

Literature

Literature at MIT embraces an expansive vision of literary study. Our research agendas and curriculum explore a broad array of written, oral, and visual forms, ranging from the ancient world to the 21st century. We teach poetry, drama, and prose fiction, as well as film, television, photography, comics, memoirs, and folk music. We represent a variety of methodologies but share a common dedication to close reading and historical reflection. We are interested in both the established masterpieces and the most recent cultural productions of the digital age.

Literature at MIT aims to maintain a level of excellence and innovation in the teaching and study of literature on par with the best universities while remaining responsive to MIT's distinctive institutional culture. The environment in which we work makes us different from any of our "peer" programs in literary study. Our faculty consists of scholars who are both leaders in their specific fields of study and devoted to enriching the education of undergraduates pursuing a wide spectrum of majors (including literature). Literature at MIT is one of the homes of humanistic and general education at the Institute. Our courses engage students in the pleasures and challenges of reading, viewing, listening, and interpreting; expose them to fresh ways of thinking about the world; and develop valuable, transferable skills in writing and communication.

The Literature faculty at MIT is all about balance. Along with our other humanities colleagues at the Institute, we are here to ensure that MIT's students have the opportunity for a fully balanced education. We complement subjects taught in the science and engineering disciplines in which many students will major. We conduct mainly small, seminar-style classes that afford undergraduates direct and continual interaction with full faculty members. Being a humanities faculty member at MIT also calls for balance. Our faculty members sustain excellent records of productivity and innovation in scholarship even though they lack the stimulus of a graduate program in their discipline and devote considerable effort to general undergraduate education. When we hire, we seek the special kind of scholar who can thrive in our distinctively challenging environment. We are proud of our ability to find and nurture such special talents.

Literature faculty members must possess the agility to shift their mode of approach to their discipline between a generally accessible idiom and a rigorously professional one. We welcome this challenge, believing that the study of literature needs to maintain its ties to broad extraprofessional audiences that can benefit from exposure to the knowledge and skills our discipline deploys.

We balance the present and future focus of our students with exposure to the cultural productions of times and places other than the here and now or the here and tomorrow. We take them out of their comfort zones. We defamiliarize the world they live in by helping them see it as embedded in cultural, historical, and representational traditions that are never simply in the past but always active or able to be activated in the present. We subject them to the inherent uncertainties of interpretation, whether of texts or of situations, helping them to see how much they interpret already without even being

aware of it. We believe this practice of defamiliarization helps them become more creative thinkers and less likely to take their world for granted.

Overview

Literature continues to operate as a highly effective unit within the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (SHASS). Our members publish vital works of scholarship, pursue innovation in research and teaching, and explore interdisciplinary partnerships and projects. They continue to win distinguished fellowships and other honors and share their ideas with professional peers at a variety of national and international conferences and meetings.

Two major events involving the Literature faculty community officially took place on July 1, 2013. On that date, Mary Fuller became the new section head of Literature, succeeding James Buzard, who served eight years in the role. Buzard will spend AY2014 on leave. Also on July 1, Sandy Alexandre was officially promoted to the rank of associate professor with tenure. We are delighted to have Sandy join the senior faculty in Literature and look forward to many years of benefiting from her presence among us.

AY2013 was a prolific year with respect to distinguished faculty publications. Junior faculty members led the way, with Professor Alexandre and associate professor Arthur Bahr both publishing major new books. Senior lecturer Wyn Kelley published a new book on innovative pedagogy. A 2006 book by Diana Henderson was brought out in paperback in 2012. Other Literature faculty members published numerous scholarly articles in journals and edited volumes.

This past year also saw Literature faculty members receive some highly noteworthy awards and grants. Our newest member, Stephanie Frampton, gained no fewer than four significant awards in support of her ongoing research in the field of classical studies. One of these deserves special notice: the Rome Prize Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Ancient Studies from the American Academy in Rome will enable Frampton to spend AY2014 in Rome working on her first book, *Alphabetic Order: The Roman Alphabet and the Material Culture of Writing in the Roman World*. For Professor Bahr, AY2013 was his first as Alfred Henry and Jean Morrison Hayes career development chair, a position he was named to starting July 1, 2012. Eugenie Brinkema spent AY2013 at Wellesley College as the recipient of the highly competitive Newhouse External Faculty Fellowship. Also, both Bahr and Brinkema received the James A. and Ruth Levitan Award for Excellence in Teaching from SHASS, a testament to the high standard of teaching Literature faculty strive to reach. Late in spring 2013, Shankar Raman was awarded the 2013–2014 Levitan Prize in support of his pathbreaking work on literature and mathematics.

