

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

Eugenio María de Hostos Community College,
The City University of New York



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English Department Newsletter

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Issue Introduction Chair's Greeting



Greetings and welcome to the Fall 2022 semester! I am delighted to be serving the English Department as Chair and I am happy to see so many colleagues and students back on campus this term. It has been a real treat to have informal conversations in person. It is also heartening to know that Zoom continues to make it possible for so many faculty to attend meetings and participate in our shared culture. I know that we are all still reckoning with the effects of the pandemic and will do so for the foreseeable future. These effects will continue to show themselves in unexpected and sometimes bewildering ways that will require patience, empathy, and adaptability. That said, it makes me hopeful to see our community coming together and I look forward to supporting and cheering on our many remarkable achievements.

Best,
Heidi

Editors' Note



This issue marks a new academic year for Team English, which opens in a period of growth and transition. Our new Faculty Spotlights section (page 2) features our two newly hired permanent faculty members, Assistant Professor Christine Choi, and Lecturer, Thomas Barber. The department enthusiastically welcomes them. The Faculty Reading List (page 2) features favorite readings by our faculty, who clearly spent the 2022 summer immersed in good books. In a feature (page 3) former English Chair, Andrea Fabrizio, updates us on her new transition to the position of Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, and the many programs and initiatives in which she is excited to be involved. This term the department is very fortunate and excited to welcome a new chairing duo, former Deputy Chair, Heidi Bollinger, who was elected to Department Chair, and Professor Clarence Robertson, who has accepted the position of Deputy Chair. The department also welcomes back Professor Anne Rounds (page 3) and Professor Tram Nguyen (page 4), who have both returned from fruitful Fellowship leaves. Prof. Nguyen resumes her post as Writing Center Director, following the thoughtful stewardship of interim Director, Craig Bernardini. Ever excellent and engaged, the Writing Center's tutors share their original acrostic poems inspired by old superstitions (page 4). The project was devised by Poet-In-Practice, Sarah Key, for a Friday the Thirteenth Professional Development event from Spring 2022. Our faculty and staff remain committed to excellence in teaching, service and scholarship. The Faculty Accolades section (page 5), is the most robust entry this newsletter has had to date. In the midst of all this growth and change, the department is deeply saddened to mark the loss of our colleague, Andrew "Drew" Hubner, who passed away over the summer. The In Memoriam (page 5) gathers together some threads from the many heartfelt reflections and memories that faculty and staff have shared of our fellow professor and friend, who served Hostos for over twenty years. Finally, we thank this issue's contributors: Heidi Bollinger, Clarence Robertson, Christine Choi, Thomas Barber, Craig Bernardini, Aaron Botwick, Alex Milsom, Elizabeth Porter, Andrea Fabrizio, Anne Rounds, Tram Nguyen, Sarah Key and WC Tutors, Charles Rice-González, and Carl Grindley.

New Faculty Spotlight

Christine Choi, PhD

Assistant Professor, English



Q: Tell us a bit about yourself.

A: I'm the youngest of four girls, and the only one to pursue a degree in the humanities. I earned my Ph.D. from the Graduate Center, CUNY, where my research focused on Victorian Literature and Women's Studies. My dissertation was on Victorian sensation fiction,

focusing on how humor works unobtrusively with the uncanny and the violent in these texts, thus revealing the authors' cultural, historical, and political critiques.

Q: What most excites you about your new position at Hostos?

A: I am honored to be joining such an accomplished yet humble group of scholars within the Hostos English department. [...] I'm also excited to have been able to revamp my syllabi and assignments for the new courses I've been assigned to teach. So far, my students have responded well and risen to the challenge of analyzing and critiquing some difficult texts.

Q: What are your current research projects?

A: I'm working on a project focused on 19th century texts that interrogate constructs of Victorian womanhood and maternity. I'm interested in both sympathetic and critical portrayals of women on whom the maternal ideal is forced, and what, if any, models are offered for being a "good" woman.

New Faculty Spotlight

Thomas Barber, MFA

Lecturer, English



Q: Tell us a bit about yourself.

A: I am originally from Salt Lake City, Utah but have been in NYC for 11 years. I am a fiction writer, and I am currently writing a revenge novel centered around corporate/political greed in America.

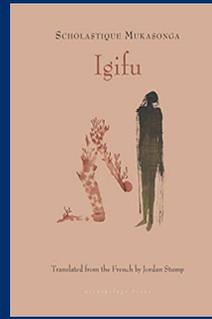
Q: What most excites you about your new position at Hostos?

