Letter from the Program Director

Each year the existence of our community of scholars, colleagues and friends is more crucial. In a world where cross-cultural and trans-lingual understanding has never been more necessary, the work of the Program in Comparative Literature has continued to reflect on the past, engage with the present, and encourage optimism about the future. Beginning with the annual GRACLS Symposium, 2015-16 has been a year of being fully present locally while connecting nationally and internationally in engaged and productive ways. Like Plato’s own dialogue of the same name, our year-long conversations, as well as our official annual “Symposium,” convene actual desiring and acting subjects, with their divergent and convergent networks of ideologies and desires, so as to explore how the human is performed and what the body performs across time, space, and media.

Despite nearly apocalyptic storms, the fall 2015 symposium brought damp, but not discouraged, participants together for the Halloween weekend to consider both emergent issues in our field academically and the place and shape of our profession pragmatically and institutionally. With both UT’s and the nation’s focus on STEM fields in mind, the agility of Comparative Literature is ideally positioned to cross disciplinary boundaries in just those ways epitomized by the Symposium. Inspired by our plenary speaker, Dr. Patricia Clough from CUNY, who was able ultimately to join us on a perfectly sunlit February afternoon, we took time to consider materiality not as degradation from a “purer” state but as a becoming in matter that matters. Desire and the body, affect and materialization, dialectically allow the human, and maybe even the post-human, to come to be in the world so as to act and make a difference.

“Corporeality” functioned not only as a theme for the symposium, but also as a guiding concept for the year. As you read the pages which follow, you will experience the dynamic presence of our faculty and students both here in Austin and across the nation and globe. Whether in Aman, Jordan or Lisbon, Portugal, whether in a digital archival space or an actual theatre in Teheran, Iran, our projects have explored the way humans are present in the world. The list of impressive scholarly accomplishments by faculty and students alike and the prestigious fellowships and successful job placements from our program confirm the admiration garnered by our work both within UT’s College of Liberal Arts and beyond. I hope you will enjoy inhabiting the work and lives of our friends and colleagues in the pages that follow.
Undergraduate Courses

C L 305  
Soviet Heroes in Literature and Culture  
Petre Petrov  
Grimms' Fairytales  
Marc Pierce

C L 315  
World Literature  
Lars Hinrichs  
World Literature  
Ernest Kaulbach

C L 323  
Holocaust Aftereffects  
Pascale Bos  
Bad Language: Race, Class, and Gender  
Thomas Garza  
Iran/Iranian-American Identity  
Michael Craig Hillmann  
20th Century Persian Literature  
Michael Craig Hillmann  
Antisemitism in History & Literature  
John Hoberman  
Hans Christian Andersen  
Jakob Holm  
Love in the East and West  
Jeannette Okur  
Latin American Short Story: 1910-2010  
Lito Porto  
Vikings and Their Literature  
Sandra B. Straubhaar  
The Films of Ingmar Bergman  
Lynn Wilkinson

Graduate Courses

C L 180K  
Introduction to Comparative Literature: Proseminar in Methods of Study and Research  
David Kornhaber

C L 381  
The Modern Metropolis  
Sabine Hake  
Metropolitan Vision/Modernity  
Alexandra Wettlaufer  
Medieval and Early Modern Curriculum  
Marjorie Woods

C L 382  
Marginal Masculinities: Russian and Mexican Men in Popular Culture  
Thomas Garza  
Transnational Quijote  
Cory Reed  
Haiti, History, & American Imagination  
Jennifer Wilks

C L 386  
Carnival in Brazilian Literature and Culture  
Omoniyi Afolabi  
C L 390  
Contemporary Literary Theory  
Lynn Wilkinson

Degree Recipients

Master of Arts:

Fall 2015:  
Kim Canuette Grimaldi: The Body Under Siege: War and Transformation of the Body In Betool Khedairi’s Ghayeb

Spring 2016:  
Chienyn Chi: Mad and Black: The 1939 Notebook of the Évolué  
Rama Hamarneh: Binaries without Borders: Performing Genders in Ghalib Halasa’s “Al-Bish‘ah”  
Michael Reyes: Reading Urban Environments: French Exiles in the Poetry of Charles Baudelaire and Ethnography of Léon-Gontran Damas  
Sarah Ropp: Subjectivity as Skopos: On Translating a Dutch Novel

Doctor of Philosophy:

Summer 2015:  
Cynthia Francica: Distant Intimacies: Queer Literature And The Visual In The U.S. And Argentina

Fall 2015:  
Martino Lovato: Harboring Narratives: Notes Toward A Literature Of The Mediterranean  
Cory Hahn: News On Film: Cinematic Historiography In Cuba And Brazil

Spring 2016:  
Jonathan Fleck: Inventing Linguistic Democracy: Entanglements Of Translation And Race In Brazil  
Julianna Leachman: “A Cousinly Resemblance”: Negotiating Identity In Literature Of Russia And The U.S. South  
Katie Logan: Geographies Of Memory In Arab Women’s Writing  
Maryam Shariati: Staging Iranian Modernity: Authors In Search Of New Forms  
Fatma Tarlaci: Literary Neo-Ottomanism: The Emergence Of A Cosmopolitan Turkey On The World Stage
A Word from the President of GRACLS
by Rama Hamarneh

The Graduate Association of Comparative Literature (GRACLS) had a wonderful and productive 2015-2016 Academic year! Our committee, a combination of veteran Comparative Literature students as well as enthusiastic members of our new cohort, provided us with an eventful and enjoyable year filled with many different types of gatherings, from the scholarly to the social.

The 12th Annual GRACLS conference, “Corporeality: Performing the Body Across Literatures, Cultures, Media and the Arts,” was a feature this academic year. Despite rather wet weather during the original conference date in October, students and faculty were present to interact with a variety of presentations and round tables. Keynote speaker Dr. Patricia Clough was able to join us in February for a wonderful speech that bridged disciplines and cultivated a comparative atmosphere. Our 2016-2017 Conference Committee members, Marlena Cravens and Nina Sport, are already well under way planning next year’s conference.

In addition to the conference, GRACLS has been busy with many events to promote scholarly exchange between students. The first and second year students were able to meet with Comparative Literature professors to discuss their Qualifying Exams and prepare them for the upcoming milestones in their career. There have been monthly GRACLS meetings to provide a place for students to discuss the graduate program and provide valuable suggestions for future events. We also had a great showing of graduate students at the American Comparative Literature Association Annual meeting in Boston this year. Our beginning and end of semester happy hours provided an informal setting for students and faculty to interact with one another throughout the semester.

Finally, GRACLS celebrated the 2nd Golden GRACLS Awards, where students, faculty and alumni within Comparative Literature were able to come and celebrate the program, as well as their many achievements and a wonderful time was had by all.

As always, a thank you goes out to the members of the GRACLS committee: Conference Organizers Nina Sport and Marlena Cravens; Secretary Liza Goodstein; Social Coordinator Reinhard Mueller, and Curriculum Committee Representatives Michael Reyes and Amy Vidor.

2016 - 2017 GRACLS Officers

President: Rama Hamarneh
Secretary: Liza Goodstein
Social Coordinator: Reinhard Mueller
Conference Organizers: Marlena Cravens & Nina Sport
Committee Representatives: Michael Reyes & Amy Vidor
Prizes and Fellowships

Elizabeth Warnock Fernea
Memorial Endowment Fellowship

Elizabeth Warnock Fernea has devoted her life to greater understanding between the Middle East and the West. Herself an intrepid traveler, scholar, filmmaker, and ambassador for intercultural exchange, Dr. Fernea was honored by friends, colleagues, and admirers upon her retirement by the creation of an endowment. It supports graduate research in Comparative Literature which focuses on the Middle East with a special emphasis on gender issues.

For five years now this endowment has funded advanced research students in our program, allowing them to undertake original archival research and to write up their research. For the sixth year of the award, the program has decided to use the available funds to supplement the studies of current students doing important work in Middle Eastern studies.

Thanks to the generosity of the Fernea Endowment and the College of Liberal Arts, we are able to supplement the studies of Kim Canuette Grimaldi, Jamila Davey, Fatma Tarlaci, Liza Goodstein, and Daniel Kahozi.

2016 - 2017 Fulbright Competition

The 2016-2017 Fulbright U.S. Student competition opened March 31, 2016 and is open to graduate students, undergraduates who will have completed their degree by the beginning of the grant period. The competition will close at 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time on October 11, 2016. The program is restricted to U.S. citizens. The grants are for study and research abroad, and are available for most countries. A number of countries also offer grants for those who wish to serve as English teaching assistants.

