Autoethnographic Mother-Writing: Advocating Radical Specificity

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Abstract

In considering the similarities between "momoirs"—popular memoirs written by mothers about motherhood experiences—and evocative autoethnographic mother-writing, I argue that differentiating these two forms of intimate observation and personal narrative requires a rethinking of autoethnographic practice. Specifically, I draw on the work of Gilles Deleuze to advocate for a radical specificity in autoethnographic writing. Thinking the autoethnographic narrative in terms of specificities and differences encourages us to think creatively about personal experiences and cultural relations beyond what is shared and communicable.

Index Terms

autoethnography; momoir; Deleuze; difference; radical specificity

Full Text:

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Teaching Autoethnography is dedicated to the practice of immersive ethnographic and autoethnographic writing that encourages authors to participate in the communities about which they write. This book draws not only on critical qualitative inquiry methods such as interview and observation, but also on theories and sensibilities from creative writing and performance studies, which encourage self-reflection and narrative composition. From these two options, you will be choosing a topic for your final research paper. We will be sharing these ideas with the entire class. Please be as specific as possible. Your topics must fulfill the following criteria: You must be able to do background and preliminary research on your topics.