

Reading Matters

Vol. 40 Nos. 8

April 2026

PUBLICATIONS

• **Traci Brimhall**, "Deus Ex Machina" and "Retrieval" (poems). *New England Review*, vol. 47, no. 1, 2026, pp. 122-123.

"Anniversary" and "Thy Will Be Done" (poems). *Pleiades*, vol. 45, no. 2 and vol. 46, no. 1, Winter 2025 / Spring 2026, pp. 228-230.

"The Devil's Crown" (essay). *Virginia Quarterly Review*, vol. 101, no. 3, 2025, pp. 122-128.

• **Anne Longmuir**.

"Correspondence, Sociability, and Elizabeth Gaskell." *Routledge Companion to Elizabeth Gaskell*, edited by Elizabeth Ludlow and Rebecca Styler, Routledge, 2026, pp. 23-36

• **Philip Nel**, "Effective Use of Visual Material." *A Practical Companion to Children's Literature Studies: Conducting Research and Building a Career*, edited by Kimberley Reynolds, Matthew Grenby, and Emily Murphy, Bloomsbury, 2026, pp. 157-159.

"Copyrights and Permissions for Published Work" (co-written with Elina Druker). *A Practical Companion to Children's Literature Studies: Conducting Research and Building a Career*, edited by Kimberley Reynolds, Matthew Grenby, and Emily Murphy, Bloomsbury, 2026, pp. 161-163.

"Blogging Case Study no. 2: Find Your Voice and Use It." *A Practical Companion to Children's Literature Studies: Conducting Research and Building a Career*, edited by Kimberley Reynolds, Matthew Grenby, and Emily Murphy, Bloomsbury, 2026, pp. 175-177.

• **Ania Payne**, "Neighbor or Researcher? Fluid Positionality in Community-Engaged Research." *Storied Practices: Positionality in Writing Studies*, edited by Kristine Acosta, Michelle Cowan, Rebecca Rickly, Nancy Small, and Erica M. Stone, WAC Clearinghouse, 2026, pp. 157-158.

• **Thomas Xavier Sarmiento**, *The Heartland of U.S. Empire: Race, Region, and the Queer Filipinx Midwest*. Temple UP, 2026.

• **D. K. Smith**, *Strategies of Failure in the Early Modern Sonnet*. London: Routledge, 2026.

PRESENTATIONS

• **Traci Brimhall**, "Ad Astra Per Aspera: Kansas Bookshelf Celebration of America 250." State of Kansas Libraries. 25 March 2026. Online.

Poetry Reading. Wednesday Night Poetry @ AWP. Baltimore, MD. 4 March 2026.

• **Nava Eghdami**, "Temporal Wounds: Dickinson and the Philosophy of Repetition." *The American Literature Association's American Poetry Symposium*. Salem, MA. 27 March 2026.

• **Daniel A. Hoyt**, "What Would Really Happen? Crafting Scenes Your Reader Believes" (panelist). *AWP Conference*. Baltimore, MD. 7 March 2026.

Fiction reading. "Sips of Madness." *AWP Conference*. Baltimore, MD. 5 March 2026.

13th Annual Rock and Roll Reading (organizer and curator). Metro Baltimore. Baltimore, MD. 4 March 2026.

• **Thomas Xavier Sarmiento**, Graduate Alumni Research panel (invited panelist). Department of American Studies, University of Minnesota. 26 March 2026. Online

AWARDS

• **Cydney Alexis** received a 2026 Commerce Bank and W.T. Kemper Foundation Undergraduate Outstanding Teaching Award.

• The following students in English received awards for their poetry from *Current Voices: A Celebration of Water and the Arts*, hosted by the Kansas Water Institute:

Mara Aberle (BA '26), winner, Foreign Language Poetry.

A.J. Ellis (MA '27), winner, Graduate Student Poetry.

Rylan Jackson (BA '26), winner, Undergraduate Student Poetry.

