



# Musings

Fall 2022 Newsletter

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Northwestern

Department of  
English

WEINBERG COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES



## FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings from University Hall! The last year has undeniably been eventful, with each quarter bringing its own Covid-related challenges. We returned cautiously to in-person classes in Fall 2021, stepped back to remote in early 2022 at the height of the omicron wave, and then – in line with changing University guidelines – began to unmask in the spring. Throughout it all, faculty and graduate student instructors experimented with more flexible attendance policies and alternate assignments for a seemingly never-ending stream of students in quarantine. We will never take for granted the transformative experience of an in-person lecture, seminar, or workshop, where faculty can tell at a glance whether a point needs further elaboration or it's time to move on, and where students can catch each other's eyes when something is funny. The difference between in-person and Zoom classes demonstrates very effectively that communities are more than the sum of their parts!

This fall, it feels as though we are finally beginning to define a new normal. The department worked with the dean's office to reduce the enrollment ceiling in our 300-level literature courses to twenty students starting in 2022-23. These smaller classes will give students more opportunities to practice thinking on their feet in group discussions – a skill that is central to the English classroom but also has much wider applications. Faculty will be able to respond more intensively to student writing, helping them to develop in an area that often lagged amid Covid-era disruptions. We also worked last year to revise the undergraduate literature major, which now offers a much more diverse set of pathways into the study of English. Alongside our surveys in British and American literary traditions, students can now satisfy the major's historical breadth requirement with courses such as Introduction to Native American and Indigenous Literatures, Introduction to Postcolonial Literatures, and Introduction to Poetry. Taking to heart our own lessons about clarity of expression, we have replaced the alphabet soup of TTC and ICSP requirements with upper-division requirements for courses focusing on Race & Ethnicity, Postcolonial & Comparative Literatures, and Gender, Sexuality & Embodiment. I have been encouraged by conversations about anti-racist pedagogy not only in the graduate-student-led workshop of that name, but also in committee meetings and hallways and faculty offices. The department is thinking about equity across multiple axes and in multiple contexts, including areas such as advising and service that often don't get much attention.

We are also delighted that the department is growing again! After a multi-year hiring freeze, we are thrilled to welcome two new colleagues in creative writing: Sarah Schulman and Daisy Hernández. You can find out more about their work in this volume of *Musings*, alongside tributes to emeritus faculty members Chris Lane and Betsy Erkkila, who retired during the pandemic.

With best wishes for 2022-23,

Katharine Breen

Board of Lady Managers of the Columbian Exposition Chair



## NEW FACULTY



**Sarah Schulman** is a novelist, playwright, screenwriter, nonfiction writer and AIDS historian. She is the author of 20 books: novels (*Maggie Terry*, *The Mere Future*, *The Cosmopolitans*, *The Child*, *Shimmer*, *Empathy*, *Rat Bohemia*, *People In Trouble*, *After Delores*, *Girls*, *Visions and Everything*, *The Sophie Horowitz Story*), nonfiction (*Let The Record Show: A Political History of ACT UP*, NY 1987-1993, *Conflict is Not Abuse: Overstating Harm, Community Responsibility and the Duty of Repair*, *The Gentrification of the Mind: Witness to a Lost Imagination*, *Israel/Palestine and the Queer International*, *Stagestruck: Theater, AIDS and the Marketing of Gay America*, *My American History: Lesbian/Gay Life During the Reagan/Bush Years*), and published plays (*Carson McCullers*, *Mercy*).

She has co-written or co-produced four feature films (*The Owls* and *Mommy Is Coming* directed by Cheryl Dunye, *United In Anger: A History of ACT UP* directed by Jim Hubbard, *Jason and Shirley* directed by Stephen Winter.) She has had 5 play productions (*Carson McCullers*, Playwrights Horizons, directed by Marion McClinton, *Manic Flight Reaction*, Playwrights Horizons w/ Deirdre O'Connell, *The Burning Deck*, La Jolla Playhouse with Diane Venora, *Enemies*, *A Love Story* (adapted from IB Singer), The Wilma Theater w/Morgan Spector, *The Lady Hamlet* (Provincetown Theater) with Jennifer Van Dyck, directed by David Drake.

Sarah is a longtime supporter of Palestinian Liberation and serves on the Advisory Board of Jewish Voice for Peace. Her journalism has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *The New Yorker*, *New York Magazine*, *The Nation*, *The New Republic*, *Harper's*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *The Atlantic*, *The New York Review of Books* and many others.

**Daisy Hernández** is an essayist, memoirist, and journalist. Her work focuses on the intersections of race, ethnicity, immigration, class, and sexuality. She is the author of *The Kissing Bug: A True Story of a Family, an Insect, and a Nation's Neglect of a Deadly Disease* (Tin House, 2021), which won the PEN/Jean Stein Book Award and was selected as an inaugural title for the National Book Foundation's Science + Literature Program. The book was named a top 10 nonfiction book of 2021 by *Time* magazine and was a finalist for the New American Voices Award.

Her memoir *A Cup of Water Under My Bed* (Beacon Press, 2014) won the IPPY Award for best coming-of-age memoir and Lambda Literary's Dr. Betty Berzon Emerging Writer Award. The memoir was also a Publishing Triangle Award finalist. She co-edited the anthology *Colonize This! Young Women of Color on Today's Feminism* (Seal Press), which was first published in 2002 and has become a widely taught text in women's and gender studies courses. She coedited a new edition in 2019, and the anthology has been praised by scholars and media outlets for its contribution to understandings of intersectionality.

Hernández's work has been reprinted in several anthologies including the *Best of Brevity: Twenty Groundbreaking Years of Flash Nonfiction*. Her essays and fiction have appeared in numerous publications including *Aster(ix)*, *Bellingham Review*, *Brevity*, *Dogwood*, *Fourth Genre*, *Gulf Coast*, *Iowa Review*, and *Rumpus*, among others. She is a regular contributor to the Buddhist magazine, *Tricycle*.

A journalist, she has reported for *National Geographic*, *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times*, and *Slate*, and her writing has been aired on NPR's *All Things Considered*. Her magazine feature on transgender issues in communities of color was nominated for a GLAAD Media Award.

She has received fellowships from MacDowell, Bread Loaf Writer's Conference, the Rona Jaffe Foundation, Djerassi Resident Artist Program, Blue Mountain Center, and Hedgebrook. She currently serves on the board of the Barbara Deming Memorial Fund.

Hernández has taught creative writing at Miami University, Vanderbilt University, Trinity Washington University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she was the 2015-2016 Kenan Fellow.



## A WORD FROM EGSO

The fall colors are in full force in Evanston, and it finally feels as though campus is resuming its usual buzz of excitement after a few unpredictable years. It's been refreshing this fall to return to another year of deep conversation, scholarly exploration and community with our friends and peers in the English department and beyond.

As we intrepidly head into this new year, we are also reflecting on the successes and many academic and social community-building events last year. We started the 2021 school year in style with a pot-luck picnic on the lakefill, during which new and returning students enjoyed conversation, food, copious amounts of wind, and the fortuitous dodging of a sudden rainstorm. There was a unique joy to reinstating this tradition, put on hold during the past few pandemic years. Our coursework representatives organized our peer mentor program and collaborated to host a peer mentor social gathering at the Rock, complete with coffee, food, sun, and thankfully without surprise rainstorms. Although the event traditionally serves for first-years to get to know their mentors and other grad students in the department, last year it offered some of the first opportunities for in-person conversations among students across multiple cohorts.

