

# Keith Wilhite

Thompson Writing Program  
Duke University  
Box 90025, Durham, NC 27708

keith.wilhite@duke.edu  
<http://www.duke.edu/~kmw34/>  
919-220-2025 (home) • 919-660-4371

## **PROFESSIONAL**

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- Postdoctoral Fellow, Thompson Writing Program, Duke University (Fall 2007-present)
- Associate Editor, *Studies in Writing and Rhetoric*, a book series of scholarly monographs co-published by Southern Illinois University Press and CCCC (Summer 2009-present)

## **EDUCATION**

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2007            Ph.D., English, The University of Iowa  
2000            M.A., English, Saint Louis University  
1994            B.A., English, Saint Louis University

## **RESEARCH & TEACHING INTERESTS**

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20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> century U.S. literature, the modern and postmodern novel, cultural geography, sexuality and gender studies, Cold War-era literature and politics, regional writing, consumer culture, visual studies

## **DISSERTATION**

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*Framing Suburbia: U.S. Literature and the Postwar Suburban Region, 1945-2002* (2007)

## **MANUSCRIPT-IN-PROGRESS**

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*Contested Terrain: Suburbia, U.S. Literature, and the Ends of Regionalism*

This study demonstrates how the suburban nation-building project in the U.S. ushered in a new, informal geography, recalibrating notions of national security, citizenship, and personal worth to the scale of the single-family home. While embodying the frontier rhetoric of an expanding American empire, suburbia has fostered the domestic insularity that continues to frame debates about privacy, the politics of sex and gender, economic and racial segregation, and post-9/11 nationalism. I argue that suburban narratives renew a literary tradition of regional writing at the crossroads of domestic isolationism and U.S. imperialism.

## **SCHOLARLY ARTICLES**

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"Contested Terrain: The Suburb as Region" (under review at *American Literature*)

"Unsettled Worlds: Aesthetic Emplacement in Willa Cather's *My Ántonia*." *Studies in the Novel* 42.3 (2010): 269-286.

"Mapping Black and Brown L.A.: Zoot Suit Riots as Spatial Subtext in *If He Hollers Let Him Go*." *Arizona Quarterly* 66.2 (2010): 121-148.

"John Cheever's Shady Hill, Or: How I Learned To Stop Worrying and Love the Suburbs." *Studies in American Fiction* 34 (2006): 215-239. Reprinted in *Short Story Criticism* (SSC 120), April 2009.

"His Mind Was Full of Absences: Whitman at the Scene of Writing." *ELH* 71 (2004): 921-948.

"A Yearning for a Kind of Consciousness': *Black Boy* and the Aesthetic Solution." *Prose Studies* 22 (1999): 103-120.

## **ENCYCLOPEDIA ENTRIES**

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"John Cheever." *The Encyclopedia of Twentieth Century American Fiction*. Eds. Patrick O'Donnell, Justus Nieland, and David Madden. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell Publishing, 2011.

"Jonathan Franzen." *The Encyclopedia of Twentieth Century American Fiction*. Eds. Patrick O'Donnell, Justus Nieland, and David Madden. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell Publishing, 2011.

"Depictions of the Suburb in Midwestern Literature." *Dictionary of Midwestern Literature, Volume 2*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. (Forthcoming)

## **FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, AND GRANTS**

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Duke University, Thompson Writing Program Research Grant, 2009

Duke University, Thompson Writing Program Research Grant, 2008

Prairie Lights/Sherman Paul Dissertation Award, 2007

Frederick F. Seely Distinguished Dissertation Fellowship, 2005-06

Graduate College Summer Fellowship, 2005

The W. R. Irwin Award for Excellence in Teaching, 2005

University of Iowa, English Department Best Essay Prize, 2005

Graduate Student Senate (GSS) Travel Fellowship, 2005

Interdisciplinary Teaching Fellowship, Fall 2004

University of Iowa Student Government (UISG) Scholarly Presentation Grant, 2001

Summer Foreign Language Study Scholarship, University of Iowa, 2001

## **CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS & PANEL DISCUSSIONS**

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"The Emerging Global City in Oscar Zeta Acosta's *Revolt of the Cockroach People*." Modern Language Association Convention, Los Angeles, CA (January 9, 2011)

