



# Musings

Fall 2023 Newsletter

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Northwestern

Department of  
English

WEINBERG COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES



## FROM THE CHAIR

I am delighted to report that the last year has been ... delightfully ordinary! That is to say, it has been marked by the normal milestones of a healthy department rather than by constant on-the-fly adjustments to Covid. We hired a wonderful new colleague in Latinx literary studies, Mariajosé Rodríguez Pliego, who started this fall as a College Fellow (see her bio on p. 4). Susannah Gottlieb became a full Professor, Tristram Wolff was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor with tenure, and Justin Mann was appointed to a second three-year term as an Assistant Professor. Shauna Seliy's accomplishments as a teaching mentor in our creative writing program were recognized by a promotion to Professor of Instruction. In the department office, David Kuzel and Nathan Mead received long-overdue promotions that belatedly recognize the depth of their contributions to the department's mission. As our new Assistant Director of Creative Writing, Colin Pope hit the ground running, bringing the department's staffing level back to pre-pandemic levels. We're approaching something that might be called a new normal.

As part of this new normal, I feel as though I'm seeing University Hall for the first time through the eyes of the fifteen first-year undergraduate students in my College Seminar advising cohort. I'm happy to report that Northwestern is mostly treating them pretty well. They are enjoying their classes, which are generally challenging in productive rather than unproductive ways, and they definitely appreciate the faculty and TAs who are kind to them, including helping them get back on track when they're confused. (One of the pleasures of working with first years is seeing the transformative role that Graduate Student Instructors play in undergraduate education, especially in their first two years.) Although my students are a little bit homesick, for that very reason they are also starting to develop close friendships – and their friends are helping them to navigate this place in ways that emails from various University offices cannot do. Almost universally, they reported being skeptical when NU announced that Elder Dining Hall would be serving Korean food as part of a One Book, One Northwestern tie-in, but when their friends texted to let them know that the kimchi fried rice was really, really good, they got themselves over to Elder as quickly as possible. Now they want to know, very understandably, why kimchi fried rice is only offered as a One Book, One Northwestern tie-in rather than as part of a regular menu rotation.

At the same time, my students are confronting elements of Northwestern that make no sense to them at all. For example, NU proudly announces wrap-around academic support including office hours and peer-led study groups for introductory math and science classes. But then it devotes so few resources to them that one of my students stood in line outside of her chemistry TA's office for an hour on four separate occasions without ever making it through the door. Another of my students shared that he had been rejected from the undergraduate crossword club, which apparently has a competitive admissions process. In that case, there's not even the excuse of resource constraints because the cost of printing out crossword puzzles is negligible. Instead, the club's policy seems to be driven by an ethos of competition for its own sake, as a kind of default setting. The perceived value of the crossword club derives from its exclusivity rather than from engaging in a fun, nerdy activity with friends.

Getting these updates from my first years has opened my eyes to facets of Northwestern I hadn't previously considered. I'm happy to report that all of my students who received midterm grade warnings for chemistry have battled back, figuring out new ways to study and, in some cases, creative ways to seek help. (Apparently there is one chemistry TA whose early morning office hours are usually very quiet.) My rejected crossword club student has moved on to apply to the Sudoku society. These updates have also had the side benefit of clarifying for me what we're trying to accomplish in this particular corner of this larger institution. In a nutshell, the English department is working to contribute to and build on the things Northwestern does well, while we push back against – or, when that fails, at least try to mitigate – the things it does badly. Above all, we try to think things through when the larger institution doesn't always do so. Thinking things through is not a panacea, but it is a powerful and effective as well as underutilized tool. It enables us to make cogent arguments for change to the higher administration and to make the most of the resources within our control, from budgeting to curriculum to departmental policy.

This commitment to thinking things through is a key reason that I'm hopeful that our new normal will be better than the old one. It's also a key reason why, in contrast to the crossword club, we do our best to welcome students in rather than turn them away.

With best wishes for a happy and healthy 2024,

Katy Breen

## A WORD FROM EGSO

As autumn transitions into a chilly Chicago winter, EGSO is happy to reflect on this first quarter of the academic year and to acknowledge the efforts of those who worked to organize academic and social community-building events.

We started the year with a bustling and fun Fall Collation—the department congregated in Harris Hall to celebrate the start of the quarter, engage with student and faculty work, and catch up on summer excursions (language learning trips, camping on coasts, gratuitous amounts of iced coffee to get us through dense theory). Sam English (PhD candidate) and Ryan Nhu (3<sup>rd</sup>-year PhD) organized our peer mentor program—hosting a delightful morning peer mentor meet-up in the Hagstrum room with coffee, bagels, and conversation. As the students in the Litowitz MFA+MA program and the PhD students have worked on building stronger relationships between the creative and critical aspects of our department, it was a particularly nice way to get to know the new students across the department's different programs. Elisa Ady and Mariam Hirsi (both 2<sup>nd</sup>-year MFA+MA students) hosted the first creative writing salon of the year in which the 1<sup>st</sup>-year MFA students shared works on the theme of “Bodies Bodies Bodies.” It was an enjoyable evening of lovely food from a local Evanston pizzeria and fantastic readings from our students.

Looking back to last winter quarter, Govind Narayan (PhD candidate) organized an advice session for second-year PhD students to hear from those in their third about constructing their reading lists, along with other advice on preparing for their qualifying exams. Surya Milner and Jackson McGrath (both 3<sup>rd</sup>-year MFA+MA students) hosted a second salon inviting writers to think on the subjects of “Love & Desire” in preparation for Valentine's Day. The salon was well attended by students from both graduate programs, who shared poetry, fiction, and prose of all shapes and forms. In March, Elizabeth Winter and Smith Yarberry (both PhD candidates) worked with Nathan Mead to organize our first recruitment weekend since the shutdown in 2020...rumor has it that Nathan credits them, and the grad students at large, with his making it through the weekend with his already-strained mental faculties intact. The weekend consisted of tacos in the graduate office lounge, mingling in the Hagstrum room over coffee, dinners around-and-about Evanston, and was capped off with a tour of campus on the perfect spring day—with, of course, faculty meetings, lectures, and classes taking place between our socializing.

Last spring, Govind and Rio Bergh (PhD candidate) organized a colloquium featuring presentations by Chris Lombardo (MFA+MA 2023), George Abraham (3<sup>rd</sup>-year MFA+MA), Mariana Guterrez-Lowe, and Allison Gibeily (both PhD candidates) on topics ranging from Helena Maria Viramontes's *Their Dogs Came with Them* to the transnational Palestinian novel. EGSO also sponsored an event inviting some of the current Visiting Assistant Professors to speak about their experiences in the current job market—a particularly useful and informative talk complete with thoughtful answers to the many questions that current grad students brought to the table. The American Cultures Colloquium, Long Nineteenth Century Colloquium, Global Eighteenth Century Colloquium, Poetry & Poetics Colloquium, the Middle East and North African Studies Cluster, among other groups, brought brilliant scholars and writers from a variety of fields including folks like Teresa Goddu (ACC), Ronjaunee Chatterjee (LNCC), Ashley Cohen (GECC), Simone White (P&P), and Zeina Hashem Beck (MENA), just to name a few.

Fall 2023 has already been filled with exciting events for the department. English Graduate students have shown their solidarity with graduate students across departments by participating in Northwestern University Graduate Workers organizing efforts like Pack the Halls of TGS Commons during a November bargaining session, and showing up and showing out for the November 13<sup>th</sup> Pay, Power, Protections NOW! Union rally in Silverman Courtyard, where 500 students came together to demand a fair contract.

It is shaping up to be a wonderful school year and we are proud of the community we've been able to foster. Additionally, we are immensely grateful for the help and organizational genius of Kathy Daniels, David Kuzel, Nathan Mead, Colin Pope, and Ashley Woods. Thank you all!

Agam Balooni and Michaela Corning-Myers, Co-Chairs

Mariam Hirsi and Elisa Ady, MFA+MA Representatives

Samantha English, Students-in-Candidacy Representative

Ryan Nhu, Students-in-Coursework Representative

Phoebe Pan, Archivist

Emma Cohen and Eliza Feero, Representatives to the Graduate Policy and Placement Committee



## NEW FACULTY



Mariajosé Rodríguez Pliego (PhD in Comparative Literature, Brown University) is a College Fellow at Northwestern. She is a comparative scholar of Latinx, Indigenous, and Latin American literature.

Mariajosé's book project, "Foundational Futures: Nationhood, Migration, and Environment in the Literatures of Abiyala," explores the language of nationalism in the United States and Mexico from the nineteenth century to the present. Bridging national and disciplinary boundaries, her project learns from oral and written stories in English, Nahuatl, and Spanish that imagine forms of land ownership and belonging outside the structures created by nation-states.

