

# Karen J. Renner

Department of English  
Northern Arizona University  
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## EDUCATION

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- Ph.D., University of Connecticut, English, *summa cum laude*. 2010.  
Dissertation: "Perverse Subjects: Drunks, Gamblers, Prostitutes, and Murderers in Antebellum America"
- M.A., The College at Brockport, English, *summa cum laude*. 1998.  
Thesis: "Confessing for a Culture: The Poetry of Anne Sexton"
- B.S., The College at Brockport, English and Mathematics, *summa cum laude*. 1995.

## PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

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### Northern Arizona University

Associate Professor	2019-Present
Assistant Professor	2017-2019
Associate Chair	2017-2018
Senior Lecturer	2016-2017
Lecturer	2011-2016
Instructor	2010-2011

## PUBLICATIONS

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### Books & Edited Collections

- Editor. *Emerging Trends in 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Horror*. Invited double special issue of *LIT: Literature Interpretation Theory*, vol. 33, no. 2 & 4, 2022-23, pp. 79-151, 229-316.
- Author. *Evil Children in the Popular Imagination*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.
- Editor. *The 'Evil Child' in Literature, Film and Popular Culture*. Routledge, 2013.
- Co-editor. *Representations of the Apocalypse in Literature and Film*. Two-volume special issue of *LIT: Literature Interpretation Theory*, vol. 23, nos. 2-3, Summer-Fall 2012.

### Book Chapters and Encyclopedia Entries

- "Psychoanalysis and the Politics of Prestige Horror." *LIT: Literature Interpretation Theory*, vol. 33, no. 4, 2022, pp. 296-316.
- "Violence in the School Shooter Film." *Handbook on Violence in Film and Media*, edited by Steven Choe, Palgrave Macmillan, 2022, pp. 187-205.
- "Academic Canonization of New Media." *Television Series as Literature: From the Ordinary to the Unthinkable*, edited by Victor Huertas Martín and Reto Winckler, Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, pp. 19-36.
- "Degeneration through Violence and Stephen King's *Rage*." *Children and Childhood in the Works of Stephen King*, edited by Debbie Olson, Lexington, 2020, pp. 15-34.

- “Youth Violence.” *Violence in American Society: An Encyclopedia of Trends, Problems, and Perspectives*, vol. 2, edited by Chris Richardson, SAGE, 2020, pp. 573-92.
- “Racial Innocence.” *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood Studies*, edited by Erica Burman and Dan Cook, SAGE, 2020, p. 1343.
- “Poe and the Contemporary Serial Killer Narrative.” *Psychology in Edgar Allan Poe*, edited by Gerardo Del Guercio, Logos Verlag, 2019, pp. 13-40.
- “Mononormativity in *American Horror Story*.” *Gender, Sexuality and Queerness in American Horror Story*, edited by Harriet Earle, McFarland, 2019, pp. 43-58.
- “The Evil Aging Women of *American Horror Story: Coven*.” *Elder Horror: Essays on Film’s Frightening Images of Aging*, edited by Cynthia Miller and Bower Van Ripper, McFarland, 2019, pp. 189-199.
- “Dreadful Girl Diaries and the Promise of Transparent Girlhood.” *Terrifying Texts: Essays on Books of Good and Evil in Horror Cinema*, edited by Cynthia Miller and Bower Van Ripper, McFarland, 2018, pp. 145-43.
- “‘Child Psychopath’ Films of the 1980s and 1990s.” *Cruel Children in Popular Texts and Cultures*, edited by Monica Flegel and Chris Parkes, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, pp. 193-216.
- “Conquering the Frontier Gothic in *Red Dawn*.” *War Gothic in Literature and Culture*, edited by Steffen Hantke and Agnieszka Soltysik-Monnet, Routledge, 2016, pp. 245-56.
- “Grading.” *How to Build a Life in the Humanities*, edited by Greg Colón Semenza and Garrett Sullivan. Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, pp. 41-49.
- “Monstrous Newborns and the Mothers Who Love Them: Intensive Mothering in Twenty-First-Century Horror Films.” *Monstrous Children and Childish Monsters: Essays on Cinema’s Holy Terrors*, edited by Sean Moreland and Markus Bohlman, McFarland, 2015, pp. 27-41.
- Afterword. *Around the World in Eighty Days*. By Jules Verne. Signet Classics, 2015, pp. 239-47.
- “Millennials, Twenty-First Century Horror, and *The Cabin in the Woods*.” *The Millennials on Film and Television: The Politics of Popular Culture*, edited by Betty Kaklamanidou and Peggy Tally, McFarland, 2014, pp. 110-25.
- “Hawthorne’s Pearl: The Origins of Good and Evil in *The Scarlet Letter*.” *Critical Insights: Good and Evil*, edited by Margaret Breen, Salem Press, 2012, pp. 159-74.
- “Literary Character and Character Types.” *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the Language Sciences*, edited by Patrick Hogan, Cambridge UP, 2010, pp. 453-54.

