



RICE

Unconventional Wisdom

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

HONORS & ACHIEVEMENTS

2017 - 2018

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WELCOME

Welcome to the 2018 Commencement Reception for the Department of English at Rice University. This afternoon we will acknowledge and honor our graduating students along with our award and fellowship recipients. Our department is proud to have you all here with us today; students have worked so very hard and made such wonderful achievements. Congratulations!

BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREES

Asena Alay * (Weiss)
English, Psychology

Blair Boone (Duncan)
English, Psychology

Brill Tresor (McMurtry)
English

Erica Cheung * (Martel)
English, Visual & Dramatic Arts
(minor: Ecology & Evolutionary Biology)

Jackson Dooling (McMurtry)
English (minor: Business)

Scott Elder (Hanszen)
English

Marley Foster * (Weiss)
English, Visual & Dramatic Arts

Tessa Fries (Lovett)
English, French Studies (Politics, Law, Social Thought)

Molly Garrison (Baker)
English, Psychology (minor: Business)

Jamie Hall (Duncan)
English, Computer Science

Sonia Hamer * (Sid Richardson)
English (minor: Jewish Studies)

Taegan Howells * (Lovett)
English

Kathryn Iverson (Martel)
English, History

Minoti Kale (McMurtry)
English, History

Reagan Kapp * (Duncan)
English (Politics, Law, Social Thought)

Hannah Krusleski (Duncan)
English

Jordan Lewis (McMurtry)
English, Managerial Studies (Business)

Alison Liu * (Martel)
English

Elizabeth Martinez * (Sid Richardson)
English, Study of Women, Gender, & Sexuality

Lenna Mendoza (McMurtry)
English

Jaecy Parham (Lovett)
English

Walden Permante (McMurtry)
English, History (minor: Business)

Breanna Perez (Jones)
English (minor: Business)

Miranda Proctor (Duncan)
English, Psychology

Zhizhen Rao * (Baker)
English, Biochemistry & Cell Biology

Joseph Russo (Duncan)
English

Nicholas Sabo (Will Rice)
English, Computer Science

Sophie Schnietz * (Baker)
English, French Studies

Rhonda Sutor (Will Rice)
English, Asian Studies

Natalie Swanson * (Baker)
English (minor: Business)

Vaneza Tallman (Martel)
English, Music

Bailey Tulloch (Jones)
English (minor: Politics, Law, Social Thought)

Julianne Wey (Jones)
English

Reagan Williamson (Brown)
English

Sarah Wozniak * (Jones)
English, French Studies (Biochemistry & Cell Bio)

Chelsea Wu * (Lovett)
English, Biochemistry & Cell Biology

Eugene Yeom (Weiss)
English, Linguistics

Maricela Zertuche (Will Rice)
English

**Student recommended for University Distinction in Research and Creative Works*

UNDERGRADUATE SENIOR THESES

The Senior Thesis in English is an optional advanced research project in which students undertake a year-long process of research and writing while working directly with their faculty advisor. The senior thesis project culminates in a 50+ page research paper on a topic of their choosing.

Asena Alay

“say, a collection of poetry”

Advisor: Judith Roof

Erica Cheung

“We Who Are Not Native”

Advisor: Lacy Johnson

Marley Foster

“45 / 90”

Advisor: Judith Roof

Sonia Hamer

“But Oceans Lie Between Us”

Advisor: Lacy Johnson

Taegan Howells

“The New Death: Allegorical Death in Terry Pratchett’s *Discworld* Series”

Advisor: Judith Roof

Reagan Kapp

“Loaded Language: Interpreting the Second Amendment and Emily Dickinson’s
‘My Life Had Stood -- a Loaded Gun’”

Advisors: Helena Michie & Amanda Johnson

Alison Liu

“Her Anatomy: Bloodletting and Other Secrets”

Advisor: Amber Dermont

Elizabeth Martinez

“An Invitation into the Hacienda: The Evolution of a Hospitality Culture in Early Chicana/o Literature”

Advisors: José Aranda & Rosemary Hennessy

Lenna Mendoza

“Wish Litter”

