

630.234.8638  
mpm7177@psu.edu  
maggiemessitt.com

# Maggie Messitt

## Literary Representation:

Jim McCarthy, Dystel & Goderich  
Literary Management

*Writer. Editor. Nonfiction Storyteller.*

Maggie Messitt is the author of *The Rainy Season*, a work of narrative and immersion journalism, long-listed for the 2016 *Sunday Times* Alan Paton Award, and *Newspaper*, part of the Object Lessons series, published by Bloomsbury and the *Atlantic*. Her work has been published in or broadcast by the BBC, *Essay Daily*, *LA Review of Books*, *Mother Jones*, NPR, Poetry Foundation, PBS, *World Literature Today*, and elsewhere. She previously taught in the MFA program at Goucher College and has had fellowships at Bowers Writers House, University of California—Berkeley, The Center for Narrative Journalism at Denison University, *Kenyon Review*, and elsewhere. Messitt is currently the Norman Eberly professor of practice in journalism, director of the News Lab, and affiliate faculty in the School of International Affairs at Penn State University.

Messitt is also a social entrepreneur. She was the executive director / founder of Amazwi, a rural non-profit media organization that trained women journalists, and publisher of its award-winning magazine and newspaper in the Lowveld, South Africa. A dual-citizen, she would later become the founding national director of Report for America, a national service program that places emerging journalists in newsrooms across the country, addressing critical coverage gaps and the changing landscape of local news. During her tenure, the program grew from 3 reporters in 3 Appalachian newsrooms to 225+ reporters in newsrooms across all 50 states. For this work, Harvard's *NiemanLab* named her as one of the "biggest brains and bank accounts in the fight for local journalism".

## EDUCATION

### Degrees

**Doctor of Philosophy**, Creative Writing — Nonfiction | Ohio University | Aug 2013- Dec 2017

**Literature Comprehensive Exams**—Am. Literary Journalism (tradition) & Post-Apartheid Literature (period)

**Creative Dissertation** — “Art(i)fact: An Atlas of my Search” (genre: memoir / investigation)

**Critical Dissertation** — “Unresolved: Ambiguous Loss and the Storyteller”

▶ **Committee**—Dinty W. Moore (Creative Writing), Eric LeMay (Creative Writing), Ghirmai Negash (African Lit), Paul Jones (Modern Literature), Gene Ammarell (Anthropology)

**Master of Fine Arts**, Creative Nonfiction | Goucher College | July 2005 - July 2007

**Thesis** — “The Rainy Season” (genre: immersion / narrative journalism)

**Craft Essay** — “On the Banks of the River, Far, Far Away: The Challenges of Immersion Journalists inside a Foreign Country, Community, or Culture.”

▶ **Mentors**—Thomas French, Joe Mackall, Laura Wexler, Diana Hume George

**Bachelor of Arts**, Communications & Faith, Peace & Justice | Boston College | Aug 1997 - May 2001

**Senior Thesis** — “Housing vs. a Home: The Philosophy Behind and Future of Public Housing in America (with Personal Narratives from Inside)”

\* **Interdisciplinary focus** — philosophy, social work, urban planning

▶ **Advisor** — David McMenamin, Philosophy Department

### Certificates

**Open Source Investigation** | Bellingcat — Global Investigative Journalism Network | April 2023

**Secondary English Education** | Bay Area Teachers Institute | San Francisco State University | 2022-2003

**Shared Inquiry Workshop Leader** | The Great Books Foundation | 2003

**ELL Instructional Methods** | California Reading & Literacy Project | UC—Berkeley | 2002

**Journalism** | Semester in Washington | American University | 1999

### Scholarly Interests

Literary Journalism, Immersion Reportage & Research Across the Genres, Documentary & Witness Poetry, Narratives of Ambiguous Loss, Post-Apartheid Literature, Resistance Literature, Transnational Literature, Verbatim Theater, and Fact-based Narratives across Form (audio, film, interactive, experimental, exhibit, etc).

## WRITING

### Books

#### ***Art(i)fact: An Atlas of my Search* —with agent and preparing for submission**

**Synopsis:** In 2009, a Midwesterner-turned-NYC artist went missing in the rainforests of Maui. This began a search—part memoir, part investigation—by journalist Maggie Messitt to not only piece together what happened to her missing aunt, but to also understand the life that led up to that moment (and subsequently find herself inside that story). Driven by decades of letters, dozens of interviews, and travels through the many places her aunt lived, Messitt becomes a detective, looking at her own family and what it means to live a creative life. When a body is found, Messitt turns from her aunt's story toward a cold case gone warm—*Is this unidentified woman her aunt?* A cross between *Into the Wild* and *Stories We Tell*, this is an exploration of a life lived outside the American mainstream and how our system deals, often inadequately, with the missing and the dead.

#### ***Newspaper (Object Lessons Series)* | Bloomsbury, in partnership with *The Atlantic* | May 2024**

*Newspaper* is a 400-year history of a nearly-endangered object as seen by journalist Maggie Messitt in the two democratic nations she calls home - the United States and South Africa. The "first draft of history," newspapers figure prominently through each movement and period of unrest in both nations—from the first colonial papers published by slave traders and advocates for press freedom to those published on ID cards, wallpaper, and folio sheets during civil wars. *Newspaper* reflects on a tool that has been used to both push down and rise up. It brings us inside our best and worst selves, from censorship and the intentional destruction of historic record to the story of an instrument that has been central to democracy to and to holding the powerful to account. *Object Lessons* is a series of short, beautifully designed books about the hidden lives of ordinary things.



"This book is an unusual, imaginative braiding together of two countries – the United States and South Africa – and two streams of history: the growth of democracy, and the growth of a probing, vibrant, defiant press. Maggie Messitt has a fine eye for the telling detail, the shocking fact, the unsung hero or heroine." — Adam Hochschild, author of *American Midnight: The Great War, a Violent Peace, and Democracy's Forgotten Crisis*



"In these very challenging times all over the world, we need works like those featured in Maggie Messitt's *Newspaper*, for they give me and will surely give other readers the hope we all need to keep on keepin' on!" — Charlayne Hunter-Gault, author of *My People: Five Decades of Writing About Black Lives*

#### ***The Rainy Season: Three Lives in the New South Africa* | University of Iowa Press | April 2015**

Just across the northern border of a former apartheid-era homeland sits a rural community in the midst of change, caught between a traditional past and a western future, a racially charged history and a pseudo-democratic present. *The Rainy Season*, a work of engaging literary journalism, introduces readers to the remote bushveld community of Rooiboklaagte and opens a window into the beautifully complicated reality of daily life in South Africa.

*The Rainy Season* tells the stories of three generations in the Rainbow Nation one decade after its first democratic elections. This multi-threaded narrative follows Regina, a tapestry weaver in her sixties, standing at the crossroads where her Catholic faith and the AIDS pandemic crash; Thoko, a middle-aged sangoma (traditional healer) taking steps to turn her shebeen into a fully licensed tavern; and Dankie, a young man taking his matriculation exams, coming of age as one of Mandela's Children, the first academic class educated entirely under democratic governance.

Home to Shangaan, Sotho, and Mozambican Tsonga families, Rooiboklaagte sits in a village where an outdoor butchery occupies an old petrol station and a funeral parlor sits in the attached garage. It's a place where an AIDS education center sits across the street from a West African doctor selling cures for the pandemic. It's where BMWs park outside of crumbling cement homes, and the availability of water changes with the day of the week. As the land shifts from dusty winter blond to lush summer green and back again, the duration of northeastern South Africa's rainy season, Regina, Thoko, and Dankie all face the challenges and possibilities of the new South Africa.

