

BREVITY's Nonfiction Blog

DAILY DISCUSSIONS OF CRAFT AND THE WRITING LIFE

The Treachery of Words

May 19, 2023 § 7 Comments

AFTER RENÉ MAGRITTE

By



(<https://brevity.files.wordpress.com/2023/05/kgaddy.jpg>)

Kristina R. Gaddy

This is not truth.

It is my version of events.

It is how I remember it happened.

It is how they remembered how it happened.

It is an oral history.

It is what someone dares say on the record.

It is the story of someone who wants to be on the record.

It is what the person asking the questions wants to hear.

It is the version of events that can be found in the historical record.

It is the story the police chose to write down.

It is the diary that someone saved.

It is the letter that someone didn't burn.

It is an account from someone who had access to pen and paper.

It is an account from someone who knows how to write.

It is what I have.

It is not the truth.

It is not the emotional truth.

It is not the memory that has been suppressed.

It is not the story they could never tell.

It is not the story she didn't think was important enough to share.

It is not the interview he was never able to give.

It is not all of the evidence.

It is not the story of the so-called perpetrator.

It is not the diary that ended up in the bottom of the river.

It is not the letter that was burned.

It is not the story of a woman who was never allowed to write her own story.

It is not the history no one was there to record.

It is not made up.

These are the pieces I choose to share with you.

It is the connection I want you to draw.

This is a truth.

—

Kristina R. Gaddy is the author of *Well of Souls: Uncovering the Banjo's Hidden History* (<https://wnorton.com/books/9780393866803>) (W.W. Norton 2022) and *Flowers in the Gutter: The True Story of the Edelweiss Pirates, Teenagers Who Resisted the Nazis* (<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/575238/flowers-in-the-gutter-by-k-r-gaddy/>) (Dutton 2020)

Tagged: Magritte, truth

§ 7 Responses to *The Treachery of Words*

-  janpriddyoregon (<http://janpriddyoregon.wordpress.com>) says:
May 19, 2023 at 8:22 am (<https://brevity.wordpress.com/2023/05/19/the-treachery-of-words/#comment-215432>)

Too often: "It is what the person asking the questions wants to hear."

Reply (<https://brevity.wordpress.com/2023/05/19/the-treachery-of-words/?replytocom=215432#respond>)

-  It Is My Version of Events | lifeunderwriter.net (<http://lifeunderwriter.net/2023/05/19/it-is-my-version-of-events/>) says:
May 19, 2023 at 9:28 am (<https://brevity.wordpress.com/2023/05/19/the-treachery-of-words/#comment-215438>)

[...] The Treachery of Words — BREVITY's Nonfiction Blog – By Kristina R. Gaddy [...]

Reply (<https://brevity.wordpress.com/2023/05/19/the-treachery-of-words/?replytocom=215438#respond>)

- Judy Reeves says:
May 19, 2023 at 12:20 pm (<https://brevity.wordpress.com/2023/05/19/the-treachery-of-words/#comment-215452>)

Oh how I love this! Thank you. These brief statements offer such good prompts to write from. I think I will.

Reply (<https://brevity.wordpress.com/2023/05/19/the-treachery-of-words/?replytocom=215452#respond>)

-  Gary (<http://www.garygruber.com>) says:
May 20, 2023 at 10:00 am (<https://brevity.wordpress.com/2023/05/19/the-treachery-of-words/#comment-215493>)

Yes, it's usually our version, even a verbatim interview depends on the question we ask. Thanks for these good illustrations!

Reply (<https://brevity.wordpress.com/2023/05/19/the-treachery-of-words/?replytocom=215493#respond>)

-  BJ says:
May 20, 2023 at 10:18 am (<https://brevity.wordpress.com/2023/05/19/the-treachery-of-words/#comment-215494>)

brilliant! I love the architecture of this piece and will share with my intro to CNF students. thank you.

Reply (<https://brevity.wordpress.com/2023/05/19/the-treachery-of-words/?replytocom=215494#respond>)

- trichyplus (<https://trichyplus.com>) says:
May 21, 2023 at 3:14 pm (<https://brevity.wordpress.com/2023/05/19/the-treachery-of-words/#comment-215534>)

What's more is that it also offers great writing tips and tricks that has really helped improve my writing style. Blog is definitely one of the best blogging platforms out there

Reply (<https://brevity.wordpress.com/2023/05/19/the-treachery-of-words/?replytocom=215534#respond>)

-  campanaconstancewheatoncollegeedu says:
May 22, 2023 at 1:36 am (<https://brevity.wordpress.com/2023/05/19/the-treachery-of-words/#comment-215548>)

I'm one of those "need to know" people. In the beginning you say "This is not the truth." Then, "It is my version of events." Yes! Then in the middle, you say, "It is an account..." "It is an account..." "It is what I have." Then you say, "It is not the truth." And I think it is. Why do I think it is? Because it's what you have. I think you have a definition of truth that I don't, and I'm wondering what it is. [I am also aware that you are making a pretty great list of what words are and are not and I really like how you did that.]

Reply (<https://brevity.wordpress.com/2023/05/19/the-treachery-of-words/?replytocom=215548#respond>)

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