

LAURA WITTMAN
Department of French and Italian
Stanford University
Stanford, CA 94305-2010
Tel (650) 725-5243 / Fax (650) 723-0482
email: lwittman@stanford.edu

EDUCATION

PhD, Department of Italian Language and Literature, Yale University, 2001

Dissertation: "Mystics Without God: Spirituality and Form in Italian and French Modernism."

Topic: An analysis of the historical and intellectual context for the self-descriptive use of the term "mystic without God" in the works of Gabriele d'Annunzio and Paul Valéry.

Advisor: Professor Paolo Valesio

MPhil, Department of Italian Language and Literature, Yale University, 1996

MA, Department of Italian Language and Literature, Yale University, 1995

BA, Yale University, *Summa cum Laude*, double major in French (with Distinction) and Italian (with Exceptional Distinction), 1991

French Baccalaureate, Lycée Français de Washington (Washington, D. C.), with honors, 1986

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Associate Professor of French and Italian, Department of French and Italian, Stanford University (8/2012-present)

Assistant Professor of French and Italian (tenure track), Department of French and Italian, Stanford University (8/2004-8/2012)

Assistant Professor of Italian (tenure track), Department of French and Italian, Department of Comparative Literature, affiliated with the Department of Film Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara (7/2000-6/2004)

Instructor, Department of Italian Language and Literature, Yale University (1994-1995)

EXTRAMURAL AWARDS AND HONORS

NEH Fellowship, National Endowment for the Humanities (September 2014-August 2015)

Charles S. Ryskamp Fellowship, American Council of Learned Societies (September 2014-May 2015)

Penn Neuroscience Boot Camp, University of Pennsylvania (July 30-August 8 2012)

Summer Research Fellowship, American Academy in Rome (July-August 2008)

NEH Summer Research Stipend (summer 2002)

Rome Prize Fellowship, American Academy in Rome (Post-Classical Humanistic Studies) (1997-98)

Charlotte W. Newcombe Dissertation Fellowship, Woodrow Wilson Foundation (1996-97)

Fulbright Scholar (University of Bologna, Bologna, Italy) (1991-92)

Elected to Phi Beta Kappa (1991)

INTRAMURAL AWARDS AND HONORS

Vice-Provost for Undergraduate Education, Stanford University, Course Development Grant (summer and fall 2012, research assistant and web site development funding)

Language, Literature, and Mysticism Research Unit, Stanford University (2010-14, Conference, Course Development, and research funding)

California Interdisciplinary Consortium for Italian Studies Annual Meeting 2009, Stanford University (2009, Conference and research funding)

Faculty Career Development Award, University of California, Santa Barbara (summer 2003, research grant)

Humanities and Arts Fellowship, University of California, Santa Barbara (summer 2003, research grant)

Faculty Career Development Award, University of California, Santa Barbara (winter 2003, sabbatical grant)

Junior Faculty Research Incentive Award, University of California, Santa Barbara (2001-02, research grant)

Regents' Junior Faculty Fellowship, University of California, Santa Barbara (8/2001, research grant)

Research Grant, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University (6/1996-7/1996)

Enders Grant, Yale University (7/1996)

Graduate Fellowship, Yale University (1992-94)

Research Grant, Department of Comparative Literature, Yale University (1989)

Thomas C. Bergin Prize for Best Essay, Italian Department, Yale University (1989)

Montaigne Prize for French Translation, French Department, Yale University (1988)

BOOKS

IN PRINT:

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Modern Mourning, and the Reinvention of the Mystical Body. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011.

This book explores the creation and reception of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier – an Italian, French, and British invention at the end of the First World War – as an emblem for modern mourning, from a cultural, historical, and literary perspective. It draws on literary and filmic evocations of the Unknown Soldier to interpret this memorial's longstanding popularity and politically subversive meanings.

Winner of the 2012 Marraro Award from the Society for Italian Historical Studies, American History Association.

IN PROGRESS:

Lazarus' Silence: Near-Death Experiences in Fiction, Science, and Popular Culture.