Two initiatives in online study and learning by MIT Literature faculty members call for special mention. Peter Donaldson, Diana Henderson, and Shankar Raman received funding from two MIT sources in support of the online learning module *Global Hamlets*, which is developing tools to enable students to engage with a wide range of recorded *Hamlet* productions and adaptations from around the world. Professor Fuller received support from MIT's School of Engineering for development of a new class, "Literature from Anywhere," designed for MIT students studying and interning abroad.

Literature at MIT continued its central role in MIT's Program in Ancient and Medieval Studies, thanks to the boundless creative energy of Professor Bahr. The program augmented its academic offerings during 2012–2013 with a lineup of distinguished speakers at a colloquium series generously supported by the Dean of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (HASS).

In the past year, in keeping with our commitment to diversifying our intellectual community, the MIT Literature faculty nominated a major young African American poet as a candidate for the Martin Luther King Visiting Scholarship for 2013–2014. Unfortunately the nomination was not successful, but we will continue our efforts in this area in the years to come.

During AY2013, Professor Buzard continued in the role of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences curriculum liaison to the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD), working with its administrators and faculty to build the new university's HASS program. Buzard visited Singapore in February and March in connection with the university's attempt to hire a senior head of HASS and again in June and July to observe classes, meet with administrators and faculty members, and make recommendations as the university embarked on its second year of operation.

Literature faculty contributions to the larger MIT community carried forward in many forms, collectively and individually. We conducted our annual, highly popular "Pleasures of Poetry" series during Independent Activities Period (IAP); these daily, hour-long discussions of poetry were organized by David Thorburn. Each session of the series was led by a different member of the Literature faculty or by one of our friends and was open to Institute faculty, students, staff, and the public. We also continued our annual marathon reading event during IAP, this time tackling the entirety of Homer's *Odyssey* in approximately 13 hours. Faculty, students, and staff took part under the inspired direction of Professor Frampton. The popular IAP class "On the Screen," piloted in early 2012 by Professor Brinkema, was successfully offered again in January 2013 by Alvin Kibel. Our weekly literature teas carried on as ever, bringing together a number of students and faculty members for informal conversations and helping to sustain a community interest in literature. We also continued to support student activities, including the Literary Society and *Rune*. We did not participate, as in years past, in the Freshman Pre-Orientation program during August 2012, but we are collaborating with MIT's History faculty in a new pre-orientation program for August 2013.

Research and Publications

Since last year, Literature faculty members have been notably productive in scholarship that is making a difference to their fields of study. This scholarship has been published in important venues and presented at a variety of conferences and symposia in North America and in numerous foreign countries.

Professor Alexandre's first book, *The Properties of Violence: Claims to Ownership in Representations of Lynching*, was published by the University Press of Mississippi in 2012. Alexandre has begun work on her second book project, which extends her interest in questions of ownership in African-American culture, focusing on African Americans'

relationship to commodities and things. The working title for the new project is *Up from Chattels: Thinghood in an Ethics of Black Material Culture*. Medievalist Arthur Bahr's monograph *Fragments and Assemblages: Reading Compilations of Fourteenth-Century London* was published in early 2013 by the University of Chicago Press. Bahr also co-edited a special issue of the journal *The Chaucer Review* devoted to the recent methodological innovations in medieval studies, of which his own scholarship is a leading example: the issue's title is "Medieval English Literature and Its Manuscript Forms: Aesthetics and Codicology." Furthermore, Bahr's article "Fear, Time, and Lack: The *Egesa* of *Beowulf*" appeared in a new scholarly volume, *Essays on Aesthetics in Old and Middle English Literature in Honor of Howell D. Chickering, Jr.*, published by the Pontifical Institute for Mediaeval Studies and the University of Toronto Press. The piece makes clear that Bahr, who works mainly on Middle English literature, is also an expert analyst of Anglo-Saxon texts.

