18th Annual Graduate Student Conference

- Conference Program -

All Roads Lead to Roam:
Interdisciplinary Studies in the New Millennium

Friday, February 2, 2018
9am-3:45pm
UNC Charlotte, Popp Martin Student Union
8:30-9:00am  Registration and Check-In, Student Union Third Floor
9:05-9:25am  Opening Remarks and Welcome, 340GH

9:30-10:45am Session One

Panel One: Linguistics, 340I
Moderator: Kelly Brabec
9:30-9:55: Andres Restrepo, "Cultural Awareness to Enhance Communication Between School Teachers and CLD Families"
9:55-10:20: Kevin Chauncey, "The Effects of Identity Threat on Conversation"
10:20-10:45: Cecilia Tomasatti, "'Born-Translated' Literature and Italophone postcolonial novels: Disentangling hybrid identities and languages in Gabriella Ghermandi’s Queen of Flowers and Pearls"

Panel Two: Writing and Psychology, 340D
Moderator: Jessie Cortez
10:20-10:45: Mary Childers, “Mad Flapper in the Asylum: Psychosis and Dangerous Love in Dear Scott, Dearest Zelda”

Panel Three: Film Studies, 340F
Moderator: Katherine Tallent
9:30-9:55: Trae Toler, “'Kill Her, Mommy! Kill Her!': Gender and Maternal Influences in 70s and 80s Slasher Cinema”
10:20-10:45: Gabrielle Stecher, “Do you remember her?: Helen Gardner and the Becky Sharp Effect”

10:45-10:55am  Break (10 Minutes)
10:55am-12:10pm  Session Two

Panel One: Anthropocene & Ecology, 340I
Moderator: Nicole Jones
10:55-11:20: Haley Crook, "Complicating White Experiences in Anthropocentric Fiction"
11:20-11:45: Karisa Harris-Cleary, "Futurity and the Literature of the Anthropocene: Temporal Interregnum in Colson Whitehead's Zone One"
11:45-12:10: Austin Shifflett, "'Odd Affinities': The Spectral Ecology of Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway"

Panel Two: Race Studies, 340D
Moderator: Sara Eudy
10:55-11:20: Kelci Barton, “Race, Colonialism, and Trauma in Zadie Smith’s White Teeth”
11:20-11:45: Alissa Cruz, "The Chains of Time Encircling Black Womanhood in the film Twelve Years a Slave"
11:45-12:10: Thomas Simonson, “Poetic Bodies / Bodily Poetics: Space & Miscegenation in the Poetry of Una Marson and Louise Bennett”

Panel Three: Violence & War, 340E
Moderator: Kelly Brabec
11:20-11:45: Hannah Brown, “Resisting the Dehumanizing Institution of the Military in the Poetry of Here, Bullet by Brian Turner”

Panel Four: Book History, 340F
Moderator: Kevin Chauncey
11:20-11:45: Jacquelyn Schaefle, "The Limited Perspective in Annie on My Mind"
11:45-12:10: Violet Strawderman, “The Monster in the Archive: Richard III and the Silencing of Tudor Mythology"
12:10-12:55pm Complimentary Lunch Break, 340GH
1:00-1:55pm Keynote Address, 340GH

Dr. Rebecca Walsh, "Modernism, Geography, and Anthropocene"

2:00-3:45pm Session Three

Panel One: Linguistics, 340F
Moderator: Kevin Chauncey
2:00-2:25: Kellan Strong, "#BlackGirlMagic: Digital Spaces for Social Activism"
2:25-2:50: Zack Dukic, "Inclusive Pronoun Usage in the Construction of Political Identity"
2:50-3:15: Macy Dunklin, "Fitting Merkel into American Political Discourse"

Panel Two: Early Modern Studies, 340D
Moderator: Jessie Cortez
2:00-2:25: Suzi Spillane, "Shakespeare's and Greene’s Daughters: Mimetic Desire within Marriage Plots"
2:25-2:50: Katherine Tallent, "'The Gay's the Thing': Queer Identity in Marlowe's Edward II"