This book is the first cultural history of near-death experiences in the twentieth-century West, and it puts literary rewritings of the Biblical Lazarus story – by major authors such as Leonid Andreyev, Miguel de Unamuno, D. H. Lawrence, Luigi Pirandello, Graham Greene, Georges Bataille, André Malraux, and Péter Nádas – in the double context of popular versions of coming back to life in testimonies, fiction, and film, and of evolving medical and neuroscientific investigation. Its central questions are: how near-death stories shape our understanding of consciousness; and how they affect our care for the dying.

EDITED VOLUMES

The Sacred in Italian Culture: Forms and Practices. Vol. 5 of California Italian Studies (CIS). Co-Edited with Simonetta Falasca and Jon Snyder. Forthcoming in 2015.

Futurism: An Anthology, ed. Christine Poggi (Visual Arts), Lawrence Rainey (Manifestos), and Laura Wittman (Literary Works) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009). Includes Laura Wittman, "Introduction to Part III: Stars-in-Freedom and the Dark Night of Futurism."

Italy and France: Imagined Geographies, ed. Laura Wittman. Special double issue of the *Romanic Review*, May-November 2006. Includes Laura Wittman, "Introduction: Imagined Geographies."

ARTICLES IN PEER-REVIEWED JOURNALS

"Avant-Garde War Memorials and the Body." *Annali d'Italianistica*. Special issue on "The Great War and the Modernist Imagination in Italy," ed. Luca Somigli and Simona Storchi. Forthcoming in 2015.

"Cuore-proiettile' [projectile-heart]: From Marinetti's *Mafarka* to World War One and Ungaretti." *L'anello che non tiene* 22 (Spring-Fall 2010).

"Mystical Insight and Psychoanalysis in the Fin-de-Siècle Novel: Huysmans, Bourget, d'Annunzio." *Forum Italicum* 32:1 (Spring 2008): 30-51.

"A proposito di un dialogo post-francescano." [A propos of a post-Franciscan dialogue] *Yale Italian Poetry*, vol. VII, Fall 2003: 257-67.

"Vittorio Sereni o l'istinto della gioia." [Vittorio Sereni or the instinct for joy] *Forum Italicum*, Fall 2001: 403-31.

"Introduction and Notes to the Selections from the Unpublished Diaries of F. T. Marinetti." (with Lawrence Rainey) *Modernism/Modernity* 1, no. 3 (September 1994): 1-25.

CHAPTERS IN PEER-REVIEWED BOOKS

"Rebellious War Memorials." In *The Edinburgh Companion to the First World War and the Arts*. Forthcoming in 2015.

"Mimetic Desire in Otherworldly Narratives." In *Studies in Violence, Mimesis, and Culture*, ed. Heather Webb and Pierpaolo Antonello (Ann Arbor, MI: Michigan State University Press, forthcoming in 2014).

"Undefended Communication." In *Discourse, Boundary, Creation*, ed. Peter Carravetta. New York: Bordighera Press, 2013.

"The Visible, Unexposed: Francesco Rosi's *Salvatore Giuliano* (1961)." In *Mafia Movies*, ed. Dana Renga (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011)

"Omnes velut aqua dilabimur: Antonio Fogazzaro, *The Saint*, and Catholic Modernism." In *Italian Modernism*, ed. Mario Moroni and Luca Somigli (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005).

ARTICLES AND BOOK CHAPTERS

"Fogazzaro tra Occultismo e Modernismo" [Fogazzaro between Occultism and Modernism]. In *Fogazzaro nel mondo*, ed. Adriana Chemello and Fabio Finotti (Vicenza, Italy: Accademia Olimpica, 2013).

"Eugenio Montale: *Cuttlefish Bones*, *The Occasions*, and *The Storm*, Etc." In *World Literature and Its Times*, vol. 7: *Italian Literature and Its Times*, ed. Joyce Moss (Santa Monica, CA: Thomson Gale, 2006).

"Giuseppe Ungaretti: *Life of a Man*." In *World Literature and Its Times*, vol. 7: *Italian Literature and Its Times*, ed. Joyce Moss (Santa Monica, CA: Thomson Gale, 2006).

