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APRIL 2019

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# THE NEWSLETTER

The official newsletter of the Department of English & Writing Studies



## A message from the Chair

PROFESSOR MANINA JONES

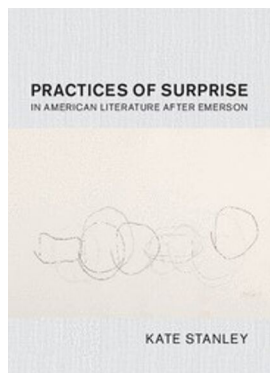
This month the academic year winds up for some of you and the summer term/Intersession gears up for others. Either way, it's a time of year we tend to disperse somewhat, so I'll take this opportunity to thank you all for your contributions to the past academic year and wish everyone a renewed sense of vitality and excitement on their research and teaching endeavours. Mid-summer, the department will welcome back Madeline Bassnett from sabbatical and into the role of Undergraduate Chair, and we'll also look forward to Mary Helen McMurren's appointment as Vice Chair, and Chris Keep's as Film Program Coordinator.

Happy Spring, everyone.

## Research & Publications

### BOOKS

#### Non-Fiction



#### **Practices of Surprise in American Literature After Emerson**

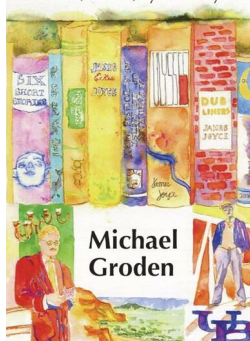
by Professor Kate Stanley  
Cambridge University Press, 2018

*Practices of Surprise in American Literature After Emerson* locates a paradoxical question – how

does one prepare to be surprised? – at the heart of several major modernist texts. Arguing that this paradox of perception gives rise to an American literary methodology, this book dramatically reframes how practices of reading and writing evolved among modernist authors after Emerson. Whereas Walter Benjamin defines modernity as a “series of shocks” inflicted from without, Emerson offers a countervailing optic that regards life as a “series of surprises” unfolding from within. While Benjaminian shock elicits intimidation and defensiveness, Emersonian surprise fosters states of responsiveness and spontaneity whereby unexpected encounters become generative rather than enervating. As a study of how such states of responsiveness were cultivated by a post-Emerson tradition of writers and thinkers, this project displaces longstanding models of modernist perception defined by shock’s passive duress, and proposes alternate models of reception that proceed from the active practice of surprise.

**REMEMBER:**  
Click the  
purple text  
to read more  
information!

#### **THE NECESSARY FICTION** *Life with James Joyce's Ulysses*



#### **The Necessary Fiction: Life with James Joyce's Ulysses**

by Michael Groden  
Edward Everett Root, Forthcoming  
September 2019

This unusual book is a fascinating work of personal criticism or “biblio-memoir” which will appeal to all interested in James Joyce’s work, and, more widely, to those interested in responses to great art. It focusses on the life-long appeal of a particular work of art on a single individual who has been a leading Joyce scholar for 40 years.

Professor Groden has taught *Ulysses* to undergraduates, to graduate students, and to adults outside of universities in a long and distinguished career. He is the author of two often-cited scholarly books on Joyce’s novel, and he has overseen the 63-volume facsimile reproduction of his manuscripts.

#### Poetry



#### **Under the Gamma Camera**

by Madeline Bassnett  
Gaspereau Press 2019

*Under the Gamma Camera* is a frank portrait of our relationship with disease, exploring the contrary state of being that is illness. Rooted in her own experience of diagnosis, treatment and remission, Madeline Bassnett’s poems bristle with

authenticity, with tactile and emotional detail available only to one who has lived it. A major preoccupation in these poems is reconciling the contradictory ways in which we experience illness and treatment—an experience at once deeply personal and human and also strangely impersonal and clinical. On one side is a catalogue of emotional responses, from denial, resistance and a sense of betrayal, to gratitude and relief; on the other, the strange detachment from our own body, the indifference of our corrupt cells to our fate, and the often alienating medical complex and the technology mobilized in our aid. Bassnett pays particular attention to the way the body is the medium through which all these things are experienced.

## Research & Publications

### BOOK CHAPTERS

**Sandhar, Jason.** "Plotting the Elephant Graveyard: Anthropomorphism and Interspecies' Conflict in Tania James' *The Tusk that did the Damage*." *Postcolonial Animality*, edited by Suvadip Sinha and Amit R. Baishya, Routledge (forthcoming 2019).

