

MICHAEL MEYER

Department of English/Frederick Honors College
University of Pittsburgh
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May 2024

EDUCATION

National Taiwan University, Taipei. International Chinese Language Program. 2022.

Tsinghua University, Beijing. Inter-University Program. Advanced studies in Chinese. 2005.

University of California-Berkeley. MA Education, Advanced Reading and Language Leadership Program. Literacy specialist teaching credential, K-12. 2001.

University of Wisconsin-Madison. BS Education (Honors). Major: English; Minor: Spanish. Language Arts teaching credential, K-12. 1995.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Pittsburgh

Professor of English. Nonfiction Writing & Journalism. 2012-present.

Electus Faculty, David C. Frederick Honors College. 2022-present.

Affiliated Faculty, Asian Studies Center. 2015-present.

Faculty Director, Literature and Writing, Pitt@London. 2015-20.

University of Hong Kong

Visiting Professor, Journalism and Media Studies Centre, 2012-2013.

Number 22 Middle School, Jilin city, China.

English-as-a-Second Language teacher, Grades 7-9. 2009-2011.

Coal Lane Elementary School, Beijing, China.

English-as-a-Second Language teacher, Grades 4-6. 2005-2008.

International School of Beijing, China.

Language Arts and Social Studies teacher, Grades 6-8. 2003-2004.

Willard Middle School, Berkeley.

Reading Specialist and supervisor of AmeriCorps volunteers. Grades 6-8. 1999-2001.

The New School of Collaborative Learning, Beijing.

Language Arts and Social Studies teacher, Grades 6-12. 1997-1999.

Neijiang Teachers College, Sichuan province, China.

Peace Corps volunteer teaching undergraduates English-as-a-Second Language and American & British Literature. Teacher practicum supervisor. 1995-1997.

BOOKS

A Dirty, Filthy Book: Sex, Scandal, and One Woman's Fight in the Victorian Trial of the Century. Penguin/WH Allen and Harvard University Press. February 2024.

Benjamin Franklin's Last Bet. The Favorite Founder's Divisive Death, Enduring Afterlife, and Blueprint for American Prosperity. Mariner/HarperCollins. April 2022. Advance blurbs appended below.

The Road to Sleeping Dragon: Learning China from the Ground Up. Bloomsbury (worldwide). Shanghai Translation Press (China) and Gusa (Taiwan). 2017.

In Manchuria: A Village Called Wasteland and the Transformation of Rural China. Bloomsbury (worldwide). Shanghai Translation Press (China) and Gusa (Taiwan). 2015.

The Last Days of Old Beijing: Life in the Vanishing Backstreets of a City Transformed. Bloomsbury (worldwide). Shanghai Translation Press (China) and Gusa (Taiwan). 2008.

AWARDS and HONORS

Honorary Doctorate, Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology, Boston. 2023.

The Berlin Prize; residency at the American Academy in Berlin. 2023-24.

University of Pittsburgh Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award. 2023.

Finalist, Athenaeum of Philadelphia Book Award. 2023.

U.S. Fulbright Scholar to Taiwan. 2021-22.

Visiting Scholar, Oxford Centre for Life-Writing, University of Oxford. 2021-22.

Rawski Fellow in Chinese Studies (National Taiwan University). Spring 2022.

Fellow at Art Omi, May 2021.

Fellow at MacDowell, Winter 2020.

Finalist, Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award. 2019-20.

Finalist (four times), Bellet Award for Teaching in the Arts & Sciences. 2015-2018.

Lowell Thomas Award for Best Travel Book, Society of American Travel Writers. 2018.

National Endowment of the Humanities Public Scholar Award. 2017.

Fellow, Public Intellectuals Program, National Committee on US-China Relations. 2014-16.

Lowell Thomas Award for Best Travel Book, Society of American Travel Writers. 2015.

Resident at the Rockefeller Foundation Center, Bellagio, Italy. 2011.

Whiting Writer's Award for Nonfiction, Mrs. Giles Whiting Foundation. 2010.

