

## Rhona Trauvitch

Department of English | DM 458B  
Florida International University  
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### EDUCATION

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- Ph.D. Comparative Literature, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2013  
M.Sc. Social and Public Communication, the London School of Economics and Political Science, 2004  
B.A. Government, Smith College, 2003  
Visiting Student, University of Oxford, 2001-2002

### APPOINTMENTS

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- 2020-present Associate Teaching Professor, Department of English, Florida International University  
2014-2020 Instructor, Department of English, Florida International University  
2013-2014 Visiting Lecturer, Department of English, Westfield State University  
2013-2014 Visiting Lecturer, Program in Comparative Literature, Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, University of Massachusetts Amherst

### PUBLICATIONS

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#### Peer-reviewed journal article

- “Mapping with Fi-Sci: Why and How Fictionality Illuminates Science.” *Narratologies of Science*, special issue of the *Journal of Narrative Theory*, edited by Daniel Aureliano Newman, vol 53.1, 2023, pp. 59-86.

#### Book chapters

- “Synontological Spaces.” *The Routledge Handbook of Popular Culture and Tourism*, edited by Christine Lundberg and Vassilios Ziakas, Routledge, 2018, pp. 31-42.  
“*Mise en Abyme* and Quantum Mechanics: The Reader as Observer.” *Interface between Literature and Science: Cross-Disciplinary Approaches to Latin American Texts*, edited by Victoria Carpenter, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015, pp. 115-140.  
“Ontology and Superposition: Where the Muppets Meet and Do Not Meet Schrödinger’s Cat.” *Jim Henson and Philosophy: Imagination and the Magic of Mayhem*, edited by Timothy M. Dale and Joseph F. Foy, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2015, pp. 199-208.  
“Charting the Extraordinary: Sentient and Transontological Spaces.” *Literary Cartographies: Spatiality, Representation, and Narrative*, edited by Robert T. Tally Jr., Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, pp. 199-213.  
“The Bible’s Paradise and *Oryx and Crake*’s Paradise: A Comparison of the Relationships between Humans and Nature.” *Plants and Literature: Essays in Critical Plant Studies*, edited by Randy Laist, Rodopi Press, 2013, pp. 165-180.  
“Alternate History as Countermonument.” *We Are What We Remember: The American Past Through Commemoration*, edited by Laura M. D’Amore and Jeffrey Meriwether, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012, pp. 114-133.

## Press

“From ancient Jewish texts to androids to AI, a just-right sequence of numbers or letters turns Matter into meaning.” *The Conversation*, 13 October 2023, [theconversation.com/from-ancient-jewish-texts-to-androids-to-ai-a-just-right-sequence-of-numbers-or-letters-turns-matter-into-meaning-207895](https://theconversation.com/from-ancient-jewish-texts-to-androids-to-ai-a-just-right-sequence-of-numbers-or-letters-turns-matter-into-meaning-207895)

## Paratext

“Discussion Questions for ‘Eulogy for My Avocado Tree’ by Donna Aza Weir-Soley.” *Introduction to Literature: Florida International University*, edited by Amy Kahrman Huseby, W. W. Norton & Company, 2018, p. 516.

## WORKS IN PROGRESS

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### Monograph

*Fi-Sci: Avatars of Science in Fiction*, under advance contract for the Theory and Interpretation of Narrative series at the Ohio State University Press

Cognitive studies of analogy suggest that we reason about every experience or concept in terms of another. But what happens with a concept that is indiscernible, such as heredity, or incomprehensible, like an eleven-dimensional space? Our minds reach out to such concepts via analogy as well, but with one crucial difference: the most productive experience in terms of which we can reason about them is fiction. A rhetorical approach reveals that through a process of fiction-science pattern mapping, fiction enhances conceptual access to strange and confounding natural phenomena. When a form in fiction is analogous to a form in science, we can reason about the latter in terms of the former. Though we encounter science without the assumption of fictionality that cloaks us when we read fiction, we carry over the pattern perceived in the story. This carrying over – the recognition of similitude – is the mechanism that broadens conceptual pathways to the indiscernible and the incomprehensible.