Two further books should be noted. Wyn Kelley's collaborative work over the past several years on the use of digital tools to enhance classroom encounters with classic American fiction resulted in the recent publication of her coedited volume *Reading in a Participatory Culture: Remixing Moby-Dick in the English Classroom* (Teachers College Press, 2013). A related article, "'Writ in Water': The Books of *Moby-Dick*," appeared in 2012 in *The Blackwell Companion to the American Novel*. Professor Henderson's 2006 monograph *Collaborations with the Past: Reshaping Shakespeare across Time and Media* (Cornell University Press) was released in paperback in 2012, a testament to the book's continuing impact on its field.

Other MIT Literature faculty members published or completed significant new scholarly articles for leading journals and edited collections.

Film and media scholar Eugenie Brinkema's essay "A Mother Is a Form of Time: *Gilmore Girls* and the Elasticity of In-finitude" was published in *Discourse: A Journal for Theoretical Studies in Media and Culture* in 2012.

Professor Buzard, who works primarily on 19th- and early-20th-century British literature, published several essays during the past year. His "Ethnographic and Narrative Frontiers: The Case of Gaskell's *Mary Barton*" appeared in *Raritan: A Quarterly Review*. A commissioned essay, "Impressions of *Theophrastus Such*: 'Not a Story,'" was published in the recent *Blackwell Companion to George Eliot* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2013). The commissioned pieces "Nationalisms and National Identities" (for *The Oxford History of the Novel in English, Vol. III: The Nineteenth-Century Novel, 1820–1880*) and "Portable Boundaries: The Question of Race in Trollope's North American Travels" (for *Riding/Writing Across Borders in North American Travelogues and Fiction*) both appeared in 2012.

Professor Fuller, new head of Literature and a renowned specialist in the literature of early modern exploration and cultural contact, published "Arctics of Empire: Hakluyt's Representation of the Arctic in *Principal Navigations* (1598–1600)" in *The Quest for the Northwest Passage* (Pickering & Chatto, 2012) and "'His Dark Materials': The Problem of Dullness in Hakluyt's Collections" in *Richard Hakluyt and Travel Writing in Early Modern Europe* (Ashgate/Hakluyt Society, 2012). Her article "Making Something of It: Questions of Value in the Early English Travel Collection" was reprinted in *Travel Writing*, a major new collection of essays from Routledge.

Early modern specialist Diana Henderson published “Where Had All the Flowers Gone? The Missing Space of Female Sonneteers in Mid-Seventeenth-Century England” in the bilingual journal *Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et Réforme* in 2012. Her “Ephemeral Echoes and Brash Possibilities: The Liberation of Adapting Shakespeare’s Early Comedies” is forthcoming in a volume titled *Shakespeare in Performance* (Cambridge Scholars Press).

Apart from the works noted above, American literature scholar and celebrated Herman Melville specialist Wyn Kelley has completed the forthcoming essays “*Pierre*, Life History, and the Obscure” (for *The Cambridge Companion to Herman Melville*) and “Free Robe and Vest’: Melville and the Uncollected Fragment” (for the edited volume *Melville’s Poetry*, from Kent State University Press).

Ann Fetter Friedlaender professor of humanities Ruth Perry carried forward her work on ballads and the culture of ballad making with “What Gets Printed from Oral Tradition: Anna Gordon’s Ephemeral Ballads,” in *Studies in Ephemera: Text and Image in Eighteenth-Century Print* (Bucknell University Press, 2013), and “The Printed Record of an Oral Tradition: Anna Gordon Brown’s Ballads,” in the journal *Studies in Scottish Literature*. She also published the short piece “A Lass Who Loved the Muckle Sangs” in *The Leopard* (August 2012).

Professor Raman’s innovative scholarship on connections between literature and mathematics in early modern Europe continues to flourish. He recently published “Constructing Selves, Making Publics: Geometry and Poetry in Descartes and Sidney” in *Beyond the Public Sphere: Opinions, Publics, Spaces in Early Modern Europe* (Fondazione Bruno Kessler). His “How to Construct a Poem: Descartes, Sidney” is forthcoming in summer 2013 in the collection *Formal Matters* (Manchester University Press).

