

WILLIAM BREVDA

Department of English
Central Michigan University
Mount Pleasant, Michigan 48859
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- Degrees:** Ph.D. in English 1980, University of Connecticut, Storrs
M.A. in English 1972, State University of New York, New Paltz
B.A. 1970, New School for Social Research, New York City
- Dissertation:** "Harry Kemp: The Last Bohemian"
The dissertation provides the first critical biography of the American writer Harry Kemp, 1883-1960. Director: William Curtin
- Experience:** **1986- : Professor of English, Central Michigan University**
251 American Literature: Colonial through the Romantic Period
252 American Literature: Realistic Period to the Present
321 Modern Poetry
332 Contemporary Literature and Thought
338A Topics in Modern or Contemporary Literature: Imagining Fascism
345 Studies in Authors: Faulkner and Flannery O'Connor
353 American Literature: Realistic Period
354 American Literature: Modern Period 1915-1945
455 The American Novel
559 Seminar in Major American Writers: Faulkner and Hemingway
559 Seminar in Major American Writers: Faulkner and Fitzgerald
559 Seminar in Major American Writers: Cather, Dos Passos, Algren
559 Seminar in Major American Writers: Jack Kerouac
656C Seminar in American Literature: Realistic Period
656D Seminar in American Literature: Modern Period
134 Introduction to Literature
145 Bestsellers and Prize Winners
234 Introduction to Literary Analysis
201 Advanced Composition
101 Freshman Composition
1990, Fall Semester: Visiting Professor, University of Groningen, The Netherlands
Racial Themes in American Literature
The City in American Fiction
1983-1986: Assistant Professor of English, University of Mississippi
106 Masterworks of American Literature
206 Introduction to Literature
321 Advanced Composition
101 Freshman Composition
1980-1983: Assistant Professor of English, Illinois State University
Language and Composition 1
Introduction to Literature: Prose Fiction
Introduction to Literature: Literary Themes and topics — "Love, Sex and Identity"
Introduction to Literature: Poetry and Drama
1974-1978: Teaching Assistant, University of Connecticut
Introduction to Literature and Composition
Seminar and Composition in Special Topics: "Spirit of Pace in American Literature."
Seminar and Composition in Special Topics: "The Tramp Figure"

in American Literature”

Teaching Interests: Modern American Literature; Late Nineteenth - Early Twentieth-Century American Literature; Contemporary Literature

Memberships: Modern Language Association of America
Society for Commercial Archeology
F. Scott Fitzgerald Society
John Dos Passos Society
Advisory Board. *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*. 2002-2012

Publications:

Books: *Signs of the Signs: The Literary Lights of Incandescence and Neon*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2011.

Harry Kemp. The Last Bohemian. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1986.

Articles in Books: “All the Dead Bodies: O’Connor and Noir.” *Flannery O’Connor in the Age of Terrorism: Essays on Violence and Grace*. Ed. Avis Hewett and Robert Donahoo. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2010. 113-124.

“Neon Light in August: Electric Signs in Faulkner’s Fiction.” *Faulkner and Popular Culture*. Ed. Doreen Fowler and Ann Abadie. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1990. 214-241.

Articles in Journals: “*Moby Dick*: A Nasty Night for Hats and Men.” *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*. 59:4 (Winter 2017): 421-456.

“Specters of Joad.” *Steinbeck Review*. 13.2 (2016): 196-209.

“The Straw Hat in Dreiser’s *An American Tragedy*.” *Midwestern Miscellany* XLII (Fall 2014): 56-63.

“The Phenomenology of Noir Perception: Dorothy Hughes’s *In a Lonely Place* and Cornell Woolrich’s *I Married a Dead Man*.” *Clues: A Journal of Detection* 26.4 (2008): 63-71.

“Is There Any Up or Down Left?: Noir and Existentialism.” *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal* LXXXIX. 3-4 (Fall / Winter 2006): 321-346.

“Neon Lights Around Everything: West’s ‘West,’ Hitler’s ‘Empire,’ Postmodernism’s ‘Reality.’” *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal* LXXXV. 3-4 (Fall / Winter 2002): 381-422.

“The Rainbow Sign of Nelson Algren.” *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*. 44.4 (Winter 2002): 392-413.

“Broadway by Night by Hollywood: Fitzgerald Revisited.” *Connecticut Review* XXII.1 (Spring 2000): 29-42.

“Search for the Original Sign of Noir: Poe’s ‘The Man of the Crowd.’” *Mythosphere: A Journal for Image, Myth, and Symbol* 2.4 (2000):

357-367.

"Harry Kemp." *American National Biography*, vol. 12. Ed. John A. Garraty and Mark C. Cames. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. 547-548.