### Book chapter

“Borges’ Lens: The Symphony of a Rhizomatic Course.” *Approaches to Teaching the Works of Jorge Luis Borges*, edited by José Eduardo González, Modern Language Association (forthcoming).

### Invited contributions

“Map, *Matryoshkas*, Ouroboros: Three Types of Borgesian Framing in *Trust*.” *PMLA*, 2023 (forthcoming).

## LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

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Fluent English, Modern Greek, and Hebrew  
Intermediate German, Russian, and Spanish

## AWARDS, GRANTS, AND HONORS

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2023	Faculty Recognition Award for Teaching College of Arts, Sciences & Education, Florida International University
2023	Project Director, Humanities Initiatives at Hispanic-Serving Institutions National Endowment for the Humanities (\$150,000) Project Title: Science, Fiction, and Science Fiction: Building a Digital Library of Teaching Resources for Interdisciplinary Curricula

2022	RETI (Rewarding Excellence in Teaching Incentive) Award (\$2,000) Office of Faculty Leadership and Success, Florida International University
2018	Faculty Senate Award for Excellence in Teaching (\$5,000) Office of the Provost, Florida International University
2017	Faculty Recognition Award for Teaching College of Arts, Sciences & Education, Florida International University
2017	UP:LIFT Course Reform Initiative Award (\$3,945) Office of the Provost, Florida International University
2013	Peter Rollins Travel Grant (\$500) Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association
2008	Grant for Conference Organization Crossroads Conference Department of Comparative Literature, Smith College
2006	Graduate School Fellowship for Incoming Students (\$15,000) Graduate School, University of Massachusetts Amherst
2002	Second place in annual poetry competition St. Catherine's College, University of Oxford
1999	International Scholar Smith College

## **COURSES TAUGHT**

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### **Florida International University**

Approaches to Literature  
 Around the World in Short Stories  
 Introduction to Literature  
 Jewish Literature: Judaic Mythology in Science Fiction and Fantasy  
 Literary Archetypes in Moving Images  
 Literary Theory in Multimedial Popular Culture  
 Literature among the Arts and Sciences: Intersections of Narrative Theory and Science  
 Major American Authors  
 Quantum Narratology and Other Curiosities: Intersections of Science and Storytelling  
 Science Fiction  
 Short Stories of Horror and the Weird  
 Studies in Metaphor  
 Semiotics and Narratology: How Fiction Crosses into Reality  
 Special Topics: Latinx Speculative Fiction  
 Special Topics: Shakespeare and Cervantes by way of Borges  
 Studies in the Film: Narrative Theory and Audiovisual Advertising  
 The Library of Borges [graduate seminar]  
 Water and Memory [graduate seminar]

