



TEXT

Journal of writing and writing courses

ISSN: 1327-9556 | <https://textjournal.scholasticahq.com/>

Carleton University

Orly Lael Netzer

Lives of the nation: On Teaching Life Writing in the Canadian Studies classroom

Abstract:

In our introduction to *Teaching Life Writing* (2022), Amanda Spallacci and I noted that the key question in auto/biography pedagogy is *how* we teach life stories, rather than *what* we teach (p. 375). Later that year, as I transitioned from teaching English literature to teaching Canadian Studies, I was struck by this very question and its ripple effects. What is the role of life stories in Canadian Studies classrooms? How do I teach life stories within a distinctly national framework? How do I invite students to engage with life stories beyond their perception as historic documents? Encourage them to understand autobiographical practices as modes of knowledge making? And how do I foster a learning space that calls students in? Exploring the public work of life stories in the Canadian Studies classroom, this essay reflects on the ways that I invited students to engage with the tensions embedded in the registers of truth, authenticity, agency, citizenship and relationality in autobiographical discourse, attending to the pedagogical potentialities of life stories as sites of knowledge-production, theory-making and future-building.

Biographical note:

Orly Lael Netzer (she/her) explores the public work of testimony in contemporary Canada. Working at the intersection of autobiography, memory and cultural studies, Orly's work is driven by questions of relations, asking how publics are invited to inherit difficult knowledge through life stories. Orly has a PhD in English Literature from the University of Alberta (2020), is the editor of *In Search of Right Relations: Provocations on Ethics and Life Stories* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2027) and co-editor of *Teaching Life Writing: Theory, Methodology, and Practice* (Routledge, 2025).

Keywords:

Life stories, pedagogy, authenticity, agency, citizenship

In our introduction to *Teaching Life Writing* (2022), Amanda Spallacci and I noted that the key question in auto/biography pedagogy is *how* we teach life stories, rather than *what* we teach (p. 375). This question stayed at the forefront of my mind over the past four years, as I transitioned from teaching literature to teaching Canadian Studies (an area studies program that centres national formation). The institution I joined – Carleton University in Ottawa (Canada) – is a medium-sized research university. My new classrooms included students who are Indigenous to Turtle Island (North America), first generation Canadians, exchange, or international students, some of whom were first-generation academics, and learners who have had non-traditional educational journeys or were mature students and/or parents. In terms of academic focus, the vast majority of the students were taking my classes as electives, and most majored in political science, communications, international relations, history, heritage and ethnography, with fewer students in architecture, education and law programs. In fact, many of my students were intending to work in a variety of government or public service positions, in Canada and elsewhere. Nonetheless, rather than a training program working in the service of the state institutions, the School of Canadian Studies’ declared aim was to interrogate the formations, logics, realities and legacies of Canada as a settler colonial nation state [1]. From the outset then, there was an inherent but incredibly productive tension between the title of the unit (and academic field), the declared aims of the program, the professional placement of many students and the diversity of lived and academic experiences that students bring to the Canadian Studies classroom.

As an Assistant Professor in the teaching-stream, I was scheduled to teach six courses each year ranging from first year introductory classes to Master’s and PhD level seminars. The School of Canadian Studies had undergone a major curriculum revamp shortly prior to my arrival, and I was assigned to teach undergraduate topics that ranged from “Debating Canada”, to “Immigrants, Migrants, and Diasporas”, or “Injury, Memory, and Redress in Canada”. As the titles indicate, topics discussed in these courses can be characterised as addressing “difficult knowledge”, namely, “studying the experiences and the traumatic residuals of genocide, ethnic hatred, aggression, and forms of state-sanctioned – and hence legal – social violence” (Britzman, 1998). In more colloquial terms, these kinds of courses would often be described as the “diversity” topics. Several of these courses have been previously taught through history or political science disciplinary lenses, but the curricular revision indicated a need for new disciplinary and pedagogical approaches. In fact, the job description distinctly called for the application of critical humanities, intersectional and decolonial practices to the study of the nation state, with a particular focus on settler, Indigenous and transnational relations.

To me, that description suggested the need for a Life Narrative approach. More specifically, introducing students to life narrative as a discourse (rather than a distinct set of genres or forms), engaged with life stories across epistemological and intellectual traditions and modalities. Beyond the literary classroom, suddenly, the real-life stakes felt much higher. We were no longer invested in the texts’ literariness, or the craft of telling life stories. Rather, the real-life stakes came to the forefront because the classroom was an explicit site of contending with formations of citizenship (whether colonial, neoliberal, or treaty formations), which were both personal and collective, experienced and theoretical.

