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# <u>Recent</u> Dissertation

Affecting Genre: Women's Participation with Popular Romance Fiction

- Stephanie Moody, Ph.D.

**Chairs:** 

Anne Ruggles Gere & Megan Sweeney



# **Dimensions and Directions**

The Joint Ph.D. Program in English and Education at the University of Michigan

### Volume 20

# Fall 2013

### From the Chairs

When we sing the praises of JPEE (which we do every chance we get!), students take center stage—students who are here on campus and alums who have moved on to other campuses but remain connected to the larger JPEE community. We count ourselves fortunate to work with students on campus who are pursuing fascinating projects, demonstrating leadership in a variety of ways, and supporting one another both academically and personally. On any given day we might discuss with students automated systems for scoring writing, the role of the workshop method in teaching writing, evidence that video composition supports the development of metacognition, print literacy rates among



Anne Curzan and Anne Gere

deaf students, the underconceptualization of plagiarism, and/or strategies for enhancing the professional development of teachers. We delight in these continuing opportunities to learn.

As we write, we are preparing to attend a graduate student conference organized by a number of JPEE students. With Shirley Brice Heath as keynote speaker and panels by students from several universities, "Making Meaning: Language, Rhetoric and Enculturation" promises to be an intellectually stimulating event. In addition to organizing large-scale events like this, students are also serving regularly on committees in the School of Education and the Department of English; they plan our weekly Chalk and Cheese meetings; and they set up a variety of social events to help our newest cohort ease into their new hometown. Perhaps most impressive, though, is the way students support one another by suggesting an article to read, throwing a party, reading a draft of an exam, bringing meals to someone who is sick, responding to dissertation chapters in a writing group, dropping someone at the airport, or planning a conference presentation together. This support extends well beyond commencement, and we take great pleasure in seeing former students who co-author articles, present together on conference panels, or share ideas for developing new programs. We found it moving to see the number of alumni who returned to campus in October to celebration Bonnie Campbell's retirement and to spend time with one another.

The strength of the JPEE community, something often commented upon by those outside it, results in part from the resources made available to students on campus: Rackham funding for student-run groups and conferences; travel funds to attend conferences; fellowships that provide time for sustained writing; and monies from the Stephen Dunning Student Support Fund that underwrite social events, special professional development opportunities, equipment purchases, and some travel costs.

This fall Stephanie Moody joined the wider JPEE network as she took a position at Kent State University, and we welcomed our newest cohort—Ann Burke, James Hammond, Jonathan Harris, Anna Knutson, and Bonnie Tucker. The five have already become vital contributors to the JPEE community. You can read more about them in the following pages, where you can also learn more about the accomplishments of our current students and our alumni.

Wishing everyone the best at this holiday season, Anne Ruggles Gere & Anne Curzan

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### Fall 2012 Cohort

**Ann Burke** grew up in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, and earned her B.A. in English and history at Aquinas College in Grand Rapids. After graduating, she taught English for three years at Bullock Creek Middle School in Midland, Michigan and became a teacher consultant for Western Michigan University's Third Coast Writing Project. From there, Ann taught first-year composition while earning her M.A. in English, with a concentration in Rhetoric and Composition, at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. Through all of this, Ann has come to value the communities to which she has belonged and those that continue to support her in her academic pursuits. Ann is excited to be back in Michigan and join the JPEE community; she looks forward to delving into her research interests, which include composition studies as well as secondary and postsecondary pedagogy.





**James Hammond** grew up in Louisville, KY and Lewisville, TX. After earning his Bachelor of Arts from University of Texas at Austin, as a double major in English and Psychology, James taught high school English for three years in San Antonio, TX and completed a M.Ed. at the University of Texas at San Antonio. He was named Teacher of the Year by the San Antonio Independent School District and Distinguished Educator by Thomas Jefferson High School; he also received the Trinity Award for Excellence in Education. His research interests include critical theory and education, popular and visual cultures, computer-assisted writing assessment, and language ideology in curriculum.