Kaleah McClure (BA '27), co-runner up, Undergraduate Student Poetry.

Miracle Okpala (MA '26), runner-up, Graduate Student Poetry.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

• **Karin Westman** represented Kansas State and the College of Arts and Sciences in Washington, D.C., on March 10 for the 2026 Humanities Advocacy Day, visiting with congressional staff to lobby elected officials for funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), Title VI/Fulbright-Hayes, and the National Archives (NARA).

FEATURED IN MEDIA

• **Traci Brimhall** appeared on KPR's *Prairie Journal* with Kaye McIntyre on 22 March 2026.

NEWS FROM ALUMNI

• **Tolu Daniel** (MA '23) published "How do you see Me?" in the 2025 edition of *The Afrocritik Report* (2026) at <https://afrocritik.com/afrocritikreport/>.

• The debut novel by **Kenan Orhan** (BA '14), *The Renovation*, has been selected for the April 2026 *New York Times* Book Club: <https://www.nytimes.com/2026/03/27/books/review/the-renovation-kenan-orhan-book-club.html>. Read a review of the novel at Kirkus <https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/kenan-orhan/the-renovation/> and an interview with Kenan with NPR at <https://www.npr.org/2026/02/14/nx-s1-5613426/in-kenan-orhans-debut-novel-the-renovation-a-hole-in-the-bathroom-tears-open-time-and-space>.

• **Catherine Strayhall** (BA '17) appeared on KPR's *Prairie Journal* with Kaye McIntyre on 30 March 2026 as part of the *Kansas 250 Bookshelf* for her poetry collection *Dress Me Like a Prizefighter* (Spartan Press, 2024), one of the Kansas Notable Books featured on the March list: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GUtX_bnZkKk.

• **Dustin Vann** (BA '16, MA '20), in his role as Communications & Marketing Specialist at KU Medical Center, writes articles on a variety of topics, such as this recent profile of KU Neurology Professor Sandra Billinger: <https://www.kumc.edu/about/news/news-archive/billinger-stroke-rehabilitation-research.html>.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

• **Friday, 6 March, 3:30-4:30 p.m.** Cultural Studies Symposium featuring Sianne Ngai, Union Wildcat Chamber.

• **Monday, 23 March, 4:00-6:00 p.m.** Current Voices: Celebrating Water in the Arts, Union Wildcat Chamber.

• **Friday, 27 March, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.** Graduate Program Visiting Day.

• **Friday, 3 April, 3:30-4:30 p.m.** Visiting writer Pam Houston, Union Wildcat Chamber and Zoom.

• **Thursday, 9 April, 5:00-6:15 p.m.** Spotlight on English Students, Hale 181.

• **Saturday, 18 April, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.** All-University Open House, K-State Student Union.

• **Wednesday, 22 April, 11:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m.** Doing DH: Mapping with Leaflet in Cove.

• **Thursday, 23 April, 5:30-8:30 p.m.** Poems + Prints, Museum of Art and Light.

• **Friday, 24 April, 3:30-4:30 p.m.** Lecture by Abby Dubisar on "Cookbooks for Civic Action: Discovering Activist Food Rhetorics in the Archives."

• **Saturday, April 25, 9:00am-12:00pm**, 10th Biennial ChALC Conference, with keynote speaker Cherie Dimaline.

• **Saturday, April 25, 11:00am-3:00pm**, Kansas Science Festival.

• **Wednesday, April 29, 3:30pm-4:30pm.** "Older and Wiser Writing Project Panel."

Reading Matters is a monthly publication of the Department of English, ECS Building, 1612 Steam Place, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506-6501. Editors: Philip Nel, Karin Westman, and Josh Allen. The deadline for the next issue of *Reading Matters* is **April 30, 2026** at 5 p.m. Central Time. Please send your news to Philip Nel via email at philnel@ksu.edu. Thank you.