- ▶ Honored by Duke's Center for Documentary: "best documentary writing for a long-term project."
- ▶ Finalist — *Foreword Reviews* INDIES 2016 Book of the Year (United States)
- ▶ Longlisted — 2016 *Sunday Times* Alan Paton Award (South Africa)

📖 "Whether safari travelogues or tributes to the legacy of Nelson Mandela, what most Americans read about South Africa is far more superficial than Maggie Messitt's gritty vision of the country. In the tradition of writers like James Agee and Katherine Boo, she has immersed herself deeply in the everyday lives of people struggling with AIDS, early death, corruption, false promises, grinding rural poverty, and the daily struggle to make ends meet in a society that tourists and most foreign correspondents never see. This is a profoundly compassionate book, that truly takes you inside the lives of those in it." —Adam Hochschild, author, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa*

📖 "*The Rainy Season* is a delight of closely observed detail from the lives of three memorable characters in a remote South African village. Skillfully taking us through the quiet drama of an unusually generous rainy season in the bushveld, Messitt gives an insight into a world that is key to understanding South Africa today." —Greg Marinovich, author, *The Bang-Bang Club: Snapshots from a Hidden War*

## Anthology

**Midland: Reports from Flyover Country** | Tiller Press, Simon and Schuster | September 2020

A collection of narrative nonfiction from "the missing middle," edited by Jack Schuler and Michael Croley. My contribution, "Reporting for America," closes the collection. Contributors include Graham Lee Brewer, Ted Genoways, Esther Honig, Mei-Ling Hopgood, Peter Slevin, Tamara Winfrey-Harris & others.

📖 Kirkus Reviews: "...Among its revelations is the fact that "flyover country" is where most Native Americans live, and there are only 19 journalists "tasked to cover Native affairs for their local newsrooms." This is in keeping, writes Maggie Messitt, with a significant flaw: "The history of U.S. journalism is largely a history of neglecting and even harming disenfranchised communities—black communities, immigrant communities, Native communities, poor white communities." ...[*Midland* is] a nuanced, smart collection that argues politicians will ignore rural America only at their peril."

## Book Chapters

**Literary Journalists Explore Death** | Routledge | *forthcoming in 2026*

Edited by Richard Keeble, University of Lincoln (UK) and David Swick, University of Kings College (CA).

In the chapter "Unresolved: Ambiguous Loss and the Storyteller," I explore the idea of an absent co-author (a situation in which a deceased's or missing person's documents are used extensively to compose the text) and its implications in the nonfiction works of Malik Bendjelloul, Anne Carson, Edwidge Danticat, Jon Krakauer, Antjie Krog, Rachel Liechtenstein, Hisham Matar, Maggie Nelson, Sarah Polley, Ian Sinclair, and

James Ellroy. Based on my reading of these texts, I investigate the condition of ambiguous loss, a term from death studies and clinical psychology, and extend its application to literary journalism and other forms of nonfiction storytelling. I argues for the classification of ambiguous loss as a sub-genre within literary journalism as demonstrated by the above authors and my own work — bringing readers into stories of the missing or lost in Canada, Israel, Libya, South Africa, the UK, and the US. Messitt further identifies the ways that these author's works narrate ambiguous loss and critically explores the way in which each find themselves experimenting with new & unusual forms and structures, an unexpected necessity in this work. *This is an expanded and updated version of the critical introduction to my creative dissertation.*

### **Freedom of the Press** | National History Day | *forthcoming in 2026*

Edited by Kathryn J McGarr, University of Wisconsin - Madison and Krista Grensavitch, NHD

Invited to author the introductory chapter to National History Day's annual book, distributed to secondary educators nationwide. NHD's 2026 book will provide accessible content and pedagogical resources on the history of journalism and press freedom, while also integrating global trends in the industry. My chapter "What is the Press?" serves as one of three anchor texts alongside overviews of press freedom history and violence against journalists. Contributors to this book include academics, museum educators, journalists, and classroom teachers. This print and digital publication will be published in partnership with the Fallen Journalists Memorial Fund and the Leonore Annenberg Institute for Civics at the University of Pennsylvania.

## Essays & Reportage

For six years (2004 - 2010), my work was represented by three wire services and sold to print publications around the world. Since returning to the United States (2011), my work has been published by the BBC, *Creative Nonfiction*, *Essay Daily*, *Mother Jones*, NPR, PBS, *River Teeth*, the Southern Poverty Law Center's *Teaching Tolerance* magazine, & *World Literature Today*, among others.

### **Select Creative, Criticism, and Craft Titles**

"Keep Out" a critical essay on documentary poet Susan Eisenberg, *The Poetry Foundation* (October 2018)  
"I Woke up Choking," a critical essay on Book of the Dead / Muriel Rukeyser, *LA Review of Books* (May 2018)  
"Dystopian Lit Rising — inside post-Apartheid storytelling," *World Literature Today* (March/April 2017)  
"Waiting (and Wading) through Story," *Creative Nonfiction* (Summer 2015)  
"On Finding & Vaulting Story," *Essay Daily* (March 2015)  
"Last Rites: A Summer's Day in Rooibok," *Boston College Magazine* (February 2015).  
"In What She Left Behind," *Bending Genre* (February 2015)  
"On the Divide that Separates a Family," *Essay Daily* (December 2014)  
"When Your Co-Author Is Missing," *Creative Nonfiction* (Winter 2014)  
"North 20°54, West 15°6'14," *Bending Genre* (November 2014)  
"Spent," Southern Poverty Law Center's *Teaching Tolerance* (Summer 2014)  
"Ukufa," *Broad Street Magazine* (Summer 2014)  
"Raising Inequality," Southern Poverty Law Center's *Teaching Tolerance* (Summer 2014)  
"Exposed," Southern Poverty Law Center's *Teaching Tolerance* (Spring 2014)  
"A South African Reading List," *PolicyMic* (April 2014)  
"Lerato," *Memoir Journal: The Special GUNS Issue* (September 2013) \*  
"Buttoned Down," Southern Poverty Law Center's *Teaching Tolerance* (Spring 2013)  
"MaSocietie," *River Teeth: A Journal of Nonfiction Narratives* (Spring 2011)  
A series of on-the-ground narratives from the Wisconsin Worker Protests, *Mother Jones* (Spring 2011)

**MULTIMEDIA**  
Gallery Exhibit

***Art(i)fact* | forthcoming**

A collaboration with fine art photographer Kija Lucas, and founder of an ongoing documentary investigation titled, “The Museum of Sentimental Taxonomy” — [themst.org](http://themst.org). *Art(i)fact* is a gallery exhibit that pulls together experimental visual essays, often in the form of a museum archival entry document, and images of objects that once belonged to my aunt, hiked / carried out of the rainforest in Maui in 2016. *This is an extension of my book, Art(i)fact: an Atlas of my Search.*

Interactive App

***Art(i)fact* — an interactive iPad / iPhone app | Forthcoming — set to be released w/the book**

This application offers readers a behind the scenes experience through the narratives of my book. By pinning images, interview audio clips, original documents, and found objects to an interactive map of the United States, I’ve created a choose-your-own-adventure through the materials and engagement that led me to tell this important story. *This is an extension of my book, Art(i)fact: an Atlas of my Search.*

**TEACHING**  
Traditional

**Norman P. Eberly Professor of Practice in Journalism | Penn State University | 2021 - present**

I teach in the journalism program and university-wide entrepreneurship minor, and I work with students in the News Lab. Every fall, I teach a highly engaged and interactive course called “Principles of Journalism” for 300 students, as well as an intimate 8-person “In Depth Reportage” workshop during which time we focus on whole class and individual projects — from profiles and narrative journalism to podcasts and documentaries. *Much of this work is published in or broadcast by professional outlets.* Each spring, I now teach a special topics course or entrepreneurial journalism. Year-round, I work one-on-one with students through intensive nonfiction works and honors college theses. ***Awarded the 2024 Dean’s Excellence Award for Integrated Scholarship — recognition for excellence in both teaching and scholarship.***

Comm271 — Principles of Journalism (SP22, FA22, SP23, FA23, FA24, F25)

Comm297 — Special Topics: DC Maymester (SP24, SU24)

Comm361 — Entrepreneurial Journalism (S24)

Comm474 — In Depth Reportage Workshop: East Palestine Train Derailment (FA23)

Comm474 — In Depth Reportage Workshop: Presidential Elections in PA (FA24)

