

Appointment

2018-present Assistant Professor of English, The University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Education

2018 Ph.D. The University of Alabama. English Literature
Dissertation: “Octavia E. Butler: History, Culture, and the Future—A
Comprehensive Approach”
2014 M.A. Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville. American Literature
2012 B.A. Tougaloo College. English

Publications

Books

Octavia E. Butler and Healing Justice (in-progress)

Refereed Articles

2019 “‘He Wanted More for Himself, but He Didn’t Know How to Get It’:
Reading Jesmyn Ward in a Maximum-Security Prison.” *The Xavier Review*.
(2019): 109-123.
2018 “Constructing Nation through Spiritual and Intellectual Labor: Octavia
Butler’s *Parable of the Sower*.” *The Pierian Literary Journal*. (2018): 99-
109.
2016 “Blogging about Octavia Butler.” *College Language Association
Journal*. (2016): 242-250.
2014 “Black Women Poets by Numbers: Evie Shockley and Allison Joseph.” *The
Journal of Ethnic American Literature 4*. (2014):61-74.

Book Chapters

2021 “Migration, Spirituality, and Restorative Spaces: Shape-Shifting to Heal in
Octavia Butler’s *Wild Seed*.” *God is Change: Religious Practices and
Ideologies in the Works of Octavia Butler*. Ed. Aparajita Nanda and Shelby
Crosby. (New Orleans: Temple University Press, 2021), 111-122.
2019 “Multi-Faceted Strands of Resistance: Teaching African American
Literature in a Maximum-Security Facility.” *Teaching with Tension*. Ed.
Philathia Bolton, Cassander Smith, and Lee Bebout. (Chicago:
Northwestern University Press, 2019), 87-102.

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- 2015 With Howard Rambsy II. "African American Language and Black Poetry." *The Oxford Handbook of African American Language*. Ed. Sonja Lanehart (New York: Oxford, 2015), 706-722.

Other Publications

- Devotional *Seamless* Devotional. Updated and Self-published. (2021).
- Article "Octavia in Vegas: Teaching Octavia Butler in a Las Vegas Classroom." *The Popular Culture Review*. (2020): 137-163.
- Article "365 Days of Internal Cleansing." *Memoirs of A Virtuous Woman Magazine*. (August 2017).
- Article "Why My Hair Journey is Spiritual." *Huffington Post*. (June 2016).

Grants, Awards, and Honors

- 2021 College of Liberal Arts Summer Research Award, UNLV, 2021. (\$15,000)
- 2020 College of Liberal Arts' Diversity Faculty Award, UNLV, 2020. (\$1,000)
- 2019 Huntington Library Short Term Fellowship, The Huntington Library, 2019. (\$7,000.00)
- 2019 Outstanding Dissertation Award, The University of Alabama, University-wide, 2019. Given at the university level to the graduate student whose work was deemed esteemed by emeritus faculty members. (\$1,200.00)
- 2019 Outstanding Dissertation Award, The University of Alabama, College of Arts and Sciences, 2019. Given at the college level to the graduate student whose work demonstrates cutting-edge research. (\$500.00)
- 2018 Outstanding Dissertation Award, The University of Alabama, Department of English, 2018. Given at the departmental level to the graduate student whose work demonstrates cutting-edge research. (\$250.00)
- 2017 Graduate Council Research Fellowship, The University of Alabama, 2017-2018. The most competitive and highly regarded service-free fellowship offered by the University in recognition of the record students have established thus far in their academic career. (\$15,000.00)

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- 2017 Graduate Teaching Fellow, The University of Alabama, 2017. Given to the graduate assistant who is recognized by their respective colleges as having superior teaching skills. (\$50.00)
- 2016 Outstanding Research by a Doctoral Student Award, The University of Alabama, 2016. Given to the graduate student who demonstrated exceptional research capabilities and contributions to their field of study. (\$500.00)
- 2015 Henry E. Jacobs Award, The University of Alabama, 2015. Given to the graduate student majoring in English to assist with conference travel. (\$250.00)
- 2014 Miriam Austin Locke Award, The University of Alabama, 2014. Given to the graduate student majoring in English to assist with conference travel. (\$250.00)
- 2014 Edwin Graham Memorial Award, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, 2014. Given to the graduate student who demonstrated precision in written English and subtlety and imagination in graduate studies of language or literature. (No compensation)

