

**WILLIAM COOK MILLER**

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**EDUCATION**

Ph.D., Johns Hopkins University, 2016  
M.A., University of Texas at Austin, 2008  
B.A., Kalamazoo College, 2005

**DISSERTATION**

*Counter-Enthusiasms: The Rationalization of False Prophecy in Early Enlightenment England*(2016). Advisors: Sharon Achinstein and Frances Ferguson (UChicago). Other Committee Members: Jared Hickman, Michael Kwass, Yitzak Melamed, Walter Stephens.

**APPOINTMENTS**

**2016-present** Assistant Professor of English, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY

**BOOKS**

*The Enthusiast: Anatomy of the Fanatic in Seventeenth-Century British Culture* (Cornell University Press, 2023)

*Possessed: Prophecy and Race in Early Modernity* (provisional title), in progress.

**TEACHING AND RESEARCH INTERESTS**

17th- and 18th-century British literature; Enlightenment and literature; Renaissance literature; literature and religion; literature and science; literature and language theory; the novel; British and Continental philosophy; global Enlightenments; critical theory.

**PUBLICATIONS**

**Peer-Reviewed Articles**

“Macabre Vitality: Texture and Resonance in *The Duchess of Malfi*” *Renaissance Drama* 43.2 (Fall 2015), 193-216.

“Feeling, Reflection, Epiphany: Truisms and Truths in Locke, Mill, and Dewey,” *New Literary History* 47.4 (Fall 2016), 611-632.

“Innocence after Experience: Robert Herrick’s Counter-Epithalamia,” *Studies in Philology* 117.1 (Winter 2020), 129-150.

“Theadora Wilkin’s Wandering Soul: Spiritual Adaptation in an Anglo-Dutch Context,” *Church*

*History and Religious Culture* 101.1-2 (Summer 2021), 357-375.

“Mystics and Wits: Free Expression in the Quaker-Kabbalists and Lord Shaftesbury,” requested submission for a forthcoming essay collection.

“Becoming Fanny Price: Regulated Self-Hatred in *Mansfield Park*,” in progress.

“*Clarissa*’s Two Enthusiasms,” in progress.

“Milton’s Belly Talk,” in progress.

### **Book Reviews**

Review of Tessa Whitehouse, *The Textual Culture of English Protestant Dissent, 1720-1800*, *William & Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 74, No. 2 (April 2017), 393-397.

Review of Rebecca Lemon, *Addiction and Devotion in Early Modern England*, *The Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 93.3 (Fall 2019), 458-460.

### **CONFERENCE ORGANIZER/CHAIR**

2018: “Jonathan Swift: Monsters, Savages, and the Carnavalesque,” NEASECS 2018. Panelists: Rebecca Avgoustopoulos (University of Alabama-Huntsville), Alexandria Einspahr (Villanova), Charles Pawluk (SUNY-Buffalo)

2017: “Early Modern *Aesthesis* and Political Economy,” MLA 2017. Panelists: Richard Halpern (NYU), Rayna Kalas (Cornell), Benjamin Parris (Haverford College).

2016: “What Was a Miracle?” ASECS 2016, Pittsburgh. Panelists: Bridget Donnelley (UNC-Chapel Hill), Sophie Gee (Princeton), Suzanne Taylor (UChicago)

2016: “Sacred Values: New Perspectives on Religion and Political Economy,” MLA 2016, Austin. Panelists: Katherine Ding (UC-Berkeley), Katarina O’Brian (JHU), Maggie Vinter (Case Western)

2013: *ELH* Colloquium, John Guillory (NYU), Johns Hopkins University

### **INVITED TALKS**

2021: “Inner Daemons: The Enthusiast in Shaftesbury and Astell,” Wesleyan University

2021: “Milton’s Literary Windows,” Wesleyan University

2020: “The Many Adventures of Franciscus Mercurius Van Helmont,” Princeton University (postponed)

2019: “Know Your Heresies,” Cornell University

2017: “Blood and Faith: Humoral Theories of Denomination in Seventeenth-Century Britain,” Transforming Bodies Conference, Cornell University

