

# Curriculum Vitae

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## Alex Beringer

Assistant Professor &  
Director of Master's Program in English  
University of Montevallo  
Department of English  
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## EMPLOYMENT

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**University of Montevallo**  
Assistant Professor (2012-Present)

**University of Michigan--Ann Arbor**  
Lecturer (2011-2012)

## EDUCATION

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University of Michigan--Ann Arbor  
Ph.D (May 2011)  
M.A. (December 2005)

Areas of Concentration: Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century American Literature,  
Graphic Narratives, Visual Culture, History of Popular Culture.

Dissertation: "The Pleasures of Conspiracy in American Literature"

Committee: Gregg Crane (chair), Jonathan Freedman, June Howard, Howard Brick.

University of Wisconsin--Madison  
B.A. (December 2003)  
Major: English Literature

Thesis: "Identities in Peril/Identities in Repair: The Cultural Criticism of Ngũgĩ wa  
Thiong'o and George Lamming."

Imperial College of London–London, England  
(January - April, 2002)  
University of Wisconsin–Madison study abroad program.

## PUBLICATIONS

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"Humbug History: The Politics of Puffery in *Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy*." *The Mark Twain Annual*, Volume 14, 2016. Pennsylvania State University Press.

"Transatlantic Picture Stories: Experiments in the Antebellum U.S. Comic Strip." *American Literature*, September 2015, Duke University Press.

- Honorable Mention, Norman Foerster Prize for best article published in *American Literature* in 2015.

"'Some Unsuspected Author': Ignatius Donnelly and the Conspiracy Novel." *Arizona Quarterly*, Winter 2013, University of Arizona Press.

"Henry James and The Pleasures of Conspiracy." *Studies in American Fiction*, Spring 2012, Johns Hopkins University Press.

## RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

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Book Project: *Lost Literacies: Experiments in Nineteenth Century American Comics*.

Tracing what I call "lost literacies," I show how nineteenth century artists in the United States experimented with an array of visual languages that often look distinct from the modern comic strip. In doing so, I challenge the critical tendency to treat twentieth century visual languages as the idealist model to which all so-called "proto-comics" were progressing. Instead, I argue for a historiography that emphasizes diversity and experimentation in its approach to the genre—a family tree in which some branches lead to later genealogies and others stop, offering only the possibility of counterfactual histories. What emerges from my history are not only recurring forms and themes that constitute the nineteenth century comic strip, but also, the broader social and political impulses that were interwoven with visual literacies.

"Exchanging Performances: Antebellum Comics and U.S. Theater Culture" in *Beyond Newspaper Row* (Accepted for inclusion in edited volume)

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## REVIEWS AND GENERAL AUDIENCE

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Review, "Comics Scholarship Finds its Voice with *INKS*," *PopMatters*, <http://www.popmatters.com/review/inks-journal-comics-studies-society-drawing-the-line-comics/> posted October 6, 2017.

Review, "Reconsidering Vietnam in *The Best We Could Do*," *PopMatters*, <http://www.popmatters.com/review/the-best-we-could-do-an-illustrated-memoir-by-thi-bui/> posted June 2, 2017

Review, "Do Our Superheroes Satisfy a Secret Craving for Authoritarianism: A Secret History of Superheroes," *PopMatters*, <http://www.popmatters.com/review/do-our-superheroes-satisfy-secret-craving-for-authoritarianism/> posted Feb. 14, 2017.

Review, *Lure of the Arcane*. Eighteenth Century Studies, Vol. 37. Issue 4, Nov. 2014, Johns Hopkins University Press.

## FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS

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University of Montevallo, Research and Creative Projects Grant (2016-17)

University of Montevallo, Teaching and Learning Grant (2015-16)

National Endowment for the Humanities, Fellowship, Summer Institute: "City of Print, New York and the Periodical Press" (2015)

University of Cambridge, Visiting Fellow, Center for Research in the Arts, Humanities, & Social Sciences (2014)

University of Montevallo, Teaching and Learning Grant (2013-14)

University of Michigan, Rackham Humanities Research Dissertation Fellowship (2009-10)

University of Michigan, Rackham Humanities Research Candidacy Fellowship (2008-09)

University of Michigan, Rackham Graduate School Thesis Research Grant (2008)

University of Michigan, Summer Departmental Fellowship (2005-2006)

University of Michigan, Research Assistant Fellowship (2005)

University of Michigan, Departmental Fellowship (2004-2005)

University of Wisconsin, University League Undergraduate Research Grant (2003)

