

CURRICULUM VITÆ

Robert A. Rushing

CONTACT INFORMATION

Program in Comparative Literature
3072 FLB, MC-160
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EDUCATION

Ph.D.	Italian Studies	University of California, Berkeley	1998
M.A.	Comparative Literature	University of Michigan, Ann Arbor	1994
B.A.	Literature & Philosophy	University of California, Santa Cruz	1991

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Director , Program in Comparative & World Literature	2019-
Professor of Comparative Literature & Italian, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign Affiliate: Media & Cinema Studies, Unit for Criticism & Interpretive Theory, European Union Center, Campus Honors Program	2017-
Acting Head , Department of French & Italian	2017-18
Visiting Fellow at Trinity College, Oxford University, England	Fall 2016
Associate Professor of Comparative Literature & Italian University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign	2007-17
Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature & Italian University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign	2001-07
Lecturer of Italian University of California, Berkeley	1999-2000

PUBLICATIONS

Books:

Descended from Hercules: Biopolitics and the Muscled Male Body on Screen (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016). **Winner:** American Association for Italian Studies (AAIS) 2016 prize, best book in film & media studies.

Resisting Arrest: Detective Fiction & Popular Culture (New York: Other Press, 2007).

Edited Volumes:

Orphan Black: *Performance, Gender, Biopolitics* (Bristol, UK: Intellect Books, 2018); co-edited with Andrea Goulet.

Mad Men, Mad World: Sex, Politics, Style and the 1960s (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2013); co-edited with Lauren Goodlad and Lilya Kaganovsky.

Articles in Refereed Journals:

- "Calvino, Cerrone & the Catacoustic: An 'Echo-Logical' Reading," *Italian Culture* 39.2 (2021): in production.
- "Toxicity: Making the Toxic Visible in Italian Cinema," *The Italianist* 40.2, special issue on ecomedia (2020): 244-55.
- "Italian Transnational Masculinity: *Jeeg Robot*, *Il ragazzo invisibile* and *MilzaMan*," *Journal of Italian Cinema and Media Studies* 8.1 (January 2020): 43-60.
- "Planes, Trains, Automobiles, Bicycles, Spaceships and an Elephant: Images of Movement from Neorealism to the *commedia all'italiana*," *California Italian Studies* 7.1 (2018) (<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/2zt4d8px>).
- "Contemporary Italian Science Fiction Film: The Future of Italy," *Luci e ombre: trimestrale di informazione cinematografica e culturale* 4.2 (2016): 32-46.
- "Skin Flicks: Haptic Ideology in the Peplum Film," *Cinema Journal* 56.1 (2016): 88-110.
- "The Weight of History: Immunity and the Nation in Italian Science Fiction Cinema," *Science Fiction Studies* 42.2, 126 (2015): 339-52.
- "Nostalgia | Utopia | Spaghetti: Utopian and Anti-Nostalgic Time in the Italian Western," *Studies in European Cinema* 11.2 (2014): 79-91.
- "Sirens without Us: The Future after Humanity," *California Italian Studies* 2.1 (2011) (escholarship.org/uc/item/0cc3b56b).
- "Blink: The Material Real in *Caché*, *Mulholland Dr.* and *Dr. Who*," *PostScript* 29.3 (2010): 18-31.
- "'Tutto è zuppa!' Making the Superego Enjoy in Calvino's *Il cavaliere inesistente*," *Romanic Review* 101.3 (2010): 561-77.
- "De Sica's *The Children Are Watching Us*: Neorealist Cinema and Sexual Difference," *Studies in European Cinema* 6.2-3 (2009): 97-112.
- "Gentlemen Prefer Hercules: Desire | Identification | Beefcake," *Camera Obscura* 23.3, 69 (2008): 158-91. **Reprinted:** in *Visual Culture and Gender*, vol. 1, ed. Annette Burfoot (London: Routledge, 2014).
- "Italo Svevo and Charlie Chaplin: Dramatic Irony and the Psychoanalytic Stance," *American Imago* 63. 2 (2006): 183-200.
- "'What We Desire, We Shall Never Have': Calvino, Žižek, Ovid," *Comparative Literature* 58.1 (2006): 44-58.
- "Traveling Detectives: Verne's "Logic of Arrest" and the Pleasures of (Avoiding) the Real," *Yale French Studies* 108 (2005): 89-101.
- "From *Monk* to Monks: The End of Enjoyment in Eco's *The Name of the Rose*," *Symposium* 59.2 (2005): 116-28 (special issue on Italian detective fiction).
- "The Real of Desire: Travel/Detection/Hitchcock/Antonioni," *The Communication Review* 6.4 (2003): 313-326.
- "Alessandro Baricco's *Seta*: Travel, Ventriloquism & the Other," *MLN* 118.1 (2003): 209-236.

