

- 566 **Paula McDowell**, *Defoe's Essay upon Literature and Eighteenth-Century Histories of Mediation*
 Questions of divine intercession and the human transmission of God's word were central to Enlightenment debates about what we would now call media. Defoe's neglected *Essay upon Literature* begins as an argument for the divine origins of writing, but its focus on writing as God's gift to humans gives way to a new kind of history, concerned with the development of human communications (oral tradition, writing systems, the invention of printing, and so on). By identifying histories of mediation, like Defoe's, as a distinct genre, we see new links between texts by such wildly diverse authors as Edward Stillingfleet, William Temple, William Warburton, Adam Smith, and the Marquis de Condorcet. Defoe's attempt to articulate an emergent area of intellectual inquiry and his understanding of literature as writing in general rather than as a subcategory of writing challenge us to think through our own generic classifications and hierarchies in the digital age. (PMcD)
- 584 **Regina Martin**, *Absentee Capitalism and the Politics of Conrad's Imperial Novels*
 The nature of Joseph Conrad's critique of imperialism, given his novels' pervasive racism, persists as a source of debate. This essay argues that three of his imperial novels, *Lord Jim*, *Nostromo*, and *Victory*, take aim at an emerging system of imperialism organized around the modern, investor-owned corporation. This system, referred to here as "absentee capitalism," was replacing the nineteenth-century British system of relatively small, family-based firms. The novels idealize the family-owned firm as having a presence of material value, meaning, and affect that contrasts with the wasted value left in the wake of absentee capitalism's invisible and ever-changing network of social relations. According to this interpretation, *Victory*, which has been marginalized in Conrad studies, takes on renewed import for its insight into the relation among imperialism, romance, and modernism in Conrad's oeuvre. (RM)
- 599 **Gordon Fraser**, *Troubling the Cold War Logic of Annihilation: Apocalyptic Temporalities in Sherman Alexie's The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*
 Sherman Alexie's widely taught short story collection *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* (1993) offers a largely unrecognized critique of the apocalyptic temporalities of United States militarism. War planners in the United States have frequently looked to the unrealized, potential holocausts of the future for a justification of violence in the present. Alexie's collection—like much contemporary literature by Indian writers—unsettles this military logic by revealing how First Nations in North America and peoples around the world live with the consequences of a militarism that continually envisages impending anti-American violence as a means of justifying violence by the state. Alexie's writing provides a way of replacing the violent, future-oriented temporality of United States militarism with a "slow" temporality that acknowledges the

unfolding consequences of the past. Ultimately, this essay suggests a method for rereading “ethnic studies” literature with a view toward the interventions these texts make in mainstream United States culture. (GF)

- 615 **Suzanne Bost**, *Messy Archives and Materials That Matter: Making Knowledge with the Gloria Evangelina Anzaldúa Papers*
 When Gloria Anzaldúa died in 2004, she gave birth to an enormous archive; indeed, she left far more unpublished writings than works published in her lifetime. What’s more, Anzaldúa was a compulsive reviser, and her archive includes ten to twenty unique drafts of some works, along with doodles, ticket stubs, and other ephemera. This collection of material decenters what we previously thought constituted her literary corpus, knocking the presumed author of *Borderlands / La Frontera* off her axis. The process of sifting through these materials changed my thinking about authority, textuality, identity, and many other things. My obsession with this archive has led me to reexamine the ways in which we produce, reproduce, and coproduce knowledge in archival work. In this essay, I show how recognizing the multiple material actants at work in this archive transforms conventional thought about archives, in general, and Anzaldúan studies, in particular. (SB)
- 631 **Christopher Pizzino**, *The Doctor versus the Dagger: Comics Reading and Cultural Memory*
 While the graphic novel has gained a measure of respectability in the United States, the medium of which it is a part has not. Even in the claim that comics are “not just for kids anymore,” adult comics readers are still stereotyped as immature. This paradoxical situation calls for a new assessment of the mid-century moment when comics were attacked and threatened with censorship and of the figure of Fredric Wertham, a famous anticomics crusader who is still hated in comics culture today. Far from being symptoms of immaturity, as they are sometimes described, attacks on Wertham are evidence of the long-term effects of illegitimacy on the experiences of comics readers and creators. Subject even now to regulatory discourses of maturity, contemporary comics are best understood not as a literature reaching adulthood but as the basis of a vital literacy still struggling with a long history of marginalization. (CP)
- 648 **Matthew Burroughs Price**, *A Genealogy of Queer Detachment*
 Despite their widespread attention to the confluence of queer sexualities and “decadence” in fin-de-siècle writing, queer theorists have yet to overcome the two concepts’ persistently destructive conflation. This essay explores the latent positive affinities of queerness and decadence in Walter Pater’s *Renaissance*, which links them through what I call queer detachment. A balance of engagement with and withdrawal from history, this critical perspective anticipates queer theory’s methodologies as well as other queer modernist productions. Examining *Goodbye to Berlin*, Christopher Isherwood’s chronicle of decadent Weimar Germany, I demonstrate how queer detachment becomes an increasingly politicized method of literary and social world making, a means of reengaging the politics and aesthetics of queer history. These works, and others like them, encourage scholars to realize decadence’s positivity, to conceptualize a queer theory that refuses to acquiesce to residual historical narratives and philosophical systems—without, for all that, refusing their value entirely. (MBP)