

# MICA HILSON

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## Education

Ph.D. in English with minor in Literary Theory, Indiana University, December 2010

M.A./B.A. in English, Emory University, 1998

(M.A. Thesis: “‘No Productions Allowed’: The Experimental Drama of Eugene O’Neill”)

B.A. in Mathematics, Emory University, 1998

## Academic Employment

**Program Chair, English & Communications**, American University of Armenia (2020-)

**Associate Professor of English & Communications**, American University of Armenia (2019-)

**Assistant Professor of English & Communications**, American University of Armenia (2016-2019)

**Assistant Professor**, Francis Marion University (2013-2016)

**Visiting Lecturer**, Indiana University (2012-2013)

**Part-Time Assistant Professor**, DePauw University (2011)

**Associate Instructor**, Indiana University (2000-2010)

## Peer-Reviewed Publications

“Toxic Masculinity in Gay Erotic Fiction” in *The Routledge Companion to Masculinity in American Literature and Culture*, ed. Lydia Cooper. New York: Routledge (2022).

“Queer Anxieties and Perverse Desires in the Alien Infiltration Film” in *Essays on the Adaptation and Influence of 1950s SF Films*, eds. Dennis Perry and Dennis Cutchins. Jefferson: McFarland (expected 2022)

“‘The kind of person who would mess with a kid’: Cultural Fantasies of Stranger-Danger and AM Homes’ ‘Looking for Johnny’.” *The Comparatist* 45 (2021).

“Networks, Desire and Risk Management in Gay Contagion Fiction” in *Embodying Contagion: The Viropolitics of Horror and Desire in Contemporary Discourse*, eds. Sandra Becker, Megen de Bruin-Mole, and Sara Polak. Chicago: U of Chicago Press (2021).

“Terrifying Odysseys and Pleasurable Detours: Sexuality and Xenophobia in *Road Trip* and *Eurotrip*” in *Our Fears Made Manifest: Essays on Terror, Trauma, and Loss in Film, 1998-2019*, ed. Ashley Jae Carranza. Jefferson: McFarland (2021).

“‘The Damned Don’t Cry’: Melancholia and White British Masculinity in 1980s Synthpop Music.” *de genere: Journal of Literary, Postcolonial, and Gender Studies* 6 (2020).

“The Cost of Whimsy in *Mood Indigo* and *The Grand Budapest Hotel*” in *Re:Focus: The Works of Michel Gondry*, eds. Jennifer Kirby and Marcelline Block. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP (2020).

"Slipping Queer Under the Radar" in *Curricular Innovations: LGBT Literatures and the New English Studies*, eds. William P. Banks and John Pruitt. New York: Peter Lang (2019).

"Reimagining the Family Tree: Property, Biopolitics, and Queer Kinship in David Malouf's Remembering Babylon and Patrick White's Riders in the Chariot." *Pacific Coast Philology* 53.2 (2018).

"'Rubbish of All Kinds': Domesticity, Squalor, and Squatting in Doris Lessing's Fiction." *Doris Lessing Studies* 36.1 (2018).

"Bath-Time and Cruising Time: Temporality, Tension, and Release in Pinter." *Harold Pinter Review* 1 (2017): 50-65.

"The Forces of Habit and the Ethics of Self-Composture." *The Comparatist* 40 (2016): 128-43.

"Rooting for the Unrooted: Invasive Species and Uncanny Ecosystems in Peter Carey's 'Exotic Pleasures'" in *The Ethics and Rhetoric of Invasion Ecology*, eds. James Stanescu and Kevin Cummings. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016. 141-58.

"A Dwarf at the Table: Hospitality and the Non-Normate Body in Modern Literature" in *Security and Hospitality in Literature and Culture*, eds. Jeffrey Clapp and Emily Ridge. London: Routledge, 2015.

"'The odd man out in the family?' Queer Throwbacks and Reproductive Futurism in *The Fifth Child*" Reprinted in *Contemporary Literary Criticism Yearbook 2013*, Vol. 370, ed. Lawrence J. Trudeau. Farmington Hills: Cengage/Gale, 2015.

