

Literature Section

MIT's [Literature Section](#) has a profile that is unusual among its peers, although not unique within MIT's School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (SHASS), which is its internationally recognized faculty who are committed to working closely with an undergraduate population made up largely of nonmajors.

Both parts of this identity matter. All of our faculty teach advanced subjects related to our research, and also expect to do half our teaching in introductory classes, not in large lectures but in small, communication-intensive subjects in Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CI-H) intended for students in their first two years. This combination of high expectations for excellence in research with high commitment to small group teaching, including at the introductory level, continues to define our unit.

News, Awards, and Honors

The Literature Section faculty members had a productive year. Their various news and accolades are listed below in this report. Some highlights for the year include the following:

- Eugenie Brinkema was awarded tenure, effective July 1, 2017.
- Wyn Kelley's senior lecturer contract was approved to be renewed for an additional five years, effective July 1, 2018.
- A search for a new junior faculty member was conducted. Laura Finch was selected, and she accepted the offer for a tenure-track assistant professorship with Literature at MIT and will begin her appointment on July 1, 2018, after she completes one year of a postdoctoral fellowship at the Michigan Society of Fellows.

The Literature Section planned, organized, and hosted the 31st annual conference for the Society of the Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States (MELUS) which took place April 27 through 30, 2017. There were over 300 conference attendees and more than 60 panels. The planning committee consisted of Sandy Alexandre (chair), Wyn Kelley (co-chair), Joaquin Terrones, Alicia Mackin, and Chloe Jones.

Two additional symposia were sponsored, organized, or both, by the Literature Section. Eugenie Brinkema worked with the MIT List Visual Arts Center to organize and host a symposium held on May 6 entitled [Feeling Thinking: An Affect Symposium](#) which was presented in conjunction with the List Center's exhibition, *An Inventory of Shimmers: Objects of Intimacy in Contemporary Art*. Additionally, Stephanie Frampton brought the second annual [MATERIA: New Approaches to Material Text in the Roman World](#) symposium to MIT which was held on June 2, 2017.

Personnel

In addition to 16 faculty members and one senior lecturer, the Literature Section included five lecturers, two diversity predoctoral fellows, four teaching assistants, two research associates and eight administrative and support staff this year.

Visiting Scholars

Each year, the Literature Section hosts visiting scholars, and employs a number of adjunct lecturers. This year, we were fortunate to host two outstanding diversity predoctoral fellows. The fellows were Lilian Mengesha, a PhD candidate in performance studies at Brown University, and Ana Schwartz, a PhD candidate at the University of Pennsylvania who defended her thesis entitled “Feeling Past Politics: Affection, Settlement, and the Disciplines of Civil Society in Early Anglo America, 1620–1682” on June 1, 2017. In the coming academic year, Literature will be welcoming Anna Abramson as a Mellon postdoctoral fellow effective July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2019, and Jennifer Wang, a diversity predoctoral fellow effective July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018.

Faculty Leaves

Several faculty members were on leave for part or all of the academic year. Mary Fuller and Alvin Kibel were on leave for the full academic year. Arthur Bahr was on leave during fall 2016. Diana Henderson, Noel Jackson, and Ruth Perry were on leave during spring 2017.

Administrative and Support Staff

Benjamin Kemp, the finance and Human Resources assistant, will leave MIT on June 30, 2017. A permanent replacement for him has not been identified at this time.

Faculty Research, Teaching, and Professional Activities

Associate Professor Sandy Alexandre’s research spans the 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* (University Press of Mississippi, 2012), uses the history of American lynching violence as a framework to understand matters concerning displacement, property ownership, and the American pastoral ideology in a literary context. Alexandre is currently writing another book, *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 United States. The book will take 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—their very own 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 comprised of 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. This year, Professor Alexandre taught 21L.006 American Literature, 21L.504 Race and Identity in American Literature, 21L.005 Introduction to Drama, and 21L.705 Major Authors.

Professor Alexandre gave a number of talks over the past year, including one at Olin College in September 2016, and another at Harvard University in October 2016. Her service to MIT included serving as a Literature concentration advisor; chair of the

MELUS 2017 organizational committee; member of the Literature new faculty search committee; member of the committee for Wyn Kelley's senior lecturer contract renewal case; and member of the MIT Faculty Policy Committee. Outside of MIT, Professor Alexandre provided service to the Modern Language Association and the American Studies Association. She also served on the board of *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*; *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*; and the Consortium for Graduate Studies in Gender, Culture, Women, and Sexuality.

