

ELIZABETH RENKER

Department of English
The Ohio State University
164 Annie and John Glenn Ave.
Columbus, OH 43210-1370
(614) 292-6065
renker.1@osu.edu

EDUCATION

Ph.D., The Johns Hopkins University, English and American Literature, 1991.
M.A., The Johns Hopkins University, English and American Literature, 1989.
B.A., Yale University, Phi Beta Kappa and *summa cum laude*, with distinction in English, 1983.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

The Ohio State University, Professor, 2008-present.
The Ohio State University, Associate Professor, 1997-2008.
The Ohio State University, Assistant Professor, 1991-1997.

EXTERNAL RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS AND HONORS

2018-2019 American Council of Learned Societies Carl and Betty Pforzheimer Fellowship in English and American Literature
2012 *The Best 300 Professors* (Random House / Princeton Review Books)
2006 The Folger Institute Short-Term Fellowship

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Realist Poetics in American Culture, 1866-1900. Oxford, UK: Oxford UP, 2018.

The Origins of American Literature Studies: An Institutional History. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP (cloth, 2007; paper, 2010).

Strike Through the Mask: Herman Melville and the Scene of Writing. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins UP (cloth, 1996; paper, 1998).

Edited Books

Poems: A Concise Anthology. Ed. Elizabeth Renker. Ontario, Canada: Broadview Press, 2016. 789 pp.

Essays in Edited Collections

- “Women Poets and American Literary Realism.” *A History of Nineteenth-Century American Women’s Poetry*. Eds. Jennifer Putzi and Alexandra Socarides. New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2017. 283-297.
- “‘The Genteel Tradition’ and Its Discontents.” *The Cambridge History of American Poetry*. Eds. Alfred Bendixen and Stephen Burt. New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2015. 403-424.
- “The Making of American Literature.” *The American Novel, 1870-1940*. Eds. Priscilla Wald and Michael A. Elliott. Vol. 6. *The Oxford History of the Novel in English*. Oxford and New York: Oxford UP, 2014. 549-565.
- “Melville the Poet in the Postbellum World.” *The New Cambridge Companion to Herman Melville*. Ed. Robert S. Levine. New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2014. 127-141.
- “Nineteenth-Century American Women’s Poetry: Past and Prospects.” *The Cambridge History of American Women’s Literature*. Ed. Dale M. Bauer. New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2012. 232-255.
- “Popular Poetry in Circulation.” With Coleman Hutchison. *U.S. Popular Print Culture, 1860-1920*. Ed. Christine Bold. Vol. 6. *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture*. Oxford and New York: Oxford UP, 2012. 395-413.
- “The ‘Twilight of the Poets’ in the Era of American Realism, 1875-1900.” *The Cambridge Companion to Nineteenth-Century American Poetry*. Ed. Kerry Larson. New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2011. 135-153.
- “Shakespeare in the College Curriculum, 1870-1920.” *Shakespearean Educations: Power, Citizenship, and Performance*. Eds. Coppelia Kahn, Heather S. Nathans, and Mimi Godfrey. Newark: U of Delaware P, 2011. 131-156.
- “‘Academicizing’ American Literature.” *A Companion to American Literature and Culture*. Ed. Paul Lauter. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2010. 57-71.
- “‘I Looked Again and Saw’: Teaching Postbellum Realist Poetry.” *Teaching Nineteenth-Century American Poetry*. Ed. Paula Bernat Bennett, Karen L. Kilcup, and Phillipp Schweighauser. New York, NY: MLA, 2007. 82-92.
- “Melville the Realist Poet.” *A Companion to Herman Melville*. Ed. Wyn Kelley. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006. 482-496.
- “Herman Melville, Wife Beating, and the Written Page.” *No More Separate Spheres!* Eds. Cathy N. Davidson and Jessamyn Hatcher. 93-120. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2002. Reprinted from *American Literature* 66 (1994).

“A -----!': Unreadability in *The Confidence-Man*.” *The Cambridge Companion to Herman Melville*. Ed. Robert S. Levine. New York: Cambridge UP, 1998. 114-134.

Articles in Refereed Journals

“What is 'Reconstruction Poetry'?” By invitation. Special issue on Reconstruction. *American Literary History*. Forthcoming, 2018.

“Sarah Piatt's Realism in 1870s Print Culture.” Special issue in honor of Paula Bernat Bennett. *The Emerson Society Quarterly*. Forthcoming, 2018.

“Melville and the Worlds of Civil War Poetry.” *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies* 16.1 (2014): 135-152.

“What Is American Literature?” *American Literary History* 25.1 (2013): 247-256.