Advisor: Lacy Johnson

Emily Rao

“The Palest Ink”

Advisor: Lacy Johnson

Sophie Schnietz

“Detection and Translation”

Advisor: Judith Roof

Natalie Swanson

“Alabaster and Oak: A Collection of Fairytale Adaptations”

Advisor: Amber Dermont

Sarah Wozniak

“A Multiplicity of Ghosts: Slavery’s Afterlives”

Advisor: Nicole Waligora-Davis

Chelsea Wu

“Sequencing Human Difference: The Longevity of Race as a Biological Construct”

Advisor: Nicole Waligora-Davis

UNDERGRADUATE PRIZES & AWARDS

Caroline S. and David L. Minter Award for Outstanding Graduating English Major

Created to honor Emeritus English Professor David Minter and his wife Caroline, this award is given out every year to a graduating English major with an extraordinary GPA and whose transcript demonstrates a breadth of scholarship.

Asena Alay and **Sonia Hamer**

Caroline S. and David L. Minter Outstanding Essay Prize

This prize is awarded for a paper of ten pages or more written for an English course by a current junior or senior English major.

Sarah Wozniak

“Conversing with Ghosts in the Archive:
Affectively Mapping Saidiya Hartman’s *Lose Your Mother*.”

Minter Summer Scholar Awards

These awards are given out every year to students whose research over the summer will benefit their work in English during the following semester.

Rebecca Chen, Shannon Klein, Claudia Middleton

Lady Geddes Essay Writing Prize

This prize is an annual writing competition for the best academic paper by a currently enrolled freshman or sophomore.

First Place - **Hania Ilahi Nagy**

“Comfort, Sleep, and Space in Vermeer’s *A Woman Asleep*”

Second Place - **Emma Gordon**

“Stones and Snails: From Objects to Art”

Inprint Marion Barthelme Prize in Creative Writing at Rice University

This award is given out every year to a graduating student who has completed course work in creative writing at Rice University.

Sonia Hamer

“Pig, An Essay”

UNDERGRADUATE PRIZES & AWARDS

The Rice Review Awards

The Rice Review is a student-run literary journal at Rice University committed to publishing the best prose, poetry, and creative nonfiction written by undergraduate students, as well as interviews with renowned authors. The journal was founded in 2004 by creative writing professor and author Justin Cronin and made possible by the generosity of the Huisick, Epstein, and Williams families. Each year *R2* gives out Williams Awards to those students whose work merits additional recognition.

George Williams Prize for Fiction

First Place – **Victoria Oliha** for “The Last Ones”

Second Place – **Alison Liu** for “Bloodletting”

George Williams Prize for Creative Nonfiction

First Place – **Sonia Hamer** for “Pig, An Essay”

Second Place – **Alice Liu** for “Step Two is Returning”

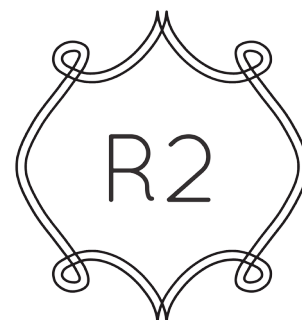
George Williams Prize for Poetry

First Place – **Annabelle Crowe** for “Confessions of A Hammer Film Monster”

Second Place – **Lenna Mendoza** for “Offering”

Cover Art Prize

Suzanne Zeller for “Art Ponders Art”



The English Department also recognizes **Professor Ian Schimmel** who serves as faculty advisor to *R2: The Rice Review*, and who goes above and beyond to help and mentor those students who serve on the editorial staff of this wonderful journal.