So, as I began designing and delivering courses in Canadian Studies, I kept asking myself: *how* do I teach life stories within a distinctly national framework? This core question raised a multitude of follow-ups: what is the role of life stories in Canadian Studies classrooms? Why should we situate life stories in relation to national formations and institutions? How do I invite students to engage with life stories as more than historic evidence, or “mere” personal “opinion” or “feeling”? How do I encourage them to think about texts beyond the content? How do I teach life stories in a way that encourages students to understand autobiographical practices as modes of knowledge-making and sharing? How do I foster a learning space that engages with life stories as a socially responsible [2] practice and calls students in rather than calls them out [3]? And how do I do this work in a good way – a way that does not centre the consumption of perceived-others’ pain or trauma in the classroom, nor create the expectation of feeling or performing guilt and shame? In other words, thinking about life narratives as a core axis of my pedagogy meant staying-grounded in an understanding that, when situated in the Canadian Studies classroom, life stories and their telling are sites and practices of relation-making and breaking within and between nation-based communities.

What guided me was the disciplinary knowledge that while national narratives, discourses of history (even public history) or those of public/counter memory seek to ascertain singularities, dichotomies and definitiveness, autobiography studies are not about ‘got ya’ moments. Instead, teaching Life Narrative is about opening up spaces of pluralities, complexities and ambiguities that cannot be easily resolved or reconciled, inviting us to sit with the difficulties, to engage in conversation rather than debate. So, approaching my courses through a Life Narrative lens would invite students to think about the lives of nations and understand stories and histories from a relational perspective – or, as Saidiya Hartman explains, to “look at historical and social process *and* at one’s own formation as a window into social and historical processes, as an example [rather than as a representative] of them” (qtd. in Saunders, 2008, p. 7, my emphasis). Approaching Canadian Studies through Life Narrative meant avoiding the juxtaposition of official narrative and counter-memory, so as not to play into dichotomies, nor position lived experience as “alternative” to the official stories, but rather, to position life stories as knowledge in their own right. It also meant being careful, though not always successful, about balancing student safety, discomfort and vulnerability. It meant understanding the classroom as a contact-zone, actively working to support students’ encounters with difficult knowledge in socially responsible ways (meaning in ways that are not extractive, not about consuming others’ trauma), *while also* fostering spaces of non-polarising conversation without the expectation of confession (so as not to cause undue stress or unintended harm).

So, what have I learned after three years of teaching multiple iterations of Canadian Studies courses through the prism of life stories? Mostly, that my literary-analysis training (focused on themes, figurative language and voice) did not quite fit the public work of life stories in the Canadian Studies classroom, and that adapting meant returning to the lessons that postcolonial and materialist approaches to autobiography have taught me as both a researcher and educator, accounting for the registers of truth, authenticity, agency, citizenship and relationality.

Authenticity or truth

One of my biggest surprises was that students think about life stories in terms of authenticity, rather than truth-telling. They didn't question objective vs. experiential truth, or even question how we determine if a story is true, what that means, or if truthfulness even matters, but they were quite preoccupied with the authenticity of the narrator's voice and its representation of the experience. This might seem like a good thing, assuming that it means they understand the complexity of truth and dive deeper to think about representation. But even if that is true (and in most cases it is not), expectations of authenticity risk assumptions of purity, essentialism, orientalism and representativeness that also result in a dichotomous notion of truth that is either "authentic" or not.

In searching for a way to trouble their need for authenticity, I introduced varied forms of life stories (magazine articles, virtual exhibits, interviews, community archives, visual arts, diaries, letters, etc.). I began drawing attention to the constructed nature of truth by talking about "autobiographical truth", specifically focused on the ways that storytellers use coaxing, how they situate their stories, and how they interlace factual and subjective truths in order to build trust with their audiences. To achieve this aim, I designed short activities that focused on the materiality of the story – what kinds of materials are used, how they were interlaced together or sequenced, by whom – inviting students to begin thinking about construction rather than an assumed purity of authenticity. In most cases, this opened conversations about positioning and relationality. These were not always nuanced conversations; rather, they were oftentimes exploratory without demanding students' confessions. In so doing, these discussions gave students language to examine what we mean when we say that a story is authentically Indigenous, or Black, or queer, who decides what is authentic, and what are the risks in situating representations of lived experiences within a binary identity-politics bracket.

