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

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 Suddbeck, “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.
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 Schlotte-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 Schlotte-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.).


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


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

PhD Qualifications
Anne Burkhart
Rajorshi Das
Kyler Dill
Joshua Foley
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
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, Aryabhatta 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.