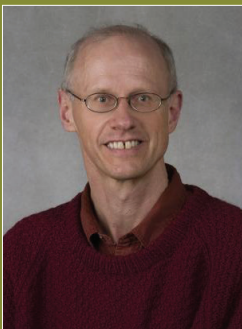


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**A NOTE
 FROM THE
 CHAIR:
 JON
 WILCOX**



*Jonathan Wilcox,
 English Department Chair and
 John C. Gerber Professor of English*

The key to our identity as a humanities department within a College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is something we take for granted and yet is something that bears rearticulating – the value of imparting a Liberal Arts education for all citizens; the importance of the imagination and a place to nurture it; the significance of humanistic research for understanding the complexities of society; the value of a top-notch research university that can provide a great education to more than just the elite; the importance of cultivating a febrile environment in which young people can experiment and play with their identity and in which it is ok to be bookish and to be smart; the value of tenure as a vehicle for maintaining free inquiry; the centrality of diversity for engaging so many issues in society; the significance of research on fields that some might consider arcane and on those (like medieval literature) that are plainly central. Iowa English provides a place to experiment with language and to critically examine the nature of society past, present, and future through engaging the stories that people tell.

A Note from the Chair continues on Page 2



An Invitation to Iowa English

Welcoming Prospective Students:
 Face-to-Face with Student Ambassadors
 Studying the City of Literature
 Living Literature: An LLC Partnership

New Faculty Spotlight
 Kerry Howley & Inara Verzemnieks
 Join the Nonfiction Writing Program

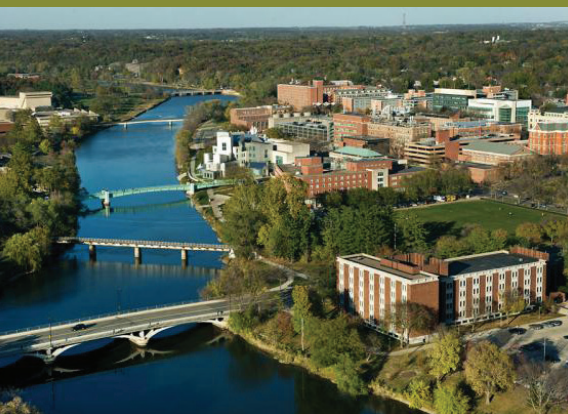
**A National Leader
 in English Education**
 Remembering Richard “Jix” Lloyd-Jones

A Note from the Chair continued from Page 1

With so much to offer, we are keen to connect with students to ensure they benefit from what our English Department can offer. Even in a time of declines in the humanities, Iowa English remains a valued destination for many. We have seen the number of our majors decline slightly (from 840 in Fall 2014 to 794 in Fall 2015), even as we have seen the number of first-year students enrolling with a declared major in English increase (from 130 in Fall 2014 to 157 this year), suggesting we will maintain our place as one of the largest and most vibrant departments in the university. The following pages will give some idea of our new initiatives to connect with incoming students and of why Iowa English continues to thrive.

The heart of the major lies in the strength of our courses, with their small-group attentiveness to student achievement in writing and reading, analysis and informed imaginative engagement. And yet a few additional events are invaluable for cementing a sense of community among undergraduates. Two student-run organizations, The English Society and Alpha Tau Iota (UI's Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, International English Honors Society), reflect student enthusiasms and receive modest support from the department drawn wholly from discretionary donor support. Each spring the Undergraduate Recognition Ceremony provides some formal recognition of the considerable and varied achievements through a wonderful event that is wholly funded by discretionary donor support, while donor scholarships facilitate and recognize the progress of many of these talented undergraduates.

Of course, the vitality of the faculty stands at the center of the department. We are delighted to welcome two new colleagues to the nonfiction writing side of the department, briefly featured below. And, as the following pages will attest, faculty continue with the exciting work of publishing and sharing their knowledge in many venues, as well as providing leadership across the university. Thanks to all who facilitated the nurturing of our community! ♡



The English Philosophy Building (bottom right) along the Iowa River on the University of Iowa campus.

An Invitation to Iowa



English Professor Phillip Round, Academic Advisor Kate Torno, and Student Ambassador Anna Tonsfeldt meet with prospective students and parents in the English Philosophy Building.

Face-to-Face with Iowa English: *New Student Ambassadors, Professors, and the English Academic Advisor Meet Year-Round With Prospective Majors*

For a prospective student, the transition into college can feel like a leap into the unknown: just ahead are four years in a new place among new people, where there are classes to master, interests to discover, and a future to build. It can be tough to know what to expect, or how to choose between universities or fields of study.

The best representatives of programs and universities are often current students, who can share their experiences and help prospective students decide on the right match for themselves. In a new initiative that began in the 2014-2015 school year, the English Department now facilitates meetings between prospective students, parents, and Student Ambassadors, current English majors who can paint a clear picture of life in the major, and give early advice for making the most out of life at the University of Iowa. The English Department was one of the first departments at the university to prioritize such outreach through Student Ambassadors, a program that is now coordinated on a much larger scale by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

In meeting with prospective students and parents, the Student Ambassadors in Iowa English are joined by the English Academic Advisor, Kate Torno, and a volunteering English professor. All together, this team provides prospective students with multiple perspectives in a single, streamlined visit to the English Department.

Christine Crowley, a senior English major from Des Moines, IA who aspires to teach literature at the collegiate level, has been a Stu-

dent Ambassador since the program began. "My favorite thing about being a Student Ambassador is definitely meeting new students and seeing the same fears I had and the same questions I had, and being able to answer," Crowley said. "To assuage those fears and give them some direction for one of the biggest decisions they're going to make in their lives."

For Kate Torno, who directs the Student Ambassador program within the English Department, the primary aim in these meetings is to help prospective students find the right fit. While parents and prospective majors want to hear from different voices in the department, Torno said, they take what the Student Ambassadors have to say the most seriously.

Continued on Page 3



Student Ambassador Christine Crowley (center right) talks with prospective students and parents in the Gerber Lounge at the You@UI Academic and Student Center.

English: Reaching Out to Prospective Students

Continued from Page 2

"Students and parents respond warmly to the students," Torno said. "They really trust the student experience."

Student Ambassador Anna Tonsfeldt, a third-year English Major from Le Mars, IA who plans on applying for the Teach For America program, relays her experiences to help prospective majors feel more prepared for college life and enjoy their time at the university. "I was a little terrified coming here, and I feel like I can really connect with them and say, 'It's not that terrifying, you're going to be okay, here are the main things you need to know,'" Tonsfeldt said.