Guggenheim Fellowship, The John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. 2010.

Resident at the Cullman Center for Scholars & Writers, New York Public Library. 2010-2011.

Paul Cowan Prize, Best Nonfiction Book, Peace Corps Writers. 2009.

Finalist for the California Book Award. 2009.

New York Times Book Review "Editor's Choice." 2008.

"Asia's Best Books of the Year," *Wall Street Journal*. 2008.

Lowell Thomas Award for Excellence in Travel Writing, Society of American Travel Writers. 2005.

Teacher of the Year, the New School of Collaborative Learning. 1998.

OTHER PUBLISHED WORK

Anthologies and Forwards

Unsavory Elements (chapter). Shanghai: Earnshaw Books. 2013.

The Inmost Shrine: A Photographic Odyssey of China, 1873 (forward). Leventer. 2009.

SELECTED JOURNALISM

Essays

- “How a Founding Father Helped Create Modern American Philanthropy,” LitHub. 4/15/22.
- “Ben Franklin on Today’s Innovation Economy,” History News Network, 4/15/22.
- “The Silent Traveller: Chiang Yee.” New Yorker.com (accepted; forthcoming).
- “The Plunge,” *The Iowa Review*, Volume 45, Issue 3, Winter 2015/16.
- “Meet the Chinese Lumberjack Who Slept with an Alien,” *Huffington Post*, 4/6/15.
- “What Fortune Cookies Might Sound Like in Chinese,” *Huffington Post*, 2/13/15.
- “The Photograph,” *The Iowa Review*, Volume 44, Issue 2, Fall 2014, pp. 3-11.
- “A Tale of Two Cities,” *China National Travel*, March 2014, pp. 120-125.
- “Dazhalan Spirit,” *Fellow Traveler* (China), March 2014, pp. 34-51.
- “See You Again, Old Beijing,” *Slate*, August 8, 2013.
- “Letter from a Chinese Rice Farm,” *China Economic Quarterly*, September 2013, pp. 29-34.
- “Desperately Seeking City,” *New York Times* (China), 12/11/12.
- “This American Friend,” *This American Life*, June 2012, (18-minute script/report).
- “Beijing, Forever,” *Foreign Policy*, September/October 2012, pp. 78-80.

Op-eds

- “A View of Past and Future Wars on Taiwan,” *Wall Street Journal*. 4/18/22.
- “The Peace Corps Cuts and Runs,” *Wall Street Journal*. 1/24/20.
- “The Quiet Revolt That Saved China,” *Wall Street Journal*, 4/17/19.
- “Reversal of Fortune Cookies,” *Wall Street Journal*, 1/4/18.
- “Stumbling my way through Berlin,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. 12/10/17.
- “What are you? They Ask My Son,” *Wall Street Journal*, 10/31/17.
- “China’s Marxist communal farming makes way for agribusiness,” *Los Angeles Times*, 3/20/15.
- “China’s Big Zhang!” *New York Times*, 1/2/11, p. WK9.
- “Still ‘Ugly’ after all these years,” *New York Times Book Review*, 7/12/09, p. 23.
- “What the Chinese Want From Obama,” *New York Times*, 2/20/09.
- “A Supreme Case for the Next President,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 10/20/00, p. A22.
- “China Dismayed by Bullying of Aunties,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 9/9/99, p. A25.
- “This time, China’s rebels look like family,” *Minneapolis StarTribune*, 8/1/99, p. A21.