Panel Three: Gender Studies, 340E
Moderator: Sara Eudy
2:00-2:25: Chelsea Ensley, "The Illusion of Female Power in Angela Carter’s ‘The Company of Wolves’"
2:25-2:50: Amy Arnott, "A Tale as Old as Time: Sexuality and Punishment in Eliza Haywood’s Fantomina, Emily Brontë’s Wuthering Heights, and Radclyffe Hall’s The Well of Loneliness"
2:50-3:15: Amanda McNally, "Walt Whitman's Use of Eroticism and the Catalytic Effect on American Women"

3:25-3:45 Closing Remarks, 340D
Presentation Descriptions
(Alphabetical by Last Name)

Arnott, Amy. UNC Charlotte. "A Tale as Old as Time: Sexuality and Punishment in Eliza Haywood’s Fantomina, Emily Brontë’s Wuthering Heights, and Radclyffe Hall’s The Well of Loneliness”.

The paper will focus on the ways in which women who deviate from the marriage plot are ultimately punished. That punishment is a spectrum that usually revolves around death - whether that be a literal, figurative, or social death. The paper is focusing on female authored protagonists that span three centuries to show that female characters cannot escape this ending even when they are created by women.

Barton, Kelci. East Tennessee State. “Race, Colonialism, and Trauma in Zadie Smith’s White Teeth”.

This presentation will cover the effects that race, culture, and colonialism have on multiple characters from Smith's novel, mainly focusing on the newest generation of the families and their struggle with identity in England. Specifically, this presentation will cover the resulting trauma from this search for identity and the conflict of cultures these characters experience.

Brown, Hannah. UNC Charlotte. “Resisting the Dehumanizing Institution of the Military in the Poetry of Here, Bullet by Brian Turner”.

The poetry collection Here, Bullet by Brian Turner chooses to actively humanize and give voice to both the soldier and the Iraqi rather than dehumanize them both as a commodity of war. The poetry in Here, Bullet illustrates the visceral and realist way in which war commodifies the body. By resisting and pushing back against the dehumanizing language of the military as capitalist institution, Turner’s poetry becomes a revolutionary act benefiting the common soldier in his struggle to regain his humanity.
Chauncey, Kevin. UNC Charlotte. "The Effects of Identity Threat on Conversation".

People operate in unfamiliar scenarios as humans only can: they make a generalization, or trust a stereotype, and believe that it is accurate more times than it is not. It goes without saying that reliance on these stereotypes can lead to harmful social behavior in the presence of others. What is not generally considered is the effect these stereotypes can have on “others” even when it is the “others” themselves who make it relevant – no derogatory comments required. This presentation addresses some relevant research done by other scholars and my own preliminary analysis from the Fall 2017 semester.

Childers, Mary. UNC Wilmington. “Mad Flapper in the Asylum: Psychosis and Dangerous Love in Dear Scott, Dearest Zelda”.

By grounding my research in the primary text, Dear Scott, Dearest Zelda: The Love Letters of F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald, published in 2003, I argue that Zelda’s relationship with F. Scott, as well as her mental illness has been romanticized to fit the ideology of a successful love story. In conclusion, by examining this collection of letters, I’ll be showing how the portrayal of Zelda Fitzgerald through this text has shaped American society’s understanding of her mental illness, as well as her relationship with F. Scott Fitzgerald.


This thesis explores the unusual implementation of Edgar Allan Poe, Master of the Macabre, in the American classroom by identifying the various reasons why his works were initially appropriated for adolescents in the mid-19th century. Through the delineation of juvenile academic adaptations, this thesis traces the societal-cum-literary transition of a starving artist once exclusively reputed for his woeful intemperance and amoral pen to his modern-day stardom and celebrated perversity in American culture.
**Crook, Haley.** Old Dominion University. "Complicating White Experiences in Anthropocentric Fiction".

Through examining texts by Margaret Atwood and Kurt Vonnegut, my project highlights the complications that occur when anthropocentric fiction is told by white male narrators and situated in their perspectives and experiences. My work is a call to action for stories of ecological collapse to include the voices of people of color and women in particular.

