

Literature Section

MIT's [Literature Section](#) is unusual in that it has internationally recognized faculty members who are committed to working closely with an undergraduate population made up largely of non-majors. All of the section's faculty teach advanced subjects related to research. They are expected to do half their teaching in introductory classes—not in large lectures but in small, communication-intensive subjects intended for students in their first two years. It is this combination of high expectations of excellence in research with an equally high commitment to small-group teaching (including at the introductory level) that continues to define the section.

Highlights

Literature Section faculty members had a productive year. Listed below is a sample of this year's honors, awards, and news.

- Shankar Raman was awarded the Arthur C. Smith Award, presented annually to a member of the MIT faculty for meaningful contributions and devotion to undergraduate student life and learning.
- Stephanie Frampton was promoted to associate professor without tenure, effective July 1, 2016.
- Diana Henderson was awarded two grants: one from the MIT Office of Digital Learning to support her proposal to develop and teach Literature Lab Tools for the Global Shakespeares curriculum (and beyond), and one from the Council for the Arts at MIT (CAMIT) to support her Merchant in Venice project.
- Arthur Bahr was awarded a Margaret MacVicar Fellowship for a 10-year term that began July 1, 2015.
- Also, Professor Bahr was largely responsible for the receipt of a substantial gift to the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (SHASS) to develop a pilot program for a three-year Ancient Greek Language subject as part of the Ancient and Medieval Studies Program. The gift was received in spring 2016 and the pilot program is expected to launch in the upcoming academic year.
- Faculty keynote speaking engagements included those of Eugenie Brinkema (Duke University, February 2016), Diana Henderson (Portugal, October 2015, and England, April 2016), and Stephen Tapscott (Albania, November 2015).

Each year, the Literature Section hosts visiting scholars and employs a number of adjunct lecturers. This year, the section was fortunate to host a number of outstanding individuals. Predoctoral fellow Joshua Bennett was a [National Poetry Series Prizewinner](#) for his book *The Sobbing School*, forthcoming from Penguin. The National Poetry Series holds an annual open competition that awards five winning poets \$10,000 and publication by a participating trade, university, or small press. Postdoctoral fellow Rosa Martinez was awarded a de Florez Fund for Humor grant to host her performance *She's the Man: A Drag Show Performance by Miss Shuga Cain*. A book launch was held at Harvard University for Lecturer Joaquin Terrones for his book *The Logic of Disorder: The Art and Writings of Abraham Cruzvillegas*.

The Literature Section hosts a variety of events every year, including a month-long poetry reading and discussion series called Pleasures of Poetry, which takes place during Independent Activities Period (IAP). This year, Pleasures of Poetry celebrated its 20th anniversary and featured discussions on a rich roster of poets, including Seamus Heaney, Gregory Pardlo, Anne Carson, William Shakespeare, Michelangelo, Sappho, and more.

In academic year 2016, the Literature Section was approached by the Society for the Study of the Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States (MELUS) to host the society's annual conference in April 2017. The section has agreed to host the conference, which is expected to draw from 200 to 300 attendees from around the country. The planning committee currently consists of Sandy Alexandre (chair), Wyn Kelley (co-chair), Joaquin Terrones, Mary Kuhn, Rosa Martinez, and Alicia Mackin.

This year, the Literature Section rolled out a new logo that will make us more recognizable in our publicity and outreach efforts. We plan to improve our social media presence in order to reach more students and expand our professional networks. At the start of AY2016, our Twitter account (@LitAtMIT) had approximately 300 followers, which increased to more than 700 by June 2016. Also in June, we created an Instagram account (@LitAtMIT) that will be used primarily to reach students, beginning in the fall. Both our Twitter and Instagram accounts will be used in various social media and student outreach campaigns that we have planned for the upcoming year.

Personnel

In addition to 16 faculty members and one senior lecturer, the Literature Section includes five lecturers, one visiting lecturer, one predoctoral fellow, two postdoctoral fellows, one visiting scholar, two teaching assistants, and six administrative and support staff.

Visiting Scholars

- Joshua Bennett was a PhD candidate in English at Princeton University and successfully defended his thesis on May 13, 2016. He will be joining the Society of Fellows at Harvard University.
- Michaela Bronstein was a one-year visiting lecturer hired as the result of a national search. Michaela will leave MIT on June 30, 2016, for Stanford University, where she has accepted a tenure-track position.
- Mary Kuhn received a two-year Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship. Kuhn terminated her appointment as of June 30, 2016, to accept a tenure-track assistant professor appointment at the University of Virginia under a Mellon grant.
- Rosa Martinez, previously a predoctoral fellow in the section, received her PhD in English from the University of California, Berkeley, in fall 2015 and completed a one-year postdoctoral fellowship with Literature. Martinez has accepted a tenure-track position at California State University, Sacramento.

In the spring, the Literature Section successfully competed for two new School-wide fellowships. In the coming academic year, the section will welcome Lillian Mengesha, a doctoral candidate in Theater and Performance Studies at Brown University, and Ana Schwartz, a doctoral candidate in English at the University of Pennsylvania.

