See It Feelingly

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Published by Duke University Press


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Annie Dillard once wrote, “I think that the dying pray at the last not ‘please,’ but ‘thank you,’ as a guest thanks his host at the door.” Finishing this sort of book has been a little bit like dying, and I, too, wish to thank my gracious hosts: DJ, Tito, Jamie, Dora, Eugenie, and Temple. What a dinner party of ideas they each put on! Their remarkable generosity gave life to this project. What I did with it—well, that’s my responsibility, not theirs. I hope, at the very least, that I have honored their participation by foregrounding their own words and by dramatizing repeatedly the intractable problem of any anthropological endeavor. Mistakes are inevitable, but interpretive humility is not.

I want to thank Erin Manning, whose belief in this book made all the difference, and Ken Wissoker and Elizabeth Ault at Duke University Press. My agent, Deirdre Mullane, performed her duties with great skill and gusto. Thanks as well to Gillian Silverman for considerable help with the Grandin chapter and to Lisa Zunshine, to whom that chapter is dedicated. Meeting Lisa and working closely with her on a project about literature and autism turned out to be the sort of coincidence that changes one’s life. Nancy Barber read the whole book and offered invaluable feedback; her friendship of almost thirty years lifted me up when I fell down. Pilar Martinez Benedi read every word (in multiple drafts), offering both warm encouragement and invaluable guidance. I profited enormously from talking to her about literature and neuroscience.

I am very grateful to the Mellon Foundation for granting me a Humanities-Writ-Large fellowship, which funded a year at Duke University’s Institute for Brain Sciences. Special thanks to Michael Platt, Zab Johnson, Tanya Schreiber, Lasana Harris, Len White, Laura Eastwood, Chris Chia, Geri Dawson, and, especially, Deborah Jenson. I learned so very much from Deborah about cognitive literary studies—no one could have been more generous
with her time or more enthusiastic about my work. I now count her and her husband, Jim Jenson, as dear friends. While I was at Duke, Priscilla Wald and Joe Donahue befriended me—and housed me as well! I drafted the Mukhopadhyay chapter in their guest room. I am indebted, in addition, to the book’s anonymous, external reviewers, whose comments were extremely useful, and to the National Endowment for the Humanities, which awarded me a summer research fellowship.

I also received tremendous support from Grinnell College, and I wish to thank both the president, Raynard Kington, and the dean, Mike Latham, for helping to make Grinnell a place where research and teaching symbiotically thrive. I owe the students in a recent independent study and those in my “neuro-lit” seminars, where I first began to try to reconcile the insights of disability studies and cognitive literary studies, a great deal. I owe my colleague Johanna Meehan and her partner, Maura Strassberg, even more. They opened up their house to me—I commute to Grinnell from Iowa City—and their hearts. They’ve heard more about this project than any friends should have to. I feel the same way about two other couples: Mark Montgomery and Tinker Powell and Maria Tapias and Xavier Escandell. Writing is lonely; comrades in the endeavor help a great deal. Even closer to home, my in-laws, Phil and Rachel Thornton, have offered unflagging love and support. My son, DJ, once said of them, “You’re old enough to be my grandparents but young enough to be my friends.” By not only embracing difference but also unreservedly relishing it, they have taught me much. Their gentle spirits are balm for a hostile world.

My colleagues in the Grinnell English department offered significant assistance while I was chair of the department—half of the book was drafted, and all of it was revised, during that time. Erik Simpson was especially helpful. Dean Bakopoulos and Alissa Nutting ran the department’s reading series, Writers@Grinnell. They did so skillfully and cheerfully while sending their own books out into the world. Their devotion to the daily practice of writing steered me through the waters of despair. Without De Dudley and Lisa Mulholland, the department’s support staff assistants, I would be worse than lost. Their good humor is a life raft; their competence, a rescue helicopter! I’m grateful to my colleague Shanna Benjamin for providing some research guidance for chapter 4.

I’m also grateful to Mary K. Bercaw Edwards for graciously conducting a tour of the Charles W. Morgan at Mystic Seaport and to Will Garrison, the curator of the Berkshire Historical Society at Arrowhead, and Will Demick,
guide, for conducting a tour of Melville’s homestead. The first “Will” was a 1985 graduate of Grinnell.