Articles in Refereed Journals (continued):

- "Traveling By Metonymy: Ugo Foscolo's 'A Zacinto,'" *Annali d'Italianistica* 20 (2002): 201-16.
- "'La sua tragica incompiutezza': Anxiety, Misrecognition and Ending in Gadda's *Pasticciaccio*," *MLN* 116.1 (2001): 130-149.
- "The Horizon of Literature: Epistemic Closure in Calvino's *I nostri antenati*," *Forum Italicum* 33.1 (1999): 213-23.
- "Il cristallo e il mare: L'enumeración caótica e l'epistemologia in Calvino e Gadda," *Forum Italicum* 31.2 (1997): 407-22.

Chapters in volumes:

- "The Noise of War: Sound, Politics and Space in the Italian Peplum," in *Celluloid Battles: Big Screen Ancient Greek and Roman Warfare* (Brill, 2022), accepted for publication.
- "Feet of Strength: The Sword-and-Sandals Film," in *Shoe Reels: The History and Philosophy of Footwear in Film* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021), 136-47.
- "*Cabiria*," in *Italian Cinema from the Silent Screen to Digital Image* (Bloomsbury, Joseph Luzzi, Ed., 2020), 503-10.
- "Descended from Hercules: Masculine Anxiety in the Peplum," in *Cycles, Sequels, Spin-offs, Remakes and Reboots: Multiplicities in Film and Television* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2016): 41-59.
- "'It will shock you how much this never happened': Antonioni and *Mad Men*," in *Mad Men, Mad World: Sex, Politics, Style and the 1960s* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2013), Lauren Goodlad, Lilya Kaganovsky, Robert Rushing, Eds: 192-212.
- "Introduction" to *Mad Men, Mad World: Sex, Politics, Style and the 1960s* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2013), Lauren Goodlad, Lilya Kaganovsky, Robert Rushing, Eds: 1-34.
- "Calvino & Readerly Expectations: Identification and Fantasy in the *Cosmicomics*," in *Approaches to Teaching the Works of Italo Calvino*, Franco Ricci, Ed. (New York: The Modern Language Association, 2013): 69-71.
- "Memory and Masculinity in the Italian Peplum Film and Zach Snyder's *300*" in *Culture et mémoire. Représentations contemporaines de la mémoire dans les espaces mémoriels, les arts du visuel, la littérature et le theater*, Eds., Carola Hähnel-Mesnard, Marie Liénard-Yétérián et Cristina Marinas (Palaiseau, Éditions de l'École Polytechnique, 2008): 239-46.

Reviews & Responses:

- Review of Vulca Fidolini, *Fai l'uomo! Come l'eterosessualità produce le maschilità* in *gender/sexuality/italy* 7 (2020), <https://www.gendersexualityitaly.com/17-fai-luomo-eterosessualita-produce-maschilita/>.
- Review of Denis Lotti, *Muscoli e frac: il divismo maschile nel cinema muto italiano, 1910-1929*, and Francesco Di Chiara, *Peplum: Il cinema italiano alle prese col mondo antico*, in *Journal of Italian Cinema and Media Studies*, 6.3 (2018): 419-22.
- "Hercules Revisited," *Cinema Journal* 56.1 (2016): *Afterthoughts and Postscripts*. (cmstudies.site-ym.com/general/custom.asp?page=CJ_after561_Rushing)
- Review of Marieke Krajenbrink and Kate M. Quinn (Eds.), *Investigating Identities: Questions of Identity in Contemporary International Crime Fiction* in *Comparative Literature Studies* 49.3 (2012): 463-66.
- "Am I Paranoid Enough?" (Emily Apter response) in *American Literary History* 18.2 (2006): 390-93.
- Review of Albert Sbragia, *Carlo Emilio Gadda and the Modern Macaronic*, in *South Atlantic Review* 62.4 (1997): 101-04.
- Review of Fernando Amigoni, *La più semplice macchina: lettura freudiana del «Pasticciaccio»* in *Forum Italicum*, 30.1 (1996): 224-28

MEDIA AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

- "A Minute with... Robert Rushing," University of Illinois News, interview with Jodi Heckel about final season of *Mad Men* (4/25/15); <http://illinois.edu/emailer/newsletter/72492.html>
- Chicago Humanities Festival, *Mad Men, Mad World*: interview with Alyson Cuddy (3/26/13)
- "Focus" on WILL 580 AM, interview with Chris Berube about *Mad Men, Mad World* (4/8/03)
- Interview on Canadian radio (CJAD 800 AM) with Ric Peterson and Suzanne Desautels about *Mad Men, Mad World* (4/15/13)
- Letter to the editor about ethics of software brain simulation, *Scientific American*, October, 2012

FELLOWSHIPS AND HONORS (SELECTED)

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| LAS Impact Award (for COVID-19 planning & implementation) | 2021 |
| Campus Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching | 2018 |
| LAS Dean's Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching | 2018 |
| Winner: Best Film/Media Book (<i>Descended from Hercules</i>) | 2016 |
| American Association for Italian Studies (AAIS) | |
| Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities (IPRH) Faculty Fellow | 2013-14 |
| Humanities Council Teaching Excellence Award | 2008 |
| Nomination: Gradiva Award: Best Theory Book (<i>Resisting Arrest</i>): | 2008 |
| National Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis (NAAP) | |
| Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities (IPRH) Faculty Fellow | 2003-04 |

SERVICE (SELECTED)

Profession:

Series editor: "New Directions in National Cinemas," Indiana University Press	2015-
AAIS Book Prize Selection Committee	2019-21
Selection Committee: Levin Prize for Comparative Literature (ACLA)	2018-19
Selection Committee: Scaglione Prize for Comparative Literary Studies (MLA)	2015-17
National Endowment for the Humanities evaluator	2010

University:

Provost's Task Force on Evaluating Teaching Effectiveness	2019-20
Campus General Education Board (Chair, 2015-16)	2014-16
Academic Senate	2002-06, 2011-13

College:

Search Committee: LAS Communications Coordinator	2021
LAS Executive Committee (Vice Chair, 2019-21)	2018-21
LAS Fall 2020 Implementation Team (COVID-19 re-opening)	Summer 2020
LAS General Education Committee (Chair, 2015-16)	2014-16
Search Committee: Director, Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory	2014

School (Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics):

Committee on Italian transfer to combined French & Italian	2013-14
Task Force on Doctoral Programs in Spanish, Italian & Portuguese	2012
Ad Hoc Committee on Global Studies	2011

Department (French & Italian):

Admissions & Financial Aid	2020-21
Chair, Search Committee: Modern French Studies	2018-19
Director of Graduate Studies, French & Italian	2018-19
Acting Head of French & Italian	2017-18
Undergraduate Advisor in Italian	2005-12; 2014-15
Chair, Search Committee: Italian Medieval/Renaissance	2005-2006

Department (Comparative Literature):

Director of Program in Comparative & World Literature	2019-
Director of Graduate Studies	2007-09
Chair, Graduate Admissions Committee	2003-06
Search Committee: Latin American/Comparative Literature	2004-05

Department (Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory):

