

RENÉE CHERIE BRANUM

14 Neptune Avenue
New London CT 06320
(618) 521-7594
rbrantum@conncoll.edu

EDUCATION

- Ph.D.** Creative Writing (Fiction), University of Cincinnati, 2023
Qualifying Examination Topics: Hybrid Literature & Blurred Lines of Genre (Literary Focus) and Fragmented Narratives & the Vignette Form (Craft Focus)
Primary Examiner: Chris Bachelder
Dissertation: “Left: A Novel” with critical essay “Making Room for White Space”
Director: Michael Griffith
- M.F.A.** Creative Writing (Nonfiction), University of Montana, 2017
Thesis: “Sympathetic Lightning: Essays”
Director: David Gates
- M.F.A.** Creative Writing (Fiction), University of Iowa – Iowa Writers’ Workshop, 2013
Examination Topic: The Power of Lyricism in Prose
Thesis: “As the Sparks Fly Upward: Stories”
Director: Marilynne Robinson
- B.A.** English with a Creative Writing emphasis and Film & Photography, Hollins University, 2009
Honors Thesis in Creative Writing: “The Devil in the Water: A Novella”
Honors Thesis in Film: “A Brief History of the Pratfall: Investigating the Life and Art of Buster Keaton”
Director: Richard H. W. Dillard

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| Assistant Professor
Southern Illinois University, School of Literature, Writing, and Digital Humanities | 2025-current |
| Visiting Assistant Professor/Writer-in-Residence –
Connecticut College, Department of English | 2024-2025 |
| Writer-in-Residence/Community Outreach Coordinator –
University of Cincinnati, Clermont Campus, Department of English | 2023-2024 |
| Instructor – University of Cincinnati, Department of English | 2018-2023 |
| Academic Tutor – On Track Tutoring, Educational Services Organization | 2017-2018 |
| Instructor – Free Verse Writing Project, Non-Profit Organization | 2016-2017 |
| Freelance Content Writer – Thomas Riggs & Company, Publisher | 2016 |

Instructor – University of Montana, Department of English	2015-2017
Adjunct Faculty – University of Iowa, Department of English	2013-2014
Instructor – University of Iowa, Department of English	2012-2013
Instructor – Caledonian Language School, Prague, Czech Republic	2010-2011

HONORS, DISTINCTIONS, & AWARDS

2025 Judge for Connecticut College's Sarah Ensign Cady Memorial Prize
 2024 Judge for Clermont County's Annual High School Creative Writing Contest
 2023 Excellence in Teaching Award Nomination, University of Cincinnati Clermont Campus
 2023 Prose Panelist for New Jersey State Council's Mid-Atlantic Arts Individual Artists Fellowships
 2023 International Booker Prize Nomination: Jonathan Cape at Penguin Random House UK
 2023 Swansea University's Dylan Thomas Prize Nomination: Jonathan Cape at Penguin Random House UK
 2023 National Endowment for the Arts Prose Fellowship first-round reader and reviewer
 2022 Recipient: Dean's Dissertation Completion Fellowship, \$20,000 Award from University of Cincinnati
 2022 Pushcart Prize Nomination: "Animal Days," *The Kenyon Review*
 2021 Recipient: Ricking Fellowship, \$7,500 Award from the University of Cincinnati English Department
 2020 Recipient: National Endowment for the Arts Literature Fellowship Grant in Prose, \$25,000 Award
 2020 Selected Poem: "Glow and Afterglow," Academy of American Poets Prize
 2020 Selected Essay: "On Hysteria," Literary Nonfiction Prize, University of Cincinnati English Department
 2019 Notable Mention: "Bolt," *The Best American Essays 2019*. Ed. Rebecca Solnit.
 2019 Selected Short Story: "As the Sparks Fly Upward," *The Best American Nonrequired Reading 2019*
 2019 Selected Essay: "Mlsná," Literary Nonfiction Prize, University of Cincinnati English Department
 2018 Artist-in-Residence: Art Omi Writers, Ghent, NY
 2018 Pushcart Prize Nomination: "Bolt," *The Florida Review*
 2017 Pushcart Prize Nomination: general nomination from contributing editor, Pinkney Benedict
 2017 Pushcart Prize Nomination: "Junk Drawer," *Denver Quarterly*
 2017 Selected Essay: "Bolt," first prize winner of the *Florida Review's* Editors' Award in Nonfiction
 2017 Finalist: *Left: A Novel*, James Jones First Novel Fellowship
 2017 Selected Short Story: "Night Moves," AWP Intro Journals Award winner in Fiction
 2017 Selected Essay: "Certainty," first prize winner of the *Los Angeles Review's* Fall Nonfiction Award
 2016 Finalist: "Left," *Glimmer Train's* New Writers Contest
 2013 Selected Short Story: "As the Sparks Fly Upward," first prize winner of the Prairie Lights Fiction Prize
 2011 Recipient: Truman Capote Fellowship, tuition and \$16,000 stipend
 2009 Mary Vincent Long Award in English: Senior English major of distinction
 2009 Melanie Hook Rice Award: Promising writer of a book-length work
 2009 Hollins Fiction Award: Outstanding work by an undergraduate fiction writer