Reporting

- “A Pittsburgh Area Restaurant that Trades Fussy for Fun.” *The New York Times*. 7/7/18.
- “The Life and Times of the Literary Agent Georges Borchardt.” *The Paris Review*, 5/23/18.
- “What the Chairman Said: 1,000 Miles from Beijing.” *Worldview*. Spring 2018, p. 25-27.
- “Echoes of Empire,” *DestinAsian*, February/March 2016.
- “Welcome to the Most Japanese City in China,” *Foreign Policy*, September 2015.
- “A Daring Rescue Mission to Manchuria,” *Wall Street Journal*, 8/12/15.
- “What Happened to the Settlers the Japanese Army Abandoned,” *China File*, 8/10/15.
- “The Lesser Wall,” *China File*, 6/6/12.
- “Taichung InfoBox,” *Architect Magazine*, September 2011.
- “One World, One Dream One Year Later,” *Sports Illustrated*, 8/3/09, pp. 66-72.
- “About that advance . . .” *New York Times Book Review*, 4/12/09, p. 27.
- “Becoming Teacher Plumblossom,” *Worldview*, Fall 2008, pp. 37-38.
- “Chinese Characters,” *New York Times Book Review*, 9/7/08, p. 18.

“The Word on the Street,” *Financial Times*, 8/2/08, p. 8.
 “City of Shadows,” *Reader’s Digest*, August 2008, pp. 100-108.
 “The Death and Life of Old Beijing,” *Architectural Record*, July 2008, pp. 72-76.
 “The Last Days of Old Beijing,” *China Connection*, June 2008, pp. 73-74.
 “Learning to Speak Olympics,” *New York Times Book Review*, 5/25/08, p. 23.
 “Homeland Fertility” *Smithsonian*, June 2006, p. 81.
 “Flaming Dragon,” *Smithsonian*, May 2005, p. 58.
 “Pearl of the Orient,” *New York Times Book Review*, 3/5/06, p. 23.
 “The World’s Biggest Book Market,” *New York Times Book Review*, 3/13/05, pp. 10-11.
 “Movin’ on up,” *Harper’s*, March 2004.
 “You can run but you can’t hide,” *Harper’s*, September 2003.
 “The Threshold,” *Worldview*, Spring 2003.
 “Song of the Open Road,” *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, 12/23/01, p. 9.

Travel writing

“Stepping Out in Singapore: A Walk around the Country’s Perimeter. *Destinasian*. August 2018.
 “A Passion for Noodles,” *Reader’s Digest*, May 2007, pp. 90-96.
 “Remix: Backstreet Beijing,” *New York Times Magazine*, 5/25/07.
 “Manchuria Under Ice,” *Departures*, November/December 2006, pp. 292-297.
 “A Return to Leaping Tiger, Jade Dragon,” *Financial Times*, 12/3/05.
 “Beijing Black Book,” *Departures*, October 2005, pp. 55-76.
 “Let the Games Begin,” *Departures*, October 2005, pp. 206-208.
 “Taiwan Makes its Move,” *Departures*, October 2005, pp. 185-187.
 “Back at the ranch,” *Time*. 4/17/05, p. 55.
 “Two Writers Stuck in the Same Boat,” *Financial Times*, 4/9/05, p. 18.
 “Vintage China,” *Destinasian*, February/March 2005, pp. 88-97.
 “Next time you’re in Qingdao,” *Time*, 1/10/05.
 “The Secrets of Laos,” *Departures*, January/February 2005, pp. 96-103.
 “Restoration Drama,” *Destinasian*, October/November 2004, pp. 91-98.
 “Backstreet Beijing,” *Time*, 10/11/04.
 “What a difference a stay makes,” *Financial Times*, 10/2/04, p. W18.
 “Looking for Luang Prabang,” *Worldview*, September/October 2004, pp. 45-48.
 “Bound for Glory,” *Time Asia*, 9/6/04, p. 61.
 “Yosemite today, Vegas next,” *Financial Times*, 9/4/04, p. W18.
 “Assembling Nagoya,” *World Traveler*, July 2004, pp. 26-31.
 “Current Affairs,” *Time Asia*, 6/7/04, p. 49.
 “Time Traveler,” *Time*, 5/31/04.
 “A slow train through China,” *Financial Times*, 5/8/04, p. 22.
 “Rails and Ties,” *Destinasian*, April/May 2004, pp. 82-91.
 “On this brewery tour, it’s Yanjing time,” *Chicago Tribune*, 3/7/04, p. 5.
 “Moscow in Manchuria,” *Time*, 3/1/04.
 “Thirst Come, Thirst Served,” *Time Asia*, 9/22/03, pp. 13-14.
 “Coming to Kashgar,” *Destinasian*, April/May 2003, pp. 70-82.
 “Beijing Now,” *Departures*, September 2002, pp. 190-196.
 “Immigrant’s Song,” *Time*, 8/19/02, pp. 82-85.
 “Stepping into a Sacred and Political Place,” *Los Angeles Times*, 7/14/02, pp. L8-9.
 “In Kashgar, clinging to an exotic past,” *Los Angeles Times*, 3/24/02.

