The University of Pittsburgh Press is pleased to announce Longleaf Services as our new fulfillment and publishing services partner. Our titles will be officially available from Longleaf beginning July 1, 2024.

Peter Kracht, director of the University of Pittsburgh Press, said, “We are very pleased to join the Longleaf family of academic presses. From the outset, the appeal of a cooperative distribution service targeted specifically to university presses was undeniable. Longleaf’s core mission to keep costs at a minimum through shared services is perfectly suited to our needs. They also offer an intimate, hands-on approach to client relations, coupled with leading-edge publishing software and distribution technologies. Their global network of services is an invaluable resource for the marketing and distribution outreach that are essential in today’s competitive publishing environment. We look forward to a long and fruitful partnership with Longleaf Services, Inc.”

Clay Farr, CEO of Longleaf Services, added, “We are very pleased to welcome the University of Pittsburgh Press to the list of distinguished client publishers we have the honor to serve. Our continued growth allows Longleaf to increase our economies of scale and operational efficiencies for the benefit of all the presses we work with. Our mission is to provide tailored combinations of fulfillment and publishing solutions that allow each press to better focus on their core mission of content acquisition and dissemination. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to support the University of Pittsburgh Press in their efforts.”

About Longleaf Services

Longleaf Services, Inc. provides complete fulfillment services for not-for-profit scholarly publishers. Operating with a collaborative philosophy, it enables client publishers to enhance their competitiveness, improve operating efficiencies, and create economies of scale, resulting in better service to their customers and lowering overall operating costs for both publisher and book buyer. A 501(c)3 organization, Longleaf provides distribution and publishing services for a growing list of over twenty university presses in the United States and abroad.

Learn more about Longleaf Services at: www.longleafservices.org.

About the University of Pittsburgh Press

The University of Pittsburgh Press is a publisher with distinguished lists in a wide range of scholarly and cultural fields. We publish books for general readers, scholars, and students.

In our efforts to acquire the best available scholarship, the Press has focused on selected academic areas: Latin American studies, Russian and East European studies, Central Asian studies, African and Asian studies, composition and literacy studies, environmental studies, food studies, urban studies, the history of architecture and the built environment, and the history and philosophy of science, technology, and medicine. Our books about Pittsburgh and Pennsylvania include history, art, architecture, photography, biography, fiction, and guidebooks.

Our renowned Pitt Poetry Series represents many of the finest poets active today, as reflected in the many prestigious awards their work has garnered over the past four decades. In addition, the Press is home to the Agnes Lynch Starrett Poetry Prize, the Donald Hall Prize for Poetry, and, in rotation with other university presses, the Cave Canem Poetry Prize. We also sponsor the prestigious Drue Heinz Literature Prize, which recognizes the finest collective works of short fiction available in an international competition.

Learn more about the University of Pittsburgh Press at: https://upittpress.org/.
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Obligations to the Wounded

MUBANGA KALIMAMUKWENTO

Winner of the 2024 Drue Heinz Literature Prize

“Rendered in rich, rolling, and riveting prose, Obligations to the Wounded is written with great care, pacing, and hard-won wisdom by one of Africa’s most talented writers. This collection of short stories, which uses Zambian womanhood as its contextual exploration point, offers the reader something approaching a universal understanding of the challenges women face in contemporary African and world societies.”
—Rémy Ngamije, author of The Eternal Audience of One

“A stunning book that should not be missed!”
—Mona Susan Power, author of A Council of Dolls

“These thematically linked stories deliver an intricate study of Zambian women living both in Zambia and abroad who are weighing their options for whom to love, where to live, where to work. The author, with a poet’s restraint, has written stories that deftly negotiate the challenges and tribulations women face when they feel the pressure and duty to yield to the will of family, community, customs, country, and spiritual beliefs. Obligations to the Wounded is a graceful, touching, and generous collection.”
—Angie Cruz, Drue Heinz Literature Prize judge and author of How Not to Drown in a Glass of Water

“Moving elegantly across decades and continents, Obligations to the Wounded showcases a rare talent and rich sensibility.”
—Mike Alberti, author of Some People Let You Down

In formally adventurous stories rooted in Zambian literary tradition, Obligations to the Wounded explores the expectations and burdens of womanhood in Zambia and for Zambian women living abroad. The collection converses with global social problems through the depiction of games, social media feuds, letters, and folklore to illustrate how girls and women manage religious expectation, migration, loss of language, death, intimate partner violence, and racial discrimination. Although the women and girls inhabiting these pages are separated geographically and by life stage, their shared burdens, culture, and homeland inextricably link them together in struggle and triumph.
EXCERPT FROM "AZUBAH"

Chakanika bakha nkhu ku siingatole.
What a duck has failed to pick up a hen cannot pick up either. —Chewa proverb

The rhythm of our sisterhood is to call each other frequently enough that we never become strangers.
so far, our system is flawless,
every few months, we swap gossip for a few minutes: Have you heard Auntie Lu’s third husband got their maid pregnant? Perfect cousin Mwape flunked out of law school and is calling himself a pastor! Enhe, yes, 10K Insta followers. His parents are telling everyone how Pastor is higher than Lawyer in the eyes of the Lord anyway.

When our laughter simmers down, I ask how Azubah is doing, and Chisomo’s answer is always “Mama is fine,” which paves way for me to race through,
“Okay, I’ll send some money for her groceries this weekend.”

One of us grows sleepy, a husband or child demands extra attention, and both of us promise-promise-promise, “Sis, I’ll call you, maiko,” only for the tomorrow to stretch into week after week of memes and thirty-second TikTok videos.

This time, Chisomo bypasses the “Uli bwa? How is the hubby? Na Gabby?” and dives straight into “Funso, Mama is really bad mwe. I think you need to come.”

“What do you mean, she’s bad?!” My voice is doing an awful job of veiling the panic racing up my throat,
“Please, sis,” Chisomo says, “just come nga you can manage.”

Azubah’s madness has been brewing for a long time, but not to the extent of the madmen who loiter around Lusaka, lugging around trash like it is expensive luggage and howling family secrets into the night.

On past calls, Chisomo has called Azubah’s ailment forgetfulness. Only once has she sprinkled dementia into our conversation,
after that, nothing,
so, this murmured bad, I take as a rapid unwinding of Azubah’s mind, a sudden revelation of her rotten core,
and a siren blares red in my head,
the last time Chisomo said someone was bad, she meant Grandpa had died.

In the background, Chisomo’s son yells, “I’ve finished!” and she hangs up.
I’m left staring at the pixelated profile picture of my sister’s dimpled smile,
bad: my mind churns the word, assigns it the meaning of Azubah lying depleted, reeking like stale life and Vaseline.
I last took Azubah’s call six months ago, last clicked reply to her texts when?
I call my husband, voice not video, because I don’t want David’s pity-you look to make me cry,
“I mean, I already remit my Black Tax via Western Union with every paycheck.” I know I’m whining, but holding it in feels like bile. “What will my presence in Zambia even do?” I say, “If anything, it will make more sense for her to come here, be seen by doctors in a hospital where she can be taken care of properly.” Which is to say, in America, I’ve at least got the option of dropping her off at a sterile assisted-living facility.

David says “I hear you” in that way people do before they show that they are, in fact, not hearing you
he says, “but, c’mon, you can’t not go.”
and what I notice is the missing honey at the end of his sentence,
“What about Gabby?” my last resort, surely, my daughter is a good enough reason to stay put,
Gabby? Oh, she’ll be fine. My mom will pick her up from track practice. Mom won’t mind.

I’m trying not to shout, trying to do what my Pilates instructor says to do in order to manipulate my mind to be calm, trying to keep my breath steady, sucking in big puffs of air, “Gabby needs her mother, David.” It’s just a statement, not an accusation, all the air in my lungs makes it so,
“Yes, but she’s your mother, Funso, and she needs you,” he says,
the first defense of people who actually have mothers, as if the title of mother has no accompanying expectations like care and attention or not abandoning their children for drinking sprees, not moving out when their youngest is nine to live with a faceless father and then a revolving door of boyfriends, only to show up to their daughter’s wedding over a decade later with scaly tears and a too-long hug,
“You’re right,” I hear myself say, my Zambian accent bubbling abruptly to the surface; I clear my throat, “She’s my mother.”

David likes to be echoed, so, I know that’s a smile behind the thawing in his voice, “Then it’s settled,” he says, “I’ll book your ticket. Just tell me when you can get time off, yeah.”
I can’t speed-walk to the teachers’ lounge fast enough, can’t grab my thermos fast enough, can’t swallow my coffee quick enough, to allow the world to be muffled by the fruit liqueur that I use instead of creamer.

Three weeks of fog float past until I’m sitting in this stuffy cubicle-cum-office-cum-consultation-room listening to a doctor saying,

“Mrs. Ashwood, your mother still has some of her long-term memories. They are just a bit fragmented”: in that I understand tone salespeople use on infuriated customers demanding refunds they’ll never get,
what I hear is that Azubah’s whole life is this sped-up movie, with someone else hogging the remote, arbitrarily clicking pause and letting her watch a still shot for a beat before hurling her into another place and time.
NEW IN PAPERBACK

Small in Real Life

KELLY SATHER

Winner of the 2023 Drue Heinz Literature Prize

“The varied plots and themes give the book surprising force, and Sather writes with the confidence and verve of a seasoned author. A strong, versatile collection as thought-provoking as it is entertaining.”
—Kirkus Reviews

“Her writing points toward Raymond Carver’s gritty realism and Nathanael West’s satiric desperation.”
—Pittsburgh Quarterly

“A lethal, electrifying sizzle unites the stories. Sather has mastered the recklessness that comes over people whose dreams are about to be smashed.”
—Hudson Review

“Through each character’s desperate and reckless acts, we get a glimpse of heart.”
—Tupelo Quarterly

“It’s soft and subtle with keen observations.”
—Debutiful

Small in Real Life invokes the myth and melancholy of Southern California glamor, of starry-eyed women and men striving for their own Hollywood shimmer and the seamy undersides and luxurious mystique of the Golden State. Exiled to a Malibu rehab, an alcoholic paparazzo spies on his celebrity friend for an online tabloid. Down to her last dollar, a Hollywood hanger-on steals designer handbags from her dying friend’s bungalow. Blinded by grief, an LA judge atones after condescending to a failed actress on a date. When hunger for power, fame, and love betrays the senses, the characters in these nine stories must reckon with false choices and their search for belonging with the wrong people. Small in Real Life offers an insider’s view of California and the golden promises of possibility and redemption that have long made the West glitter.

