

Nathaniel Langdon Williams

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. English, University of Kansas, 2010

M.A. English, Truman State University, 1995

B.A. Communication (minor in International Studies) (*cum laude*), Truman State University, 1993

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Continuing Lecturer, University Writing Program, University of California, Davis 2018-present

Full-Time Lecturer, University Writing Program, University of California, Davis 2012-2018

Postdoctoral Teaching Assistant, English, University of Kansas 2011-2012

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

Books

Gears and God: Technocratic Fiction, Faith, and Empire in Mark Twain's America. Tuscaloosa: U of Alabama P, 2018.

Reviews: *American Literature*, *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, *American Literary Realism*, *Science Fiction Studies*, *Extrapolation*, *The Mark Twain Annual*, *The Mark Twain Journal*, *Religious Studies Review*, *Church History*

Journal Articles

"The Mysterious Origins of Twain's 'Skeleton Novelette.'" *The Mark Twain Annual* (forthcoming).

"Oceanic Fiction, W. Clark Russell, and Twain's Sequel to 'Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses.'" *The Mark Twain Annual* 17 (2020).

"George Lippard's Fragile Utopian Future and 1840s American Economic Turmoil." *Utopian Studies* 24:2 (2013): 166-83.

"Reconstructing Biblical History: Garrett P. Serviss, Pauline Hopkins, and Technocratic Exploration Novels." *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 34:4 (September 2012), 323-40.

"*Frank Reade, Jr., in Cuba*: Dime-Novel Technology, U.S. Imperialism, and the 'American Jules Verne.'" *American Literature* 83:2 (June 2011), 279-303.

Book Chapters

"Science and Technology." *Mark Twain in Context*. John Bird (ed.) Cambridge UP, 2020: 182-91.

"War Machines and Child Geniuses: American Edisonades." *The Cambridge History of Science Fiction*. Gerry Canavan and Eric Carl Link (eds.) Cambridge UP, 2019: 86-100.

"Dreiser, Dey, and the Dime-Novel Detective Tradition." *The Centrality of Crime Fiction in American Literary Culture*. Alfred Bendixen and Olivia Carr Edenfield (eds.), Routledge, 2017: 53-74.

Book Reviews, Short Articles, and Interviews

"Brief Reviews." *The Mark Twain Annual* 18 (2021) (forthcoming).

"Alternate History: Science Fiction, Facts, and 'Reality.'" Introduction to *For Want of a Nail* exhibit. Shields Library, University of California, Davis (forthcoming).

"Brief Reviews." *The Mark Twain Annual* 17 (2020).

"*The Steam Man of the Prairies* (1868) Spotlight" (online teaching resource). Nickels and Dimes from the Collections of Johannsen and LeBlanc. Northern Illinois University Library Rare Books and Special Collections. dimenovels.lib.niu.edu (2020).

Strange Stars: David Bowie, Pop Music, and the Decade Sci-Fi Exploded, by Jason Heller. (Book Review) *SFRA Review* 50.2 (2020).

"*Gears and God: What Powered Twain's Speculative Fiction?*" Center for Mark Twain Studies website. Elmira College, Sep. 27, 2018.

Biographies for "Keith Gilyard" and "Joseph Williams and Gregory Columb." *Teachers on the Edge: The WOE Interviews*. Ed. David Masiel, Eric Schroeder, and Lisa Sperber. New York: Routledge, 2017.

Here Be Dragons: Exploring Fantasy Maps and Settings, by Stefan Ekman. (Book Review) *Extrapolation* 56.2 (2015): 215-17.

(--- with Laurie Glover) "'Change Your Ruling Science': An Interview with Justine Larbalestier and Scott Westerfeld." *Writing on the Edge* 24.2 (Spring 2014): 96-106.

"Steampunk: Assembly Required, Disassembly Encouraged." Introduction to *Worlds of Steampunk* exhibit. Shields Library, University of California, Davis. 2012-2013.

"Celebrating James Gunn: Writer, Scholar, Teacher." *James Gunn's Ad Astra* 2 (Summer 2013).

"Teaching Science Fiction: Perspectives from AboutSF's Portable Workshop." *SFRA Review* 287 (Winter 2009): 7-10.

"The Venture Bros." (Media Review) *SFRA Review* 286 (Fall 2008): 29-30.

Works in Progress

"Rethinking Retro: Buddy Holly as Science-Fiction Metaphor" (essay).

"U.S. Responses to Verne's Oceanic Fiction" (essay).

