

CREST Residential Fellowship Application Cover Sheet
Academic Year 2011-2012

Name CATHERINE CAVANAUGH
Rank PROFESSOR
Department ENGLISH
Campus address DOLAN Hall, room 6
Campus phone 454-5221 Home phone 449-2254
Email address cavanaugh@strose.edu
Previous CREST Residential Fellow? NO If yes, give year _____
Title of Research Project IMAGINARY and REAL Motherlands:
IRISH AND KASHMIRI INTERSECTIONS

Application materials:

- One copy of proposal narrative of roughly 1,500 words with cover sheet attached. Proposals should describe the project clearly and concisely for a multidisciplinary evaluation panel and address its relevance to current directions of research in the field. Please double-space proposals and use a 12-point type.
- One copy of bibliography not to exceed one page.
- One copy of *curriculum vitae*

Note to department heads:

- Residential Fellows will be released from one course during the fellowship year.
- This semester will tentatively be Fall 2011 or Spring 2012 (please circle one)

Department Head signature Catherine Cavanaugh
Printed CATHERINE CAVANAUGH

If appointed in two departments:

Additional Department Head signature _____
Printed _____

Signature of Applicant Catherine Cavanaugh

Applications must be received by Friday, February 11, 2011

Please mail to:

Dr. John Williams-Searle, Director
Center for Citizenship, Race, and Ethnicity Studies (CREST)
The College of Saint Rose
432 Western Avenue
Albany, NY 12203-1490

Proposal for a CREST Residential Fellowship in 2011-2012

Catherine Cavanaugh, Professor of English

Scholarly Context:

My project, tentatively entitled "Imaginary and Real Motherlands: Irish and Kashmiri Intersections" involves research into several Irish and Kashmiri/Indian poets and visual artists. I will explore how issues of postcolonialism, exile, gender, and aging intersect in their aesthetics and ethics. The relevance of postcolonialism, exile, and gender to current literary research and to the interests of CREST needs little explanation. There is also an emerging interest in the relationship between gender and aging, as evidenced, for example, by the special issue on aging of the National Women's Studies Association Journal in 2006.

Research Design

In "Imaginary Homelands," Salman Rushdie explains that when exiles or emigrants or expatriates [like himself] look back, "we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost; . . . we will, in short, create fictions . . . imaginary homelands" in which "the mundane acquire[s] numinous qualities." Such is the case in the poetry by two exiled poets, Seamus Heaney and Agha Shahid Ali. Heaney was born and raised in Northern Ireland and expatriated to the Republic of Ireland in 1969. Agha Shahid Ali, who often referred to himself as a "triple exile," was born in India, spent his childhood and was educated up to his bachelor's degree in Kashmir, and came to the U.S. to study for his Ph.D. He lived in the U.S. (with annual visits to Kashmir) from 1975 until his death in 2001. Both Ali and Heaney write in the language of the colonizer, English, although both continue to evoke their native tongues, Irish and Urdu, in sound and form in their poetry.

The parallels between Northern Ireland and Kashmir offer a complex basis of comparison between these two poets since both Northern Ireland and Kashmir became sites of conflict in a colonial context and as a result of partition that involved religious division. In a treaty after war with England, Ireland was partitioned in 1921 into the Irish Free State (later Republic of Ireland) and Northern Ireland with the predominantly Catholic nationalist south and the predominantly Protestant Unionist north. When the subcontinent was subdivided in 1947 into India (predominantly Hindu) and Pakistan (predominantly Muslim), Kashmir, which had been ruled by Muslims for centuries prior to British rule and had a majority of Muslims, was ruled by an Indian maharaja, who "opted" for India. Violence ensued, fueled (according to which side is reporting) by paramilitaries allowed across the border by Pakistan and/or by Indian police. Eventually a Line of Control was set up across Kashmir with the part on one side administered by Pakistan and the part on the other (including Srinagar) by India. Periodic eruptions of violence have occurred ever since. As is well reported in western media, paramilitaries on both sides have been active and violent in Northern Ireland, too, especially between 1969 and the Good Friday Agreement of 1996. Since the focus of my research is not on the historical causes and implications, I won't belabor what I see as obvious parallels in the two divided countries from which these poets have chosen self-exile, but which, of course, continue to inform their work.

This research will build on previous research. I delivered a paper on these parallels between Heaney and Ali as they are reflected in their postcolonial aesthetics, especially in their elegies for their mothers, at the American Conference for Irish Studies Conference in 2005. At this point, I would like to explore the postcolonial intersections of the aesthetics of exile, gender, and aging in these two male poets with the work of two women, Irish poet Eavan Boland and Indian visual artist Nilima Sheikh.

