

# DEPARTMENT *of* ENGLISH

2016 Newsletter

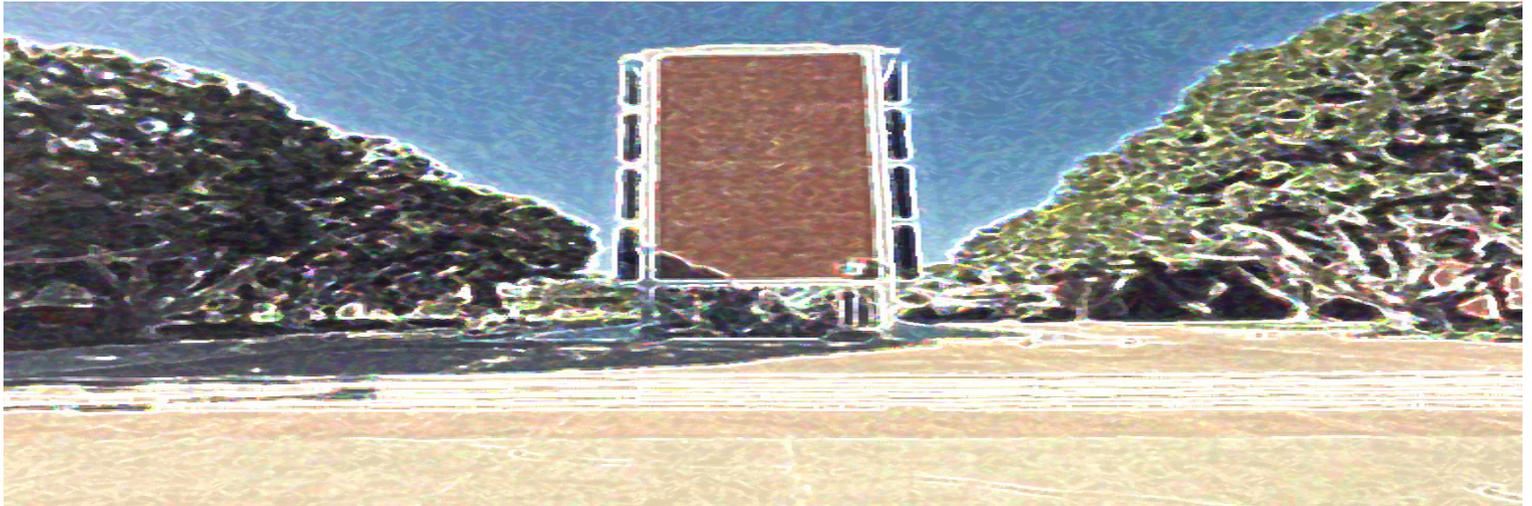


Photo By Kevin Salger

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## Notes from the Chair

To English majors, and others, spring signifies renewal, rebirth, and regeneration. In the case of our newsletter, reconnection with graduates, emeritus faculty, and friends of our department. Whether studying literature, rhetoric and composition, and/or creative writing, our majors are well aware of the ubiquitous nature of Change. We recognize there is no Constant, and this newsletter brings to you the evidence of Change this past year.

Looking forward to my twentieth year as Chair of this extraordinary department, I have a first-row seat in both the past and the present, and I note Change within each year's newsletter. Faculty leave us to pursue new paths and honors: This year saw the retirement of Gene Dinielli, Brian Finney, and Alosi Moloi. Paul Gilmore left us to become the Administrative Dean of the Honors College at Rutgers University, and Tim Caron is now the Associate Dean of Arts and Humanities at CSU Dominguez Hills. I am always saddened to announce the passing of faculty, and this year that list now includes Daniel Bahner, Don Weinstock, Joanne Yockey, and Arnie Schwab (whose \$1,000,000 donation funded the new Arnold Schwab Graduate Center on the fifth floor of the University library).

Change is also signaled by new arrivals, and we have just hired two new tenure-track faculty: Rene Treviño, whose area is pre-1900 American literature, with an emphasis in African-American literature, and David Hernandez, award-winning poet and author, who will be a member of our Creative Writing faculty. Rene comes to us from Texas A&M, and David earned his BA from CSULB and his MFA from the University of California, Irvine. Both are dedicated to teaching, and I know that their presence in our department will augment our curricula to meet the interests and needs of our 21st-century students.

Our faculty continue to demonstrate their leadership and administrative abilities this year; our presence is felt throughout the university. We especially celebrate Norbert Schürer, our Graduate Advisor, being elected Chair of the Academic Senate for 2016-17.

Change is often equated with Accomplishment, and we know you will enjoy reading of our many successes in this newsletter. Please read on!!!!

Eileen Klink, Chair

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2016 NEWSLETTER STAFF WRITERS:

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# A L U M N I P R O F I L E

## CERA SMITH

CSULB, BA ENGLISH LITERATURE, 2015

Cera Smith is one of the exceptional students to graduate from the English department at CSULB in recent years. Smith now holds a BA in English Literature and Creative Writing, with a minor in Psychology. After being accepted into eleven PhD programs this year, she has decided to pursue her postgraduate education in a joint doctoral program in English and African American Studies at Yale University.

Smith chose to attend CSULB after being offered a President's Scholarship, giving her a fully-funded four years of study. Once a student, she began to understand her true potential at CSULB. "I realized that CSULB offered unparalleled access to faculty and a wealth of campus resources that made such a huge difference in my educational experience," said Smith. By the end of her time at CSULB, she was named one of the English department's Distinguished Undergraduates for 2015.

As a student, Smith was involved in multiple campus organizations. She was president of the Iota Pi chapter of CSULB's English Honor Society, Sigma Tau Delta, and of the CSULB Social Dance Club. As a benefit of being in these organizations, unique skillsets, such as how to plan and execute major events on campus and how to acquire funding for presentations at conferences. Being a member of these organizations also allowed her to form strong friendships with peers who had similar interests.

Apart from these leadership roles, she was also a member of the President's Scholars Program, the University Honors Program, and CSULB's slam poetry team. To add to her already busy workload, she worked as a tour guide and as the publications editor for University Outreach & School Relations.

Smith thinks highly of her time spent in the English department at CSULB. She found that the faculty's ability to challenge and encourage her allowed her to become a more critical reader and to develop her writing style. Smith claims that the training in literary theory and close-reading that she received as an English major helps explain her success in being offered admission to eleven PhD programs and has prepared her for advanced study in the field.

In addition to taking the standard English courses, she branched out by enrolling in courses on subjects like U.S. ethnic literature and radical protest literature of the U.S. The questions raised in these classes have shaped the interests that Smith plans to pursue in graduate school. "The exposure that I received to decolonial, Marxist, women of color/Third World feminist, queer, trauma, and critical race theories has

sparked my interest in continuing to develop an interdisciplinary framework for literary analysis," said Smith.

