

# Encompass



THE COLLEGE OF  
**ARTS + SCIENCES**  
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NEWSLETTER FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF THE  
IU DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

## Third Annual Comparative Literature Graduate Conference

By: Zachary Scalzo

The Third Comparative Literature Graduate Conference was organized and hosted this year by the Department of Comparative Literature's Student Advisory Board. "The End of the World: Tragedy | Catastrophe | Apocalypse," held March 2-3, was conceived of as a way to explore scholarship that speaks to the contemporary academic and political atmosphere and sought presentations that considered different kinds of world-ending and how they were understood and represented throughout literature and the arts.

The conference committee

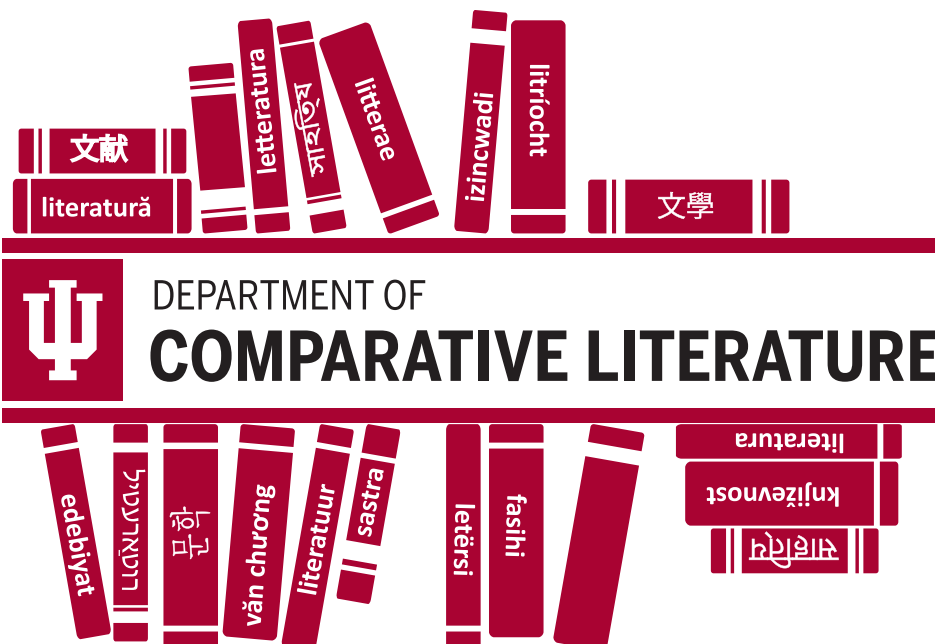


"The End of the World: Tragedy | Catastrophe | Apocalypse," Conference Participants

consisted of graduate students Sarah Lawson, Meaghan Murphy, Helen Plevka, Claire Riley, Sean Sidky, and Melissa Sokolski, as well as two undergraduate representatives, Em Brewington and Maddy Klein. "I didn't really know what goes into putting together

an academic conference and I wanted to learn about the process," says committee member and first-year M.A. student Meaghan Murphy. "It also seemed like a great way to get involved both in the department and in the larger academic community." The conference committee invested heavily in involving not only many different units within the IU community but received submissions from a number of diverse academic disciplines and backgrounds, including both American and international institutions. Graduate presentations covered a great deal of academic and cultural terrain—ranging from comparative readings of the Ragnarok myth to considerations of the role humor plays at the end of the world—and even included a

(continued on page 4)



# Contents

<i>Alumni Profile</i>	5
<i>Department News</i>	9
<i>Photo Gallery</i>	12
<i>Faculty Profile</i>	14
<i>Faculty News</i>	15
<i>Emeriti News</i>	18
<i>Alumni News</i>	20
<i>Graduate News</i>	21
<i>Graduate Profile</i>	23
<i>Undergrad Spotlight</i>	25

# Encompass

This newsletter is published by the Department of Comparative Literature, with the College of Arts and Sciences, to encourage alumni interest in and support for Indiana University.

For activities and membership information, call (800) 824-3044 or visit <http://alumni.iu.edu>

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# From the Chair

By: Paul Losensky

Since my colleagues in Comparative Literature voted me to serve as department chair last spring, I have been clambering up a steep learning curve and am still far from the summit. If there is a summit—the position generates challenges that are as diverse as the people who visit, call, or write the office. But the rewards of serving such a creative, intelligent, and generally good-natured group of colleagues and students have far outweighed the bureaucratic agonies, and it is my privilege to write to all of you in the Indiana University comparative literature community for the first time and to share some news of the past year.

We are happy that Izabela Potapowicz has joined our faculty this year as a Visiting Assistant Professor. She holds a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from the University of Montréal and specializes in literary culture and audiovisual media. She brings this expertise to bear in her own classes and in supervising several Associate Instructors teaching courses in popular culture. Beginning in spring 2019, Jennifer Goodlander will be transferring her appointment from Theatre and Drama to Comparative Literature. Jennifer received her Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Arts from Ohio University. Her research specialties

are Southeast Asian puppet theatre, comparative drama, and gender and performance studies. She earned tenure this year and we are looking forward to her contributions to our program for years to come. Claudia Fischer, a specialist in German Romanticism, visited us for eight weeks as part of our exchange program with the University of Lisbon. Our long-time faculty remain as busy and productive as ever, as you will see in the *Faculty News* section.

It is my pleasure to bask in the reflected glory of some of our well-established annual activities. For the Wertheim Lecture in Comparative Drama this year, we hosted Nicholas Hare from Princeton University. Our newly minted Ph.D. Magda Dragu has provided an account of Hare's visit in these pages. This year's issue of *The Yearbook of Comparative Literature* on "Allegory and Political Representation" was guest-edited by Tara Mendola and Jacques Lezra under the general editorship of Eyal Peretz. The Horst Frenz Prize, given to the best paper presented by a graduate student at the annual meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association, is celebrating its 25th anniversary and you can read about its history in an article included in this issue by its founder, Professor Emeritus Eugene Eoyang.

Few things have given me



greater joy this year than working with the creative, diligent, and friendly students who have chosen to pursue their education here. The Student Advisory Board organized a full-scale, two-day conference. Students handled every aspect of the conference from the call for papers to final cleanup of the meeting room. All I was left to do was say, “Okay,” sign authorization forms, and enjoy one of the most engaging and well-organized small conferences that I have attended. Three students received their doctorates this year: Magda Dragu, Lizi Gabelle, and Moustapha Ndour. We wish them success in all their future endeavors. We hope that Ali Frauman and Roy Holler will take a big step toward completing their Ph.D.s next year as recipients of dissertation writing grants. As a member of the Phi Beta Kappa executive committee, I was delighted to see two Comparative Literature undergraduate majors, Em Brewington and Maddy Klein, initiated into this national honor society. Maddy was also awarded the Palmer-Brandon Prize for outstanding majors in the humanities in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Meeting with our many alumni was like taking a course in the history of Comparative Literature at Indiana. Their support for the department this year has been unprecedented and has

done much to strengthen the educational mission of the Department and its students. I would especially like to mention Sarah Fogg (Ph.D. 1975) and her husband Robert Highsmith (Ph.D. Economics, 1974), Robert Glick (Ph.D. 1973), William Slaymaker (Ph.D. 1975), and Catherine Cameron (Ph.D. 2005) for their generous commitment to the future of the department. If you would be interested in making or planning a gift to further our pursuit of literary and humanistic inquiry, I would be delighted to speak with you personally.

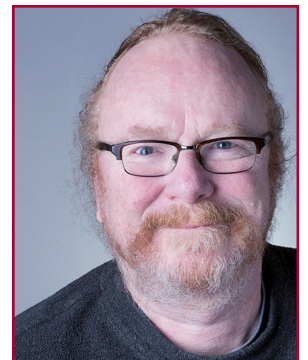
I also met Nicholas Koss (Ph.D. 1981), who is now the Director of the Comparative Literature Program at Peking University, showing just how far the influence of our program has spread. Finally, with the help of Eileen Julien, Comparative Literature faculty member and Director of the Institute of Advanced Study, I met with Jeffrey and Shaowen Bardzell, who received their Ph.D.s in Comparative Literature but returned to Indiana as professors in the School of Informatics. You can read an interview with them in this year’s alumni profile.

Finally, my thanks go first to former chair David Hertz for taking some time from his well-deserved sabbatical to guide me through the more mysterious administrative byways. Bill Johnston agreed to take up the position of Director of Graduate Studies, and

Sarah Van der Laan continues to show her commitment to our educational mission by serving as Director of Undergraduate Studies. I do not exaggerate when I say I could not do this job without them. The same goes for the departmental administrative staff. We began the year with a major shake out of office personnel. Melinda Bristow-Meadows still serves as our financial officer, but Stephanie Klausung was promoted from Graduate Secretary to Melinda’s former position as Office Manager. Stephanie and I are learning together. Her organizational skills, initiative, and sense of humor have been a boon to me and everyone else in the program. We were joined in October by our new Administrative Assistant, Kristen Joseph; among her other duties, Kristen sits at the front desk and offers a warm welcome for visitors to the ninth floor of Ballantine Hall. Kristin, alongside our office assistant and editor of *Encompass*, Daniel “Sully” Sullivan, designed the new departmental logo that you can find on the cover of this issue, featuring the word “literature” in 21 languages.

(How many can you name?)

*Paul Losensky,  
Chair*





### *Third Annual Grad Conf. (cont.)*

presentation of apocalyptic music in the novel with live clarinet accompaniment.