I could not have written this book without the example, input, and/or encouragement of so many writers, scholars, artists, activists, and friends across the country—and indeed the globe. A woefully incomplete list will have to suffice: Sara Maria Acevedo, Kazim Ali, Melanie Almeder, Diane Alters, Mel Baggs, Julia Bascom, Jill Bennett, Tammy Berberi, Michael Bérubé, Doug Biklen, Larry Bissonnette, Sonia Boue, Maria Brincker, Lydia X. Z. Brown, Victoria Brown, Brenda Brueggemann, Mike Burke, Sheree Burke, David Campbell, Joy Castro, Kerima Cevik, Geoff Hume Cooke, David Coster, Tom Couser, Lennard Davis, Selene DePackh, Marty Dobrow, Elizabeth Donaldson, Anne Donnellan, John Duffy, Marshall Duke, David Dunbar, Paula Durbin-Westby, Judy Endow, Eva Feder-Kittay, Angus Fletcher, Stephen Forssell, Chris Foss, Chris Gabbard, Susannah Goodman, Ibby Grace, Mike Guenther, Elizabeth Hamilton, Laura Hans, Bev Harp, Aeron Haynie, Andy Hazucha, Judith Hill-Weld, Monica Huerta, Paweł Jędrzejko, Dan Kaiser, Julie Kane, Estee Klar, Kevin Kopelson, Jennifer Krohn, Martha Leary, Dawn-Joy Leong, Cynthia Lewiecki-Wilson, Heather Lobban-Viravong, Janet Lyon, Brian Massumi, John Matteson, Harley McIlrath, Bobbie and Shirley McKibbon, Karen McRitchie, Celeste Miller, Susannah Mintz, Mario Montano, Cal Montgomery, Soma Mukhopadhyay, Stuart Murray, Nico Ian Nicolson, Christina Nicolaidis, Keith Oatley, Laura Otis, Nick Pentzell, Martina Pfeiler, Jeff Porter, Lynn Powell, Elizabeth Prevost, Dawn Prince, Chammi Rajapatarana, Scott Robertson, Julia Rodas, Rachel Rottenberg, Sue Rubin, Dani Alexis Ryskamp, Becky Saletan, Carrie Sandahl, John Schaut, Carlos Schaut, Phil Schwarz, Sue Schweik, Amy Sequenzia, Jenn Seybert, Stephen Shore, Steve Silberman, Olga Solomon, Chris Sten, Laura Stevenson, Jane Thrailkill, Tracy Thresher, Sarah Thwaite, Emily Titon, Elizabeth Torres, Jason Tougaw, James Trent, Nick Walker, Brent White, Marco Wilkinson, Amy Williams, Donna Williams, James Wilson, Tilly Woodward, Melanie Yergeau, Zhenyu Yuan, Martin Zelder, and Mary Zournazi.

A few people deserve special thanks. Ben Reiss and Rosemarie Garland-Thomson reminded me, when I needed it most, that what I was writing was both important and distinctive. The novelist Elizabeth Graver, with whom I went to college, has, for almost forty years, been a lighthouse of encouragement and fine sentence making. David Blake, with whom I taught high school English some three decades ago, has offered continual instruction in artful thinking and writing—I’ve learned much from him and his work. John
Bryant, Melvillean extraordinaire and fellow adoptive father, has tutored my very soul. Suzanne Paola alerted me to the possibilities of writing about neurodiversity in both factual and creative ways. Her friendship has been sustaining. In his poems and conversation, the poet Rick Kenney has repeatedly demonstrated that literature and science, like Ishmael and Queequeg, belong in the same bed. Peter Sokol is the kind of friend that one dreams of having (and that one can never come close to equaling). Let me put John and Elaine Mahon in that category as well. I sometimes think that my friend Michael Hofmann exists in order to prove that extraordinary achievement and extraordinary humility can sometimes go hand in hand. He, like his partner, Barbara Hofmeister, is also extraordinarily kind. I count it a lucky blessing that the Internet brought the poet Chris Martin into my life; we had each been teaching poetry writing to autistics without knowing of the other’s activities. The comedian Henny Youngman once joked that his brother worked as a lifeguard in a carwash. Steve Kuusisto and David Weiss work there as well. Again and again, they rescue me in my convertible! I feel the same way about Jeremy Mindich, my oldest friend. His wife, Amy Smith—let me call her a brother-guard, too. Their remarkable generosity has no expression in language. For thirty-five years, John and Leslie Paoletti have been like much-needed parents, and Sarah and Rebecca Paoletti like much-needed sisters. Emily Thornton Savarese has been my partner for almost three decades, the last two parenting DJ. Would that I were as filled with such steady and unassuming wisdom as she. Would that I were as indefatigably generous.

Finally, since this is a book about teaching—autistics teaching me, me (sort of) teaching autistics—I’ll conclude with a short list of teachers who made a difference in my life. From middle school and high school: Charles Campbell, Tad Cavuoti, Bill Doswell, Rod Dulany, Gail NIELDS, Ed Sundt, Peter Swineheart, and Fred Zirm. From college: George Creeger, Annie Dillard, Sherman Hawkins, Gertrude Hughes, Priscilla Meyer, John Paoletti, F. D. Reeve, Richard Stamelman, and John Tivenan. From graduate school: Don Ault, Marsha Bryant, Michael Hofmann, David Leverenz, John Murchek, Robert Ray, Robert Rothstein, Stephanie Smith, and Phil Wegner. These teachers showed me what a life of the mind (and body) could be.

Grateful acknowledgment is made to the editors of Fourth Genre, who published a version of the prologue, and to the editors of Thinking in the World, who published an earlier version of chapter 2. The prologue was a “Notable Essay” selection in the Best American Essays series of 2013.