

Richard A. Garner, PhD, LMSW

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Academic Employment

Instructional Associate Professor, The Honors College, University of Houston, 2024 - present
Former Director, Speech & Debate Program, University of Houston, 2016 - 2024

Education

MSW in Social Work, Tulane University, 2023
Ph.D. in English, University at Buffalo, State University of New York, 2012
B.A. in English (Honors, with a Specialization in Creative Writing), New York University, 2003

Areas of Specialization

Humanities; clinical social work; psychoanalysis; early American rhetoric & literature; slave narratives and African American literature; American sentimental and women's novels; aesthetics; critical theory, including poststructuralism and queer theory; argumentation & debate; rhetoric

Publications

"Melville Among the Heathens: Religion, Race, and Representation in the South Seas," *Visionary of the Word: Melville and Religion*, Eds. Brian Yothers & Jonathan Cook, Northwestern UP, 2017.

"From Sovereignty to Ethopoiesis: Literature, Aesthetics, and New Forms of Life," *The Comparatist* 36 (2012): 86-106.

Dissertation

"Aesthetics, Slavery, and Sentiment: The Discourses and Practices of Mastery in the American Renaissance." Professors Tim Dean (Chair), Robert Daly, and William Solomon

Grants

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. "Examining obstacles to supported permanency for Black, Indigenous, and other people of color kinship caregivers in the foster care system." Co-Principal Investigator. ID# 82059. 9/1/24-8/31/26.

Accelerating Collaborations for Evaluation (ACE) Matching Service Grant, Matching Service for RWJF Evidence for Action (E4A), Johns Hopkins University. "Examining obstacles to supported permanency for Black, Indigenous, and other people of color kinship caregivers in the foster care system." 2023.

Public Appearances

Houston Matters, "Houston Teacher Wins World Championship of Public Speaking," Houston Public Radio 88.7, October 9, 2018
Houston Matters, "What Advice Would Houston Debaters Have For the Presidential Candidates?," Houston Public Radio 88.7, September 21, 2016

Courses

The Human Situation, Fall 2013 - present, University of Houston
Readings in Mental Health & Society, Spring 2026, UH
Leadership & Mass Psychology, Fall 2017 - present, UH
Debating Policy, Spring 2020 - present, UH
Leadership Studies Field Experience (Independent Study), Spring 2025, UH
Radical Leadership in the 19th Century: Abolition & Suffrage, Spring 2019, UH
Composition & Rhetoric I & II, 2013, Lone Star College
Writing Composition, Fall 2005 - Spring 2010, University at Buffalo
Literary Types: Science Fiction, Fall 2009, UB

Fellowships & Honors

Lerner Family Faculty Fellowship Award, UH Honors College, 2022
Wong Faculty Engagement Award, UH Honors College, 2020
Human Situation Lecture Award, “Sphragidonychagokomētai; Or, Measuring the Gnat’s Anus”
(Aristophanes’ *The Clouds*), UH Honors College, Fall 2018
Dean’s Service Award, UH Honors College, 2018
Outstanding Lecture Award, “Slavery as Humanism,” UH Honors College, Spring 2014
Inaugural Department of English Dissertation Fellow, SUNY Buffalo, Fall 2009 - Spring 2010
SUNY Buffalo Presidential Fellow, Fall 2005 - Spring 2009
SUNY Buffalo Composition Syllabus Prize, Honorable Mention, 2009
Cross Examination Debate Association National Champion, 2003

Past Academic Employment

Instructional Assistant Professor, The Honors College, University of Houston, 2018 - 2024
Director, Speech & Debate, University of Houston, 2017 - 2024
Interim Director, Speech & Debate, University of Houston, 2016 - 2017
Lecturer, The Honors College, University of Houston, 2013 - 2018
Assistant Debate Coach, University of Houston, 2013 - 2016
Assistant Debate Coach, Harvard University, 2006 - 2015
Adjunct Professor, Lone Star College, 2013
Instructor, University at Buffalo, SUNY, 2005 - 2010
Assistant Debate Coach, Emory University, 2003 - 2004

