

Kimberly W. Benston
Francis B. Gummere Professor of
English Haverford College
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Curriculum Vitae

Research & Teaching Interests:

African-American Literature and Cultural Studies; Race Theory; Early Modern Studies (esp. the drama of Shakespeare and his contemporaries; Donne; and Milton); Performance Studies; Modern Drama; Philosophy and Literature; Poetics; Photographic History and Theory; Critical Animal Studies.

Education:

Ph.D. Yale University (English), 1980 (w/distinction).
M. Phil. Yale University (English), 1978.
M. A. Yale University (English), 1977.
B. A. Yale University, 1974 (Summa; PBK; high honors in English & HAL)

Positions Held:

President, Haverford College, 2015-2019.
Provost, Haverford College, 2013-215. [Chief Academic Officer]
Interim Provost, Haverford College, 2012-13. [Chief Academic Officer]
Francis B. Gummere Professor of English, Haverford College, 2002-date.
Director, Hurford Humanities Center, Haverford College, 2002-5; 2007-9. [Center supervision]
Director, Faculty Seminar Program, Haverford College, 1997-2000. [Director of faculty seminars]
William R. Kenan Professor of English, Haverford College, 1992-97.
Visiting Professor, Bread Loaf School of English, 1992-5.
Director, Africana Studies, Haverford College, 1991-95.
Visiting Professor, Princeton University (Graduate School), 1990-91.
Professor, Haverford College, 1988-date.
Chair, Department of English, Haverford College, 1985-86; 1987-89.
Associate Professor (tenured), Haverford College, 1984-88.
Assistant Professor, Yale University, 1980-84.
Instructor, Yale University, 1978-80.

Honors and Awards:

W.E.B. DuBois Institute Distinguished Visiting Professor, Harvard U., 2011.
Student Association Award, Haverford College, 2005.
ASTR Errol Hill Award for "best book in theater & performance studies"
(*Performing Blackness*), 2001.
Whitehead Faculty Research Fellowship, Haverford College, 1999-2000.
NEH Fellowship, 1990-91.
Lindback Foundation Teaching Award, Haverford College, 1987-88.
Callaloo Award for Outstanding Contributions to Afro-American Studies, 1985.
Morse Prize Teaching Fellowship, Yale University, 1983-84.
Outstanding Teaching Award (Afro-American Studies), Yale University, 1982, 1983.
Mellon Fellowship, Wesleyan University, Center for the Humanities, 1981-82.
Whiting Dissertation Fellowship, Yale University, 1978-79.
Prize Teaching Fellowship, Yale University, 1978.
Murray Fellowship for research and independent study, 1974-75.

Publications:**I. Books:**

Ed., Malcolm X: A Critical Casebook (Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

Ed., Who Blew Up America?: African-American Expressive Culture and the Crisis of 'Terrorism'(Chain Books, forthcoming).

Ed., The Island of Dr. Moreau (H.G. Wells) (Norton Critical Edition, forthcoming).

Ed. (w/Henry-Louis Gates, Jr., et al.), The Norton Anthology of African-American Literature, 3rd edition (Norton, 2014).

Performing Blackness: Enacting African-American Modernism (Routledge, 2000). (Winner, ASTR Errol Hill Award)

Ed., Larry Neal (Callaloo Books, 1985).

Ed., Speaking for You: Ralph Ellison's Cultural Vision (Howard University Press, 1987; 2nd edition, 1993).

Ed., Baraka: A Collection of Critical Essays (Prentice-Hall, Twentieth Century Views Series, 1978).

Baraka: The Renegade and the Mask (Yale University Press, 1976; 2nd ed., 1978).

II. Journal Special Issues (Ed): "Performance." PMLA 107, no. 3 (1992).

"Sterling Brown." Callaloo 21, no. 4 (1998).

III. Articles:

"Kuntu Montage and Bebop Ghosts: Larry Neal, Past & Future," in Don't Say Goodbye to the Porkpie Hat: The Larry Neal Reader, eds. Mae Henderson and Carter Mathes (University of Illinois Press, forthcoming).

"Preface to a Twenty-Volume Critical Note: Amiri Baraka, Ghost of the Future," Callaloo (forthcoming).

"Thinking Precisely on the Event: (Dis)Locating 'Politics' in Shakespeare." Shawangunk Review (forthcoming).

"*The Veil of Black: (Un)Masking the Subject of African-American Modernism's 'Native Son'.*" In Essays on Richard Wright. Ed. Harold Bloom (Chelsea, 2010), pp.43-74.

"Experimenting at the Threshold: Sacrifice, Anthropomorphism, and the Aims of (Critical) Animal Studies." PMLA 124, no.2 (2009), 548-55.