- “At the end of the wall in China,” *Chicago Tribune*, 3/3/02, p. 1 & 4-5.
- “Going Underground in Beijing,” *Los Angeles Times*, 1/6/02, p. L9.
- “The Hero of Santiago,” *The Atlantic Online*, 5/30/01.
- “A Return Trip on the Iron Rooster,” *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, 3/18/01, pp. 12-18.
- “Havana’s salute to a true revolutionary,” *Chicago Tribune*, 3/4/01, p. 1 & 6-7.
- “Sit-and-Think Pictures,” 7X7, Spring 2001, p. 42.
- “Snowed-in in Shangri-La,” *Atlantic Online*, 8/2/00.
- “Waking Up to Beijing,” *Chicago Tribune*, 6/4/00, pp. T1 & 12-13,
- “A proud walking tour rises from ‘Angela’s Ashes,’” *Los Angeles Times*, 4/2/00, p. L8-19.
- “Welcome, Monday to Bloody Sunday,” *South China Morning Post*, 2/12/00.
- “Ashes to Ashes,” *Chicago Tribune*, 1/30/00, p. 1 & 20-23.
- “Salinas’ path to Steinbeck,” *San Francisco Examiner*, 11/21/99, p. T6-7.
- “Fried Locust and Mao,” *Asian Wall Street Journal*, 8/27/99, p. P6.
- “Sky’s the Limit in Shanghai,” *Los Angeles Times*, 4/25/99, p. L15.
- “Taking the high road,” *Chicago Tribune*, 4/25/99, p. T1 & 4.
- “Dallying a while in Dalian,” *South China Morning Post*, 4/13/99, p. 20.
- “Piecing together Shenyang’s past,” *South China Morning Post*, 3/23/99, p. 18.
- “The most beautiful road in America,” *South China Morning Post*, 2/6/99, p. 5.
- “Reversal of Fortunes,” *Chicago Tribune*, 12/6/98, pp. 8-9.
- “The Predicament of Tibet,” *Chicago Tribune*, 10/18/98, pp. T1 & 5-6.
- “Pandering to tourists,” *South China Morning Post*, 9/24/98, p. 19.
- “Another side to the Land of the Lakes,” *South China Morning Post*, 7/12/98, p. 19.
- “The Great Buddhist Escape,” *South China Morning Post*, 6/30/98, pp. 17.
- “Hungry for Mao,” *Chicago Tribune*, 6/21/98, pp. T1 & 6-7.
- “Encounters with Confucius,” *Los Angeles Times*, 6/14/98, pp. L10-11.
- “Food for Thoughts of Revolution,” *South China Morning Post*, 6/4/98, p. 18.
- “New Year, Old China,” *Los Angeles Times*, 1/4/98, pp. L1 & L8.

SELECTED INVITED LECTURES AND READINGS

“*Taiwan Rising*”

- Heidelberg Center for American Studies, University of Heidelberg, 6/4/24
- United States Embassy, Berlin, Public Diplomacy Talk, 5/13/24
- Holtzbrink Foundation, Cologne, 3/19/24
- American Academy in Berlin, 1/30/24

“*A Dirty, Filthy Book*”

- Conway Hall, London 5/19/24
- National Secular Society, UK, 4/10/24
- BBC History Extra podcast, 3/18/24
- University of Oxford, Wolfson College, 2/27/24
- Middle Temple Library and Archives, London, 2/26/24
- University of Oxford, Centre for Life Writing (with Ada Ferrer), 2/21/24