Comm474 — In Depth Reportage Workshop: Reporting & Writing Nonfiction Serial Narratives (FA25)

Comm494 — Research Projects (SP23, FA23, FA24)

Comm496 — Independent Study (FA23, FA24)

Comm497 — Special Topics: Documenters (SP23)

Comm498 — Open Source Investigation: Missing Persons & Incomplete Narratives (SP25)

Comm498 — Special Topics: The Anatomy of Nonfiction Serial Narratives (FA25)

Comm496H — Schreyer Honors College Thesis, Independent Study (FA22, FA23, FA23, SP24)

**Core Graduate Faculty / CNF Mentor | Goucher College, MFA in Creative Nonfiction | 2016 - 2022**

As a faculty member of Goucher's Creative Nonfiction MFA program, I worked with graduate students at twice-annual residencies and continued to mentor them throughout the year on the development of memoir and narrative nonfiction manuscripts. Since the program's start in 1997, Goucher MFA students and alumni have published more than 110 books and have become Pulitzer finalists and winners of the Alicia Patterson Fellowship, Atlantic Media's Michael Kelly Award, the Sidney Award for best magazine essay, the Rona Jaffe Foundation Writers' Award, the New York Book Festival Award for best historical memoir, and the Southern Book Critics Circle Award for nonfiction. Most of the books have grown out of the 150-page MFA manuscripts required for graduation.

CNF 601 — Manuscript Mentorship I  
 CNF 602 — Manuscript Mentorship II  
 CNF 603 — Manuscript Mentorship III  
 CNF 604 — Manuscript Mentorship IV  
 CNF 605 — Manuscript Mentorship V  
 CNF 606 — Nonfiction Residency Online  
 CNF 607 — Nonfiction Residency in New York City  
 CNF 608 — Nonfiction Residency in Baltimore  
 CNF 613 — Literary Magazine Publishing Practicum & Studies  
 CNF 617 — The Entrepreneurial Writer  
 CNF 621 — Nonfiction Workshop I  
 CNF 623 — Nonfiction Workshop II  
 CNF 625 — Nonfiction Workshop III  
 CNF 627 — Nonfiction Workshop IV  
 CNF 629 — Nonfiction Workshop V  
 CNF 640 — Fieldwork in Nonfiction  
 CNF 650 — Projects in Digital Narrative (cross-registered between CNF MFA and Digital Arts MFA)

**Mellon Fellow / Faculty Mentor | Center for Narrative Journalism, Denison U. | Fall 2019 - Fall 2021**

Denison University's Center for Narrative Journalism is a vibrant hub for journalism and programs that include writers, reporters, filmmakers, and audio producers engaged in long-form narrative storytelling — for Denison students and it's surrounding community members. In 2018, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded Denison a \$700,000 grant for the Center's initiative to integrate “place-based” narrative across the curriculum, particularly focused on deeply researched writing that examines critical narratives between the coasts — “the missing middle,” as it is sometimes called — its people, politics, culture, environment, economics and more. In this role, I designed, launched and led the 2019-2021 Narrative Journalism Mellon Faculty Cohort.

2020-2021 “Narrative Journalism Mellon Faculty Cohort” — 9-mo program, application required  
 >> including TT-faculty in Anthropology, Economics, Education, International Studies, Neuroscience, and Sociology.

2019-2020 “Narrative Journalism Mellon Faculty Cohort” — 9-mo program, application required  
 >> including TT-faculty in Anthropology, Communications, Geosciences, Global Health, History, International Studies, Sociology, and Women’s & Gender Studies.

**Visiting Lecturer | Chatham University, MFA in Creative Writing | Fall 2017**

Invited by the MFA Director to take over her literature course while she was on sabbatical, I taught the required course for nonfiction MFA students in their first year.

“Readings in Prose” — required course for all MFA Nonfiction students

**Visiting Mentor | Carlow University, MFA in Creative Writing | Spring 2017**

“The Entrepreneurial Writer” — *focused on the business of writing & literary citizenship*

**Visiting Professor / Writer-in-Residence | Truman State University, BFA Program | Fall 2016**

“Adv. Creative Writing Workshop: Nonfiction,” Special Topics: Immersion & the Researched Essay”

**Scholar-in-Residence | Bowers Writers House @ Elizabethtown College | Fall 2015**

“Travel Writing,” co-taught this course with Dr. Matt Willen, part of a year-long program. Students also completed an anthropology course & summer fieldwork in Iceland.

**Doctoral Instructor | Ohio University | Fall 2012 - Spring 2015**

ENG 151 — “Writing & Rhetoric I (F12, S13)

ENG 161 — “Writing & Rhetoric — Special Topics: Truth in Nonfiction” (F13)

ENG 310J — “Writing about Environmental Sustainability” (F13, S14, S15) — piloted course for dept.

ENG 363 — “Creative Nonfiction Workshop” (F14, S15)

**Instructor & Program Designer | Amazwi School of Media Arts (South Africa) | Jan 2004 - Dec 2009**

“Fieldwork Studies” (2004-2009)

“Narrative Storytelling” (2004-2009)

“English Language & Grammar” (2004-2009)

“Final Portfolio Seminar” (2004-2009)

Traditional Advising  
& Committees

**Dissertation Review Committee Member | University of Witswaterand (South Africa) | May 2025**

Invited to serve as an outside evaluator for Greta Schuler’s creative and critical dissertation — a work of narrative journalism, titled “Tricky Business,” chronicling the story of a Zimbabwean soccer player who, during the Mugabe regime, found herself in Jo’burg and inside the South African sex trade. Schular’s critical scholarly Committee members include Bronwyn Law Viljoen (University of Adelaide) and Anthea German (Rhodes University).

**Faculty Promotion Committee Member | The New School | January 2023 - September 2024**

Served as an outside evaluator of faculty reappointment/promotion dossiers serving on a committee with Eugene Lang College of Liberal Arts Dean Kate Eichhorn and Professor Albert Mobilio.

**The Schreyer Honors College Thesis Advisor | Penn State University | Aug 2022 - May 2024**

Lidia Vitoc ('24) — “Pass the late: The extent to which media representation of ethnic food has the ability to create an in-group among first-generation Americans” (journalism and sociology major)

Megan Swift ('23) — “The Impact of Biases on the Reportorial and Editorial Processes in American Newsrooms” (journalism and English major)

**MFA Thesis Committee Member | Goucher College, MFA in Creative Nonfiction | 2017 - 2022**

\* Amanda Brandt ('21) — Memoir, “A Biography of my Anxiety”

Dustin Hodge ('21) — Memoir, *untitled*

\* Megan Reilly ('21) — Memoir, *The Heart is a Muscle*

Darci Glass-Royal ('20) — Critical Intro and Collection of *untitled* Travel Essays

\* Brandon Arveson ('20) — Reported Memoir, “The Last Racehorse”

\* Stephanie Atkins ('20) — Memoir, “59 Weeks”

Anita Dale ('20) — Reported Memoir, “Scenes from a Mental Illness”

\* Laura Stall ('20) — Critical Intro and Collection of Essays “On Religion & Identity”

\* Yolanda Manora ('19) — Critical Intro and Collection of Reported Lyric Essays, “Trill”

Susette Brooks ('19) — Critical Intro and Collection of Essays, "The Lies I Tell"

\* Susan Banta ('18) — Critical Intro and Memoir, "The Beauty Project"

\* Ellie Bozmorova ('18) — Critical Intro and Memoir, "Motherland"

\* *First Reader / Committee Chair*

**MFA Thesis Committee Member | Chatham University, MFA in Creative Writing | 2018 - 2019**

Shawna Kent ('19) — Critical Introduction & Collection of Essays, "Remember Eisenhower Street"

Samantha Smith ('19) — Critical Introduction and Collection of Essays, "Tomboy in Red Lipstick"

**MFA Thesis Committee Member & Advisor | Goucher College, MFA in Digital Arts | 2017 - 2018**

\* Rahlana Smith ('18) — Critical Essay and Animated Documentary on women Civil Rights leaders.

