

Alyssa Quintanilla

American Studies and Art History, College of William & Mary

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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Professor, American Studies Program and Department of Art and Art History (joint appointment),
College of William & Mary, 2025-present

Assistant Professor, Department of English, United States Naval Academy, 2021 - 2025

EDUCATION

University of Pittsburgh

PhD in Critical and Cultural Studies, 2021

Dissertation: "A Matter of Waste and Bodies: Life, Death, and Materiality in the United States-Mexico Borderlands 1990 to the Present"

Committee: Elizabeth Rodriguez-Fielder (Co-chair), Jennifer Waldron (Co-chair), Troy Boone, Zach Horton, Caitlin Bruce

University of Colorado, Boulder

M.A. in English Literature, 2015

University of North Texas

B.A. in English with University Honors, Minors in Psychology and Social Sciences, 2012

DIGITAL PROJECTS

[*Vistas de la Frontera*](#)

PUBLICATIONS

Book Project

Markers, Monuments, Memorials in the United States-Mexico Borderlands – in progress

Peer-Reviewed Articles

- 2024 "Surveilled Mourning: Materiality, Absence, and Digital Memorials in the United States-Mexico Borderlands," *under review* for "Processing Forms: Political Aesthetics and Materiality of the US-Mexico Border," a special 2026 issue of *Afterimage: The Journal of Media Arts and Cultural Criticism*, ed. Alyssa Quintanilla and Benjamin Williams
- "Left Among the Waste: Global Capital, Femicide, and the Materiality of Bodies in Roberto Bolaño's 2666", *Studies in the Novel*, vol. 57, issue 3, Fall 2025, *forthcoming*.
- 2021 "Mourning as Resistance: Seeing and Hearing the Borderlands through *Vistas de la Frontera*", *The Digital Review*, Issue 1, Fall 2021.
- 2020 "Border Trash: Recovering the Waste of U.S.-Mexico Border Policy in 'Fatal Migrations' and 2666", *Lateral: Journal of the Cultural Studies Association*, Issue 9.2, Fall 2020.
- "Mourning Absence: Place, Augmented Reality (AR), and Materiality in The Border Memorial", *Journal of Media Art Study and Theory* 1.2, 103-123.

Special Issues

2024 “Processing Forms: Political Aesthetics and Materiality of the US-Mexico Border”, *Afterimage: The Journal of Media Arts and Cultural Criticism*, Co-editor with Benjamin Williams, expected publication March 2026

Public Writing

2025 “Centering the Boundary”, *The Carryall: An Online Journal of US Cultural and Intellectual History*, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15015658>.

Reviews

2025 Review of *New Narratives on the Peopling of America: Immigration, Race, and Dispossession* for U.S. Intellectual History online journal

2022 Review of *The Deportation Express: A History of the United States through Forced Removal* for U.S. Intellectual History online journal

2020 Review of *Indians on the Move: Native American Mobility and Urbanization in the Twentieth Century* published in H-Net Migration online

2019 Review of *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet: Ghosts and Monsters of the Anthropocene* published in “Gothic Natures” online journal

FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2024 Clements Center for Southwest Studies, David J. Weber Research Fellowship for the Study of Southwestern America, Southern Methodist University
First Book Institute, Center for American Literary Studies, Penn State University
Barbara Thom Postdoctoral Fellowship, Huntington Library, Pasadena, California (Declined)

2023 Center for Regional Studies Travel Grant, United States Naval Academy

2022 Engaging Latinx Art: NEH Summer Institute, June 2022

2022 Center for Regional Studies Travel Grant, United States Naval Academy

2021-2024 Volgenau Faculty Fellowship, United States Naval Academy

2020-2021 American Association of University Women, American Fellowship (Declined)

2021 Ford Foundation Fellowship, Dissertation Competition, Honorable Mention

2020-2021 Immersive Dissertation Research Fellowship, *Humanities Engage*, University of Pittsburgh

2019-2020 Richard C. and Barbara N. Tobias Dissertation Fellowship, University of Pittsburgh

2019 Northeast Modern Language Association Conference Graduate Student Travel Award
Tamara Horowitz Graduate Student Paper Prize – Gender, Sexuality, Women’s Studies Program, University of Pittsburgh

2018 Graduate Student Research Assistant
Summer Research Fellowship – University of Pittsburgh, Department of English

2012 Mary E. Whitten Outstanding Undergraduate for English Award

2011 Summer Opportunity Research Program, Northwestern University

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

United States Naval Academy, 2021 – present

Assistant Professor

Latinx Studies, Fall 2021, Spring 2024

Introduction to Rhetoric and Literature I, Fall 2021, 2022, 2023
Methods of Literary Analysis, Spring 2022
Introduction to Rhetoric and Literature II, Spring 2022, 2023, 2024
Postcolonial Studies, Fall 2022
Sci-Fi From the Margins: Places of Belonging, Capstone, Spring 2023
Gender and Sexuality Studies, Spring 2023
The (Imagined) American West, Capstone, Fall 2023
Independent Studies, Spring 2022, Fall 2023

University of Pittsburgh, 2017 – 2021

Teaching Assistant/Fellow

Written Professional Communications, Online, Summer 2020
Words and Images, Summer 2019
Imagining Social Justice, Fall 2018 - Spring 2019
Seminar in Composition, Fall 2017 - Spring 2018

University of Colorado, 2013-2015

Teaching Assistant

Shakespeare for Non-Majors, Spring 2015
Comic books and Graphic Novels Massive Open Online Course, Fall 2014

