

**PARDIS DABASHI**

pdabashi@brynmawr.edu  
Bryn Mawr College  
Department of Literatures in English  
101 N. Merion Avenue  
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010-2899

**EMPLOYMENT**

Assistant Professor of Literatures in English and Film Studies. Bryn Mawr College. August 2022-Present.

Assistant Professor of English. University of Nevada, Reno. 2019-2022.

**EDUCATION**

Ph.D., English, Boston University, 2019.

B.A., English and Comparative Literature, Columbia University, 2008.

Certificate in Theater Training, École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq, 2009.

**PUBLICATIONS**

**Book-in-progress:** (under contract with the University of Chicago Press)

*Losing the Plot: Film and Feeling in the Modern Novel.* This book argues that a film-historical analysis of literary modernism puts pressure on the received idea that the modernist novel abandoned that formal hallmark of the nineteenth-century novel: plot. Reading the works of Nella Larsen, Djuna Barnes, and William Faulkner in conjunction with the mainstream films they enjoyed not as critics but as consumers—classical Hollywood films starring Greta Garbo, Marlene Dietrich, or Gary Cooper for instance—I argue that plot in the modernist novel is less an object of irony or disdain, as is often assumed, than a formal site of profound ambivalence and longing. Larsen, Barnes, and Faulkner thus express a conflicted if not embarrassed desire to recuperate the very residual forms—social, psychic, literary—that aesthetic modernity is supposed to have moved past if not risen above.

**Edited Volumes:**

*The New William Faulkner Studies*, co-editor with Sarah Gleeson-White. (Cambridge UP, August 2022).

**Scholarly Journal Articles:**

“‘There is No Gallery’: Race and the Politics of Space at the Capitol Theater.” Invited contribution to a special issue on Minority Women and Cinematic Spectatorship. *Early Popular Visual Culture* (forthcoming Winter 2022).

“Cosmopolitan Secrets: The Racialist Affordances of Equivocation in Henry James’s *The American*.” *MFS: Modern Fiction Studies* 66.4 (Winter 2020): 620-649.

“The Loose Garments of Argument.” *PMLA* 135.5 (2020): 946-955. Introduction to “Cultures of Argument,” a “Theories and Methodologies” forum.

Editor and Coordinator. “Cultures of Argument.” *PMLA* special feature “Theories and Methodologies” section, 135.5 (2020): 946-1020. Contributors: Amanda Anderson; Michael Bérubé; Robert Chodat; Nijah Cunningham; Kathleen Fitzpatrick; Kyle Kaplan; Grace Lavery; Yoon Sun Lee; Erin Spampinato. Respondent: Heather Love.

“Helga Crane’s Camera Obscura: Nella Larsen, Garbo’s Face, and the Modernist Longing for Plot.” Invited contribution to a special issue on “The Bildungsroman: Form and Transformations.” Guest-edited by John Frow, Melissa Hardie, and Vanessa Smith. *Textual Practice* 34.12 (2020): 2069-2089.

“‘too soon too soon too soon’: Continuity, Blame, and the Limits of the Present in *As I Lay Dying*.” *Arizona Quarterly* 75.4 (Winter 2019): 107-130.

“The Compsons Were Here: Indexicality, the Actuality, and the Crisis of Meaning in *The Sound and the Fury*,” *Modernism/modernity* 24.3 (September 2017): 527-548.

“Literature, Lecoq and the ‘nouveau roman’.” *The Routledge Companion to Jacques Lecoq*, eds., Mark Evans and Rick Kemp (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016): 79-86.

### **Other Publications:**

“Those Who Believe in the Unseen.” Forum response to Julie Beth Napolin, *The Fact of Resonance: Modernist Acoustics and Narrative Form* (New York: Fordham UP, 2020). *Syndicate* (forthcoming, 2021-2).

Response to a Letter to the Editor about “Cultures of Argument” forum, written by Max Chapnick. *PMLA* 136.5 (October 2021): 809-812.

Response to a Letter to the Editor about “Cultures of Argument” forum, written by Donald Lazere. *PMLA* 136.2 (March 2021): 322-23.