Poet and translator Stephen Tapscott published two pieces on the artist Tucker Hollingsworth, “What Do You See When You Turn Out the Lights?” and “13 Questions and 13 Answers about Tucker Hollingsworth’s ‘Noise’ Series,” in the magazine of the Walker Arts Center, Minneapolis. Six of his translations of poems by Georg Trakl, set by composer Gregory Mertl, were published in spring 2013 and will premiere in the autumn.

Ford Foundation professor of humanities Peter Donaldson, an internationally recognized Shakespearean and digital humanities scholar, continues to expand his path-breaking Global Shakespeare initiative, focused on Shakespeare in performance the world over. He is currently working with partners in Asia, the Arab world, India, Brazil, and Mexico on a digital archive gathering and annotating performances of Shakespeare in all of these areas, in most of which artists bring the dramatic text and local performance traditions together in innovative ways. Global Shakespeare has also made its way into our curriculum, fundamentally altering the way Shakespeare is taught through explorations of the plays’ performance in such different contexts.

Fellowships and Awards

MIT Literature faculty members were acknowledged during the past year with a number of awards and honors.

As noted, Professor Frampton, in her first year on our faculty, won the prestigious Rome Prize Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Ancient Studies for AY2014. In addition, Frampton won three other awards in support of her promising scholarship on the sites and materiality of writing in the ancient Roman world. She will hold an Andrew Mellon Fellowship for Scholars in Critical Bibliography from the University of Virginia's Rare Book School for three years beginning in 2013. She also received the Margo Tytus Fellowship for a summer residency from the University of Cincinnati Department of Classics, as well as the Loeb Classical Library Foundation Fellowship from the Harvard University Department of Classics.

As mentioned above, Professors Bahr and Brinkema received the James A. and Ruth Levitan Award for Excellence in Teaching, and Brinkema spent the past academic year at Wellesley College's Newhouse Center on a highly competitive fellowship. In addition, Professor Raman was awarded the Levitan Prize in support of research on his forthcoming book *Before the Two Cultures: Literature and Mathematics in Early Modern Europe*.

Romanticist Noel Jackson was named a 2013–2014 alternate for the distinguished American Council for Learned Societies Fellowship.

The innovative Global Hamlets online learning module, developed by Professors Donaldson, Henderson, and Raman as a way of revolutionizing the study of Shakespeare in performance around the world, received funding from both the SHASS Dean's Teaching and Research Fund and the d'Arbelloff Fund for Excellence in Education. Professor Fuller received funding from MIT's School of Engineering to develop "Literature from Anywhere," a distance-learning project.

Margery Resnick continued work on the MIT/AMITA (Association of MIT Alumnae) Women's Oral History Project, which documents the role of women in the history of MIT.

Lectures and Appearances

Faculty members in Literature at MIT continued to spread their ideas and hone their ongoing research by delivering a host of invited and panel lectures over the past year at conferences and meetings in North America and in numerous foreign countries, including Germany, Britain, Canada, Italy, Singapore, Taiwan, Romania, and Turkey. Particularly noteworthy are the invitations to speak at conferences and workshops extended to our junior faculty members, an indication of the impact they have already begun to have throughout their fields.

Professor Brinkema merits special mention here for continuing her remarkable pace in bringing new work before a variety of audiences. Brinkema is already garnering keynote lecture invitations at professional conferences as well as repeated invitations to speak in series arranged by Boston's Museum of Fine Arts (MFA). Brinkema's latest MFA talk

was “Eisenstein to Tarantino,” an invited lecture presented at the museum’s “What Makes a Masterpiece?” series. Brinkema also presented the keynote lecture, “Violence and the Diagram: Or, *The Human Centipede*,” at the Corpus/Bodies: Film & Philosophy conference at the University of Florida, as well as “Digestion and the Diagram” at the University of Toronto’s Jackman Humanities Institute. Additional lectures included “An Oasis of Boredom in a Desert of Horror: Language and Time in *Pontypool*” (presented at the Society for Cinema and Media Studies conference in Chicago, where Brinkema organized and chaired a panel on “The Event of Boredom”), “Shame in Sequence” (presented at the Modern Language Association conference in Boston), and “*A l’intérieur* and the Sensitive Action of Horror” (presented at the World Picture Conference, University of Sussex). While in residence at Wellesley’s Newhouse Center, Brinkema also conducted an interview, “*Zona*: In the Tracks of Tarkovsky’s *Stalker*,” with writer and critic Geoff Dyer.

