

Volume 26, Issue 7

Journal of the Plague Year - Final Entry

April is the Cruellest Month.....

But now it's over! As we finally get outside to smell the May flowers I want to congratulate all our graduate students for surviving what has surely been the most challenging academic year on record. You have all my admiration and gratitude for being able not only to teach and learn but also to continue to publish and progress in your professional careers.

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 2020-21. From the newly graduated to the newly admitted, graduate student achievements are supported by faculty and staff who manage the graduate programs with dedication and determination. I want to thank Director of Graduate Studies **Stephen Voyce**, who has been a tireless advocate for graduate students in the department, and **Gigi Durham**, who graciously crossed departmental boundaries to direct the Nonfiction Writing Program through an unprecedentedly difficult year. And of course all our gratitude goes to **Cherie Hansen-Rieskamp**, the heart and soul of our graduate programs and the fount of all knowledge and wisdom about them.

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**, Assistant Directors for the Foundations of Creative Writing course **Louisa Hall** and **Donika Kelly**, 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 all, 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

I'm sure there's a timely joke about bangs and whimpers, but since Dr. Glass beat me to it, I'll just say thanks to you our graduate students—for your excellent work and for your patience during an unprecedented academic year. You have not just managed during this most challenging period of graduate education, but have done so with passion, commitment, and professionalism.

Despite many challenges, our graduate programs have much to celebrate. The newly created Book Studies Track is thriving, as is the American Association of Universities PhD Careers initiative. I'm also excited to report that we've enrolled our most diverse incoming PhD cohort on record. In grad faculty news, **Tara Bynum** joins recent hires **Liz Rodriguez-Fielder** and **Will Rhodes**, all three of whom have spared no time expanding our graduate course offerings and departmental strengths. **Deborah Whaley** will soon join us, and our program will only get better! In closing, let me offer a special thanks to **Cherie Hansen-Reiskamp** for her poise, knowledge, and dedication. I cannot (and would not like to) imagine these past twelve months as DGS without her steady hand. To our MA, MFA, and PhDs, you've risen to the occasion, and we're proud to call you our students and colleagues.

MFA Graduates

Tony Andrews, "Life Noise: A Slacker Memoir," (Bonnie Sunstein, dir.).

Kathleen Cole, "Personality," (John D'Agata, dir.).

Amelia Gramling, "The Loved Ones," (Inara Verzemnieks, dir.).

EmmaJean Holley, "What Salt Can Do," (Melissa Febos, dir.).

Jess Kibler, "That Was Just a Dream," (John D'Agata, dir.).

Kofi Opam, "The Fall and the Flight," (Inara Verzemnieks, dir.).

Ian Shank, "*Imposter Syndrome*," (Kerry Howley, dir.)

Rachel Sudbeck, "I Thought You Might Find This Interesting, I Love You," (Susan Steinberg and Melissa Febos, co-dirs.).

Lei Wang, "In Case Everything Is As It Should Be," (Kerry Howley, dir.).

MFA Publications, Presentations, and Awards

Ilana Bean published the essay "[Smart Pigs](#)" in *The Nashville Review*.

Jenny Fran Davis published "[A Thousand Nothings](#)" in *Speculative Nonfiction* and "[High Femme Camp Antics](#)" in *Los Angeles Review of Books*.

Georgie Fehringer published "A Last Name" in [The Amistad](#).

Jonathan Gleason published the essay "Gilead" in the May/June 2021 issue of *Kenyon Review*. This essay, which won the NWP's Roxanne Mueller Award in 2020, was a finalist for the *Indiana Review's* 2020 Creative Nonfiction Prize.

Gyasi Hall was the runner-up in the *Black Warrior Review's* 2020 Nonfiction Contest. Gyasi also participated in the [Writers of Color Reading Series](#), presented by The Englert.

Jamila Osman published the poetry chapbook *A Girl is a Sovereign State*, part of the New-Generation African Poets box set edited by Kwame Dawes and Chris Abani.

Tatiana Schlote-Bonne won the 2020 Diverse Worlds Grant from the Speculative Literature Foundation.

Sanjna N. Singh is the recipient of a 2021 MFA Summer Fellowship, a Herodotus grant and winner of the AC Bose Grant for Speculative Literature. Recent publications include an interview with filmmaker Thomas Balmes (*Happiness, Sing me a Song*) and a personal essay in *Tricycle* magazine.

Rachel Sudbeck's piece "[The Walls Here](#)" won the 2020 Flash Creative Nonfiction Contest at *Atticus Review*.

