

UC DAVIS DEPARTMENT OF

ENGLISH

NEWSLETTER

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Letter from the Chair



Elizabeth Miller

Dear Friends, Colleagues, and Students:

Three is a magic number. Three wishes. Three wise men. Three points to make a plane. Three-year terms for department chairs in the Humanities, Arts, and Cultural Studies division at UC Davis.

This is my third “Letter from the Chair,” marking the end of the last year of my three-year term. I am happy to announce that I will soon be passing the baton to Professor John Marx, who will begin his own magical journey on July

1. John and I worked closely together during my first year as chair, when he was serving as the department’s Graduate Advisor, and I can attest to his excellent administrative skills as well as his wit and good humor. I am grateful to be leaving the department in such good hands!

As Chair, I have been fortunate to work with a wonderful staff, and I would especially like to thank Lynda Jones, Darla Tafoya, and Mary White, with whom I’ve collaborated on a daily basis these past three years. I’ve had countless occasions to admire Lynda’s tireless dedication to our undergraduate students, Darla’s ingenious capacity for solving problems, and Mary’s warmth and kindness to all creatures who pass through the halls or courtyard of Voorhies, be they human, feline, or otherwise.

I have also had the pleasure of working with Professors Mark Jerng (Graduate Advisor), Lucy Corin (Director of Creative Writing), and Matthew Stratton (Director of Undergraduate Studies). While Mark and Lucy have agreed to stay on in their respective posts for next year, Matthew has decided to step down after three successful years as Director of Undergraduate Studies. Professor Kathleen Frederickson will be taking his place at the end of the summer, and we look forward to her energy and vision as our undergraduate major continues to flourish despite the challenging times for humanities departments.

More changes are in store for next year. Professor Richard Levin is retiring after 42 years on the English faculty! In an interview on page 7, he reflects on his time in the department and the changes he has seen. We are grateful to Richard for his many years of dedicated service to UC Davis students.

Hiring new faculty is perhaps what I have enjoyed most about being chair, and I’m delighted to report that we have successfully recruited a new faculty member in fiction: Professor Jacinda Townsend, a novelist, will join us this fall. Her first novel, *Saint Monkey*, was published by W. W. Norton in 2014 and was awarded the Janet Heidinger Kafka Prize as well as the James Fenimore Cooper Prize. We are thrilled to welcome this wonderful writer-teacher to our department community.

As Chair, I have relished the opportunity to publicly acknowledge and congratulate my faculty colleagues when they receive special recognition for scholarship or teaching. This year, I am proud to say, Professor David Simpson was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, one of the highest honors of our profession. In the long history of our department, he is only the fourth faculty member to achieve this designation (*continued on page 2...*)

FACULTY NEWS

(...continued from page 1)

(previous inductees have included Professor Margaret Ferguson and Professors Emeriti Sandra Gilbert and Gary Snyder). I am thrilled to report, too, that in 2016 Professor Fran Dolan became the first faculty member from English to receive the UC Davis Prize for Undergraduate Teaching and Scholarly Achievement. The prize, which honors faculty members whose careers demonstrate how working with undergraduates enriches scholarly inquiry and vice versa, is the biggest faculty award at UC Davis and carries an endowed prize of \$45,000. In another teaching award coup, Professor Alessa Johns received two teaching awards this year: the UC Davis Distinguished Teaching Award for Undergraduate Teaching and the Phi Beta Kappa Northern California Association Teaching Award. On the creative writing front, Professor Katie Peterson received an Arts and Letters Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and Professor Lucy Corin was granted a Creative Writing Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. Two of our recently tenured faculty members also received recognition for their first scholarly monographs: Kathleen Frederickson's book *The Ploy of Instinct: Victorian Sciences of*

Nature and Sexuality in Liberal Governance (2014) received Honorable Mention for this year's Sonya Rudikoff award for the best first book in Victorian Studies, and Tobias Menely's *The Animal Claim: Sensibility and the Creaturely Voice* (2015) was shortlisted for the Kenshur Prize for best book in eighteenth-century studies (with the winner to be determined later this year).

Our students also received many awards and prizes this year. I am especially proud to congratulate graduate students Daniel Grace and Chris Wallis, who received Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Awards, and undergraduate major Austin Lim, who received the English Department's Lois Ann Lattin Rosenberg Outstanding Graduating Senior Award.

Let me close by offering my thanks to our graduate student newsletter editor, Angela Hume Lewandowski, for her hard work on this 2016 edition. I hope you enjoy reading it!

Sincerely,
Liz Miller

Alessa Johns Receives Two Awards for Teaching Excellence



Alessa Johns

Alessa Johns received two teaching awards this past year: the UCD Academic Senate Distinguished Teaching Award for Undergraduate Teaching and the Phi Beta Kappa (PBK) Northern California Association Teaching Award for 2016.

The UCD Academic Senate Distinguished Teaching Award honors professors for their innovative pedagogy, their ability to stimulate thought and involvement among students in the educational process and to teach students how to develop an independent program of sustained learning, and their responsiveness and

concern for the education and welfare of students, among other strengths.

The PBK Northern California Association makes annual Teaching Excellence Awards to outstanding teachers who are faculty members at one of the eight Northern California universities and colleges that have PBK chapters.

These awards are conferred to honor those who have been outstanding teachers and mentors in the opinion of members of PBK. They have taught an especially memorable course, or have had a special impact on the lives of students, or have been identified as inspiring or admirable by a PBK member.

A PBK member and former student of Alessa's wrote, "Whenever I offer an opinion in class, I find [Professor Johns] challenging my ideas and asking for another example or a broader significance. This direct intercourse of ideas and thoughts is unique to Professor John's teaching style and promotes deeper, critical thinking in her students."

FACULTY NEWS

David Simpson Elected to American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Professor David Simpson has been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He is among 213 new inductees, many of whom are among the world's most accomplished scholars, scientists, writers, artists, as well as civic, business, and philanthropic leaders.

The American Academy of Arts and Sciences is one of the country's oldest learned societies and independent policy research centers. Founded in 1780, the academy convenes leaders from the academic, business, and government sectors to respond to challenges and opportunities facing the nation and the world today. Members contribute to Academy publications and studies of science, engineering, and technology policy; global security and international affairs; the humanities, arts, and education; and American institutions and the public good.

In the following Q&A, David Simpson discusses the relationship between literature studies and social issues, literature and teaching, and current research and writing.

Congratulations on being elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, David.

How do you think literary scholars and literature teachers have the power to respond to the "challenges facing the nation and the world"? How do you conceive of your own research and teaching as relevant to the greater social world?

David Simpson: As scholars and critics we tend to see the world in ethical terms, asking not just does it work but is it right? After all, we began as a discipline as secular moralists (in the Matthew Arnold manner). But, just as important, we have a kind of "technology" to contribute: close attention to language in all its slippery forms. No one else does that as a matter of course. So philology, in its updated social-historical incarnations, is critical to my teaching and writing, as is attention to syntax and grammar—what we call "close reading"—as the bearer of meanings and implications that are not evident to those who read only in a hurry and for what they call "content."

How does your scholarly research inform your classroom pedagogy, and/or vice versa?

DS: Teaching and research always go together—each throws up things important for the other. I don't teach my own research directly, but much of what I read for teaching, and discuss with students, feeds back into my thinking and writing.

What do you think undergraduate humanities education needs today?



David Simpson

DS: Without theory, it is hard for anyone to break out of either formalism for its own sake, or simple referentiality (x "means" y). This is what I think undergraduate teaching needs today, more than ever in a culture dominated by outcomes, cashable qualifications, and neoliberal pressures to succeed in ideologically acceptable ways.

What are you working on now?

DS: Right now I am in the middle of a long critique of terror—its history, its place in an affective lexicon, its politicization from 1794 onwards (well, actually from well before that, e.g., in the King James Bible). My approach here is doggedly scholarly and historical, but the address to our contemporary situation is evident enough. That is what I think I can best contribute to our current self-understanding. That of course calls for an address to our own nation-state as the major worldwide deployer of the power of terror: quite the opposite of what most of the political and media class are telling us.

FACULTY NEWS

Frances Dolan Wins Prestigious UC Davis Prize



Frances Dolan is honored with UC Davis Prize and a celebratory cake resembling the books on her syllabus.

During her “Law and Literature” class on March 1, Professor Frances Dolan was presented with the prestigious UC Davis Prize for Undergraduate Teaching and Scholarly Achievement. Students, colleagues, and administrators honored Fran with speeches and a special cake that resembled a stack of books.

Established in 1986, the UC Davis Prize honors faculty who are both exceptional teachers and scholars. It is the first time the prize, which comes with a \$45,000 monetary award, was given to an English professor. The prize is funded by philanthropic support from the UC Davis Foundation.

Fran’s students say she is the kind of professor you dream of having. Her interest in how literature and literary methods contribute to knowledge informs both her teaching and research. Fran’s most recent scholarly book, *True Relations: Reading, Literature and Evidence in Seventeenth-Century England* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), won the North American Conference on British Studies 2014 John Ben Snow Prize for the best book by a North American scholar in any field of British Studies dealing with the period from the Middle Ages through the 18th century.

Fran joined the UC Davis faculty as professor of English in 2003. She has taught courses on Shakespeare, British drama, and children’s literature, among many other topics. In 2004-05, Fran served as the president of the Shakespeare Association of America. She has received fellowships from the Guggenheim and the Huntington Library.

