

Errata

Vol. 6. No. 1. Paolo Valesio. “On Witnessing,” p. 135 last paragraph—p. 136 first full paragraph.

The editorial board is responsible for having changed all third-person pronouns, in consideration of stylistic consistency, from alternating between male and female into all female pronouns. Professor Valesio fears that using female pronouns throughout his writing may embrace an orthodoxy similar to using only male pronouns, a practice he chooses to avoid. The original should read:

This latter part can be accommodated within the university. Teaching a creative writing course is a witnessing. Specifically, it is a form of listening-to-writing, which is related to but subtly different from listening to reading or speaking. When an instructor listens to students reading their compositions in turn in front of the class, he is engaged in a peculiar activity, somewhere between mental reading and listening to an oral performance. The instructor listens, but she listens to a performance where the written or writerly aspect wins over the oral one; that is, he witnesses what is normally hidden, the birth of writing. There is in this something intrinsically poetic, even when what is being read is a prosy vignette.

The university functions in this as a frame of reference for the construction of a delicately interconnected set of linguistic pacts—the pact of *listening* (the instructor and the other students listen in an intense and sympathetic silence, broken only by short interventions), the pact of *expression* (the student is given freedom of expression, though she must learn to earn and manage that freedom), and also,

when the written language is not the student's mother tongue (as in the present case), the pact of *boundaries* (the student accepts a much more pervasive revision of her text than she would normally, but as compensation, enjoys a certain sense of liberation, a sense of freedom to express himself in language without the burden of the past). . . .