Last year, Elizabeth Winter (4<sup>th</sup> year PhD) worked to develop advice sessions that could facilitate peer mentorship as students tackled program milestones like the newly reimagined Qualifying Exam. Smith Yarberry (3<sup>rd</sup> year PhD), Suzanne Scanlon (3<sup>rd</sup> year MFA+MA), and Rio Bergh (4<sup>th</sup> year PhD) collaborated to organize a salon. Conceptualized as an opportunity to foster casual conversations between MFA+MA and PhD students in English, as well as with students in the arts and humanities more broadly across the university, the salon featured readings and presentations by PhD students in both literature and performance studies, and by MFA+MA students across the spectrum of fiction, poetry, and nonfiction. This fun and intellectually fruitful series will continue through the 2022-23 school year with several upcoming events in the works.

Last March, our board organized online recruitment events—bringing together prospective and current graduate students—and worked to put prospective students in contact with current students in their fields. In spring quarter, Elizabeth and Allie Gibeily (3<sup>rd</sup> year PhD) organized a colloquium featuring presentations by MA, PhD, and MFA+MA students alike. EGSO also co-sponsored the Global Eighteenth Century Colloquium's pedagogy workshop, "Improving Accessibility in the Classroom," with Prof. Jason Farr. Around University Hall, a large number of student-run groups, from the Anti Racist Pedagogy Workshop to the Long Nineteenth-Century Colloquium, hosted exciting conversations and brought new scholarly voices to campus.



## A WORD FROM EGSO (continued)

Fall 2022 has already been filled with exciting events to welcome our peers back to campus: another potluck, a mentor breakfast, and a wonderful collation and happy hour. EGSO's new board has hosted townhall conversations with the department chair and program DGSs, working to build greater transparency and communication lines between faculty and students. English Graduate students have also been active in growing unionization efforts, which just reached a majority of graduate student participation. We look forward to continued advocacy and community building work, none of which would be possible without the generosity of the students and scholars who gave their time and intellectual energies to engage and support one another.

**Elizabeth Winter** and **S Yarberry**, Co-Chairs

**Jackson McGrath** and **Surya Milner**, MFA+MA Representatives

**Rio Bergh**, Students-in-Candidacy Representative

**Govind Narayan**, Students-in-Coursework Representative

**Emma Cohen**, Archivist

**Paulina Jones-Torregrosa** and **Yasmin Yoon**, Representatives to the Graduate Policy and Placement Committee

## NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS

**Elisa Ady** (MFA+MA – Fiction) is a Mexican-American writer from Southern California. She graduated from the University of California, San Diego in 2021 with a BA in Literatures in English. She's a McNair Fellow, a two-time Pushcart Prize nominee, and a recipient of the Sherley Williams Memorial Award in Literary Arts for her magical realist fiction. Her research and creative interests include decoloniality, trauma studies, Indigenous epistemologies, and the queer uncanny.

**Andrea Bianchi** (MFA+MA – Creative Nonfiction) lives in Chicago. She earned a BA in English from Wheaton College and a Certificate in Creative Writing from Northwestern University, and she has worked as an editor, proofreader, and legal secretary. Her writing has appeared in various literary journals, including *Witness*, *New Ohio Review*, and *Epiphany*, and her work was selected as a notable essay in *The Best American Essays 2021*. Andrea's nonfiction explores relationship and family dynamics, shame and taboo, and the tension between isolation and belonging. Her interests include the essay, memoir, and fragmentary forms.

**Isabel Griffith-Gorgati** (PhD) graduated in 2021 from Princeton University with a BA in English and a certificate in Spanish. Her undergraduate thesis focused on feminist recuperations of anonymity in the war novels of Virginia Woolf and Elizabeth Bowen. Isabel previously worked in development and marketing at PeerForward, a college- and career-access nonprofit serving students from low-income communities. As a graduate student, she plans to research transatlantic women writers' responses to war and conflict in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

**Nat Happe** (MFA+MA – Creative Nonfiction) grew up in Minnetonka, Minnesota before moving to Montreal to attend university. She graduated in 2016 with a BComm in Economics and a minor in English literature. Her research interests include speculative nonfiction, autofiction, motherhood, and queer theory. At night she can be found illustrating at her desk.

**Mariam Hirsi** (MFA+MA – Fiction) is a Somali writer raised in Seattle, WA. In 2020 she graduated from the University of Washington, where she studied Cinema and Media Studies with a minor in Gender and Women's Studies. She has devoted many hours to retail and food service jobs, which have colored her literary interests as well as ideas around work and its role in our lives. Before moving to Chicago, she spent time teaching in Korea. Her creative and critical work centers around themes of diaspora, labor, love, and the complex interpersonal relationships of women.

**Lauren Johnson** (PhD) graduated from Princeton University in 2021 with a BA in African American Studies and minors in French and Gender and Sexuality Studies. For her senior thesis, she focused on the life and works of Ann Petry, the first Black woman to sell over one million copies of a book. She deferred her acceptance to Northwestern to complete a year-long civic engagement fellowship in Chicago. Her research interests include black feminist theory and jazz studies, and as a literary historian, she is interested in how we read Black literature today.

**Mitchell Johnson** (MFA + MA – Nonfiction) grew up in the rural mountain West and graduated from Brown University in 2018 with a degree in American Studies. He writes about history, ecology, and capitalism.

## GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

This past summer, **George Abraham** (2<sup>nd</sup> year MFA+MA) was a poetry fellow at the Sewanee Writers' Conference; had a poem, "GET FUCKED & DIE! Poetica," published with *Catapult* Magazine, and other work in *The Academy of American Poets's Poem-A-Day* series, *Foglifter*, and *The Indiana Review*; and spent the summer starting an interview series with *TriQuarterly* Magazine on poetic process. Their work-in-progress performance poetry collaboration with Fargo Tbakhi, titled *Eve*, is a 2022 MAP Fund recipient, and is a National Performance Network Creation Fund Awardee. George is also, alongside Noor Hindi, currently editing a Palestinian global anglophone poetry anthology for Haymarket Books, which is tentatively set for release in 2024.

**Kai Chase** (3<sup>rd</sup> year PhD) is a fellow with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, a position in which they're working with marginalized graduate students to help them navigate their experiences in graduate school at Northwestern. Kai helps mentor students, create content for a newsletter, and plan events and activities to help students become familiar with social life, resources, and the like.

**Emma Cohen** (2<sup>nd</sup> year PhD) and **Katana Smith** (3<sup>rd</sup> year MFA+MA) participated in this summer's month-long LA Review of Books Publishing Workshop.

**Nina Coomes** (MFA+MA 2022) was a Writer in Residence this past March at Hedgebrook on Whidbey Island in Washington, where she was able to focus on the project that developed into *A Story To Say I Love You/愛しきモノ語*, which was submitted as her final MFA book manuscript.

Last year, **Jennifer Comerford** (PhD candidate) received a Graduate Research Grant to support her study of manuscript recipe books, household manuals, and palmistry records at the British Library and the Society of Antiquaries of London. She used the time to consider how these texts theorize experience and expertise through the hand in both its physical and metaphorical manifestations. Jennifer is also the recipient of the 2022-23 Lawrence Lipking/Newberry Fellowship, and is using time in residence at the library primarily to research eighteenth-century penmanship manuals and copybooks kept by women.

**Maria Dikcis** (PhD 2021) was the recipient of the 2021-22 Jean Hagstrum Award for Best Dissertation for *Ink, Wave, Signal, Code: Multiethnic American Poetry's Media Ecologies After 1965*.

With the support of a Graduate Research Grant, **Johana Godfrey** (PhD candidate) traveled to London at the end of the summer where, in service of her fourth and final dissertation chapter, she explored Kipling's manuscripts for *Kim* and some short stories, as well as the India Museum records at the British Library. She also spent time in the archives of the Royal Society of Antiquaries.

In August, **Paulina Jones-Torregrosa** (PhD candidate) attended the inaugural Black Feminist Theory Summer Institute at Duke University, organized by former Northwestern professor Jennifer C. Nash. In addition, her article, "'I Am Always Met at the River': Revisiting *This*

*Bridge Called My Back*," was published in the journal *Feminist Studies* (48.1) in July.