Wyatt Williams is publishing his first book, *Springer Mountain: Meditations on Killing and Eating*, in September 2021 with UNC Press.

MFA Fellowships and Department Awards

Provost's Postgraduate Visiting Writer in Nonfiction 2021-2022

Amelia Gramling

Iowa Arts Fellows 2020-2021

Danielle Jackson

Sarah Khatry

Aaron Pang

Spencer Wilkins

2021 Underrepresented Minority Thesis Fellowship

Kofi Opam

2021 Graduate Diversity Fellowship

Jamila Osman

Graduate College COVID Fellowship

Jessie Kraemer

Digital Scholarship & Publishing Studio Summer Fellowship

Jessie Kraemer

MFA Summer Fellowship 2020

Gabriela Claymore

Jamila Osman

Sanjna Singh

NWP Summer Research Fellowship

Gabriela Claymore

Jamila Osman

Sanjna Singh

Andrew Tan-Delli Cicchi

Edwin Ford Piper Memorial Scholarship

Carey Dunne

Englert Nonfiction Fellowship

Jess Kibler

Herodotus Awards

Andrew Tan-Delli Cicchi

Sanjna Singh

Jonathan Gleason

Roxanne Mueller Award (to be announced in May)

Tatiana Schlote-Bonne

Buckley Fellows

Sarah Adler

EmmaJean Holley

Amelia Gramling

Andrew Tan-Delli Cicchi

Gabriela Claymore

Jamila Osman

2021 Council on Teaching - Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award

Sarah Adler

Tatiana Schlote-Bonne

John C. Gerber Teaching Award

Jamila Osman

2021 Incoming MFA Students

Hannah Bonner

BA, U. of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

English

MA, University of Iowa

Film Studies

Rebecca Flowers

BA, Dartmouth College

English and Biology

Danielle Jackson

BA, American University

Economics

Sarah Khatry

BA, Dartmouth College

English and Physics

Logan Naylor

BA, Humboldt State University

Art

Aaron Pang

BA, Washington University-St. Louis

Business and Computer Science

Bela Shayevich

BA, Emory University

Comparative Literature

MA, Columbia University

Russian Translation

Martha Strawbridge

BA, Lawrence University

Math

Spencer Wilkins

BA, Bowdoin College

English

MA Graduates with Portfolio

Khaled Rajeh, (Peter Nazareth, dir.).

PhD Graduates

Heidi Renée Aijala, ““The Steam That is to Work the Engines”: Women’s Writing and the Rise of the Steam Power in the Victorian Britain,”(Florence Boos, dir.).

Faith Avery, “Violence and Citizenship in 21st Century American Documentary Poetics,” (co-dirs. Claire Fox and Naomi Greyser).

Laura Hayes, “Writing Matter in Victorian Literature and Culture,” (Florence Boos, dir.).

Haley Larson,” Writing That Reads: Collage Poetics and Aesthetic Techniques as Media Literacies, “ (co-dirs. Stephen Voyce and Jennifer Buckley).

Caitlin Simmons, “Dispossession and Survivance in the Literature of Atrocity,” (Laura Rigal, dir.).

PhD Qualifications

Anne Burkhart

Rajorshi Das

Kyler Dill

Joshua Foley

Conor Hilton
Pedro Martinez

PhD Comprehensive Examination Completed

Maria Capecchi
James O'Neil

2021 PhD Fellowships and Departmental Awards

Ballard and Seashore Dissertation Fellowship

E Mariah Spencer

Konrad Swartz

Huston Diehl Distinguished Dissertation Fellowship

Konrad Swartz

CLAS Dissertation Fellowship

Maddison McGann

Marcus Bach Fellowship

Jeremy Lowenthal

Graduate College COVID Fellowship

E Mariah Spencer

Graduate College Post Comp Research Award

Kassie Baron

Matthew Helm

Maddison McGann

Digital Scholarship & Publishing Studio Summer Fellowship

Kathleen Shaughnessy

Graduate College Summer Fellowship

Kassie Baron

Victoria Burns

Caroline Cheung

Ryan Furlong

Matthew Helm

Jeremy Lowenthal

Frederick P.W. McDowell Dissertation Scholarship

Heidi Renee Aijala

Freda Dixon Malone Dissertation Scholarship

Maddison McGann

English Department Best Essay Prize

Enrico Bruno

English Department Poetry Prize

Jeremy Lowenthal

Prairie Lights and Sherman Paul Award

Jeremy Lowenthal

Lulu Merle Johnson Fellowship

Darius Stewart

*Graduate College Iowa Recruitment Fellowship 2021 Council on Teaching-
Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award*