“*Benjamin Franklin’s Last Bet*”

- Boston Athenaeum, 6/13/23
- Commencement, Franklin Cummings Institute of Technology, Boston, 5/20/23
- Motley Fool Money, 10/2/22
- South Dakota Festival of Books, 9/23/22

Benjamin Franklin House, London, 8/10/22
The American Philosophical Society, 4/12/22
U.S. National Archives, 4/14/22
The Commonwealth Club, 4/19/22
The Massachusetts Historical Society, 4/25/22

“The Road to Sleeping Dragon: Learning China from the Ground Up”

Duke Durham & Duke Kunshan University, 2/11 and 3/29/19
National Council for the Social Studies (keynote speaker), Chicago, 12/1/18
Columbia University, School of Social Work. 10/10/18
Columbia University, Urban Studies Program. 2/13/18
University of California-Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism. 1/30/18
The China Institute, New York City. 11/15/17
Columbia University, Weatherhead East Asian Institute. 11/15/17
The Commonwealth Club, San Francisco. 11/6/17
University of Southern California. 10/17/17
Asia Society, New York (with the *New Yorker’s* Jiayang Fan). 10/16/17
University of Pittsburgh. 10/11/17
University of California-Berkeley. 9/15/17

“In Manchuria: Covering China’s Countryside”

Yale University. 3/30-31/17. (A hosted Agrarian Studies colloquium on my books.)
Ohio University. 2/23/17.
National Library of Taiwan/Taiwan Normal University. 10/22/16.
University of London. 2/15/16.
University of Oxford. 2/11/16.
Singapore National Library. 11/16/15.
Hong Kong International Literary Festival. 11/6-7/2015.
Chinese University of Hong Kong. 11/6/2015.
Foreign Correspondents’ Club, Shanghai. 11/2/2015.
Shanghai International Literary Festival. 11/1-2/2015.
Cornell University. 10/26/15.
Royal Geographic Society, Hong Kong. 10/13/15.
National Consortium for Teaching About Asia, Pittsburgh. 10/10/15.
American Writers Festival, Singapore. 9/14-18/2015.
Keynote address at the swearing-in of Peace Corps China volunteers, on the
twentieth anniversary of my own. Chengdu, Sichuan. 8/27/15.
Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA. 4/23/15.
University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA. 4/6/15.
University of Buffalo, SUNY. Buffalo, NY. 4/3/15.
Luce Foundation/National Committee on US-China Relations. New York, 4/2/15.
New America Foundation, Washington, D.C. 3/30/15.
Yale Center Beijing, Beijing China. 3/24/15.
Beijing Bookworm Literary Festival, Beijing, China. 3/22 and 3/23/15.
The Commonwealth Club, San Francisco, CA. 3/5/15.
University of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA. 3/5/15.
University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA. 3/4/15.
University of California-Irvine, Irvine, CA. 3/3/15.

University of California-Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA. 3/2/15.
University of California-Berkeley, Berkeley, CA. 2/25/15.
Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. 2/24/15.
University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA. 2/21/15.
The Asia Society (in conversation with Ian Buruma), New York. 2/18/15.
The New York Public Library, with Ian Frazier, New York. 2/17/15.
Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA. May 2014.

“*The Last Days of Old Beijing: Immersive Reporting in a Neighborhood and Megacity*”

Stanford University and Tsinghua University joint course on “International Urbanization.” Palo Alto, CA. October 2015.

The China Institute, New York City, NY. May 2015.

The Asia Society, New York, with Peter Hessler. June 2013.

Peking University, Beijing, China. May 2013.

Jiaotong University, Shanghai, China. May 2013.

Foreign Correspondents’ Club, Shanghai, China. May 2013.

Asia Society, Hong Kong. May 2013.

National Taiwan University, Taipei, Taiwan. April 2013.

St. Paul’s School, Concord NH. April 2013.

San Francisco Planning + Urban Research Association, July 2012.