Faculty Leaves

Several faculty members were off campus for all or part of the academic year. Wyn Kelley was on leave for the full academic year. Eugenie Brinkema was on a junior faculty leave in the fall 2015 semester and on parental leave in spring 2016. Sandy Alexandre and Stephen Tapscott were on leave during fall 2015. Marah Gubar, Alvin Kibel, and Ruth Perry were on leave in spring 2016.

Administrative and Support Staff

Alicia Mackin joined the section on July 1, 2015, as the administrative officer. Mackin had previously worked for more than three years at MIT's Picower Institute for Learning and Memory. The Humanities Film Office received funding to change Laura Ryan's position as the media assistant from a part-time to a full-time position. Additionally, a temporary cataloging assistant, Christopher Ruble, was hired in June 2016 to help with a special project in the film office through June 30, 2017. Funding was received for Belinda Yung's position as a permanent technical support specialist for the section, which now allows her to support many more of Literature's activities, including support for the digital humanities. The section also received funding to move the administrative assistant II/publicity and outreach coordinator position from part time (27.5 hours/week) to full time (35 hours/week) to better support publicity and outreach activities. Susan Wiedner currently holds this position; her last day in the post will be in July 2016.

Research, Teaching, and Professional Activities

Associate Professor Sandy Alexandre's research spans late 19th-century to present-day black American literature and culture. Her first book, *The Properties of Violence: Claims to Ownership in Representations of Lynching* used the history of American lynching as a framework for understanding matters concerning displacement, property ownership, and the American pastoral ideology in a literary context. Alexandre is currently writing *Up From Chattels: Thinghood in an Ethics of Black Curation*, which explores the relationship between the history of chattel slavery and various forms of black, anti-capitalist consumption in the US. The book takes as its point of departure the premise that the former enforced condition of black Americans as fungible merchandise can haunt, inform, and morally energize, to some extent, relationships to material objects. This book will explore how some black Americans create what Alexandre calls a "culture of significance" with material objects. Using literary analysis, studying material artifacts, and engaging the work of black collectors, Alexandre argues that such an improvised, curated, and eventually sacralized culture of subject-object relations constitutes an immanent critique of consumer capitalism. Overall, Alexandre's work takes into serious account the ways in which an ecology comprising people, places, and things can, at once, reverberate with and attempt to negotiate the various instances of racial violence that mark the aggregate of US history.

Professor Alexandre was on a research leave during the fall 2015 semester, working on her second book project. In spring 2016, Professor Alexandre taught 21L.504 Race and Identity in American Literature: Being Human.

Professor Alexandre served as a Literature concentration advisor, as chair of the MELUS 2017 organizational committee, as a member of the Dean's Search Committee, a member of the MIT Employee Assistance Program search committee (one of only two faculty representatives), a member of the Subcommittee on the HASS requirement, a first-year advisor for the Interphase program, and a board member of the Graduate Consortium in Women's Studies. Outside MIT, Professor Alexandre is a board member of *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture & Society* and *TSWL: Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*. Professor Alexandre published an essay in *Critical Insights: Beloved*.

Associate Professor Arthur Bahr is a medievalist who likes to read old books as if they were poems—that is, for how their constituent pieces (the text and pages of a manuscript, like the lines and stanzas of a poem) work together to create a whole that is larger and more interesting than any of those pieces would be if read in isolation. His research interests include Old and Middle English literature, the structure and interpretation of medieval books, formalism(s), aesthetics, and the idea of the literary. During AY2016, Professor Bahr taught 21L.001 Foundations of Western Literature: Homer to Dante (fall 2015), 21L.460 Medieval Literature: Old English and Beowulf (fall 2015), and 21L.701 Medieval Manuscripts, Modern Media: Constructing Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (spring 2016).

Professor Bahr served as chair of the Literature Section Curriculum Committee, as senior faculty mentor to Stephanie Frampton, and as a member of the committee for Stephanie Frampton's assistant professor without tenure case, which was approved in spring 2016. He was a member of the Presidential Committee for Distinguished Fellowships, director of the Program in Ancient and Medieval Studies, and its concentration as well as minor advisor. He serves on the conference committees of the New Chaucer Society 2016 Conference and the Medieval Academy of America 2016 Conference. Professor Bahr was a peer reviewer of book manuscripts for Ashgate Publishing and the University Press of Florida, and a dissertation reader and reference for Alexis Kellner Becker (Harvard University) and Michael Raby (University of Toronto).

Professor Bahr's publications include articles in *ELH* (Fall 2015), in *The Medieval Manuscript Book: Cultural Approaches* (August 2015), and in *The Pocket Instructor: Literature: 101 Exercises for the College Classroom* (November 2015).

Professor Bahr presented a talk, "Compulsory Figures," at the English Institute's 74th Annual Conference at Yale University and as part of the MIT Ancient and Medieval Studies Seminar Series (September 2015). Professor Bahr was the first invited speaker in the new series of Faculty Talks for Students sponsored by the chancellor.

Associate Professor Eugenie Brinkema's research in film and media studies focuses on violence, affect, sexuality, aesthetics, and ethics in texts ranging from the horror film to the body of films dubbed "New European Extremism" to the visual and temporal forms of terrorism. Abiding research interests include embodiment and sensation in ultraviolet film and literature, critical and cultural theory, literary theory, and psychoanalysis and continental philosophy; more recent areas of inquiry include French gastronomy, sound, and color.