SELECTED HONORS AND AWARDS

National Level

Quarry Farm Fellowship, Center for Mark Twain Studies, Elmira College, 2017

Honorable Mention, Norman Foerster Prize for Best Essay in *American Literature*, 2011

Horatio Alger Fellowship in American Popular Culture, Northern Illinois University Libraries, 2011

University Level

Academic Federation Research Travel Award, UC Davis, 2017, 2020

Non-Senate Faculty Professional Award (for research at the Library of Congress), UC Davis, 2015

PRESENTATIONS

Invited Lectures

- "Mark Twain and the Inventor Fiction Boom: Technology Meets American Conceit, 1876-1910."
"The Trouble Begins at Eight" Lecture Series, Elmira College, Oct. 17, 2017.
- "U.S. Expansionism and the Editorship of Luis Senarens." Horatio Alger Society Conference,
Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL, May 4, 2012.

Invited Panelist

- "Teaching with Dime Novels." Papers for the People Dime Novel Symposium. Online, Hosted by
Northern Illinois University and Villanova University. Nov. 4, 2020.
- "*Above the American Renaissance*: David Reynolds and the Spiritual Imagination in American
Literary Studies." American Literature Association, San Francisco, CA, May 24-27, 2018.
- "Old Sleuths: Portraying Age in Detective Serials, 1870-1900." Special "Illustrating Crime Fiction
Panel." American Literature Association, San Francisco, CA, May 25, 2018.

Conference Presentations

- "Pros and Cons of Steampunking a C19 Syllabus." C19: Society of Nineteenth-Century Americanists
Conference. Special Teaching the Weird Nineteenth Century" Panel. Online. Oct. 17, 2020.
- "Sea Fiction, Globalism, and Twain's Sequel to 'Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offenses.'" Special Mark
Twain and Globalism Panel. Modern Language Association, Seattle, WA, Jan. 11, 2020.
- "In Nemo's Footsteps: U.S. Responses to Verne's Oceanic Internationalism." C19: Society of
Nineteenth-Century Americanists Conference, Albuquerque, NM, March 22-25, 2018.
- "American C19 SF: Methodologies for the 'Poe-Gernsback Gulf.'" Special Session on Recovering
19th-Century American Science Fiction. Science Fiction Research Association Conference,
University of California, Riverside. June 30, 2017.
- "Albert Bigelow Paine and Anna Adolph's Polar Utopias: Gender, Faith, Technocracy." American
Literature Association, San Francisco, CA, May 27, 2016.
- "Boy Inventors and Jewish Giants: Biblical Literalism in 19th-Century Technocratic Dime Novels."
American Literature Association Symposium on "God and the American Writer," Feb. 28, 2015.
- "Reimagining Twain's Talking-Dog Sentimentalism in 21st-Century Speculative Fiction." Tenth
Biannual Conference of Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment (ASLE),
May 29, 2013.
- "Retro-Futurism in Context: Buddy Holly as Science-Fiction Metaphor." 2013 Joint SFRA/Eaton
Science Fiction Conference, University of California-Riverside, Apr. 13, 2013.
- "Martí, Maceo, and Gómez as Dime-Novel Action Heroes, 1895-1898." American Literature
Association, San Francisco, CA, May 25, 2012.
- "Sam and Orion's Journey to the Center of Religious Doubt; or, Twain vs. Verne." The Clemens
Conference, Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Museum, Hannibal, MO, Aug. 12, 2011.
- "From 'Used Up' Man to Steam Man: Prosthetic Technology and U.S. Imperialism in Poe and Ellis."
2011 Eaton Science Fiction Conference, University of California-Riverside, Feb. 13, 2011.
- "Teaching Poe's Anti-Technocratic Perspective." American Literature Association (Special Session on
"Teaching Poe in the Digital Age"), San Francisco, CA, May 29, 2010.

- "'Re-Bop, Mop': The R&B Heart of Langston Hughes's Be-Bop *Montage*." 2010 Popular Culture/American Culture Associations Conference (Black Music Culture Area), St. Louis, MO, Apr. 2, 2010.
- "From Scientific Exploration to Racial Revelation: Extraordinary Voyages to Garrett P. Serviss's Mars and Pauline Hopkins's Africa." 2009 Eaton Science Fiction Conference, University of California-Riverside, May 1, 2009.
- "Against 'Theologic Determinism': Emerson's Shift on Swedenborg's Science." 2008 Popular Culture/American Culture Associations Conference, San Francisco, CA, Mar. 20, 2008.
- "Performance and News Technology in Twain's *Connecticut Yankee*." 22nd Annual Interdisciplinary Nineteenth-Century Studies Conference, Kansas City, MO, Apr. 20, 2007.
- "Courting Devil-Bug's Daughter: Prophetic Dreams and Radical Social Change in Lippard's *The Quaker City*." 31st Annual Utopian Studies Conference, Colorado Springs, CO, Oct. 12, 2006.