Nicholson Associate Director of the Unit	2009-11
Advisory Committee	2006-07

TEACHING

Selected Courses at Illinois (400-level is mixed grad and undergrad; 500 level, grad only):

CWL 581	The "Echo-Logical": Sound Politics Space	Seminar on sound studies, politics and the environment: Attali, Chion, Proust, Eidsheim, Cavarero, Sterne, Lacoue-Labarthe and others.	*
CWL 581	The "Moving Image": Feeling & Film	Seminar on phenomenology and film: Merleau-Ponty, Deleuze, Sobchack, Barker, Massumi, Harbord, Chen and others.	o
CWL 581	Biopolitical Fantasy	Seminar on the role of fantasy in mediating and shaping biopolitics: Esposito, Agamben, Edelman, Väliäho, Neroni, Mbembe and others.	o
CWL 501	Theory of Literature	Survey of critical theory: Kant, Hegel, Freud, Marx, Nietzsche, Lacan, Derrida, Bhabha, Spivak, Zizek and others.	o
CWL 461	European Detective Fiction	Italian, French and Scandinavian crime fiction from 1980s to the present, with emphasis on globalization and decline of nation state.	o
CWL 413	Dante	Study of entire <i>Divine Comedy</i> along with source texts (<i>dolce stil novo</i> , courtly love, etc.); Auerbach, Barolini, Ascoli and others.	o
ITAL 510	Inhuman(e) Cinema	The "non-human turn" in Italian cinema: Schoonover, Iovino, Morton, Wu Ming and more; films by Pasolini, Antonioni, Rossellini and others.	o
ITAL 470	Topics in Italian Cinema	<i>Commedia all'italiana</i> : Italian film comedies of the 1950s, 60s and 70s, gender, socio-economic changes and consumerism in postwar Italy.	o
ITAL 470	Topics in Italian Cinema	The Peplum: survey of "sword and sandals" genre from 1914 to now; emphasis on gender, sexuality, and the male body on screen.	o
ITAL 470	Topics in Italian Cinema	The Spaghetti Western: major works of the genre (Leone, Corbucci, etc.); readings on masculinity and genre, Fisher.	o
ITAL 470	Topics in Italian Cinema	Contemporary Auteurs: auteur theory and films by four contemporary Italian directors: Sorrentino, Garrone, Rohrwacher and Crialesse.	o
ITAL 440	Modern Italian Novel	Works of Italo Calvino. Taught in Italian.	o

Selected Courses at Illinois (Undergraduate only):

CWL 395	Persons and Things	The history and philosophy of artificial life and intelligence, from Homer to <i>Ex machina</i> . Campus Honors Program.	o
CWL 242	Literature of Europe and the Americas II	Introduction to masterpieces of the Western literary tradition from the Enlightenment to the present; lectures and supervision of TAs.	o
CWL 241	Literature of Europe and the Americas I	Introduction to masterpieces of the Western literary tradition from the ancient world to Early Modern; lectures and supervision of TAs.	o
ITAL 270	Introduction to Italian Cinema	Survey of Italian cinema, from the silent period to fascist film, neorealism, and the present day.	o
ITAL 200	Intro. to the Study of Italian Literature	Survey of Italian literature from 1300-present; also includes literary terminology and methodology. Taught in Italian.	o

* Student evaluation scores were not collected because of the transition to online learning (COVID-19).

o course evaluations were "truly outstanding" (top 10%) according to the "List of Teachers Ranked as Excellent."

EXAMS AND DISSERTATIONS (SELECTED)

Ph.D. Chair: Asiya Ikhsanova, CWL (2016-, co-chair Lilya Kaganovsky); Laura Chinchilla, CWL (2012-15, co-chair Ericka Beckman); Matthias Stephan, CWL (2007-15).

Ph.D. Committees: Elisabetta Carraro, Italian (University of Toronto, External Examiner, 2020); Julien Berthelon, French (2020-); Patrick Kimutis, English (2019-); Francesco Ferrari, Italian (2017-); Pier-Paolo Spagnolo, Italian (2017-); Benoit Malyoune, French (2018); Peter Tarjanyi, French (2017-19); Nick Strole, French (2017-19); Meagan Smith, CWL (2016-); Dora Valkanova, ICR (2016-19); Corey Flack, Italian (2013-16).

Ph.D. Exams: Nobuto Sato, CWL (2021); Demetrio Antolini, Italian (Ohio State, 2020); Julien Berthelon, French (2020); Francesco Ferrari, Italian (2017); PierPaolo Spagnolo (2017); Peter Tarjanyi, French (2017); Nick Strole, French (2017); Meagan Smith, CWL (2016); Jessica Sciubba, Italian (2014); Corey Flack (2013); Laura Chinchilla, CWL (2012)

M.A. Exams: Gabriella Stuardi, Italian (2020); Soraya Cipolla, Italian (2019); Patrick Mabeya, Italian (2019); Francesca Nardecchia, Italian (2018); Fara Taddei, Italian (2017); Asiya Ikhsanova, Comp Lit (2016); Brooke Welling, Italian (2016); Daniella Moffa, Italian (2016).

CONFERENCE PAPERS & TALKS

Invited Talks (Selected):

"Calvino and the Catacoustic: An 'Echo-logical' Reading," for the French and Italian Graduate Student speaker series at The Ohio State University, 2/4/2020.

"Calvino and the Catacoustic: An 'Echo-logical' Reading," at UC Berkeley, 1/30/2020.

"Calvino and the Catacoustic: An 'Echo-logical' Reading," for the Italian Ecologies lecture series at The Johns Hopkins University, 11/5/2019.

"Transnational Genre Films," a seminar on videographic criticism at the Ohio State University, 9/25/2019.

"Italian Cinematic Masculinity: The Italian (Super)hero and Transnational Flow," for the Italian Cinema(s) Abroad conference at The Ohio State University, 3/23/19.

"Transnational Masculinity, Biopolitics and Italian Cinema," at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1/12/18.

"The Biopolitical Dimension of Italian Cinema," at the University of Leeds, UK, 11/30/16.

"Feeling Biopolitics: The Visceral Dimension of the Peplum," at the Centre for Film and Screen Studies, Cambridge University, UK, 11/16/16.

"Biopolitical Fantasy in Contemporary American Television and Film," at Aarhus University, Denmark, 9/16/16.

"The Italian Crime Novel as National Popular Culture," at Loyola University, Maryland, 4/16/12.

"A Peplum Century: from *Maciste* (1914) to *Spartacus: Blood and Sand* (2010)," at St. John's College, Cambridge University, England, 11/30/11.

"Descended from Hercules: A Brief History of the Peplum," at the University of Vermont, Burlington, 9/20/11.

"Gentlemen Prefer Hercules," at Northwestern University, 1/19/07.

Conference Presentations (selected):

- "Cross Dressing in Early Italian Cinema," at the American Association of Italian Studies (AAIS) annual conference (5/30/21, online). Organizer: Robert A. Rushing.
- "Alice Rohrwacher and the Tactile Register: Dirt, Grain, Dust, Noise," at the 10th annual Symposium on New Trends in Modern and Contemporary Italian Cinema in Bloomington, Indiana (4/21/19)
- "Invisible Afterlives: The Afterlife of Calvino's Voice," at the American Association of Italian Studies (AAIS) annual conference in Sorrento, Italy (3/15/19). Organizer: Elena Past.
- "The Toxic Biopolitics of *Jeeg Robot*," at the Modern Language Association (MLA) annual conference in Chicago (1/4/19). Organizer: Elena Past.
- "*Jeeg Robot*: Animacy, Biopolitics and Survival," at the American Association of Italian Studies (AAIS) annual conference in Sorrento, Italy (4/20/18). Organizer: Maria Anna Mariani.
- "*Jeeg Robot*: Transnational Masculinity and Biopolitics" at the 9th annual Symposium on New Trends in Modern and Contemporary Italian Cinema in Bloomington, Indiana (4/21/18)
- "Biopolitical Fantasy: Italian Thought and Contemporary Media," at the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA) annual conference in Los Angeles (3/18/18).
- "Securing the Apocalypse: Biopolitical Imagery in Italian Cinema, 1960s-present," at the American Association of Italian Studies (AAIS) annual conference in Columbus, Ohio (4/20/17). Organizer: Roberto Risso.
- "No Future for Italy? Contemporary Italian Science Fiction" at the 7th annual Symposium on New Trends in Modern and Contemporary Italian Cinema in Bloomington, Indiana (4/21/16)
- "*Orphan Black*: Textuality, Sexuality and Science," panel co-chair and co-organizer (with Andrea Goulet, Penn) at the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA) annual conference in Boston (3/17-20/15)
- "The Dancing Women: Gendered Codes in *Orphan Black*," at the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA) annual conference in Boston (3/18/15)
- "*Nos morituri*: Time in the Peplum" at the 6th annual Symposium on New Trends in Modern and Contemporary Italian Cinema in Bloomington, Indiana (4/24/15)
- "Rome: mobile city," at the Society for Cinema and Media Studies (SCMS) annual conference in Montreal, Canada (3/26/15)
- "Italian Detective Fiction and National Popular Culture" at the American Association of Italian Studies (AAIS) annual conference in Zurich, Switzerland (5/23/14)
- "Roma: città mobile: From Neorealism to *Commedia all'italiana*," at the 5th annual Symposium on New Trends in Modern and Contemporary Italian Cinema in Bloomington, Indiana (4/24/14)
- "The Euro-Procedural: Globe | Nation | City," at the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA) annual conference in New York (3/21/14)
- "The Geometry of Desire: Calvino & Descartes" at the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA) annual conference in New Orleans (4/4/10)
- "Fractal Microscopy: *Blowup*, Greene, Calvino," at the Modern Language Association (MLA) annual conference in Chicago (12/27/07)

Roundtables & Responses:

- "Italian Futures," a roundtable discussion at the American Association of Italian Studies (AAIS) annual conference in Columbus, Ohio (4/22/14). Organizers: Robert A. Rushing (Chair) and Arielle Saiber.
- "Neorealism and Science Fiction," a roundtable response on realism at the "Worlding Realisms" symposium at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, sponsored by the Unit for Criticism and Interpretation (organizer, 2/7/14)
- "Christopher Nolan's Dark Worlds," at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, sponsored by the Unit for Criticism and Interpretation (organizer, 10/26/10)
- "The Symbolic & the Social," a response to Tina Chanter's "The Political Legacies of Antigone" at the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory Colloquium, at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (03/10/08)
- "Realism and Literature," roundtable sponsored by the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities (IPRH) at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (March 2006).
- Roundtable discussion with Italian director Piero Sanna at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (03/17/05)
- "New Lacanian Cultural Studies," a response at the IPRH Lacan Reading Group at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (11/30/04)
- "Freudian Perversions, or Keeping Our Perversions Perverse," a response to Tim Dean's "Freudian Sex" at the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory Colloquium, at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (09/27/04)
- "Two Kinds of Passive Aggressivity," a response to Slavoj Žižek at the State of the Art Conference ("Democracy/Totalitarianism: Political Theory and Popular Culture in an Age of Global Insecurity") at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (04/24/04)
- Roundtable Discussion on "Violence and Its Sublimation" at the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities (IPRH) Annual Conference (Annual Theme: "Violence"), at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (04/02/04)
- Roundtable Discussion on the works of Dacia Maraini, with Dacia Maraini, Rebecca West, Barbara Spackman, Claudia Karagoz and Renate Holub at UC Berkeley (11/18/98)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Member, Society for Cinema and Media Studies (SCMS)	2006-
Member, American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA)	2001-
Member, American Association for Italian Studies (AAIS)	1998-
Member, Modern Language Association (MLA)	1997-

LANGUAGES

English (native), Italian (near-native), French (advanced), Spanish (intermediate), Old English and Latin (reading), Russian (beginner).