Conference Presentations

International/ National

- 4/10/21 "Octavia's First Afronaut: Alanna, the Lost Patternist Sister." 2021. College Language Association, Virtual Conference.
- 1/10/20 "New Approaches to the Fiction of Octavia E. Butler." Modern Language Association. 2020. Seattle, Washington.
- 11/7/19 Chair. Sites of Revelation and Historical Reckoning. American Studies Association. 2019. Honolulu, Hawaii.
- 5/28/19 "'Monstrous Bodies, Digging to Escape: The Burden of the Black Body in Octavia Butler's 'The Evening, The Morning and the Night.'" American Literature Association. 2019. Boston, Massachusetts.
- 1/2/19 "'Everyone Prays in the End': A Multimodal Approach to Digitizing Academic Freedom and Spirituality." Modern Language Association. 2019. Chicago, Illinois.
- 6/27/18 "What Speculative Fiction offers? Where We've Been and Where We Need to Go?!" UNCF/Mellon Teaching and Learning Institute. 2018. Hampton University, Hampton, Virginia.

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- 4/5/18 “Whiteside and Wright Connections: Teaching *Native Son* in a Maximum-Security Prison.” 2018. College Language Association, Chicago, Illinois.
- 4/6/17 “‘The Body that Race Built’: Imagining the Impact of Racism in Octavia Butler’s *Clay’s Ark*.” 2017. British Association for American Studies, Canterbury Church University, Canterbury, England.
- 10/28/16 “Literacy and the Power of Communication in Octavia Butler’s short stories ‘Childfinder’ and ‘Speech Sounds’.” 2016. The Society for the Study of American Short Story: The American Short Story An Expansion of the Genre, Savannah, Georgia.
- 10/21/16 “Battling Social Death: Pedagogy as Resistance in a Maximum Security Prison.” 2016. Celebrating African American Literature and Language: Race and Resistance, Penn State, State College, Pennsylvania.
- 4/8/16 “Attributing Super Powers to the Ancestor in Octavia Butler’s Patternist Series.” 2016. College Language Association, Houston, Texas.
- 4/9/15 “The Metaphysical Migrations and Restorative Places of Resistance in the Works of Octavia Butler.” 2015. College Language Association: Black and Caribbean Women’s Migration Narratives and Transnational Identities, Dallas, Texas.
- 10/25/13 “Black Women Poets by the Numbers, 2000-2013.” 2013. Celebrating African American Literature: U.S and Afro-Caribbean Poetry, Penn State, State College, Pennsylvania.

Regional and Special Topics

- 3/7/21 Roundtable. “Changing Faith: Religious Practices and Ideology in the Works of Octavia E. Butler.” 2021. Octavia E. Butler Society: The Confluence: Octavia E. Butler at the Intersection of Cultural Critique and Climate Collapse, Virtual Conference.
- 2/23/20 “Teaching Octavia Butler in a Las Vegas Classroom.” 2020. Far West Popular and American Culture Association, Nevada, Las Vegas.
- 2/23/19 “Octavia Butler in the Age of Donald Trump.” 2019. Far West Popular and American Culture Association, Nevada, Las Vegas.
- 2/24/18 “The Nation that was Built on a Black Woman’s Back: Religion and Survival in Octavia Butler’s Parable Series.” 2018. Octavia E. Butler Society: Uniting the Academy and the Community, Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia.

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- 3/5/16 “Moving from Teacher to Counselor: Teaching African American Literature in a Men’s Security Prison.” 2016. Literature and Social Justice Graduate Conference, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.
- 2/26/16 “Signifyin’ on Myself: The Intricate Design of Octavia Butler’s Patternist Series.” 2016. Octavia Butler: Celebrating Letters, Life, and Legacy, Spelman College, Atlanta, Georgia.
- 9/12/15 “Bessie, Put on Display Like Baartman: Reflections on Teaching Native Son in a Medium Security Prison.” 2015. Distinguished, Intellectual, Virtuous, Academic, Sistas (D.I.V.A.S.), Elon, North Carolina.

Graduate Student

- 10/30/15 Biological Mutations: Rethinking Bodily Horror in Octavia Butler’s *Clay’s Ark*.” Ohio State EGO Conference, Columbus, Ohio.
- 3/27/15 “Healing Spaces in Octavia Butler’s *Wild Seed*.” 2015. UTSA Interdisciplinary Graduate Symposium on ‘Social Healing,’ San Antonio, Texas.

Teaching Experience

- 2018-Present **The University of Nevada, Las Vegas**
Contemporary American Novel. ENG 473C: “Contemporary Black Authors” (Fall 2021 online)
Introduction to African American Literature, ENG 290: “African American Literature and Pop Culture” (Fall 2021 online)
Seminar in African American Literature, ENG 744: “African American Science Fiction” (Spring 2021: New Prep)
American Literature II, ENG 451: “Modern American Literature and Culture”(Spring 2021)
Major Figures in Literature, ENG 436A/636A: “Octavia Butler and Healing” (Fall 2020: New Prep)
Introduction to African American Literature, ENG 290: African American Literature and Pop Culture” (Summer 2020 online)
American Literature II, ENG 451: “Modern American Literature: What is Human?” (Spring 2020)
Early African American Literature, ENG 495A: “The Neo-Slave Narrative” (Spring 2020: New Prep)
Introduction to African American Literature, ENG 290: African American Literature and Pop Culture” (Fall 2019)
Seminar in African American Literature, ENG 795: “The Black Women’s Renaissance: Black Women Writers of the 1980s” (Fall 2019: New Prep)
Introduction to African American Literature, ENG 290: African American Literature and Pop Culture” (Summer 2019 online: New Prep)

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Independent Study with Frank Johnson on reading Black Poetry (Spring 2019)

American Literature II, ENG 451: “Modern American Literature: What is American?” (Spring 2019: New Prep)

Modern African American Literature, ENG 495B: “The Octavia Butler Mixtape” (Spring 2019: New Prep)

Modern African American Literature, ENG 495B: “An Existential Journey to Wakanda” (Fall 2018: New Prep)

- 2014-2017 **The University of Alabama, Instructor of Record**
African American Literature, EN 249: “Survey Course in African American Literature”
Introduction to College Writing, EN 101: “Literature in Pedagogical Spaces”
Intermediate College Writing, EN 102: “Imagining the 22nd Century;” “TedTalks”
Introduction to College Writing (Honors), EN 103: “Short Stories of Octavia Butler”
- 2014-2017 **Auburn University, Prison Arts Instructor**
African American Literature, Bibb County Medium Security. Bibb County, Alabama.
African American Literature, Donaldson Maximum Security. Bessemer, Alabama.
- 2014-2015 **Auburn University, Prison Arts Instructor**
African American Literature, Bibb County Medium Security. Bibb County, Alabama.
African American Literature, Donaldson Maximum Security. Bessemer, Alabama.
- 2012-2013 **Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, Instructor of Record**
Introduction to College Writing-ENGL 101

Service

The Writing Party
2021

In November 2021 I hosted 3 writing virtual sessions. I designed The Writing Party to provide aspiring authors and academics with equitable and accountable writing spaces. Prior to each meeting, I sent all 40 participants a Thrive Kit, which contained six worksheets: Mindset Message, Spiritual Grounding, Daily Decrees and Affirmations, SMART Goals, and Preparation Strategies. Each session lasted 2hrs, with the first 20 minutes of each session focusing on dismantling limiting beliefs.

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**Academically
Dope Graduate
Student series**

Academically Dope is a weekly video series where I provide grad students with tips and tools on how to make it through the academic semester. The series airs every Sunday on YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram.

**Research
Resources
Committee**
2021-present

I am a member of the Research Resources committee.

