

UIC DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH Graduate Research Topics

Updated: Fall 2007

STEPHEN A. ALLEN: M.A. CREATIVE WRITING

Poetry. 20th Century American, English, and Irish writing; the intersection of history and literature; translation. Poetry has been most recently published in Blue Mesa Review and Samizdat.

CYNTHIA BAROUNIS: Ph.D. ENGLISH STUDIES (GWS CONCENTRATION)

20th century American literature (emphasis on the Southern Gothic); biocultures; intersections of queer theory and disability studies; visual culture; the history of sexuality in the U.S. (1880-present). Most recently presented work on Carson McCullers and representations of deafness (MMLA 2006), Brokeback Mountain's deployment of able-bodiedness (KSU 2007) and the relationship between heteromascularity and disability in Murderball (SDS 2007). Article on Flannery O'Connor's Wise Blood appears in the Flannery O'Connor Review, Summer 2007.

MARK BENNETT: Ph.D. ENGLISH LITERATURE

Rural Studies; Twentieth-Century American Political Writings; Twenty-First Century American Political Writings and the War on Terror; American Popular Culture.

PAUL BERGSTRAESSER: Ph.D. CREATIVE WRITING

Fiction. Dissertation/novel contemporary literary fiction set in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Other interests: 18th-century British novel; the comic novel. Fiction and nonfiction most recently published in Sojourn, Other Voices, and The Barcelona Review.

ERICA BERNHEIM: Ph.D. CREATIVE WRITING

Contemporary poetry and poetics. Interests also include Faulkner, film studies, Italian. Poetry Editor of Keep Going. Poems and reviews have recently appeared or are forthcoming in Black Warrior Review, Gulf Coast, 26, The Canary, Volt, Court Green, Backwards City Review, Bridge and others. Poems are also forthcoming in Legitimate Dangers: American Poets of the New Century (Louisville, KY: Sarabande Books, forthcoming Winter 2006).

STEFANIE BOESE: Ph.D. ENGLISH STUDIES

Political philosophy, new media, twentieth century and postmodern literature. Current research interests include: literary theory in the context of digital humanities; subject formations and the role of language in modern continental philosophy, with a particular focus on Badiou.

RYAN BROOKS. Ph.D. ENGLISH STUDIES

My research interests include 20th century and contemporary American fiction, modernism and postmodernism, and critical theory. Lately I've been trying to put postwar American novels in dialogue with contemporary political theory -- reading William S. Burroughs's *Junky* and *Queer* in terms of their resistance to a "politics of recognition" and comparing the projects of Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* and Hardt and Negri's *Multitude*.

JOHN CASEY: Ph.D. LITERATURE

Nineteenth Century American Novel. Currently working on my dissertation which examines Reconstruction Era fiction with an emphasis on the connection between Romance plots in the novels under examination and the phenomenon of post-war Nationalism.

CHRISTINE DE LUCA: M.A. LITERATURE

Historical nonfiction, English Literature from 1300-1850. Completed second semester of coursework; graduating May, 2006.

MOHAMMED ERRIHANI: Ph.D. LANGUAGE, LITERACY, AND RHETORIC

Currently writing dissertation on Language Policy in Morocco. Has recently published article on language policy and the teaching of Berber in Morocco in the *Journal of North African Studies* (JNAS vol 11. # 2) and has contributed a book chapter on language attitudes in Morocco (Cambridge Scholars Press, forthcoming). Has presented papers at several venues, University of Texas at Austin, Portland State University, and Harvard. Will be presenting at MESA (Middle East Studies Association) in November 2006.

PETE FRANKS: Ph.D. LITERATURE

Pete's current project charts the ways in which U.S. texts of the 1930s theorize the individual's relation to society through geographic determinations, along the axes of underdevelopment, affect, and diversity. He has recently presented on James Agee and concrete universality (UIC symposium, 2006), Southern Agrarian poetry and the New Criticism (MSA 2006), Pound and Caldwell (M/MLA 2006), and Zukofsky and Mike Gold (M/MLA 2007, upcoming).

