

# Kevin R. West

Professor (tenured)  
Stephen F. Austin State University  
Department of English and Creative Writing  
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## Education

PhD, Comparative Literature, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, 2004  
Minors: Medieval Studies, Religious Studies  
Dissertation: "Reading the Signs: Desire in the Apocalyptic Text"

Area Certificate in Medieval Studies, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, 2000

MA, Comparative Literature, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, 1998  
Master's Essay: "Intercession in Dante and the *Visio Sancti Pauli*"

MA, Theology, Harding University Graduate School of Religion, Memphis, Tennessee, 1994  
Master's Thesis: "The Soteriological Problem of Evil: William Lane Craig's Theodicy"

BA, English, Harding University, Searcy, Arkansas, 1992

## Teaching Experience

Stephen F. Austin State University, Summer 2005–present  
(Assistant Professor 2005–2011, Associate Professor 2011–2018, Professor 2018–present)

### Undergraduate English Courses

- Freshman Composition I (Rhetoric and Composition)
- Freshman Composition II (Research and Argument)
- Technical and Scientific Writing
- Introduction to Literature
- Introduction to Mythology
- World Literature to 1650
- World Literature 1650–present
- British Literature to 1800
- Ancient/Classical Literature
- Medieval/Renaissance World Literature
- Contemporary World Literature
- Medieval British Literature
- The Bible as Literature
- The French Novel
- Dante
- The Epic
- Hemingway and the World
- Senior Seminar (Topic: "Umberto Eco and the Modern Euro-Thriller")

### Undergraduate Interdisciplinary Courses

- Freshman Seminar
- Introduction to Religious Studies

## Graduate English Courses

Twentieth-Century Short European Novel

*Caveat Lector: The Dangerous Text*

The Bible and/as Literature

Great Texts 1650–present

Dante

Virgil, Paul, Dante

Bibliography and Research Methods

Literary Criticism

Independent Study (topics including Arthurian Literature; Critical Theory and the Bible)

Indiana University, 1997–1998, 2000–2004 (as Associate Instructor)

Freshman Composition

Major Themes in Literature: “Folly”

Introduction to Popular Culture

Science Fiction, Fantasy, and the Western Tradition

Detective, Mystery, and Horror Literature

“In Love and War”: War and Romance in Film and Literature

Université de Paris-X (Nanterre), 1998–1999 (as Lecteur d’anglais)

Introduction to Anglo-American Civilization

3<sup>rd</sup> year English intonation laboratory1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year English conversation (“Dynamique”)1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year English comprehension**Publications**

*Literary Depictions of Dangerous Reading: Textual Dangers*. Monograph with Lexington Books (Rowman & Littlefield), 2019. xiv + 195 pp. ISBN 9781498563710

Abstract: *Literary Depictions of Dangerous Reading* explores how various classic and contemporary texts represent reading as a dangerous endeavor. I consider how “textual dangers” may derive from the text being read or from the conditions of reading; likewise, I consider the various qualities of the dangers depicted: actual or metaphorical, real or imagined, minor or mortal. Whereas readers typically assume that the mere words of a book cannot directly affect their physical health, literature can and does stage readings in which readers suffer harm from the magical or supernatural qualities of some text. I argue that such impossibly dangerous reading fascinates by exaggerating the dangers that inhabit certain real or realistic experiences of reading. Chapters include “Toward a Taxonomy of Dangerous Texts,” “The Dangers of Romantic Reading,” “Possibilities of Overreading,” and “The Bible as a Dangerous Text (?)” Key novels studied include *Don Quixote*, *Madame Bovary*, *The Name of the Rose*, *Foucault’s Pendulum*, *Bleeding Edge*, *The Club Dumas*, *The Da Vinci Code*, *Never Any End to Paris*, and *Lullaby*.

“Why Things Happen and Why They Don’t: Causality and Contingency in ‘The Snows of Kilimanjaro’ and ‘One Reader Writes.’” *The Hemingway Review* 41.2 (Spring 2022): 130–35.

“Dante as Orpheus: *Georgics* 4 and *Inferno* 5.” *Bibliotheca Dantesca* 4 (2021): 189–98.