A new addition this year was a panel of IU undergraduates who presented their work. Madison Story, Jonathan Van Hecke, and Megan Vinson shared papers that represented some of the dedicated and varied scholarship our undergraduate students engage with and create, presenting on topics that ran the gamut from Joan of Arc to Shakespeare to *The Walking Dead*. “As important as these events are in the professional life of a graduate student, it is so encouraging to see younger scholars so internally motivated to share their work,” first-year student and SAB treasurer Helen Plevka shared. “In a way, they reminded me why I decided to do what I am doing.” SAB co-chair Sean Sidky added, “I think it was the most rewarding part of the conference. Not only were their papers excellent, but they inspired a really good conversation. It was possibly the best single panel of the conference.”

A keynote lecture was delivered by Professor Jonah Siegel of Rutgers University, who also served as a panel



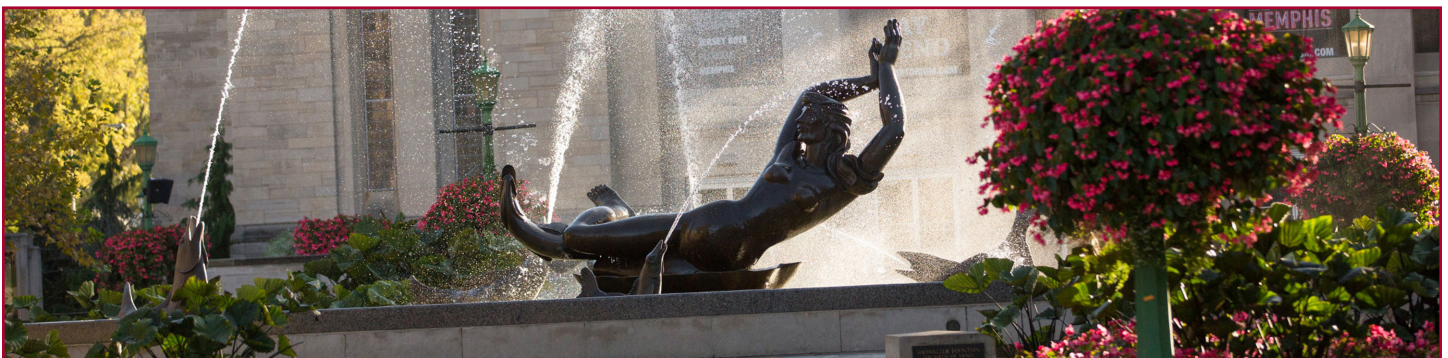
*A Q&A session during the Graduate Conference.*

moderator on the second day of the conference. A scholar whose research interests include literature’s relationship with the other arts, he presented a talk entitled “‘Strange Aphrodite,’ or What It Looks Like to Look at the End of the World,” looking at Comte de Volney and the power of representing ruins in literature and art.

The Comparative Literature Graduate Conference was started in the 2014-2015 academic year by the Student Advisory Board with the theme “Missed Connections” and ran April 10-11, 2015. The following year, the Student Advisory Board ran the Second Comparative Literature

Graduate Conference, “Crystal Queer,” from April 1-2, 2016. This year’s conference was made possible, in great part, thanks to the generous support of the Department of Comparative Literature, the Indiana University Funding Board, the Department of Germanic Studies, the Institute for European Studies, and the Department of Religious Studies.

*Zachary Scalzo is a Ph.D. student and the current Academic Coordinator on the Student Advisory Board of the Department of Comparative Literature.*





# Alumni Profile

## Jeffrey and Shaowen Bardzell

Interview by: Maddy Klein

Jeffrey and Shaowen Bardzell met as Ph.D. students in Comparative Literature, where they worked with Professor Rosemarie McGerr. While they were completing their dissertations, they also worked as IT specialists on campus and are now professors in the School of Informatics at IU Bloomington. Below are excerpts from a long interview conducted by Maddy Klein, an undergraduate major in the Department.

**M: So, as medievalists, did you ever think you would do anything in Informatics, or were you picturing careers within Comparative Literature?**

**J:** I think my hope and assumption when I was entering the program was that I would be a professor of literature. That's what I wanted and believed. As we went through the program, we were most active in the 90s when the Internet became a consumer thing. So right around the time when we were starting to feel pessimistic about the prospects of employment and of a future in literature, there was just boundless optimism in technology.

**S:** We couldn't continue to take out student loans. We needed to put some bread on the table, so to speak, and so that's why we both had IT jobs on campus. I was managing the technology office for the school of public health and he was working at UITS. That was our dissertation stage.

**J:** And a funny happenstance occurred that had long-range impact. At the time Flash was a hot technology and I was trying to do some multimedia development and I was OK with the animation and the graphics side of it but the programming side was something I really didn't know how to do. So I bought a book on Flash, and it was good on everything but the programming part so I wrote an Amazon review. The author of that book wrote to me



Jeffrey and Shaowen Bardzell

in Latin because it turned out he had been a classicist when he was in school, and thanked me for the review. So we just had a little friendly conversation and that was that –

**M: In Latin?**

**J:** No, that did not last long! But he had a book contract that he couldn't do so he asked if I wanted to ghostwrite for him. I said "sure" and I did, and the long story short is that the two of us over the next several years wrote over a dozen books for Adobe Press and Macromedia Press. I have a couple of them right here actually.

**S:** Yeah, we were just writing computer books.

**J:** These things were so time sensitive, you know, a version of Dreamweaver MX would have been live for about a year and a half, so the book would have to hit the market as close to the release of the software as possible. They needed people who could write really fast and we were a couple lit majors, and what we can do is turn out content. We didn't actually know anything about applications. At that point, I think if you had asked us, we would have said we're done, we're going to be ABD, we're never going to get our degrees. We're going to be IT people and we're going to move to California – we've been moving to California since '96.

**S:** It's a sad thing, you know, writing these books, being on the beta list. It gets old really quickly.

(continued)

# Alumni Profile

**S (continued):** You're not learning anything new. You deal with the code and you write about it. You don't do anything beyond that.

**J:** So we missed learning, we missed research, we missed inquiry. We decided to at least finish our dissertations. Then something magic happens; when you do that you kind of get back into it and you realize, "Oh wait, this is why I was in Comparative Literature; I like to read, I like to think."

**S:** We did not anticipate that we would get a job in a department like Informatics. That's another happenstance.

**J:** That's another bit of luck. In 2004, Informatics did the so-called "Great Hire." They hired 22 professors in one year. We really benefited from that because in that big hire they weren't just filling in a gap here or a gap there. They were asking, "What do we want this to be?" And so they took a chance on me. When I saw the application I thought, "This brings everything together that I am; this is the academic side, the research side, but also the technical side and the creative side. I can do all those things." So I applied and I got hired.

**S:** I was hired in 2008. I had kind of been shuffled around on campus. That was not fun. But in 2008 there was an opening and I applied.

**J:** Coming from Comparative Literature into computing was rocky; there were sort of ways of speaking, ways of doing research –

**S:** Yeah it's completely different.

**J:** We thought we should try to blend it. So, we tried to be scientists, or tried to be designers, and both of us tried to read about stuff that we thought was informatics, and that was a failure.

**S:** We can write. That's no problem. It's the way they write; what they consider legitimate. Their research inquiry is very different from a humanistic orientation.

**M: In what way?**

**S:** For example, all the papers are organized into "Introduction," "Literature Review," "Findings," and "Discussion"; nobody in Comparative Literature writes like that, right? They are all into research questions. They don't necessarily care about, for example, women's lived experiences, or politics, or power, rather common themes in literature. People don't talk about politics or power in computing...

**J:** Even when they talk about topics that are implicated in it. So there's a huge literature on gender IT, and it is has not a shred of feminism, it's utterly depoliticized. The solution is to create programs that will help women or minorities "get better," so they're "good enough" to compete with the white men rather than to say, "Look at the top students at a historically black university, where are the highest levels of achievement, where have they excelled, and how does that fit into computing; how do we take advantage of that, how do we build on that, how do we integrate that, how do we learn from that?"

**S:** We're in Informatics but the academic discipline where we publish is Human Computer





Interaction (HCI); it's definitely the human side of computing so they're open to issues like experiences and social justice issues that are going on right now. What happened with us and to us, and what we do with our degree in the computing discipline, I think it's maybe the answer or can be an answer to why humanities or the liberal arts education is important, because we do contribute to society.

**J:** I think there's a couple ways that Comparative Literature has really served us well. One is that we were able to approach science like a foreign language. A lot of the work that we do is translational. One of the things we learned is, "Ok, so we don't use 'methods' in a scientific sense, but we can translate this into the procedures or approaches or strategies or tactics that we use." The other thing is that computing has over the course of my lifetime really changed the way that it is situated in society and gets treated in society. In the last 20 years, people have talked a lot about user experience. Apple is the world's most valuable company in part because it takes user experiences seriously. Well, who understands experience? Who understands the relationship between physical objects or cultural products and the kind of experiences they create? To me that's like Aristotle's *Poetics*. Aristotle's *Poetics* does the thing that Apple now does so well, which is to understand the relationship between objective things and their qualities and the way that humans experience and make sense of experience.

**S:** I think we can be a strong input to how we design technologies, not just critique the technology after the fact.

**J:** One of the things that we do in design is the studio crit. There's an obvious connection between the studio crit and critique in the humanities. And so we've done a lot to try and teach our students how to do critique and how to look at the same design from many different perspectives and try to understand them. This process actually shapes design and designing, but in a meaning-oriented way, and to me it's a very comparatist style of thinking.