**Nevada Prison
Education
Project**
10/11/2021-
Present

The Nevada Prison Education Project (NPEP), a consortium of prison education experts and professionals in higher education and formerly incarcerated individuals in Nevada, propose to create an AA and BA pathway in the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) that maximizes transferability and flexibility in order to expand access to college education in Nevada for individuals and students who experience incarceration.

**Global
Anglophone
Search
Committee**
2021-present

I served on the Global Anglophone search committee for the 2021-2022 academic year.

**Executive
Board Member
DBLAC**
10/1/2021-
present

My position as a DBLAC Executive Board member resembles that of a collaborator, one who thinks with other members on the direction of DBLAC programming and planning. DBLAC is a graduate student non-profit organization housed at The University of Pittsburg.

**Book club
Facilitator**
2019-present

I am the creator and discussion facilitator of a 208-person online book club.

**Faculty
Marshal
Spring
Commencement**
2021

I served as a faculty marshal for spring commencement

**Doctoral
Dissertation
Committee**
2021

I served on Tajanaé Barnes' dissertation committee.

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MFA Thesis Committee 2021	I served on Therin Alrik's thesis committee.
MFA Thesis Committee 2021	I served on Chantelle Mitchell's thesis committee.
Master's Exam Committee 2021	I served on Antonela Verdha's exam committee.
COLA Faculty Diversity Awards Committee 2019-2021	As a committee member, I am responsible for reading application materials and deciding an award recipient along with five other committee members.
Online Teaching Mentor Fall 2020	I assisted Nanette Hilton and Megan Becker with additional support developing and delivering their online courses.
Dissertation and Thesis Committee November 2020-2021	The Graduate Dissertation and Thesis Committee evaluates nominated Ph.D dissertations and Master's theses to represent the department of English. The committee then recommends two research projects to then receive the award.
Master's Prospectus Committee 2020	I served on Alexis Brooks' Thesis Prospectus committee. (2020)
Doctoral Prospectus Committee 2020	I served on Tajanaé Barnes's Dissertation Prospectus committee. (2020)
Doctoral Exam Committee 2020	I served on Tajanaé Barnes's Comprehensive Exam committee. (2020)
MFA Thesis Committee 2019	I served on Frank Johnson's MFA thesis committee. (2019)

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Graduate Studies Committee 2018-2021	The Graduate Studies Committee reviews and makes recommendations regarding all new graduate certifications and programs. The committee also reviews and recommends for approval and proposed changes to existing graduate curriculum.
Co-editor for Married and Young Online Magazine 2018-2019	As the co-editor for the online magazine, I am responsible for ensuring that writing tasks have been assigned to the appropriate team of writers, as well as serve as first round editor on the project. My team was also responsible for curating the weekly newsletter sent to readers of the site.
Dissertation and Thesis Committee November 2018	The Graduate Dissertation and Thesis Committee evaluates nominated Ph.D dissertations and Master's theses to represent the department of English. The committee then recommends two research projects to then receive the award.
Mentor and Life Leader 2017-2018	The Foundry Women's Center. Bessemer, Alabama. The Foundry foundation is an organization that seeks to restore hope and rebuild the lives of the addict, the ex-inmate and the destitute through Christ-centered Community Rescue, Addiction Recovery and Prison Re-entry. In my time as a mentor and life leader, I coached women through various healing processes including coming into an awareness of how identity informs our decisions.
Graduate Advisor 2016-2018	Girl Talk. As the student advisor, I am responsible for ensuring that the organization adheres to the rules and regulations of student organizations on campus. I am also responsible for supervising outreach activities off campus.
Creator of the "Prison Book Drive" Project 2015-2016	I initiated and oversaw the establishment of the first literary and spiritual library within a Maximum-security prison in Birmingham, Alabama. After soliciting book donations from publishers such as Random House, non-profit organizations, and from my fellow academics, I secured more than 600 literary and spiritual texts for Donaldson Correctional Facility.