### SHORT STORIES

**Manley, Claudia.** "Dear Alien." *The New Guard*, Vol. VII (2018) was nominated for a Pushcart Prize.

**Manley, Claudia.** "Yellow Wedding." *Lake Effect*, forthcoming Spring 2019.

**Green, Terence.** "**Sante Fe**." *Queen's Quarterly*, Spring 2019.

### ARTICLES

**Chambers, Melanie.** "Bhutan and death for Mountain." *Life Magazine*. Fall 2018.

**Chambers, Melanie.** "Bhutan hiking." *Modalina*. Winter 2018.

**Moll, Richard.** "**Pasiphaë in William Caxton's *Booke of Oryde* and Jean de Courcy's *Bouquechardière***." *English Studies* 100.1 (2019): 5-13."

**Pero, Allan.** "**What Is Camp**." them. April 4, 2019.

**Stanley, Kate.** "**Unrarified Air: Alfred Stieglitz and the Modernism of Equivalence**." *Modernism/modernity* 26.1 (2019): 185-212.

**Stanley, Kate.** "**Getting Acquainted with Wallace Stevens**." *Los Angeles Review of Books* (April 2019).

### POETRY PUBLICATIONS

**Mockler, Kathryn.** "**Water**." Published in the League of Canadian Poet's Poem in Your Pocket Day, April 18, 2019.

**Mockler, Kathryn.** "**Raccoons Have Poor Impulse Control**." *This Magazine*, Poetry May 2019.

### CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

**MacLean, Alyssa.** "Josiah Henson and the Politics of Black National Belonging in North America." Invited keynote for the *Phantoms of the Past* undergraduate conference, Huron University College, London, ON, March 21, 2019.

**Pennee, Donna.** "Symbolic and Political Economies in Sara Jeannette Duncan's *The Imperialist*." Joint session at ACCUTE and the International Gothic Association (Congress 2019).

*This paper explores a genealogy of Southern Ontario Gothic fiction not based in wilderness or Indigeneity but in United Empire Loyalist "moral capital" as compensation for economic decline.*

### READINGS

**Mockler, Kathryn,** Chatterjee, A., Clarke, G.E., Graham, C., Kirby. "EARTHY ANECDOTES." League of Canadian Poets and the Toronto Arts Council, Toronto, Ontario, April 2019.

**Mockler, Kathryn,** Cullis, R., Grahame, C. "**10th Anniversary of Lynn Crosbie's poetry book *Liar***." Toronto, Ontario, April 2019.

**Mockler, Kathryn,** Bruck, J., Germaine, M. "**Common Readings, April Edition**." Toronto, Ontario, April 2019.

### PUBLIC LECTURES

**Leonard, John.** "Medieval Studies Speakers' Series: Game of Thrones, London Public Library, March 2019.

*Following an introduction by Adam Deboscher, the TA for Western's popular English course on the series, Leonard launched into a discussion of Medieval murder mysteries, their place in the period's history and their influence on Martin's plot and character development.*



## News & Events

### Meher Hakim awarded the 2019 Avie Bennett Prize in Canadian Literature

The 2019 Avie Bennett Prize in Canadian Literature has been awarded to Meher Hakim for her paper "The Japanese-Canadian Experience: Dehumanization, Rape, and Blame in Joy Kogawa's *Obasan*." The paper offers an insightful analysis of the ways that Kogawa's novel deploys metaphors and imagery of animality to depict the dehumanization of Japanese Canadians during the period of internment in the WWII era. Through a combination of thoughtful close readings and the deft incorporation of secondary scholarship, the essay offers a compelling analysis of the text. The adjudication committee would like to congratulate Meher, and to thank all the students who submitted their excellent and provocative work.

### Noelle Schmidt awarded the 2019 Alfred Poynt Award in Poetry

The judges selected "a demand that knows nothing" for its impressive structural rigor and emotional depth. The treatment of suicidal ideation is sensitive and nuanced, deftly avoiding familiar language or melodrama. This poem's very form enacts the transformative thoughts of the speaker: vivid, painterly imagery immerses readers in the speaker's harrowing memory just as accelerating patterns of repetition move readers towards the glimmer of light sparked by the artistic act itself. This poem's gorgeous marriage of image, musicality, and structure achieves a deeply resonant final effect.

Honorable Mention was also awarded to Camille Intson.

### Erin Akerman awarded the 2018-19 Carl F. and Margaret E. Klinck Prize

The Committee on Graduate Studies has awarded the 2018-19 Klinck Prize to Erin Akerman for her thesis-in-progress, "Unsettling Sympathy: Representations of Indigenous Identity in the Great Lakes Region of Canada in Nineteenth-Century Literature." Erin is supervised by Dr. Pauline Wakeham. The committee felt that Erin's work will make an excellent contribution to scholarship in Canadian Literature and that it is very deserving of the Klinck Prize.