Professor Alexandre published a book chapter with Salem Press entitled "Adoption and Persuasion: Raising and Reckoning with Beloved," and continued work on her second book project. Professor Alexandre successfully submitted a grant proposal for a Suzy Newhouse Faculty Fellowship at Wellesley College. She has accepted this fellowship and will be on professional leave for the entirety of the upcoming academic year.

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 (texts and pages of a manuscript, like 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. He blends formalist and materialist approaches in order to find literary resonance in the physical particularities of medieval manuscripts. 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 AY2017, Professor Bahr was on leave during fall term and taught 21L.460 Arthurian Literature in the spring term.

His service to the section included sitting as chair of the Literature Section Curriculum Committee; search committee and interview team member for the new junior faculty search; and, member of the search committee responsible for reviewing and recommending the Mellon postdoctoral applications. Service to the Institute included work as a reader for the Kelly-Douglas Fund prizes and co-director of the ancient and medieval studies program at MIT. He began his first year as president of the MIT chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. Professor Bahr was also a reviewer for a tenure case at Amherst College; was a program committee member for the biennial conference of the New Chaucer Society, which took place in July 2016; and was a peer reviewer for Oxford University Press and the journal *Studies in the Age of Chaucer*.

Publications included the chapter "Sex, Plague, and Resonance: Reflections of the BBC 'Pardoner's Tale'" for an edited collection from Ohio State University Press entitled *Chaucer on Screen: Absence, Presence, and Adapting the Canterbury Tales*. Additionally, Professor Bahr gave a talk at the Medieval Studies Symposium at Washington University in December 2016 entitled "Reading the Pearl Manuscript in the Twenty-First Century." In April 2017 he was an invited participant in a symposium on the history of the book at the University of Texas at Austin. His paper was entitled "Sheets of Parchment, Sheets of Ice." In May 2017 he served as the respondent on a panel about Arthurian compilations at the International Medieval Congress in Kalamazoo, MI.

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 film and literature, critical and cultural theory, literary theory, and psychoanalysis and continental philosophy, while more recent areas of inquiry have explored French gastronomy, sound, and color. In AY2017, Professor Brinkema taught 21L.011 The Film Experience, CMS.796 Major Media Texts: Strong Sensations, and 21L.706 Studies in Film. During this academic year, Professor Brinkema was awarded tenure effective July 1, 2017.

Professor Brinkema presented papers at the Film-Philosophy Conference at the University of Edinburgh (July 2016), The Boston Cinema/Media Seminar at the University of Massachusetts (November 2016), and at the World Picture Conference at Cambridge University (December 2016). She also presented invited talks at the ELH Colloquium at Johns Hopkins University (October 2016) and at the University of Chicago (October 2016).

Service to the unit included was extensive and included: reading predoctoral fellow candidate applications; reading predoctoral fellows written material and conducting mock interviews; reading Comparative Media Studies/Writing (CMS/W) graduate student application files; supervising an MA thesis in CMS/W; recording commentary for Diana Henderson's massive open online course; serving as a member of the Literature junior faculty search committee (all stages of search process); writing a letter successfully nominating Laura Ryan for an MIT Excellence Award; and conducting a search for 21L.011 teaching assistants. She also served on the dissertation committees for a PhD student in History, Theory, and Criticism at MIT and another in Visual and Environmental Studies at Harvard. Outside of MIT, Professor Brinkema was on the editorial board of *New Review of Film and Television Studies*, was an advisory board member of *InVisible Culture*, and was a peer reviewer for *Theory and Event, Discourse* (forthcoming from Continuum/Bloomsbury Publishing) and the journal *differences*. She was also an external reviewer for a doctoral thesis at McGill University in the Department of Art History and Communication Studies.