Jonathan Harris is originally from Red Wing, Minnesota—a small town on the banks of the Mississippi. He

went to St. Cloud State University, where received his B.A. in English with an emphasis on Rhetoric and Applied Writing. He then attended Ohio University, where he earned his M.A. in rhetoric and composition, served as the English department's Web Consultant, and taught sections of first-year and junior composition. He has professional experience in multicultural student outreach centers in Education Departments in Minnesota, has produced grant and funding materials with the National Science Foundation, and has been contracted to design web-text for publication in his field. Currently his research interests lie at the crossroads of transnational and globalization studies and new media studies; he hopes to better understand how digital rhetorics affect the ways student writers are constructed inside of composition classrooms. A native Minnesotan, Jonathan is looking forward once again to experiencing cold, northern winters.





**Anna V. Knutson** grew up in Seattle, Washington, where she, like many Seattleites, played in a punk band and worked in the coffee industry. After earning undergraduate degrees in English and Women Studies at the University of Washington, Anna moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico to pursue her M.A. in Rhetoric and Writing at the University of New Mexico. Anna is interested in educational access, linguistic diversity, extracurricular literacies, multimodal composition, and reflection and transfer.

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**Bonnie Tucker** completed her BA at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where she double majored in English and Spanish. She went on to live abroad in central Mexico for a year, teaching ESL to both children and adults. She returned to the U.S. to work in Raleigh, North Carolina as a family literacy instructor at a community center teaching ESL and basic literacy skills to Latino families, including parents and their children. Bonnie's love of literature and history was reignited while she completed her Master's degree in Interdisciplinary Humanities at the University of Chicago. Afterwards she returned to teaching, working in student affairs at a small college in Chicago where she also taught Basic English, ESL, and College Composition. Her diverse interests include the history of professional education and medical education in nineteenth-century America as well as ESL education and community-based learning.



### **JPEE Awards**

Steven Engel was selected to be the recipient of the Linda Pinder Fellowship for 2013.

**Timothy Green**, **Stephanie Moody**, and **Christie Toth** were recipients of this year's David and Linda Moscow Prize for Excellence in Teaching Composition. This award is given to instructors remarkable for the energy, passion, insight, pedagogical skill and creativity, and commitment they bring to the teaching of writing.

Liz Homan is a recipient of the new Sweetland Digital Rhetoric Collaborative fellowship.

During 2012-2013, the following students were awarded a Rackham One-term Dissertation Fellowship: Liz Homan, Anne Porter, and Crystal VanKooten.

Liz Homan, Becca Manery, Melody Pugh, Sarah Swofford, and Joanna Want received Rackham Graduate Student Research Grants.

Liz Homan and Joanna Want were awarded Rackham Graduate School Humanities Fellowships in 2013.

**Stephanie Moody** was the recipient of one of the 2013 Rackham Outstanding Student Instructor Awards. This award recognizes exceptional ability and creativity as a teacher, service as an outstanding mentor, and continuous growth as a teacher and scholar. The Rackham Outstanding GSI Award is a highly competitive award: there were only twenty recipients across the entire university in 2013.

**Christie Toth** was awarded a Rackham Predoctoral Fellowship and was honored to receive the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) Chairs' Memorial Scholarship.



# **JPEE Current Student Activities**

**Ann Burke**, **Ben Keating**, and **Bonnie Tucker** are working for the Sweetland Writing Center leading Admissions Essay Workshops in Detroit for high school students preparing to apply for college.

Merideth Garcia, Gail Gibson, Liz Homan, Danielle Lillge, Christopher Parsons, Aubrey Schiavone, and Chinyere Uzogara contribute to the Policy Research Briefs that appear in each issue of the National Council of Teachers of English's quarterly *Council Chronicle*.

The collaborated efforts of **Anne Gere**, Norbert Elliot, **Gail Gibson**, **Christie Toth**, and Carl Whithaus on a CompPile.org annotated bibliography on Automated Writing Evaluation.