Non-Traditional

**Workshop / Monthly Commons Leader | Report for America Training | 2018 - 2019**

"Covering poverty in rural communities" (in-person, July 2019)

"Covering communities that are not your own," (in-person, July 2019)

"Introduction to Service," (in-person, July 2018, July 2019)

"Pitching Session" (online, October 2018, November 2018)

"Long-form Project Planning and Execution" (online, January 2019)

"Essays" (online, March 2019)

"Service Project: Reflection & Planning" (online, August 2019)

"Capstone Projects" (online, January 2019)

**Workshop Instructor | Creative Nonfiction Magazine & Foundation (PA) | 2016 - 2017**

"Foundations of Creative Nonfiction" (online, Spring 2016)

"A Cinematic Approach to the Personal Essay" (in-person, Summer 2017)

**Workshop Instructor | Lighthouse Writers Workshops (CO) | 2016 - 2017**

"Memoir — a generative workshop" (online, S17)

"A Journalist's Approach to Memoir" (in-person, S16)

**Workshop Facilitator | Writers In Prisons Project (WI) | Summer 2011 - Summer 2012**

"Creative Nonfiction — Memoir Workshop" (Su11, F11, W11, Sp12, Su12)

**Workshop Instructor | Shake Rag Alley: Midwest Center for the Arts (WI) | Spring 2011**

"Flash" (S11)

"Multimedia Storytelling" (S11)

"Portfolio Development" (S11)

Visiting Writer &  
Master Classes  
(by Invitation)

**University of Chicago's Center for Democracy | May 2025**

"Newspapers as Tools of Control & Resistance," a luncheon lecture & conversation w/Manny Ramos

**Colby-Sawyer College | September 2024**

"Obsessions — one story, seven ways" — a workshop

"Art(i)fact: A true crime reading and discussion"

**Brown Bag Lit | September 2024**

“Writing the Missing: A Conversation on Family, Disappearance, and Creative Investigations”

**Creative Nonfiction' Wednesday Webinars | June 2024**

“Diving Deeply: Using Research to Expand your Work”

**Creative Nonfiction' Wednesday Webinars | April 2021**

“The Self-Interview: Approaching Memoir like a Journalist”

**Denison University' Tuesday Luncheon Lecture Series | September 2019**

“Art(i)Fact: One Story, Seven Ways”

**Conversations & Connections Conference @ Chatham University | October 2017**

“In the Field & the Archives: Research in Creative Nonfiction”

**Words Without Walls' Maenads Fellowship Program @ Chatham University | March 2017**

“Publishing & Mentorship”

**Goucher College MFA Winter Residency | January 2017**

“Project Management for Creative Nonfiction Writers”

**Kalamazoo Valley Community College | November 2016**

“The Empathetic Writer: Telling True Stories in a Deeply Divided Nation”

**Truman State University | September 2016**

“Race, Gender, and Society—an interdisciplinary look at *The Rainy Season*”

**2016 Creative Nonfiction Writers Conference | May 2016**

“Interview Techniques”

**Franklin University | April 2016**

“A Journalist’s Approach to Memoir,” and one-on-one student meetings

**Wilkes University | Allan Hamilton Dickson Spring Writers Series | February 2016**

“A Journalist’s Approach to Memoir”

**Malone University | February 2016**

“Thinking Cinematically: A Visual Approach to Creative Writing”

**University of Wisconsin—Whitewater | Creative Writing Festival | November 2015**

Keynote Address, “Taking Risks in Life & on the Page”—to more than 700 high school creative writers from Illinois, Minnesota, and Wisconsin—and four workshop sessions of “Thinking Cinematically: A Visual Approach to Creative Writing”

**University of Wisconsin—Whitewater | March 2012**

“Introduction to Immersion Journalism and the Research Process”

Professional  
Development Lectures  
(by Invitation)

**Guest Lecturer | MFA Program @ University of North Dakota**

“The Pedagogy Behind Prison Creative Writing Programs,” and Q&A (November 2014)

**Panelist | “Professional Issues Colloquium on the Profession,” a Lecture Series @ Ohio University**

Grant Writing (March 14, 2014)

**Lecturer | “Professional Issues in Teaching College English,” a Lecture Series @ Ohio University**

Curriculum Design, Course Management, & At-Risk Students (November 8, 2013)

Technology in the Comp Classroom (April 19, 2013)

At-Risk Students Inside First-Year-Writing (February 8, 2013)

**Lecturer and Workshop Leader | First-Year Instructor Orientation @ Ohio University**

Curriculum Design and Lesson Planning (August 2014)

Curriculum Design and Lesson Planning (August 2013)

**ADMINISTRATION**  
Academic & NPO

**Director of the News Lab | Penn State's Bellisario College of Communications | 2022 - Present**

- + Launched the News Lab in Fall 2022 after listening to faculty, students, and regional media leaders with the aim of increasing professional opportunities and addressing critical coverage gaps with an emphasis on rural Pennsylvania.
- + Established the **Local Reporting Cohort** as a way to pay students to work as journalists with a focus on critical coverage gaps in Pennsylvania through special projects, in-depth reportage, and partnerships. News Lab reporting has been published or broadcast by more than 45 news organizations, including the Lehigh Valley Public Media, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Patriot News*, PennLive, Spotlight PA, WPSU, and WVPB.
- + Launched **Centre Documenters**, the first rural and first university-based Documenters program in the nation, through which students are paid to train, attend and document public meetings in six under-covered townships, and participate in our editing and fact-checking process. This information is made available to local residents and media organizations through a website, our instagram account, the Documenters two newsletters (media, resident), our monthly *Centre Daily Times* roundup, and texting service.
- + Developed a **Training and Badging Program** that offers students specialized journalism training outside of coursework. The program hosts 10 trainings each semester, filling an average of 700 seats, covering topics from broadcast camera training and public records requests -to- fact-checking and building a beat. As an extension of these trainings, students who participate in a series of trainings and complete a competency task can earn a News Lab badge. In our first year of badging, we awarded approximately 50.
- + Secured funding from the American Press Institute and the Knight Foundations' Election Engagement Experiment Fund to support “The Listening Project,” an ongoing engagement reporting project. This gives the News Lab access to texting and voicemail technology rarely used outside of newsrooms like *The New York Times* and the *Texas Tribune*. Our experience and findings will serve as a blueprint from which other rural newsrooms can gain insight.
- + Led the News Lab to win professional awards including a 2024 Press Club of Western PA Golden Quill Award in Public Affairs / Gov't Reporting and a 2024 Pennsylvania Association of Broadcasters' Excellence Award in Special Projects in its first year.
- + Guided students to achieve recognition in national student media competitions, including placing 2nd and 10th in Hearst for profiles, 6th and 10th for investigations, and 16th in multimedia in the News Lab's first two years.

+ **Reporting Highlights in News Lab coverage include:** the 2022 mid-term elections; an investigation into Tranq in rural PA; food insecurity across PA; the loss of maternal healthcare in rural PA; the aftermath of the East Palestine train derailment and its impact on western PA communities; the impact of the Mariner East II pipeline's environmental violations on Blair county families; the impact of inflation on a single PA township; a range of issues in Pennsylvania agriculture (aging, diversity, alternative uses of farm land, and mental health), including the story of a sixth generation family farm; and the 2024 presidential elections with an emphasis on rural issues and voices.

#### **Senior Advisor | Full-time Consultant to Report For America | 2019 - 2020**

- + Advisor to Report for America's President, National Director, and Leadership team (Directors of recruitment, local fundraising, training and service, and corps excellence) on critical scaling strategies.
- + Manage special projects related to scaling— from negotiating and establishing critical partnerships (ie. with the Native American Journalists Association with the aim of increasing our Indigenous Affairs placements and assuring the best training and mentorship for corps members in those placements) to overseeing the evaluation process and impact data measurement of newsrooms and corps members.
- + Support the execution of three major executive goals in year three of RFA — from scaling to development.

*At the end of my tenure with RFA, we had 250+ reporters in all 50 states and we were named one of three finalists for the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's 100&Change Challenge — a global competition for the \$100 million grant.*

#### **National Director | Report For America | 2017 - 2019**

- + Serve in the COO-role (on day 1) of a national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms across the country to address critical coverage gaps—funded by the Craig Newmark Foundation, Facebook, Ford Foundation, Google News Initiative, Lenfest Institute, Knight Foundation, and others.
- + Establish and implement the standards, practices, policies, and strategies for scaling.
- + Coordinate the design and implementation of training for RFA corps members, including an annual on-site 7-day intensive, year-round distance education, and national mentor network.
- + Serve as an ambassador for recruiting on college campuses, at public forums, and in the press.
- + Oversee the development and implementation of an annual application process for newsrooms and corps members, as well as the on-boarding process, metrics agreements, quarterly evaluations, and renewal.
- + Oversee the development and implementation of our corps member service project requirement.
- + Serve on the Development team, focused on small and large-scale fundraising.
- + Work with the RFA President on short & long-term financial planning and budgeting
- + During this time — the first 18mo of Report for America — I started with 3 corps members in 3 newsrooms across Appalachia and grew RFA to 61 corps members and 50 newsrooms in 28 states and Puerto Rico, and established the foundation necessary to expand to 225 corps members. This is when I stepped into a senior advisor role.

#### **Founder of Nonfiction Program | Writers In Prisons Project (Wisconsin) | 2010 - 2012**

- + Worked with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections, Oakhill Correctional Facility, and Writers In Prisons Project throughout the design, approval, and implementation of the first nonfiction workshops.
- + Worked with the University of Wisconsin – Madison's MFA Program to secure assistant workshop facilitators, specifically Poetry and Fiction MFA students and the UW Director of Creative Writing, Ron Kuka.
- + Secured literature donations from regional authors and bookstores.

### **Founding Director | Amazwi School of Media Arts (South Africa) | 2004 - 2009**

- + Piloted and launched a writing school for rural Zulu, Shangaan, and Northern Sotho women.
- + Managed NPO (on-site international staff of 15+) and its 3 projects: Amazwi School of Media Arts, Amazwi Writers Publishing, and Writers & Artists Residency Program.
- + Wrote, secured, and managed grants from the Media Development & Diversity Agency (\$25,000), International Academy of Film & Television (\$150,000), the *Lonely Planet* Foundation (\$20,000), and others.
- + Developed curriculum and instruction methods, recognized by MAPPP-SETA, South Africa's media and arts education governing body.
- + Hired, trained, and mentored a team of international, long-term-volunteer writing instructors (6mo - 1year).
- + Trained & certified women (ages 22-34) who have gone on to write for South African wire services, newspapers, and magazines, work in communications departments and as field researchers for Wits Rural, and serve as narrative-driven case workers for organizations across the Lowveld.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

For-Profit

### **Owner & Financial Manager | Transfrontiers Wildlife Walking Safaris (South Africa) | 2009 - 2011**

- + Took over all operations/management of a failing tourism company in South Africa's Kruger National Park.
- + Designed and successfully implemented a short-term business plan to pull the company out of debt in 6-months, and a long-term business plan to increase value, streamline procedures, and sell.
- + Managed an international staff (15+).

### **CONSULTANT**

### **Executive Advisor / Organizational Consultant | Media & Arts Orgs (US & SA) | 2018 - Present**

- + Provide comprehensive organizational assessments and strategic guidance to media and arts organizations experiencing foundational challenges, leadership transitions, or mission realignment.
- + Develop tailored frameworks for organizational sustainability that integrate editorial excellence with sound business practices, including detailed analysis of governance structures, operational workflows, and financial models.
- + Lead strategic planning processes and facilitate difficult conversations around organizational culture, diversity considerations, and management transitions.
- + Developed early-stage planning and fundraising strategies for a major research organization and think tank, working with founders ranging from a New Yorker writer and independent scholar to longtime media and culture nonprofit executives to craft founding documents, establish operational frameworks, and secure seed funding.
- + Support founder-led organizations through succession planning and leadership transitions that preserve institutional memory while enabling necessary evolution.
- + Design and implement customized leadership development programs for organizations navigating generational transitions.
- + Conduct comprehensive media ecosystem analyses to identify critical coverage gaps in rural and underserved communities, then develop innovative, multi-stakeholder approaches to addressing information needs through collaborative reporting projects and resource-sharing initiatives.
- + Design long-term community trust-building frameworks that integrate audience listening methods, transparent editorial processes, and participatory journalism practices, resulting in stronger relationships with previously marginalized communities and increased financial support through community-centered revenue models.
- + Partner with media and arts entrepreneurs to transform initial concepts into viable ventures—guiding founders through iterative development processes, refining value propositions, and creating compelling funding presentations.

## **FELLOWSHIPS & IN-RESIDENCE**

### **Mellon Fellow | Denison University's Center for Narrative Journalism | 2019 - 2021**

Denison University's Center for Narrative Journalism is a vibrant hub for journalism and programs that include writers, reporters, filmmakers, and audio producers engaged in long-form narrative storytelling — for Denison students and its surrounding community members. In this role, 1) I was tasked to organize the 5th “Between Coasts,” an invitation-only, all-expense paid, journalism conference for 60 journalists and editors focused on narrative nonfiction in the middle off the country; and 2) I designed and launched the NJ Mellon Faculty Cohort with the aim of integrating and producing “place-based” narratives across the curriculum, particularly focused on deeply researched nonfiction writing/audio/documentary that examines critical narratives between the coasts — “the missing middle,” as it is sometimes called — its people, politics, culture, environment, economics and more.

### **Ofstad Endowed Writer-in-Residence | Truman State University | Fall 2016**

As a Visiting Professor in the English & Linguistics department (BFA in Creative Writing), I taught an advanced creative nonfiction workshop focused on immersion journalism and the researched essay. Additionally, I participated in the Ofstad Reading Series and guest lectured in a junior interdisciplinary literature course called “Race, Class, and Gender.” This semester position--funded by the Ofstad Endowment--supported my residence on Truman State's campus and engagement with students and faculty in the School of Arts & Letters.

### **John Cady Research Fellow | The Graduate College @ Ohio University | 2015 - 2016**

The John Cady Graduate Research Fellowship is service-free and focused on the time one needs to conduct dissertation research. It is granted through the Ohio University Graduate College as one of five competitive, university-wide graduate fellowships (with more than 4000 eligible applicants). During this time, my research focused on a single missing persons case (fieldwork / investigation) and examined the intersections of mental health, missing persons, and homelessness (secondary research).

### **Scholar-in-Residence | Bowers Writers House @ Elizabethtown College | Fall 2015**

Funded by a Mellon Humanities Grant, this position supported my residence at Bowers Writers House and engagement with students and faculty across the college. In this role, I guest lectured on the basics of fieldwork, story structure, book proposals and query letters, documentary writing, and developmental editing in professional writing and creative writing classrooms; co-taught Dr. Matt Willen's travel writing class; and presented a semester-long series of public lectures: “South Africa in Three Acts: Elephant, Newspapers, and Rimbewu” / “Place As Character: Cartography, Street History, and Literature” / “Journalism, Literature, and the Arts in a New Democracy”. During this time, I also developed & led an 8-week research assistant program for seven students, across the university. This opportunity afforded each to learn about creative research methodology and organization; apply the skills they've honed inside the classroom to professional work in the humanities; brainstorm and problem-solve with an author and other research assistants; and see how this kind of research finds its way into an early draft of a narrative nonfiction book.

### **Peter Taylor Fellow | Kenyon Review Writing Workshops | Kenyon College | Summer 2015**

Named after former Kenyon professor and poet / short story writer Peter Taylor, this fellowship is awarded to an “outstanding writer” to assist in the teaching of a summer writing workshop. I was selected to teach with essayist Dinty W. Moore and to meet with participant writers one-on-one throughout the week. In this

generative workshop, participants completed daily assignments geared to specific nonfiction writing techniques, & shared their drafts with the class. As a fellow, I also gave a public reading of my work.