Speaking Engagements, Guest Lectures and Interviews

November 1, 2021	"Research in African American Literature." English 700: Bibliography and Methods. University of Nevada, Las Vegas.
August 24, 2021	Panelist. "The Church and Hollywood Lied." <i>The One University</i> . Miller Media Group. Online.
May 13, 2021	Keynote Speaker. "The Purpose of Identity in Destiny." Raven C. Nole Enterprises/Soul Clinic. Online.

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- April 1, 2021 Podcast Guest. "Deconstructing Dating." *Becoming The One*. Miller Media Group. Chicago, IL.
- March 12, 2021 Panelist. *Coded Bias*. The University of Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh, PA.
- February 19, 2021 Moderator and Panelist. *Mr. Soul!* Vegas PBS. Las Vegas, NV.
- October 27, 2020 "The Future of African American Literature." English 700: Bibliography and Methods. University of Nevada, Las Vegas.
- August 14, 2020 Panelist. "Strategies for Online Learning Success." UNLV. Las Vegas, Nevada.
- February 13, 2020 Plenary Speaker. "Legal Bodies and Racial Legalities in Science Fiction." Boyd Law School. Las Vegas, Nevada.
- October 19, 2019 Panelist. "Women in the Gospel." Greater King David. Fontana, Wisconsin.
- August 6, 2019 Workshop Leader. "Public Speaking;" "Time Management;" "Social Media and Marketing." Tougaloo College. Jackson, Mississippi.
- January 18, 2019 Keynote Speaker. "A Woman Who Finds Her Identity is Safe." Mutual Ground Domestic Violence Center. Aurora, Illinois.
- November 30, 2018 Panelist. "Teaching Writing, Literature, and Creative Writing." English 791: Practicum and Pedagogy. University of Nevada, Las Vegas.
- November 15, 2018 Moderator. "Twitter Talk: Rhetorical Healing." DBLAC Reading Series. Digital Black Lit and Composition. University of Pittsburgh.
- October 22, 2018 "Research and Digital Scholarship." English 700: Bibliography and Methods. University of Nevada, Las Vegas.
- September 26, 2018 "Thinking about Octavia Butler in the Age of Trump." English 760: Studies in Literary Genres. University of Nevada, Las Vegas.
- September 15, 2018 Conference Speaker. "I'm So Glad I Don't Look Like What I've Been Through." Women's Empowerment Brunch. Logan Street Missionary Baptist Church. Aurora, Illinois.
- July 21, 2018 Panelist. "It's H.E.R. Season: Healing, Empowerment, Restoration." Women's Empowerment Conference. Zion Travelers Missionary Baptist Church.

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- March 29, 2018 Panelist. "Talking Black in America." The University of Alabama, Language and Life Project.
- March 25, 2018 Keynote Speaker. "Preparing Young Leaders." Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Scholarship Brunch.
- August 18, 2017 Panelist. "31st Annual Workshop for New Graduate Teaching Assistants." University of Alabama Graduate School Teaching Orientation.
- April 20, 2017 "Natural Hair and Spirituality." NPR Interview. CBC Tapestry.
- November 29, 2017 "Interview with Briana Whiteside: Department of English Doctoral Student on Prison Libraries." *The Chambered Nautilus*. University of Alabama.

Research and Programming Experience

- 2012-2015 Contributing Writer. "Cultural Front African American Resource."
- 2012-2013 Editorial Assistant. "African American Poets, 2000-2013." SIUe Black Studies Program
- Fall 2013 Editorial Assistant. "Afrofuturism and Digital Humanities." SIUe Black Studies Program
- Fall 2013 Coordinator. "Studies on Octavia Butler." SIUe Females of African-Descent Modeling Excellence (F.A.M.E) class
- 2013-2014 Research Assistant. Professor Howard Ramsby II, SIUe

Professional Affiliations

- 2019-current American Studies Association
- 2018-current American Literature Association
- 2016-current Modern Language Association
- 2014-current College Language Association
- 2014-2018 African American Graduate Student Association
- 2014-2018 English Graduate Organization (EGO)
- 2014-2016 Tide Together Minority Mentoring Program
- 2008-2010 Sigma Tau Delta International English Honors Society