For more information, visit:
http://us.fulbrightonline.org/home.htm

Major Prizes and Fellowships

Comparative Literature Graduate Excellence Fellowships

University Graduate Continuing Fellowship
Hannah Alpert-Abrams (2016-17)
Zainab Cheema (2016-17)

Decentralized Continuing Fellowships
Mehdi Torabian (Fall 2016)

Graduate School Mentoring Fellowship
Emma Wilson (2016-17)

Recruitment Supplement Fellowships
Hamza Iqbal (2016-17)
Diana Silveira-Leite (2016-17)
Abraham Layman (2016-17)

Stiles Endowment Graduate Supplement Fellowships
Juan Ávila Conejo (Summer 2016)
Marlena Cravens (Summer 2016)
Jamila Davey
Liza Goodstein
Julianne Leachman
Jennie Wojtusik
Nina Sport (Summer 2016)

Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowships
Sarah Ropp (2016-17)

Other Fellowships and Awards

Fulbright Fellowship
Jennie Wojtusik (2016-17)

Ford Fellowship
Michael Reyes (2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18)

William J. Powers Recruitment Fellowship
Xinyao Xiao (2015-16, 2016-17)

Carrie Lee Kennedy Fellowship
Zainab Cheema (2016-17)
Juan Manuel Ávila Conejo holds a B.A in French from the University of Costa Rica as well as a B.Arch from the University of Science and Arts of Costa Rica. Before coming to UT, he spent a year at Colorado College, where he first got involved with Comparative Literature. He works in Spanish, French, English, and Russian with a focus on studying existentialism, Marxism, and twentieth century revolutionary movements.

Liza Goodstein received a BA in English with a Certificate in Middle Eastern Studies from Wesleyan University in 2013. She studies contemporary North African literature in French and Arabic, with a focus on in-betweenness, gender and sexuality, memory and forgetting, and the fantastic. This spring she presented at the UT Africa Conference and the Critical Juncture Conference at Emory University.

Monica Mohseni has a B.A in English and a minor in Italian from Boston University. She studies decadence and homesteads in plantation house literature. She has recently delved into cultural studies, focusing on cultural colonization and the socio-economic repercussions of corporate empires. She is also particularly interested in oil and corporate cultures in Latin America.

Claudio Eduardo Moura de Oliveira has an MA in Comparative Literature from University College London and another in Language Studies at PUC-Rio, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He works in English, Spanish and Portuguese, with research focused on women in Medieval Iberian literature, psychoanalysis, hermeneutics and metaphor studies. He will spend the summer in France, studying French Language and Civilization at the Sorbonne University on a Graduate Summer Fellowship.

Nina Sport obtained her B.A. summa cum laude in French and Spanish from the University of Texas at Arlington in 2013. Prior to beginning her graduate study at UT Austin, she taught French and Spanish at an independent school in North Texas for 2 years. In the summer of 2014, she completed a program for Spanish teachers at the Centro Panamericano de Idiomas in Costa Rica. Her research at UT investigates fin-de-siècle poetry and the influence of the French avant-garde on Latin American modernismo. She is particularly interested in questions of identity formation, gender performance, and the role of the animal in literature. This summer she will attend the Harvard Institute for World Literature, where she will present her paper on the conceptualization of hospitality in Camus’ short story L’Hôte.

Xinyao Xiao receives her B.A and M.A in English literature from China’s Tsinghua University. She works on late medieval and early modern European literature and intellectual history (ca. 1300-1650) with a special interest in classical influence on the philosophy and literary works of this period. Working with English and Latin, and honing her skills in Italian, she explores issues related to the medieval-modern paradigm shift, east and west interactions in early modern Europe. In March 2016, she presented a paper on François Rabelais’s grotesque realism and early modern medical practice at ACLA’s annual conference at Harvard University.
Incoming Graduate Students
by David Kornhaber, Graduate Advisor

It is my pleasure to introduce the incoming Comparative Literature graduate student cohort for 2016-2017. Our five new graduate students were selected from an outstanding pool of applicants hailing from across the globe. Their range of interests and breadth of expertise speaks to the coverage and scope of the Comparative Literature Program itself, and we are excited to welcome these students (or welcome them back) to Austin. My thanks goes to the tireless Comparative Literature admissions committee and the many expert readers from across the program who helped select the next generation of Comparative Literature scholars at UT.

Tia Butler will be transferring into the Program in Comparative Literature from the Department of Spanish and Portuguese in order to pursue a comparative study of Afro-Latinidad, Afro-Diasporic Identity, and questions of borders and migration in the Caribbean diaspora from a hispanophone and francophone context. Ms. Butler holds a BA in Spanish Language and Literature from Whitman College and an MA from the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at UT Austin, and she bring with her expertise in Spanish, French, and Haitian Kreyól. She has previously studied in both Spain and Haiti.

Hamza Iqbal comes to us from Karachi, Pakistan and holds a BA in Philosophy from the University of St. Andrews. With expertise in Urdu, Hindi, and English (plus a smattering of German), Mr. Iqbal intends to study comparative twentieth-century South Asian literatures with an emphasis on postcolonial studies, critical theory, and philosophy.

Abraham Layman will be remaining with us in Austin. With a BA in Russian Language and Literature from the University of South Carolina and an MA in Russian, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies from UT Austin, Mr. Layman will be joining the Program in Comparative Literature to pursue a comparative study of Russian and Ukrainian literatures in a post-Soviet context. Mr. Layman brings with him past experience studying in Russia and the Ukraine and at the Harvard Ukranian Research Institute.

Hailing originally from Brazil, Diana Silveira Leite is returning to Austin, where she earned her B.A. in English and History at UT, by way of Humboldt-Universitaet zu Berlin, where she recently earned an MA in British Studies. Fluent in Portuguese, English, German, and Spanish, Ms. Silveira Leite intends to study comparative British and Brazilian literature of the nineteenth century.

Emma Wilson comes to us from Mills College in Oakland, California, where she earned a BA in English Literature. With expertise in English, French, and German, she plans to study francophone literature in a postcolonial and diasporic context and has a special interest in digital humanities. Ms. Wilson is the recipient of a Mentoring Fellowship from the Office of Graduate Studies under the tutelage of Dr. Lynn Wilkinson, chair of the Graduate Studies Committee for Comparative Literature.
Looking back at the past 12th GRACLS conference on “Corporeality: Performing the Body Across Literatures, Cultures, Media and the Arts,” we would like to first and foremost thank everyone who played a part in organizing this conference and the (postponed) keynote speech by Dr. Patricia Clough. Without all our many helpers, this conference would not have been such a success.

When picking a topic for our conference, we quickly decided that we wanted to deal with the very broad theme of “the body” in all its dimensions. In doing so, we wanted to take advantage of the special freedom given Comparative Literature—going beyond traditional limits of individual disciplines and producing not only scholarship in the field of literature but also in the entire area of the humanities. The 2000 year-old body/mind dichotomy has permeated human life altogether. But even today, it is an open question as to what extent we have overcome it and to what extent there are more fruitful ways to address the complexities of our corporeal existence. Since the 19th century, phenomenological studies have been dealing with this subject, and it has recently been picked up specifically by theories on affect. We were extremely happy to welcome one of the leading scholars in the field of affect theory, Dr. Patricia Clough, to give the keynote speech on “Ecstatic Corona: From Ethnography to Performance.”

Despite all planning for our conference on October 30th, 2015, we could not have planned for the unpredictable Texas weather! Heavy rain, thunderstorms, and tornado warnings prevented not only a few students from reaching the campus, but also our keynote speaker, Dr. Clough, was stuck at the Houston airport for over 6 hours. We eventually canceled the keynote for the evening and rescheduled it for a sunnier day in February. Nevertheless, our conference featured many wonderful presentations of grad students from UT and from other institutions, such as the University of Toronto. Our first panel provided an open forum in a “Working Group” to discuss gendered politics in academia, which many students and faculty joined for a beneficial and productive discussion. After lunch, students presented inspiring papers related to corporeality and performance in various contexts, stretching from Indian Sanskrit and early Christianity to Dostoevsky and Thomas Pynchon, from the divine and trauma to studies on gender, sexuality, media and translation.