Professor James Buzard, interim head during AY2017), works on 19th- and early 20th-century British literature and culture, with particular interest in the Victorian novel (by Dickens, George Eliot, the Brontës, and others), modernism, the history of travel, and theories of culture and society. He is the author of two books, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to "Culture," 1800–1918* (Oxford University Press, 1993) and *Disorienting Fiction: The Autoethnographic Work of Nineteenth-Century British Novels* (Princeton University Press, 2005), as well as contributing co-editor to *Victorian Prism: Refractions of the Crystal Palace* (University of Virginia Press, 2007), and the author of over 40 scholarly articles. In AY2017, Professor Buzard served as the interim head of the Literature Section and taught 21L.003 Reading Fiction: Imaginary Journeys, and 21L.320 Big Books: George Eliot's *Middlemarch*. In addition to serving as interim department chair, Professor Buzard's service to MIT included co-chairing the Subcommittee on the Communication Requirement. His essay "How George Eliot Works" was published in the journal *Raritan*. He lectured on "Degeneration Fascination and its Narrative Effects in Dickens" at conferences in Florence, Italy, and Baltimore, and on "*David Copperfield* and the Thresholds of Modernity" at a conference in Washington, DC.

Professor Peter S. Donaldson, Ford International Professor of Humanities and Professor of Literature is the author 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 [Global Shakespeares: Video and Performance Archive](#). Professor Donaldson's research interests also include Renaissance literature, Machiavelli, educational technology, and digital archives. During AY2017, Professor Donaldson taught 21L.009 Shakespeare: Global Shakespeares, 21L.706 Studies in Film: Remakes, Replays, Remixes, and 21L.431 Shakespeare on Film and Media.

Professor Donaldson continued his work on the Global Shakespeares archive, as well as his work with Professor Diana Henderson on the Global Shakespeare course as part of the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences Exploration Program. He gave a talk at Gallaudet University's month-long celebration of the Shakespeare First on "Visual Shakespeare, the First Folio and the Living Variorum Folio" in October 2016.

Service to the Literature Section included serving on the tenure committee for Eugenie Brinkema; participating in the search committee for predoctoral fellow candidates; and participating in the junior faculty search conducted by the Literature Section this year. Additionally, he was a member of the SHASS Digital Humanities Committee. Outside of MIT he reviewed a proposal for a major symposium series on Global Shakespeare NYU-Abu Dhabi Center for Global Shakespeare. Professor Donaldson holds numerous ongoing academic positions including the Ford International Professor of Humanities, director of the MIT Global Shakespeare Project, and the director and editor-in-chief of the MIT Global Shakespeare Video Performance Archive, and is a permanent fellow of the Royal Historical Society in the United Kingdom.

Associate Professor Stephanie Frampton's research interests include Latin literature and material culture, ancient media and book history, and comparative approaches to classical literature. In AY2017, Professor Frampton taught 21L.001 Foundations of Western Literature: Homer to Dante, 21L.338 Reading in the Original: Virgil's Eclogues, and 21L.S88 Special Subject in Literature: Greek I.

Professor Frampton's service to the Institute included taking on the role of undergraduate officer for the Literature Section, and participated as a member of both the MIT Libraries Space Planning Subcommittee and the MIT Presidential Committee on Distinguished Fellowships. Outside of MIT, Professor Frampton served as a member of the Planning Committee and Diversity Subcommittee for the Mellon-funded Society of Fellows in Critical Bibliography at the Rare Book School at the University of Virginia.

Invited talks were presented at the World Heritage Strategy Forum in Cambridge, MA (September 2016); the Rohatyn Center for Global Affairs at Middlebury College (March 2017); The Future of Print in the Academic Library at the University of Arizona (March 2017); and the Conference for Mellon Fellows in Critical Bibliography at the Rare Book School at the University of Virginia (May 2017).

Professor Frampton organized and planned the second annual MATERIA symposium, a major cross-institutional conference held in June 2017 on the history of the material

text in antiquity. Professor Frampton was able to secure funds from the Mellon Foundation and the SHASS Dean's Office by way of the fall 2016 Dean's Research Fund to support the conference.

Professor Mary C. Fuller is the 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 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 CMS/W, Music, Anthropology, Women's and Gender Studies, and Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences.

In AY2017, Professor Fuller was on leave. In the fall term, Professor Fuller was at Oxford University in the United Kingdom on an MIT-Balliol research fellowship. While on leave she gave a number of international talks including a plenary address at the University of Bern Summer School (Kandersteg, Switzerland, September 2016), one at the Oxford Forum in the History of Mathematics (Queens College, November 2016) and one at Hakluyt and the Discovery of the World (Oxford University, November 2016).