“Poets in the Iron-Mills.” *American Literary History* 20.1 (2008): 521-529.

“Melville's Poetic Singe.” *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies* 2.2 (2000): 13-31.

“'American Literature' in the College Curriculum: Three Case Studies, 1890-1910.” *ELH* 67 (2000): 843-871.

“Melville the Poet: Response to William Spengemann.” *American Literary History* 12.1, 2 (2000): 348-354.

“Melville's Spell in *Typee*.” *Arizona Quarterly* 51.2 (1995): 1-31.

“Herman Melville, Wife Beating, and the Written Page.” *American Literature* 66 (1994): 123-150. Featured in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (6 April 1994); in editorials across the U.S., including *The Columbus Dispatch* (29 April 1994) and the *Chicago Tribune* (1 May 1994); in *The New York Times Magazine* (15 December 1996) and *La Stampa* (Italy; 16 January 1997); and in Philip Weiss, “Melville Mystery Cannot Be Stifled By New Biography,” *The New York Observer* (12 June 2002): 1.

“Resistance and Change: The Rise of American Literature Studies.” *American Literature* 64 (1992): 347-365.

“'Declaration-Men' and the Rhetoric of Self-Presentation.” *Early American Literature* 24 (1989): 120-134.

Encyclopedia Entries

“Canon.” *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry & Poetics*. 4th ed. Eds. Roland Greene and Stephen Cushman. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2012. 186-188.

“Sarah Morgan Bryan Piatt.” With Paula Bernat Bennett. *Student's Encyclopedia of Great American Writers Vol. II: 1830-1900*. Ed. Paul Crumbley. New York: Facts on File, 2010. 373-387.

Edited Journals

“Melville the Poet.” Guest editors, Elizabeth Renker and Douglas Robillard. *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies* 9 (2007).

Introductions

Foreword. *Melville as Poet: The Art of “Pulsed Life.”* Ed. Sanford E. Marovitz. Kent State UP, 2013. ix-xi.

“Melville the Poet: Introduction.” *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies* 9 (2007): 9-12.

Introduction. *Moby-Dick*. By Herman Melville. 1851. Signet Classic edition. New York: Penguin Books, 1998 and 2013. ix-xvii.

Anthologies

The American Tradition in Literature. 2-vol. and concise editions. Twelfth edition. Eds. George Perkins and Barbara Perkins. Advisory eds., James Phelan and Elizabeth Renker. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2008.

Reviews (since 2006)

Rev. of *Archives of Labor: Working-Class Women and Literary Culture in the Antebellum United States*, by Lori Merish. *Nineteenth-Century Literature*. Forthcoming, 2018.

Rev. of *The Political Poetess: Victorian Femininity, Race, and the Legacy of Separate Spheres*, by Tricia Lootens. *ALH Online Review*, Series XVI (Sept. 2018): 1-4.
<https://academic.oup.com/DocumentLibrary/ALH/Online%20Review%20Series%2016/16Elizabeth%20Renker.pdf>

Rev. of *The Passages of H.M.: A Novel of Herman Melville*, by Jay Parini (2010. New York: Anchor Books, 2011) and *Call Me Ahab: A Short Story Collection*, by Anne Finger (Lincoln, Nebraska: U of Nebraska Press, 2009). *Leviathan: A Journal of Melville Studies* 16.2 (2014): 70-74.

Rev. of *Writers in Retrospect: The Rise of American Literary History, 1875-1910*, by Claudia Stokes. *The New England Quarterly* 80.2 (2007): 332-334.

Rev. of *Shakespeare and the American Nation*, by Kim C. Sturgess. *The Upstart Crow: A Shakespeare Journal* 26 (2006/2007): 122-124.

INVITED LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS (since 2006)