From voice to agency

Closely related to the assumptions of authenticity, were notions of voice. In the classroom, many students were well attuned to thinking about a narrator's voice, or who gets to tell the story in a personal versus a national narrative. Most students held the premise that minoritised communities are 'given voice' through autobiographical discourse, or 'empowered' to speak by virtue of having their stories published and circulated (or 'amplified' in digital / social media contexts). As Life Narrative scholars, we know that individuals and communities of the global majority have voices; they are not silent, nor have they ever been. But the politics of cultural production and representation mean that minoritised communities are often silenced or ignored until dominant groups are ready to listen, until dominant groups are ready to 'empower' marginalised communities to 'use their voices'. The notion of empowerment, then, reflected an interesting power dynamic at play in the transactions of autobiography [4] in the Canadian Studies classroom. On the one hand, the passive voice of the term 'empowered' demonstrated that almost all students – regardless of their identities, politics, or interests – recognised that the processes of publication, circulation, and reception of life stories were equally, if not more impactful than the act of telling the story itself. On the other hand, they concurrently failed to acknowledge both the storyteller's and their own power in this social dynamic, obscuring the

power dynamic between those who have the currency to empower and those who need to be empowered. Interestingly enough, this occurred whether the students were members of the storyteller's community or not, and whether they were members of marginalised or dominant groups, indicating that the premise of necessary external recognition encompassed in "empowerment" was prevalent.

Attention to the constructed nature of life stories offered a gradual transition from considerations of voice to these discussions of agency. Rather than asking 'who has a voice?' or 'who gets to have a voice?', we started asking more complex questions about the politics of voice and agency – whose voices are we, as a national society, willing to listen to? Whose voices are we willing to make space for? Who tells the stories, not just in terms of voice but in terms of who produces the stories, who stewards and mediates them? Whose traditions of knowledge are we using when we read and interpret stories? And most importantly, for whose benefit? This set of questions fostered conversations about individual, communal and structural aspects of agency, drawing attention to the power dynamics embedded in cultural industries and markets. To open these discussions, the syllabus featured interviews with editors, curators, publishers and educators who also reflect on the processes and practices of stewarding the life stories that the students were reading or viewing.

To complement these professional perspectives with learner-based ones, my courses began with a storytelling activity across the undergraduate and graduate levels. I was introduced to this activity by Indigenous Studies Professor Andrés C. López and adapted it from their practice to one that highlights the formations of life storytelling. The activity begins with students partnering and telling their peer a personal story, prompting them to choose one that ties to the course topic. After exchanging stories, the students move to teams of four, and each learner tells their partner's story (rather than their own). The activity positions each student as a speaker, steward and listener. It invites them to explore responsibility and vulnerability while also building initial trust. Our follow-up conversation further identifies considerations of authenticity and truth alongside the power dynamics of voice and agency.

On memory and representation

As we began to think critically about agency and the stories that students were reading, about the power dynamics embedded in telling, mediating and receiving, the nation was always in our orbit. But thinking about agency and life stories also brought to the foreground assumptions of the single life story as an un/reliable historical document (read for its factual, evidentiary value) that, ironically, concurrently stands as a representative for an entire community (or nation).

To contend with these assumptions, I returned to Amanda's and my question of what we teach and how we teach life stories, remembering that changing the 'what', affects the 'how'. In the shift from my literature courses to the Canadian Studies classes, I made two key changes: I pivoted to feature fewer excerpts of single-authored texts and move towards polyvocal works, include a wider scope of modalities (from visual arts, to performance, and podcasts), and

deliberately introduced materials that challenge clear-cut assumptions about distinctions between creative storytelling and scholarly theory. In certain weeks, I featured creative polyvocal works that shared multiple stories of a single community, while in other weeks I invited students to engage with the experiences of different communities at the same place or of the same event. Some weeks introduced work that combined scholarly or theory writing with lived experience. I opted for arts and humanities research, where scholars weave their own Indigenous or diasporic traditions of knowledge-making through lived experience, alongside works from the social sciences which interlace the personal experience of the author and their community alongside quantitative data and research. These changes allowed me to achieve four distinct but related aims: to invite students to see their own disciplines reflected; to unsettle their assumptions about representation; to situate varied traditions of life storying as sites and practices of knowledge-making; and to require students to consider more critically what we value as story, history and knowledge and for how we can engage with this in socially responsible ways.

