

## STEVEN MILLER

### PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

**Assistant Professor**, Department of English, University at Buffalo, SUNY, 2006-present.

**Visiting Assistant Professor**, Department of English, University at Buffalo, SUNY, 2004-06.

**Postdoctoral Fellow**, Cornell University Society for the Humanities, 2003-04.

### EDUCATION

Ph.D. Comparative Literature, University of California at Irvine, 2002.

Dissertation: *The Fulfillment of the Law: Contestation in Postwar Thought and Fiction*.

Committee: Andrzej Warminski and Ellen Burt, co-chairs; Juliet Flower MacCannell; Julia Reinhard Lupton.

M.A. Comparative Literature, University of California at Irvine, 1994.

B.A. Semiotics, Brown University, 1990.

### RESEARCH & TEACHING INTERESTS

19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century literatures in English, French, and German; literary theory; psychoanalytic theory; continental philosophy; translation studies; visual culture.

### BOOK PROJECTS

*Contestation: Politics, Psychoanalysis, and the Limits of Legal Theory*. (In preparation).

This book projects the event of political contestation into the field of literary studies in order to raise new questions about the relations among democracy, law, and religion; it proposes close readings of philosophical and literary texts by Bataille, Derrida, Genet, Lacan, and Saint Paul.

*Literature and the Right to Marriage*, ed., Special Issue of *Diacritics*. (Forthcoming 2007).

A collection of essays by leading scholars that intervenes in current debates about the status of marriage in modern democracies. The essays approach marriage through readings of Auden, de Rougemont, Duras, Emerson, Kafka, Kant, and Melville.

*Hyperbolic Thinking*. (In the first stages of preparation).

This book advances the thesis that hyperbole is a pivotal trope in modern political thought, psychoanalytic theory, and literature, from Descartes' hyperbolic doubt to Leibniz's "best of all possible worlds"; the irony of Voltaire's *Candide*; Clausewitz's theory of absolute war; the death drive in Freudian psychoanalysis; the logic of hyper-Christianity in Flannery O'Connor and Georges Bataille; and, the rhetoric of the "worst" in Beckett's late prose.

### FELLOWSHIPS & HONORS

Postdoctoral Fellowship, Cornell University Society for the Humanities, 2003-04.

U.C. Regents Dissertation Fellowship, U.C. Irvine, 2002

John and Elizabeth Stahr Dissertation Fellowship, U.C. Irvine, 1999

Regents Summer Research Grant, U.C. Irvine, 1997. Award for research at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, France.  
Passed Qualifying Exams with Distinction, 1996.  
Nominated for Outstanding Teaching Award in Comparative Literature, 1996.  
University of California Chancellor's Fellowship, U.C. Irvine, 1992-96.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

- "Literature and the Right to Marriage," ed. and intro. to special issue *Diacritics*, Fall 2007.
- "Open Letter to the Enemy: Jean Genet's Holy War," *Diacritics*, vol. 34, no. 2. Spring 2006.
- "Hyperbolic Warfare: The Myth of Fury in Kant and Freud," *Umbr(a)*, Fall 2004, pp. 53-73.
- "Lacan at the Limits of Legal Theory: Law, Desire, and Sovereign Violence," *Umbr(a)*, Spring 2003, pp. 81-94.
- "The 'Fulfillment of the Law' in Paul and Kant," (*a*) *A Journal of the Culture and the Unconscious*, Volume 2, no. 1, 2002, pp. 33-45.
- "Notes on Marriage without Marriage," *Savoir*, Volume 5, no. 1, September 1999, pp. 61-74.

## **TRANSLATIONS (from the French)**

- Willy Apollon, "The Function of the Dream in the Wake of the Freudian Rupture," in *Dreams of Interpretation, Interpretation of Dreams*, eds. Thomas Pepper, John Mowitt, Catherine Liu, and Jakki Spicer (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007).
- . "The Untreatable," *Umbr(a)*, Winter 2006.
- Georges Canguilhem, "Is a Pedagogy of Healing Possible?" *Umbr(a)*, Winter 2006.
- Serge André, "Writing Begins Where Psychoanalysis Ends," *Umbr(a)*, Winter 2006.
- . "Being a Saint," *Umbr(a)*, Winter 2005, pp. 95-101.
- Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, "Pasolini: An Improvisation. (On a Saintliness)," *Umbr(a)*, Winter 2005, pp. 87-92.
- Jean-Luc Nancy. "In Praise of the Melee," in *A Finite Thinking*, ed. Simon Sparks (Stanford University Press, 2003), pp. 277-88.
- . "Changing of the World" in *A Finite Thinking*, ed. Simon Sparks (Stanford University Press, 2003), 300-07.
- . "Res Ipsa Et Ultima," in *A Finite Thinking*, ed. Simon Sparks (Stanford University Press, 2003), 311-18.