Anne Gere, Melody Pugh, and Sarah Swofford presented on work with the Upper Level Writing Requirement project at the Council for Writing Program Administrators in Savannah this past summer. They are currently working on an article based on their findings.

**Brett Griffiths'** poem "Detroit Suburbs, 1976" appears in the current issue of *PoemMemoirStory* from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

**Brett Grittiths** and **Christie Toth** authored "Distinct and Significant': Professional Identities of Two-Year College Faculty" in the current issue of CCC (September 2013). Kate Thirolf, the third author of the piece, is from the CSHPE. Their collaboration on this article emerged from collaborations in the founding and steering of the Community College Interdisciplinary Research Forum (CCIRF) in the School of Education.

With the guidance of Anne Gere: Liz Homan, Christopher Parsons, Ruth Anna Spooner, and Chinyere Uzogara, from the NCTE Policy Team, are crafting their first-ever ebook, which features videos of teachers, interactive audio/visual elements, and discussions of text complexity in light of the Common Core.

Liz Homan recently became a contributing author to GradHacker, a blog published by Inside Higher Ed, and for the Rackham Graduate School blog. Liz also had a paper accepted into the *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education*, entitled ""The Shifting Spaces of Teacher Relationships: Complementary Methods in Examinations of Teachers' Digital Practices."

Liz Homan, Merideth Garcia, and Crystal VanKooten co-organized and co-edited the Computers and Writing 2013 Conference reviews. Crystal wrote this review: Review of "Living in Enough Worlds at the Same Time: Speculative Feminisms Amid Boundary Objects," a keynote address at the 2013 Computers and Writing Conference: http://www.digitalrhetoriccollaborative.org/collaborative/cw-reviews/2013-cw-reviews/.

**Elizabeth Hutton**, **Ben Keating**, and **Sarah Swofford** continue their work as Graduate Student Research Assistants in the Sweetland Center for Writing, where they work on a wide variety of projects ranging from longitudinal research on undergraduate writing development to supporting student writing in large science courses and the effects of writing on the acquisition of content knowledge.

# JPEE Current Student Activities continues...

**Ben Keating**, **Justine Neiderhiser**, **Melody Pugh**, and **Sarah Swofford** serve as the coordinators for the Language and Rhetorical Studies Interdisciplinary Workshop, and they were thrilled to host the 3rd biennial Graduate Student Conference, featuring keynote speaker Shirley Brice Heath in November. Lang/Rhet will also be welcoming Rebecca Nowacek this spring and sponsoring a wide variety of scholarly activities for its members. They are pleased to have Anne Curzan continue in her role as faculty sponsor, and they welcome our new faculty sponsor, David Gold.

**Danielle Lillge** presented at the Conference on English Education in Fort Collins, CO, a paper entitled, "Picking from the Professional Development Buffet: The Challenge of Helping Pre-Service Teacher Productively Select and Apply On-Going Learning."

**Anne Porter** presented "Climate Change Testimonial: Emergent, Online, Multimodal" at North Carolina State University's 4th Annual Communication, Rhetoric and Digital Media Symposium in Raleigh, NC. She also presented "Interagentivity in Cortazar's *Axolotl*" at the Association for Study of Literature & Environment's 10th Biennial Conference at the University of Kansas.

**Christie Toth** published "When the Writing Requirements Went Away: Two Decades of Decentralization/ Abolition" in *Writing Program Administration* with Portland State University colleagues Hildy Miller and Duncan Carter. Christie's article "Unmeasured Engagement: Two-Year College English Faculty and Disciplinary Professional Organizations" will appear in *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* in May. Christie is serving on two national TYCA committees: the research committee and the group revising the "Guidelines for the Academic Preparation of Two-Year College English Faculty."