A major question from prospective students has been about size, said Professor Tom Simmons, who volunteers to meet with visiting students. "Though we have 800 majors, the way the classes are structured and the size of the classes means that people meet each other quickly and develop pretty strong bonds over the course of four years," Simmons said. "I only rarely had at Stanford anything like the kinds of connections that I've seen with my students at Iowa. It's a really good place to make very smart friends, people who think like you or people who think differently from you but who are very compassionate and respectful toward your opinion."

"I think studying literature teaches you a great empathy for other people," Crowley said. "Because we love characters, we care for their stories, so we care for other people—it just kind of follows. It rounds you out as a person and makes you a world citizen."

Support for Students



Professor Claire Sponsler (left) and current and prospective students at Student Life Open House, Fall 2015.

The support offered to prospective students is an extension of the larger culture of student-focused engagement within the English Department. "The faculty here are incredibly supportive," Simmons said. "If I were talking to a prospective student right now, I would say, 'You can knock on the door of any faculty member and say, 'I don't know what I'm doing, can you help me?' And that faculty member would say, 'Sure.'"

"Student well-being is a primary concern," Simmons said. "Emails about students among the faculty in English are among the highest priority emails. If there is any concern from anybody about anybody, that's the first thing that gets answered."

That culture of support and engagement in the learning environment springs from the relationships that the English faculty members have with each other, Simmons said. "We work well together, we admire each other, and we care about each other's work," Simmons said. "We're very pleased to be colleagues for each other, but we're even more pleased to help the students who ask for our help."

"I've really grown to love the faculty here," said fourth-year English Major and Student Ambassador Steven Raines. "They've been extremely helpful in making me a better student and helping me with questions, inside and outside of class."

Raines, who is from Mokena, IL and aspires to become a criminal prosecutor, named English Professor Florence Boos as a major mentor who's been crucial in fostering his exponential growth as a student. Raines has taken three classes with Boos, and with her guidance enrolled in a graduate seminar as an undergraduate. "It's really made me a better critical thinker. I'm better at arguing, which my friends and family don't appreciate as much," Raines said, laughing.

Along with support from the faculty, the prospective students learn they can also turn to the English Academic Advisor for help with fulfilling requirements. "Our department is fortunate to have an incredibly capable undergraduate advisor in Kate Torno," Simmons said. "Kate knows the system better than anyone I've ever seen. If you get in a jam with requirements, she can perform miracles."

"If you decide you want to major in English," Simmons said, "you will be well supported all the way through." ♡



LOREN GLASS
Professor of English

English Professor Loren Glass, shown in the documentary, *City of Literature*, now teaches a class on Iowa City's storied literary history.

A Tour in Books: Welcoming University of Iowa Freshmen to the City of Literature

Literature is dynamic and alive in Iowa City—it is studied, written, and printed here with passion and energy, just as it is carved into our streets, spoken into our microphones, and transmitted through our airwaves. Iowa City draws people who love literature from across the nation and across the globe, from the celebrated and long-established to young, aspiring writers and scholars at the very beginnings of their careers. A new course developed by Professor Loren Glass, "City of Literature," introduces undergraduates—often new to Iowa City and to college life—to this literary world, and utilizes literature produced in or connected to Iowa City to set in motion the students' study of English at the collegiate level.

Glass's course, taught for the first time in Fall 2015, is comprised mostly of freshmen who expressed an interest in English or Creative Writing, and were preregistered by the University in the class. "One of the most gratifying things so far has been so many of those students telling me how glad they were that this was done for them, how much they like the class," Glass said.

The curriculum for the course was loosely based on Benjamin Hill's 2012 documentary, *City of Literature*, which in turn was heavily influenced by Glass's scholarship on Iowa City's literature and literary history. The course covers the period from the founding of the Writers' Workshop to the recent designation of Iowa City as a UNESCO City of Literature, and includes readings from the faculty and graduates of the Writers' Workshop and the Nonfiction Writing Program. The course also engages the city itself, with public readings, interviews with writers, walking tours, and archival research. Because of the wealth of strong material available from writers based in or connected to Iowa City, Glass said, the course can be taught in a new way every year.

Glass, who usually teaches declared majors, has been impressed with his freshman students. "I've been really gratified by their engagement, by their interest in literature. A lot of them want to be poets and writers," Glass said, "so they really appreciate the opportunity to learn how this all began here, how this became a center of creative writing." ♡



New Faculty Spotlight

The Department of English warmly welcomes Kerry Howley and Inara Verzemnieks to the Faculty of the Nonfiction Writing Program and Iowa English.



Kerry Howley

Assistant Professor
Nonfiction Writing Program, Department of English

Kerry Howley brings an exciting new talent to the Nonfiction Writing Program faculty. Her recent book, *Thrown*, was a *New York Times* Notable Book of 2014, inspiring critics to praise her writing as “extraordinary,” “incredibly bracing,” and reminiscent of “some of the boldest voices of twentieth-century fiction.” Forthcoming in German, Dutch, British, French, and Swedish editions, *Publisher’s Weekly* said that the book-length essay “threatens to remap the entire genre of nonfiction.”

Howley’s essays, excerpts, and reportage have been published in *Granta*, *The Paris Review*, *Harper’s*, *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *Bookforum*, and *New York Magazine*. “Much of what I love about the essay is its potential for playfulness,” Howley said. “I like to approach the genre as an opportunity not just to experiment but to play with the reader’s expectations.” With her new appointment as Assistant Professor in the Nonfiction Writing Program, Howley teaches an undergraduate course in personal writing and a graduate-level essay writing workshop, encouraging her students to push the boundaries of the genre. “I would love to see us come back around to what the Romantic essayists were doing, which was this meeting of fact and memory and imagination presented in this elegantly, fiercely intelligent playful way. That’s where I would like the essay to go,” Howley said.

A graduate of the University of Iowa’s Nonfiction Writing Program, where she was admitted as an Iowa Arts Fellow, Howley is currently writing a work of literary journalism about insiders in the Iowa caucus process. Howley’s vision for the essay continues to inspire and surprise as she leads the genre into new realms of rediscovery and reinterpretation. ♡

Inara Verzemnieks

Assistant Professor
Nonfiction Writing Program, Department of English

With an inspiring ability to challenge, witness, and take risks, Inara Verzemnieks champions the central questions of what it really means to watch and listen. A finalist for a Pulitzer Prize in Featured Journalism for her writing at Portland’s *The Oregonian*, where she served as a reporter for thirteen years, as well as a Pushcart Prize winner and the recipient of a Rona Jaffe Foundation Writer’s Award, Verzemnieks’s essays and journalism have appeared in *The New York Times Magazine*, *Tin House*, *The Atlantic*, *The Iowa Review*, and *Creative Nonfiction*.