"Benedetta's Lyrical Transfiguration of Matter." *Polytext*, winter 1999-2000: 180-92.

BOOK REVIEWS

Review of *The Puccini Problem* by Alexandra Wilson. *The Cambridge Opera Journal*. (Fall 2008)

Review of *The Other Modernism: F. T. Marinetti's Futurist Fiction of Power*, by Cinzia Sartini Blum, and *L'Utopia futurista*, by Gianni Eugenio Viola. *Modernism/Modernity* 4, no. 2 (1997): 197-203.

SELECTED TRANSLATIONS

Emilio Gentile, "Conflicting Modernisms: *La Voce* and the Myth of the New Italy," in Emilio Gentile, *Great Italy: The Rise and Fall of the Myth of the Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004). (Italian to English)

Paula Chamlee, *Madonnina* (Revere, Penn.: Lodima Press, 2004). (English to Italian, and Italian to English)

"Marinetti Papers: Letters and Postcards from Gino Severini to F. T. Marinetti, 1910-1915," in Anne Coffin Hanson, *Severini futurista: 1912-1917*, exhibition catalogue (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1995). (Italian and French to English)

Michel Thévoz, "Dubuffet: The Nutcracker," *Yale French Studies* 84 (1994). (French to English)

INVITED LECTURES

"Consciousness and the Visionary Mind in Near-Death Experiences." Interdisciplinary Approaches to Consciousness Series, Stanford University, 9 May 2013.

"Memory, Vision, and the Unmaking of the Self." Narrative Medicine in the 21st Century Conference. The Ohio State University, 5-6 April 2013.

"Lazarus' Silence." How I Think About Literature Series, Stanford University, 15 March 2013.

"The Mafia in Italy and Beyond." Stanford Saturday University, Fall 2012.

"The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Modern Mourning, and the Reinvention of the Mystical Body." *Harvard University, De Bosis Colloquium*, Boston, 26 March 2012.

"Personal Mythology, Mass Mourning, and Catholic Modernism During World War One: d'Annunzio, Ungaretti, and Marinetti." Penn Center for Italian Studies, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 23 February 2012.

"The Unknown Soldier Returns: Mutilation, Spectacle, and the Mystical Body of the Nation," keynote address at *(Dis)Unity in Italy (Annual Graduate Student Conference at UCLA)*, University of California, Los Angeles, January 27-28, 2012.

"Fogazzaro fra occultismo e modernismo" [Fogazzaro between occultism and modernism], *Fogazzaro nel Mondo*, Vicenza, Italy, 10-11 October 2011.

"Mimetic Desire in Otherworldly Narratives," *Deceit, Desire and the Novel Fifty Years Later*, Stanford University, 14-15 April 2011.

"Undefended Communication," *Between Logos and Nomos: Festschrift for Paolo Valesio*, Columbia University, 23 April 2010.

"Cuore-proiettile' [projectile-heart]: From *Mafarka* to World War One," *Marinetti and Ungaretti: Futurisms and Avant-Gardes*, Department of French and Italian, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 9-10 October 2009.

"Absolute Anarchism, Marinetti, and World War One," *Poetry + Painting + Politics x Professors = Futurism Past*, SF MOMA, 17 October 2009.

“Oceanic Manuscripts,” *Futurism at 100: The Measure of a Centenary, 1909-2009*, Harvard University, 17-18 April 2009.

“Anonymity, Embodied Memory, and Trauma,” keynote address at *Memory and Trauma (Fourteenth Annual Graduate Student Association Conference at the Ohio State University)*. April 18-19, 2008.

“A New Philology,” Yale Italian Alumni Conference in honor of Thomas Bergin, Yale University, New Haven, CT. October 28, 2006.

“Metaphor, Loss, and the Fragile Absolute in the Italian and French *Fin-de-Siècle*.” New York University, Casa Italiana, December 1, 2005.

“Metamorphosis as Mystical Encounter.” Department of Italian Studies, University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, California. 20 February 2002.

“Severini and Marinetti: A Futurist Friendship.” Gallery talk to accompany the show *Severini futurista: 1912-1917*. Yale Art Gallery, New Haven, CT. 28 and 30 November 1995.