UNDERGRADUATE SERVICE

Erica Cheung, Editor-in-Chief, *R2*

Chelsea Wu, Managing Editor, *R2*

Marley Foster, Art Editor, *R2*

Lily Wulfemeyer, Creative Nonfiction Editor, *R2*

Molly Garrison, Fiction Editor, *R2*

Steffanie Alter, Poetry Editor, *R2*

Ellie Mix, Layout Editor, *R2*

Megan Gordon, Associate Editor, *R2*

Kristen Hickey, Contest Committee Head, *R2*

Erika Schumacher, Web Coordinator, *R2*

Griffin Milan, Sarah Smati, Kimberly Wood
Socials, *R2*

Steffannie Alter and **Megan Gordon**, Co-Presidents, English Undergraduate Association (EUA)

Kelsie Utz, Treasurer, English Undergraduate Association

Founded in 2016, the EUA seeks to connect English majors across Rice’s residential colleges. More broadly, it seeks to ready students for diverse career paths and lives and to advance knowledge of the humanities. Professor Ian Schimmel and Professor Amanda Johnson serve as faculty advisors.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREES

Rachel Conrad Bracken

Professor Kirsten Ostherr

“National Bodies: Epidemiologies of Belonging and the Literature of American Public Health”

May 2018

Lorena Gauthereau

Professor José Aranda

“Class, Race, and the Coloniality of Power in Mexican American Literature”

December 2017

Brittany Henry

Professor José Aranda

“Utopia: The Politics of Hope in North American Dystopian Fiction”

May 2018

Suzanne Rindell

Professor Judith Roof

“Fashion and the Shifting Semiotics of Sex and Gender in Modernist Literature and Culture”

May 2018

Karen Rosenthal

Professor Caroline Levander

“Novel Economies: A Literary Pre-History of U.S. Commercial Capitalism, 1730-1859”

August 2017

Derek Woods

Professor Cary Wolfe

“What Is Ecotechnology?: Biopolitics and Trophic Writing in American Cultures of Science”

August 2017

ACHIEVEMENT OF CANDIDACY

Annie Lowe

Alexander McAdams

Mallory Pladus

NEW ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Sydney Boyd

Ph.D. expected August 2018

Project Manager, Humanities Research Center Spatial Studies Project
AY 2018-2019

Rachel Conrad Bracken

Ph.D. 2018

Assistant Professor of Family & Community Medicine, Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED)
Starting Fall 2018

Lindsey Chappell

Ph.D. 2017

Assistant Professor of English, Georgia Southern University
Starting Fall 2018

Lorena Gauthereau

Ph.D. 2017

Council on Library and Information Resources/Digital Library Federation – Andrew W. Mellon
Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Recovering the U.S.
Hispanic Literary Heritage Project (Recovery Project), University of Houston
AYs 2017-2019

Brittany Henry

Ph.D. 2018

Postdoctoral Instructor, Program in Writing and Communication, Rice University
AYs 2018-2020

Sophia Hsu

Ph.D. 2018

Assistant Professor of English, Lehman College, CUNY
Starting Fall 2018

AnaMaria Seglie

Ph.D. 2015

Assistant Professor of English, St. Norbert College
Starting Fall 2018

Victoria Ford Smith

Ph.D. 2010

Associate Professor of English (promotion), University of Connecticut
Starting Fall 2018

Meina Yates-Richard

Ph.D. 2016

Assistant Professor of African American Literature and Culture, Emory University
*Dr. Yates-Richard will be leaving Syracuse University to take this new position starting in Fall 2018;
She is also the recipient of the 2018-19 Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship.*

GRADUATE STUDENT AWARDS & PRIZES

EXTERNAL

Rachel Conrad Bracken

2018-2019 Corse Fellowship, University of Vermont Department of English

Lindsay Graham

Digital Humanities Research Assistantship through the Resilient Networks within the Libraries
Department at George Washington University

Elena Valdez

2017 WLA J. Golden Taylor Award (Best essay presented at the conference by a graduate student)
for her essay, "When Collective Memory Takes You Home: Jorge Ainslie's *Los Pochos* and the
Folkloric Difference in the Spanish Language Press"

UNIVERSITY

Rachel Conrad Bracken

2018 Graduate Teaching Award for Independent Instruction, Center for Teaching Excellence

Brittany Henry

2018 Seth Balkishan Das Singhal Award for her article, "Undocumented Narratives: Migrant
Testimonio in '*La Migra me hizo los Mandados*,'" Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality

2018 CSWGS Best Graduate Essay Prize for her dissertation chapter,
"We never intended to have any more to do with Europe': Feminist Utopia and the Settler
Colonial Imaginary in *The Female American*."

