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## Editors' Note

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## EDITORS' NOTE

This year's Annual Bibliography displays the continued pattern of growth in the number of critical publications devoted to life writing that we've noted in the last few bibliographies. (The number of individual entries has increased from roughly 800 to roughly 1,200 in the past four years.) Though this year's increase isn't as dramatic as the previous two, it still is substantial: from 1,111 entries in 2006 to 1,202 this year, each entry providing bibliographical information and an annotation for single-authored books, essays in edited collections and special journal issues, articles and essays, and doctoral dissertations.

Edited collections and special issues continue to provide over half of the entries, standing as the primary printed source these days for life writing criticism and theory. The number of single-authored books has grown slightly—125 last year, 133 this year. Dissertations have rather dramatically declined—from 121 to 87—but we think this is primarily due to a change in one of the main databases for tracking dissertations that has paradoxically made it less easy to navigate. Articles in regular issues of journals have noticeably increased, from 321 to 356, but these numbers are dwarfed by the number of essays to be found in special issues and edited collections: 626 in all, contained within 79 different volumes. Clearly, critics and theorists are targeting specific journal calls for papers on an announced topic, or being solicited to contribute to a volume edited by someone else, or creating the opportunity to publish by editing special issues or collections themselves.

While editing this year's installment, we also jotted down some impressions about who is publishing life writing scholarship. The short answer is everyone—virtually every major press is represented by at least one volume in this bibliography. But certain presses stand out as displaying a definite interest in life writing. Wilfred Laurier University Press in Canada has been running a very strong series for some time now, and their memoirs and critical volumes appear regularly. In Europe, Rodopi has published a number of volumes, and in the United States, the university presses of California, Minnesota, and Wisconsin continue to lead the way. (Duke also has published several important works.) But the big three publishers for life writing studies seem to be Cornell University Press, which has had a distinguished list of major critical works on life writing for some time; Palgrave Macmillan, who publishes life writing principally in the area of edited collections; and above all, Ashgate,

which has fifteen single-authored volumes or collections represented in this bibliography of works released in the last year and a half.

Though the number of entries in this year's bibliography is again overwhelming, we're becoming increasingly aware that it represents only a sizable fragment of what is actually being published or posted. While there are still more entries this year for materials in languages other than English, the coverage is only cursory, and the internet poses a huge challenge for our ideas of scholarship that everyone in academics is slowly having to recognize.

Despite these limitations, we know that this bibliography is an important and frequently consulted resource for students and scholars in the field. Project Muse, our principal online presence, tells us that the annual installments get consulted roughly 200 times a day, and expanding and improving this bibliography is a challenge that we're facing, and are determined to meet.

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A note about the cover image. We've reproduced the cover of a forthcoming publication of the Maine Humanities Council and the Center for Biographical Research, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Edited by Ruth Nadelhaft with Victoria Bonebakker, *Imagine What's It's Like: A Literature and Medicine Anthology* is a collection of poems, plays, short stories, memoirs, and essays that deal in some way with issues of disease, health, medicine, healing, and loss. The anthology will be primarily used by participants in the national program Literature and Medicine: Humanities at the Heart of Health Care, which brings health care professionals in individual hospitals together into reading groups, where they discuss the ethical, philosophical, and psychological dimensions of their work through a shared exploration of literature. Published as part of the Biography Monograph Series, the volume will be available in mid-2008.