Professor Fuller's service to the Institute included serving on the Corporation Joint Advisory Committee and the Future of the Libraries Task Force. Outside of MIT, Professor Fuller continued to serve as the US representative of the Hakluyt Society. She served as an external referee for an endowed professorship appointment for the Boston University English Department; as a member of the Clark University Department of English Visiting Committee; and as a visiting faculty member at the University of Bern Summer School in Kandersteg, Switzerland.

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 theater. During AY2017 Professor Gubar taught 21L.015 Children's Literature: Children's Culture in the 1970s, and 21L.434 Science Fiction and Fantasy: Science Fiction Before Science Fiction.

Professor Gubar's 2013 article "Risky Business: Talking About Children in Children's Literature Criticism" was translated into Danish by Dr. Nina Christensen, associate professor and head of the Centre for Children's Literature at Aarhus University. [Gubar was also interviewed about her work on child actors and children's theater](#) as part of the Childhood: History and Critique series. Additionally, Professor Gubar gave the keynote address at the annual Francelia Butler Conference at Hollins University (July 2016) and the Robert M. Gay Memorial Lecture at Simmons College (February 2017). At MIT, she gave two invited talks on her scholarship: one for the Knight Science Journalism seminar (December 2016) and the other for freshman enrolled in the Concourse Program (March 2017). She also organized and moderated a panel honoring the work of James R. Kincaid at the annual Modern Language Association (MLA) conference (January 2017) and a panel on children and art at the annual Children's Literature Association conference (June 2017).

Service to MIT included being a member of the Literature Section's Curriculum Committee, the assistant director of the MIT Communications Forum, and a member of the Committee on the Undergraduate Program Subcommittee on the HASS Requirement. Professor Gubar organized and ran the Literature Program's Mobile Reading Marathon (January 2017), and served as a judge for the Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship Program (February 2017) and the MIT Inspire competition (April 2017). Service to professional organizations included membership of the Children's Literature Association Executive Board (since 2015) and past president and member of the MLA Forum on Children's and Young Adult Literature. Professor Gubar was elected to both of these roles in national competitions. Professor Gubar did reader's reports for an article submitted to the journal *Children's Literature in Education*, a book manuscript submitted to the University of Mississippi Press, and an Oxford Bibliographies entry on childhood studies.

This year, Professor Gubar also became the Children's and Young Adult Literature Section editor for the website Public Books. She commissioned and edited three book review essays, including one by MIT colleague Sandy Alexandre. [Professor Gubar contributed a full-length book review essay](#), plus four mini-reviews as part of the monthly On Our Nightstands column. Other publications included [an article in *Jeunesse: Young People, Texts, Cultures*](#) and a book chapter in *Late Victorian into Modern* (Oxford University Press, 2016).

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* (Cornell University Press, 2006) and *Passion Made Public: Elizabethan Lyric, Gender and Performance* (University of Illinois Press, 1995), as well as the edited collections *Alternative Shakespeares 3* (Routledge, 2008) and *A Concise Companion to Shakespeare on Screen* (Blackwell, 2006). She has published more than 40 articles and, with James R. Siemon, co-edits the annual *Shakespeare Studies*. The 2014 president of the Shakespeare Association of America, 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 PI 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, and 21L.325 Small Wonders: Songs, Sonnets, and Other Popular Poems. Professor Henderson was on a sabbatical leave for the spring term in AY2017.

Professor Henderson gave a number of invited talks throughout the year including a public lecture for Ca' Foscari University of Venice's *The Merchant in Venice* summer school (July 2016); a talk at the World Shakespeare Congress at Stratford-upon-Avon and London (August 2016); participated as a roundtable panelist at the Cambridge University Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) on Doctoral Training Partnerships Conference on the topics of time and temporality (September 2016); she gave the keynote address at the Massachusetts Center for Renaissance Studies 14th Annual Graduate Conference in Amherst, Massachusetts (October 2016); a lecture for the 6th Bonn Humboldt Award Winners Forum in Bonn, Germany (October 2016); a talk at the Shakespeare Association of America conference in Atlanta, GA (April 2017); and speaking engagements in Munich and Venice (May 2017).