**Cruz, Alissa.** James Madison University. "The Chains of Time Encircling Black Womanhood in the film *Twelve Years a Slave*".

This essay looks at how women's time is affected differently than men's within slavery. This essay looks at how slavery disrupts the development of womanhood for the female slave and how this is depicted within the film.

**Draina, Nicole.** UNC Wilmington. “Parental Padres, Indigenous Populations & Silent Genocide: Analysis of a 1950s Travel Guide of the California Missions”.

In this paper, I hope to explain the neglected narrative of the indigenous populations compared to the Eurocentric, romantic, narrative that is highlighted in Wright's 1950s travel guide. With the recent canonization of mission founder, Padre Serra, the continued neglected narratives of the native populations as seen in the 1950s travel guide and current travel information is increasingly urgent. The overall intent of this project is to promote the importance of a silenced voice within the dominant culture.

A politician’s language use is crucial in creating familiarity with and drawing support from a particular community. This study analyzes the use of inclusive pronouns (e.g. we, our, us) in speeches delivered by John F. Kennedy, Bill Clinton and Fidel Castro to answer the question of how these politicians used inclusive pronouns to construct a political identity through synthetic personalization and different speaker roles.

Dunklin, Macy. UNC Charlotte. “Fitting Merkel into American Political Discourse”.

Political leaders are becoming more aware that their addresses are being heard by those around the world. Because of this, speech structures and functions among world powers have become more and more universal in nature. I will address the ways in which Merkel’s New Year’s Eve address fits into the current political genre of American Political Discourse by analyzing the function and structure.

Enlow, Myers. Clemson University. “Visual Rhetorics Encouraging Statutory Rape”.

My paper shows how the television show, Pretty Little Liars, encourages viewers to find statutory rape relationships romantic, and not illegal and dangerous. This is shown through two separate, but related, relationships throughout the show’s course.

Ensley, Chelsea. Western Carolina University. “The Illusion of Female Power in Angela Carter’s ‘The Company of Wolves’”.

An exploration of Angela Carter’s “The Company of Wolves” sheds light on the classic Little Red Riding Hood tale and reveals the subservient and powerless position women are forced to inhabit in a patriarchal world. While the female body and sexuality can be used to seduce and acquire power, Carter’s story exposes how female power remains purely illusionary.
Gonzalez Caban, Jasmin. UNC Charlotte. “Deconstructing Ideologies within *The Walking Dead*”.

This paper applies Jacques Derrida’s theory of deconstruction to AMC’s *The Walking Dead* in order to analyze racial ideologies within the show and among society.

Harris-Cleary, Karisa. James Madison University. "Futurity and the Literature of the Anthropocene: Temporal Interregnum in Colson Whitehead's *Zone One*".

John Lyly’s Gallathea performs more than a silly queer romance tied together by a marriage plot. The play's Lincolnshire setting, threatened to be flooded by Neptune, has an ecological backstory interwoven with queerphobia. Gallathea and Phyllida’s romantic endeavors in the grove subvert these patriarchal narratives of the “natural” and ignite strange love throughout the village.


The novella Fantomina was written hundreds of years ago, but the protagonist’s experience of sexual abuse contains many parallels to that of women today. Using modern statistics and contemporary psychological findings, this presentation will explore how the character Fantomina falls victim to a cycle of sexual abuse that has been repeated for centuries.


Through Whitman’s bold and honest approach to sexuality he opened a discussion for women who had the most to gain from sexuality being normalized. His use of sexual themes in poetry provided the catalyst needed for social change in Victorian America.

Who is more of a monster: the Incredible Hulk or Dr. Bruce Banner? The answer may surprise you.

Restrepo, Andres. Greensboro College. “Cultural Awareness to Enhance Communication Between School Teachers and CLD Families”.

Let’s talk about how the communication and behavior of ESL families can be understood through the eyes of cultural dimensions and how this affects students.