Professor Alexandre gave three lectures in connection with her newly published book on lynching representations and one related to her ongoing second book project on African American object and property relations. She presented an invited lecture, “Out of Site: On Location in Lynching Photographs,” at the Center for the Study of the New South (University of North Carolina, Charlotte). In addition, she spoke on “The Hateful Things of Lynching Paraphernalia” at the Mark Twain House & Museum in Hartford, CT, and “Addressing the Lynched: On Putting Dead Bodies in ‘Their Place’” at the University of Würzburg in Germany. Alexandre also previewed a portion of her new book project on Georgia Douglas Johnson at a lecture at Balliol College in Oxford, England.

Arthur Bahr was particularly active as a lecturer during the past year, giving four substantially different talks as well as organizing a conference panel. He was an invited speaker for the New England Medieval Conference in Amherst, MA, where he spoke on “The Manifold Singularity of *Pearl*.” He delivered the lecture “Pause for Effect: Unpunctuating *Patience*” at the annual International Congress of Medievalists in Kalamazoo, MI. His talk “Pleasurable Forms and the Forms of Pleasure in the Poems of Cotton Nero A.x” was featured at the 2013 Canada Chaucer Seminar in Toronto. He also presented “Knots, Chaucer’s Squire, and *Sir Gawain*” at the New Chaucer Society Conference in Portland, OR, as part of a panel he arranged on “Filler, Content, and the Interpretation of Medieval Books.”

Professor Buzard conducted an invited seminar on his ongoing work on Charles Dickens at the International Victorian Studies Conference in Venice, Italy. He is coorganizer of both this year’s and next year’s “Dickens Universe” conference held at the University of California, Santa Cruz; at the August 2012 conference, he cotaught a weeklong graduate seminar on *Bleak House*. He also conducted a pedagogy workshop on Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* at the Singapore University of Technology and Design in summer 2012.

Professor Donaldson gave the plenary talk “Global Shakespeare in Performance: New Tools for Education and Research” at the Mellon Workshop on Shakespeare and Education at Scripps College. He also lectured on “*The King’s Speech*: Shakespeare, Empire and Media History” at the Conference on Cultural Translations at George Washington University.

Professor Frampton presented an invited talk, “Memory and the Impermanent Text,” to students in the Classics Department at the University of Buffalo.

Professor Fuller was invited leader of a seminar on “Geography and Literature” at the annual conference of the Shakespeare Association of America.

Professor Henderson delivered the keynote lecture, “Magic in the Chain: *Othello*, *Omkara*, and the Materiality of Gender in Cross-Cultural Adaptation,” at the Shakespeare Across Media Conference at National Taiwan University. Henderson also presented a version of this lecture at the International Shakespeare Conference in Stratford-upon-Avon, England. She spoke as well on “Echoes and Retrospections: Listening for Other Voices, Hearing Shakespeare Anew” at the International Shakespeare Forum at Taiwan’s National Tsing Hua University. In her role in the Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education (see below), she was an invited participant at the Reinvention Center’s national conference on “Access and Success: Undergraduate Education in the 21st Century Research University” in Crystal City, VA. Locally, Henderson delivered versions of “Magic in the Chain” at Harvard and MIT; a panel presentation (“From Timur Khan to Tamburlaine”) at the MIT Global History Workshop, with Peter Perdue and Shankar Raman; and a guest lecture on filmed Shakespeare for a Boston College graduate seminar. She also presided over the “Intellectual Crimes: Theft, Pinking, and Roguish Behavior” session at the 2nd Biennial Meeting of the BABEL Working Group in Boston.

Professor Jackson gave invited talks at the City University of New York Graduate Center and at Harvard.

Senior lecturer Kelley presented the talk “Melville’s ‘Piazza’ on the Piazza” as part of Cultural Pittsfield’s Call Me Melville series in Lenox, MA.

Professor Kibel gave three lectures at the invitation of the MIT Alumni Association.

Professor Raman was an invited speaker at a panel on “The Seven Undeadly Sciences” at the BABEL Working Group conference in Boston. His lecture was titled “Infinite Finitude.”

Professor Tapscott presented a paper on photography and time at conferences in Romania and Istanbul.