**Crystal VanKooten** presented papers at two conferences: "Awareness, Adaptation, and Audio-Visual Composing: Looking for Markers of Meta-Awareness through Video in First-Year Writing" at the 2013 4Cs con-

ference; and "Looking and Listening for Learning – with Video" at the 2013 Computers and Writing conference. Crystal also published a chapter in a 2013 online edited collection *Digital Writing Assessment and Evaluation* (edited by Dánielle Nicole DeVoss and Heidi A. McKee): "Toward a Rhetorically Sensitive Assessment Model for New Media Composition." http:// ccdigitalpress.org/ dwae/09 vankooten.html



Sarah Swofford, Merideth Garcia, Ben Keating and Justine Neiderhiser

# 2012-2013 Dissertation

### **Stephanie Moody**

Affecting Genre: Women's Participation with Popular Romance Fiction Chairs: Anne Ruggles Gere and Megan Sweeney

#### Dissertation Abstract:

This study examines women's engagements with popular romance fiction. Framing genres as sites of participation, it explores the digital, social, and literate practices women enact as they participate with and actively shape the popular romance genre. Popular romance reading is a common literacy practice for adolescent and adult women in North America. Thus far, the appeal of romance reading has been largely understood through a model of mass production and consumption, and largely explained as a solitary literacy practice whereby women use romance novels to escape to a fantasy love story. Drawing from interviews and book discussions with romance readers, interviews with romance authors, and analyses of four genre-sponsored websites, this study suggests instead that some women engage with popular romance fiction in order to connect to, as well as escape from, their social worlds. It demonstrates that women's talk and writing about popular romance allow them to co-construct the genre, demonstrate readerly and writerly expertise, and engage in collective and civic action. It also illustrates that women's affective and escapist reading practices produce a range of transformative, critical, and genre-specific knowledges. Drawing from rhetorical genre theory, feminist theory, and ethnographic methods, this study shifts the focus away from romance reading as a solitary and single literacy practice to romance genre participation as comprised of varied digital, social, and literate practices. By examining a specific genre in this way, this study aims to help composition scholars draw connections between academic and everyday literacies and encourage students to explore their own subjectivities and expertise within familiar genres as they learn to participate in new ones.



Stephanie Moody was the recipient of one of the 2013 Rackham Outstanding Student Instructor Awards. This award recognizes exceptional ability and creativity as a teacher, service as an outstanding mentor, and continuous growth as a teacher and scholar. The Rackham Outstanding GSI Award is a highly competitive award: there were only twenty recipients across the entire university in 2013.

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### JPEE Alumni

Laura Aull ('11) is on research leave from Wake Forest University this year and is delighted to be back in Ann Arbor this fall. She is working with the Sweetland Center for Writing research team on the Directed Self-Placement (DSP), especially by using corpus linguistic analysis of incoming student essays to inform future decisions about DSP and first-year writing research and instruction. Laura's principal focus this year is her book project, *Genrebased Rhetorical and Linguistic Approaches to First-year Writing*, which will come out with Palgrave Macmillan in 2015. She has also been fortunate to collaborate with many E&Ers, including Anne Gere, Zak Lancaster, and Moisés Perales Escudero on a CCC article, Christie Toth on DSP questionnaire design, and Moisés Perales Escudero, Zak Lancaster, and David West Brown on a symposium on corpus analysis of transitioning student writing for WRAB in Paris (February, 2014). Zak and Laura oversaw the second iteration of DSP at Wake Forest this past summer.

**Jennifer Buehler** ('09) received the Saint Louis University Excellence in Faculty Mentoring Award for the 2012-2013 school year. With Michigan-area teachers Daria Plumb and Jennifer Walsh, she published an article on young adult literature book awards in the Summer 2013 issue of *The ALAN Review*. Recently she extended her work on young adult (YA) literature into schools and the community by hosting a workshop on culturally responsive approaches to YA lit at the University of Illinois Chancellor's Academy and moderating a live interview with author Patrick Ness for the St. Louis Public Library. At this year's NCTE Annual Convention, she presented the ALAN Award for significant contributions to the field of young adult literature to Judy Blume. An interview with Blume is forthcoming on Text Messages, the monthly young adult literature podcast Jennifer has hosted since 2009 (www.readwritethink.org/textmessages).

