life experience, nature, and the world around them—spiritual and physical, emotional and social.

The commonplace book commenced in the seventeenth and eighteenth century in an attempt to categorize beliefs such as religion, politics, and love. The act of writing down useful quotes from well-known authors and arranging them by topic, heading or place become known as "commonplacing."[11] For schoolboys commonplacing was purely academic. For example, the writer selected an important word, preferably Latin, as the heading, (i.e. *Confessio*) penned it on the left side of the first empty double page along with the excerpt, notes or question, and respective source. On the next page, the writer repeated the process with a different heading (i.e. *Itineranur*). Each time that particular topic reappeared, the writer returned to that page to record important notes. Within these pages existed bits of humor, a quote, poem, piece of prose, song lyrics and newspaper clippings. Within the framework of the diary, Daniel Kotzin describes these pages as the "literary identity" in his essay "Writing Irish Lives During the Civil War." Kotzin points to the four stanzas of "The Star-Spangled Banner" transcribed on the first page of Corporal Timothy Regan's diary, along with poems and songs and short stories.

For schoolgirls, the repetitiveness of copying poetry and quotes in their commonplace books were lessons in handwriting and socially appropriate femininity. For women, throughout the late sixteenth and seventeenth century, the diary served as family books to document everyday domestic experiences and as a private record for supporting and maintaining their husband's activities. For the social elite, diary-keeping was a literary practice to keep a daily record, monitor behavior, correct moral lapses, and use time wisely.

William Cole explains that the compiler of the commonplace book "reacts to the passages he has chosen or tells what the passages have led him to think

about. A piece of prose, a poem, an aphorism can trigger the mind to consider a parallel, to dredge something from the memory, or perhaps to speculate with further range and depth on the same theme."[12] Once the mind has been triggered to speculate or dredge up a memory, and introspection occurs causing the writer to reflect on life experiences and personal matters, the commonplace books develop into an autobiography. W.H. Auden referred to his forthcoming commonplace book, *A Certain World*, as "a sort of autobiography." The book contained quotations and commentary which revealed secret parts of his inner life. Like a diary, the commonplace book chronicles observations, reflections, and pieces of wisdom that the writer had read or experienced in a lifelong self-education plan.[13]

As the industrialization era begins and labor increases, leisurely time for keeping a diary decreases, for many Americans. Therefore, the early eighteenth and nineteenth-century diarists recorded matter of fact comments about the weather, daily chores, and the well-being of friends and family rather than personal feelings that require more time for introspection and reflecting on the events of one's life. The cultural meaning of work pointed to one's accomplishments rather than one's musings about their personal feelings.[14] Additionally, there was a rise in the middle class, expansion of print, the market revolution and the growth of education.[15] The Protestant principle of self-regulation became secularized into a mode of self-improvement, in which diarists kept track of time and accumulated an account of self with minute details of their lives. This shift occurred during 1877-1930 because the popularity of the diary signaled a change in the way early Americans recorded and imagined themselves. Molly McCarthy argues the diary appealed to mid-nineteenth century diarists because "it reflected and reinforced the change around them in the way it presented the market and shifting conceptions of time, while simultaneously allowing them to exercise tendency toward introspection in little to no time."[16] Paige Mason's analysis of Lucius Clark Smith's diaries illustrates how a rural farmer uses the diary to comment on his work life without reflecting on his personal feelings of continuous failure in the essay " A Lifetime of Sowing the Blues: Lucius Clark Smith, 1834-1915."

In the late twentieth century, psychological insights and therapeutic and creative benefits ushered in a re-creation of the diary as a place to discover new solutions to problems, appreciate the process of one's life. According to Tristine Rainer, "modern psychology's recognition of the subconscious, the free experimentation of contemporary art and writing and the popularization of psychological insights and concepts of personal responsibility"[17] attributed to the widespread use of the diary.

Is it a diary, journal or notebook? What's the difference?