LECTURES

“Near-Death, Grief, and Hope in Historical Perspective.” International Association for Near-Death Studies Conference, Crystal City, Virginia, August 29-September 1, 2013.

“Holism in Italian Philosophy and Neuroscience.” Modern Language Association Conference, Los Angeles, CA, 6-9 January 2011.

“Out-of-Body Experience and Embodied Communication.” *Language, Literature, and Mysticism*, Stanford University, 15-16 October 2010.

“Divine Women’ and the Poetry of Alda Merini.” Modern Language Association Conference, San Francisco, CA, 27-30 December 2008.

Presentations on Jonas, Schroedinger, Emerson, Kant, Sartre, Schopenhauer, Heidegger, Kierkegaard, William James, Bergson, Camus, de Rougemont. Philosophical Reading Group, Stanford University, 2004-present.

“Logos and Compassion: Benedict XVI’s 2006 “Regensburg Speech” and Pius X’s 1907 “Pascendi dominici gregis.”” *Bay Area Benedict Conference*. Stanford, May 9, 2008.

“Mutilation and the Invention of the Unknown Soldier Memorial, Italy and France, 1916-22.” Meeting of the California Interdisciplinary Consortium for Italian Studies, UC Santa Cruz, 28 Feb – 1 Mar, 2008.

“Religion and Politics in Bellocchio’s *L’ora di religione*.” Modern Language Association Conference, Chicago, IL, 27-30 December 2007.

“Mystical Insight and the Mimetic Self.” American Association of Italian Studies Annual Conference, The Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado. May 5, 2007.

“The Fragility of the Plural.” *Bay Area Schroedinger Conference*. Stanford, May 20-21, 2005.

“Pasolini and the Revisionist Mafia Movie,” “Murder and Mayhem Conference,” Florence, Italy. 4 July 2004.

“Pasolini’s ‘Inner Enemy’ and the Revisionist Mafia Movie,” American Association of Italian Studies Annual Conference, Ottawa, Canada. 1 May 2004.

“The Abyssal Night: Idolatry and the Absolutist Instinct from d’Annunzio and Valéry to Michelstaedter and Bataille,” Department of French and Italian, Stanford University. February 2004.

“Nocturnal Light: Idolatry and the Absolutist Instinct from Vattimo and Derrida to d’Annunzio and Valéry,” Department of Italian Studies, Brown University. January 2004.

“Mystical Poetics, the Dark Night, and Secularization: from d'Annunzio and Valéry to Vattimo and Derrida,” Department of French and Italian, Northwestern University. January 2004.

“Pietro Germi's *Seduced and Abandoned*, an Introduction.” Italian Film Festival, University of California, Santa Barbara, 11 May 2003.

“The Mystical Body of Suffering and the Saints of *Italia Unita*.” Modern Language Association Conference, New York, New York, 27-30 December 2002.

“Reenacting the ‘Death of God’: The Genesis of F. T. Marinetti’s *Maifarka le futuriste*,” Modernism Research Focus Group, University of California, Santa Barbara, 24 May 2002.

“*I Cento Passi*: Introduction, Comments, and Discussion,” Italian Film Festival, University of California, Santa Barbara, 19 May 2002.

“The Mafia, Leftist Activism, and the Legacy of Pasolini in Marco Tullio Giordana's *I Cento Passi*.” Special guest lecture, Introduction to Italian culture, University of California, Santa Barbara, 13 May 2002.

“Martyrs to a *Patria in fieri*, from Foscolo to d'Annunzio.” Modern Language Association Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana, 27-30 December 2001.

“Catholic Mysticism, Cosmopolitan Mysticism: Italian Identity and the Modernist Crisis.” American Association of Italian Studies Annual Conference, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. 18-22 April 2001.

“D'Annunzio's Assault on Plenitude and the Event Beyond All Expression.” Department of French and Italian, University of California, Santa Barbara, California. 7 February 1999.

