

# Volume 25, Issue 6

## O Fortuna! The Graduate Programs Issue

This spring, as we processed memo after memo about the pandemic and transition to remote instruction, English Department graduate students made the double adaptation to being online students and teachers gracefully and with impeccable standards. Thank you, graduate students, for your steadfastness during this period and warmest congratulations on completing the semester! I hope that you are now preparing to have a well-deserved break.

In this issue, we recognize awards and accolades received by graduate students in the Nonfiction Writing MFA and English Literary Studies MA and PhD programs during academic year 2019-20. From the newly graduated to the newly admitted, graduate student achievements are supported in no small measure by faculty and staff administrators who manage the graduate programs with dedication and passion. I would like to thank Director of Graduate Studies **Kathy Lavezzo**, who has served in this position for two years and been a tireless advocate for graduate students in the department and before the UI administration. Kathy has fought to improve the living and working conditions for graduate students and designed new programs for English that address professionalization and career diversity during and after graduate school. **John D'Agata** directed the Nonfiction Writing Program through another stellar year, revealing [new dimensions of his talent](#) in an effort to foster community following the shift to online. **Cherie Hansen-Rieskamp** is the heart and soul of the graduate programs--warm, wise, and present at every milestone in graduate student careers. It will come as no surprise that she is already planning a welcome-back-to-EPB celebration for graduate students when such an event becomes possible!

With many awards in this issue related to excellence in teaching, I would also like to recognize the faculty and staff who train and coordinate Teaching Assistants in English, including Director of English & Creative Writing **Ed Folsom**, Foundations of Creative Writing Faculty Mentor **Louisa Hall**, and English & Creative Writing Program Administrator **Corey Campbell**; Creative Nonfiction Writing course supervisor **Bonnie Sunstein**; Foundations of the English Major instructors **Kathy Lavezzo** and **Stephen Voyce**; General Education Literature Program Director **Blaine Greteman** and General Education Literature Program Administrator **Rebecca Isaacs**, who are assisted by a dedicated team of GEL graduate peer mentors and faculty teaching advisors.

Kudos to you, MFA, MA, and PhD students in English, for your impressive accomplishments as scholars, writers, and teachers during this most challenging year.

## **From the Director of Graduate Studies**

To say this year has been challenging is an understatement. The pandemic forced faculty and graduate students to generate, with very little lead time, radically new approaches to their teaching and scholarship. The capacity of our MFA and PhD cohort to meet those pedagogic and research goals in the face of such challenges is astonishing. The bravery, dedication, strength and resilience of our community here in the English department is truly remarkable. I have no doubt that once this strange and horrible situation ends—and end it will, to be sure—we will return to EPB. Who knew how much we would all miss the “[ugliest building in the state](#)”? So many faculty, graduate students and staff merit thanks for their contributions to the success of our graduate program in the English department during the 2019-20 year.

The members of the grad steering committee—**Stephen Voyce, Phil Round, Doris Witt, Dave Wittenberg, Marie Kruger, Florence Boos, Peter Nazareth** and **John D’Agata**—provided expert advice and recommendations. **Phil Round** and the other members of the admissions committee--**Bluford Adams** and **Kathleen Diffley**--did superb work on admissions, as did **Stephen Voyce** on finances, and **Doris Witt** and **Dave Wittenberg** on quals. Adam’s work on Intro to Grad Studies was excellent and **Marie Kruger** and **Eric Gidal** did a wonderful job on admissions.

**Barb Pooley** and **Claire Fox** provided expert guidance this year on a slew of funding and other issues. Our amazing team of administrative, academic and technological coordinators—**Corey Cambell, Rebecca Isaacs, Mandy McAllister, Diane Jones,** and **Hannah Sorrell**—provided expert and invaluable support to our graduate students.

Our AGSE representatives—**Kassie Baron, James O’Neil, Jamie Chen, Brady Krien** and **Bronwyn Stewart**—did a host of things to assist the graduate student community. The organizers of CCC this year— **Caroline Cheung, Matt Helm, Katherine Randazzo, Jeremy Lowenthal, Maria Capecchi**—worked very hard on the conference, which has been postponed due to the pandemic.

Our department is delighted to be participating in the AAU PhD Education Initiative (<https://www.aau.edu/education-community-impact/graduate-education/phd-ed...>). I am grateful to our community of faculty and students (both current and alums) for providing invaluable feedback on our action plan. Special thanks are due to faculty members **Claire Fox, Eric Gidal, Jen Buckley, Bonnie Sunstein** and **Brooks Landon**, and to graduate students **Kassie Baron, Kyle Barton, Marie Capecchi** and **Brady Krien**, for their work on committees and subcommittees related to the initiative.

Finally, what would we do without our astonishing Graduate Academic Coordinator, **Cherie Hansen-Rieskamp**? The passion, expertise and wisdom that Cherie brings to her position make her indispensable to our program. Thank you so much, Cherie, for everything you do.