A: The stability and the increased salary! I've been an adjunct here for eight years, so I already love the students and the community. With this new position, I feel a little more accepted and also like I belong.

Q: What are you excited to bring to the classroom?

A: I am big on following your dreams. I got lost in corporate America for a while in my 20s and was miserable. One of the messages that always comes out in my classroom is to be honest with yourself about what you really want in life and to GO FOR IT!

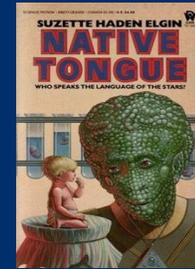
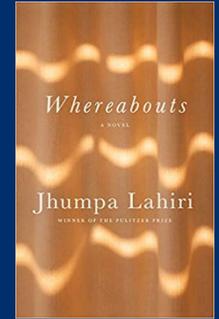
Fall Faculty Reading List



Scholastique Mukasonga, *Igifu* (2020): "Moving autobiographical stories about the Tutsi refugee community." - Prof. Barber

Jhumpa Lahiri, *Whereabouts* (2021): "[...] beautifully evokes the texture of everyday life in an understated way."

- Prof. Bollinger

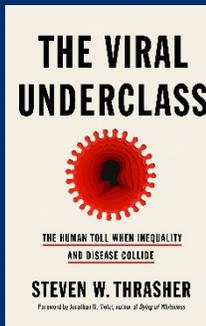
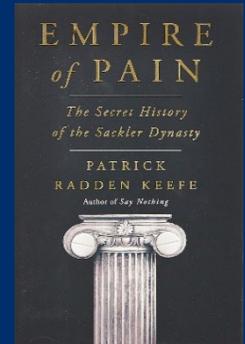


Suzette Haden Elgin, *Native Tongue* (1984): "[...] ability to communicate with aliens is essential to interstellar trade. Also: the nineteenth amendment has been revoked."

- Prof. Botwick

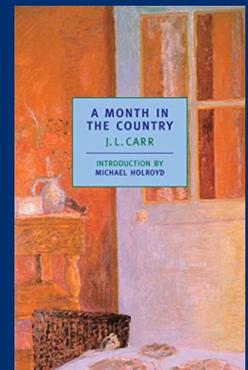
Patrick Keefe, *Empire of Pain* (2021): "[...] the Sackler family and the rise of Oxycotin. [...] how much money they made destroying lives and families. And how they essentially got away with it."

- Prof. Bernardini



Steven Thrasher, *The Viral Underclass* (2022): "viruses, biological and so-cietal, [...] straddle the ten-sion between privilege and striving, and land in a loving place." - Prof. Rice-González

J.L. Carr, *A Month in the Country* (1980): "[...] short, gloomy book about a WWI veteran who restores medieval murals in old churches. I loved it." - Prof. Milsom



Ling Ma, *Severance* (2018): "[...] witty and eerie [...] the mundane routine of a woman who survives the apocalypse and keeps going to her office." - Prof. Porter

Former English Chair Andrea Fabrizio Becomes Associate Dean of Academic Affairs

We asked Prof. Fabrizio to discuss her exciting transition to this new position.



I am excited to have this opportunity to share the work I am doing in my new role as OAA Associate Dean with the English Department.

These past few months

working with our Provost, Dr. Shiang-Kwei Wang, and the OAA team, have been an incredible and enjoyable learning experience. I am happy to be working with a number of initiatives and programs, some familiar and some very new, and to learn more about the many ways our faculty and staff work to support our students. I work closely to support five academic departments including Behavioral and Social Sciences, Language and Cognition, Math, the Library and English. I am delighted to be able to work with the English Department and to continue to work with WAC and the Writing Center. It is also a pleasure to collaborate with the many directors and offices that support our students, including HALC, START, CLIP, ASAP, USIP, First Year Experience, and the Honors program. My new role also gives me the opportunity to support faculty and student research on campus by working with CSTEP/STEP, CRSP, and the Grants Office. One project I am particularly excited about this term is co-chairing a subcommittee of the Cross Divisional Advisement Committee on Advisement with Director of the Coaching Unit, Jason Pelosi. We will be working to define what we mean by advising on campus and on how to form a true partnership between advisors/coaches and faculty in supporting our students. This position offers new experiences and new challenges, and because of the many rewarding years I had the privilege to spend with the English Department, I feel well-prepared and optimistic about the year ahead. Thank you, Team English.