On a beautiful and sunny day in February 2016, we were pleased that Dr. Patricia Clough was able to fly back to Austin from the City University of New York to give her plenary speech on “Ecstatic Corona.” In her deeply fascinating talk, she presented on her ethnographic experiences participating in group performances in Corona Queens. In this inventive study, she intriguingly connected questions of aesthetics and critical theory with personal affective experiences. At the end of the conference and the plenary speech, we realized that our initial questions were far from being solved. Instead,
the discussions at the conference inspired even more questions about the theme of human corporeal existence.

For the success of this conference, we would like to express our sincere thanks to the many helpers, to faculty moderators, student presenters and our keynote speaker, Dr. Patricia Clough. We would like to further give our personal thanks to Dr. Richmond-Garza for her gracious and patient guidance, the least of which was for our Call for Papers; to Billy Fatzinger for his indispensable support in so many respects; to our previous conference organizers Raelene Wyse and Jamila Davey for greatly helpful materials and advice; to our helpers before and around the conference, including Marlena Cravens, Michael Reyes, and Monica Mohseni; and to our panel moderators, Lynn Wilkinson, Hannah Wojciechowski, David Kornhaber, Peter Rehberg, Hannah Alpert-Abrams, and Raelene Wyse.

Furthermore we would like to extend our thanks to the following departments and programs for their generous support, without which the conference would not have been possible: Dr. Elizabeth Cullingford and the Department of English; Dr. Thomas J. Garza and the Texas Language Center; Dr. Charles Hale and the Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies; Dr. Steven D. Hoelscher and the Department of American Studies; Dr. Jacqueline Jones and the Department of History; Dr. Huaiyin Li and the Center for Asian Studies, the Mitsubishi Japanese Studies Endowment, the China Studies Endowment, and the POSCO Korean Studies Endowment; Dr. Mary Neuburger and the Department of Slavic and Eurasian Studies and CREEES; Dr. Domino R. Perez and the Center for Mexican-American Studies; Dr. Jill Robbins and Dr. Josianna Arroyo-Martinez and the Department of Spanish and Portuguese; Dr. Sharmila Rudrappa and the Center for Asian American Studies; Dr. Martha Selby and the Department of Asian Studies; Dr. Cherise Smith and the Warfield Center; Dr. Pauline Strong and the Humanities Institute; Dr. Karin G. Wilkins and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies; Dean of Liberal Arts Randy L. Diehl; Senior Associate Dean Richard Flores; Associate Dean Esther Raizen; Senior Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies Judith H. Langlois; Associate Dean Jamie Southerland, the College of Liberal Arts, and the Graduate Student Assembly. We are deeply thankful for having had the opportunity to organize the 12th GRACLS conference, and we now give our best wishes to the next conference organizers, Marlena Cravens and Nina Sport.
Teaching Portuguese at Rice University
by Jonathan Fleck

After completing my Ph.D. in May, I'm eagerly preparing for my new job as a Lecturer in Portuguese at Rice University’s Center for Languages and Intercultural Communication (CLIC). This outstanding language-teaching program is a well-suited context to apply the specific pedagogical, research, and service skills I developed in the Comparative Literature Program here at UT.

At Rice, I’ll be responsible for developing and expanding an innovative, research-driven curriculum for undergraduate Portuguese courses. It means a lot to be able to mobilize and share the cultural knowledge that I developed in my research on Brazilian literature, and to build off of my experience as an Assistant Instructor in Spanish and Portuguese. One of the principal “selling points” with my future colleagues was my experience working with BrazilPod, the open-source pedagogical materials produced in UT’s College of Liberal Arts. I’m looking forward to the summer of 2018, when I get to develop and lead a study abroad program. My own experiences in Brazil as part of UT study abroad (summer 2011) and funded research (summers of 2013 and 2015) were great preparation for this new project. Finally, CLIC will encourage service-learning hours and internships for my students. Administering significant academic and service projects will allow me to broaden students’ learning in a social context, and also to provide links with the wider community I’m joining in Houston.

Since submitting my dissertation, I’ve spent my time enthusiastically reading up on the pedagogical theories that underpin the methods at CLIC. I’ve become familiar with “interactional competence,” or the measure of language use as a social, co-constructed skill, rather than as a strictly internal cognitive process. “Interactional competence” speaks to me on a fundamental level, as a successful classroom requires an open, collaborative attitude from both the instructor and the students. Learning really does happen together. Besides furthering my teaching practice, my new position will help me to develop a vocabulary with which to articulate and share ideas with professional interlocutors. In the coming years, I anticipate adding a major pedagogical theme to my publication and conference record.

A long-term project that assisted my job candidacy was my Portfolio in Romance Linguistics. With language and culture pedagogy in mind, I designed and assembled a large, searchable corpus of Brazilian literary texts, which I made available online. One of the benefits of the corpus is that it lends itself to quickly finding many examples of vocabulary and grammatical forms in rich, authentic contexts. The unique flexibility I had to “go interdisciplinary” in Comp Lit was a true advantage in my job interviews, allowing me to speak confidently and let my passion shine through.
This academic year, we have had the pleasure and privilege of studying with the Center for Arabic Study Abroad (CASA) in Amman, Jordan. CASA was established in 1967 and has been a training ground for generations of scholars of Arabic language, literature, and culture. This 11-month program offers intensive advanced Arabic language training and has been a goal of ours for many years. We’d like to thank the program for their generous support in this endeavour.

This year, the CASA program was hosted by the American University in Cairo and Qasid Institute in Amman. As students at Qasid, we studied Classical and Modern Standard Arabic as well as the Jordanian dialect. In our courses, we turned to a variety of cultural resources ranging from newspaper articles to poetry, political speeches to novels, and sit-coms to films. This work afforded us the opportunity not only to increase our competence in speaking, reading, and writing Arabic but also to deepen our understanding of the cultural resonances of the language. The final semester provided the opportunity for coursework in our fields of interest including Islamic Studies, contemporary novels, travel literature, cinema, and literary criticism.

In the fall semester of the program, CASA fellows are invited to participate in internships and learning programs outside the institute as a way of deepening their engagement with the community and applying their language skills. Kim put her past skills as a web content manager to work with the online bookseller Jamalon.com. Online booksellers like Jamalon are one of the many ways that residents of the Middle East access censored texts and distributing otherwise unavailable texts is fundamental to Jamalon’s vision. Jamila interned at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, an organization that offers arts and culture programming and is home to one of Amman’s most popular libraries. Jamila worked in the classification and cataloguing division of the library which stewards an initiative to align regional indexing practices with international standards.

Beyond our time in the classroom, spending a year in Amman enriched our understanding of the political, historical and cultural complexity of the Middle East as well as our positionality as comparatists endeavoring to study the literary cultures of the region. Amman itself is a kind of contradiction, at once a historically important settlement with archaeological sites dating back to 3500 BC and prominent Byzantine and Umayyad monuments dotting the skyline, and a locale that was insignificant as an urban center until the early 20th century when it became the Hashemite capital of Transjordan. Jordan's proximity to Syria, Iraq, Turkey and Israel, meant that we were reminded on a seemingly daily basis of active regional conflicts. And yet, we enjoyed a sense of security and well-being that confounded this reality. We were witness to a city struggling to cope with an 87% increase of population over the past decade, due to urban migration and the influx of refugees from neighboring countries. At the same time, we were forced to reflect on the fact that our presence in the city, as part of a wave of westerners flocking to the country for study and work, was placing demands on its infrastructure and exerting a transformative force on neighborhoods such as Jabal Weibdeh where we resided. Living our daily lives in Amman, we have gained a stronger sense of these complexities and have come to better appreciate the human connections in our work. This experience will no doubt inform our research and teaching for years to come.
My dissertation research in book history requires the examination of rare printed books from the sixteenth century, often located in archives and special collections around the world. To access these books, I use digital facsimile repositories online, like the Internet Archive, HathiTrust, or the Primeros Libros project. But these archives are generally limited to page images and (often imperfect) metadata. It was my desire to search, copy, and paste from the documents I studied that led me to collaborate with the developers of tools for the automatic transcription of historical books at Berkeley, UT-Austin, and Texas A&M. This collaboration ultimately led to “Reading the First Books,” a two-year project dedicated to the automatic transcription of early modern printed books funded by the NEH Office of Digital Humanities.

Transcribing early modern printed books is challenging for a number of reasons. Uneven inking, damaged pages, unfamiliar fonts, obsolete orthographies, shorthand, and the use of multiple languages all make character recognition difficult, whether the books are being transcribed by a person or by a machine. As a collaborator in modifying Ocular, a tool for Optical Character Recognition, I helped computer scientists to recognize the unique challenges of these historical texts and to find ways of working with them by building in multilingual capabilities. I also helped the developers to understand the different goals that humanists have in approaching transcribed texts, leading to an extension that produces both orthographically accurate and modernized versions of historical texts. These interventions reflect my training in literary analysis and in comparative literature.