### **Westfield State University**

Composition  
 Composition II: Writing about What Matters  
 World Literature II

### **University of Massachusetts Amherst**

Fantasy and World Literature

Introduction to Science Fiction

**University of Massachusetts Amherst**

Intensive Modern Hebrew I, with Shmuel Bolozky

Intensive Modern Hebrew II, with Shmuel Bolozky

**Smith College** (Teaching Assistant)

Elementary Russian, with Catherine Woronzoff-Dashkoff

**University of Massachusetts Amherst** (Teaching Associate and Course Designer)

Brave New Worlds

Good & Evil: East-West

International Short Story

Introduction to Science Fiction

**University of Massachusetts Amherst** (Teaching Assistant)

Brave New Worlds, with David Lenson

Comic Art in North America, with N. C. Christopher Couch

Myth, Folktale and Children's Literature, with William Moebius

## INVITED LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS

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| 2024 | "How Fiction Powers the SciComm Warp Drive," plenary session, International Conference of Three Societies on Literature and Science, Birmingham, UK   |
| 2023 | "Communicating Science with Fictionality," plenary panel, ComSciCon: Communicating Science Conference, Miami, FL  |
| 2023 | "Fi-Sci: How to Speak Science with Fiction," workshop + panel, Society for Literature, Science & the Arts, Tempe, AZ  |
| 2023 | "Fi-Sci Analogies: Designing Interdisciplinary Curricula with Narrative Theory," keynote address, International Conference on Narrative, Dallas, TX   |
| 2023 | Fi-Sci workshop, Women in Science Communications DC Fly-In Seminar, FIU   |
| 2023 | Science & Fiction Lab, Language and Literature Program Innovation Room, Modern Language Association, San Francisco, CA  |
| 2018 | "Judaic Mythology and Speculative Fiction: The Animating Aleph-Bet," Jewish Museum of Florida – FIU, Miami Beach, FL  |
| 2017 | "The Alphabet, DNA, and Computer Programming," Lifelong Learning Institute Lecture Series, Nova Southeastern University, FL   |
| 2016 | "The Ingredients of Story in Contemporary Film," Lifelong Learning Institute Lecture Series, Nova Southeastern University, FL   |
| 2016 | "Ontology and the Muppets: Are Jim Henson's Creatures Fictional, Non-Fictional, or Both?" Lifelong Learning Institute Lecture Series, Nova Southeastern University, FL  |
| 2015 | "The Magical Machinations of Metalepsis: How Fiction Becomes Reality in Theory and in Practice," Lecture Series for the Research Training Group: Factual and Fictional Narrative, Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg, Germany |
| 2012 | "The Wold Newton Universe and the Peculiar Case of Palimpsest Characters," ConBust: Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Anime convention, Smith College, MA   |

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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| 2024 | "That was to be the name thereof": The World According to Adam and Piranesi," American Comparative Literature Association, Montreal, Canada |
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- 2023 “Crake’s Big Reset: Upending Taxonomy to Unhuman the World,” Forum: Margaret Atwood Society, Modern Language Association, San Francisco, CA.
- 2022 “From Adam to Android: The Judaic Myth that Inspires a Speculative Fiction Trope,” Forum: Jewish American, Modern Language Association, Washington, D.C.
- 2022 “Outlandish Settler Colonialism in *The Wake* and “Bloodchild,” Forum: Speculative Fiction, Modern Language Association, Washington, D.C.
- 2021 ““Creation by Letters’: Alterity and Belonging in Tales of Recombination,” Forum: Folklore, Myth, and Fairy Tale, Modern Language Association, Virtual Convention
- 2019 “Fantastical Border Crossings: The Language of Parallel Spaces and Alternate Realities,” International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts, Orlando, FL
- 2019 “The Symbolic Blending of Science and Magic in Cabiya’s *Wicked Weeds*,” Forum: Science and Literature, Modern Language Association, Chicago, IL
- 2018 “Synontological Communicative Acts as Atypical Rhetoric,” International Conference on Narrative, Montreal, Canada
- 2018 “Biological Homunculus, Mystical Golem, Technological Robot,” American Comparative Literature Association, Los Angeles, CA
- 2018 “Dancing Aleph-Bet: Grapheme Recombination in Speculative Fiction,” Gimelstob Symposium, Boca Raton, FL
- 2018 “The Transmedial and Synontological Complexity of *Castle*,” Forum: Popular Culture, Modern Language Association, New York, NY
- 2017 “Stories of Graphemes and Genes: Diversity and Extinction in Languages and Species,” Subject Area: Science Fiction and Fantasy, Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association, San Diego, CA
- 2017 “Units of Expression on Shuffle in Borges, Asimov, and the X-Men,” International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts, Orlando, FL
- 2017 “Ectostory Interaction: The Confluence of Reception, Fandom, and Cognitive Flexibility,” Allied Organization: Reception Study Society, Modern Language Association, Philadelphia, PA
- 2017 “Ignorance, Bliss? Collective Memory and Cultural Narrative in *The Buried Giant* and *The Wake*,” Forum: Memory Studies, Modern Language Association, Philadelphia, PA
- 2016 “Metaphor and Fictionality,” International Comparative Literature Association, Vienna, Austria
- 2016 “Fan-Tastic Non-Fictional Locales: Where Ectostory Interactions Commemorate Fictional Events,” Fan Studies Network, Norwich, England
- 2016 “Synontological Spaces,” International Conference on Narrative, Amsterdam, the Netherlands
- 2016 “Beyond Metalepsis: How Participation Lets Fictions Exceed Fictionality,” American Comparative Literature Association, Cambridge, MA
- 2015 “Of *a/0* in the Work of Borges,” Literature and Crisis Symposium, Florida International University, Miami, FL
- 2015 “*Figmentum nonfictumi*, or, What You Get When You Cross Taxonomical Nomenclature with Popular Culture,” Subject Area: Science and Popular Culture, Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association, New Orleans, LA