In October 2015, Professor Brinkema was one of four people invited to speak at a conference on Roland Barthes at Northwestern University. She was a keynote speaker at the Pleasure and Suspicion Conference hosted by Duke University in February 2016 and was the invited external speaker (she gave a public lecture and directed a workshop for the Philosophy Department) at the Center for Interpretive and Qualitative Research at Duquesne University. She also gave a seminar on “Violence and the Diagram (Or, the Human Centipede)” at the University of Chicago in March 2016 at a joint meeting of their Department of Cinema and Media Studies and Contemporary European Philosophy Workshop. She was also invited to be one of the featured speakers at the Drew Theology Colloquium on Affect at Drew University in March 2016.

Professor Brinkema’s publications include “Blue Is the Warmest Color,” part of a dossier on cinematic affect in *The Cine-Files* (spring 2016) and “Violence and the Diagram: Or, the Human Centipede” in the journal *qui parle* in summer 2016. In addition, Professor Brinkema co-edited a special issue of the *Journal of Visual Culture*, “The Design and Componentry of Horror” (December 2015), for which she contributed the “Introduction: A Genreless Horror” and an article, “Design Terminable and Interminable: The Possibility of Death in *Final Destination*.”

Professor James Buzard works on 19th- and early 20th-century British literature and culture, with particular interest in the Victorian novel (Dickens, George Eliot, the Brontës, and others), modernism, the history of travel, and theories of culture and society. In addition to lecturing on these topics, he enjoys teaching “great books” surveys, such as 21L.001 Foundations of Western Culture: Homer to Dante and 21L.012 Forms of Western Narrative. In AY2016 Professor Buzard taught 21L.003 Reading Fiction: Imaginary Journeys, 21L.485 Modern Fiction (fall 2015), and 21L.705 Major Authors: George Eliot (spring 2016).

Professor Buzard served on the Literature Curriculum Committee and was co-chair of the Subcommittee on the Communication Requirement. He continued as MIT’s liaison to the humanities, arts, and social sciences program at the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD). Outside MIT, Professor Buzard was an external reviewer for a full-professor case at the University of Chicago (October 2015), reviewed a number of articles for *ELH* and *19th Century Literature*, and served on the editorial boards of *ELH*, *19th Century Literature*, and *Journeys*.

Professor Buzard gave invited talks at the North American Victorian Studies Association annual meeting in Honolulu, Hawaii (July 2015), and at the 2015 Dickens Universe event of the Dickens Project at the University of California, Santa Cruz (August 2015). He published essays in *The Legacy of the Grand Tour*, *A Companion to the English Novel*, and *The Encyclopedia of Victorian Literature*.

Professor Peter Donaldson, the Ford International Professor of Humanities, has undergraduate degrees from Columbia and Cambridge and a PhD in English from Columbia. His early research led to the publication of a previously unknown treatise by Stephen Gardiner, England’s chancellor in the reign of Queen Mary, that uses passages from Machiavelli’s *The Prince* to reflect on English dynastic politics, and later

to the publication of *Machiavelli and Mystery of State* (Cambridge University Press, 1988). Since the late 1980s, he has focused on two major research areas: Shakespeare on film and electronic projects, including the [Shakespeare Electronic Archive](#), [Hamlet on the Ramparts](#) and the [Global Shakespeares Video and Performance Archive](#). Professor Donaldson's research interests include Shakespeare, Shakespeare on film, Renaissance literature, Machiavelli, educational technology, and digital archives. During AY2016, Professor Donaldson taught 21L.009 Shakespeare: Global Shakespeares (fall 2015 and spring 2016), 21L.706 Studies in Film: Remakes, Replays, Remixes (fall 2015), and 21L.431 Shakespeare on Film and Media (spring 2016).

Professor Donaldson acted as concentration advisor and minor advisor and was a member of the search committee for AY2017 diversity predoctoral fellows. Professor Donaldson's academic positions include directing the MIT Global Shakespeares Project, and serving as editor-in-chief of the MIT Global Shakespeares Video Performance Archive. He is also a permanent fellow of the Royal Historical Society (UK). Professor Donaldson presented a paper at the 2016 Mellon Sawyer Seminar at the University of Wisconsin, Madison (May 2016).

Assistant Professor Stephanie Frampton's promotion to associate professor was approved during AY2016 and will take effect July 1, 2016. Her research interests include Latin literature and material culture, ancient media and book history, and comparative approaches to classical literature.

During the fall 2015 semester, Professor Frampton taught 21L.715 Media in Cultural Context. Professor Frampton was on a Junior Faculty leave for the spring 2016 semester. While on leave, she was a visiting fellow at Balliol College, Oxford University (January to March 2016) and received a fellowship from the Hardt Foundation for the Study of Classical Antiquity in Geneva, Switzerland (March–April 2016).

Professor Frampton served as a concentration advisor and faculty coordinator for the 2015 Freshman Pre-Orientation Program. Outside MIT, Professor Frampton presided on an ad hoc panel for the Society of Classical Studies annual meeting (January 2016). She also reviewed articles for *Book History* and *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*.

Professor Frampton gave a number of invited talks, including talks at the MACTe Workshop in Hartford, CT (November 2015), the Yale Program in the History of the Book in New Haven, CT (December 2015), and on a panel at the Society for Classical Studies annual meeting in San Francisco, CA (January 2016). Her publications included an article in *TAPA* (Spring 2016) and an essay in *Deep Classics* (May 2016).