**Chris Lombardo** (3<sup>rd</sup> year MFA+MA) was the recipient of the 2021-22 English Department Award for Teaching Excellence. His short story, "Aurora Australis," will be published in volume 70:1 of *EPOCH* Magazine.

**Kira Tucker** (3<sup>rd</sup> year MFA+MA) previewed a suite of poems from their MFA book manuscript in *Tupelo Quarterly* and *The Spectacle*. These works—"Total Climate," "Frontier," "Edict for Negro Advancement," "Together, We," and "Self Assessment: June 2020"—will reappear in Tucker's debut poetry collection. They also participated in the Tin House Summer Workshop in Portland, OR this past June.

Earlier this year, **Jayme Collins's** (PhD 2022) essay, "Ecopoetic Antinomies: Inscription and Voice in Jen Bervin's *Silk Poems*," was published in volume 29.1 of *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*.

**Suzanne Scanlon** (3<sup>rd</sup> year MFA+MA) had her essay, "The Moving Target of Being," published this year in *Granta*. She recently received the Goldfarb Family Fellowship in Creative Nonfiction, and will be in residence at the Virginia Center for the Arts in January of 2023. Lastly, the French translation of her 2012 novel, *Promising Young Women*, will be published in France in October 2023.

In May, Deep Vellum Publishing released *A Boy in the City*, the debut collection of poetry by **Smith Yarberry** (3<sup>rd</sup> year PhD). They will be presenting a paper titled "Transness, Transmutability, and Creation in William Blake's *The Book of Urizen*" at the 2023 MLA Conference.



Two works by **Sreddy Yen** (PhD candidate) have been published in the last year: an interview with Zoë Wicomb in *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde* 58.2 and a review of Jeanne-Marie Jackson's "The African Novel of Ideas" in *Research in African Literatures* 52.2. Yen's research article, "Freedom through this strange kind of love: Impersonal be(com)ing and Barbara Adair's *In Tangier We Killed the Blue Parrot*," originally published online in the *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* in 2019, will be released in print in volume 57.2.

**Elizabeth Winter** (3<sup>rd</sup> year PhD) was the recipient of the 2021-22 English Department Award for Excellence as a Teaching Assistant.



## FACULTY NEWS

**Katharine Breen** recently published an essay in the medieval studies journal *Speculum*, entitled “Personification and Gender Fluidity in the *Psychomachia* and its Early Reception.” She argues that in this late-classical poem and its extended medieval afterlife, personifications function as sites for transgender identification, inviting male readers to imagine themselves as virtuous warrior women and encouraging woman readers to become men. The scholarly journal she edits, *The Yearbook of Langland Studies*, is seeing an influx of submissions after a couple of lean years. She sees this as a hopeful sign that faculty and graduate students are returning to intellectual projects they had to set aside at the height of the pandemic.

**Nick Davis** recently published new essays about Cate Blanchett, Charlotte Gainsbourg, and feminist screen performance (included in *Reframing Todd Haynes*) and about queer opacity in recent films like *Moonlight*, *Tomcat*, and *Spa Night* (in *The Oxford Handbook of Queer Cinema*). In Fall 2022, he became Director of the Gender & Sexuality Studies Program, as well as beginning a new monthly series of hour-long lectures about current movie releases, traveling to different theaters and sites around Chicago.

Over the last few months, **Reg Gibbons** has submitted to publishers three volumes of poetry co-translated, over several years’ time, with Ilya Kutik (Slavic Languages and Literatures): *Selected Poems of Boris Pasternak*; *Marina Tsvetaeva: A Portrait in Poems*; and Kutik’s own book, *The Wasp of Time: Selected Poems*. He has also submitted to publishers a new book of his own poems. Gibbons’ novel *Sweetbitter* (originally published in 1995, when it won an Anisfield-Wolf Book Award) is being reprinted again in paperback in early 2023, this time in a revised version (JackLeg Press).

In November, **Daisy Hernández** delivered the 2022 Rose Wohlgenuth Weisman Women’s Voices Lecture at Case Western Reserve University’s Baker-Nord Center for the Humanities. Her short story “SourSoup” was recently published in *The Iowa Review*.

**Michelle N. Huang** is a 2022-2023 Kaplan Faculty Fellow. Her film essay, *INHUMAN FIGURES: ROBOTS, CLONES, AND ALIENS*, is on display on the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center website. She recently consulted on a play, *Tiger Style!*, at Writers Theatre in Glencoe. Michelle is looking forward to giving talks at the University of Michigan and University of Glasgow, and to leading a Newberry Teachers’ Consortium seminar on Asian American literature.

**Lauren M. Jackson** has contributed several essays to *The New Yorker* recently, both online and in the magazine, including a review of Namwali Serpell’s latest novel, *The Furrows*, and a retrospective on Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson. In August, *Harper’s Bazaar* published

her cover story on the actor Tessa Thompson and in October she interviewed artist Chloë Bailey as part of The New Yorker Festival. Her chapter on African American literature and affect is forthcoming in *The Cambridge Companion to Contemporary African American Literature*, edited by Yogita Goyal.

**Justin Mann** is currently in residence in Princeton University’s Department of African American Studies as a Visiting Research Scholar. This visiting research position functions as, de facto, one of the most prestigious fellowships available to junior faculty in the field of African American Studies.

While on research leave last year, **Susan Manning** nearly completed a book of her own essays titled *Critical Histories of Modern Dance* and made progress on a co-edited anthology titled *Dancing on the Third Coast: Chicago Dance Histories*. An essay published in 2020, “Cross-Viewing in Berlin and Chicago: Nelisiwe Xaba’s *Fremde Tänze*,” won the Selma Jeanne Cohen Prize from the American Society for Aesthetics.

**Jeffrey Masten** was awarded a Guggenheim fellowship for 2022-23. The award will help support Masten’s research into early printed copies of literary texts and the changing histories of gender and sexuality registered by the readers who owned, marked up, and read them across time.

**Barbara Newman** has worked on a variety of projects this year. She gave several podcasts on her recent book, *The Permeable Self*; edited and translated the *Rothschild Canticles*, a luxurious illuminated prayer book; and completed articles on the hagiography of St. Francis and a Middle High German poem about a hermaphrodite. Now that travel has resumed, she was able to present a paper in Salt Lake City and another in Prague, and continues to shepherd her students through their Medieval Latin studies. To Barbara’s astonishment and joy, a dozen or so former students ambushed her at an August birthday celebration to present her with a Festschrift in progress.

**Laurie Shannon** organized the Anne Lister Society Inaugural Meeting, held in person in Halifax, West Yorkshire in April 2022; fifteen speakers across all career stages presented emerging research on the Regency diarist and queer polymath. She is in advanced discussions with Oxford University Press, the West Yorkshire Archive Service, and Calderdale Council to launch a scholarly edition of Lister’s almost five-million-word diary. In November, Shannon keynoted an online conference at the Institute for British Studies, University of Warsaw, discussing the nonmodern premises of Lister’s theory of singularity. A new essay, “A Regular Oddity: Natural History and Anne Lister’s Queer Theory of Tradition,” opens a collection on Lister forthcoming from Cambridge University Press (2023). Meanwhile in Shakespearean locales, she’s writing an



## FACULTY PUBLICATIONS

essay called “Livestock at Large in the Forest of Arden.” Shannon also assisted in bringing Lauren Berlant’s book, *On the Inconvenience of Other People* (2022), through the production process at Duke University Press this year. She served on Northwestern’s Presidential Search Committee in 2021 and 2022.

**Julia Stern** has been named to the Henry Sanborn Noyes Professorship in English.

In September 2022, **Helen Thompson** presented a talk for the Eighteenth Century and Romanticism Colloquium at UC Berkeley, titled “West African Craft, Sand-Gold, and Boyle’s Hydrostatic Instrument.” She will be sharing material from another project, “Mercantile Capitalism and Literary Form: The Royal African Company Letters,” at the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Atlantic Cultures Workshop at the University of Chicago in spring 2023. She is at work on a book about antirealism.

