

Dr Thomas Ross Griffin

Email: rgriffin@qu.edu.qa Tel: +974 7053 2369

Research Profile:

Dr Griffin is an early-career academic who teaches Postcolonialism and American Literature in Qatar University. He has published work on a broad range of subjects ranging from Orientalism in the British broadsheet press in the 21st century to the soft power implications of the Marvel Superhero Universe in peer-reviewed journals and edited university press collections as well as for international news media. His research interests include the portrayal of the Arab world in Western media, the relationship between sport and postcolonial society, and national identity in the GCC.

Education:

University College Cork, College Road, Cork, Ireland.

Sept 2011 – June 2015: Doctoral Degree – American Literature.

Thesis Title: “‘*Something Isn’t Right Here*’: *American Exceptionalism and the Creative Nonfiction of the Vietnam War.*”

- Examining the creative nonfiction of the Vietnam War through the interpretative lens of American exceptionalism, I argue that the nonfictional narratives inspired by the conflict played a fundamental part in correcting the exceptionalist ideology which had pervaded the American psyche for centuries.
- Of equal importance is how my research also demonstrates that such nonfictional narratives were constructed in a manner which deliberately encouraged the reader to interpret them as true.
- Utilising the three main types of nonfictional narrative inspired by the Vietnam War, autobiography/memoir, literary journalism and oral history, my investigation combines the theoretical works of cultural critics such as Donald Pease, Susan Jeffords and John Carlos Rowe with those works of literary theory by Philippe Lejeune, Gérard Genette and Michel Foucault. (For further details, see Dissertation Abstract in Appendix A)

External Examiner: Prof Donald Pease, Dartmouth College

Internal Examiner: Prof Lee Jenkins, University College Cork

Sept 2010 – Sept 2011: Master of Arts in English Literature: Modernities – Romanticism, Modernism, Postmodernism (1H).

Thesis Title: “*Real, Compared to What? Creative Nonfiction, Historiographic Metafiction and Vietnam War Literature.*”

- A 90 credit Master of Arts, this programme combined a multitude of taught modules examining the canonical works of the Romantic, Modern and Postmodern periods with independent research in order to complete the 17000 word thesis required to graduate.
- In the thesis I outline a taxonomy of the postmodern genres of creative nonfiction and historiographic metafiction using Michael Herr’s *Dispatches* and Bao Ninh’s *The Sorrow of War*, and demonstrate that despite the referential undertones of the former, creative nonfiction was as inherently fictional as the obviously fictional historiographic metafiction.

Sept 2009 – May 2010: Higher Diploma in Arts, English Literature (1H).

- A 60 credit, one year conversion programme which included the works of Shakespeare, nineteenth and twentieth-century American literature, Romanticism and Contemporary Irish literature.

University of Limerick, Castletroy, Limerick, Ireland.

Sept 1998 – May 2002: Bachelor of Technology – Information Technology (2H)

Teaching Experience:

August 2015 – Present: Assistant Professor of English & Comparative Literature, Department of English Literature and Linguistics, Qatar University

Courses Taught (as of Spring 2018):

Upper Level	Lower Level
Postcolonial Literature	Introduction to Literature 1
American Literature	Introduction to Literature 2
Capstone Research Project	Advanced Reading Comprehension
20th-Century Literature	
Women in Literature	

Primary duties include:

- Literary analysis of both form and content across a broad range of genres and styles.
- Implementing learner-centred teaching strategies based on the principles of peer discussion that encourages student engagement with the chosen texts.
- Promoting the use of digital-based learning techniques, such as Blackboard, Prezi and personal blogs, within the classroom.
- Oral and written assignment preparation and correction.
- The successful and timely completion of administrative work concerning written assessments, presentation scheduling and one-to-one meetings.
- Basic instruction on the fundamental principles of grammar and syntax, expository and argumentative writing, and effective compositional, revision, and editing skills.

Sept 2011 – April 2015: Academic Tutor (Modern English), Department of English, UCC

As a modern English tutor, I taught five undergraduate broad-based literature classes per week of up to fifteen students per class. Each class supplemented the existing lecture structure.

Administrative Experience

Oct 2014 – July 2015: Freelance Content Creator/Proof-reader, Nova Language Solutions, Bishopstown, Cork, Ireland

- Creation of original written site content for *Venere.com* and *Expedia.com*

Oct 2011 – April 2015: Note-taker and Personal Tutor, UCC Disability Support Services

May 2011 – Dec 2014: Exam scribe, UCC Exams and Records Office

Nov 2003 – August 2009: Consultant / Senior Consultant / Business Manager, Hays Recruitment Services, Cork, Ireland.

As both a consultant and then manager of a business unit supplying contract site personnel to Ireland's leading building contractors, my main administrative duties were as follows:

- Training and mentoring of 4 recruitment sales consultants based in-office and the supervision of approximately 125 site-based construction staff.
- Negotiating prompt payment of any monies which went beyond terms agreed.