In the first year of the “Reading the First Books” project, I also helped to integrate our research into the Early Modern OCR Project, a system for the automatic transcription of massive numbers of historical texts developed by Texas A&M University for use on EEBO (Early English Books Online), a collection of more than seventeen million scanned pages. Next year, we plan to use this workflow to transcribe the books in the Primeros Libros collection of books printed in the Americas prior to 1601. This will then make those books available for new kinds of research, both for those who simply want to search through this large collection, and for those who want to conduct computational analyses of historical texts. We will also make this tool available for other collections and other kinds of research, both in the Americas and beyond.

Working on the “Reading the First Books” project has had practical significance for my training as a professional academic: it has required truly interdisciplinary collaboration, multi-institutional project management, grant writing, and public outreach. It has also significantly influenced my research: learning about the inner workings of digital transcription has helped to guide my dissertation research on the history of textual circulation and reproduction. It was possible because I was able to work within pre-existing institutional structures, such as the relationship between LLILAS (the Latin American Studies program at UT) and the Benson (the affiliated library and collections); or the Initiative for Digital Humanities, Research, and Culture at Texas A&M University. The funding of research assistantships for graduate students through these institutions made the exploratory research which led to the grant proposal possible.

You can learn more about “Reading the First Books” on our website: https://sites.utexas.edu/firstbooks/. The project is funded by a National Endowment for the Humanities Digital Implementation Grant. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this article do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.
The Value of “Interdisciplinary” Service during Graduate School
by Fatma Tarlaci

Throughout my graduate study in the Comparative Literature Program at the University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin), I have been involved in different committees and organizations that serve or are related to graduate students in various capacities. This allowed me to gain a great deal of first-hand experience in addition to my academic endeavors. Among others, two of the roles, for which I have served since last year, were aimed particularly at improving the graduate student life both at the institutional level through the UT Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) and at the national level, through the MLA’s Committee on the Status of Graduate Students in the Profession (CSGSP), which serve graduate students in the disciplines of languages and literatures. The experience in serving for these organizations enhanced my graduate school experience in ways that I had not initially foreseen.

The GSA can be defined as the voice of UT Austin graduate students within the institutional governance, representing over 11,000 graduate students. My introduction to the GSA began when I was the representative for the Comparative Literature Program during the 2014-2015 academic year. During this experience, I became aware of the importance of engaging in the university-wide community of graduate students, observing what issues the members of other disciplines encounter during their graduate studies, and how the GSA generates a platform where graduate students can communicate their concerns and propose solutions. While learning how effective the Robert’s Rules can be in facilitating meetings, I was also given a glimpse of the complexities of university governance. During my time as the program representative, I undertook various duties. We all know how important every single word you put on an application statement is, but I had not experienced being on the other side of the table before I sat on the GSA’s Academic Committee, which selects the GSA travel grant recipients. Through this experience, I realized how deceptively minor factors become critical in selecting who gets the travel grant, such as how much effort one puts in writing a paragraph about how the GSA travel grant would help them, in a clear and precise statement that is effectively written, which directed the decision on the application to select a few among hundreds.

While writing my dissertation and teaching, I was spending Tuesday evenings at the GSA meetings. My interest in the GSA led me to get selected as the GSA Student Affairs Director for the 2015-2016 period, during which time I served as the liaison between the university administration and graduate students. I co-authored resolutions and initiated various projects, such as presenting a proposal to the Dean of Graduate School for an open access publishing fund for graduate students. Through the GSA, I also served for the national organization Student Advocates for Graduate Education (SAGE), which was originally founded at UT Austin in 2008 and has eighteen institutional members today. I travelled to Washington DC in April 2016 with the council to advocate at Congress for the graduate students. Meeting with federal legislators and telling them about the important issues that affect thousands of graduate students nation-wide, I realized that these legislators, in fact, appreciate the input as they often do not know what major issues graduate study entails. I was particularly excited about advocating for increasing NEH funds in one of the White Papers we wrote and tell the Congressmen and their staffers about how humanities education is critical to the world’s advancement as much as the sciences are. Through the GSA, I also served in the Dean’s Advisory Committee and Graduate Assembly, where I participated in the decision-making processes of faculty representatives for their respective departments and for the graduate education at UT Austin. The politics and legislative processes of higher education, which might not sound very exciting to everyone, nevertheless, reinforced my perspective as a literary scholar and helped me see the importance of applying critical analysis skills that I have developed during the graduate school to various aspects of graduate education. The work I have performed while serving in these different committees taught me to apply.

My interest in working towards improving the experience of graduate students in literature led me to MLA’s CSGSP. While still on the job market, I have been learning more about the difficulties that graduate students, particularly in Humanities encounter. The committee considers a range of curricular, intellectual, and professional issues that affect graduate students in language and literature as well as assist them while they pursue their education, gain experience as teachers, seek employment, and make a transition to the workplace. I co-organized a networking event at the 2016 MLA Convention, where professionals and professors from various career paths told their stories and engaged in one on one conversations with graduate student attendees. I am also currently co-organizing a panel for the 2017 MLA Convention, entitled “Teaching as Theoretical Practice,” which focuses on how graduate students incorporate their research in to their teaching styles and methodologies. While I had previous experience as a panel organizer, choosing among all the brilliant submissions was not an easy task. My work at this committee includes maintaining the “MLAGrads” blog and social media accounts, which allows me to reach out to graduate students in Humanities and let them know that they have such a strong organization as MLA to support them in various ways. When I look back, all these things that one might consider “extra,” I am gladly noticing how much my investment in these different lines of work contributed towards my professional development, how it improved my ability to have effective interdisciplinary communications, and hopefully made an impact in some graduate students’ life.

As I am about to graduate and embark on a new journey in my life, I am grateful for my academic, scholarly, and professional experience that I have been able to acquire at and through UT Austin. Not only had I a rewarding experience but I also made great friends and was introduced to their varying disciplinary perspectives, which, as a junior scholar, I value immensely. Without these roles that I took on, I would probably not have been able to function as effectively as I can now in environments where legislative, administrative, and interdisciplinary works are being performed. I would like to encourage all my graduate student colleagues in the Comparative Literature Program to introduce themselves to the different communities that UT Austin’s diverse campus, as well as the national organizations for our discipline, has to offer. The intellectual and critical contribution that students in the literary studies can offer to the diverse groups both within and outside their immediate academic circles, and the experience they can gain from those communities are, to me, invaluable contributions to a graduate student’s academic and professional development. You might think you do not have time for this kind of work; however, once you realize how rewarding such experience can be, you will improve your time management skills, too. Whether one plans to stay in academia upon graduating or whether they elect to find careers outside of academia, by getting involved in things outside of one’s immediate field of research, one can improve their skills in professional development, project management, networking, and administrative tasks, which are invaluable contributions to the intellectual skills that we develop throughout the graduate school.
The Blanton Museum of Art: Exploring Natalie Frank’s Uncanny Fairy Tales
by Marlena Cravens & Nina Sport

In the first lecture for her Undergraduate Studies (UGS) course, “Modernity, Anxiety, and the Art of the Uncanny,” Dr. Elizabeth Richmond-Garza assured us all that we would begin to see traces of the uncanny everywhere; this was never more apparent than during our coordinated discussion section visits to the Blanton Museum of Art to view Natalie Frank’s interpretation of Grimm’s Fairy Tales. With a grounding in Sigmund Freud’s authoritative essay on the uncanny, titled “Das Unheimliche,” both students and TAs alike were excited to apply their knowledge to paintings, an experience that was rewarding and enlightening.

Natalie Frank, an Austin native, began her synaesthetic work on Grimm’s Fairy Tales in 2011, inspired by the words of Paula Rego. A recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship for painting as well as a myriad of awards from the likes of Columbia and Yale, her work resonates deeply with magical realism, articulations of flesh and its transformations, women’s bodies, and sexuality. Each gouache and pastel drawing from her exhibit in the Blanton Museum of Art reveals an uncanny and unexpected mixture of garish color with muted tones, of beauty with the grotesque, and of the viewer’s expectations of Grimm’s sanitized, Americanized fairy tales with their darker, more violent reality.