#### **Climate Change Fellow | Kanawha Project | Ohio University | 2013 - 2014**

As a fellow, I participated in a year-long program to increase interdisciplinary environmental conversations. The goal of the program—Advancing Carbon Neutrality: Using the Kanawha Model to Facilitate Climate Change Literacy—was to build climate change literacy with the aim of enhancing undergraduate curriculum and further the implementation of the Ohio University Sustainability and Climate Action Plans. Faculty participants attended monthly lectures and discussion groups, as well as three weekend-long workshops throughout the year. At the conclusion of the year, faculty attended a fourth workshop aimed at revising an existing course, weaving in climate change issues and themes. The Kanawha Project was sponsored and supported by University College and the Environmental Studies Program in the Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs.

#### **Multimedia Storytelling Fellow | Knight Digital Media Center | Univ of California—Berkeley | 2010**

UC-Berkeley established the Knight Digital Media Center with a 2.8 million dollar, 5-year grant from the Knight Foundation to host and further educate leaders in digital storytelling. The 2010 cohort of 20 print and broadcast professionals participated in workshops that covered all aspects of multimedia storytelling production, from basic storyboarding to cross-platform news and documentary production. Fellows were taught the technical skills they needed to produce and teach colleagues to produce quality multimedia stories including audio/video recording and editing, Flash graphics, digital equipment, and more. Guest speakers discussed the future of journalism, the role of technology, and the importance of engagement. UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism lecturers Paul Grabowicz, Samantha Grant, Marilyn Pittman, Jeremy Rue, Jerry Monti and Scot Hacker presented the workshop's core multimedia curriculum. *The KDMC only awarded fellowships from 2007-2012. I was awarded this fellowship in recognition of my multimedia and engagement work with PBS Wisconsin and POV Documentary Films.*

#### **Research/Pilot Grantee | Media, Development & Diversity Agency of South Africa | 2004-2005**

The Media Development and Diversity Agency was established by an Act of Parliament in 2002 to try to enable “historically disadvantaged communities and persons not adequately served by the media” to gain access to and become key players within the media. As a recipient of an early MDDA grant, I researched the state of small print media in rural communities throughout Kwa-Zulu Natal, Mpumalanga, and Limpopo and identified its greatest needs in the post-apartheid media landscape and possible training and publishing solutions. The grant covered foundational research, programmatic concept development, and pilot training. My research led to the establishment of a non-profit initiative focused on training rural women as nonfiction storytellers and journalists with an emphasis on rural communities and the establishment of a narrative-focused community newspaper. *This led to the launch of Amazwi.*

#### **Fellow | Teacher Edu. for the Adv. of a Multicultural Society | Univ. of San Francisco | 2002 - 2003**

Teacher Education for the Advancement of a Multicultural Society (TEAMS) was a collaborative of schools and community-based organizations, led by the University of San Francisco (USF), which provided resources, support and preparation for educators who wanted to work in the Bay Area's neediest schools and were committed to diversity, equality, and excellence in education. TEAMS was established to address the critical shortage of teachers in Bay Area urban schools, and its objective was to develop educational leaders to shape a multicultural world with creativity, generosity, and compassion. TEAMS utilized four specific methods to prepare teachers: (1) Enrollment in a credential program; (2) Service as a teacher or

school counselor; (3) Attendance at pedagogical seminars; and (4) Design and implementation of a service-learning project. Through the pedagogical seminars, Fellows were trained in the Youth Empowerment Model of service-learning. Implemented within schools and surrounding communities, Service-learning projects helped Fellows to collaborate with other community members, gain practical skills in building community, and develop creative approaches to curriculum development.

**Fellow & Classroom Facilitator | Human Rights Education Service Corps | Amnesty Internl. | 1999**

Founded in 1997, the Human Rights Education Service Corps (HRESC) was a unique Amnesty International USA program designed to promote human rights issue awareness through classroom education. Partnering with high school classrooms in the Washington D.C. school system, HRESC Corps Members facilitated an interactive 10-week curriculum that used the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) as its framework. Students developed critical thinking skills while learning about human rights issues on a local, national, and international level. Topics included Women's Rights, Immigrants' Rights, Genocide, The Juvenile Justice System, LGBTQ Rights, Homelessness and Poverty, and more.

**EDITING & PROJECT  
MANAGEMENT**

**Developmental Manuscript Editor | Contract / Freelance | 2011 - Present**

Developmentally edit and coach writers (under book contract or represented by an agent) through the structuring of their manuscripts, proposal writing, and/or the completion of their books. *An extension of this is my ongoing work with family members of the missing as they navigate a range of ways — from memoirs and documentaries to other forms of narrative nonfiction storytelling across form — to construct the narrative of their missing loved one's lives and, often, their own.*

**Editor & Co-Founder | Proximity, a quarterly collection of true stories, & True | 2013 - 2019**

Manage a team of five quarterly editors, two weekly blog editors, guest editors, editorial fellows, and annual contest judges to produce a quarterly, themed literary magazine, grounded in place and connection. The *Review Review* says our quarterly “is an exemplary exhibition of creative nonfiction” and, in October 2018, the *NYTimes* Morning Briefing highlighted the work of our weekly publication, *True*. *This work continues, as it was passed on to a set of more recent Goucher alum — faculty members at Penn State University and Colby-Sawyer College, and a doctoral student at University of Nottingham (UK).*

**Series Editor & British Broadcasting Corporation Content Manager | Learnist | 2012 - 2014**

Managed and edited a series of author interviews—Leslie Jamison, Maximilian Potter, among others—and worked closely with the BBC to manage, edit, and curate content for their digital channel.

**Publications Editor & Coordinator | Wisconsin Historical Society & Press | 2010 - 2012**

Managed and edited a manuscript series for print and web, funded by a federal historic preservation grant. I managed all writers, artists, photographers, and content-specialists (from state tender to project completion), and coordinated multiple staff across Historic Preservation, Web/IT, and the Press. This project involved developmental editing, trouble-shooting, and the management of people, finances, and material.

**Multimedia Producer & Engagement Media Manager | PBS Wisconsin | 2009 - 2011**

Managed pre-production, on-site production, and post-production of multimedia storytelling projects and live viewing events with the aim to increase viewer engagement (digitally and in-person) and the localization of national issues. In addition to multimedia production, this required the management of people (young reporters and event partners), finances (grant writing, budgets, assessments, and final reports), venues

(engagement events), and final products (events, content for the web and film, public screenings and discussions). During this time, I piloted and managed the WPT College Correspondent Program and managed engagement for a network of 6 public television stations with an audience of 537,000 households per week. *For this work, I was awarded a 2010 Multimedia Storytelling Fellowship by UC—Berkeley.*

**Editor | *a.magazine: nonfiction narratives of Africa* | 2007 - 2009**

Awarded a grant to pilot the first exclusively nonfiction literary magazine focused on Africa, I managed a small editorial team and worked with award-winning writers and photographers from story inception to print, including Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Zakes Mda, Mikhael Subotzky, Greg Marinovich, Stephanie Nolen, & Collette Rossant. Our launch issue was reviewed by the *Utne Reader* (08) and exhibited at Colophon: an International Magazine Symposium (Luxembourg, 09) & We Love Magazine Library (Japan, 09).

**Editor | *Amazwi Villager* | 2007 - 2009**

Managed a team of 3 editors and 5 local female journalists, and established a freelance co-op producing domestic & international magazine features (08-09). An alternative monthly news magazine, *The Villager* was the first print & online community news source in Acornhoek (South Africa) and surrounding communities, avg. readership of 60,000. In 2008, an Amazwi-trained investigative journalist, Linky Matsie, working for *The Villager*, received South Africa's 2008 Vodacom Community Journalist of the Year Award.