**Amy Carpenter Ford** ('10) is an Assistant Professor of English Education at Central Michigan University where she teaches composition and prepares elementary teachers to teach writing and secondary English teachers to teach literature. Building on her dissertation research, she is currently studying how to prepare teachers for diversity in K-12 classrooms. Amy, **Ebony E. Thomas**, and **Kelly Sassi** presented papers at the American Educational Research Association 2013 Annual Conference as part of a symposium called "'Race Still Matters': Studying Race in Classroom Interaction Using Critical Discourse Analysis – 'From the Bottom Up'" for the Language and Social Processes Special Interest Group.

In August, **Christian Dallavis** ('08) was appointed Senior Director for Leadership Programs in the Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE) at the University of Notre Dame. In this new position he directs the Mary Ann Remick Leadership Program, which offers a master of arts degree in educational administration and state licensure to aspiring school leaders, and he is charged with establishing a new Center for Transformational Educational Leadership in Notre Dame's Institute for Educational Initiatives. He also continues to oversee the Notre Dame ACE Academies, a network of high-performing Catholic schools that serve low-income communities in Arizona and Florida. He recently published an article on the governance model of the ND ACE Academies in *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*. In 2013 he presented on the ND ACE Academies model of school culture, finance, and governance to the Catholic Higher Education Collaborative, to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and at a bipartisan mayors' summit on faith-based schools in the urban core at the George W. Bush Institute.

**Bethany Davila** ('11) is an assistant professor of Rhetoric and Writing and assistant director of Core Writing at the University of New Mexico. She received the 2012 Best New Scholar Award from *Written Communication* and was nominated for the 2012 John R. Hayes Award for her article "Indexicality and 'Standard' Edited American English: Examining the Link Between Conceptions of Standardness and Perceived Authorial Identity." In addition to her teaching and research, Beth is working with a fantastic team of faculty and graduate students to strengthen UNM's first-year writing program.

**Zak Lancaster** ('12) is in his second year as assistant professor of English at Wake Forest University (WFU). At WFU, Zak is working with fellow E&Er Laura Aull to build the university's Writing Program, and he is focusing his efforts on launching a Writing Across the Curriculum initiative. Toward this end, he has initiated a writing (cont.)

### JPEE Alumni continues...

fellows program for faculty across disciplines who will come together to engage with writing theory and pedagogy and discuss strategies for implementing student writing in their teaching. He also worked with Laura Aull, along with undergraduate research assistants, on Wake's new DSP process. Zak teaches upper-level courses in linguistics (grammar and discourse analysis) as well as first year writing. He is continuing to develop his research focus on upper-level student writing, using methods from systemic functional linguistics and corpus linguistics.

**Thomas Philion** ('93) is now Interim Dean of the College of Education at Roosevelt University. Two newly earned grants are fueling the re-design of the elementary education, secondary English, and secondary math programs (to meet new standards and improve clinical partnerships), as well as the search for an assistant professor with expertise in language development and English Language Learners. By the end of the year, the college will have developed a five-year strategic plan to redesign all licensure programs and expand its counseling, leadership, youth, and school improvement offerings.

**Randall Pinder** ('11) is in his second year as coordinator of the first semester writing course at the College of The Bahamas (COB). In March 2013, he presented in a panel with two colleagues from COB at "Beyond Bahamian Classroom Walls (and Back Again): Student Writing and Engagement in Public Spaces" at the Conference on College Composition and Communication in Las Vegas. **Anne Gere** was the chair. In November, Randy presented "Adult Literacy Learners: Partners not Problems" at the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) conference in Lexington. Also in November, his book chapter "What Trisha Taught Me about Participation: A Case Study of a Tutor-Learner Relationship" was published in *Developing and Sustaining Adult Learners*. The publication was launched at AAACE in two roundtable discussion sessions. Paul and Randy continue to live and move between The Bahamas and the Cayman Islands. They purchased a new place in Cayman that they are in the midst of renovating.

**Sarah Ruffing Robbins** ('93) is Lorraine Sherley Professor of American Literature at Texas Christian University (TCU). In Spring 2013, she published a co-authored essay with Joycelyn Moody for a special issue of *MELUS*: "Women's Interracial Collaborations in the Nineteenth Century and Today: Seeking Trust and Commitment in Shared Writing and Research." She gave presentations at the American Literature Association (on designing a course for comp/rhet and literature-focused grad students to study authorship together), at the Symbiosis conference in London (on transatlantic periodical culture), at the Popular Culture Association (with a group of graduate students, on women writers navigating the space between high art and popular culture), and at the American Women Writers of Color conference (on Toni Morrison's *Home*). With Victorian Studies scholar Linda Hughes, she co-taught a graduate seminar on transatlan-

tic culture in the long nineteenth centurywhile involving graduate students in work on a collection of essays, *Teaching Transatlanticism* (which includes a superb essay by U of M English Department faculty member Daniel Hack). She continues work on a monograph about cultural legacies drawn from counter-narratives in American writing on education at the turn into the twentieth century, and how those resources can contribute to humanities-based public work today. Her JPEE colleagues Dave Schaafsma and Todd DeStigter have been particularly helpful to her work on a Hull-House chapter: "Thank you!" to Dave and Todd and their fabulous UIC team of Addams-studying scholarteachers



Randall Pinder, Paul Pearson & Laura Aull at Bonnie Campbell's reception

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## JPEE Alumni continues...

Kelly Sassi ('08), Assistant Professor of English and Education at North Dakota State University in Fargo (Go Bison!), has a forthcoming chapter titled "Feminist-Indigenous Rhetorics of Survivance and Discursive Spaces in S. Alice Callahan's Wynema: A Child of the Forest" in *Feminist Challenges, Feminist Rhetorics: Locations, Scholarship, and Discourse.* She published "Reading the White Space in a Multicultural Field Experience" (2012) with Denise Lajimodiere, Katherine Bertolini, and Gerald Ketterling in *Multicultural Education.* Her proposal, "Reading Literature, Viewing Art: Moby-Dick, Ahab's Wife, and the paintings of T.L. Solien," was funded by the North Dakota Humanities Council in September 2013. In May she completed work on a writing intensive institute at an American Indian school, funded by a National Writing Project SEED Grant for Professional Development in a High Needs School. Kelly has been co-director of the Red River Valley Writing Project for the last three years, and received the 2013 Vogel Teaching award.

**Ebony Elizabeth Thomas** ('10) is in her second year as Assistant Professor of Reading/Writing/Literacy at Penn's Graduate School of Education. She has published recent and forthcoming articles in *Linguistics and Education* and the *Journal of Teacher Education*. She is embarking upon her first post-dissertation research projects: a longitudinal reading and classroom interaction study at a West Philadelphia middle school, and a planned annual critical issues in urban education teacher institute on issues of literacy and educational reform. Recently, she was elected to the CEE Executive Committee for a four-year term (2013-2017). In the spring, she looks forward to welcoming JPEE alumni and other friends to Philadelphia for AERA 2014.

Alumni returned for Bonnie Campbell's retirement reception Friday, October 25, 2013. Stephanie Moody, Hannah Dickinson, Bonnie, Staci Shultz, and Steve Engel .



# **Stephen Dunning Student Support Fund**

As you think about your end-of-year charitable contributions, please consider a gift to the Stephen Dunning Student Support Fund. This is the fund that supports special events, provides Chalk and Cheese refreshment, and, when monies permit, supplements research-related expenses for graduate students.

Contributions of all sizes are most welcome. Write checks to the University of Michigan E&E Gift Account and send them to Jeanie Laubenthal, Joint Ph.D. Program in English & Education, 610 E. University, 4204 SEB, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1259.



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The Rackham Graduate School works with faculty, students and staff across the University of Michigan to promote excellence in graduate education for over 8,200 students in 108 Ph.D., 87 master's, and 34 certificate programs.



**School of Education** 

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