

# OLIVIA MILROY EVANS

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## EMPLOYMENT

Assistant Professor of Global Anglophone Literatures, Department of English, Samford University,  
Birmingham, AL (August 2022 – Present)

The Joseph F. Martino '53 Lecturer in Undergraduate Teaching, Department of Literatures in English,  
Cornell University (2021 – 2022)

## EDUCATION

Cornell University, PhD in English (August 2021)  
Concentration: World Anglophone Literature, Poetry and Poetics, Media Studies  
Committee: Roger Gilbert (chair), Jonathan Culler, Ishion Hutchinson, Caroline Levine

The University of Virginia, MA in English (May 2016)  
Concentration: 19 – 20<sup>th</sup> Century Literature  
Thesis: “The Ekphrastic Poetry of Tourism,” Professor Stephen Cushman, advisor

Wake Forest University, BA in English (May 2011)  
Honors in English with a minor in Classical Studies

## DISSERTATION

“Archiving Otherwise: The Rhetoric, Ethics, and Poetics of Contemporary Documentary Poetry”

The recent “archival turn” has produced a surge in research-based poetry that uses documents like court cases, medical records, and news clippings as the “raw material” of poetry. Documentary poets like Claudia Rankine, Layli Long Soldier, M. NourbeSe Philip, and Solmaz Sharif write both with and against the archive in an act I call “archiving otherwise.” Reading 21<sup>st</sup> C world Anglophone poetry and drawing on poetics, postcolonial theory, and media studies, this project indexes documentary poetic innovation in forms like elegy, sonnets sequences, and ekphrasis. Ultimately, “Archiving Otherwise,” shows how poets perform acts of critical fabulation in response to the erasures and exclusions of an archive.

## PUBLICATIONS

### Peer-Reviewed Scholarship

“Ekphrasis as Evidence: Forensic Rhetoric in Contemporary Documentary Poetry,” *Word & Image: A Journal of Verbal/Visual Enquiry*, 37.2 (2021): 142-151.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02666286.2020.1866969>

“Archive as Underworld in the Modern Long Poem,” *Callaloo: A Journal of African Diaspora Arts and Letters*, 41.2 (2018): 44–58. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/842281>

### Reviews and Public Writing

“Speaking a Cemetery: On Alice Oswald’s *Memorial* and Homer’s *Iliad*,” *Annulet: A Journal of Poetics*, Issue (2) (2022). <https://annuletpoeticsjournal.com/Olivia-Milroy-Evans-Speaking-a-Cemetery>

“Archival Assemblages: Conceptualism and Documentary Poetics in the Twenty-First Century,” Book Review on *Contested Records: The Turn to Documents in Contemporary North American Poetry* by Michael Leong (Iowa University Press, 2020), *Contemporary Literature*, 62.2 (2021), forthcoming.

“Activist Documentary Poetics: On Susan Briante’s *Defacing the Monument*,” *Jacket2*, forthcoming.

## COMPETITIVE AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Alan Young-Bryant Memorial Graduate Award in Poetry, Cornell University (2021)

Shin Yong-Jin Fellowship for excellence in teaching and scholarship, Cornell University (2020 – 2021)

Interdisciplinary Dissertation Writing Group Grant, Cornell Society for the Humanities (2020 – 2021)  
 Graduate School Conference Travel Grant, Cornell University (2018, 2020, 2021)  
 Martin Sampson Teaching Award, Cornell University (2020)  
 Dissertation Year Sage Fellowship, Cornell University (2019 – 2020)  
 Corson-Browning Poetry Prize for the long poem *Teichoscopia*, Cornell University (2018)  
 Knight Institute Peer Collaboration Pedagogy Grant, Cornell University (2018)  
 Sage Fellowship for Graduate Studies, Cornell University (2016 – 2017)  
 Graduate Research and Travel Grant, The University of Virginia (2015)  
 Bashir El-Beshti Prize in Renaissance Studies, Wake Forest University (2011)  
 William Louis Poteat Scholarship for academic achievement and leadership, Wake Forest (2007 – 2011)  
 Beulah Lassiter Raynor Scholarship in English Literature, Wake Forest University (2010)

## PRESENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS

- “Persona Poems and Political Portraiture in Contemporary African-American Art,” *Protest Most Conventional: Poetry Of Resistance And The Politics Of Form*, MLA, San Francisco, CA, January 2023. (panel pending review)
- “Composing Counter-Archives through Multimodal Documentary Practice,” Panel on *Multimodality and Inclusivity*, Conference on College Composition & Communication, Chicago, IL, March 2022. (Virtual)
- “American Meridian,” workshopped documentary film pitch-deck, *Ethics and Representation in Documentary Filmmaking*, led by Angela J. Aguayo and James Chase Sanchez, Rhetoric Society of America Summer Institute, Syracuse, NY, June 2021. (Virtual)
- “Close Listening: Collective Composition and Paratextual Performance in Blunt Research Group’s *The Work-Shy*,” Panel on *(Meta)Narratives*, English Graduate Student Organization Conference on Vulnerability, Cornell University, April 2021. (Virtual)
- “Anaphora’s Anti-Economy: Documentary Poetry and Legal Discourse,” English Department Roundtable, Cornell University, March 2021. (Virtual)
- “Unraveling Elegy in Anne Carson’s *Nox*,” Panel on *American Elegy, Now*, American Literature Association Symposium on American Poetry, Washington, DC, February 2020.
- “Teaching and Assessing Non-Traditional and Creative Assignments in First-Year Writing Seminars,” Planned and co-led public workshop with Bojan Srbinovski for graduate instructors and faculty hosted by the Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines, Cornell University, July 2019.
- “The Poetics of...Poetics?” Panel on *Metatexts*, English Graduate Student Organization Colloquium, Cornell University, March 2019.
- “Speaking a Cemetery: Alice Oswald’s *Memorial: an Excavation of Homer’s Iliad*,” Panel on *Poems of War*, SAMLA 90: Fighters from the Margins: Socio-Political Activists and their Allies, Birmingham, AL, November 2018.
- “Narrating Napping in *Mrs. Dalloway*,” graduate workshop with Rebecca Walkowitz, Novel Theory: Society for Novel Studies Conference, Cornell University, May 2018.
- “Teaching World Literature,” invited guest on the *Circulating Spaces Podcast: Literary and Language Worlds in a Global Age*, Public Humanities Lab at the Institute for the Humanities and Global Cultures, University of Virginia, November 2017.
- “‘A spectacle to which there is no end’: Narrative Looping as Self-Crossing in *The Prelude*,” Panel on *Forms of Knowledge Production*, The Global Nineteenth Century Colloquium: Overwhelming Pessimisms, Cornell University, March 2017.
- “Heteroglossic Monologue in ‘Annie Pengelly,’” Panel on *Poetry and Poetics*, PAMLA Conference, Portland State University, November 2015.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### Joseph F. Martino '53 Lecturer in Undergraduate Teaching, Cornell University, 2021 – 2022

#### Expository Writing Seminar

“Living with Death,” ENGL 2890, Spring 2022

Interdisciplinary perspectives on death from philosophy, sociology, medicine, literature, and film/tv (*Antigone*, Freud, Barthes, Sontag, Keats, Rankine, Atul Gawande, Kübler-Ross, *The Good Place*) addressing private mourning, memorials, political death, and extinction. Students write personal narratives, oral histories, public essays, and make a digital monument map.

#### First-Year Writing Seminars

“Traveling Poetry: Diaspora & Tourism,” ENGL 1111 Writing Across Cultures, Spring 2022

Places diaspora poetry (exile, the slave trade, immigration, and migration) in conversation with the poetry of tourism (from the Grand Tour to the modern vacation). Is tourism always voyeuristic? Is reading a kind of tourism? Texts include Jamaica Kincaid’s *A Small Place*, poetry by Virgil, Ovid, Wordsworth, Byron, Dickinson, Aime Cesaire, Robert Hayden, Elizabeth Bishop, Derek Walcott, Agha Shahid Ali, Craig Santos Perez, Aria Arber (Part two of survey).

“Traveling Poetry: Conquest & Pilgrimage,” ENGL 1111, Fall 2021 (part one of two-part survey)

From Odysseus’ wanderings to Dante’s underworld, poetry ferries readers across time and space. Course interrogates colonization and both earthly and otherworldly pilgrimages by comparing the sonnet’s epiphany to narratives of discovery and nationalist epics to manifest destiny. Texts include *The Odyssey*, *The Tempest*, Layli Long Soldier’s *WHEREAS*, excerpts from Dante and Chaucer, various short poems (e.g. C.P. Cavafy, Derek Walcott, Solmaz Sharif). Students focus on close reading and developing arguments from the text up, as well as conduct interviews to write a [public piece](#) on a travel experience, such as immigration, deployment, or relocation.