## Articles

- “Psychoanalysis and the Politics of Prestige Horror.” *Emerging Trends in 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Horror*, Special issue of *LIT: Literature Interpretation Theory*, vol. 33, no. 4, 2023, pp. 296-316.

- “Zombie Desire in *The Girl with All the Gifts*.” *Revenant: Critical and Creative Studies of the Supernatural*, vol. 7, 2021, pp. 165-89
- “Negotiations of Masculinity in American Ghost Hunting Reality Television.” *Paranormal Television*, edited by Drew Beard. Special Issue of *Horror Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2, Fall 2013, pp. 225-43.
- “The Apocalypse Begins at Home: The Antichrist-as-Child Film.” Invited essay for *Apocalypse*. Special Issue of *Frame: Journal of Literary Studies*, vol. 26, no. 1, May 2013, pp. 47-59.
- “Monstrous Schoolgirls: Casual Sex in the Twenty-First-Century Horror Film.” *Red Feather: An International Journal of Children in Popular Culture*, vol. 3, no. 2, Fall 2012, pp. 34-50.
- “The Appeal of the Apocalypse.” *Representations of the Apocalypse in Literature and Film*. Vol. 2, edited by Joshua J. Masters and Karen J. Renner. Special Issue of *LIT: Literature Interpretation Theory*, vol. 23, no. 3, Fall 2012, pp. 203-11.
- “Evil Children in Film and Literature: Notes toward a Taxonomy.” *Evil Children in Film and Literature*. Vol. 2. Ed. Karen J. Renner. Special Issue of *LIT: Literature Interpretation Theory*, vol. 22, no. 3, Summer 2011, pp. 177-96.
- “Evil Children in Film and Literature: Notes toward a Genealogy.” *Evil Children in Film and Literature*. Vol. 1. Ed. Karen J. Renner. Special Issue of *LIT: Literature Interpretation Theory*, vol. 22, no. 2, Spring 2011, pp. 79-95.
- “Seduction, Prostitution, and the Control of Female Desire in Popular Antebellum Fiction.” *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, vol. 65, 2010, pp. 166-91.
- “Repeat Viewings Revisited: Emotions, Memory, and *Memento*.” *Film Studies: An International Review*, vol. 8, 2006, pp. 106-15.

### Reviews and Review Essays

- Review of *Global TV Horror* (U of Wales P. 2021), edited by Stacey Abbott and Lorna Jowett. *Comparative Literature Studies*, vol. 60, no. 1, Feb. 2023, pp. 184-87.
- Review of *Affective Intensities and Evolving Horror Forms: From Found Footage to Virtual Reality* (Edinburgh UP, 2020), by Adam Daniel. *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, vol. 50, no. 2, 2022, pp. 95-96.
- Review of *Vivarium* (Dir. Lorcan Finnegan, 2019). *Gothic Nature*, Issue 3, Summer 2022, pp. 414-17.
- Review of *From Dead Ends to Cold Warriors: Constructing American Boyhood in Postwar Hollywood Film* (Rutgers UP, 2021), by Peter W. Y. Lee. *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2022, pp. 159-61.
- Review of *Fashionable Childhood: Children in Advertising* (Bloomsbury, 2017), by Annamari Vänskä. *Studies in Popular Culture*, vol. 42, no. 1, Fall 2019, pp. 142-44.
- “Girl Meets Shark: From *The Shallows* (2016) and *47 Meters Down* (2017) to *The Meg* (2018).” *Gothic Nature*, Issue 1, 2019, pp. 295-99.
- Review of *What’s Eating You? Food and Horror on Screen* (Bloomsbury, 2017), edited by

Cynthia J. Miller and A. Bowdoin Van Riper. *Screen Bodies*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2019, pp. 93-96.