**Wendy Wall** is returning to Northwestern after a lovely year at the Huntington Library, where she worked on her book, “Revolution, Dissolution, Resurrection: Hester Pulter and the Poetics of the Reimagined Early Modern World.” Having soaked in sunshine while walking the Huntington gardens, she returns to Chicago as a Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar for 2022-23, which means that she travels on a circuit to six colleges/universities to converse with faculty and students about the joys of the liberal arts. She gave the plenary talk for the Spanish and Portuguese Society for English Renaissance Studies meeting in March, and continues to co-edit *The Pulter Project: Poet in the Making* (<https://pulterproject.northwestern.edu/>). She’s giving numerous talks this year on subjects such as recipes; early modern animal studies and the formation of race; early modern astronomy poetry; queering Shakespeare; and prison education.

In April, **Will West** presented the keynote talk on “Shakespeare’s Extraordinary Voices” at Loyola University’s McElroy Shakespeare Celebration, as well as organizing the MacLean Lecture, reimagined as a MacLean Performance Event, for the International Spenser Society, on “Spenser and Performance.” His book *Common Understandings, Poetic Confusions* (University of Chicago Press, 2021) was awarded the Joe A Callaway Prize for Best Book on Drama and Theatre by New York University.

In 2022, **Kelly Wisecup**’s volume *Plymouth Colony: Narratives of English Settlement and Native Resistance from the Mayflower to King Philip’s War*, which she co-edited with Lisa Brooks, was published by Library of America. Also in 2022, she and other members of an interdisciplinary, multi-university, multi-year research project on Indigenous art and activism about the Mississippi River completed a digital archive of their work together: *Indigenous Mississippi* (<http://indigenoumississippi.com>). The website holds collaboratively written keyword essays by grant participants, which reflect how their understandings of key terms developed across the life of the grant, photographs and reflections from graduate students created after their site visits along the river between 2018-2019, and interviews with artists who joined them on those site visits. Former Northwestern graduate students Sara Černe and Bonnie Etherington were part of the grant and authors and editors of the digital archive. In 2022-23, Wisecup is interim director of the Kaplan Institute for the Humanities and executive coordinator for the Society of Early Americanists.

**Chris Abani**  
*Smoking the Bible*  
(Copper Canyon 2022)



**Susannah Gottlieb**  
*Auden and the Muse of History*  
(Stanford 2022)



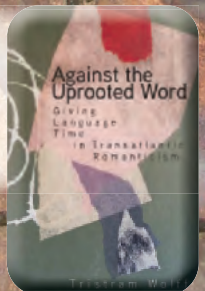
**Charif Shanahan**  
*Trace Evidence: poems*  
Tin House forthcoming  
(March 2023)



**Kelly Wisecup**  
*Plymouth Colony: Narratives of English Settlement and Native Resistance from the Mayflower to King Philip’s War*  
co-edited with Lisa Brooks  
(Library of Congress 2022)



**Tristram Wolff**  
*Against the Uprooted Word: Giving Language Time in Transatlantic Romanticism*  
(Stanford 2022)





# Betsy Erkkila Professor Emerita

Thoughts on Professor Erkkila's retirement

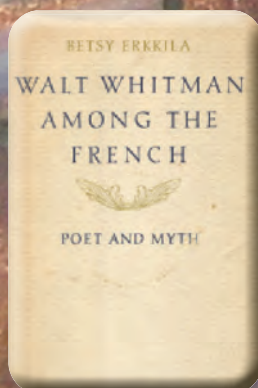
Betsy Erkkila, Henry Sandborn Noyes Professor of Literature, an expert on nineteenth-century American poetry and eighteenth-century American Revolutionary literature and culture, has retired after 27 years of research, teaching, and service at Northwestern. Beyond her field-transforming, encyclopedic work on Whitman and sexuality, and Dickinson and class, Betsy served as department chair for two terms. In that office, she inaugurated the drive to diversify a faculty that had been largely white, and she advanced opportunities for young women colleagues, often crafting strategies for their maternity and family leaves, all the while nurturing their research. Former students at her retirement party on June 2 spoke fiercely and lovingly of Betsy, praising her mentoring of them as feminists, scholars, and mothers, inspired by her remarkable example.

Betsy was born in San Francisco and received her BA, MA, and PhD at the University of California, Berkeley. Fluent in French, she taught as a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Amiens for two years, where she also wrote and published *Whitman Among the French*. She spent six years as a Visiting Assistant Professor of English at California State University, Chico, where she was an avid equestrian, before joining the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania as a full professor for 14 years. Betsy came to Northwestern in 1995 with a mandate to chair and strengthen the English Department. Along the

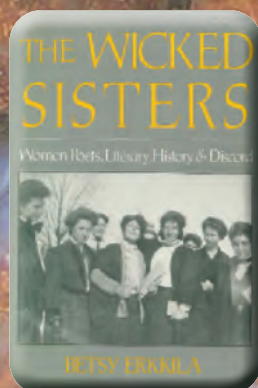


way, she published four more monographs (*Whitman the Political Poet*, *The Wicked Sisters*, *Mixed Blood and Other Crosses*, and *The Whitman Revolution*); three edited collections, including *Breaking Bounds: Whitman and American Cultural Studies*, co-edited with Jay Grossman; and numerous essays. Two current projects are “Imagining the Revolutions: Literature and Politics in Incendiary America,” and “The Abigail Adams Affairs.”

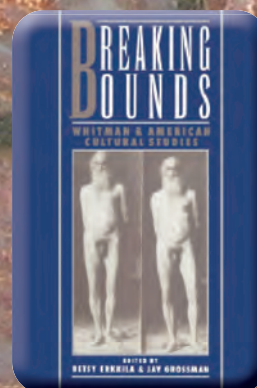
While winning numerous prestigious awards such as a Guggenheim Fellowship and a grant from the Woodrow Wilson Institute, Betsy was always, at heart, a devoted mentor and placer of graduate students. She directed 32 dissertations and served on 23 additional dissertation committees. Her Americanist students found remarkable success on the job



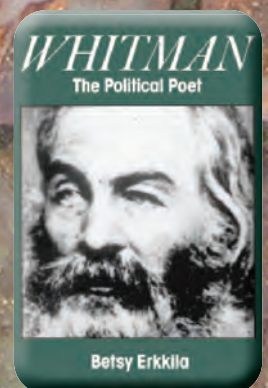
*Walt Whitman Among the French: Poet and Myth*  
(Princeton, 1980)



*The Wicked Sisters: Women Poets Literary History and Discord*  
(Oxford, 1992)



*Breaking Bounds: Whitman and American Cultural Studies*  
co-editor  
(Oxford, 1996)



*Whitman: The Political Poet*  
(Oxford, 1996)



market, being hired and then thriving at the University of California, Irvine; Vanderbilt University; Oxford University; the University of Texas, Austin; Boston University; the University of Southern California; Pace University; Yale University; the University of Montana; Washington University; the University of Maryland; and Oakton Community College. Having served with her as a committee member for the projects she chaired or as a director of theses for which she served on the committee, my fondest memories across the last 25 years involve collaborating with Betsy. In our many conversations about projects facing troubled waters which we tried to navigate, we also enjoyed intimate reflections about our research and roles as women in the academy. Betsy shared childcare recommendations that changed our lives; and our beloved only children, Suli and Nicholas, developed a beautiful friendship despite the five-year gap in their ages. Betsy Erkkila transformed Whitman Studies, the English Department between 1996-2002 and beyond, shaping the lives and work of all of her students. We are all profoundly grateful.