- “The Disciplinary Legacy of ‘The Genteel Tradition.’” The Modern Language Association Convention, Chicago, IL, January 2019.
- “Reconstruction Poetries and Poetic Climates.” C19: The Society of Nineteenth-Century Americanists Annual Convention. Albuquerque, NM, 24 March 2018.
- “The Historiography of American Poetry and Other Aversions to Reconstruction.” Invited speaker. Reenvisioning Reconstruction Symposium. Department of English, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Sponsored by the Trowbridge Initiative in American Culture. 6 Oct. 2017.
- “The Reconstruction Poetry of Sarah Piatt.” The Midwest Modern Language Association Convention, Civil War Caucus. Detroit, MI, 14 Nov. 2014.
- “Translation and Postbellum Poetics.” C19: The Society of Nineteenth-Century Americanists Conference, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC, 13 March 2014.
- “The ‘Twilight of the Poets’ and the Ideology of Genre.” The Modern Language Association Convention, Chicago, IL, 10 January 2014.
- “The Civil War Worlds of Herman Melville.” Melville & Whitman in Washington: The Civil War Years & After, Washington, D.C., 5 June 2013. Keynote address.
- “Sarah Piatt and the Haunted South of Memory.” American Literature Association Symposium, Savannah, GA, 22 Feb. 2013.
- “Fault Lines in American Literary History: Postbellum Poetry.” The Modern Language Association Convention, Boston, MA, 5 January 2013.
- “Melville the Poet.” C19: The Society of Nineteenth-Century Americanists Conference, University of California, Berkeley, 13 April 2012.
- “William Dean Howells, Realist Poet.” The American Literature Association Conference, Boston, MA, 27 May 2011.
- “Poetry in Schoolbooks, 1865-1915.” C19 Inaugural Conference, Penn State, 20 May 2010.
- “The Changing Shape of the College Curriculum: Classics, English, and Higher Education for African-Americans after the Civil War.” Colloquium on Latin and the Study of Greco-Roman, British and American Literature in Historically Black Colleges, University of Maryland, 17 April 2010.

“The Twilight of the Poets.” Crossing the Bar: Transatlantic Poetics in the Nineteenth Century Conference, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, 6 March, 2010.

“Herman Melville in the Age of Realism.” Trinity College, Hartford, CT, 31 March 2009.
Invited lecture, Allan K. Smith Visiting Scholars Series.

“Teaching Poetry in a Digital Classroom.” Digital Media in a Social World Conference, The Center for the Study and Teaching and Writing, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, 20 Feb. 2009.

“The End of the Curriculum.” The Inaugural Lecture Series, The Ohio State University College of Arts & Sciences, Columbus, OH, 3 Nov. 2008.

“The Invisible History of Students.” The Modern Language Association Convention, Chicago, IL, 27 December 2007.

“Shakespeare in the College Curriculum, 1890-1915.” Shakespeare in American Education, 1607-1934, A 75th Anniversary Conference, The Folger Institute, Washington, D.C., 16 March 2007. Invited lecture.

“Amateurs and Professionals: Joseph Crosby and the Shakespeare Expert in America, 1875.” The Folger Institute, Washington, D.C., 16 September 2006. Invited lecture.

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES (selected)

Editorial and Advisory Board Member

Board of Editors, *American Literary History*, 2013-2018.

Advisory Editor, *American Periodicals*, 2003-2013.

Editorial Board, The Ohio State University Press, 2008-2011.

Reviewer for Journals

American Literary History, *American Periodicals*, *American Quarterly*, *Emerson Society Quarterly*, *J19*, *Leviathan*, *Literature and History*, *The New England Quarterly*, *Nineteenth Century Studies*, *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*.

Manuscript and Edition Referee

Cambridge UP, Oxford UP, Bloomsbury, Wiley-Blackwell, Blackwell, Houghton Mifflin, W.W. Norton, The Ohio State UP, Oxford UP.

Department External Reviewer

University of Kentucky, Lexington, 2014.

Tenure, Promotion, and Instructor Contract Renewal Referee

The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; The University of North Texas; Massachusetts Institute of Technology; University of Pittsburgh; University of Georgia; Amherst College; University of Missouri; University of California at Santa Barbara.

Public Humanities

“A Poet Rediscovered: Sarah Morgan Bryan Piatt.” The Harriet Beecher Stowe House. Cincinnati, OH. 15 April 2018.

“Sarah Piatt and Ireland.” *Salon at Mac-O-Chee*, sponsored by Piatt Castles, The Mac-A-Cheek Foundation for the Humanities, and The Columbus Foundation. West Liberty, OH. 12 Aug. 2017.

“A Poet Rediscovered: Sarah Morgan Bryan Piatt.” The Ohio History Connection Inaugural Speaker Series. Columbus, OH. 30 April 2017.

“A Poet Rediscovered: Sarah Morgan Bryan Piatt, 1836-1919.” *Timeline: A Publication of the Ohio History Connection*. 33.2 (April-June 2016): 28-41.

Panelist, “Why Read *Moby-Dick*?” Wild Goose Creative, Columbus, OH, 25 Aug. 2015.

Speaker and organizer, *Salon at Mac-O-Chee*, a day of public presentations by doctoral students in The Ohio State University, Department of English. Sponsored by Piatt Castles, The Mac-A-Cheek Foundation for the Humanities, and The Columbus Foundation. West Liberty, OH. 25 May 2015.

Organizer, public exhibit, original art by Matt Kish from *Moby-Dick in Pictures: One Drawing for Every Page* (Tin House, 2011). Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, The Ohio State University Libraries, 2012.

