

Al Filreis  
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**POSITIONS:**

Kelly Professor of English, School of Arts & Sciences  
Professor of Education, Graduate School of Education (secondary appointment)  
Faculty Director, Kelly Writers House  
Director, Center for Programs in Contemporary Writing  
Co-Director, PennSound  
Producer & host, PoemTalk  
Teacher/convener, "ModPo" (2012-present; 180,000 people enrolled)  
Publisher, *Jacket2*

**EDUCATION:**

1978-1985 M.A., Ph.D., University of Virginia  
1974-1978 B.A., Colgate University

**BOOKS:**

*Modern & Contemporary U.S. Poetry: Poets on Poems*, eds. Al Filreis & Anna Strong Safford (University of Pennsylvania Press, under contract).

*Citizen Poetics*, a book manuscript consisting of three chapters: "Digital Poetics at the End of the Lecture," "Modernist Pedagogy," "Citizen Poetics."

*The End of the End of Ideology: The Art & Politics of the Avant-Garde in 1960* (400 ms pages in draft; in progress).

*Counter-Revolution of the Word: The Conservative Attack on Modern Poetry, 1945-60* (University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 422 pp.

*Modernism from Right to Left: Wallace Stevens, the Thirties, & Literary Radicalism* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), 365 pp.

*Wallace Stevens and the Actual World* (Princeton University Press, 1991), 350 pp.

*Tucker's People*, by Ira Wolfert (first pub. 1943), ed. Filreis, in University of Illinois series "The Radical Novel in the U.S. Reconsidered," 1997, 496 pp.

*Secretaries of the Moon: The Letters of Wallace Stevens and Jose Rodriguez Feo*, with Beverly Coyle (Durham: Duke University Press, 1986), 212 pp.

**ARTICLES AND ESSAYS (SELECTION):**

"Visionary Modernism: A Witnessing," *American Literary History*, Winter 2019 (forthcoming, 2019).

"Poetics as Institutional Critique: The Networked Life of Collaborative Reading," *College Literature*, "Poetry Networks" issue, eds. Kamran Javadizadeh & Robert Volpicelli [forthcoming].

"The Kafka Revival of 1960: Guilt, Absurdity, Forestalled Post-Trauma," *Jacket2*, April 1, 2018.

"The End of the End of Modernism," book chapter in *The 1960s*, ed. David Wyatt (forthcoming, 2019).

"Explode for Small Change," transcript of interview with Yolanda Wisher, Charles Bernstein, and Patricia Spears Jones on Akilah Oliver's "is you is or is you ain't" (from "the she said dialogues: flesh memory"), *Jacket2*, September 14, 2017.

"On 'Difficult' Poetry: Sonnets of Laynie Browne and John Donne," book chapter in *Articulating Contemporary Poetics*, ed. Charles Altieri and Nicholas Nace, Northwestern University Press, 2017 (forthcoming).

"The Stevens Wars," in *Poetry and Poetics after Wallace Stevens*, eds. Bart Eeckhout & Lisa Goldfarb (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016), pp. 137-56.

"Wallace Stevens of the New York School," book chapter in *Wallace Stevens, New York & Modernism*, ed. Lisa Goldfarb, Bart Eeckhout, Routledge, 2012.

Symposium/debate on the future of humanities education, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, June/July 2013; ed. Lee Konstantinou, with Cathy Davidson, Ian Bogost, and Raymond Schroeder.

"Flipped Poetics and the Resources of the Academy," an essay published with essays by Maria Damon, Steve Yao, Brian Reed, Craig Dworkin and others in "Poetry Communities: A Conference Companion," eds. Katie Price & Jonathan Fedors, *Jacket2*, September 2013.

"Introduction to the poetry and poetics of 1960," *Jacket2*, April 27, 2011. Editor, *Poetry & Poetics 1960*, published in *Jacket2*: commissioned and edited essays by Erica Kaufman, Bob Perelman, Mel Nichols, Ron Silliman, Judith Goldman, Chris Funkhouser, Kristen Gallagher, Rachel Blau DuPlessis, Charles Bernstein, Jerome Rothenberg, Josephine Park, Curtis Faville, Michael Hennessey, Fred Wah, David Wyatt, Marie Damon, Lisa Steinman, Anne Tardos.