Smith holds her faculty mentors in the highest regard. "I would like to thank Professors Dennis López, Araceli Esparza, Carol Zitzer-Comfort, Neil Hultgren, Susan Carlile, and Tim Caron for their unending support and for being so transparent about their love for and belief in literature," said Smith. She claims that the encouragement she received from the English department faculty has influenced her to pursue a career in teaching English at the college level.

Since graduating, Smith has been tutoring, auditing courses, and working for a social-justice-oriented community organization called the California Conference for Equality and Justice (CCEJ). "I facilitate conversations with high school and

middle school youth in diverse dialogue groups and racial affinity groups as they explore the relationships between stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, oppression, multiple "isms" that engage issues of power and privilege, as well as the necessity for allyship and advocacy," Smith says of her work with the organization.

Cera Smith is an exemplary alumna of the CSULB English department. Smith encourages students to broaden their educational experience by exploring the diverse range of courses and organizations offered at CSULB. By taking advantage of CSULB's wide variety of opportunities as a college student, Smith was able to have a unique and fulfilling experience that has prepared her for her future endeavors in pursuing a doctorate.



# A L U M N I P R O F I L E

## KRISTEN-PAIGE MADONIA

CSULB, MFA CREATIVE WRITING, 2005

As a child, Kristen-Paige Madonia spent countless hours writing stories about her stuffed animals. Her passion to write has led her into a successful career as a young novelist since completing an MFA degree in Creative Writing at CSULB.

Her efforts in looking for strong writing communities and for an opportunity to focus on her fiction led her to the English department's MFA program. She enrolled in it shortly after moving from Virginia to California.

"I knew I wanted to be writer, but I wasn't sure what that exactly meant," Madonia explains. She was certain that her talent lay in fiction-writing, since she had worked on short stories for a while. However, she realized she still needed to learn a great deal about her craft. As an undergraduate, she studied playwriting, scriptwriting, and journalism. The tools she learned helped her with her fiction, but she was still severely behind in reading the classics and had not yet focused on prose writing. She wanted to practice and find a mentor. "I wanted to study successful literary authors and share my work with other students who could help me become a stronger writer," Madonia says.

During her experience in the MFA program in English, she was both inspired and motivated by her professors. They were actively publishing new work and were willing to meet with her to discuss her stories and excerpts from a novel she was writing. "They were honest, encouraging, and incredibly generous with their time and guidance," Madonia says. She is certain that the years she spent here laid a solid foundation for her writing and teaching career. She is grateful that the program helped her to be persistent and thick-skinned, while at the same time teaching her to read like a writer and to formulate critiques and feedback.

Her forthcoming book, *Invisible Fault Lines*, is about a 17-year-old girl whose father goes to work one morning and never comes home. Set in 2006 in San Francisco, the girl and her friends try to unravel his mysterious disappearance. However, when she attends an art exhibit and sees her father in a photograph of the Great San Francisco Earthquake of 1906, she becomes obsessed with the city's history. "In that way, it's hybrid fiction, part mystery,

part contemporary, and part historical," Madonia says. "But at the heart, it's a story about how we cope with loss and hope we find family, friends, and music."

When asked what inspired her to write the novel, she said that her interest was to explore more of an ambiguous loss, such as when a person disappears and you are grieving about

something that has been taken away from you. As a result, you end up navigating unanswered questions. She states that the protagonist, Callie Pace, is constantly wrestling with the "not-knowing." This particular concept was interesting to Madonia. "There's hope in the unknown just as much as there is heartache, and I wanted to explore that dynamic."

Madonia explains that the setting holds a specific kind of energy, in large part due to the Great San Francisco Earthquake. It's a place where there is a heightened awareness of hope, as the citizens see the city crumble, rebuild itself, and thrive. However, there also remains an awareness of vulnerability. Madonia states that, over the decades, there have been memorials, tributes, and art exhibits in response to the earthquake.

During its 100th anniversary, she said that you could feel the weight of the event's tragic history and consider the possibility of its happening again. She believes the traumatic event caused the people of San Francisco to be forever linked together, and it is this connection that fuels her writing.

Kristen-Paige Madonia's *Invisible Fault Lines* is scheduled to be published by Simon and Schuster later this year.



## STUDENT *News*

---

ARWA ALMASAARI (MA)

WILL BE ENTERING THE PHD PROGRAM IN LITERATURE AND CULTURAL THEORY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE IN FALL 2016.

AMBER PAYNE (BA)

PUBLISHED "HOLD ON LOOSELY," A WORK OF CREATIVE NONFICTION, IN MIDWAY JOURNAL (15 JANUARY 2016).

ASHTON POLITANOFF (MFA)

PUBLISHED TWO SHORT STORIES, "DIVINE LOVE" AND "ONE END AND AIM," IN THIS YEAR'S ISSUE OF THE LITERARY JOURNAL *NOON*.

KAYLEIGH QUARTERMAN (MA)

WILL BE ENTERING THE PHD PROGRAM IN ENGLISH AT UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE IN FALL 2016.

## ALUMNI *News*

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SHANNON COUEY (BA, 2010; MA, 2012)

WILL BE ENTERING THE PHD PROGRAM IN ENGLISH AT UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS IN FALL 2016.

TOM DO (BA, 2005; MA 2008)

HAS COMPLETED HIS PHD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA AND ACCEPTED A TENURE-TRACK POSITION AS AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AT CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO.

RACHEL EMLING (MA, 2015)

WILL BE ENTERING THE MA PROGRAM IN MEDIEVAL STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO IN FALL 2016.

DEAN FRANCO (MA, 1995)

PUBLISHED AN ARTICLE, "VIRAMONTES' MIRACULOUS METAPHORS," IN THE NOVEMBER 2015 ISSUE OF *NOVEL: A FORUM ON FICTION*. HE IS PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH, AND CURRENTLY THE DIRECTOR OF THE JEWISH STUDIES MINOR, AT WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY.

FRANK X. GASPAR (BA, 1973)

PUBLISHED A POEM, "QUAHOGS," IN THE JANUARY 11, 2016, ISSUE OF *THE NEW YORKER*.

KOLLEEN (HIGGINS) KALT (MA, 2006)

WAS GRANTED TENURE LAST YEAR AS A FACULTY MEMBER IN THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT AT CERRITOS COLLEGE.

KATHERINE KENDALL-WEED (BA, 2008)

IS CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN THE MFA PROGRAM IN CREATIVE WRITING AT WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY.

MICHAEL OPSTEEGH (BA, 2003; MA, 2008)

WILL BE ENTERING THE PHD PROGRAM IN TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION AND RHETORIC AT TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY IN FALL 2016.