In the following Q&A, Fran discusses her pedagogy, her “lifelong reader” philosophy, and her current research and teaching projects.

Congratulations on this incredible honor, Fran. How does your scholarly research inform your classroom pedagogy, and/or vice versa?

Fran Dolan: They inform each other at every turn. I bring the fruits of research into every lecture and discussion. I think students sometimes underestimate what goes into constructing a good class: the thinking, planning, reading. My active engagement in research also enables me to enter the classroom as a fellow learner. For example, I might say, “I used to say this about unmarried women in Shakespeare’s England, but new research suggests that . . .” At the same time, what happens in the classroom animates my research—suggesting new questions, gaps in my knowledge, assumptions I should rethink, new approaches.

What have you learned over the years as a teacher? How has your teaching philosophy changed or come to fruition?

FD: I started out teaching classes of 25 in the humanities sequence at the University of Chicago. I really got to know my students over three quarters and I learned how to lead discussion and work intensively with students on their writing. Then, at Miami University, I taught composition every year and I never taught a class larger than 50. So I continued to develop as a teacher of writing—and as a writer—and continued to think about teaching as interactive. At Columbia, I taught my first lecture class. When I arrived at Davis, I started teaching more lecture classes—topping out in a children’s literature class that enrolled 225 students. Now, I am trying to integrate discussion and lecture. I love lecturing because it requires the same prep and skills writing an essay or book does. It also feeds directly into publication. My lectures on Frances Hodgson Burnett’s *Secret Garden* became my essay on that novel, for example.

I really want to hear from students and I want to be open to being derailed by them. I always have a carefully worked out plan for each class, but I usually reroute once we are underway. For me, the best classes are those in which at least one student throws me off my charted course or questions a basic assumption—or in which I throw out a question or idea that catches an attentive participant by surprise.

In almost thirty years of teaching, I have seen dramatic changes in the technologies available to us as teachers (and that students bring with them into the classroom). I welcome and rely on those technologies. *(continued on page 5...)*

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(...continued from page 4)

I also rely on my colleagues for little pushes to expand my comfort zone and try new things. But I also think that it is more important than ever to help students focus and discover the rewards of concentration and uni-tasking. I'm constantly thinking about ways to make that happen in class and outside of it.

How do you teach university-level students to read Shakespeare and other challenging texts?

FD: At one level, Shakespeare is easy because people have been convinced it's important, so that's why they sign up. Once students are in the classroom, Shakespeare becomes an occasion to talk about all kinds of things we care about: from the power of language and storytelling to relationships, identity, politics, ethics, death. Shakespeare brings the winning combination of historical alienation, unexpected recognition, and cultural cache to any issue.

But the language is undeniably challenging. So, like my colleagues, I slow down. We read five to six plays in a Shakespeare class, which means we re-read. We all look at the same scene, or line, or speech together. Literally being on the same page draws the community together to figure out what we can find there. We talk about the reading process. We showcase the questions and terms that serve as tools for excavating meaning out of texts.

What do you think humanities education needs today?

FD: Better advocates! We need to think together constantly about how to articulate the value of what we do. We deliver portable skills that help our students in many parts of their lives across the years. But it's important not to reduce the value of our teaching to the instrumental, the useful, the vocational. There is also enormous value in the unsettling, unnecessary, ornamental, fascinating, and wonderful. Love and delight are at the center of our enterprise and there isn't really an outcome assessment for that. Our students' passion for their studies and their favorite works of literature inspire me. So does their openness to becoming more critical of their

world (which deserves and requires it). As a character in Shaw's *Major Barbara* puts it: "You have learnt something. That always feels at first as if you have lost something." In the classroom, what we take away or tarnish is as important as what we give or burnish.

Can you say more about what you've elsewhere described as your "lifelong reader" philosophy? What role might reading play in social life and the social world today?

FD: I could not manage myself or my life without books. Losing myself in a book is fundamental to my pleasure, relaxation, trauma management, citizenship, and learning. I want students to have that resource, whatever they end up doing for a living.

What are you working on now in terms of research and also teaching/course development?

FD: I don't want to lose touch with my affection for Renaissance literature, especially the drama, which is where I started. So I am eager to be teaching Shakespeare at the undergrad and grad levels next year. I'd love to teach courses on early modern figures in popular circulation—that is, figures from sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature (including the pirate, the hood, the traitor) that keep turning up in contemporary culture. Since I'm working on 17th-century agriculture, I'd also love to do a course on "aggie lit," from Virgil's *Georgics* to back-to-the-land memoirs such as Barbara Kingsolver's *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*. How does farming generate literature? What does literature teach us about farming?

This summer, I'll be continuing my research on winemaking, composting, and local food and developing a new piece of that project on hedgerows—both as they are described in the 17th century and as they are being advocated and established on our landscape now. My current project involves an indoor-outdoor research process, reading old books and doing field trips!

Lucy Corin receives NEA Fellowship

Professor Lucy Corin has been awarded a National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) 2016 Creative Writing Fellowships in prose. She receives \$25,000 for writing, research, travel, and general career advancement. The annual grants are given to emerging and established writers and alternate between poetry and prose. Lucy is among 37 fellows for 2016. A group of twenty-three readers and panelists chose the recipients from 1,763 applications.



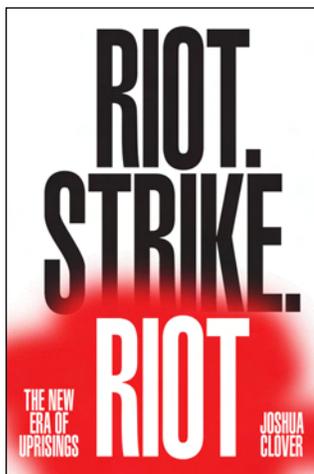
Lucy Corin

FACULTY NEWS

Faculty Book Publications

Rio. Strike. Riot: The New Era of Uprisings

By Joshua Clover
Verso, 2016

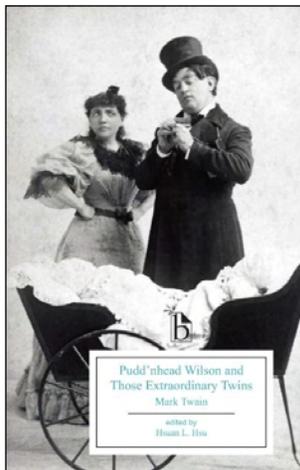


Fred Moten writes, “Riot, in this absolutely necessary book, is considered as differential procedure and rigorous improvisational method, as essential repertoire on the way from general malaise to general strike. But then this conception folds tightly yet disorderly into a new and open set of questions. It’s not that the raging, ragged entrance to the new golden age is the new golden age.

It’s not that theory can’t bear a riot. It’s just that riot makes new ways of seeing what theory can and can’t do and imposes upon us a kind of knowledge of our own embarrassing and already given resources of enjoyment. Joshua Clover says riot deserves a proper theory but here—sly, stone cold—he gives us more than that. Now we have some guidelines for the new and ongoing impropriety that fleshes forth and fleshes out our optimal condition.”

Pudd’nhead Wilson and Those Extraordinary Twins

By Mark Twain, edited by Hsuan Hsu
Broadview Press, 2016



“Hsuan L. Hsu’s fine edition of *Pudd’nhead Wilson and Those Extraordinary Twins* charts the complex interplay between formal innovation and historical analysis central to understanding Mark Twain’s purposively flawed tale. Hsu offers a comprehensive introduction and situates the novel within Twain’s career and the broader concerns of racial segregation and

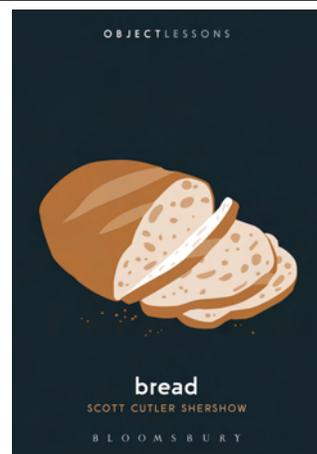
violence, citizenship, and embodiment facing the U.S. in the final decade of the nineteenth century. Equally useful are the appendices, which provide background information on the narrative’s legal and historical contexts. They situate Twain as both a vantage onto the most pressing social issues of the 1890s and a writer experimenting with the novel form at the height of his craft. This edition establishes *Pudd’nhead Wilson and Those Extraordinary Twins* as one of Twain’s great works of social commentary and aesthetic innovation.”

—Edlie L. Wong

Bread

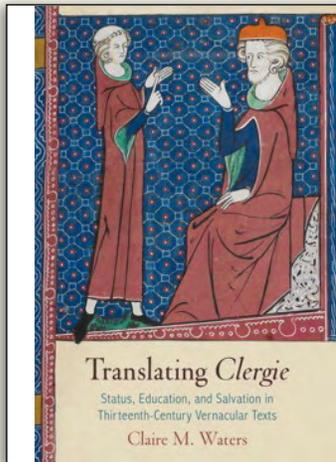
By Scott Cutler Shershow
Bloomsbury, 2016

Bread is an object constantly in the process of becoming something else—grain to flour, flour to dough, dough to loaf, loaf to crumb. This holds true even for bread’s symbolic existence: while people have historically gathered to “break bread together,” bread has also driven social conflicts, from “bread riots” to its divisive role as an ethnic, religious, and class signifier. Considering sources ranging from the holy scriptures to modern pop culture, Scott Cutler Shershow’s *Bread* traces the shifting meanings of this ancient and everyday object—from “staff of life” to dietary phobia, from miracle to mistake, from communion to exclusion.