"A Doctor for *Who(m)*?: Queer Temporalities and the Sexualized Child." Co-written with Adrienne Wadewitz. *Bookbird*. 2014.

"Sharing Economies and Value Systems on the Nifty Archive" in *The Feminist and Queer Information Studies Reader*, eds. Rebecca Dean and Patrick Keilty. Los Angeles: Litwin, 2013.

"'The odd man out in the family?' Queer Throwbacks and Reproductive Futurism in *The Fifth Child*" in *Doris Lessing Studies* 30.1 (2011): 18-22.

"The 'Problem' of William Styron in *The Confessions of Nat Turner*" in *Literary Griot: International Journal of Black Expressive Cultural Studies* 14.1-2 (2002): 103-23.

## **Other Publications**

"The Little Revolution That Could: What can the world learn from Armenia's successful uprising against a would-be strongman?" *Slate* 10 May 2018.

"Kiss of the Snake Woman" in *Los Angeles Review of Books* 16 November 2015.

## Selected Conference Presentations

- "Lydian International's Amulsar Project as a Study in Failed Corporate Communications."  
*Modern Language Association Conference*, Toronto, January 2021
- "The Homosociality of Possession and the Homosociality of Access in William Maxwell's *The Folded Leaf*." *MLA International Symposium*, Lisbon, July 2019
- "The Lifespan of a Corpse in *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*."  
*European Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts Conference*, Athens, June 2019
- "Pure Green or Promiscuous Green?: Eco-Puritanism and *The Sin of Father Mouret*."  
*European Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts Conference*, Copenhagen, June 2018
- "'Rubbish of All Kinds': Domesticity, Squalor, and Squatting in Doris Lessing's Fiction."  
*Modern Language Association Conference*, New York, January 2018.
- "Desire and Risk Management in Contagion Fiction"  
*American Comparative Literature Association Conference*, Utrecht, July 2017
- "Ecocriticism, The Human Microbiome, and the Cultural Politics of Probiotics"  
*European Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts Conference*, Stockholm, June 2016
- "Internal Plumbing or Lush Jungle?: (Re)Imagining the Gut"  
*11<sup>th</sup> ASLE Biennial Conference*, University of Idaho, June 2015.
- "*Woman's World* and the Pains and Pleasures of Collage"  
*Modern Language Association Conference*, Austin, January 2016.

## Dissertation

**Title:** *From Pulp to Plasma Screen: A History of Gay Erotic Fiction, 1965-Present*

**Committee:** Karma Lochrie (director), Alexander Doty (Communication & Culture/ Gender Studies), Joan Hawkins (Communication & Culture), and Shane Vogel (English)

## Other Work Experience

**Rutgers University Press**, Freelance Copywriter (2011-2022)

**MIT Press**, Freelance Copywriter (2022)

**University of Washington Press**, Freelance Copywriter (2020)

## Departmental and University Service

### *At AUA*

**Admissions Committee Member**, 2017-2022. E&C representative on the admissions committee. Interviewed hundreds of student applicants per admissions cycle. Evaluated undergraduate candidates for admission. Advised on admissions policies. Designed written and spoken English assessments for students unable to take the TOEFL/IELTS exams during quarantine, then graded them. Participated in recruitment efforts.

**Academic Affairs Committee Member**, 2016-2018. Heard appeals from students dismissed for poor academic performance. Decided policies on dismissals and probation.

**Search Committee Member** for AUA Provost, 2020-2021. Worked with recruiting firm Isaacson & Miller to edit job advertisement, evaluate applications, conduct interviews, and meet with prospective candidates.

**Search Committee Member** for AUA Head Librarian, 2019-2020. Rewrote job advertisement, evaluated applications, conducted Skype interviews, and met with prospective candidates.

**Search Committee Member** for Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences, 2018-2019. Rewrote job advertisement, evaluated applications, conducted Skype interviews, and met with prospective candidates.