———. *Hegel: The Restlessness of the Negative* (University of Minnesota Press, 2002).

## INVITED LECTURES

**“Hyperboles: Jacques Derrida and Modern Jewish Thought.”** *Jewish Heritage Lecture Series.*

Sponsored by the Mosse-Weinstein Center for Jewish Studies. University of Wisconsin, Madison, November 14, 2006.

**“Mayhem,”** [on Benjamin, Schmitt, and Goya] featured speaker, “Aesthetics of War,” Cornell Graduate Student Conference, Cornell University, February 27-28, 2005.

**“What is Psychoanalytic Work?”** [on Lacan] *Futures of Psychoanalysis*, Northwestern University, February 24-25, 2004.

**“Depoliticization,”** Comparative Literature Speaker Series, Cornell University, November 19, 2003.

**“Paul and *Polemos*,”** panel convened, *Saint Paul and Modernity*, Center for Jewish Studies, University of California, Los Angeles, April 13-15, 2002.

**“Paul on the Side of the Law,”** *Saint Paul and Modernity*, Center for Jewish Studies, University of California, Los Angeles, April 13-15, 2002.

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

**“The *Passeur* as Translator,”** Annual Meeting of International Federation for Psychoanalytic Education, Pasadena, California, November 3-5, 2006.

**“The People of God and the Absence of the Book,”** [on Saint Paul] Annual Meeting of the International Association of Philosophy and Literature, Syracuse, May 19-25, 2004.

**“The Earth’s Two Words: Beckett’s *Worstward Ho*,”** Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, April 15-18, 2004.

**“Psychoanalysis, Free Labor, and Capital,”** Annual Meeting of the California Psychoanalytic Circle, Cardozo Law School, New York City, May 3-5, 2003.

**“‘The Just Man Justices’: Miller on the Subject of Hopkins,”** *‘J’: Around the Work of J. Hillis Miller*, University of California, Irvine, April 18-19, 2003.

**“The Children’s Theater of Cruelty: ‘Objects’ of Sovereign Violence in Psychoanalysis and Politics,”** [on Lacan and Heidegger] *Encountering Infancy*, Emory University, March 21-22, 2003.

**“Psychoanalysis Has an Earth,”** *Derrida/Deleuze: Psychoanalysis, Territoriality, Politics*, University of California, Irvine, April 12-13, 2002.

**“Jeanne Balibar: Nameless in Two Languages,”** *Go Figure Va Savoir: Film and Translation Around the Work of Jeanne Balibar*, University of California, Irvine, February 15-16, 2002

**“Openness and Capital,”** paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Western Humanities Alliance, Davis, California, October 18-20, 2001.

**“Open Letter to the Enemy,”** Annual Symposium of the California Psychoanalytic Circle, San Francisco, California, May 12-13, 2001.

**“Sovereignities of Law and Literature,”** panel co-convened at the Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association, February 25-27, 2000.

**“Sovereignty Beyond the Fictions of the Political,”** Annual Meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association, New Haven, Connecticut, February 25-27, 2000.

## EDITORIAL EXPERIENCE

2004-present, Faculty Advisor, *Umbr(a)*.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### State University of New York at Buffalo

**ENG 648: “Derrida and the Death Drive”:** a close analysis of the major works of Jacques Derrida on psychoanalysis, with special attention to his various readings of Freud’s *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*.

**ENG 301: “Criticism”:** Survey of the major works and trends of aesthetic and literary criticism from Plato to Roland Barthes.

**ENG 680: “Fantasy and the Construction of Psychoanalytic Knowledge”:** An intensive exploration of the role of the concept of “fantasy” in psychoanalytic theory and practice, its relation to works of art and literature, and in elaborating the difference between psychoanalytic and philosophical knowledge.

**ENG 428: “20<sup>th</sup> Century Experimental Theater.”** An introduction for advanced undergraduates to the major works of 20<sup>th</sup> Century European and American experimental theater.

**ENG 684: “Translations.”** A workshop for graduate students, designed as an introduction to the theory and practice of translation. Readings include Schleiermacher, Pound, Benjamin, de Man, and Derrida, in addition to texts by Blanchot, Nancy, Genet, and Jabès that are the focus of translation exercises. Spring 2006.

**ENG 679: “Psychosis, Semiology, and Rhetoric.”** A graduate seminar that focuses on Lacan’s *Seminar III: The Psychoses*, along with his other writings on psychosis and linguistics, in order to understand the relation between the clinic of psychosis and the development of Lacan’s theory of the signifier. Besides the writings of Lacan, readings include works of Freud, Abraham, Jung, Schreber, Saussure, Jakobson, Genette, Deleuze, and Lyotard. Spring 2006.

**ENG 431/ COL 470: “Philosophy and Literature.”** An upper-level seminar for undergraduates designed as an introduction to the work of Jacques Derrida. We focus on texts that explicitly stage the complex relation between philosophy and literature: “The Closure of Representation”; “Plato’s

Pharmacy”; and *Given Time*. Readings also include works of Artaud, Baudelaire, Heidegger, and Mauss. Spring 2006.

**ENG 679: “The Invention of Psychoanalysis.”** A seminar for graduate students, designed as an introduction to the early works of Sigmund Freud. Class discussion revolves primarily around close readings of *Studies on Hysteria*; *The Interpretation of Dreams*; *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*; *Three Case Histories*; and *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, as well as questions of rhetoric, symbolism, and myth that arise through Freud’s debate with Adler and Jung. In addition to Freud’s texts, therefore, readings include texts of Abraham, Jones, Jung, and Lacan. Fall 2005.

**ENG 431: “Irony, Philosophy, and Literature.”** An upper-level undergraduate seminar on the question of irony in selected works of philosophy, literary theory, and literature. Class discussions not only attempt to define irony; they also invite students to grapple with the ways in which irony complicates the project of textual understanding. Readings include works of Plato, Kierkegaard, Sterne, Schlegel, Nietzsche, Schreber, and Beckett. Writing assignments include experiments with the form of dialogue and polylogue. Spring 2005.

**ENG 648: “The Critical and the Clinical.”** A graduate seminar that focuses on specific philosophical texts that turn to the psychoanalytic clinic in order to theorize the limits of metaphysical knowledge, and texts of Freud and Lacan which explicitly address critical philosophy. Readings include works by Freud, Lacan, Michaux, Foucault, Deleuze, and Derrida. Spring 2005.

**ENG 601: “Supervised Reading.”** An independent study with several graduate students designed as preparation for qualifying exams. Spring 2005.

**ENG 367: “Freud.”** A seminar for undergraduates, designed as an introduction to the works of Sigmund Freud, with emphasis upon psychoanalysis as a hermeneutics. Readings of Freud’s works include *Studies in Hysteria*; *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*; *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*; “Jensen’s *Gradiva*”: the Schreber Case; and “The Uncanny,” as well as works by Hoffmann, Jensen, Schreber, and Breton. Fall 2004.

**ENG 648: “Psychoanalysis and the Politics of Truth.”** A seminar for graduate students that focuses on a close reading of Lacan’s late *Seminar XVII: The Other Side of Psychoanalysis* to understand the political importance of the distinction between psychoanalytic knowledge and philosophical knowledge. Additional readings include works of Plato, Petronius, Hegel, Freud, Hyppolite, Caillois, Wittgenstein, and J.A. Miller. Fall 2004.

### Cornell University

**SHUM 429/ GERST 429: “War, Techné, Religion.”** A seminar for graduate students and advanced undergraduates, devoted to close readings of ethical, juridical, and political writings that conceive the relation between law and politics in terms of the “permanent possibility of war,” with special attention to texts that conceive of this exceptional possibility in terms of religion or technology. Spring 2004.

### University of California, Irvine

**“Photography Across the Disciplines.”** Fall 2001.

**“World Religions.”** SPRING 2000-Spring 2001.

**“Romance and Realism: Underworld, U.S.A.”** Fall 1998, Fall 1999.

**“Logics and Politics of Life.”** Spring 1999

**“Comic and Tragic Vision: Dramatic Plots, Amorous Intrigues.”** Spring 1998.

**“Homer to Renaissance.”** Fall 1995.

**“Expository Writing,”** Composition Program. 1994-1995.

**“Argument and Research,”** Composition Program. 1993-94.

## **LANGUAGES**

**French** (fluent); **German** (reading); **Spanish** (reading).