Departmental & Disciplinary Service

Houston Urban Debate League, Board of Directors, 2018 - present
Academic Affairs Committee, UH Honors College, Fall 2024 - present
 Global Perspectives Subcommittee, Fall 2024 - Spring 2025
 Co-Curricular Programs Subcommittee, Fall 2024 - Spring 2025
Co-Curricular Committee, UH Honors College, Fall 2022 - present
Best Human Situation Essay Prize Committee (Chair), UH Honors College, 2024 - present
Honors College Huddle, Speech & Debate, UH Honors College, Fall 2016 - 2022
Service Learning Committee, UH Honors College, Fall 2016 - Spring 2017
Awards Subcommittee, Best Human Situation Essay Prize, UH Honors College, 2016 - 2017
Curriculum Subcommittee, “The Human Situation,” UH Honors College, 2013

Organizer, “Antebellum Affects: Literature & Theory,” MLA 2014
Organizer, “Nineteenth-Century American Sentiment, Radical or Otherwise,” MLA 2012
Ad Hoc By-Laws Committee, Department of English, SUNY Buffalo, 2007

Other Teaching

Lecturer/Faculty, National Debate Institutes (NYU, Emory, Texas, UH), 2000 - present
Writer in Residence, Just Buffalo Literary Center, Spring 2007

Works in Progress

Slavery & Humanism: Plantation Management and Black Literature in Early America, book length, manuscript
“An Image of Grass: Immanence and Transcendence in the Modern American Novel,” in submission
“Literary Form & the Imaginary: Lacan, Aesthetics, Animality,” manuscript
“Negative Visions: Georges Bataille’s Restricted Economy and Climate Policy in the Anthropocene,” drafting
“Aphanasis and Social Psychosis in Melville’s *Typee*,” drafting
“Science Fiction and the Structure of Sexuality,” drafting

Conferences

Chair & Respondent, “Topographies of Violence and Desire: Race and Urban Space.” National Communication Association Annual Convention, Las Vegas, NV, November 19-22, 2015

“Making Universality: Human Rights, Performance, and Archive Fever in Early American Literature.” American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, CA, March 19-22, 2015

“The Animal Magnetism of Sentiment: Novels and Imaginary Capture.” Modern Language Association Annual Convention, Chicago, IL, January 9–12, 2014.

“The Clinic of Literature: Foucault, Deleuze, and Psychoanalysis.” Intensities and Lines of Flight: Deleuze and Guattari and the Arts, King’s University College, London, Ontario, May 4-6, 2012.

Organizer & Respondent, “Nineteenth-Century American Sentiment, Radical or Otherwise.” Modern Language Association Annual Convention, Seattle, WA, January 5-8, 2012.

“An Archaeology of Slave Management: From ‘The State of War Continued’ to ‘No More Beautiful Picture of Human Society’.” Modern Language Association Annual Convention, Los Angeles, CA, January 6-9, 2011.

“Sinthome, Writing, Rhizome: New Forms of Life.” University of Massachusetts-Boston VII Annual Social Theory Forum conference on “Critical Social Theory: Freud & Lacan for the 21st Century,” Boston, MA, April 7-8, 2010.

“Science Fiction & Sexuality: Le Guin, Butler, Delany and the Limits of Transgression.” SUNY Buffalo Gender Institute, Gender Across Borders conference on “Globalisms,” Buffalo, NY, April 2-3, 2010.

“The Other Side of the Screen: Jonathan Coe’s *The Winshaw Legacy* and the Question of Simulation.” American Comparative Literature Association Annual Meeting, Princeton, March 23-26, 2006.

Journal Peer Reviews

Studies in American Fiction, 2022

Research & Editorial

Editorial Committee, *Umbr(a): A Journal of the Unconscious*, 2007 - 2010

Editorial Board, *Theory@Buffalo*, 2005 – 2010

Professional Memberships (Past and Present)

American Literature Society (ALS)

American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ASECS)

Houston Psychoanalytic Society (HPS)

Modern Language Association (MLA)

National Communication Association (NCA)

Society of Nineteenth-Century Americanists (C19)

Society of Early Americanists (SEA)