University of Wisconsin, Honors Fellowship (1999-2000)

## **TEACHING AWARDS**

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Information Literacy Innovator Award, University of Montevallo (2015)

David and Linda Moscow Prize for Excellence in Composition Instruction, University of Michigan (2008)

English Undergraduate Association Award, Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor, University of Michigan (2006)

## **PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC SERVICE**

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Staff Writer: PopMatters.com (2017-Present)

Chair: Comics and Graphic Narratives Circle, American Literature Association (2016-Present)

Search Committee: Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs position, University of Montevallo (2016)

Director: Master's Program in English, University of Montevallo (2016-Present)

Chair: English Graduate Program Committee (2016-Present)

Academic policies subcommittee, University of Montevallo (2015-2016)

Faculty Senate Liaison to Untenured Faculty, University of Montevallo (2015-16)

Peer Reviewer: *MELUS: Multi-Ethnic Literatures of the United States*, Johns Hopkins University Press, (Active reviewer, 2014-Present)

Search Committee: Early Modern and Renaissance Literature Faculty Position, University of Montevallo (2015-16)

English Major Committee: University of Montevallo (2014-Present)

English Graduate Program Committee: University of Montevallo (2014-Present)

Faculty Senate: University of Montevallo (2013-2016)

Honors Program Committee: University of Montevallo (2013-Present)

Sophomore Literature Committee: University of Montevallo (2012-Present)

Faculty Research Workgroup: University of Montevallo (2012-Present)

Search Committee: 18<sup>th</sup> Century Literature Faculty Position, University of Montevallo (2014-15)

College Night Committee, University of Montevallo (2013-2014)

Search Committee: Associate Director of English Department Writing Program, University of Michigan (2010-11)

Coordinator: United States Literature and Cultures Consortium, University of Michigan (2007-09)

Invited Panelist: "Creating Assignments for Composition," English Department Writing Program, University of Michigan (2009)

Invited Panelist: "Academic Argumentation," English Department Writing Program, University of Michigan (2008)

Conference Organizer: "The Language and Rhetoric of Citizenship," University of Michigan (2007)

Workshop Facilitator: "Teaching with Technology," English Department Writing Program, University of Michigan (2007)

Department Representative: Rackham Graduate Student Forum, University of Michigan (2006-07)

Coordinator: Language and Rhetorical Studies Interdisciplinary Workshop, University of Michigan (2006-08)

Conference Organizer: "Africa Without Borders," University of Wisconsin–Madison (2003)

Board Member: Distinguished Lecturer Series, University of Wisconsin–Madison (2001-2004)

## **PUBLIC TALKS AND CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION**

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"'An Accidental Blot': Cultural Capital in early Nineteenth Century Comic Strips," South Atlantic Modern Language Association, Atlanta, GA (2017)

Session Chair: "Queering Comics History," American Literature Association, Boston, MA (2017)

Invited Talk, "The Language of Comics," University of Alabama at Birmingham (2016)

"The Early American Comic Strip and the 'Feminization' of American Theater," American Literature Association Conference, San Francisco, CA (2016)

Session Chair: "C19 and Graphic Storytelling," C19: The Society of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Americanists Conference, State College, PA (2016)

"Graphic Travels: Augustus Hoppin's Travelogue Comics, 1852-1880," C19: The Society of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Americanists Conference, State College, PA (2016)

"The Honest Home-Writ Page: The Search for the Antebellum American Comic Strip," American Literature Association Conference, Boston, MA (2015)

"Punch Takes Manhattan: Exchanges between British and American Exchanges in Nineteenth Century Comics," Popular Culture and American Culture Conference, New Orleans, LA (2015)

"Paranoid Masculinities in Mark Twain's Fiction," Public Lecture at the University of Cambridge, Cambridge UK (2014)

"Taking Digital Humanities Projects to Live Publics," The Humanities and Technology Camp, Birmingham AL (2014)

"Lost Literacies: Experiments in the American Comic Strip, 1846-1866," National Popular Culture and American Culture Conference, Chicago IL (2014)

Keynote Speaker, "Why English Majors Get all the Jobs!," Sigma Tau Delta Initiation, University of Montevallo (2013)

"Humbug History in *Tom Sawyer's Conspiracy*," American Literature Association, Boston, MA (2013)

Session Chair and Commentator: "Dropping Out/Opting Out: Iconoclasts in American Culture," American Studies Association, San Antonio, TX (2010)

"The Pleasures of Conspiracy in Henry James' *The Princess Casamassima*," Great Lakes Modern Language Association, Chicago, IL (2010)