This period was punctuated by a career break spent travelling in Southeast Asia from September 2007 to March 2008.

Publications:

Peer Reviewed:

- **August 2018:** “Humanity’s Greatest Hope: The American Ideal in Marvel’s *The Avengers*.” *Imperial Benevolence: U.S. Foreign Policy and American Popular Culture since 9/11*. Oakland, Calif.: U of California Press, 2018.
- **October 2017:** “Football in the Hands of the Other: Qatar’s World Cup in the British Broadsheet Press.” *The Arab World Geographer*. Summer/Autumn 2017, 20.2-3. 170-182.
- **April 2015:** “Creative Nonfiction: A Special Kind of Fiction.” *Critical Insights: American Creative Non-Fiction*. Ed. Jay Ellis. New York: Grey House Publishing, 2015. 15-28.

Academic:

- **September 2015:** “History with a Human Face: Creative Nonfiction and the Oral Histories of the Vietnam War.” *War, Literature and the Arts: An International Journal of the Humanities*.
- **August 2015:** Review of *The Vietnam War: Topics in Contemporary North American Literature in Media, War & Conflict* 8.2. 283-285.
- **October 2012:** “Possibly the Truth, the Whole Truth and Nothing But the Truth: Attempting to Define Creative Nonfiction.” *The Boolean*, Vol. 3.

Media:

- **June 2018:** “[Qatar Carves National Identity out of Saudi-led Blockade](#).” *Middle East Eye*. 20th June 2018.
- **May 2018:** “[Making Qatar 2022 a 48-Team Tournament is Not a Good Idea](#).” *Al Jazeera*. 18th May 2018

Conferences:

- **February 2018:** “Football in the Desert? Qatar’s World Cup, National Identity, and the British Broadsheet Press.” [Oral Presentation] *Liberal Arts International Conference: Local Dreams, Global Visions – Multi-Disciplinary Perspectives*. Texas A&M University at Qatar, Doha. 4th-6th February 2018.
- **December 2017:** “Qatar’s World Cup and Online Media.” [Oral Presentation] *Digital Humanities Colloquium*. Department of English Literature & Linguistics. Qatar University, Doha. 4th-5th December 2017.
- **September 2017:** “Football and the Half-Civilized Races: Qatar’s World Cup in the British Broadsheet Press.” [Oral Presentation] *Globalization. Postcolonial Studies Association Annual Convention*. School of Advanced Study. Senate House, University of London, London. 18th-20th September 2017.
- **June 2017:** “Recreating the Other: Cultural Narratives in the 21st Century – Qatar.” [Oral Presentation] *Asia in Motion: Beyond Borders and Boundaries. The Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference*. Korea University, Seoul. 24th-27th June 2017.
- **May 2016:** “Humanity’s Greatest Hope: The American Ideal in Marvel’s *The Avengers*.” [Oral Presentation] *Imperial Benevolence: U.S. Foreign Policy in American Popular Culture since 9/11. The 7th American Studies Fulbright Conference*. University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong. 21st-22nd May 2016.
- **April 2015:** “Nothing to Savour with Your Eyes: The Politics of Seeing in Tim O’Brien’s *If I Die in a Combat Zone*.” [Oral Presentation] *Sight Unseen – Seeing, Surveillance, and the Visual Sphere in American Culture: The Irish Association of American Studies Annual Conference*. Trinity College Dublin, Dublin. 24th-25th April 2015.

- **March 2015:** “‘An Occasional Item of Surpassing Value’: How Fiction was Turned into Fact in the Narratives of the Vietnam War.” [Oral Presentation] *International Conference on Narrative 2015*. Purdue University Calumet, Chicago, Illinois. 5th-8th March 2015.
 - **November 2012:** “Daniel Defoe, 20th Century Man: Creative Nonfiction in the Eighteenth Century.” [Oral Presentation] *College of Arts, Celtic Studies, and Social Sciences Annual Postgraduate Conference*. University College Cork, Cork. 10th Nov 2012.
 - **November 2012:** “The Exceptional Seven: America’s New Kind of Cold War in *Avengers Assemble*.” [Oral Presentation] *The Marginalised Mainstream: Literature, Culture, Popularity Conference*. Institute of English Studies, Senate House, University of London, London. 8th-9th Nov 2012.
 - **July 2012:** “The History Books Gloss it Over: European Exceptionalism in Graham Greene’s *The Quiet American*.” [Oral Presentation] *Transatlantic Studies Association Conference*. University College Cork, Cork. 9th July 2012.
 - **November 2011:** “Real, Compared to What: Does Creative Nonfiction Really Tell the Truth?” [Oral Presentation] *College of Arts, Celtic Studies, and Social Sciences Annual Postgraduate Conference*. University College Cork, Cork. 12th Nov 2011.
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Academic Awards:

- September 2012: College Scholar, College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences, UCC
 - September 2011: College Scholar, College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences, UCC
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Funding:

- April 2017: Fulbright Conference Travel Bursary – €675 (QAR2700)
 - September 2013: PhD Studentship, School of English, University College Cork – €5750 (QAR24000)
 - September 2012: PhD Studentship, School of English, University College Cork – €10000 (QAR40000)
 - September 2011: PhD Studentship, School of English, University College Cork – €10000 (QAR40000)
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Academic/University Service:

September 2017 – May 2018:

- Chair: Recruitment Committee, Department of English Literature & Linguistics, Qatar University.
- Committee Member: Timetable & Scheduling Committee, Department of English Literature & Linguistics, Qatar University.