## **MFA Graduates**

**Julia Conrad**, “Sex and the Symphony,” (Bonnie Sunstein, dir.)

**Louisa Dewey**, “THANK YOU FOR LAUGHING,” (John D’Agata, dir.)

**Cassandra Jensen**, “Their Exits and Their Entrances,” (Bonnie Sunstein, dir.)

**Bryn Lovitt**, “Delusions of Glamour,” (Kerry Howley, dir.)

**Julia Lucas**, “Run,” (Jeff Porter, dir.)

**Brittany Means**, “Homebody,” (Jeff Porter, dir.)

**Darius Stewart**, “The Body Within the Body: autobiographical essays,” (John D’Agata, dir.)

**Tiffany Tucker**, “Hated on Mostly,” (Inara Verzemnieks, dir.)

## **MFA Publications, Presentations, and Awards**

**Darius Stewart** is the recipient of the 2019 John C. Gerber Teaching Award, the Magdalena Essay Prize, the 2020 Nonfiction Writing Fellowship from the Englert Theater, and will be the 2020-2021 Provost’s Postgraduate Visiting Writer in Nonfiction. Darius has also been selected to participate this summer in the Michigan Humanities Emerging Research Scholars (MICHHERS) program at the University of Michigan—Ann Arbor. He has an essay forthcoming in the journal *Fourth Genre*.

**Sanjna N. Singh** is the recipient of a 2020 Stanley Award for International Research, a Herodotus award and a 2020 Nonfiction Writing Summer Fellowship. She has also been selected to participate in the University’s Summer 2020 Grant Writing Seminar. Recent publications include a piece in *The Guardian*.

## **MFA Fellowships and Department Awards**

*Provost's Fellow 2020-2021*

**Darius Stewart**

*Iowa Arts Fellows 2020-2021*

**Ilana Bean**

**Jennifer Fehringer-Hicks**

**Cathryn Klusmeier**

**Wyatt Williams**

*Marcus Bach Fellowship*

**Lei Wang**

*Digital Scholarship & Publishing Studio Summer Fellowship*

**Amelia Gramling**

**Kofi Opam**

*MFA Summer Fellowship 2020*

**Tony Andrews**

**Jess Kibler**

**Ian Shank**

**Lei Wang**

*NWP Summer Research Fellowship*

**Andrew Cardenas**

**Dylan McGonigle**

**Sanjna Singh**

**Rachel Sudbeck**

**Andrew Tan-Delli Cicchi**

*International Stanley Research*

**Julia Conrad**

**Jon Gleason**

**Jessie Kraemer**

**Jamila Osman**

**Sanjna Singh**

**Andy Tan-Delli Cicchi**

*Englert Nonfiction Fellowship*

**Darius Stewart**

*Edwin Ford Piper Memorial Scholarship*

**Julia Conrad**

*Roxanne Mueller Award*

**Jon Gleason**

*Buckley Fellows*

**Julia Conrad**

**Amelia Gramling**

**Ian Shank**

**Andy Tan-Delli Cicchi**

*7th Annual Herodotus Research and Travel Award*

**Andrew Cardenas**

**Julia Conrad**

**Carey Dunne**

**Brittany Means**

**Ian Shank**

**Sanjna Singh**

**Andy Tan-Delli Cicchi**

*Hellas Fellow*

**Ian Shank**

*2020 Council on Teaching - Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award*

**Ian Shank**

*2020 Carl Klaus Teaching Award*

**Lulu Dewey**

*Lakeside Lab Writer-in-Residence Fellowship*

**Gabriela Claymore**

*Magdalena Award*

**Darius Stewart**

*Quarantine Memorial Award*

**Kofi Opam**

## **2020 Incoming MFA Students**

**Sarah Adler**

BA, University of California-Berkeley

English

**Elizabeth Barber**

BA, SUNY College at Geneseo

English

MS, Columbia University

Journalism

**Ilana Bean**

BA, Virginia Commonwealth University

Preparatory Medical and Scientific Illustration

**Jennifer (Georgie) Fehringer-Hicks**

BA, Evergreen State College

Creative Writing

**Larson Fritz**

BA, University of New Mexico

English

**Ashley (Asha) Galindo**

BA, Humboldt State University

English

**Mason Hamberlin**

University of North Carolina-Wilmington

Creative Writing

**Brian Kearney**

BA, National University of Ireland

English and Philosophy

MLitt, University of St. Andrews  
Creative Writing  
**Cathryn Klusmeier**  
BA, Whitman College  
Environmental Studies-Humanities  
MS, University of Oxford  
Medical Anthropology  
**Erel Michaelis**  
BA, Tel Aviv University  
Creative Writing and Philosophy  
**Wyatt Williams**  
BA, Georgia State University  
English

## **MA Graduates**

Jamie Chen

## **PhD Graduates**

**Matthew Blackwell**, "Creating the Cold War Canon: A History of the Center for Editions of American Authors," (Matthew Brown, dir.)

**Benjamin Batzer**, "The Poetics of Reader Participation," (Marie Kruger and Doris Witt, co-dir.)

**Lydia Maunz**, "TESTAMENT OF GRIEF: A SOMATIC EPISTEMOLOGY OF LOSS AND TRAUMA IN WOMEN'S WRITING OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR," (Florence Boos, dir.)