Verzemnieks’s first book, a memoir forthcoming from W.W. Norton, retraces the steps of her grandmother and great-aunt in the wake of World War II, and recounts her own journey back to the remote Latvian village where her family broke apart. A graduate of the University of Iowa’s Nonfiction Writing Program, Verzemnieks teaches an undergraduate course on personal writing and a graduate essay writing workshop, and seeks to remind her students of “the jolt, the surprise, the energy that comes from being in the unfolding present.” Verzemnieks emphasizes a scrupulous vigilance and curiosity toward the outside world: “Make yourself alert to that which is unseen. It takes time to realize what you haven’t been noticing all along—the hidden center of something.”

Verzemnieks’s current work includes an investigation of the shadows and gaps in healthcare in the U.S. and a project that considers “everything from the famous soccer player George Best to the artist Agnes Martin to rodeo queens to a blacksmith to a couple who essentially get transposed in their different paths of addiction and of recovery.” Verzemnieks will continue building stories that transform the craft and study of nonfiction writing into a world of powerful and enduring possibility. ♡

An Invitation to Iowa English

Living Literature:

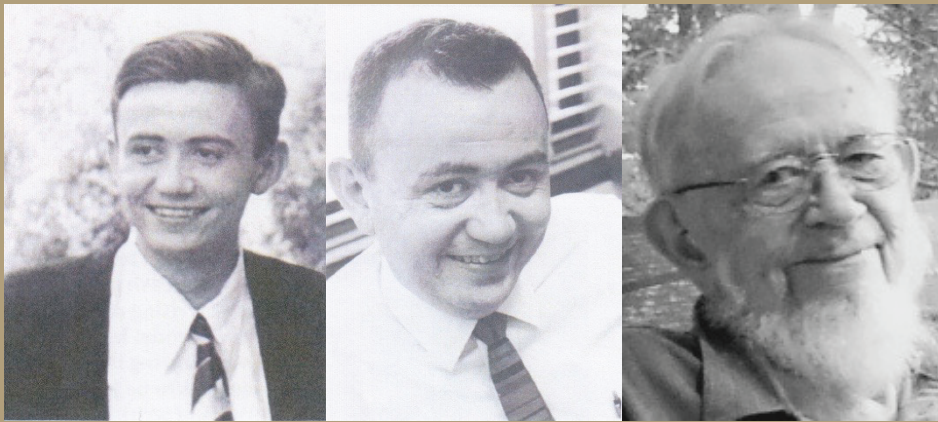
The Department of English Partners with a Living-Learning Community in the New Petersen Residence Hall

In a Living-Learning Community (LLC), first-year college students study and live alongside their peers in a group environment centered on an interest of their choice. Beginning in Fall 2015, the Department of English is partnering with the LLC, “Living Literature,” which invites students to “experience literature come to life with other students and faculty who love reading and writing”

in North America’s only UNESCO City of Literature. During the Fall 2015 semester, Academic Advisor Kate Torno and Director of Undergraduate Studies Lena Hill have taken the lead in developing this partnership, by involving LLC students in Loren Glass’s “City of Literature” class, the Iowa City Book Festival, the English @ Work program, National Novel Writing Month, and many more anticipated events in the future. ♡

Richard “Jix” Lloyd-Jones

A National Leader in English Education



Through the Years: Richard Lloyd-Jones, August 25, 1927 - October 7, 2014

Professor Richard “Jix” Lloyd-Jones, a national leader in English Education who tirelessly served the University of Iowa and the Department of English for four decades, died peacefully in his home on October 7, 2014. He was 87.

An exceptionally dedicated scholar and innovator, Lloyd-Jones’s ideas and efforts were nationwide in their reach and long-lasting in their influence. Together with University of Iowa Professors Richard Braddock and Lowell Shoer, Lloyd-Jones co-authored the seminal work *Research in Written Composition*. Published in 1963, the book was the first major survey and analysis of composition research to appear in thirty years, and sparked decades of further scholarship in the field. As chair of the UI Department of English, Lloyd-Jones was an instrumental force in the development of the PhD program in rhetoric and composition and—working with Professor Carl Klaus—the master’s program in nonfiction writing, both of which became national models.

Lloyd-Jones led the University of Iowa’s English Department as chair and as Director of the School of Letters from 1976 to 1985, having previously served as Iowa English’s Director of Undergraduate Studies for eleven years and the Director of the General Education Literature Program for four years. He developed a formal program for training and mentoring graduate teaching assistants, created the col-

laborative, team-taught “English Semester” program, and beginning in 1957, served on the University of Iowa Faculty Senate and Faculty Council for a combined 29 years. UI University of Iowa Emeritus Professor of English John Harper wrote of Lloyd-Jones, “Few faculty members have ever served the University of Iowa with such distinction in so many different roles.”

At the national level Lloyd-Jones served terms as, among other leadership positions, President of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the first elected President of the College Conference on Composition and Communication (CCCC). He was honored with the NCTE’s Distinguished Service Award in 2002 and the CCCC’s inaugural Exemplar Award, which recognized Lloyd-Jones as “a person who has served as an exemplar for the organization and represented the highest ideals of scholarship, teaching, and service to the entire profession.”

“An awful lot of us were fortunate to have him as a teacher and as a mentor, a word that I do not use lightly,” wrote Doug Hesse, Director of Writing at the University of Denver and alum of the master’s program in nonfiction writing. “Everything about his career and his personal life was exemplary.”

Lloyd-Jones first joined the Department of English in 1951 at the age of twenty-four, as a PhD candidate specializing in Victorian

poetry. A son of Mason City, Iowa, an Eagle Scout who had contended with dyslexia and hearing loss in order to compete on his high school debate team, Lloyd-Jones returned to Iowa after serving in the U.S. Army and attending college in New Mexico on the G.I. Bill. By the time he retired from the Department of English forty-five years later in 1996, he had become not only a beloved professor and colleague and a giant in the field of English composition; he was also a major voice for English teachers and students of writing across the nation. He argued for small classes that facilitated active discussions and close interactions and relationships with students, for setting conditions in the classroom that fostered creativity and openness over rote standardization, and for the rights of students to use their own distinctive voices in their creative and academic work. He recognized, again and again, the great difficulty and the greater gifts of teaching English: in his keynote address for a joint meeting of English teachers and composition scholars in Louisiana, Lloyd-Jones said, “We in English Language Arts are assigned the most frustrating, exhausting, and painful task of all—and yet the one with the greatest rewards—helping people find the words that will put them at peace with themselves and the world.”

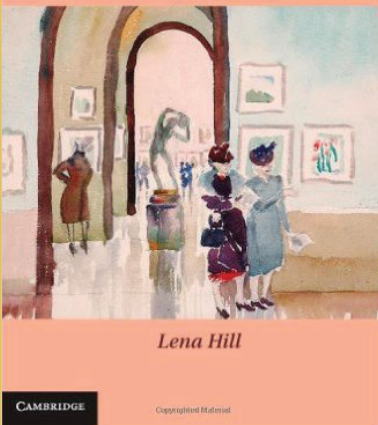
“We remember Jix Lloyd-Jones as a quiet and modest man, who left a giant imprint in all of his professional endeavors,” wrote Professor John Harper. “Much of the way we view the teaching of writing at every level in the educational system, and the way we understand the organization and mission of English departments, can be traced to his imagination and his efforts.”

The Versatile Writer Award in honor of Richard “Jix” Lloyd-Jones

Funded by generous donations from the family and friends of Richard Lloyd-Jones, the new Versatile Writer Award is granted to three Iowa high school students who excel at writing creative nonfiction. Administered by the Department of English and funded through the UI Foundation, this award is judged by Iowa English’s Nonfiction Writing Program and UI’s Language, Literacy, and Culture Program in the College of Education.

Recent Books By Our Faculty

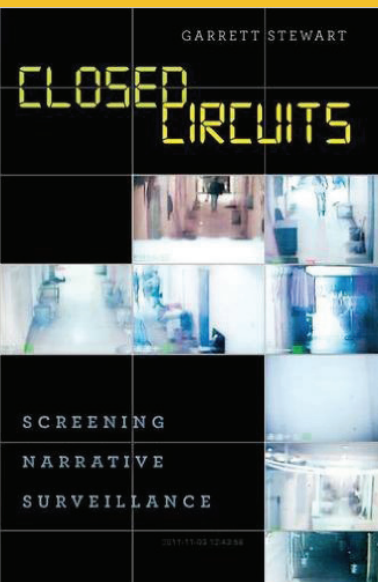
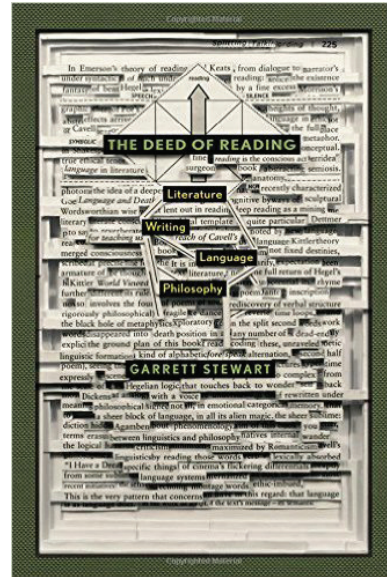
Visualizing Blackness and the Creation of the African American Literary Tradition



LENA HILL
Visualizing Blackness and the Creation of the African American Literary Tradition
Lena Hill charts two hundred years of African American literary history, from Phillis Wheatley to Ralph Ellison, and engages with a variety of canonical and lesser-known writers. Chapters interweave literary history, museum culture, and visual analysis of numerous illustrations with close readings of Booker T. Washington, Gwendolyn Bennett, Zora Neale Hurston, Melvin Tolson, and others. Together, these sections register the degree to which African American writers rely on vision - its modes, consequences, and insights - to demonstrate black intellectual and cultural sophistication. Hill's provocative study will interest scholars and students of African American literature and American literature more broadly. (Cambridge University Press, 2014)

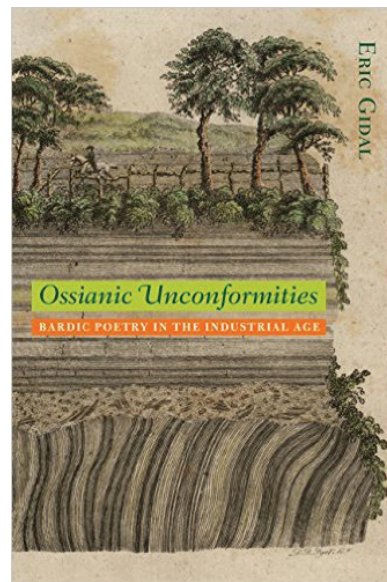
GARRETT STEWART The Deed of Reading

To take the measure of literary writing, The Deed of Reading convenes diverse philosophic commentary on the linguistics of literature, with stress on the complementary work of Stanley Cavell and Giorgio Agamben. Sympathetic to recent ventures in form-attentive analysis but resisting an emphasis on so-called surface reading, Stewart explores not some new formalism but the internal pressures of language in formation, registering the verbal infrastructure of literary prose as well as verse. In this mode of "contextual" reading, the context is language itself. Literary phrasing, tapping the speech act's own generative pulse, emerges as a latent philosophy of language in its own right, whereby human subjects, finding no secure place to situate themselves within language, settle for its taking place in, through, and between them. (Cornell University Press, 2015)



GARRETT STEWART
Closed Circuits: Screening Narrative Surveillance
In Closed Circuits, Garrett Stewart analyzes a broad spectrum of films, from M and Rear Window through The Conversation to Déjà Vu, Source Code, and The Bourne Legacy, in which cinema has articulated—and performed—the drama of inspection's unreturned look. While mainstays of the thriller, both the act and the technology of surveillance, Stewart argues, speak to something more foundational in the very work of cinema. The shared axis of montage and espionage—with editing designed to draw us in and make us forget the omnipresence of the narrative camera—extends to larger questions about the politics of an oversight regime that is increasingly remote and robotic. To such a global technopticon, one telltale response is a proliferating mode of digitally enhanced "surveillancinema." (University of Chicago Press, 2015)

ERIC GIDAL
Ossianic Unconformities: Bardic Poetry in the Industrial Age
In Ossianic Unconformities Eric Gidal introduces the idiosyncratic publications of a group of nineteenth-century Scottish eccentrics who used statistics, cartography, and geomorphology to map and thereby vindicate [James] Macpherson's controversial eighteenth-century renderings of Gaelic oral traditions. Although these writers primarily sought to establish the authenticity of Macpherson's "translations," they came to record, through promotion, evasion, and confrontation, the massive changes being wrought upon Scottish and Irish lands by British industrialization. Their obsessive and elaborate attempts to fix both the poetry and the land into a stable set of coordinates developed what we can now perceive as a nascent ecological perspective on literature in a changing world. (University of Virginia Press, 2015)



CHRISTOPHER MERRILL
Boat: Poems
Like Neruda and Paz, Perse and Milosz, Christopher Merrill is both a writer and a diplomat, crisscrossing the globe as chronicler and courier. Boat records a series of passages over a decade, employing varied formal strategies: meditations and fantasias, prose poems and versets, lyric sequences and narratives, translations and ghazals. Composed in war zones and embassies, refugee camps and monasteries, Boat is a logbook tracking questions of memory, the body and body politic, faith, mortality, and the ways knowledge moves through generations. (Tupelo Press, 2013)

KERRY HOWLEY
Thrown
In this darkly funny work of literary nonfiction, a bookish young woman insinuates herself into the lives of two cage fighters—one a young prodigy, the other an aging journeyman. Acclaimed essayist Kerry Howley follows these men for three years through the bloody world of mixed martial arts as they starve themselves, break bones, fail their families and form new ones in the quest to rise from remote Midwestern fairgrounds to packed Vegas arenas. With penetrating intelligence and wry humor, Howley exposes the profundities and absurdities of this American subculture. (Sarabande, 2014)



Claire Sponsler Named M.F. Carpenter Professor in English

The University of Iowa College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has appointed Claire Sponsler, English Professor specializing in medieval literature and past Chair of the Department of English, to the M.F. Carpenter Professorship.

In commending Sponsler, Dean Chaden Djalali of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences said, “Her contributions to our college and university, and to her discipline on a national and international level, are extraordinary and make her very deserving of this recognition.”



Pictured Above: Dean Chaden Djalali of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, M.F. Carpenter Professor Claire Sponsler, and 2007-2015 University of Iowa President Sally Mason at the 2015 CLAS Faculty Honors Celebration.

Blaine Greteman Named Dean’s Scholar, Awarded Stanford Humanities Fellowship



Professor Blaine Greteman, Dean’s Scholar and Stanford Fellow

English Professor Blaine Greteman has been named a Dean’s Scholar by the the University of Iowa’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Greteman, who joined the Department of English in 2009, was one of three Dean’s Scholars chosen by the College. The scholars were commended for their world-class scholarship, teaching, and public engagement at the 2015 CLAS Faculty Honors Celebration.

The author of *The Poetics and Politics of Youth in Milton’s England*, Greteman’s work focuses on early modern book history, poetry, and drama. His two year Dean’s Scholar award includes a one-time grant to support teaching and research initiatives.

In May, Greteman was awarded a Stanford Humanities Fellowship, one of the most prestigious and competitive awards for scholarship in the nation.

The Stanford fellowship funds a year of scholarly work, providing Greteman with an opportunity to work on his second book, *Authorship and Influence in the Early Modern Social Network*. The book is based on “Shakeosphere,” a digital project created by Greteman and scholars from the UI School of Library and Information Science. Shakeosphere reveals networks that connected writers, publishers, printers, authors, and readers together from 1473-1800 by bringing together far-flung data about these literary figures for the first time in a single place.

Miriam Thaggert wins 2015-2016 Newberry Library Fellowship



Professor Miriam Thaggert, Newberry Library Fellow, is at work on her next book, *Riding Jane Crow: Women and the Railroad in African American Culture*.

Professor Miriam Thaggert has been awarded a 2015-2016 Newberry Library’s National Endowment for the Humanities/Lloyd Lewis Fellowship in American History.

As an NEH/Lloyd Lewis Fellow, Thaggert is at work on her next book, *Riding Jane Crow: Women and the Railroad in African American Culture*, on the displaced history of African American women and nineteenth century train travel in the United States. Newberry Library Fellows pursue research in the Newberry’s collections, and Thaggert’s book draws on extensive research, including

early African American newspapers, legal proceedings, railroad employee records, oral interviews, and African American literature. In all, the book will detail the nineteenth-century railroad’s social impact on perceptions of race, gender, class, and nationality in American culture.

Thaggert, author of *Images of Black Modernism: Verbal and Visual Strategies of the Harlem Renaissance*, is an Associate Professor of English with joint appointments in the Department of Gender, Women’s and Sexuality Studies and the Program in African American Studies.



Visiting medievalists with their manuscript models outside the English Philosophy Building, Summer 2015.

Jonathan Wilcox Partners with UI Center for the Book for 2015 NEH Summer Seminar: *The Materiality of Medieval Manuscripts*

An innovative 2015 summer seminar led by Iowa English Chair Jonathan Wilcox gave visiting scholars in medieval studies a rare experience: a chance to immerse themselves in bookmaking techniques practiced more than half a millennium ago.

Hands-on mastery of medieval bookmaking techniques is rare, and connections between bookmaking experts and other medievalists are rarer still. Wilcox's sem-

inar, "The Materiality of Medieval Manuscripts: Interpretation through Production," drew on the well of expertise at the University of Iowa Center for the Book, including Center Director Timothy Barrett and professors Sara Sauers, Julie Leonard, and Cheryl Jacobsen. Selected for funding by the National Endowment for Humanities as a Summer Seminar for College and University Teachers, the seminar's intent, as described by Wilcox, was to stimulate "new insight for contemporary medieval-

ist scholars who, through expanding their understanding of books as constructed artifacts, will bring new understanding to the culture, history, and texts of the Middle Ages." While Wilcox originally tested the seminar concept in a 2008 University of Iowa Obermann Summer Research Seminar, this summer workshop was the first NEH seminar of its kind.

Faculty members guided visiting scholars through every stage of manuscript production, from stretching and scraping animal skins for parchment to binding inked pages into a book. The visiting scholars reviewed medieval manuscripts in UI Libraries Special Collections, participated in focused seminar discussions, and created their own manuscript models in connection with their research, which ranged from the study of a fourth century Greek codex of the Christian Bible to a fourteenth century poem on Sir Gawain. Through direct experience, the participants gained a new sensitivity not only to the manuscripts central to their own research, but also to the minds that created and altered those manuscripts over centuries. ♣



Pictured Above: Scholars prepare a skin, stretch and smooth parchment, and write calligraphy at the 2015 NEH Seminar, "The Materiality of Medieval Manuscripts."

A Positive Impact on the Class of 2015

The following English faculty and graduate students have been recognized by the Graduating Class of 2015, President Mason, Provost Butler, and Vice President Tom Rocklin as making a positive difference in University of Iowa student lives:

Bluford Adams, Catina Bacote, Thomas Blake, Linda Bolton, Daniel Boscaljon, Lori Branch, Jennifer Buckley, John D'Agata, Brett DeFries, Kathleen Diffley, Jomil Ebro, Ed Folsom, Patricia Foster, Claire Fox, Loren Glass, Blaine Greteman, David Hamilton, Cheryl Herr, Lena Hill, Michael Hill, Adam Hooks, Mark Isham, Jackie Kleist, Marie Kruger, Brooks Landon, Kathy Lavezzo, Jennifer Loman, Peter Nazareth, Katherine Nesbit, Dylan Nice, Matt Owens, Horace Porter, Jeff Porter, MaryAnn Rasmussen, Rebecca Roma Stoll, Phil Round, Robyn Schiff, Tom Simmons, Sarah Smith, Alvin Snider, Claire Sponsler, Anne Stapleton, Harry Stecopoulos, Garrett Stewart, Stephen Sturgeon, Miriam Thaggert, Inara Verzemnieks, Stephen Voyce, Joshua Wheeler, Jon Wilcox, Doris Witt, and David Wittenberg.

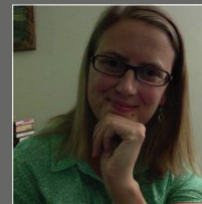
Recognition was published in The Daily Iowan on April 30, 2015.

Excellence in Teaching Graduate Student Teaching Awards

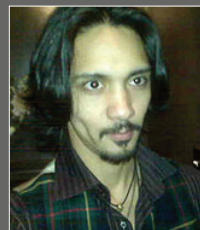
The UI Department of English congratulates the following 2014-2015 Graduate Student Awardees for their commitment to excellence in the instruction of our undergraduates:



Annmarie Steffes, English



Stephanie Grossnickle-Batterton, English



Jomil Ebro, English



Helen Rubinstein, English (NWP)

2015 Outstanding University Teaching Assistant Award

Jennifer Janecek
Helen Rubinstein
Katlyn Williams

John C. Gerber Teaching Award
Annmarie Steffes

W.R. Irwin Teaching Award

Jomil Ebro
Stephanie Grossnickle-Batterton

Carl Klaus Teaching Award

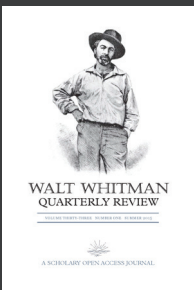
Erick Brucker



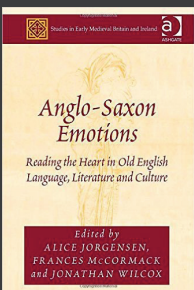
Philological Quarterly, Fall 2014, ed. Eric Gidal



The Iowa Review, Spring 2015, ed. Harry Stecopoulos



Walt Whitman Quarterly Review, Summer 2015 ed. Ed Folsom



Anglo Saxon Emotions, 2015, co-ed. Jonathan Wilcox

LORI BRANCH was selected to speak at the Geneva Lecture Series, presenting on “The Religious Turn: Postsecular Approaches for Literature and the Humanities.”

JENNIFER BUCKLEY was chosen as one of three co-leaders for the 2015-16 Obermann Center for Advanced Studies Working Group, “Performance Studies.”

COREY CREEKMUR was selected for a two-week NEH-sponsored workshop at Middlebury College on “Scholarship in Sound & Image,” which focused on the video essay as a creative and critical text. Thirteen participants representing four countries were selected for the workshop from over one hundred applicants.

BARBARA ECKSTEIN was one of three co-directors of the Spring 2015 Obermann Humanities Symposium, “Energy Cultures in the Age of the Anthropocene.” Eckstein was also co-director of the successful Spring 2015 Obermann Graduate Institute on Engagement and the Academy.

ED FOLSOM served as continuing Editor for the international journal of record for Whitman studies, the *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review*, which became an open-access journal with its Summer 2015 (Volume 33, Number 1) issue. Folsom is also continuing co-director for The Walt Whitman Archive, which published more than 1,200 letters and added early notebooks,

a new section of fiction, a newly discovered poem, and the journalistic series “New York Dissected” to its collection during the 2014-2015 school year.

PATRICIA FOSTER published essays in the *Antioch Review*, the *Florida Review*, the *Southern Humanities Review*, and *Steerforth Press*. Two of her essays – “Contingencies” (*Antioch Review*) and “In Transit” (*The Sun*) were named Notable Essays in *Best American Essays, 2014*. Foster was also nominated for a Pushcart Prize.

CLAIRE FOX received an honorable mention for the Modern Language Association’s Katherine Singer Kovacs Prize. The prize committee wrote of Fox’s recent book, *Making Art Panamerican: Cultural Policy and the Cold War*, “Based on extensive archival research and an in-depth analysis of primary sources, Fox’s work makes a valuable contribution to the study of cultural policy, art institutions, and the circulation of intellectuals, artists, and artworks between the United States and Latin America from the early 1940s to the late 1960s.”

As continuing Editor for *Philological Quarterly*, Iowa English’s international journal on medieval European and modern literature and culture, ERIC GIDAL oversaw the accelerated publication of the journal, bringing its quarterly releases close to the cover date for recent issues.

LOREN GLASS won a Gold Medal in the Writing/Publish-

ing category for the Independent Publisher Book Awards. He has also received a special award from the Office of the Vice President for Research and Economic Development in support of the Annual Meeting of the Post45 Collective in November, and garnered Graduate College assistance to help fund an associated graduate student position. Glass was selected as a participant in the Mellon-funded Digital Bridges Summer Institute on digital pedagogy.

KEVIN KOPELSON reviewed Don Bachardy’s *Hollywood* for the *London Review of Books*.

PETER NAZARETH’S *Remembering Singapore*, a two-part book on Singapore literature, has been republished in e-book version by Goa 1556, a publishing house in Goa, India.

As the continuing Editor for *The Iowa Review*, HARRY STECOPOULOS oversaw the publication of its Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 issues. The literary journal, which publishes a wide range of fiction, poetry, nonfiction, and other creative work, included an interview by MICHAEL HILL and a review by LOREN GLASS in recent issues.

JONATHAN WILCOX recently saw the publication of a co-edited volume, *Anglo-Saxon Emotions: Reading the Heart in Old English Literature, Language and Culture* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), which includes his essay, “An Embarrassment of Clues: Interpreting Anglo-Saxon Blushes.”

Pictured Below: English Faculty meet with prospective English majors in Gerber Lounge “Coffee House” for You @ UI Academic & Student Life Open House, Fall 2015



PHD PROGRAM

JACOB BENDER published an essay in the critical edition of Nephthys Anderson's *Dorian*, and a fiction story in *West Trade Review*.

SHUHITA BHATTACHARJEE (Lori Branch, dir.) is an Assistant Professor (TT), Presidency University, Kolkata, India.

BLAKE BRONSON-BARTLETT (Ed Folsom, dir.) is continuing in a postdoc teaching major at the University of Dortmund, Germany.

GEMMA GOODALE-SUSSEN created the Incarcerated in Iowa Symposium, an interdisciplinary event connecting publicly engaged scholars with interested community members, Department of Corrections staff, and prison communities.

COREY HICKNER-JOHNSON published a piece of peer-reviewed digital scholarship on *United States Studies Online*, a book review in *Modern Language Studies* and public scholarship on feminism in *Feministing* and *The Press Citizen*.

JENNIFER JANECEK published an article on *Dombey and Son* and *Bleak House* in *Dickens Studies Annual*, as well as peer-reviewed web-texts on 19th-century disability and reviews for *Disabilities, Inc.*

NICHOLAS KELLY received the Ballard and Seashore Dissertation Fellowship.

HALEY LARSON published four poems in *ecolinguistics* and col-

laborated on a film featured in the *Continental Review*.

SARAH WALKER LIVESAY won the Prairie Lights/Sherman Paul Dissertation Research Scholarship and the Frederick F. Seely Distinguished Dissertation Fellowship.

JENNIFER LOMAN received the Ballard and Seashore Dissertation Fellowship, the Marcus Bach Graduate Fellowship, and the Futures of American Studies Travel Award.

ELIZABETH LUNDBERG (Brooks Landon and Naomi Greyser, co-dirs.) accepted a position as an Academic Advisor at the University of Iowa's Advising Center.

SONJA MAYRHOFER (Claire Sponsler, dir.) has accepted a position as Visiting Assistant Professor, English Dept., University of Iowa.

BENJAMIN MIELE (Adam Hooks, dir.) accepted a position as Visiting Assistant Professor, English Dept., University of Iowa.

JOSHUA MINER (Linda Bolton, dir.) accepted an Assistant Professor (TT) position in the Department of Film and Media Studies at University of Kansas.

KATHERINE NESBIT published an article on Thomas Holcroft's *A Tale of Mystery* in the *European Romantic Review*.

GEMMICKA PIPER won the ACT Scholars Award and the Edwin Piper Award.

MARIJA REIFF won the Dickens

Universe Department Tuition Scholarship, and published a paper on Coleridge's *Zapolya* in the *Coleridge Bulletin*.

TIMOTHY ROBBINS (Ed Folsom, dir.) accepted a position as Assistant Professor (TT) position at Graceland University, Independence, MO. Robbins won the English Department Best Essay Prize.

SPENSER SANTOS published four translations, including "The Seafarer," on *Asymptote Journal*.

MICHAEL SARABIA (Garrett Stewart and Jonathan Wilcox, co-dirs.) accepted a judicial clerkship with Judge Moses on the Montana District Court at Billings, MT.

STEFAN SCHOEBERLEIN was an Obermann Graduate Fellow and won the Elizabeth Dietz Poetry Essay Prize.

JENNIFER SHOOK served as Co-Director of the PAGE (Publicly Active Graduate Engagement) fellows network with Imagining America, and joined the editorial board of Imagining America's journal PUBLIC.

REBECCA ROMA STOLL (Lori Branch, dir.) accepted a position as Visiting Assistant Professor, English Dept., University of Iowa.

MICHELLE TAYLOR won the Freda Dixon Malone Dissertation Research Scholarship.

KATHERINE WETZEL was an Obermann Graduate Fellow and won the Dickens Universe Depart-

ment Tuition Scholarship. Wetzel published a book review of Mel Y. Chen's *Animacix* in the *Graduate Journal of Social Science*.

ANDREW WILLIAMS (Lori Branch, dir.) accepted a position as Visiting Assistant Professor, English Dept., University of Iowa.

**MFA PROGRAM
(NONFICTION WRITING)**

ERICK BRUCKER (Bonnie Sunstein, dir.) accepted an Adjunct Assistant Professor position at The Magid Center for Undergraduate Writing, University of Iowa.

GEMMA DE CHOISY (John D'Agata, dir.) accepted an Adjunct Assistant Professor position for The Magid Center for Undergraduate Writing, University of Iowa, and the Editor position at *Little Village* magazine.

MAGDA DAVIS's essay, "Ashes Over Havana," was selected for inclusion in *The Best Women's Travel Writing: True Stories From Around the World*.

NAZLI INAL (Bonnie Sunstein, dir.) accepted a Foreign Instructor position at the Sun Yat-sen University Center for English-Language Creative Writing in Guangzhou, China.

SPENSER MESTEL published the essay "How I Conquered 'American Ninja Warrior'" in *Rolling Stone Magazine*.

RANDAL O'WAIN (Patricia Foster, dir.) published the essays "The

"Junk Trade" in *Guernica* magazine, "Like a One-Eyed Cat" in *Oxford American*, and "Superman Dam Fool" in *The Pinch Literary Journal*, among other publications.

HELEN RUBINSTEIN (Patricia Foster, dir.) was named the 2015 Provost's Visiting Writer for Nonfiction at the University of Iowa and the Robert P. Dana Emerging Writing Fellow at Cornell College.

BERNICE SANTIAGO (John D'Agata, dir.) received the Nonfiction Writing Program Administrative Fellowship and the Lloyd-Jones Fellowship at the University of Iowa.

JENNA SAUERS won the Roxanne Mueller Arts Award, judged for the 2014-2015 year by writer Honor Moore.

BEATRICE SMIGASIEWICZ (Jeff Porter, dir.) received a 2015-2016 Fulbright Fellowship to Poland, to write a book of essays on post-Soviet Polish identity.

ANYA VENTURA won the Carl Klaus Nonfiction Prize, judged for the 2014-2015 year by NWP alum Dorian Karchmar.

JOSH WHEELER (John D'Agata, dir.) accepted a tenure track position at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. He also sold his first book, *Acid West*, to Farrar Straus and Giroux.

LAWRENCE YPIL (Jeff Porter, dir.) is an Emerging Writing Fellow in Residence at Yale-NUS College, Singapore. ♡

Celebrating Our Undergraduates

A warm congratulations from the Department of English to our many accomplished students for these scholarships and prizes awarded during the 2014-2015 year:

The Fairall Scholarship
For Iowa born and educated juniors or seniors with preference to students interested in literature from 1900 to the present:

Megan Bowman, Emily Duncan, Alexandra Walgren, Alexander Bradbury, Margaret Dressel, Anthony Koranda, Grace Kreger, Celine La Vonne Uhl, Elizabeth Schwendinger

The Margaret Leuz Einspahr Scholarship

Recognizing excellent students who plan to pursue a career in teaching:

Darien Sloat, Will Kapp

The Anderson Memorial Prize

For students with an interest in writing:

Oluwabunmi Orogun, Dot Armstrong, Mackenzie Bean, Sri Ponnada, Lisa Sullivan, Brittney Callahan, Caitlin Keen

Sherry Simmons Loring Memorial Scholarship

Recognizing students who have demonstrated their commitment to and pleasure in the life of the mind at the University of Iowa:

Kaitlin Twaddle

The Ruth Gulden Holsteen and Charles Sophus Holsteen Memorial Scholarship

For excellence in English:
Nathaniel Otjen

The Darwin T. Turner Award

Recognizing outstanding students who best combine Dr. Turner's devotion to literature and scholarship with his exemplary qualities as teacher and leader:

Oluwabunmi Orogun

The Louise P. Herring Scholarship

Recognizing excellent students with a commitment to English studies as a preparation for life:

Keegan Gormally

The Emily Wagner Memorial Scholarship

For an English major who demonstrates academic excellence and shares Emily's love of literature:

Meg King

The Maloney Family Scholarship

For a student of high academic achievement in the Department of English who wishes to pursue a career in science or medical writing:

Anna Walker

The Golden Pledge Scholarship
For undergraduates from Iowa who demonstrate commitment to and excellence in English:

Christina Crowley, Miranda Pederson, Elli Ruen, Ryan Schroeder, Caitlin Yeggy, Elizabeth Halverson, Dominique Weldon, Nathan Woolard

The Aicher/Nelson Scholarship

For students who intend to teach High School English:

Caroline Mangum, Lilly Boenker, Carolyn Brugman, Kaitlin Twaddle, Meg King

Miriam Gilbert Shakespeare Prize

For the best essay on Shakespeare, renaissance literature, or drama and performance, in honor of Professor Gilbert, who taught Shakespeare at Iowa until 2013: Caroline Mangum, for her essay, "The Persuasive Iago"

John C. McGalliard Prize

For the best essay on a topic from medieval literature, in honor of Professor McGalliard, who taught and wrote on Anglo Saxon poetry and literature until 1975:

Jaimie Simpher, for "Folwen alle the Favour of Fortune: How Emelye is a Prisoner of the Knight's Tale."

James and Syndy Conger Scholarship
Amanda McMahon Allard, Ellen Elaine Cranberg

Bill and John Fenton Scholarship
Christina Crowley, David Freeman, Matthew Geary Schutz, Hannah L. Soyer

Robert F. and Mary J. Godwin Scholarship
Randi E. Proescholdt, Celine La Vonne Uhl

Ralph K. and Maxine J. Hibbs Scholarship
Kirsten Arneson, Nathaniel Otjen

Hogan Family Scholarship
Caroline K. Barraco

Lennis J. Holm Scholarship
Caitlin Rose Edwards

Faith M. Knowler Scholarship
Kathleen Jane Kiesewetter, Clarissa J. Klostermann

William and Effa McMeans Scholarship
Antonio Burns Busot, Caroline K. Barraco, Jacqueline May Belding, Sophie Anne Katz, Laura Ying Wang, Nathan Bradley Woolard

Esther Walls Scholarship
Lisa Sullivan, Nathan Bradley Woolard

Dorothy Wirtz Fine Arts Scholarships
Antonio Burns Busot, Eileen Olivia



Mary and Robert Godwin with English Major Celine La Vonne Uhl, winner of the Robert F. and Mary J. Godwin Scholarship.



English (Creative Writing) Major & Asian Languages and Literature (Chinese) Major Laura Wang, winner of the William and Effa McMeans Scholarship.

Dorothy Wirtz Fine Arts Scholarships contin.
Campbell, Emma Jane Fenstermaker, Jeremy Scott Friedman, Austin Hughes, Melissa Anne Lauer, Morgan Anne Musselman, Ann Therese Peters, Brenda Adazuri Romo, Lauren Rose Sanfilippo, Emily Anne Smith. ♡

Alumni News

Catina Bacote (MFA '14) accepted a tenure-track position as a Professor of Creative Writing at Warren Wilson College.

Katherine Bishop (PhD '14) accepted a renewable 2-year Assistant Professor position at Miyazaki International College, Island of Kyushu, Japan.

Tom Blake (PhD '14) accepted an Assistant Professor position at Austin College in Sherman, Texas.

Rose Butchart (BA '12) served as a diplomatic intern at the Kurdistan Regional Government-Iraq's diplomatic mission in Washington, D.C., after earning a Master of Science degree from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Rachel Dankert (néé Stevenson) (BA '12) earned an MA in Renaissance Studies from Columbia University, and is working toward an M.L.S. in Archives and Digital Curation at the University of Maryland-College Park.

Olivia Dunn (MFA '14) is a Visiting Assistant Professor at Skidmore College.

Mieke Eerkens's (MFA '13) essay, "Seek", was selected as a Notable Essay in the 2015 edition of *The Best American Science and Nature Writing*.

Hope Edelman (MFA '92) and past NWP Director Robin Hemley co-edited the anthology *I'll Tell You Mine: Thirty Years of Essays from the Iowa Nonfiction Writing Program*, published by The University of Chicago Press.

Laurel Fantauzzo (MFA '13) is an Emerging Writing Fellow in Residence at Yale-NUS College, Singapore.

Aviya Kushner (MFA '05) recently published her book-length essay, *A Grammar of God*, with Random House/Spiegel & Grau.

Ariel Lewiton (MFA '13) is the Director of Marketing and Publicity at Sarabande Books.

Matthew J. Lavin (PhD '12) accepted a 3-year renewable position as a Clinical Assistant Professor of English at the University of Pittsburg, where he is also Director of the Digital Media Lab.

Deborah Manion (PhD '10) is the Acquisitions Editor at Syracuse University Press.

Lucas Mann (MFA '12) published his second book, *Lord Fear*, with Pantheon earlier this year.

John "Pres" Maxon (BA '02) published his first book, *Bender at the Bon Parisien*.

Elena Passarello (MFA '08) is a winner of the 2015 Whiting Award.

Kristen Radke (MFA '12) is the Managing Editor at Sarabande Books.

Joseph Rodriguez (PhD '12) accepted a full-time position as Assistant Professor at Haskell Indian Nations University, Lawrence, KS.

Alyssa Varner (BA '08) published her first comic book series, *Blown Away*. ♡

for **IOWA** | forever more

The Campaign for the University of Iowa



Thank You for Supporting the Department of English

Gifts to the Department of English help us continue to develop and thrive and, most importantly, enable us to serve current and future students by providing them with an education of incomparable depth and diversity. We rely on private contributions to support students, faculty, and the innovative initiatives that make ours among the highest-ranked English programs in the nation.

Graduates of our BA, MA, MFA, and PhD programs have gone on to make meaningful contributions in the fields of education, the arts, business, the nonprofit sector, and government—shaping the world in which they live with the understanding, compassion, and communication skills they gained as English majors.

Your gifts have allowed us to continue a range of important initiatives, including visits by eminent scholars and writers, conference hosting, undergraduate and graduate student scholarships and funding, and faculty travel to professional conferences. We thank you for playing a crucial role in the department, especially in light of the historic budget difficulties the University of Iowa has faced in recent years.

If you wish to make a donation to the English Department, you can use the form on the back of this newsletter, or you can donate online via the University of Iowa Foundation's secure site: www.uifoundation.org. ♡