“The Most Secret Abandon: A Dialogue Between Gabriele d'Annunzio and Paul Valéry.” Department of Romance Languages, The Colorado College, Colorado Springs, Colorado. 28 January 1999.

“Mystics Without God: d'Annunzio, Valéry, and Modern Self-Consciousness.” American Academy in Rome, Rome, Italy. 18 May 1998.

“Gabriele d'Annunzio's Last Years at the Vittoriale.” Lecture and guided tour of d'Annunzio's home on Lake Garda for Fellows of the American Academy in Rome, Gardone, Italy. March 1998.

“Readings of Futurist Works.” Organized and participated in this poetry reading included in “Futurism: A Symposium at Yale University,” New Haven, CT. 3-4 November 1995.

MEDIA APPEARANCES

“Stanford University’s Teagle Humanities Courses Promote Faculty Graduate Teaching.” Ruth Starkman, Huffington Post Blog Post, 3/27/13. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ruth-starkman/stanford-universitys-teag_b_2918005.html

“What Fiction Can Tell Us About NDEs.” Laura Wittman, Huffington Post Blog Post, 11/28/2012. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/laura-wittman/nde-near-death-experiences-fiction_b_2204774.html

“From the Bible to the lab: Stanford scholar decodes the near-death experience.” By Camille Brown, *Stanford Report*, 10/30/2012. <http://news.stanford.edu/news/2012/october/near-death-experience-103012.html>

“Mourning the Unknown Soldier: An Interview with Laura Wittman.” With Thomas Wisniewski, Harvard University, 5/5/2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-tT5ErXelNY>

“A Conversation with Robert Harrison on Georges Bataille.” *Entitled Opinions (about Life and Literature)*, with Robert Harrison, on KZSU – 90.1 Stanford University Radio Station. 5 May 2010.

“A Conversation with Robert Harrison on the Poetry of A. R. Ammons.” *Entitled Opinions (about Life and Literature)*, with Robert Harrison, on KZSU – 90.1 Stanford University Radio Station. February 2008.

“A Conversation with Robert Harrison on Michel Tournier’s *Friday*.” *Entitled Opinions (about Life and Literature)*, with Robert Harrison, on KZSU – 90.1 Stanford University Radio Station. 14 September 2005.

CONFERENCES ORGANIZED

“Valerio Magrelli on Poetry and Poets.” Co-organized with Robert Harrison and Dylan Montanari. Stanford University, Stanford, CA. May 15, 2013.

“Milo de Angelis and Susan Stewart: A Conversation on Poetry and Translation.” Co-organized with Serena Ferrando. Stanford University, Stanford, CA. May 11, 2012.

Marla Stone: “The Enemy: Italian Fascist Anti-Communism and the Politics of Fear.” Stanford University, Stanford, CA. April 25, 2012.

Barbara Newman: “Exchanging Hearts, from Heloise to Helfta.” Co-organized with Marisa Galvez. Stanford University, Stanford, CA. February 27, 2012.

Language, Literature, and Mysticism. Stanford Humanities Center, Stanford, CA. October 15-16 2010.

California Interdisciplinary Consortium for Italian Studies, 2009 Annual Meeting. Stanford Humanities Center, Stanford, CA. 6-7 March 2009.

Italian film event: Caterina Borelli. Stanford, screening and workshop. November 17 and 18, 2005.

Cinema Italiano: Santa Barbara's First Festival of Contemporary Italian Cinema. Sponsored by the Italian Cultural Heritage Foundation of Santa Barbara, Fiesta Five Theatres, Santa Barbara, Creative Director and presenter of three film. October 24 and 25, 2003.

Italian Film Festival. Italian Club, Department of French and Italian, University of California, Santa Barbara. Co-organizer. Spring 2002.

CONFERENCE PANELS CHAIRED

Chaired panel, **“Reinventing Italy’s Past,”** Modern Languages Association Meeting, Boston, MA, January 2013.

Chaired panel at **“Different Stories, Common Ends: The IHUM Fellows Research Colloquium,”** Stanford University, Stanford, CA. April 13, 2007.

Chaired panel at **“Eastern Orthodoxy and Literature,”** Stanford, March 4, 2006.