CAROLINE GOTTSCHALK-DRUSCHKE: Ph.D. RHETORIC

Rhetorical, political, and feminist theories and urban studies. Has written extensively on the urban landscape and engaged pedagogy and is currently involved with varied projects including work on the rhetorics of urban agriculture and environmental justice. Teaches community-based writing and rhetoric courses that encourage students to explore and engage with the city.

JoANNE RUVOLI GRUBA: Ph.D. ENGLISH

20th Century American Literature and Film. Exam specialization areas included: Immigrant Narratives and Italian American Literature, Women and Early Cinema, Beat Literature, Narrative Inquiry and Teacher Narratives.

Forthcoming conference papers to be presented at AIHA, MLA and Rocky Mountain MLA. Dissertation, tentatively titled "Framing Ethnicity: Storytelling in Italian American Novels," focuses on representations of oral storytelling in Italian American novels that utilize narrative frames.

KRISTEN HARRELD: M.A. LANGUAGE, LITERACY, AND RHETORIC

Interests include general Rhetorical Studies, Composition Theory, and Feminist Rhetoric. Scheduled to present essay entitled, "Visual vs. Verbal: The Case for Defining Rhetoric" at 2005 conference of the National Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association. Revising latest essay, "Minding and Mending the Fractures: Feminist Theory and Practice in the Composition Classroom" for publication.

LaVONNE HARRIS: Ph.D. CREATIVE WRITING

Interests include fiction and poetry writing, African literature, 20th Century American literature (Hurston, Brooks and O'Connor), science fiction, gender studies and popular culture and hip-hop. Also a growing interest in narrative writing and film studies.

TIMOTHY HENNINGSEN: M.A. LITERATURE

Research interests include Atlantic Studies, Postcolonialism, Herman Melville and C.L.R. James; also currently drawing parallels between the growth of the 19th-century American novel and emergence of 20th-century Caribbean texts.

MARY HIBBELER: M.A. LITERATURE

Currently working on eighteenth-century fiction and the development of the novel.

DAVID HOSSLER: M.A. ENGLISH EDUCATION

Concentrating on teaching of writing, reading, and literacy skills. Particularly interested in the possible connections between writing skills and critical thinking skills.

GLENDA JONES: Ph.D. LANGUAGE, LITERACY, AND RHETORIC/ LITERATURE

Interests include cultural studies; the representation of women in reality TV; feminist and gender studies; composition theory and practice. Also interested in the personal and cultural narrative of Jane Addams and the women of Hull-House. Recent presenter at MAPACA and CEA conferences.

MEG KING: Ph.D. LITERATURE

20th Century American. Current research interest: the idea of the "real," as discussed during the 1930s and the postmodern era. Presenting a paper on F. Scott Fitzgerald and race at the MMLA in November.

MEGAN MARIE: Ph.D. RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION; GENDER AND WOMEN'S STUDIES

Current research interests: Burkean rhetoric, the rhetoric of religion, rhetorical tropes and commonplaces – reflective of late capitalism - used in contemporary institutions to mobilize social energy. Scholarly work presented this past year at Rhetoric Society of America Summer Institute, The Rhetoric Society of America Conference, The Conference on College Composition and Communication, National Council of Teachers of English Conference (2005), and Third Wave Feminism Conference (2005). Journal publications in *The Community Literacy Journal*, *Works and Days*, *The Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, and *FACET: Quick Hits for Civic Engagement*. Book chapter publications in *21st Century Writing: New Directions for Secondary Classrooms* and *Ordinary Writing: Redesigning First Year Composition for the Engaged University* (both forthcoming).

KAT McCLELLAN: Ph.D. ENGLISH LITERATURE

Eighteenth century British literature; Marxist theory.

BETH MCDERMOTT: Ph.D. CREATIVE WRITING

Current research topics include contemporary formal poetry, modern american poetry, and the criteria that designate "ecopoetry" and how that genre has evolved out of a tradition of nature poetry.