“Documentary, Now?,” ENGL 1111, Fall 2021

As both art and argument, documentary models investigative, citational, interpretive, and aesthetic practice. Discusses the 21<sup>st</sup> C surge in documentary to ask: What is the relationship between propaganda and data? What counts as evidence? Whose voices are heard and whose silenced? Texts include recent documentary films, Maggie Nelson’s *Jane: A Murder*, the *Serial* podcast, Susan Sontag’s *Regarding the Pain of Others*, and Susan Briante’s *Defacing the Monument*. Students gather oral histories, write film reviews, and create documentaries for our [class blog](#). Course also includes a unit on media literacy and recognizing fake news sources.

### First-Year Writing Seminar Instructor of Record, Cornell University, 2017 – 2021

“Documentary, Now?,” ENGL 1111, Spring 2021 (online course during COVID19)

*Designed with generous support of the Shin Yong-Jin Fellowship.* Description above. Class [blog](#).

“Dramedy from Ancient Greece to NBC,” ENGL 1168 Cultural Studies, Fall 2018

Considered how genre-bending plays, novels, films, and TV shows walk the line between drama and comedy. Who gets to laugh and at whom? How do texts adapt or parody other genres? What is the role of race and gender in comedy? [Students write](#) essays, reviews, and creative pieces.

“The Mystery in the Story,” Fall 2017, ENGL 1147, Spring 2018

Course explored the tropes, conventions, narrative structures of mystery from Sophocles to Ishiguro. Assignments aimed to demystify academic writing and develop students’ unique voices.

#### Graduate Seminar

“Teaching Writing,” Writing 7100, Co-facilitator: Jessica Sands, The Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines, Cornell University, Summer 2019

Intensive pedagogy course preparing graduate students to teach First-Year Writing seminars. Led discussion and provided individualized feedback on syllabi, assignment sequences, and activities.

### Upper School Literature and Rhetoric Teacher, Ad Fontes Academy, Centreville, VA, 2011 – 2014

Designed and taught five concurrent preps in literature, rhetoric, and creative writing for grades 7 through 12 emphasizing analytical writing and student-driven discussion at a classical school. Served in administrative role as founder and co-director of a schoolwide House System.

Courses designed and taught:

“Rhetoric I,” 11<sup>th</sup> grade (2011 –2013)

Aristotle’s *On Rhetoric*, Plato’s *Gorgias*, Adler’s *How to Read a Book*, reading for Junior thesis research paper. Students working knowledge of the theories of rhetoric; learn to analyze the ethos, pathos and logos of any persuasive speech or essay; memorize speeches; write original speeches; research, write, and present a thesis using the five canons of rhetoric. Course prepares students for Rhetoric II, which culminates in a senior thesis project (long paper and a presentation in front of an audience and panel of experts).

“Contemporary Literature,” 7<sup>th</sup> grade (2011 – 2014)

*Tom Sawyer, A Christmas Carol, Treasure Island, Fahrenheit 451, Romeo & Juliet*, American poetry and short stories. Students move from writing summaries and short answers to argumentative essays; complete vocabulary units; create poetry portfolios.

“Ancient Literature,” 8<sup>th</sup> grade (2012–2014)

*Gilgamesh, Iliad, Odyssey, Aeneid, Julius Caesar*. Writing instruction focuses on developing logic skills, such as identifying and addressing counterarguments. Students learn about the importance of audience and rhetorical situations through a collaborative writing project: creating a newspaper from either the Trojan or Greek perspective of the Trojan War.

“European Literature,” 10<sup>th</sup> grade (2011 – 2014)

*Utopia, Faerie Queene, Othello*, Shakespearean sonnets, *Paradise Lost, Gulliver’s Travels, Pope’s Rape of the Lock*, Romantic poetry, metaphysical poetry, *Les Misérables, Pride and Prejudice, Frankenstein, Great Expectations*. Course mapped onto students’ history course and involved an interdisciplinary midterm exam, close reading quote IDs, analytical essays, and a creative project in which students write their own satires.

“American Literature,” 11<sup>th</sup> grade (2011 – 2014)

*To Kill a Mockingbird*, Thoreau, Emerson, Whitman, Dickinson, Anne Bradstreet, Phillis Wheatley, *The Scarlet Letter, Huck Finn*, “Daisy Miller,” *All Quiet on the Western Front, The Sun Also Rises, The Great Gatsby, Animal Farm, The Tempest, Brave New World*, short stories by Flannery O’Connor and William Faulkner. Students practice annotating texts, running class discussion using the Harkness method, writing analytical essays, and inhabiting writers’ tones by completing an imitation exercise (writing a scene first in the voice of Hawthorne, then converting it to the voice of Hemingway).