"The Double Nihilation of the Neon: Raymond Chandler's Los Angeles." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 41.1 (Spring 1999): 70-102. Rpt. in *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*. Ed. Thomas J. Scoenberg and Lawrence J. Trudeau. Vol. 179. Detroit: Gale, 2007. 198-214.

"The Private Eye, the Femme Fatale, and the Sign: Epistemology of the Hardboiled Narrative." *North Dakota Quarterly* 65.2 (1998): 26-50.

"How Do I Get To Broadway? Reading Dos Passos's *Manhattan Transfer Sign*." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 38.1 (Winter 1996): 79-114.

"Everything Possible Nothing Real: Electric Signs in American Life and Literature 1890-1925." *North Dakota Quarterly* 6.3 (Summer 1994-95): 22-54.

"Love's Coming-of-Age: The Upton Sinclair - Harry Kemp Divorce Scandal." *North Dakota Quarterly* 51.2 (Spring 1983): 59-77.

"Harry Kemp: A Bibliography of Primary Sources." *Bulletin of Bibliography* 39.4 (December 1982): 191-194.

"At the Crossroads of Vagabondia, Hobohemia, and Bohemia: Harry Kemp's *Tramping on Life*." *The Markham Review* 11 (Spring 1982): 46-50.

Book Review:

Rev. of *Flickering Light: A History of Neon*, by Christoph Ribbat. Translated by Anthony Mathews. London: Reaktion Books, 2013. *The Historian* 76.3 (2014): 667-669.

Papers Read:

"Specters of Joad." 2016 International Steinbeck Conference. San Jose State University, May 4-6, 2016.

"The Beat Flaneur." The 56th Annual Convention of the Midwest Modern Language Association. Detroit, Michigan, November 13-16, 2014.

"The Hat in *Manhattan Transfer*." The First Biennial Meeting of the John Dos Passos Society. Signal Mountain Room, University Center, University of Tennessee Chattanooga, October 10-11, 2014.

"The Straw Hat in Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*." The Cultural Heritage of the Midwest: A Symposium. The 44th Annual Meeting of the Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature. Kellogg Conference Center, Michigan State University, May 8-10, 2014.

"On the Road to Moriah: Kerouac's Leap of Faith." The 40th Annual Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture since 1900. University of Louisville, February 23-25, 2012.

"Kerouac and the New Infernal Mockery." The Conference on Christianity and Literature. Western 2012 Regional Conference. Belief and Unbelief in Postmodern Literature. Seattle Pacific University, May 24-25, 2012.

"Is There Any Up or Down Left?: Noir and Existentialism." The Forty-Eighth Annual Convention of the Midwest Modern Language Association. Chicago, Illinois, November 9-12, 2006.

"All the Dead Bodies: Flannery O'Connor and Noir." Flannery O'Connor in the Age of Terrorism: An Academic Conference on Violence and Grace. Grand Valley State University, Pew Campus, October 5-7, 2006.

"The Rainbow Sign of Nelson Algren." Twenty-Ninth Annual Twentieth-Century Literature Conference. University of Louisville, February 22-24, 2001.

"Waving or Drowning? Hemingway's Anguish." Hemingway Centennial Conference: Literary and Historical Perspectives at 100. Oak Park, Illinois, July 18-21, 1999.

"Hammett on Truth and Lie." Twenty-Fifth Annual Twentieth-Century Literature Conference. University of Louisville, February 20-22, 1997.

"Search for the Orinary Sign of Noir." The Annual Meeting of the Midwest Popular Culture and American Culture Associations. Traverse City, Michigan, October 23, 1997.

"How Do I Get To Broadway? Reading Dos Passos's *Manhattan Transfer* Sign." Twenty-Third Annual Twentieth-Century Literature Conference. University of Louisville, February 23-25, 1995.

"Writing 'Great Ideas' in Freshman English." The Annual Meeting of the Michigan College English Association. St. Clair County Community College, October 6, 1989.

"Neon Light in August: Electric Signs in Faulkner's Fiction." Fifteenth Annual Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference: Faulkner and Popular Culture. The University of Mississippi, August 5, 1988.

"The Tramp Poetry of Harry Kemp." Conference on Our Hidden Heritage of People's Culture. Foolkiller Cultural Center, Kansas City, Missouri, January 26, 1985.

Greenwich Village Bohemianism 1912-1917 and the Bohemian Bildungsroman." Ninth Annual Colloquium on Modern Literature and Film: Rebels, Aliens, and Outsiders. The West Virginia University, September 28, 1984.

"Who Was Harry Rowe? Mississippi Philological Association, Oxford,
Mississippi, January 20, 1983.