Her work has been recognized by the American Comparative Literature Association and is published in *Comparative Literature* and forthcoming in *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*. At Northwestern, she teaches interdisciplinary courses on Latinx studies, Indigenous literature, Latin American fiction, and literatures of the borderlands.

## NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS

**Samuel Aftel** (PhD) received his AB in History from Princeton University in 2020 and, just recently, his MA in English at the University of Kentucky. His MA thesis examined queer spatiality and relationality in E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* and James Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room*. More broadly, Sam's research interests include queer theory, postcolonialism, affect theory, Marxism, and twentieth-century British and American literature. Before graduate school, Sam served as a teaching fellow for AmeriCorps in a Newark, NJ high school. There, he taught English language arts to ninth-grade students.

**JK Anowe** (MFA+MA – Poetry) currently serves as Assistant Poetry Editor at *The Nation*, as well as Poetry Editor at *Sycamore Review*. He is an Igbo-born poet, and recently completed his MFA in creative writing at Purdue University. His poems interrogate the existential, absurdist, and autobiographical landscapes of the psyche, especially as these relate to memory, mental illness, and such externals as the body, family, faith, art, and country. Anowe's work has appeared in *Bakewell Magazine*, *THE SHORE*, *Glass Poetry Journal*, *Palette Poetry*, *Agbonvo*, *20.35 Africa*, and elsewhere. He is the author of the poetry chapbooks *Sky Raining Fists* (Madhouse Press, 2019) and *The Ikemefuna Tributaries* (*Praxis Magazine Online*, 2016). Anowe is

currently working on his debut collection of poems.

**Dawn Angelicca Barcelona** (MFA+MA – Poetry) is a Filipina-American writer originally from New Jersey. She is an alumna of The Fulbright Program to South Korea (2014-2016), Community of Writers at Olympic Valley, VONA, and Kearny Street Workshop's Interdisciplinary Writers Lab. She serves as the Acting Poetry Editor for *Epiphany* and volunteers as a speaker and support group facilitator for the National Alliance on Mental Illness. In 2022, she was awarded the San Francisco Foundation/Nomadic Press Literary Award in Poetry. Her work can be seen in *2River View*, *Epiphany*, *Trouble Maker Fire Starter*, *Red Ogre Review*, *Quiet Lightning*, and *Atlanta Review* (forthcoming).

**María José Cornejo Griffin** (PhD) graduated from Universidad de Chile in 2020 with a BA in Literature and Linguistics and recently earned her MA in Literature at the same university. Her main interest is early modern English drama, especially Shakespeare and Marlowe. She focuses on the relations between drama, imperial expansion, and the advancements in cartography during the sixteenth century, topics that she hopes to continue during her PhD studies.



**Jinjia (Grace) Hu** (MA) received her BA in English and Psychology from Wesleyan University in 2023. Her research interests are in early modern literature, with a focus on the roles of women, including characters and audience, in Shakespeare's plays. She is also a translator whose co-translated work *One Hundred Favorite Folktales* was published in 2021, and a creative writer whose picture book *Apple, Potion, and Glass Slipper* is going to be published in August 2023.

**Hannah Kadin's** (PhD, CLS) academic interests include speculative fiction, decolonial theory, Latin American and Caribbean studies, Black studies, utopia, critical theory, the avant-garde, music and arts subcultures (especially the Chicago experimental arts communities), and Marxism.

**June Shou Li** (PhD) just completed her undergraduate degree at University of Southern California, where she majored in English Literature with a minor in American Studies and Ethnicity. Her research centers liberatory affects, proleptic imaginaries, racial orientations, radical whimsies, and Fanonist pedagogies. Her broad-scope academic goals are to establish a pragmatic affective space under the Josephson Storm model of metamodernism that eludes the essentialist/reductionist and sociopaternalist tendencies of the “-studies”

**Barbarita Polster's** (PhD, CLS) current work is framed by the study of code-switching/code-mixing, as applied to a range of research, including a semiotic code-switching when applied to visual and literary texts, a sociocultural code-switching in exchanges between people of different backgrounds, and an infrastructural code-switching in the anthropological study of the repurposing of public goods and services according to specific material needs. Understood as a historical bellwether, the cultural texts of Latin America and the Caribbean provide insight into contemporary questions of democracy, economy, and society; the region's cultural producers operating at the intersection of all three of these modes point to the revolutionary potential of their time. Drawing theoretical connections between such concepts as Bakhtin's heteroglossia and Glissant's *créolité*, Polster proposes the application of this loose framework to undergird further research into the cultural production of this region.

**Sof Sears** (MFA+MA – Fiction) is a Mexican-American writer from Los Angeles who just earned their BA from UPenn, majoring in English and Gender Studies. They're primarily interested in

monster theory, feminist horror, and experimental fiction; their undergraduate thesis is about Shirley Jackson's *Hangsamen*, trauma, and girlhood. Sof's work has been published in *Diagram*, the *Sonora Review*, *Waxwing*, and others.

**Emely Taveras** (MFA+MA – Fiction) is a Dominican writer who started from zero in the United States after finishing high school in the Dominican Republic. She graduated from Borough of Manhattan Community College in 2020 with an AS in Early Childhood Education, and from the College of Staten Island in 2022 with a BA in English and a concentration in Creative Writing. She graduated with honors from CSI and made the dean's list. Her honors project is a fiction excerpt of a larger story she is working on currently – a story about a high school student who has a stalker, a girl she had a sleepover with once when she was younger. Emely plans on exploring the psychological aspects of the girls' obsession and developing their different personalities. She plans on making their story into a novel as her studies continue. She loves to read to her little brother and is learning to play the guitar.

**Heather Williams** (PhD) is a writer and editor who recently moved from Prague to Chicago. Her work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Baffler*, *The Believer*, *Granta*, and *Five Dials* under the pseudonym “Missouri Williams,” and her first novel, *The Doloriad*, was published by FSG in the US last year. She graduated from the University of Cambridge with a BA in English Literature in 2013, and earned an MA in Medieval Literature and Renaissance Studies from University College London in 2021. Her research interests include animal studies, ecocriticism, literary theory, and medieval literature. She co-edits the film journal *Another Gaze*.

**Han Xu** (MA) is from China, and earlier in the year received his BA from Skidmore College with Honor in English. His undergraduate thesis theorized that Shakespeare portrays “metaphorical blackness” as a contagious disease. By incorporating existential writings from Jean-Paul Sartre, Frantz Fanon, and Fred Moten to diagnose the word “black” in *Othello*, Han pointed out that Othello's physical blackness could be invisible in the context of Venetian politics, identifying the contradictory nature of the black subject and free subject as well as the letter “O” in *Othello*.



# Reginald Gibbons Professor Emeritus

reflections by Chris Abani

Reginald Gibbons is my friend, and friend to many in the department – faculty and students alike. This is no small achievement: to be brilliant and accomplished and yet to be valued for the humanity you embody. Reginald Gibbons is in large part responsible for me being at Northwestern – for better or for worse. I first met Reginald in 2003, when Brian Bouldrey invited me to speak at Northwestern. I must have made a deep enough impression because Reginald invited me back in 2009, as part of the Center for the Writing Arts’ Visiting Writers initiative. I bring this up to speak to Reginald’s intentionality and commitment to the communities he chooses to be part of as he sought to bring more international writers and a more global presence to Northwestern than ever before and ever since. The purpose of all Center for the Writing Arts activities was to create, support and further undergraduate and graduate opportunities for the study of writing at Northwestern, both within CWA itself and across the university; to facilitate a continuing discussion in the university community about how best to foster and situate writing as a crucial part of a university education; to help coordinate the university’s multifarious courses and programs in writing across departments, programs and schools; and also to welcome audiences from the metropolitan area to the rich array of public events on campus that are focused on writing. In the time he ran the center, before he helped fold it into the Litowitz MFA+MA program, and in fact, over the course of his career, Reginald has focused increasingly on social and political injustice, and the power and responsibility that writers have to engage their society and effect change, and he has tried to embody this in his service, writing and teaching.

Reginald brought the same global perspective and focus to *TriQuarterly*, the journal he came to Evanston to take to new heights, and he did just that. It continues, over two decades later, to grow and remain international and to attract over 50k visitors a month in its online form. Reginald is the mastermind behind the School of Professional Studies’ MFA program, and simultaneously a core founder of the Litowitz MFA+MA in the English Department. In all of this, community, with students at the center, has been Reginald’s focus. And yet, while giving in service, he remained a scholar, translator, novelist, essayist, editor, and poet.