VIET PHAM (BA, 2003; MA, 2006, 2009)

HAS COMPLETED HER PHD IN RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION AT UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, EL PASO.

CERA SMITH (BA, 2015)

WILL BE ENROLLING IN A JOINT PHD PROGRAM IN ENGLISH AND AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES AT YALE UNIVERSITY IN FALL 2016.

ANDY STUART (BA, 2010; MA 2013)

HAS ACCEPTED A TENURE-TRACK FACULTY POSITION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AT ORANGE COAST COLLEGE.

ROSA TRUJILLO (MA, 2015)

IS PURSUING AN MS IN COUNSELING AT CSULB.

# S T U D E N T P R O F I L E

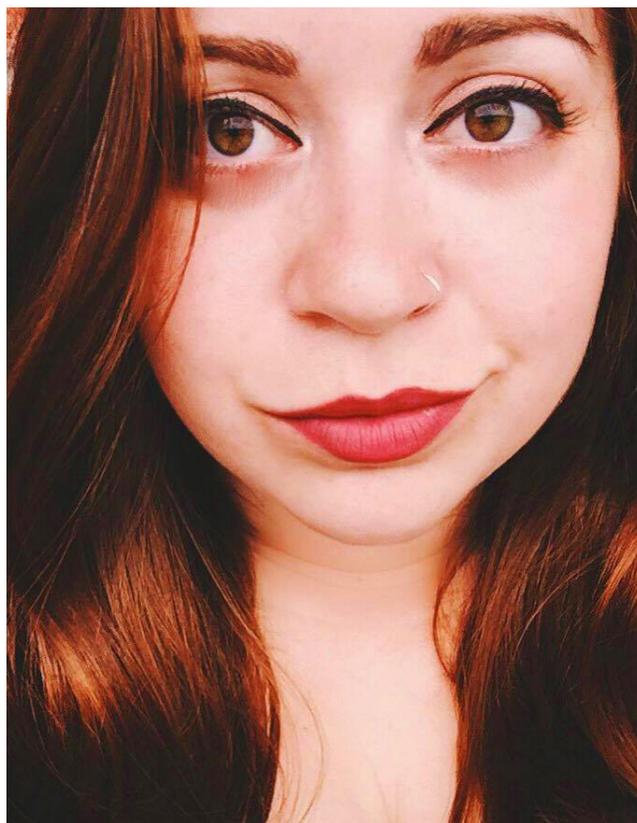
## KELSEY GUTIERREZ CSULB, BA CREATIVE WRITING

Kelsey Gutierrez is a junior majoring in English, in the creative writing option, and she is the winner of this year's William T. Shadden Memorial Undergraduate Award in poetry.

While she has always envisioned herself writing novels and fiction, she “didn’t really think about writing poetry until community college.” While taking an entry-level poetry-writing course, Kelsey was inspired by one of her teachers, who showed her poetry’s capability to be poignantly “weird.” She fell in love with poetry for its condensed language and unusual imagery, and for the poet’s responsibility to straddle clarity and the absurd.

Since she was in high school, Kelsey has known that she wanted to attend CSULB. Her first visit to the campus was for a drama competition. She explains, “We were walking past the McIntosh Building when I noticed a flyer that read ‘Long Beach Poetry Slam.’” While she did not yet consider herself a poet, the idea of a campus that celebrated writing and performance stuck in her mind and cemented her desire to one day attend this university.

At CSULB, Kelsey’s favorite classes have been her creative-writing workshops—smaller classes where a number of students read and critique the work of their peers. Under the direction of instructors such as Professor Charles Webb and Professor Patty Seyburn, she has noticed a remarkable improvement in her craft after her first year of study in our department. Having published poets as her teachers—each bringing different viewpoints on “what works”—has helped Kelsey develop her poetry.



According to Kelsey, the subjects that seem to be central to her poetry are “sexual assault, strange parents, and loss.” Her influences include Sharon Olds, Lucille Clifton, Jeffrey McDaniel, and Long Beach native Mindy Nettifee, among others. Kelsey remembers attending an open mic, nearly ten years ago, where Nettifee was performing; she was amazed by her performance style and has been a fan of hers ever since.

When asked what her advice would be to any students considering the English major, she stated, “Take weird, random classes.” She feels it is a common trap for college students to narrow their scope too much. Though she has found her calling as a poet, Kelsey is taking classes in short fiction and non-fiction, and has even enrolled in nursing courses. She notes that medical terminology from courses she took early in college frequently finds a place in her poetry. As a writer, she feels there is a danger in not taking your time to experience everything the campus and Long Beach have to offer you; she believes that, without life experiences, you may find yourself writing solely in generalities.

## 2016 DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

GERALD LOCKLIN WRITING PRIZE: JULIE YEUN KIM  
ELIZABETH W. NIELSEN SCHOLARSHIP: ROBERT GUTIERREZ  
RONALD FOOTE SCHOLARSHIP IN FICTION: LAURA PICKLESIMER  
JOHN B. WILLIAMS SCHOLARSHIP IN LITERATURE: MEAGAN MEYLOR  
JOHN B. WILLIAMS SCHOLARSHIP IN ENGLISH EDUCATION: ABIGAIL WIRBEL  
ISABELLE McCAFFREY HORN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP IN FICTION: BRIELLE BABIAR  
JAMES I. MURASHIGE JR. MEMORIAL AWARD FOR A SHORT STORY: ASHLEY ANTHONY  
MARY PURCELL SCHOLARSHIP FOR THE STUDY OF C17 AND C18 LITERATURE: ERIKA ZEMANEK  
WILLIAM T. SHADDEN MEMORIAL AWARD IN POETRY (UNDERGRADUATE): KELSEY GUTIERREZ  
WILLIAM T. SHADDEN MEMORIAL AWARD IN POETRY (GRADUATE): TOREN WALLACE

### Distinguished Undergraduate Students

SHANE DOMINGUEZ      MEAGAN MEYLOR

### Distinguished Graduate Students

NICOLE BENNETT (MA)      SALLY SOWTER (MA)

### Outstanding Undergraduate Students

REBEKAH A. BLASER      RICHARD ESTRADA  
CRISTAL SIMONE GUZMAN      DEANA TRUC HO  
HEATHER JOHNSON      JONATHAN CHARLES BUCK LEFEVRE  
SALVADOR MARTINEZ      ANA MERKULOVA  
MICHELLE NGUYEN      NATALIE OLLEN  
RAYMOND PARAMO      MAITLYN REYNOLDS  
JODY MICHELE SALLEE      SAMANTHA MARIE SMITH  
MELISSA YAEKO TANAKA      INDIGO THUY VU  
DEREK TYLER WAITE      MADELINE WENTWORTH

### Outstanding Graduate Students

KIMBERLEE FLACK (MA)      DANIELLE GILSTRAP (MA)  
SARA GONZALEZ (MA)      LAURA PICKLESIMER (MFA)  
KRISTEN SKJONSBY (MA)      ERIKA ZEMANEK (MA)

### Best Master's Thesis Award

ASHTON POLITANOFF (MFA): LOCALS

### Dean's List of Graduating Master's Students

JANEA WILSON (MFA)

## SIGMA TAU DELTA

Sigma Tau Delta at CSULB started in 2011 as the Iota Pi Chapter, with former president Cera Smith, and its faculty advisor, Professor Neil Hultgren. The International English Honor Society is composed of over 600 currently active chapters. According to the Iota Pi Chapter's website, its "central purpose is to confer distinction upon outstanding students of the English language and literature in undergraduate, graduate, and professional studies." Sigma Tau Delta promotes interest in literature as well as exemplary character and good fellowship among its members.

