

## Letter from the Editors

College is a classic juncture for the proverbial “coming-of-age” tale to take shape. It’s here where we are constantly confronted with new experiences, and what’s more, entirely new realms. Where we grasp at the new—sometimes daunting—opportunity to juggle personalized course loads, live-in friends, bills, burgeoning professional personas, and intensified romantic encounters, among other “firsts.” We’re suspended in this intermediary between nest and real world, forced to negotiate and renegotiate our sense of self almost on a daily basis as we absorb, process, assimilate, and contest a barrage of information disseminated by our cozy Husky community—and the tumultuous, ever-shifting outside world.

In this issue of *NU Writing*, we’re adding to the onslaught. We’ve compiled a selection of essays that will challenge you to “identify” in new, often provocative ways with a host of distinct voices that explore their own tenuous timbres—and those that reverberate on a global scale. These essays present a variety of disciplines, styles, and perspectives, revealing the breadth of voices that surround us. They upset singular understandings of identity, the self, by examining its intersections, its complexities, its contradictions. They reveal how selves are embedded in their history, immersed in their art, and entrenched in discovery.

In this issue, we explore cultural heritage as contributors Julia Barnes and Vera Lee learn to reconcile the conflicts with their multi-ethnic backgrounds, while Nicolas Knaian and Nivedha Kumar discuss the adversities and controversies surrounding their cultures. Cole Bush discusses how he coexists with a loved one’s impairment and amends presumptions regarding normalcy. Meanwhile, discussions about nonconformity of expression usher in experimental forms to subvert social norms. Eric Spencer challenges us to defy societal preconceived notions and enrich our own lives by creating unique perspectives as Nicholas Viviano advocates for originality and individuality in language. Anne Marie Miller confronts dissatisfactory gender roles and stereotypes with her insightful analysis of *Fight Club*, and Sydney Andrews analyzes the surprising role of fashion in politics. Still others engage with artistic forms of self-expression, from R.B. Ganon’s passion for photography to Cody Mello-Klein’s and Angelo Massagli’s enthrallment and identification with musical analysis.

In these ways, Issue Three is about the multifaceted and often complicated selves which interact with the outside world and ultimately converge at the point of individual identity. It’s composed of an active bunch of voices that weave personal narratives, unpack scholarly analyses, contend with the very underpinnings of society—and ultimately demand reciprocal thought from their readership. So we chose the action verb “Identify” to represent this issue in part as a warning. These essays aren’t for passive consumption; they will rally you to engage with old subject matter in new ways and new subject matter in unexpected ones. Are you ready?

—Andrew and Delaney