Service to the Literature Section included serving as the undergraduate officer, a faculty mentor to Associate Professor Stephanie Frampton, serving on the promotion committee for a tenure case, participating in the hiring process for a new junior faculty colleague, and serving as a prethesis supervisor for a Literature student. Professor Henderson was also the faculty lead for MIT's participation in the 2016 Cambridge AHRC Doctoral Training Partnership Conference at Peterhouse College, Cambridge University (September 2016); a representative for the MIT Creative Arts Council; and was an external letter writer for an associate professor without tenure review in Architecture. Outside of MIT, Professor Henderson was the seminar organizer and co-chair for a monthly seminar series at the Mahindra Humanities Center at Harvard University. She was the documentary organizer and on the Academic Advisory Board for *The Merchant in Venice* project, a site-specific performance in the Venetian Ghetto (July through August 2016).

Publications included an article in the print and online editions of *The Cambridge Guide to the Worlds of Shakespeare* (Cambridge University Press, 2016), book chapters in *Rethinking Feminism in Early Modern Studies: Gender, Race, and Sexuality* (Routledge, 2016) and *Shakespeare in Our Time: A Shakespeare Association of America Companion* (Bloomsbury, 2016). Professor Henderson was also the forum editor and wrote the introduction and epilogue for *Shakespeare Studies* volume 44.

Associate Professor Noel Jackson works on topics in poetry and poetics, aesthetics, critical theory, and the literature of the long eighteenth century, particularly that of the British romantic period. His book *Science and Sensation in Romantic Poetry* (Cambridge University Press, 2008) examines 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. He has published essays in journals including *ELH*, *MLQ*, *Studies in Romanticism*, and elsewhere, and currently has essays out and forthcoming on lyric melancholy, criticism and pleasure, the event of beauty, and the experience of the contemporary, among other topics. In AY2017, Professor Jackson taught 21L.004 Reading Poetry, and 21L.704 Studies in Poetry: Power, Protest, and Poetry. Professor Jackson was on leave in the spring term of AY2017.

Professor Jackson was the coordinator of the Pleasures of Poetry program offered during Independent Activities Period (IAP) in AY2017, and served as both a concentration and minor advisor for the Literature Section. Professor Jackson continued to serve as an advisory board member of MAKE IT NEW: an international platform for poetry education (since 2015); was a research proposal reviewer for the National Science Centre in Poland; and reviewed a manuscript for Layman Poupard Publishing.

Senior Lecturer Wyn Kelley teaches classes on American writers, literary genres (i.e., comedy, melodrama, gothic, and 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 (MEL), an interactive archive of Melville's texts, sources, and adaptations, [Kelley has also developed a classroom tool called Annotation Studio](#) in conjunction with the Hyperstudio, MIT's digital humanities lab. In AY2017, Professor Kelley taught 21L.000

Writing About Literature: Writing in Margins, 21L.705 Major Authors: Toni Morrison and Herman Melville Talking About America, 21L.021 Comedy: Comedy and Love, and 21L.709 Studies in Literary History: Ethnic Literature in America.

Professor Kelley served on the MELUS 2017 Organizing Committee and was a concentration advisor for the Literature Section in fall 2016. She was also a research associate for Hyperstudio, participating in pedagogy discussion groups. Outside of MIT, Professor Kelley served on the editorial board of *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies*, as associate director of MEL, and as ex officio member of the Executive Committee of the Melville Society.

Professor Kelley was awarded an MIT SHASS Research Award for work on Melville's travel in London in 1849, which included funds to travel to and participate in the Melville Society conference in London (June 2017), and for support of the research and development of a digital London map. Professor Kelley served as a consultant for the National Endowment for the Humanities Next Generation Humanities PhD Planning Grant, led by faculty at the University of Rhode Island, which was awarded in August 2016.

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 and initiated various other Literature subjects. Professor Kibel was on leave for all of AY2017.

Professor Ruth Perry's research interests 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, 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 who 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. Gordon's is the oldest known repertoire of British ballads. Professor Perry was on leave during AY2017.

Service to the institute included continuing to serve as a member of the Technology and Culture Steering Committee; the Steering Committee of the Women's and Gender Studies Program; and the Faculty Newsletter, even though she has been on leave this year. Professor Perry continues to serve as a member of the Folk Song Society of Greater Boston (FSSGB) Program Committee, and continues to chair the 18th Century seminar at Harvard's Mahindra Humanities Center. She also acted as a consultant and read manuscripts for Cambridge University Press, Bucknell University Press, Broadview Press, *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, *Philological Quarterly*, and *Women's Writing*.

Professor Perry gave interviews with the *Boston Globe* (October); the *Guardian* (November); and National Public Radio (December) about a reprinted article on political correctness, which she first published in 1992. She also gave a speech about the FSSGB library with an accompanying ballad at the New England Conservatory (September 2016).