The writers and scholars in this anthology do not purposefully make a distinction between the diary and the journal. Only two essayists refer to the diary as a journal, Wagner and Jackson; however, those terms are not used for gendering the journal or the diary. Diary is the dominant word in this collection because throughout my research, I, like many other diary scholars, have determined both the diary and journal are muddled terms used synonymously. Both terms indicate dailiness. The French termed *journal intime* based on introspection, the mark of temporality, the day-to-day commentaries on itself and insignificant events. Thomas Mallon claims the journal is a link to newspaper trade and diary exist based on the intimate term dear. In making a distinction, Mallon refers to *Samuel Johnson's Dictionary of the English Language,* published in 1755, which defines the diary as "an account of the transactions, accidents an observation of every day; a journal."[18] The Oxford English Dictionary describes a diary as "a daily record of events or transactions, specifically, a daily record of matters affecting the writer personally." Whereas the journal is described as "a daily record of events or occurrences kept by anyone for his own use." Sheila Bender renamed the diary and the journal, "journairy." A journairy is a blank book, loose-leaf papers or computer where the diarists make sure "that by thinking in writing, you allow yourself to take leaps in the dark. In such places, you can write every day or week in a quest to keep describing your world from a state in which you are present at the moment but not knowing what is next. If you write from this state, you will find writing offers you epiphanies, meaningful evocations of places and people and things past and present, as well as knowledge essential to your well-being that you would not have been able to gain any other way."[19]

D. Gordon Rohman and Albert O. Wlecke distinguish the journal from the diary by defining the journal as a record of the mind and the diary a record of what one does.[20] They separate the two when it comes to using the journal as a prewriting tool for students.

Whether diarists scribe their thoughts in a diary or a journal the result remains the same: the invention of self, language, and symbols that stems from internal dialogue with self to create a "world and world view in words."[21]

To Capitalize or Not to Capitalize that is the Question

The writers in this collection have chosen to capitalize or not capitalize the terms Black and White when identifying race. Race is controversial. The discussion of race is tense. Many discussions are centered on both Black and White being capitalized just as any other race is capitalized, such as Asian and Hispanic. However, Asian and Hispanic are based on geographical region,

ethnic origin making them proper nouns. Merrill Perlman of *Columbia Review Journalism*, claims "Just as people might describe themselves as "Japanese" or "Chicano" rather than "Asian" or "Hispanic," people who are "black" or "white" are just as likely to describe themselves as "African American" or "Irish."[22] But for the African American, there has been a long history attempting to find a term to describe themselves that everyone could agree on, which began in 1831. However, "what is the appropriate term to call African people who were involuntarily bought to America and have since become an integral part of the fabric of this country."[23] Depending on political, social, and economic conditions, today, the term is varied black, Black American or African American. Therefore, capitalization plays an important role based on the writer's message.

Even style guides are flummoxed when it comes to the capital B versus the lowercase w. Should it be a choice or a rule? Does the typography indicate inequality between Black and white; black and White? Should both be capitalized to show respect and equity? This collection answers the question by respecting the writer's choice whether to capitalize "black" and "white" or use the term African American or Black American.

In order to understand how the diaries, connect and interconnect to each other, the following is an introduction to each section of *The Dairy as Literature Through the Lens of Multiculturalism in America* based on the diaries purpose.

Diaries of the American Civil War

During the American Civil War, diaries were used to start a journey or document a dramatic circumstance. For African American soldier in the Union Army, the military service was means to develop rhetorical skills, one being diary writing as well as write themselves into history. Corey Greathouse explores the emotional rollercoaster penned in William B. Gould's diary in "Using Personal Diaries as a Site for Reconstructing African American History." Greathouse notes that Gould's diary has a "range of emotion that makes his writing an essential resource in reconstructing the lives of enslaved people." Whereas Anthony David Franklin writes about the "escalating tension between southern and northern culture and the climax that lead to the diary of William P. Woodlin, a northern, black Civil War soldier." Franklin claims, "Woodlin's chronology represents the transition towards racial equality." In the diaries of the Irish-American soldiers, Timothy Regan and Thomas Francis Galwey, they don't miss the details of the war. Daniel Kotzin observes that their private writing gives them a literary identity. In "Writing Irish Lives During the Civil War" Kotzin states "diary writing was a fundamental part of their experience in the Civil War, and these two soldiers used diary writing to work out their personal identity as they adjusted to their new lives in the Union army." One bringing literature into the diary and

the other military. Ironically, neither soldier writes about the disparity of race relations or violence in their diary.