--Julia Stern



Colleagues and former students gathered to honor Betsy:

**First row:** Heidi Kim, Wendy Roberts, Nicole King, Julia Stern, Betsy Erkkila, Sarah Blackwood, Sarah Mesle

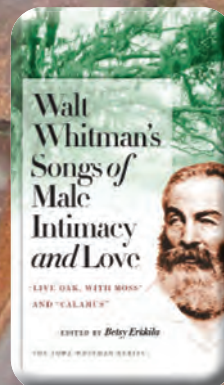
**Second row:** Greg Laski, Jay Grossman, Katherine Kinney, Hunt Howell, Katy Chiles



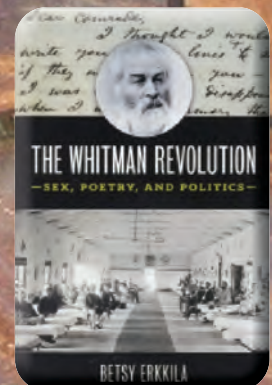
*Mixed Bloods and Other Crosses:*  
*Rethinking American Literature from the Revolution to the Culture Wars*  
(Pennsylvania, 2004)



*Ezra Pound: The Contemporary Reviews*  
editor  
(Cambridge, 2011)



*Walt Whitman's Songs of Male Intimacy and Love: "Live Oak, with Moss" and "Calamus"*  
editor  
(Iowa, 2011)



*The Whitman Revolution: Sex, Poetry, and Politics*  
(Iowa, 2020)



# Christopher Lane Professor Emeritus

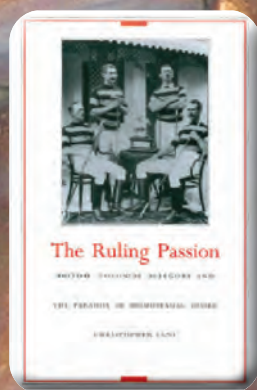
Thoughts on Professor Lane's retirement



On the early retirement of our dear colleague Christopher Lane, we contemplate his prodigious accomplishments with grateful admiration. Former Herman and Beulah Pearce Miller Research Professor of Literature; affiliate of Feinberg's Center for Bioethics and Medical Humanities and Institute for Public Health and Medicine; author of six books and many articles in prominent journals; editor of groundbreaking essay collections; winner of British Academy, Mellon, and Guggenheim fellowships; and beloved mentor, Chris is also an extraordinarily successful public intellectual. Poised at the cutting edge of cultural history, bioethics, and public health, his critical thinking on matters ranging from Victorian crises of religious belief to same-sex desire and race in psychoanalysis to the politics and economics of the mental-health and pharmaceutical industries resonates around the world and extends the reach of Victorian cultural studies to our moment.

Lane's *Surge of Piety: Norman Vincent Peale and the Remaking of American Religious Life* (Yale 2016), on Peale's "religio-psychiatric" movement, continues the public-spirited scholarship of his earlier books: *The Age of Doubt: Tracing the Roots of Our Religious Uncertainty* (Yale 2011), *Hatred and Civility: The Antisocial Life in Victorian England* (Columbia 2004), *The Burdens of Intimacy: Psychoanalysis and Victorian Masculinity* (Chicago 1999), *The Ruling Passion: British Colonial Allegory and the Paradox of Homosexual Desire* (Duke 1995), *Homosexuality and Psychoanalysis* (Chicago 2001), and *The Psychoanalysis of Race* (Columbia 1998).

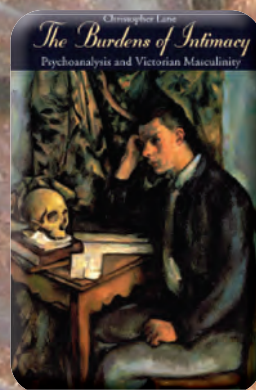
One book stands out for its impact: *Shyness: How Normal Behavior Became a Sickness* (Yale 2007; Prescrire Prize for Medical Writing), debated everywhere from the *NY Times Book Review*, *Le Monde*, and *TLS* to *Scientific American*, *New England Journal of Medicine*, and *Lancet* to media interviews around the world. Translated into French, Spanish, Japanese, Korean, Turkish, Danish, and Chinese, *Shyness* details the shockingly haphazard groupthink behind the American medical profession's pathologization of normal mental life and ordinary behaviors—isolated from environmental causes, labeled "personality disorders," and inscribed amid serious mental illnesses in the psychiatrist's Bible, the *DSMIII*. "If you're not already concerned about the over-medicalization of our mental lives," remarked a BBC commentator, "you will be."



*The Ruling Passion: British Colonial Allegory and the Paradox of Homosexual Desire*  
(Duke 1995)



*The Psychoanalysis of Race*  
editor  
(Columbia 1998)



*The Burdens of Intimacy: Psychoanalysis and Victorian Masculinity*  
(Chicago 1999)



*Homosexuality and Psychoanalysis*,  
co-editor  
(Chicago 2001)



The international impact of *Shyness* led to Chris's *Psychology Today* blog, "Side Effects." It lately surpassed two million hits on posts including "Good Grief: The APA Plans to Give the Bereaved Two Weeks to Conclude Their Mourning," "Brain Damage from Benzodiazepines," "The NIMH Withdraws Support for *DSM-5*," "Fighting Cancer with Science and Nature: Why Natural Agents That Kill Cancer Cells Warrant Further Investigation," "Placebos Do Work: Let's Consider Why," and "'Curing' Homosexuality: Reparative Therapy and the Politics of Ex-Gay Ministries." Chris reaches still broader publics in "Meet the Men Who Taught Donald Trump How to Bully" (*TIME* 10/12/2016), "Religiosity in the White House" (*HuffPost* 3/26/2017), and "Bitterness, Compulsive Shopping, and Internet Addiction: The Diagnostic Madness of *DSM-V*" (*Slate* 7/24/2009) complete list: <https://www.christopherlane.org/other-writing/>.

Chris's extensive service ranges from the MLA Divisional Committee on Psychological Approaches to editorial boards (*Discourse*, *Gender and Psychoanalysis* and *Nineteenth-Century Gender Studies*) to Northwestern fellowship committees (Mellon Summer Fellowship, Graduate School DYF, and Kreeger-Wolf). He chaired Northwestern's Humanities Vision Committee and served as Director of Graduate Studies in English, co-convenor of the British Studies Graduate Cluster, faculty advisor to the Long Nineteenth-Century Colloquium, chair of the Chicago Psychoanalytic Institute's Graduate Essay Competition, and more. Chris's students surveyed British literary history, explored the worlds of the Brontës, Eliot, Hardy, and WWI writers, studied psychoanalytic theory, gender, and literature, and honed intensive research skills. His twenty graduate students in English, French, German, and the Interdisciplinary Theatre and Drama program have won prizes, published, and excelled in professions in and beyond academe, from teaching (at Sewanee: the University of the South; Wheaton College; Dartmouth University; the University of Southern California; the University of Texas, Austin; the University of Wyoming, Laramie; and Chicago Field Studies) to master translator,

software engineer, and corporate consultant. Menglu Gao, assistant professor at the University of Denver, recalls Chris's "generosity, kindness, and wisdom throughout my doctoral studies. I was extremely lucky to have him as my mentor, and I hold him in mind as a model as I teach and advise my own students." Olivia Xu remembers her first class with Chris, his much-loved George Eliot seminar: "We spent so much time talking about community, both abstract and concrete. The class remains for me an endearing reminder of how reading collectively is itself an intimate form of community building." Olivia is completing her dissertation, as is Tyler Talbott, who describes Chris as "an exceptionally engaged and engaging mentor and teacher" who gives full attention to every exchange about the project at hand, "inspiring you to give your all." Tyler notes that Chris's "interests and intellectual curiosity have always extended far beyond the traditional confines of English programs, as his endlessly diverse teaching materials and methods show. I'm rooting for him as he pursues new passions, lines of inquiry, and modes of critical work."