**M:** *Can you give some examples of what democratization of design would look like?*

**S:** I have a great example! Breast pumps. This is something that most every mother has a problem with. It is the same problem with bras. They don't ever fit. It's an issue of gender and feminism. A group of HCI researchers and designers got together and did a hack-a-thon. A hack-a-thon is an event where people all come together who are interested in a particular topic and have some materials in front of them and just make things, kind of like garage culture. They tinker and then they can create some kind of solution to address a question. What they came up with are diverse, multiple solutions; some of them are really wacky and some of them have a strange form but at least they are putting forward alternatives that are different from existing solutions. Some of them actually got funded by investor capitalists, got support, and they're actually rolling out. So that's an example of democratizing design.

**J:** Intel is looking at human practices, and they're trying to anticipate. They're looking at history and they're looking at things that were supposed to be transformations that weren't. It's a humanistic activity. The whole university is transitioning from a college of arts and sciences model to a professional school model. All the skills that were taught in the COAS model, like Comparative Literature and critical thinking, are now sublimated into these professional schools as marketing. Organizations today, like people who do design thinking, are doing things a Comparative Literature person would have done a generation ago. But they don't do it very well because they're institutionally cut off. Comparative Literature has a tremendous ability that it isn't communicating to society, and people look for it in Informatics or the Kelley School rather than in Comparative Literature. One of our life agendas is to ask, "How can we get Comparative Literature and professional schools talking to each other," so that people know where to look when they need the kind of knowledge about lived experience or politics or

(continued)

# *Alma* Profile

emancipation or the kinds of issues that we talk about Comparative Literature, or even just how to look at a thing and understand its meaning. So hopefully you can see that we didn't leave our Comparative Literature behind. We've carried it with us, it's who we are...

**S:** And it's what we do.

**J:** The first few years after we ran away from Comparative Literature; we tried to be scientists, we tried to be designers, we tried to do what we thought people wanted us to do and we weren't successful. We became successful when we asked, "What does it mean for a Comparative Literature person to do this?" In my earlier days, I was writing about interface criticism, so I just started reading interfaces as though they were texts. What happens when you start to treat technologies as if they're texts? A whole world of analysis opens up. It's the kind of analysis that companies want. Why is it meaningful, why do people feel like this? It was the moment when we started being shamelessly humanistic and shamelessly Comparative Literature that we started being appreciated.

**M:** *One thing I've been wondering this whole time – what were your dissertation topics?*

**S:** Mine was about reciprocity and gift-exchange. I just analyzed two different Arthurian romances and then I found an angle of reciprocity and gift-exchange, and there's a lot of feminism.

**J:** Here's mine—not exactly an HCI topic—"Speculative Grammar and Stoic Language Theory in Medieval Allegorical Narrative." There's plenty of Latin in there, you'll be glad to

know. And I am glad I learned Latin because I learned grammar inside and out and technology is very syntactical – there's a lot of syntax and semantics and pragmatics in technology and semiotics and language is all still here.

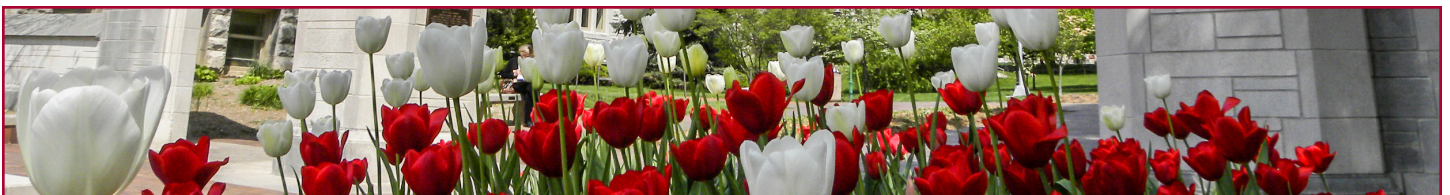
**M:** *Do you have any final thoughts on interactions between literature, technology, your research, or other things you are involved in at IU?*

**S:** We would definitely appreciate more involvement—I think it would benefit both parties.

**J:** It's not that we're evangelizing – we think that IT recognizes that it needs the things humanities provides; it just doesn't seem to realize that it's the humanities that provides those things and what they need.

**S:** When somebody like Paul Losensky is having to justify or motivate the existence of Comparative Literature to the administration, I think people like us or people who are doing similar work are a great justification – we are having a tangible impact on society. Who can say that the humanities are obsolete – that's crazy talk.

**J:** I can also say that we have humanities people come into this program, and they do great. So it's just getting more humanities people to apply and getting them to understand that what we're doing is what they do. We're redesigning our undergraduate curriculum, and the second most important outcome of the program is "making an argument." It's not writing a piece of code; it's writing an argument that makes that piece of code matter and make sense.





# The 2017 Albert Wertheim Lecture in Comparative Drama

By: Magda Dragu

**N**oh theater is the most refined form of Japanese theater. It has not only influenced European writers like W. B. Yeats or Ezra Pound (among others), but also the 15th-century Japanese poet Ikkyū Sōjun (1394-1491). In the October 30th, 2017 Albert Wertheim Lecture at the University Club in the Indiana Memorial Union, Thomas Hare (the William Sauter LaPorte '28 Professor in Regional Studies and Professor of Comparative Literature at Princeton University) advanced a strong and compelling argument regarding the influence of Zeami (Hada no Motokiyo, 1363-1443)'s *noh* plays and treatises on Sōjun, a 15th-century Japanese court poet. As Professor Hare pointed out in his lecture, Sōjun referenced in his (mostly) licentious love poems many of Zeami's *noh* plays, with which they share the principles of Zen (*Ch'an* in Chinese), a key concept of Japanese Buddhism.

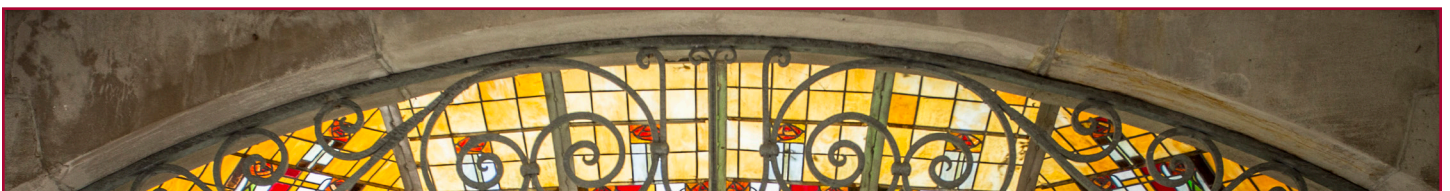
Professor Hare is one of the world's leading scholars in the work of Zeami (the founder and first theoretician of *noh* theater in 15th-century Japan). Professor Hare's most recent volume of translations of Zeami's work, *Zeami. Performance Notes* (2008), contains new translations of Zeami's most important treatises on *noh* and received the Kanze Hisao Memorial Prize in Noh Drama awarded by Hosei University in 2008. His previous volume, *Zeami's Style. The Noh Plays of Zeami Motokiyo* (1986), includes translations and commentaries of Zeami's plays from the most important *noh* modes. Professor Hare is also a specialist in Ancient Egyptian art and culture and his 1999 volume, *ReMembering Osiris: Number, Gender, and the Word in Ancient Egyptian Representational Systems* is a fascinating excursion into the nature of the Egyptian writing system and religion.

Professor Hare's lecture attracted a large audience from the Department of Theater,

Drama and Modern Dance, Religious Studies and East Asian Languages and Culture, all of whom, in the Q&A section after the talk and the reception that followed, engaged with the multiple facets, ramifications, and implications of Professor Hare's lecture.

On the following day, Professor Hare had lunch with Comparative Literature graduate students, another opportunity for our graduate students to ask questions about the most important aspects of *noh* as well as approach important issues regarding translation theories in a less formal context. The highlight of the day was the round table discussion organized by the department on *Performativity Across Cultures*, which further expanded on the issues of performativity of *noh* and other forms of world theater. Professor Hare joined Jennifer Goodlander (Theater and Drama), Rosemarie McGerr and Ali Frauman (CMLT) on the panel of speakers for a fascinating discussion concerning the complex relationships between text and performance in various forms of world theater. Professor Emerita Angela Pao moderated the discussions.

The Wertheim Lectures in Comparative Drama commemorate the work of Albert Wertheim (1940-2003), who was Professor of English, Comparative Literature, and Theater and Drama at IU from 1969 until 2003. Professor Wertheim passed away in 2003, shortly before his latest volume *Staging the War: American Drama and World War II* (2004) was published by Indiana UP. Professor Wertheim has five co-edited volumes, more than 50 articles, as well as books that investigate various aspects of modern and classical world theater—American, British, and African. His volume, *The Dramatic Art of Athol Fugard: From South Africa to the World* (2000), made extensive use of Fugard's papers which are currently held by Lilly Library, allowing IUB students and scholars to further engage and deepen research on Fugard's theater.