### Inaugural Alice Munro Lecture

On March 26th, Nino Ricci gave the inaugural Alice Munro Chair in Creativity lecture at the Wolf Performance Hall at the London Public Library. Addressing an audience of about 150 members of the community, Nino talked about the value of creativity in contemporary Canada, read from his novel-in-progress, and was engaged in lively dialogue with Student Writer-in-Residence Camille Intson and members of the audience.



### Jane Urquhart named 2019-20 Writer-in-Residence

Governor General's award-winner, Jane Urquhart is one of Canada's most celebrated authors. In January, she will join the Western community as the 2019-20 Writer-in-Residence, following Cherie Dimaline. [Read more >>](#)

### Kim Solga named a Graham and Gale Wright Distinguished Scholar for 2019

Professor Kim Solga also finishes the Winter term with a flourish, picking up the Graham and Gale Wright award from the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. This award is made by the Faculty of Arts and Humanities in recognition of Kim's wide-ranging and initiatives and discipline-shaping contributions to the field of Theatre Studies and pedagogy. Congratulations, Kim.



## News & Events

### Elizabeth Saks wins the 2019 Lillian Kroll Prize in Creative Writing

"Room for Rent" is a witty, satirical take on the Harpies of Homer's Odyssey that reinvigorates the mythological material by resituating it in a contemporary context. Tackling the themes of desire, appetite, and social deviance, the story seamlessly blends the canonical with a careful attention to the grubbier details of student life to produce social commentary that is cleverly framed, carefully observed, and entirely satisfying.

Honourable Mentions were also awarded to Madeleine Ghesquiere for "The Stories We Tell" and Gabrielle Drolet for "Grass".

### Betty Wang awarded the 2019 Undergraduate Essay Prize

Betty Wang's essay, "Equiano and his Fight for Smithian Market Ideals in *The Interesting Narrative*" shows how Olaudah Equiano, an eighteenth-century enslaved African who bought his freedom, absorbs Adam Smith's ideals of a capitalist system and, at the same time, exposes this system as flawed and self-defeating as long as it engages in the slave trade. The adjudicators found Wang's reading of Equiano and her use of Adam Smith's central tenets to be both original and astute. Her demonstration of the hinge between the larger economic system and Equiano's daily life events is nuanced and presented persuasively in clear and lively prose.

### Solga: Making teaching both active and activist

Western will host the Times Higher Education (THE) Teaching Excellence Summit June 4-6, the first time the event has been hosted in Canada. Professor Kim Solga was featured in one of a series of stories highlighting teaching excellence at Western.

[Read more >>](#)

### Professor Richard Moll receives the 2019 Faculty Scholars Award

This award recognizes Richard's unique scholarly achievements in teaching and research and celebrates his outstanding contributions to the department, faculty, and university. Nominated by faculty deans and selected by the Faculty Selection committee chaired by the Provost, recipients of this award must have an international presence in their discipline and be considered all-round scholars.

Richard is an internationally respected scholar in his fields of expertise: literature in medieval England, the history and structure of the English language, Arthurian literature, medieval biography and historiography, medieval heraldry and heraldic culture, early print culture, and editing as a form of scholarship. His scholarly work includes *Before Malory: Reading Arthur in Later Medieval England* (U Toronto P, 2003), a critical edition of William Caxton's *The Booke of Ovyde Named Methamorphose* (jointly published by Oxford's Bodleian Library and the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto, 2013), *A Heraldic Miscellany: Fifteenth-Century Treatises on Blazon and the Office of Arms in English and Scots* (Liverpool University Press, 2018), as well as many articles and reviews. As Undergraduate Chair, he is serving his fourth year (an extension of his initial term), and we owe him a debt of gratitude for having seen the English program through the development of learning outcomes, the 2017-18 IQAP undergraduate program review, and a large-scale curriculum consultation and revision. He is also a highly regarded, passionately committed teacher who has contributed in significant ways to both undergraduate and graduate programs.

### Fall 2018 and Winter 2019 PhD graduates

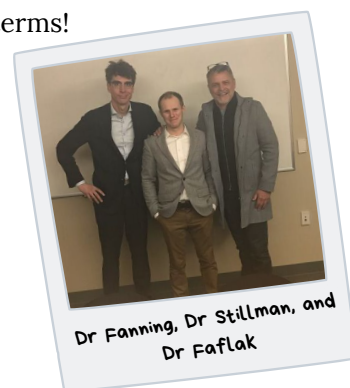
Congratulations to Dr Marc Mazur, Dr Jason Sunder, Dr Jonathan Stillman, Dr Taylor Richardson who successfully defended their doctoral dissertations in the Fall 2018 and Winter 2019 terms!



