

## Highlights of the Ph.D. Program

With eighteen faculty teaching and publishing in twentieth and twenty-first century literature and culture, the English Department at Northwestern offers superb graduate training in the period's literary and cultural histories, genres, theory, approaches, and methods. Drawing on resources within and beyond the department, graduate students specializing in the period have amassed an extraordinary record of publications, pre- and postdoctoral fellowships, and tenure-track positions.

Faculty include Chris Abani, John Alba Cutler, Nick Davis, Brian T. Edwards, Betsy Erkkilä, Harris Feinsod, Christine Froula, Reginald Gibbons, Susannah Gottlieb, Jim Hodge, Rebecca Johnson, Christopher Lane, Andrew Leong, Susan Manning, Juan Martinez, Evan Maina Mwangi, Shaundra Myers, and Ivy Wilson. (*field specialties on reverse.*)

Concentrations within the period include poetry and poetics; narrative; drama, theatre, and performance; literary, gender, critical race, and political theory; African literatures and film; ethnic and diasporic literatures; Anglophone literature and film in transnational and global contexts; interdisciplinary modernism; genetic and textual criticism, among others.

## Job Placement

Northwestern's English Ph. D. program enjoys a strong record of tenure-track placement. Since 2005, Northwestern Ph.D.s in English have been offered tenure-track and post-doctoral positions at a variety of colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada, including Boston University, Columbia University, Cornell University, Ohio State University, Trinity College-Hartford, University of British Columbia, University of Michigan, University of Pennsylvania, University of Pittsburgh, the University of Texas at Austin, Marquette University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Trinity University in San Antonio, and Franklin and Marshall College.

Our specialists in 20<sup>th</sup>- and 21<sup>st</sup>-century literature have secured tenure-track positions at institutions including Columbia, the University of Pittsburgh, Marquette, Ohio State, and SUNY at Stony Brook. During their studies, our students have placed or published articles in major journals such as *PMLA*, *Modern Fiction Studies*, *Callaloo*, *Novel*, *The Yale Journal of Criticism*, and *Modernism/Modernity*.

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## Twentieth and Twenty-first Century Literature & Culture



"After 'Invisible Man' by  
Ralph Ellison, the Prologue"  
Jeff Wall

Northwestern University



**Chris Abani** (Ph.D. USC) teaches Creative Writing (Fiction and Poetry) and Literature. He is a novelist, poet, essayist, screenwriter and playwright. His fields of interest include African Poetics, World Literature, 20<sup>th</sup>-century British and American Literature, African Presences in Medieval and Renaissance Cultural Spaces, The Architecture of Cities and their Potential Symbiotic Relationship with their Populations, West African Music, Postcolonial and Transnational Theory, Robotics and Consciousness, Yoruba and Igbo Philosophy and Religion. He is the recipient of the PEN USA Freedom-to-Write Award, the Prince Claus Award, a Lannan Literary Fellowship, a California Book Award, a Hurston/Wright Legacy Award, a PEN Beyond the Margins Award, the PEN Hemingway Book Prize and a Guggenheim Award.

**John Alba Cutler** (Ph.D. UCLA) teaches and researches US Latino/a literatures, multiethnic American poetry, contemporary American literature, and print culture studies. He is the author of *Ends of Assimilation: The Formation of Chicano Literature* (Oxford, 2015), as well as essays in *American Literary History*, *American Literature*, MELUS, *Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano Studies*, and the *Los Angeles Review of Books*.

**Nick Davis** (Ph.D. Cornell) works in cinema studies, queer theory, gender studies, and 20<sup>th</sup>-century American literature. His book *The Desiring-Image* (Oxford UP, 2013) employs Deleuzian models of film and desire to re-theorize contemporary queer cinema and reassess some of its key films. He has published many articles and book chapters and also reviews movies at [www.Nicks Flick Picks.com](http://www.Nicks Flick Picks.com).