Having traveled the world from Norway and Sweden to the Amazon Basin, Chris is a poster child for Susan Sontag's quip "I haven't been everywhere, but it's on my list." With a BA in English and Philosophy from the University of East Anglia, London-born Chris taught in Zimbabwe in 1988, when hopes ran high for the newly independent country. Then, studying with Jacqueline Rose, he earned an MA in Critical Theory at the University of Sussex and doctorate in English at the University of London. He has taught at UW-Milwaukee, Emory, and Coimbra and lectured in the Americas, UK, Europe, and Asia. Now based in Peru with his partner, Jorge Arce, and their family, Chris remains a treasured friend and mentor whose legacy continues green and flourishing. Chris, warm thanks for all you've given us and congratulations at this great crossroads in Life's Adventure. We wish you joy in everything to come.

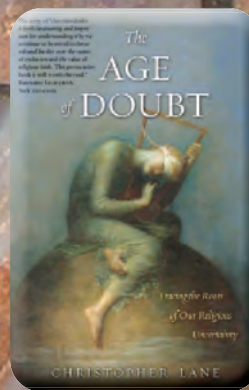
--Christine Froula



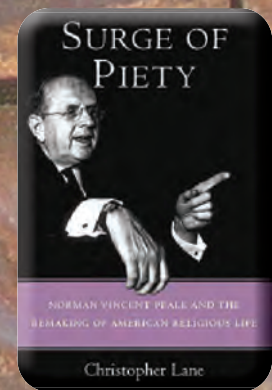
*Hatred and Civility: The Antisocial Life in Victorian England*  
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*Shyness: How Normal Behavior Became a Sickness*  
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(Yale 2011)



*Surge of Piety: Norman Vincent Peale and the Remaking of American Religious Life*  
(Yale 2016)



## GRADUATE STUDENT & ALUM PROFILES

As a new feature of Musings, we will be offering a more in-depth look at the projects and careers of English Department students and alumni of the graduate program. We hope you enjoy it!

### Allison Gibeily (PhD Student)



Since starting the PhD program in 2020, my research has focused primarily on post-classical Arabic and eighteenth-century English travel writing, with a special interest in embodied knowledge and the exchange of scientific knowhow. Rather than distinguishing the so-called factual from the fantastic, as much scholarship on this genre tends to do, my work considers how both ways of knowing commingle in travelogues to locate unwritten or unwritable local knowledges in an otherwise limited, and often violent, textual archive.

As a Mellon cluster fellow in Middle East and North African Studies, and as a diasporic Lebanese American, I'm both personally and professionally committed to interdisciplinarity in my project, which takes up texts in both Arabic and English. To reinforce my work in Arabic, I've taken several language courses both at Northwestern and beyond, including an accelerated program at the American University of Beirut in summer 2021. I was also able, with support from the Graduate School, the English Department, and the MENA

Program, to spend this past summer living and researching in Beirut.

While preparing for my qualifying exam and dissertation, these language skills will prove crucial in accessing and writing about Arabic manuscripts from a primarily oral period of cultural production so often dismissed as the "Age of Decline." Further, as part of a side project I hope to continue growing over the next few years, this training in Arabic has also allowed me to translate my grandparents' personal papers, which include handwritten recipes and daily journal entries about their experience as first-generation immigrants in the US in the 1960s and 70s.

Along with my own research, I've also served as an Assistant Editor for the *Journal of Arabic Literature* and am currently the co-chair of the Graduate and Early-Career Caucus for the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies.

### E. Hughes (MFA+MA 2021)

Since graduating from the Litowitz Creative Writing Program, I have become a Cave Canem fellow and am in the early stages of trying to publish my first collection of poems titled *Black Women Standing Ankle-Deep in Pacific Water*. So far, the collection has been a finalist for the 2022 CAAPP Book Prize and for the Catamaran Poetry Prize. I have also been a featured poet for Rhino Poetry at Printers Row Literary Festival, for Elevate Atlanta ("Color + the Body," for which I wrote a poem in response to Deanna Sirlin's paintings) and for *Jazz & Culture*—among others. I have been a finalist for the 92Y Discovery Contest, the 2022 Bennett Nieberg Transpoetic Broadside Prize, and the 2021 Granum Foundation Fellowship Prize. I also have poetry published or forthcoming in the *Indiana Review*, *Hypertext Magazine*, *Jazz & Culture Journal*, *Rhino Poetry*, and *The Art Section*. Finally, I have recently begun a PhD in Philosophy at Emory University.





**Nancy Haijing Jiang** (PhD Candidate)



I'm just a few weeks away from completing my dissertation project—*The Trade of Penance: Commercial Practice and Penitential Piety in Late Medieval Literature*—which examines medieval penitential literature's intersections with pre-modern commercial culture. Through this work, I have explored the account books that shaped penitential handbooks, the bargaining techniques within sermons on confession, and the lending mechanisms that taught readers of hagiographies how to borrow spiritual rewards from their saints. Recently, I've also written an article on Margery Kempe's credit practices which was shortlisted for the *New Medieval Literatures* Scholars of Colour Essay Prize (forthcoming NML 24) and finished a book chapter on bookkeeping technologies as tools of religious pedagogy in a volume entitled *Media Technologies and Digital Humanities in Medieval and Early Modern Studies* (forthcoming 2023, Routledge). Originally from the UK (and China), my time living in the U.S. (2016-2021) was unfortunately bookended by the arrival and departure of a president who shall not be named.

But those turbulent years were also incredibly sweet because I had the most wonderful cohort by my side and a beyond-supportive dissertation committee who walked me through every doubt, answered my many (many) questions, and listened to all my half-baked ideas with incredible patience, generosity, and grace. This year, I was lucky enough to be appointed an Associate Teaching Fellow in the English and Comparative Literatures Department at the University of Warwick where I am currently teaching a range of courses—from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* to Melville's "Benito Cereno"—and getting reacquainted with the quirks of the British higher education system.

**Dan Gleason** (PhD 2007)



I earned my degree back in 2007, using cognitive approaches to analyze visual imagery in Imagist poetry. Since 2019, I've served as Head of the Upper School at Kingswood Oxford School, an independent 6-12 school in West Hartford, CT. In this role, I've worked to advance the school's vision of innovative place-based and interdisciplinary learning. Before moving to Connecticut, I worked in public education in the Midwest. After Northwestern, I started my career as an English teacher at Illinois Math and Science Academy, a public residential magnet school in Aurora, for students gifted in STEM. I became English Department Chair and, later, Director of Academic Programs, leading curriculum development and promoting faculty scholarship. After IMSA, I moved to a traditional public school, leading the English Department at Maine East High School in Park Ridge, IL before finally moving on to Connecticut. When leading change in all of these different school contexts, I've relied on research, experimental thinking, and the value of multiple perspectives—approaches I learned to value during my time at Northwestern.



## ALUMNI NEWS

**Katie Blankenau** (PhD 2021) published two articles over the past year, “From Plays Within to Players Without: Theatrical hospitality in *Hamlet* and *Sir Thomas More*” in *ELR* and “‘As well by the English as by the strangers’: Performing a multicultural London in *The Magnificent Entertainment*” in *The London Journal*. Katie’s position at Mount Marty University, previously a visiting assistant professorship, was converted in 2022 to a tenure-track appointment.

**Katy Chiles** (PhD 2008) published “The Competing Demands of Early African American Literature” in *African American Literature in Transition, Volume 1, 1750-1800* (Cambridge UP, 2022) and with “Synchronic and Diachronic: Race in Early American Literature” in *Race in American Literature and Culture* (Cambridge UP, 2022). Katy also won the University of Tennessee College of Arts and Sciences’ Faculty Academic Outreach Teaching Award.

**Vanessa I. Corredera** (PhD 2012) published “When the Master’s Tools Fail: Racial Euphemism in Shakespeare Appropriation, or, the Activist Value of Premodern Critical Race Studies” in *Literature Compass*, as well as a state-of-the-field review, edited by fellow NU alum Carissa Harris, in *Exemplaria*. Most notably, in November, she published her first monograph, *Reanimating Shakespeare’s Othello in Post-Racial America*, with Edinburgh University Press.