GRADUATE STUDENT AWARDS & PRIZES

DEPARTMENTAL

Shirley Bard Rapoport Essay Prize

This essay prize is awarded every year for the best essay by a graduate student in the English Department. Morris Rapoport established this endowed prize as a memorial to honor his beloved wife and lifetime partner, Shirley Bard Rapoport, and her love of writing and literature.

Evan Choate

“A Potent Flaccidity: Misreading Impotence in *Richard III*”

Chair’s Best Dissertation Prize

Each year this prize is awarded to the best dissertation in the English department.

Lorena Gauthereau

“Class, Race, and the Coloniality of Power in Mexican American Literature”

Director: Professor José Aranda

August 2017

Margaret C. Ostrum Summer Research Grant

This summer research grant allows students to travel to archives or work on ethnographic projects outside of Houston, especially for work related to their dissertation.

C. Brooke Clark

Alexander McAdams

Randi Mihajlovic

Samuel Stoeltje

Clinton E. Wilson III

GRADUATE SERVICE

Andrew Battaglia, Graduate Student Representative

Annie Culver, Graduate Student Representative

Samuel Stoeltje, GSA/HGSA English Department Representative

Emerson Zora Hamsa, Randi Mihajlovic, Samuel Stoeltje

Organizers of the Spring 2018 English Graduate Symposium: “(Un)making the Self”

GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

Hannah Biggs

2017-2018 Pre-doctoral Fellow

Center for Energy and Environmental Research in the Human Sciences, Rice University

2017-2018 Civic Humanist Fellow

Humanities Research Center, Rice University

Jade Hagan

2018-19 Humanities Research Center Civic
Humanist Fellowship in the Medical Humanities

Brittany Henry

2017-2018 Inquiry-Based Learning Graduate Fellow

Kevin MacDonnell

2018 Marilyn Marris Gillet International Travel Fellowship
Humanities Research Center, Rice University

Alexander McAdams

2017-2018 Rice Seminar: Forgery and the Ancient: Art, Agency, and Authorship
Humanities Research Center, Rice University

Scott Pett

2018 Lectures, Symposia, and Speaker Series Grant
Humanities Research Center, Rice University

Elena Valdez

2018-2019 Public Humanities Initiative Alt-Ac 6th Year Funding
Humanities Research Center, Rice University

Els Woudstra

2018-2019 Andrew W. Mellon Graduate Research Seminar Fellowship
Humanities Research Center, Rice University

GRADUATE PUBLICATIONS

Hannah Biggs

“This is Really an Introduction in Disguise.”

Critical Introduction to *The Abandoned Farmers* by Irvin Shrewsbury Cobb.
Hastings, NE: Hastings College Press. Fall 2017. ISBN 978-1-942885-41-2.

Sydney Boyd

“The Color of Sound: Timbre in Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man*,” *Arizona Quarterly*. Forthcoming.

Rachel Conrad Bracken

“Borderland Biopolitics: Public Health and Border Enforcement in Early Twentieth-Century Latinx Fiction.” *English Language Notes* 56.2. Forthcoming October 2018.

Mark Celeste

“Dungeons & Dragons & Graduate School,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (6 November 2017).

Lindsay Graham

“Applied Media Studies and Digital Humanities: Technology, Textuality, Methodology.”
Applied Media Studies. Ed. Kirsten Ostherr. NY: Routledge. Fall, 2018.

Jade Hagan

“Rebel Souls, Kindred Spirits: Seeker Spirituality and the American Blake.” *Transnational Romanticism*. Ed. Agnieszka Gutthy. Forthcoming, January 2019.

Sólveig Ásta Sigurðardóttir

Sigurðardóttir, Sólveig Ásta and Guðrún Baldvinsdóttir, “True Icelandic Stories? Narrative, Freedom of Speech and The Right to Personal Privacy”, *Ritið*, 2018.