FACULTY NEWS

Faculty Book Publications



Translating "Clergie": Status, Education, and Salvation in Thirteenth-Century Vernacular Texts

By Claire M. Waters

University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015

"This is an enterprising, deftly argued, and much-needed book. Waters identifies an under-researched and significant corpus of materials and uses it in an innovative account of medieval teaching in the vernacular, demonstrating its long reach and cultural weight. Performing close readings of substantial works from England and relevant Continental texts in French and Latin, Waters offers a beautifully imaginative and stimulating account of the nature and goals of medieval doctrinal and theological teaching." —Jocelyn Wogan-Browne

Richard Levin to Retire after 42-year Career in English Department

Professor Richard Levin will retire from the English department after this spring quarter. Richard joined the English department as assistant professor in 1974. For more than 40 years, he has taught Renaissance literature and drama with a focus on Shakespeare. In the following Q&A, Richard reflects on teaching and Shakespeare studies while also looking ahead to what's next.

Thank you for your incredible 42-year career at UC Davis, Richard. What has been your favorite thing about teaching literature at UC Davis?

Richard Levin: For Davis students, the study of literature is no mere exercise and no mere step along a career path. They find in literature something that resonates within them and which they want to understand better. They have the capacity to surprise, both themselves and their teachers, with the seriousness of their effort. Davis students catch fire. Their progress is helped along by the courteous and supportive environment of the classroom.

What do you love about teaching Shakespeare?

RL: Shakespeare is, at heart, not an academic subject. Shakespeare belongs to the people of the world. The proverbial man, or woman, on the street, is ready to discuss the fine points of interpretation. The study of Shakespeare is slightly more formalized inside the classroom than outside but in both settings we enrich our understanding of Shakespeare as long as we realize his "meaning" will always elude us. In every class session I have taught, I have learned about

Shakespeare; every student paper has taught me about Shakespeare and very likely taught the student who wrote it as well.

What excites you about where Shakespeare studies is going today?

RL: Available to a critic now is an eclectic mix of critical approaches. An important anchor is close and sensitive reading of the text. Such reading can do still more than it has done to explore Shakespeare's challenges to orthodox and conventional thinking. He subverts, or suggests the possibility of subverting, the structures on which his plays seem to depend.

What has been a personal career highlight for you?

RL: My career highlight was winning our campus's Distinguished Teaching Award. I took the award as validation of my belief that I brought all of myself into my role as teacher. And, because I bring all of my research into the teaching of Shakespeare, and because teaching Shakespeare opens up for me new issues that require research, Shakespeare teaching and Shakespeare scholarship are, for me, very close to being one and the same.

What are you working on now?

RL: I am working on "Shakespeare's Sonnets," a mystery volume. While individual sonnets or groups of sonnets have been discussed in illuminating fashion, the full collection of 154 sonnets has eluded interpretation.

FACULTY NEWS

Colin Milburn Awarded New Directions Fellowship

Colin Milburn, the Gary Snyder Chair in Science and the Humanities and professor of English, Science and Technology Studies, and Cinema and Digital Media, has been awarded a 2015 New Directions Fellowship from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to become a truly multidisciplinary digital humanist by learning how to code.

As the author of *Nanovision: Engineering the Future* (2008), *Mondo Nano: Fun and Games in the World of Digital Matter* (2015), and many articles on the relations of literature, science, and technology, Milburn is already an accomplished scholar of digital culture. However, Milburn discovered that his new research into the “politics of video games and the cultural dimensions of software” required additional training. This represents “a significant turn in my scholarship, which is also reflected in my efforts to build institutional capacities in the digital humanities at UC Davis. It has become evident to me that, to succeed in this new trajectory, I need to learn to code,” Milburn said.

The New Directions award of \$278,000 will allow Milburn to seek additional training in software development, programming, database architecture and computer science. Milburn is most looking forward to coordinating “more coherently and effectively” with his colleagues at the UC Davis ModLab, an experimental laboratory for media research and digital humanities that is developing new tools, methods, and models of interdisciplinary collaboration for scholars at the intersection of the humanities, sciences, social sciences and the arts.

The New Directions Fellowship will allow Milburn to take a two-pronged approach to digital humanities: “critical analysis combined with critical making.” Milburn explained, “Studying digital media and technoculture from the humanities perspective gets you to a certain point that is incredibly useful, but I’m finding that being able to approach these questions from the technical side – through software and media development, or ‘critical making’ – is just as important.”

In the collaborative work at ModLab, Milburn and his colleagues have found that learning to speak each other’s languages and develop compatible research questions and methods has advanced new research questions and opened new avenues of exploration.

Although Milburn does not necessarily see his new path as a model to emulate, he acknowledges that for scholars interested in the cultural impact of computing technologies, the more technological knowledge that can be brought to the research questions, the better. Moreover, the increasing ubiquity of computational methods and techniques presents



Colin Milburn will pursue training in software development, programming, database architecture and computer science.

new opportunities for training humanities and social science students to incorporate these tools.

Basic training in computer science, software development, or software carpentry/hacking can help humanities scholars to ask new research questions afforded by the computational methods of new media.

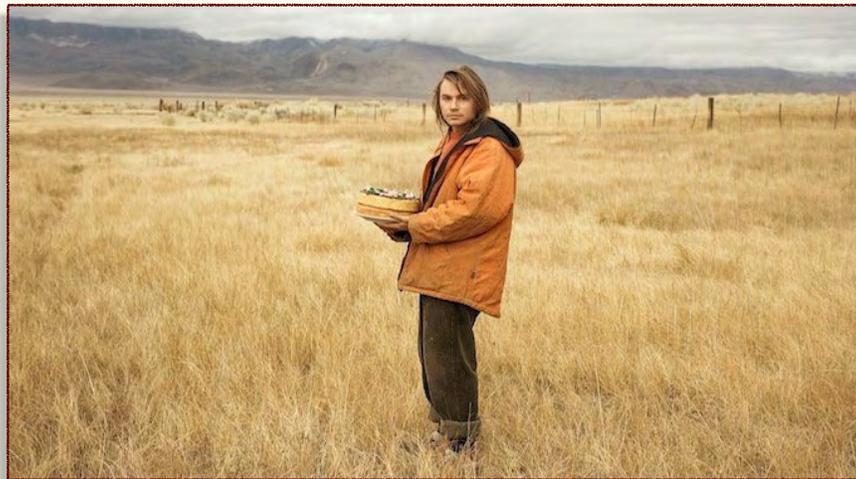
The computer science training to be provided through the Mellon New Directions grant allows Milburn to expand existing research interests and pursue entirely new ones. A recent research area and a strength of the ModLab is game culture and the impact of gaming technologies on a variety of social and cultural institutions.

A project Milburn wants to begin now explores how video game players become politicized around particular issues because of the games they play. “This project,” Milburn said, “will require a multimodal, transdisciplinary approach, involving methods such as ethnography, discourse analysis, historical research, and close attention to the media objects themselves, while also coming to grips with the ways that gamers often become attuned to the political dimensions of software and code as such.”

Emphasizing the collaborative nature of his work at the ModLab, Milburn said the first step is to sit down with his colleagues in computer science and map out the best course of study to help him achieve his educational goals – all the while with attention to the long view of how his training will further enrich the work at ModLab.

By Stephanie Maroney, DHI Graduate Student Researcher and doctoral candidate in Cultural Studies.

FACULTY NEWS

Katie Peterson exhibits multimedia project at Mills College

Young Suh, Birthday, 2014. Archival pigment print, 44 x 54 inches.

Assistant Professor Katie Peterson, in collaboration with Young Suh, Associate Professor of Art at UC Davis, exhibited their multimedia project *Can We Live Here? Stories from a Difficult World* from January through March of this year at Mills College Art Museum. Their project examines the struggle of humans to survive in a rapidly changing natural world and the shifting concepts of nature that govern it. Peterson and Suh's works upend the Romantic tradition of the sublime landscape and respond to the Romantic tradition of populist, narrative storytelling. These works bring into focus how daily life itself is charged with a sense of environmental disaster, and elevating the stakes of ordinary experience beyond the ordinary to the mythic.

Poetics Now colloquium explores contemporary poetry and politics

On April 22, the English Department hosted Evie Shockley (Rutgers) and Cathy Wagner (Miami University), along with our own Joshua Clover, for a colloquium on Poetics Now. This colloquium was sponsored by funds from a Hellman Fellowship received by faculty member Margaret Ronda. The colloquium, led by these three vital figures in contemporary American poetry, offered a generative and lively inquiry into the state of the field for a packed audience.

Each of these three scholars shared insights into the emergent dynamics and persistent issues shaping contemporary poetic production, focusing on themes of racial form, politically engaged poetics, and poetic experiment in the wake of avant-garde aesthetics. Clover's presentation focused on similarities and distinctions between debates surrounding the politics of poetic expression in the 1970s and those shaping the poetry community today, discussing figures such as Amiri Baraka and Claudia Rankine. Shockley's talk offered a sustained reading of one contemporary poet, Julie Patton, whose multimedia forms present a complex model for thinking through representations of race in contemporary poetry. Wagner framed her comments around a series of emergent forms in current American poetry, all of which respond in different ways to larger conversations around identity, community, and activism. These three presenters, poets as well as scholars, all concluded their presentations by reading some of their own creative work.