This part of my research and writing will build on multiple papers I have done on Boland in the past and especially on my most recent papers on Boland: a paper entitled "Boland and O'Faolain: Imagining and Sharing an Aging Woman's Life" delivered at the International Association for the Study of Irish Literature in 2008 in Dublin and a paper I hope to present at the Canadian Association of Irish Studies in July 2011 entitled "Domestic Violence: A Painter's Daughter Redraws the Still Life in Words." Boland's poetry and essays not only reflect her experiences of exile when she lived in New York and London as a child, but, perhaps more significantly, her ongoing experience of exile within postcolonial Ireland as a doubly colonized woman. Boland has critiqued the political poem *In Ireland*, particularly in its continuing reiteration in postcolonial Ireland, as sexist and agist in her essays and poetry. Her mother, Frances Kelly, was a visual artist specializing in still life paintings, who lived and died, according to Boland, in "a country that hated a woman's body." Starting from her reaction to her mother's work, Boland interrelates sexism and agism in visual art and poetry to what she terms "domestic violence" in ethics and aesthetics. I am also looking into the work of Nilima Sheikh, a current feminist Indian visual artist, who has found inspiration for some of her paintings in the poetry of Agha Shahid Ali and Kashmir. I am finding intersections between Boland's work and Sheikh's as well. I plan to continue my research into the recent works of Heaney, Boland, Ali, and Sheikh and will explore the intersections among these themes of postcolonialism, exile, gender, and agism in the works by and commentary on these artists. I do not know if this research will result in one longer essay or multiple presentations or papers. I plan to conduct my research during the summer and fall of 2011 and present a paper either at the American Conference for Irish Studies in spring 2012 or at the International Association for the Study of Irish Literature or the Canadian Association of Irish Studies in summer 2011 and/or 2012. The

reassigned time will allow me to focus on this project in spring 2012 and the monetary grant will allow for travel to either a national or international conference.

A bibliography (highly selective to adhere to the one-page limit) is attached.

Qualifications: Resume attached.

Bibliography

- Ali, Agha Shahid. *Call Me Ishmael Tonight: A Book of Ghazals*. W.W. Norton, 2003.
- . *The Country without a Post Office*. NY: W.W. Norton, 1997.
- . *Rooms are Never Finished*. NY: W.W. Norton, 2002.
- Benevuto, Christine. "Agha Shahid Ali," *Massachusetts Review* 43.2 (Summer 2002): 261-275.
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- . "Domestic Violence: An Argument in Ten Parts" *American Poetry Review*. April 2007.
- . *Domestic Violence*. NY: Norton, 2007.
- . *Object Lessons: The Life of the Woman and the Poet in Our Time*. NY: Norton, 1995.
- Collins, Floyd. *Seamus Heaney: The Crisis of Identity*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2003.
- Guffey, E. E. "Conversations with Tradition: Nilima Sheikh and Shahazia Sikander. The Asia Society, New York" *Art On Paper* 6.5 (May/June 2002): 86.
- Heaney, Seamus. *District and Circle*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006.
- . *Electric Light*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001.
- . *Finders Keepers: Selected Prose, 1971-2001*. NY: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2002.
- . *Opened Ground: Selected Poems, 1966-1996*. NY: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1998.
- Henneberg, Sylvia B. "Of Creative Crones and Poetry: Developing Age Studies Through Literature." *NWSA Journal* 18.1 (2006): 106-125.
- Jackaman, Rob. *Broken English/Breaking English: A Study of Contemporary Poetries in English*. Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2003.
- Needham, Lawrence. "Agha Shahid Ali (1949-)." *Writers of the Indian Diaspora: A Bio-bibliographical Critical Sourcebook*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1993.
- Robinson, Brian. "Negotiations: Religion, Landscape, and the Postcolonial Moment In the Poetry of Seamus Heaney," *Mapping the Sacred: Religion, Geography and Postcolonial Literatures*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001. 5-36.
- Rushdie, Salman. "June 1999: Kashmir," *Step Across This Line: Collected Nonfiction 1992-2002*. NY: Random House, 2002.

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- EDUCATION:**
- Ph.D.** English, State University of New York at Binghamton
Major field: 20th Century British, Irish, and American Poetry
Minors: Medieval Literature
Late 18th-Early 19th Century British Literature
 - M.A.** English, State University of New York at Albany,
 - B. A.** English, College of Saint Rose, Albany, summa cum laude

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

1977- present College of Saint Rose, Albany
Professor of English, tenured

Courses taught:

Graduate

Seminar in Yeats	20 th Century British and American Poetry
Shakespeare	20 th Century British and Irish Fiction
Irish Literature	Autobiography
Late 18 th -Early 19 th Century British Literature	
20 th Century British, Irish, and Caribbean Short Story	

Undergraduate

20 th Century British Literature	Modern Poetry
Irish Drama	Late 18 th -Early 19 th Century Literature
Seminar in Yeats	
Studies in Irish Literature (300-level)	Shakespeare
Irish Literature Survey	Chaucer
Early British Literature	Later British Literature
Introduction to Literary Studies	Early World Literature
Oral Interpretation of Literature	Language and Linguistics
Local Authors (Hudson Valley/Adirondacks)	Group Process
Expository Writing and Research Techniques	Medieval Romance
Writing Strategies (remedial)	Oral Communication
Professional Presentation and Performance	Writing Experienced Adult Portfolios
Modernism	
Methods of Teaching English	

1971-1977 Bishop Grimes High School, East Syracuse, NY
New York State Permanent Teaching Certification for English, 7-12
Levels taught: grades 9, 10, 11, 12—remedial to honors