Kelly Sather is a writer, former entertainment lawyer, and screenwriter. Her stories and interviews have appeared in Santa Monica Review, J Journal, Pembroke Magazine, and PANK, on ZYZZYVA, and elsewhere. She grew up in Los Angeles and lives in Northern California.

MARKETING PLANS
• New in paperback mentions
• Online promotion
• Social media outreach
THE PITT POETRY SERIES

Since its inception in 1967, the Pitt Poetry Series has been a vehicle for America’s finest contemporary poets. Throughout its history, the series has provided a voice for the diversity that is American poetry, representing poets from many backgrounds without allegiance to any one school or style.

We are proud to publish debut poets each year through the Agnes Lynch Starrett Prize, and every three years through a collaboration with the Cave Canem Poetry Prize. We also publish the winners of the Association of Writers and Writing Programs’ Donald Hall Prize for Poetry.

Pitt poets have recently won the Norma Farber First Book Award, the Lambda Literary Award for Bisexual Poetry, the PEN/Jean Stein Book Award, the Kingsley Tufts Award, the National Book Critics Circle Award, and others. Our poets have also recently been finalists and semifinalists for the National Book Award in Poetry, National Book Critics Circle Award in Poetry, PEN Award for Poetry in Translation, the Kate Tufts Discovery Award, the Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award, and numerous regional poetry awards, among other honors.

ABOUT THE SERIES EDITORS

Terrance Hayes’s poetry collections include American Sonnets for My Past and Future Assassin, finalist for the National Book Award; How to Be Drawn, finalist for the National Book Award and the National Book Critics Circle Award; Lighthead, winner of the National Book Award and finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award; and Wind in a Box, finalist for the Hurston-Wright Legacy Award, among others. Hayes is currently professor of English at New York University.

Nancy Krygowski’s book Velocity won the Agnes Lynch Starrett Poetry Prize in 2006, and her most recent poetry collection is The Woman in the Corner. She teaches poetry at Carnegie Mellon University and in Carlow University’s Madwomen in the Attic program.

Jeffrey McDaniel is the author of six books of poetry, most recently Holiday in the Islands of Grief. Other books include Chapel of Inadvertent Joy, The Endarkenment, The Splinter Factory, The Forgiveness Parade, and Alibi School. He teaches at Sarah Lawrence College and lives in the Hudson Valley.

ABOUT THE MANAGING EDITOR

Alex Wolfe has a long-standing connection to university press publishing and poetry in Pittsburgh, starting as a student at Carnegie Mellon University. He has been with the University of Pittsburgh Press since 2006, and he is currently the editorial and production director. An award-winning designer and experienced editor, he enjoys working closely with the poetry series editors, authors, and his colleagues to produce distinguished books.
Dragstripping

JAN BEATTY

Re scripting the Ecstatic in the Midst of Violence

“Jan Beatty writes at full throttle, a plunge into the self without flinching. These poems are highways, the finish lines smoking with ‘the truth that drags and bitters.’ Stories stripped raw. Brave, honest, death-defying, Beatty’s poetry roars.”
—Sandra Cisneros, author of Woman without Shame

“Jan Beatty has written a wildly associative and resolutely secular rebel’s ‘lives of the saints’—one in which her love for rock and the blues is contiguous with her working-class roots, and in which familial, communal, and sexual love coalesce into unforgettable portraits of democratic life on the brink of revelation. You’ll find no stick-figure pieties or fool’s gold politics here. Everything the poet sees, she sees with the precise eye of passion.”
—Tom Sleigh, author of The King’s Touch

“Don’t pretend you can’t see this,’ demands the fierce speaker in Jan Beatty’s Dragstripping. With unblinking grit, Beatty’s malleable language and line—from narration to lyric image, from couplets to prose—affirm that ‘blues is three chords and the truth— // And poetry is long-lined lies and a deep dive / into the body’s costly river.’ These astonishing poems have been captured in the very act of redefining identity and desire, ‘because who wants a watered- / down heart?’ In her seventh brilliant collection, Beatty once again proves herself a skilled master poet who sings of loss, grief, and trauma—but she also whispers a refrain of dynamic resolve: ‘Now I’m a heart without a head, walking. / I don’t need to be right— / I just need it to be worth it . . .’”
—Ellen Bass, author of Indigo

Dragstripping, Jan Beatty’s seventh collection of poems, takes readers to the literal dragstrip, the metaphorical dragstrip of the body, and the strip club, where the ecstatic is rescripted and where women disappear and reappear in the crosscut of gender. Transgressing into and out of poetic form, Beatty writes the fractured landscape of the unknown woman, breaking rules of grammar and subverting expected speech, mixing the real and unreal, and finding elation in a strange and shifting land.

POETRY

September 3, 2024
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6 × 8 • 112 pp.
978-0-8229-6727-9
eBook available

PITT POETRY SERIES

Jan Beatty is the author of six previous collections of poetry, most recently The Body Wars and Jackknife: New and Selected Poems, which won the Paterson Poetry Prize. Her memoir, American Bastard, won the Red Hen Nonfiction Prize. Beatty has worked as a waitress, in abortion clinics, and in maximum-security prisons and is professor emerita at Carlow University, where she directed the MFA and creative writing programs and the Madwomen in the Attic writing workshops.

MARKETING PLANS

• Galley mailing
• National print and online reviews
• Regional print and online reviews
• Targeted outreach to women’s interest media
• Select author appearances
• Online and social media promotion
• Feature at AWP 2025
The Earthmovers

Hart Island serves as the City’s public cemetery and is the final resting place of over one million individuals.
—New York City Dept. of Corrections

May 5, 2020, the island is alive with earthmovers.

Not shovels, but John Deere lifts the dirt, opening the ground for Covid victims.

Who runs the earthmover?
Who stacks the bodies in the mass graves?

What’s in his mind as he digs the deep and long holes?

Does he feel more alive today as he looks at Long Island Sound,
is there a shorebird in the mudflats?
As he jumps from his machine he sinks into the muddy ground.
Hart Island is alive with the dead today—

the Thursday gazebo visits canceled,
so no way to stare out at the graves.

Fear rises like a bulldozer blade—and lingers like a thousand pins,
a metal heart on the skin.
Can we go back?

Can we replay this to save people?
One shovel of dirt.

What lives in the spaces of dying?
One blade moving,
one bird across the East River.
2000 Blacks
AJIBOLA TOLASE
Winner of the 2024 Cave Canem Poetry Prize

“The Cave Canem Prize celebrates the richness of Black culture and the depth of our shared experience. Ajibola Tolase exemplifies the essence of creativity and resilience, using his poetry to shed light on the beauty and complexity of the Black experience.”
—Lynne Thompson, Cave Canem Prize judge, Los Angeles poet laureate, and author of Fretwork

“Imagine / the land without the conflicts,” writes Ajibola Tolase in his blazing debut, 2000 Blacks. From Nigeria to America, Tolase explores the surrealness that arises from living in repressive spaces. Yet despite the violence embedded in systems of power, ‘the native word for burn is the same as dance.’ This is a necessary poetry that leaves no quarter unsinged, a revelation in its willingness to dwell in the unimaginable.”
—Quan Barry, author of Auction

“Yes, there is a villanelle and sonnets flanked by abcedarians, but it’s the percussive vernacular that guides me through Ajibola Tolase’s 2000 Blacks. It’s the revelrous, ‘If everyone celebrated / what didn’t kill them, we can pretend / to be immortals’ and the irreverent ‘I would have hugged him / until he felt shame’ that sings to me. Be it the tongue’s many failings, absence, migration, Tolase has created a world I’ll trumpet for years to come.”
—Clemonce Heard, author of Tragic City

“2000 Blacks is a celebration not only of survival but of a creation of life built on generations of living. So, just open the book, drop the needle, and let it spin; every track is a poem I want to dance to.”
—A. Van Jordan, author of When I Waked, I Cried to Dream Again

2000 Blacks probes the complexity of economic and politically motivated migration from Africa, which has been referred to as “African Brain Drain.” In the first sequence of poems, Ajibola Tolase explores Africa’s history and encounters with the Western world, providing poetic insight into the economic instability precipitated by the transatlantic slave trade and exploitation of mineral resources. Moving inward, the second sequence plumbs the poet’s complex relationship with his father, connecting his emotional and then physical absence with the consequences of community disintegration.

Ajibola Tolase is a Nigerian poet and essayist. His writing has appeared in LitHub, New England Review, Prairie Schooner, Poetry, and elsewhere. He is a former Wallace Stegner Fellow at Stanford University and has received a creative writing grant from the Elizabeth George Foundation. He is the 2023–2024 Olive B. O’Connor Fellow in Poetry at Colgate University and graduated from the MFA program at the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

MARKETING PLANS
• Galley mailing
• National print and online reviews and features
• Regional print and online reviews and features
• Targeted outreach to African interest media
• Select author appearances
• Online and social media promotion
• Feature at AWP 2025
Commutative Properties of Black Bodies

I chose a bullet as the answer to the multichoice question on speed and velocity. I knew I was right because if sound travels faster, then Black bodies will hear the bullet knocking the door of their skins the moment before impact.

