

Misha Grifka-Wander

**University of Chicago, BA 2015
Ohio State University, Phd Expected 2024**

**Research Interests: video games, comics, digital culture; science fiction and
fantasy; gender and sexuality studies, ecocriticism**

**Undergraduate GPA: 3.88
Undergraduate English GPA: 3.93
Graduate GPA: 4.00**

Michael Grifka

9 1/2 Auburn Ave, Columbus, OH, 43205

misha.grifka@gmail.com | (734) 546-4058

Research interests: video games, comics, digital culture; science fiction and fantasy; gender and sexuality studies, ecocriticism

Education

The Ohio State University

PhD in English

Columbus, OH
expected June 2023

The University of Chicago

Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities with honors

Thesis Title: "Time, Space, and the Web Between: Webcomics as Form"

Chicago, IL
June 2015
Adviser: Daniel Morgan

Honors and Awards

Buckeye Access All Star

Awarded by the Comic Studies Society for innovative graduate work in comics

2020

The Hillary Chute Award for Best Graduate Student Conference Presentation, Honorable Mention

Awarded by the Comic Studies Society for innovative graduate work in comics

2018

UCPIP Fellow

Year-long fellowship to support work in the public interest field

2015-16

Dean's List, the University of Chicago

2012-15

Phi Beta Kappa Society

Inducted in junior year

2014

The Arts Council Summer Fellowship

Awarded to fund creation of a short webcomic

2011

Published Works – Journal Articles

"Goddess Troubles: Gender and Femininity in *Lore Olympus*." Forthcoming from *MAI Feminism*, 2023.

"Without Water: Willingly Enduring the Speculative Landscape." Forthcoming from *Helice*, 2023.

"Someone Else's Icon: Complicating Comics and Identification." *INKS*, vol. 6, no. 3, 2022.

"A Genuine Messiah: The Erosion of Political Messaging in *Dune 2021*." *Ekpbrasis*, vol. 28, no. 2, 2022

"A Fairy Tale Apocalypse: Nature, Humanity, and Disease in *Stand Still Stay Silent*." *Marvels and Tales*, vol. 35, no. 1, 2021.

“Moving Forward: Gender, Genre, and Why There’s No Hard Fantasy.” *The New Americanist*, vol. 1 no. 3, Autumn 2019.

Published Works – Book Chapters

“Building the World: Ecopunk TTRPGs and Collaborative Critical Societies.” *SF and Societal Vulnerability: Fragility, Collapse, and Transformation*, forthcoming.

“Queer Comics Queered.” *Comics: A Companion*, forthcoming from Peter Lang.

“New Pronouns and New Uses: Gender Variance and Language in Contemporary Science Fiction.” *The Routledge Companion to Gender and Science Fiction*, Routledge, Spring 2023.

“Nature Versus Player: Skyrim Players and Modders as Ecological Force.” In *Being Dragonborn: Critical Essays on The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim*, edited by Mike Piero and Marc Ouellette, McFarland Press. June 2021.

Published Works – Academic Reviews

Review of *The Paradox of Blackness in African American Vampire Fiction*, by Jerry Rafiki Jenkins. Appeared in vol. 51, no. 2, *SFRA Review*, 2021

Review of *Phantasmal Spaces: Archetypal Venues in Video Games*, by Matthias Fuchs. Appeared in vol. 31, no. 1, *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, 2020

Review of *Regarding Frames: Thinking with Comics in the Twenty-First Century*, by Shiamin Kwa. Appeared in vol. 22, no. 1, *International Journal of Comic Art*, 2020

Conferences

Grifka Wander, M. *Digital Time, Space, and Comics*. Paper presented at “Comics strike back: digital comics, digital audiences, digital practices,” Ghent, Belgium

July 2022

Grifka Wander, M. *Mapping the Fantastic City—and its Crime*. Paper presented at the annual conference for the International Society for the Study of Narrative, Chichester, England

June 2022

Grifka Wander, M. *Learning to Use Elfroot: Video Games and Worldbuilding*. Paper presented at GIFCon, Glasgow, Ireland

April 2022

Grifka Wander, M. *Reckoning with Difference in the Anthropocene*. Paper presented at the research incubator Humanities for the Anthropocene: Values, Principles, and Practices

July 2021

Grifka Wander, M. *Locating Blackness at the End of the World: N.K. Jemisin's Broken Earth and the Black Anthropocene*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Association of the Fantastic in the Arts. Later published in *SFRA Review*, vol. 51, no. 3.

