

The American Parish: Trans-Atlantic Literature, Religion and Community

Why were American novelists so fascinated by the English parish? Writers like Harriet Beecher Stowe looked back on the religious communities they had left behind in Britain. By reading through an extensive collection of nineteenth-century novels and religious literature, we hope to understand how the parish's practices of devotion and worship shaped American community. The mentee will assist in building our archive of readings, developing interpretations of key texts, and identifying new lines of inquiry. In doing so, she will gain familiarity with comparative and historical methods of literary research.



Jessica Ling
Ph.D. candidate, English

Jessica Ling is a Ph.D. candidate in the English Department, with interests in the nineteenth century novel and Victorian church culture. She's looking forward to developing methods for collaborative research — a rarity in her discipline — through SMART.

This year, she will be an English Department Dissertation Fellow and a Charles Montgomery Gray Fellow at the Newberry Library in Chicago.



Elena Bellaart
Graduating Senior, English

Elena Bellaart graduated from UC Berkeley in May with a B.A. in English and a minor in History of Art. Her senior thesis examined the relationship between depictions of weather and theories of mood in Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*.

This summer she looks forward to pursuing her interest in 19th century American literature and exploring its relationship with British religious practices. By reading intensely in a body of text that is rarely studied in undergraduate coursework, she plans to expand her understanding of the period's literary production.

As a SMART mentee, she hopes to gain new research skills and get a more comprehensive view of graduate-level work in the field of English through reading and conversation with her graduate student mentor.

UC Berkeley's Student Mentoring And Research Team (SMART) is a paid professional development program that engages doctoral students in creating mentored research opportunities conducted with selected undergraduate student mentees during a ten-week period over the summer. Both participants receive compensation and training throughout their participation. SMART broadens the professional development of doctoral students and fosters research skills and paths to advanced studies for undergraduates.

Expenses associated with each team total \$10,000 000 (\$5K graduate stipend/ \$3.5K undergrad stipend/\$1.5K research and conference costs). As a donor-supported program of the Graduate Division, the majority of teams are underwritten through a combination of donor funds paired with matching support courtesy of the Graduate Division.

Learn more at smart.berkeley.edu