Through her work, the viewer is forced to confront societal expectations of sexuality and the feminine body in all of its iterations, from masculinization of the female form to androgyny, from sexual violence to asexuality. Inspired by her own diagnosis with stereoscopic vision, which places her in the company of artists like Picasso, her works offer a metacommentary on the way viewers perceive and consume the world around them. The All Fur painting sequence, derived from the Grimm fairy tale called “All Fur” or in the French “Peau d’ne”—“Donkeyskin”—demands that viewers encounter the narratological fluidity between painting and text. The first in the set, All Fur I, presents the contrast between youth and old age, played against the concepts of beauty and the creaturely, the monstrous. These images of creature and woman, age and youth, frame the male figure at the center, whose genitalia is prominently displayed. His sexuality and political force drive the narrative of the tale; with the death of his wife and her request that he only remarry a woman as beautiful as herself, he sets his predatory eyes upon his daughter, who most resembles his lovely wife. Forced to flee from his power, she transforms into All Fur, the creaturely and monstrous apparition of All Fur II, a hybrid and genderless chimera with the furs of many beasts to conceal her flesh. In the paintings, shocking human pinks dialogue with the browns of fur, the iridescences of plumage, and the scales of reptiles.

These paintings very strongly interacted with the theme of the “uncanny” that our discussion sections hoped to uncover and define throughout the semester. The “uncanny,” or what Freud calls the “unheimlich,” produces a sense of creeping familiarity within a context that is unfamiliar or strange. This familiar unfamiliarity produces fear and, at times, horror. The depiction of All Fur, exposed and blushing yet masked by the animal, makes her feminine form at once familiar while simultaneously making it disturbing and Other.
The 2015 Institute for World Literature in Lisbon, Portugal

by Raelene Wyse

In the summer of 2015, I had the honor of attending the Institute for World Literature (IWL) in Lisbon, Portugal. The ambitious four-week long summer program began in 2011 in Beijing with the goal of studying literature in a globalizing world. It has since taken place in Istanbul, Boston, and Hong Kong, with several of our UT-Austin Comparative Literature students in attendance. At the 2015 session at the University of Lisbon, I had the opportunity to engage with scholars pursuing research on literature from around the world. Our conversations were global and comparative by nature, as we wrestled with the concept of world literature.

The program combined daily seminars with esteemed scholars, weekly meetings with working groups to share our research, panels regarding professional and scholarly topics (such as publishing and the job market), and organized trips to learn about cultural and scholarly centers in Lisbon. The participants included graduate students, postdoctoral students, and professors hailing from three dozen countries. As a community of scholars, we came together to discuss topics such as poetics, circulation, translation, postcolonial theory, and more. I had the chance to participate in one seminar taught by Dr. Debjani Ganguly (Australian National University), “The Contemporary World Novel: Hauntings and Mediations,” and a second seminar taught by Galin Tihanov (Queen Mary, University of London), “Exilic Writing and the Making of World Literature.” I also shared my research and gained valuable feedback in a working group entitled “Politics, Poetics, and World Literature.” Each of these components of the program challenged me intellectually and provided me invaluable opportunities to think through my research.

In addition, being in the city of Lisbon allowed me to practice my Portuguese skills and learn about Brazil, one of my areas of interest, from a different perspective. Having studied Portuguese with Brazilianists and in Brazil, the Portuguese sotaque (accent) represented an amusing and daily challenge, as well as continued language-learning opportunities. As always, I am humbled by the incredible power of being able to communicate, especially when reminded that subtle differences in pronunciation or word choice can quickly lead to an unexpected turn of events. Moreover, as a Latin Americanist, I was struck by the ways in which our Portuguese guides described Portugal’s relationships to its former colonies.

At the end of the four weeks, I walked away feeling deeply grateful for the opportunity to participate in this community of scholars. As comparatists, we rarely come together as such, since our work brings us to a variety of distinct literary fields. The IWL represents one such opportunity to recognize the rich conversations that can emerge out of discussing literature across linguistic, geographic, cultural, social, and disciplinary boundaries.

Indeed, our conversations in and outside of the seminar rooms enriched me personally and intellectually, and I am thankful to have made many meaningful friendships as well as spent time with my fellow UT comparatist, Jonathan Fleck, at the IWL. Nearly one year after attending the program, I continue to revisit my seminar readings and notes, plan ways meet up with other IWL participants, and reflect on the questions that we discussed there. Two of my biggest takeaways from the program were a recognition of the importance of face-to-face conversations with other scholars and, second, a deeper appreciation for the future of my field and the research and questions that it makes possible. I would like to thank Professor Richmond-Garza and the Program in Comparative Literature for their support, which made it possible for me to attend the IWL.
Ilê Aiyê in Brazil and the Reinvention of Africa
by Dr. Omoniyi Afolabi

In 2016, Dr. Omoniyi Afolabi, Associate Professor in the Program in Comparative Literature, published *Ilê Aiyê in Brazil and the Reinvention of Africa*. “Ilê Aiyê redefines itself within shifting political realities of the Brazilian mythic racial paradise. The globalization agenda of the tourism industry places its Africanized strategies in dialectical tension with State’s funding. The discussion of ‘race’ is inevitable as Ilê Aiyê questions the economically marginalizing status of Afro-Brazilians.” Niyi Afolabi teaches Yoruba, Afro-Luso-Brazilian, and Africana Studies at UT Austin. He is the author of *The Golden Cage* (2001), *Afro-Brazilians: Cultural Production in a Racial Democracy* (2009), and numerous articles and edited volumes on transatlantic migration, the Yoruba in Brazil, and the African diaspora.

Vienna’s Dreams of Europe: Culture and Identity beyond the Nation-State
by Dr. Katherine Arens

In 2015, Dr. Katherine Arens published *Vienna’s Dreams of Europe: Culture and Identity beyond the Nation-State* (New Directions in German Studies). Vienna’s Dreams of Europe puts forward a convincing counter-narrative to the prevailing story of Austria’s place in Europe since the Enlightenment. For a millennium, Austrian writers have used images of Europe and its hegemonic culture as their political and cultural reference points. Yet in discussions of Europe’s nation-states, Austria appears only as an afterthought, no matter that its precursor states—the Holy Roman Empire, the Austrian Empire, and Austria Hungary—represented a globalized European cultural space outside the dominant paradigm of nationalist colonialism. Austrian writers today confront reunited Europe in full acknowledgment of Austro-Hungary’s multicultural heritage, which mixes various nationalities, ethnicities, and cultural forms, including ancestors from the Balkans and beyond.

Challenging standard accounts of 18th- through 20th-century European imperial identity construction, Vienna’s Dreams of Europe introduces a group of Austrian public intellectuals and authors who have since the 18th century construed their own public as European. Working in different terms than today’s theorist-critics of the hegemonic West, Katherine Arens posits a political identity resisting two hundred years of European nationalism.

Cervantes’ Novelas ejemplares
by Dr. Michael Harney

Dr. Michael Harney, Associate Professor in the Program in Comparative Literature and the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, published his translation of *Cervantes’ Novelas ejemplares*. Of Dr. Harney’s translation, Michael J. McGrath said, “Michael Harney’s translation of Cervantes’s *Novelas ejemplares* is the most authoritative and accurate rendering of Cervantes’s classic tales to date and promises to be the translation against which future translations will be measured. Harney skillfully portrays the nuanced and complex world of the Exemplary Novellas in a translation that is faithful to the letter and spirit of the original. An erudite and informative Introduction presents a general overview of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain, the life of Cervantes, and a detailed analysis of the Exemplary Novellas. Before each story, Harney provides a brief synopsis, an analysis of the novella’s themes, motifs, and generic affinities, and a bibliography for further reading. In addition, numerous footnotes complement the background information Harney provides in the Introduction and prior to each novella.”
The Birth of Theater from the Spirit of Philosophy: Nietzsche and the Modern Drama
Dr. David Kornhaber

In May 2016, Dr. David Kornhaber, Assistant Professor of English and Graduate Advisor of the Program in Comparative Literature, will publish his book, *The Birth of Theater from the Spirit of Philosophy: Nietzsche and the Modern Drama*. Nietzsche's love affair with the theater was among the most profound and prolonged intellectual engagements of his life, but his transformational role in the history of the modern stage has yet to be explored. In this pathbreaking account, David Kornhaber vividly shows how Nietzsche reimagined the theatrical event as a site of philosophical invention that is at once ancestor, antagonist, and handmaiden to the discipline of philosophy itself. August Strindberg, George Bernard Shaw, and Eugene O'Neill—seminal figures in the modern drama's evolution and avowed Nietzscheans all—came away from their encounters with Nietzsche's writings with an impassioned belief in the philosophical potential of the live theatrical event, coupled with a reestimation of the dramatist's power to shape that event in collaboration with the actor. In these playwrights' reactions to and adaptations of Nietzsche's radical rethinking of the stage lay the beginnings of a new direction in modern theater and dramatic literature.