PUBLICATIONS

Fiction (Book-length Works)

Defenestrate: A Novel. Bloomsbury Publishing, January 2022
 UK edition, Jonathan Cape at Penguin Random House, February 2022
 UK paperback edition, Jonathan Cape at Penguin Random House, February 2023
 Audiobook, Audible, January 2022
 Italian Translation, Bompiani, forthcoming April 2025

Fiction (in Journals)

“Dowsing.” *Sequestrum*, Spring 2022
 “Animal Days.” *The Kenyon Review*, v. 44 no. 3, May/June 2022
 “As the Sparks Fly Upward.” *Alaska Quarterly Review*, v. 35 no. 1&2, Summer/Fall 2018
 “Night Moves.” *Tampa Review*, v. 55&56, Spring 2018
 “Let Him Go On, Mama.” *Narrative Magazine*, Winter 2018
 “Left.” *The Georgia Review*, v. 71 no. 3, Fall 2017
 “The Lightning Left No Mark.” *The Long Story*, no. 32, 2014
 “The Devil in the Water.” *Blackbird*, v. 11 no. 1, Spring 2012

Nonfiction (in Journals)

“Bigfoot is a She: A Monster Mash-Up.” *Barrelhouse*, issue 23, 2022
 “Instructions for Dating a Fellow Writer.” *LitHub*, March 2022
 “Buster Keaton by James Curtis: A Review.” *The Telegraph*, February 2022
 “A Caregiver’s Diary.” *The Iowa Review*, v. 50, issue 2, Fall 2020
 “I and Thou: A Bigfoot Encounter.” *Guernica*, December 2019
 “A Couple of Idiots.” *Con*text*, November 2019
 “Elders.” *Boulevard*, v. 35 no. 1, Fall 2019
 “Twofold.” *Brevity*, September 2018
 “On Hysteria.” *New Limestone Review*, March 2018
 “Certainty.” *The Los Angeles Review*, v. 22, 2018
 “Bolt.” *The Florida Review*, v. 42 no. 1, Spring 2018
 “My Own Personal Herakles.” *LitHub*, September 2017
 “Neighbors of Fire.” *The Gettysburg Review*, v. 30 no. 3, Autumn 2017
 “On Burning.” *Hobart*, August 2017
 “Junk Drawer.” *Denver Quarterly*, v. 51 no 4, 2017
 “Rendezvous.” *True Story*, v. 8, 2017
 “A Brief History of Dog Walking.” *Chicago Quarterly Review*, v. 25, Summer 2017
 “Mlsná.” *The Texas Review*, v. 38 no. 1&2, Spring/Summer 2017
 “Smoke: A Love Story.” *Fields Magazine*, no. 6, Autumn/Winter 2016

Poetry

“Glow and Afterglow.” *Poets.org*, Academy of American Poets Prize, Spring 2020

COURSES TAUGHT

Southern Illinois University

English 381A, Beginning Fiction. *Why Stories Matter: An Introduction to Fiction Writing*.

English 592, Graduate Seminar in Fiction. *Patterns, Shapes, and Alternative Narrative Structures*.

Connecticut College

English 220, Writing the Short Story. *The Art of Storytelling in Short Fiction Craft*.

English 322, Seminar in Fiction. *Plotting the Tale: Shape and Strategy in Narrative Formation*.

English 222C, Writing Short Forms. *Flash Fiction, Prose Poems, & Micro-Memoirs*.

University of Cincinnati, Clermont Campus

English 2011, Introduction to Creative Writing: Fiction. *Truth in Fiction: Reading & Writing Empowering Narratives*

English 2089, Intermediate English Composition. *The Self in Discourse: Discovering Discourse Communities*.

University of Cincinnati, Main Campus

English 1001, English Composition. *Ethics, Identity, & What it Means to Be Human: A Cultural Investigation of Robots & Androids*.

English 2015, Introduction to Creative Writing: Screenwriting. *Utilizing Urban Landscapes in Narrative Film*.

English 2011, Introduction to Creative Writing: Fiction. *We Tell Ourselves Stories in Order to Live: Storytelling as Essential Act*.

University of Montana

Writing 101: College Composition. *Children of Our Landscape: Engaging with Identity Through Place*.