# The History of the Horst Frenz Prize

By: Eugene Eoyang, Professor Emeritus of Comparative Literature and of East Asian Languages and Cultures, Indiana University, FRSA

When I started the Horst Frenz Prize in 1993, inaugurated at the ACLA conference held that year at Indiana University, the thought was to honor Frenz, who was not a widely published “authority” on anything, a scholar who was not complacent about what he knew, a scholar who, because of his German origins, could have merely reveled in German literature, but who wondered, like Goethe, about the literatures he could not read. When I was asked to write the “*necrologie*” for Horst Frenz when he died in 1990, I started off with this observation:

*Most people look up at the night sky and are impressed with how many stars they see. A very few scan the firmament and wonder how many stars they don't see. There are many who are impressed with all that we know, but there are others who are more impressed with how much we should know and don't. Horst Frenz belonged to the second group, whose gaze is fixed on the empty spaces in the firmament.*

I wrote that in the early 1990s. Cosmologists since then have speculated about dark matter, black holes, etc. Some of them now remind us that the visible world is but 4% of all the

matter that exists in the universe, which means that 96% of the world is unknown and unperceived. Contrary to the gurus of his time, Horst Frenz was not embarrassed to explore areas he knew nothing about. He ignored the criticisms of more recognizable colleagues who counseled the field to *stick to their own* and research that with which they are familiar. As chairman of Indiana University's Comparative Literature Program, which he started in 1949, Frenz promoted the study of film (which other departments disdained as the academic study of “movies”), he championed the difficult study of the comparative arts, and started a series of quadrennial conferences he titled “Oriental Western Literary Relations.” He instituted courses in Oriental Poetry and Oriental Fiction. Those who knew about these path-breaking moves in cross-cultural research, like Earl Miner, an East-West scholar, professor at Princeton, and former president of the International Comparative Literature Association, recognized these path-breaking moves in cross-cultural research. Miner wrote in his seminal 1990 book, *Comparative Poetics: an intercultural essay on theories of literature*, “Horst Frenz and the leadership of his colleagues at Indiana University were the first in the United States to bring the engagement of American comparatists with Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean literature” (p. 10).

In this context, it seemed fitting that the Horst Frenz Prize be awarded for the best presentation by a graduate student at an ACLA conference.





In the initial years, I funded the Prize with \$150 in a book coupon and \$150 as a travel subsidy. I was tired of Prize winners not appearing at ACLA conferences to be recognized. (In 25 years, only three prize-winners have failed to appear at the conference to receive the prize: one because she had to teach during the week of the conference, the other because the university that offered him a job insisted on an early defense of the dissertation; the third, because her flight from Paris was canceled). When Jonathan Culler became president of the ACLA in 1999, the Prize was raised to \$500—half as a book coupon, and half as a travel subsidy. Happily, Horst Frenz' wife, Evelyn Frenz, and his son Paul, a prominent Chicago Attorney, made a substantial contribution which enabled the establishment of a Horst Frenz Prize fund at the Indiana University Foundation that would provide an annual yield that would cover the Prize sum in perpetuity.

In 2017, the 25th year of the Prize, the judges decided to award the Prize to not one, but two graduate students for papers presented at the ACLA conference in Utrecht. In order to award each student \$500, I made a contribution to cover the shortfall between the annual yield of the endowment and the prizes awarded. Moving forward, I would like to establish \$1,000 as the Prize amount for subsequent Prize winners. To that end, we need to increase the principal in the Horst Frenz Prize Fund to \$25,000. If you would like to join me in establishing an annual yield from the Fund at \$1,000 in perpetuity,

please send your contributions, payable to the IU Foundation (gift designation: Horst Frenz Prize Fund; contact person: Caitlin Callahan). The Foundation has a website which offers several options for giving: <https://iufoundation.iu.edu/ways-give/index.html>.

In reviewing the careers of the 25 Horst Frenz Prize winners, I note from their email addresses that many of them are on the faculty of major universities, including the following: Michigan, Ohio State, Chicago, Johns Hopkins, University of Southern California, and Fresno State. One Prize winner also won the Charles Bernheimer Prize, which the ACLA confers annually for the best dissertation produced by a comparative literature student. She now teaches in a tenure-track position in Moscow. Another winner is now Vice President in charge of Student Success at Montana State University.

Academic success, though predominant, is not the only achievement that Horst Frenz Prize winners can cite. For instance, David Wondrich was disenchanted with academic life and became a professional writer. He initially wrote jazz reviews and later became a staff writer for *The Daily Beast*. Through his best-selling books, *Imbibe!* and *Punch: The Delights (and Dangers) of the Flowing Bowl*, he has become a guru on “mixology” (the art of mixing cocktails). Without exception, the Horst Frenz Prize winners have distinguished themselves by their subsequent successes.





## 2018 Awards and Presentations



*A Few of the Comparative Literature Undergraduate Award Recipients: Joshua Sutcliffe, Dylan Taylor, Madeline Klein, and Em Brewington*



*A few of the Graduate Award Winners: Helen Plevka, Meaghan Murphy, Zachary Scalzo, and Emerson Richards*





*Paul Losensky addresses the Spring Reception crowd alongside fellow faculty Sarah Van der Laan and Bill Johnston*



*The Comparative Literature Department's 2018 Spring Reception*



*U. Lisboa Faculty Exchange Visiting Professor Claudia J. Fischer gives a talk at IU.*



# Sonia Velázquez: A Profile

By: Meaghan Murphy

Sonia Velázquez has a joint appointment as Assistant Professor in the Department of Comparative Literature and the Department of Religious Studies. When she's not in her Sycamore Hall office working on her first book, she can be found proposing courses for IU's Themester that are in line with the department's interdisciplinary profile, or out teaching.

## **Tell me a little bit about your work.**

I work on medieval and early modern (13th-17th centuries) visual and textual cultural production in Europe and colonial Latin America. The book I'm working on right now is about holiness and beauty, and the title is *Promiscuous Grace: Rethinking Holiness and Beauty with Saint Mary of Egypt*.

## **What a great title! How did you come up with that?**

Ah, well the character in the title, Saint Mary of Egypt, was a nymphomaniac who turned into a saint, so the promiscuity was always kind of in the back of my head. Then when I was looking at the ways in which *Grace* is one of those terms which encompasses so much--it's divine favor, and there's an aesthetic component, and, at least in Catholicism, *Grace* is...in a sense...promiscuous because it gives itself wantonly—with all of that it was sort of a no brainer.

## **So would you say that's the project you're most excited about right now?**

I am actually going through my third-year review now so I've had to read through all my work again. I am still very excited about *Promiscuous Grace*, but I look forward to working on a second project on Miguel de Cervantes' prose fiction. I recently realized that the several articles I have published on the novel hold the core for a future book manuscript whose provisional title is *Lyric Citizenship*. It will look at the ways in which in the early modern period's greater awareness of a global context, language, in its flexibility, and the way that it is never only one thing, serves as a model for understanding civic belonging, and that we can see this most clearly in the



ways in which the novel incorporated lyric. The project will focus primarily on Cervantes' last novel, *The Trials of Persiles and Sigismunda* (1617). It's an amazing story—*Don Quixote* was fine—but this work! It's really mind-blowingly good! It's a romance, consciously rewriting Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*. It begins in the north of Norway and ends in Rome. In between there are cannibals who are also poets, virtuous pirates, a fake spiritual possession and fake redeemed captives from the Mediterranean wars against the Ottoman Empire. In all this movement, Cervantes pays close attention to the ways in which language in its lyric mode, and not only the promise of storytelling, mediate our understanding of foreignness and belonging.

## **Sounds exciting! Do you have a translation you'd recommend to people who are interested?**

The book in Spanish is called *Los Trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*. In English it's *The Trials and Travails of Persiles and Sigismunda: A Northern Story* and there is a good translation by Celia Weller and Clark Colahan.



## ***I know you're a member of the Inter-Arts council, can you speak a little about that?***

My participation in the council has basically been at the undergraduate level and I've been involved in it primarily by proposing courses that will work with IU's Themester so that students can take advantage of the extracurricular programming to truly experience "Inter-Arts" in relationship to broad themes such as "labor" or "beauty."

## ***Any courses you've particularly enjoyed teaching?***

I had a wonderful time teaching the Introduction to Contemporary Literary Studies. It was a required class for all first-year Comparative Literature graduate students and for those who want to do the minor. The different perspectives they brought to our common consideration of texts such as Auerbach's *Mimesis* or Derrida's *Monolingualism of the Other* was priceless.

## ***How do you turn a required literature class into something that students feel is useful to them?***

That's why I like Themester, for instance. It's not useful in that it's going to help them go out and build a bridge, but I hope that they begin to see themselves as less isolated. I love teaching first-year students. I love being able to introduce them to what the university can do for them. That it's not just to train them and get them out, but that there's still a place where they can take time to really find out who they are, what they care about, and how they're connected to the world around them. I hope that, as Hannah Arendt put it, "they learn to think what they're doing" and that they learn that doing isn't something separate from thinking. If I manage to get that across, I think I've done my job.

## ***Finally, academia is a pretty stressful environment. What do you do to relax?***

I play with my cat. She enjoys sitting on my books, and I pray my students aren't allergic to cats because when I'm grading she also enjoys sitting on their papers.

## **David Hertz**

After serving as chair from 2013-17, Professor Hertz enjoyed a year-long sabbatical for the academic year of 2017-18. During this period, he worked on his new book on the interrelationships of lyrics and music in popular song from 1890-1960, which is tentatively entitled *East and West of the Sun: the Jazz Song and the Standard*. A highlight of his research time was discovering the complete collection of Ella Fitzgerald's sheet music in the archives at UCLA. He also continued his efforts as Council Member at the National Endowment of the Humanities in Washington DC.



