

The English Times: August 2020



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Department News



Professor Lisa Kasmer Welcomes You Back to the English Department

“If a thing loves, it is infinite.” – William Blake

Welcome back, everyone! Please know that in this challenging time, the English Department is here to support and enhance your academic journey. Foremost, I want to highlight our wonderful community in the English Department at Clark.

To nurture our community, our department is fully committed to diversity, inclusion and equity. You will see this commitment in our faculty's research, our teaching, and our concerns. In scholarship and teaching, our faculty focus on emergent fields that emphasize social justice— Critical Race Theory; sexuality and gender studies; transnational studies; the medical humanities and disability studies; the environmental humanities; and book history. Some of you may be surprised by the level of cultural and political engagement in our work. Through our research and teaching, we also rethink conventional ways of building the discipline to remake the received canon, the history of the field, and established terms in literary studies.

Many of our recent course offerings foreground this commitment: Queer Modernisms with Professor Elizabeth Blake; Advanced Studies in Shakespeare: Kings, Queens, Tyrants with our newest faculty member Professor Justin Shaw; Fictions of Empire: Studies in Global English Literature with Professor Stephen Levin; Toni Morrison with Professor Kourtney Senquiz; American Print Culture with Professor Meredith Neuman; Contemporary Literary Theory with Professor Jay Elliott; and Traumatic Tales: National Trauma in Romantic Literature with me, Professor Lisa Kasmer.

Our Creative Writing program continues to offer exciting courses taught by professional writers in every genre that allow you to workshop your creative work. This program also has courses that promote diverse viewpoints, such as, Imagining Place: Writing Health, Science and the Environment with Professor Michael Carolan and Utopias/Dystopias: Writing Resistance and Identity with Professor Mandy Gutmann-Gonzalez.

This academic year we will advise and mentor Honors students online to foster student independent student research in the department. All of our majors also carry out a significant individual research project within our Capstone course. Our chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, national English Honor Society, will participate in service projects within the community and assist with scholarly activities in the department.

Our Department will hold our popular events virtually this academic year. Join us for our Open House, where staff and administration who majored in English will speak to the salience of an English major; Chowder Fest, where English major alumni discuss their career paths; and Wassail, our holiday celebration at the end of the semester to relax and unwind. Clark Writes, the student-run Creative Writing group, will continue to hold forums for students' creative work.

We also have a number of exciting writers and scholars who will speak virtually this academic year. We will hold a conference to honor scholar Professor Winston Napier's foundational reader *African American* Literary Theory. The Poets and Writers reading series will host Benjamin Garcia, author of *Thrown in the Throat*, this fall. And our very own Regie Gibson, poet, performer and National Poetry Slam Individual Champion, will perform in the spring.

Stop by my virtual office hours if you have questions about the department. Don't forget to check out our e-newsletter The English Times, our blog [The Next Chapter](#), and [Facebook](#) for more news!

All the best,

Lisa Kasmer

Associate Professor and Chair

Department of English



Introducing our New Assistant Professor Justin Shaw

The English Department is happy to welcome Professor Justin Shaw to our faculty. Justin P. Shaw is a literary and cultural critic who specializes in early modern (16th and 17th Century) English literature. He teaches about and researches the intersections of race, emotions, disability, and medicine in early modern literature. His book project, tentatively titled, “White Tears: Race and Melancholy on the Early Modern English Stage,” examines how melancholic attribution influences the emergence of racial categories in the early modern period. Committed to both public and traditional scholarship, his work appears in the peer-reviewed journal *Early Theatre*, in the forthcoming critical volume, *White People in Shakespeare*, and has been discussed on NPR and podcasts. He has consulted on exhibits for the Michael C. Carlos Museum such as, *Desire & Consumption: The New World in the Age of Shakespeare* and *First Folio: The Book that Gave Us Shakespeare*, and has re-developed the massive digital humanities project, *Shakespeare and the Players* (<https://shakespeare.emory.edu>). Professor Shaw regularly gives lectures about his work, his pedagogy, and about how to better understand the complexity of race in Shakespeare and in our own world. Professor Shaw’s upcoming courses include “Working My Nerves: Emotions in the Renaissance,” “Seeing Race and Disability in Medieval Literature,” and a rotating variety of quirky Shakespeare courses.

B.A., Morehouse College, 2011

M.A., University of Houston, 2014

Ph.D., Emory University, 2020



Introducing Professor Nicolyn Woodcock

The English Department is happy to welcome Professor Nicolyn Woodcock to our faculty. She will be teaching ENG 136 Post-Apocalyptic Fiction and the Environment and ENG 279/379 Fictions of Asian America in the fall; she will be offering these courses online.

Nicolyn Woodcock teaches contemporary American and US multiethnic literature,

with a specialty in Asian American literature. Her particular interests include the histories of war and empire in Asia since the turn of the 20th century and the intimate relationships that form as a result, both personal and geopolitical. Prof. Woodcock also dabbles in food studies and likes to think about the influences of space and place in identity formation. Her most recent article is “Narratives of Intimacy in Asian American Literature” in the Oxford Encyclopedia of Asian American Literature and Culture (2019); she is also the author of “Tasting the Forgotten War: Korean/American Memory and Military Base Stew” in the Journal of Asian American Studies (2018). Prof. Woodcock has previously taught at Colorado College and looks forward to teaching “Post-Apocalyptic Fiction and the Environment” and “Fictions of Asian America” at Clark this fall.