Chaired panel at **“Architecture and Literature,”** Stanford, May 6-7, 2005.

Chaired panel at **“Allegory,”** Stanford, February 25-26, 2005.

ACADEMIC AND UNIVERSITY SERVICE AT STANFORD

UNDERGRADUATE ADVISING AND PROGRAM:

Chair of Undergraduate Studies for Italian, Department of French and Italian (2010-2013)

Undergraduate Affairs Committee, Member, Division of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages. (2004-06; 2010-2013)

Committee for Italian Undergraduate Essay Awards, Chair (Spring 2011, Spring 2012, Spring 2013)

Committee for French and Italian Undergraduate Summer Grants, Co-Chair with Dan Edelstein (Spring 2011; Spring 2012; Spring 2013)

Undergraduate mentoring for individual summer research grants (2008-2013)

Undergraduate advising to give papers, in conjunction with my ItalLit 275 course, at the 2009 annual meeting of the California Interdisciplinary Consortium for Italian Studies, which took place at the Stanford Humanities Center in March (Winter 2008)

Director of Undergraduate Studies for French, Department of French and Italian (2005-06)

Committee for French Undergraduate Essay Awards, Chair (spring 2006)

GRADUATE ADVISING AND PROGRAM:

Graduate Advisor, Joint French and Italian PhD, Department of French and Italian (2006-present)

“Women of the DLCL,” luncheon speaker and advisor to students (Fall 2014)

Graduate Advisor (interim), Italian PhD, Department of French and Italian (Spring 2013)

Graduate Admissions Committee, member: French and Italian (winter 2005); Italian, (winter 2006); Italian (winter 2008); French and Italian (winter 2009); Italian (winter 2010); French and Italian (winter 2011; winter 2012; winter 2013)

Mock interviews with graduate students on the job market (2004-present)

Drafted proposal for a new **Joint French and Italian PhD Program** in the Department of French and Italian (approved in spring 2006)

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT:

VPUE funding for course development for “The Mafia in Italian Society, Literature, and Culture.” A new gateway course to be taught in Winter 2013.

Teagle project member: teach teaching with two graduate student as a form of mentorship. (2012-13)

DLCL Committee for a new minor in Translation Studies, member. (2011-12; 2012-13)

Faculty College, member. Planning and teaching new broad-based introductory courses on literature and the humanities. (2011-present)

New initiative for Introduction to the Humanities seminars. Participated in planning new seminars that will accompany IHUM courses, and will be taught in Spring, following the lecture courses in Winter (I will be offering a seminar on Pirandello in Spring 2012). (winter 2011)

Designed **Honors Thesis Seminar** for the Division of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages (fall 2005)

Designed **Honors College** for the Division of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages (fall 2005)

OTHER SERVICE AT STANFORD:

Freshman Advisor. (2012-13)

Personnel and Planning Committee, Junior Faculty Representative, Division of Literatures, Cultures, and Languages (2009-2010)

OTHER ACADEMIC AND UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Outside Reader, Dissertation by Maria Laura Grace Conlon, “La communication et l’indicible dans l’oeuvre de Simone Weil,” Department of French, University of Toronto School of Graduate Studies (11 April 2013)

MLA Delegate, Twentieth-Century Italian Studies (2011-2014)

Reader, Bloomsbury Academic, University of Chicago Press, Toronto University Press, *California Italian Studies*, Harvard University Press (2003-present)

Member, California Interdisciplinary Consortium for Italian Studies Steering Committee (2007-08, 2008-09)

Member, California Interdisciplinary Consortium for Italian Studies Best Graduate Student Paper Award Committee (Spring 2008; Spring 2013)

Undergraduate Advisor (Italian), Department of French and Italian, University of California, Santa Barbara, (2000-2004)

Member, Student Conduct Committee, University of California, Santa Barbara, Departmental Representative (2003-2004)

Managing Editor, *Modernism/Modernity* (Johns Hopkins Press) (1993-1995)

Organizational Secretary, “Futurism: A Symposium at Yale University,” Departments of English, Italian, and Art History, Yale University (1995)