Fellowship Leave Catchup with Prof. Anne Rounds

I enjoyed a productive sabbatical in 2021 – 2022. By the end, I had finished writing a longform elegy entitled *Clearing the Stage*, and published it on Manifold, CUNY’s open-source platform for digital publishing. The work is a suite of poems responding to the pandemic and its shifting aftermath. Working with our own Krysia Michael, I learned how to manipulate my manuscript so the poems displayed with all the proper spacing and line breaks. There are a lot of allusions to other texts, and Manifold allows hyperlinking and hosting of supplemental materials, so readers know where I am stealing my material. *Clearing the Stage* is now live [here!](#)

I also completed a scholarly article, “Crippling Core Books: Beyond Accessibility in the Great Books Classroom.” The article will appear in a special issue of the *College English Association Critic* themed on “Impediments to Student Success.” Using critical lenses from disability studies, I unpack the terminology of access within select Great Books initiatives, community college missions, and their paratexts. Writing this article was a way to reflect on aspects of Hostos’ Columbia Core program and place it in a larger context, and I also enjoyed integrating lived experience into a piece of academic writing.



Image: Rounds performs at New York City’s Merkin Hall (Credit: Richard Turmine).

Other artistic opportunities cropped up during the year. In March, I prepared and performed a Franz Schubert solo piano work, *Klavierstück D. 946 No.1 in E-flat minor*, at New York City’s Merkin Hall. The performance was part of the Kaufman Music Center’s Day of Musical Action, a fundraiser for music education. Playing on the Merkin stage, a space known for its superb acoustics and innovative programming, was a mix of scary and amazing, and I was so happy to share the performance on Zoom with many members of the department. I am including a picture from the event—perhaps a more compelling visual than a picture of me typing an article on my laptop.

Fellowship Leave Catchup with Prof. Tram Nguyen

My fellowship leave was a productive time. My article “Feminist Memorializations in Piercy and Carter” was completed and published in an issue of *Gender Forum* titled “Gender, Violence, and the State in Contemporary Speculative Fiction.” I’m proud to acknowledge that this essay came out of a writing-intensive Special Topics electives course for the English department called “Feminist Cyberpunk Narratives.”



Image: Nguyen presents at the Modernist Memories Conference at Goethe University, Frankfurt. Credit: Amalia Cotoi.

I presented at two conferences: an hour-long talk at the 2021 International Writing Center Association Conference on the successful practices of the Hostos Writing Center, titled, “The Bronx Way: Re-thinking Educational Access and Social Justice” and at the Modernist Memories Conference at Goethe University Frankfurt in May 2022. My paper “The Neural Time Scales of Stein’s *Geography and Plays*” read Stein’s writing through the lens of contemporary neuroscientific discoveries about time-mapping and memory encoding.



Image: Nguyen outside Newberry Library, Chicago, IL. Credit: Siobhan Burke

I was invited to participate in a NEH Summer Institute at the Newberry Library titled “Making Modernism.” Capped at 25 attendees, this three-week institute allowed me to make use of the Newberry archives and receive feedback from colleagues on a draft of the theatrical staging of Gertrude Stein’s children’s fable, *The World Is Round*, which I hope to submit to the *Feminist Modernist Studies* journal in Fall 2022.

This term, Prof. Nguyen also resumes her position as director of the Hostos Writing Center.

Superstitious Poetry

By Writing Center Tutors

Step away from your worries and approach
your dream or wish or goal

On miner’s hard day, even he finds more
than coal

A summer’s heat can only be blessed by an
icy treat

Crack your fingers to release tension

Break your concentration

Your fingers are now stiff, far from
relaxation

Mother’s voice tripping, strolling

Back to back—look at your worries trolling

- Julia Baker

THROW backs, take me to a time better
than now but no

SALT, No shade, I just help can’t help
how happy memories play

OVER and over. Nothing competes with
the present like the past and although

YOUR future can be what you make it, I
can’t help but feel like lady luck is
giving me the cold

SHOULDER

- Khalid Wright

A curious mind and spirit, like that of a
Cat, keeps your soul young and open to
whatever

Crosses your way. The universal mind,
God, makes no mistakes.

Your life’s meant to be a surprise. Don’t
be afraid to wander and be lost
sometimes. Just follow your heart, it
will show you the

Path you came here to walk.

- Rosangella Cruz

You always have reservations when you
first fall into it. You think that you
can’t live up to the standards that exist.

You don’t want anyone to
see you embarrass yourself. Yet at the
same time you know

the idea of doing it would make you
happy. That having a

bride can be the highlight of your life. It
was never something you thought
about

before, but now it’s all you want. You
start to think that maybe

the risk is worth it. Or maybe it wasn’t
there at all. You think that after this

ceremony, what other people think isn’t
as important as what you feel.

