

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

BILINSKI FELLOWSHIP COLLOQUIUM

**Humanities Presentations by Doctoral Students Awarded the 2021/2022
Bilinski Dissertation Fellowships**

The Russell J. and Dorothy S. Bilinski Fellowship is a program of the Bilinski
Educational Foundation

12:50 – 4:00 PM
Thursday, November 18, 2021
Zoom Meeting ID: 939 5471 5312
Password: 840635
<https://unm.zoom.us/j/93954715312>

2021-2022 BILINSKI FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

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The Bilinski Colloquium Program

12:50 P.M. – Welcome

1:00 P.M. – Presentations, Part One

Andrea Borunda

Rachael Cassidy

Mark Cisneros

Elsbeth Iralu

2:15 P.M. – Break

2:30 P.M. – Presentations, Part Two

Pavlina Kalm

Mariah Partida

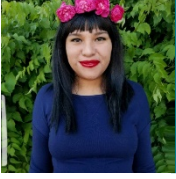
Sara Fairbanks-Ukropen

Vicki Vanbrocklin

3:30 P.M. – Q & A with Fellows

4:00 P.M. – Concluding Remarks

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Andrea Borunda – “Mestizaje Maneuverings in Shakespeare’s Tragicomedies”

Abstract: Multiplicities of generic and narrative doublings abound in Shakespeare’s tragicomedies through the pairings of characters, disguises and misrecognitions that double and elide identity. I contend the tragicomic genre gestures towards a contemporary intersectional approach of global movements that engage with Shakespeare in the borderlands. I use a more capacious sense of “race” in my analysis of Shakespearean drama defined by the social structures of class and socioeconomics: aristocrat, prostitute, and slave; family and households: siblings spouses, and master/servant relations; the parahuman: a human/animal hybrid; and community: nationality, citizenship, migrant, and resident. As such, my analysis of polyarchitecture, confronts traditional notions of “race” as arbitrary classifications of modern humans based on their various physical characteristics such as skin color, to open up an understanding of early modern formations of trans/historical alterity. The shifting template of the tragicomic reframes conqueror and acquirer, male and/or female, human and subhuman, victor, and failure, to mangle the tenets based on constructions of whiteness. I contend that race and environment, or the ecoracial, serve as a scholarly intervention to reread Shakespeare’s *Comedy of Errors*, *Pericles*, *The Winter’s Tale* and *The Tempest* to combat oppression through an enforced turn of a larger global context both geographically and socially to curate a space for women and women of color. This literary analysis exposes and dismantles fantasies of white male supremacy that dominate central world making both in Shakespeare’s works that reflect an early Modern English investment in structural inequity and oppression that persist in premodern and modern times.

Bio: Phiana Borunda is a PhD Candidate in the Department of English at the University of New Mexico. She is the recipient of the Regents’ Winrock Research Fellowship, the UNM Division for Equity and Inclusion Community Engagement Fellowship, and the Rudolfo Anaya Folklore Scholar Award. Her social advocacy of BIPOC communities informs her scholarly work on racial fluidity, (trans)global identities, and ecocriticism curating a space of mestizaje and the borderlands in the tragicomic works of William Shakespeare. Her publications are featured in *The Victorian*, *The Middle Ground Journal of World History and Global Studies*, and the *Pennsylvania Literary Journal*.



Rachael Cassidy – “D.C. Tribe: A Social History of Indigenous Residents of Washington D.C.”

Abstract: In This dissertation explores the long and hidden history of Native American residents of Washington D.C. Long before Native people became U.S. citizens (1926), they were citizens of their own nations who lived in the U.S. capitol city. The political nature of D.C. intimately connects the city with tribal governments who have fought to maintain their sovereignty throughout U.S. history. Although some Native people have lived almost their entire lives in D.C. -- they still endearingly refer to their tribal community as “home.” They often take advantage of the political nature of D.C. to advocate for Native people through diplomacy, legislation, education, visibility, and participation in the federal service.

The first Native people of the area we now know as Washington D.C., are the local groups including the Piscataway from Maryland and the Pamunkey Indian Tribe of Virginia, among others. These communities are still largely intact, and continue to participate in their traditional government systems, however over history they have also been disenfranchised to delegitimize their claims to the valuable land in and around the U.S. capital city. As of 2015, the Pamunkey are the only tribal government with U.S. federal recognition.