“The Rise of the Absurdly Demanding Job Ad,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (June 4, 2020). Reprinted in July 24, 2020 hardcopy issue.

“Dear Nella: What Did You See?” *Modernism/modernity* Print Plus 4.3 (November 2019).

“Iraj Pezeshkzad’s *My Uncle Napoleon*,” B-sides Series, *Public Books* (July 4, 2019). Reprinted in *B-side Books: Essays on Forgotten Favorites*, ed. John Plotz (New York: Columbia UP, 2021). 174-178.

“The Art of the High-Born: A Look Back at Bahman Farmanara’s *Prince Ehtejab*,” *Politics/Letters* #13 (September 2018).

### **Book Reviews:**

Review Essay on David Bordwell, *Perplexing Plots: Popular Storytelling and the Poetics of Murder*. In *Los Angeles Review of Books* (commissioned May 2022, forthcoming January 2023).

Review of Daniel Morgan, *The Lure of the Image: Epistemic Fantasies of the Moving Camera*. In *Film Quarterly* (forthcoming Fall 2022).

Review of Sarah Keller, *Anxious Cinephilia: Pleasure and Peril at the Movies*. In *Modernism/modernity* (forthcoming 2022).

Review of Malcom Turvey, *Play Time: Jacques Tati and Comedic Modernism*. *Modernism/modernity* 28.3 (September 2021): 585-587.

### **INVITED TALKS**

“Watching Dietrich: On Silence, Restraint, and the Modernist Longing for Plot.” Invited talk sponsored by the Eugene Lang College of the Liberal arts, The New School. (Zoom.) May 4, 2022.

Formal response to Rivky Mondal, “Tact in Henry James and Nella Larsen.” Event sponsored by the 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> Century Workshop in the Department of English at the University of Chicago. (Zoom.) April 25, 2022.

“Knowledge, Belief, Conviction, Conversion: What is Aesthetic Criticism?” Invited talk sponsored by the Trans Area Literature Collective. Vanderbilt University. (Zoom.) April 7, 2022.

Invited roundtable participant for “The State of Modernist Studies Now” event sponsored by the Department of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University. (Zoom.) April 1, 2022.

“Evidence, Causality, and the Writing of Colonial Violence in Graham Greene’s *The Quiet American*.” Invited talk at the Brandeis Novel Symposium. Brandeis University, Wellesley, MA. October 22,

- 2021.
- “Cultures of Argument.” Invited talk sponsored by the Philosophy and Literature Initiative. Stanford University. (Zoom.) April 8, 2021.
- Formal response to Peter Gordon, “A Precarious Happiness: Adorno on Negativity and Normativity.” Event sponsored by the Program in Critical Theory at the University of California, Berkeley. (Zoom.) March 16, 2021.
- Formal response to performances by Javon Johnson and Albert Lee. Black Studies Roundtable of the Universities of Nevada. (Zoom.) February 26, 2021.
- “Cuteness and Work: *Gremlins* and Late Capitalism.” Invited talk sponsored by ETH Zürich. (Zoom.) June 9, 2020.