2016: “Swift’s Enthusiasms,” University of Rochester

2015: “Enthusiasm and the Secular Self,” Albion College, MI

### **CONFERENCE PAPERS**

2021: “The Mystic and the Wit: Intersubjectivity in a Seventeenth-Century Anglo-Dutch Context,” Ritman Library, Amsterdam

- 2021: “Milton’s Belly Talk,” Wesleyan University
- 2018: “Enthusiasm and Fascination in the Making of Secularity,” ACLA, Los Angeles
- 2017: “Locke in Rotterdam: Thinking Language in Exile,” CSECS, Toronto
- 2017: “Figuring the Oracle: An Imitative Cluster in *A Tale of a Tub*” ISCL, University of Oxford
- 2016: “Jane Austen’s Evils,” ASECS, Pittsburgh
- 2015: “Smithfield’s Ghosts: The Secular Experience of Urban Space,” NEASECS, Trinity College, CT
- 2015: “Between Reason and the Senses: Prophecy and the Imagination in the Cambridge Platonists,” Religious Ideas and Scientific Thought, McGill University
- 2015: “The Asymptomatic Enthusiast: Henry More Reads David George,” ACLA, Seattle
- 2014: “Swift’s Lucretian Logos,” Journal Club Talk, Johns Hopkins University
- 2014: “Inventing the Enthusiast: Swift, Hume, and the Literary Memory of Post-Revolutionary England,” NEASECS, Syracuse University
- 2014: “From ‘Heresy’ to ‘Enthusiasm’ in Late Seventeenth-Century England,” International Society for Heresy Studies, NYU
- 2012: “Dr. Johnson, Sophist,” NEASECS, Wesleyan University

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### Assistant Professor

- “Race and Religion in Early Modernity,” Spring 2023, University of Rochester  
A graduate course which links ancient and early modern models of the soul to the changing representation of race in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
- “Doctors and Devils,” Spring 2022, University of Rochester  
This course introduces the major medical theories of early modernity, from humoralism to vitalism to mechanism, through readings of important literary and philosophical texts.
- “The Album as Literature,” Fall 2021, University of Rochester.  
Students consider literary aspects of music ranging from 19th century art songs to 21st century experimental hip-hop.
- “Great Books: Heaven and Hell,” Fall 2021, University of Rochester  
An introduction to a wide range of canonical and recent books concerned with afterworlds.
- “Imagining Reality in the Eighteenth Century,” Spring 2020, University of Rochester.  
We consider the most influential intellectual circle in eighteenth-century English literature. Authors include Samuel Johnson, James Boswell, Edmund Burke, Frances Burney, Charlotte Lennox, Oudalah Equiano. The course emphasizes the influence of new medias and changing genres on conceptions of reality.
- “The Rise of the Novel,” Spring 2020, University of Rochester  
A graduate course on the early novel and theories of the novel and its rise.
- “The Witch,” Spring 2018, Spring 2021, University of Rochester  
We read literary and historical texts about witchcraft and witches from ancient to contemporary times, with a special emphasis on the witch hunts of the early modern centuries. In addition, students read theoretical texts on the witch from feminist and queer theoretical perspectives.
- “Great Books: Myth and Lore,” Spring 2018, Fall 2020, Fall 2023, University of Rochester  
An introduction to great books through readings of mythological literary and scriptural texts.

The course introduces students to theories of mythology from disciplines including anthropology, religious studies, and literary studies.

“Religion, Science, and Literature,” Fall 2017, University of Rochester

A graduate seminar on historical and philosophical intersections between scientific, religious, and literary forms.

“Satire,” Fall 2017, Spring 2022, University of Rochester

A review of satirical literature from ancient to modern times, with special emphasis on Menippean satire.

“The Bible in English,” Spring 2017, Fall 2018, University of Rochester

A consideration of the literary, cultural, and political influence of Bible translation in the long Reformation.

“What Is Tragedy?,” Spring 2017, Fall 2020, University of Rochester

This course considers the practice and theory of tragic drama from Ancient Greece to the present.

“Great Books: Welcome to a Strange New Place,” Fall 2016, University of Rochester

An introductory course surveying literature from Homer to Kafka through the lens of “strange new place” tropes (including wonderlands, fantastic islands, utopias, and speculative countries).

