

Editor's Note

By Melissa Fitzgerald, Jenna Chalfonte, Jessica Darfoor and Denise Bates

Compiling this issue of NU Writing has helped us confront preconceived ideas about loss and recovery. For many, the terms “lost” and “found” operate as an oxymoron—two contradictory words forever tied together by a conjunction but also never quite lost to each other. As the issue gradually came together, we began thinking of these seemingly contradictory ideas more as metaphors. There are so many forms of loss; so many types of discovery; the two words are simply stand-ins for a history of losing and finding things, people, spaces, places. NU Writing itself has been lost and found; we temporarily lost last year’s issue and found a new sustainable means of publication in this digitized journal management system. This issue only covers a small fraction of the many things that can be scooped up in a lost and found bin. The pieces we have included vary from discussions of finding safer methods of construction to the perfect bowl of noodles; from losing one form of language to inventing a totally new form of communication; from mosaics to make-believe dogs.

There are pieces here that demonstrate the cyclical nature of lost and found. Loss is a catalyst that prompts people to find new ways to prevent and respond to future losses. In “Making America Safer,” Kimberly Ryan discusses how the loss of so many lives has led to an increase in international measures of security. The piece focuses specifically on finding new ways to design buildings in order to protect them and the occupants against terrorist attacks. In “Food Loss: Data Gaps and Data Collection Methods,” Tavish Fenbert talks about the need to find new ways to measure and record the types of food loss in order to reduce it and increase the amount of available food for a growing population.

Other works discuss how in the world’s current turbulent political environment, many people seem to have lost a sense of security that they are desperately trying to find again. “Safe Space” deals with many of the social and political issues that are relevant today. It suggests places that Northeastern students—and others, as well—can find a sense of peace and safety that they may be lacking right now. Similarly, “Unequal Faith: Analyzing the Discordance of Secular and Islamic Feminism” discusses the loss of rights for women, as well as their attempts to find an intersection between feminism and their traditional religious beliefs. “Within the Mosaic” draws on the theme of finding you and your home in life: both losing the sense of who you are, and rediscovering it as you begin to further understand your own identity.

Loss and discovery can also be tied in more abstract theme, like language communication. In “Is Language Dead?” Julia Palmer questions the arbitrary nature of grammatical rules within the English language. Through compared examinations of

classically based literary tropes and the modern language of texting and social media, Palmer examines the fluidity of language and how we can begin to question rules of language and discover new rules along the way. In a similar vein, Gabrielle Kussmaul becomes lost in the world of virtual reality in her essay, "The Dog." Kussmaul recalls the simultaneous thrill and fear of finding an anonymous online personality all while being lost online.

The common thread that binds all these pieces is the constant game of tag between loss and discovery. The two are interminably tied together by people, by time, by language, by three little letters. It's an oxymoron, a metaphor, a simply complex truth, something to lose track of only to find once again and repeat.

We hope that this issue helps our readers explore loss in their own lives, and consider ways they too can be part of a process of recovery. Enjoy!