

Mary I. Unger

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Education

Ph.D.	English	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) Graduate Minor in Gender and Women's Studies	2012
		Dissertation: <i>Modernism and the American System: Ugliness, Standardization, Literature, 1900-1930</i>	
M.A.	English	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	2005
B.A.	English	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign High Distinction, English Chemistry Minor	2002

Academic Appointments and Professional Experience

Ripon College			
	Associate Professor, Department of English		2018-present
	Assistant Professor, Department of English		2012-2018
<i>Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers</i> (U of Nebraska P)	Managing Editor and consultant		2013-present
<i>American Literary History</i> (Oxford UP)	Assistant Editor		2011-2012
	Managing Editor		2010-2011
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	Instructor, Teaching Assistant, and Research Assistant		2004-2012

Publications

<i>In Progress</i>	<i>Bronzeville's Books: Cultures of Reading in the Black Chicago Renaissance</i> This book manuscript uses extensive archival research to argue that readers on Chicago's South Side fundamentally shaped black writers, texts, and literary tastes during the mid-twentieth century.
	"Hope, Humor, and Joy as Radical Feminist Praxis," to be submitted to <i>Signs</i> . This article builds on work by Rebecca Solnit, Sara Ahmed, Jill Filipovic, Kathleen Rowe Karlyn, bell hooks, and Jonathan Lear to consider the use of hope, humor, and joy in contemporary feminist thought and practice.

- Under Review* “The Book Circle: Black Women Readers and Middlebrow Taste in Chicago, 1943-1953,” under review at *Reception: Texts, Readers, Audiences, History*.
- Forthcoming* “Black Women Readers,” invited article for the *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Literature*, edited by Paula Rabinowitz, Oxford UP, literature.oxfordre.com/. Forthcoming spring 2019.
- Invited review of *Chicago Renaissance: Literature and Art in the Midwest Metropolis*, by Liesl Olson (Yale UP, 2017), for *American Literary History*. Forthcoming 2019.
- Invited contribution, A Tribute Forum for Nina Baym, *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers*, vol. 36, no. 1, June 2019.
- Peer-Reviewed Articles and Chapters* “Literary Justice in the Post-Ferguson Classroom.” *MELUS (Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States)*, vol. 42, no. 4, Winter 2017, pp. 92-112. Special issue, “Pedagogy in Anxious Times,” edited by Cristina Stanciu and Anastasia Lin.
- “Mapping *The Quaker City*’s Queer Ecology.” *A Greene Country Towne: Philadelphia, Ecology, and the Material Imagination*, edited by Alan C. Braddock and Laura Turner Igoe, Penn State UP, 2016, pp. 50-64.
- “‘Dropping Crooked into Rhyme’: Djuna Barnes’s Disabled Poetics in *The Book of Repulsive Women*.” *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers*, vol. 30, no. 1, 2013, pp. 124-50. Special issue, “Women Writing Disability,” edited by Michael Davidson.
- “‘Dens of Iniquity and Holes of Wickedness’: George Lippard and the Queer City.” *Journal of American Studies*, vol. 43, no. 2, Aug. 2009, pp. 319-39.
- Digital Humanities Projects* “Letters from Era Bell Thompson to Stanley Pargellis, 1944, 1953.” *Making Modernism: Literature and Culture in 20th-Century Chicago*, a Newberry Library Digital Exhibit funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, edited by Liesl Olson, <https://publications.newberry.org/digital/making-modernism/letters-from-era-bell-thompson-to-stanley-pargellis-1944-1953>, 2014.
- On Angelina Weld Grimké’s “Fragment.” *Modern American Poetry: An Online Journal and Multimedia Companion to the Anthology of Modern American Poetry*, edited by Cary Nelson, english.illinois.edu/maps/poets/g_l/grimke/fragment.htm, 2006.

Awards and Fellowships

- National* Katharine Newman Best Essay Award, *MELUS*, 2018
For “Literary Justice in the Post-Ferguson Classroom”
- National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend (\$6,000), 2017
Funding for *Bronzeville’s Books: Cultures of Reading in the Black Chicago Renaissance*

National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute (\$3,300), 2013
 Newberry Library, Chicago: "Making Modernism: Literature and Culture in
 Twentieth-Century Chicago, 1893-1955," led by Liesl Olson

Ripon College Senior Class Award, 2017
 Awarded to an outstanding faculty member as chosen by the senior class.

UIUC Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities, Fellowship, 2010-2011
 Declined to accept position at *American Literary History*.

Liberal Arts and Sciences Fellowship, 2010-2011
 Declined to accept position at *American Literary History*.

English Department Summer Fellowship, 2010

Liberal Arts and Sciences Fellowship in the Humanities, 2009-2010

English Department Fellowship, 2009-2010

University Fellowship, fall 2008

Teaching Awards

UIUC Campus Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, 2011
 The University's highest teaching honor for a graduate student, awarded to
 roughly five of nearly 6,000 teaching assistants annually.

Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, 2011
 The result of a yearlong nomination and vetting process by students, faculty,
 and administrators, this and the above campus award are given to teachers
 who have demonstrated sustained excellence in undergraduate teaching;
 made a positive impact on undergraduate student learning; developed
 innovative approaches to undergraduate teaching; and have otherwise
 improved undergraduate instruction at the University.

Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award, Department of English, 2008
 Highest departmental teaching award given to graduate students who have
 demonstrated teaching excellence; nominated by undergraduates and
 selected by a board of faculty and students.

List of Teachers Ranked as Excellent by Their Students, 2005-2010
 Honors faculty and teaching assistants whose student evaluations rank them
 as excellent, campus-wide. I was awarded for eleven classes, seven of which
 were rated *Outstanding* (top 10%).

Academic Presentations

National "Bad Girl Brooks: Popular Poetry, Black Girlhood, and the Great Migration," Society

for the Study of American Women Writers triannual conference. Denver, November 2018.

“The Book Circle: Women Readers of the Black Chicago Renaissance,” Reception Study Society biannual conference. St. Paul, September 2017.

“Recovering Gwendolyn Brooks’s Early *Defender* Poems, 1934-38,” MELUS annual conference. MIT, April 2017.

“Bronzeville’s Bookstores and the Making of the Black Chicago Renaissance,” MELUS annual conference. Charleston (SC), March 2016.

“The Caring Labor of the Black Chicago Renaissance: The Case of *Chicago Girl*,” Society for the Study of American Women Writers triennial conference. Philadelphia, November 2015.

“*For My People*: Reception and Readership in the Black Chicago Renaissance.” Reception Study Society biannual conference. Fort Wayne (IN), September 2015.

“Recovering the Black Chicago Renaissance: The Case of *Chicago Girl*.” American Literature Association annual conference. Boston, May 2015.

“*Chicago Girl*: A Lost Novel of the Black Chicago Renaissance.” Center for the History of Print and Digital Culture biennial conference: “African American Expression in Print and Digital Culture.” University of Wisconsin-Madison, September 2014.

“Surviving Naturalism in *The Street*.” Society for the Study of American Women Writers triennial conference. Denver, October 2012.

“Women Writers, Classroom Citizens: A Roundtable on Pedagogy.” Society for the Study of American Women Writers triennial conference. Denver, October 2012.

“Nineteenth-Century Women Writing Disability,” a panel sponsored by *Legacy*. Society for the Study of American Women Writers triennial conference. Denver, October 2012.

“‘Any Volunteers?’: Graduate Student Service Work Roundtable.” MLA annual convention. Seattle, January 2012.

“A New Philosophy of Normalcy: Negative Beauty in *Lummox*.” Space Between Society conference. McGill University (Montreal), June 2011.

“Fannie Hurst and the Standardization of Middle-Class Culture.” “Women Writers to Know II,” a panel sponsored by the Society for the Study of American Women Writers. American Literature Association annual convention. Boston, May 2011.

“‘Ugly and Undistinguished’: Democratic Taste in *The Blacker the Berry*.” MLA annual convention. Los Angeles, January 2011.

“Ugliness and the Limits of Sentimentalism in *The Jungle*.” The Futures of American Studies Institute. Dartmouth College, June 2009.

“‘Dropping Crooked into Rhyme’: The Space of Ugliness in *The Book of Repulsive*

Women.” The Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900. University of Louisville, February 2008. (Read by Robin Silbergleid.)

“‘This Strange Joy’: Abortion and Female Autonomy on the American Left.” Twentieth-Century Literature & Culture Conference. University of Louisville, February 2006.

Ripon College

“From Upstairs to Pulse: A History of Violence against the Queer Community.” Invited talk by the Queer/Straight Alliance (QSA) for LGBTQ Month, October 2016.

“Intersectionality with Unger.” Invited talk by the Ripon College Feminists for Women’s History Month, March 2016.

Invited guest, “Theory Thursday: The History of the Feminist Movement,” Ripon College Feminists, 2015.

“*For My People*: Reception and Readership in the Black Chicago Renaissance.” Faculty Brown Bag Presentation, October 2015.

“Summer in the Archives: Chicago Modernism at the Newberry Library.” Faculty Brown Bag Presentation, October 2013.

“‘Ugly and Undistinguished’: The Aesthetics of Racial Progress in the Harlem Renaissance.” Faculty Brown Bag Presentation, April 2013.

TED Talk & Tea, Ripon College Office of Community Engagement. Invited speaker and moderator of discussion about beauty and disability, February 2013.

UIUC

Invited respondent to Janet Halley’s *Split Decisions: How and Why to Take a Break From Feminism* (Princeton UP, 2006). “Where Are We? New Work in Critical Theory & Cultural Studies”: A Series of Debates Sponsored by the Unit for Criticism & Interpretive Theory, April 2007.

Courses Taught

Ripon College

English Department:

110: Literature and Composition

200: Departmental Studies: American Protest Literature

246: Early American Literature

260: Topics in Cultural Identity: The Harlem Renaissance

260: Topics in Cultural Identity: African American Literature, 1773-Present

300: Departmental Studies: The Lost Generation

324: Modernism

330: Literary Theory

530: Senior Seminar: Disability Studies

Women’s and Gender Studies Program / English Department:

WOM 204/ENG 260: Beyoncé and Black Women’s Writing

WOM 300/ENG 300: Gender & Sexuality in 20th-Century American Literature

WOM 300/ENG 340: Major Author: Zora Neale Hurston

Catalyst General Curriculum / First Year Studies Seminars:

CTL 110: Black Lives Matter in American Film

CTL 110: Beyoncé, Black Feminism, and Pop Culture

FYS 175: Freaks and Geeks in American Literature (linked with the History course, “American Lives”)

Interdisciplinary Studies:

151: Race and Diversity in the 21st Century (co-taught with faculty in Education, Politics and Government, and Mathematics)

Mentored Undergraduate Research Projects:

Rachel Stanley, Disability Justice Studies senior capstone, 2016-2017

“The Price of Passing: Autistic Adult’s Stigma Management Strategies and Their Consequences” (co-mentored with faculty in Sociology)

Katie Warczak, English Department independent research, spring 2016

“Disabling Tragedy: Responsibly Reading F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *Tycoon*”

Rachel Stanley, Center for Social Responsibility summer research, 2015

“Queer Portrayals in Popular Media”

Rachel Wedeward, Ethical Leadership Program senior capstone, 2014

“Internal Conflicts in Public Library Adult Literacy Programs”

UIUC

English Department:

106: Literature and Experience: Deviant and Dangerous Embodiments in Literature

109: Introduction to Fiction, advanced composition section

116: Introduction to American Literature

255: Survey of American Literature I: Beginning to 1870 (teaching assistant)

256: Survey of American Literature II: 1870-Present

301: Critical Approaches to Literature (teaching assistant)

Gender and Women’s Studies Department:

250: Gender Studies in the Humanities (teaching assistant)

Taught one section in a residential living and learning community for undergraduates that simulates a small, liberal arts setting.

Rhetoric Program:

105: Principles of Composition

Professional Service

*National*Advisory Board, *Arkansas Literary Review*, 2009-2012

MLA Regional Delegate, 2008-2011

Elected graduate student representative of the Great Lakes Region

Ripon College

Faculty Governance:

Faculty Advisory Council, 2015-2018
 Board of Trustees Infrastructure Committee, 2015-2018

Faculty Hiring and Promotion:

Peer reviewer for Rafael Salas (Art), promotion to full professor, 2018-2019
 Vice President and Dean of Faculty search committee, 2014-2015
 Assistant Professor of English search committee, 2013-2014

Committees:

Fringe Benefits Committee, 2017
 President's Task Force for Prioritization, 2017
 President's Re-Imagining Public Spaces at Ripon College focus group, 2016
 Center for Politics and the People, faculty advisory board, 2015-2016

Curriculum:

American Studies Program Coordinator, 2015-2018

Diversity and Inclusion:

Safe Zone certified, spring 2016 and fall 2016
 Campus Ally for Diversity and Inclusion, 2014-present
 Women's History Month planning committee, 2013 and 2017

Student Groups and Programming:

DREAM (Disability Rights, Education, & Activism Movement), faculty adviser, 2016-2018
 ACM India study abroad program, faculty adviser, 2014-2016
 Alpha Chi Omega, faculty adviser, 2013-2016
 Ripon Senior Showcase organizing committee, 2013-2016
 ACM Botswana study abroad program, faculty adviser, fall 2013
 Sigma Tau Delta (English Honors Society), faculty adviser, 2012-present

Faculty Scholarship Workshops and Reading Groups:

Ceresco Research Workshop, Ripon College, 2013-2015
 American Studies Working Group, collaboration between Ripon College, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, and Lawrence University, 2012-present

UIUC

American Literary Studies at Illinois, co-organizer, 2011-2012

English Department Advisory Committee, elected graduate student rep., 2008-2009

Community Engagement

Public talk on Edgar Allan Poe, Caestecker Public Library, Green Lake (WI), November 2018

"Ernest Hemingway and the Midwestern Response to WWI," public talk, Caestecker Public Library, Green Lake (WI), November 2017

The Vagina Monologues, public performance, Ripon (WI), February 2017

Organized by the Ripon College Feminists, featuring RC faculty, staff, and students

Reading group, Green Lake County (WI) Correctional Facility, spring 2014

Read and discussed literature on the topic of “greatness” (*A Raisin in the Sun* and “The Open Boat”) with six male inmates and two undergraduate student assistants.

Certified Adult Education Tutor, Project READ Literacy Program, Champaign (IL), 2009-2012

Classroom tutor for Parkland Community College Adult Basic Education (Pre-GED) and ESL classes

Spectrum Summer Program, Northwestern University Center for Talent Development, 2007

Teaching Assistant for “Literary Analysis Honors: American Short Stories,” a class for gifted 7th and 8th graders

Professional Organizations

American Studies Association

Modern Language Association

Modernist Studies Association

Society for Disability Studies

Society for the Study of American Women Writers

The Society for the Study of the Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States (MELUS)

References

Available upon request.