“Great Books,” 12<sup>th</sup> grade (2011 – 2014)

*Oedipus Rex, Antigone, Ovid’s Metamorphoses, Augustine’s Confessions, Hamlet, Wuthering Heights, Mrs. Dalloway, Heart of Darkness, Things Fall Apart, T.S. Eliot, Much Ado About Nothing*. Students explicate poems, write analytical essays, give presentations, lead discussions, share a favorite poem on Poetry Fridays. Class field trip to the National Gallery of Art to research works of art based on mythology for interdisciplinary research papers.

“Creative Writing Elective,” (2013 – 2014)

Students write original creative non-fiction essays, short stories, and poetry (odes, sonnets, villanelles); present and give one another feedback in a workshop.

“Introduction to Epic Poetry for Entering Students” (Summer 2013)

Summer course introduces new students to ancient epic poetry, as well as close reading skills. Texts include Hesiod’s *Theogony, The Iliad, Odyssey*, and *Aeneid*.

Instructor, Four Star Camps College Prep Program, Charlottesville, VA, Summer 2016.

“Public Speaking”: Course trained students in the canons of rhetoric, debate, logical fallacies, extemporaneous speeches, etc.

“Critical Reading”: Course equipped students to actively close read both texts and images by annotating, summarizing and paraphrasing, analyzing, interpreting, and synthesizing.

“Academic Writing”: Course focused on making evidence-based arguments, crafting thesis statements, structuring paragraphs, and introduced students to basic research practices.

ELL Creative Writing Instructor, Learning Support Ministry, Centreville, VA, Summer 2014

Designed and led creative writing workshop in poetry and fiction for English language learners.

### **Teaching Assistant**

Cornell University

ENGL 2080: “Shakespeare in the 20 and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries,” Professor Stuart Davis, Spring 2019

The University of Virginia

SOC 1010: “Intro to Sociology,” Professor Paul Kingston, 3 sections, Spring 2015

ARCH 2050: “Global Sustainability,” Professor Carla Jones, 1 section, Fall 2014

### **Guest Lecturer**

“The (In)Hospitality of Tourism in Jamaica Kincaid’s *A Small Place*,” English 2706: “The Idea of Hospitality,” Professor Caroline Levine, Department of English, Cornell University, Spring 2020

Gave a guest lecture as part of teaching mentorship program. Designed and managed asynchronous discussion boards for over 100 students during the COVID19 pandemic.

### **Writing Tutor**

Writing Center Intern, Cornell Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines, Summer 2017

Private Writing Tutor, specializing in working with ELL students, 2015 – 2019

Writing Center Tutor, The University of Virginia, 2014 – 2016

ELL Reading Tutor, Old Town Elementary, Winston-Salem, NC, 2008 – 2011

## **RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS**

20 – 21<sup>st</sup> C world Anglophone poetry

media studies, film, and television

narrative theory

documentary poetics

epic and the long poem

travel, tourism, diaspora

postcolonial theory

classical rhetoric

elegy and ekphrasis

## **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

Literatures in English Department Roundtable Coordinator, co-organized and publicized workshops for graduate student works-in-progress, 2021–2022.

Teaching Mentor, Literatures in English Department, Cornell University, 2018, 2022.

First-year student observed my class and met to strategize designing their own course.

Podcast Developmental Editing Consultant, *All the (Y)As*, podcast on YA literature for adults.

Gave structural feedback for podcast episodes in Season 1 of *All the (Y)As*.

Moderator, Literatures in English Department Roundtable, March 2020, October 2021.

Moderated workshops for a colleagues’ dissertation chapters-in-progress.

Invited Panel Member to discuss preparation for first-time teaching, First-Year PhD Student Benchmarks Q&A Session, English Graduate Student Organization, Cornell University, March 2021.

Mentor to Undergraduate Students, Chesterton House, Cornell University, 2019 – 2020.

Provided guidance and support to two seniors in weekly meetings; discussed anti-racist readings.

Prospective Student Contact, English Department, Cornell University, 2017, 2020.

Fielded questions and successfully recruited prospective students to join our department.

Invited Panel Member, “Knight Institute Summer Internship,” shared experiences working at the Writing Center during orientation for new graduate student instructors, Cornell University, May 2018.