Reginald is the author of eleven books collections of poetry, including *Sparrow: New and Selected Poems* (1997), winner of the Balcones Poetry Prize, *Creatures of a Day* (2008), finalist for the National Book Award, and *Last Lake* (2016), and he will be publishing two more books of poetry in 2024 and 2025. In a 2008 interview, Gibbons describes *Creatures of a Day* as “a book about chance encounters, the testing of

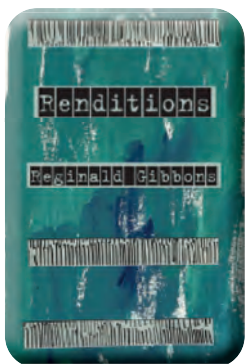


one’s sense of the world that is produced by encounters with other people,” a depiction that speaks to one of Reginald’s major concerns, that of poetry’s role in the lives of others. The facing page displays a selection of Reginald’s published works as both author and translator.

The editor of numerous anthologies, including *The Poet’s Work* (1979) and *TriQuarterly New Writers* (1996), Reginald has been represented in *Best American Poetry* and the *Pushcart Prize* anthology, and has also published short stories, critical essays, as well as translations of Spanish and Mexican poetry and ancient Greek tragedy. His first novel, *Sweetbitter* (1994), won the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award. He is the author of a work of poetics, *How Poems Think* (2015) and a collection of short stories, *An Orchard in the Street: Stories* (2017). Reginald was the editor of *TriQuarterly* magazine from 1981 to 1997, during which time he co-founded and edited TriQuarterly Books. He has also been a columnist for *The American Poetry Review*.

Born and raised in Houston, Reginald earned his BA in Spanish and Portuguese from Princeton University, and both his MA (in English and creative writing) and his PhD (in comparative literature) from Stanford University. Before coming to Northwestern, Reginald taught Creative Writing at Columbia University and Spanish at Rutgers and Princeton. He taught English to immigrant children from Puerto Rico at both a “street academy” in Trenton NJ and at Warren Wilson College in Asheville, NC. He has been awarded the Folger Shakespeare Library’s O.B. Hardison Jr. Poetry Prize and the John Masefield Award from the Poetry Society of America. He has received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Fulbright Program, and the National Endowment for the Arts. He is the recipient of the Chicago-based Fuller Award for Lifetime Achievement in Literature.

2021



2017



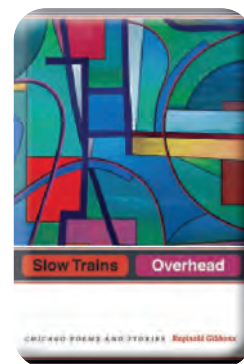
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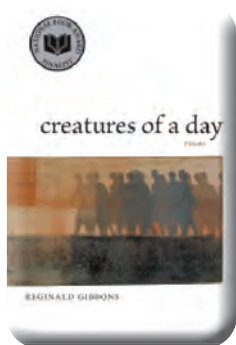
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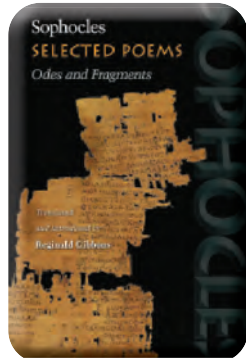
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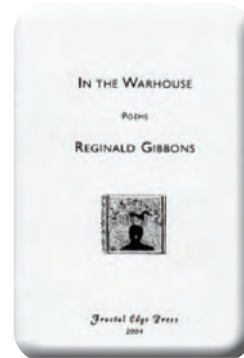
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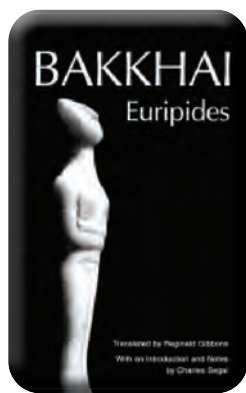
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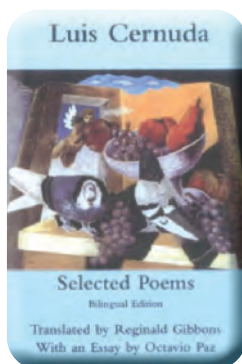
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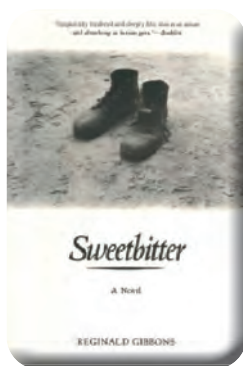
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1997



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1991



1986



1981





## FACULTY NEWS

**Brian Bouldrey** gave the plenary presentation at the fall conference for the Institute for Pilgrimage Studies at William & Mary, “The Accidental Highway: US Highway 20 and The Pilgrimage to Main Street, USA.”

**Katharine Breen** delivered a plenary lecture at the 8<sup>th</sup> International *Piers Plowman* Society Conference in London in July – her first in-person conference presentation since the pandemic. A version of her talk, entitled “Degrees of Embodiment, or the Personifications’ New Clothes,” will be published in the 2024 volume of the Society’s journal. Her recent *Speculum* essay, “Personification and Gender Fluidity in the *Psychomachia* and its Early Reception,” was featured on the website of *Feminae: Medieval Women and Gender Index* as its September 2024 article of the month. She is also the author of a great many long emails in her capacity as department chair.

**Tracy C. Davis** published *Liberal Lives and Activist Repertoires: Political Performance and Victorian Social Reform* with Cambridge University Press. Her co-edited collection, *The Cambridge Guide to Mixed Methods Research for Theatre and Performance Studies* will appear in early 2024. Along with Ivy Wilson (English) and Jesse Rosenberg (Music) she is leading the Mellon Sawyer Seminar “On Decolonizing Theatre” in 2023-2024; events can be found on the website <https://sites.northwestern.edu/decolonizingtheatre/>.

**Kasey Evans** published a chapter in *New Psychoanalytic Readings of Shakespeare*, part of the Routledge Studies in Shakespeare series, entitled “The Time Is Out of Joint: Hamlet Speaks with the Dead.” In February 2024, she will travel to the annual conference of the American Psychoanalytic Association in New York, where she will participate in a panel discussion about psychoanalysis and literary criticism. The *Hamlet* piece derives from her practically-perpetual book project *Renaissance Resurrections*.

**Harris Feinsod** recently published an essay on David Berman in *Post45*. For the centennial of William Carlos Williams’s *Spring and All*, he was interviewed on the podcast *Close Readings with Kamran Javadiqadeh*. His essay “Canal Zone Modernism” was reprinted in Bloomsbury’s *Central American Literature as World Literature*. In addition to delivering papers at ACLA, MSA, the Louisville Conference, and MLA (where he was elected to the Executive Committee for Poetry and Poetics), he was a keynote speaker at the Universidade Católica Portuguesa

conference “Transatlantic Women’s Networks,” and he spoke at a Princeton University event honoring Susan Stewart. At the ACLA, he co-organized a series of plenary sessions on academic unionization that brought together scholars and organizers who participated in recent higher education labor victories. In 2023–24, he is on research leave writing a book on modernism and the sea, co-editing an anthology on anticolonial thought, and serving enthusiastically on fifteen dissertation committees.

**Christine Froula’s** “Torvald’s Question: Italo Svevo and James Joyce Stage Modern Masculinity” is forthcoming in *Comparative Drama* (Spring 2024). It draws on her translation of Svevo’s play *Un Marito* and her (remote) talk on Svevo, Joyce, and the Quintessence of Post-Ibsenism at the 2023 Comparative Drama Conference.

Two books of poems by **Reginald Gibbons** are forthcoming—*Three Poems* (Finishing Line Press, 2024) and *Young Woman With a Cane*, which will also include several of RG’s small etchings (Louisiana State University Press, 2025). Gibbons has completed and will soon submit a third book of new poems, *Say All of It*, to publishers, while he and Ilya Kutik are now submitting two translation projects to publishers—co-translations of Ilya Kutik’s selected poems, and co-translations of selected poems of Boris Pasternak. At the June 2023 Printers Row Lit Fest, Gibbons gave a joint reading with Ana Castillo from the new fourth edition (paperback) of his novel *Sweetbitter* (which in its first edition won the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award). Leaving his office in University Hall, he donated 2200 volumes of poetry to the Poetry Foundation, and another 800 books elsewhere. He is now working on a collection of essays both autobiographical and about writing poetry, and is returning simultaneously to a book of translations of Hellenistic poems.

**Daisy Hernández’s** next nonfiction book is under contract with Hogarth Press, an imprint of Penguin Random House. The new book interrogates citizenship and the American psyche, braiding memoir, history, and cultural criticism to reframe understandings of how we define a citizen and how that affects our personal and national identities.