Professor Mary C. Fuller is head of the Literature Section. She works on the history of early modern voyages, exploration, and colonization, and is interested in material books and how readers use them in the past and in the present. She has published articles on Caribbean poetry, exploration narratives and video games, the dullness of travel writing, circumnavigations and their media, and on narratives of travel to Russia, West Africa,

Guiana, Newfoundland, and Istanbul in the 16th and 17th centuries. Her teaching spans a broad range of topics, from poetry to scientific expeditions, and has included subjects cross-listed with Comparative Media Studies/Writing, Music, Anthropology, Women's and Gender Studies, and Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences.

In AY2016, Professor Fuller co-taught (with Charles Shadle of the Music and Theater Arts Section) the interdisciplinary HASS Exploration Program/Subject 21L.013, *The Supernatural in Music, Literature and Culture* (fall 2015, cross-listed as 21M.013). This class included guest speakers in the history of science and cultural history, as well as hands-on work with special collections and live performance. She also developed a new seminar, 21L.709 *Studies in Literary History: Avatars, Allegory, and Apocalypse in Spenser's Faerie Queene* (spring 2016); students in the seminar experimented with crowd-sourced research questions and a variety of presentation tools for their work on this book-length 16th-century poem.

Professor Fuller's service to MIT included completing a third year as the Literature Section head and member of the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences Council. Professor Fuller also served on the Future of the Libraries Task Force, the Nominations Committee, and the Corporation Joint Advisory Board, as well as doing first-year advising. Outside MIT, Professor Fuller was a member of the editorial board for *Studies in Travel Writing*, and continued serving as president of the American Friends of the Hakluyt Society and as the US representative to the Hakluyt Society.

Professor Fuller was invited to deliver the Hakluyt Society Annual Lecture (June 2016); the lecture is printed and distributed to the society's worldwide membership. She spoke about the methodology of her current book project, *Geographical Information in the Age of Drake*. She also spoke at the Renaissance Society of America's annual meeting in Boston, MA (April 2016), giving a talk on the early modern Arctic that drew on her editorial work for the Oxford University Press edition of Richard Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations*. Her essay, "Geographical Myths in Shakespeare's Time," appeared in *The Cambridge Guide to the Worlds of Shakespeare* (Cambridge University Press, 2016).

Associate Professor Marah Gubar teaches and writes about children's literature from a variety of periods, but she is especially interested in 19th- and 20th-century representations of childhood and the history of children's theatre. During AY2016, Professor Gubar taught 21L.434 *Science Fiction Before Science Fiction* and 21L.015 *Children's Classics* (fall 2015). While on leave in the spring 2016 semester, Professor Gubar continued to work on her second book—now titled *How to Think About Children: Childhood Studies in Academia and Beyond*—and finished doing final edits on three articles (forthcoming). Professor Gubar published a book review of Beverly Lyon Clark's monograph *The Afterlife of Little Women* in her field's premier journal, *Children's Literature*. In May 2016, she was interviewed about her ongoing work on child actors and children's theater as part of the *Childhood: History & Critique* series: a multimedia series of interviews, essays, and reports on happenings in the historical study of childhood hosted by a team of scholars. The series is published and circulated online by the Society for the History of Children and Youth.

In June 2016, Professor Gubar began serving as a contributing editor for the website Public Books, an open-access site where the general public can discover professors writing about today's books, movies, TV shows, and cultural trends. The current readership for Public Books averages around 40,000 a month, and the site enjoys content-sharing partnerships with LitHub, *The Guardian* (London), the Huffington Post, the *Caravan* (India), and several other publications. These partnerships allow contributors to Public Books to reach people all over the world. Professor Gubar served as president of the Genre Studies Forum on Children's and Young Adult Literature of the Modern Language Association (MLA) and is a member of the Children's Literature Association Executive Board.

In June 2016, Professor Gubar's award-winning article, "Risky Business: Talking About Children in Children's Literature Criticism" (2013) was translated into Danish by Dr. Nina Christensen—head of the Centre for Children's Literature at Aarhus University in Denmark—and published in a special issue on children's literature research of the Danish literary magazine *Passage*.

Professor Gubar gave an invited talk on "Sending Up the Cult of the Child" as part of the Victorian Literature and Culture seminar at the Mahindra Humanities Center at Harvard University (September 2015). She moderated the MIT Communications Forum on "Women in Politics: Representation and Reality" (November 2015), participated as a panelist on an MLA "presidential theme" roundtable that focused on "Children's Literature Scholarship and Its Publics" at the MLA national convention in Austin, Texas (January 2016), and presented a talk, "What Was So Groovy About the 1970s? Children's Writing Children's Literature II" at the annual conference of the Children's Literature Association in Columbus, Ohio.