Selection of short essays published in *Jacket2*: "Nathaniel Mackey on Sonny Rollins," March 2017; "Planning to Stay—a Manifesto," February 2017; "Poetry Leader to Joseph McCarthy: Good Job!," January 2017; "Teaching Imagist Revision," January 2017; "Bob Kaufman & Wallace Stevens on improvisation," October 2016; "Clumsy, erroneous, freakish, foreign [on Charles Bernstein]," September 2016; "An Assemblage of Paradoxes in One Body: On Baroness Elsa von Freytag Loringhoven," March 2015; "Physio-digital responses to the digital: Stephen Vincent's haptic drawings of the sound of poets reading," March 2014; "Anti-ordination in the visualization of the poem's sound," February 2014 [on Charles Bernstein's "1-100" (1969)]; "Needless Iconoclasm: Notes on an Anthology of Contemporary American Poets in 1957," May 2013; "To Keep You from Going: Notes toward a Definition of Modernism," April 2012; "1974 Larry Eigner Recordings," March 2012; "Know What Is Happening in Your Heart: Robert Penn Warren's Racism," February 2012; "Learning, Not Teaching," February 2012. "Gil Ott and Charles Alexander after 9/11," January 2012; "Experiment is Exhausted and So It's Time to Interpret Rather than Explore: Louise Bogan's Cold War Anti-Modernism," January 2012; "Return to the Tapeworm Factory: The Conceptualism of Darren Wershler-Henry," December 2011; "Mere Alphabetic Adjacency: David Buun's Card Catalogue Art," November 2011; "When the Right Thought of Itself as Poetry & the Left as Prose," November 2011.

"The End of the End of Poetic Ideology, 1960," for Cary Nelson, ed., *Handbook of Modern & Contemporary American Poetry*, Oxford University Press (2011)

"The Baseball Fan," for Leonard Cassuto, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Baseball*, Cambridge University Press (February 2011)

"The President of This Sentence: Bob Perelman's History," *Jacket* 39 (2010), special issue ed. Kristen Gallagher.

"Modernist Pedagogy at the End of the Lecture," in *Teaching Modernist Poetry*, eds. Nicky Marsh & Peter Middleton (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

"Descriptions without Places" (foreword), in *Visiting Wallace: Poems Inspired by the Life and Work of Wallace Stevens*, eds. Dennis Barone and James Finnegan (Iowa City, IA: Iowa University Press, 2009).

"The Stevens Wars," *boundary 2* 36, 3 (Fall 2009), *American Poetry after 1975*, ed. Charles Bernstein, Duke University Press.

"Sounds at an Impasse," *Wallace Stevens Journal*, special sound issue edited by Natalie Gerber, Spring 2009, pp. 16-23.

"Om PennSound" (or "Audio Archiving"), *Audiatur Poetry Festival Magazine*, ed. Paal Bjelke Andersen, September 2007, Bergen (translated into Norwegian).

"Modern Poetry and Anticommunism," in *A Concise Companion to Twentieth-Century American Poetry*, ed. Stephen Fredman (Blackwell, 2005), pp. 173-90.

"What's Historical about Historicism," *Wallace Stevens Journal* (Fall 2004).

"Stevens and Communism," *Cambridge Companion to the Poetry of Wallace Stevens*, ed. John Serio (Cambridge University Press, 2007).

"Kinetic Is as Kinetic Does: On the Institutionalization of Digital Poetry," in *New Media Poetics: Contexts, Technotexts, and Theories*, ed. Adelaide Morris and Thomas Swiss (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006), pp. 123-140.

"Tests of Poetry," *American Literary History* 15, 1 (Spring 2003), pp. 27-35, "A Cambridge Literary History of the US Forum: Poetry."