## **CONFERENCES and COLLOQUIA**

- “Ambivalence and Autotheory.” Invited roundtable participant. Modernist Studies Association, “Between the Acts,” Zoom Event. April 12, 2021. Cancelled due to Covid.
- “*Passing* and *Passing*: Visual Indeterminacy in the work of Nella Larsen and Rebecca Hall.” Invited talk sponsored by the Art History and Visual Culture Studies Forum. University of Nevada, Reno. February 14, 2022.
- “Cultures of Argument and Collaboration.” Invited roundtable participant. MLA. Washington, D.C., January 2022.
- “Recite!?: Reading Criticism and Theory Closely.” Roundtable participant. Association for the Study of the Arts of the Present (ASAP) Annual Conference. Zoom conference. October 2021.
- “Nella Larsen/Garbo’s *Passing*.” Annual Conference of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies. (Zoom.) March 21, 2020.
- “Modernist Plot as Media History.” Roundtable Presenter. Prose Fiction Session. MLA. (Zoom.) January 2021.
- “Nella Larsen, Garbo’s Face, and the Whispers of the Archive.” “Audience Lost: Minority Women and Spectatorship” conference sponsored by Ghent University. Ghent, BE, November 2019.
- “Cultures of Argument and Academic Precarity.” Invited roundtable participant. Modernist Studies Association Annual Conference. Toronto, CA, October 2019.
- “Scenes of Embarrassment in the Aristocratic Families of William Faulkner and Bahman Farmanara.” The Annual Faulkner & Yoknapatawpha Conference. Conference Theme: Faulkner’s Families. Oxford, MS, July 2019.
- “The Art of the High-Born: Stillness and Denial in Bahman Farmanara’s *Prince Ehtejab*.” Annual Conference of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies. Seattle, March 2019.
- “A Case for the Modest (Young) Critic.” MLA. Chicago, IL, January 2019.
- “Nella Goes to the Movies: Classical Hollywood *Bildung*.” “Bildungsroman: Form and Transformations,” international conference sponsored by the University of Sydney. Sydney, AU, November 2018.
- “The Ache of Departure: The End of the *Bildungsroman* and the Coming of Classical Film.” Modernist Studies Association Annual Conference. Columbus, OH, November 2018.
- “Demolition of a Wall: Irreversibility and Plot in Early Film.” Invited roundtable participant. Biannual Conference of the Society for Novel Studies. Cornell University, May 2018.
- “Towards a Theory of Middlebrow Critique: From Jane Austen (Adaptations) to Busby Berkeley.” Annual Conference of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies. Toronto, March 2018.
- “We’re in the Money: On Busby Berkeley’s Auteurism. Seminar presentation. Annual Conference of the American Comparative Literature Association. University of California, Los Angeles, March 2018.
- “The Public’s Optical Unconscious: The Cinematic Demise of the Rational Public Sphere in Theodore Dreiser’s *An American Tragedy* and Fritz Lang’s *M*.” Modernist Studies Association Annual Conference. Amsterdam, NL, August 2017.
- “The Art of Asphyxiation: The Suffocating Beauty of Max Ophuls’ Narrative.” Annual International

Conference on Narrative. Lexington, KY, March 2017.  
“What Does This Mean for Women?” Invited roundtable participant. Boston University Center for the Humanities, November 2016.  
“Monster Time: The Temporality of Spectacle in Tod Browning’s *Freaks*.” Film and History Annual Conference. Milwaukee, WI, October 2016.  
“‘too soon too soon too soon’: The Present Tense and the Problem of the Event in William Faulkner’s *As I Lay Dying*.” Northeast Modern Language Association Annual Conference. Hartford, CT, March 2016.  
“The Compsos Were Here: Indexicality, the Actuality, and the Crisis of Meaning in *The Sound and the Fury*.” “Literature and Crisis,” conference sponsored by Florida International University. Miami, FL, April 2015.

### **Organizer: Seminars and Panels**

Co-organizer with Alix Beeston. “The Modernist Scene.” Seminar at the Modernist Studies Association, “Between the Acts,” Zoom Event. April 11, 2022.  
Co-leader with Laura Green (Northeastern), “Narrating Atrocity,” student seminar at the Brandeis Novel Symposium. Waltham, MA. October 22, 2021.  
Co-organizer with Rivky Mondal, “Reciprocity and Criticism.” Roundtable at the Association for the Study of the Arts of the Present (ASAP) Annual Conference. Zoom conference. October 2021.  
Co-organizer with Matthew Hart, “Modernism from the Standpoint of Labor.” Roundtable Special Event sponsored by the Modernist Studies Association. (Zoom.) November 2020.  
Organizer, “Post-Critique and the Profession.” Special Session at the MLA Conference. Chicago, IL, January 2019.  
Co-organizer with Alix Beeston, “The Pasts and Futures of Hollywood’s Golden Age: Reading Classical Cinema in Literary Modernism.” Panel at the Modernist Studies Association Annual Conference. Columbus, OH, November 2018.  
Co-organizer with Rebecca Kastleman, “Modernist Ensembles: Collaboration and Interdependence in Theater and Film.” Seminar at the Annual Conference of the American Comparative Literature Association. UCLA, March 2018.