In fall 2022, **Maria Dikcis** (PhD 2021) joined the Department of English at Harvard University as a College Fellow in Media. During the summer, Maria was part of the first cohort of the *Born-Digital Scholarly Publishing: Resources and Roadmaps* institute, hosted by Brown University Library. This NEH-supported three-week summer program was designed to equip humanities scholars from all career levels with in-depth knowledge of the digital publishing process, familiarity with open-source tools and platforms, individualized plans for project advancement, and top-level publishing industry contacts.

This year, **Aaron Greenberg** (PhD 2017) is teaching seminars at both the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (“Lost Arts, Rediscovered” and “Art in the Age of Crypto”) and the Newberry Library (“Stories of Our Genes and Ancestry” and “Life’s Short, Art’s Long: Life Writing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”). His article, “‘Escape to Impersonality’: Personas in H.G. Wells’ Experiment in Autobiography” is forthcoming in the journal *Persona Studies*, and his company, Biograph, has launched their audio storytelling app in beta.

**Carissa Harris** (PhD 2012) published a co-edited volume, with Sarah Baechle and Elizaveta Strakhov, titled *Rape Culture and Female Resistance in Late Medieval Literature* (Penn State, 2022), which includes teaching editions of sixteen English and Scottish *pastourelles* and rape songs that she transcribed from manuscripts in the UK.

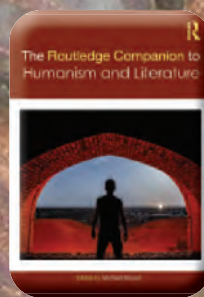
In 2022, **Katie Hartsock** (PhD, CLS 2015) was promoted to the rank of associate professor of English at Oakland University, where she teaches creative writing and literature courses, as well as classical mythology in translation. Her poems have recently appeared in publications such as *Kenyon Review*, *Ecotone*, *The Threepenny Review*, *Poetry*, *32 Poems*, *The New Criterion*, *THRUSH*, *Nimrod*, and *Beloit Poetry Journal*, and her second poetry collection, *Wolf Trees*, will be published in early 2023 by Able Muse Press. She lives in Ann Arbor, MI, with her husband, the novelist Jonathan Geltner, and their two young sons. In winter 2023 she will teach a graduate workshop as a visiting writer in the Zell Writers Program at the University of Michigan.

Earlier in 2022, **Kara Johnson** (PhD 2017) was promoted to Director of Teacher Programs at the Newberry Library, where she implements professional development programs and classroom workshops on humanities subjects for K-12 teachers and their students. Recently, her department received a large multi-year grant to create free Professional Development programs for

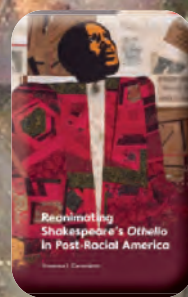
## ALUMNI PUBLICATIONS



**Toby Altman** (PhD 2017)  
*Discipline Park*  
Wendy’s Subway (2022)



**Michael Bryson** (PhD 2001), ed.  
*The Routledge Companion to Humanism and Literature*  
New York: Routledge (2022)



**Vanessa Corredera** (PhD 2012)  
*Reanimating Shakespeare’s Othello in Post-Racial America*  
Edinburgh UP (2022)



Chicago Public Schools teachers. Behind the scenes, Kara has worked closely with her colleagues to develop and promote inclusive instruction strategies centering the library's collection of primary sources.

**Gregory Laski** (PhD 2012) is co-editor of *Democracies in America: Keywords for the Nineteenth Century and Today* (Oxford University Press, 2023). Written by a diverse group of intellectuals, the twenty-five essays that make up the book each tackle a key term relevant to democracy. Together, the book provides a language to deliberate about the possibilities and problems of democracy, past, present, and future.

**Celia Marshik** (PhD 1999) has been appointed Interim Dean of the Graduate School and Vice Provost for Graduate Education at Stonybrook University

**John Edward Martin** (PhD 2006) was recently promoted to Director of Scholarly Communication at the University of North Texas Libraries. He has a forthcoming book chapter, “‘And she grew strangely’: Poe, Women, and Comics” in *Poe and Women: Recognition and Revision*, eds. Amy Armiento and Travis Montgomery, Lehigh UP 2023. He also continues his work as Book Review Editor for *The Edgar Allan Poe Review* and recently attended the International Edgar Allan Poe Festival in Baltimore as a judge for the Saturday Visiter Awards competition. He has applied for a faculty development leave in spring 2024 to work on a book-length digital open monograph on Poe and comics, and next summer, he will be co-hosting the annual Comics Studies Society conference here in Denton, TX (John: “Hope some of you will attend!”). Having reached the half-century mark this year, John celebrated by getting his first-ever tattoo, buying a new hybrid vehicle, and applying for student loan forgiveness (because he deserves forgiveness for *something*).

**Sara Mason’s** (PhD 2021) article, “A Pause to the Roar: Silence in Dickens’s *Little Dorrit*,” will appear this fall in a special issue of *Victorian Studies*.

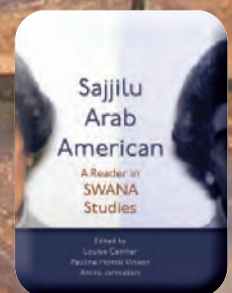
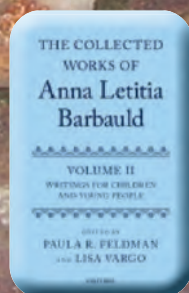
At the beginning of the 2022-23 academic year, **Susanna Sacks** (PhD 2019) started a new position as an Assistant Professor of English & Comparative Literature at Howard University. Her first book, *Networked Poetics: African Poetry’s Digital Turn*, has also been accepted for publication with the University of Massachusetts Press, to be released in winter 2024.

**Carl Smeller** (PhD 1997) was appointed chair of the English department at Texas Wesleyan University, where he is an Associate Professor and has taught since 1999.

**Josh Smith** (PhD 2011) is now the vice president of the Celtic Studies Association of North America.

**Abram Van Engen** (PhD 2010) received the 2021 Gomes Prize for *City on a Hill: A History of American Exceptionalism*. The Peter J. Gomes Memorial Book Prize is an annual award that honors the best book representing the history of Massachusetts published in the preceding year.

After two years of Covid-imposed work from home, **Pauline Vinson** (PhD 1995) has now resumed the meandering and world-traveling post-PhD path she has embraced and taken a temporary position as Visiting Assistant Professor and Interim Director of the Center for Arab American Studies at the University of Michigan, Dearborn. Her book *Sajjilu Arab American: A Reader in SWANA Studies*, co-edited with Louise Cainkar and Amira Jarmaki, was recently published by Syracuse University Press.



**Paula Feldman** (PhD 1974), ed. *The Collected Works of Anna Letitia Barbauld, volume 2* “Works for Children and Young People” Oxford UP forthcoming (February, 2023)

**Carissa Harris** (PhD 2012), ed. *Rape Culture and Female Resistance in Late Medieval Literature* co-edited with Sarah Baechle and Elizaveta Strakhov Penn State UP (2022)

**Greg Laski** (PhD 2012) *Democracies in America: Keywords for the Nineteenth Century and Today* co-edited with D. Berton Emerson Oxford UP forthcoming (February 2023)

**Pauline Vinson** (PhD 1995), ed. *Sajjilu Arab American: A Reader in SWANA Studies* co-edited with Louise Cainkar and Amira Jarmaki Syracuse UP (2022)



## DEGREES COMPLETED

**Matthew Beeber** (PhD)

Dissertation: *Coalitional Aesthetics: Institutions of 1930s US Literature*

**Nina Li Coomes** (MFA+MA - Creative Nonfiction)

MA Thesis: *Watching for Whales: Charisma as Current Between the U.S. and Japan*

MFA Thesis: *A Story To Say I Love You/愛しきモノ語*

**Brad Dubos** (PhD)

Dissertation: *American Sanctuaries: Poetry and Placemaking in an Age of Revival*

**Menglu Gao** (PhD, CLS)

Dissertation: *The Lacquered Chinese Box: Opium, Addiction, and the Fantasy of Empire in Nineteenth-Century British Literature*

**Ilana Larkin** (PhD)

Dissertation: *Hostile Love: Rage, Race, and Gender in American Children's Literature, 1850-1900*

**Michelle Lee** (MFA+MA - Fiction)

MA Thesis: *Thesis of a Thesis:*

*Subtitle: An Exploration into the Validity of Anchoring Pseudo-Academic Texts into Personal Experiences*

*Sub-subtitle: Finding Something to do with Your Terribly Written Thesis*

*Sub-sub-subtitle: How You Were Once 26; A Review Four Years Later*

*Sub-sub-sub-subtitle: How Loneliness Never Leaves You*

MFA Thesis: untitled

**Nina Moon** (PhD)

Dissertation: *Mobile Women: Domesticity, Race, and Empire in the Eighteenth-Century Transatlantic, 1666-1831*

**Brittany Neil** (MA)

Thesis: *On the Way to Somewhere: Loneliness and Community in Contemporary Young Adult Literature*

**Matthew Richardson** (MFA+MA - Fiction)

MA Thesis: *Plot, Sexuality, and Style in Jane Austen's Comedy*

MFA Thesis: *Stories and Aye*

**Harrington Weihl** (PhD)

Dissertation: *Modernism at Play: Games and Sport in Twentieth-Century Literatures of Anglophone Empire, 1913-1971*

## JOB PLACEMENT

**Sara Černe** (PhD 2021) began work this past summer as the Research Grants Manager at the University of California Humanities Research Institute at Irvine.

**Jayne Collins** (PhD 2022) has taken up a position as an Environmental Postdoctoral Fellow at Princeton University's High Meadows Environmental Institute.

**Maria Dikcis** (PhD 2021) has joined the Department of English at Harvard University as a College Fellow in Media.

**Menglu Gao** (PhD 2022, CLS) is an Assistant Professor at the University of Denver's Department of English and Literary Arts..



# GRADUATE PAPERS & CONFERENCES

## NOVEMBER 2021

### [Midwest Modern Language Association](#)

Milwaukee, WI

**Johana Godfrey** (PhD candidate)

“Henry Mayhew’s Collected Collectivities”

## 2022

### MARCH

### [Association of Writers & Writing Programs Conference](#)

Philadelphia, PA

**George Abraham** (2<sup>nd</sup> year MFA+MA)

“Experimental Southwest Asian and North African Writing”

co-leader of the Arab American Caucus (the largest national annual gathering of Arab writers in America)

### [Interdisciplinary Nineteenth-Century Studies Association](#)

Salt Lake City, UT

**Johana Godfrey**

“Henry Mayhew’s Collected Collectivities”

### [American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Conference](#)

Baltimore, MD

**Allie Gibeily** (3<sup>rd</sup> year PhD)

“Hermeneutics of Faith and Mistranslation in Joseph Pitts’s  
*A Faithful Account of the Religion and Manners of the Mahometans*”

### [C19: Society of Nineteenth Century Americanists](#)

Coral Gables, FL

**Brad Dubos** (PhD 2022)

“Mapping the Shoreline: Indigenous-Centered Water Pedagogy in the Great Lakes”

co-organizer of a panel titled: “The Place of Pedagogy in a Post-Pandemic World”

**Philip Ellefson** (PhD candidate)

“Housing American Realism: The French Flat in the Strike Novel”

### APRIL

### [University of Virginia 2022 GradCon](#)

Charlottesville, VA

**Michaela Corning-Myers** (3<sup>rd</sup> year PhD)

“Black American Abolitionism in the Nineteenth-Century: Activism, Transcendentalism, and Interpersonal Connection”

### [Association for Asian American Studies Conference](#)

Denver, CO

**Irene Kim** (PhD candidate)

“Holds, Holdings: Technologies of Containment in Myung Mi Kim’s *Commons*”

**Yasmin Yoon** (2<sup>nd</sup> year PhD)

“Towards Inhuman Futures”

### [University of Massachusetts at Amherst English Graduate Conference](#)

**Michaela Corning-Myers**

“Is this what motherhood is? The Brutality of Motherhood in *Salvage the Bones*”

### MAY

### [English Graduate Student Organization Spring Colloquium](#)

Northwestern University

**Brittany Neil** (MA, 2022)

“On the Way to Somewhere: Loneliness and Community in Contemporary Young Adult Fiction”

**Philip Ellefson**

“Bronzeville kitchenettes and the remodeling of the novel in Gwendolyn Brooks’s *Maud Martha*”

**Kira Tucker** (3<sup>rd</sup> year MFA+MA)

selected poems

**Tyler Talbott** (PhD candidate)

“Transmission of an Improved Heritage’: Orientalism, Comparative Philology, and Forgetful Ethno-nationality in *Felix Holt*”

### JUNE

### [Marxist Literary Group Institute for Culture and Society](#)

Philadelphia, PA

**Anna Zalokostas** (PhD candidate)

panel titled “The Long Downturn Reconsidered”

### [Futures of American Studies Institute](#)

Dartmouth College, NH

**Michaela Corning-Myers**

“Illness and Female Bodies at the Turn of the Century: Safe and Moulin Rouge”



## GRADUATE PAPERS & CONFERENCES (continued)

### JULY

[Thomas Hardy Society 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference and Festival](#)  
Dorchester, UK

**Samantha English** (3<sup>rd</sup> year PhD)  
“Ruined Maids: Figuring Hardy’s Women in a Post-Darwinian Landscape”

[22<sup>nd</sup> Biennial New Chaucer Society Congress](#)  
Durham, UK

**Nancy Haijing Jiang** (PhD candidate)  
“For Her Interest: Margery Kempe’s Penitential Credit Market”

[International Medieval Congress](#)  
Leeds, UK

**Nancy Haijing Jiang**  
“‘Yeve credens’ to her’: Credit and Credibility in *The Book of Margery Kempe*”

[The Dickens Universe](#)  
UC Santa Cruz

**Olivia Xu** (PhD candidate)  
“The ‘Linked-Bone Style’ Dickens: A Critical History of the Novel Form in Translation”

### AUGUST

Joint conference of the [North American Society for the Study of Romanticism](#) and the [British Association for Romantic Studies](#)  
Liverpool, UK

**Jennifer Comerford** (PhD candidate)  
“A Matter of Race: Haptic Contact and Material Transformations in *The Woman of Colour*”

### SEPTEMBER

[Duke-Stanford Graduate Conference on Philosophy, Arts, and Literature](#)  
Duke University

**Ryan Nhu** (2<sup>nd</sup> year PhD):  
“‘Leave them to their Event Proper’: Anecdote, Contingency, and Maggie Nelson’s *The Argonauts*”

### OCTOBER

[North American Victorian Studies Association](#)  
Lehigh University

**Tyler Talbott**  
“Eliot, Renan, and Willed Ethnonationalism”

**Johana Godfrey**  
“Untimely Women: Transgressive Histories in the Victorian Ghost Story”

**Olivia Xu**  
“The ‘Linked-Bone Style’ Dickens: A Critical History of the Novel Form in Translation”

[International Conference on Romanticism](#)  
UC Santa Barbara

**S Yarberry** (PhD 3<sup>rd</sup> year)  
“Enough! Or Too Much: The Political Sermons of Ottobah Cugoana & William Blake”

### DECEMBER

[Middle East Studies Association](#)  
Denver, CO

**George Abraham**  
“Permission to Speculate: Death Worlds and Palestinian Literary Imaginations”



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