According to the Iota Pi Chapter's current president, Meagan Meylor, the elected board members are renewing the chapter through ASI and establishing connections with the College of Liberal Arts Student Council. Their main priority this semester has been to recruit new members, as they are looking to strengthen the chapter's future. Meylor sees the chapter as working with the English department to provide English majors with more networking and connection opportunities.

The chapter works to provide its members with information about professional opportunities, social events, and internships. Meylor claims that Sigma Tau Delta has given

her the opportunity to connect with students from CSULB and nearby universities who have similar interests. She has also had the opportunity to make a presentation at the Far Western Regional Conference at CSU Fullerton. "Being in an Honor Society highlights your academic accomplishments and allows you to stand out," says Meylor. "Sigma Tau Delta has allowed me to become a student leader on campus."

IF YOU'RE AN ENGLISH MAJOR AND LOOKING FOR A WAY TO GET MORE INVOLVED ON CAMPUS, LOOK NO FURTHER THAN SIGMA TAU DELTA. IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION, OR ARE INTERESTED IN JOINING THE IOTA PI CHAPTER, CHECK OUT ITS WEBSITE AT [WWW.CSULB.EDU/ENGLISH/SIGMATAUDELTA](http://WWW.CSULB.EDU/ENGLISH/SIGMATAUDELTA). FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SIGMA TAU DELTA AT LARGE, VISIT [WWW.ENGLISH.ORG](http://WWW.ENGLISH.ORG).



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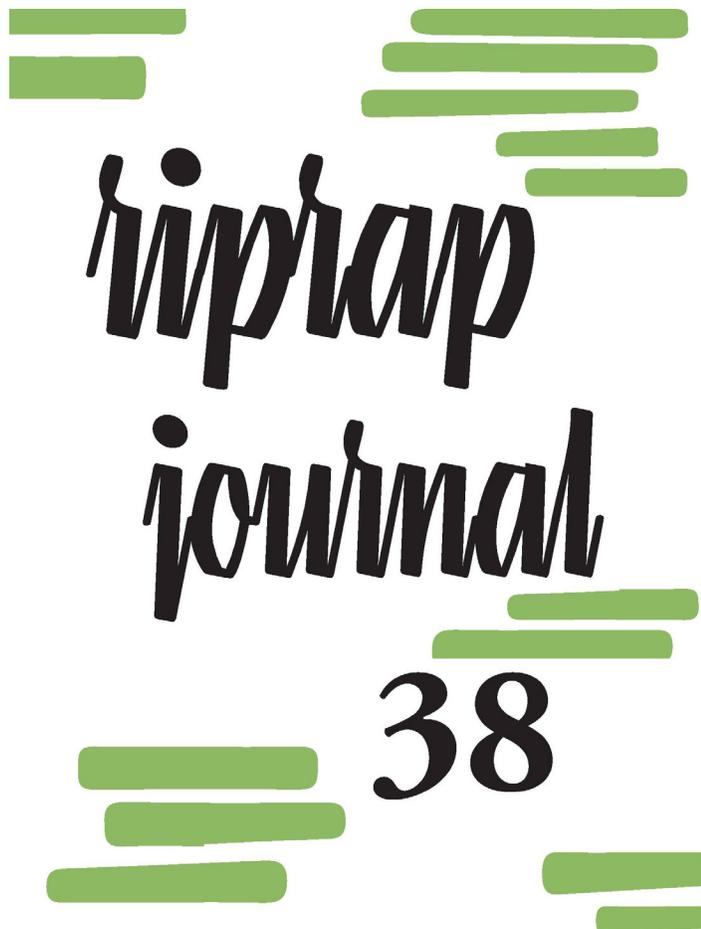
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## The Helena María Viramontes Annual Lecture Series: *Manuel Muñoz*

On March 10th, 2016, author Manuel Muñoz visited the CSULB campus as this year's featured speaker in the Helena María Viramontes Annual Lecture Series. The series was created through the joint efforts of the Departments of English and of Chicano and Latino Studies to provide a forum for the discussion and appreciation of Latino/a art and literature.

A former student of Helena María Viramontes, renowned author of *The Moths and Other Stories* and of the novels *Under the Feet of Jesus* and *Their Dogs Came With Them*, Muñoz led a writing workshop for CSULB students, followed by a reading from his work and Q&A. The event was exceptionally well attended; the lecture hall was filled to capacity by students and faculty.

Born and raised in California's Central Valley, Muñoz engages in his writing with issues of poverty and identity faced by Chicano families. As a self-identified gay author, he provides strong voices for the queer and Chicano communities alike.

Muñoz is the author of three books, including *Zigzagger: Stories and The Faith Healer of Olive Avenue*--short story collections--as well as his most recent work, *What You See in the Dark*, a novel. For the campus event, Muñoz read a short story entitled "The Happiest Girl in the Whole USA," a piece he explained was inspired by his mother. During the event, Muñoz shared his conviction that the stories and voices of individual Chicano families are often overlooked. He stressed that every family has a significant and unique story to share and that it's important to listen to these voices if we are to understand the United States as a whole.

California's Central Valley, in particular, is home to several scattered agricultural communities; these small towns are often made up of Mexican-Americans and immigrants separated from the public eye by the barriers of geography, poverty, and language. The stories of these families are central to Muñoz's writing, and they represent voices from the other side of America's cultural divide.

The Helena María Viramontes Annual Lecture is significant to Muñoz's message because it is a collaboration of the Chicano and English communities. It represents the need and desire for communication across language barriers and highlights the importance of ethnic writers in the nation's contemporary literature. In order to effectively engage with an increasingly diverse population, students must be exposed to the stories and perspectives of Americans of different ethnicities.