March 2021

Grifka Wander, M. *Branching Romance: Queer Visual Novels*. Paper presented at the annual Northeastern Modern Language Association conference

March 2021

Grifka Wander, M. *Queer Goose Games: Pastoral Queerness in Untitled Goose Game*. Scheduled for presentation at the annual Queerness and Games Conference, cancelled due to COVID19

March 2020

Grifka Wander, M. *A Fairy Tale Apocalypse: Time, Nature, and Magic in Stand Still, Stay Silent*. Scheduled for presentation at the annual International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts, cancelled due to COVID19

March 2020

Grifka Wander, M. *Connecting Queerly: Queer Webcomics and the Comments-Section Community*. Paper presented at the annual Modern Language Association conference

January 2020

Grifka Wander, M. *Renegotiating Coming Out Through Humor: Tumblr Coming Out Narratives*. Paper presented at the annual Popular Culture Association conference

April 2019

Grifka Wander, M. *Idle Horror: Idle Browser Games and the Horror of the Internet*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Association of the Fantastic in the Arts

March 2019

Grifka Wander, M. *Queers, Horror, and No-Fun Games: Queerness and Trauma in the Body of the Gamer*. Paper presented at the annual Queer Games Conference

October 2018

Grifka Wander, M. *Walking Through the Game World: Embodied Narrative Architecture in Video Games*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Northeastern Modern Language Association

April 2018

Grifka Wander, M. *The Digital Pastoral*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Brandeis University English Department

March 2018

Community Involvement / Professional Service

English Graduate Organization

President, Committee Representative 2018, 2020-2022

Elected representative for the English department's graduate students at Ohio State; sat on faculty committees including the Diversity Committee, Grad Studies Committee, and Executive Committee

New Media and Society, Convergence

Peer Reviewer 2021-ongoing

Provided peer review services for six articles

Ancillary Review of Books

Editor and Reviewer 2022-ongoing

Commissioned and edited reviews and articles on contemporary speculative fiction; acquired review copies and corresponded with editors; interviewed authors and wrote reviews

Yale University Film and Media Studies: Digital Storyworlds

Auditing Student Fall 2016

Completed coursework for film studies class on digital and contemporary film; created critical video essay on reality status in film

Sex Week at the University of Chicago

Moderator 2015

Moderated a panel of professional comics artists; interviewed panelists on comics and sexuality

UChicomics

Board Member 2013-15

Organized weekly meetings of comics-making and –appreciation club, published two anthologies of student work

Work In Progress

President 2011-14

Facilitated weekly writing workshops and peer criticism

Critique Groups

2011 - now

Beta reading for novelists Naseem Jamnia, Emma Cueto, and Shobana Appavu; workshop for short stories

Published Works - Creative

Open Bar (short story) 2021

Apricity Magazine

Poem for a Pharmacy (poem) 2021

614Now Magazine

Layers of Choice: Discussing The City Inside with Samit Basu (review and interview) 2022

Work Experience

The Ohio State University

Graduate Teaching Associate

August 2018 – ongoing

Taught composition, literature, and video games analysis; designed course themes around otherness in science fiction and fantasy, video games, and international literature; created course materials

Online Asynchronous Courses: 2 sections 1110 (Intro Composition), 2 sections 2367 (Second Year Writing)

The Ohio State University

Grader

2021

Provided grading and feedback for students of Chinese literature and poetry

URU, The Right To Be, Inc.

Executive Assistant

August 2016 – August 2017

Provided support for Oscars eligibility campaign for nonprofit documentary, including event management, correspondence, and support solicitation; assisted with hiring efforts; conducted website support; assisted editing and proofreading of screenplays

Connecticut Council for Education Reform

September 2016 – February 2017

Executive Assistant/Office Manager

Provided support for executive director, including communication writing and editing, policy research, office management, and more

Youth & Opportunity United (Y.O.U.)

Special Assistant to the ED and COO

July 2015 - August 2016

Created organizational materials such as annual report, campaign brochure, and more; assisted with operations including office supplies, event planning, organizational policy planning, and database construction

CharacTour

Writer

June 2013 – December 2017

Wrote for an entertainment start-up; created personality profiles for hundreds of characters; analyzed personality traits; wrote reviews for dozens for media properties

University of Chicago Call Center (run by Ruffalo Noel Levitz)

Supervisor

January 2013 - June 2015

Represented the University of Chicago to alumni; secured donations; trained new callers; maintained performance of calling team; tracked performance goals

Caller

October 2011 – January 2013

Solicited donations, establish rapport with alumni and community members, answered questions

About Face Theatre

Development Intern

June 2013 - September 2013

Created marketing and development materials; solicited donations; planned both small-scale and large-scale events; wrote grant applications

826michigan

Summer Intern

June 2012 – August 2012

Created and implemented creative writing lessons for students aged 5-18, in groups ranging from 5 students to 30; created publication of student work with dozens of entries; taught literacy skills as an assistant teacher in a second grade classroom