Contending with these ideas of stories and histories in the plural kept the nation as our central axis, not only in terms of content, but also in terms of understanding the work of national mythologies in establishing the ethos which makes a nation, and accounting for the roles of a national history and life stories in this process. Coupled with the conversations on representative-ness, representation and truth-telling, we turned our attention to memory and commemoration in both autobiographical and national narratives. Thinking through the ways that memory, commemoration and memorialisation shape personal and collective stories and identities invited students to think about which narratives have come to define Canadian identity. In other words, students explored how the ethos of Canada as a nation born through diplomacy and peacekeeping (as opposed to violent and revolutionary America) has been reshaped into a multicultural, humanitarian and now reconciliatory nation [5].

My worry was that exploring Canada's national narratives alongside life stories from varied periods, communities, and locations would risk creating a dynamic of countering or refuting rather than one where we learn to sit with multiplicities, complexities, and nuance. In an attempt to foster the latter, I aimed to build on the polyvocal life stories, archival materials, national monuments, historic exhibitions, and academic research. I asked students to journal, framing this as a practice of processing, reflecting, and questioning rather than performing knowledge. At the outset of "Injury, Memory, and Redress" (an undergraduate seminar), I introduced students to Sara Ahmed's notion of "orientations" (2006) [6] and invited them to journal at the beginning and end of class on a weekly basis. Journaling their "orientations," I explain, isn't about confession or performance of identity. Rather, it is about exploration, identifying relations, questions, and connections between materials which the syllabus situated as in conversation as well as between themselves and the stories they were engaging with. They recorded their orientations in a small notebook (I provided those on day one) at the beginning of each class. Following the day's class discussion, they journal a reflection, noting where their thinking is near to the end of class, what ideas are now changed, how, what new concerns have risen, and more. This iterative yet explorative journaling practice allowed students to

understand both memory and identity as constructed *and* continuously evolving through a conversation between different perspectives, experiences, and versions.

Citizenship or national identity

In an almost full-circle return to the notion of authenticity, perhaps the least surprising but most persistent hurdle was that students kept jumping to identity politics. After all, that is what contemporary culture trains them to think – that identity is reflected through essentialised versions of voice, authenticity, and representation. What was surprising to me is that although many students recognise that lived experience is shaped by the intersectionality of identities – that gender identity is fluid, or that social class is a dynamic category – they often still code ethnic or racial identity in binary terms (you are either x or not x). This becomes risky as it both de-historicises the politics of racialisation and serves as a calibrating tool, surveilling both self and others, “checking privilege” and determining which topics one is allowed to speak of, be heard on, ask a question about, or voice an opinion on. At a time of extreme polarisation in social discourse and a rising backlash against social justice, self and peer-policing are dangerous constraints in a learning environment.

To counter a surveillance dynamic, I began to use anonymous digital tools for mind-mapping activities, especially in first- and second-year undergraduate classrooms. I’d ask a simple question like “describe Canada in one word,” or give a prompt like “write a six-word memoir for the nation”. While the former was a fun day-one icebreaker, I turned to the latter twice or more during the semester. A six-word memoir invites students to tell their story in six words (whether as a single sentence or fragmented form); six words that encapsulate a life. I shifted the activity from the individual to the nation: to “tell the story of the nation in six words”. I often scaffold the activity by asking them to “tell the story from the perspective of ‘the nation-state’” and then inviting them to “tell the same story from your own lived perspective”. Individually, they each see the juxtaposition between their personal and national memoir. As a class, sharing responses in an anonymous digital mind map on our screen creates a polyvocal edition that opens a conversation about the potential of diverse versions of Canada’s national story and *how* they each chose to tell it. At a later point in the semester, I invite them to “share an aspirational six-word memoir for the nation; or, in other words, what you’d like us to become”. Beyond ending on a hopeful note (in courses that are often mired in heavy topics), this final prompt opens conversations about the tensions and aspirations that shape both life stories and collective histories.

Concurrently, the anonymity of the digital mind map allowed students to push beyond self-policing or stereotypical answers, while the brevity required a pin-pointed description. The iterative return to the same mind-map at multiple points throughout the semester (whether to add terms, dive deeper or further reflect) encouraged students to think beyond individual terms and categories and focus on the relations between them – identifying questions they have about different concepts on the map; tracing patterns, noticing tensions and finding causalities. In so doing, the anonymous activities offered an opportunity to expand, add nuance and deepen our thinking by fostering a course-long conversation rather than isolated debates of identities, truths

or memories. The iterative practice thus pushed us beyond binaries, and the anonymity of the platform allowed students to lessen self-censorship.