"King Lear and the Ethics of Encounter." In Comparative Political Theory and Cross-Cultural Philosophy. Ed. Jin Y. Park (Rowan & Littlefield, 2009), pp.307-330.

"Listen Br'er Sterling: Meditations on Sterling Brown's Cultural Vision." In After Winter: Selected Writings on the Life and Art of Sterling A. Brown, Eds. John Edgar Tidwell & Steven C. Tracy (Oxford UP, 2009), pp.95-107.

"Beyond the Circle: Challenges and Opportunities for the Contemporary Liberal Arts Teacher-Scholar." In Liberal Arts Colleges in American Higher Education, Ed. Francis Oakley (ACLS, 2005), pp.98-112.

"Prologue: Performing Blackness." In Performance: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies, Vol. IV. Ed. Philip Auslander (Routledge, 2005), pp.74-96.

"Memory, Mourning, and Revision: William Earle Williams's 'Gettysburg--A Journey in Time.'" exposure 35, no.2 (2003), 27-42.

"Dutchman as 'Political Theater.'" In Political Stages. Eds. Emily Mann & David Roessel (Applause Theatre Books, 2002), pp.128-35.

"Listen Br'er Sterling: The Critic as Liar." Callaloo 21, no. 4 (1998), 837-45.

"Locating Adrienne Kennedy: The Subject as Preface," In Reconsidering Adrienne Kennedy. Eds. Robert Jackson & Lois Overbeck (Minnesota UP, 1995), pp.113-130.

"Performance as Mise-en-Scène, Abscene, Obscene, and Other Scene." PMLA 107, no. 3 (1992), 434-49.

"Facing Tradition: Revisionary Scenes in African-American Literature." PMLA 105, no.1 (1991), 98-109.

"Reweaving the 'Ulysses Scene': Enchantment, Post-oedipal Identity, and the Buried Text of Blackness in Morrison's Song of Solomon." In Comparative American Identities. Ed. Hortense Spillers (Routledge, 1991), pp. 87-109).

"Performing Blackness: Re/Placing Afro-American Poetry." In Black Literature in the 1990s. Eds. Houston A. Baker, Jr. and Patricia Redmon (University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp.164-85.

"Controlling the Dialectical Deacon: The Critique of Historicism in Invisible Man." Delta 17 (1987) [Special Issue on Ellison, ed. Michel Fabre], 89-103.

"'Beauty's Just Applause': Dramatic Form and the Marlovian Sublime." In Marlowe. Ed. Harold Bloom (Chelsea House, 1986), pp.207-227.

"'I Yam What I Am': Naming and Unnaming in Afro-American Literature." BALF 16, no. 1 (1982), 3-11. Expanded version rpt. in Black Literary Theory. Ed. Henry-Louis Gates, Jr. (Methuen, 1985), pp.121-47.

"'I Wandered Lonely As a Cloud': Can We Know the Dancer fro the Dance?" The CEA Critic 42, no. 4 (1980), 10-14.

"The Aesthetic of Modern Black Drama: From Mimesis to Methexis." In Modern Black Drama, Vol. I. Ed. Errol Hill (Prentice-Hall, 1980), pp.61-78.

"Ellison, Baraka, and the Faces of Tradition," boundary 2 6,no. 2 (1978), 333-54.

"Late Coltrane: A Re-membering of Orpheus." The Massachusetts Review 18, no. 4 (1977), 770-81. Rpt. in Chant of Saints. Eds. Michael S. Harper and Robert B. Stepto (Illinois University Press, 1979), pp.413-24.

"Cities in Bezique: Adrienne Kennedy's Expressionistic Vision." CLA Journal 20, no. 2 (1976), 235-44.

"Lionel Trilling's Criticism of Life." The Alternative 9, no. 9 (1976), 13-18.

"The Duchess of Malfi: Webster's Tragic Vision." The Gypsy Scholar 3, no. 1 (1975), 20-36.

"Tragic Aspects of the Blues." Phylon 36, no. 2 (1975), 164-76.

"Architectural Imagery and Unity in Paule Marshall's Brown Girl, Brownstones." BALF 9, no. 3 (1975), 67-70.

