

Curriculum Vitae
Michael D. Rectenwald

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Literary and Cultural Studies
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Education

Ph.D. Literary and Cultural Studies, Carnegie Mellon University, December 2004.
M.A. English Literature, Case Western Reserve University, May 1997.
B.A. English Literature, University of Pittsburgh, August 1983.

Dissertation

The Publics of Science: Periodicals and the Making of British Science, 1820-1860.
Chair: Jon Klancher; Readers: Kristina Straub, Michael Witmore

This dissertation is a study of nineteenth-century print culture as a key context for knowledge producers who vied for cultural, ‘scientific’ authority. To examine the new ‘knowledge industry’ of early nineteenth-century Britain, I study periodicals that aimed to reach common readers with “useful knowledge,” the making and reception of Charles Lyell’s *Principles of Geology* (1830-33), and the emergence of Secularism in the 1840s and 50s—each within the framework of Victorian literary and intellectual cultures. I argue that the rise of modern science was the legacy of several distinct, yet overlapping publics. My research also addresses the broader question of science’s rise relative to the humanities.

Teaching Areas

Nineteenth-Century Literary and Cultural Studies, Nineteenth-Century Science and Culture, Literary and Critical Theory, Social and Cultural Studies of Science, Composition, Professional and Technical Writing

Academic Publications

“Roots of the Divide: ‘Useful Knowledge’ versus Literary Culture,” *The Humanities and Expertise*, the Humanities Center, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA (Forthcoming).

“Secularism: Artisan Politics and the Cultures of Nineteenth-Century Naturalism,” *Configurations*, Johns Hopkins University Press (Under review).

“Reading Around the Kids,” Constance Coiner and Diana Hume George, eds., *The Family Track: Keeping Your Faculties while You Mentor, Nurture, Teach, and Serve* (University of Illinois Press, 1998): 107-13.

“New Economic Criticism: A Review of the Conference,” *News and Notices for The Society of Critical Exchange*, 9 Winter/Spring (1995): 11-21.

Academic Presentations

“Roots of the Divide: ‘Useful Knowledge’ versus Literary Culture,” *Humanities and Expertise, An Interdisciplinary Conference*, Sponsored by the Humanities Center at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA, April 2005.

“Reforming Oxbridge and Redefining Science: *The Principles of Geology* in Context,” *Society for Literature and Science Annual Meeting*, Durham, NC, October 2004.

“Secularism: Artisan Politics and the Cultures of Nineteenth-Century Naturalism,” *Cultural Studies Association Founding Conference*, Pittsburgh, PA, June 2003.

“Early ‘Useful Knowledge’ Periodicals: The Making of the Useful Knowledge Reader,” *Society for Literature and Science Annual Conference*, Pasadena, CA, October 2002.

“A Science for *Hard Times*: Positivism or Working Class Knowledges,” *Society for Literature and Science Annual Meeting*, Norman, OK, October 1999.

“The Construction and Deconstruction of Science in *Middlemarch*,” *Society for Literature and Science Annual Meeting*, Pittsburgh, PA, November 1997.

“Ideologies in Business Writing Instructions,” *Midwest MLA Annual Conference*, Chicago, IL, November, 1997.

“Constructing Authorship in the Chat Room,” Cultures of Writing Conference, *The Society for Critical Exchange*, Cleveland, OH, February 1997.

“Radical Niche Marketing: Allen Ginsberg, the Body and Media,” *Midwest MLA Annual Conference*, Minneapolis, MN, November 1996.

“The Gendered Rhetoric of Intellectual Property, from William Wordsworth to Vanna White,” *Rhetoric in the Disciplines Annual Rhetoric Conference*, Philadelphia, PA, April, 1995.

Discussant, *The New Economic Criticism Conference, The Society for Critical Exchange*, Cleveland, OH, November 1994.

Poetry and Creative Non-Fiction

“The Beat Generation Meets The E-Generation,” review of *Orpheus Emerged* by Jack Kerouac, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, Sunday, February 11, 2001.

“Who's afraid of a Woolf Biography? Scholarly, Feminist Examination of Writer's Life Discards Romantic Bravado,” review of *Virginia Woolf* by Hermione Lee, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, Sunday, August 24, 1997.

“Milton Finds and Loses Paradise in the New World,” A review of *Milton In America* by Peter Ackroyd, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, Sunday, July 13, 1997.

“The Landscape Of Yeats' Life Emerges From A Personal Perspective,” review of *W.B. Yeats: The Man And The Milieu* by Keith Alldritt, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, Sunday, June 8, 1997.