Professor Diana Henderson's areas of research and interest include Shakespeare, gender studies, early modern poetry and drama, modernism, media studies, and world drama. Her books include *Collaborations with the Past: Reshaping Shakespeare Across Time and Media* and *Passion Made Public: Elizabethan Lyric, Gender and Performance*, as well as the edited collections *Alternative Shakespeares 3* and *A Concise Companion to Shakespeare on Screen*. She has published more than 40 articles and, with James Siemon, co-edits the annual *Shakespeare Studies*. Professor Henderson has worked as a dramaturge or consulting scholar with (among others) the Potomac Theater Project, the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Actors Shakespeare Project, the New York Theater Workshop, and directors Daniel Kramer and Robert Lepage. She currently serves as principal investigator for MIT's participation with The Merchant in Venice performance and educational project, and co-leads the Global Shakespeares Curriculum Initiative. In AY2016, Professor Henderson taught 21L.010 Writing with Shakespeare (FA15), 21L.S90 Global Shakespeares in Performance (IAP16), and 21L.486 Modern Drama (SP16).

Professor Henderson serves as the section's undergraduate academic officer, chairing the Frampton promotion committee, mentoring junior faculty member Stephanie Frampton, co-anchoring the weekly Literature teas, and leading the annual Mobile Reading Marathon during IAP. She was also a member of the Steering Committee and Curriculum Committee chair for the Program in Women's and Gender Studies. She is a

member of the Creative Arts Council, a consulting faculty member for the MIT-SUTD collaboration, and a freshman advisor.

Outside MIT, Professor Henderson co-chaired the monthly Women and Culture in the Early Modern World seminar series at the Mahindra Humanities Center at Harvard University and served on the editorial boards of *Shakespeare Studies* and the *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*. Professor Henderson was a panelist for Teatro Nacional D. Maria III in Lisbon, Portugal, and a post-performance speaker for the Central Square Theater. She contributed to the full professor promotion case for Lisa Starks-Estes at the University of South Florida and was an outside reader and evaluator for PhD candidates at King's College, the University of New South Wales, and Boston College.

Professor Henderson gave many invited talks, including a seminar paper at the European Shakespeare Research Association in England (July 2015), a talk at the Futures of Historicism: A Symposium Honoring David Scott Kastan, and the keynote address at the Shakespearean Collaborations conference in Portugal (both October 2015). She also delivered a symposium address at the Hudson Strode Program in Renaissance Studies at the University of Alabama (February 2016), a seminar paper at the Shakespeare Association of America annual meeting (March 2016), a lecture at the Freie Universität Berlin, a panel presentation at "Shakespeare: The Next 400 Years" in Helsingor, Denmark, and a plenary keynote at the Indian Shakespeares on Screen conference in London (all April 2016).

Her publications include *Shakespeare Studies, Volume XLIII*, co-edited with James R. Siemon, and the articles "Pluralizing Performance," in *Shakespeare in Our Time: A Shakespeare Association of America Collection*, and "Shakespeare Into Fiction," in *The Cambridge Guide to the Worlds of Shakespeare*.

Professor Henderson was awarded two grants during AY2016. The first was an MITx grant from the Office of Digital Learning, effective July 1, 2015, in support of her proposal to develop and teach Literature Lab Tools for the Global Shakespeares curriculum and beyond. The second grant was awarded in May 2016 from CAMIT to partially fund Professor Henderson's Merchant in Venice project. The project aims to produce a documentary on the first-ever performance of William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* in the original ghetto on the 500th anniversary of its founding and the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death. Professor Henderson will travel to Venice, Italy, with a team from MIT consisting of her colleague, Professor Shankar Raman, program staff member Cathleen Nalezty, and undergraduate researcher Daniel Epelbaum. Cathleen Nalezty and Daniel Epelbaum were both members of the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program under Professor Henderson's supervision in AY2016.

Associate Professor Noel Jackson works on topics in poetry and poetics, aesthetics, critical theory, and the literature of the long 18th century, particularly that of the British Romantic period. His book *Science and Sensation in Romantic Poetry* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), examined Romantic poetry and aesthetics both in relation to the 18th-century human sciences of physiology and the science of mind, and in the context

of momentous social transformations in the period of the French Revolution. Professor Jackson has published essays in journals including *ELH*, *Modern Language Quarterly*, and *Studies in Romanticism*, and currently has essays forthcoming on lyric melancholy, criticism and pleasure, the “event of beauty” and the experience of the contemporary, among other topics. This year Professor Jackson taught 21L.004 Reading Poetry, 21L.704 Studies in Poetry: Power, Protest, and Poetry (fall 2015), 21L.325 Small Wonders: The Romantic Lyric (spring 2016), and 21L.350 Science and Literature: The Frankenstein Project (spring 2016).

Professor Jackson was the co-director, with Professor David Thorburn, of the Pleasures of Poetry program offered during IAP in AY2016. Additional service to the Literature Section included serving as concentration advisor, transfer credit examiner, and thesis advisor to undergraduate Literature major Anna Walsh, who successfully defended her thesis in May 2016. Also in 2016, Professor Jackson joined the advisory board of MAKE IT NEW: an international platform for poetry education.

Professor Jackson published a review of Robert Mitchell’s *Experimental Life: Vitalism in Romantic Science and Literature* in *Modern Language Quarterly* (June 2016), and a review of Yasmin Solomonescu’s *John Thelwall and the Materialist Imagination* on the Romantic Circles Reviews and Receptions website (May 2016).