CONFERENCE PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS

Panels Organized

Infrastructures of the U.S.-Mexico Border, American Studies Association, Baltimore, MD, November 2024
Processing Forms: Political Aesthetics and Materiality of the States, American Studies Association, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, November 2023
Materiality, Embodiment, and the Politics of Place in Literary Borderlands, The Society of Multi-Ethnic Literatures in the United States, Indianapolis, IN, March 2023
Movements Beyond the Body: Speculative Migrations/Alternative Realities, The Society of Multi-Ethnic Literatures in the United States, Online, 2021
Ordinary Language and Everyday Experiences of Migration, The Society of Multi-Ethnic Literatures in the United States Conference, Cincinnati, OH, March 2019,
Material Conversations: Materialities Across Disciplines, Cultural Studies Association, Pittsburgh, PA, June 2018

Papers Presented

“Photographing the Towers: Countermapping and Surveillance in ‘Infrastructures of Control’”, Society for Cinema and Media Studies, Chicago, IL, April 2025
“Filling the Gaps: Shipping Containers and ‘Protected’ Landscapes”, American Studies Association, Baltimore, MD, November 2024
“Environments of Mourning: Necropolitics and Memorialization in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands”, Modern Language Association, Philadelphia, PA, January 2024
“Places of Mourning: Materiality, Absence, and Digital Memorials in the Borderlands”, American Studies Association, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, November 2023
“Place, Spirituality, and Bodies in Ana Castillo’s So Far from God”, The Society of Multi-Ethnic Literatures in the United States, Indianapolis, IN, March 2023

“Creating Borders: Considering the Cultural-Material Obelisks of the U.S.-Mexico Border”, Association for the Study of the Arts of the Present, Los Angeles, CA, 2022

“Desert Absence: Considering the Desert in Contemporary Climate Fiction”, Science Fiction Research Association, Oslo, Norway (Virtual Attendance), 2022

“Echoes in the Archive: Borders and Ghosts in Lost Children Archive”, The Society of Multi-Ethnic Literatures in the United States, New Orleans, LA, 2022

“Haunted Borders: Ghosts and Intergenerational Trauma in *Everyone Knows You Go Home*”, Northeastern Modern Language Association, Baltimore, MD, March 2022

“What’s In a Name?”: Discarded Objects, Sovereignty, and Matter in *Yo Tengo Nombre*” Cultural Studies Association, Online, 2021

“Undoing the Border Binary: Challenging Categorizes of Citizenship in the US-Mexico Borderlands”, The Society of Multi-Ethnic Literatures in the United States, Online, 2021

“The Part about the Dump: Waste, Bodies, and Global Capital in the United States-Mexico Borderlands”, Northeastern Modern Language Association, Boston, MA, March 2020

“Distant Language in the Everyday Migration of *Signs Preceding the End of the World*”, The Society of Multi-Ethnic Literatures in the United States Conference, Cincinnati, OH, March 2019 (Chair)

“From Disgust to Hate: Exploring the Affect of the Border Wall”, Cultural Studies Association, Pittsburgh, PA, June 2018 (Chair)

“A Matter of Bodies and Bodies that Matter: New Materialism in the Borderlands”, Cultural Studies Association, Pittsburgh, PA, June 2018

“The Materiality of Bodies as Waste in Yuri Herrera’s *The Transmigration of Bodies*”, Northeast Modern Language Association, Pittsburgh, PA, April 2018

“Digitizing the Borderlands: Digital Surveillance and the Desert in Josh Begley’s *Best of Luck with the Wall*”, Society for the Study of Southern Literature Conference, Austin, TX, February 2018 (Chair)

“Walls of Insecurity: ‘Slow Violence’ in Donald Trump’s Proposed Border Wall”, Cultural Studies Association Conference, Washington, D.C., May 2017

“GPS Poetics: The Transborder Immigration Tool and Art of Survival”, The Society of Multi-Ethnic Literatures in the United States Conference, Boston, MA, April 2017

Invited Presentations and Workshops

“Surveilled Mourning: Memorializing Deaths in the Sonoran Desert”, Invited Talk at Washington University in St. Louis, Department of Art History and Archeology, Fall 2024

“Objects Out of Place: Materiality in the United States-Mexico Borderlands”, Invited Talk at Nimitz Library, United States Naval Academy, Spring 2022

Discussion of *Vistas de la Frontera* with FS486A, Invited Speaker for Dr. Perla Sassoon-Henry’s course: Spanish and Hispanic Culture Through New Media, United States Naval Academy, Spring 2022

“Digital Humanities Research and Pedagogy in English”, Invited Talk for Data Science Seminar, United States Naval Academy, Spring 2022

“Border Mourning”, Invited Workshop for American Borders, University of Louisville, Fall 2020

“The Pilgrim, The Migrant: Excavating Mythologies in Yuri Herrera’s *Signs Preceding the End of the World*”, Invited Talk for Literature of the Americas, Spring 2017

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Undergraduate Committee, American Studies Program, College of William & Mary, 2025 – present

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, Department of English, United States Naval Academy, 2022-2024

Director of the Forum for Latin American Studies, Center for Regional Studies, United States Naval Academy, 2022

Hiring Committee, Department of English, United States Naval Academy, 2022 - 2024
Upper Division Honors & Course Curriculum, United States Naval Academy, 2021 – 2024
Junior United Kingdom and International Scholarship Program (Mentor), Spring 2022 - 2023
Hostile Terrain 94, Organizer, University of Pittsburgh, 2020
English Graduate Organization, University of Pittsburgh, 2018-2019
English Graduate Student Council, University of Colorado at Boulder, 2014-2015
Sigma Tau Delta, English Honor Society President, University of North Texas, 2011- 2012

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Modern Languages Association
American Studies Association
Association for the Study of Arts of the Present
Cultural Studies Association
The Society of Multi-Ethnic Literatures in the United States