<https://repository.upenn.edu/bibdant/vol4/iss1/9>

“Politics, Espionage, and Surveillance: Hemingway and the Rise of Paranoia Culture.” Chapter in *The New Hemingway Studies*. Ed. Suzanne del Gizzo and Kirk Curnutt. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2020. 241–54

- “Tokens of Sin, Badges of Honor: Julian of Norwich and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.” *Renascence: Essays on Values in Literature* 69.1 (2017): 3–16. (Note: This essay subsequently received the Joseph M. Schwartz Award for the best *Renascence* essay in vols. 68–69.)
- “What He Says about ‘the Cat’: Enrique Vila-Matas on Hemingway’s ‘Cat in the Rain.’” *The Hemingway Review* 34.2 (2015): 105–110
- “Dante and Orpheus: Ovidian Intertext in *Inferno* 5.” Chapter in *News from the Raven: Essays from Sam Houston State University on Medieval and Renaissance Thought*. Ed. Darci N. Hill. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars, 2014
- “Julian of Norwich’s ‘Great Deed’ and Tolkien’s *Eucatastrophe*.” *Religion and Literature* 43.2 (2011): 23–44
- “Translating the Body: Towards an Erotics of Translation.” *Translation and Literature* 19.1 (2010): 1–25
- “Apocalypse Found: The Manuscript in and of *The Name of the Rose*.” Chapter in *Postscript to the Middle Ages: Teaching Medieval Studies through The Name of the Rose*. Ed. Alison Ganze. Syracuse: Syracuse UP, 2009. 135–50
- “Foucault’s *Pendulum* and Eco’s Hermeneutics.” *Journal of Faith and the Academy* 2.2 (2009): 27–37
- “Professing Desire: The Kepesh Novels.” Chapter in *Philip Roth: New Perspectives on an American Author*. Ed. Derek P. Royal. Westport: Praeger-Greenwood, 2005. 225–39
- “Pascalian Quixotism in Umberto Eco’s *L’isola del giorno prima*.” *Italica* 79.2 (2002): 224–39
- “Sacrificing Responsibility: Assisting the Suffering in Two Middle English Purgatorial Visions.” *Le Futur dans le Moyen Âge anglais*. Actes du Colloque de l’Association des Médiévistes Anglicistes de l’Enseignement Supérieur 23.2. Ed. W. Harding and A. Mathieu. Paris: AMAES, 1999. 317–36
- Review of *The Pull of Politics: Steinbeck, Wright, Hemingway, and the Left in the Late 1930s*, by Milton A. Cohen (U of Missouri P, 2018). *The Hemingway Review* 39.2 (2020): 111–14
- Review of *Biblical Paradigms in Medieval English Literature: From Caedmon to Malory*, by Lawrence Besserman (Routledge, 2012). *Christianity and Literature* 63.1 (2013): 121–23
- Review of *The Oxford Handbook of the Reception History of the Bible*, ed. Michael Lieb et al. (Oxford UP, 2011). *Christianity and Literature* 62.2 (2013): 288–91
- Review of *The Gift of Tongues: Women’s Xenoglossia in the Later Middle Ages*, by Christine F. Cooper-Rompato (Pennsylvania State UP, 2010). *Christianity and Literature* 61.1 (2011): 139–42
- Review of *Whose Freud? The Place of Psychoanalysis in Contemporary Culture*, ed. Peter Brooks and Alex Woloch (Yale UP, 2000). *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature* 49 (2001): 226–30
- Review of *The End of the World As We Know It: Faith, Fatalism, and Apocalypse in America*, by Daniel Wojcik (New York UP, 1997). *Symplokē* 5.1–2 (1997): 241–42

## Presentations

- “Representations of Prayer in Hemingway and Antonio Monda.” Paper presented at the 19<sup>th</sup> International Hemingway Society Conference, Sheridan College, 18 July 2022
- “Why Things Happen and Why They Don’t: Causality and Contingency in ‘The Snows of Kilimanjaro.’” Paper presented at the 18<sup>th</sup> International Hemingway Society Conference, Paris, France, 25 July 2018
- “On Forming a Referential Relationship to Literature.” Panelist for “*The Professor of Desire* Turns 40,” 28<sup>th</sup> annual American Literature Association Conference, Boston, Massachusetts, 26 May 2017
- “Milan Kundera’s Ernest Hemingway.” Paper presented at the 17<sup>th</sup> International Hemingway Society Conference, Dominican University, 21 July 2016
- “‘What He Says about the Cat’: Enrique Vila-Matas on Hemingway’s ‘Cat in the Rain.’” Paper presented at the 16<sup>th</sup> International Hemingway Society Conference, Venice, Italy, 26 June 2014
- “Dante and Orpheus: Ovidian Intertext in *Inferno* 5.” Paper presented at the International Conference on Medieval and Renaissance Thought, Sam Houston State University, 6 April 2013
- “Reading and Misreading in ‘God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen.’” Paper presented at the 15<sup>th</sup> International Hemingway Society Conference, Petoskey, Michigan, 22 June 2012
- “‘A Sexual Life’ in *The Dying Animal*.” Paper presented at the 21<sup>st</sup> annual American Literature Association Conference, San Francisco, California, 28 May 2010