Writing 201: College Composition II. *Viewers vs. Voyeurs: Locating Arguments in Film & Media*.

Creative Writing 212: Intro Nonfiction Workshop. *Writing from Real Life: Memory, Emotion, & Experience*.

University of Iowa:

Creative Writing 1800, Creative Writing Studio Workshop. *Three Colors: Spectrums of Prose & Poetry*.

Creative Writing 4745, The Sentence: Strategies for Writing. *The Sentence as Shapeshifter: Encountering Old Words Through a New Lens*.

TEACHING & RESEARCH INTERESTS

Sentence-Level Writing and Lyricism in Prose
Myth, Folklore, and the Origins of Story
Adaptation from Page to Screen
Horror Studies: Stories of Monsters/Monstrosity
Creative Writing as Therapy
Rural, Underclass, and Midwestern Fiction

Hybrid Literature and Blurred Lines of Genre
Fragmented Narratives and the Vignette Form
Family History: Definitional Inherited Narratives
Subversive Storytelling as Feminist Action
Belief, Spirituality, and Religion in Fiction

ADVISING EXPERIENCE

Academic Advising for English Majors and Minors

Senior Honors Thesis Advising for Graduating Connecticut College English Majors with a Concentration in Creative Writing

Arts Portfolio Review for Connecticut College Prospective Students with an interest in Fiction Writing

Thesis Preparation for Art Academy of Cincinnati's Senior Pathways program

"Ask An Author." Clermont County Public Library Community Advising program

INTERVIEWS & TALKS

“‘It’s All In My Head But I Want Nonfiction:’ Writing Fiction and Nonfiction,” Panel Discussion with Natalie Villacorta, Maia Morgan, and Justin St. Germain. NonfictionNOW Conference. University of Notre Dame. June 2025.

Visit to William Wallace’s Storytelling class to discuss my short story “Animal Days.” January 2025.

“For Better and Worse: Fictional Families.” Panel Discussion with Bethany Ball, Xochitl Gonzalez, and Melissa Scholes Young. Tucson Book Festival. Tucson, AZ. March 2022

“Cursed Characters: Generational and Inherited Narratives.” Panel Discussion with Melodie Winawer. Tucson Book Festival. Tucson, AZ. March 2022

The Situation and the Story Podcast. Featured Author Interview with Chris Moore. March 2022

“Ask the Author.” Featured Author Interview in *The Daily Iowan*. March 2022

A Mighty Blaze Podcast. Featured Author Interview with Rachel Barenbaum. February 2022

The Write Question, Montana Public Radio Show. Featured Author Interview with Lauren R. Korn. February 2022

Vox Vomitus Podcast. Featured Author Interview with Jennifer Anne Gordon and Allison Martine. January 2022

“A Life of Books.” Featured Author Interview in *Debutiful*. January 2022

Featured Author Interview in *Public Libraries Online*. January 2022

Reading with Robin Series. Featured Author Live Instagram Interview with Robin Kall. November 2021

Visit to John Drury’s Poetry Capstone class to discuss my essay “Rendezvous.” September 2020

READINGS & PRESENTATIONS

Warwick’s Virtual Event with Maggie Su. San Diego, CA. February 7, 2025.

Drew University, Writers at Drew Reading Series. October 5, 2023

Arkansas Tech University English and World Languages Department. October 20, 2018

Jackson Center for Creative Writing at Hollins University. Roanoke, VA. September 8, 2022

“Pièces de Résistance,” *Alaska Quarterly Review* Virtual Reading Series with Charlie Buck and Pete Duval. February 25, 2022

Prairie Lights Bookstore Virtual Event with Jessie Gaynor. February 10, 2022

Magers & Quinn Booksellers Virtual Event with Charles Baxter. February 3, 2022

McNally Jackson Virtual Event with Andrew Martin. February 7, 2022

Joseph Beth Books. Cincinnati, OH. January 27, 2022

REFERENCES

Professor Chris Bachelder, University of Cincinnati, Department of English, 2700 Campus Way, Cincinnati, OH 45221-0069. (513)556-3207. bachelcr@ucmail.uc.edu

Charles Baxter, University of Minnesota, Department of English, 310 Pillsbury Dr. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455. (612)625-3363. baxte087@umn.edu

Professor David Gates, Bennington College, MFA in Writing, One College Drive, Bennington, VT 05201-6003. (802)442-5401. umustgoon@aol.com

Professor Michael Griffith, University of Cincinnati, Department of English, 2700 Campus Way, Cincinnati, OH 45221-0069. (513)556-3129. griffmfc@ucmail.uc.edu

Sara Martin, 1741 Sigel Street, Philadelphia, PA 19145. (609)577-2972. saramrtn45@gmail.com