Central to unpacking the ethos and myths that shape Canadian national identity was contending with the formations of citizenship: who is recognised as a citizen, what it means to be a citizen and how citizenship is experienced by different members of the national imaginary. Our discussions of citizenship framed it as interlacing both juridical and affective dimensions (which reflected concepts about factual and experiential aspects of autobiographical truth); as concurrently inclusionary and exclusionary (allowing language for feelings of un/belonging), and as the shared set of ideals that the national community aspires to – while also being a continuously evolving construct (expanding, narrowing, evolving in response to historic, societal, economic and political changes) (Chariandy & McCall, 2008; Fleischmann et al., 2011). These considerations of citizenship brought to the forefront ideas of relationality, responsibility, reciprocity and accountability – whether of citizens, those made to be non-citizens [7], or the nation-state. So, what started as a consideration of authenticity and truth, shifted to thinking about voice and agency in the transactions of life narratives, transformed to analysing the dynamics of national identity and memory, and invited us to explore relations between communities who share the place we call Canada.

Attention to relationality, in turn, expanded our conception of citizenship beyond its colonial formation in the modern nation-state. Chickasaw law scholar James (Sa'ke'j) Youngblood Henderson (2002) defines “treaty citizenship” as a set of communal non-negotiable obligations which are defined by relationship to the land and bind all of the land’s inhabitants to one another. Treaty citizenship thus shifts power dynamics on multiple levels. First, it binds everyone who shares this land, whether for a short while or from generations ago, and regardless of the circumstances of their arrival. More so, treaty citizenship formulates an ongoing process that requires the continuous and sustainable consent of Indigenous peoples, rather than the Canadian state (p. 115). Treaty citizenship transformed our conversations to apply to every single student in the room, right here, right now, as it defines their relation to one another, to everyone else who shares this place, this land with them, and to caring for the very places they inhabit (rather than simply land as a theoretical idea). In a learning environment that started with personal storytelling activities and weekly journaling about their orientations, treaty citizenship allowed students to claim their learning space in a different way – still vulnerable and hesitant, but certainly more nuanced and engaged, developing a deeper understanding of the real-life stakes of their work in the classroom.

In other words, engaging with life stories while thinking about Canada through the prism of treaty citizenship changed how and why we read both national and personal stories, drawing us away from binary identity politics, extractive dynamics, confessional expectations or assumptions of authenticity to considerations of agency, relationality and memory. Interestingly, considerations of treaty citizenship and relationality to and through land also opened discussions of life stories as sites of knowledge-production, theory-making, and future-building, thus expanding students’ understanding of autobiographical works as texts that look inward, to the past, to ones that *also* make space for multiplicities of temporalities and modes

of relationalities. Teaching Life Narrative in the Canadian Studies classroom allowed me to follow Hartman's attention to autobiographical discourse as getting us to think about process and formation (see Saunders, 2008). To offer students a critical thinking space not only about the nation, but rather the nations who inhabit this place, understanding individuals and collectives through situated, relational and hopefully conversational perspectives; learning to listen to the lives *in* the nations, and *of* the nations, turning to the past, to understand our present, and build shared futures.

Notes

[1] When I joined the unit in 2022 it was named The School of Indigenous and Canadian Studies. The two units are now independent. The description I reference is from the website description at the time (since updated).

[2] Métis scholar Jo-Ann Episkenew (2002) defined "socially responsible criticism" as an approach where readers are required not only to recognise "that ideology is embedded in the text" but also "the ideology that they bring to their reading" (p. 34). Episkenew advocates for "socially responsible criticism" where non-Indigenous readers are "cognisant of the authority that society accords their voice", an institutional and cultural authority "which could overpower the voices of Aboriginal people"; otherwise, they risk promoting decontextualised interpretations that situate Indigenous people as "abstractions, metaphors that signify whatever the critic is able to prove they signify" (p. 35, 65). In my use of the term "socially responsible" I expand Episkenew's argument to include engagement with the works of diasporic and otherwise marginalised writers.

[3] Black activist and educator Loretta Ross developed "calling-in" as a framework for building communities of allyship. Grounded in her lived experience as a survivor of sexual assault and her professional experience working with other survivors, Ross's "calling in" (1979; 2025) offers a pathway for managing difficult conversations and transforming them to sites of connection – refusing to ostracise (to "call-out") and opting for "calling in", inviting people who have caused harm into accountable circles of allyship and community, offering a pathway for repair. Since Ross began "calling in", community workers, organisers and educators have continued to develop her practice, recognising that "we [all] will and do ... stray, and there will always be a chance for us to return. Calling in as a practice of loving each other enough to allow each other to make mistakes" (Trần, 2013).