Guest speaker, videoconference interviews about *Moby-Dick*. AP English classes, North Allegheny SHS, Pennsylvania, 2012, 2013, 2016, 2017.

Organizer, public exhibition, *What America Read: Taste, Class, and the Novel, 1920-1960* (by Gordon Hutner, The University of North Carolina P, 2009). In conjunction with the William Charvat Collection of American Fiction, Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, The Ohio State University Libraries, 2011.

“The End of the Curriculum.” *Talking about Teaching: A Collection of Essays*. Vol. 4. Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Academy of Teaching, 2010.

Humanities Scholar, Mac-A-Cheek Foundation for the Humanities, West Liberty, OH, 2004. Composed and assessed materials for public programs. Sponsored by the Ohio Humanities Council.

Speaker, "Introduction to Sarah Piatt." Free public program. Sponsored by the Mac-A-Cheek Foundation for the Humanities. West Liberty, OH, 2002.

Organizer, Sarah Piatt Week, The Ohio State University, 2001. Public and student programs. Featured in *The Columbus Dispatch*, 27 Feb. 2001.

Speaker, "Reading *Moby-Dick* for the First Time; or, How to Avoid Shipwreck." Roundtable with Sena Jeter Naslund on *Moby-Dick* and *Ahab's Wife*, Barnes & Noble, Columbus, OH, 1999.

Digital Humanities Projects

The Sarah Morgan Bryan Piatt Recovery Project. I have devised this project as a digital initiative under the larger rubric of the Sarah Morgan Bryan Piatt collections housed at the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library (RBML), The Ohio State University Libraries. A collaborative project with RBML and The Ohio State University Knowledge Bank, the *Sarah Morgan Bryan Piatt Recovery Project* collects research memoirs by the first and second waves of scholars who began the recovery of Piatt's work in the 1990s. This resource will provide a foundation for future scholarship about Piatt's shifting cultural status and her entry into the canon. This project will be available for free public digital access.

Conducted and recorded oral history interview with Dr. Larry R. Michaels for *The Sarah Morgan Bryan Piatt Recovery Project*. 10 Oct. 2017.

Conducted and recorded oral history interview with Dr. Paula Bernat Bennett for *The Sarah Morgan Bryan Piatt Recovery Project*. 9 Sept. 2017.

The Early Poems of Sarah Morgan Bryan (Piatt) in the New York Ledger, 1857-1860. I devised this digital initiative under the larger rubric of the Sarah Morgan Bryan Piatt collections housed at the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library (RBML), The Ohio State University Libraries. A collaborative enterprise with doctoral student Ayendy Bonifacio in The Ohio State University Department of English; with RBML; and with The Ohio State University Knowledge Bank, this project, currently in its penultimate phase, digitizes for free public access all the known early poems by Sarah Morgan Bryan (Piatt) published in *The New York Ledger*, one of the most popular periodicals of its age. This crucial and substantial archive of her early work is not currently available in any published edition. Launch projected in time for the 2019 Piatt Centennial.

The Capital, 1871-1880. I devised this digital initiative under the larger rubric of the Sarah Morgan Bryan Piatt collections housed at the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library (RBML), The Ohio State University Libraries. A collaborative enterprise with The Mac-A-Cheek Foundation for the Humanities, the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library (RBML) of The Ohio State University Libraries, and The Ohio State University Knowledge Bank, this project digitized for free public access all issues of *The Capital* published from 12 March 1871 through 22 Feb. 1880. A rare, Washington, D.C. weekly newspaper and important historical record of Reconstruction,

this paper was founded and managed by Donn Piatt, Sarah Piatt's cousin by marriage, who often featured her poems in its pages. Official launch 30 Sept. 2016.

Other Professional Activities

Nominating Committee, Melville Society, 2013-2016.

Foerster Prize Committee, Chair, American Literature Section, MLA, 2012.

A.K. Smith Visiting Scholar, Trinity College, 2009.

Collection development, Sarah Morgan Bryan Piatt collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, The Ohio State University Libraries, including the Paula Bennet Collection and the Larry R. Michaels Collection.

Press Coverage

“New Book Features Sandusky Poet Forgotten for More than a Century.” By Tom Jackson. *Sandusky Register* (11 Feb. 2018).
<http://www.sanduskyregister.com/story/201802080032>.

“The MLA on Academic Freedom, Faculty Status, and the Value of Argument.” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (11 Jan. 2008): A16.

“Professing Literature: 20 Years Later.” 28 Dec. 2007. By Jennifer Ruark.
<http://chronicle.com/blogs/conference>.