City University, Hong Kong. September 2011.

University of Colorado, Boulder, CO. July 2011.

Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. April 2011.

Boston College, Boston, MA. April 2011.

National Committee on US-China Relations, New York. March 2011.

The Luce Foundation, New York. March 2011.

St. Ann’s School, Brooklyn, NY. January 2011.

University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA. October 2010.

The Asia Society, New York City, NY (aired on CSPAN’s *Book TV*). May 2009.

Columbia University, New York City, NY. February 2009.

University of California-Irvine. September 2008.

Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA. September 2008.

University of Washington, Seattle, WA. June 2008.

University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN. June 2008.

The Commonwealth Club, San Francisco. June 2008.

Google headquarters, Mountain View. June 2008.

University of California-Berkeley. June 2008.

TEACHING

University of Pittsburgh. Assistant/Associate/full Professor, English, 2012-present.

Undergraduate courses

Introduction to Journalism and Nonfiction. (Spring 2013; Fall 2013; Spring 2021.) Reading, reporting, workshopping, and (repeatedly) editing feature stories. Class evaluation of Overall Teaching Effectiveness: 4.8 out of 5.

Readings in Contemporary Nonfiction. (Fall 2013, Fall 2014, Fall 2016, Spring 2019.) Fourteen classic and modern books that exemplify the artistic and journalistic possibilities of the

Literature of Fact. Class evaluation of Overall Teaching Effectiveness: 4.7 out of 5. *Created a section of this course specializing in Chinese Nonfiction, Spring '19.*

Intermediate Nonfiction. (Spring 2014, Spring 2018, Fall 2020, Fall 2022.) How to delve deep into a subject using interviews and archives; the ethics of reporting; story forms from print to digital to podcasting. Class evaluation of Overall Teaching Effectiveness: 4.9 out of 5.

Senior Seminar. (Spring 2013 and 2015; Fall 2018; Spring 2019; Spring 2021 and 2023) Close reading of *Moby Dick*, followed by researching, reporting and workshopping a longform story while posting progress and setbacks on a student-designed website. Class evaluation of Overall Teaching Effectiveness: 4.75 out of 5.

Travel Writing. (Spring 2016, Summer 2018, Summer 2019 London.) Researching, reporting and workshopping travel essays, articles, and service items in London and other European cities. Intensive study of the genre's classic and contemporary writing. *Created a stand-alone four-week session of study abroad in London focused around this course.* Class evaluation of Overall Teaching Effectiveness: 3.82 out of 4.

Urban Underworlds (Spring 2016, London.) A literature course exploring little-seen London, from subcultures through the centuries to the suburbs today, with a focus on the rapidly changing East End, Brixton, and Southwark. Class evaluation of Overall Teaching Effectiveness: 3.75 out of 4.

Graduate courses

Readings in Contemporary Nonfiction. (Spring 2013 and 2015; Fall 2018; Fall 2020) Analysis of structures and techniques nonfiction writers employ, like novelists, to keep readers turning the page. Class evaluation of Overall Teaching Effectiveness: 4.9 out of 5.

Graduate Nonfiction Workshop. (Fall 2012, Fall 2014, Fall 2016, Spring 2018, Fall 2022.) Intensive archival research, writing set pieces and editing. Overall Teaching Effectiveness: 4.92 out of 5.

University of Hong Kong, Journalism for Media Studies Centre.

Literary Journalism. (Spring 2012 and Spring 2013.) Designed graduate-level foundation course in classic and contemporary reportage, set against immersive, reported stories observing tradespeople at work. Evaluation of Overall Teaching Effectiveness: 4.8 out of 5.

University of California-Berkeley.

Education 50: The Discourse of the Major. (Spring 2001.) As a TA, designed and taught an undergraduate four-credit foundation course in discourse as the basis for my Master's thesis. More than a decade later, the course is still offered.

SERVICE

UNIVERSITY

Ad Hoc Promotion Committee of Ruth Mostern, 2022.

Tenure Council, Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences (Alternate), 2020-present.