**Selected Conference
Papers/Presentations
(Since 2000):**

"Black Hauntologies: Slavery, Modernity, Photography." Locke Lectures, Dubois Institute, Harvard U. (April, 2011):

- Spectral (Re)Origination: Modernity, Slavery, and Traumatic Enunciation
- Spectral Revolution: Slavery, Modernity, and the Politics of Conversion
- Spectral (Re)Vision: Photography, Archive, and Transgressive Illumination

"Coltrane's Poetics." International Conference for the Study of Jazz and Literature. Universite Francois-Rabelais de Tours, School of Musicology. (Read in absentia.) (November, 2007)

"Theory, Politics, and Animals." Panel on Terrorism and Animal Rights. UPenn School of Law. (March, 2007)

"Don't Say Goodbye to the Porkpie Hat: Larry Neal, Past and Future." Keynote Address. Conference on "Larry Neal's Creative and Critical Vision of the Black Aesthetic." Brooklyn College. (October, 2006)

"The Terror of 'Eco-Terrorism.'" TAFE Conference. Washington, D.C. (September, 2006)

"Response" (and Moderator), "Controversy in the Eye of the Beholder." Panel on Politics, Censorship, and Artistic Challenge, NY Theater Workshop. (April, 2006)

"Political Shakespeare." Keynote Address. New Paltz Shakespeare Conference. "Contradictions in the Politics of Shakespeare." New Paltz U. (April, 2006)

"Response," Panel on the (In)Human Other. American Comparative Literature Association. Princeton U. (March, 2006)

"Issues in Modern Black Photography." First Annual Petee Jung Memorial Lecture, Moravian College. (February, 2006)

Leader, Workshop on Scholarly Thinking, Moravian College. (February, 2006)

"Smudging Othello, Welles to Branagh." Talk Cinema Conference. New York. (November, 2005)

"Pacino and Shakespeare: Which is the Merchant, Which the Jew?" Talk Cinema Conference. Washington. (November, 2004)

"Ethics of Authentic Encounter." International Association of Philosophy and Literature Conference. Syracuse University. (June, 2004)

"The Contemporary Liberal Arts Scholar-Teacher." ACLS Conference on "The Current State of the Liberal Arts College." Williams College. (November, 2003)

"The Humanities & the Liberal Arts." Bard/Clemente Conference. New York. (June, 2003)

"Mentoring the Mellon Fellow." Mellon Conference. Barnard College. (June, 2003)

"The Scholar-Teacher at Mid-Career." ACLS, Panel Presentation. (December, 2002)

"The Static Image in Modern Black Performance." NYU, English Department (October, 2002)

"Pragmatism and Postmodernism." Philosophy Colloquium. Vanderbilt U. (April., 2002)

"Minstrelsy and the Performance of Whiteness." CCNY, Inaugural Lecture for American Studies Program. (March 2002).

Class of 1960 Visiting Professor Lectures at Williams College (April, 2001):

- "I Am a Jew: Spectacles of (Dis)Identification in Marlowe"
- "Psychoanalysis and Race."
- "Levi, via Homer, Dante, and Tennyson: Sublimity, the Demonic, and Modernity."

"Realism and 'The Human' in Ralph Ellison's Cultural Criticism." Race, Rhetoric, and Society Lecture Series. Villanova U. (April, 2001)

"Jazz Photography in Modernity." Jazz and Visual Culture Conference. Columbia U. (November, 2000)

"Hamlet: The Mourning After." Distinguished Graduate Lecture Series. Arcadia University: April, 2000.

"Howl: The Advent of Interdisciplinarity." Swarthmore College. (March, 2000)

Works-in-Progress:

Black Hauntologies. (Trauma and spectral history in African-American literature Hammon to Simpson)

Can An Animal Die?: (Animal singularity at the margins of Anglo-American literature from Shakespeare to Coetzee)

Courses:

Freshman Writing
 Humanality: Animal (Dis)Figurations in the Shaping of Human Institutions
 Narratologies: Obsession, Trauma, Boredom, Bliss
 Introduction to African-American Literature
 African-American Modernities: Minstrelsy, Machinery, and Narrative
 Modes of African-American Performance
 Contemporary African-American Cultural Theory
 The Black Arts Movement: The Politics of Culture
 Africana Studies: Core Course

Humanism and Hermeticism: From Pico to Prospero
 Donne
 Milton
 Seventeenth-Century Poetry
 Shakespeare (Introductory & Advanced)
 Shakespeare & Marlowe
 Jacobean Drama
 Modern Drama
 Studies in Drama: Aeschylus to Shange
 Performance: Theory and Praxis
 Women and Performance: Film, Drama, Performance Art
 Performing Otherness: Race, Ethnicity, Gender
 Problems in Poetics
 Studies in Lyric
 English Poetry: Chaucer to Eliot
 The European Epic: Homer to Joyce
 Topics in Literary Theory
 Key Terms for Literary Study