Budget Committee Chair, Graduate English Students Association Conference, *Terrible Beauty*, featuring keynote speaker Paul Muldoon, The University of Virginia, 2016.

Creative Writing Competition Judge, Ad Fontes Academy, Centreville, VA, 2015 – 2016.

Abstract Committee Member, Graduate English Students Association Conference, *Human Terrains: Identity, Geography, Politics*, keynote speaker Jasbir Puar, The University of Virginia, 2015.

Thesis Advisor and Defense Panelist, Ad Fontes Academy, Centreville, VA, 2011 – 2015  
Advised several senior theses each year. Served as an expert panelist for other defenses.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN TEACHING**

Teaching and Learning in the Diverse Classroom, Cornell Center for Teaching Innovation, Summer 2020  
Completed course on evidence-based learning strategies for designing inclusive courses, supporting diverse student engagement, and facilitating discussions on difficult topics.

Peer Collaboration, The Knight Institute, Cornell University, Spring 2018  
Completed a semester-long collaboration with an upper-level graduate student: observed one another teach, exchanged teaching materials, discussed instruction and assignment sequencing.

ENGL 6001, “Pedagogy Workshop,” Department of English, Cornell University, Fall 2017  
Discussed English-specific pedagogical methods and workshopped teaching materials.

Writing 7100, “Teaching Writing,” The Knight Institute, Cornell University, Summer 2017  
Course on pedagogical theory and practice for teaching first-year writing seminars.

Harkness Method Workshop, Exeter Humanities Institute, August 2013  
Attended a workshop with Ralph Sneed training teachers to orient their classroom around student-driven discussion, including methods of encouraging and assessing student participation.

## **RESEARCH ASSISTANT**

Digital Humanities Research Assistant, Image Analysis for Archival Discovery ([Aida Project](#)), Professor John O’Brien, The University of Virginia, 2015 – 2016. Located poems in newspapers from the 18<sup>th</sup> C Burney Collection to create a test set for machine learning software designed to isolate poems from prose. Funded by the NEH and the IMLS.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE**

Founder and Co-Director of House System, Ad Fontes Academy, Centreville, VA, 2012 – 2014  
Designed and implemented a new schoolwide program that would foster connections across grades. Trained and supervised student leaders, addressed discipline issues, and planned four annual house competitions, including creative writing and arts festival.

Program Specialist, Camp Cedar Cliff, Asheville, NC, Summer 2010  
Designed and executed a new program for 100 campers weekly (including skits, activities, games, and music). Supervised 20 employees, led daily meetings, performed staff evaluations.

Program Ambassador, Center for International Studies, Wake Forest University, 2010 – 2011.  
Represented the Casa Artom study abroad program in Venice, Italy at fairs and info sessions.

Youth Programming Intern, Parkwood Baptist Church, Gastonia, NC, Summer 2009  
Created, organized, and implemented events and trips for 200 middle and high school students; mentored individual students; informed parents of events by phone, meetings, and newsletters.

## **AFFILIATIONS**

Modern Language Association  
National Council of Teachers of English  
Anti-Racist Pedagogy Reading Group, Cornell University  
Contemporary Poetry and Poetics Reading Group, Cornell University  
Modernist Reading Group, Cornell University  
English Graduate Student Organization, Cornell University  
Phi Beta Kappa, Wake Forest University

## **REFERENCES**

Jonathan Dwight Culler, Class of 1916 Professor Emeritus, Cornell University. Graduate Committee Minor Member (Narrative Theory, Poetry and Poetics). Email: [culler@cornell.edu](mailto:culler@cornell.edu)

Stuart Arrowsmith Davis, Senior Lecturer & Weiss Provost's Teaching Fellow Emeritus, Cornell University. Course leader and teaching mentor. Email: [sad4@cornell.edu](mailto:sad4@cornell.edu)

Roger Stephen Gilbert, Professor of English, Cornell University. Graduate Committee Chairperson (American Poetry). Email: [rsg2@cornell.edu](mailto:rsg2@cornell.edu)

Caroline Levine, David and Kathleen Ryan Professor of Humanities, Cornell University. Graduate Committee Minor Member (World Anglophone Literature and Cultural Studies). Email: [cel235@cornell.edu](mailto:cel235@cornell.edu)

Jessica Sands, Senior Lecturer and Multilingual Writing Specialist, Knight Institute Writing Workshop, Cornell University. Co-teacher and teaching mentor. Email: [jls642@cornell.edu](mailto:jls642@cornell.edu)