Teaching

The Literature Section at MIT teaches about one quarter of MIT’s undergraduate population each year, and all of our faculty members, regardless of rank, devote half of their teaching load to introductory subjects that are part of the Institute’s general requirements. We also deliver a top-quality major to those who choose to pursue it, and over the past several years we have sent literature majors to graduate programs in English at such leading universities as the University of California, Berkeley; Stanford University; the University of California, Los Angeles; Cambridge University; the University of Chicago; and Yale University.

The Literature faculty regularly play a major role in the General Institute Requirements by offering many popular Communication-Intensive (CI-H) subjects and a wide range of middle- and upper-tier classes, as well as a growing number of Communication-Intensive subjects that focus on writing (CI-HW). Our teaching performance remains very strong, with some of our members routinely receiving student evaluation scores above 6.5 (out of 7) and, as noted, two of our members receiving teaching awards this past spring. We also have three current and two former MacVicar Faculty Fellows—Margery Resnick, David Thorburn, Ruth Perry, Stephen Tapscott, and Diana Henderson—about a third of our total number of faculty.

Ours is a faculty passionately devoted to excellence in undergraduate education. Toward that end, we are always innovating and seeking new ways to engage students with our rich and complex materials. Some highlights of our new and ongoing activities in undergraduate education include the interdisciplinary teaching collaboration on Global Shakespeare involving Professors Donaldson, Henderson, and Raman, which has recently focused on development of online modules for the teaching of *Hamlet* in global performance as templates for further study and development; Professor Fuller's new class "Literature from Anywhere," designed for MIT students engaged in study or internships abroad; Professor Buzard's new 21L.430 Serial Storytelling course, cotaught with Comparative Media Studies graduate student Elyse Graham and covering a wide range of media from the Renaissance to contemporary times; and the successful continuation of our popular new IAP subject "On the Screen," taught in its second iteration by Professor Kibel.

Professional Service

Our faculty members continue to play important roles in their scholarly communities. We regularly serve as executive committee members, delegates, chairs of ongoing seminars, advisory board members, manuscript reviewers for presses and journals, outside readers of PhD dissertations, doctoral defense examiners, and outside referees in tenure and promotion cases. Our opinion on all sorts of professional matters is highly valued. Most of this professional activity is done by comparatively senior members of our faculty, although there are notable exceptions.

Professor Bahr served on the organizing committee for the BABEL Working Group conference "Cruising the Ruins: The Question of Disciplinarity in the Post/Medieval University," held in Boston in the fall of 2012, and is now on the steering committee for the upcoming New England Medieval Conference.

Since 2010, as noted, outgoing head of Literature James Buzard has acted as chief HASS curriculum consultant for the Singapore University of Technology and Design; he advises SUTD on curricular and other matters and made a pair of two-week visits to Singapore during 2012–2013 in connection with this role. Professors Kibel, Henderson, and Raman also visited SUTD in AY2013 in support of this effort. In addition, Buzard continues his involvement with the multiuniversity Dickens Project consortium and is now a member of that group's executive board, charged with organizing the next two "Dickens Universe" events at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He is also helping to organize the 2014 annual conference of the International Society for the Study of

Narrative, which will be held at MIT. He is on the advisory boards of several journals and regularly reviews submitted work for these publications. During the past year, he served as an external reviewer for promotion cases at Indiana University and the University of California, Los Angeles.

Professor Donaldson was a referee for promotion cases at George Washington University, the University of Toronto, and Florida Atlantic University; in addition, he was a manuscript and plan reader for *Shakespeare: Journal of the British Film Institute*, the *Shakespeare International Yearbook*, and Palgrave Macmillan.

Professor Henderson is the new president of the Shakespeare Association of America and serves on the group's finance committee. She chairs the selection committee for the J. Leeds Barroll Dissertation Prize, which recognizes achievement in Shakespearean studies, and cochairs the ongoing "Women and Culture in the Early Modern World" seminar at Harvard University's Mahindra Humanities Center. She is on the nominations committee for the Society for Early Modern Women and the selection committee for the American Council of Learned Societies' Frederick Burkhardt Fellowships.

Professor Jackson was a member of the organizing committee for the 2013 conference of the North American Society for the Study of Romanticism, held in Boston. Jackson also served as an external member of one dissertation committee (University of Rhode Island) and assessed two promotion cases (for Arizona State University and Iowa State University).

Senior lecturer Kelley is currently serving as president of the International Herman Melville Society. In addition, she serves on the executive committee for the Melville Society Cultural Project and on the organizing committee for the Melville Society's 2013 international conference ("Herman Melville, Walt Whitman, and the Civil War") in Washington, DC. She is also associate director of the Melville Electronic Library.

Professor Perry chairs the ongoing "Eighteenth-Century Studies" seminar at Harvard's Mahindra Humanities Center. She reviewed submitted manuscripts for two important journals in her field and conducted several promotion reviews for other universities.

Professor Raman is a member of the editorial board for the journal *Shakespeare*; he reviewed submitted manuscripts for that journal and for *Shakespeare Quarterly*, *Genre*, and *Modern Philology*. As a recent fellow of the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, he reviewed applications to the program.

Professor Resnick continues to serve as president of the International Institute in Madrid, where she oversees numerous educational and outreach programs. The International Institute is a Massachusetts Charitable Foundation established by American educators and suffragists in the 19th century.

Professor Tapscott serves on the admissions committee of the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts.

Service at MIT

MIT Literature faculty members continued to fulfill a wide variety of roles at the Institute. During the past year, our members served in such important positions as associate chair of the MIT Faculty, director of the Office of Faculty Support and dean for curriculum and faculty support in the Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education, and chair of the Committee on Curricula, as well as on other vital Institute or section committees.

Professors Fuller, Henderson, Jackson, and Raman warrant particular attention in this category.

Professor Fuller completed her two-year term as associate chair of the MIT Faculty and served on numerous other Institute bodies, including the Faculty Policy Committee, the Committee on the Undergraduate Program, the Committee on Graduate Programs, the Corporation Joint Advisory Committee on Institute-Wide Affairs, and the SHASS Digital Learning Group. Along with other Literature faculty members, she also served as a freshman advisor.

Professor Henderson continued to serve as director of the Office of Faculty Support and dean for curriculum and faculty support in the Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education. Her roles include oversight of MIT's Who's Teaching What online subject evaluation system, the Office of the Communication Requirement, and the d'Arbeloff Fund for Excellence in Education and the Alumni Class Funds. They also include membership on, among others, the Committee on the Undergraduate Program, the MacVicar Faculty Fellows selection committee, the MIT Council on Educational Technology (MITCET), the Subject Evaluation Advisory Committee (chair), and the d'Arbeloff Fund awards committee (chair). Henderson was also theme leader for the Catalyzing the Undergraduate Commons project and a member of the Creative Arts Council.

Professor Jackson was Literature's Curriculum Committee chair, a member of the Committee for the Undergraduate Program, director of the Kelly-Douglas Fund, and a member of the organizing committee for the biannual MiT8 (Media in Transition) conference held at MIT.

Professor Raman chaired the important Committee on Curricula beginning in fall 2012. He was also a member of Literature's Curriculum Committee (fall 2012), MIT's Committee on Foreign Scholarships, and the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences' Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship Committee.

Other Literature faculty members were involved in important activities as well, as follows.

Professor Bahr was named a Burchard Fellow in fall 2012 and was a featured speaker at the annual MacVicar Day colloquium. Bahr organized and ran the very successful inaugural speakers' series for MIT's Program in Ancient and Medieval Studies. He also served as a member of Literature's Curriculum Committee in the fall of 2012.

Professor Buzard completed his eighth and final year as head of the Literature faculty in 2012–2013.

Professor Donaldson was a member of the newly formed MIT edX interest group.

Professor Frampton organized the section's *Odyssey* mobile reading marathon during 2013 IAP.

Wyn Kelley worked with the Subcommittee on the Communication Requirement to develop guidelines for an important subset of the "Communication-Intensive" subjects offered in the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.

Professor Perry served on a promotion committee for the Program in Writing and Humanistic Studies, on the d'Arbelloff Fund for Excellence in Education selection committee, on the Faculty Newsletter Board, and on the steering committee for the Program in Women's and Gender Studies.

Professor Resnick was director of the IAP program in Madrid and the MIT semester program in Spain, chair of the Burchard Scholars Program, and a member of the Committee on the Undergraduate Program's Subcommittee on the HASS Requirement.