## **Upcoming Summer PhD Graduates**

**Alexander Ashland**, "The Documentary Turn: U.S. Literature in the Age of Compromise, 1850-1877," (Kathleen Diffley and Stephen Voyce, co-dir.)

**Katherine Ostdiek**, "Memory and the Metropole: Displaced and Reimagined Communities in Late-Victorian Literature," (Florence Boos, dir.)

**Annemarie Pearson**, "A Land of Enchantment: Fictional Spain Through the Eyes of British Travelers, 1776-1867," (Eric Gidal, dir.)

**Rachel Walerstein**, "Masculine Gestures: Imitation and Initiation in American Modernism," (Kevin Kopelson and Loren Glass, co-dir.)

## **PhD Qualifications**

**Maria Capecchi  
Jamie Chen  
Reid Dempsey  
Bryanne Estes  
Katherine Randazzo  
Kathleen Shaughnessy  
Philip Zaborowski**

## **PhD Comprehensive Examination Completed**

**Torie Burns  
Matthew Helm  
Jeremy Lowenthal  
Maddie McGann  
Kassie Baron  
Caroline Cheung**

## **2020 PhD Fellowships and Departmental Awards**

*Ballard and Seashore Dissertation Fellowship*

**Benjamin Batzer  
Caitlin Simmons**

*Huston Diehl and Frederick F. Seely Distinguished Dissertation Fellowship*

**Enrico Bruno**

*Marcus Bach Fellowship*

**Bambi Whitaker**

*Graduate College Post Comp Research Award*

**Torie Burns**

**Jeremy Lowenthal**

*Graduate College Summer Fellowship*

**Heidi Renee Aijala**

**Caitlin Simmons**

**Makayla Steiner**

*Frederick P.W. McDowell Dissertation Scholarship*

**Heidi Renee Aijala**

**Laura Hayes**

*Freda Dixon Malone Dissertation Scholarship*

**E Mariah Spencer**

*Humanities for the Public Good Summer Internship*

**Kassie Baron**

**Laura Hayes**

**Matthew Helm**

*Lulu Merle Johnson Fellowship*

**Daisy Morales Trejo**

*Graduate College Iowa Recruitment Fellowship*

**Tove Conway**

**Jordan Ogle**

**Thelma Trujillo**

*Hugh Vollrath Ross Scholarship*

**Matt Ma**

## **Department and College Teaching Awards**

*John C. Gerber Teaching Award*

**Neala Arnold**

*W.R. Irwin Teaching Award*

**Benjamin Batzer**

**Jeremy Lowenthal**

## **MA and PhD Publications, Presentations, and Awards**

**Torie Burns** passed her comprehensive exams in January 2020. She was awarded the Graduate College Post-Comprehensive Research Fellowship for the Fall 2020 semester and is currently working on her prospectus.

**Maria Capecchi** was awarded the Graduate Student Paper Prize at the 2019 Midwest Modern Language Association, where she presented her paper "Practicing the Work of Worms: Lyric Voice and Grievable Lives in Solmaz Sharif's *Look*." She has papers forthcoming in the *Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association* and the *Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies*. She also served as treasurer for the 2020 CCC Conference.

## **2020 Incoming PhD Students**

**Sarah Barringer**

BA, Ohio State University

English



**Margaret Bowlin**

BA, Fresno Pacific College  
English, Biblical, and Religious Studies

**Sydnee Brown**

BA, Grinnell College  
English and Sociology

**Tove Conway**

BA, University of Saint Thomas  
English and Environmental Studies  
MA, University of Saint Thomas  
English

**Camille Davis**

BA and MA, Temple University  
English Literature

**Riley Hanick**

BA, Kenyon College  
English  
MFA, University of Iowa  
Nonfiction  
MLIS, University of Iowa  
Library and Information Services

**Daisy Morales Trejo**

BA, Grinnell College  
English

**Jordan Ogle**

BA, Wabash College  
English Literature  
MA, University of Exeter, UK  
English Literary Studies

**Katelyn (Kaden) St Onge**

BA, Haverford College  
English

**Thelma Trujillo**

BA and MA, Illinois State University  
English

**Placement Matters**

**Katherine Ostdiek**, Instructional Designer, Bellevue University, Bellevue, NE

**Annemarie Pearson**, Instructor, New Mexico Tech, Socorro, NM

## **Alumni Matters**

**Adam Bradford** (PhD 2010) was recently appointed Dean of Graduate College, Idaho State University, Pocatello, Idaho.

**Douglas Dowland's** (PhD 2010) essay on "The Politics of Resentment in J.D. Vance's Hillbilly Elegy" has received *Texas Studies in Literature and Language's* Tony Hilfer Prize for Best Essay. The prize is awarded by the journals' editors annually to the best essay in each volume. The Hilfer Prize is named after Anthony Channell Hilfer, a long-time editor of *TSSL* and professor of English at The University of Texas at Austin.

Warm congratulations to **Kelly Franklin** (PhD 2014), who received tenure at Hillsdale College!