**Senior Theses
 Advised Since
 2000 (Selected):**

Melancholia in Miltonic Lyric
 The Racial Gaze: DuBois, Ellison, and Walker
 Shakespearean Silences
 Heidegger, Terror, and Albee's A Delicate Balance
 Baldwin's Double-Voiced Historiography
 The Spectral Body in Shakespearean Tragedy
Moby Dick's Prosthetic Narration
 Traumatic Historiography in Middlesex
 Hamlet's Questioning Ear
 Translation & Catachresis in the Henriad
 Platonic Dogma, Ovidian Doxa
Invisible Man: Thing Theory and the Politics of Race
 Freud, Caruth, and Gray's "Elegy"
 Reification in Wright's Black Boy
 Therapeutic Performance in Shange's Drama
 Sublime Ekphrasis in Antony and Cleopatra
Stuart II: An Original Full-Length Play
 Donne's Ghostlier Demarcations: Telescopic (De)formations
 Modal Praxis in Jazz and Modern Black Poetry
 Fire and Form in Stoppard's Arcadia
Mason & Dixon, Levinas, and Post-Humanist Ethics
 Minstrelsy and Anti-Lyricism in Berryman's Dream Songs

**Selected Professional
 Activities (Since 2000):**

Member, Pulitzer Prize Jury for Drama (2005—7)
 Dramaturg, Act/Ion Theatre Company, Philly Festival.
 Co-Editor, Larry Neal Papers.
 Advisory Editor, AmeriQuest.
 Advisory Editor, Arizona Quarterly.
 Advisory Editor, Callaloo.
 Member, Advisory Board, George Moses Horton Society for Study of Black Poetry.

Member, Advisory Board, Black Fiction Project.
 Member, Advisory Board, Oxford Companion to African-American Literature.
 Consultant to National Research Council.
 Consultant to MacArthur Foundation.
 Consultant to National Endowment for the Humanities, Textual Studies.
 Consultant to Toni Morrison Society.
 Referee for: PMLA; American Quarterly; American Literature; Theatre Studies;
Modern Drama Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature.
 Consultant to Library of America (Nineteenth Century Authors Series).
 Consultant to PBS (Ralph Ellison and James Baldwin documentaries).
 Consultant Reader for: University of Illinois Press; University of Chicago P;
 Temple UP; Princeton UP; University of Michigan P;
 Iowa UP; University of Mississippi P.
 Over twenty-five personnel evaluations for c. 20 institutions.

**Haverford Service
 Since 2002:**

Chair, Task Force on Strategic Planning for Academic Enrichment
 Member, Presidential Search Committee
 Director, Hurford Center for the Arts and Humanities
 Member, HCAH Advisory Board
 Chair, Working Group to Form Environmental Studies
 Member, Environmental Studies Steering Committee
 Chair, Working Group on the Arts
 Member, Working Group to Form Health Studies
 Member, Academic Council
 Faculty Representative to Board of Managers: Educational Affairs; Honorary Degrees;
 Faculty/Staff Policies
 Coordinator, Guest Program in Comparative Cultures and Religions
 Chair, Ad Hoc Mellon Arts Grant Working Group
 Member, Library Advisory Committee
 Member, Gallery Committee
 Member, Faculty Committee on Institutional Advancement
 Chair & Member, Mellon Fellows Search Committees
 English Search Committees (Medieval; 18th Century)
 Member, Bryn Mawr College English Search Committees
 HC Delegate to "Forum on Excellence in Higher Education" (Harvard U.)
 Member, Integrated Learning Council
 Presenter, Tenure Cases (Music; Religion; German; History)
 Gloassator, Tenure & Reappointment Cases
 Member, Phi Beta Kappa Selection Committee
 Faculty Mentor, Minority Scholars Program
 Faculty Advisor, Literary House
 Faculty Advisor, Student Art Center
 Admissions Recruiter
 Panels: COD; HHC; CPGC; Honor Code; Customs; Alumni Weekend
 Honorary Degree Citations: James Clifford; Elaine Hansen; Anna Deavere Smith

**Working Groups/
Seminars Since 2005:**

Faculty Seminar, "Performance" (Director)
 Faculty Seminar, "Cultural Memory" (Director)
 Faculty Seminar, "Representations of Violence and Terror"
 Faculty Working Group in American Studies
 Faculty Working Group in Visual Studies
 Forum on Science and Society (BMC)
 Social Science Works-in-Progress
 Levinas Research Seminar

**Professional
Organizations:**

Modern Language Association.
 American Studies Association.
 George Moses Horton Society for Study of African-American Poetry.
 Shakespeare Association.
 Renaissance Society of America.
 American Comparative Literature Association.
 International Association for Philosophy and Literature.
 Human/Animal Studies Group.