Education:

B.A. Kenyon College, 2012

M.A. Miami University, 2014

Ph.D. Miami University, 2019



The Next Chapter Recent Blog Posts

We have been so lucky to receive some of our favorite blog posts from students and alumni during the pandemic. We wanted to highlight the blog posts that we published after Clark went remote and over the summer:

Rachel Lloyd published ["Less Pomp, More Circumstance: Earning a Driveway Diploma in the Midst of Covid-19,"](#)

Dean Jones published ["Science Fiction Builds Mental Resiliency in Young Readers,"](#)

Alumni Lee V. Gaines published ["Personal Achievements During Covid-19: Clark Alum Lee V. Gaines on Rallying Pride in Difficult Times,"](#)

Alumni and office worker Olivia Simmonds published ["April Paintings,"](#)

The English Department released a recommended reading list, ["Summer Reading Recommendations from the English Department"](#)

#ClarkTogether



Deans Esther Jones and Betsy Huang Hosted a Seminar for Clark's Summer Series: "Sci-Fi, Race, and the Radical Imagination"

Over the summer, Clark University offered webinars for students, faculty, staff, and the public to help us navigate these times. Deans Esther Jones and Betsy Huang hosted their webinar "Sci-Fi, Race, and the Radical Imagination" on Wednesday, July 8. The recording is available [here](#). Description below:

Stories of social disruption, restructuring, and transformation have long been at the heart of science fiction's ways of radically re-imagining what ails us. Join Deans Esther Jones and Betsy Huang for a conversation about what science fiction can teach us about surviving.



Dean Esther Jones was Interviewed by Radio New Zealand

Dean Jones gave an interview with Radio New Zealand (an independent public service multimedia organization for New Zealand) about her research on the effects of Sci-Fi on young readers. To read or listen to the full interview, [click here](#). The interview was conducted as part of their Sunday Morning podcast. And to read one of her original articles on the subject, check it out on [The Next Chapter](#).



Professors Jay Elliott and Janette Greenwood Hosted a Seminar for Clark's Summer Series: "Baseball as History and Literature"

Clark's summer webinar series continued with Professors Jay Elliott and Janette Greenwood's webinar "Baseball as History and Literature" on Thursday, July 30.

The recording is available [here](#). Description below:

Professors Jay Elliott (English) and Janette Greenwood (History) hope to console baseball fans suffering through what promises to be, at best, a very short and strange season by presenting some of their favorite selections from their course, "A Perfect Game: Baseball as History and Literature."

James
Fenimore
Cooper

The Chainbearer.
Or, The Littlepage
Manuscripts

EDITED BY Lance Schachterle and James P. Elliott

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION BY Lance Schachterle,
Wesley T. Mott, and John P. McWilliams

EXPLANATORY NOTES BY Lance Schachterle



Professor Jay Elliott has Edited a New Edition of *The Chainbearer* by James Fenimore Cooper

The new edition of *The Chainbearer* is available [here](#).

Edited by Lance Schachterle and James P. Elliott
Historical Introduction by Lance Schachterle, Wesley T. Mott, and John P.
McWilliams
Explanatory Notes by Lance Schachterle
Publisher: SUNY Press



Professor Justin Shaw Presented Two Talks for "Dr. Ralph Presents: Then You Must Speak"

Professor Shaw recently gave two talks for "Dr. Ralph Presents: Then You Must Speak" titled "Race and Disability in Shakespeare's Othello." The talks are linked [here](#) and the description is below.

"Building off his article "Rub Him About The Temples: Othello, Disability, and the Failures of Care" (Early Theatre 22.2), scholar Justin P. Shaw joins us for a conversation about race and disability in Othello, networks of care, early modern medical practice, the symbolic and material web of the handkerchief, and more."



Professor Liz Blake Published Two Articles

Professor Liz Blake recently published two articles, "[Queering the Marriage Plot: Gale Wilhelm's Middlebrow Modernism](#)" and "[Adaptive Kinship: Jane Rule's Domestic Geographies of Care.](#)"



IDND and Eng 20 Professor Jackie Morrill and Three Students Will Virtually Present at The Northeast Popular Culture Association Conference

Professor Jackie Morrill and three of her former IDND 22: Writing: Horror,

Serial Killers & the Grotesque students will be (virtually) presenting at NEPCA (Northeast Popular Culture Association). The students presenting are Mallory Trainor, Caitlyn Angeletti, and Drew Brodney.

Mallory's paper is titled "The Good, the Bad, and the Bloody: Menstruation as a Motif in Horror"; Caitlyn's is "The Horror of Sensory Deprivation: Unseen, Unheard, and Unspoken Evils"; Professor Morrill's is called "Evolving Identities of the Final Girl: Virgins, Whores, and Savages in Slasher Horror"; and Drew's paper is currently untitled.

English Department Events



The English Department Hosted Virtual Commencement Reception

Like all of the country, the English Department had to adapt some of its most

important rituals to an online format last spring. Luckily, thanks to the participation and good humor of everyone involved, we had a fabulous virtual commencement reception to celebrate the achievements of our graduates.

Alumni and Student News

- **Lee V. Gaines '11** received the Regional Edward R. Morrow Award, read about it [here!](#)
- **Alexandria Ross '21** will have two of her poems published in the upcoming issue of *Laurel Moon*, the Brandeis literary magazine.
- **Joseph Jung '20** will be heading to Harvard Law School this fall. Read more about it [here!](#)
- **Mahi Taban '21** was awarded a \$1250 Junior Scholarship from Sigma Tau Delta, the English Honor Society. Based on academic merit, these scholarships are highly competitive. Mahi also had a poem accepted to *Laurel Moon*, the Brandeis literary journal.

Find Us Online:

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and The Next Chapter.

If you have any news to share with us, please write a couple of lines about it and send it to [Davina Tomlin](#) and [Sophie Stern](#) /or to Professor [Lisa Kasmer](#), Chair. Also please remember

to send us photos along with the text/post. Now that we are on Facebook, we try to share photos with every post!