SCOTT McFARLAND: Ph.D. CREATIVE WRITING

Fiction. Project Biocultures. American literature/pop culture. Southern history. Conference papers: "Confederate Flag Decals," "Bruce Wayne's Obsession," "Invisible Man's Invisible Black Policemen." At work on: "Faulkner v. Snopes," "In-Their-Shoes Journalism 101," "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Apes (But Were Afraid to Ask)," and a sprawling comic novel about the New South.

CARRIE MESSENGER: Ph.D. CREATIVE WRITING

Fiction. Interests include 20th Century American urban literature; Asian cinema; feminist theory and literature; postcolonial theory and literature; postmodernism. Also translation from Romanian to English and creative nonfiction. Stories have appeared in *Blue Mesa Review* and *Beloit Fiction Journal*. Translations have appeared most recently in *International Poetry Review* and *Salmagundi*.

COLIN MILROY: M.A. TEACHING OF ENGLISH

Currently exploring the uses of theatre-based interactive education programs that enhance language arts learning. Thesis research for this semester will coincide with study of narrative theory.

CATHERINE R. MINTLER: Ph.D. LITERATURE

American and British Modernism; 19th Century American Literature; Aesthetic Theory; Women in Literature; Women's Literature; Feminist and Gender Theory; Racial, Class and Gender "passing" and novels of "passing"; History and Theory of Fashion; Origin and History of the Department Store and Department Store Mannequins. Currently writing an interdisciplinary

dissertation project titled: "Fashioning Identity: Consumption, Performativity and Passing in the Modernist Novel." Scholarly work presented this past year at: MLA, RMMLA, ALA, the Annual Virginia Woolf Conference, and the 20th Century Literature Association Conference. Recipient of 2005 Antette Kolodny Award from Women's Consortium for the Modern Languages.

MADELEINE MONSON-ROSEN: Ph.D. LITERATURE

20th Century novel. British and American postmodernism. Feminism. Queer theory. Article appears in *Straight Writ Queer: Non-Normative Expressions of Heterosexuality in Literature*.

SIMONE MUENCH: Ph.D. CREATIVE WRITING

Interested in poetry and film studies, particularly the horror genre. Her second book *Lampblack & Ash* won the Kathryn A. Morton Prize for Poetry and will be published by Sarabande Books in Fall 05. Will be presenting at the AWP conference in Vancouver in 05. Poetry editor, ACM. Assistant Professor, Lewis University. Her website is simonemuench.com

MATHIAS NILGES: Ph.D. LITERATURE

20th century American lit., Critical Theory (Frankfurt School), Marxist theory, autonomia and operaismo, psychoanalysis, ethnic and radical literatures. Current research interests: collective action and social movements in times of globalization; the similitude and decentralized revolutionary organizations; terrorism (esp. the Red Brigades) and the figure of the urban guerilla; repressively sublimated simulacra in consumer-capitalism; rhizomes of pain, excess, and squandering in global networks. Presentations in 2004 at the MMLA, MLG ICS, K-State Cultural Studies Conference, SCT, Third Wave Feminism Conference, International Conference on Globalization. Presentations early 2005: K-State Cultural Studies Conference, ACLA, MELUS. Articles under review at *Media/Culture*, and *symploke*.

JAMES PATE: Ph.D. CREATIVE WRITING

Fiction and poetry. British Modernism, Nigerian literature, experimental film, German Romanticism, biocultural theory, and post-WWII urban American literature. Stories have appeared in *Black Warrior Review*, *Blue Mesa Review*, and *New Delta Review*; poetry has appeared in *Rhino*, *Harpur Palate*, and is forthcoming in Action Press' online journal *Action, Yes*.

MATTHEW PAVESICH: Ph.D. ENGLISH STUDIES

Rhetoric, the philosophy of the self, and political theory; authenticity and its presence in contemporary political theory, philosophy, and culture. Most recently given papers at the Rhetoric Society of America conference and a conference on authenticity at the University of Salford in Manchester, England.