From left: Evie Shockley, Margaret Ronda, and Katie Peterson.

FACULTY NEWS

Gina Bloom was elected as a Trustee to the Shakespeare Association of America and published several essays this past year, including “Videogame Shakespeare: Enskilling Audiences Through Theater-Making Games” in the journal *Shakespeare Studies* and “The Historicist as Gamer,” which appeared in the volume *Shakespeare in Our Time*. She continues to work with faculty and students in the ModLab, where she directs *Play the Knave*, a 3D digital game involving Shakespeare performance. Bloom was invited to present research on the digital project at Northwestern University and the Huntington Library, and also offered keynote addresses at the Blackfriars Theater Conference and the “Shakespeare Plays when Shakespeare Works” education conference. In addition to including Professor Colin Milburn and PhD student Sawyer Kemp from the English department (both on the development team), the department project also involves 18 undergraduate students from across campus, 11 of whom are English majors. *Play the Knave* received coverage on BBC News and was featured as part of Chicago’s Shakespeare 400 festival.

Joshua Clover organized a conference at UC Irvine on May 6 through the UCHRI: Crisis of Values, featuring Robert Brenner, Juliana Spahr, Kim Stanley Robinson, and others.

Lucy Corin contributed to a feature titled “Magic and the Intellect: Four Writers Consider the Takes of Magic in Literature Today” in *The Writer’s Chronicle* 48.6 (summer 2016).

Fran Dolan received the UC Davis Prize. She has also enjoyed meeting with former and present graduate students at conferences: the Attending to Early Modern Women Conference in Milwaukee in June 2015—where she gave the plenary address, and where many present and former grad students were on the program; the Shakespeare Association of America Annual Meeting, where many former grad students gathered at the lunch; and the Pacific Coast Conference for British Studies, where she gave a plenary talk, and where four UC Davis grad students gave talks. Fran says, “It’s been a treat to see grad students present their work in progress and begin to establish their professional

identities and to see how those with PhDs from our program are now flourishing.”

Alessa Johns received two teaching awards this past year: the UCD Academic Senate’s Distinguished Teaching Award for Undergraduate Teaching and the Phi Beta Kappa Northern California Association Teaching Award for 2016.

Marit MacArthur, a departmental visiting scholar, published an article, “Monotony, the Churches of Poetry Reading, and Sound Studies,” in *PMLA* 131.1 (January 2016).

Elizabeth Miller has received a Visiting Fellowship from Clare Hall, Cambridge University, and is very excited to spend six months there with her family in 2017.

Katie Peterson is one of eight writers of “exceptional accomplishment in any genre” to receive an American Academy of Arts and Letters 2016



literature award. Author of three books of poetry, Katie is on a list that includes two MacArthur “genius grant” fellows and a Pulitzer Prize winner. Nominations for the awards are made by American Academy members, a 250-member group of architects, artists, composers, and writers. A committee consisting of John Guare, Sharon Olds, Anne Tyler, Rosanna Warren, and Joy Williams selected the literature winners this year. The award is for \$10,000.

PHD PROGRAM NEWS

Graduate Adviser's Column

Dear Friends, Colleagues,
and Students:

Many thanks are due for an amazing year in the English Department graduate program. I want to thank our program staff, Robin Alexander and Darolyn Striley for being so attentive to our students. Robin will be moving to a new position in the English Department as Undergraduate Adviser. I also want to thank outgoing Department Chair Elizabeth Miller, who has been a staunch supporter of the graduate program. I



Mark Jerng

continue to be grateful for the entire English department faculty for stepping up and offering generously of their time, whether it is their presence at departmental events such as visiting day or their service on departmental exams or doing teaching observations. And of course, for writing all those letters of recommendation!

Over the past couple years, our graduate program has operated alongside the shadow of the 2014 MLA Report on Doctoral Study in Modern Language and Literature, which largely charged PhD programs with the task of doing everything and doing it in a shorter time. It charged programs with doing a better job of training teachers and of affording more non-academic opportunities. Nationally, many of its diagnoses of the status of doctoral study remain true. Humanities research continues to be under- and devalued. The tenure-track job outlook is poor. But I remain optimistic. How can one not be optimistic when visitors from other universities, such as *American Literature* editor Priscilla Wald, continually laud our students. Or when you go to a talk on poetics and hear first-year students in the program asking amazing, challenging questions. Or when you go to an Environment & Societies Colloquium and hear one of our students delivering an incisive and insightful response paper. Voorhies Hall has been an active space for intellectual work and collaboration, and English graduate students have been at the center of it all.

Our graduate program tries to do it all and craft a balance between crucial teacher training/experience and research. Our students do incredible teaching. Two students, Daniel Grace and Chris Wallis, won outstanding teaching awards at

the university-wide level. Five students have been recognized with yearlong fellowships for their doctoral research: Simon Abramowitsch, Treena Baldis, Michael Martel, Meg Sparling, and Chris Wallis. Their projects range from writing a literary history of multi-ethnic publishing, to analyzing representations of race and labor, to an interdisciplinary project bringing modernist literature and math together. Innovative scholarship is being done on the practice of enclosures in early modern literature and local governmentality in Victorian literature. These projects give a good sample of the range and breadth of research being done in the English Department. In a competition across the humanities disciplines, the Davis Humanities Institute awarded summer fellowships to Samantha Snively, Annette Hulbert, Ashley Sarpong, and Jennifer Tinonga. Annette Hulbert won a UCLA Clark Library Residential Fellowship.

This competitiveness along both research and teaching shows in our job placement. Leilani Serafin, who is going on to work as a Production Editorial Associate for Annual Reviews, cited her teaching experience as a crucial thing that employers wanted to talk about. Jenae Cohn, who will start as Academic Technology Specialist for the Program in Writing and Rhetoric at Stanford University, cited the graduate student researcher work, her teaching, and her research work across writing and rhetoric as strong preparation for her position. Molly Ball and Josef Nguyen will each be taking Assistant Professor positions at Eureka College and University of Texas-Dallas, respectively. Ian Afflerbach will join Tobias Bates as a Marion L. Brittain Postdoctoral Fellow at the Georgia Institute of Technology.

At the departmental level, the year in the graduate program has been one of evaluation and implementation. The university conducted its program review, and I want to thank all the students and faculty for their participation. The department transitioned to a new five-page prospectus format. New initiatives such as the UC-HBCU Initiative are underfoot in order to create new collaborations between Davis and Hampton University. Thank you to all of the graduate students who participated in those meetings and for their interest in continuing to pursue questions of diversity and race in higher education. Continuing initiatives such as our Mainz Exchange program give our students opportunities that they otherwise might not have.

Finally, I want to thank the graduate committee, Margaret Ronda, Michael Ziser, Margaret Ferguson, Scott Simmon, and Claire Waters, for all their hard work. Among many other things, we navigated a very competitive PhD application process and now will welcome ten students for the incoming cohort of first-year PhD students.

Sincerely,
Mark Jerng

PHD PROGRAM NEWS

Placement News



Ian Afflerbach

Ian Afflerbach and **Tobias Wilson-Bates** both received a three-year Marion L. Brittain Postdoctoral Fellowships at the Georgia Institute of Technology in the Department of Literature, Media, and Communication. Brittain Fellows teach writing courses built around their own research. The program also trains fellows in digital pedagogy, helping us to develop multimodal approaches. Ian will begin his fellowship this fall.



Jenae Cohn

Jenae Cohn will start in the position of Academic Technology Specialist for the Program in Writing and Rhetoric at Stanford University. There she will consult with writing program lecturers on uses of technology in their classrooms, organize and lead workshops for instructors on digital learning, collaborate with leadership to make department-wide decisions about technology, and teach entry-level writing.



Tobias Wilson-Bates

Tobias Wilson-Bates began his fellowship in fall 2015. He taught a course on time and communication and one on the multimodal discursive scene of contemporary robotics. Find an essay of his relating to the class at <https://amplifier.gatech.edu/articles/2016/03/frankenbot-inevitable-monstrosity-artificial-life>.



Annet Jessop

Annet Jessop will begin in the position of Assistant Professor of English at University of Texas Tyler. There she will teach 20/21st-century American literature and creative writing, including upper-division and graduate courses in American literature, bibliography, and research methods and creative writing.



Molly Ball

Molly Ball has accepted the position of Assistant Professor of English at Eureka College in Central Illinois. She looks forward to teaching a wide range of American literature, getting to know her new colleagues and students, and exploring the Midwest.



Josef Nguyen

Josef Nguyen has accepted the position of Assistant Professor of Game Studies in the Department of Arts and Technology at the University of Texas at Dallas.

PHD PROGRAM NEWS

Placement News



Leilani Serafin

Leilani Serafin has accepted the position of Production Editorial Associate for Annual Reviews, an academic publishing company in Palo Alto with more than 40 academic journals in the STEM and social science fields. In her new position, she will proofread, copyedit, and clean up manuscripts as they move through the journals' publication processes. She will also maintain the accuracy and currency of the Production Department's journal databases.