Miller, William Ian, “Threat”,

translated by Sólveig Ásta Sigurðardóttir and Guðrún Baldvinsdóttir, *Ritið*, 2018.

Simonsen, Karen-Margrethe and Ditlev Tamm, “Law and Literature-The Danish Way: On a Danish Crime Story”, translated by Sólveig Ásta Sigurðardóttir, *Ritið*, 2018.

GRADUATE CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Hannah Biggs

“Putting the EI in Kindness (K[EI]ndness): What kind of assignments foster emotional intelligence (EI) in general education college courses?”

Otterbein University – Kindness Matters Integrative Studies Symposium
Westerville, OH

“That’s ‘Some Pig!’: A Piggish Rise in the 20th-century Farm Novel”

The Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900
Louisville, KY

Sydney Boyd

“Billy Budd’s Closed Door: Music, Language, and Temporal Space”

Modern Language Association
New York, NY

Rachel Conrad Bracken

“Public Health in Hostile Climates: The Pathologization of Latinx Bodies in the Borderlands”

C19: The Society of Nineteenth-Century Americanists Biennial Conference
Albuquerque NM

“Borderland Biopolitics: Public Health, Pathologization, and Surveillance in Early Twentieth-Century Latinx Fiction”

Invited Lecture, University of Houston Medicine and the Arts Series
Houston, TX

Mark Celeste

“Charting *Persuasion*,”

British Women Writers Association Conference
Austin, TX

Lindsay Graham

“The Queer Theology of Christina Rossetti’s *Goblin Market*”

Midwest Modern Language Association Annual Conference
Cincinnati, OH

GRADUATE CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Jade Hagan

“Oh, for adequate words to sing thy praises!': Print Culture, Seeker Spirituality, and William Blake's Nineteenth-Century American Reception”

Interdisciplinary Nineteenth Century Studies 2018 Conference
San Francisco, CA

“New Age Blake Memes: Psychedelics, Quantum Physics, and Cosmic Consciousness in William Blake's Twentieth-Century Reception”

Invited Lecture in coordination with “William Blake and the Age of Aquarius” exhibition at Northwestern University's Block Museum of Art and Northwestern's Kaplan Environmental Humanities Workshop
Chicago, IL

“Blake Memes”

North American Society for the Study of Romanticism 2018 Conference
Providence, RI

Emerson Zora Hamsa

“Mah Tongue is in Mah Friend's Mouf: Black Women's Truth-Telling, Healing, and Spiritual Transformation in Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*”

The American Academy of Religion (AAR)
Boston, MA

“I Don't Live in Harlem: Blackness, Border Areas, and Geographies of Transfiguration in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*”

The Society for the Study of the Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States (MELUS)
Las Vegas, NV

“Writing the Territory: Geography and Subjectivity in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*”

American Literature Association (ALA)
San Francisco, CA

GRADUATE CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Brittany Henry

“Narrating Resistance: The Pedagogical Work of Mothering in ‘*Lunar Braceros*’ and ‘*Ink*.”
Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States Annual Conference
Las Vegas, NV

Invited participant in American Studies Journal Special Issue Roundtable:
“Speaking Up to Make a Difference: Testimonio and Oral Tradition in Latinx Social Justice Issues.”
American Studies Association Annual Conference
Chicago, IL

“‘A Thing of Hope’: Settler Feminist Utopianism in Margaret Atwood’s ‘*MaddAddam*’”
Western Literature Association Annual Conference
Minneapolis, MN

Alexander McAdams

“The Secret of Secrets: Alchemy, Pseudo-Aristotle, and the Quest for Truth in Early Modern Europe”
Society for the History of Alchemy and Chemistry at the Royal Institute
London, UK

“Alchemical Tinctures and the Secret Soul in *Paradise Lost*”
Shakespeare Association of America
Los Angeles, CA

Kelly McKisson

“Are You Game? Fast Food Challenges Representations of American Wilderness”
Southwest Popular/American Culture Association
Albuquerque, NM

Scott Pett

“The Paperwork of Whiteness in Thomas Dixon’s *The Clansman*” (Seminar with Prof. Koritha Mitchell)
C19: The Society of Nineteenth-Century Americanists Biennial Conference
Albuquerque, NM

“Thomas Dixon’s Audience”
Modern Language Association (MLA)
New York, NY

“The Undocumented Art of Touching Liberty”
American Studies Association (ASA) - Chicago, IL

GRADUATE CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Mallory Pladus

“Endless Bodies”

Western Literature Association Conference

Minneapolis, Minnesota

“‘Depth on Depth’: Immanent Networks and Flannery O’Connor’s *Wise Blood*.”