Dr Schuster, Dr Sunder,  
Dr Hubel, Dr Bhatia, and  
Dr Ball at the Grad Club



Dr Richardson, with supervisor  
Dr Bruhm, and external examiner  
Nancy Johnson.



Dr Fanning, Dr Stillman, and  
Dr Faflak

## News & Events

### Gabrielle Drolet & Noelle Schmidt winners of the 2019 Marguerite R. Dow Canadian Heritage Award

Drolet's 'Little Malta' is a touching exploration of familial identity. The speaker recounts the stories 'Nana' tells of Malta – 'the clotheslines hanging between bright houses', fish cooking in the family restaurant, picking snails from rocks – and describes her own life in 'Little Malta', 'a small community of men and women who fled an isolated country' and who still attend Maltese Mass and eat *pastizzis*. When Nana came to Canada, she came with her three young children and without their father, the speaker's grandfather. Gabrielle reorients this reflection on familial identity beautifully when the speaker hears that the absent grandfather is alive, now an isolated island himself unable to communicate or remember, in a hospital room in either Malta or Australia.

Schmidt's poem "an inheritance" powerfully features a direct address to "you," who turns out to be a young World War II soldier from Hungary who does not believe in the war but finds that no one cares and he must fight to survive. The speaker of the poem encounters the living and dead victims of the Nazis and the lines accumulate the horrific reality that "you are eighteen years old and alone / and everything is afire." The end of the poem finds the speaker in Canada but it is as if the war is still ongoing, but this time the bodies are of Indigenous peoples whose children are stolen and killed. The poem is intense and unrelenting from start to finish. The final words of the poem remain vividly nightmarish with the phrase "but i know there are / two genocides in my blood."

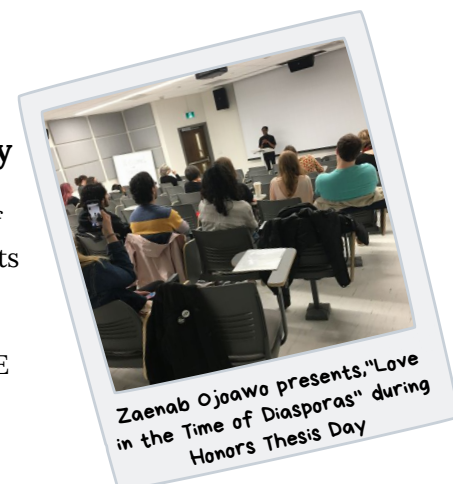
### Sheetala Bhat is the recipient of the 2019 David G. Hartwell Emerging Scholar Award

Congratulations to Sheetala Bhat on receiving the 2019 David G. Hartwell Emerging Scholar Award from the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts!



### Honors Thesis Day

On April 10, we celebrated the work of undergraduate students enrolled in English 4999E, Writing 4999E and Film Studies 4409E theses courses.



### Lisa Templin, PhD Candidate, shares her experience at the 2019 Multidisciplinary Graduate Student Conference

Conferences and research trips are difficult to fund on a graduate student budget, but with the generous support of the Newberry Center for Renaissance Studies consortium, I was able to attend the Multidisciplinary Graduate Student Conference and do research in the Newberry's special collections.

At the conference, I met and engaged with other graduate students from all over the world. The conference organizers were friendly and inviting, which made this conference a great opportunity for emerging scholars to present their research, ask questions, and bond over our mutual love of old books, libraries, and all things Renaissance.

Like any bibliophile, my favourite part of my experience at the Newberry was the books. The graduate conference gave us a taste of the Newberry's immense holdings through their collection presentations. The best part, for me, was looking through the original quartos of the plays that I have been studying in my dissertation. Though my primary interest is in English Renaissance drama, the most interesting item that I found wasn't a play at all, but a 1561 volume of Baldassare Castiglione's *The Courtier*, translated into English by Thomas Hoby, that was owned and annotated by Gabriel Harvey in 1572 (VAULT Case Y 712 .C27495). Harvey's manuscript notes all but take over the margins of the page as he summarizes the contents, makes note of passages for further study, and references other contemporary courtesy manuals. I spent hours reading Harvey's comments on Castiglione's work and thinking about the ways that people read and interact with texts. If my own treasured dog-eared and scribbled-over volumes are any indication, it doesn't seem as though much has changed even if prevailing attitudes have, but my experience at the Newberry has only increased my growing fascination with early modern manuscript marginalia.