Senior Lecturer Wyn Kelley teaches classes on American writers, literary genres (comedy, melodrama, gothic, autobiography), and writing about literature. Her scholarship focuses primarily on Herman Melville’s works and on the intersections of traditional and new media. A founding member of the Melville Society Cultural Project, she collaborates with the New Bedford Whaling Museum on projects related to Melville and whaling. Currently associate director of the Melville Electronic Library, an interactive archive of Melville’s texts, sources, and adaptations, she has also worked with MIT’s digital humanities laboratory, the HyperStudio, to develop a classroom tool called Annotation Studio.

Although Kelley was on leave for AY2016, she continued to be active within the Literature Section. She served on the MELUS 2017 planning committee and was the Literature faculty lead on the Freshman Pre-Orientation Program (held jointly with the History Department). Her service to MIT included helping to develop the PEN/New England program for reading aloud in student dormitories (a collaborative effort with D. Peterson, K. Wulf, M. Fuller, H. Lee, and A. McCants), collaborating with Daniel Pritchard from the SHASS Dean’s Office on articles for SHASS publicity, and as a research associate to HyperStudio. Outside MIT, Professor Kelley served as associate editor for the Melville Electronic Library, assisted with editing a *Billy Budd* manuscript and a *Moby-Dick* text, added geographical information to the new MELCat database, and helped develop a tool (Juxta Editions) for the editing and display of Melville texts.

Professor Kelley gave a talk as part of a faculty lecture series at the California State University Maritime Academy (October 2015), participated in the first-ever San Francisco *Moby-Dick*-reading marathon (October 2015), and attended the British Association of Nineteenth-Century Americanists Symposium at the University of

Warwick, Coventry, UK (November 2015). Professor Kelly also organized a panel for the conference of C19: The Society of Nineteenth-Century Americanists, with Rosa Martinez, Literature's Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow (January 2016).

Publications include her article "Ahoy, Engineers! From STEM to Stern, Herman Melville's Classic Whaling Novel Resonates with MIT Students" in the *MIT Technology Review* (November/December 2015), and "Seeing Twice: William Bradford's *The Arctic Regions* in Print and Paint" in *J19: The Journal of Nineteenth-Century Americanists* (fall 2015).

Professor Alvin Kibel's research interests include the history of ideas, literary theory, film, ethics and literature, and Darwin studies. He initiated the study of film as a subject in the Literature curriculum. During AY2016, Professor Kibel taught 21L.004 Reading Poetry (fall 2015), 21L.471 Major Novels: Major European Novels (fall 2015), and 21L.345 On the Screen: American Film Genres (IAP 2016). Professor Kibel was on leave for the spring 2016 term.

Professor Kibel gave a three-part lecture series to MIT alumni in the provincial French countryside through the MIT Alumni Travel Program in May 2016. He also served as a concentration advisor.

Professor Ruth Perry's research interests are vast and include balladry, orality and literacy, women's cultural traditions, the Scottish Enlightenment, fiction, the English novel, 18th-century British literature and British women's writing, Jane Austen, feminist literary theory, and folk music of the British Isles and North America. Professor Perry's recent work has been about 18th-century Scotland and the family of Anna Gordon (later Mrs. Brown), an 18th-century Scotswoman. She was the first individual ballad source whose repertoire was deliberately sought out and published by Walter Scott, Robert Jamieson, Thomas Percy, and other writers and intellectuals of the period. Hers is the oldest known repertoire of British ballads. In AY2016, Professor Perry taught 21L.707 Problems in Cultural Interpretation: Women Reading/Women Writing (fall 2015), and 21L.023 Folk Music of the British Isles and North America (cross-listed with Music 21M.223, fall 2015). Professor Perry was on leave for the spring 2016 term.

Professor Perry served as the Literature transfer credit advisor. Outside MIT, she is the section's liaison with the New England Conservatory for transfer of the music library of the Folk Song Society of Greater Boston (FSSGB), a member of the FSSGB Program Committee, and liaison with the Schlesinger Library at Radcliffe for Grace Paley papers. She was also a consultant and read manuscripts for Ashgate, Cambridge University Press, Broadview Press, *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, *Philological Quarterly*, and *Women's Writing*.

Professor Perry was invited to give a seminar, "Meeting Mary Astell," at Harvard University (October 2015) and was interviewed on National Public Radio's *All Things Considered* about *Auld Lang Syne* (December 2015). Her publications include introducing and editing a *festschrift* for the well-known 18th-century scholar Janet Todd from Cambridge University, brought out as a special issue of *Women's Writing* (May 2016). She also wrote an article on "Music in *Emma*" for the *Cambridge Companion to Emma* (2015).

Professor Shankar Raman's research focuses on Renaissance and late medieval literature and culture, colonialism and post-colonialism, the history of ideas, the history of science, and literary theory. In AY2016, Professor Raman taught 21L.009 Shakespeare: Global Shakespeares (fall 2015), 21L.451 Literary Theory (fall 2015), and 21L.017 The Art of the Probable (spring 2016). Professor Raman was a visiting professor at the Singapore University of Technology and Design where he co-taught a course called "Religion, Science, and Magic" with Alastair Gornall.

Professor Raman was the recipient of the 2016 Arthur C. Smith Award. This award, in honor of Dean Smith's service, was established in 1996 on the occasion of his retirement from the position of Dean for Undergraduate Education and Student Affairs. It is presented to a member of the MIT faculty for meaningful contributions and devotion to undergraduate student life and learning at MIT.