Review of *Making and Remaking Horror in the 1970s and 2000s: Why Don't They Do It Like They Used To* (UP of Mississippi, 2014), by David Roche. *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, vol. 25, no. 4, 2017, pp. 232-33.

Review of *A Companion to American Gothic* (Wiley Blackwell, 2013), edited by Charles L. Crow. *Journal of American Culture*, vol. 39, no. 1, 2016, pp. 78-79.

"The Ambiguous Role of Agency in Childhood Studies." *The Child*, edited by Sarah Chinn and Anna Mae Duane. Special issue of *Women's Studies Quarterly*, vol. 43, no. 1-2, Spring/Summer 2015, pp. 304-07.

Review of *Folklore Rules: A Fun, Quick, and Useful Introduction to the Field of Academic Folklore Studies* (Utah State University Press, 2013), by Lynne S. McNeill. *Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 47, no. 6, Dec. 2014, pp. 1330-32.

Review of *Getting Inside Your Head: What Cognitive Science Can Tell Us about Popular Culture* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), by Lisa Zunshine. *Journal of Popular Romance Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2, Oct. 2014, online.

Review of *The Politics of Childhood* (Pickering & Chatto, 2013), by Anne Kordas. *Journal of American Culture*, vol. 37, no. 3, Fall 2014, pp. 370-71.

### **Creative Work**

"A History of New Bomer, pop. 2,402." *Soul Scream Anthology: Fear and Loathing*, edited by Christopher Ryan, Seamus and Nunzio Productions, pp. 70-74.

"Afterword: Debunking the Myths." *Haunted Flagstaff*, by Susan Johnson, The History Press, 2022, pp. 99-104.

"Solving for X." *Bards & Sages Quarterly*, vol. 13, no. 2, April 2021, pp. 10-12.

"The Archive." *The Sharpened Quill: New Voices in Modern Short Fiction*, edited by Steve Schwartz, Shadow Press, 2017, pp. 83-85.

"Second Wife." *The Sharpened Quill: New Voices in Modern Short Fiction*, edited by Steve Schwartz, Shadow Press, 2017, pp. 73-82.

"The Cocktail as Fashion Accessory: A (Very) Brief Personal History Told Through Drink." *Make Mine a Double: A Celebration of Women and Drink*, edited by Regina Barreca, UP of New England, 2011, pp. 47-52.

### **PRESENTATIONS AND INTERVIEWS**

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Presenter. "Urban Horror in the 1970s and 1980s." Southwest Popular Culture Association. Virtual. February 2023.

Invited Presenter. "[Everything You Never Wanted to Know about Children of the Corn](#)." Spooky Evenings, Nebraska Wesleyan University. Virtual. October 2021.

Presenter. "Emotional Complexity in the Contemporary Horror Film." Southwest Popular Culture Association. Virtual. February 2021.

Invited Presenter. "[The New Child Psycho](#)." Nights of Horror. Nebraska Wesleyan University. October 2020.

Roundtable Presenter. "Freud's 'The Uncanny': 100 Years of Horror Scholarship."

Southwest Popular Culture Association. Albuquerque, NM. February 2020.

Presenter. "Nostalgia and The Uncanny in Horror." Southwest Popular Culture Association. Albuquerque, NM. February 2020.

Invited Presenter. "Haunted Flagstaff." Local Legends. Flagstaff Public Library. Flagstaff, AZ. July 2019.

Roundtable Presenter. "2018: The Year in Review." Southwest Popular Culture Association. Albuquerque, NM. February 2019.

Presenter. "The Pleasures of the Post-Theory Horror Film." Southwest Popular Culture Association. Albuquerque, NM. February 2019.

Interview. "[How Zombies Reflect Modern Fears](#)." KJZZ, NPR member station, Phoenix. October 2018.

Presenter. "Horror and Anti-Nostalgia: The Remake." Southwest Popular Culture Association. Albuquerque, NM. February 2018.