"Stevens/Pound in the Cold War," *Wallace Stevens Journal* 26, 2 (Fall 2002), pp. 181-193; special "Pound/Stevens Revisited" issue, ed. Glen MacLeod.

"Some Remarks on the Institutionalization of E-Poetries," *NC1* (Spring/Summer 2002), pp. 84-88; part of "New Media Literature: A Roundtable Discussion on Aesthetics, Audiences, and Histories."

"On Frets about the Death of the Book," *CrossConnect*, vol. 1, no. 2 (Fall 1995).

"Conflict Seems Vaguely Un-American": Teaching the Conflicts and the Legacy of Cold War," *Review*, volume 17 (1995), pp. 156-71.

"This Posture of the Nerves': Modernism's Partisan Center," *Journal of Modern Literature* 18, 1 (Winter 1992): 49-64.

"Words 'With All the Effects of Force': Cold War Interpretation," a review-essay on Peter Steinberg's *The Great 'Red Menace'* (1984) and Ellen Schrecker's *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism & the Universities* (1986), *American Quarterly* 39 (Summer 1987), 306-12.

**PODCAST SERIES:**

*PoemTalk*: producer & host ][ 131 monthly episodes since 2007 ][ co-sponsored by the Poetry Foundation

*PennSound Podcasts*: producer & editor & (often) host ][ 62 episodes ][ available on iTunes

*Kelly Writers House Podcasts*: producer & [often] host: 47 episodes

*Kelly Writers House Fellows*: three interviews with eminent writers per year ][ 51 interviews since 2000 with Susan Sontag, Tony Kushner, Jamaica Kincaid, John Edgar Wideman, Edward Albee, Joan Didion, Laurie Anderson, et alia. ][ webcast, live & recorded

**SELECTION OF TALKS/KEYNOTES GIVEN ON THE FUTURE OF HUMANITIES PEDAGOGY:**

"The Digital Audio Archive and the Crisis in the Humanities," Concordia University, December, 2016.

"Open Access Humanities and the New Media," Columbia University, Center for New Media, January 31, 2014.

"Digital Humanities Meets Digital Pedagogy, New Forms of New Content," Duke University, November 13, 2013.

"Poetics and Open Access," lecture to the faculty of Bates College, Lewistown, Maine, May 20, 2013.

"Flipped Poetics and the Resources of the Academy," a conference on "Poetry Communities: A Conference Companion," convened by Katie Price & Jonathan Fedors, University of Pennsylvania, September 2013.

"Digitally Dwelling in Possibility," MIT, Cambridge MA. A presentation to MIT's School of Humanities Faculty, hosted by the Comparative Media Studies Department, December 10, 2012.

"Sound Theory & the Digital Archive," talk at the "Beyond the Text/Digital Archive" conference held at Beinecke Library, Yale University, April 2013.

"Humanities Pedagogy in the Massive Open Online Environment," Open Learning Conference, Univ. of Pennsylvania, April 6, 2013.

"Digital Humanities: Learner-Centered Learning," Philadelphia University, February 21, 2013.

**SELECTION OF INVITED TALKS ON POETRY & POETICS**

"Contemporary Poets Encounter Stevens," chair and participant, panel, MLA conference, Seattle, January 2020 [in progress]

"The Old Word Witness: Muriel Rukeyser's Poetic Strategy at the End of the Cold War," MLA panel, Chicago, January 6, 2019, panel on "Anti-Cold War Modernism & Women's Writing."

"On the Poetry Archive," Concordia University, Montreal, SpokenWeb Conference, December, 2016.

"Poetry, Community and the Academy: Clearing a Space," paper given at "Poetry Communities & the Individual Talent" conference, April 12, 2012 (paper to be published later).

"On Primo Levi's 'Iron' and 'Carbon,'" Jewish Writers Symposium, University of Pennsylvania, February 17, 2012.

"The Poetics of the Modernist Dead End," American Literature Association Conference, Boston, May 22, 2009.

"Cold War Poetics," Franklin & Marshall College, Writers House/English Department, March 10, 2010.