Bhisham Sahni’s Today’s Pasts: A Memoir
Dr. Snehal Shingavi

Dr. Snehal Shingavi, Associate Professor of English, published his translation of Bhisham Sahni’s *Today’s Pasts: A Memoir* in 2015. Rawalpindi in the first few decades of the twentieth century is a prosperous, bustling town, witnessing the first stirring of the freedom movement. It is in this place and time that a delicate child grows into adolescence, at the heart of an unusual family. Adulthood and the horrific business of Partition drive the young man to Bombay, then Ambala and finally Delhi. As he gathers life experience, he hones his politics and talent as a writer. We observe the making of one of the icons of modern Indian literature: Bhisham Sahni.

In addition to being the story of Sahni’s life and art, *Today’s Pasts* also chronicles the great cultural high points of modern India: the IPTA, the Progressive Writers Association, the Nayi Kahani movement. The stars of Hindi and Urdu literature enter and exit the text as friends and familiars.

In Bhisham Sahni’s hands, a life story is transformed into a history of our present. One life bears witness to the tale of nation.

Shakespeare’s Cymbeline
by Dr. Hannah C. Wojciehowski

In 2015, Dr. Hannah C. Wojciehowski, Professor of English, published a New Kittredge Shakespeare edition of Shakespeare’s *Cymbeline*. Dr. Wojciehowski’s performance notes and additional textual notes offer readers a streamlined reading experience aimed at helping them understand the play and envision how key “interpretive junctures” in it have been, and might yet be, performed on stage or screen. Wojciehowski’s Introduction brilliantly illuminates the play’s plot and lyricism as well as its treatment in recent stage and screen productions—including Michael Almereyda’s *Cymbeline* (2014).

In “How to Read Cymbeline as Performance” an interview with James Loehlin, Director of the Shakespeare at Winedale program at the University of Texas, offers practical reflections on making the leap from reading this challenging play to imagining its performance.
Since completing my Ph.D. in Comparative Literature at UT, I have worked on developing my dissertation project into a book manuscript that explores the role of women and feminist writers in transforming the realist novel at the end of the nineteenth century. This project, entitled “Character Density: Late Victorian Realism and the Science of Description,” shows how novelists such as George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, and Olive Schreiner generated new techniques of description in response to pressing scientific and philosophical problems of agency, materiality, and embodiment. Shifting the critical focus of Victorian novel studies away from plot as the place where epistemological paradigm shifts are registered toward description as the place where novelists cultivated their own form of ontological inquiry, I highlight the active role of literature in the production of knowledge.

Attending to the fate of realism at the century’s end, the book develops a theory of realism as a descriptive science committed to documenting the practices through which character materializes. My chapters explore how English and (in the case of Schreiner) South African novelists used the novel form to intervene in philosophical and scientific debates of the period, underlining the significant role played by women and feminist writers in the transportation of natural philosophical theories of the body and matter to England from the European continent. Working closely with the German and French sources that infused these writers’ thinking (Schopenhauer, Bichat, Weissman) and engaging the longer history of character from the ancient to the modern world (Theophrastus, Bain), I broaden the pur-view of Victorian literature and science studies beyond Darwin to argue that the late-century convergence of a vitalistic Continental natural philosophy and British materialist science led to the rise of a new realism in the late Victorian period: a science of description committed to elucidating the forces at work in character formation. As such, I approach realism less in terms of its desire to represent the world accurately or objectively than in terms of its endeavor to claim a fundamental stratum of ontology for literature at a time when “the real” was increasingly perceived to be the province of the sciences.

After spending two years as a postdoctoral fellow at the ICI Berlin Institute for Cultural Inquiry in Germany, and one year as an assistant professor of English at the University of Oregon, in fall 2016 I will begin a new job as an assistant professor of English at the University of Pennsylvania, where I will draw from my book project research in a new course entitled “Literature and Science: Norms, Forms, and Deviance.”
This year the annual ACLA Conference was held at Harvard University March 17 - 20, 2016. A number of Comparative Literature faculty and graduate students participated in the conference as presenters and panel organizers.


Dr. Thomas Garza, “Killing Him Softly: Andrej Gelasimov’s Thirst and Putin’s Endless War in Chechnya,” in the seminar, “Nostalgia For The Future: The Legacy Of Svetlana Boym In Comparative Slavic Studies,” which he also organized.


Dr. Elizabeth Richmond-Garza, “‘Monstrous Marionettes’: Surface and Disidentification in Oscar Wilde,” in the seminar, “Technologies Of Sexuality And Gender (Sponsored By The Icla Comparative Gender Studies Committee).” Along with co-organizer Maria Khotimsky (MIT), Dr. Richmond-Garza also organized “Readings in Memory of Svetlana Boym (1959-2015)”


Xinyao Xiao, “From Scientia to Historia: Representing the Body in Early Modern Europe,” in the seminar, “Medical Humanities: Reading the Body In the Medicine, Literature and the Visual Arts.”
News in Brief

Dr. Niyi Afolabi published Ilê Aiyê in Brazil and the Reinvention of Africa (African Histories and Modernities).

Hannah Alpert-Abrams is part of a research team which was awarded an NEH Digital Humanities Implementation Grant in July 2015, funding two years to develop tools for the automatic transcription of early modern printed books (read more: sites.utexas.edu/firstbooks). She was also awarded a Pine Tree Foundation Fellowship in Hispanic Bibliography from the Bibliographic Society of America and a Helen Watson Buckner Fellowship from the John Carter Brown Library to support her dissertation research.

Dr. Daniela Bini published four essays: “Cesare ha da muri” or Caesar Must Die in Neapolitan” in Esperienze Letterarie; “South and North: Pulcinella, A Southern Thought” in F. Finotti & M. Johnson eds. L’Italia allo specchio: linguaggio e identità italiane nel mondo; “Ritratti e autoritratti: un’esigenza espressionistica” in Carlo Michelstaedter, ed. Yvonne Hutter; and “The Value of a Critical Mind: Tolerance and Slowness” in Rob Riemen ed. School der Beschaving. She gave a version of her essay “Caesar Must Die” at the Symposium on Pier Paolo Pasolini at Yale University. In fall she delivered the “Paper Leopardi in Music and Film: Giovanna Marini and Mario Martone,” at Franklin and Marshall, and the essay “Deconstructing the Self: Fausto Pirandello’s Self-Portraits” at the MLA in Austin.

Marlena Cravens presented at both the GRACLS Conference “Corporeality: Performing the Body across Literature, Cultures, Media, and the Arts” and the MLA Special Session “The Translator as Character.” She will be representing the University of Texas at the Institute for World Literature at Harvard under a Comparative Literature Excellence Fellowship. She is also happy to announce that she is co-planning the next GRACLS Conference with Nina Sport and that she published an article on paleography in Pterodáctilo, the Department of Spanish and Portuguese’s graduate student publication.

Jamila Davey presented research at the 2016 MLA convention in Austin. She resided in Amman, Jordan as a fellow with the Center for Arabic Study Abroad at Qasid Arabic Institute. She also returned to Austin to present research at the 2016 MLA convention.

Dr. Thomas Garza (Slavic) assumed direction of the UT Arabic Flagship Program in September 2015 and received a two-year renewal grant from the Institute of International Education and the Department of Defense to continue the program. He also published “Raise the Flag(ship)! Creating hybrid language programs on the Flagship model” in The U.S. Language Flagship Program: Professional Competence in a Second Language by Graduation, and delivered the keynote address, “Putin’s Troubling Trifecta: Chechnya, Sochi, and Ukraine” at the Friendship Force Southwest Regional Conference in April 2016. He also delivered “Killing him softly: Andrei Gelasimov’s Thirst and Putin’s endless war in Chechnya” as part of a Special Seminar in Memory of Svetlana Boym that he organized for the American Comparative Literature Association Annual Convention at Harvard in March, “Foreign language enrollments and the MLA 2013 Report: The case for Russian,”at the MLA Convention in January, and “From Russia with blood: Reimagining the vampire in contemporary Russian popular culture” at the ASEEES Convention in November. He was also elected President of the American Council of Teachers of Russian in January.

