

This is a transcript of the video clip "Cindy on the Importance of Personal Narratives" from the interview with Dr. Cynthia Selfe in Samuel Head, "A Scholarly Legacy: Professor Cynthia Selfe and the Digital Archive of Literacy Narratives" published in *Kairos: Rhetoric, Technology, Pedagogy*, 22(1), available at <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/22.1/interviews/head>.

Sam:

So as you teach your students about literacy, and as you have them go and interview people about literacy, you often ask your students to invite people to "tell a story." What do you feel is the significance of personal narratives in regards to literacy?

Dr. Selfe:

Yeah well, you know, a personal narrative is sometimes the most natural way or genre for communicating. Right? And it's not that I think that that genre that we all do of telling his story has any capital "T" truth value, but when you tell a story, it is just laden and laced and sedimented with personal understandings of what literacy is, what the expectations for literacy are, what your values surrounding literacy are, what your economic class, gender, considerations, familial expectations are. All these things are layered into stories. They're just there, they're part of the fabric of the story. So you can get such perspectival glimpses into people's literate lives through the telling of stories, that it provides a marvelous lens through which we can discern some of the personal experiences and values and understandings of literacy, not always directly, but sometimes indirectly.