### **FELLOWSHIPS and HONORS**

W.M. Keck Foundation Fellowship at the Huntington Library, Spring 2021  
Boston University Center for the Humanities, Dissertation Fellow, Spring 2019  
Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship Competition, 2018-19, Honorable Mention  
AAUW Dissertation Fellowship Competition, 2018-19, Alternate  
John W. Hunt Memorial Scholarship, William Faulkner Society, Summer 2017  
Summa Cum Laude, Course in French Civilization, Paris-Sorbonne University, June 2011

### **TEACHING**

Bryn Mawr College, beginning Fall 2022-

Introduction to Film

Emily Balch Seminar, Topic: “Narratives of Passing”

Global Cinema (cross-listed with Comparative Literature)

A Star is Born: Race, Gender, and Celebrity (advanced seminar)

University of Nevada, 2019-

Global Cinema (Advanced undergraduate)

Horror: Text and Screen (Undergraduate)

Text/Image/Form: Problems of Representation in Film and the Novel (Advanced undergraduate)  
A Star is Born: Women, Race, and Celebrity (Advanced undergraduate)  
American Literature, 1900 to the Present: A Literature of Empire (Advanced undergraduate)  
Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism (Undergraduate)  
The Modernist American Novel (Graduate)

Boston University, 2017-2018

(Un)Telling Stories: Narrative and Spectacle in Film and the Novel (Undergraduate)  
What Happens Next?: Plot Structure in the Novel (Undergraduate)

## **ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP and SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION**

National Endowment for the Humanities, Peer-review Panelist, May-June 2021  
GS Prose Fiction Forum Executive Committee Representative at MLA Delegate Assembly, January  
2022-2025)  
Modernist Studies Association, Program Chair (October 2022-October 2024)  
“Visualities” forum on *Modernism/modernity* Print+, co-editor with Alix Beeston  
Peer review: *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*; *Film Quarterly*

External Ph.D. Advising:  
ETH Zürich, Dissertation, second reader: Sebastien Fanzun (Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaft, expected  
2023)

## **MEDIA APPEARANCES**

Interview with Shirin Jaafari of PRX’s and GBH’s “The World,” about the death of Iranian author, Iraj  
Pezeshkzad ([https://theworld.org/media/2022-01-14/iranian-satirist-prompted-smiles-also-deep-  
reflection](https://theworld.org/media/2022-01-14/iranian-satirist-prompted-smiles-also-deep-reflection)). (January 14, 2022)

Interview with John Plotz of humanities podcast, “Recall This Book,” about Iraj Pezeshkzad’s novel *My  
Uncle Napoleon* ([https://newbooksnetwork.com/59-recall-this-b-side-4-pardis-dabashi-on-my-uncle-  
napoleon-jp](https://newbooksnetwork.com/59-recall-this-b-side-4-pardis-dabashi-on-my-uncle-<br/>napoleon-jp)). (June 24, 2021)

Interview with Kim Adams of humanities podcast, “High Theory,” about Theodor Adorno’s concept of  
the “autonomous work of art” (<https://hightheory.net/2020/08/30/autonomous-work-of-art/>). (August  
30, 2020)

## **INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE**

Cinema and Media Studies Committee, University of Nevada, 2019-2022  
Visiting Speakers Committee, University of Nevada, 2020-2021  
Literature Committee, University of Nevada, 2019-2020  
Graduate Committee, University of Nevada, 2020-2022  
Search Committee, Teaching Assistant Professor position in Cinema and Media Studies, University of  
Nevada, 2019-2020

Ph.D. Advising:  
Dissertation, second reader: Katie Wolf (English, expected 2024)  
Dissertation committee, reading member: Lee Olsen (English, 2020)

## **LANGUAGES**

Persian: native fluency speaking and some reading; French: near-native fluency speaking and reading; German: some speaking and reading; Italian: some speaking and reading.

### **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

Modern Language Association; Modernist Studies Association; Society for Cinema and Media Studies; Society for Novel Studies; American Comparative Literature Association; International Society for the Study of Narrative

### **PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES**

Available upon request.