J
ob Placement

In the past 10 years, our graduates specializing in twentieth- and twenty-first-century literature have secured tenure track positions at SUNY Albany, Marquette University, the University of Pittsburgh, and others. Graduates of our program have accepted tenure track positions at numerous universities and colleges, including Boston University, Cornell, Queens University in Ontario, Temple University, UNC-Chapel Hill, the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington University in St Louis, Wheaton College in Massachusetts, and Yale University.

Our students have also been awarded post-doctoral positions with Emory University, the Michigan Society of Fellows, the University of Pennsylvania, the Public Theater in New York, Oxford University, the Stanford University Humanities Center, and UCLA. 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*.

Faculty include Chris Abani, John Alba Cutler, Nick Davis, Brian T. Edwards, Betsy Erkkilä, Harris Feinsod, Christine Froula, Reginald Gibbons, Susannah Gottlieb, Jim Hodge, Michelle Huang, Rebecca Johnson, Christopher Lane, Susan Manning, Juan Martinez, Evan Maina Mwangi, Shaundra Myers, Natasha Trethewey, 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.
Chris Ahani (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, 20th-century British and American Literature, African Presences in Medieval and Renaissance Cultural Spaces, The Architecture of Cities and their Potential Symbolic 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, the American Literary Fellowship, a California Book Award, Hurston/Wright Legacy Award, a PEN Beyond the Margins Award, the PEN Hemingway Book Prize and a Guggenheim Award.


Nick Davis (Ph.D. Cornell) works in cinema studies, queer theory, gender studies, and 20th-century American literature. His book The Drawing-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 NedsFlicksPick.com.


Betsy Erkikla (Ph.D. Berkeley) specializes in Revolutionary and 19th-century American literature and modern and contemporary poetry and poetics, with a particular interest in gender, race, and political theory and transnational literary exchange. She is the author of Wall Whittman: Among the Frosch, Whitman the Political Poet, The Wicked Sisters, Mixed Blonde 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.


Christine Foula (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 Bloomington Avant-Garde: Modernism’s Body: Sex, Culture, and Joy; To Write Parasite: Style and Form in Eros Pound’s Cowboy Poets and Eros Pound’s Selected Poems; and 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 TedQuarters: 1981 to 2010, the founder of the Humanities Institute workshop on Poetry and Poetics, and is jointly appointed in Classics and in 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 Sense: Anxiety and Melancholia 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 Heritage 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 researches the interwoven 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 Nana); D. H. Lawrence, Sak, and Wyndham Lewis (in Modemism/Modernity); Joyce (in Ulysses); and on other First World War poets (in Raritan) and Forster (in The Cambridge Companion to E. M. Forster).

Susan Manning (Ph.D. Columbia), jointly appointed in Theatre and Performance Studies, specializes in modernism in theatrical performance and is the author of England and the Dance: The Dance of Mary Wigman and Modern Dance, Negro Dance Race in Mexico, curator of Danse minére/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.


Shaundra Myers (Ph.D., University of Maryland, College Park) specializes in African American literature and culture, with particular interests in U.S. black transnationalism, autobiographical and historical scholarship. 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.

Natasha Trethewey (M.A. Hollins University, M.F.A. University of Massachusetts Amherst) won the Pulitzer Prize for poetry for her book Native Guard, and has served as Poet Laureate of the United States. She has based many poems on historical events and figures, including those of the Civil War, her poems also often explore race and gender. She has said that she considers her creative work a form of research as well as an artistic practice. Her poem-cycle Bolling’s Ophelia fictionalizes--on the basis of early 20th-century photographs by E. J. Bollsoq--the life of a prostitute in New Orleans. Beyond Katrina is a mixed-genre book that constitutes "A Meditation on the Mississippi River." Her most recent book of poems,Threads, which makes use of both personal and historical materials, also continues her work in explication mode. Trethewey joins the faculty of Northwestern in fall 2017, having taught for a number of years at Emory University.

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)
- American Studies (Kate Baldwin, Janice Radway)
- Caribbean & Latin American Literature (Jorge Coronado, Darris Gzaray)
- Film & Media Studies (Scott Harris, Miriam Petty, Ariel Rogers, Jeff Sconce, Domieta Tolfasco)
- Gender Studies (Alex Owen, Jane Winston)
- Latino/a literatures (Frones Aparicio)
- Philosophy & Critical Theory (Chris Bush, Penelope Deutscher, Scott Durham, Peter Ferrero, Sam Weber)
- Sound Studies (Neil Vermez, Jacob Smith)
- Television Studies (Lynn Spigel, Mimi White)
- Theatre & Performance (E. Patrick Johnson, Soyini Madison, Ramón Rivera-Servera)
- Visual Culture (Huy Copeland, Christina Kaier, Krista Thompson)

Through the BIG (Big-Ten Academic Alliance), 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 & Twenty-first Century/Transnational