"Anarchist Secret Societies in Henry James' *The Princess Casamassima*," United States Literature and Cultures Consortium Colloquium, University of Michigan (2009)

"Read Between the Lines: Conspiracy as Archival Vision in Donnelly's *Caesar's Column*." Great Lakes American Studies Association Conference, Notre Dame University (2009)

"A Class of Readers Hitherto Beyond the Reach of Thoughtful Men': Conspiracy Narratives in Late Nineteenth Century American Working-Class Novels," Northeast Modern Language Association Conference, Boston, MA (2009)

"Conspiracy as Literary Genre in Gilded Age Literature," United States Literature and Culture Consortium Colloquium, University of Michigan (2008)

"Conspiracy, Paranoia, and Historiography in Charles Chesnut's Fiction," Nineteenth Century Studies Association Conference, Florida International University (2008)

"Masonic Motifs in James Weldon Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*." Language and Rhetorical Studies Workshop Conference, University of Michigan (2007)

## ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP

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Modern Language Association

American Studies Association

American Popular Culture Association

Nineteenth Century Studies Association

Phi Kappa Phi

## **TEACHING AND ADVISING**

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### **Courses Taught and Designed**

English 500: Introduction to Graduate Studies (Fall 2016)

English 485: Senior Capstone Seminar (Spring 2016)

English 471/571: Against Slavery! Literature in the Fight over the Transatlantic Slave System, 1654-1865 (Fall 2015)

English 439 and Art 307: The Origins of the Comic Strip: Graphic Narratives Before 1945 (Spring 2015)

English 590: Graduate Seminar: The Idea of Equality in American Literature (Fall 2014)

English 306: Survey of British and American Literature 1660-1865 (Fall 2014 & Spring 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017)

English 233: Honors Global Literature I: "Conspiracy and Paranoia" (Fall 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017)

English 234: Honors Global Literature II: "Introduction to Graphic Narratives" (Spring 2014, 2016, 2017)

English 405/505: Mark Twain (Fall 2013)

English 300: Introduction to the English Major (Fall 2013)

English 102: "Composition II: Narrating Reality" (Spring 2013)

English 232: "Graphic Narratives 1800-Present" (Spring 2013, Fall 2014, 2017)



English 419/519: "Hoaxes, Hucksters, and Artful Deceptions in American Literature and Culture" (Spring 2013, 2014, Fall 2017)

English 101: "Composition I: Academic Prose as Storytelling" (Fall 2012)

English 231: Global Literature I: "Conspiracy and Paranoia in Western Literature" (Fall 2012, 2013, & Spring 2015)

English 432/532: "American Literature After 1865" (Fall 2012)

English 298: "Introduction to Literary Studies: 'Beautiful Lies'" (Fall 2011, Winter 2012)

English 362: "The American Novel" (Summer 2011)

English 225: "Advanced Argumentation and Rhetoric" (Fall 2010)

English 230: "Introduction to Short Fiction and the Novel: Conspiracy and Paranoia in American Literature 1830-Present" (Winter 2008)

English 125: "College Writing: Pop Rhetoric" (Fall 2007)

English 124: "Writing and Literature: Narrating Reality" (Fall 2006, Winter 2007, Fall 2011, Winter 2012)

### **Research Project Advising**

Undergraduate Research Advisor, Zachary Clifton, "Western reception of Yaoi Manga" (2015)

Committee Chair, Will Hasenbein, M.A. Thesis, "Honorable Materialism in Antebellum American Literature." (2014-15)

Undergraduate Research Advisor, Lindsay Hodgens, McNair Undergraduate Research Project, "The Necessary Good: Commodity Culture in Chris Ware's Graphic Novels." (2014)

Committee Member: Kristin Gilmore, M.A. Thesis, "Pinecone Warriors, A Memoir." (2013-14)

### **Teaching Assistant:**

English 351: "Milton to Whitman: English Literature 1660-1830" (Winter 2006, 2 sections)

English 305: "Modern English" (Fall 2005, 2 sections)

**Grader:**

English 371: "Medieval and Early Modern Literature" (Summer 2008)

**Pedagogy Advisor:**

Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT), University of Michigan, (2009-10)

English Language Institute (ELI), University of Michigan, (2010)

## REFERENCES

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Gregg Crane  
Professor of English  
University of Michigan  
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Ph: 734.647.7678

Jonathan Freedman  
Professor of American Culture,  
English, and Judaic Studies  
University of Michigan  
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Chair, Dept. of American Culture  
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English and Philosophy  
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