[4] Gillian Whitlock (2015) posits the concept of "testimonial transactions" to explain the movement of testimonial texts across cultures and markets as "embedded in global networks of traumatic memory and witness, campaigns for social justice, reconciliation, and reparation" (p. 8, 70). These movements, Whitlock argues, demonstrate how the "visibility, legibility, and audibility" of testimonial life narratives have been framed in "tactical, contingent, and constrained" ways, mediating its transformative capacities (p. 8, 68). In my use of the term "autobiographical transactions" I expand Whitlock's logic to describe autobiographical accounts that are produced, circulated and received in relation to the settler-colonial nation and national narratives.

[5] For discussions that trace the development of Canada's national identity from peacekeeping to reconciliation, see Pauline Wakeham "The Cunning of Reconciliation" (2012), Paulette Regan's "Deconstructing Canada's Peacemaker Myth" (2011), and Orly Lael Netzer's

“Material Weapons: Paratext, Ethics, and Testimony in Carmen Aguirre’s *Something Fierce*” (2021).

[6] In *Queer Phenomenology* (2006) affect theorist Sara Ahmed draws attention to “orientations”, meaning ways of inhabiting and moving through space that become entrenched through repeated gestures. Orientations, Ahmed notes, “are necessarily shaped by each subject’s specific ‘histories of arrival’ into this world ... shape[ing] not only how we inhabit space, but how we apprehend this world of shared inhabitation, as well as ‘who’ or ‘what’ we direct our energy and attention toward” (p. 3).

[7] Lily Cho (2015) defines “non-citizens” as a category produced by the colonial nation state to distinctly categorise residents who the state deliberately excludes from the category of citizen by denying them a pathway towards citizenship. Non-citizens, according to Cho, are “indeed human, and definitely not a citizen”, their “construction as non-citizens is a deliberate process of exclusion and discrimination... in the name of safeguarding citizenship” (pp. 14–15).

References

- Ahmed, S. (2006). *Queer phenomenology: Orientations, objects, others*. Duke University Press.
- Chariandy, D., & McCall, S. (2008). Citizenship and cultural belonging. Special issue of *West Coast Line*, 59.
- Cho, L. (2021). *Mass capture: Chinese head-tax and the making of non-citizens*. McGill Queens University Press.
- Episknew, J. A. (2002). Socially responsible criticism: Aboriginal literature, ideology, and the literary canon. In R. Eigenbrod & J. A. Episknew (Eds.), *Creating community: A roundtable on Canadian Aboriginal literature* (pp. 51–68). Penticton: Theytus Books.
- Henderson, J. (2002). Sui Generis and treaty citizenship. *Citizenship Studies*, 6(4), 415–440. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1362102022000041259>
- Fleischmann, A., Van Styvendale, N., & McCarroll, C. (Eds.). (2011). *Narratives of citizenship: Indigenous and diasporic people unsettle the nation-state*. University of Alberta Press.
- Lael Netzer, O. (2021). Material weapons: Paratext, ethics, and testimony in Carmen Aguirre’s *Something Fierce*. *AmLit: American Literatures*, 1(1), 64–85. <https://doi.org/10.25364/27.1:2021.1.5>
- Lael Netzer, O., & Spallacci, A. (2022). On teaching life writing in an age of social change. *a/b: Auto/Biography Studies*, 37(3), 375–384. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08989575.2022.2154437>
- Regan, P. (2011). *Unsettling the settler within: Indian residential schools, truth telling, and reconciliation in Canada*. University of British Columbia Press.

- Ross, L. J. (2025). *How to start making change with those you'd rather cancel*. Simon & Schuster.
- Saunders, P. (2008). Fugitive dreams of diaspora: Conversations with Saidiya Hartman. *Anthurium: A Caribbean Studies Journal*, 6(1), 7–16.
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/e6eb/d3d7c474b00402db54ed53f1c559268f5409.pdf>.
- Trần, N. L. (2013, December 18). Calling IN: A less disposable way of holding each other accountable. *BGD*. <https://www.bgdblog.org/2013/12/calling-less-disposable-way-holding-accountable/>
- Wakeham, P. (2012). The cunning of reconciliation: Reinventing white civility in the “age of apology”. In S. Kamboureli & R. Zacharias (Eds.), *Shifting the grounds of Canadian literary studies* (pp. 209–233). Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- Whitlock, G. (2015). *Postcolonial life narratives: Testimonial transactions*. Oxford University Press.