The Helena María Viramontes Annual Lecture demonstrates how English is becoming a multicultural language--a common window for Americans of very different backgrounds to frame and communicate their experiences. A committee that includes Professors Araceli Esparza and Dennis López, of the English department, and Professors Anna Sandoval and Griselda Suarez of the Chicano and Latino Studies department organized this year's event.

Regarding Manuel Muñoz, Professor Suarez says, "Manuel exposes the relationships between the queer self, religion, community and family while at the same giving a queer person of color agency for their own identity. This is liberating when so often queer characters are absent or fall flat in literature."

Moving forward, the committee will be seeking to expand the Helena María Viramontes Annual Lecture into a two-day event featuring panel discussions with a variety of guest speakers. Given the popularity of the event this year, it is clear that students will be enthusiastically awaiting the lecture next time around.



Manuel Muñoz speaks to a crowd of students.

# RE/INVENTIONS

## ALTERNARRATIVES

THIS PAST APRIL 7 SAW THE 5TH ANNUAL RE/INVENTIONS CONFERENCE ON THE CSULB CAMPUS IN THE KARL ANATOL CENTER, ORGANIZED BY THE ENGLISH GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (EGSA). THIS YEAR'S THEME, "ALTERNARRATIVES," LOOKED AT DIFFERENT WAYS TO TELL A STORY. OVER 250 PEOPLE ATTENDED THIS YEAR'S CONFERENCE.

DR. MARCIAL GONZÁLEZ, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY, GAVE THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS: "AGAINST OMNISCIENT NARRATION: A FARM WORKER NOVEL'S CRITIQUE OF NEOLIBERALISM." DR. GONZALEZ TEACHES COURSES IN CHICANO/A LITERATURE & CULTURE, MIGRANT IMMIGRANT LITERATURE, U.S. ETHNIC LITERATURE, U.S. LITERATURE OF RESISTANCE & REPRESSION, POLITICAL ECONOMY IN LITERARY FORM, AND LITERARY & CULTURAL THEORY. HE IS WIDELY PUBLISHED IN THE FIELD OF CHICANO/A STUDIES AND MARXIST LITERARY THEORY, AND HAS AUTHORED THE SHORT STORY, "THE RIVER BOTTOM RANCH," PUBLISHED IN THE COLLECTION *THE WAY WE WORK: CONTEMPORARY WRITINGS FROM THE AMERICAN WORKPLACE* (VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2008).



Dr. Marcial González

IN HIS KEYNOTE ADDRESS, DR. GONZÁLEZ TURNED TO SALVADOR PLASCENCIA'S NOVEL, *THE PEOPLE OF PAPER*, IN WHICH THE LIVES OF MEXICAN FARM WORKERS ARE CONSTANTLY WATCHED BY A CHARACTER NAMED SATURN, AN "OMNISCIENT, OPPRESSIVE CHARACTER," LATER DETERMINED TO BE PLASCENCIA HIMSELF. MOST OF THE WORKERS RESIST HIS AUTHORITY AND LATER DECLARE WAR ON SATURN. RETALIATION AGAINST THE WORKERS FOLLOWS THROUGH MONITORING, SUBJECTION, AND PUNISHMENT. THE FIGHT IS NOT WAGED THROUGH TRADITIONAL MEANS (KNIVES, GUNS, ETC.), BECAUSE HOW CAN CHARACTERS KILL AN AUTHOR? THEIR STRUGGLE MIRRORS THAT OF REAL-WORLD WORKERS PITTED AGAINST THE "SOCIAL CONTRADICTIONS OF NEOLIBERAL CAPITALISM, IN WHICH PEOPLE WHO WORK FOR A LIVING MUST CONSTANTLY LOOK FOR WAYS TO CHALLENGE A SYSTEM THAT IS POLITICALLY UBIQUITOUS, IDEOLOGICALLY DOMINANT, AND STRUCTURALLY DETERMINING." THE NOVEL'S CHARACTERS REFUSE TO ADHERE TO A TRADITIONAL AUTHOR/CHARACTER RELATIONSHIP AND ATTEMPT TO CHANGE THE STRUCTURAL AND VISUAL ASPECTS OF THE NOVEL ITSELF.

 English Graduate Student Association



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: SARA GONZALEZ, DR. GARY GRISWOLD, ERIKA ZEMANEK, DORIS PALOMAREZ, SALLY SOWTER, KRISTEN SKJONSBY, GITANA DENEFF, JORDAN KHAJAVIPOUR

THE EGSA WAS FOUNDED WITH THE INTENTION OF CREATING A LOCAL, INEXPENSIVE CONFERENCE WHERE STUDENTS OF DIFFERENT DISCIPLINES (THOUGH USUALLY THAT OF LITERATURE) AT THE UNDERGRADUATE, MASTER'S, AND DOCTORAL LEVELS CAN PRESENT THEIR WORK TO THE ACADEMIC AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

IN ADDITION TO THE ANNUAL SPRING CONFERENCE, THE EGSA ALSO HAS HOSTED WORKSHOPS ON HOW TO GET A TENURE-TRACK JOB AT A COMMUNITY COLLEGE, HOW TO ASSEMBLE A CURRICULUM VITAE (CV), AND HOW TO APPLY FOR ADMISSION TO DOCTORAL PROGRAMS. THERE ARE ALSO GAME NIGHTS AIMED AT RECRUITMENT AND MEMBERSHIP. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO JOIN EGSA, SEND AN EMAIL TO [EGSA.CSULB@GMAIL.COM](mailto:EGSA.CSULB@GMAIL.COM).

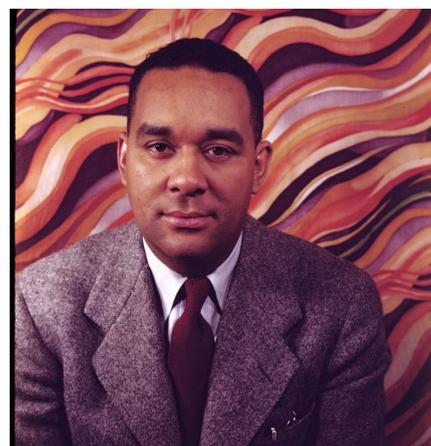
# Featured Course

## ENGL 479P: MAJOR AMERICAN WRITERS - RICHARD WRIGHT

Men can starve from lack of self-realization as much as they can from lack of bread – Richard Wright

During the fall 2015 semester, Professor Dennis López offered ENGL 479P, a section of the English department's undergraduate seminar, "Special Topics – Major American Writers," dedicated to the study of Richard Wright (1908-1960). Wright is widely recognized for works like *Black Boy*, *Native Son*, *Uncle Tom's Children*, and *The Outsider*.

