

DEREK WITTEN

DEREK.WITTEN@DUKE.EDU

portfolio: derekwitten.com

EDUCATION

Ph.D. English | Medieval and Early Modern Literature | Duke University | GPA 4.0 **2020–2026**

Dissertation: The Sign of Labour: Craft, Theology, and Symbol in Late Medieval England, 1348–1450

M.A. in Theological Studies | Regent College | GPA 3.87 **2013–17**

Thesis: “Participation and Particularity in Dante’s *Commedia*”

B.A. English (Hons.) | Trinity Western University | GPA 3.83 **2008–13**

Thesis: “Intrusions of Grace: Flannery O’Connor’s Incarnational Fiction”

CERTIFICATES

Duke University: Certificate in College Teaching (all requirements complete) **(2022–TBD)**

Duke University: Writing in the Disciplines (1/3 requirements complete) **(2023–TBD)**

TEACHING

Instructor of Record

ENGL / CIN 290, Shakespeare and Film, Duke University **2025 (spring)**

ENGL 331, Late Medieval Literature and Culture, Duke University **2023 (fall)**

WRTG 101, Nature Writing (Intro to Writing), Duke University **2023 (spring)**

Primary Instructor (under supervision of Dir. of Graduate Studies)

ENGL 996, Practicum in Teaching College English, Duke University **2024–25**

Teaching Assistant / Apprentice

ENGL / LING 204, History of English Language, Duke University **2024 (spring)**

- Grading, test design

ENGL / CIN 289, America Dreams American Movies, Duke University **2024 (spring)**

- Grading, test design, film group supervision

ENGL 338, Shakespeare on Love, Duke University **2022 (fall)**

- Grading, group supervision, lecture and discussion lead on King Lear and theology

ENGL 338, John Milton: Poetry, Theology, Politics, Duke University **2021 (fall)**

- Grading, co-teaching, lecture and discussion lead on Book IV, *Paradise Lost*

ENGL 235, Shakespeare & Contemporaries, Duke University **2021 (spring)**

- Grading, lecture and discussion lead on reading Macbeth within its political context

INDS 570, Theology of Love and Longing, Regent College (marking assistant) **2019 (sum)**

INDS 588, Icons in Prayer and Worship, Regent College **2016 (sum)**

HIST 501 & 502, History of Christianity, Regent College	2014–15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graded papers; taught tutorials (two per week) of 6–7 students on key primary texts from the history of Christianity. Completed an accompanying, credited class, “Christian Pedagogy,” involving weekly meetings on class design and strategy, professor observation and critique of my teaching, and in-depth written reflection. 	
INDS 571, Dickens and the Divine, Regent College	2015 (spring)
INDS 572, TS Eliot: Poet, Critic, Christian, Regent College	2015 (fall)
As Private Tutor for Winnifred Tang and Associates and TutorBright	2013–17
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tutored students from grades 6 to 12 in composition, grammar, and literature. Trained in pedagogical techniques for students with dyslexia; implemented these skills in a multi-year tutoring program for a high school student with dyslexia. 	

PUBLICATIONS

PEER-REVIEWED ACADEMIC

- “The Double Possibility of Labour in *Cursor Mundi*, *Egerton Genesis*, and the *York Corpus Christi Plays*” in *Studies in Philology*. Vol. 123.3, (forthcoming summer 2026).
- "Dante's Construction of the Creative Reader in the *Commedia's* Passages of Direct Address" in *Dante Studies*. Vol. 141 (2023).
- "King Lear's Edgar and Early Modern Renderings of Peter" in *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*. (Vol. 36, Dec. 2023).
- "Two Stigmatas in Ron Hansen's *Mariette in Ecstasy*" in *Christianity and Literature*. Vol. 71.3, (Sep. 2022).

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

- “Perceiving the Transcendence of the Mundane: A Comparison of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and John Ames from the Novel *Gilead*” in *Christian Humanism and Moral Formation in "A World Come of Age."* Cambridge Scholars Publishing, (Jan 2016).

REVIEWS

- Review of J.R.R. Tolkien and the Arts, ed. Melody Green, *VII*, (Vol. 39, 2023).
- [Review of Amateur Scientist's Notebook](#), by Jesse DeLong, *Carolina Quarterly*, (Jan. 2022).
- Review of *Angels and Saints*, by Eliot Weinberger, *Carolina Quarterly*, Vol. 70.3, (Spring/Summer 2021).
- Review of *The Parcel*, by Inosh Irani, *Foment Literary Journal*, Issue 5, (2017).
- Review of *Your Heart is a Muscle the Size of a Fist*, by Sunil Yapa, *Foment Literary Journal*, Issue 4, (2016).
- Review of *Under the Keel*, by Michael Crummey, *Foment Literary Journal*, Issue 2, (2014).
- [Review of Dark Diversions](#), by John Ralston Saul, *Ottawa International Writer's Festival*, (2013).

CREATIVE

- “Driving the Pass,” a poem in *CIRQUE* (Vol. 14.2, July, 2025)
- “Chadwin El-ahrairah,” a short story in *Nashwaak Review* (Vol. 52/53, 2025).
- “Etiology,” a poem in *Minetta Review* (Issue 2, Spring 2024)

“Night in the Rockies,” song lyrics for Justin Milad and the Missed Opportunities’ 2024 album, *The Most Likes I Ever Got*.

“Old Wooden Saint,” a short story in *Dappled Things* (Vol. 17, Issue 4, 2022).

"[Assiniboine River Horseshoe](#)," a poem in *Image* online (as Mitchell Prize longlister, 2022).

“Silent Earth,” a poem in *Crux Quarterly Journal*, (Vol. 56, No. 2, 2020).

“Sound Ladder,” *Driftwood Poetry*, (Vol. 3, 2018).

“Wing Light,” featured poem in Dal Schindell Gallery at Regent College, (2017).

“Cultivation,” “Prairie Storm,” “Moment,” “Cedar’s Foot,” *Driftwood Poetry* (Vol. 1, 2016).

“Acreage,” a poem in *Crux Quarterly Journal*, (Summer 2015 Vol. 51, No. 2.).

“De Courcy Islands,” a poem in [spaces] Literary Journal of Trinity Western University, (2011).

“Blue Spruce,” a poem in [spaces] Literary Journal of Trinity Western University, (2010).

JOURNALISM (selected)

“The Theological Comedy Awards,” humour piece in *Regent World*, vol. 30.2 (Winter 2018).

"From Church Parking Lot to Groundbreaking Housing Community," feature article in *Regent World*, vol. 30.1 (Spring 2018).

"An Hour with NT Wright," interview in *Mars Hill*, (Fall 2010).

“The ‘King of Techno’ Was a Rocky Boy,” feature article in the *Mountaineer*, (July, 2010).

"Mapping the Mountains: Largest Repeat Photography Project in the World Is Currently Underway in Banff National Park", feature article in the *Mountaineer*, (July, 2010).

"May Long Weekend Madness: Sustainable Resource Development Hopes to Educate West Country Campers," feature article with aerial photos in the *Mountaineer* [Third Place for Environmental Writing: Alberta Weekly Newspaper Association Better Newspaper’s Competition] (May, 2010).

PRESENTATIONS

ACADEMIC

“The Possibilities and Perils of Labour in N-Town *Noah*," International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, forthcoming May 2026.

Invited Lecture: “City and Religion: Contexts of *Piers Plowman* and the York Corpus Christi Plays.” ENG 890S, Versions of Charity and its Impediments: Thomas Aquinas, William Langland, and Corpus Christi in the Later Middle Ages. Nov. 2025.

“Craft and Eucharist in the York *Magi* Pageant.” International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI, May 2025.

“Labouring Bodies and the Corpus Christi: Measure as Meditation in York's *Crucifixio*.” Vagantes Conference on Medieval Studies, Durham / Chapel Hill, April 2025.

Guest instructor on C.S. Lewis, *Letters to Malcolm*, and the theology of prayer, for RELS 368 at Duke, Feb 2025.

“The Theology of Craft in *Piers Plowman*.” Piers Plowman Society Conference, London, July 2023.

“Translating Charity in *Piers Plowman*.” International Medieval Congress, Leeds, July 2023.

- "Milton's Materialism and his 'Sweet New Speech.'" Sixteenth Century Conference, Minneapolis, Oct. 2022.
- "'Lettore in Scrittore': Dante's Construction of the Believing Author in His Passages of Direct Address." Modern Languages Association Convention, Washington D.C, 2022. Online.
- "Nicholas Love's Subversive Pauline Exegesis: Lay-Affirming Epistemology in *The Myrrour of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*," at the International Medieval Congress, Leeds, UK, 2021. Online.
- "The Siren, Beatrice, and the I AM: Dante's Theological Justification for the Exaltation of Individuality in Pre-Renaissance Italy," at St. Louis University Symposium on Medieval and Renaissance Studies, MO, 2018.
- "Dante's Human Guidance Towards the Beatific Vision," at Regent College Academic Symposium, 2015.
- "Perceiving the Transcendence of the Mundane: A Comparison of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and John Ames from the Novel *Gilead*," at the 17th Bonhoeffer Society Lectures at Regent College and Vancouver School of Theology, May 2014.

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

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|---|-------------|
| Panelist for Men's Ministry quarterly pancake breakfast | 2024 |
| • Introduced the history and practice of Ignatian spiritual direction. | |
| "Dante's Way of Images," guest speaker at St. John's Vancouver Learner's Exchange | 2018 |
| Featured poet: Regent College Arts Chapel. Read and discussed a poem entitled "Axe Head" | 2017 |
| Delegate: Faith in Canada 150 Millennial Summit (inter-religious dialogue conference) | 2017 |

RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL

Durham Tech Educational Programming for First Generation Students **2023 (sum)**

Provost's Intern

- Prepared research documents for the implementation of a peer mentorship program at Durham Tech Community College.
- Produced a survey designed to data on current first generation students.

Regent College Communications and Public Engagement Dept. **2016–2020**

Senior Writer and Editor

- Wrote news items, conducted and published interviews, produced and edited copy for the school's web and print materials.
- Contributed creative content for advertisements, both web and print.
- Completed four issues of Regent's popular-theology magazine, *Regent World*—planning, editing, writing for, publishing each issue as well as overseeing visual design and optimization for the web (SEO).
- Supervised assistant staff in production of web content and social media.

Regent College **2016**

Editor in Chief, Etcetera Campus Newspaper

- Published weekly school newspaper, managing all aspects of its production.
- Recruited and managed a team of volunteer writers.
- Designed visual layout on Adobe InDesign.

The Mountaineer Publishing Company **2010, 11 (Sums)**

Journalistic Reporter (Intern)

- Wrote and photographed stories for several sections: police, court, sports, and town council.
- Published in-depth feature stories, interviewing notable citizens and investigating memorable happenings in the community.

- Contributed bi-weekly opinion column.

***Mars' Hill* Newspaper**

2010–11

Academy Section Editor

- Managed 3-page section of university newspaper devoted to accessible academic writing.
- Supervised, guided, and edited a team of 10–15 writers.
- Frequently authored editorial pieces on relevant academic topics.

[*Spaces*] Literary Journal

2010–11

Associate Editor

- Assisted in planning, writing, and vetting (poetry and fiction) for the yearly journal.

SERVICE

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| • Volunteer and host, 24 th Vagantes Conference on Medieval Studies | 2025 |
| • Small Group Co-Leader: All Saints Anglican Church | 2022–24 |
| • Christian Scholarship Fellow at Duke's Center for Christianity and Scholarship | 2022–23 |
| • Working group of doctoral students and professors dedicated to sharing work, peer review, and discussion surrounding the relationship of faith and scholarship. | |
| • Guest Fiction Editor: <i>The Snickle</i> grassroots Catholic literary journal | 2023 |
| • Duke English PhD Incoming Student Mentor | 2022, 2023 |
| • Co-Resident at Co:Here Housing Community | 2018–2020 |
| – Lived in community designed to address housing inequality in Vancouver. Provided support for neighbours at risk of homelessness or in recovery from addiction. | |
| • Co-founder, author, editor at Driftwood Poetry Journal | 2016–2018 |
| • Youth Leader: St. John's Vancouver Anglican Church | 2015–17; 18–20 |
| • Co-Founder and Leader: East Vancouver Shakespeare Club | 2015–16 (sums) |

HONOURS AND AWARDS

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| • MRDS New Voices in Early Performance Studies Award (\$250) toward participation in International Medieval Congress 2026 | 2026 |
| • Aleane Webb Dissertation Research Fellowship | 2025–26 |
| • Duke University competitive Summer Research Fellowship (\$10,000) | 2025 |
| • Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship (Finalist) | 2024 |
| • Course Evaluation Instructor Honour: Top 5% (For Engl 331) | 2024 |
| – Measured against all Duke undergraduate humanities instructors | |
| • Duke International Dissertation Travel Award (\$3,500) | 2023 |
| – Conducted archival research in Bodleian, British, and York Minster libraries | |
| • Duke International Conference Funding | 2023 |
| • Duke Medieval & Renaissance Studies Summer Funding Grant | '22 '25 |
| • Duke Conference Travel Award | '21 '22 '25 |
| • Honourable Mention: J.F. Powers Prize for Short Fiction for "Old Wooden Saint" | 2022 |
| • Longlist: Mitchell Prize in poetry for " Assiniboine River Horseshoe " (\$20,000 for winner) | 2021 |
| • Conway Holy Land Travel Bursary (\$5000) | |
| – Traveled to Israel and Palestine to research modern Palestinian Christianity. | 2014 |
| • President's Scholarship (IWU's highest academic scholarship) | 2008–12 |
| • Alberta Weekly Newspaper Association Better Newspaper's Competition: Third Place for Environmental Writing | 2010 |

LANGUAGES

Middle English: advanced reading

Latin: advanced reading

Italian: advanced reading; limited speaking

Spanish: limited reading; limited speaking

Koine Greek: limited reading

REFERENCES

David Aers, James B. Duke Distinguished Professor of English and Historical Theology at Duke University (aers@duke.edu) (dissertation chair)

Sarah Beckwith, Katherine Everett Gilbert Professor of English, Theater Studies and Religion at Duke University (ott@duke.edu) (committee member)

Tom Ferraro, Professor of English, Duke University (ferraro@duke.edu) (committee member)