American Literature Association Symposium

New Orleans, Louisiana

“Insular Politics”

International Melville Association Conference

Kings College, London, UK

Sólveig Ásta Sigurðardóttir

“Migrants to Settlers: Figuring 19th century Norwegians in Texas”

American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA)

Los Angeles, CA

“Literary Asylum: Representations of Immigrants in Icelandic Literature”

Reykjavík City Library Speaker Series

Reykjavík, Iceland

Els Woudstra

“Algorithmic Touch: Unpacking the Cyborg Semiologies of Sensory Neuroprosthetics”

Artificial Life: Debating Medical Modernity

Riverside, CA

Invited lecturer, “From Sainthood to Sickness: The Medicalization of Anorexia”, The History & Culture of Disease & Healing Seminar Series, 21 November 2017, The Health Museum, Houston TX

FACULTY HOSTING THE RECEPTION

Professor Scott Derrick, Director of Undergraduate Studies

Professor Derrick is the author of *Monumental Anxieties: Feminine Influence and Homoerotic Anxiety in Nineteenth-Century U.S. Literature* and has published articles on James, Hawthorne, and Upton Sinclair. His current work involves a project concerning Edith Wharton and race and a larger project on the general subject of waste and the aesthetic in U.S. culture. He teaches courses in 19th- and early-20th-century U.S. literature.

Professor Rosemary Hennessy, Department Chair

Rosemary Hennessy received her Ph.D. from Syracuse University and has been a professor at Rice since 2007. She is the L. H. Favrot Professor of Humanities in English and the English Department Chair. She is also a faculty affiliate with the Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality which she directed from 2006-2015. Her research and teaching interests include feminist theory, sexuality studies, US-Mexican border studies, affect theory, and twentieth and twenty-first century American literature.

Professor Susan Lurie, Chair of the Awards Committee

Professor Lurie is the author of *Unsettled Subjects: Restoring Feminist Politics to Poststructuralist Critique*. She has published articles on U.S. literature and culture, feminist theory, film theory, photography, and the dynamics between culture and politics. Her current book project, *Spectacular Bodies and Political Knowledge: 9/11 Cultures and the Problem of Dissent*, explores the roles of literature, visual culture, law, and political theory in imagining political community in the wake of 9/11. She teaches courses in 20th century and contemporary U.S. literature and cultural studies; feminist, gender, and sexuality studies; literary, political, and critical theory; and race and ethnicity studies.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

The Department of English is one of the founding departments at Rice University. Established in 1912, the department has long served as a space for intellectual engagement and thought within the Humanities. Today the department is made up of twenty-six tenured and tenure-track faculty, four non-tenured instructors, and three staff members (one full-time and two part-time). The department offers a B.A. and Ph.D. in English literature and at any given time has an average of 70+ declared majors (the largest pool of majors in the School of Humanities) and 35-40 doctoral students.

Rice English faculty research and pedagogy covers the breadth of the study of English from the earliest Medieval writings to contemporary literatures. There are around 30-40 courses offered each semester, and students engage with forms of writing and expression including novels, poetry, drama, film, and other media. Classes can include material from the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Africa.

Faculty in English are experts who regularly attend conferences, publish within their field, and in some cases have won teaching awards. They are helping shape the conversations around reading practices, teaching, and other inquiries in the Humanities. Moreover, our faculty are active across campus as they engage in collaborations with other departments and schools, serve on committees, and also help mentor undergraduates by serving variously as college magisters, resident associates, and divisional advisors.