According to Professor López, the class "provides an intensive examination of Richard Wright's political thinking, literary writing, and critical essays, while discussing the historical, political, economic, and socio-cultural contexts that gave shape and meaning to Wright's literary and critical production." Additionally, students consider works of other 20th-century U.S. writers such as Zora Neale Hurston, Ann Petry, Margaret Walker, Sterling Brown, Langston Hughes, James Baldwin, and Ralph Ellison. These texts highlight points of convergence and of disagreement between Wright and other key literary contemporaries.



Richard Wright

Although he is a mid-20th-century writer, Wright and his works are pertinent to our current U.S. confrontation with racism. In 2015, there were more than 300 documented cases of fatal police brutality against black people—many of whom were unarmed. Yet it was the fatal shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, that incited the nationwide outcry against police brutality in late 2014, inspiring protest songs, such as "Don't Shoot," and initiating the widespread Black Lives Matter movement that is universally recognized today. As such, issues of ethnic inequality, structural and institutionalized racism, and black discrimination are at an all-time high within popular media, politics, and college campuses.

In the midst of increasing racial tensions in American society, Wright's works as a pioneering African-American writer are still relevant. "Writing in a time of economic crisis, global imperialist wars, and racist violence and inequality," López explains, "Wright offers sharp and powerful commentary in his essays and creative works on the history and social origins of racism, poverty, exploitation, and state violence in the United States—all issues that remain vital for Americans today." For Wright, who, as a black man, experienced extreme racism and discrimination during the early- to mid-1900s, his critical, and often controversial, theories about and perspectives on the African American plight are believed to have helped change race relations in the U.S.



Without a doubt, racism still rampant in American society today. Especially with the rise in shootings of young black men over the past few years, there is little excuse for sitting on the sidelines. Members of our generation no longer have any choice but to challenge structural and institutionalized racism in intellectual conversation for the sake of a better future. Through the study of Richard Wright, Professor López believes the course will provide students "not only [with] a keen understanding of the foundational and longstanding connections between capitalist inequality and racist oppression in the United States, but also [with] an appreciation of the power of politically-engaged literature, as a socially symbolic act, to speak truth to power and effect change in our world." Whether you are an interested English student or an activist, ENGL 479P is certainly a class to consider.

# Featured Course

## ENGL 492: LITERATURE FOR ADOLESCENTS



Featuring popular young adult fiction such as *The Hunger Games* and *The Fault in Our Stars* and even a wordless graphic novel, “English 482: Literature for Adolescents” provides students a survey of literature and literary theory suitable for adolescents at the secondary level. According to Professor Dianne Vipond, one of the course’s key instructors, the three main goals of ENGL 482 are “to acquaint students with a variety of young adult literature, to provide students with an early field experience to help them decide if teaching is the profession they wish to pursue, and to demonstrate how teaching literary theory at the high school level is a highly effective way of promoting true critical thinking.”

Through reading and in-class discussion of assigned texts, students are prepared to utilize theory and more than one critical lens and are taught to draw upon a repertoire of active learning strategies for teaching literature at the high-school level—such as inquiry methods and literature circles. As a result, students are able to apply effectively what they have learned in class to the field.

Specifically tailored for students pursuing a BA in English education, ENGL 482 is a 4-unit course that features a one-unit fieldwork component. For approximately 20 hours of the semester, students meet and work with English language learners at Downey High School as reading buddies, often paired in groups of two or three. There, ENGL 482 participants are expected to use what they have learned in class and formulate a teaching and reading schedule for their reading buddies based on the instructor’s selected book. Students are responsible for communicating throughout the week via email or by phone, conducting weekly follow-up exchanges about the book, and helping their reading buddies with the goals and logistics of their final creative project.

While the fieldwork experience at Downey High School spans eleven weeks, the memories certainly last a lifetime. For students interested in pursuing English education and teaching at the secondary level, ENGL 482 is an excellent way to test the waters. In teaching English and literature to secondary language learners, one’s endurance and patience are surely tested—but the rewards are that much greater, and the experience gained is truly invaluable.

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN A FUTURE NEWSLETTER.**

## *L.A. Fire Department Internship*



Jennifer Smith on the LAFD boat.

On February 5th, 2016, the Technical and Professional Communication Certificate Program directors, Professor Jennifer Smith and Dr. Gary Griswold, and CSULB student and Los Angeles Fire Department intern, Danielle Gilstrap, experienced something that most civilians never do. Corinne Tipton, Battalion Chief of the LAFD, Homeland Security Division, invited the TPC program directors and their intern to board Fire Boat 2, an extremely powerful and hi-tech fireboat.

Smith, Griswold, and Gilstrap met Chief Tipton at Fire Station 112 in San Pedro, after Gilstrap had been collaborating with her online for three months on important documents for the LAFD. “Battalion Chief Tipton offered us this opportunity... so that we can put names [to] faces [and gain] a clearer understanding of what the interns are actually helping to create,” said Smith.

Along with many stories about the boat, Chief Tipton and the captain were able to give Gilstrap and the TPC program directors some insight into the importance of the port and its role in the economy as they headed towards Angel’s Gate lighthouse, the historic landmark that marks the entrance to the port. Turning back, they piloted past the USS Iowa, a permanently stationed battleship that now serves as a museum in the harbor. Gilstrap said, “They took us sideways along the battleship to showcase the fireboat’s unique capabilities.”

Back in the port, Chief Tipton showed Gilstrap a physical copy of the Joint Tankship Inspection Program (JTIP) guide that she had been working on for the past three months. The JTIP guide had been approved at the state level and was in the process of being re-submitted to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for approval for nationwide distribution.

Smith explained that, as part of the LAFD internship, students assist in writing and editing manuals and curricular material for training courses in which first responders are taught the operations of Fire Boat 2. Gilstrap worked on documents for two training courses: JTIP and the Marine Search, Rescue, and Recovery Program. “The technical writing program [at CSULB] was definitely a big help in providing me with important skills for the internship. My academic writing skills were strong as a result of completing the MA program in English, but workplace writing is very different,” said Gilstrap.

Gilstrap said that being able to learn about the ways that firefighters protect us gave her a much better understanding and appreciation of the work that she was doing. She was unaware of the range of the fire department’s responsibilities before this opportunity. “So much of modern life depends on technology,” Gilstrap says, “and we need good writers to explain how that technology works, so our digital lives can keep running. I don’t think I truly realized all of this until I took that boat tour. What would happen if the people who run our infrastructure didn’t know what they were doing?” She feels prepared for her new job as content coordinator at Laserfiche, a software-development company in Long Beach, thanks to her training in the English department’s TPC program, combined with the real-world experience provided by the LAFD internship.