Professor Raman's publications include "Interrupted Games: Pascal, Hamlet, Probability," which appeared in *Shakespeare Studies*, Vol. XVIII; "Protesting Bodies: King Lear," an essay appearing in *Upstart* (August 2015); and two book reviews for *Textual Practice*.

Professor Raman's service to the Literature Section and MIT is extensive. He is a member of the Literature Curriculum Committee, a Literature major advisor, a member of the Committee on Curricula and of the Committee on Curricula–Committee on the Undergraduate Program subcommittee for pedagogical guidelines on experimental proposals, director of the Kelly Douglas Fund, member of the Foreign Scholarships Committee, and a first-year advisor. Outside MIT, Professor Raman is a member of the Shakespeare Association of America and the Renaissance Society of America, and a member of the editorial board for the *British Journal of Shakespeare Studies*. Professor Raman was an external reader for Oxford University Press, peer-reviewed articles for various journals, and served on the selection committee for the Radcliffe Fellowship Program at Harvard University. He was also an external reviewer for Michael Gaudio's promotion to full professor in the Department of Art History at the University of Minnesota, and for Alastair Gornall's promotion to assistant professor at the Singapore University of Technology and Design.

Professor Raman has taken on mentoring and advising roles, including mentoring his colleague Eugenie Brinkema, co-advising postdoctoral fellow Emily Jones (an MIT–SUTD postdoctoral fellow working on the Global Shakespeares project), and co-mentoring Nazry Bahrawi, a visiting scholar from SUTD, during spring 2016.

Professor Raman accepted an invitation from Professor Susan Arndt to be a Visiting Fellow at the Bayreuth Academy of Advanced African Studies in Bayreuth, Germany (June 2016). This invited fellowship involved participation in the BIGSAS Festival of African and African-Diasporic Literatures: "ReMIX. Africa in Translation" in Bayreuth, Germany, where he gave a talk, "Remixing Othello," and participated in a series of workshops in Berlin for the graduate students in the Bayreuth University program. He also participated in the Shakespeare Association of America seminar on forms of scientific knowledge in New Orleans (March 2016).

Associate Professor Margery Resnick's research interests include Hispanic literature and film, the literature and culture of post-Franco Spain, European fiction, international women's writing and film, the cultural history of globalization, and the history of women at MIT. Professor Resnick initiated MIT's program in Spanish literature and culture, established the program in English as a Second Language, and made it possible for MIT students to study Chinese. Professor Resnick's current research focuses on the history of women at MIT. She is the director of the MIT/AMITA Women's Oral History project, which seeks to chronicle and record the ways in which an MIT education, with its emphasis on problem-solving, has shaped individual lives; six new oral history interviews were completed and placed in the MIT archives this year.

During AY2016, Professor Resnick taught 21L.020 Globalization: The Good, the Bad, and the In-Between (fall 2015, co-taught with Joaquin Terrones); 21L.S88 Global Literature Cultural Encounters: Insiders and Outsiders (IAP 2016, developed and organized by Professor Resnick, co-taught with Stephen Tapscott in Madrid, Spain); and 21L.048J International Women's Voices (spring 2016). For 21L.020, Professor Resnick also organized videoconferencing with a class at the American University in Cairo.

Professor Resnick continues to serve as the president of the International Institute in Spain, working with Spanish universities, the Spanish government, and the American embassy in Madrid to promote historical, political, and cultural exchange. Professor Resnick was also the organizer and moderator for an international colloquium on "Borders and Barriers: Challenges for Refugee Women in Spain and the US" (October 2015). Her service to the Institute includes being the Spanish minor advisor and a Literature major advisor, directing the Burchard Scholars program, and serving on the MIT Committee on Discipline.

Professor Stephen Tapscott is a poet whose fields of interest include creative writing (poetry and experimental prose), poetry as a literary genre, and translation. His academic interests include North American writing (especially Walt Whitman, Anglo-American modernists, and writers since World War II); Latin American poetry; world poetries in Russian, German, and Polish; autobiography; gender and queer studies; and photography and other visual arts. Professor Tapscott was on sabbatical for the fall 2015 term. During his sabbatical, Professor Tapscott did a residency at the Santa Fe Arts Institute (September and October 2015) and at the Truchas Peaks Institute (November 2015). Subjects that he taught in the past year include 21L.S88 Literature/IAP in Madrid, which he co-taught with Professor Margery Resnick at the American Institute in Madrid, Spain (IAP 2016), and 21L.487 Modern Poetry (spring 2016).

Professor Tapscott served on various service committees within the Institute and was a Literature concentration and major advisor. Outside MIT, Professor Tapscott belongs to the admissions committees at the Virginia Center for Creative Arts and the Santa Fe Arts Institute, and was a manuscript reader for several university presses.

Professor Tapscott gave the keynote address at the British and American Literature Conference at the University of Tirana, Albania (November 2015).

Professor Tapscott's translation of Pablo Neruda's *100 Love Sonnets* went into a new edition. Published articles include "Day unto Day" in *Pleiades: Literature in Context* (Winter 2016), and "Picturing Alice Liddell" in *A Serious Genre: The Apology of Children's Literature*. Settings of Professor Tapscott's poems and translations have been published and performed this year by several groups, including the TrueLife Trio (wind ensemble) and Ensemble/NYU (an oboe concerto).