Moderator, Chair, or Respondent

- "Lowriders and Flying Horses: Expanding SF's Definitions." (Moderator) The 76th World Science Fiction Convention (Academic Track), San José, CA, August 16-20, 2018.
- "How SF and Fantasy Create Societies." (Moderator) The 76th World Science Fiction Convention (Academic Track), San José, CA, August 16-20, 2018.
- "Mapping Science, Mapping Stars." (Moderator) The 76th World Science Fiction Convention (Academic Track), San José, CA, August 16-20, 2018.
- "Postmonogamy in Robert Heinlein & Spider Robinson." (Moderator) The 76th World Science Fiction Convention (Academic Track), San José, CA, August 16-20, 2018.
- "The Economics of Resource Scarcity and Cold War Rhetoric." (Moderator) MidAmeriCon II: The 74th World Science Fiction Convention (Academic Track), Kansas City, MO, Aug. 20, 2016.
- "...And Yesterday was Already Tomorrow': Ancient Greece and Rome in Science Fiction." (Moderator) MidAmeriCon II: The 74th World Science Fiction Convention (Academic Track), Kansas City, MO, Aug. 20, 2016.
- "William Faulkner and Mark Twain" (Respondent) American Literature Association, Washington, DC, May 22, 2014.
- "Celebrating James Gunn: Writer, Scholar, Teacher." (Moderator) 2013 Joint SFRA/Eaton Science Fiction Conference, University of California-Riverside, Apr. 13, 2013.
- "Dead Reckonings: Positioning the Undead in American Literature." (Moderator) American Literature Association, San Francisco, CA, May 25, 2012.

Selected Media Appearances and Invited Non-Academic Panels

- "Mark Twain and the Origins of Steampunk." Big River Steampunk Festival, Hannibal, MO. Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Museum. (scheduled Sept. 3, 2021).
- "Project Huckleberry aka *The Mandalorian*." The American Vandal Podcast. Center for Mark Twain Studies, Elmira College. February 2021. <https://marktwainstudies.com/the-american-vandal-podcast/>.
- "*American Gods*: Perspectives" (Panelist) Kansas City Science Fiction and Fantasy Convention, Kansas City, MO, May 25, 2019.
- "Book Signing/Reading from *Gears and God*." *The Avid Reader*, Nov. 7, 2018.

- "Dr. Andy's Poetry and Technology Hour." (On-Air Guest) KDVS 90.3 FM, Nov. 7, 2018.
- "Un-Pulping the Pulp Heroes." (Moderator) The 76th World Science Fiction Convention, San Jose, CA, Aug. 17, 2018.
- "Third Rock (and Roll) from the Sun." (Panelist) MidAmeriCon II: The 74th World Science Fiction Convention, Kansas City, MO, Aug. 21, 2016.
- "An Evening with Sarah Vowell." (Q&A Period Moderator) UC Davis Conference Ballroom, Nov. 2, 2015.
- "Fantastic Victoriana: The True Roots of Steampunk." (Panelist) LoneStarCon 3: The World Science Fiction Convention, San Antonio, TX, Sep. 2, 2013.
- "Fans and Academia." (Panelist) LoneStarCon 3: The World Science Fiction Convention, San Antonio, TX, Sep. 1, 2013.
- "The Search for Other Worlds in Science and Art." (On-Air Guest) *The Walt Bodine Show*, KCUR 89.3 FM, Dec. 23, 2009.
- "Making a Living as a Writer... but Not Necessarily in Fiction." (Panelist) Kansas City Science Fiction and Fantasy Convention, Kansas City, MO, May 23, 2009.

COURSES TAUGHT

University of California, Davis

The American Novel to 1900	2019
Writing in the Professions: Science Writing	2019-2021
Oxford: Portal to Fantasy (Study Abroad: Oxford University)	2018
Love and Desire in Contemporary American Poetry	2017
Study of an Individual Author (Mark Twain)	2015
Science Fiction	2014
Writing in the Professions: Journalism	2014-2020
Writing in the Professions: Technical Communication	2014-2016, 2021
Advanced Composition	2014, 2016, 2019, 2021
Early American Literature	2013
Topics in the Novel: Nostalgia, Desiderium, and Retro-futurism	2013
Writing in the Professions: Business Writing	2013-2020
Style in the Essay	2013
First-Year Seminar: Steampunk	2013, 2015, 2018
Expository Writing	2012-2013
Introduction to Literature	2012