**Search Committee Member** for Dean of Student Affairs, 2016-2017. Evaluated applications, conducted Skype interviews, and met with prospective candidates.

**Peer Mentor Selection Committee**, 2018-2020. Evaluated over 40 candidates for student peer mentor positions per year, conducting interviews with each.

**Graduate Studies Advisor** for English & Communications, 2017-2019. Ran informational sessions for E&C majors interested in graduate study in the humanities or social sciences. Provided one-on-one counseling for students applying to graduate programs.

**Faculty Advisor** for *Speak-Up Club*, 2017-2021. Oversaw student-run public speaking club, which has organized many events with speakers such as Hakub Arshakyan and Richard Giragosian. Participated in panel discussion on “Armenian Women and Social Equality.”

**Faculty Advisor** for *Pathway To... Club*, 2018. Oversaw student-run club devoted to improving the lives of disabled children in Armenia and increasing accessibility for disabled Armenians.

**Workshop Presenter** for “Critical Thinking and Analysis Made Easy Easier,” 2018-2021. Designed and presented a skill-building workshop for AUA undergraduates through the Center for Student Success.

### *At Other Institutions*

**Faculty Advisor** for *Snow Island Review*, 2014-2015. Oversaw Francis Marion University campus literary magazine, publicized student literary events, selected student editors.

**Honors Thesis Director** for Robbie Miley, 2015-2016. Held twice-weekly meetings with Senior English major writing a thesis on the evolution of internet memes.

**Member** of Francis Marion University World Literature Search Committee, 2014-2015. Reviewed candidate dossiers, offered assessments, and interviewed finalists.

**Member** of Francis Marion University Professional Writing Committee, 2013-2015. Reviewed internship portfolios of Professional Writing majors and participated in program assessment.

**Member** of FMU Freshman Writing Committee, 2014-2015. Assisted in assessment and administration of the composition program and selected essays for student writing prizes.

**Co-Organizer** of FMU Wiki-edit-a-thon, 2015. As part of “Gender Week,” organized faculty-student event writing, expanding, and editing Wikipedia pages on local topics related to women’s history and minority representation in South Carolina.

**Undergraduate Advisor** at Francis Marion University, 2014-2015. Advised both upper-level English majors and incoming undeclared students, helping to plan their course schedules.

**Judge** for FMU Undergraduate Research Award, 2015 & 2016.

**Faculty Chaperone** for Francis Marion University educational trip to Cuba, March 2014.

**Founding Member** of Indiana University’s interdisciplinary Disability Studies Reading Group, exploring disability from theoretical, pedagogical, and activist perspectives.

**Member** of DePauw University English Department “Century Committee,” responsible for the administration of lower-division courses, Fall 2011.

**Faculty Interviewer** on the DePauw University Fulbright Committee, Fall 2011. Interviewed and advised Seniors applying for Fulbright grants.

**Graduate Representative** on Indiana University English W170 course selection committee, Fall 2007 and Spring 2008, choosing among numerous proposals for interdisciplinary, topics-based, first-year writing courses.

**Creative Director** and **Co-Chair** for the Indiana University English Department's international interdisciplinary graduate conference, 2004-2009. Helped found the conference, which has now been running for over 15 years. Handled continuity, managed publicity, designed flyers, posters, and conference programs, wrote the CFP, and proposed the theme for each of the following conferences:

|                                       |             |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| "Transmission→Translation→Relocation" | Spring 2009 |
| "Open Secrets: Knowing and Unknowing" | Spring 2008 |
| "Time/Passages"                       | Spring 2007 |
| "Going Awry"                          | Spring 2006 |
| "Intimacy/Proximity"                  | Spring 2005 |
| "Excess"                              | Spring 2004 |

## Selected Teaching

### *Taught at American University of Armenia*

#### **E&C 104—"Introduction to Communications"** (2016-2021)

Redesigned existing syllabus to include more material traditionally found in a Communications course (e.g. social and behavioral science approaches). Included units on the history of communications, non-verbal communication, semiotics, the psychology of communication, group communication, intercultural communication, mass media, and new media. Added a heavy writing component to give first-semester students more practice with academic writing strategies and genres.