Roundtable Presenter. "Highbrow Horror: Taste and Style in the New 'Prestige Horror.'" Southwest Popular Culture Association. Albuquerque, NM. February 2017.

Invited Presenter. "Evil Children in the Popular Imagination." Northern Arizona Book Festival. Flagstaff, AZ. October 7, 2017.

Interview. "[Horror Genre Seems to Be Bleeding into Other Genres](#)." KJZZ, NPR member station, Phoenix. October 2017.

Invited Presenter. "Spine Chillers: Why We Seek the Scary." Flagstaff Public Library. Flagstaff, AZ. April 5, 2017.

Presenter. "*American Horror Story* and the Origins of Evil." Southwest Popular Culture Association. Albuquerque, NM. February 2017.

Roundtable Presenter. "Bad Robot: Are Robots the New Zombie?" Southwest Popular Culture Association. Albuquerque, NM. February 2017.

Roundtable Presenter. "Horror Fiction: The Changing Literary Scene." Southwest Popular Culture Association. Albuquerque, NM. February 2017.

Presenter. "Monsters Masquerading as Children: Violence against Kids in the Contemporary Horror Film." American Comparative Literature Association Annual Conference. Boston, MA. March 2016.

Presenter. "From Superpredators to Sociopaths: Killer Kids from the 1990s to the Present." Southwest Popular Culture Association. Albuquerque, NM. February 2016.

Roundtable Presenter. "Could It Be ... Satan? Horror and Moral Panic." Southwest Popular Culture Association. Albuquerque, NM. February 2016.

Presenter. "Youth Group Violence and the Feral Child Narrative." Southwest Popular Culture Association. Albuquerque, NM. February 2015.

Roundtable Presenter. "The Horrors of War." Southwest Popular Culture Association. Albuquerque, NM. February 2015.

Presenter. "The Return of the Possessed: The Possessed Child Narrative of the New Millennium." Southwest Popular Culture Association. Albuquerque, NM. February 2014.

Roundtable Chair. "Horror Television." Southwest Popular Culture Association. Albuquerque, NM. February 2014.

Presenter. "Satan's Spawn: The Antichrist-as-Child Film." Southwest Popular Culture Association. Albuquerque, NM. February 2013.

Roundtable Presenter. "Horror Film Remakes." Southwest Popular Culture Association. Albuquerque, NM. February 2013.

Presenter. "Disease and Deviance in Antebellum America." Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association. Boulder, CO. October 2012.

Presenter. "Judging a Book by its Cover: Paperback Art, Evil Children, and the 1980s Horror Industry." Northeast Modern Language Association. Rochester, NY. March 2012

Panel Chair. "Evil Children in Literature, Film, and Popular Culture." Northeast Modern Language Association. Rochester, NY. March 2012.

Presenter. "Sensationalism in Temperance Literature." Modern Language Association. Seattle, WA. January 2012.

Presenter. "The Antebellum Origins of the Superhero." Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association. Scottsdale, AZ. October 2011

Presenter. "Monstrous Infants and the Mothers Who Love Them: *It's Alive!* (2008) and *Grace* (2009)." Southwest Popular Culture/American Culture Association. San Antonio, TX. April 2011.

Invited Speaker. "Evil Children in Film and Literature." Peaks Interdisciplinary Conference. Northern Arizona University. Flagstaff, AZ. February 2011.

Invited Speaker, "Poe, Madness, and Murder." The Big Read at Rhode Island College. Providence, RI. May 2010.

Roundtable Presenter, "Assessing the Assessment: Roundtable on Portfolios and Student Self-Assessments." University of Connecticut's Fifth Annual Conference on the Teaching of Writing. Storrs, CT. March 2010.

Presenter, "Antebellum Predecessors of the Anti-Hero." Northeast Modern Language Association. Boston, MA. February 2009.

Presenter, "More Sinned Against than Sinning: The Prostitute in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Literature." Mid-Atlantic Popular/American Studies Association. Philadelphia, PA. November 2007.

Presenter, "Domesticity and Patriotism in Hawthorne's Romances." College English Association. San Antonio, TX. April 2006.