My knowledge is not physics. It is Shaft saying “relax, if you hear the shot, it’s not for you.” In becoming a man of science, I learned science takes its wisdom from the street. Textbooks define a blackbody as an idealized physical body that absorbs all incident radiations. Black bodies are blackbodies.

Which is why science explains Black death as Black bodies absorbing bullets. Stephen Hawking argues a blackbody is an entity from which nothing can escape. Which by commutation could mean Black bodies can escape nothing. If all blackbody propositions are true, it means I, a Black body, cannot escape insults at the cash register in department stores is the same as I, a Black body absorb insults at the cash register in department stores. Stay with me; see where I’m going with this. A whitebody is an entity that emits particles completely and uniformly in all directions. This brings about equilibrium only because blackbody emission is negligible.
Querida
NATHAN XAVIER OSORIO
Winner of the 2024 Agnes Lynch Starrett Poetry Prize

“In his first book, Nathan Xavier Osorio doesn’t think about immigration, family, and capitalism—he thinks through these subjects, imbuing them with a lyrical intelligence that refutes idealization and answers and isolation. Querida is a spectacular book that demands and rewards multiple readings.”
—Eduardo C. Corral, author of Guillotine

“Nathan Xavier Osorio’s Querida leads the reader through a series of hymns, songs, and prayers that give voice to the question of how we are formed by what we are born into. The mark of inheritance is presented, repeated, worked through, and returned to—as it is slowly absorbed into the body of the text. Inheritance is the very matter from which this exquisite debut collection derives.”
—Cynthia Cruz, author of Hotel Oblivion

“Memory is a guiding force in Nathan Osorio’s stunning debut, Querida. From the opening, single-sentence tour-de-force of a poem to sonnet-sequences throughout, Osorio’s formal agility and singular voice takes hold of our attention and never lets it go. These poems connect personal narrative to a profound understanding of history. They contest and reinscribe ideas of land, language, family, ancestry, masculinity, immigrant experience, and America itself (baseball is even in the mix!). I’m grateful for this book and this poet who ‘carries such heavy things’ with a touch that allows them to be held dear, to become habitable. With a mesmerizing mix of tenderness and ferocity, Querida constructs the home for which the poet-speaker often hungers.”
—Shara McCallum, author of No Ruined Stone

Querida offers a place-based lyrical meditation on the poet’s immigrant parents, collective memory, language, and family in the San Fernando region of Los Angeles, California. Through a constellation of interweaving persona poems, confessional reflections, imagistic portraits of people and places, and decolonial poetic rituals—braided with a crown of sonnets—a choir of speakers navigate the fraught inheritance of memory frayed by the generational trauma of migration, coloniality, and the exploitative labor of late-stage capitalism. Swaying between maximalist and carnivalesque textual decadence and sparse, brutalist, bilingual inquiries into language as yet another exploitative and extractive tool for control, these poems honor familial and community wisdom as the only way to survive the steadily destabilizing Capitalocene.

MARKETING PLANS
• Galley mailing
• National print and online reviews and features
• Regional print and online reviews and features
• Targeted outreach to Latinx and California media
• Select author appearances
• Online and social media promotion
• Feature at AWP 2025

Nathan Xavier Osorio is the author of The Last Town Before the Mojave, selected by Oliver de la Paz for the Poetry Society of America’s 2020 Chapbook Fellowship. His poetry, translations, and essays have been featured or are forthcoming in BOMB, the Offing, Boston Review, Public Books, Notre Dame Review, the New Museum of Contemporary Art, and elsewhere. His writing and teaching have been supported by fellowships from the Fine Arts Work Center, the Kenyon Review, and the Poetry Foundation. He was born and raised in Los Angeles, California.

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PITT POETRY SERIES
Querida América

Querida América, my lonely days are over.
I ride the train upstate past the military academy
to sit in gazebos in the woods and listen to crickets
as they pelt the headstones. From here, I can see

the black body of the mountain and where it breaks
open into the milky way. The belly of the dead doe
churns with the passel of possums I bury beneath
my breast. Querida América, I remember your promise

and put my lips to the gas tank. I whisper a line
from “Bennie and the Jets,” We’ll kill the fatted calf
tonight so stick around, and the crypt rumbles
birthing a phosphorescent Union Seventy-Six ball.

The moths gather and mold their cotton wings
along its body. You were such a good girl,
with your tiny feet like mango seeds. My mother
fell in love with your curly red hair and the way

you ate chocolate straight from the conveyor belt.
When she got sick, we found orange rinds
and the smell of grass clippings. Querida América,
the last train home has left. You hung my serrated

baby teeth in the pines, fed me government cheese
and cow tongue, asked me to listen to the obedient
winding of the river mill. I dozed and when I woke,
you had sliced away my tattoo of languageless gods,

and tied the possums, tail-to-paws, wearing them
like a necklace to show me you were listening.
Querida América, our lonely days are over.
Our railroad has wilted. Our river, rotted.

Our moths are only statuettes. Our orange ball has
flown away. Our teeth hang on the dead branches.
Our crickets have turned the tinsel into nests.
Our mother is still on the operating table.
Our memory keeps her smelling fresh.
Absent Here

BRET SHEPARD

Winner of the 2023 Donald Hall Prize for Poetry

“Visual, sensual, and clear, this collection maps a distinctly Alaskan space. The relationships, realities, land, sky, creatures, waters—ice—of the Arctic breathe in these poems like characters. There’s a tricky math at work: each poem adds to or subtracts from what a lone human can know. This is life as some gorgeous zero-sum game. These poems, even if defined by howling absence, encourage us to mark the present and live, simply live, in it.”
—Heidi Erdrich, Donald Hall Prize for Poetry judge

“A remarkable collection in which the poet shares with us questions for a lifetime. Read it and consider your own.”
—Roxane Beth Johnson, author of Jubilee and Black Crow Dress

“In lines sharpened by passion and restraint, unequivocal about the desires that drive personal and cultural survival, Shepard acknowledges catastrophe and offers tribute to continuance. After reading these fierce and phenomenal poems, it’s impossible to deny that the Arctic ‘fuels / what the rest of us feel.’”
—Brian Teare, author of Poem Bitten by a Man

Landscape and language drive the poems in Absent Here, which explore loss, community, the changing environment, and whiteness of skin and scenery against the backdrop of the Alaskan North Slope of the author’s youth. More than mere background, the land and water become characters in their own right, guiding syntactic forms and flowing reflections. Bret Shepard merges cultural experiences with meditative moments, ensuring that the voices and stories of this community are not lost to time, as so much has been already.

Bret Shepard is from the North Slope of Alaska. He is the author of Place Where Presence Was, winner of the Moon City Press Book Award, as well as two chapbooks, including The Territorial, which won the Midwest Chapbook Award from the Laurel Review.

MARKETING PLANS

• Galley mailing
• National print and online reviews and features
• Regional print and online reviews and features
• Targeted outreach to Alaskan interest media
• Select author appearances
• Online and social media promotion
• Feature at AWP 2025

POETRY

October 8, 2024
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6 × 8 • 80 pp.
978-0-8229-6728-6
eBook available

PITT POETRY SERIES
Here but Elsewhere

The absence is enormous in the Arctic.

Christian’s mother died when a rope broke as she helped pull the bowhead onto the beach, its recoil force enough to kill what it hit the moment it did. Some deaths create other ways to die.

Some losses you only understand once your body and mind come back together wherever it is beyond what we name.

*

On this street or that one, on Fireweed or Tudor, maybe downtown Anchorage, their blocks on my breath, if I see a story repeat a gesture and fall, maybe like Jonah would have years ago, winter on his face, will it return as pores release in the night?

*

As we tilted our cold necks to the floor one friend stood behind and pushed hard on the back of our heads to make us black out. We tried to turn off, inhaling days with every drug hidden in school to leave ourselves and return metaphors.
Praise for *Open Interval*:

“What joy to enter the universe Lyrae Van Clief-Stefanon wills into being. In *Open Interval* Jimi Hendrix, Robert Hass, Rilke, Bearden, John Goodricke, blues, desire, longing, supernovas, and more are all held together with lyrical daring and fierce imagination. Lyrae Van Clief-Stefanon invents a new world to reveal to us the secret workings of the old.”

—Cornelius Eady, author of *706 Union Ave: Memphis Sessions*

“Teach the sonnet’s a cell’ says the speaker in one of Lyrae Van Clief-Stefanon’s compelling new poems, as she prepares to teach poetry to inmates at a New York State prison, ‘now try to escape—’. This poet’s astute and various formal choices perform exactly that work, containing the poem then constructing an opportunity for the splendidly intelligent maker of these artful forms to step into the light. *Open Interval* not only confirms the promise of Van Clief-Stefanon’s first book but takes her work to startling new heights.”

—Mark Doty, author of *What Is the Grass: Walt Whitman in My Life*

“Lyrae Van Clief-Stefanon asserts early in *Open Interval* that ‘Poise begins here: / in cinders, in rhyme, in splintering beauty into this / and this—:’ and the volume’s inventive splintering becomes luminous exploration of the body—human and celestial. Part of its concern ‘the crushing need / for form’ in intricate renavigations of the personal and historical, the mythic and scientific, the book’s shape is finally more lyric constellation than traditional collection, the poems themselves variable stars, beautifully intense, pulsing.”

—Claudia Emerson, author of *Claude before Time and Space*

*Purchase* is for those who are grieving, who feel frightened by the world’s meanness, who are solitary. It is for those who, even in the midst of mourning, find themselves distracted from despair by the natural world. It is for everyone looking to find comfort and understanding.

