

The University of Alabama Welcomes
SEC Travel Grant Recipient

Melisa Cahnmann-Taylor



brown bag

Thursday, November 10th
12:00-1:00 pm
202 Graves Hall

talk

Thursday, November 10th
5:00-6:00 pm
118 Graves Hall

Writing the "Not Me": Drama and Poetry in Qualitative Inquiry

When we think of "portraits" we often think of paintings--Mona Lisa or Picasso's Blue Man with Guitar. But most literary artists and qualitative researchers also spend creative time meditating on others' lives as they loom larger than the individuals themselves and become symbolic of a complicated interrelated life. Keats' term "negative capability," referred to the poet's ability to suspend one's ego and imagine others from the inside out. In this talk, we will review the affordances, risks, and ethics of writing in the "not me" voice, and connections to creative and ethnographic work. Sharing examples of persona poems and dramatic monologues, we discuss how these forms may shape greater connections to the diversity of what it means to be human as well as connections to animal, vegetable, and mineral worlds. Participants will learn ethnographic techniques of observation and interview to gain access to others' stories, vocabularies and vernaculars with respect and aesthetic care. We will also discuss the value of portraiture in relating qualitative inquiry findings to wide, public audiences within and outside the academy.

Melisa (Misha) Cahnmann-Taylor is author of the newly-released book of poems, *Imperfect Tense* (Whitepoint Press, 2016). Winner of Dorothy Sargent Rosenberg Prizes, a Leeway Poetry Grant, and a Fulbright award, she has co-authored two books, *Teachers Act Up: Creating Multicultural Learning Communities Through Theatre and Arts-Based Research in Education*. Professor of TESOL & World Language Education at UGA, she judges the annual *Anthropology & Humanism* poetry contest and is the editor of the ethnographic poetry section. In October 2015 she won the Beckman Award given to Professors Who Inspire. Her website is <http://teachersactup.com>