“Milton,” Fall 2016, Fall 2018, Spring 2021, Spring 2023, University of Rochester

This course surveys Milton’s poems and prose from his early lyrics to his late epics.

### **Instructor**

“Enlightenment and Revelation,” Spring 2016, JHU

This upper-level course considers the role of revelation, whether understood in terms of inspiration, prophecy, divination, or meditation, in global enlightenment movements.

“Freshman Seminar: Prophecy after Science,” Fall 2015, JHU

This course surveys the persistent importance of prophecy for representing changing conceptions of nature and selfhood.

“Friends and Enemies in Jane Austen,” Summer 2015, JHU

This course considers representations of friendship and enmity in Austen’s novels, linking these to the social history of the novel.

“Prophecy after Science,” Fall 2014, JHU

An upper-level version of the above course.

“What Is Tragedy?” Summer 2014, JHU

A survey of the history of tragic drama from Aeschylus to the present.

“Welcome to a Strange New Place,” Fall 2011, Spring 2012, Fall 2013, Spring 2015, JHU

This first-year writing course focuses on representations of wonder in coming-of-age and utopian literature and film.

### **Teaching Assistant**

“The Bible as Literature,” Fall 2014, JHU; “Introduction to Film,” 2013-present, JHU; “The Nineteenth-Century British Novel,” Spring 2011, JHU (Lecture on *Adam Bede*);

“Shakespeare: Then and Now,” Fall 2010, JHU (Lecture on *King Lear*); “Masterworks of the English Language,” 2007-2009, UT-Austin

### **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

MA Advisor, University of Rochester, Fall 2020-present; Job Placement Officer, University of Rochester, Fall 2016-Fall 2019; Graduate Studies Committee Member, University of Rochester, 2018-present; Search Committee Member for Hire in Anglophone Literature, University of Rochester, 2017-2018; External Reviewer for *Renaissance Drama*, *New Literary History*, *The Journal of Modern Philosophy* and Gale Publishers.

### **AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS**

Folger Institute Fellowship, Summer 2019; Humanities Center Fellowship, University of Rochester, Spring 2018; Dean's Prize Fellowship, JHU, 2015; MLA Travel Fellowship, MLA, 2015; Preparing Future Faculty Training Academy Certificate, JHU 2014; Dean's Teaching Fellowship, JHU, 2014; Donovan Fellowship, JHU, 2009-2013; Teaching Fellowship, UT-Austin, 2007-2009; Phi Beta Kappa, 2005; Departmental Honors and Thesis Honors, Kalamazoo College, 2005; Senior Prize for Music Performance, Kalamazoo College, 2005; Newberry Library Fellowship, 2004 (Thesis, "Natural Normativity in Word-of-Mouth Ballads")

### **OTHER ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS/EMPLOYMENT**

Managing Editor, *ELH: English Literary History*, 2012-2016; The Writing Center at Johns Hopkins, Fall 2012, Spring 2013; Faculty Research Assistant, Johns Hopkins, 2010-2011; Assistant Reference Librarian, Sterling Library, Yale University, 2005-2006

### **NON-ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT**

Film Critic, *Baltimore City Paper*, 2014-2015; Case Editor, Connecticut Department of Children and Families, 2006-2008 (collected and prepared testimony for child custody decisions); Instructor of English, Aix-en-Provence, France, 2006-2007; Freelance Writer and Editor, 2005-2008 (created and edited content for online publications)

### **GROUPS AND SOCIETIES**

University of Rochester Renaissance Reading Group, 2016-present; JHU Renaissance Reading Group, 2009-2016; JHU Human Rights Working Group, 2010-2016; Circles of Voices, 2015-2016; 20th-Century Capitalism Reading Group, 2011-2013; Feminism and Queer Theory Reading Group, 2011-2012; Hopkins Graduate Film Society, 2010-2012

### **ADDITIONAL INTERESTS**

Music (guitar, piano, voice, drums, violin); film; creative writing

### **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

American Comparative Literature Association; American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies;

Modern Language Association; Renaissance Society of America; Shakespeare Association of America