Schaefle, Jacquelyn. UNC Charlotte. "The Limited Perspective in Annie on My Mind".

With LGBT+ representation in media so widely discussed today, it is important to recognize the progress which led to the present as well as the developments still needed for the future. In looking at the editing process of the groundbreaking novel, Annie on My Mind, it becomes clear that the incredible leaps it made for LGBT+ visibility in literature, though already great, could have been even greater had certain changes not been made.

Shifflett, Austin. James Madison University. "'Odd Affinities': The Spectral Ecology of Virginia Woolf’s Mrs. Dalloway".

This paper considers the strange, haunting, and immaterial facets of Virginia Woolf’s ecology.
Simonson, Thomas. Wake Forest University. “Poetic Bodies / Bodily Poetics: Space & Miscegenation in the Poetry of Una Marson and Louise Bennett”.

In the poetry of Una Marson and Louise Bennett, the body of the poetic speaker/citizen and the bodily form of the poems in question serve as the loci of postcolonial contestations of space. Corporeal bodies in these poets’ works are explored both as sources of colonialist apprehensions of miscegenation and as the means to claim formerly colonial spaces; the hybridized poetic forms of these works, accordingly, mirror the metonymic signification that miscegenation possessed in the poets’ sociocultural contexts.

Spillane, Suzi. UNC Charlotte. “Shakespeare's and Greene's Daughters: Mimetic Desire within Marriage Plots”.

In this paper I explore the relationships between fathers and daughters in William Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream, The Taming of the Shrew, and Robert Greene’s James IV. I view the relationships through Rene Girard’s theory on homosocial desire to explain the greater importance placed on the father’s relationship with the suitor, rather than the relationship between a father and his daughter and argue that in these plays daughters are used as a conduit for fathers to reach a deeper bond with their daughters’ betrothed.

Stecher, Gabrielle. University of Georgia. “‘Do you remember her?’: Helen Gardner and the Becky Sharp Effect”.

This paper discusses the career of forgotten female film pioneer Helen Gardner and the ways in which her performance as Becky Sharp in the 1911 Vitagraph film adaptation of Thackeray's Vanity Fair influenced the trajectory of her career.
Strawderman, Violet. Old Dominion University. “The Monster in the Archive: Richard III and the Silencing of Tudor Mythology”.

The power of an archive created by Tudor propagandists resulted in a 527 year (and counting) silencing and disabling of Richard III. Only through re-examining this archive and its contents can agency for other silenced, disabled figures be established.

Strong, Kellan. UNC Charlotte. “#BlackGirlMagic: Digital Spaces for Social Activism”.

This is a pilot study that unpacks the ways in which Black women use Twitter hashtags for social change. The implications of this research is intended to inform the ways in which classroom teachers can begin to develop critical literacy practices for Black female students.

Tallent, Katherine. UNC Charlotte. "The Gay's the Thing': Queer Identity in Marlowe's Edward II".

Through the analysis of past criticism, early modern ideas of sexuality, and the dialogue and actions of the characters of Edward II, the importance of gender performance and sexuality become clearly evident in the play.

Toler, Trae. UNC Wilmington. “‘Kill Her, Mommy! Kill Her!’: Gender and Maternal Influences in 70s and 80s Slasher Cinema”.

In this presentation, through the use of psychoanalytic-feminist film theory, I analyze the depiction of the Oedipus complex, phallic imagery, and castration anxiety as a means to explore and continue the discussion surrounding Carol Clover’s notion of the “Final Girl.” Unlike Clover, I argue that gender is not traded between the killer and survivor. Instead, the survivor becomes a phallicized female—still embodying femininity—and the killer becomes a castrated male.
Tomasatti, Cecilia. North Carolina State. “‘Born-Translated’ Literature and Italophone postcolonial novels: Disentangling hybrid identities and languages in Gabriella Ghermandi’s Queen of Flowers and Pearls”.

Born-translated literature can exist in languages other than English and present the reader with hybrid texts and identities. A novel by the Italian-Ethiopian writer Gabriella Ghermandi in its original and English version will be the case study to look for such features.