However, Lucius Clark Smith, a nineteenth-century teacher and farmer, his diary entries reflect musings about the livelihood of soldiers with little interest in being a soldier. Instead, his diaries chronicle his failures as a businessman and farmer along with his father's travels. Paige Mason looks at the historical conversation about labor, the Midwest, and vocation in Smith's diary in her essay "A Lifetime of Sowing the Blues: Lucius Clark Smith: 1834-1915."

Whether writing about the war or the home front, these diaries have an overlapping literary element such as character, theme, intention, form, and truth-telling. Diary writing engages in dialogue with an audience, self, real or imagined. If a diary can have elements of a novel, then can a novel have elements of a diary: a first-person narrator, fragmented narrative, and an intended audience. Suzy Woltmann reviews Alice Randall's 2001 novel *The Wind Done Gone* in her essay "'I Can't Pass Away from Her': Adaptation and the Diaristic Impulse of *The Wind Done Gone*." Woltmann states that Randall gives voice to characters who lacked agency in *Gone with the Wind*. She believes, "As reader, we are privy to Cynara's darker thoughts, including wishing evil on Scarlett and denying faith in God." We as a reader also, "see how Cynara hides parts of herself and her thoughts from Rhett and other white people." Woltmann argues, "*The Wind Done Gone*'s diary form responds as romanticized view of the Confederate South created in Mitchell's immensely popular epic, but also to recurring race and gender issues in the years since its publication." Resembling the diary, *The Wind Done Gone* begins in medias res and talks about diary writing. In the first diary entry, the protagonist, Cynara, writes: "Today is the anniversary of my birth. I have twenty-eight years. This diary and the pen I am writing with are the best gifts I got—except this cake."

The experiences and observations for life during the Civil War connects these diaries.

Diaries of Trips and Letters of Diaspora

The diarist who keeps a travel journal takes a piece of the foreign land back home with them. Their diary entries are like a camera lens snapping different scenes from a unique perspective, creating maps that document their lives as more than an imagined journey or a fact book. Margo Culley explains that for pioneer women travel diaries were a book of information for friends and relatives thinking about making the journey. However, both Juanita Harrison and Olive Dame Campbell turn the diary on its head as women diarist of the early twentieth century.

The world is viewed with excitement through the vivid details of Juanita Harrison travel journal from 1927-1935, published as *My Great, Wide Beautiful World*. At 36 she embarks on a venture, rarely made by African American women, snapping literary portraits of people and places in Europe, Middle East, India and Japan and China. Her journal reflects how people reacted to her as an African-American woman traveling alone. Chimene Jackson narrates the course of Harrison' travels and the importance of black and brown women keeping a diary in her essay, "Black Women's Journals Reflect Mine, Yours, and Ours Through the Travel Writing of Juanita Harrison."

It was the immersion into the Appalachian culture that enthused Olive Dame Campbell, a New Englander, to create her 1908-1909 diary. Campbell began her journey only as an assistant to her husband to help him record facts about the Appalachian. Her first assignment as a diary keeper reflected that of the seventeenth-century female diary keeper, to help her husband. However, Campbell's diary illustrates constructing an intercultural community when she discovers the beauty of nature and the humanness of the people. Philp Krummrich and Alexa Potts claim that "as a New Englander, she inevitably tended to regard the denizens of Appalachia as members of fundamentally different cultures" in their essay, "When the Clash of Cultures Is Like the Clash of Cymbals: Olive Dame Campbell's Appalachian Travels."

Through letters, Aisha Z. Cort, pieces together "the fragments of her mother's past with archival research and family interviews" in her personal narrative, "The Lost Girl of Havana: A Tale of Afro-Cuban Diasporic Memory." Like the diary, the letter serves as an act of writing, and in that act, the letter writer like the diarist wishes "to rewrite themselves." Letter-writing is comparable to an extended diary with an intended audience, particularly when the diarist has changing ideas of self or influence of romanticism. When a woman is suffering from physical or emotional restrictions, the letter-writing process can be used to investigate and to confirm her responses to others and to herself, as well as to encourage certain responses from others. Accordingly, Cort examines her mother and her grandmother's letters "during a three-year separation at the beginning of the Cuban Revolution." The letter writer maintains a power of agency enabling the protagonists, the self, to hold onto their desire and subjectivity. Thus, female agency connects these diaries and letters together.