"Planning to Stay, a Manifesto," Banff Centre, Literary Arts Program, Banff, Alberta, February 21, 2010, "Interventions" Conference.

"Wallace Stevens as New York School Poet," paper delivered at the "Wallace Stevens, New York & Modernism" conference, Gallatin School, New York University, March 5, 2010.

"The Rago Era at *Poetry*," Regenstein Library, University of Chicago, April 2010.

"Oppen's Antifascism: Guilt in 'Myth of the Blaze,'" George Oppen at 100 conference, April 7, 2008, University of Pennsylvania

"Poetics & Learning," Franklin Inn Club, Philadelphia, April 6, 2007

"Poetics of Stanley Burnshaw: Eco-Lyricism and Environmental Radicalism in 'The Iron Land,'" symposium on the life and work of Stanley Burnshaw, CUNY Graduate Center, co-sponsored by CUNY and Harry Ransom Research Center of the University of Texas, October 20, 2006

"The Radical Poetry of New York City," Gotham Center for New York City History, CUNY Graduate Center, May 4, 2006.

A series of related talks on the politics of writing and the university at the University of Michigan co-sponsored by the College of Literature, Science & Art, the MFA Program of the English Department, the Sweetland Writing Center, and the Alice Lloyd Hall Scholars Program, October 6, 2005.

"Modernism and Anti-Communism," English Department, Pennsylvania State University on October 18, 2004.

"Red Blue Guitar: Why Can't Modernism and Communism Get Along," Poetics Program, SUNY Buffalo (hosted by Susan Howe) on September 22, 2004.

"Modernism in Anti-Communism in the 1940s," National Poetry Foundation conference on the Poetry of the 1940s, University of Maine, June 2004

"What's Historical about Historicism?" a plenary session paper delivered at the *Celebrating Wallace Stevens* conference in Hartford, sponsored by the University of Connecticut, April 8-10, 2004

**POSITIONS PREVIOUSLY HELD at the University of Pennsylvania (selected):**

Chairman, WXPB-FM Policy Board, 1999-2004

The Class of 1942 Professor of English, 1999-2002

Undergraduate Chairman, English, 1993-1996

Faculty Director, Arts & Sciences in Advanced Management Program, Wharton School, 2000-2005

Director, The Writing Program, 1996-98

Chair, Residential Faculty Council, 1996-98

Faculty Master, Van Pelt College House, 1995-98  
 Associate Professor of English, 1991-1995  
 Esther K. & N. Mark Watkins Assistant Professor in the Humanities, 1988-91  
 Assistant Professor of English, 1985-88

### SELECTED HONORS:

Member, Pulitzer Prize Selection Committee, Poetry, 2015–16  
 Named as Top Ten Tech Innovator in Higher Education, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2013  
 Member Bollingen Prize Award Panel, Beinecke Library, Yale University, 2014  
 Outstanding Educator Award for Transformation, Coursera, Leiden Univ., The Hague, March 22, 2016  
 Member, Minerva Prize Board, 2014–present  
 Member, Philadelphia Mayor’s Poet Laureate Selection Committee, 2011–present  
 Carnegie-CASE Pennsylvania Professor of the Year, 1999–2000  
 Ira Abrams Distinguished Teaching Award, 1995

### PROJECTS:

**Kelly Writers House:** Open, inclusive honors program-style learning community that I founded in 1995 and have served in the two decades since as Faculty Director. Board of 20 donor/volunteers, including founding donor Paul Kelly. KWH annually hosts some 225 free public programs—seminars, lectures, performances, readings, workshops, exhibits, symposia. Seven full-time staff (30 part-time), three direct reports. In 2015 we opened a new 2-story addition to the now 16-room 1851 cottage. Special admissions/outreach program to talented high-school students featured in *New York Times* & elsewhere. [writing.upenn.edu/wh]