**Documentary Shorts Script Writer & Editor | *Visionaries, a PBS Documentary Series* | 2000 - 2001**

My time at Visionaries and with Bill Mosher not only taught me about the financial and editorial side of documentary production, but it inspired me to see the ways in which media is also service. At a time when the web was opening up new possibilities, I spent a year transforming used and unused footage from past Visionaries episodes to create documentary shorts for streaming on the web. Visionaries has been producing its series for public television since 1995. Hosted by Sam Waterston, the series highlights the rarely told stories of nonprofit organizations around the world that are working to make a positive difference in their community and beyond. Visionaries' production crews have traveled across six continents and to more than 50 American cities to profile the extraordinary work of true philanthropists--people dedicating their lives and careers to the service of others. From the beginning, the concept of Visionaries was to utilize television as an instrument of service.

**SCHOLARSHIPS,  
AWARDS,  
& GRANTS**

**2024 Dean's Excellence Award for Integrated Scholarship** | Penn State | Bellisario College | 2024

**Summer Research Scholarship** | Penn State | Bellisario College | 2022

**Graduate Summer Research Scholarship** | Ohio University | English Department | 2016

**Original Works Grant** | Graduate Student Senate | Ohio University | 2014

**Documentary Essay Prize, 1st Runner-up / HM** | Center for Documentary Studies | Duke University | 2013

**Doctoral Teaching Scholarship** | Graduate Creative Writing Program | Ohio University | 2012 - 2015

**International Project Grant** | *Lonely Planet* Foundation (Australia) | 2007

**Project Grant** | International Academy of Film & Television | 2007

**Academic Dean's Travel Grant** | Neiman Conference South Africa Funding | Goucher College | 2006

**Small Media Research Grant** | Media Development & Diversity Agency of South Africa | 2004

**JUDGE**

**Ernie Pyle / Narrative Storytelling Judge | Scripps Howard Journalism Awards | Spring 2025**

**Literary Journalism Contest Judge | *True* magazine | Winter 2024**

**Ernie Pyle / Narrative Storytelling Judge | Scripps Howard Journalism Awards | Spring 2024**

**Creative Nonfiction Fellowship Judge | Oregon Literary Arts | Fall 2016**

Reviewed fellowship applications and selected finalists and winners. Oregon Literary Arts Fellowships are intended to help Oregon writers initiate, develop or complete literary projects in poetry, fiction, literary nonfiction, drama and young readers literature. As a fellowship judge (*by invitation*), application review lasted approximately 3 months. In the final stage, final selections were made as a collective (fiction judge Matthew Salesses, poetry judge Lo Kwa, and me).

**Documentary & Essay Judge | Wisconsin Youth Media Festival | 2010, 2011**

**Children's Book Judge | PBS Kids Go! Writing Contest | 2010, 2011**

**Research Paper Judge | National History Day: Wisconsin State Finals | 2010**

## CONFERENCE PANELS

### **2025 Keystone News Summit (Harrisburg, PA)**

“Journalism Programs as Publishers, News Services and More” with Colleen Stiffen (The Statehouse File, Franklin College), Matt Veto (The brown & White, Lehigh University), Andy Conte (Next Generation Newsroom, Point Park University) and Latrell Crittenden (Center for Community Engaged Media, Temple University).

### **2024 JEA/NSPA National High School Journalism Convention (Philadelphia, PA)**

“Shut up and Listen: Narrative Journalism in 300 words” — a main stage pedagogical lecture

“Documenters: Building Skills, Serving Communities” — a main stage pedagogical lecture

### **2024 Ass. for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication Conference (Philadelphia, PA)**

“Expanding Journalism Education: Balancing Hard, Soft & Intangible Skills to Effectively Train Student Journalists” with Jennifer Thomas (Howard University), Ty Lawson (Columbia University) and Kix Patterson (University of Florida).

### **IAJLS-sponsored panel at 2024 AEJMC (Philadelphia, PA)**

“Hyper-Local Literary Journalism: Telling Community-Specific Stories” with Bret Schulte (Arkansas), Patrick Walters (Washington and Lee University), and Shanna Gilkeson (Eastern Michigan).

### **2022 Associated Writers & Writing Programs (Philadelphia, PA)**

“Revise and Refine: Creating a Diverse, Inclusive, and Equitable Writing Industry,” with Susette Brooks (Director of Multimedia Marketing at Penguin Random House), Danielle A Jackson (Editor-in-Chief of Oxford American), Merry Sun (Associate Editor for Portfolio, Sentinel, and Current), and Jeanine Cook (Owner of Harriet's Bookshop).

### **2021 International Conference for Literary Journalism Studies (Copenhagen, Denmark)**

“Longform Storytelling in the News Magazine and Beyond,” with Tobias Eberwein (American University in Paris, France), Brett Popplewell (Carleton University, Canada), and Kevin Lerner (Marist College, USA).

### **2021 International Conference for Literary Journalism Studies (Copenhagen, Denmark)**

“Literary Journalism & Found Poetry,” with Sue Joseph (University of Technology Sydney, Australia), David Drayton (University of Technology Sydney, Australia), and Rob Alexander. (Brock University. Canada).

### **2018 NonfictionNow (Phoenix, AZ)**

“Unexpected Activism: Creative Writing meets Social Justice” with Scott Morris, Sheila Pham, and Tom Fate.

**2018 Investigative Reporters & Editors Conference (Orlando, FL)**

“How to Report for America,” with Molly Born (West Virginia Public Broadcasting), Ryan Nave (Mississippi Today) and Charlie Sennott (The GroundTruth Project)

**2017 Creative Nonfiction Writers Conference (Pittsburgh, PA)**

“Better Writing with Research,” a presentation & discussion with Adriana E Ramirez.  
“Engaging Your Audience, Raising your Profile, and Self-Promotion” with J. Brickhouse and NK Johnstone.  
“Writing for the Web” with editors from *Paris Review*, *Slate*, *Future Tense*, and *Proximity*.

**2017 NonfictionNow (Reykjavik, Iceland)**

“Nonfiction Comics: The Next Frontier” w/Kevin Haworth, Dr. Ariel Kahn, Morsal Mohammad, Houman Sadri.

**2016 Creative Nonfiction Writers Conference (Pittsburgh, PA)**

“Better Writing with Research,” a presentation and discussion with Adriana E. Ramirez.

**2015 Association of Writers and Writing Programs (Minneapolis, MN)**

“Digging for Story: Research, Fieldwork, and Accuracy in Creative Writing”  
with Sheri Booker, Bronwen Dickey, Nomi Stone, and Kristen Millares Young.

**2014 Northeastern MLA Conference (Harrisburg, PA)**

“Literature of Resistance: Creative Writers & the Occupy Movement”  
with Eric Bliman, Jennifer Lee Hirt, Rachel Wilkinson.

**2014 Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900 (Louisville, KY)**

Creative Readings from forthcoming works & Q&A session.

**2013 Association of Writers and Writing Programs (Boston, MA)**

“Teaching Creative Writing Behind Bars (& Beyond)”  
with Antonia Crane, Josh Mohr, and Tyler McMahon.