Professor Tapscott was Literature's undergraduate officer for 2012–2013.

Professor Thorburn continued to run the vibrant Communications Forum and served on the Committee on Intellectual Property.

Conclusion

This report details the activities of a highly effective, cohesive academic unit. The members of the Literature faculty at MIT are active and prominent in their fields and continue to produce scholarly work of exceptional quality. We continue to provide our extraordinary undergraduates with illuminating, often inspiring educational experiences. We win various measures of recognition for our scholarship and teaching. We carry out the business of our disciplinary fields and our home institution with professionalism, wisdom, and energy.

Looking ahead, Literature at MIT faces a major opportunity that is also a challenge. We have the opportunity to become a new kind of literary studies program, one that builds upon its proven track record of broad multimedia research and teaching to embrace a truly global perspective. Our demonstrated commitment to follow the story, the lyric, and the dramatic, not simply on the page but wherever they travel on the media landscape—on film, on TV, on the stage, in song, in images, and in other media—could inform a new style of comparative literary studies whose global reach would be in keeping with MIT's. Fostering intellectual connections across the expressive cultures of many nations and languages, such a program would "fit" the interconnected 21st-century world and would align with MIT's commitment to expanding the opportunities for international engagement in our curriculum and research. It could also become

a launching pad for pioneering work linking residential and online education and developing new ways of connecting MIT undergraduates with learners and teachers around the world.

We have already begun to take steps in the direction of this vision. For quite some time, Literature at MIT has stretched itself beyond the English-language literary tradition in which most of its members were trained. For example, we have long offered classes that bring our students into contact (mediated by translation or film subtitles) with the works of great writers, filmmakers, and other artists from other language traditions. Some years ago, in support of the Program in Ancient and Medieval Studies, and since MIT's Foreign Languages and Literatures program is limited to modern languages, we began offering instruction in Latin. We deepened our commitment to supporting that program with the hiring of a new assistant professor in classical studies, who is expanding our offerings of ancient literatures, both in the original and in translation. A tenured member of the Literature faculty specializes in Hispanic literature, runs several programs in Spain, and teaches a popular undergraduate class, 21L.020J/21F.076 Globalization: The Good, the Bad, and the In-Between. Our distinguished team of early modern scholars has been working to expand its international network in support of the Global Shakespeare initiative. As noted above, one of our faculty leaders, with the support of the dean of engineering, has begun to develop a HASS subject ("Literature from Anywhere") that MIT students can take using digital tools while engaged in study or internships abroad. Literature faculty members have been and continue to be actively involved in the development of a HASS curriculum at the new Singapore University of Technology and Design. In addition, we piloted two introductory subjects designed as global versions of the traditional "great books" classes. They will be on the agenda as we continue to discuss revising our curriculum in keeping with our emerging vision for our section.

We never were a conventional "English department"; our multimedia emphasis alone has long given us a broader profile than that. By incremental steps, we have crept toward the vision of a multimedia comparative literature for the 21st century.

The questions that accompany this great opportunity are legion, and some of them are obvious. How many faculty members does it take to cover the world? How many does it take just to handle a few key regions? What is feasible? How can we maintain the wonderful density of intellectual community and the coherence of identity that we have managed to build if we move farther and farther away from a basis in the English language? In other words, how can we avoid turning into a "thin" aggregate with token faculty representation in each of a dozen languages? What would be our relationship to the study of foreign languages at MIT (a matter of keen concern to us)? How would our vision facilitate further collaboration with the Comparative Media Studies program and with other Institute neighbors in the humanities and beyond? These are just some of the questions my colleagues and I have begun to discuss.

One thing we are agreed on: the opportunity that presents itself—an opportunity to link up with major Institute goals and to take our humanities discipline out into the world as never before—would be a shame to waste. So we continue to discuss how some authentic approximation of it might be realized, with the Institute’s help. An excellent, innovative multimedia comparative literature program of global dimension could achieve greater visibility for humanities at MIT and build more and deeper ties of collaboration with our MIT colleagues in Comparative Media Studies and beyond. It would also give substantial support to the study of foreign languages at MIT, an activity sure to grow in importance to our undergraduates in the coming years.

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