## **Bill Johnston**

In March 2017, Bill Johnston published his translations of the work of contemporary Polish poet Julia Fiedorczuk entitled *Oxygen* (Zephyr Press). In April Johnston took part in a panel with author Wiesław Myśliwski at the Found in Translation Festival in Gdańsk. In October he served as quizmaster for Translation Trivia at the annual conference of the American Literary Translators Association, where he also moderated a panel of IU graduate student presentations. He is currently working on a translation of Congolese writer Alain Mabanckou's 2006 novel *The Black Grandsons of Vercingetorix* (*Les petits-fils nègres de Vercingétorix*) for Indiana University Press. His translation of Adam Mickiewicz's epic narrative poem *Pan Tadeusz* will be released in September, 2018 by Archipelago Books.



### **Paul Losensky**

Paul spent much of his time this past year adjusting to his new position as department chair, but has maintained his mental equilibrium by presenting scholarly papers on campus and at several conferences. He spoke on various aspects of early modern Persian literature at the Middle East Studies Association conference in Washington, DC, and at an international symposium on the comparative study of hagiography in Rome with scholars from across Europe and the United States. He addressed different ways of integrating Persian literature into the comparative study of the global baroque in papers at the Sixteen Century Studies Conference (Milwaukee) and the Renaissance Society of America (New Orleans). He discussed translation theory during a seminar on the translation of Arabic and Persian poetry at the most recent American Comparative Literature Association meeting in Los Angeles. He published a review article in the journal *Translation and Literature*, and two of his translations of early modern Persian poetry were accepted for publication in forthcoming collected volumes. He was also appointed to the Editorial Advisory Board for the *Encyclopedia Iranica*.

### **Rebecca Manring**

Professor Manring (adjunct in Comparative Literature) has a new article, "Child Sacrifice in Rupram's Dharmamangala," coming out in the *Oxford*

### *Journal of Hindu Studies*.

She's helping organize the 3rd annual Middle Bengali Reading Retreat, to be held this year in Himachal Pradesh, India in early August, where she regularly teaches sections from the Dharmamangala.



### **Rosemarie McGerr**

Last fall, her article "The Judge as Reader, the Reader as Judge: Literary and Legal



Judgment in Dante, Machaut, and Gower" appeared in *Machaut's Legacy: The Judgment Poetry Tradition*

in *Later Medieval Literature* (UP of Florida). This essay explores issues that are part of a larger project on representations of the reading process in medieval Europe. McGerr also completed an essay on "Gender and Representation" for the *Wiley-Blackwell Companion to World Literature: The Medieval World* (forthcoming in 2019). Last fall, McGerr was especially pleased to participate in a project on the medieval English play *The Second Shepherd's Play* that brought together students and scholars from Syracuse, Colgate,

Rochester, Cornell, and the University of Maryland. During the fall, she assisted in preparing a production of the play that used songs from medieval England that she had researched. Students staged the play at Colgate and Syracuse Universities in December, and Colgate also hosted a conference on the play, for which she presented the keynote address: "Song in *The Second Shepherd's Play*: Polyphony as Dramatic Experience, Then and Now." This spring, Rosemarie presented a paper called "Agency and the Medieval Reader" at the 2018 meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association at UCLA. This paper focused on texts by Boccaccio and Chaucer and also relates to her project on medieval representations of reading. Several other current faculty and graduate students from IUB gave papers, and they also had a chance to catch up with graduates of our program, such as Ben Garceau, Burcu Karahan, and Laila Amin.

### **Izabela Potapowicz**

Izabela Potapowicz is delighted to have joined the Department of Comparative Literature in the fall of 2017 as Visiting Assistant Professor. Aside from coordinating the C-151 Popular Culture class sections, she has also been developing materials for the





Science Fiction in the Western Tradition and Literature and Television courses. Izabela gave papers at the “Authentic Artifice” 2017 international conference on Intermediality, where she spoke about the mediating role of Denis Scheck’s presentation of the German literary show *Druckfrisch*. At the 2018 Popular Culture Association Conference, she gave a paper on the representation of indigenous characters in Mexican films in the 1960s. Izabela is presently gathering materials for a larger project about the representation of ordinary readers on television, for which she will be conducting research at the French Institut national de l’audiovisuel (Ina) in the summer of 2018.



**Anya Peterson Royce**

Anya Peterson Royce was awarded the Tracy M. Sonneborn award for

Distinguished Teaching and Research, and will deliver the Sonneborn lecture next fall. She published the following book chapter “Being Curated by a Divine Force: The Forty-plus year Success of the Pilobolus Dance Theater,” in *Psycho Cultural Analysis of Folklore* (In memory of Professor Alan Dundes) Volumes 1 & 2, ed. P Chenna Reddy, 2018, B R Publishing Corporation, Delhi, 2018. She

has another chapter in press “Reflections on a Community of the Heart: Ethnographer and the people of Juchitan, Oaxaca,” in *Reciprocity Rules: Friendship and Compensation in Fieldword Encounters*, eds. M. Johnson and E. Searles. Lexington Press: Lanham, MD. Following the September 2017 earthquake that devastated the city of Juchitán, Oaxaca, she followed the responses and rebuilding that the people of the city undertook and published a blog post: <https://campanthropology.org/2017/11/06/anya-royce-and-the-people-of-juchitan-oaxaca/#more-1396>; it documents the success of local community efforts, led in many cases by poets, musicians, painters and teachers, which spoke directly to economic, social, and cultural needs. Royce is helping local architects charged with planning rebuilding by sharing with them the earliest photos taken of the city by her and her husband Ronald R. Royce in the early 1970’s.



**Sarah Van der Laan**

Sarah Van der Laan presented two papers in 2017: on Renaissance lyric and operatic

adaptations of Ovidian lament at the Renaissance Society of America annual conference, and on sixteenth-century Homeric interpretation and criticism of contemporary

Italian epic (by invitation) at the “Beyond Poetics” symposium at the Newberry Library. Her article, “Circean Transformation and the Poetics of Milton’s Masque,” which first appeared in *The Seventeenth Century* in 2016, was reprinted in *Milton, Drama, and Greek Texts* (Routledge, 2017). Her response to the “Spenser, Poetry and Performance” conference held at Shakespeare’s Globe in London in June 2017 was published in the Winter 2018 issue of *The Spenser Review*. She also appeared on a BBC Radio 4 documentary on Milton’s travels to Italy and encounter with Galileo, “In Search of Milton’s *Paradise Lost*”. She continues her involvement in the International Spenser Society, having been elected Secretary-Treasurer in 2018 after joining its Executive Committee in 2017.

**Sonia Velázquez**

Sonia Velázquez will complete the manuscript for her monograph, *Promiscuous Grace: Rethinking Holiness and Beauty with Saint Mary of Egypt*, next year as a Solmsen Fellow at the University of Wisconsin’s Institute for Research in the Humanities. This year, for her efforts in developing awareness and programs in the areas of culture, arts, and education in her teaching, research, and service, she received the Distinguished Faculty Award, an honor conferred by IU’s Latino Faculty and Staff Council.

## **Ernest Bernhardt-Kabisch**

Emeritus Professor Ernest Bernhardt-Kabisch continues to translate mostly scholarly works from the German. This past year he rendered two books by the noted German musicologist Constantin Floros into English. *Listening and Understanding: The Language of Music and How to Interpret It* was published by Peter Lang Publishers; *Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky* is in press and will appear in the near future. Professor Bernhardt is currently translating yet another book by Floros, “Passion Music: A Scholarly Autobiography,” which will appear probably late in 2018.

## **Claus Clüver**

In April, Professor emeritus Claus Clüver was the invited speaker to open the Congress of the Brazilian Semiotic Studies Association in Niteroi, Rio de Janeiro. The Conference topic being “Travessias / Crossings,” he chose to speak about “Travessias – entre mídias, entre disciplinas, entre públicos, entre culturas.” During the following four weeks he served as a Visiting Professor at the Institute for Advanced Transdisciplinary Studies at the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG), where he presented a public lecture on “Making It New? Intermediality and Current Theories of Adaptation” (which is about to be published at UFMG) and taught a graduate course on “Transformações

intermediáticas: teorias, modelos e aplicações.” At 84, that was probably the last course for him to teach in a long career. Before returning to Bloomington, he participated in the VI Intermedia Conference at UFMG as one of the invited speakers for the “International Colloquium: Word, Sound, Image,” where he gave an illustrated talk on “Textos intermediários e problemas da tradução: os ‘ideogramas’ concretos brasileiros.”

## **Sumie Jones**

A new volume of Sumie Jones’ anthology, coedited with Charles Shirō Inouye, *A Tokyo Anthology: Literature from Japan’s Modern Metropolis, 1850-1920*, was published by the University of Hawai’i Press in March 2017. This volume was well reviewed in the *Japan Times*, Japan’s oldest and largest English language newspaper (July 16, 2017 issue). Sumie gave a lecture, “Inventing Modernity Downtown: The Role of Tokyoite Masses in the Development of Urban Literature during the Meiji Period,” Purdue University, West LaFayette, IN, March 27, 2017. Sumie was featured in Fall 2017 East Asian Book Workshop, in which students and faculty members discussed *A Tokyo Anthology* on the basis of their prior reading of the volume, East Asian Studies Center, Indiana University, Bloomington, September 13, 2017. Sumie gave a lecture,

“Gender, Class, and Repression in Male Homoerotic Narratives of the Early Edo Period in Japan,” at Ohio State University, Columbus OH, on October 20, 2017.

## **James Naremore**

James Naremore’s new book, *Charles Burnett: A Cinema of Symbolic Knowledge*, was published by University of California Press in October, 2017. Research for the book was supported by a Scholar’s Award from the Motion Picture Academy of Arts and Sciences, and Naremore gave a lecture on Burnett at the Academy’s theater in Los Angeles.