Presenter, "Emotions, Memory, and *Memento*." Center for the Cognitive Study of the Moving Image. Grand Rapids, MI. July 2004.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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### Northern Arizona University

ENG 697 Horror Theory (independent study)  
ENG 697 Humor (independent study)  
ENG 685 The Child in Transatlantic Literature (independent study)  
ENG 662 Literary Periods or Genre Studies: Contemporary Speculative Literature  
ENG 642 Nineteenth-Century American Literature  
ENG 551 Cultural Studies: Evil Children  
ENG 524 American Authors: Stephen King  
ENG 500 Introduction to Research in Literary Studies  
ENG 499 Contemporary Developments: Editing & Publishing  
ENG 499 Contemporary Developments: Career Exploration  
ENG 497 Horror (independent study)  
ENG 497 Humor (independent study)  
ENG 497 The Apocalypse in American Literature and Film (independent study)  
ENG 469C Literature Emphasis Capstone: Literary Studies to Career  
ENG 461 Supernatural Horror Film  
ENG 460 Evil Children in Literature and Film  
ENG 441 American Gothic Literature  
ENG 441 Origins of American Culture  
ENG 368 Topics in Speculative Literature: Chinese and American Science Fiction  
ENG 368 Topics in Speculative Literature: Contemporary Speculative Fiction  
ENG 368 Topics in Speculative Literature: Horror  
ENG 364W Topics in Popular Literature: Crime Fiction  
ENG 346W Topics in Popular Literature: Cultural Criticism  
ENG 364 Popular Literature: Science Fiction  
ENG 341 Early American Fiction  
ENG 243 American Literature from 1865  
ENG 242 American Literature to 1865  
ENG 230 Introduction to Literature  
ENG 174 Introduction to Creative Writing

### MA Thesis Chair

Skye McNeeley, "The Development of Posthuman Identity in Literature and Videogames," 2015  
Kristen Gregory, "The Female Survivor in American Young Adult Fiction," 2013

### MFA Thesis Reader

Katie Tonellato. Fiction. *The Haunting of the Fields Women*. 2023.  
Zach Semel. Creative Nonfiction. *The Other Side of the Wall*. 2023.  
Megan Latin-DeBono. Fiction. *Wayward*. 2022.  
Myles Lum. Creative Nonfiction. *Finding the Point*. 2021.  
Devin Perez. Fiction. *The Truth of All Endings*. 2021.  
Courtney Brooks. Fiction. *The Only Way Out is Through*. 2020.  
Camille Sinaguinan. Fiction. *Felix Huertas Street and Other Works*. 2017.

### University of Connecticut

ENGL 2203W American Literature since 1880  
ENGL 2201W American Literature before 1880  
ENGL 1011 Seminar in Academic Writing through Literature  
ENGL 1010 Seminar in Academic Writing

## **ACADEMIC SERVICE**

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Member, Teaching Academy, 2022-present  
Senior Editor, *Journal of Children in Popular Culture*, 2017-present  
Secretary, Faculty Senate, 2021-2022  
Treasurer, Faculty Senate, 2020-2021  
Member, Faculty Grants Committee, 2018-2021  
Website Coordinator, English Department, 2018-2020  
Graduate English Organization (GEO) Faculty Advisor, Spring 2017, 2019-2020  
Co-Chair, Commission on the Status of Women, 2018-2019  
Member, Teaching Academy, 2016-2019  
Facilitator, May Teaching Seminar, Summer 2017  
English Curriculum Committee, Spring 2017  
Co-Founder, *The Tunnels* (creative and academic journal for NAU undergraduates)  
Chair, Undergraduate Studies Committee, 2015- 2016

## **HONORS AND AWARDS**

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Presidential Distinguished Teaching Fellow, Northern Arizona University, 2022-Present  
Educator of Influence, Northern Arizona University, 2021, 2023  
Faculty Diversity Award, 2020  
Writer in Residence, Flagstaff Public Library, Summer 2018  
NAU Award for Excellence in Liberal Studies, 2017  
Teacher of the Year, College of Arts and Letters, Northern Arizona University, 2016  
College of Arts and Letters Summer Research Grant, Northern Arizona University, 2013  
College of Arts and Letters Summer Research Grant, Northern Arizona University, 2012  
Northeast Modern Language Association C.A.I.T.Y. Caucus Travel Award, 2012  
Peter Rollins Travel Grant, Popular Culture Association/American Studies Association, 2011