"Aggressive Tendencies: *Lolita* and the Conscripted Reader." Modern Language Association Convention, Los Angeles, CA (January 7, 2011)

"Moving Out: Jonathan Franzen's *The Corrections* and the Future of Suburbia." Northeast Modern Language Association Convention, Montreal, Quebec (April 10, 2010)

"Your Life as a Writer: From Dissertation to Book and Beyond." Panel Participant. John Hope Franklin Center, Duke University (February 10, 2010)

"Behind the Scenes with the Search Committee." Panel Participant. Academic Career Services, Duke University (September 14, 2009)

"*Lolita* and the Science of Sex." Northeast Modern Language Association Convention, Boston, MA (February 27, 2009)

"The Trouble with Midwestern Roots: Jonathan Franzen's Oprah Problem." Midwest Modern Language Association Convention, Minneapolis, MN (November 14, 2008)

"Imagining a Community of Readers in the Era of Suburban Sprawl." American Studies Association Convention, Philadelphia, PA (October 14, 2007)

"Short Story: American Short Story and American Neighborhoods." (Session Coordinator) Midwest Modern Language Association Convention, Milwaukee, WI (November 12, 2005)

- "Pornography Begins at Home: Erotic Fantasy and Domestic Abuse in Paula Vogel's *Hot 'N' Throbbing*." Midwest Modern Language Association Convention, Milwaukee, WI (November 11, 2005)
- "A Midwestern Postmortem: Jeffrey Eugenides' Suburban Suicides." Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature, East Lansing, MI (May 13, 2005)
- "Reading for Transgression/Transgressive Readings in Contemporary Suburban Literature." Craft, Critique, Culture Conference, Iowa City, IA (April 9, 2005)
- "Real-Estate Terrorism and 'Serious Fiction' in Jonathan Franzen's *The Twenty-Seventh City*." Midwest Modern Language Association Convention, St. Louis, MO (November 6, 2004)
- "Suburban Estrangement." (Session Coordinator) Midwest Modern Language Association Convention, St. Louis, MO (November 6, 2004)
- "Racial Trespassing: Representations of Suburbia in Ann Petry's *The Street*." James F. Jakobsen Graduate Forum, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA (March 27, 2004)
- "A Promissory Space: Jean Toomer's *Cane* and the 'Soft Circle' of Aesthetics." Mid-America American Studies Association / Great Lakes American Studies Association Conference, Iowa City, IA (April 11, 2003)
- "The Woman With(out) a Past: Desiring Subjects and Objects of Desire in *The House of Mirth*." Northeast Modern Language Association Convention, Hartford, CT (March 30, 2001)
- "I had two dreams': O'Neill and the Duality of Inwardness." Twentieth-Century Literature Conference, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY (February 23, 2001)
- "Dividing Body and Soul in the Shakespearean Spectacle." Northeast Modern Language Association Convention, Buffalo, NY (April 7, 2000)

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

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### **DUKE UNIVERSITY (Fall 2007-present)**

- Remakes & Adaptations: Rewriting Across the Genres (Fall 2010) – This writing seminar takes up various theoretical approaches to adaptation, inviting students to grapple with complex questions surrounding authorship, originality, intellectual property, and cultural transmission.
- The Body in/on the Market (Spring 2010) – In this writing seminar, students wrote about the body as a "contested commodity." They read about the body as an object within consumer culture, but they also took up more theoretical questions related to the body as a marketable commodity, researching topics as varied as sex trafficking in the Middle East, the black-market organ trade, literature and artificial intelligence, and "guinea-pigging" for pharmaceutical companies.
- Writing About Real Things: Materialism and Consumer Culture (Fall 2009) – Beginning with a reading of Marx's "The Fetishism of the Commodity," this writing seminar addressed the social life of "things." Readings and writing assignments focused on material culture, underscoring that materiality always exists as part of a larger, fluid network of ideas and cultural values.
- Sexuality, Censorship, & Contemporary U.S. Culture (Fall 2008) – Drawing on the work of Foucault, Butler, and Fausto-Sterling, this literature seminar considered how writers "put sex into discourse" and how these discursive representations give voice to, or silence, particular bodies, ideas, and practices. Readings included *Lolita*, *Middlesex*, *Howl*, and the dramatic work of Paula Vogel.