Publications included *A Life in Feminist Scholarship: Festschrift in Honour of Professor Janet Todd* (Routledge, 2016) and a chapter in *Staging Women's Lives in Academia: Gendered Life Stages in Language and Literature Workplaces* (State University of New York Press, 2017). Her essay "Balladry and the Scottish Enlightenment" was published in a collection entitled *The Scottish Enlightenment and Literary Culture* (Bucknell University Press, 2016), and her essay defining the ballad for the Oxford Handbook of English Poetry (Oxford University Press, 2016) finally saw the light of day.

In late May, Professor Perry gave a paper on Anna Gordon's ballad repertoire for the Kommission fur Volksdichtung conference in Palermo, Italy.

Professor Shankar Raman's research focuses on Renaissance and late-medieval literature and culture, colonialism and postcolonialism, history of ideas, history of science, and literary theory. In AY2017, Professor Raman taught 21L.701 Literary Methods and 21L.350 Science and Literature: Brave New Worlds.

Professor Raman's service to the Literature Section included serving as a member of the curriculum committee, organizer for the Literature Workshop talk series, performing the first round review of 370 plus applications received in the fall 2017 junior faculty search, and serving as the supporting thesis advisor for two literature majors. Professor Raman continued to serve as the director of the Kelly-Douglas Fund, served on the Foreign Scholarship Committee, and served as a freshman advisor. Outside of MIT he read applications for the Radcliffe Fellowship, reviewed book proposals for Palgrave and Routledge, and was an external reviewer for a book manuscript under consideration by Oxford University Press.

In July 2016, Professor Raman traveled to Venice, Italy, to collaborate with Professor Diana Henderson on the online module on Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. While in Italy, he gave an invited talk at the Shakespeare Summer School in Venice.

Associate Professor Margery Resnick's research interests include Hispanic literature and film, 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 director of the Association of MIT Alumnae Women's Oral History project which seeks to chronicle and record the ways in which an MIT education with its emphasis on problem solving shaped individual lives; six new oral history interviews were completed and placed in the MIT archives this year. During AY2017, Professor Resnick taught 21L.020 Globalization: The Good, the Bad, and the In-Between (co-taught with Joaquin Terrones), 21L.S88 Global Literature Cultural Encounters: Insiders and Outsiders, and 21L.019 Introduction to European and Latin American Fiction: Great Fiction on the Page and the Screen.

Service to the institute included serving as a major advisor to a graduating student, as transfer credit advisor, and as a concentration advisor. Professor Resnick continued her service to MIT as the director of the Burchard Scholars program, member of the MIT Committee on Discipline, a judge at the MIT INSPIRE competition, and gave a

presentation to parents about Global Opportunities at MIT (August 2016). Outside of MIT, Professor Resnick continued to serve as the president of the International Institute in Spain, and acted as a consultant for language programs at the Brookline Public Schools. She also ran Comunidad Autónoma de Madrid, a professional development program for teachers from the Boston area and Madrid (July 2016).

Professor Resnick and Joaquin Terrones successfully submitted a d'Arbeloff grant proposal for funding to develop their new subject entitled Medical Narratives: Compelling Stories from Antiquity to Grey's Anatomy, which is currently being developed and will be introduced to the curriculum in fall 2018.

Professor Stephen Tapscott is a poet whose fields of interest include creative writing, poetry, experimental prose, poetry as a literary genre, and translation. His academic interests include North American writing (especially Walt Whitman, Anglo-American modernists, writers since World War II); Latin American poetry; world poetics in Russian, German, and Polish; autobiography; gender studies and queer studies; photography; and the visual arts. During AY2017, Professor Tapscott taught 21L.018 Introduction to English Literature: Irony, Wit, Satire, Parody, Farce, and Funny Walks, 21L.310 Bestsellers: Detective Fiction, 21L.345 On The Screen: The Best Movie Ever Made, 21L.004 Reading Poetry, and 21L.487 Modern Poetry: Healing the World.

Service to the unit included serving as a concentration advisor, major advisor, and thesis advisor. Professor Tapscott additionally served as a judge for various CMS/W contests and as an advisor and member for a writing thesis. Outside of MIT, Professor Tapscott served on the board of the British and American Literature Association and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts. He also served as an external evaluator for the Italian National University evaluation and accreditation system and was an external reader for several university presses.