Dr. John Morán González, as a member of the Refusing to Forget Project, helped develop and curate a special exhibit at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum during the Spring 2016 semester. He also co-edited The Cambridge Companion to Latina/o American Literature, due out in May 2016.


Dusty Hixenbaugh has accepted a position as Assistant Professor of English Education at Bethany College in West Virginia. In June, he married his partner of six years, Sean Mailey.

Dr. David Kornhaber was promoted to Associate Professor in the Department of English, effective September 1, 2016. This past year, he took on the position of Graduate Adviser for the Program in Comparative Literature, he joined the editorial board of the journal Modern Drama, he participated as an invited panelist on the MLA panel “How to Get Published in PMLA,” and he published his first monograph, The Birth of Theater from the Spirit of Philosophy: Nietzsche and the Modern Drama (Northwestern University Press, 2016).


Dr. Naomi Lindstrom (Center for Jewish Studies) coordinates the Edwin Gale Collaborative Lucille Kerr and Alejandro Herrero-Olaizola, eds., Teaching the Latin American Boom; “Latin American Jewish Studies at the University of Texas at Austin” in Portal, and “El discurso profético en la poesía de Luisa Futoransky” in Hispamérica, and presented at the annual conferences of the Latin American Studies Association, Latin American Jewish Studies Association, Association for Jewish Studies, and Modern Language Association.

Carol MacKay (English and Women and Gender Studies) was recently named the J.R. Millikan Centennial Professor of English Literature. This past year she published the “Annie Besant” entry in the four-volume Encyclopedia of Victorian Literature (Wiley-Blackwell), as well as the chapter “Life-writing” for The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Women’s Writing (edited by Linda Peterson). For the Interdisciplinary Nineteenth-Century Studies Conference in Asheville NC this Spring, she presented a paper entitled “Up in Flames: Burning the Sensation Novel,” and she is chairing a panel honoring the late Linda Peterson at the upcoming British Women Writers Conference at the University of Georgia.
Reinhard Mueller translated a paper by Werner Stegmaier “Nietzsches Zukunft”, which will be published in The Journal of Nietzsche Studies under the title “Nietzsche’s future”. He will receive a “Fellowship in Residence” at the Nietzsche-Kolleg in Weimar (Germany) for June-July 2016 to work on a publication under the working title “Lessing and Nietzsche: The Relation to the Other in Global Ethical Responsibility”. For this, he also received the Dina Sherzer Award.

Dr. Guy P. Raffa published essays in PopMatters (on Dante and Mad Men) and Signature Course Stories as well as scholarly articles on Dante and his legacy in Italic and the Electronic Bulletin of the Dante Society of America. He delivered two papers at the MLA conference in Austin and an invited lecture on Digital Humanities at the FL@DH symposium.

Dr. Wayne Rebhorn’s Norton Critical Edition of Boccaccio’s Decameron was published last year. He was one of four finalists for the Graduate School’s Career Research Excellence Award. And he has been named a semi-finalist for the Friar Centennial Teaching Fellowship Award.

Dr. Cory Reed published “Scientific and Technological Imagery in Don Quixote” in the MLA’s Approaches to Teaching Don Quixote, and contributed a study on Cervantes’s drama to Cognitive Approaches to Early Modern Spanish Literature (Oxford University Press). He also presented papers at the Pacific Modern and Ancient Languages Association, at the conference “Don Quixote in the American West” (Denver/Laramie), and co-organized “Cervantes and the Mediterranean World,” an international conference at UT.

Michael Reyes received a Professional Development Award which helped fund his travels to deliver his first presentation in French at L’Université des Antilles in Martinique. He also received a Graduate Studies Enhancement Grant from the Social Science Research Council to fund an upcoming visit to the Archives Nationales d’Outre-Mer in Aix-en-Provence this summer. Michael published a review of Keith Walker’s English translation of Suzanne Césaire’s essays The Great Camouflage in E3W’s Annual Review of Books, and was also contracted by The Atlantic to write an op-ed about his experience teaching Junot Díaz in the Travis County Correctional Complex.

Dr. Elizabeth Richmond-Garza was nominated and confirmed as the director of the Program in Comparative Literature for another term, 2016-2021. She presented two original research papers at “Monstrous Marionettes: Surface and Disidentification in Oscar Wilde,” at the Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association at Harvard University and “Идеальный муж: Oscar Wilde in Vladimir Putin’s Moscow” at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages in Austin, TX. She also moderated a “Creative Conversation: Writing on the Border” which featured Rolando Hinojosa-Smith and Oscar Casares at the MLA and organized a special memorial session at the ACLA meeting for our distinguished and beloved colleague Svetlana Boym. Among many community and outreach presentations, she conducted a workshop for Humanities Texas for high school teachers on innovative approaches to teaching Shakespeare at the Kimball Museum in Fort Worth and spoke on Jack the Ripper to the Alumni College and UT Forum and on US-Russian cultural relations since Sputnik, along with Thomas J. Garza, to the Phi Beta Kappa Alumni Association of Greater Austin.

Sarah Ropp celebrated the birth of her son Zef in May 2015, presented at the Netherlandic Literatures panel and the Western Literature Association roundtable at the 2016 MLA conference, and was awarded a FLAS fellowship to study Dutch for the 2016-17 academic year.

Dr. César A. Salgado was invited to participate at a Union of Cuban Writers and Artists conference in Havana commemorating the Cuban critic, translator, and journal editor, José Rodríguez Feo. His paper considered how Rodríguez Feo’s years at Harvard during WWII and under F. O. Matthiessen’s mentorship bore on his work with the Orígenes and Ciclón literary circles and his eventual support of the Cuban Revolution. With Prof. Naomi Lindstrom, Salgado co-organized and chaired the panel “Global Gabo” at the Flair Symposium inaugurating the Gabriel García Márquez Archive at the HRC last October. He organized two panels (“Sin Embargo” and “Cuban Post-Exile Identities”) for the Cuban and Cuban Disporic LLC Forum at the Austin MLA Conference. He also coordinated the 2015-2016 Afro-Cuban Speaker Series that brought race activist and writer Roberto Zurbaro, poet Georgina Herrera, and critic and professor Odette Casamayor to campus.

Dr. Martha Ann Selby, Professor of South Asian Studies and Chair, Department of Asian Studies, presented a paper titled “The Starving Flaneur: On Abjection and the Everyday in the Tamil Short Fiction of D. Dilip Kumar” at the Annual Conference on South Asia on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus. She was also elected Chair of the Board of Directors of the South Asia Summer Language Institute, also housed at Madison.

Fatma Tarlaci co-organized a panel “What Do Comparative Literature and Digital Humanities Have to Say to Each Other? A Critical Approach” at ACLA 2016 and presented “Comparative and Digital: An Interdisciplinary Collaboration” in the same panel. (ACLA, March 2016). As a member of the MLA’s Committee on the Status of Graduate Students, she co-organized the networking event “How I Got Here: Networking and Discussion with Professors and Professionals” (January 2016 MLA Convention). She co-organized THATCamp Digital Pedagogy at UT Austin (January 2016). As part of the Student Advocates for Graduate Education Coalition (SAGE) Chair’s Team, she served as Delegate of Record during the 2015 Summit at UC San Diego in October and will travel to meet federal legislators at the Congress for graduate education advocacy in April 2016.
Dr. Alexandra K. Wettlaufer was a 2015 Guggenheim Fellow and spent the year working on her project, “Reading George: Sand, Eliot, and the Transnational Novel” in Paris and London. In 2015-16 she also held the Raymond Dickson Centennial Endowed Teaching Fellowship and was a Visiting International Fellow at Exeter University (UK). She recently took over as North American editor for Nineteenth-Century Contexts: An Interdisciplinary Journal and is guest editing a special issue of George Sand Studies on “Sand’s Lieux de Memoire.” Alex was elected to the MLA Forum Executive Committee for 19th-Century French Studies and published a catalogue essay on “Paintings of Modern Life: Balzac, Baudelaire, Zola, and Caillebotte” in Gustave Caillebotte: The Painter’s Eye, a 2015 exhibition at the National Gallery in Washington.

Dr. Lynn Wilkinson is at work on a translation of the 1872 version of the inaugural lecture of Georg Brandes’s Main Currents of Nineteenth-Century Literature, which will appear in PMLA as part of the journal’s “Criticism in Translation” series. Her essay on Brandes and Germaine de Staël will appear in a volume entitled Other Capitals of the Nineteenth Century. The two texts are related to her ongoing project on women intellectuals. She also presented papers on George Sand, Emma and Urban Gad, and Anne Charlotte Leffler at the MLA, the ACLA, and the annual conference of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study.