#### **E&C 120—"American Literature"** (2017-2020)

Chose all texts and designed all writing assignments and exams for this survey of American literature from colonial times to the present, designed for second-semester Freshmen. Included a wide selection of genres (including captivity narratives, slave narratives, essays, melodramas, and pulp fiction) from an array of canonical and lesser-known authors, including Bradstreet, Longfellow, Alcott, Chesnutt, Lovecraft, Stein, Didion, Lorde, and Saunders.

#### **E&C 121—"English Literature"** (2018-2019)

Chose all texts and designed all writing assignments and exams for this survey of English literature from Anglo-Saxon times to the present, designed for first-semester Sophomores. Included a wide selection of genres (including riddles, morality plays, travel narratives, detective fiction, and avant-garde drama) from an array of canonical and lesser-known authors, including Chaucer, Defoe, Blake, Woolf and Lessing.

#### **E&C 200—"Discourse Analysis"** (2017-2019)

Collaborated with Melissa Brown on revising the existing syllabus for this class for second-semester Sophomores. Emphasized techniques for written discourse analysis, visual

rhetoric analysis, and conversation analysis, which were then applied to a wide variety of situations, texts, and genres, from restaurant menus to resumes, from political speeches to talk-show interviews.

**E&C 290—“Research Methods” (2016-2021)**

Collaborated with Arto Vaun, Maria Titizian, and Melissa Brown to pilot this class, taught to first-semester Seniors. Drafted all program documents and assignment sheets regarding the course and the capstone sequence. Introduced students to quantitative and qualitative research methodologies in communication, media studies, PR studies, cultural studies, textual analysis, and the humanities and social sciences more generally. Customized the course readings each semester to cater to student interests. Helped students brainstorm and refine their capstone project ideas.

**E&C 299—“Capstone” (2017-2022)**

Collaborated with Arto Vaun, Maria Titizian, and Melissa Brown to pilot this class, taught to second-semester Seniors. Met with each student individually on a weekly basis, providing guidance and encouragement on their capstone projects. Evaluated each capstone project at the end of the semester. Directed a diverse range of academic and creative capstone projects, including work on historical video games, ISIS propaganda, Armenian proverbs, repatriate integration in Armenia, retention of PicsArt app users, Parajanov’s surrealist films, and a book of fairytales for Armenian children.

*Taught at Francis Marion University*

**Honors Colloquium—“Bodies of Information” (Spring 2015)**

Chose all texts and designed all writing assignments and exams for this interdisciplinary special topics course, designed for Senior Honors students. Examined the history of biodata collection, including phrenology and fingerprinting, then raised ethical, legal, and practical questions about the future of biodata collection, from genetic databases to digital photos. Explored topics from a range of disciplinary perspectives, including authors from criminology, medicine, media studies, critical geography, economics, and informatics.

**Writing for Disciplines—“Much Obligated: Gifts, Hospitality, Sharing” (2013-2016)**

Chose all texts and designed all assignments in this lower-division composition course, the final general education requirement in a three-course sequence. Explored themes of hospitality and gift exchange from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, including philosophy, anthropology, business management, ecology, medicine, law, and literature. Designed a range of assignments offering practice in specific academic writing skills and genre conventions, while also establishing connections between academic writing and personal, professional, and public writing genres.

**Professional Writing (2015-2016)**

Introduced upper-division students to common genres of professional writing, including reports, memos, cover letters, and resumes. Emphasized visual elements of document design, both on paper and in digital formats. Focused on a multiphase group project, requiring students to research feasible solutions to real-world local problems, then develop rhetorical strategies that would persuade the relevant authorities to implement their solutions.

### **Argumentative Writing (2013-2015)**

Chose all texts and designed all assignments in this introductory composition course. Emphasized three main skills—reading for arguments, being mindful of audience and tone when making arguments, and using research to bolster arguments. Developed a range of multimodal assignments that used students’ relative strengths in oral communication, visual literacy, and digital literacy to help bridge gaps in academic reading and writing skills.