- Damien Rivera

In Memoriam Andrew Hubner, MA Lecturer, English 1962-2022

The Hostos Community College English department honors the life of our colleague, Andrew “Drew” Hubner (Lecturer, English), who passed away this past summer. Drew taught in the English Department at Hostos for over twenty years. Drew was the author of numerous articles and three books: *American By Blood* (Simon & Schuster, 2001), *We Pierce* (Simon & Schuster, 2004), and *East of Bowery* (Sensitive Skin Books, 2011). He will be missed.



Credit: Carl Grindley

“He was a dedicated teacher who loved our students and who believed deeply in the mission of Hostos.”
- Heidi Bollinger

“I liked so much counting on Drew to [...] tell lively stories about his kids and his students.” - Jerilyn Fisher

“We shared our feelings of gratitude for the chance to become teachers.” - Daniel Casey

“[...] an ‘inveterate greeter of strangers.’ That’s how I knew and experienced Drew” - Andy Connolly

“I will miss his laugh and sense of humor.”
- Arisbel Marte

“He had ‘Mayor of the 3rd Floor’ presence, [...], making sure everybody was okay.” - Alice Nicholas

“There was not a greeting that he didn’t ask about my children and I would ask about his as well as his love of baseball.” - Shalema Averett-Hunt

“A wonderful person, a workhorse teacher, a gifted writer.” - Michael Cisco

“[...] he had to pick up a pen if he found one in the street because he thought there might be a great novel in it.” - Craig Bernardini

“His love of Hostos made him fearless.” - Carl Grindley

Departmental Accolades Publications

- Bollinger, Heidi. "Loss Made Visible: Women's Graphic Memoirs and the Boundlessness of Grief." *Auto/Biography Studies*, vol. 36, no. 3, 2022, pp. 655-662.
- Bollinger, Heidi. "Post-Truth but not Post-Race: The Repeating Realities of Anna Deavere Smith's *Twilight*: Los Angeles, 1992." *Theater in a Post-Truth World: Texts, Politics, and Performance*. edited by William C. Boles, Bloomsbury, 2022, pp. 39-57.
- Choi, Christine. "[Multiplicities of English and the Specter of Colonial-ism in the Composition Classroom](#)." *Victorian Studies*, vol. 64, no. 2, 2022, pp. 276-280.
- Gerrity, Sean. "[Harriet Jacobs, Marronage, and Alternative Freedoms in Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl](#)." *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers*, vol. 38, no. 1-2, 2022, pp. 67-89.
- Hubner, Drew. "[Books in Conversation: Mike DeCapite with Drew Hubner](#)." *The Brooklyn Rail*, March 8, 2022. Online.
- Key, Sarah. "Walking on the Beach the Morning After RBG Died." *Mom Egg Review*. vol. 20, 2022.
- Michael, Krystyna. "[Hybrid Scholarly Publishing Models in a Digital Age](#)." Cowritten with Matt Gold and Jojo Karlin. *Print Cultures in the Americas: Materialism in the Archives*, edited by Jesse Schwartz and Daniel Worden, Bloomsbury, 2022. pp. 277-292.
- Michael, Krystyna. "[Evolving Manifold Scholarship: From Monographs to OER](#)." Cowritten with Jojo Karlin and Robin Miller. *OER Starter Kit for Program Managers*, edited by Abbey K. Elder, Rebus Press, 2022.
- Rice-González, Charles. "[Deep Salvage](#)." *The Big Other*, John Madera (ed.), 10 June 2022.
- Rice-González, Charles. "[Julio's Footprints](#)." *Aster(ix) Journal*. Angie Cruz (ed.), 17 March 2022.
- Soto-Franco, Juan. "[Poemas Acrósticos, Rimas y Juegos de Palabras](#)." *MICROS: Revista de minificción dominicana y caribeña [MICROS: A Dominican and Caribbean minifiction magazine]*. vol. 1, no. 5. May-August 2022.