## **Suzanne Stetkevych**

Suzanne Stetkevych continues to work as Sultan Qaboos Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C. She has presented her research on “Verbal Relic and Verbal Reliquary: al-Būshīrī’s *Qaṣīdat al-Burdah* and the Art of *Takhmīs al-Burdah*,” at Divination and Art in the Islamic World: Workshop Two: Islamic Relics. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford University, September 23, 2017. Her other presentations include: “*Al-Ittijāh al-Mu’ākis: Al-Ma’arrī’s Luzūmiyyāt* and the Poetics of Restriction” at MESA, Washington, DC, 18-21 Nov. 2017; “*Al-Sharīf al-Raḍī and Nahj al-Balāghah: Rhetoric, Dispossession, and the Lyric Sensibility*,” at The Shi’ah Institute Annual Symposium,



‘Nahj al-Balāghah: The Word of ‘Alī’. London, 14-15 Dec. 2017; and “The Interface of the Private and the Political in Classical and Modern Arabic Poetry,” at The International Symposium on the Personal and the Public in Literary Works of the Arab Regions, Center for Modern Middle East Studies, National Museum of Ethnography, Osaka, Japan, March 24-25, 2018, as well as several research presentations in Cairo, Egypt, where she is spending spring semester 2018 on sabbatical leave. Her recent publications are “Solomon and Mythic Kingship in the Arabo-Islamic Tradition: Qaṣīdah, Qur’ān and Qīṣaṣ al-Anbiyā’.” *Journal of Arabic Literature* 48 no. 1 (2017): 1-37; and “Irony, Archeology and the Rule of Rhyme: Two Readings of the *Ṭasmu Luzūmiyyah* of Abū al-‘Alā’ al-Ma‘arrī.” *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, (forthcoming 2018). At MESA 2017, she was awarded the Middle East Medievalists Lifetime Achievement Award 2017, “For a distinguished career in the field of Middle East and Arabic Studies and the promotion of the profession at large.”

### **Bronislava Volkova**

Bronislava Volkova has

continued to publish poetry in various languages in 2017, as well as exhibit her collages. She has traveled to Czech Republic, Ukraine (in September 2017) and Russia (in February 2018), where she had extensive readings and lecture engagements in Prague, Černigov, Nežin, Kiev, Rovno, Lutsk, Sankt Peterburg and Moscow. She read and lectured at universities as well as in literary associations and embassies and participated in literary festivals (Lytavry LitEra, Den poezie). She published in anthologies and journals in various languages: *Oír Ese Río*, (Colombia, Argentina), *Řeka úsvitu*, *Partonyma*, *Zřetelným mistem nalomení* (Czech Republic), *stixi.ru*, *45-aja parallel’*, *LitEra*, *Paralleli*, *Sojuz pisatelej XXI-go veka*, *Poetograd* (Russia), *Kníževno žitie* (Macedonia), *Kníževna rijeka* (Croatia), *Romania Literara* (Romania). Further, she has translated poems by an Ecuadorian poet Karina Gálvez from Spanish into Czech and published them in *Welles* (Czech Republic) as well as poems of Turkish poet Asli Erdogan from English.

Reviews of Volkova’s work appeared this year in *Lynx* (Spain), *Tvar* and *Welles* (Czech Republic) and *Bukvoid*

(Ukraine). Articles about her work and interviews with her appeared in *Glosolália* (Slovakia), *Kníževno žitie* (Macedonia), *radio.cz* (English) and *Roden glas* (Bulgarian), *tv-dialog.ru* (Russia), *pravda.lutsk.ua*, *volynnews.com*, *volyninfo.com*, *enu.edu.ua* (Ukraine) and others.

### **Eugene Eoyang**

Professor Emeritus Eugene Eoyang published the article “Jia Pingwa, the Concept of Ren, and the Reading of Fiction” in *Comparative Literature: East & West*, vol. 26, no. 1 in Chinese and English. His article “Words, Numbers, and Concepts: How Translators Have Mistranslated and Misunderstood Basic Chinese Notions” appeared in *Translation Quarterly* (82, pp. 1-14). He reviewed Debjani Ganguly’s book *This Thing Called the World: The Contemporary Novel as Global Form for World Literature Today* (vol. 91, no. 2). At the meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association in Utrecht, he convened the panel of judges for the Horst Frenz Prize and chaired the panel “Comparative Literature Around the World: Global Practices.”



## Laila Amine

Laila Amine's book *Postcolonial Paris: Fictions of Intimacy in the City of Light* is forthcoming in June, 2018 with the University of Wisconsin Press. Spanning 1947 to the present, this comparative study challenges the idea that Paris has served as a site of liberation for the African Diaspora. Laila will start a new position as Assistant Professor of English at University of Wisconsin-Madison in fall 2018.

## Wendy Hardenberg

Wendy Hardenberg presented a paper, "The Ear, the Eye and the Arm: YA Fiction Decolonizes the Mind" at ACLA in Los Angeles in March 2018, and also a version of a paper she wrote during her time at IU at the International Samuel Beckett Conference in Cacerès, Spain, in April 2018. She will be taking her first sabbatical from March–August 2019, during which time she will have the opportunity to focus exclusively on literary translation activities. Another milestone was the publication of her translations of two short pieces by Vincent Ravalec in the January 2018 issue of *Asymptote*—an author she has been working on for over 10 years and whose work she translated for her master's project.

## James G. Hermsen

After graduation, Jim began a career in compliance, first as technical director at

Beveridge Paper Company in Indianapolis. Upon its closure for the White River State Park, he worked in the mortgage banking industry, creating user manuals and training guides for the software that monitors all aspects of this industry. He retired in 2017. Jim has also served on the Board of Directors for a housing cooperative for over 40 years, most of that time as its president. He was an exchange student host family for over 20 students and served on the Indianapolis International Council and National Council for International Visitors. He authored genealogies and three cemetery indexes for the Yellow Creek Cemeteries in Elkhart. Jim currently serves on the board of the Swiss Anabaptist Genealogical Association as its treasurer and membership chair.

## Elliott Rabin

Elliot Rabin's day job is editor of an education magazine, and in his spare time he tries to keep up with scholarship. Rabin has a new book coming out later this year combining biblical and literary scholarship, titled *The Biblical Hero: Portraits in Nobility and Fallibility* (JPS/Nebraska).

## Tassilo Schneider

Tassilo Schneider (M.A. Comparative Literatur/Film Studies 1990) is owner of an institute for dyslexia therapy in Frankfurt, Germany.

## Dennis Walsh

Dennis is currently an instructor for a youth-development organization, Urban Boatbuilders, that engages youth in critical thinking, job readiness, and social-emotional learning through the construction of skin-on-frame canoes and kayaks. He was recently admitted to the University of Minnesota's Ph.D. program in Culture and Teaching.

## Nancy Watanabe

Nancy Watanabe has a new book, *African Heartbeat: Transatlantic Literary and Cultural Dynamics*, which is a sequel to *Beloved Image: The Drama of W.B. Yeats 1865-1939* and *Love Eclipsed: Joyce Carol Oates's Faustian Moral Vision*, all available for purchase at Rowman & Littlefield 1-800-462-6420 and [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). Affiliated with the University of Oklahoma and University of Washington as East-West Research Professor of Comparative and English Literature, she is a recipient of fellowship sponsorship from Alpha Kappa Alpha. Her recent articles include "Clarissa's Chamber Revisited: Richardson, Poe, Robbe-Grillet, and Shimada," *Inhabited by Stories: Critical Essays on Tales Retold*, Cambridge Scholars, 2013; "Italian-American Ethos in the Post-Capra Novel: Peretti's *This Present Darkness* and Trigiani's *The Queen of the Big*



# Graduate Student News

*Time*”, *Italian Americana*, vol. 30, no. 2 (Summer 2012); “R.K. Narayan’s Ultimate Realism: India’s Spiritual Rebirth in *The English Teacher*” and “R.K. Narayan’s Historic Slice of Life: Theological Hybridity and East-West Logistics in *The Vendor of Sweets*,” *A Talent for the Particular: Critical Essays on R.K. Narayan*, Worldview, 2012; “Hrotsvit (Roswitha, Hrotswitha) of Gandersheim (A.D. 932-1002),” *New Catholic Encyclopedia Supplement 2011*, Gale; “The Contemporary Catholic Bildungsroman: Passionate Conviction in Shūsakū Endō’s *The Samurai* and Mary Gordon’s *Men and Angels*,” *Between Human and Divine: Catholic Vision in Contemporary Literature*, Catholic U of America P, 2010; and “Barrie’s Meiji-Era London Plays and the East-West Modernism of Yeats and Eliot,” *Origins of English Dramatic Modernism, 1870-1914*,” *Academica*, 2010.

## **Karen Winstead**

Karen Winstead, professor of English at Ohio State University, has published *The Oxford History of Life-Writing, Volume 1: The Middle Ages*.



## **Morgane Flahault**

On her way to finishing her dissertation this year, Morgane has presented her paper “It Came from Neither and Both’: Making Mestizaje Visible through Silk’s Transnational Connections in Cisneros’ *Caramelo* and Eugenides’ *Middlesex*” at the 2017 PAMLA conference at Chaminade University in Honolulu, and has presented on “The Ethics of Hermaphrosthetics” at UCLA for the 2018 ACLA conference. She is currently the grateful recipient of the Sanders-Weber fellowship.

## **Roy Holler**

Roy Holler was awarded the College of Arts and Sciences Dissertation Research Fellowship for 2018-19. He presented his work at the Association of Jewish Studies (AJS) 49th Annual Conference, and at the American Comparative Literature Association 2017 and 2018 Annual Meetings. Roy was recently invited to participate in the 2018 Yale Annual Symposium on Modern Hebrew Literature and Jewish Literatures.

## **Sarah N. Lawson**

In the 2017-2018 academic year, Sarah N. Lawson presented at two conferences. In October, she presented her paper, “Naming the Imp: A Proposed Taxonomy for New Fairy Tale Media” at the American Folklore Society Annual Meeting in

Minneapolis, Minnesota. She was awarded a travel grant from the College Arts and Humanities Institute in order to attend. In March, she presented “A Court of Norms and Poses: Anti-Subversion in a New Fairy Tale Novel” at the National Pop Culture Association Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana. She also served as the historian and as the graduate admissions subcommittee representative on the Comparative Literature Student Advisory Board. Finally, she was admitted to the Dual Ph.D in Folklore, which will inform and enhance her research in Comparative Literature.

## **Helen Plevka**

Helen Plevka presented at IU’s Jewish Studies and Comparative Literature graduate student conferences this spring. Both papers were about the role of Olivier Messiaen’s Quartet for the End of Time in Richard Powers’s novel *Orfeo*, and she accompanied her readings with excerpts on the clarinet. Helen was selected to participate in the Flanigan Colloquium and enjoyed sharing her work on the presence of Western music in Latin American literature through a musico-literary analysis of Alejo Carpentier’s *Los pasos perdidos*.

## **Emerson Richards**

Emerson Richards spent fall of 2017 at the John Rylands

(continued)

Research Institute of the University of Manchester, where she worked on the Manchester Apocalypse, a 14th c. Flemish illustrated *Book of Revelations* which is a copy of the *Paris Apocalypse*, on which she will write her dissertation.

With support from the James Marrow Travel Award, Emerson visited the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge University to incorporate the Nuneaton Book into her work.

As a member of the Graduate Student Council for the Medieval Academy of America, this spring Emerson presented at the annual meeting in Atlanta. She spoke on the importance of making Special Collections accessible to a non-specialist and non-academic audiences in order to promote the Humanities. She emphasized the important role that Comparative Literature and the IU Moving Image Archive have played in allowing her to communicate the importance of old books and libraries without Starbucks. Emerson and Ali Frauman co-organized a panel for the International Congress on Medieval Studies which examines the misuse of the medieval by nationalist groups. Supported in part by a travel award from CAHI, Emerson will present the fruits of her Manchester research at the New Chaucer Society in July on the campus of the University of Toronto.

On campus, with the hard work and collaboration of the Graduate Student Advisory Council for Medieval Studies, as president, Emerson helped

organize the 30th Annual Medieval Studies Institute Spring Symposium, which brought speakers from around the US, UK, Canada, and Nigeria.

The second half of Emerson's M.A. thesis, titled, 'It is Mainly Just That They Are Irish: Anglo-Irish Tensions in T. H. White's *The Once and Future King*', was published in *Arthuriana*, and a short blog post detailing the finding of a 12th c. binding fragment in an Ottonian gospel book was published on the *John Rylands Special Collections Research Blog*.

This summer Emerson will attend Barbara Shailor's 'Advanced Paleography' course at Rare Book School, under the auspices of the Beinecke Library. From there, she will go to a London Rare Book School session, taught by Michelle P. Brown on the production and reception of illuminated manuscripts.

### **Claire Riley**

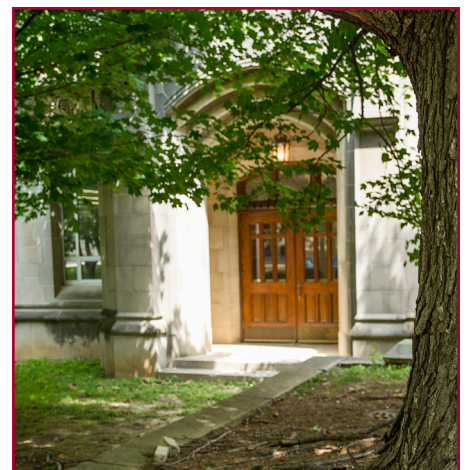
Claire is a third-year Ph.D. student interested in the ways medieval European writers represented the Mongol Empire in literature. Claire spent last summer studying Mongolian language at the American Center for Mongolian Studies in Ulaanbaatar and this year is continuing her study of the language at IU through a Foreign Language and Area Studies fellowship. She will be heading to Paris in the fall to participate in the Department's Nanterre exchange.

### **Zachary Scalzo**

Zachary Scalzo presented at the 40th Annual American Literary Translators Association Conference as part of a panel titled "I wish I had my problems': Re-weirding the weird in contemporary prose," composed of IU students. In November, he wrote for the Bloomington Playwright Project's 2017 Ike & Julie Arnove Playoffs, during which his short play, *Going Gaga*, was performed. He also presented on his translation of Pier Vittorio Tondelli's *Dinner Party* at the second annual Italy in Transit Symposium, hosted at Florida Atlantic University.

### **Sean Sidky**

Sean Sidky has spent most of this year frantically preparing for his qualifying examinations. In his few spare moments, he has been continuing to work on a translation of a collection of Yiddish short stories, for which he received a Translation Fellowship from the Yiddish Book Center in 2017, and he presented excerpts from this translation at this year's American Literary Translators Association Conference in Minneapolis.





# Graduate Profile

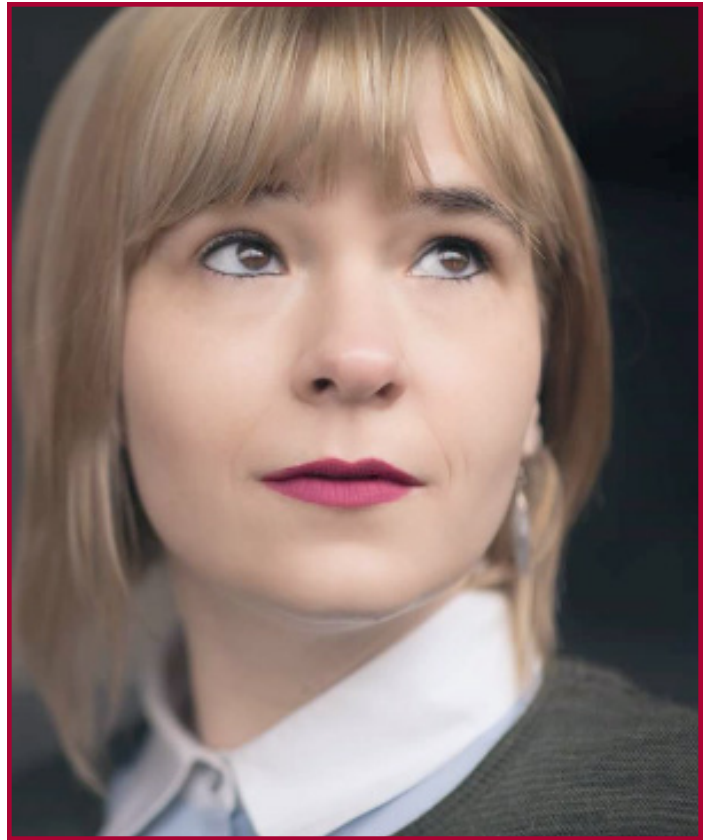
## Emerson Storm Fillman Richards, Ph.D. Candidate

By: Claire Riley

**M**edieval Times Dinner and Tournament, ye olde gifte shoppe, *Game of Thrones*. Medieval culture tends to get pigeonholed in contemporary American society: it's nerdy, it's kitsch, or it's elitist, and there are probably dragons. Emerson Storm Fillman Richards, a Ph.D. candidate in Comparative Literature minoring in Medieval Studies, would like to change those impressions.

Richards came to IU from the University of Florida, where she studied English with a focus on Arthurian legend. She made the leap to Comparative Literature after a professor realized she was “too French for the English Department, too Celtic for the French department” and “wasn't actually working with English literature.” Richards admits, “I've never really focused on literature. It's just been a default of how to get to medieval culture. It's not particularly literature as much as it is medieval culture.”

At IU, Richards has directed her attention toward medieval book culture. She explains, “I got increasingly frustrated with edited editions that I felt didn't really show the literature in the way that it would have been engaged with by its medieval audience, and it's difficult to have upper-level students say something about medieval culture when they're reading it out of a Penguin edition.” Richards acknowledges that digital humanities have gone a long way toward closing this gap and works to bring facsimiles and digital copies of manuscripts into all of the classes she teaches. But even as she extolls the benefits of digital reproductions, Richards emphasizes the continuing importance of spending time with physical manuscripts: “The way a book is constructed—the codicology of it—is not something that digitization and facsimile can show you. And if you don't understand the codicology, you can't understand how it was physically produced. If you understand how it was physically produced, you can know for whom



it was produced and a lot of details like that. The quality of the parchment, the quality of the ink, it's all evident in the manuscript itself.”

Richards' dissertation will examine the incorporation of secular imagery into a mid-thirteenth century Anglo-Norman Book of Revelations housed in Paris. She became aware of this particular manuscript of the Book of Revelations, usually called the Apocalypse when it is transmitted alone, during her time in France on the Comparative Literature-Nanterre exchange in 2015-16, then continued her research as a Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Manchester John Rylands Library last fall. Through her formal manuscript study, Richards expects to argue that her Apocalypse is the earliest extant manuscript in a series of Apocalypses bearing nearly identical illustrations.

This focus on the Paris Apocalypse's illustrations aligns well with Richards' larger objective to “help people see why medieval stuff isn't elitist and it's not Dungeons and Dragons. It is relatable and accessible as much as Netflix is.” For Richards, manuscript illustrations go a long way in demonstrating the commonalities between medieval and contemporary societies.

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She exudes, “People are able to access this visual idea of the past though the manuscripts. As our society continually gets more visually oriented, the ability to see that the past was also visually oriented is important.”

In time, Richards hopes to work as a director or curator of medieval manuscripts in the special collection of an academic or national library. She explains, “I just want to be the person who explains to non-specialists and non-academics why these books are important, and, through that, why the humanities are important, because there’s a lot of misunderstanding about why medieval culture is still relevant when ‘the

way of the future is STEM’ and our printed books ‘aren’t even relevant.” Richards turns to Brexit to emphasize her point. She hopes that by introducing non-specialist audiences to the blurring of national lines in manuscripts she will help them to understand the traditional fluidity of cultural boundaries: “England—and I’m using England, specifically—thinks it’s this entity unto itself. They don’t want to be told what to do by the Continent, but that’s a historical fallacy. There’s always been such an interrelationship between the Continent, particularly France, and England—Britain ... By looking at the past, we can see how everything is interconnected.”

In the meantime, Richards is busy working on her dissertation and starting her own manuscript consulting firm. “Clients send me manuscripts, and I sit with them and I go through each page. I tell them what it is and what time period it’s from, and I write a formal description,” she says, before enthusiastically adding, “And if it’s a forgery, I can tell them why it’s still cool. There are some really neat forgeries out there.” For Richards, the business is a labor of love: “I’m always impressed by every manuscript that I handle, because each one of them has this secret life to tell. I feel like Sherlock Holmes, because you go through and you collect the clues, and you learn about the production and the reception, and then the post-medieval life.”

This June, Richards will be continuing her efforts to know medieval manuscripts and their more recent reception better when she attends the Rare Book School advanced paleography course in New Haven, Connecticut.





# Undergraduate Spotlight

For the past two years, the Undergraduate Spotlight consisted of two students interviewing each other. This year, we have three students finishing senior honors theses for the spring, and one who finished her honors thesis and recently graduated. We thought it would be great to give them a chance to tell us about their thesis and about how they found their way to comparative literature and how the major has worked within their lives.

## Tell us about your senior project/directed study.

**Dylan Taylor:** My thesis project, under the supervision of Jacob Emery, is concerned with the work of Harry Smith (1923-1991), one of the big names of American avant-garde cinema—specifically his film/installation *Mahagonny* (1980). In the paper, I explore the intricacies and internal contradictions of this work, as well as its place within Smith’s own corpus and more generally within the universe of the 20th-century avant-garde—ultimately arguing that Smith’s laborious and eccentric creative methods, as well as the film’s complex and self-conscious subversion of adaptation and representationality, necessitate the characterization of the methods, aesthetics and affective implications of the work in terms of the *political*. For all its ambiguities, I argue that the work is part and parcel with a 20th-century tradition of radical, anti-capitalist art at large. I also examine the film’s insistence on its own “incompleteness” and resistance against its own commodity status, touching on concepts inherited from Marxist criticism and Gilles Deleuze’s work.

**Alexis Rueff:** I worked with Professor Bill Johnston to create a thesis that focuses on comparing photography, painting, and literature. When I approached Professor Johnston about writing a thesis all I knew was that I wanted to compare literature and photography, and that I really wanted to use my own photography.

He was completely supportive. My photos for the project are long exposure images of lights at night that have been swirled into abstraction by my own motion. I compare my abstractions to those of Abstract Expressionist photographer, Aaron Siskind and painter, Jackson Pollock. Next, I compare my abstract images to abstractions in literature. While, working on this project I was reading Lewis Carroll’s *Through the Looking Glass*, where the nonsense poem “Jabberwocky” can be found. This is where I discovered the title for my thesis, *Nonsense Photography*. I went on to compare my nonsensical imagery to other authors such as, John Lennon and Gertrude Stein. I found that these non-representational art forms engage the viewer/reader in an interpretive way that causes them to feel things they may not fully understand.

**Corey Lee:** For my senior honors thesis, I am studying the influence of techno-orientalism on William Gibson’s *Neuromancer* and Ursula K. Le Guin’s *City of Illusions*. Both novels depict Asian (“oriental”) characters as the “other” by associating those characters with technology, but they do so in some interestingly different ways.

**Joshua Sutcliffe:** I chose to write about William Blake’s prophetic works, specifically his 1790’s prophecies, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and *The Book of Urizen*. I place Blake in the context of the radical political tradition of his time and examine how his relationship to that tradition informs his poetics. Ultimately, my argument is that Blake reaches a point in *The Book of Urizen* where he resolves to challenge the notion of textual authority as a means to destabilize the oppressive hegemonies he writes against, perhaps opening a space for a new social order to emerge.

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## ***Why did you choose Comparative Literature?***

**Dylan Taylor:** I approached Comparative Literature in a deliberately interdisciplinary way—I also majored in Sociology. I was drawn to comparative literature out of an interest in international media (from the novel to cinema to music), as well as an interest in continental philosophy and social/media theory—the “thinking” of texts and communications of all varieties.

**Alexis Rueff:** When I first came to Indiana University I was completely undecided about what I wanted to study. At the end of my freshman year I declared a Spanish major, but I still felt like there was something else I was meant to be studying. I knew I was good at English in high school, so I began to search for more literature based classes. This is when I found Comparative Literature. Immediately I was drawn to the cross disciplinary elements of this department, such as comparing literature to music, painting, and photography. This was unlike any literature course I had ever taken. After taking my second Comparative Literature course, and receiving encouragement from the professor, David Hertz, I decided to declare Comparative Literature as my second major. I enjoy comparing cross culturally and this major has worked with my Spanish major in this regard. However, the part of Comparative Literature that I enjoy most is comparing across mediums.

**Corey Lee:** During my sophomore year at IU, I became very disoriented about what I wanted to do with my degree and what I wanted to do with my life. Reflecting on the classes I was taking

at the time, I realized that the only class I truly enjoyed was my Comparative Literature class. I ultimately decided that it was more important to choose a major that I genuinely enjoyed rather than one that would get me a job directly after graduating. Now, in spite of this decision—and perhaps because of it—I will be attending a graduate program in School Psychology next year!

**Joshua Sutcliffe:** I began college as a business major at Kelley before switching to the English Department at the end of my freshman year. During my sophomore year, I realized that I had plenty of room in my schedule to add another major. One of my best friends and current roommate is a Comparative Literature major, and the way he described the major sounded interesting. I took a couple of classes to test the waters and was sold.

## ***What is the most interesting book you've been assigned?***

**Dylan Taylor:** In the first comparative literature class that I took—with Professor Losenky, who's a wonderful, brilliant person—we read Amos Tutuola's *The Palm-Wine Drinkard*. Instant favorite. In a virtually sui generis style, Tutuola weaves the story (based on Yoruba folk legend) of a drunkard who ventures to conquer Death itself after his private palm wine tapster dies. Given its strange style and its often patronizing and racist Western reception, it has been somewhat controversial among some Nigerian critics, but as far as I can tell it's a work well worth the read.





**Alexis Rueff:** It is hard to pick just one, but I would have to say *The Rings of Saturn*, by W.G. Sebald. This book combines literature with photography in way I had never experienced before. There are photos throughout the text that seem to offer evidence of what is being said in the text, but often the photos do not have anything to do with what is occurring in the text around them. This made me begin to think of the purpose of photographs. This intersection of literature and photography is what sparked my interest that led to my thesis. There is something so interesting about combining images and words: together they create a new object that can lead the viewer/reader to a greater understanding of the work.

**Corey Lee:** The single most interesting book that I've been assigned as a Comparative Literature student is Amos Tutuola's *The Palm-Wine Drinkard*. Written by a Nigerian author, this novel gives an interesting glimpse into Yoruba folklore in an undeniably humorous fashion.

**Joshua Sutcliffe:** The most interesting works I've been assigned were the poems of John Donne. It is easy to fall into the trap of thinking that older poetry is stuffy, boring, and overrated, but I was amazed when I read Donne in Professor Van der Laan's Renaissance class. It was not the first time I had read Donne, but it was the first time that I was in a class that took the time to read him extensively, and I quickly realized that there was a lot more there than I first thought. He has been a favorite of mine ever since.

### ***Do you have a piece of advice for younger students?***

**Dylan Taylor:** Read and watch everything you possibly can! Do your darndest to read poetry in its original language! Don't be afraid of theory! Always think politically! "Always historicize!"

**Alexis Rueff:** Go to the library!!! Let the library be a place of exploration, and not just a place you are forced to go to for a class. Today it is easy to go on the internet and find resources with the click of a button. This type of research is useful, but I would argue that the internet also leads to other distractions like online shopping or Facebook. I did not discover the real joys of going to the library until my senior year and I wish I had sooner. The library is full of resources, take advantage of them!

**Corey Lee:** The best advice I can provide to younger students is to pursue what makes you happy. It is very difficult to know what might make you happy in a few years, but much easier to know what makes you happy in the present moment. Pursue those endeavors from which you derive happiness, and success as a student will come as a by-product of that pursuit.

**Joshua Sutcliffe:** My advice would be to take classes outside of your area of study when available. I fell into the habit of trying to accumulate too many minors and majors at the expense of branching out to study more topics that really interest me. Now, I regret not taking some of the great courses that the College of Arts and Sciences offers. I think a more interdisciplinary curriculum would have added a lot to my experience at IU and would have made me a better Comparative Literature major as well.







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