- 2015 “Media Convergence + Participatory Culture = De-Fictionalization,” American Comparative Literature Association, Seattle, WA
- 2015 “Sweet Sounds: Synaesthetic Metaphors and Multi-Modal Categorization,” Division: Linguistic Approaches to Literature, Modern Language Association, Vancouver, Canada
- 2014 “#Hashtag: Autoclassification in Hypertext and Speech,” Subject Area: Internet Culture Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association, Chicago, IL
- 2014 “Transontological Crossover Universes: Where Sherlock Holmes Meets both Tarzan and You,” American Comparative Literature Association, New York, NY
- 2013 “Kindred Metaphors: Literary Criticism at the Confluence of Narratology and Jewish Mysticism,” Association for Jewish Studies, Boston, MA
- 2013 “How Narratology and Speech Act Theory Decipher Quidditch, Klingon, and Kwik-E-Mart,” International Conference on Narrative, Manchester, UK
- 2013 “Temporal Crosshatching: Mapping Sentient Spaces,” American Comparative Literature Association, Toronto, Canada
- 2013 “The Tree of (Real) Life as a Metaphor for Fiction-Memoir Integration in Amos Oz’s *A Tale of Love and Darkness*,” Discussion Group: Hebrew Literature, Modern Language Association, Boston, MA
- 2012 “Illusory Contours in the Language of the Palimpsests,” American Comparative Literature Association, Providence, RI
- 2012 “The Implausible Traces of YouTube in Borges,” Northeast Modern Language Association, Rochester, NY
- 2011 “The Authentic Imaginary: A Study of Catalogs and Second-Tier Fictionals,” American Comparative Literature Association, Vancouver, Canada
- 2010 “Border Crossings along Axes of the Real and the Fictional,” Crossroads Conference II, Amherst, MA
- 2010 “Western Philosophy and Hebrew Mysticism: A Comparison of Language Theory,” American Comparative Literature Association, New Orleans, LA
- 2009 “Brands of Multi-Dimensional Discourses,” American Comparative Literature Association, Cambridge, MA
- 2008 “Brands of Multi-Dimensional Discourses,” Crossroads Conference, Amherst, MA
- 2007 “Flying Through Walls: Magical Realism in Literature and Advertisements,” American Comparative Literature Association, Puebla, Mexico

## **MEDIA AND INTERVIEWS**

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- 2023 “New program boldly goes where no FIU curriculum has gone before: NEH Awards \$150,000 for humanities-STEM collaboration,” FIU News, <http://news.fiu.edu/2023/new-program-boldly-goes-where-no-fiu-curriculum-has-gone-before>
- 2016 “10 lugares inventados y reales que se hicieron famosos gracias a la literatura” [“10 Invented and Real Places That Became Famous Thanks to Literature”], *BBC Mundo*, <http://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-36946445>
- 2012 “*One Hundred Years of Solitude*, Magical Realism, and Advertising,” *Tan cerca, tan lejos* [So Near, So Far], WMUA The Voice of UMass, 91.1 FM

## **INVITED CAMPUS LECTURES AND WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS**

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### **At Florida International University**

2023	Scones with a Scholar Workshop panelist, Center for Advancement of Teaching, FIU
2023	Science & Fiction Lab, Faculty Innovations for Student Success Showcase (FISSS)
2018	“The Hebrew Letters in Science Fiction and Fantasy,” Alumni Dinner and TAK Induction, Department of Religious Studies
2017	Hybrid Course Design, Faculty Innovations for Student Success Showcase (FISSS)
2016	Hybrid Courses Workshop
2015	“Student Involvement and Instructor Engagement,” Faculty Development Series, FIU Online
2015	Fall Semester Online Teaching Workshops
2015	Spring Semester Online Teaching Workshops

## **ADVISING AND MENTORING**

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### **At Florida International University**