Dissertation-Year Fellowships

Bilinski Fellowship Recipients

Simon Abramowitsch

"Under the Sign of the Rainbow: The Production of Multi-Ethnic Literature in the San Francisco Bay Area from the 1960s to the 1990s"

Michael Martel

"Anytown UK: the Local State of Victorian Fiction"

Meg Sparling

"Sights and Sounds of Black Labor in Nineteenth-Century American Literature"

Christopher Wallis

"Utopian Occupations in Early Modern English Literature"

Provost's Dissertation-Year Fellowship Recipient

Treena Balds

"(De)mystifying Samuel Beckett's Dramatic and Narrative texts using Algorithmic Methods"

Two English PhDs Receive Graduate Student Teaching Award

The Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award is a university-wide award that recognizes the contributions of graduate students to teaching and learning at UC Davis. This year two English PhDs received this honor.

Daniel Grace

"Teaching literature and writing has been an exceptionally rewarding experience. My argument to students is that whatever else it is, literature is a great source of problems; and for its part, writing is a great place for working them out. Time and again, I stress to students that in approaching their essays, they should not choose a text or topic they feel comfortable with or untroubled by—such an essay will be dead on arrival. Instead, they should steer toward areas of confusion, problems their reading did not solve. Only this way will they discover the potential for learning through writing."



Daniel Grace

Christopher Wallis

"Because I ask my students to engage in the process of revision (or "re-seeing," per Donald Murray), I believe that my teaching should also follow this practice. At the middle and end points of each course, I have students fill out anonymous surveys that ask them to share with me what works well about the course and what can be improved. Through this process, students appreciate how syllabi, assignments, and class exercises are entities that—much like their own writing and thinking—can transform and develop; moreover, they understand that their feedback factors significantly into how I rework materials and adjust my teaching. In addition to helping me imagine innovative ways to develop accessible and community-based learning practices, this assessment procedure shows students that their ideas have value and are valued."



Christopher Wallis

PHD PROGRAM NEWS

PhDs Conferred

Russell Backman

"The Distributed Epic: Modularity, Networks, and Organization in the Novels of Thomas Pynchon"

Molly Ball

"Writing Out of Time: Temporal Vulnerability in Nineteenth-Century Narrative"

Jenae Cohn

"The Books that Bind Us: Remediation of the Printed Book as Social Practice in the 21st Century"

Heather Jennings

"Pedagogy, Delivery, Drama: Performance in the Later Middle Ages"

Dyani Johns Taff

"Contested Vessels: Gender and the Maritime in Early Modern Texts"

Danielle McManus

"Eating Discourses: How Beliefs about Eating Shape the Subject, its Body, and its Subjectivity"

Josef Nguyen

"Creative Makings of the Digital Generation"

Tobias Wilson-Bates

"Time and its Machine: The Novel as Temporal Technology"

Kristin had poems published or accepted for publication in *Denver Quarterly*, *Cincinnati Review*, *Laurel Review*, *Berkeley Poetry Review*, and *Salamander*. Her review of Jamaal May's poetry collection, *Hum*, was published by *32 Poems*.

Molly Ball recently had an article accepted to *ESQ: A Journal of Nineteenth-Century American Literature and Culture*. The piece is titled "On Making the Present Past: Non-Generational Temporality in *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*."

Elizabeth Crachiolo won the David Noel Miller essay prize for her paper "Queen Bees, Queen Bess, and the Gender Politics of Butler's *Feminine Monarchie*."

William Hughes's book review of Judith Butler's *Senses of the Subject* is forthcoming in *GLQ*. The review is titled "Narrating Sensation Before Subjectivity."

Angela Hume's article "Beyond the Threshold: Unlimiting Risk in Mei-mei Berssenbrugge and Kiki Smith's *Endocrinology*" was selected as an Editor's Choice article in *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 22.4 (fall 2016). Her article "Toward an Antiracist Eco-poetics: Waste and Wasting in the Poetry of Claudia Rankine" appears in *Contemporary Literature* 57.1 (spring 2016). Also, Angela was nominated by Robert Hass to participate in "Climate Change at the Western Edge," a pilot project between the Point Reyes National Seashore Association and the Mesa Refuge made possible through a National Endowment for the Arts grant. At the Mesa Refuge this August, she will be one of three writers who will study and write about the changing bioregion.

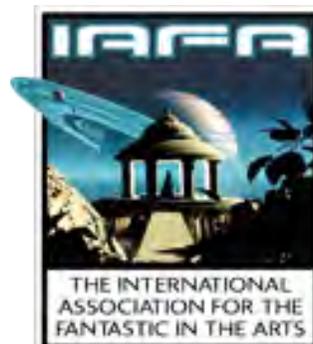
Michael Martel has an article forthcoming in the *Routledge Companion to Anthony Trollope* (fall 2016) entitled "Trollope and the State."

Josef Nguyen has the following articles forthcoming: "Make Magazine and the Social Reproduction of DIY Science and Technology," in *Cultural Politics*; "Performing as Video Game Players in Let's Plays," in *Transformative Works and Cultures*; and "Minecraft and the Building Blocks of Creative Individuality," in *Configurations*.

Simon Abramowitsch presented a paper, "African American Literature, White Graduate Students," at the MLA Annual Convention in January 2016. He was also selected to participate in the UC Davis Mellon Public Scholars Program. As part of the program, he is conducting an oral history project and interviewing editors and publishers of multi-ethnic literature in the San Francisco Bay Area in the 1970s.

Kristin George Bagdanov presented papers on poetry, the anthropocene, cyborgs, and drought at SLSA, MLA, AWP and the inter-UC EcoMaterialisms conference during this past academic year. UCSD's interdisciplinary forum for environmental research also invited her to present her paper "The Anthropocenic Lyric."

Jordan Carroll received the David G. Hartwell Emerging Scholar Award from the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts.



PHD PROGRAM NEWS

Sara Petrosillo has an article entitled "A Microhistory of the Womb from the N-Town Mary Plays to *Gorboduc*" forthcoming in the *Journal for Medieval and Early Modern Studies* (47.1). In the fall, she was invited to present in the Microhistory Symposium at Duke University's Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. Throughout the year, she has thoroughly enjoyed running a Middle English Reading Group for undergraduates interested in reading medieval poetry aloud. Sara will finish out her 2015-2016 Bilinski Fellowship conducting archival research in Italy and presenting on the panel "Women Who Hunt" at the International Medieval Congress in Leeds, and on the "Queer Manuscripts" roundtable at the New Chaucer Society Congress in London this summer.

Bonnie Roy published the article "Niedercker Blue: Proofs and Poetics" in the fall 2015 issue of *Contemporary Literature* (56.3). *Seven to December*, her chapbook collaboration with the poet Megan Kaminski, also came out from Horse Less Press (2015), and her review of Amish Trivedi's *Sound/Chest* appeared in *Jacket2* (January 2016).

Meg Sparling participated in the Humanists@Work Graduate Career Workshop in L.A. on May 9. She collaborated with the UCHRI on a panel at that workshop, which brought faculty and graduate students together to discuss improving faculty mentorship of graduate students' career preparation.

Jennifer Tinonga-Valle received a Margrit Mondavi Travel Fellowship to do research in the UK this summer.

Christopher Wallis received a 2016-2017 Bilinski Fellowship, a 2016 Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award, and a winter quarter Distinguished Dissertation Fellowship.

Ryan Wander's article "Heterochronic West: Temporal Multiplicity in Bret Harte's Regional Writing" is forthcoming in a special issue of *Western American Literature* titled "Queer West."

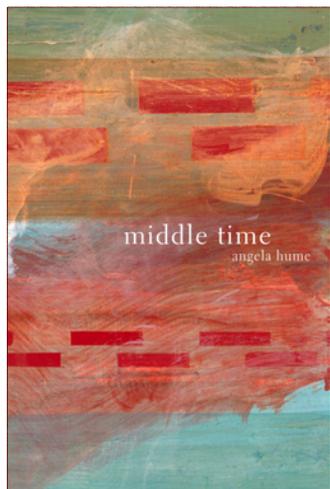
PhD Program Book Publications

Middle Time

By Angela Hume
Omnidawn, 2016

"Mid-stream, mid-era, mid-construction of the notion of an Anthropocene extending into a multitude of future absences, Hume is writing poetry that is both symptom and diagnosis. Querying vocabularies of mitigation, of damage, of 'rage's junk effects,' these intelligent, visually and sonically acute fragments set forth an almost impossible lyric of a 'possible earth / capsizing toward you' or, rather, us."

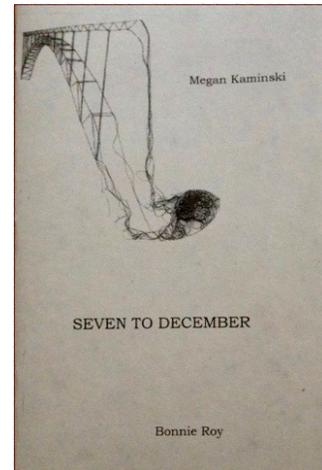
—Evelyn Reilly, author of *Styrofoam* and *Apocalypse*



Seven to December

By Megan Kaminski and
Bonnie Roy
Horse Less Press, 2015

PhD candidate Bonnie Roy and Creative Writing alumna Megan Kaminski have published a collaborative chapbook with Horse Less Press. At *Jerry Magazine*, Bonnie remarks, "The idea that independence is an essential creative property is as powerful for me as it is counterproductive. There are so many chances to think with others in reading... but in my writing that chance has typically come through material—a source text to erase from or tune to, an image borrowed to shade what I see..."



PHD PROGRAM NEWS

Welcome, New PhD Program Students

Sarah Eddings earned her BA in English at Baylor University and an MA in English Literature at Northern Arizona University. She is interested in magic, religion, and the supernatural in English and French medieval literature, as well as medievalism in modern fantasy literature.

Mario Giron completed his bachelors at UCLA and is excited to continue working with US Central American texts at UC Davis. His research interests include the subjects of nation, trauma, performativity, and identity, exploring how they intersect to formulate new histories and identities for these diasporic communities.

Farah Khan completed her undergraduate degree in English in May, with a minor in Spanish, from the University of Florida. Her research interests include colonial/postcolonial literature, gender studies, and race and ethnicity studies.

Amanda Kong recently graduated with an MA in English from California State University LA. She focuses on nineteenth-century American literature and hopes to develop research on the building of American infrastructure and the concomitant representation of the ethnic bodies that participated in these projects.

Margaret A. Miller is a butch, lesbian feminist with a BA in English from the University of Denver and an MFA in Prose from Mills College. Her research focuses on the British long 19th century, locating queerness in structures, narratives, and temporalities. Not simply queer as folk, but also as folktale.

Leanna O'Brien completed BA and BA degrees in a double major of Computer Science and English at the University of South Carolina Columbia in May.

She is interested in science and technology studies, nanotechnology, and "video games as a literary medium." Leanna is a USC Horseshoe Scholar, who presented her essay "Representations of Male Virginity in Canterbury Tales" at the University of South Carolina's INK Undergraduate Literary Conference in 2015.

Lauren Peterson earned her BA degree from Walla Walla University, where she majored in English and minored in chemistry. She continued studying literature and science at Western Washington University, where she earned an MA in English. At UC Davis, she looks forward to studying nineteenth-century Transatlantic literature, especially the gothic.

Jonathan Radocay is a native of Southern California. Since completing a BA in English and Philosophy at UC Irvine in 2010, he has lived in Los Angeles. His current research interests include critical geography and spatial studies, but he plans to expand these into the environmental humanities and gender at UC Davis.

Timothy Walker earned his BA in English from Kennesaw State University in 2009 and his MA in Literary Studies from Georgia State University in 2015. His current research interests include queer theologies and temporalities in U.S. literature beginning in the nineteenth century, and most particularly in the U.S. South.

Bethany Williams is looking forward to exploring the connection between literature and the environment. After receiving her BA from Willamette University in 2012, Williams has been working in the arts and technology sectors in lovely Portland, Oregon.

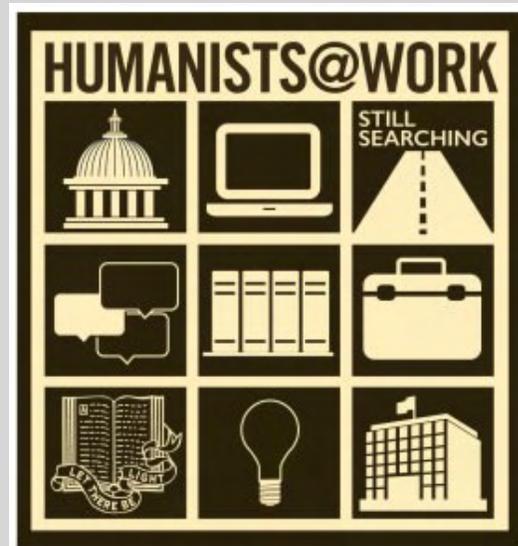
PHD PROGRAM NEWS

Grads at Work on Humanists@Work

This year, two English Department graduate students were involved in the UCHRI's Humanists@Work initiative. Humanists@Work is a UC-wide initiative geared toward humanities and humanistic social science MAs and PhDs interested in careers outside and alongside the academy.

Simon Abramowitsch, English PhD Candidate, was a member of the 2015-2016 Humanists@Work Graduate Advisory Committee. Abramowitsch helped organize and promote two graduate career workshops this year, in Sacramento and Los Angeles, and he wrote for the Humanists@Work website—including an interview with two English Department PhD candidates who recently completed successful job searches for alternative academic positions (Jenae Cohn and Leilani Serafin). Abramowitsch also wrote an essay about the connection between the #BlackLivesMatter movement and the work of the humanities.

Meg Sparling, English PhD Candidate, attended both Humanists@Work workshops this year, wrote about these workshops in two articles for the UC Davis Humanities Institute, and participated in the initiative's "Candid Conversations" video series about faculty mentorship of graduate student career preparation. Sparling will be joining the Humanists@Work Graduate Advisory Committee for the 2016-2017 academic year—and she hopes to bring more members of the English Department into the important conversations that Humanists@Work is fostering across the UC system.



CREATIVE WRITING NEWS

MAs Conferred

Emma Boyce, *A Noisy Heart: Stories*

Marshall Callaway, *Disinterment & Other Poems*

Jacob Garber, *Under the Valley*

Will Greene, *Josie & the Pimp*

Kateland Harte, *Messiahs*

Amanda Hickok, *Burning or Dodging*

Jen Li, *Lost Children & Other Stories*

Nich Malone, *Cafe Poems: I'm Like an Extra in a Series of Failed Romance Movies*

Becky Mandelbaum, *Howl If You Hurt: Kansas Stories*

Sarah Murray, *Please Obey All Traffic Laws*

Nancy Nguyen, *She Deserves the World: Stories*

Seychelle De Luca, *Strands: A Memoir*

Lauren Swift, *In the Softer Wilderness*

Christina Turner, *The Way Out: A Novel*

CREATIVE WRITING NEWS

Creative Writing Awards

Elliot Gilbert Memorial Prizes in Poetry and Fiction

Fiction: Jen Li, *Lost Children*

Judged by Annie Liontas

Poetry: Lauren Swift, *Pilgrimage*

Judged by Joe Wenderoth

Honorable Mention for poetry: Amanda Hickok,
[still rocks and things]

The Gilbert Prize is awarded in memory of Elliot Gilbert (1930-1991), Professor and Chair of the English Department and co-founder of the UC Davis Graduate Creative Writing Program. Known as a charismatic teacher, he presented literature within the contexts of history and the arts using music, humor, and drama. Each winner will receive a \$100 cash prize.

Celeste Turner Wright Poetry Prize

co-sponsored by The Academy of American Poets

1st Place Prize winner

Lauren Swift

Lauren will receive her award prize from the Academy, a one-year membership to the Academy, a subscription to the Academy's journal *American Poet*, and her name listed in the Academy's Annual Report.

Honorable Mention

Roy Magat

The Academy of American Poets will recognize Roy with a certificate and letter.

Judges: Katie Peterson, Greg Dobbins, and Joe Wenderoth

Maurice Prize for Fiction

The English Department at the University of California, Davis, and *New York Times* best-selling novelist John Lescroart are pleased to announce the 12th annual Maurice Prize in fiction:

Reema Rajbanshi for her novel manuscript

Sugar, Smoke, Song

Reema receives \$5,000.

Judge Ramona Ausubel writes, "This novel is a gorgeous thunderswirl of dance and music failure and friendship. I love how the places—India, New York, San Francisco and beyond—press out through the narrative alongside Hindu, American and family mythologies. I love the rhythms in it, the scatter and the necessity."

Ausubel chose a runner up, as well:

Leticia A. Del Toro for *Café Colima*



MA students Will Greene and Amanda Hickok led the organization of Art Ball, a celebration held on June 7 with food, drinks, and dancing at City Hall Tavern in Davis. The money they raised will help support the program's reading series Fig +Axe and also the MFA Studio Art Grads arts programming for the 2016-17 school year.

CREATIVE WRITING NEWS

Welcome to the Class of '18

Madeline Gobbo is a pair of eyes at your window. If you throw open the sash, in she will flow, but you will not see her. Parts of her are not where they should be. At times she is more than one entity; at others, only a notion. Citizens, older and wiser, will take you aside in coffee shops. "She's more of a tea-drinker," they will say. "She hails from Oregon." "Sells books." "Haunts ghosts." "Breathes fire." "She is an artist, too." "Beware!" they'll cry. "Beware!"

Brendan Higginbottom graduated from the University of Kansas with degrees in Chinese Language and Creative Writing. He is a poet and translator. Brendan is interested in writing about place and one's relation to it as well as exploring the odd in the everyday.

Scott Hunter earned his Bachelor's in English with a focus on poetry from Pitzer College. Now he's interested in novels. His favorites include Joyce, Proust, Coetzee, Greene, and, most recently, Ferrante.

Andrew Ly is a fiction writer from Philadelphia. He has been published in *APIARY* and later served as the magazine's fiction editor. His academic interests include Asian American representation in media, popular culture and the rise of comic books, and story cycles. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania.

Molly Montgomery specializes in fiction. She graduated from UCLA in 2014 with a BA in English and French. She is interested in exploring mixed race identity and California history in her creative writing. Her favorite authors include Kazuo Ishiguro, John Steinbeck, and Isabel Allende.

Joanna Ng received a BA in English with a minor in Education from UC Davis in June 2014. Joanna is a poet whose accomplishments include being on the

Dean's Honor List for her entire four years at UC Davis, where she also received 2nd place and honorable mention in the Pamela Maus Contest in Creative Writing for fiction and for poetry, respectively, in 2014.

Jeanne Panfely earned her BA at the University of Oregon with a major in English and a minor in Creative Writing. At UC Davis, she is most looking forward to the workshop environment. Her favorite authors include Alice Munro, Karen Russell, and Ann Patchett.

Andy Robinson received a BA in English from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst in August of 2014. Andy is a poet, whose publications include "Sonnet Crown for Third Officer Ripley" (original feature, *Lady Churchill's Rosebud Wristlet*, no. 32), "The Vampire May Yet Attend a Potluck" (*Weightless Books* column feature, fall 2014), and "After Liszt" (*TINGE Magazine*, no. 8, fall 2014). Andy has also worked as an editor for a variety of projects.

Natalie Savio attended University of San Francisco, receiving a BA in Architecture and Community Design. She is drawn to visually appealing subjects whether that be building an architectural model she designed, writing fiction or nonfiction, or practicing her American Sign Language. Being first-generation Portuguese American, Natalie enjoys cultural and mixed race topics and looks forward to being immersed in the world of writing at UC Davis.

Sarah Wendel is from a tiny town called Cool, California (yes, it's a real place!) and got her bachelor's from UC Davis, majoring in English and minoring in history. Between undergraduate and graduate studies, Sarah worked for a small media company proofing audiobooks. Sarah spends most of her free time in a fantastical land of her choosing, but when in the real world she enjoys history, road trips, and diving down the Wikipedia rabbit hole.

UNDERGRADUATE NEWS

Department Award Winners

Lois Ann Lattin Rosenberg
Outstanding Graduating Senior Award:

Austin Lim

“Majoring in English has trained me to discern the connections between and histories of things I would formerly have accepted as just there. As I pursue a career in education, I believe I’ll continue to attend to these connections and histories as a way to begin envisioning change.” — Austin Lim

Lois Ann Lattin Rosenberg English Department
Essay Prize:

1st Place: **Mason Harper**, “The Monumental Task: Considering a Racialized Voice”

2nd Place: **Brian Wright**, “The Crying of Lot 49 and the American Car”

Elliot Gilbert Memorial Prize for the
Best Honors Critical Thesis (tie):

Austin Lim, “‘Money is Money’: Economies of Urban Crime and International Exchange in *The Beetle*”

Grace Gordon, “Gertrude Stein: The Mathematical Narrative”

Elliot Gilbert Memorial Prize for the
Best Creative Writing Honors Project (tie):

Courtney (Elfie) Nelson, “Somehow Hours”

Melissa Dittrich, “Alright for Now”

Pamela Maus Contest in Creative Writing

Fiction

1st Place: **Kelsey Owen**

2nd Place: **Denise Castro**

3rd Place: **Adrienne Bergen**

Honorable Mentions

Michael Clogston

Amelia Fink

Gabriella Mercier

Anita Yu

Poetry

1st Place: **Sydney Choi**

2nd Place: **Kevin Yotsoubanh**

3rd place: **Ian Dickerson**

Judges:

Nicholas Malone and Lauren Swift (poetry)

Jennifer Li and Jamil Kochai (fiction)



(From left) Elizabeth Miller and Lois Ann Lattin Rosenberg with Best Honors Critical Thesis recipients Austin Lim and Grace Gordon.

Diana Lynn Bogart Prize for Fiction

1st Place: **Hannah Carroll** for “The Sink”

2nd Place (three-way tie)

Jonathan Lee for “Silver Dollars”

Kelsey Owen for “On the Backs of Teeth”

Brian Wright for “In Hawai’i”

Judges: Katie Peterson, Greg Dobbins, and Joe Wenderoth

Ina Coolbrith Statewide Poetry Competition Finalists

Ian Dickerson, Devon Houtz, Nicholas Tolfa



A group of English department graduating seniors pose by the Voorhies fountain during the annual graduation brunch.

UNDERGRADUATE NEWS

Majors Graduating with Citations for Outstanding Performance

Bryanna Mariel Andrews
 Dana Jo Aros
 Helen Rachel Bansen
 Rebecca Lea Barilla
 Lindsay Nicole Billings
 Derk Erickson Bramer
 Amanda Kaye Burgess
 Kayla M. Camilli
 Sydney Chi Lai Chan
 Anahit Davtyan
 Melissa Emily Dittrich
 Zenni Duong
 Madison Ann Emery
 Neusha Etamad
 Chelsea J. Fink
 Sarah Jordyn Fordyce
 Ruben A. Gil-Herrera
 David (Avi) Maurice Gindratt
 Lucero Gonzalez
 Grace Branna Gordon

Connor Andrew Gorman
 Jessica Joann Grilli
 Amy Lynn Hanak
 Aubrey Helene Harper
 Mason Leo Harper
 Megan Taylor Hartenstein
 Deborah Jessica Hasen-Klein
 Devon Nicole Houtz
 Alyssa Jean Hurst
 April Marie Kersh
 Stephanie In Ae Kim
 Laura Elizabeth King
 Austin Ben-Keat Lim
 Kara Elizabeth Loughner
 Jordyn Helene May
 Noelle Alexis Mills
 Kristina Marie Munoz
 Brandon Joseph Nicolas
 Anna Kay Paivinen
 Katrina De Guzman Panganiban

Briana Grace Pereira
 Jason Anh Pham
 Madeline Eloise Porter
 Kevin Douglas Roney
 Elizabeth Alice Rowan
 Melissa Carol Schiller
 Victoria Marie Scott
 April Dawn Smith
 Ana Marija Sola
 Kaylin Ann Squyres
 Christopher James Summers
 Audrey Delores Tang
 Dorothy Tao
 Ryan James Villard
 Laura Kathryn Walters
 Danielle Mckenzie Winson
 Emiley Jayne Santana

Undergrads Intern for *Play the Knave* Digital Shakespeare Game



Play the Knave script writers: (from left, top) Michelle Lang, Alison Blecman, Gina Bloom, Melissa Valk, Isabelle Williams, (bottom) Alison Tam, Anneliese Sanders, Rebekah Zachariou, Wesley Sweger.

This spring quarter, English undergraduate majors worked as interns on the *Play the Knave* digital Shakespeare game project directed by Associate Professor Gina Bloom. The project has provided an exciting way for undergraduates to apply the critical reading, thinking, and writing skills they've learned in English classes. One group of interns are serving as script writers: they read Shakespeare plays to determine scenes that would work well for the game, editing the scenes as needed; they then create and play-test coded scripts for the gaming platform. Two other English majors (Leah Daugherty and Christopher Summers) have been working with English PhD candidate Sawyer Kemp to develop mini-games about Shakespeare interpretation and theater performance that will be added to the game to make it even more useful in the classroom, especially for middle and high school students. Additionally, third year major Sarah Asnaashari has been researching the game's impact on the teaching of Shakespeare and is preparing a white paper on the topic, while first year Samantha Moody has been assisting with public relations. All of the interns assisted with the installation of the game in April at the Mondavi Performing Arts Center, and several were interviewed for and appeared in a BBC News story that aired April 19. Bloom says, "The *Play the Knave* development team is on the lookout for interns for the summer and next year. Students who are enthusiastic about Shakespeare and interested in real-world applications should get in touch with me."

STAFF NEWS

Program Coordinator Paula Goldston to Retire

In winter 2017, Assistant Program Coordinator Paula Goldston will retire from the English department. Paula joined the English department in 2006. In the following Q&A, Paula reflects on her career in the English department and looks ahead to what's next.

Thank you for your service, Paula. What been your favorite thing about being the program coordinator?

Paula Goldston: I think my favorite part of being program coordinator is getting in ordered desk copies from the publishers. My predecessor told me it's like Christmas when the boxes begin arriving—and it is. Many of my job functions are of the repetitious nature, so designing talk and course flyers is a creative outlet I will miss. I don't think I will miss telling visitors, at least once a day, where the stairs are or how to get to room 126 Voorhies!

What have you enjoyed about working with UC Davis students, faculty, and staff?

PG: I've enjoyed getting to know the large number of faculty from English and UWP over the years, and remember thinking I would never know all their names and have an easy rapport with them—but I do. My job includes working with the PhDs and CW grad students, so I've had the pleasure of getting to know them and helping them along the way. I've made lifetime friends with co-workers and thank them for

patiently teaching me what they know...Lynda Jones especially! I do enjoy interaction with the students who come into Voorhies main office. When a nephew began college, he told me how hard it was to get information and help from staff at his school and how frustrating it was. When I have a student at my desk needing help, I picture my nephew in front of me and try to help as best I can, so they have a better experience.

What has been a personal career highlight for you? What aspect of your job has been the most exciting or gratifying?

PG: I've enjoyed the challenge of looking at the labor intensive and paper-driven processes of my job and converting them to computer-based applications, made possible by our programmer, Kevin Bryant. Many job processes have been streamlined and incorporated for ease of use. They now save me enough time daily to request a reduced work schedule.

What are your plans for retirement?

PG: Sleep-in past 4:40 am, taxi grandkids around, travel around the U.S. and abroad, publish a memorial book about my father's military career for my family, do volunteer work and fund raising, perhaps work part-time for the Sacramento Kings, and look for opportunities to use my golden ticket retiree parking pass on campus.

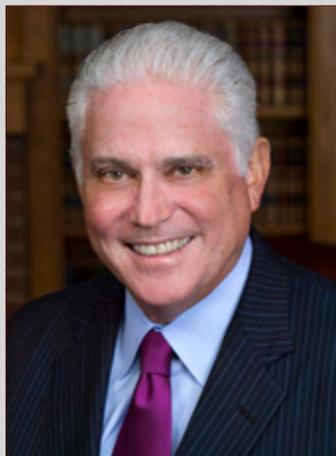
ALUMNI NEWS



Alumni reunite at the Shakespeare Association of America conference in March 2016 in New Orleans. From left: Claire Dawkins, English Instructor, Stanford Online High School; Valerie Billing, Visiting Assistant Professor, Knox College; Tara Pedersen, Assistant Professor, University of Wisconsin-Parkside; Vanessa Rapatz, Assistant Professor, Ball State University; Professor Fran Dolan; Anna Pruitt, Assistant Research Professor in the Indiana University School of Liberal Arts and Associate Editor for the New Oxford Shakespeare Project; Kelly Neil, Assistant Professor, Spartanburg Methodist College; Dyani Johns Taff, Lecturer, Ithaca College; John Garrison, Associate Professor, Carroll University.

ALUMNI NEWS

Alumnus Walt Harrison Reflects on Experience that Shaped His Life



Walt Harrison, PhD '78

Walt Harrison, President of the University of Hartford, and his wife, Dianne—both 1978 graduates of the English PhD program—say that their experiences at UC Davis shaped their lives and their intellectual accounts of the world. Walt and Dianne want current and future graduate students to be able to have transformative experiences in graduate school like they did. According to Walt, that's why they recently pledged a major gift to the PhD program to support student summer fellowships and research travel.



Walt Harrison and other graduate students and faculty in English were intramural softball champs in 1978.

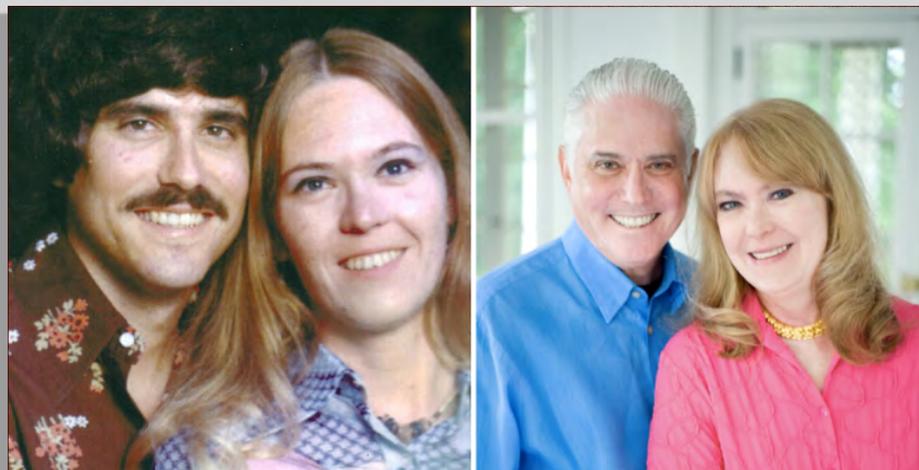
Walt says it never occurred to him that one day he would become president of a university. Now, in the eighteenth year of his tenure, he's had a chance to help University of Hartford financially, establish new opportunities for students, and significantly influence the university's culture. "Since I've been here, I've fallen in love with this university. I feel like I've made a difference in people's lives," Walt says. "We've lived up to our longtime commitment to being a university that provides opportunities to students regardless of their economic, racial, and gender backgrounds."

A native of Pittsburgh, Walt earned a bachelor's degree from Trinity College in 1968 and a master's from University of Michigan a year later. He and Dianne started in the PhD

program at Davis during the turbulent Vietnam War years. When Walt was stationed as an Air Force captain in Sacramento, Dianne applied to the PhD program to study Victorian literature. And when the government started offering "early out" programs to servicemen, Walt raised his hand and, shortly after, applied to the PhD program, too. They both matriculated in 1972.

"The years we spent in the program were the best years of our lives," Walt says. "We were studying literature, which was what we loved. We loved our friends and the faculty. We have very strong ties to the people who were terrific mentors to us." Walt recalls with good humor how he and Dianne would compete with each other. "Dianne said, 'Why don't you take American literature, and I'll take British, and then we'll never end up in the same course.'"

Walt recalls in particular his close relationships with faculty members Jack Hicks and Jim Woodress, who took him under their wings. He remembers how when Jack learned that he had a personal interest in baseball, he encouraged him to figure out how to apply it to literature. So Walt wrote a dissertation about the relationship between 19th-century values, the rise of baseball, and baseball fiction. "I was one of the first to think seriously about sport and its place in American culture," Walt says. *(continued on page 24...)*



Walt and Dianne Harrison during their graduate school years and, at right, now.

ALUMNI NEWS

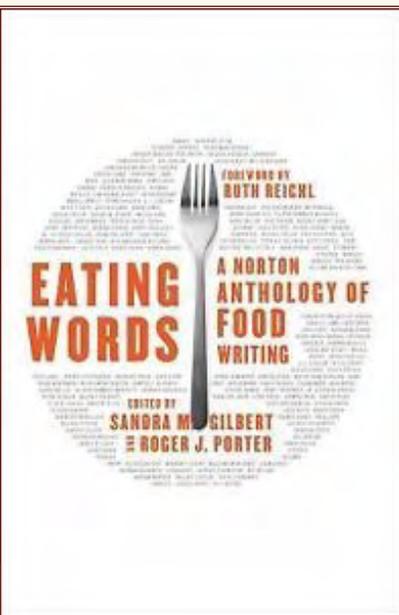
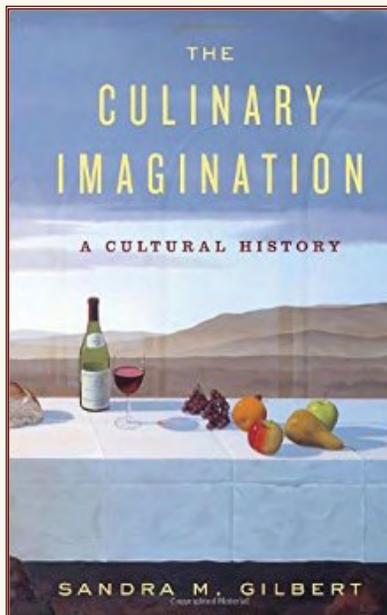
(continued from page 23...)

He continues, "It's remained a lifelong passion of mine. The dissertation idea really came from Jack, who said everybody would want to read a book about baseball. He was a close friend and a really great mentor." Walt recalls how Jack even worked with him to organize an intramural softball team. "I am so grateful that I went to Davis," Walt says. "The department had a vibrant intellectual diversity, but it was small enough that we had faculty whom we were close to personally." Walt also fondly recalls participating in the program's longstanding Mainz Exchange and living and teaching in Germany for a year. He also served on a university task force during his time at Davis to study the

honor code. Walt's work on the task force was his first involvement in university administration. In the process, Walt started thinking seriously about the concept of integrity, one that would continue to be paramount to his thinking in his career as an administrator.

With respect to the value of doctoral work in English, Walt says, "There's a mixture of critical discipline and artistry in the study of literature that helped us understand the world we lived in. Grad school broadened our imaginations while focusing us in a disciplined fashion. In a lot of ways, it made us who we are today."

EMERITI BULLETIN



Sandra Gilbert has published two books: *The Culinary Imagination: From Myth to Modernity* (W.W. Norton, 2015) and *Eating Words: A Norton Anthology of Food Writing* (W.W. Norton, 2016), coauthored with Roger Porter.

Peter Hays delivered a paper in Cuba last summer, one in Brooklyn in the fall, and will deliver one in Oak Park, Illinois (Hemingway's birthplace) this summer. He published a book chapter: "Hemingway, PTSD, and Depression" in *Teaching Hemingway on War*, ed. Alex Vernon (Kent State University Press, 2016); two articles: "Camelot as Current and Classical Tragedy" in *ANQ* and "Hemingway as Social and Political Writer" in *The Hemingway Review* 34:2 (spring 2015): 111-117. Additionally, he published a book review and has read articles for the *Arthur Miller Journal* and *The Hemingway Review*. He is also the News and Notes editor for the *F. Scott Fitzgerald Newsletter*. A friend and he are completing a dead colleague's line-by-line annotation of *The Old Man and the Sea*, which will be published by Kent State University Press.

James J. Murphy has been elected to the Academic Council of the The Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies (CMRS) in Oxford, England. The Academic Council advises the CMRS Principal on curriculum and long-range planning for this independent teaching and research center in the middle of Oxford. He is also editor of a special issue of *Advances in the History of Rhetoric* devoted to "Quintilian in the Modern World," which includes his own essay, "Quintilian and Modern Writing." The special issue will appear in both online and print versions in summer 2016. In December 2015, Southern Illinois University Press published the second edition of James's *Quintilian On the Teaching of Speaking and Writing: Translations of Books One, Two and Ten of His Institutio oratoria*, with co-editor Cleve Wiese.

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