Over the last few months, **Lauren M. Jackson** has contributed essays to *The New Yorker*, *New York Review of Books*, and *BOMB* magazine, including an essay on Greta Gerwig’s



*Barbie* and reviews of Maya Binyam's debut novel *Hangman* and Britney Spears's memoir, *The Woman In Me*. She completed the manuscript for her second book of essays, "Back," and has been grateful for the opportunity to read excerpts of this work as a part of Urbana's Pygmalion Festival and the Critical Speaker Series at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She has also helped welcome two newly published books in conversations with their authors hosted by the Seminary Co-op—*Madonna's Erotica* by Michael Dango and *Normporn: Queer Viewers and the TV That Soothes Us* by Karen Tongson—and made her return to the *Switched On Pop* podcast to discourse on Taylor Swift (again), with more podding to come.

**Susan Manning** has completed the manuscript for *Dancing on the Fault Lines of History: Selected Essays*, scheduled for publication by the University of Michigan Press in fall 2024. Now she will turn her energies to coediting a two-volume anthology, *Dancing on the Third Coast: Chicago Dance Histories*, under contract with the University of Illinois Press. This year she is serving as DGS for the Interdisciplinary PhD Program in Theatre and Drama, a program that has been an essential part of her portfolio at Northwestern for the last 35 years.

Audio rights were acquired for **Juan Martinez's** 2023 novel *Extended Stay*, and the audiobook was released in November. The novel was recently selected as the New York Public Library's Book of the Day and has been shortlisted for the Chicago Review of Books Prize. A Polish translation of his story "Esther (1855)" is due out from *Nova Fantasyka*. New short stories are forthcoming in *The Chicago Quarterly Review*, *The Sunday Morning Transport*, and elsewhere in early 2024.

**Jeffrey Masten** spoke in March at "The Canon of Shakespeare at 400" conference, at the Marco Institute (U Tennessee), on the topic "Marlowe's First Folio." He gave a lecture and graduate seminar in the series "Queer and Trans Case Studies in Early Modern Literature" in Comparative Lit at Yale University this fall. Forthcoming publications include two book chapters: "Frolic," in *Logomotives: Words that Change the Premodern World* (Edinburgh UP); and "Marlowe's Queer Futures: *Edward and Richard, the Second*," in *Histories of the Future, c. 1600: On Shakespeare and Thinking Ahead* (U Penn Press).

Back in the day, **Barbara Newman** spent nine years as a "Brepols slave," working on the highly labor-intensive editorial board of their series on "Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts." Now, much to her delight, that same series has published a festschrift in her honor: *Mystics, Goddesses, Lovers, and Teachers: Medieval Visions and Their Legacies*. The volume came out in October, edited by her former students Steven Rozenski, Joshua Byron Smith, and Claire Waters. Cordial thanks to all of them and all 18 contributors!

**Sarah Schulman** has been active in a number of realms. Her musical, *SHIMMER*, with music by Anthony Davis and lyrics by Michael Korie, and directed by Northwestern alum Jess McLeod, will be workshopped at Northwestern with public performances on January 25 in the evening and January 28 in the afternoon. Also forthcoming are "Alice Neel: Ahead of the Diminishing World," in Alice Neel's *Queer Portraiture* (David Zwirner Books, March 2024); *Conversations with Sarah Schulman*, edited by Will Brantly (University Press of Mississippi, February 2024), liner notes for *All The Beauty and The Bloodshed* directed

## FACULTY PUBLICATIONS



**Brian Bouldrey**  
*Good in Bed*



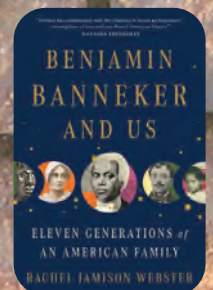
**Tracy C. Davis**  
*Liberal Lives and Activist Repertoires: Political Performance and Victorian Social Reform*



**Juan Martinez**  
*Extended Stay*



**Natasha Trethewey**  
*The Essential Muriel Rukeyser*



**Rachel Jamison Webster**  
*Benjamin Banneker and Us: Eleven Generations of an American Family*

## FACULTY NEWS CONTINUED

by Laura Poitras for the Criterion Collection (January 2024). Sarah's work as a journalist, activist, and novelist is extensively discussed in "Queer Kinship in Sarah Schulman's AIDS Novels" (Routledge 2024), a research monograph juxtaposing the works about the AIDS epidemic which were well-received by mainstream America with Schulman's own output as a "bard of AIDS burnout," in the words of Edmund White.

**Regina Schwartz's** "Poetics of the Holy: On Michael Lieb," will be published in *Milton Quarterly*, ed. David Loewenstein in 2024. The tribute to Lieb was given at the Newberry Milton Seminar in May, 2023. Her article "The Letter and the Spirit" will appear in *Knowing Judgements: Literature and the Legal Imaginary*, ed. Subha Mukherji, Palgrave Press, also in 2024.

**Charif Shanahan's** second book, *Trace Evidence: poems*, was longlisted for the 2023 National Book Award for Poetry, and shortlisted for the 2023 Chicago Review of Books Award. Poems from the collection appear in *The Nation*, *The New Yorker*, and *On Being*, among other publications, along with feature reviews and interviews in *LARB*, *The Paris Review*, *Poets.org*, and elsewhere. In support of the collection, Shanahan has appeared at universities, cultural centers, and book festivals across the country and in the UK, in conversation with Claudia Rankine, A. Van Jordan, Pádraig Ó Tuama, and others. His work in the collection has also been recognized by the Grammys, the CHIRBy Awards, and the Hawthornden Foundation. In Fall 2022, Shanahan was invited to serve as the Guest Editor of *Poetry*, a post he held until July 2023.

**Laurie Shannon** organized the Second Anne Lister Society Meeting, held in Halifax, West Yorkshire in April 2023; nineteen speakers presented new research on the Regency diarist and queer polymath. In collaboration with the Calderdale Council and the West Yorkshire Archive Service, she also announced there that advanced discussions are underway with Oxford University Press to edit a scholarly edition of Lister's five-million-word diary—a monumental emerging text in the history of English writing. She published "A Regular Oddity: Natural History and Anne Lister's Queer Theory of Tradition" in a Cambridge University Press collection, *Decoding Anne Lister: From the Archive to Gentleman Jack*. On the Shakespeare front, Shannon presented a lecture, entitled "Frailty's Name," as a plenary session at the annual Boston University Colloquium on Literature, Philosophy, and Ethics (2023).

After ten years spent leading the Weinberg College Advising team, first as Director and then as Assistant Dean, **Liz Trubey** has picked up the mantle of Associate Dean for Undergraduate Academic Affairs. While daunted by the prospect of following in Mary Finn's footsteps, Liz is excited by the opportunity to help shape the experience of undergraduates and faculty and to lead the fantastic team in the Office of Undergraduate Studies and Advising.

**Wendy Wall** was the Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar last year, which meant that she visited five (mostly liberal arts) colleges to energize undergraduate intellectual engagement and to share research on subjects such as: early modern recipes and science; how newly discovered female poets can force us to rethink what we think we know of the past; queer Shakespeare; and Shakespeare and race. She gave papers at the Renaissance Society of America (on Feminist Digital Practice; and on Hester Pulter's weird atomism) and at the Shakespeare Association of America (on early modern philosophies of shared common matter and racial difference). In the summer, she travelled to Cottered, England to walk in Hester Pulter's footsteps, at her church and on her estate. This year, she returned to Stateville Correctional Center to teach a fall 2023 literature course entitled "Far From Home: Journeys, Odysseys, and Refugees."

**Will West** spent three weeks in March at Cill Rialaig, Ballinskelligs, where he experimented with translating the sixteenth-century poetry of English-language poet Edmund Spenser and Irish-language poets like Tadhg Óg Ó Huiginn and Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bhaird linguistically, formally, materially, and geographically into the landscape of the west coast of Ireland. In May he presented some of this work as "Spenser's GPS" at the "Creating Renaissance Criticism" conference at Oxford University. Over the summer he also presented work on the Negro Renaissance and the Italian Renaissance at "The Concept of the Renaissance" in Rome and on the quantum sublime of seventeenth-century continental drama in Verona.