- Indeterminate Subjects: Writing Sex & Gender (Fall 2008 & Spring 2009) – This writing seminar focused on the indeterminacy of sex and gender as categories of identity and discourse. In their writing, students explored competing definitions of “normalcy,” considered the challenges that “anomalous bodies” pose to binary modes of thinking about sexuality and gender, and analyzed primary source materials collected in Duke’s Sallie Bingham Center for Women’s History and Culture.
- Re-Writing the 1950s (Spring 2008) – This writing seminar explored U.S. cultural nostalgia for the 1950s. More specifically, students focused on contemporary reinventions and revisions of this formative era, paying particular attention to the geographies of racial segregation and the politicizing of gender and sexuality in the Cold War era.
- American Dreams, Gothic Landscapes (Fall 2007) – This writing seminar explored suburban culture and Cold War politics, with an eye toward moving beyond the familiar focus on conformity and banality. We considered consumerist, feminist, environmental, visual studies, and literary approaches to suburban homes and neighborhoods.

#### **THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA (Fall 2001 – Spring 2007)**

##### Literature Seminars for Advanced Undergraduates

- Topics in Sexuality Studies: Representations of Sexuality in Postwar American Literature
- Topics in American Literature: Transgression and the Postwar Suburban Region

##### Survey Courses, 19<sup>th</sup>- 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Literature

- American Lives: Voices from America’s Urban Centers
- Introduction to the Short Story: Community and the Short Story Sequence in American Literature
- American Lives, American Spaces

##### General Education Courses

- Interpretation of Literature
- Accelerated Rhetoric
- Rhetoric II
- Rhetoric I

#### **SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY (Fall 1998 – Spring 2000)**

- Introduction to Drama: Spectacle and Modern Drama
- Advanced Strategies in Research and Rhetoric
- Process of Composition

#### **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

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Faculty Reviewer, Chester P. Middlesworth Award for Writing, Duke University (2010)  
 Editorial Board, *Deliberations: A Journal of First-Year Writing at Duke University* (2009-10)  
 Faculty Reviewer, Sallie Bingham Center’s Mary Lily Travel Grant Program, Duke University (2009)  
 Lecturing Fellows Search Committee, Thompson Writing Program, Duke University (2008-09)  
 Course Curriculum Committee, Thompson Writing Program, Duke University (2007-08)  
 Graduate Writing Fellow, Business Communications Center, University of Iowa (2006-2007)  
 Writing Mentor, Scattergood Friends High School, West Branch, IA (2005-2006)  
 Co-Leader, Professional Development Program, Rhetoric Department, University of Iowa (2002)  
 Graduate Admissions Review Committee, English Department, University of Iowa (2002)

## **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS**

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Modern Language Association  
Conference on College Composition and Communication  
National Council of Teachers of English  
Northeast Modern Language Association

## **REFERENCES**

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Barbara Eckstein, Professor of English

The University of Iowa  
Department of English, 308 EPB, Iowa City, IA 52242  
barbara-eckstein@uiowa.edu / (319) 335-2789

Ed Folsom, Roy J. Carver Professor of English

The University of Iowa  
Department of English, 308 EPB, Iowa City, IA 52242  
ed-folsom@uiowa.edu / (319) 335-0450

Joseph D. Harris, Associate Professor of English

(Director, Thompson Writing Program, 1999-2009)  
Duke University  
English Department, Box 90014, Durham, NC 27708  
joseph.harris@duke.edu / (919) 681-8283

Tom Lutz, Professor of Creative Writing, English, and Media and Cultural Studies

University of California at Riverside  
900 University Avenue, 4146 INTS Building, Riverside, CA 92521  
tomlutz@ucr.edu / (323) 660-7376

Dennis Moore, Professor Emeritus

The University of Iowa  
Rhetoric Department, 171 EPB, Iowa City, IA 52242  
dennis-moore@uiowa.edu

Harry Stecopoulos, Associate Professor of English

The University of Iowa  
Department of English, 308 EPB, Iowa City, IA 52242  
harilaos-stecopoulos@uiowa.edu / (319) 335-1260