**Center for Programs in Contemporary Writing:** Founded CPCW in 2003 in order to bring together all the university's writing programs. Includes four major departments & programs—the Critical Writing Program (through which all 10,000 undergraduates fulfill their writing requirement; 32 full-time faculty); the Creative Writing Program (38 faculty; 85 courses per year); the Marks Family Writing Center (serves the whole university, 3,500 appointments annually); and the Kelly Writers House. Seventeen full-time staff, 8 direct reports. [writing.upenn.edu]

**PennSound:** Co-founded in 2003 and co-directed with Charles Bernstein, PennSound is the world's largest archive of poetry recordings. Total 70,000 recordings, 15 million downloads annually. Funded by grants and donor support. [writing.upenn.edu/pennsound]

**PoemTalk:** I created, produce, and host this monthly 30-minute radio show/podcast, co-sponsored with the Poetry Foundation (Chicago). 100 episodes since 2007. [http://jacket2.org/content/poem-talk]

**Jacket2:** I am the Publisher of this magazine of poetry & poetics with its goal of merging academic and public conversations about supposedly "difficult" art. Editorial staff of five, one direct report. After 15 years based in Australia as "Jacket," the magazine was transferred to Philadelphia in 2010, renamed "Jacket2." The oldest continuing online poetry magazine. [jacket2.org]

**ModPo:** For four years, since 2012, I have taught/convened a free, open, non-credit massive open online course—the second-ever humanities MOOC. Including not a single lecture, ModPo works on the principle that close readings of difficult poems can be managed by the collective interpretive wisdom of the global community. ModPo's open pedagogy has been featured in the *Washington Post*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *NPR's Morning Edition*, the *Paris Review*, *The Today Show* and elsewhere, and includes among its "successful" students Senator Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), hundreds of high school teachers, the instructors and students of a La Guardia Community College class & 130,000 others from 191 nations. [jacket2.org/commentary/modpo-overview]

**RealArts:** A 9-year-old program through which students apply for specially arranged summer internships for which we (not the hosts) pay a \$4000 summer stipend—intended to break the trend of mass-designed, unpaid internships. Twenty-five internships at distinguished organizations such as The Morgan Library, McSweeney's, the Jewish Museum, *Rolling Stone*, the "Homeland" writing room, etc.; \$100,000 annual cost (funded by donors). [<http://writing.upenn.edu/realarts>]

**Writers House Fellows:** Since 1999, as part of a special advanced seminar, I have hosted the visits of three eminent writers each spring for a series of public events that includes an interview/conversation moderated by me (the session is presented before a live audience and also broadcast as video and audio stream). In this role I have interviewed Tony Kushner, Grace Paley, Jamaica Kincaid, David Milch, Susan Sontag, Laurie Anderson, Michael Cunningham, Robert Creeley, Roger Angell, Adrienne Rich, Matthew Weiner, Edward Albee, Karen Finley, John Ashbery, Buzz Bissinger, John Barth, and many others.

**BRIEF PROFILE:** Al Filreis is Kelly Professor of English, Faculty Director of the Kelly Writers House, Director of the Center for Programs in Contemporary Writing, Co-Director of PennSound, Publisher of *Jacket2* magazine—all at the University of Pennsylvania, where he has been a member of the faculty and administrator since 1985. He has published many essays on modern and contemporary American poetry, on the literary history of the 1930s and 1950s, on the literary politics of the Cold War, on the end of the lecture, and on digital humanities pedagogy. Among his books are *Modernism from Right to Left*, *Wallace Stevens and the Actual World*, and *Counter-Revolution of the Word: The Conservative Attack on Modern Poetry, 1945-60*. He produces and hosts a monthly podcast/radio program, "PoemTalk," co-sponsored by the Poetry Foundation. He has hosted three eminent writers for residencies each spring through the Kelly Writers House Fellows Program since 1999. He has won many teaching awards at Penn, was named Pennsylvania Professor of the Year in 2000 by the Carnegie Foundation, and was named one of the Top Ten Tech Innovators in Higher Education for 2013 by the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. He teaches an open online course called "ModPo," which has served 130,000 participants in four years.