In the spring of 2023, **Tristram Wolff** spent a month as a visiting scholar at the École Normale Supérieure in Lyon, where he gave three talks, worked on two new writing projects, and ate at one of the strangest great restaurants in France. The first writing project was a translation of the recently published



novella *Background for Love*, written in German in 1932 by editor and publisher Helen Wolff (his grandmother) when she was in her 20s, which will appear in English in June 2024 with Pushkin Press. The second was an article for a special issue of the *Yearbook in Comparative Literature* on “languages of critique,” called “Not Feeling It: Hazlitt, Affect, and Critique,” which comes out at the end of the year. He’s now working on an article for a Routledge collection on global romanticism, reading the deployment of romantic tropes in nineteenth-century Haitian poet Oswald Durand.

## GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

**Lydia Abedeen’s** (3<sup>rd</sup>-year MFA+MA) poetry was published in The Asian American Writers’ Workshop’s magazine *The Margins: the Love Letters*. Another of her poems, “[the zuihitsu considers the consequences of survival: an exercise in obfuscation]” was published in issue 24.1 of *Mizna* this past summer. Lydia attended The Watering Hole writers’ retreat last December, and conducted independent research in the spring at Atlanta’s High Museum of Art.

Some of **George Abraham’s** (3<sup>rd</sup>-year MFA+MA) poems were published this year in *Poetry Magazine* and *Poetry London*, and other pieces appeared in various folios on ecopoetry and love poetry with The Asian American Writers’ Workshop’s magazine *The Margins*. Their work was also recently anthologized in *Infinite Constellations: an Anthology of Identity, Culture, and Speculative Conjunctions* (University of Alabama Press) and *Between Paradise & Earth: Eve Poems* (Orison Books), and they were commissioned to produce a visual poem by the CUE Art Foundation, as part of a recent Queer Arab art exhibit *الفكرة ذكري / A Thought Is A Memory*. They also edited *Mizna’s* issue 24.1 on Myth and Memory, which featured an interview they conducted over the summer on Queer Palestinian folklore with Sarah Cypher as part of their MA thesis work. They attended a critical theory intensive with the Beirut Institute of Critical Analysis and Research (BICAR) at the American University of Beirut over the summer.

**Rio Bergh** (PhD candidate) was awarded the 2023 Lawrence Lipking Fellowship at the Newberry Library, where he has spent the last two quarters engaged in archival research for his dissertation.

“A Still Life,” an essay by **Andrea Bianchi** (2<sup>nd</sup> year MFA+MA), was awarded the *Hunger Mountain* 2023 Creative Nonfiction Prize. Andrea was also a finalist for the *Passages North* 2023

Ray Ventre Memorial Creative Nonfiction Prize, and one of her essays was recently chosen by *New Ohio Review* as a 2023 Best of the Net nominee. She recently published nonfiction in *New South*, and participated as a nonfiction contributor in the 2023 Middlebury Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference in Vermont this past summer.

An article by **Kai Chase** (PhD candidate), “Growing Solidarity in Weelaunee,” was published in *Rampant Magazine* in March. They assisted with the Summer Research Opportunity Program at Northwestern, providing assistance and guidance for marginalized undergraduate students looking to go to Northwestern for graduate school. Kai conducted research training as well as offering regular mentoring and conversations about what to expect in graduate school.

**Jen Comerford** (PhD candidate) received the 2023 International Visitor Fellowship from the Jane Austen Society of North America, an award that allowed her to spend six weeks over this past summer in Chawton, England where she conducted research in the women’s writing collection at Chawton House and the museum collection at Jane Austen’s House.

This summer, a review by **Michaela Corning-Myers** (4<sup>th</sup>-year PhD) of Anna Pochmara’s *The Nadir and the Zenith: Temperance and Excess in the Early African American Novel* was published in *Studies in American Naturalism*, vol. 17, no. 1.

**Sam English** (PhD candidate) was one of the recipients of our department’s 2022-23 Award for Excellence as a Teaching Assistant.

**Allie Gibeily** (PhD candidate) organized and co-chaired a seminar entitled “Anticolonial Poetics in Form and Performance” at the 2023 American Comparative Literature

## GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS CONTINUED

Association's conference, and chaired a panel entitled "Public Humanities in Eighteenth-Century Studies" at the American Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies conference in the same month. She will chair the Graduate and Early Career Caucus for the latter organization over the coming year.

During the last two weeks of June, Allie attended a seminar on critical theory and psychoanalysis at the Beirut Institute for Critical Analysis and Research. The rest of her summer was spent conducting preliminary dissertation research at archives in England, Lebanon, Germany, and Turkey. She will spend the Winter and Spring Quarters of 2024 at the Qasid Arabic Institute in Amman, Jordan thanks to a CASA II Fellowship awarded by the Center for Arabic Study Abroad. The fellowship is designed to provide doctoral students with a mix of immersive language training and research opportunities related specifically to their projects, while also allowing them to network with regional scholars.

**Mariana Gutierrez-Lowe** (PhD candidate) received a Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library Fellowship to consult Leslie Silko's Papers at the Beinecke Library this past summer.

In March 2023, **Paulina Jones-Torregrosa** (PhD candidate) was named a Woodrow Wilson Dissertation Fellow in Women's Studies. Paulina also earned Northwestern's Presidential Fellowship for 2023-25, as well as membership in the Northwestern Society of Fellows.

**Mitchell Johnson** (2<sup>nd</sup>-year MFA+MA) published a brief essay entitled "My Curtains, My Radiator" in *The Paris Review Daily*, and has an essay forthcoming this winter, about addiction and harm reduction, in *n+1*. This summer he attended a residency at Art Farm Nebraska.

**Irene Kim** (PhD candidate) was one of the principal organizers of the March 2023 Post45 Graduate Symposium, which met at the University of Washington in Seattle. She also won a 2023-24 Graduate Fellowship from the Council for Race and Ethnic Studies at Northwestern.

**Ryan Nhu** (3<sup>rd</sup>-year PhD) was one of the recipients of our department's 2022-23 Award for Excellence as a Teaching Assistant.

Under the auspices of a Summer Research Grant awarded by the Sexualities Project at Northwestern, **Angad Singh** (3<sup>rd</sup>-year PhD) engaged in archival work in New York and Connecticut,

looking at the archives of some 20<sup>th</sup> century thinkers central to the fields of postcolonialism and queer studies.

In June it was announced that **S Yarberry's** (PhD candidate) book, *A Boy in the City*, won the 2022 Foreword INDIES award for Poetry. In July, they joined an international group of students and scholars in London for the nine-day T. S. Eliot International Summer School. Over the course of the past year, S has had poems published from their new project, "The Robert Poems," in *Guernica*, *Gulf Coast*, *The Dialogist*, *Another Chicago Magazine*, *Sequestum*, and *Paperbag*. A short article "Desire, Joy, and Sadness in Spinoza's P18" can be found in *The Brooklyn Rail*, and their chapbook, *To Seem the Stranger*, is available now from Bottlecap Press. S is now serving as co-chair of the Trans & Queer Caucus for the American Society of Eighteenth Century Studies (ASECS).

At the ACLA conference in March, **Sreddy Yen** (PhD candidate) co-organized a seminar titled "What Has (African) Literature Got to Do With It?" At the 2023 African Literature Association Conference, Sreddy was an invited respondent at the roundtable on Lindsey Green-Simms's *Queer African Cinema*. In fall 2023, Sreddy worked as a graduate assistant in the Northwestern Prison Education Program.



## GRADUATE STUDENT & ALUM PROFILES

### Andrea Bianchi (MFA+MA Student)



As I study creative nonfiction in my second year of the Litowitz program and begin my final projects that will mark the program's end, my writing is paradoxically focused on questions of endlessness.

My nonfiction is committed to engaging with vulnerable personal topics—including chronic disease, mental illness, and abusive relationships—yet such experiences and their aftereffects often offer no resolution. Through my creative work and my intended MA capstone project, I am exploring how non-linear structures or fragmented forms can still reach toward understanding and insight even when life provides no coherent narrative arc or satisfactory closure. I recently investigated this tension in my lyric essay “A Still Life,” which is forthcoming in *Hunger Mountain*. The piece details living with the stigma of an incurable infection, finding solace in art, and recognizing beauty in circumstances that may never change.

Beyond nonfiction, my writing also contemplates the question of endlessness through other genres. In a current fiction workshop, I am reevaluating chronic illness from a third-person perspective. I have also been reconsidering this topic through the condensed language of prose poetry, and I further explored the connection between poetry and prose during this summer's Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, which I attended through support from the Northwestern Graduate School and English Department.

Also this summer, I began research for my MFA thesis project, a memoir that intends to recount my homeschooled childhood, including the accompanying religious extremism, mental illness, and isolation. My research has included reviewing my personal archive of childhood diaries and K–12 homeschool curriculum, as well as completing a course on the sociology of the family during my first year in the Litowitz program. Through this and other seminars, I am examining the social context of my family dynamics as I write about its endless aftereffects.

### Aaron Greenberg (PhD 2017)

After completing my PhD in English at Northwestern in 2017, I founded the writing and publishing company Biograph. While writing, designing, and publishing dozens of custom books for clients, we scaled our expertise with the Biograph app, which as *The Daily Northwestern* reports, is making storytelling more accessible. Since 2019, I've been teaching seminars at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago including “The Art of Life Writing,” “(Still) Life Writing,” “Generative Art: The Futures of Creativity,” “Lost and Found Arts,” and “Art in the Age of Crypto.” I've also taught seminars on a range of topics including life writing at Newberry Library, and just joined the faculty at Lake Forest College.



My academic research and practice are rooted in life writing, (auto)biographical acts intertwining daily “arts of living” (*ars vivendi*) with existential considerations: What are the historical and contemporary meanings of life? How do folks make meaning from their lives? How is meaning-making an essential skill for both survival and living well? How do the ways in which cultures and states define “life” enact what they describe? My work celebrates humanity while questioning the anthropogenic decisions that institute sociopolitical orders through (de)humanization. Recent publications include “Escape to Impersonality: Personas in H.G. Wells’ *Experiment in Autobiography*” in *Persona Studies*; Amparo Garcia Crow, *Prophecy of My Undoing*, ed. Aaron Greenberg (Biograph, forthcoming 2024); and *Disrupted Lives: Stories from Child Survivors of the Holocaust*, a project of the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center in association with Biograph LLC (Kar-Ben Publishing, forthcoming 2024).

My story is being featured in the upcoming winter issue of *Northwestern Magazine* for the unpredictable directions in which I am taking my training from the English Department.

## PROFILES CONTINUED

### Suzanne Scanlon (MFA+MA 2023)

I spent the third, glorious gift of a year in the Litowitz creative writing program writing and revising and rewriting and editing my memoir. I could not have written this book in 1.5 years without the support of this program. *Committed: On Meaning and Madwomen* will be published by Vintage in April 2024. My other works in progress include a novel, “Without You I’m Nothing,” and “The Book of Walks,” a long essay structured around walking and artmaking.

Since graduating, I’ve been teaching in the Writing program at the School of the Art Institute and as an Artist-in-Residence here at Northwestern. My essay “The Moving Target of Being” was selected as a Notable essay in the *The Best American Essays 2023*. Two books of mine will be published in Paris in March 2024 from *Les Editions du Portrait*; it’s been a joy to work with Marie Chuvin and Laure Jouanneau-Lopez on the French translations. The UK edition of *Committed* will appear in April 2024 and other translations are forthcoming.



An excerpt from *Committed*, titled “Without Care,” will be published in *BOMB Magazine* next December. This was a brief chapter I wrote in response to feedback from Chris Lombardo (MFA+MA 2023), Matthew Richardson (MFA+MA 2022), and Professor Sarah Schulman in our manuscript development workshop, who very helpfully suggested that, given that the book is very much a story of disequilibrium, I should write an early scene of equilibrium. I followed their prompt and the resulting section became key to structuring the book’s trajectory.

I am grateful to the Litowitz family and the department for the gift of the past three years, my great good luck to work with so many inspiring faculty members and students. I’m still actively looking for a full-time/tenure-track job, but we’ll see. For now, I’m making it work, as artists do, in more ways than one.

### Simone Waller (PhD 2019)



I am grateful that I was able to explore the full range of my interests as a teacher and scholar during my time at Northwestern and beyond. I have been lucky to teach in a variety of contexts—arts and humanities nonprofits based in local communities, private universities, and a small liberal arts college. Working with and learning from mentors between campuses, across Chicagoland, and through the pandemic helped me understand that good teaching is versatile and meets students where they are.

I research sixteenth-century humanists’ attempts to do just that, using the material features of print and theater to innovate literary forms that taught ordinary people to see themselves as part of public conversations on the most pressing issues of their day. My work aims to help students recover the urgency in texts that may otherwise feel remote, and to carry what they learn from those old books into their new lives and vocations.



### Yasmin Jiesoo Yoon (PhD student)

I came to Northwestern's English PhD program in 2021 with the intention of researching the "Asian Century," a time and place that supposedly eclipses U.S. hegemony, alongside new materialism, affect theory, and feminist thought. In preparation for my qualifying exam, I've continued to be interested in the "Asian Century," but feel as though I have many more tools to think about its construction. During my first two years of coursework, I was able to learn about and test out new and previously unfamiliar critical methodologies, such as historical materialism and psychoanalysis, as well as take interest in topics and periods that seemed at first unrelated to the "Asian Century." Towards the end of my first year, I was able to present on a panel at 2022 Asian American Studies Conference, held that year in Denver, CO. The experience was especially meaningful, as I was able to meet other young scholars of Asian American Studies and got to observe first-hand the dynamic conversations happening in the field. To return to my initial interest in the "Asian Century" after two years of coursework has been thus exciting, and I feel that I am returning to the topic with a fresh pair of eyes.



### Anna Zalokostas (PhD student)



Despite being on the job market—a canonically terrible period of anyone's life—I'm still excited by and interested in my dissertation project. Analyzing globalization as a keyword of the 1990s, "Object Lessons: Free Trade, Race, and the Literature of Globalization" brings together a group of Black, Asian American, and Latinx writers as critical commentators on free trade imperialism. Though writers including Harryette Mullen, Karen Tei Yamashita, Francisco Goldman, and Juan Felipe Herrera are often celebrated as representatives of an ascendent U.S. multiculturalism, I argue that this label obscures a shared concern with how race is discursively and materially entangled with the fast flow of retail commodities across global space. Working across genre and other accustomed literary categories, I contextualize their novels and poems within the U.S. print and public culture's contemporaneous interest in plumbing the depths of transnational commodity chains.

Drawn from my first chapter, my very first peer-reviewed article, "Generic Life: Mass Consumption and Globalization in Harryette Mullen's S\*PeRM\*\*K\*T," appeared last year in *Post45*. I'm proud of it—and still even like it, at least most of the time. Reading Mullen's supermarket poems alongside microeconomic histories of shopping, retailing, and advertising, I show how Mullen uses lyric forms of listing, canting, and riddling to redraw the link between the commodity form, racial form, and poetic form. Though I'm already bracing myself to be overwhelmed by MLA, I'm truly excited to be on a panel (with Kalyan Nadiminti!) about cultural production and leftist movements, where I'll talk about the anti-globalization movement and literary fictions of trade policy. In the meantime, I'm trying to finish revising another article, "What Was Globalization? The Long Downturn at the End of History," which is forthcoming in a special issue of *Mediations*. It's still hard to believe I even had a first!

Though I have moved out of the Chicagoland area, I'll be returning in the winter to teach my fifth class as instructor of record, a first-year seminar on the 1990s. I'm most looking forward to resuming in-person study halls with the Northwestern Prison Education Program (NPEP), which I've been involved with since 2019, and which has been one of the most rewarding endeavors I've undertaken as an educator.

## ALUMNI NEWS

**Toby Altman** (PhD 2017) received a research fellowship from the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts for his next book of poems, "Prairie School."

**Katy Chiles** (PhD 2008) has become co-editor (with Professor Cassander Smith) of the journal *Early American Literature*. She was also named the Kenneth Curry Professor of English at the University of Tennessee.

**Jayne Collins** (PhD 2022) was chosen as one of the recipients of the English Department's 2023 Hagstrum Prize for her dissertation, "Composing in the Field." A new publication, a collaborative essay with Sheryda Warriner, Claire Battershill, and Amy Elkins entitled "Sequences of Touch: Dried Flowers; Linen Rags; Rotten Potatoes; Wool Roving," appeared in *Inscription Journal* in November, and a public essay titled "Art, Protest, and Climate Change in the Gallery" came out in early December in *Edge Effects*. In Winter 2024, the first season of her new public humanities audio storytelling project called "Archival Ecologies" is airing. The first season tells the story of Lytton, British Columbia, which was severely damaged during a 2021 heatwave-fueled wildfire. The communities in the town centre and the surrounding First Nations reserves lost 4 significant cultural collections during the fire, from museums and archives to informal community collections. Jayne spent 10 days this past summer interviewing community members and collection stewards, and this audio story delves into both the role of these collections in the communities and how they are approaching recovery when most of the objects and documents from the collections have burned.

**Vanessa I. Corredera** (PhD 2012) published a co-edited volume with L. Monique Pittman Geoffrey Way, entitled *Shakespeare and*

*Cultural Appropriation* (Routledge, 2023). This collection moves beyond the binary impasse of Shakespearean appropriation as gift or theft by investigating cultural appropriation as a theoretical framework that affords a spectrum of possibilities for more rigorously thinking about Shakespeare's socio-political use in modern global appropriations. She also published "Decommissioning the Bard: Chloe Gong's *These Violent Delights* as Anticolonial Edutainment" in *Comparative Drama*. In spring of 2023, she had the privilege of becoming a trustee of the Shakespeare Association of America.

**Becky Fall** (PhD 2016), with Noémie Ndiaye, Lia Markey, Christopher Fletcher, and Yasmine Hachimi, co-curated a public exhibition at the Newberry Library called *Seeing Race Before Race*, part of a collaborative project with the RaceB4Race collective. The exhibition opened in early September and runs through December 29, 2023. Throughout the autumn, the curatorial team have been running a series of complementary public and academic programs featuring Broadway actors, international filmmakers, and pathbreaking scholars. Becky also contributed catalog entries to an associated publication entitled *Seeing Race Before Race: Visual Culture and the Racial Matrix in the Premodern World*, edited by Ndiaye and Markey (ACMRS Press, 2023; freely accessible online at <https://asu.pressbooks.pub/seeing-race-before-race/>), and helped create the digital teaching tool *Seeing Race Before Race: A Closer Look* (accessible at <https://digital.newberry.org/rb4r/>).

**Menglu Gao's** (PhD 2022, CLS) dissertation, "The Lacquered Chinese Box: Opium, Addiction, and the Fantasy of Empire in Nineteenth-Century British Literature," was selected as the 2023 Outstanding PhD Thesis by the Society for Global Nineteenth-Century Studies Awards Committee.

## ALUMNI PUBLICATIONS



**Vanessa Corredera**  
*Shakespeare and Cultural Appropriation*  
co-edited with  
L. Monique Pittman &  
Geoffrey Way



**Bonnie Etherington**  
*Deep Horizons: A Multisensory Archive of Ecological Affects and Prospects*  
co-edited with Brianne Cohen & Erin Espelie



**Ray Gleason**  
*A Grunt Speaks: A Devil's Dictionary of Vietnam Infantry Terms*



**Katie Hartsock**  
*Wolf Trees*



**Paul Hedeon**  
*Ukrainians in Michigan*



**Johana Godfrey** (PhD 2023) was the 2022-23 recipient of our Department's Award for Teaching Excellence.

**Carissa Harris** (PhD 2012) got to give a Medieval Colloquium talk in the Hagstrum Room in May 2023, the fulfillment of one of her wildest grad school dreams. With Fiona Somerset, she edited the colloquium "Historicizing Consent: Bodies, Wills, Desires" in the 2022 issue of *Studies in the Age of Chaucer* and, in response to the bombshell new archival discovery regarding Geoffrey Chaucer and Cecily Chaumpaigne, she published an essay titled "On Servant Women, Rape Culture, and Endurance" in *The Chaucer Review* (October 2022).

**Paul M. Hedeem** (PhD 1990) published his seventh book, a history coauthored with his wife Maryna. *Ukrainians in Michigan* traces the history of Ukrainian immigration from 1870 to the present day. The book is published by Michigan State University Press as part of the Discovering the Peoples of Michigan series.

This past year, **Jackie Hendricks** (PhD 2013) was promoted to Senior Lecturer in Santa Clara University's English Department, where she's currently leading a faculty team in a project intended to develop materials for first-year college-level writing courses. OER for Social Justice awarded the project a \$40,000 grant as part of a larger endeavor, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, to adapt or create free, open textbooks that further goals of diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism to be used in high-enrollment courses at grant partner institutions Loyola Marymount University, Saint Mary's College of California, Santa Clara University, and the University of San Francisco. Jackie also has an article entitled "A 'ful vicious' author: Examining J.K. Rowling's

Transphobia through her Framing of Chaucer's *Pardoner's Tale*" forthcoming in 2024 in *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*.

**Carolina Hotchandani's** (PhD 2013) debut poetry collection, *The Book Eaters*, won this year's Perugia Press Prize for first and second books.

In her first year as Teaching Fellow in Medieval and Early Modern Literatures at the University of Warwick, **Nancy Jiang** (PhD 2023) won the English department's 2022-23 Faculty Teaching Award. Her book chapter, "From Audits to Confessionals: The Influence of Accounting Technology on Medieval Penitential Pedagogy," was published in *Media Technology and Digital Humanities in Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, and she was invited to give a talk in December at the University of Oxford's Medieval English Research Seminar.

Nancy was also selected as one of the recipients of our Department's Hagstrum Prize for her dissertation, "The Trade of Penance: Commercial Practice and Penitential Piety in Late Medieval Literature."

**Janaka Lewis** (PhD 2009) is serving as Interim Chair of the Department of Writing, Rhetoric & Digital Studies (WRDS) at UNC Charlotte, and her new book, *Light and Legacies: Stories of Black Girlhood and Liberation*, was published earlier in 2023 by University of South Carolina Press.

**Chris Lombardo's** (MFA+MA 2023) short story, *Forever War*, won 1<sup>st</sup> Place in *Oxford Magazine's* Golden Ox Prose Contest, and was published in Issue 50 of the magazine. He also received a Stories Matter Foundation Masters Award from StoryStudio Chicago.



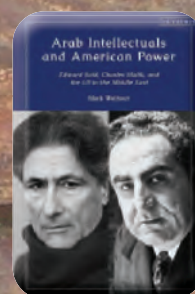
**Carolina Hotchandani**  
*The Book Eaters*



**Janaka Lewis**  
*Light and Legacies: Stories of Black Girlhood and Liberation*



**Suzanne Scanlon**  
*Committed: On Meaning and Madwomen, a memoir*



**Mark Walhout**  
*Arab Intellectuals and American Power: Edward Said, Charles Malik, and the US in the Middle East* (paperback)



## ALUMNI NEWS CONTINUED

**John Edward Martin** (PhD 2006) is Director of Scholarly Communication at the University of North Texas Libraries. This October he curated an exhibit on “Poe in Comics” for the 2023 International Edgar Allan Poe Festival in Baltimore, MD and participated in this year’s Festival of Monsters Symposium at UC-Santa Cruz with a paper on “A Beautiful Monster: Race and Monstrosity in Two Werewolf Tales”. He continues his work as Book Review Editor for the *Edgar Allan Poe Review* and will be hosting a series of virtual forums for the Poe Studies Association over the coming year. In the Spring of 2024, he will begin a semester of leave to work on a book-length monograph on Poe and comics. He would be happy to find a cabin in the woods, a bungalow on the beach, or even an empty apartment in the city in which to write, provided it has good wifi and room for a possessive ragdoll feline research assistant.

**Ben Pauley’s** (PhD 2004) chapter on authorship and print publication appeared in the 2023 *Oxford Handbook of Samuel Johnson*, and one on early eighteenth-century education was published in

*Daniel Defoe in Context* (Cambridge UP). This semester, he also moved out of chairing the English Department at Eastern Connecticut State University in order to take on an interim role as Associate Provost.

**Wendy Roberts** (PhD 2012) was awarded the 2023 *Early American Literature* Book Prize for her first book, *Awakening Verse: The Poetics of Early American Evangelicalism*. She was awarded an NEH Fellowship for 2023-24 for her second book project on the manuscript presence of Phillis Wheatley (Peters).



**Suzanne Scanlon** (MFA+MA 2023) received the Goldfarb Fellowship for Creative Nonfiction, which gave her the opportunity to attend the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts in Amherst, VA in January 2023.

**Josh Smith’s** (PhD 2011) article, “The Legend of Saint Brendan in Cotton Vespasian A.xiv.” was published in *Seintiau Cymru, Sancti Cambrenses: Astudiaethau ar Seintiau Cymru/Studies in the Saints of Wales* (University of Wales Press, 2022) and “Madog of Edeirnion’s *Strenua cunctorum*: A Welsh-Latin Poem



**Wendy Roberts** and **Jackie Murdock** with **José Villagrana** (one of our own 2009 undergrad alums) at Santa Clara University. Wendy gave a keynote address on Phillis Wheatley (Peters) in late October at “Disrupting Narratives: The Power of the Humanities.”





in Praise of Geoffrey of Monmouth” in *The North American Journal of Celtic Studies* 6: 1-14 (2022). Along with Claire M. Waters (PhD 1998, CLS) and Steven Rozenski (BA 2002), Josh also edited *Mystics, Goddesses, Lovers, and Teachers - Medieval Visions and their Legacies: Studies in Honour of Barbara Newman* (Brepols, 2023). Josh was also awarded a Scholarly Editions and Translations grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, enabling him to spend two years translating a group of Middle Welsh texts known as *Brut y Brenhinedd*.