This stage of research focuses Native Washingtonians who resided in the D.C. area between 1840 and 1940. Regardless of pro- or anti-Indian political environments, Native people established social, cultural, and political networks in D.C. to benefit their home communities. Chronologically, this research begins with Johnson K. Rogers, a Cherokee attorney who signed the illegal Treaty of New Echota, that removed the Cherokee Nation “west of the

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Mississippi River.” Rogers moved to Washington City rather than relocate to Indian Territory. He was the first Cherokee to pass the BAR for the United States Supreme Court and lived in the city until he passed away in 1869. Ely S. Parker, Seneca from New York, spent a lot of time in Washington D.C, throughout his adult life. As a young man, he visited D.C. as a tribal diplomat. During the Civil War, he enlisted in the Union Army and became a close friend and confidant of General Ulysses S. Grant, so much that Parker personally drafted the official Confederate terms of surrender for General Robert E. Lee. He later served as the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, the first Native person in the position, under Grant’s presidential administration.

Around 1870, just after Johnson K. Rogers died and while Ely S. Parker made the most of his presidential appointment, Sophie Pitchlynn moved to D.C. from the Choctaw Nation in Indian Territory when she was just seven years old. Her father, Peter Perkin Pitchlynn, served as a Choctaw delegate in Mississippi and Indian Territory after forced removal. Sophie and her two brothers, Lee and Thomas, grew up in the capital city, but also remained tied to their Choctaw family in Indian Territory. In 1907, her romanticized status as a “Choctaw Princess” fascinated the newspapers when she began winning national poultry competitions in a male dominated industry. Although she didn’t live in D.C. to conduct tribal business, she made it her business to publicly represent the Choctaw people well.

Zitkala-Sa, or Gertrude Bonnin, a Dakota journalist and musician, would have known Sophie personally. She was the editor of the American Indian Quarterly, a magazine that ran a three-page story on Sophie’s success in the poultry industry. Zitkala-Sa moved to D.C. in 1918 but was active in the city as early as 1912. As a leader and activist in the Society of American Indians, she used her platform in the nation’s capital to advocate for many different tribal nations. Her book, *Low these Poor Indians in Oklahoma*, passionately describes murders and underhanded trickery by white settlers to gain Native land and resources in the state. She founded the first National Congress of American Indians, which dissolved after she passed away in 1938.

In 1936, on the energetic heels of the Progressive Era, D’Arcy McNickle, Metis, moved to D.C. to work for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The previously accepted assimilation policies were no longer preferred by new Commissioner of Indian Affairs, John Collier. In response to issues like the ones raised earlier by Zitkala-Sa, Collier passed the “Indian New Deal,” which offered more protection and empowered tribal governments. McNickle was instrumental in the restructuring of Native governments under the Wheeler Howard Act, which promoted a new era of Self-determination. While in D.C., McNickle was also a founding member of the new National Congress of American Indians, the same organization that continues to advocate for tribal Nations in D.C. today and has representation from over 500 of the 576 federally recognized tribes.

These five individuals lived through incredible changes in the nation’s history, all witnessing it from the seat of American power in Washington, D.C. Whether working as diplomats or tribal leaders, in the military service, as an individual entrepreneur, activist and journalist, or government employee, these people not only witness history, but actively shaped it to benefit their tribal communities by utilizing the power and influence of the U.S. capital city.

Bio: Rachael Cassidy is an enrolled citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and is the first Native person to serve as the Managing Editor of the *New Mexico Historical Review* during its 95-year publication history. She is a doctoral candidate in the Department of History where she specializes in Indigenous history and methodologies, urban Native history, memory studies, and oral history. Her dissertation explores the social history of Native residents, Indigenous Diplomats, and local tribal nations in Washington, D.C. She hopes to make this research accessible by creating an interactive website that shares stories and primary sources with public audiences. Additionally, Rachael has a background in public history, which includes program development and education at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian, in Washington D.C.

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Mark Cisneros – “The Development of Discourse Markers in Narrations Written by Spanish Heritage Language Learners”

Abstract: Studies in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) indicate that the use of discourse markers (DMs) in the academic writing of second language learners improves the overall quality of these written texts by contributing to their cohesion and comprehensibility (Saif Modhish 2012; Jalilifar 2008; Intaraprawat & Steffensen 1995). The use of DMs not only improves the quality of second language (L2) written texts, but also that of texts produced by speakers in their first language (L1). Learning how to properly use DMs allows L1 writers to become more conscious of how they present the information in their texts (Steffensen & Cheng 1996). However, despite the importance of the use of DMs in both native and foreign/second language writing, in the field of Spanish as a Heritage Language (SHL), the acquisition and production of DMs among this learner population has been given little attention.