Chair, Promotion Committee of Irina Reyn, 2020-21.

Secretary, Ad Hoc Promotion Committee of David Marshall, 2021.

Chair, Tenure Committee of Bill Lychack, 2018-19 (tenure awarded).
China Council, Asian Studies Center, 2016-present. Collaborator on \$1.4m FLAS grant, awarded Fall, 2018.
Faculty Grants Committee, Dietrich School of Arts & Sciences (Chair), 2015-2018.
Special Initiatives in the Humanities Grant Committee, 2015-present.
Affiliated Faculty Member of the Asian Studies Center, 2014-present.
Reader and mock interviewer for Fulbright fellowship and Rhodes applicants, 2014-present.

DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEES

University and external Grants and Awards, 2020-present.
Graduate Admissions (Chair), 2018, 2019, 2022.
Graduate Admissions (Chair, Nonfiction), 2013-present.
Selection of the Pitt Contemporary Writers Series visiting authors, 2013-2014.
Faculty advisor, Longform.org, 2013-2015.
Curriculum, 2012-2013.
Judge: Graduate Nonfiction Award, 2012.

MFA THESIS COMMITTEES

Abdulrahmen El-Gendy, April 2025. Chair.
Megan Valley, April 2025. Reader.
T.C. Martin, April 2023. *The Watchers*. Chair.
Brian Broome, April 2021. *Punch Me up to the Gods*. Chair. (Kirkus Prize and Lambda winner)
Megan Donnelly, April 2021. *Utqiagvik, Alaska*. Chair.
Avery Keatley, April 2019. Chair.
Tyler McCloskey, April 2019. Chair.
Andrew Thurman, April 2019. Chair.
Clarissa Leon, April 2019. Chair.
Katie Waring, April 2019. Reader.
Courtney Harrell, April 2018. *Hard to Go to Hell from Colorado Springs*. Chair.
Molly Bain, April 2018. *Dear Lake*. Chair.
Kim Olsen, August 2016. *A Woman Soldier in Afghanistan*. Reader.
Sara Button, April 2016. *Let's Go to the Movies: A (Really Long) Love Letter to the Cinema*. Reader.
Gavin Jenkins, April 2016. *Life at a Gas Station*. Reader.
Aletha Francis, April 2015. *All the Good: A Memoir of Love, Faith, and Incest*. Chair.
Rachel Wilkinson, April 2015. *Search History*. Chair.
Laura Clarke, April 2014. *Specter*. Reader.

UNDERGRADUATE MENTORING

Abhignya Mallipalli, Spring 2019. B.Phil. thesis chair/advisor: "Stigma, Violence and Pregnancy: Thinking Beyond the Clinic."
Grant Burgman, Spring 2019. Internship sponsor, *Creative Nonfiction*.
Josh Ye (Junior), Summer 2015. Internship sponsor, the Committee of 100, San Francisco.
Christine Scully (Freshman), Spring 2015. First Experiences in Research.
Ryan Bertomaschi (Senior), Fall 2014. Writing internship at *Pittsburgh Sports Report*.
Kathleen Mannard (Freshman), Spring 2014. First Experiences in Research.
Julia Campana (Senior), Spring 2014. Writing internship at Pitt Study Abroad Office.

LANGUAGES

English (native); Mandarin Chinese (fluent); Spanish (good)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

PEN, The Author's Guild, and the Association of Writers and Writing Programs
The National Committee on United States-China Relations
National Geographic Center for Sustainable Destinations (China representative, emeritus)
Royal Geographic Society (Hong Kong)

REFERENCES

Anne Fadiman, author, Yale University. fadiman@comcast.net
Adam Hochschild, author, UC-Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism.
adamhochschild@earthlink.net
Peter Hessler, author and *New Yorker* staff writer. peterhessler@gmail.com
Ian Johnson, author/Pulitzer winner iandjohnson@gmail.com

REPRESENTATION

Georges Borchardt (whose first-ever sale was *Waiting for Godot*)
136 East 57th Street, New York City, NY 10022 georges@gbagency.com