ERIC DEAN RASMUSSEN: Ph.D. LITERATURE

American literature and culture, literary theory and philosophy, media studies. Eric's research interests include technology and subjectivity in

modern and postmodern literature and philosophy; the status of the literary in aesthetics and media theory; and cybercultural influences on the future of the digital humanities. He has taught American Literature and Culture classes that provide an introduction to modernism/postmodernism and composition courses on topics including new media writing, writing on drugs, and existentialism. Developed an ongoing interest in electronic literature, new-media arts and digital publishing while working in editorial positions for the Electronic Literature Organization and ebr: the electronic book review. Posts semi-regularly at his blog on EricRasmussen.com. Recently published "The Last Hegelian: An Interview with Slavoj Zizek" in the Minnesota Review n.s. 61-62 (2004): 79-93. A longer version of the interview is [available online](#). Scheduled to present a paper, "They're Still Fucking Us': Sex and the Family Mythology in E.L. Doctorow's The Book of Daniel," at the 2005 Nordic Association of American Studies (NAAS) Conference.

ANNA RIEHL: Ph.D. ENGLISH

Early modern literature and visual culture. Currently working on a dissertation, tentatively titled "The Face of Power: Elizabeth I." Recently presented a paper called "Persuading the Prince: George Chapman's De Guiana" at the 4th Annual Tudor Symposium at Kingston University and Hampton Court Royal Palace, September 2004. Will be presenting a paper entitled "Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart: Veils, noses, books, and portraits" at the conference of Renaissance Society of America.

IVAN RODDEN (aka IVAN FAUTE): Ph.D. PROGRAM FOR WRITERS

Critical and theoretical interests include: memory and identity in narrative; drama performance and audience reactions; critical evaluation as a moral and political act; fabulism as a construct of reality. He has presented papers at the Midwestern Conference on Literature, Language, and Media and 20th Century Literature and Culture Conference. Creative interests include: the construction of a narrative life story; the performance and construction of the self in society; time and distance in relationships; Cartesian and Augustinian models enacted in physical spaces and relationships. His various projects include flash fiction, short stories, novels and drama.

KRISTEN SCHAFFENBERGER, Ph.D. LITERATURE

20th century American poetry, contemporary art, visual culture, theories of the avant garde, systems theory.

LARRY J. SWAIN, Ph.D. LITERATURE

Larry works on Bede, Alfred, and Aelfric, 3 Anglo-Saxon era writers and studies Anglo-Latin, Old English and related texts principally from 600-1200 CE. Larry is also interested in all Late Antique and Medieval "biblical literature" loosely defined as literature that retells the Bible in some way as well as the History of the Book.

KRISTY L. ULIBARRI: Ph.D. LITERATURE

20th-and 21st-Century American Literature, Latina/o Literature and Studies, Ethnicity. Work deals with mestizaje; nationality, the nation state, and the global; and the oscillations in ethnicity and performance. 2006 Conference Presentations: paper on Serros and fandom at ASU and upcoming presentation on Velvet Goldmine at the MAPACA.

BEN UNDERWOOD: Ph.D. ENGLISH STUDIES

Concentrations: Twentieth-Century/Contemporary Literature and Theory. Underwood's interest in contemporary literature has led him to write on David Markson's generically adventurous fiction, the relation of William S. Burroughs's cut-up technique to intentionalist accounts of language, and Fredric Jameson's treatment of innovative fiction from E.L. Doctorow to J.G. Ballard. He has also explored the rapport between literary and composition pedagogy, and he will present his ideas on this topic at the Future of English Studies conference at the University of Illinois at Springfield in October 2007. Last semester, Underwood taught a course called "Writing about Rap and Popular Culture," and he is currently completing an essay for a forthcoming collection that will be the first volume of scholarship on Jim Henson's Muppets. Recently, Underwood began working as an Associate Editor of [ebr: electronic book review](#). On the less contemporary front, Underwood has published a brief article on the influence of Platonic thought on Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady*, has written on Edith Wharton's depictions of divorce, and has undertaken a narratological reading of George Eliot's short fiction.

ANDREW WALSER: Ph.D LITERATURE

The Epic. Renaissance Drama. Postmodern and Contemporary American Writing. African, Indian, and Caribbean Literature in English. Reviews have recently appeared in *American Book Review* and *electronic book review*.