Diaries of Family and Prison Lyrics, and Memoir

Like the diary, autobiographical writing is the story of a life that includes facts and emotions connected to family, education, relationship, sexuality, travels, and inner struggles but limited by dates. bell hooks claims, "autobiographical writing was a way for her to evoke the particular experience of growing up southern and black in segregated communities. It was a way to recapture the

richness of southern black culture. The need to remember and hold to the legacy of that experience …" A legacy Sumaira Ahammed discusses in her autoethnography "The Praxis of Oral Diaries Maintained by Bengali Immigrant Women." Ahammed explains the oral traditions of keeping a diary in Bengali and how those traditions affected their life as immigrants in America. Oral compositions require relatives to pass on their experiences and observations to each generation. In the eighteen and nineteen centuries "women shared portions of their private entries with sisters and friends by reading them aloud or passing them around" frequently one person served as a transcriber of family records. Ahammed desires to be that transcriber.

In my autobiographical essay, "Diaries of Me, Myself, and Grandma" I want to understand I'm on a quest to understand my identity as a diary-keeper who has maintained diaries for three decades. On my journey, I discover my grandmother was a diary-keeper but her diaries were destroyed. Autobiographical writing like the diary includes retrospection and reflection, a conversational voice that may "explain, summarize, interpret or provide a larger sociological or historical context for the material, insights in their protagonist's quest for self-knowledge." The protagonist is the writer, the self, chronicling the story based on their voice that they hear in their head. Diarists write of uncertainties and talk to themselves whereas the autobiographer "speak softly to themselves." In this essay, I am both protagonist, diarist and autobiographer.

Like the diary, memoir writing is fragmented pieces of a life puzzled together, focused on one aspect of that life, with a select theme. Judith Barrington contends that the memoir is a story from life and does not replicate a whole life. Virginia Maresca explores the memoirs of Trevor Noah and former president Barack Obama in "Mixed-Race Memoirs: Breaking Institutional Binaries" to illustrate racial barriers as a false social construct to create multicultural identities. Both memoirs focus on life as a mixed-race citizen. The OED definition for "memoir" also blurs the genre, defining memoir "as a person's written account of incidents in his own life, of the persons whom he has known and the transactions or movements in which he has been concerned; an autobiographical record."

It is the published journal of Lil Wayne, *Gone 'Til November: A Journal of Rikers Island* (2016) that sheds light on the widespread use of the diary and how it shifted, evolved and recreated itself over time. His journal entries are a place of creation, a forum of play, a testing ground for work elsewhere as well as a journal of self-reflection. He keeps a journal while in prison to breath and have a sense of freedom. As Tristine Rainer notes, diary writing is one form of writing that allows freedom of expression.[24] Rachel Wagner's essay, "Worth Writing About Lil Wayne's Jail Journal *Gone Til November,*" examines how "the

journal reads like a series of interconnected poems, which redefine what's considered productive in prison through routines and rhetoric."

Diary writing is creating "real" fictions of one's self. For the diarist, the diary becomes a transnational space in which an intersection of cultures, languages, and peoples help the diarist understand self and the world they live in. James Olney states that an autobiography is "intentionally or not, a monument of the self as it is becoming, a metaphor of the self at the summary moment of composition."[25] This metaphor of self, connects these diaries of family, prison lyrics, and memoir.

Diary as novel requires an authentic voice of the real self that represents its culture, its gender, its community. The self in the diary reflects authenticity with narrative incidents, vignettes of personal relationships, character sketches, account travels, dialogues, and copies of letters sent or received. Diary writing as a quasi-literary genre conforms to Philipe Lejeune's "autobiographical contract" theory about genre classification in regards to the diary, autobiography, memoir, that it's an "a matter of proportion; there are natural transitions to the other genres of literature intime (memoirs, diary, essay) and a certain latitude is left to the classifier in the examination of particular cases.

Endnotes

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FROM THIS FREE SAMPLE

Contributors

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