### **Introduction to Expository Writing (2015)**

Introduced first-year students to basic concepts of organization, grammar, audience, purpose, and genre (including reflection essays, problem-solution papers, evaluative writing, summaries, and position papers). Emphasized the importance of the prewriting, drafting, and revision processes, offering strategies for each stage. Worked with students and undergraduate writing tutors in a twice-weekly computer lab setting, designing small lab assignments to help students scaffold longer papers.

### ***Taught at Indiana University***

#### **Literary Interpretation—“Ecologies and Individuals in Literature” (Summer 2013)**

Chose all texts and designed all writing assignments and exams in this required introductory methods course for English majors and minors. Explored relationships between individuals and larger ecologies—including natural ecosystems, as well as urban ecologies, social ecologies, and other large-scale complex systems. Included a diverse range of authors, from Walt Whitman to Daphne du Maurier, from Heinrich von Kleist to Sarah Ruhl.

#### **Critical Practices—“Access Codes” (Spring 2013)**

Chose all texts and designed all writing assignments and exams in this capstone course for upper-level English majors. Surveyed major schools of literary and critical theory (including queer theory, feminism, psychoanalysis, Marxism, deconstruction, reader-response and postcolonial theory), using the concepts of “access” and “decoding” as entry points to understanding these relatively inaccessible texts. Applied these critical perspectives to a variety of literature, including works by Shakespeare, Malouf, and Jelinek.

#### **Literary Interpretation—“Body of the Text/Text of the Body” (Fall 2012)**

Chose all texts and designed all writing assignments and exams in this required introductory methods course for English majors and minors. Explored how the body is represented as an object of interpretation within poetry, drama, and fiction, while considering the roles that (dis)embodiment has played in the production of each genre. Included a diverse range of authors, from Andrew Marvell to Claude McKay, from Lord Tennyson to Lynn Nottage.



**Critical Practices—"Hacking the System"** (Spring 2012)

Chose all texts and designed all writing assignments and exams in this capstone course for upper-level English majors. Drawing parallels between computer hackers and critical theorists, both of whom try to master a given system's codes and rules in order to subvert them, surveyed major schools of literary and critical theory (including Marxism, psychoanalysis, critical race theory, feminism, queer theory, and postcolonial theory). Applied these critical perspectives to a variety of literary texts about individuals who try to resist systems of domination, including works by Zola, Moravia, and Octavia Butler.

**Professional Writing** (2012-2013)

Introduced upper-division students to common genres of professional writing, including reports, memos, cover letters, and resumes. Emphasized visual elements of document design, both on paper and in digital formats. Focused on a multiphase group project, requiring students to research feasible solutions to real-world local problems, then develop rhetorical strategies that would persuade the relevant authorities to implement their solutions.

**Advanced Expository Writing—"Writing for New Media"** (2012; 1 section)

Chose all texts and designed all assignments in this upper-division composition course. Explored numerous aspects of digital culture, from gaming to privacy issues, through a focused inquiry into how new media is eroding distinctions between work and play. Practiced both traditional genres of academic writing – position papers, analytical writing – and less formal modes of online writing, including websites and professional blogs.

**Analytical Writing—"Virtual Identities, Embodied Identities"** (2012; 2 sections)

Chose all texts in this first-year composition course, which explored the construction of alternate identities, both online and in the physical world. Analyzed films (including *Superbad* and *Boys Don't Cry*) and historical advertisements alongside the work of scholars like Susan Bordo, Aaron Devor, and Deborah Tannen, focusing on constructions of gender identity and representations of the body.

*Taught at Depauw University***College Writing—"Writing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century"**, at DePauw University (2011)

Chose all texts and designed all writing assignments for this introductory composition course. Explored a host of issues raised by new technology and postmodern culture – including mash-up culture, information overload, intellectual property wars, bioethics, and cultural appropriation. Emphasized strategies for writing and research in the digital age, from collaborative editing to multimedia essays.