**Kira Tucker** (MFA+MA 2023) took part in the 2023 Sewanee Writers’ Conference, held in July at the University of the South in Sewanee, TN.

**Abram Van Engen** (PhD 2010) has been promoted to an endowed chair at Washington University in St. Louis, and is now the Stanley Elkin Professor in the Humanities.

In Spring 2023, **Jade Werner** (PhD 2014) was awarded an endowed chair, and is now the proud holder of the Jane E. Ruby Chair in Humanities and Social Sciences at Wheaton College in Massachusetts. The Ruby Chair is awarded in recognition of outstanding teaching and research that has had a demonstrable impact on scholarship and on student learning. Jade also won a Marion & Jasper Whiting Foundation Fellowship to support the development of teaching resources focused on the global nineteenth century. She was able to carry out research and interviews in Malaysia and Singapore this summer thanks to the fellowship. Finally, her essay, co-written with Mimi Warnick, entitled “How to See Global Religion,” came out in a special issue of *MLQ* devoted to “Talking About Religion in 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Literature.”

In July, **Sarah Wilson** (PhD 2020) took on the position at the University of Chicago of Assistant Director of Engagement, Leadership & Society Initiative.

## DEGREES COMPLETED

**Jayme Collins** (PhD)

Dissertation: “Composing in the Field”

**Johana Godfrey** (PhD)

Dissertation: “Victorian Anachronists: Knowing the Past in the Nineteenth-Century Novel”

**Nancy Jiang** (PhD)

Dissertation: “The Trade of Penance: Commercial Practice and Penitential Piety in Late Medieval Literature”

**Chris Lombardo** (MFA+MA)

MA thesis: “The World Ends with Us: Affect, Contact, and Communal Futures in the *Dark Souls* Series”

MFA thesis: “‘Last of the Species’ and Other Stories”

**Suzanne Scanlon** (MFA+MA)

MA thesis: “All of Us Vanishing”

MFA thesis: “Committed, a Memoir”

**Katana Smith** (MFA+MA)

MA thesis: “‘We send a backwards gaze onto thee’: H. Cordelia Ray’s Plural Lyric Sonnets and Black Poetic Communalism”

MFA thesis: “Still Life”

**Kira Tucker** (MFA+MA)

MA thesis: “I Can Live Again: An Eco poetic Meditation”

MFA thesis: “Wild Dream”

**Wenhan Zhang** (PhD, CLS)

Dissertation: “Conscience under Tyranny: Resistance and the Problem of Judgment in Sixteenth-Century English and Scottish Thought”

## JOB PLACEMENT

**Sam Botz** (PhD 2022) Assistant Professor at the University of Alaska Fairbanks

**Brad Dubos** (PhD 2021) Assistant Professor at Ohio State University

**Nancy Jiang** (PhD 2023) Teaching Fellow at the University of Warwick in Coventry, UK

**Kira Tucker** (MFA+MA 2023) Assistant Managing Editor for Northwestern’s *TriQuarterly*



## GRADUATE PAPERS & CONFERENCES

### JANUARY

#### Modern Language Association

San Francisco, CA

**Paulina Jones-Torregrosa** (PhD candidate)

“Archive and Actant: New Methods in Black and Latinx Feminist Literatures”

**S Yarberry** (PhD candidate)

“Transness, Transmutability, and Creation in William Blake’s *The Book of Urizen*”

### FEBRUARY

#### Newberry Consortium in American Indian and Indigenous Studies Graduate Student Conference

Chicago, IL

**Mariana Gutierrez-Lowe** (PhD candidate)

“Indigenous Maternal Archives: Katherine Garret, Pamphlets, and Reading Otherwise”

#### Zora Neale Hurston Annual Conference

Bethune-Cookman University

**Lauren Johnson** (2<sup>nd</sup>-year PhD)

“Obligatory and Alternative Sights/Sites: Gaze, Desire, and the Constraints of Heterosexual Marriages in Fauset and Hurston”

### MARCH

#### American Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies

St. Louis, MO

**S Yarberry**

“Transness, Transmutability, and Creation in William Blake’s *The Book of Urizen*”

**Allie Gibeily** (PhD candidate)

“‘Eyes in all parts?’ Indigenous Knowledge, Archival Absence, and the Limitations of Empiricism in Thomas Sprat’s *A Relation of the Pico Teneriffe*”

**Jennifer Comerford** (PhD candidate)

“Finding Common Ground: The Phenomenology of Wandering in *Pride and Prejudice*”

#### American Comparative Literature Association

Chicago, IL

**Allie Gibeily**

“Punctuating Solidarity...Ekphrasis & Description in *Lotus*”

#### *Afro-Asian Writings*”

**Sreddy Yen** (PhD candidate)

“Bessie Head, Bandung Humanism, and Thought of the Whole-World”

### APRIL

#### (In)Habit: University of Toronto’s Graduate English Association Conference

University of Toronto

**Elena Bellaart** (PhD candidate)

“Dwelling Askew: Queer Orientations and Domestic Space in Elizabeth Stoddard’s *The Morgesons*”

#### 5<sup>th</sup> Biennial Latinx Literary Theory & Criticism Conference

City University of New York Graduate Center

**Mariana Gutierrez Lowe**

“‘because she was a mother too’: Mothering and Carework in Helena Maria Viramontes’s *Their Dogs Came with Them*”

**Allie Ibarra** (PhD candidate)

“Out of the Tar Pits: Embodied Knowledge in *Under the Feet of Jesus*”

#### The Society for the Study of Multi-Ethnic Literature

Butler University

**Paulina Jones-Torregrosa**

“Latino/a American Provocations in *Cuentos: Stories by Latinas*”

### MAY

#### African Literature Association

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

**Sreddy Yen**

“Errant Human(itarian)ism and Mphuthumi Ntabeni’s *The Wanderers*”

#### British Women Writers Conference

Charlottesville, VA

**Elizabeth Winter** (PhD candidate)

“Legal Liberties and their Literary Limits: Bi-Racial Women and the Bigamy Plot”

#### Strategies of Critique 2023: Care and Cure

Toronto, Ontario

**Harrison Graves** (PhD candidate)

“‘Who Is You?’: Narratology, Social Death, and Black

## PAPERS & CONFERENCES CONTINUED

Masculinities in Barry Jenkins's *Moonlight*"

### JULY

#### Association for the Study of Literature and Environment

Portland, OR

**Phoebe Pan** (3<sup>rd</sup>-year PhD)

"Against Earth-Alienation: Galactic Intimacies and Poetic Futures" [a paper on the poetry of Ada Limon, Natalie Diaz, and Rio Cortez]

### AUGUST

#### Postgraduate Writers' Conference

Burlington, VT

**May Dugas** (3<sup>rd</sup>-year MFA+MA)

"Dread the Unthought"

### OCTOBER

#### Association for the Study of the Arts of the Present

Seattle, WA

**Irene Kim** (PhD candidate)

"Live(ly) and On-Air: Pneumatic Affects in Carl Cheng's Alternative TVs"

**Anna Zalokostas** (PhD candidate)

"Run Aground: The Shipping Industry and the Carceral State in Francisco Goldman's *The Ordinary Seaman*"

#### Tufts Graduate Humanities Conference

Tufts University

**Agam Balooni** (PhD candidate)

"The Neoliberal Form of Old Horror" to be presented at the panel "Forms of Work/Works of Form"

#### National Women's Studies Association

Baltimore, MD

**Paulina Jones-Torregrosa**

"Third World Reproductive Justice in Triple Jeopardy"

#### Modernist Studies Association Annual Conference

Brooklyn, NY

**Philip Ellefson** (PhD candidate)

"Through the Airshaft: Class Formation and the Built Environment in Michael Gold's 'Jews Without Money'"

### NOVEMBER

#### American Studies Association

Montreal, Quebec

**Paulina Jones-Torregrosa**

"Coalitional, Anti-Colonial, and Reproductive Rhetorics in Triple Jeopardy"

**Harrison Graves**

"Who Is You?": Narratology, Social Death, and Black Masculinities in Barry Jenkins's *Moonlight*"

#### North American Victorian Studies Associate

University of Indiana, Bloomington

**Elizabeth Winter**

"What's in a Name: Racial Difference and Liberal Reform in Wilkie Collins' *Aramadale*"



We are grateful to everyone who has donated to the department over the years. It is with your continued support that we are able to offer our graduate students the many opportunities for research and professionalization funding available to them.

We list here, with our most sincere thanks, our valued donors from this past year.

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# Musings

2023 Newsletter

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Please send thoughts and news to

## **Musings**

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