Few studies on the teaching of DMs to Spanish L2 learners have recently focused on oral discourse and show that both explicit and implicit instruction promote the learning and use of DMs in Spanish Second Language (SSL) learners (Hernández & Rodríguez-González 2013; Hernández 2011; De la Fuente 2009). However, pedagogies that promote the use of DMs in SHL writing have not yet been identified in the literature, while pedagogies for the use of DMs in SSL writing are few (Saíz 2003). For this reason, my Dissertation attempts to answer the following research questions: 1) What is the frequency of use (i.e., number and type) of discourse markers used by SHL learners in narrations?; 2) Does the following pedagogical intervention (i.e., Explicit Instruction + Input Flood + Textual Enhancement) increase the production of discourse markers in the narrations of Spanish Heritage Language learners?; and 3) What are the differences and/or similarities in the syntactic complexity, morpho-syntactic accuracy, and fluency of narrations produced by two types of SHL learners (i.e., early SHL speakers vs. late SHL speakers)?

Bio: Mark Cisneros is a PhD candidate in Hispanic Linguistics in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. He holds an M.A. in Spanish from the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley and a B.A. in Spanish from the University of Texas-Pan American. His research interests include Spanish Second Language (SSL) and Spanish Heritage Language (SHL) Acquisition and Pedagogy, bilingualism, sociolinguistics, and Spanish in the U.S. His dissertation focuses on the use of discourse markers in the academic writing of SHL learners in advanced Spanish writing courses. His research aims to determine whether SHL learners benefit from explicit and implicit instruction with respect to the acquisition and production of discourse markers.

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Elspeth Iralu – “Technologies of Territoriality: Indigeneity Surveillance, and the State”

Abstract: This project examines the global spatial surveillance of Indigenous peoples, nations, and territories in the twenty-first century through a multi-site comparative analysis of colonial surveillance and Indigenous resistance in India, Palestine, and the United States. Based on archival, spatial, and visual research, this project will create a cultural history of colonialism and the aerial perspective, showing how the aerial perspective is tied to colonial spaces and places. The past two decades have seen a rapid proliferation of modes of spatial surveillance around the globe, through both military surveillance technologies and civilian spatial data collection. This project argues that Indigenous experiences of colonial and counterinsurgent surveillance are not bounded by geographic and legal bounds of individual nation-states but are linked through global histories of militarization and colonialism. I contend that local struggles over Indigenous territory and sovereignty must be understood within a geopolitical context.

I ask: What do remote modes of seeing reveal about how we relate to colonial violence? How has the aerial perspective been normalized as way of seeing Indigenous territory? How do militarized modes of seeing generate a structure of feeling such that we can sense from a distance? How do militarized spatial technologies shape not only how we look, but what we look for? I seek to suggest how we might expose the blinders these technologies erect. This project is uniquely situated to address perceived difficulties in comparative Indigenous research, using archival, spatial, and visual evidence to project alternative territorial futures and illuminate complex Indigenous political landscapes.

Bio: Elspeth Iralu (Angami Naga) is a doctoral candidate in American studies. She is an Indigenous scholar working at the intersection of Indigenous studies, geography, and cultural studies. Iralu’s dissertation examines the aerial perspective as a technology of colonial territoriality. In this project, she considers the volume of Indigenous territories above, below, and on the surface of the earth to better understand the volumetric sovereignty of Indigenous nations and challenge new modes of colonial spatial surveillance and control. In addition to her scholarly work, Iralu has worked on Indigenous community projects for environment, health, and self-determination in India and the United States.



Pavlina “Pav” Kalm – “The Semantics of Social Verbs: A Force-Dynamic Analysis”

Abstract: This This dissertation develops a representation for the meaning of verbs that describe various types of social interactions (or ‘social verbs’). Social verbs comprise various semantically diverse classes of verbs, including verbs of communication (e.g., tell, advise, remind), transfer of possession and owning verbs (e.g., give, buy, own), social role verbs (e.g., hire, sanction, elect), or verbs that describe interpersonal interactions between people (e.g., fight, meet, bully). Though verb meaning is an area of great interest in theoretical and computational linguistics, the category of social verbs remains understudied and has not been investigated within a unified theoretical framework.