**Brian T. Edwards** (Ph.D. Yale), jointly appointed in Comparative Literature Studies, specializes in 20<sup>th</sup>- and 21<sup>st</sup>-century literature and culture from the U.S., North Africa and the Middle East. His publications include *Morocco Bound: Disorienting America's Maghreb, from Casablanca to the Marrakech Express* (Duke, 2005); *Globalizing American Studies* (co-edited with Dilip Gaonkar, Chicago, 2010); and *After the American Century: The Ends of U.S. Culture in the Middle East* (Columbia, 2016), academic essays in *American Literary History*, *Public Culture*, *NOVEL*, *Journal of North African Studies*, creative non-fiction in *The Believer*, *McSweeney's*, *A Public Space*, and *Michigan Quarterly Review*, and essays and opinion pieces in publications such as *Salon*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Foreign Policy*, and *Chicago Tribune*.

**Betsy Erkkilä** (Ph.D. Berkeley) specializes in Revolutionary and 19<sup>th</sup>-century American literature and modern and contemporary poetry and poetics, with a particular interest in gender, race, and political theory and transatlantic literary exchange. She is the author of *Walt Whitman Among the French*, *Whitman the Political Poet*, *The Wicked Sisters*, *Mixed Bloods and Other American Crosses*, and recent essays on Wheatley, Jefferson, Poe, Melville, Dickinson, and Lincoln. Her current projects include a book entitled *Imagining the Revolution*. She received Northwestern's Graduate School Faculty Award for Service in 2014 for her distinguished work as a graduate teacher and mentor.

**Harris Feinsod** (Ph.D. Stanford) teaches 20<sup>th</sup>- and 21<sup>st</sup>-century U.S. and Latin American literature and culture. He is currently writing a book entitled *The Poetry of the Americas from Good Neighbors to Countercultures*. His research focuses on modern poetry and the avant-garde in Europe and the Americas, hemispheric literary and cultural relations, environmental and inter-ethnic literatures of the U.S. "new west," and oceanic studies. Recent writing appears in *American Literary History*, *American Quarterly*, *Arcade*, *Centro*, *Chicago Review*, and the *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*.

**Christine Froula** (Ph.D. Chicago) specializes in American, British, and European modernist literature, visual art, and culture; feminist and gender theory; and editorial theory and practice. Books include *Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Avant-Garde*; *Modernism's Body: Sex, Culture, and Joy*; *To Write Paradise: Style and Error in Ezra Pound's Cantos*; and *A Guide to Ezra Pound's Selected Poems*.

**Reginald Gibbons** (Ph.D. Stanford) has published over thirty volumes, including poems; translations from ancient Greek and Spanish; fiction; edited collections of essays, fiction and poetry; and editions of modern fiction. He edited *TriQuarterly* magazine from 1981 to 1997, was a co-founder of the Humanities Institute workshop on Poetry and Poetics, and is jointly appointed in Classics and in Spanish and Portuguese.

**Susannah Gottlieb** (Ph.D. Chicago) works in the areas of modern and contemporary poetry and poetics, continental philosophy and political theory, and Asian American literary traditions. She is the author of *Regions of Sorrow: Anxiety and Messianism in Hannah Arendt and W.H. Auden* and the editor of *Hannah Arendt: Reflections on Literature and Culture*. She regularly teaches courses on poetry, poetics, and literary theory. Her current projects include a book-length study entitled *The Importance of Metaphysics: The Intellectual Heresies of W.H. Auden*.

**Jim Hodge** (Ph.D. Chicago) specializes in comparative media aesthetics with an emphasis on digital media. He also works on media theory, film theory, and experimental media art genres including new media art, electronic literature, and avant-garde film. He has written essays on new media art, contemporary cinema, and the phenomenological tradition. His book project argues for the significance of animation for the expression of history in the digital age.

**Rebecca Johnson** (Ph.D. Yale) Rebecca Johnson teaches courses in Middle Eastern literary and cultural studies with a special focus on modern Arabic literature. Her research focuses on the history and theory of the novel in Arabic and English, the literature of the nineteenth-century period known as the Nahda, and literary orientalism and occidentalism, and her wider interests include pre-modern Arabic prose genres, cosmopolitanism, and the poetics and politics of translation. Her current book project studies the intertwined early histories of the Arabic and English novels, using translation as a lens through which to understand the form and function of the genre.

**Christopher Lane** (Ph.D. University of London) specializes in Victorian culture and also publishes in Edwardian and modern literature, including essays on Conrad (in *Novel*); D. H. Lawrence, Saki, and Wyndham Lewis (in *Modernism/Modernity*); Joyce (in *Quare Joyce*); Sassoon and other First World War poets (in *Raritan*); and Forster (in *The Cambridge Companion to E. M. Forster*).