Professor David Thorburn received his AB from Princeton University and his MA and PhD from Stanford University. He taught in the English Department at Yale University for 10 years before joining the MIT Literature faculty in 1976. He is the author of *Conrad's Romanticism* and many essays and reviews on literary, cultural, and media topics. He has edited collections of essays on romanticism and on John Updike as well as a widely read anthology of fiction, *Initiation*. Recent publications include the co-edited volumes *Democracy and New Media* and *Rethinking Media Change*. Professor Thorburn was editor in chief of the MIT Press series *Media in Transition*.

During AY2016, Professor Thorburn taught 21L.011 The Film Experience, 21L.325 Small Wonders: Masters of the Short Story (fall 2015), and 21L.706 Hollywood Renaissance—American Film in the 1970s (spring 2016).

Professor Thorburn is director emeritus of the Communications Forum; he was succeeded by Seth Mnookin of Comparative Media Studies/Writing. In March 2016, he participated in a Communications Forum on Excellence in Teaching with former US Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky. Professor Thorburn served as a concentration and minor advisor. He and Noel Jackson co-organized the Pleasures of Poetry program offered every year during IAP; the program celebrated its 20th year in 2016. Professor Thorburn was a reader for scholarly and trade presses in media and modern fiction, and continued work on two projects, a collection of essays and a book of poems.

Digital Humanities

Technology Support Specialist Belinda Yung works to foster and support digital humanities research and teaching among the faculty. Her work focuses on helping faculty members to integrate digital media and technology in the classroom, supporting researchers and scholars at partner institutions, and exploring new ways for active learning.

After the success of the *Global Hamlet in Performance* and *Global Tempest in Performance* online study modules, which were used in several MIT Literature subjects, a new module was developed for *King Lear* over IAP 2016 and used in spring 2016. Professor Diana Henderson and her students from the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program generated content, while Yung set up the infrastructure (based on WordPress) and converted and published the videos for the web. These online

study modules are limited to students enrolled in MIT subjects since they contain some copyright protected material. A new *Hamlet* module that does not use copyrighted material and is designed for the general public is under development.

Professor Donaldson worked with Yung on his Shakespeare talk at the University of Massachusetts Amherst in March 2016 and also on an online essay that was submitted to the Elsinore Conference 2016: Shakespeare—The Next 400 Years. They are actively planning future projects and grants involving collaborations with HamletWorks and JStor to enhance Shakespeare studies. Yung provided Professor Henderson with technical advice and support in preparation for her talk at the Elsinore Conference 2016 and for a presentation at the 2016 Phi Beta Kappa induction ceremony at MIT. Professors Henderson and Donaldson have been brainstorming with Yung on a new study module for *The Merchant of Venice*. There will be two versions, one of which will follow the basic template of the previous study modules. As noted, Professor Henderson will also create an MITx/edX module on *The Merchant of Venice* that will be closely connected to the staging of the play in the Jewish ghetto of Venice in July 2016.

Teaching

Margery Resnick and Stephen Tapscott organized and taught 21L.S88 Cultural Encounters: Insiders and Outsiders during IAP in Madrid, Spain. This was the second year the class was offered; 27 of the more than 70 students who applied were accepted and participated in the program overseas. Professor Resnick made the housing and travel arrangements and Resnick and Tapscott co-taught the class. Outside the classroom, students were exposed to a variety of cultural activities. Students paid a program fee to participate, and the Literature Section supplied the funds needed to house the two faculty members. This year, Professor Resnick also successfully applied for a grant from CAMIT to bring the students to a flamenco performance and lesson.

Peter Donaldson, Diana Henderson, and Shankar Raman collaborated on an MIT HEX class that received funding from the Dean for Undergraduate Education and was launched in fall 2015. The experimental class brought together two sections of 21L.009 Global Shakespeares and 21L.010 Writing with Shakespeare. The classes met together for one class each month; they also attended Boston-area Shakespeare productions. Activities included student performances, student critiques of professional productions, the study of international Shakespeare films, and a mock Shakespeare conference. For the mock conference, students were assigned one of five journal articles by leading Shakespeare scholars and then took part in an in-class conference as if they had written the piece, presenting its main ideas and defending them in a roundtable and question-and-answer session. The class was well received and brought together the MIT Shakespeare community.

Enrollments

The Literature Section's enrollments have been slightly lower in recent years than they had been in the past. The AY2016 enrollment total was 773, compared with a three-year average of 897 (776 in AY2015, 883 in AY2014, and 1031 in AY2013). These numbers are enrollment numbers at registration. One of the biggest challenges the section currently faces is to increase enrollments.

In AY2016, the Literature Section will follow the rest of the SHASS in moving to a 2:1 teaching load, which (similar to recent changes in degree requirements) may affect enrollments. The Literature curriculum committee reports that it is a difficult challenge to plan subject offerings that are diverse enough to attract students and to support various major, minor, and concentration tracks while offering fewer total subjects. The Literature Section is moving to a two-year curriculum planning process, which will offer students more predictability in planning their classes and facilitate coordination with other sections.

Mary C. Fuller
Section Head
Professor of Literature