June – September 2017:

- Judging Panellist – Literature: The Undergraduate Awards, Undergraduate Network, Dublin, Ireland.

April 2017:

- Peer Reviewer: *New Voices in Jewish American Literature*, ed. Dan O’Brien. OLH, 2017. <https://olh.openlibhums.org/articles/10.16995/olh.258/>

September 2016 – May 2017:

- Co-chair: Timetable & Scheduling Committee, Department of English Literature & Linguistics, Qatar University.
- Committee Member: Recruitment Committee, Department of English Literature & Linguistics, Qatar University.
- Committee Member: Capstone Committee, Department of English Literature & Linguistics, Qatar University.

September 2015 – May 2016:

- Committee Member: Curriculum Committee, Department of English Literature & Linguistics, Qatar University.
- Committee Member: Literature Committee, Department of English Literature & Linguistics, Qatar University.

April 2015: Bookends Conference, UCC: Co-organizer (<https://bookendsucc.wordpress.com/bookends-2015/>).

- This is an annual two-day postgraduate conference which provides the opportunity for all English postgraduates (MA, MPhil, Phd (Track) and PhD) to present papers on their own research.
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Continuous Professional Development:

2018: Office of Instructional Development, Qatar University

Courses Taken:

- Sept 2018: Developing Narrative (Storytelling) Approaches to Enhance Learning.

2017: Office of Instructional Development, Qatar University

Courses Taken:

- Nov 2017: Avoiding Powerpointlessness: How to Develop and Use Presentation Materials Effectively.
- Oct 2017: Addressing Different Learning Styles.
- Sept 2017: Maximising Motivation (Theirs and Yours).

2016: Office of Instructional Development, Qatar University

Courses Taken:

- Approaches to Developing and Implementing Learner-Centred Pedagogy.
- How to Improve Success Chances for Your NPRP Proposal Workshop.
- NPRP 10th Cycle Workshop.
- PLO Assessment Workshop.

2015: Office of Instructional Development, Qatar University

Courses Taken:

- Overview of Library Resources .
- Academic Integrity.
- Effective Teaching Strategies and Teaching First Year Courses.
- The First Day of Class: Setting the Tone for Rest of the Semester.
- Blackboard 9.1 – Introduction.
- Blackboard 9.1 - Similarity Reports *SafeAssign* and *TurnItIn*.
- Blackboard 9.1 - Online tests 1.
- Blackboard 9.1 - Online tests 2.

2013: Digital Editing Skills for Research Postgraduates in the Humanities and Social Sciences. College for Arts, Celtic Studies & Social Sciences, University College Cork.

Courses Taken: HTML, XML, Wordpress, TEI, IP and Copyright Issues

2011: Teaching and Learning for Graduate Studies, Ionaid Báire (Teaching Centre), University College Cork.

Courses Taken:

- The dynamics of small and large group teaching.

- Framing subject matter.
- Teaching strategies to encourage learning.

2011: Graduate Research Skills, College for Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences, University College Cork.

- Training Needs Analysis
- Professional Development Planning
- Time Management
- Ethics of Research
- Grant Applications

Professional Memberships:

- Postcolonial Studies Association
- Modern Language Association
- Association of Asian Studies
- Irish Association of American Studies

Interests & Achievements:

- **Cycling:** I am currently a member of *Velostar* Cycling Team and participate in official *Qatar Cycling Federation* races in Qatar. Past member and Road Captain of *UCC Cycling Club* and have represented the university in official *Cycling Ireland* sanctioned competition.
- **Squash:** A keen squash player, I was a member, former coach and committee member of *UCC Squash Club*. I have represented the university on numerous occasions in both *Munster League* and intervarsity competition. I was also an active member of *Highfield Squash Club*.
- **Coaching:** *UCC Squash Club Coach* 2001 – 2012. Responsible for training beginners and intermediate players using practical methods of teaching such as *IDEA* (Introduce-Demonstrate-Explain-Attend) and *50/50* (Greater than 50% proficiency of a repeated action).
- **Bridge:** I have won two All-Ireland schools titles for *Schools Bridge* (1997 – Pairs/1997 – Teams)
- **Professional:** I was named in a three-person shortlist for *Consultant of the Year* in 2007 by *Hays Recruitment Services*.

Signed:

Date: