

Cheers From the Chair

Dear Colleagues and Coworkers,

Welcome to the final issue of Reading Matters for the 22-23 academic year, marking the manifold achievements of our graduate students, welcoming the incoming class, and wishing well to those outgoing. I am also outgoing so this is my farewell issue. It has truly been an honor to serve as your DEO for the last three eventful years. There have been many challenges, but the rewards of working for and with all of you have more than compensated for the anxieties and frustrations that come with this position. I've only been able to do my job because all of you do your jobs so well. Running this department is a collective endeavor and working with such a dedicated and talented community has taught me the true meaning of service, which is to commit your time and energy to the success of others. In this issue we celebrate some of that success, and I'm deeply grateful for the small part I've played in facilitating it. Thanks to all of you—students, staff, and faculty—for making my job so meaningful and memorable.

Loren

From the Director of Graduate Studies

As my three-year term as Director of Graduate Studies comes to an end, I'd like to thank the faculty and graduate students for their support and hard work during an especially challenging era of the department's history. In particular, thanks to all faculty who served on the Graduate Steering Committee and all those PhD and NWP students who served as AGSE representatives. And thanks to our DEO **Loren Glass**. Together we had to make a great number of unprecedented decisions in response to the Covid Pandemic. As hard as this was, it tested the very real and lasting resilience of the department, its faculty, staff, and students.

A special thanks, unsurprisingly, goes to **Cherie Rieskamp**, who—as I write this—is leaving for a much-deserved vacation in Florida! She was, as they say, a rock during these past three years. Always tremendously patient with my many, many questions! It was an honor to nominate her for a University of Iowa Staff Award. Hearing that she won was truly one of the highlights of my semester.

When I began in the Fall of 2020, I had several goals in mind: to promote the book studies track, work more closely with AGSE representatives, streamline certain requirements for the degree, and continue the important work of the AAU PhD Education Initiative begun by **Kathy Lavezzo**. The pandemic notwithstanding, we managed to accomplish many of these objectives.

Finally, I'd like to express how elated I am that **Dr. Jen Buckley** has agreed to serve as our next DGS. Notably, **Dr. Buckley** spearheaded the revised 5000: Introduction to Graduate Studies curriculum. She served on the AAU PhD Initiative committee that developed internships at the Stanley Museum and the Library of Congress, along with the AAU Speaker Series in diverse career opportunities for PhDs. I can't think of a better colleague to help our graduate students achieve their future academic goals!

Stephen

2023 MFA Graduates

Sarah Adler, “Stalked” (Louisa Hall, dir.)

Ilana Bean, “A little grey, a little blood” (Kerry Howley, dir.)

Georgie Fehringer, “Even If We Didn't Make It Out” (Andre Perry, dir.)

Larson Fritz, “Extimacy” (Bennett Sims, dir.)

Asha Galindo, “This What It Feels Like?” (Inara Verzemnieks, dir.)

Mason Hamberlin, “A Mouth Opens Red and Wet and Smiling” (Sarah Minor, dir.)

Cathryn Klusmeier, “Inside Passage” (Melissa Febos, dir.)

Erel Michaelis, “Learning Is Pleasure” (Inara Verzemnieks, dir.)

Wyatt Williams, “Reading Multatuli in Bali” (John D’Agata, dir.)

MFA Publications, Presentations, & Awards

Hannah Bonner published poetry this year in Bear Review, Cutleaf, SAND, The Carolina Quarterly, and The Hopkins Review. Her film criticism and book reviews have appeared in Bright Wall/Dark Room, Cleveland Review of Books, The Rumpus, and The Adroit Journal. In September 2022, she was invited to attend Another Gaze’s and Open City Documentary Film Festival’s Critics Workshop in London, an immersive six-day program developed by the Another Gaze editorial team to discuss the methodologies and practice of politically engaged film criticism. This spring she was awarded the 2023 Summer MFA Fellowship.

Spencer Jones was awarded a Spring 2023 Buckley Fellowship. She has three forthcoming essays: “Preces” in The Other Journal, “On Nodding Terms” in Arts & Letters, and “Tripod” in Black Warrior Review.

Mofiyinfoluwa Okupe won the 2022 Magdalena Award for her essay “The Responsibility of Remembrance,” forthcoming in AFREADA. She received the Buckley Fellowship and taught a masterclass titled: “Writing From The Head and The Heart.” In 2022, her essay “Do We Choose Death?” was published in The Black Warrior Review. In December 2022, she led a Non-Fiction Writing Workshop with Agbowo, a Nigerian lit magazine.

MFA Fellowships and Departmental Awards

CLAS Visiting Writer in Nonfiction 2023-2024

Wyatt Williams

Iowa Arts Fellows 2023-2024

Sabrina Bustamante

Alyssah Morrison

Mishma Nixon

Ergisa Xhuveli

2023 Underrepresented Minority Thesis Fellowship

Georgie Fehringer

Asha Galindo

Digital Scholarship & Publishing Studio Summer Fellowship

Aaron Pang

MFA Summer Fellowship 2023

Hannah Bonner

Sarah Khattry

2023 Johnson County Summer RA

Mofiyinfoluwa (Fi) Okupe

Stanley Award for International Research

Sarah Khattry

Englert Nonfiction Fellowship

Jenny Singer

Herodotus Awards

Connie Chen

Bela Shayevich

Roxanne Mueller Award

Richard Frailing

Buckley Fellows

Spencer Jones

Sarah Khattry

Grace Morse

Mofiyinfoluwa (Fi) Okupe

Wyatt Williams

W.R. Irwin Teaching Award

Hannah Bonner

2023 Carl Klaus Teaching Award

Ilana Bean

Larson Fritz

Magdalena Award

Mofiyinfoluwa (Fi) Okupe

Prairie Lights Prize in Nonfiction

Spencer Jones

Lifetime SNAP Award

Georgie Fehringer

2023 Incoming MFA Students

Sarah Bari

BA, North South University, Bangladesh (2017)
Economics

Sabrina Bustamante

BA, Yale University (2020)
History

Isaac Engelberg

BA, U. of California–Berkeley (2021)
Geography and American Studies

Kyra Goldstein

BA, Brown University (2019)
Nonfiction

Alyssah Morrison

BS & BA Evangel University (2018)
Psychology and English

Mishma Nixon

BA, University of Iowa (2021)
English and Creative Writing

Heidie Raine

Cedarville University (2023)
English

James Wheless

BA, University of Chapel Hill (2019)
English

Adam Witte

BA, University of Iowa (1995)
English: Secondary Education

Ergisa Xhuveli

BA, Brown University (2019)
Nonfiction

PhD Graduates

Ben Kirbach, “Neckerology: Fiction, Technology, And Theory After Postmodernism” (Garrett Stewart, dir.)

Jeremy Lowenthal, “The Media Unconscious of Confessional Poetry” (Garrett Stewart and Marie Kruger, dirs.)

Konrad Swartz, “Writing Against an Enlisted Audience: Reading War in Sterne, Barbauld, and Hogg” (Eric Gidal, dir.)

PhD Qualifications

Carolyn Gonzalez

Darryl Moton

Alyssa Smith

Kaden St. Onge

Darius Stewart

PhD Comprehensive Examination Completed

Jamie Chen

Tove Conway

Matt Ma

Pedro Martinez

Katherine Randazzo

Incoming PhD Graduate Students

Mila Argueta

BA, Brigham Young U. (2019)

English

MA, Brigham Young U. (2023)

English

David Munn Carstensen

BA & BS, University of Southern Carolina (2020)

English and Mathematics

Allana Lopez

University of Texas-Austin

English

Adelina Pineda Canganelli

BA, University of Iowa (2023)

French and Spanish

Cary Stough

BA, U. of Missouri-Columbia (2014)

English

MFA, Brown U. (2017)

Literary Arts

Incoming MA Graduate Student

Catherine McCourt

University of Iowa (2021)

English and Creative Writing

2023 PhD Fellowships and Departmental Awards

Lulu Merle Johnson Fellowship

Mila Argueta

Freda Dixon Malone Dissertation Scholarship

Maria Capecchi

Ballard and Seashore Dissertation Fellowship

Victoria (Torie) Burns

English Department Best Essay Prize

Matthew Helm

Maddison McGann

Graduate College Post Comp Research Award

Annie Burkhart

Dietz Poetry Essay Prize

Qiao Yang (Jamie) Chen

Maria Capecchi

Tove Conway

Joshua Foley

Edwin Ford Piper Memorial Scholarship

Annie Burkhart

Graduate College Summer Fellowship

Maria Capecchi

2023 Council on Teaching- Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award

Qiao Yang (Jamie) Chen

Jennie Sekanics

Joshua Foley

PJ Zaborowski

Katherine Randazzo

Bronwyn Stewart

Obermann Center for Advanced Studies/Humanities for the Public Good

Rajorshi Das

T. Anne Cleary International Dissertation Research Fellowship

Rajorshi Das

Huston Diehl Distinguished Dissertation Fellowship

Rajorshi Das

Department and College Teaching Awards

John C. Gerber Teaching Award
Bronwyn Stewart

PhD Publications, Presentations, and Awards

Annie Burkhardt was named the English Department's 2023 Edwin Ford Piper Memorial Scholar by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and was awarded a Post-Comprehensive Research Award as well as a Presentation Travel Award from the Graduate College this spring. Annie presented on Michael Field's queer Egyptological poetry at this year's annual Midwest Victorian Studies Conference, Victorian Popular Fiction Association Conference, and Craft Critique Culture Conference.

Maria Capecchi has been hard at work on her dissertation, "Performing Early Modern Women: 1610-1680," with the support of the Marcus Bach Graduate Fellowship, a College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Fellowship, and the Graduate College Summer Fellowship. She received the South Central Renaissance Conference Graduate Student Travel Award and presented excerpts from her dissertation at the Midwest Modern Language Association ("Print, Prophecy, & Performance in the Works of Lady Eleanor Davies and Anna Trapnel") and at the South Central Renaissance Conference ("All Virtuous Ladies and Gentlewomen: An Examination of Race and Gender in Aemilia Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judæorum*"). Maria would like to thank the English Department and the Graduate College for their support during this exceptionally challenging year.

Jamie Chen completed her Comprehensive Exams at the beginning of spring semester, and plans to complete her Prospectus Meeting before the summer holidays. She currently serves as the PhD Representative on the IDEAS Committee and Co-Chair of the GEL Textbook Committee. In March 2023, Jamie presented her paper, "Beyond the Patriarchal Principle: Plotting Pleasure Through Intertextuality in Angela Carter," at the International Society for the Study of the Narrative Conference. She is pursuing a certificate with the Center of the Book and the Center for the Integration of Research.

PhD Publications, Presentations, and Awards

Rajorshi Das received T. Anne Cleary Fellowship for International Dissertation Research and a GPSG research grant in the Fall of 2022. They were invited to deliver a talk “Savarna Queer Aspirations and the Narrative of Indian Hindu Exceptionalism” at Jyoti Dalal School of Liberal Arts, Mumbai on 22 November 2022. Das was also an invited panelist for “Borderless Queering the Teacher: A Roundtable Discussion,” organized by LGBTQ Archives and Library, Iowa City on 13 October 2022. They presented a paper and organized a roundtable at the National Women’s Studies Association Annual Conference, in Minnesota. In the Summer of 2023, Das will work as an intern at Public Space One. The internship is funded by Obermann Center for Advanced Studies. As a Huston Diehl Fellow, Das will teach an upper-level undergraduate course titled “Postcolonial Studies and Studies on Decoloniality” in Spring 2024.

Greetings from Germany. **Matthew Helm** is about to start his second semester as a visiting instructor at TU Dortmund, where he will teach two courses of his own design: “California Dreaming: Hollywood in the American Literary Imaginary” for undergraduate students and “Out of the Closet, Into the Archive: The Archival Impulse of Queer Literature,” a class based on his dissertation project, for master’s students. Last semester, Matt participated in the “Ruhr PhD Forum in American Studies,” a colloquium for researchers from Ruhr-University Bochum, TU Dortmund University, and the University of Duisburg-Essen. This summer, Matthew looks forward to the publication of his article “‘Orgasm of Nostalgia’: Narrative and Sexual Desire in Aleksandar Hemon’s *Nowhere Man*” forthcoming in *Studies in the Novel*. Matt hopes to catch up with everyone back in Iowa soon!

Katherine Randazzo (she/hers) is currently finishing her fifth year of the English PhD program. In the Fall of 2022, Katherine passed her Comprehensive Exams, receiving a Master’s of Fine Arts in English en passant. In the Spring of 2023, Katherine also was invited to present at the International Conference for the Fantastic in the Arts (ICFA). She has recently finished the final draft of her Dissertation Prospectus, and hopes to meet with her committee in the coming weeks. For the Summer of 2023, Katherine was awarded the Graduate College Dissertation Summer Fellowship, and will begin work on her Dissertation during the break.

In March, **Jennie Sekanics** presented her papers “Trauma Unseen: Decoding the Sexual Violence Trauma Narrative in Octavia Butler’s *Kindred*” and “The Body Speaks Back: Silence, Trauma, and the Body in *Kindred* and *Cane*” at the International Society for the Study of the Narrative conference and the Northeastern Modern Languages Association conference respectively. She was also accepted to Cornell University’s School of Theory and Criticism and awarded the Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award for her instruction of Foundations of the English Major. Over the summer, Jennie will be conducting research for the Iowa City Public Library through the Andrew W. Mellon funded Humanities for the Public Good internship program.

PhD Publications, Presentations, and Awards

Thelma Trujillo participated in the November workshop, “Introduction to the Critical Study of Race in the Middle Ages,” organized by the Center for Renaissance Studies at the Newberry Library. This workshop considered the conceptual foundations, recent conversations, and possible futures of the critical study of race in the Middle Ages. In January, she returned to the Newberry as an organizer and panel moderator for the Multidisciplinary Graduate Student Conference on premodern studies. She also received the Sherry L. Reames Graduate Travel Award from The Hagiography Society to present her work on medieval race and “The Life of St. Mary of Egypt” at the upcoming International Congress on Medieval Studies (ICMS) in Kalamazoo.

PJ Zaborowski spent the summer of 2022 interning at the Library of Congress’s LC Labs as a member of the Iowa Digital Internships in the Humanities. PJ served as a GEL Program Associate and Co-Chair of the GEL Textbook Committee during the 22/23 academic year, earned the ISSS Engaging Across Cultures certificate, and received the Council of Teaching’s Outstanding TA Award. His article, “Miso no Messenger,” was published in the Spring 2023 Issue of *Arthuriana*. PJ presented his paper, “The Fourfold Fetishization of the First Four Folios of the Plays of William Shakespeare” at MLA in January and would have presented another paper, “Making the Medieval Modern: Leafbooks and the Demediation of Medieval Manuscripts,” at the Annual Meeting of the Medieval Academy of America in February, but was thwarted by the cruelty of winter storms. During 22/23 he earned the Digital Humanities certificate and completed the requirements for a certificate with the Center of the Book, while continuing to work towards a MA in Library Information Sciences. Over the summer, PJ will be conducting digital research in Iowa City, thanks to the Digital Studio Summer Fellowship, and travelling to the University of Cambridge to examine medieval manuscripts, thanks to the T. Anne Cleary International Dissertation Research Fellowship.

Staff Matters

Administrative superstar **Cherie Hansen-Rieskamp** has been selected by the Staff Council for one of the University of Iowa's Outstanding Staff Awards for 2013. She is one of the university's six recipients.

NWP coordinator and fiction writer **Corey Campbell** was awarded an Artist Catalyst Grant, an award supported by the Iowa Arts Council, a division of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, and by the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

Alumni Matters

Ryan Furlong, PhD 2021, recently accepted a position as Professor of English, Crown College, St. Bonifacius, MN.

Faculty Matters

Lori Branch recently published, “[How to Talk About Religion and Literature: A Modest Proposal](#),” in the latest issue of MLQ.

Tara Bynum will be a participant in an NEH Summer Institute for university faculty, "Data-Informed Methods in Slavery Studies," hosted by Michigan State University's Enslaved.org project.

Eric Gidal's article "Watershed Communities: River Systems in Coleridge and Geddes" appears in the latest issue of *Studies in Romanticism* for Spring 2023, a special issue devoted to Romantic Writing and Ecological Knowledge, open access for the next 30 days: <https://muse.jhu.edu/issue/49898>

Kathy Lavezzo's [essay](#) about her mentor Aranye Fradenburg Joy, which features an interview with Aranye, is now available in the latest issue of *NCS Pedagogy and Profession*. On May 13, she will be the invited speaker for the Harvard Medieval Colloquium at the International Congress on Medieval Studies in Michigan.

Harry Stecopoulos just completed his tenure as a judge for the biennial Townsend Prize for Fiction (2021–2022). In late June, he will present a lecture entitled "From Cold War Modernism to Diasporic Diplomacy: Langston Hughes as Cold War Diplomat" at the University of Regensburg, Germany.

On April 21 **Deborah Whaley** did a workshop on writing DEI statements for The Society for the Study of the Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States conference. She is also doing an event on May 10 with South East Jr High Kids - a talk then a workshop on creating comics: <https://www.icpl.org/events/47922/bring-brilliance>.

Congratulations to **Elizabeth Rodriguez Fielder**, **Donika Kelly**, **Inara Verzemnieks**, and **Doris Witt**, all of whom were named by 5 or more graduating seniors as having had a positive impact on their education at Iowa.

Postgraduate Visiting Writer, **Kathleen Maris Paltrineri**, published “Drift,” a photo essay in response to Shene Mohammed’s “In Real Time” in the April 2023 special issue of *Translation Review on Translation Communities, Co-Translation and Collaborations*.

UI English alums, [please let us know about your career](#).

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