Jeremy Lowenthal

Khaled Rajeh

Edwin Ford Piper Memorial Scholarship

E Mariah Spencer

Department and College Teaching Awards

John C. Gerber Teaching Award

Jamila Osman

W.R. Irwin Teaching Award

Enrico Bruno

Ruben Cota

MA and PhD Publications, Presentations, and Awards

Heidi Renée Aijala is honored to receive the English Department's Frederick P.W. McDowell Dissertation Research Scholarship, which supported the completion of her dissertation, *"The steam that is to work the engines:" Women's Writing and the Rise of Steam Power in Victorian Britain* (successfully defended April 2021).

Moreover, Heidi Renée was awarded tenure at Pierce College, where she has been teaching since the fall of 2018. Furthermore, her paper, "Wa(i)sting Away: Hunger and Entropy in Brontë's *Shirley*," was accepted to the NAVSA 2020 conference; she will present with her fellow panelists Kate Nesbit and Laura Hayes in the fall of 2021.

Torie Burns has received a Graduate College Summer Fellowship for Summer 2021, which she will use to continue working on the first and second chapters of her dissertation.

Maria Capecchi passed her comprehensive exam in April. This year Capecchi took part in the AAU Education Initiative, where she represented the University of Iowa as a member of the English Department's Pedagogy Initiative Committee. She presented a paper titled "Nature & Experience: Clothing the Female Body in Med-

Ren Poetry “at the Vagantes Conference on Medieval Studies. Capecchi also worked as a Program Associate for GEL and as a member of the Board of Trustees for the Montessori School of Iowa City, where her children attend school.

Rajorshi Das is a recipient of Stanley Fellowship Award for International Research and Stephen Lynn Smith Memorial Scholarship for Social Justice 2021. Recently, they presented a paper, titled “Negotiating Cis-whiteness in Iowa City” in NeMLA 2021. Das’ review of Kareem Khubchandani’s *Ishtyle: Accenting Gay Indian Nightlife* was published by *Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies* (Vol 16, Issue 4). Their parody piece ["A Roundtable on Intersectionality,"](#) (illustrated by Micki Burdick) is part of GWSS’s *Tell Magazine*. In addition, Das’ poem, “Looking” was published in Akhil Katyal and Aditi Angiras’ *The World that Belongs to Us: An Anthology of Queer Poetry from South Asia* (2020). Das was also invited to deliver a talk on queer literature and LGBTQ+ representation by *Connecting Dreams*, Aryabhata College, in October 2020.

Last summer, **Matthew Helm** was selected as a Humanities for the Public Good Fellow through the Obermann Center for Advanced Studies, where he partnered with Iowa Valley Resource Conservation & Development to publish [A Tour of Food Traditions in the Iowa Valley Scenic Byway Corridor](#). He was awarded a \$2,500 [Iowa Tourism Grant](#) to run a second printing. In addition, he received the Post-Comprehensive Research Fellowship and the Graduate College Summer Fellowship. His presentations include “‘Oh, hilloo, darling!’: Telephonic Representation in Christopher Isherwood’s *Goodbye to Berlin*” at [Crossed Lines: Telepoetics](#). His work was included as a part of their [Online Exhibition](#), which was featured in [The Guardian](#). This spring, he presented “‘Orgasm of Nostalgia’: Narrative and Sexual Desire in Aleksandar Hemon’s *Nowhere Man*” at Carnegie Mellon University’s *Bridges & Borders* conference. Matthew has two forthcoming publications: “Discerning Love, Recuperating Hope: The ‘Search for God’ in Carson McCullers’ *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*” in *Religion & Literature* and “Nathaniel Hawthorne’s Reframing of That ‘—which Milton tells about’: Literary Influence and Blithedale’s Queer Masque” in the *Nathaniel Hawthorne Review*. He served as the co-president of *Craft Critique Culture*, which ran April 16-17 with the special theme of “Justice Framed.” The conference featured a keynote from noted activist and scholar Harsha Walia. In the fall, he will serve as a Program Assistant with General Education Literature.

Congratulations to **Khaled Rajeh** for his successful completion of the MA in Literary Studies and his admission to the University of Iowa’s Translation Studies Program!