University of Kansas

Intensive Institute on Science Fiction (Co-Taught, Graduate Summer Class)	2016, 2017
Major Authors (Poe and Melville)	2012
American Literature I (pre-Columbian to 1865)	2010

American Literature II (1865 to present)	2010, 2008
Introduction to Poetry	2011
Science Fiction from the Nineteenth Century	2008
Introduction to Fiction	2007-2009
Foundations of Technical Writing	2006-2009
Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking	2006-2009, 2011
Composition	2005-2006, 2010-2011

Kansas City Kansas Community College

Introduction to Fiction	2010
Composition I and II	2010-2011

Missouri Valley College

Comic Book Movies: Adaptation from Page to Screen	2005
Rock and Roll: History, Culture, and Criticism	2004-2005
Survey of American Literature I (to 1865)	2004-2005
Literature and Composition	2004-2005
Rhetoric and Composition	2003-2005

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Academic Service

- Book Review Editor, *Mark Twain Annual*, 2019-present
- Advisory Board Member, Gunn Center for the Study of Science Fiction, 2009-present
- Manuscript/Proposal Reviewer, Routledge Press, 2019
- Academic-Track Programming Lead, San José Worldcon: The 76th World Science Fiction Convention, 2017-2018
- Manuscript Reviewer, *College Literature*, 2016-2018
- Academic-Track Committee Member, MidAmeriCon II: The 74th World Science Fiction Convention, Kansas City, 2015-2016

Service at UC Davis

- Workshop Designer/Leader, "Targeting and Publishing Your Journal Article in the Humanities and Social Science: A Genre-Based Approach." Graduate Writing Services, 2021
- Presenter, "Business Writing and Presentations," Leaders for the Future Program, UC Davis Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, 2018, 2021
- Workshop Leader, "Writing & Publishing a Journal Article in the Humanities and Social Science." Graduate Writing Services, 2020
- Presenter, "Writing Executive Summaries," Big Bang Competition, UC Davis Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, 2018, 2020
- Organizer/Moderator, "Reporting History" Symposium (Keynote Speaker: Sarah Vowell), 2015

Organizer/Moderator, "Writing History for Academic and Popular Audiences (Panelists: Kathryn Olmsted, Mark Jerng, Jillian Azevedo), 2015

Internship Advisor, *Davis Business Journal*, 2015-2016

Presenter, "Write a Winning Proposal," Big Bang Competition, UC Davis Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, 2014, 2015

"Instructor's Comment" Writer. *Prized Writing*, 2015

Vice-Chair, Public Relations Committee, University Writing Program, 2014-2015

Promotion/Site Selection, Conversations with Writers, "What the Doctor Ordered: Science, Medicine and Writing, (Speaker: Dr. Michael Blumlein) 2015

Member, Lecturer Search Committee, University Writing Program, 2014

Guest Lecturer, "Writing for Scholarly Publication." Dr. Brenda Rinard's Graduate-Level Writing Class ("UWP 298: Writing an Academic Journal Article"), 2014

Member, Public Relations Committee, University Writing Program, 2013-2014

Selected Service at University of Kansas

Graduate/Lecturer Representative, Science and Literature Professor Job Hiring Committee, 2011

Appointed Graduate Representative, Conger-Gabel Professorship Selection Committee, 2010

Member, English Department Advisory Committee, 2009-2010

Member, English Department Lecturers and Readers Committee, 2006-2007, 2008-2009

RELATED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant (Susan K. Harris's *God's Arbiters* book project), 2010

Adjunct Instructor, Kansas City Kansas Community College, 2010-2011

Program Coordinator, AboutSF (Grant Writer, Online Content Creator, Teaching Workshop Leader), 2007-2009

Adjunct Instructor of English, Missouri Valley College, 2003-2005

Technical Writer / Trainer, PDA/Covansys, 1994-2004

Technical Writer / Product Manager, BHA Group, Inc., 1995-1997

PUBLISHED FICTION

"The Record Collector," *Metaphorosis*, June 2020

"River Styx Leads to Athens," *The Sockdolager* 6, Summer 2016

"Have You Seen Lucky?" *Abyss & Apex*, June 2014

"Eyesores," *Perihelion*, December 2013

"Tenientes," *Fantasy Magazine*, February 2010

"End of the Punch Line," *Poor Mojo's Almanac(k)*, February 2010

"Rural Suburban," *10 Flash Quarterly* (1:3), January 2010

"Relics of Interesting Times," *Footprints*. Ed. Jay Lake and Eric Reynolds. Hadley Rille, 2009

ORGANIZATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Modern Language Association

American Studies Association

C19: The Society of Nineteenth-Century Americanists

Science Fiction Research Association

Mark Twain Circle of America

Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America