Professor Tapscott's publications included articles in *Pleiades* and *Poets Lore*.

Professor David Thorburn is the author of *Conrad's Romanticism* (Yale University Press, 1974) 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 used anthology of fiction, *Initiation: Stories and Short Novels on Three Themes* (Harcourt Brace, 1976). Recent publications include the co-edited volumes [Democracy and New Media](#) and [Rethinking Media Change](#) (both MIT Press, 2003), volumes in the MIT Press series Media in Transition, of which he was editor in chief.

Two of Thorburn's MIT courses are reaching audiences beyond the Institute. His lecture series Masterworks of Early 20th-Century Literature, a version of his MIT undergraduate course, is available in DVD and audio versions from The Teaching Company, and his long-running MIT lecture course, [21L.011 The Film Experience](#), is now accessible on [YouTube](#). The course is also available through MIT's [OpenCourseWare](#) platform.

Thorburn has recently completed a book of poetry, some of whose entries have been previously published, and he is working on final revisions of a collection of his previously published essays on television and literature. He continues to write poems.

During AY2017, Professor Thorburn taught 21L.702 Studies in Fiction: Joyce, Woolf, and the Legacy of Modernism, 21L.011 The Film Experience, and 21L.485 Modern Fiction: 20th-Century Fiction, Modernist Masters.

Professor Thorburn served as a minor advisor for the Literature Section and is the director emeritus of the Communications Forum, now directed by Seth Mnookin of CMS/W. Outside of MIT he was an occasional reader for various scholarly journals in media and literature, as well as for university and trade publishers.

Digital Humanities

The digital humanities are supported by the Literature Section's technology support specialist, Belinda Yung, who works to foster and support digital humanities research and teaching among the faculty. Her work focuses on helping faculty to integrate digital media and technology in the classroom, supporting researchers and scholars at partner institutions, and exploring new ways for active learning.

The Global *Hamlet* in Performance, [Global *Tempest* in Performance](#), and [Global *King Lear* in Performance](#) online study modules continue to be used in Shakespeare subjects offered by the Literature Section. They are limited to students enrolled in MIT subjects since they contain some copyright protected material. A [new Hamlet module](#) clear of media under copyright designed for the general public is now available, but requires user registration before access is granted. A separate [study module for *The Merchant of Venice*](#) was released in spring 2017 and will be expanded during summer 2017.

Yung worked with Professor Peter Donaldson on his Shakespeare talk at Gallaudet University in September 2016. They are also actively working with a programmer to enhance video viewing and sharing for Global Shakespeares: Video and Performance Archive. In fall 2016 Professor Diana Henderson completed an MITx module on *The Merchant of Venice*. She also is writing "[Reflections on Shakespeare 2016](#)," a series of blog posts.

Teaching

In addition to the subjects and other teaching information listed above for each faculty member, there were a number of collaborative and innovative teaching efforts.

Margery Resnick again organized and taught 21L.S88 Cultural Encounters: Insiders and Outsiders during IAP in Madrid, Spain. This was the third year the class was offered, and 28 of the more than 60 students who applied were accepted and participated in the program overseas. Housing and travel arrangements were made by Professor Resnick, who also taught the class. Outside of 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 faculty member.

The Literature Section has decided to expand the IAP abroad offerings and has begun planning an IAP in London, UK, class entitled Literary London, which will be offered over IAP 2018 and led by Diana Henderson. Professor Henderson has secured \$15,000 in funding toward the program from the MIT Global Classroom Fund.

Enrollments

Our enrollments have been slightly lower in recent years than they have been in the past. AY2017 enrollment totals were 701 compared to a three-year average of 828 (819 in AY2016, 794 in AY2015, and 870 in AY2014); these numbers are enrollment numbers at registration and may vary once listeners are added in. One reason for lower enrollments is probably increased competition among humanities sections: current students have many more options to choose from, and it is not uncommon for classes in adjoining sections to overlap in materials covered and semester offered. Better planning among neighboring sections should alleviate some of this problem. Visibility remains a problem as well. The disappearance of the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Distribution requirement has meant that students now receive no clear message that (among other things), experience in close reading would be valuable to them. We hope to work with the leadership of SHASS and with the MIT administration to improve the visibility of our field and to make more transparent to MIT undergraduates the value of studying literature.

James Buzard
Interim Head