2023-Present	Master’s in English Literature Thesis Committee Chairperson; graduate student: Nicholas Cabezas, Department of English
2023-Present	Master’s in English Literature Thesis Committee Member; graduate student: Thomas Marin, Department of English
2023-Present	Master’s in Fine Arts Thesis Committee Member; Graduate student: Rebecca Wallwork, Department of English
2023-Present	Master’s in Fine Arts Thesis Committee Member; Graduate student: Arnaldo Batista, Department of English
2022-Present	Doctoral Dissertation Committee Member; Graduate student: Anshu Sharma, Knight Foundation School of Computing and Information Sciences
2020-2023	Faculty Advisor, Geek Culture Club
2021-2022	Master’s in English Literature Thesis Committee Member; Graduate student: Brandon Cordova, Department of English
2016-2017	Volunteer Mentor, Student Access and Success Mentoring Program
2016	Volunteer Mentor, CIS (Communities in Schools) of Miami Mentor Program
2015-2016	Faculty Advisor, Advanced Research and Creativity in Honors (ARCH) Program
2015-2016	Master’s in English Literature Thesis Committee Member; Graduate student: David Frisch, Department of English

## **SERVICE TO PROFESSION**

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2021-present	Founding Director, Science & Fiction Lab, Florida International University
2018-2022	Member, Executive Committee, Linguistics and Literature Forum, Modern Language Association
2020	Session Organizer, “Linguistic Reimaginings in Speculative Fiction,” Modern Language Association, Seattle, WA
2020	Session Organizer, “Alternate Linguistic Environments in Speculative Fiction,” Modern Language Association, Seattle, WA

2016	Seminar Organizer, “Metaphor and the Conceptualization of Fictionality,” International Comparative Literature Association, Vienna, Austria
2016	Seminar Co-organizer, “From Fiction to Fandom: Fictional Worlds, Participatory Culture, and Novel Social Formations,” American Comparative Literature Association, Cambridge, MA
2015-2017	Nominee, Executive Committee for Linguistics and Literature Forum, Modern Language Association
2013	Seminar Organizer, “The Cartography of Fictionality: Mapping Communities that Originate in Fiction,” American Comparative Literature Association, Toronto, Canada
2012	Seminar Co-organizer, “Palimpsest Story: Vestiges and Emanations,” American Comparative Literature Association, Providence, RI
2011	Seminar Organizer, “Mythical Citations and Fictional Sources,” American Comparative Literature Association, Vancouver, Canada
2010	Seminar Organizer: “Language in the Quest for Utopia,” American Comparative Literature Association, New Orleans, LA
2009	Seminar Organizer, “Packaging Art: Brands and Adaptations,” American Comparative Literature Association, Cambridge, MA

## **DEPARTMENTAL AND INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE**

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### **At Florida International University**

2023	Organizer and Director, Fall Fiction-Science Faculty Fellowship Institute, Science & Fiction Lab
2023	Organizer and Director, Summer Science Fiction Faculty Fellowship Institute: FIU+MDC, Science & Fiction Lab
2023	Organizer and Moderator, Inaugural Science & Fiction Confab, Science & Fiction Lab
2022	Organizer and Director, Pilot Jigsaw Module Interpolation, Science & Fiction Lab
2022	Organizer and Director, Pilot Fiction-Science Faculty Fellowship Institute, Science & Fiction Lab
2022	Independent Study Director; Undergraduate student: Maria Veronica Perez Garcia
2022	Organizer and Director, Pilot Science Fiction Faculty Fellowship Institute, Science & Fiction Lab
2023-present	Member, Assessment Design Committee
2022-present	Chairperson, Professional Development Leave Selection Committee, Office of the Provost
2022	Member, NTT Promotion Committee
2016-2022	Member, Literature Gateway Curriculum Committee
2019-2020	Liaison, College of Arts, Sciences and Education
2017-2019	Participant, Literature Gateway Summer Institute
2018	Organizer, Literature Gateway Summer Institute
2017-2018	Member, Literature Track Committee
2016-2017	Member, Literature Instructors Hiring Committee
2016	Independent Study Director; Undergraduate student: Jessica Maria Oliveira
2016	Liaison, CAEP (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation) Compliance



2015-2016 Co-coordinator; Coordinator, Program Assessment

## **REFERENCES**

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Available upon request