**Andrew Leong** (Ph.D. Berkeley) is a comparatist who works primarily in English and Japanese, with additional interests in Spanish, and Portuguese. His research focuses on the problem of "migrant stillness" — a transnational circulation of texts, objects, and bodies through Japan and the Americas that culminates not in "free commerce" but unevenly distributed states. He has taught courses spanning a range of textual and visual media — from 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century Japanese and American literature; to comics and manga; to Westerns, film noir, and Japanese period drama. His translations from Japanese of two novels by Nagahara Shoson — who wrote for a Japanese reading public in Los Angeles during the 1920s — have been collected in a single volume: *Lament in the Night* (Kaya, 2012).

**Susan Manning** (Ph.D. Columbia), jointly appointed in Theatre and Performance Studies, specializes in modernism in theatrical performance and is the author of *Ecstasy and the Demon: The Dances of Mary Wigman and Modern Dance*, *Negro Dance: Race in Motion*, curator of *Dances noires/blanche Amerique*, and co-editor of *New German Dance Studies*.

**Juan Martinez** (Ph.D. UNLV) is a fiction writer, with critical work focusing on the post-war and contemporary novelists, the sociology of literature, and Vladimir Nabokov's role in the field of contemporary cultural production.

**Evan Maina Mwangi** (Ph.D. Nairobi) specializes in literary theory and global Anglophone cultural studies. The co-author of *The Columbia Guide to East African Literature in English since 1945*, his latest book is *Africa Writes Back to Self: Metafiction, Gender, Sexuality*. His current projects include studies of African popular culture, memory, and translation of postcolonial texts.

**Shaundra Myers** (Ph.D., University of Maryland, College Park) specializes in African American literature and culture, with particular interests in U.S. black transnationalism, autobiography, multimodality, and citizenship. Her current projects include a book examining the global itineraries of African American literature in the post-civil rights era and an essay on black women's print culture of the 1980s.

**Ivy Wilson** (Ph.D. Yale) teaches comparative literatures of the black diaspora and U.S. literature with a particular emphasis on African American culture. He has written *Specters of Democracy: Blackness and the Aesthetics of Politics in the Antebellum U.S.*.

## Interdisciplinary Faculty

Specialists in the period in other departments augment our students' training in many areas, for example:

- **African-American literature & theory**
- (Alex Weheliye, Michelle Wright)
- **American studies** (Kate Baldwin, Janice Radway)
- **visual culture** (Huey Copeland, Christina Kaier, Krista Thompson)
- **Caribbean & Latin American literature**
- (Jorge Coronado, Doris Garraway)
- **film & media studies** (Scott Curtis, Miriam Petty, Jeff Sconce, Jacob Smith, Domietta Torlasco)
- **gender studies** (Alex Owen, Jane Winston)
- **Latino/a literatures** (Frances Aparicio)
- **theatre & performance** (E. Patrick Johnson, Soyini Madison, Ramón Rivera-Servera, Harvey Young)
- **television studies** (Lynn Spigel, Mimi White)
- **philosophy & critical theory**
- (Chris Bush, Penelope Deutscher, Scott Durham, Peter Fenves, Sam Weber).

Each year the Carole and Gordon Segal Visiting Professorship of Irish Literature brings a specialist to campus to teach for one quarter. Past Segal professors include Maud Ellmann (Cambridge University and Notre Dame), John Bishop (Berkeley), Clair Wills (University of London), Andrew Gibson (Royal Holloway, University of London), Carol Loeb Shloss (Stanford), Murray Beja (Ohio State), Lucy McDiarmid (Villanova), Sean Latham (Tulsa); and Derek Attridge (York).

Through the CIC, our students may take courses and attend seminars, lectures, and workshops at other Chicago institutions, including the University of Chicago and the University of Illinois at Chicago. They may also work in relevant collections held by the Newberry Library holdings and other area libraries. The Paris Program in Critical Theory offers students the unique opportunity to spend one year in Paris familiarizing themselves with French and European theoretical research.

Chicago enjoys a lively theatre and music scene and an array of world-class museums. The Chicago Film Seminar regularly hosts screenings and discussions with filmmakers and scholars. The annual Humanities Festival and the Poetry Foundation sponsor readings and events.

## Faculty in Twentieth and Twenty-first Century Literature