- “Apocalyptic Persistence in ‘The Apocalypse Commentary of Bob Paisner.’” Paper presented at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, New Orleans, Louisiana, 21 November 2009
- “Verbal Excess, Trinitarian Theology, and Divine Intention in Julian of Norwich.” Paper presented at the Southwest Conference on Christianity and Literature, “From Lesser Lights to Greater,” Houston Baptist University, 2 October 2009
- “Following Eco through Woods and Worlds: Meaning and/as Quest.” Paper presented at the 29<sup>th</sup> annual Christian Scholars’ Conference, “The Power of Narrative,” Lipscomb University, 26 June 2009
- “*The Sun Also Rises* and the ‘Sinister’ Text.” Paper presented at the 13<sup>th</sup> International Hemingway Society Conference, Kansas City, Missouri, 10 June 2008
- “The Pilgrim’s Presence: Disruption, Mitigation, and Contradiction in Dante’s *Inferno*.” Paper presented at the 17<sup>th</sup> annual Texas Medieval Association Conference, Texas A&M University, 13 October 2007
- “*Foucault’s Pendulum* and Eco’s Paris.” Paper presented at the conference “From Paris to the World,” Missouri Southern State University, 3 November 2006
- “Translating an Erotic Passage in *Il nome della rosa*, the Erotics of Translation.” Paper presented at the 11<sup>th</sup> annual French and Italian Graduate Student Organization Colloquium, Indiana University, 7 April 2002
- “The *Roman de la Rose* as Erotic Apocalypse.” Paper presented at the 14<sup>th</sup> annual Indiana University Medieval Symposium, “City, Court, Cloister: Centers of Power in the Middle Ages,” 23 March 2002
- “Demonic Spectacle in the *Vision of Thurkill*.” Paper presented at the 27<sup>th</sup> annual Southeastern Medieval Association Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana, 19 October 2001
- “*Libido sciendi* and *Libido videndi* in Apocalyptic Texts.” Paper presented at the “Comparative Arts: What Was... What Is... What’s Next...” Conference, Indiana University, 6 April 2001
- “Pascalian Quixotism in Umberto Eco’s *L’isola del giorno prima*.” Paper presented at the 9<sup>th</sup> annual French and Italian Graduate Student Organization Colloquium, Indiana University, 1 April 2000
- “Sacrificing Responsibility: Assisting the Suffering in Two Middle English Purgatorial Visions.” Paper presented at the Colloque de l’Association des Médiévistes Anglicistes de l’Enseignement Supérieur (AMAES), Nîmes, France, 6 March 1999
- “Apocalyptic Desire in Umberto Eco’s *The Name of the Rose*.” Paper presented at the conference “Apocalypse, Millenarism, New Boundaries,” Binghamton University, 3 May 1997