## *AWP Conference*

The Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP) Conference is a traveling convention respected throughout America’s writing community. It is a destination for teachers, creative writers, and essayists to collaborate and participate in a dialogue with other writing enthusiasts. Guests can expect to listen in on readings by new and established authors as well as panel discussions featuring literary experts. This year, AWP brought the conference to Los Angeles (a remarkable event in that the convention rarely leaves the East Coast). From March 31st to April 2nd, over 12,000 readers, writers, and English professionals packed the L.A. Convention Center. They were treated to over 800 exhibitors, a record number for the conference. Most of these were representatives of university, literary, and small presses, with a few larger publishers and publications thrown into the mix.

English department faculty member Lisa Glatt spoke alongside other female authors, including Helena María Viramontes, on the “Women Write Los Angeles” panel. This discussion explored the ways in which female writers of Los Angeles are frequently categorized and stereotyped despite the incredibly diverse base of voices and perspectives this region boasts.

# *Boom and Bust: Miner Smith and His 1920s California*

## *Bungalow Mansions*

Wander around Long Beach and you'll find a variety of architectural styles: ranch, Victorian, Tudor revival, and modern, among others. One of these, Craftsman Bungalow, is well known for its distinctive look, smaller size, and simplified layout. In the 1920s, the builder Miner R. Smith erected about 30 "Bungalow Mansions" in the Belmont Heights neighborhood, with workmanship and design elements that were novel for the time. English Department Professor Norbert Schürer is lucky enough to own one of these houses, which started him on a journey to uncover what makes them special.

The result of that journey is *Boom and Bust: Miner Smith and His 1920s California Bungalow Mansions*. Professor Schürer's book details the life and art of Miner Smith, primarily focusing on the houses he built between 1920 and 1926 in Belmont Heights. His research spawned a recent exhibit curated by Professor Schürer with realtor Steffie Hands at the Historical Society of Long Beach with funding from the Long Beach Navy Memorial Heritage Association and the Long Beach Arts Council.



A bungalow designed by Miner Smith.

After several unsuccessful business ventures, by the 1920's, Miner was building complete houses combining elements of the Craftsman Bungalow and Victorian architectural styles—adding unique touches and innovations like electricity, refrigeration, and custom fireplaces and porches to make his houses appeal to buyers. Because of these features, his houses often sold for thousands of dollars more than the average at the time. Toward the end of his building period, for example, Smith had houses listed at \$50,000 each, when a house in the Sears and Roebuck catalog typically sold for about \$2,500. As he would build houses "on spec," it wasn't unusual for Miner to be thousands of dollars in the red until a house sold. Florence Ballenger, one of his children, recounted, "My brother and myself, we always said that our dad had more talent than he had business sense, but dad liked to play the artist, you know." Unfortunately, because his houses cost up to 20 times more than others (because of the additional features), attracting buyers was difficult as the boom slowed down.

Today, all of the houses are privately owned, but Long Beach Heritage, the nonprofit education and advocacy group committed to the preservation of the city's historical and architectural resources, sponsors an annual tour during which a few of the houses are opened to the public. *Boom and Bust* is available at the Historical Society of Long Beach on Atlantic Blvd. for \$20. Professor Schürer says that he hopes people will enjoy the book, while also gaining an appreciation of the unique contributions Miner Smith made to the architectural diversity of Long Beach.

(The book is available at the Historical Society of Long Beach, 4260 Atlantic Avenue, Long Beach, California 90807. 562.424.2220, <http://hslb.org>, ISBN: 978-0-692-58019-6)

Professor Glatt and her fellow speakers talked about both the joys and struggles of writing within the Los Angeles community. Their conversation was one of many that day exemplifying how important the diversity of every writer is in shaping the literary landscape of Southern California.



CSULB students at the AWP Conference.

# FACULTY *News*

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DR. SARAH ARROYO AND BAHAREH ALAEI

WERE INVITED TO SPEAK AT UC DAVIS' RHETORIC @ DAVIS WINTER 2016 WORKSHOP IN DAVIS, CA IN JANUARY 2016. THEIR WORKSHOP, "COMPOSING WITH VIDEO: AN INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP FOR PRODUCING AS A LISTENER," ENGAGED THE AUDIENCE WITH PRACTICES FOR SCHOLARLY VIDEO PRODUCTION.

DR. SUSAN CARLILE

PRESENTED TWO PAPERS, "LESS OF THE HEROINE THAN THE WOMAN': PARSING GENDER IN THE BRITISH NOVEL" AND "CHARLOTTE LENNOX AND NATURAL HISTORY," AT THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY STUDIES CONFERENCE, PITTSBURGH, PA, IN APRIL 2016, AS WELL AS A PAPER, "WHEN FICTIONALIZING 'FACT' IS A DANGEROUS ACT," AT THE FICTION AND REALITY SYMPOSIUM, LOS ANGELES ITALIAN CULTURAL CENTER, ON APRIL 30, 2015.

DR. GERALD EGAN

ORGANIZED AND CHAIRED A PRESIDENTIAL THEME SPECIAL SESSION ENTITLED "PUBLIC SELF-STYLING: FASHION AND AUTHORSHIP IN THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES" AT THE 2016 MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION CONVENTION IN JANUARY 2016.

CHRISTOPHER S. GLOVER

PRESENTED A PAPER, "BORN BRITTLE': LIMINAL STATES AND SELF-IMPOSED EXILES IN MARGARET ATWOOD'S *STONE MATTRESS*," AT THE MIDWEST MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION (MMLA) CONFERENCE, COLUMBUS, OH IN NOVEMBER 2015.

ROBERT GUFFEY

PRESENTED A PAPER, "HERE AMONG THE DEAD: THE PHANTOM CARRIAGE AND THE CINEMA OF THE OCCULTED TABOO," AT THE 2016 AMERICAN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING, HARVARD UNIVERSITY IN MARCH 2016.

DR. GEORGE HART

PRESENTED A PAPER, "TYPING THE MESH: LARRY EIGNER'S ECOPOETICS IN THE 1960s," AT THE LOUISVILLE CONFERENCE ON LITERATURE AND CULTURE SINCE 1900, LOUISVILLE, KY IN FEBRUARY 2016.

DR. NEIL HULTGREN

PRESENTED A PAPER, "MELODRAMA'S REVERSALS," AS PART OF A GLOBAL MELODRAMA ROUNDTABLE AT THE 2016 NORTH AMERICAN VICTORIAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE, IN HONOLULU, HAWAII, AND ANOTHER PAPER, "DOWN THE COMPLETED CHAIN': THE PREQUELS AND SEQUEL TO H. RIDER HAGGARD'S *SHE*," AN ENGLISH AND HISTORY DEPARTMENTS SPONSORED TALK AT LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY, LOS ANGELES, CA, ON MARCH 30, 2016.

PATRICIA LOUGHREY

IS THE AUTHOR OF *DEAR HARVEY*, A DOCUDRAMA ABOUT THE LIFE OF HARVEY MILK, OF WHICH A PRODUCTION WAS STAGED IN DECEMBER 2015 BY COLLEGE PLAYERS, UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO.