“An Apprentice's Appreciation: Learning And Growing As A Poet, With Allen Ginsberg For A Guide: A Eulogy for Allen Ginsberg,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, Sunday, April 20, 1997.

The Eros of the Baby Boom Eras, Bethesda, MD: Apogee Books, 1991.

Teaching Experience

Postdoctoral Fellow in Literary and Cultural Studies, Carnegie Mellon University: Present

Nineteenth Century Literary and Cultural Studies: “The Condition of England Question”

This split-level, undergraduate/graduate course focuses on the “Condition of England Question”—the discourse surrounding the great social, economic and political upheavals following the Napoleonic wars and before the halcyon days of mid-Victorianism. We explore the set of issues represented by this complex phrase from various social locations and socio-political positions. William Cobbett, Thomas Carlyle, John Stuart Mill, Benjamin Disraeli, Charles Dickens and George Eliot are among the authors whose works we examine.

Literature and Science: Evolutionary Narrative: This course explores the relations of culture, literature, the sciences and technology, focusing in particular on narratives of evolution (and creation) from the late 18th and into the 20th century. Beginning with a brief look at late 18th century texts dealing with questions of perfectibility and evolution, we then launch into Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*. We look at William Paley’s classic text of *Natural Theology* and continue by examining selections from the evolutionary writings of Jean Baptiste Lamarck, Robert Chambers, Charles Darwin, and others. We continue to explore themes of origin and genealogy in fiction by Charles Kingsley, Robert Louis Stevenson, H.G. Wells, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and examine *fin de siècle* literature of decadence and retrogression. We end with a consideration of the contemporary debates over creationism (or intelligent design) and evolution and the arguments and implications surrounding recent developments in Genetics and Robotics.

Nineteenth-Century British Literature: This course engages the unprecedented changes in the 19th century—industrialization, urbanization, social dislocation, urban poverty, reform, the reorganization of knowledges, and the expansion of empire—through major British writing of poetry, fiction and essays, including works by Jane Austen, Mary and Percy Shelley, Emily Bronte, Thomas Carlyle, Benjamin Disraeli, Elizabeth Gaskell, Charles Dickens, Matthew Arnold, and George Eliot.

Teaching Fellow/Lecturer, Carnegie Mellon University, Fall 1997-Spring 2004

Nineteenth-Century British Literature: Science and Culture: Drawing on fiction, poetry, criticism, science writing, and film, this course examines the early to late nineteenth-century convergences and divergences of science and literature across several distinct yet overlapping public spheres. Beginning with Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818), other objects of study

include *Vestiges of the History of Natural Creation* (1844); Charles Kingsley, *Alton Locke, Tailor and Poet*; Charles Darwin, *Origin of Species* (1859); and George Eliot, *Middlemarch* (1871). The course arrives at the heated science and culture debates between Matthew Arnold and Thomas Huxley and ends with C.P. Snow's notion of the "two cultures" and subsequent critiques of the two cultures paradigm by contemporary literary and science critics.

Multi-Media Authorship: In this course, web authorship is considered as historically, culturally, and technologically situated practice.

English 101: Interpretation and Argument: I have adapted this introductory critical reading and writing course to several topic areas.

Mechanical Engineering Junior Seminar I & II: A requirement for the Mechanical Engineering Bachelor's degree, this self-designed series introduces students to professional, technical presentations in writing and speech.

Multiculturalism for Adult Learners: Designed and taught on a volunteer basis a 6-week course in Multiculturalism for adult learners in Carnegie Mellon's Academy for Life-long Learning.

Adjunct Professor, Robert Morris University, Communications Department, Fall 2001-Present

Teaching Fellow, Case Western Reserve University, English Department

Other Professional Experience

Writer/Editor III, Robotics Institute, Intelligent Software Agents Lab, Carnegie Mellon University, Jan 2000-August, 2005. This position involved editing and co-authoring journal papers, technical reports and conference presentations.

Awards

Dean's Commendation for Teaching Ratings, 2000, 2003.

Neil McIntyre Memorial Prize winner, awarded for the best essay by a graduate student in English, Case Western Reserve University, 1997.

Languages

Reading: French, German and Spanish; Speaking: Spanish

References

Professor Jon Klancher	Carnegie Mellon University, Department of English
Professor Kristina Straub	Carnegie Mellon University, Department of English
Professor Michael Witmore	Carnegie Mellon University, Department of English
Professor Peggy Knapp	Carnegie Mellon University, Department of English
Professor Martha Woodmansee	Case Western Reserve University, Department of English