## Positions, Service, Honors, and Awards

### At Stephen F. Austin State University

- Advisor for Gage/Cengage Learning’s *Literature Criticism Series* entry on *Umberto Eco*, 2021
- Joseph M. Schwartz Award, best *Renascence* essay for vols. 68–69, awarded March 2018 for “Tokens of Sin, Badges of Honor: Julian of Norwich and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*”
- Travel Support Minigrants, Summer 2018 and Summer 2014, to support travel to the 18<sup>th</sup> International Hemingway Society Conference (Paris) and the 16<sup>th</sup> International Hemingway Society Conference (Venice)
- Faculty Research Grant, Spring 2008, for archival research on Umberto Eco and William Weaver at the Lilly Library, Indiana University, Summer 2009. Grant provided for travel expenses and summer session I salary
- Session Moderator: “*The Sun Also Rises* and the Functions of Paris,” 18<sup>th</sup> International Hemingway Society Conference, 26 July 2018; “Spiritual Hemingway,” 17<sup>th</sup> International Hemingway Society Conference, 19 July 2016; “Hemingway and Northern Michigan,” 15<sup>th</sup> International Hemingway Society Conference, 22 June 2012
- Peer Reviewer for *Christianity and Literature*, *Religion and Literature*, *The Hemingway Review*, *Philip Roth Studies*, and *The Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies*
- Director of MA Thesis, *To Reach the Unreachable Stars: Reexamining Shared Arthurian Narratives in C. S. Lewis’s Science Fiction Trilogy and Raymond Chandler’s Marlowe Novels*, by Hollis Thompson, 2020

Director of MA Thesis, *The Socially Deviant Mother in Euripides' Medea and Two Modern Adaptations*, by Christina Kramer, 2018

Director of MA Thesis, *Ismail Kadare's Voice in Albania's Polyphonic Identity*, by Eralda Lameborshi Tarpley, 2009. (This thesis subsequently won the university's William R. Johnson Outstanding Thesis Award.)

Member, MA Thesis Committees: *Unicorns Are Not Real and Neither Are You: Peter S. Beagle's Postmodern Fairy Tale*, by Athena Hayes, 2021; *Salt in the Deep Marine*, by Rachel Bollinger, 2020; *Through the Devil's Mirror: The Villain and the Sinthomosexual as Manifestations of the Death Drive*, by Andrew Markus, 2020; *Mise en abîme and Reader Response in Philip K. Dick's VALIS*, by Brody Wedgeworth, 2019; "Comrades in Their Own Right": *Women's Struggle against Apartheid in the South African Novel*, by Ntfontjeni Dlamini, 2017; *The Demands of Western Education's Hidden Ideology on Identity Formation in the African School Novel*, by Thabo Mzileni, 2016; *The Italian Influence in Chaucer's Dream Visions: Medieval Internationalism, Intertextuality, and Reception Bias*, by Hailey Hiers, 2013

Director (and Creator) of Interdisciplinary Religious Studies Minor, Spring 2007–Fall 2014

Graduate Coordinator, Dept. of English, Spring 2007–Summer 2011

Chair, Job Search Committees: Non-western world literature specialist search, Spring 2006; Early Modern specialist search, Spring 2015

Member, Job Search Committees: Early Americanist search, Spring 2006; Chairperson search, Spring 2008; Lecturer search, Spring 2018; Technical writing specialist search, Spring 2019

Member, President's Innovation Fund Selection Committee, Fall 2022

Member, College Emeritus Committee, Fall 2020

Member, University Faculty Development Leave Committee, Fall 2019–present

Member, Dept. of English Executive Council, Fall 2011–Spring 2014, Fall 2018–Spring 2021 (three-year terms)

Member, English Academic Program Review Committee, Spring–Summer 2020

Member, College Workload Committee, Fall 2017

Member, University Graduate Council, Fall 2010–Spring 2013 (three-year term)

Member, University Academic Integrity Committee, Fall 2012–Spring 2014 (two-year term)

Member, College Social Responsibility Rubric Committee, Fall 2013

Member, College Promotion Committee, Fall 2012, Fall 2014, Fall 2020, Fall 2022

Member, College Tenure Committee, Fall 2011

Member, Dean's Committee for Specialized and International Programs, Spring 2008

#### At Indiana University

Student Coordinator for C151, Introduction to Popular Culture, Dept. of Comparative Literature, Fall 2003 and 2004

Volunteer, The Lilly Library, Fall 2002 (cataloging English and Italian materials acquired from William Weaver pertaining to his translations of Umberto Eco's novels and essays)

Assistant Editor and Business Manager, *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature*, Fall 2000–Fall 2002

Conference Assistant for the "Comparative Arts: What Was... What Is... What's Next..." conference at IU, 5–8 April 2001

Associate Instructor Award for Distinguished Teaching, Dept. of Comparative Literature, April 2000

College of Arts and Sciences Travel Grant for the "Apocalypse, Millenarism, New Boundaries" conference, Binghamton University, 1997

Part-time Editor for *The Knowledge Base*, IU's resource for computing assistance (<http://kb.iu.edu>), August 2001–May 2005