The analysis presented in this dissertation fills this gap by systematically examining the semantics of social verbs using the concept of FORCE-DYNAMICS. In this framework, which builds on the general notion of causation, a verb is analyzed as evoking schematic information about the semantic structure of an event (or ‘event structure’). A force-dynamic representation for a verbal event structure depicts the event as a causal chain that consists of event participants, force-dynamic relations between them, and the change that each participant undergoes in the event. A schematic force-dynamic approach to the analysis of verbal event structure allows for a coarse-grained categorization of verbs that are conceptualized as semantically similar. This study proposes a comprehensive categorization of social verbs into semantically coherent verb types based on their shared force-dynamic event structures and the syntactic realization of event participants. The analysis thus targets not only the semantics of verb types but also the semantics of argument structure constructions associated with these verb types.

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Bio: Pavlina Kalm is a PhD candidate in the Department of Linguistics at the University of New Mexico. Pavlina grew up in Prague, Czech Republic. She came to New Mexico in 2007 and has made it her home. She pursued her passion for language, earning her BA and MA in Linguistics at UNM. Her dissertation focuses on verb meaning, its relation to syntactic form, and a semantic representation for cross-linguistic applications. Semantics and syntax are among her central research interests. Outside of her career in Linguistics, Pavlina enjoys spending time with her family in the outdoors hiking, camping, and skiing.



Mariah Partida – “Vulnerability and Becoming”

Abstract: My dissertation develops a novel conception of vulnerability, one that designates not just susceptibility to harm but also openness to unanticipated change and transformation. Conceived in this way, vulnerability as such is neither good nor bad but fundamentally ambiguous. Drawing on the work of Martin Heidegger, Simone de Beauvoir, Judith Butler, Erinn Gilson, Baruch Spinoza, and Gilles Deleuze, I argue that vulnerability is not a static property borne by only some individuals, but rather a relational process that is fundamental to the human condition. I suggest, moreover, that a disavowal of vulnerability can give rise to a potentially harmful fantasy of mastery. Hence, our attitude toward vulnerability has important ethical implications.

I begin my dissertation with an overview of several philosophical themes that help pave the way for a discussion of vulnerability: Heidegger’s concepts of anxiety, indeterminacy, and openness; Beauvoir’s notions of fundamental ambiguity and moral uncertainty; and, finally, Butler’s concepts of precariousness, precarity, and corporeal vulnerability. I then examine which aspects of Butler’s account of vulnerability Gilson inherits and which she rejects, which elucidates the latter’s unique approach to conceptualizing vulnerability. Finally, I discuss the relationship between vulnerability, disability, and affect theory. I argue that disability stigma not only serves as a highly illuminative example of disavowing vulnerability, but also sheds light on our tendency to avoid our mortality, finitude, and fundamental dependency on others. I then show how Spinoza and Deleuze’s conception of the affect (affectus) as a lived passage or transition of the body from one state to another, which either increases or diminishes our power of acting (puissance), reinforces the non-static nature of vulnerability and allows us to better harness its transformative potential.

Bio: Mariah Partida is a PhD candidate in the Department of Philosophy at the University of New Mexico. Her research interests include existentialism, phenomenology, feminist ethics, and disability studies. Her dissertation aims to develop a novel conception of vulnerability, one that designates not merely susceptibility to harm, but also openness to unanticipated change and transformation. Conceived in this way, vulnerability in and of itself is neither good nor bad but fundamentally ambiguous. Drawing on the work of Martin Heidegger, Simone de Beauvoir, Judith Butler, Erinn Gilson, and Gilles Deleuze, she argues that vulnerability is not a static property borne by only some individuals, but rather a relational process that is fundamental to the human condition.

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Sarah Fairbanks-Ukropen – “Church, Law, and Literature: The Interconnected Social Structures of Domestic Violence in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods”

Abstract: This dissertation will focus on Medieval and Early Modern English conceptions of violence in marriage by examining the reactions that the Church, the State and popular literature had to abusive marriages. Today, domestic violence is often viewed as a pervasive problem but is widely held to be unacceptable by society. This was not the case in the Medieval or Early Modern periods. Many believed that it was a husband’s duty to physically chastise a wife when she made a mistake, and this made it difficult for bodies of authority to draw definitive lines between what was acceptable violence and what was not. By examining the Church’s foundational thoughts about marriage, and violence, and how these theories and philosophies became ingrained into Canon Law shows a progression whereby the Church cut off avenues for women to escape abusive marriages. This was further aided by secular law and literature which both in different ways, reaffirmed the Church’s stance on marriage and violence. This changed however with the protestant reformation and the beginnings of the separation of Church and State in the Early Modern period. While the new protestant religious organizations often rejected certain aspects of Catholic doctrine, the attitude towards marriage remained the same, but the responsibility of enforcing marriage bonds, no matter the situation, began to fall to the State. Examining the works of the Patristic Fathers, Canon law, secular law, popular literature, martyrologies, ecclesiastical courts, trials of sexual assault and murder, and plays, shows how religion, law, and popular culture intersected to create institutional hierarchies of power which in turn encouraged domestic violence within marriage.

Bio: Sarah Fairbanks-Ukropen is a doctoral candidate in Medieval and Early Modern History at the University of New Mexico. Her research focus has been on women and power dynamics in those time periods, with special attention to the creation of hierarchies that still affect modern society. She received her MA from the University of New Mexico and a BA in History and Creative Writing from Warren-Wilson College. Her dissertation focusses on how canon law, secular legal systems and popular literature from the medieval period created power structures that encouraged violence against women in marriage.



Vicki Vanbrocklin – “More than the Defiant Few: Lost Womanhood and Necro Women Dismantling Nineteenth-Century Gender Ideologies”

Abstract: Too many scholars still rely on adjectives such as deviant, unruly, dangerous, and wild to describe women who interrogate rigid forms of womanhood, especially women of color. For too long, literary studies have compressed these women into a category of outliers. My dissertation, “More than the Defiant Few: Lost Womanhood and Necro Women Dismantling Nineteenth-Century Gender Ideologies,” intervenes in nineteenth-century womanhood discussions, which have traditionally solidified three prominent categories: Republican, True, and New Womanhood. However, I argue that between True Womanhood in the mid-nineteenth century and the late nineteenth-century concept of New Womanhood lies an overlooked category aptly understood as Lost Womanhood. To achieve this intervention, I focus on newspaper archives, archival research, and American literature to find “lost” women who critiqued a patriarchal system that thrives on women living in a status akin to being socially dead. My dissertation sets out to recover marginalized women writers like Sojourner Truth and Lucy Parsons. I want to prove that an alternate model of womanhood always existed in which women wrote against domesticity and femininity to negotiate gender expectations. First, I contrast Lost Womanhood to previous categories, then describe its foundational characteristics that contribute to literary studies. As I see it, whereas True Womanhood relies on a stagnant, submissive woman, Lost Womanhood allows for evolution and rebellion. Lost Women can recognize the instabilities in their lives and work to change them through negotiation or resistance. They deeply understand their second-class and invisible status and rebel against it with successful strategies of writing that I find in their literary texts and the historical archive.

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Bio: Vicki Vanbrocklin is a Ph.D. candidate in American Literary Studies in the UNM English Department. Her dissertation, “More than the Defiant Few: Lost Womanhood and Necro Women Dismantling Nineteenth-Century Gender Ideologies,” creates a ground-breaking category that includes women that would not or could not access a white middle-class form of womanhood, like True Womanhood, that depended on coloniality and patriarchy to define itself. This new category, Lost Womanhood, reveals that women have sought and created alternate forms of womanhood that acknowledge the successes of rebellious women. This new category normalizes their so-called unruly behavior when gender and literary studies have framed these women as outliers rather than effective changemakers.

Thank you!

The College of Arts & Sciences and the UNM Foundation thank Bonnie Severiotti, President and Executive Director, and the Trustees of the Bilinski Educational Foundation for their generous support.

About the Bilinski Educational Foundation

Russell J. and Dorothy S. Bilinski's goal in life was to be independent and challenged intellectually. They strongly believed in people being self-sufficient, ambitious, and above all, responsible. Both Russell and Dorothy were true intellectuals, as well as being adventuresome, independent and driven. Russell was a researcher, academician and an entrepreneur. Dorothy was an accomplished artist and patron of the arts. Russell and Dorothy believed that education was a means to obtain independence, and this is the legacy they wished to pass on to others.

In furtherance of that goal, when Russell and Dorothy died, they left a significant gift for the formation of a nonprofit corporate foundation. The Bilinski Educational Foundation seeks to fulfill this legacy by providing fellowship funds for post-secondary education for students who have demonstrated, and are likely to maintain, both the highest academic achievement and good moral character, but who lack the financial resources to complete their post-secondary education.