****Praise for *A Dirty, Filthy Book: Sex, Scandal and One Woman's Fight in the Victorian Trial of the Century* (Penguin, 2024)**

Hugely entertaining, told with verve and humour, with a riveting court trial at its heart. A terrific study of the Victorian controversy and criminalisation of contraception and the dire consequences for women of confusing medicine with morals. At last, Annie Besant has found a champion equal to the task of doing justice to her crusading life and the significance of her achievements. Victorian patriarchy denied Besant her rightful place in political history: Michael Meyer has reinstated her, in all her glorious complexity, as **the pioneering feminist changemaker in Britain's history of morals, censorship and sex.**

Rachel Holmes, author of SYLVIA PANKHURST and ELEANOR MARX

Michael Meyer has mined the rich seams of history and woven together a fascinating and gripping narrative. Beautifully told, it has echoes for today. I don't know how he does it

Adam Hochschild, author of KING LEOPOLD'S GHOST

Annie Besant was a freethinker and a half – an indomitable woman who challenged many of the discriminatory views of her day and put all her energies into social change. A great read

Prof. Helen Pankhurst CBE, Women's Rights Campaigner

****Praise for *Benjamin Franklin's Last Bet: The Favorite Founder's Divisive Death, Enduring Afterlife, and Blueprint for American Prosperity* (HarperCollins April 2022)**

"Michael Meyer's marvelous book has it all: life, death, love, money, generosity, and greed, not to mention the seeds of microfinance, the miracle of compound interest, and the important lesson that an idealistic vision, even if imperfectly executed, can change lives."

—**Anne Fadiman, National Book Critics Circle Award–winning author of *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down***

"From the first page, Michael Meyer's storytelling talent grips you and doesn't let go. *Benjamin Franklin's Last Bet* is a surprising and important read that follows the financial and cultural ripples caused by the founding father's death, from the surprising revelations that appear in his will right up to the present day. Full of rich detail and deftly-rendered twists and turns, this is a superb read that will make you see Franklin, and our American culture today, in an entirely new light."

—**A.J. Baime, *New York Times* best-selling author of *White Lies* and *The Accidental President***

"Books about America's founders are often as heavy as tombstones, but with *Benjamin Franklin's Last Bet*, Michael Meyer has created something different: deeply researched, beautifully written, and perfectly concise. It's also utterly original: the history of a great man's legal and philanthropic afterlife. By beginning at the end—Franklin's death, and his unusual will—Meyer embarks on a tale that reveals both the origins of American philanthropy and its trajectory over more than two centuries."

—**Peter Hessler, *New Yorker* staff writer and National Book Award-finalist for *Oracle Bones***

"*Benjamin Franklin's Last Bet* is the charming, wide-ranging tale of Franklin's dying bequest to the tradesmen of Boston and Philadelphia and its abiding legacy. Meyer is a brilliant guide, unwinding for us the many threads that link this founding father to a modern-day America he would barely have recognized."

—**Stephen R. Platt, author of *Imperial Twilight*, shortlisted for the *Baillie Gifford Prize for Nonfiction***

"Benjamin Franklin gave more than his thoughts to the future of the young republic he helped establish. As Michael Meyer explains in this illuminating account, the founder also bequeathed an enduring financial endowment to his beloved 'leather apron' men—the working people of Boston, Philadelphia, and America. *Benjamin Franklin's Last Bet* is a welcome and timely addition to our understanding of Franklin's age, as well as our own."

—**Philip Dray, finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and the author of *Stealing God's Thunder: Benjamin Franklin's Lightning Rod and the Invention of America***

"If anyone had told me you could find something genuinely new about one of the Founding Fathers, I wouldn't have believed it. But Michael Meyer's extraordinary tale of this amazingly foresighted project of Ben Franklin's proves me wrong—and makes for lively and fascinating reading."

—**Adam Hochschild, *New York Times* best-selling author of *Spain in Our Hearts*, and *King Leopold's Ghost***