Dr. Jennifer Wilks (AADS, English, and Comp Lit) published the essay “Revolutionary Genealogies: Suzanne Césaire’s and Christiane Taubira’s Writings of Dissent” in Small Axe: A Caribbean Platform for Criticism in November 2015. She also presented two papers related to her book project Diasporic Carmens: “Vagabond Feminism: Reading Carmen in Claude McKay’s Banjo” at the Modernist Studies Association meeting in Boston (November 2015) and “Dynamic Divas: Dorothy Dandridge’s and Beyoncé’s Star Turns as Carmen” at the Modern Language Association meeting in Austin (January 2016), respectively. Wilks co-organized “Public Blackness: Celebrity, Diaspora, and Modernity,” the MLA panel on which she presented, with colleague Dr. Samantha Pinto of Georgetown University.

Dr. Hannah Chapelle Wojciechowski will deliver a keynote address at the Media Mutations 8 conference in Bologna, Italy, entitled “Binge-watching.” This conference is organized by the University of Bologna, in collaboration with the Society for Cognitive Studies of the Moving Image and the research project Theoretical Innovation Strategies in the Analysis of Narration in Television Series. Wojciechowski will also serve as a respondent at the Third International Neurohumanities Dialogue, entitled “Ars et Ingenium: The Processes of Imagination,” to be held in Catania, Italy, this summer. Wojciechowski published her edition Cymbeline (Hackett) in the fall of 2015.

Jennie Wojtusik presented recent work on Dostoevsky at ASEEES in the fall of 2015 and AATSEEL and ACL A in the spring of 2016. Additionally, she organized 3 panels and a round-table on Russian Philosophy for the ASEEES conference this fall. She also received the FLAS for summer study in Russia and the Fulbright to conduct dissertation research at Humboldt University in Berlin for the 2016-17 academic year.


### FLAS Fellowship Award Information

The highly competitive Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship is funded by the U.S. Department of Education and assists meritorious graduate students undergoing intensive training in modern languages and related area or international studies.

**Academic Year Awards:**
$15,000, plus tuition and required course-related fees up to $18,000 per academic year.

**Summer Awards:**
$2,500, plus tuition and fees for an intensive language course (up to up to $5,000)

**Application Deadlines:**
Vary, but generally mid-December

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**Attention Alumni:**
The Newsletter welcomes contributions from alumni about any aspects of your post-UT Austin lives and careers. The newsletter’s goal is to celebrate the achievements of students and faculty currently in the program and at the same time to share important news about our alumni. It is your successes and undertakings which have secured us a national ranking of 21st in the country according to the National Research Council’s survey, and we would like the opportunity to congratulate you publicly. We encourage you to share your accomplishments with us.

Please send your news for publication in the 2017 newsletter to the Program’s email address: complit@austin.utexas.edu
CL Proseminar: Professional Strategies for Comparatists in Field Studies

Coordinated and moderated by Dr. David Kornhaber (English), Comparative Literature Graduate Adviser

August 28  Welcome by Dr. Esther Raizen, Associate Dean for Research

September 4  Dr. Thomas Garza, University Distinguished Teaching Associate Professor of Slavic and Eurasian Studies, speaking on the topic of "Applied Literature"

September 11  Dr. Wayne Rebhorn, Celanese Centennial Professor of English, speaking on the topic of "New Historicism"

September 18  Dr. David Kornhaber, Assistant Professor English and Comparative Literature Graduate Adviser, speaking on the topic of "Professionalization in Comparative Literature"

September 25  Dr. Sabine Hake, Professor of Germanic Studies, speaking on the topic of "Film Studies"

October 2  Dr. Lynn Wilkinson, Associate Professor of Germanic Languages and chair of the Comparative Literature Graduate Studies Committee, speaking on the topic of "Graduate Studies in Comparative Literature"

October 9  Dr. Elizabeth Richmond Garza, Associate Professor of English and Director of the Program in Comparative Literature, speaking on the topic of "Translations"

October 16  Dr. Naomi Lindstrom, Gale Family Foundation Professor in Jewish Arts and Culture, speaking on the topic of "Latin American Jewish Studies and Cross-Disciplinary Identities"

October 23  Dr. Daniela Bini, Professor of Italian, speaking on the topic of "Images, Words, Sounds: Creating an Interdisciplinary Undergraduate Course"

November 6  Dr. Snehal Shingavi, Associate Professor English, speaking on the topic of "Postcolonial Studies"

November 12  Dr. Katherine Arens, Professor of Germanic Studies and Women's and Gender Studies, speaking on the topic of "The Death of Theory and the Birth of a New Research Imperative: The CL Identity"

November 13  Dr. Hannah Wojciehowski, Professor of English, speaking on the topic of "Michel Foucault"

November 15  Dr. César Salgado, Associate Professor of Latin American and Comparative Literature, speaking on the topic of "Designing a Study Abroad Program"

My thanks go to the students and presenters who made this year’s proseminar such a rewarding experience. As in years past, presenters tailored their topics to cover their own areas of research specialization alongside issues of broad interest and appeal to new graduate students and developing scholars. As the diversity of topics listed above illustrates, the proseminar discussions ranged from questions of pedagogy to issues of graduate student professionalization to topics of broad applicability across comparative literary studies. I am grateful to all of our presenters for helping introduce our new cohort to our program and our shared fields of study.

Dr. David Kornhaber
The Extra-human

Call for Papers:
Graduate Association for Comparative Literature Students
September 24th & 25th, 2016

In a 1917 essay, Freud noted that modern science had dealt three devastating blows to human pride: the Copernican revelation that the earth revolves around the sun, the Darwinian revelation that man shares a common ancestor with apes, and his own revelation that consciousness is mostly ruled by the unconscious. These three epistemological shifts imply a revision to, or even a rejection of human exceptionalism and a reorientation that emphasizes what is beyond the human, what is ahuman, inhuman, posthuman: extra-human.

We call for papers that explore the limits of what it means to be human and that investigate any aspect of the extra-human. We encourage contributions that problematize the very idea of individualized subject formation; interrogate the role of the mass (re-)production of objects, identity, and language as discrete entities; and that trace the divisible limits distinguishing “the human,” “the animal,” and “the monstrous.” We welcome a wide array of theoretical and methodological approaches, including Marxist theory, rhetorical theory, animal studies, extra-textual analysis, feminist theory, queer theory, deconstructive theory, psychoanalytic theory, new materialisms, and post-colonial theory. We encourage papers from all departments, including literatures, rhetoric and writing, communication studies, political studies, anthropology, media and the arts—including the performance arts—and any historical or contemporary cultural context. We also invite projects that productively bring into dialogue interdisciplinary and comparative areas of study.

We call for papers that examine any aspect of the extra-human across notions of, for example:
• The translator
• Language, very broadly defined
• The Self-Other dialectic
• The sublime
• Reification
• Consumption
• Animals and/or animality
• Vegetal being
• Monsters and the Monstrous
• Cyborgs and Science-Fiction
• Dehumanization
• Xenophobia
• The Dead and/or The Undead
• Technicity or Mechanicity
• The Object or Thing
• The Divine or Sacred
• Material Environs or the Environment
• Bioethics, Biopolitics, and/or Biopower

The deadline for individual abstracts and round table papers is Friday, August 26, 2016. We ask for a 250-word abstract, the name of your affiliated institution, and your contact information. Please submit proposals to graclsconference2016@gmail.com.
Job Placement News

Jonathan Fleck took a lecturer position in Portuguese and Spanish at Rice University’s Center for Languages and Intercultural Communication through Summer 2018.

Dusty Hixenbaugh has accepted a position as Assistant Professor of English Education at Bethany College in West Virginia.

Katie Logan has accepted an Assistant Professorship at Virginia Commonwealth University for their Focused Inquiry department.

Martino Lovato has accepted a lecturer position in Classics and Italian at Mount Holyoke College.

Fatma Tarlaci has been accepted into a fully funded Computer Science MA program at Stanford University.

Attention Alumni:

The Program in Comparative Literature welcomes contributions about any aspects of your post-UT Austin lives and careers. The newsletter’s goal is to celebrate the achievements of students and faculty and share important news about our alumni.

It is your successes and undertakings which have made this such a strong program, and we would like the opportunity to congratulate you publicly.

Please send your news for publication in the 2017 newsletter to:
complit@austin.utexas.edu