“Melville Mystery Cannot Be Stifled By New Biography.” By Philip Weiss. *The New York Observer* (17 June 2002): 1.

“Why Authors Get Hot.” By Julia Keller. *The Chicago Tribune* (21 April 2002): 7.1+.

“Her Work Inspires New Look at Forgotten Poet.” By Bill Eichenberger. *The Columbus Dispatch* (27 Feb. 2001): D8, D6.

“Beethoven's Hair Tells All!” By Philip Weiss. *The New York Times Magazine* (29 Nov. 1998).

“Herman-Neutics.” By Philip Weiss. *The New York Times Magazine* (15 Dec. 1996): 60-65, 70-72.

“The ‘New’ Melville: Revelations about Author's Personal Life Bring a Re-Evaluation.” By Scott Heller. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (6 April 1994): A8, A14.

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY HONORS AND AWARDS

2014 The Ronald and Deborah Ratner Distinguished Teaching Award, College of Arts and Sciences, Division of Arts and Humanities
2012 Undergraduate Professor of the Year, Department of English
2012 Sigma Tau Delta Honorary Professor of the Year
2010 Graduate Professor of the Year, Department of English
2008 Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching
2006 Rodica C. Botoman Award for Distinguished Undergraduate Teaching and Mentoring, College of Humanities

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY GRANTS AND LEAVES (since 2007)

2017, International Travel Grant, Division of Arts and Humanities
2015-2016 Faculty Professional Leave
2013 Special Assignment, Division of Arts and Humanities
2012 Pressey Course Enrichment Grant, University Honors & Scholars Center
2011 Course Enhancement Grant, The Ohio State University Libraries
2009 Research Enhancement Grant, College of Humanities
2009 Honors Course Development Grant, University Honors & Scholars Center
2008 Course Enhancement Grant, The Ohio State University Libraries
2008 Faculty Professional Leave
2007 Grant-in-Aid, College of Humanities
2007 Special Research Assignment, College of Humanities

DEPARTMENT SERVICE (selected since 2007)

Executive Committee, 2016-2018, 2011-2013, 2008-2009, 2004-2006.
Course director, Introduction to Poetry.
Co-Chair, English Department Chair Search, 2016, 2012, 2009.
Course director, American literature survey, 2015, 2013, 2008-09.
Communications Committee, 2014-2015.
Special Assistant to the Chair, 2009-2011.
Convener, American Literature Before 1900 area group, 2008-2015.

COLLEGE SERVICE (selected)

Ratner Award Selection Committee, 2016.
Co-Chair, English Department Chair Search, 2016, 2012, 2009.
NEH proposal review, 2012.
Curriculum Committee, 2004-2007.

UNIVERSITY SERVICE (selected)

Advisory Committee, Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, The Ohio State University Libraries, 2010-2013.

Faculty Presenter, Honors Orientation Session, 2008.

Presidential appointee, Council on the Physical Environment, University Senate, The Ohio State University, 2003-2006.

Faculty Presenter, President's Salute to Undergraduate Achievement, 2004.

COURSES TAUGHT (selected)

Introductory undergraduate courses

Introduction to Fiction; Special Topics in Popular Culture: Alternative Rock Lyrics as Poems; Colonial and U.S. Literature, Origins to the Present; Colonial and U.S. Literature to 1865; U.S. Literature 1865-Present; Introduction to Poetry; Introduction to American Literature (in both 45-student and large-lecture formats).

Upper-level undergraduate courses

American Poetry: Reconstruction and The Gilded Age; American Poetry in a Time of Tumult, 1865-1900; Archival Research Methods and American Literature, 1865-1900 (honors); Alternative Rock Lyrics as Poems; The Age of Realism and Naturalism (honors); Sarah Piatt; *Moby-Dick*; Writing about *Moby-Dick* (honors); Herman Melville; Special Topics in American Poetry, 1800-1900 (honors and non-honors versions); Colonial and U.S. Literature to 1830; U.S. Literature 1830-1865; U.S. Literature 1865-1914.

Undergraduate writing courses

Freshman Composition (honors and non-honors versions); The U.S. Experience in Literature (second-level writing, honors and non-honors versions); Critical Writing (third-level writing, English-major specific, in honors and non-honors versions).

Graduate courses

Archival Research Methods; Rethinking the Post-Civil War Era, 1866-1900; U.S. Poetry, 1865-1900; Introduction to Graduate Study in American Literature, 1840-1914; Nineteenth-century American literature: The Field, the Institution, and Canon Formation, 1870-1950; Nineteenth-century American poetry; Herman Melville; Teaching College English.