From a hidden river in upstate New York to a massive flood in Kentucky, currents of all strengths run through these poems, taking the reader through grief, estrangement, and the too-often unseen interiority of Black women, landing at a new perspective, the light of faith dawning.
Are you alright? I walked with M to the edge of the water. Not sweeping but raging. Not washing but wrenching. A turtle clasps a clotted mess of grass, debris, tangled scraps, wisps churned together and bobbing against the bridge pillar. The rough current reeks of gasoline. M and I are standing behind the gas station, then suddenly, to the left, the officer is there too. When I ask, something changes in his face but there are no words for how his face changes. He points but he is pointing towards a gap in time. I walk over and touch him because I understand something about the gap. I did not know that water. Mud-milky and welting, lashing, the water struggles against the town; tears at it; tears it. The water ripped the doors off the building where I was supposed to have been sleeping but wasn’t. Because my nephew had Covid-19, my room assignment had been changed. Up in Stucky on the hill, I was asleep through all the rising. All night, dead asleep. When I walked out of the bedroom, I wasn’t sure I was awake. The living room was crowded with belongings, packed with people who had not been there when I went to bed. There was a little dog in front of me. I think I said, “Good morning,” but no one spoke. I stood there like a ghost in bare feet and a white cotton night gown feeling strange even to myself. Wake up. I looked to my right out the window and saw the people gathered on the porch. There had been a party going on at the Gathering Place when I went to bed. Grippos. G in the kitchen telling stories, hilarious. The music circle. B is singing “You’ll Never Leave Harlan Alive” and it feels like everything in nature has stopped to listen to him. Utter stillness. The night loves his voice like I do. At the last verse, the winds arrive. Like presence, they tiptoe in then shift, audience, then participant. The winds sing. Then the rain comes down hard in sheets. And we are sitting in a gap the roof makes in the rain at the Gathering Place. Then I am in a deep rain sleep all night, dreaming the party has moved to the porch at Stucky. In the grey light the ducks on the hill look so white they make the green lawn seem neon. Then I see Troublesome Creek. Overnight a trickle has become not a river but a stranger. When I touch the officer’s arm, he is welling up. He points to where the gap moves, much more slowly than the current. I see but cannot see through to what he sees. There is no way to cross this water to get through to the place where he is pointing. There is a doorway over there—two people standing in that doorway. Do not try to cross that gap. I wrap my arms around him.
Still City

OKSANA MAKSYMCHUK

First-Hand and Documentary Poetic Witness to the War in Ukraine

“We have needed this book of poems for centuries, for generations; a poet who shatters all the quiet retreat like an alarm clock that will never shut off.”
—CAConrad, author of Listen to the Golden Boomerang Return

“Poet, philosopher, anthologist, translator Oksana Maksymchuk is someone whose work I have known and admired for years, and yet nothing prepared me for her new book, Still City. How can one prepare for war? This is precisely the question this poetry makes memorable music of. There is terrifying restraint in these poems of war wherein realism becomes a song, realism becomes hallucination, realism is a naked nerve set to a tune. Terrifying, yes, but necessary. Still City is an important book.”
—Ilya Kaminsky, author of Deaf Republic

“In Oksana Maksymchuk’s Still City, war is everywhere. It is impending, it arrives, it swallows, infusing every detail of life, and every act of figurative language that can be used in the service of those details. I am grateful for her radical honesty, for her willingness to take me to her homeland, to its lit display cabinets filled with cakes, its candied pinecones, the lushness of its flowers, its classrooms filled with children, so that I can begin to understand the brutality of its violation. She teaches me that life, it turns out, is as tenacious as war.”
—Diane Seuss, author of frank: sonnets

The poems in Oksana Maksymchuk’s debut English-language collection meditate on the changing sense of reality, temporality, mortality, and intimacy in the face of a catastrophic event. While some of the poems were composed in the months preceding the full-scale invasion of the poet’s homeland, others emerged in its wake. Navigating between a chronicle, a chorus, and a collage, Still City reflects the lived experiences of liminality, offering different perspectives on the war and its aftermath. The collection engages a wide range of sources, including social media posts, the news reports, witness accounts, recorded oral histories, photographs, drone video footage, intercepted communication, and official documents, making sense of the transformations that war effects in individuals, families, and communities. Now ecstatic, now cathartic, these poems shine a light on survival, mourning, and hope through moments of terror and awe.

Oksana Maksymchuk is a bilingual Ukrainian American poet, scholar, and translator. She is the author of poetry collections Xenia and Lovy in the Ukrainian. She coedited Words for War: New Poems from Ukraine, an anthology of contemporary poetry, and has published a few single-author volumes of translations. Born and raised in Lviv, Ukraine, she has also lived in Chicago, Philadelphia, Budapest, Berlin, Warsaw, and Fayetteville, Arkansas. She currently teaches at the University of Chicago.

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When a Missile Finds a Home

Cat in the window
examines the snowflakes that float—
marks of art in the winter dark

It’s a Christmas Eve in my homeland
the things to come
waiting to be unwrapped

in a house with a roof
not yet stuffed with snow, openings
still windows and doors

I remember the poet who wrote
of a missile
entering his home

For him in Donbas
all the newness is over
and yet

Vasya the cat in his lap
licks his face
just like it used to

Mom gets ready for work in the kissel-blue
glow of dawn while he reads
verses of Mandelstam

in a room
they patched up with
foam, scotch tape & cardboard

How he dreamt of becoming the Minister of
Culture in the new state, orchestrating
massive screenings of Eisenstein!

His defenders said: No use for culture now!
Better take this gun!
Fatten up the Motherland on some blood!

It’s all over for him—
the wait, the uncertainty—
What will become of me?

Just the beginning for us
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Andy Warhol’s Mother

The Woman behind the Artist

ELAINE RUSINKO

The First Comprehensive Biography of Julia Warhola

“Julia Warhola was an artist in her own right. Naive yet shrewd, traditional yet eccentric, and tender yet manipulative, this complex Carpatho-Rusyn immigrant led a purposeful life. However, she is often stereotyped in biographies of her famous son. Rusinko skillfully and sensitively narrates her life story from Miková to Pittsburgh and New York, offering a nuanced perspective that challenges conventional portrayals.”

—Bogdan Horbal, Curator for Slavic and East European Collections, the New York Public Library

“For much of his adult life, Andy Warhol lived with his mother in New York City. Drawing upon a wealth of material, Elaine Rusinko takes us beyond the mythmaking surrounding this arrangement and brings to life Julia Warhola’s unique voice, chronicling her Carpatho-Rusyn background, her immigrant world in Pittsburgh, and her complex relationship with her famous son. This is an important book.”

—Reva Wolf, State University of New York at New Paltz

While biographers of Andy Warhol have long recognized his mother as a significant influence on his life and art, Julia Warhola’s story has not yet been told. As an American immigrant who was born in a small Carpatho-Rusyn village in Austria-Hungary in 1891, Julia never had the opportunity to develop her own considerable artistic talents. Instead, she worked and sacrificed so her son could follow his dreams, helping to shape Andy’s art and persona. Julia famously followed him to New York City and lived with him there for almost twenty years, where she remained engaged in his personal and artistic life. She was well known as “Andy Warhol’s mother,” even developing a distinctive signature with the title that she used on her own drawings.

Exploring previously unpublished material, including Rusyn-language correspondence and videos, Andy Warhol’s Mother provides the first in-depth look at Julia’s hardscrabble life, her creative imagination, and her spirited personality. Elaine Rusinko follows Julia’s life from the folkways of the Old Country to the smog of industrial Pittsburgh and the tumult of avant-garde New York. Rusinko explores the impact of Julia’s Carpatho-Rusyn culture, Byzantine Catholic faith, and traditional worldview on her ultra-modern son, the quintessential American artist. This close examination of the Warhola family’s lifeworld allows a more acute perception of both Andy and Julia while also illuminating the broader social and cultural issues that confronted and conditioned them.
EXCERPT FROM CHAPTER FIVE OF ANDY WARHOL’S MOTHER

Warhol recalled, “My mother had shown up one night at the apartment where I was living with a few suitcases and shopping bags, and she announced that she’d left Pennsylvania for good ‘to come live with my Andy.’ I told her okay, she could stay, but just until I got a burglar alarm.” Julia saw her role differently: “Andy go to New York by himself. I prayed, God, oh God, help my boy Andy. He no get job. I help him with a little bit of money. Later I visit him. One time, two time, third time. I stay.” Julia Warhola then lived in New York with her youngest son for nearly two decades.

When Andy said good-bye to his mother and brothers and left for New York with Philip Pearlstein, he entered what he would later call his “Cockroach Period.” Together with Pearlstein, he sublet a sixth-floor walk-up on the Lower East Side. For the next several months, he bounced around from one roach-infested tenement to another, living with diverse sets of artsy roommates. In March 1951, after eighteen months of sharing overcrowded flats, Andy signed a lease for his first private apartment. A one-room semibasement at 216 East Seventy-Fifth Street, it boasted a kitchen and bath. Now living alone, he could play host to family, even if conditions were less than ideal. When his mother and brother visited Andy’s new digs, Paul complained that he and his kids returned to Pittsburgh with lice.

More commonly than not in Slavic working-class families of that era, sons lived in the parental home until they married. Especially when the mother was a widow, bachelor-sons contributed to household finances, while benefiting from maternal care. Meals appeared on the dinner table like manna from heaven, laundry scrubbed itself on a washboard, and dust bunnies evaporated as if by magic. Like so many Carpatho-Rusyn men of his generation, Warhol had not learned basic housekeeping skills. Now on his own, he dismissed the details of self-management as inessential. Friends remember that he subsisted on cake and candy “sometimes smelled as if he had not taken a bath in days.” When he came into money, he simply bought new shirts to replace those too dirty to be reused. In what was surely a hyperbolic statement, Julia claimed to find ninety-seven unwashed shirts in her son’s closet. On her visits, she pitched in to help, undoubtedly leaving her son with pots of chicken soup and holubky (stuffed cabbage). On her return to Pittsburgh, she worried about him and prayed.