Presentations & Performances

- Botwick, Aaron. "NeMLA's Publishing Mentorship Program." *North-east Modern Language Association Conference*. March 2022, Baltimore, MD. Roundtable.
- Botwick, Aaron. "Common Graves: The 'Sensational Suicide Story' of Victorian Print Media." *Northeast Modern Language Association Conference*. March 2022, Baltimore, MD. Presentation.
- Botwick, Aaron. "The Gospel of the Death Drive: Blood Knowledge and Suicide in D.H. Lawrence's *Women in Love*." *International D.H. Lawrence Conference*, July 2022, Taos, NM. Presentation.
- Choi, Christine. "Killing Her Softly: The Role of Social Humour in *Ouida's Moths*." *Women & Humour in the Long Nineteenth Century, Traditions of Women's Humour*. 24 June 2021, King's College, London, U.K.
- Milsom, Alexandra. "Romanticism and Romantic All-Inclusive Resorts in the Caribbean." *New Romanticisms*, North American Society for the Study of Romanticism (NASSR) & British Association for Romantic Studies (BARS) Conference, 3 August 2022, Edge Hill University, Ormskirk, U.K. Online presentation.
- Muñoz, Victoria. "Literatura caballeresca ibérica en la corte inglesa: escándalo y piratería en tiempos de Isabel I" (*Iberian Chivalric Literature at the English Court: Scandal and Piracy in the Times of Elizabeth I*). *Seminario de Estudios sobre Narrativa Caballeresca (SENC)*. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. September 22nd, 2022. Invited online lecture.

- Muñoz, Victoria. "Raleigh the Romantic, Raleigh the Reader: Quixoticism and Piracy on the High Seas." "Cervantes's English Transformations." Shakespeare Association of America Conference, 9 April, 2022, Jacksonville, FL. Hybrid panel.
- Nguyen, Tram. "Teaching Canonical Texts & CUNY: A Panel Discussion," Core Books at CUNY, City College of Technology, 15 September, 2022.
- Porter, Elizabeth. "Reading and Writing like a Detective: Designing an Asynchronous Course on the Female Detective Novel." Transitions and Transactions VI: Teaching Literature in the Time of COVID. BMCC/New York College English Association. 9 April, 2022. Online panel paper.
- Porter, Elizabeth. "Reframing Richardson." American Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS) Annual Conference. Baltimore, MD. 2 April, 2022. Panel Organizer & Moderator.
- Soto-Franco, Juan. "RPM: Speed up Your Essay Grading and Feedback." Dominican Republic TESOL (DR- TESOL) International Conference, 29 July 2022, Santo Domingo, DR. Presentation.
- Widney, Chris. "Why?" A ten-minute play about chickens. Edmonds Driftwood Players Festival of Shorts. 24 June - 3 July, 2022. Wade James Theatre, Edmonds, WA.
- Zucker, Elyse "Projection and the Pursuit of Self in Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness" 38th Conference on Psychology and the Arts, 29 June 2022, Albany University, NY. Online.

Congratulations

- To Shalema Averett-Hunt, for completing her second Associate's Degree in Office Technology (May 2022).
- To Andrea Fabrizio, for her appointment to her new position as Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.
- To Victoria Muñoz, for receiving a \$40,000 Community College Faculty Fellowship for Humanistic Scholarship from the Mellon Foundation/American Council of Learned Societies.
- To Charles Rice-González, for receiving the Premio Igualdad 2022 from Fundacion Igualdad (May 2022) and for being Honored by Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson with a Citation of Merit Celebrating Pride Month (June 2022).
- To Christopher Widney, for receiving a Judges' and Audience Fave Award for his play, "Why?"

News & Announcements

- ENG 241: Introduction to LGBTQ Literature is scheduled to have its inaugural run in Spring 2023.
- On October 6, Heidi Bollinger will participate in a roundtable at New York Comic Con on "Pop-Culture, Fandom, and Comics in the College Classroom."
- On October 6th from 12:30-1:45 PM in B-501, The Women's and Gender Studies (WGS) Program is hosting documentary filmmaker, Lisa Molomot, and screening her newest film *Soleidad* about a teenage girl seeking asylum in the U.S.
- On November 11th from 11-12, Profs. Porter and Tajbhai will be hosting an online CTL-sponsored Mindful Conversations workshop on Growth Mindset practices in the classroom.
- We are reading *Custom of the Country* with the English Department book club on Manifold. Join us!

Term Meetings

- Department: Wed., Oct. 19th | Developmental: Tues., Oct. 18th and Wed., Dec. 7th | ENG 110: Mon., Oct. 24th and Mon., Nov. 14th | ENG 111: Tues., Nov. 1st and Tues., Nov. 29th | Electives: Wed., Oct. 12th

Engaged Storytelling Salon

"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you." — Maya Angelou

I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings



@ Hostos Writing Center



Stay Tuned!!



Hostos Community College



Engaged Storytelling Salon

"It's like everyone tells a story about themselves inside their own head. Always. All the time. That story makes you what you are. We build ourselves out of that story." — Patrick Rothfuss

The Name of the Wind, 2007

@ Hostos Writing Center

Stay Tuned!



Hostos Community College



To register for the Engaged Storytelling Salon, contact writingcenterhostos@gmail.com or (718) 518-6678.