**PUBLIC READINGS**

**(2024)**

Brown Bag Lit (Indianapolis, IN and online) *with Robert Sunday*  
Colby-Sawyer College (News London, NH)  
Howard University (Washington DC) *with the Black Press Archive's Brandon Nightingale*  
Politics & Prose (Washington DC) *with the Black Press Archive's Brandon Nightingale*  
The Inner Loop Reading Series (Washington DC) *with Rabih Alameddine*  
University of Chicago's Center for Democracy (Chicago, IL) *with Block Club Chicago's Manny Ramos*  
White Whale Books (Pittsburgh, PA) *with Stephanie Gorton*

**(2017-2019)**

City of Asylum (Pittsburgh, PA)  
Cleveland Drafts Literary Festival (Cleveland, OH)  
Free Association Reading Series (Wilkinsburg, PA)  
Goucher College, Alumni House (Baltimore, MD)  
The Ivy Bookshop (Baltimore, MD) *with Patsy Sims and Suzannah Lessard*  
Moon Tunnel Reading Series (Athens, OH) *with Katie Berta and Jennifer Pullen*  
Pitt-Greensburg Written/Spoken Series (Greensburg, PA) *with Jim Daniels*

(2015-2016)

The Book Loft (Winnetka, IL)  
Boswell Books (Milwaukee, WI)  
Broadway Books (Portland, OR) *with Rene Denfeld*  
Elliott Bay Book Co. (Seattle, WA) *with Wendy Call and Kristen Millares Young*  
Elizabethtown College (Elizabethtown, PA)  
Franklin College (Franklin, IN)  
Kalamazoo Valley Community College (Kalamazoo MI)  
Kramerbooks & Afterwords (DC) *in conversation with journalist Andy Kroll*  
The Little Professor (Athens, OH)  
Madison Public Library & the Wisconsin Book Festival (Madison, WI)  
Magers & Quinn (Minneapolis, MN)  
Malone University (Canton, OH)  
Manheim Township Library (Lancaster, PA)  
Pete's Candy Store Series (Brooklyn, NY) *with Rick Moody and Alexandra Kleeman*  
Politics & Prose (DC) *in conversation with journalist & author Patsy Sims*  
Prairie Lights Books (Iowa City, IA)  
A Room of One's Own (Madison, WI)  
The Tattered Cover (Denver, CO)  
Truman State University (Kirksville, MO)  
The Wild Detectives (Dallas, TX) *in conversation with essayist Clinton Crockett Peters*  
Wilkes University (Wilkes-Barre, PA)  
Why There are Words (Sausalito, CA) *with Christian Kiefer, Ann Packer, among others*  
Women & Children First Bookstore (Chicago, IL)

**LITERARY  
COMMUNITY  
SERVICE**

**Organizer | *Literary Wilderness* | 2013, 2015**

Organized an every-other-year campaign (lasting four to six months), connecting writers and publishers (and their books) with prison creative writing and literature classrooms.

**Literary Wilderness Reading & Benefit, The Nicolette, Minneapolis, MN (April 2015)**

—with Sheri Booker, Antonia Crane, Shasta Grant, Sarah Green, Richard Gold, Tasha Golden, Arielle Greenberg, Jennifer Bowen Hicks, Robert Lopez, Brad Aaron Modlin, Metta Sama, Kelly Sundberg, Anca Szilagyi, Kristen Millares Young.

**Literary Wilderness Reading & Benefit, Old South Church, Boston, MA (Feb 2013)**

—with Matthew Zapruder, Jill McDonough, Daniel B. Johnson, Jen Moore, Lucy Christopher, Erin Celello, Suzanne Roberts, Kristen Millares Young, Bronwen Dickey, Samuel Park, Ann Wertz Garvin, and my co-organizer Sarah Green.

**Official “Giver” & Local Project Leader | *World Book Night* | 2014**

**Mentor | *PEN America—Prison Writing Program* | 2012 - 2014**

Mentored incarcerated creative writers. Through individual mail correspondence, mentors provide careful criticism, tips on craft, and guidance in the fundamentals of grammar to inmates around the country.

**Reader, Creative Nonfiction & Fiction | *New Ohio Review* | 2012 - 2013**

**Writers in Prisons Project Reading | *Wisconsin Book Festival* | October 2011**

**Editorial Board Member | *ANFASA (Academic & NF Authors Ass. of South Africa)* | 2009 - 2010**

**UNIVERSITY  
SERVICE**

South Africa's first national association specially for authors of general non-fiction works, textbooks and academic books, dedicated to promoting their works and their status in society and advocating for the recognition of their works and the protection of their rights.

**Member | Penn State Student Media Leadership Committee | Bellisario College | 2024-2025**

A committee of all staff and student members of PSSM, a consortium of student media organizations — the Collegian, CommRadio, Centre County Report, Lion Radio, PSN TV, and others. As a non-voting member of the committee, I serve as a consultant to student news organizations seeking additional support (from business to editorial) and I provide an outside voice in leadership meetings through new opportunities, decision-making, editorial projects, etc...

**Member | Graduate Program Committee | Bellisario College | Penn State | 2023-2025**

An interdisciplinary exploratory committee focused on graduate program development.

**Member | Hiring Committee | Bellisario College | Penn State | 2022, 2024, 2025**

News Lab & Curley Center for Sports Journalism Editor — 2025

Centre Documenters Program Coordinator — 2025

Assistant Teaching Professor in Broadcast — 2024

Assistant Teaching Professor in Multimedia — 2022

**Member | Student News Consortium Committee | Penn State's Bellisario College | 2023-2024**

An exploratory committee focused on the development of a cooperative-style setup for student-run student media across print, television, and radio.

**Narrative Journalism Major Development Committee Member | Denison University | 2020 - 2021**

An interdisciplinary team of faculty from Anthropology, Black Studies, Communication, English, Global Commerce, Earth Sciences, and Environmental Studies gathered to discuss the transition of the Narrative Journalism program from a concentration to a major, design interdisciplinary curriculum that embraces existing coursework as well as new coursework, and formally propose this major to the university. This team guided the major proposal through approval and accreditation.

**Narrative Journalism Program Committee Member | Denison University | 2019 - 2021**

**Podcast-a-thon Mentor Program Organizer | Denison University | 2021**

Coordinated 12 audio storytelling mentors to work with 82 student teams across 11 courses (from departments across the university) to review their podcast-a-thon submission rough cuts three days prior to their due dates. Mentors included Jesse Dukes (Curious City, WBEZ), Basim Blunt (Dayton Youth Radio Project Coordinator, WYSO), Jocelyn Robinson (Producer for Emerging Initiatives, WYSO), Samantha Max (Criminal Justice reporter @ WPLN), Glynis Board (Asst. News Director, WVPB), Clare Roth (All Things Considered host, WOSU), Savannah Maher (Indigenous Affairs reporter, KUNM), Angela Dennis (Black in Appalachia podcast host) and others.

**Campus-Wide 'Conversations' Organizer and Participant | Denison University | 2019 - 2021**

'In Conversation' with essayist Garnette Cadogan, journalist Anna Badkin, podcast producers Taylor Hom and Neil Shea, broadcast journalist and NABJ board member Sia Nyorkor, radio producer and documentary filmmaker Molly Born, journalist and fiction writer Jesse Holland, journalist and novelist Kristen Millares Young, and others.

**Virtual Campus Event Planning *due to COVID* | Denison University | Spring 2020**

As students departed campus, I opened a community space (using Workplace) and moved all of the Narrative Journalism and English department students online to continue ongoing engagement, conversation, and weekly Happy Hours with raffles and conversations with professionals.

**Narrative Journalism 5-Year Strategy Development Team Member | Denison University | 2020**

**Elected Graduate Representative | Creative Writing Committee | Ohio University | 2014 - 2015**

Served on the creative writing faculty committee as a representative of graduate student interests and needs. This role also included serving as a liaison between faculty and student when conflict arose while offering as a safe place for students when they needed to discuss any needs or concerns.

**Mentor | Women's Center Mentoring Program | Ohio University | 2013 - 2015**

Paired with a female mentee (for two-semester terms). Organized and met with my mentee, every-other-week, throughout the year, focused on both personal and professional concerns, as well as creating strategies and stress coping mechanisms. Additionally, we opted to attend programs and activities focused on career and personal development together throughout the year. I participated in this program twice.

**INTERNSHIPS &  
APPRENTICESHIPS**

**Personal Assistant & Copy Editor** | Donald Lessem, a science author / museum consultant | 2000 - 2001

**Investigative Reporting Intern** | Dateline NBC (DC) | 1999

**Production & Field Reporting Intern** | CBS Evening News and Face The Nation (DC) | 1999

**Writing & Campaign Intern** | Barbara Quiroga PR | 1998 - 1999

**Local Reporting Intern** | *Beacon News* (IL) | 1998

**TECHNICAL**

Adobe Creative Suites (Photoshop, InDesign, Adobe Express, Premiere Pro, Adobe Express, Express It), Audacity, DeScript, Final Cut Pro X, Final Draft, Microsoft Office Suite, Subtext, Trint, Wordpress, WriterDuet, among others.