John Warhola later told an interviewer, “Everybody talks about how important his mother was to Andy but he was equally important to her.” In a postcard dated January 13, 1952, barely a week after Rusyn Christmas, Julia expressed concern about Andy’s absence and chafed at his neglect. In an idiosyncratic mix of Rusyn and English, she opens with a formulaic blessing: “I greet you wholeheartedly, my dearest Andy, with God’s blessing.” Then she moves to the purpose of her note: “For some reason, I haven’t heard any news from you,” and with a mild rebuke she reminds him, “but you have our new telephone number.” She shares good but dull news from home: “Johnny is working, Paul is working too,” and closes with another prayerful wish, “May God keep you healthy. Bye. Mum.” In fact, Andy had plenty of news, but not such that he would share with his family. Warhol was leading a lively social life in New York, frequenting trendy restaurants and gay bars.

Around this time, Julia was reconsidering her own life plans. Paul had moved his family out to Clairton, a suburb about fifteen miles south of Pittsburgh, dubbed on road signs, “City of Prayer.” According to Paul, Julia had agreed to leave Oakland, and they purchased a house for her in Clairton. But like many Carpatho-Rusyn women of her generation, Julia considered it her responsibility to care for the menfolk of the family until she could hand them over to a wife. John Warhola married Margaret Dancis on September 13, 1952, and they moved into the Warhola family home on Dawson Street. Just as Julia had waited to leave Miková until her brother Yurko got married, she could now leave John to Marge and focus on her youngest son. “Well, the only thing I can see, I guess, is I’d like to be with Andy in New York.” Her plan was to take care of him until he found a nice girl and got married.

In the early spring of 1952, John drove Julia in his ice-cream van to visit Andy, and she discovered just how much he needed her help. “Andy had a hole in the sole of his shoe as big as a silver dollar, so I left him my best pair of shoes. I think when mother saw that, she decided to move up there at once to look after Andy.” According to a niece, Julia worried, “Oh, my Andy doesn’t know how to live, how to buy food. how to eat, he know nothing. He doesn’t know how to take care of money.” Julia’s grandson James remembered, “She provided a foundation, an anchor. It was like it was before. He had a good feeling of security at home.” And Warhol’s associate Gerard Malanga said, “Andy welcomed the opportunity. It relieved him of any domestic situations which he wasn’t capable of dealing with. When Julia came to New York she basically took care of [Andy].”

John and his family lived in the Warhola family house through the 1950s, and Julia stayed with John and Marge when Andy traveled. In summer 1956, he sent postcards to his mother at the Dawson Street address from a trip to Asia and Europe. His postcards are at once dismissive in their semi-dyslexic carelessness, and touching in their desire to allay parental concern: “Dear Mum, i got your telephone number. I told her okay, she could stay, but just until I got a burglar alarm.” Julia saw her role differently: “Andy go to New York by himself. I prayed, God, oh God, help my boy Andy. He no get job. I help him with a little bit of money. Later I visit him. One time, two time, third time. I stay.” Julia Warhola then lived in New York with her youngest son for nearly two decades.
William Bartram’s Visual Wonders

The Drawings of an American Naturalist

ELIZABETH A. ATHENS

Position Bartram’s Illustrations as Central to His Understanding of the Natural World

“Beautifully written and deeply researched, William Bartram’s Visual Wonders presents a close reading of Bartram’s natural history illustrations and place in the transatlantic world of botanical exchange and knowledge formation.”
—Romita Ray, Syracuse University

“Through exquisite formal analyses of Bartram’s drawings, coupled with rich historical considerations of his place in the tradition of botanical illustration and Enlightenment visual culture more broadly, this fascinating book connects Bartram’s innovative drawing practice to the development of his unique and startlingly modern perspective on the natural world.”
—Christopher Iannini, Rutgers University

Pennsylvania naturalist William Bartram (1739–1823) is best known as the author of a travelogue describing his botanizing journey through the American South in the late eighteenth century. Writing was not, however, Bartram’s only or even preferred method of recording the natural world around him. His deeply unconventional drawings, depicting sentient plants and hybrid organic forms, lie at the heart of his understanding of nature. With this book, Elizabeth Athens considers the strangeness of Bartram’s graphic enterprise, exploring the essential role his renderings played in his natural history. For Bartram, the making and interpretation of figures on a surface was a dynamic and collaborative relationship between nature, the observing artist-naturalist, and the audience. This book offers the first in-depth investigation of Bartram’s drawing practice as central to his understanding of nature. Through an examination of Bartram’s approach to botanical and zoological representation, Athens highlights the struggle between different modes of seeing nature in eighteenth-century Enlightenment science.

HISTORY OF SCIENCE / NATURE

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Elizabeth A. Athens is an art historian and curator based at the University of Connecticut. She has written extensively on the overlap of the arts and sciences in British North America and the United States, with a special focus on the visual and material culture of natural history. She has also been recognized nationally and internationally for her reinterpretation of the portrait galleries at the Worcester Art Museum in Massachusetts, which holds one of the most important collections of early American portraiture.

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EXCERPT FROM THE INTRODUCTION TO WILLIAM BARTRAM’S VISUAL WONDERS

The compound nature of figuring, a process at once corporeal, intellectual, and imaginative, inherently yields both overlaps and fissures. We see this process play out in Bartram’s oeuvre: some themes or subjects he revisited regularly in his drawings and writings, retranscribing and reworking them almost compulsively, while to others he barely gave passing notice. His work often balances uneasily between over-description and under-description, contrasting detailed and thickly rendered passages with ones that are sparse and only faintly sketched. In this book I follow a similar pattern, with areas of concentrated focus juxtaposed against voids and absences. By looking so intently at Bartram’s drawing practice and how it informed his view of nature, I admittedly give less attention to other important aspects of his work.

Bartram’s understanding of nature, for instance, was shaped in part by his Quakerism. John had been read out of the Darby Meeting in 1758 for questioning the divinity of Christ, and Kelly Walters has pointed out that the Bartram family’s Quakerism was hardly unalloyed. Still, both father and son retained a Quaker belief in an experiential relationship and knowledge of God, a relationship that could be made manifest in and through the natural world. Moreover, the Bartrams’ most important patrons—Peter Collinson, John Fothergill, Robert Barclay—were noted members of the Society of Friends. Quakerism provided both a spiritual impetus and a social context for Bartram’s study of nature, a topic that has been investigated by Amy Meyers, William Cahill, Larry Clarke, and Kerry Walters, but which goes unexamined here.

Likewise, Bartram’s knowledge of and writings on the Cherokee, Creek, Seminole, and other Native communities he encountered have long served as an important historical reference in anthropology and ethnography. Perhaps even more important is the role that American Indian guides played in his research. As he traveled through the Southeast, he often relied on the assistance of American Indians, gaining permission to botanize on their territories, relying on them for direction through the local topography, and gaining information on the properties and uses of different plants and animals. His natural history would not have been possible without the aid, and his Travels is struck through with an openness toward and admiration for the communities he encountered. Key figures such as Ahaya—the Oconee chief who gave Bartram the name “Flower Hunter” and allowed him to botanize in the Alachua Savanna—are given voice in the Travels, and the book’s frontispiece is perhaps his only attempt at a human portrait. And yet, because this book focuses on Bartram’s visual rhetoric and descriptions of nature, his connections to Native communities are addressed only tangentially. Kathryn H. Braund’s and Gregory Waselkov’s coedited volume, William Bartram on the Southeastern Indians, is an essential resource in this regard.

Also absent in this work is a deep investigation of Bartram’s relationships with free and enslaved people of African descent. This area has been less studied than Bartram’s engagement with American Indians of the Southeast, though it has received the attention of Shareece Blakney, Joel Fry, Kerry Walters, Christopher Iannini, and Monique Allewaert, among others. Bartram surely knew the family of George Hilton, a free Black gardener working at William Hamilton’s nearby estate, The Woodlands, though there is no mention of them in Bartram’s extant letters. Bartram’s relationship with enslaved Blacks is more clearly documented. When he attempted to establish his plantation in East Florida in 1766, his father purchased Jack, Siby, Jacob, Sam, Flora, and Flora’s unnamed son to labor there. Bartram was also given title to a woman named Jenny in 1772 by his cousin Mary Bartram Robeson (daughter of Colonel Bartram) and her husband, Thomas Robeson. It appears Jenny was brought from North Carolina to Pennsylvania, but what her role was while there is not clear: she may have worked at the Garden or been sent out to labor elsewhere. We know only that Bartram asked his brother-in-law to sell her on his behalf when he set off on his botanizing journey for Fothergill.

Just as Bartram was aided by Native communities in his southern travels, so too was he assisted by enslaved people laboring on local plantations, who were often “lent” to him as he made his way through difficult terrain. Unlike the American Indians he encountered, Bartram gave them no voice in his text, except when he described them as praising “the virtues and beneficence of their master in songs of their own composition.” Despite his framing of slavery as quite literally harmonious, we also know that Bartram was patentely aware of the institution’s deep cruelty and degradation, as both an observer of the practice and as a slaveholder himself. The nearly four years between 1761 and 1765 he spent with his uncle in North Carolina would have been especially instructive. Twenty-nine enslaved people, of whom at least eleven were children, were enumerated in Colonel Bartram’s probate inventory—as well as “a percel of Slaves the number Not known,” “1 Mouth piece to put on Negro,” and “1 pair Iron hoppels for Negros.” Slavery’s brutality, apparent even in this dry list, did not keep Bartram from relying on forced labor or from using humans such as Jenny as capital.

In the second half of his life, however, we see Bartram struggle to come to terms with his participation in slavery. By 1783 he had drafted an antislavery treatise, expositating at length about the inhumanity of the institution.
NEW IN PAPERBACK

Pittsburgh Rising
From Frontier Town to Steel City, 1750–1920

EDWARD K. MULLER and ROB RUCK

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“Muller and Ruck present a deep, nuanced portrait of our city.”
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—Pennsylvania Geographer

Over 170 years, Pittsburgh rose from remote outpost to industrial powerhouse. With the formation of the United States, the frontier town located at the confluence of three rivers grew into the linchpin for trade and migration between established eastern cities and the growing settlements of the Ohio Valley. Resources, geography, innovation, and personalities led to successful glass, iron, and eventually steel operations. As Pittsburgh blossomed into one of the largest cities in the country and became a center of industry, it generated great wealth for industrial and banking leaders. But immigrants and African American migrants, who labored under insecure, poorly paid, and dangerous conditions, did not share in the rewards of growth. Pittsburgh Rising traces the lives of individuals and families who lived and worked in this early industrial city, jammed into unhealthy housing in overcrowded neighborhoods near the mills. Although workers organized labor unions to improve conditions and charitable groups and reform organizations, often helmed by women, mitigated some of the deplorable conditions, authors Muller and Ruck show that divides along class, religious, ethnic, and racial lines weakened the efforts to improve the inequalities of early twentieth-century Pittsburgh—and persist today.


Rob Ruck is a historian at the University of Pittsburgh, where he teaches and writes about sport. He focuses on how people use sport to tell a collective story about who they are to themselves and the world. He is the author of Tropic of Football: The Long and Perilous Journey of Samoans to the NFL, Raceball: How the Major Leagues Colonized the Black and Latin Game, and Rooney: A Sporting Life, among other titles.

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From the Steel City to the White City

Western Pennsylvania and the World’s Columbian Exposition

ZACHARY L. BRODT

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“A must-read for all historians of the Steel City.”
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—Robert W. Rydell, Montana State University

“Brodt weaves a fun and fascinating tale of two cities contributing to and learning from each other at Chicago’s 1893 World’s Fair.”
—Brian Butko, Heinz History Center

In From the Steel City to the White City, Zachary Brodt explores Western Pennsylvania’s representation at Chicago’s Columbian Exposition, the first major step in demonstrating that Pittsburgh was more than simply America’s crucible—it was also a region of developing culture and innovation. The 1893 Columbian Exposition presented a chance for the United States to prove to the world that it was an industrial giant ready to become a global superpower. At the same time, Pittsburgh, a commercial center that formerly served as a starting point for western expansion, found itself serving as a major transportation, and increasingly industrial, hub during this period of extensive growth. Natural resources like petroleum and coal allowed Western Pennsylvania to become one of the largest iron- and steel-producing regions in the world. The Chicago fairgrounds provided a lucrative opportunity for area companies not only to provide construction materials but to display the region’s many products. While Pittsburgh’s most famous contributions to the 1893 World’s Fair—alternating current electricity and the Ferris wheel—had a lasting impact on the United States and the world, other exhibits provided a snapshot of the area’s industries, natural resources, and inventions. The success of these exhibits, Brodt reveals, launched local companies into the twentieth century, ensuring a steady flow of work, money, and prestige.

Zachary L. Brodt is the university archivist and records manager at the University of Pittsburgh Library System. He is currently a member of the Pennsylvania Historical Association, Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference, and Society of American Archivists.

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Dianne Harris is dean of the College of Arts & Sciences at the University of Washington. From 2017 to 2021 she was a senior program officer at the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Prior to that she served as dean of the College of Humanities and as professor of history at the University of Utah. Among her most recent publications are Second Suburb: Levittown, Pennsylvania and Little White Houses: How the Postwar Home Constructed Race in America.

ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT SERIES EDITORS:

Martin V. Melosi is Cullen Professor Emeritus of History and founding director of the Center for Public History at the University of Houston. He received the Distinguished Research Award and the Distinguished Service Award from the American Society for Environmental History, the Distinguished Service Award from the Urban History Association, and the Esther Farfel Award from the University of Houston. Melosi is the author or editor of twenty-two books and more than one hundred articles and book chapters.

Joel A. Tarr is Richard S. Caliguiri University Professor Emeritus of History and Policy at Carnegie Mellon University. He is the recipient of the Leonardo da Vinci Medal from the Society for the History of Technology, the Distinguished Service Award from the American Society for Environmental History, and the Distinguished Scholar Award from the American Society for Environmental History. He is the author, coauthor, and coeditor of several prize-winning books.
Black Urban History at the Crossroads

Race and Place in the American City

Edited by LESLIE M. HARRIS, CLARENCE LANG, RHONDA Y. WILLIAMS, and JOE W. TROTTER JR.

Navigates the Complicated History of the City as Both Site of Oppression and Space for Self-Determination

“For anyone who wants fully to grasp what has made this nation’s cities the extraordinary, vibrant, and contested crucibles of hope, struggle, and determined justice that they always have been and still must be, this new collection from the top scholars of African American history is both beautiful and essential reading.”


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—Luther Adams—Free Man of Color, University of Washington

Drawing on significant recent scholarship on African American urban life over three centuries, Black Urban History at the Crossroads bridges disparate chronological, regional, topical, and thematic perspectives on the Black urban experience beginning with the Atlantic slave trade. Across ten cutting-edge chapters, leading scholars explore the many ways that urban Black people across the United States built their own communities; crafted their own strategies for self-determination; and shaped the larger economy, culture, and politics of the urban environment and of their cities, regions, and nation. This volume not only highlights long-running changes over time and space, from preindustrial to emerging postindustrial cities, but also underscores the processes by which one era influences the emergence of the next moment in Black urban history.

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES / URBAN HISTORY

October 8, 2024
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Leslie M. Harris is professor of history at Northwestern University.

Clarence Lang is Susan Welch Dean of the College of the Liberal Arts and professor of African American studies at The Pennsylvania State University.

Rhonda Y. Williams is professor and the Coleman A. Young Foundation Endowed Chair in the African American Studies Department at Wayne State University.

Joe William Trotter Jr. is the Giant Eagle University Professor of History and Social Justice at Carnegie Mellon University.

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• Feature for OAH 2025 and AHA 2025
Black urban history remains a pivotal field of scholarship within US history and African American studies. This book aims to broaden the base of innovative scholarship on this important topic and contribute historical knowledge and context to the larger struggle for social justice within our socially and politically fragmented communities and nation. Innumerable current events underscore the ongoing centrality of cities, race, and the African American experience to the successes and failures of the American experiment in freedom and democracy. Walking home with Skittles; rolling through a stop sign; failing to signal while driving; looking “too long” at a police officer; shopping in a supermarket; jogg- ing, birdwatching, or playing music in public; knocking on the wrong door or asking someone for help in a storm; organizing warehouse workers; standing in long lines at polls with too few voting machines—these incidents and others expose the disparate treatment, and sometimes life-threatening conditions Black people confront when exercising their economic, political, and citizenship rights in urban spaces.

Standing out among these recent events are the governmental failures in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. These developments include most notably the white supremacist mass murders of African Americans in a Charleston, South Carolina, church in 2015 and in a Buffalo, New York, supermarket in 2022; the crisis of access to clean water in majority-Black Flint, Michigan, in 2014 and currently in Jackson, Mississippi; the repression of Black protests against police brutality and policing regimes like Cop City in Atlanta from 2020 to the present; an acceleration in the suppression of Black voters since the contested ballots in the 2000 US presidential election, culminating in the disparate allotment of voting locations in urban areas during the 2022 elections; and the election of two Black elected officials representing majority-Black districts in Nashville and Memphis by a white partisan Republican-dominated Tennessee legislature in 2023.

But even as cities large and small reproduce racial, economic, political, and social inequalities, African Americans and others have demonstrated the power to transform them into exemplars of a more democratic and equitable future. Because of the largest mass protests in American history in the wake of the George Floyd murder in Minneapolis in 2020, racialized police oppression is under scrutiny as never before. The Charleston and Buffalo mass shootings have been and are being vigorously prosecuted. The attempt to nullify the vote of the urban districts of Memphis and Nashville were overturned when those districts reelected their state legislators.

In addition, African Americans in cities are central to the defense of American democracy in a time of antidemocratic repression across the nation. The historic midterm elections of 2022, when the future of US democracy was clearly on the ballot, found urban areas sending African Americans to a number of significant local and state offices. On the national level, Black people have consistently increased their representation, including Black women like Summer Lee, Pennsylvania’s first Black congresswoman to the House of Representatives, where she joined Ayanna Pressley from Massachusetts, Cori Bush from Missouri, Sheila Jackson Lee from Texas, among others. The election of Joe Biden with overwhelming Black urban support enabled the election of the first Black, Asian, and female vice president in the nation’s history as well as the appointment and confirmation of Ketanji Brown Jackson as the first African American woman Supreme Court justice in the nation’s history. Kamala Harris’s ascent to the vice presidency came little more than a half decade after the final term of Barack Obama as the first US president of African descent, an occurrence also made possible by the concentration of Black people in urban areas.

Indeed, the ascendency of Black people to political office in the last quarter of the twentieth century and the first decades of the twenty-first century, including as urban mayors, cannot be understood apart from the epic transformations wrought by industrial capitalism, African American internal migration to the cities, the growth and codification of racialized housing markets, and Black urban community formation and institution building that accelerated after World Wars I and II. The Reconstruction era was the last time African Americans were able to capture significant electoral power in this nation, and that power was rooted in the largely rural emancipation of Southern African Americans and their strong coalition with Abraham Lincoln’s Republican Party, known as “Black Republicans.” The brutal repression of Black economic and political activism during and after Reconstruction in the rural and urban South reinforced the movement of Black people to the urban North over the course of the twentieth century. In addition, the economic decline of the Southern rural economy accelerated the movement of Black people from the rural to the urban South as well. These combined developments alongside racialized residential landscapes provided a spatial, material, and historical base for a new succession of Black politicians whose electoral strength was rooted in urban Black communities. In Chicago, for instance, one of the largest sites of Black migration north, the Black urban population elected a long line of Black politicians into national legislative office, beginning with Oscar Stanton De Priest in 1929 (the first African American US representative from outside the South), to William L. Dawson, Carol Moseley Braun, and then Barack Obama. That electoral strength and experience culminated in Obama’s ascendency to the presidency in 2008.
Spatial Theories for the Americas

Counterweights to Five Centuries of Eurocentrism

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To study the built environment of the Americas is to wrestle with an inherent contradiction. While the disciplines of architecture, urban design, landscape, and planning share the fundamental belief that space and place matter, the overwhelming majority of canonical knowledge and the vernacular used to describe these disciplines comes from another, very different, continent. With this book, Fernando Luiz Lara discusses several theories of space—drawing on cartography, geography, anthropology, and mostly architecture—and proposes counterweights to five centuries of Eurocentrism. The first part of Spatial Theories for the Americas offers a critique of Eurocentrism in the discipline of architecture, problematizing its theoretical foundation in relation to the inseparability of modernization and colonization. The second part makes explicit the insufficiencies of a hegemonic Western tradition at the core of spatial theories by discussing a long list of authors who have thought about the Americas. To overcome centuries of Eurocentrism, Lara concludes, will require a tremendous effort, but, nonetheless, we have the responsibility of looking at the built environment of the Americas through our own lenses. Spatial Theories for the Americas proposes a fundamental step in that direction.
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Sarah S. Elkind, San Diego State University, and Finn Arne Jørgensen, University of Stavanger, Norway

ABOUT THE ACQUIRING EDITOR

Abby Collier comes from three generations of printers, earned her MA in editorial studies from Boston University, and is a proud advocate of authors and books. She joined Pittsburgh in 2013 from the University of Chicago Press, where she worked in the sciences group of the books division and acquired new manuscripts in geography and cartography.
Nature on Paper
Documenting Science in Prussia, 1770–1850
ANNE GREENWOOD MACKINNEY

How Paper Tools Transformed the Infrastructure of Modern Research in Prussia at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century

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Over the past two decades, natural things—especially those collected, exchanged, studied, and displayed in museums, such as animals, plants, minerals, and rocks—have emerged as fascinating protagonists for historical research. *Nature on Paper* follows a different, humbler set of objects that make it possible to trace the global routes and shifting meanings of those natural things: the catalogs, inventories, and other paper tools of information management that form the backbone of collection institutions. Anne Greenwood MacKinney focuses on Prussia from the late eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century, a place and time that witnessed the dramatic restructuring of research, government, and public collections toward a closer integration of science, state, and a proto-civil society. The documents at the heart of her study are mediators actively shaping the historical trajectories, values, and meanings of the objects they record, and with pasts and paths of their own. MacKinney also reveals how various stakeholders—in the research community, museum sector, government, and general public—can interact with these documents and thereby shape the world of natural science. By centering the history of natural historical collection paperwork and the agents involved in its production, circulation, and safekeeping, *Nature on Paper* tells a largely neglected story of a form of scientific labor that transformed the infrastructure of modern research at the turn of the nineteenth century.

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SCIENCE AND CULTURE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Anne Greenwood MacKinney is a historian of science and museums. Her research on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century cultures of natural history and collecting is based on extensive practical experience working in museums, including the Museum für Naturkunde Berlin, the Centrum für Naturkunde in Hamburg, and the Goethe-Nationalmuseum in Weimar.

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Most Adaptable to Change
Evolution and Religion in Global Popular Media

Edited by ALEXANDER HALL and WILL MASON-WILKES

How Multimedia Influenced Relationships between Evolutionary Studies and Religion in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries

“Most Adaptable to Change uniquely provides scholars and students interested in the global and transnational history of science and religion with novel perspectives on evolution and its intersections with religion in society.”
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In a globalized and networked world, where media crosses national borders, contributors reveal how transnational processes have shaped popular representations of scientific and religious ideas in the United Kingdom, Argentina, Ecuador, India, Spain, Turkey, Israel, and Japan. *Most Adaptable to Change* demonstrates the varied and divergent ways evolutionary ideas and nonscientific traditions and ways of understanding life on Earth have transformed across the globe. By examining a range of popular media forms across a multitude of different geopolitical contexts from the 1920s to today, this book traces how different evolutionary traditions and figures have been championed or discredited by different religious traditions, their spiritual leaders, and politicians using the cultural authority of religion as leverage. It analyzes the ways in which evolutionary theory has been mobilized explicitly for the purposes of addressing wider sociopolitical questions, and it is the first collection of its kind to explicitly explore the role of popular media formats themselves as mediators in institutional debates on the relationship between evolution and religion.

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Alexander Hall is assistant professor in science communication in the School of Interdisciplinary Science at McMaster University in Ontario, Canada. He is the author of *Evolution on British Television and Radio: Transmissions and Transmutations* and a contributor to the edited volume *Identity in a Secular Age: Science, Religion, and Public Perceptions.*

Will Mason-Wilkes is assistant professor in engineering, technology, and innovation in society at the Institute for STEMM in Culture and Society at the University of Birmingham. He is coauthor of *The Face-to-Face Principle: Science, Trust, Democracy and the Internet.*
William Whewell
Victorian Polymath

Edited by LUKAS M. VERBURGT

Reexamines the Work and Legacy of One of the Most Important Figures of the Victorian Era

“A well-conceived, well-structured, and timely volume that will be swiftly endorsed as the standard reference work to all things Whewellian.”
—Menachem Fisch, University of Tel Aviv

William Whewell, the famous master of Trinity College in Cambridge, was a central figure in nineteenth-century British scientific culture and one of the last great polymaths. His influential work ranged from history and philosophy of science, education, architecture, mineralogy, and political economy to mathematics, engineering, natural theology, metaphysics, and moral philosophy. Among his many gifts to science was his role as cofounder and president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science and his wordsmithing; he coined the terms *scientist*, *physicist*, *linguistics*, and *electrode*. While he was himself an opponent of evolution through natural selection, Whewell’s most famous works, including his Bridgewater Treatise (1833) and *Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences* (1840), played a formative role in Charles Darwin’s creation of the theory of evolution. *William Whewell: Victorian Polymath* reexamines the whole of Whewell’s oeuvre, as well as the wide range and internal unity of his many polymathic endeavors, placing him within the early Victorian intellectual landscape and highlighting his exchanges with other important figures of the period, such as John Herschel, Charles Lyell, and Robert Peel. Bringing together a group of eminent and emergent scholars, the volume explores all major aspects of Whewell’s reform project and its legacy, both in the sciences and the humanities, in the Victorian era and beyond.

Lukas M. Verburgt is an independent scholar based in the Netherlands. A fellow of the Royal Historical Society, he has published widely on the history of science and philosophy in the Victorian era.

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SCIENCE AND CULTURE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Lukas M. Verburgt is an independent scholar based in the Netherlands. A fellow of the Royal Historical Society, he has published widely on the history of science and philosophy in the Victorian era.
Sharing Spaces
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“Sharing Spaces offers a highly sophisticated and much welcome contribution to the fields of environmental studies, human-animal studies, and science and technology studies. It serves as an excellent example of how these three fields can be brought into a very fruitful conversation.”

—Dorothee Brantz, Technische Universität Berlin

H uman and animal lives intersect, whether through direct physical contact or by inhabiting the same space at a different time. Environmental humanities scholars have begun investigating these relationships through the emerging field of multispecies studies, building on decades of work in animal history, feminist studies, and Indigenous epistemologies. Contributors to this volume consider the entangled human-animal relationships of a complex multispecies world, where domesticated animals, wild animals, and people cross paths, creating hybrid naturecultures. Technology, they argue, structures how animals and humans share spaces. From clothing to cars to computers, technology acts as a mediator and connector of lives across time and space. It facilitates ways of looking at, measuring, moving, and killing, as well as controlling, containing, conserving, and cooperating with animals. Sharing Spaces challenges us to analyze how technology shapes human relationships with the nonhuman world, exploring nonhuman animals as kin, companions, food, transgressors, entertainment, and tools.
Creatures of Reason
John Herschel and the Invention of Science

STEPHEN CASE

Explores the Early Life and Career of a Figure Central to the Development of Modern Scientific Practice

“This fully documented, and clearly written book shows convincingly how John Herschel’s earlier fascinations with travel and telescopes, with experiment and education, led to a remarkable exercise in reforming philosophy and scientific guidance. Stephen Case’s study gives the Preliminary Discourse and its author a central place in the forging of the principles and practice of the modern sciences.”
—Simon Schaffer, University of Cambridge

“This Stephen Case has pulled tight the broad sweep of Herschel’s interests and tamed his ‘thickets of equations,’ successfully knitting mathematics and astronomy together with scientific politics and the writing of the Preliminary Discourse into a thoroughly enjoyable and enlightening tale of Herschel’s vision for modern science.”
—Kelley Wilder, De Montfort University

In his lifetime, John Herschel was Britain’s best-known natural philosopher, a world celebrity, and arguably the first modern scientist of the generation in which the term itself was invented. The polymath son of William Herschel, discoverer of Uranus and constructor of the world’s largest telescopes, Herschel took highest honors as a student at Cambridge, conducted groundbreaking work in chemistry and optics, helped establish a mathematical revolution, extended his father’s astronomical surveys to the entire sky, and wrote the popular texts by which a generation of readers learned what it meant to do science. Along the way, Herschel gave to natural philosophy the contours of modern science, defining scientific theories as “creatures of reason rather than of sense.” His creatures of reason could also refer to a new type of scientific practitioner: the natural philosopher beginning to transition into the modern scientist. With this book, Stephen Case encompasses Herschel’s impact on mathematics, chemistry, geology, and optics as well as the organization of science and its relation to government, society, and culture, revealing Herschel’s transformation of the practice of science itself. Drawing on his unpublished manuscripts, correspondence, and notebooks from archives in London, Cambridge, and Austin, this book contributes significantly to our understanding of the early life and career of the nineteenth century’s most influential natural philosopher.
Science, Religion, and the Protestant Tradition
Retracing the Origins of Conflict

JAMES C. UNGUREANU

Revisiting the Origins, Development, and Popularization of the “Conflict Thesis”

“An impressive piece of scholarship and will be essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the origins of the conflict narrative.”
—Science & Christian Belief

“Meticulously researched and routinely insightful, this book . . . develops a compelling argument for historians of science to give more weight to religious history when appraising matters of science and religion.”
—Isis

The story of the “conflict thesis” between science and religion—the notion of perennial conflict or warfare between the two—is part of our modern self-understanding. As the story goes, John William Draper (1811–1882) and Andrew Dickson White (1832–1918) constructed dramatic narratives in the nineteenth century that cast religion as the relentless enemy of scientific progress. Unraveling its origins, James Ungureanu argues that Draper and White hoped their narratives would preserve religious belief. For them, science was ultimately a scapegoat for a much larger and more important argument dating back to the Protestant Reformation, where one theological tradition was pitted against another.
LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

With a vigorous and wide-ranging list in Latin American studies, including multiple dedicated series and a peer-reviewed journal, the University of Pittsburgh Press seeks to highlight not only Latin American history, politics, and culture but also important artists, writers, and performers. Our interdisciplinary list includes many titles that explore Latin American cultural practices, histories, and institutions, and their effect on our present moment.

The Pitt Latin American Series began in 1968 and has a broad focus on all topics concerning Latin America. The Latinx and Latin American Profiles series outlines the shape of US Latinx and Latin American producers of cultural content and their work through multidisciplinary studies. A third series, Illuminations: Cultural Formations of the Americas, highlights the historical sedimentation and genealogies that cut through time and across continents. The Press also publishes Cuban Studies, the premier scholarly journal on that topic.

Titles in our Latin American studies series have recently won the Conference on Latin American History’s Socolow-Johnson Prize, Bolton-Johnson Prize, and Warren Dean Prize; the Brazilian Studies Association’s Roberto Reis Award; and prizes from the Latino Book Awards and the Mexico Section, the Southern Cone Studies Section, and the Venezuelan Studies Section of the Latin American Studies Association.

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ABOUT THE ACQUIRING EDITOR

Joshua Shanholtzer joined the University of Pittsburgh Press in 2007. Previously, he was an editor at the Modern Language Association.
Imaginative Possibilities
Conversations with Twenty-First-Century Latinx Authors

JAVIER O. HUERTA and MACEO MONTOYA

Interviews That Speak to New Trends and Developments in Latinx Literature

“Imaginative Possibilities is a timely and much-needed contribution to our critical and aesthetic conversations about Latinx literature. I deeply admire and appreciate the care with which Huerta and Montoya assembled the interviews.”
—Ralph Rodriguez, Brown University

Two decades into the twenty-first century, contemporary Latinx writers have established themselves within an evolving literary tradition. Imaginative Possibilities collects interviews with some of these authors to explore the writers’ processes, aesthetics, creative trajectories, and places within the larger body of Latinx literature. The interviews address artistic, professional, and cultural issues including the building of intellectual communities, the writing and publication process, and the practical economics of making a living. US Latinx writers discuss how they navigate the overwhelmingly white publishing industry, the academic book market, higher education, and MFA culture while exploring questions of representation, hybridity, and mestizaje. Through these conversations, a truth emerges: Latinx literature speaks not with one voice, but many.

LATINX AND LATIN AMERICAN PROFILES

Maceo Montoya is an author, artist, and educator who has published books in a variety of genres, including four works of fiction: The Scoundrel and the Optimist, The Deportation of Wopper Barraza, You Must Fight Them: A Novella and Stories, and Preparatory Notes for Future Masterpieces.

Javier O. Huerta is the author of American Copia: An Immigrant Epic and Some Clarificaciones y otros poemas, which was awarded the 31st Chicano/Latino Literary Prize from UC Irvine. His most recent book is a translation of Nicaraguan poet León Salvatierra’s collection Al Norte. Currently, he teaches at Mission College in Santa Clara and lives in Oakland, California.

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The Return of the Contemporary

The Latin American Novel in the End Times

NICOLÁS CAMPISI

A Study of the Twenty-First-Century Latin American Novel in an Era of Apocalyptic Catastrophe

“The Return of the Contemporary is a beautifully written book with a strongly articulated and original argument. Ambitious in its geographical reach and timely in its subject matter and corpus, its abiding question of how and why Latin American writers over the past twenty years have engaged with a present marked by crisis—not only environmental but also economic and political—is rigorously and compellingly examined.”
—Lesley Wylie, University of Leicester

In The Return of the Contemporary, Nicolás Campisi combines the fields of post-dictatorship studies and environmental humanities to analyze Latin American cultural production in the neoliberal age. Each chapter pairs two authors from different parts of Latin America and the Caribbean who create a common vocabulary in which to frame the various crises of the region’s present and recent past, such as climate change, forced migration, the collapse of state institutions, and the afterlives of slavery. By situating itself at the intersection of ecocritical and environmental humanities, affect studies, and the politics of memory and postmemory, Campisi presents new comparative methods to show how Latin America’s neoliberal crisis prompted significant changes in how the novel as a form imagines a different future.
Cuban Studies 54
Edited by ALEJANDRO DE LA FUENTE

Praise for Cuban Studies:

“A new editorial team led by Alejandro de la Fuente draws on scholarship from Cuba and around the world to make this multidisciplinary journal a must-read for those looking beyond the headlines for a deeper understanding of the rapid changes taking place on the island.”
—Foreign Affairs

“El empeño de difundir la riqueza de la producción científico-social cubana más allá de los confines de la Isla define la labor de Cuban Studies.”
—El Toque

Cuban Studies is the preeminent journal for scholarly work on Cuba. Each volume includes articles in English and Spanish and a large book review section. In publication since 1970, and under Alejandro de la Fuente’s editorial leadership since 2013, this interdisciplinary journal covers all aspects of Cuban history, politics, culture, diaspora, and more. Issue 54 contains seven articles, a dossier on transition in Cuba, and two sections of primary sources.

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Alejandro de la Fuente is the Robert Woods Bliss Professor of Latin American History and Economics and professor of African and African American studies at Harvard University and director of the Afro-Latin American Research Institute in the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research. He is the author of Havana and the Atlantic in the Sixteenth Century and A Nation for All: Race, Inequality, and Politics in Twentieth-Century Cuba, and is the editor of Queloides: Race and Racism in Cuban Contemporary Art.
COMPOSITION AND RHETORIC

The Composition, Literacy, and Culture series was established in 1989. It publishes in composition and rhetoric, literacy, and culture; the history of writing, reading, and instructional practice; the construction of literacy and letters; and the relations between language and gender, ethnicity, race, and class. The goal of the series is to bring together scholarship that crosses traditional boundaries. The editors welcome investigations that step outside the usual forms and outlines of academic inquiry.

Books in the CLC series recently have won the David H. Russell Award from the National Council of Teachers of English, the Top Book Award from the National Communication Association’s Communication Ethics Division, and several Outstanding Book Awards from the Conference on College Composition and Communication. CLC books also recently received honorable mentions in the Rhetoric Society of America Book Awards and Society for the Study of American Women Writers Book Awards, among other honors.

ABOUT THE SERIES EDITORS

Aja Martinez is associate professor of English at the University of North Texas. She is the author of Counterstory: The Writing and Rhetoric of Critical Race Theory, which won the 2023 Conference on College Composition and Communication’s Outstanding Book Award and the Advancement of Knowledge Award, as well as the 2021 Vision Award from the Coalition for Community Writing. She is also the coeditor of Code-Meshing as World English: Policy, Pedagogy, and Performance.

Stacey Waite is the Susan Rosowski Associate Professor of English at the University of Nebraska and the author of Teaching Queer: Radical Possibilities for Writing and Knowing. Waite is also the coeditor of Ways of Reading: An Anthology for Writers, 11th ed., and The Best of the Independent Rhetoric and Composition Journals 2011 and has published four collections of poetry.
Swarms, Viral Writing, and the Local
Rhetorical Dynamics across Networked Publics

CARL WHITHAUS

Considers How Social Media Writing Can Both Fuel and Resist Disinformation and Violence

“By tracing the ways different forms of writing emerge in situ and in deep interrelation with writers’ sense of agency, audience demands, platform pressures, and the uptake and redistribution of a range of communication activities, Whithaus offers us one of the most sophisticated understandings of how writers write in the world today. As never before, we never write alone. Writing is always already embedded in webs, networks, swarms, and viral redistributions that demand rethinking what writing is and what it means to be literate today.”
—Jonathan Alexander, University of California, Irvine

“Drawing on cases of writing from the past fifteen years, Whithaus explores how people write together in shared multimodal ecologies. The cases recount writing collaborations spanning fandom communities, Dungeons & Dragons games, antagonistic trolling, conspiracy theories, and local political action. Parodies, pastiches, and protests all show up in this extended mediation on what it means to write multimodally and how that writing creates and shapes locality. Read it—and don’t forget to like, comment, and subscribe.”
—Clay Spinuzzi, University of Texas at Austin

Swarms, Viral Writing, and the Local examines the social and rhetorical dynamics around emerging writing technologies. Carl Whithaus argues that these dynamics work across networked publics as patterns of behavior and ways of interacting through and with multimodal texts. This rhetorical analysis of the production and reception of born-digital rhetoric shows the ongoing and evolving impacts of online public discourse that can lead to bad restaurant reviews or the subversion of democracy. It is a networked process that gains significance because of the interplay and tensions between the global and the local. As these texts are created, distributed, received, and then recreated and shared again in viral ways, different messages resonate across media ecologies. Whithaus documents how emerging social dynamics shape—and are shaped by—digital writing, reading, and distribution technologies.
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