Jeremy Lowenthal received the Graduate College Summer Fellowship and the Marcus Bach Graduate Fellowship for summer and fall semesters, respectively. He was awarded the Prairie Lights/Sherman Paul Dissertation Scholarship and an Office of the Vice President for Research Grant. Jeremy’s essay “Sound in Memoriam: Airing Trauma on the BBC Third Programme” was accepted for publication in

the *Journal of Literature and Trauma Studies*. He also received the Dietz Poetry Essay Prize for his essay "Traumaphonic Rift in Sylvia Plath's Aerial Poetics," which is forthcoming in *Modernism/modernity*. For his work teaching GEL, Jeremy was awarded the Council on Teaching's Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award.

Maddison McGann was awarded the CLAS Dissertation Writing Fellowship and the Graduate College Post-Comprehensive Research Fellowship. In addition, she was awarded the Honorable Mention MVSA Walter L. Arnstein Prize for Dissertation Research in Victorian Studies and the Freda Dixon Malone Dissertation Scholarship. Maddison presented research at the 4th annual Vcologies workshop, and had conference proposals accepted from MLA, ASLE, RSVP, VISAWUS and MVSA. Her article, titled "Reading Reception in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*," is currently under revision at *Victorian Periodicals Review*.

Daisy Morales will present a paper titled "Textual Ghosts: Interracial Desire in James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*" at the upcoming American Literature Association Conference in July.

Katie Randazzo presented a conference paper at the 2021 International Association of the Fantastic in the Arts Conference. She was also one of the organizers of this year's 2021 CCC Conference.

Meredith Stabel is co-editor (with Zachary Turpin) of a two-volume anthology entitled *Radicals: Audacious Writings by American Women, 1830-1930*. Volume 1 is comprised of poetry, fiction, and drama and features a foreword by Roxane Gay, and volume 2 is made up of memoir, essays, and oratory, with a foreword by Katha Pollitt. *Radicals* will be published by the University of Iowa Press on June 15, 2021.

Makayla Steiner has had an essay on Marilynne Robinson's *Lila* accepted for publication in *Religion and Literature*, and her essay "Cormac McCarthy's Postsecular Faith" has been accepted for publication in a special issue of *Intégrité*.

Thelma Trujillo was an invited speaker for the winter colloquium "Queer & Latinx in the Academy" sponsored by the Yale Center for the Study of Race, Indigeneity, and Transnational Migration (RITM), where she discussed *chisme* as a tool for the knowledge production and survival of first-gen Latinx students in higher education. She also presented at the Vagantes Conference on Medieval Studies and the Medieval Studies Student Colloquium at Cornell. Recently, she published a poem titled "'I Love You' and Other Similar Curses of the Tongue" in the 2021 issue of *Latino Book Review*.

Philip Zaborowski presented his work at "The Newberry Library Multidisciplinary Graduate Student Conference" and "The Redefining the Middle Ages Conference". Philip was also awarded The Judith Popovich Aikin Award in Renaissance Studies.

2021 Incoming PhD Students

Carolyn Gonzalez

BA, University of Iowa

English

MA, Iowa State University

English

Darryl Moton

BA, Iowa State University

English

Alyssa Smith

BA, Furman University

English

Darius Stewart

BA, Tennessee Knoxville

English

MA, University of Texas-Austin

Writing

MFA, University of Iowa

Nonfiction

Placement Matters

Faith Avery, PhD, '20.

Educational Specialist, Goodwill Industries, Portland, OR.

Heidi Renee Aijala, PhD, '21.

Assistant Professor (TT), English and ESL (Transitional Education), Pierce College, Lakewood, WA.

Laura Hayes, PhD, '21

Accessibility Coordinator & Academic Coach, Coe College, Cedar Rapids, IA.

Haley Larson, PhD, '20.

Assistant Professor of English for New Media (TT), Dakota State, Madison, SD.

Katherine Ostdiek, PhD, '20.

Instructional Designer, Bellevue University, Bellevue, NE.

Annemarie Pearson, PhD, '20.

Instructor, New Mexico Tech, Socorro, NM.

Caitlin Simmons, PhD, '20.

Assistant Professor (TT), Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA.

Makayla Steiner, (ABD)

Assistant Professor of English (TT), Brigham Young University, Provo, UT

Alumni Matters

James Tweedie, PhD, '02, currently Professor of Cinema and Media Studies, University of Washington. Is this year's winner of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation award in the Film, Video, & New Media Studies.

Douglas Wilhide, MA, '74, newly released book "Nutshells: Diversions in a Time of Pandemic, a collection of short essays," has been published in Minneapolis, by Trolley Car Press.