RUSTY RUST

PRESENTED A PAPER, "THIS IS, LIKE, NEXT LEVEL CRAZY': *ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK* AND RE-PRESENTATIONS OF MENTAL ILLNESS," AT THE 2016 POPULAR CULTURE ASSOCIATION/AMERICAN CULTURE ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE, SEATTLE, WA IN MARCH 2016.

KIKI SHAVER

PRESENTED A PAPER, "ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT STUDENTS CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSSES IN BORDER WRITING PROGRAMS," AT THE 2016 CCCC ANNUAL CONVENTION, HOUSTON, TX IN APRIL 2016.

DR. NANCY SHELEY

DELIVERED PERFORMANCES OF *AGNES PELTON: BRINGING LIGHT TO LIFE*, HER ORIGINAL ONE-WOMAN SHOW ABOUT THE AMERICAN PAINTER, AT THE PAINTER'S FORMER HOME IN CATHEDRAL CITY, CA ON OCTOBER 17 AND 18, 2015.

DR. FREDERICK WEGENER

HAS AGREED TO SERVE AS AN ASSOCIATE EDITOR OF THE COMPLETE WORKS OF EDITH WHARTON, A SCHOLARLY EDITION TO BE PUBLISHED IN TWENTY-EIGHT VOLUMES BY OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS.

DR. MARK WILLIAMS

PRESENTED A PAPER, "CONFESSIONAL TURNS IN POPULAR MEDIA: BURKE'S TROPES AS RHETORICAL ATONEMENTS," AT THE 2016 POPULAR CULTURE ASSOCIATION/AMERICAN CULTURE ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE, SEATTLE, WA IN MARCH 2016.

# FACULTY *Publications*

## Dr. Sarah Arroyo

"Growing up with Electracy." *Enculturation: A Journal of Rhetoric, Writing, and Culture*. 21 (Spring 2016). Web.

--- and Bahareh Alaei. "One More Video Theory (Some Assemblage Required)." *Present Tense: A Journal of Rhetoric in Society* 5.2 (December 2015). Web.

---, Bahareh Alaei, and Amy K. Loy. "The Choric Slam Tilt: Unpinning the Table." *Itineration: Cross-Disciplinary Studies in Rhetoric, Media, and Culture*. Spring 2016. Web.

## Dr. Susan Carlile

"Lennox, Charlotte." *The Encyclopedia of British Literature 1660–1789*. Ed. Gary Day and Jack Lynch. Blackwell Publishing, 2015.

## Dr. Stephen Cooper

"River of Angels" and "Isaac Babel." *Santa Monica Review* (Spring 2015). Short stories.

"Terminal Island." *LA Fiction Anthology: Southland Stories by Southland Writers* (Red Hen Press, 2016). Short story.

## Suzanne Greenberg

"Under the Radar." *LA Fiction Anthology: Southland Stories by Southland Writers* (Red Hen Press, 2016). Short story.

## Robert Guffey

*Chameleo: A Strange but True Story of Invisible Spies, Heroin Addiction, and Homeland Security*. (OR Books, 2015). Narrative Nonfiction.

"Here Among the Dead: The Phantom Carriage and the Cinema of the Occulted Taboo." *Expressionism in the Cinema*. Ed. Olaf Brill and Gary D. Rhodes. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016. Essay.

"The Wedding Photographer." *Postscripts* #36/37 (2016). Novelette.

## Dr. George Hart

reviewed *American Poetry after Modernism: The Power of the Word*, by Albert Gelpi. *Contemporary Literature* 56.3 (2015).

reviewed *This Present Moment: New Poems, by Gary Snyder*. *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 22.4 (2015).

## Kathleen Keirn

"Hybrid Cosmopolitanisms, Heterotopias, and The Female American." *Fictionalizing the World: Rethinking the Politics of Literature*. Ed. Louisa Söllner and Anita Vrzina. New York: Peter Lang, 2015.

"Animals." *The Encyclopedia of British Literature 1660–1789*. Ed. Gary Day and Jack Lynch. Wiley-Blackwell, 2015.

## Clint Margrave

*Salute the Wreckage* (NYQ Books, 2016).

## Alan Rifkin

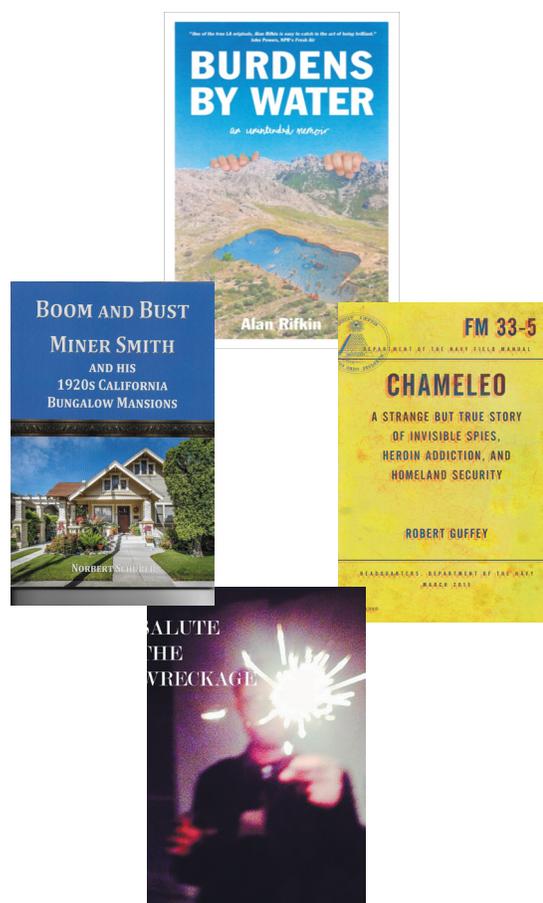
*Burdens by Water: An Unintended Memoir* (Brown Paper Press, 2016).

## Dr. Norbert Schürer

*Boom and Bust: Miner Smith and His 1920s California Bungalow Mansions*. (Historical Society of Long Beach, 2015).

## Charles Webb

published poems this past year in *The Yale Review*, *Harvard Review*, *Poetry*, *The Southern Review*, *Poetry Northwest*, *Georgia Review*, *Gettysburg Review*, *Chiron Review*, *Bryant Literary Review*, *Nerve Cowboy*, *Superstition Review*, *Plume*, *Harpur Palate*, *New Madrid*, *Burntdistrict*, *River Styx*, *Tampa Review*, *Atlanta Review*, *Southern Poetry Review*, and *Green Mountains Review*, as well as essays in *Publishers Weekly* and *The Writer's Chronicle*.



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