

ALEXANDER CATCHINGS

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Education

University of California, Berkeley

Ph.D. in English (2021)

Areas of Research: African American, New Media, Novel and Narrative

Committee: Dorothy Hale (advisor), Scott Saul, Tom McEnaney, Sonnet Retman

University of Washington, Seattle

B.A. in English with Honors (2013)

Publications

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

“Ishmael Reed Online” (currently being revised for *Studies in the Novel*)

“Aggregating Amazon: Satire and Paul Beatty’s *The Sellout*” (in preparation)

MANUSCRIPT

Hashtag Reading: Race in Web 2.0 Literature (manuscript in preparation)

Awards and Fellowships

ACADEMIC RESEARCH

Chancellor’s ADVANCE Postdoctoral Fellow – UC Irvine | 2022-23

Berkeley English Department Lectureship – UC Berkeley | 2021-22

Chancellor’s Mellon Fellowship – UC Berkeley | 2013

Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship Honorable Mention – 2013

Leadership Alliance Mellon Research Award – Princeton University | 2013

Presidential Research Scholar – University of Washington | 2012-13

Ronald E. McNair Scholar – University of Washington | 2012-13

Mary Gates Research Scholar – University of Washington | 2012-13

PEDAGOGY & MENTORING

Pathways to Academia: Visits and Experiences (PAVE)

Grant, Creating Connections Consortium (C3) – UC Berkeley | 2022

Bridge Connect Summer Senior Fellow – UC Berkeley | 2020-21

Berkeley Connect Mentorship Fellowship

Selected as English Department Starkey Fellow – UC Berkeley | 2019
Art of Writing Daniel E. Koshland Award – UC Berkeley | 2016
2016 Mentored Research Award & Fellowship – UC Berkeley | 2016

Courses Taught

PRIMARY INSTRUCTION & COURSE

Lecturer – English 125E, The Contemporary Novel: Seeing Books Like Seeing Screens (Spring 2022)

Upper division course theme: Examination of avant-garde novels whose form simulates the process of using online interfaces. Texts from Joshua Cohen, Meg Cabot, Matthew McIntosh

Lecturer – English 133T, Humor and the Neo-Slave Narrative (Fall 2021)

Upper division course theme: The political and theoretical logic behind parodic representations of slavery in the works of Henry Box Brown, Harriet Jacobs, Ishmael Reed, Paul Beatty, and Richard Pryor

Graduate Student Instructor – English R1A, Visual Rhetoric and the Novel (Fall 2020)

Course theme: The intersection between digital interfaces and the physical pages of books. Texts from Ellen Ullman, Marshall McLuhan, Barbara Browning, Jaron Lanier

Graduate Student Instructor – English 133T, Humor & the Neo-Slave Narrative (Summer 2020)

Course theme: The political and theoretical logic behind parodic representations of slavery in the works of Ishmael Reed, Charles Johnson, Paul Beatty

Graduate Student Instructor – English R1A, Cosmopolitan Reading (Spring 2019)

Course theme: Explored limits and possibilities of “traveling through books” in texts from Kawabata, O’Connor, Adichie, Lispector

Graduate Student Instructor – English R1B, Unreliable Friends (Spring 2019)

Course theme: Unreliable narrators in texts from Perkins Gilman to Junot Diaz

TEACHING ASSISTANT

Graduate Student Instructor for Prof. Dorothy Hale – English 161, Intro. to Literary Theory (Spring 2021)

Graduate Student Instructor for Prof. Steven Lee – English 45C, Literature Survey from 1880-2010 (Spring 2016)

Graduate Student Instructor for Prof. Steven Lee – English 45C, Literature Survey from 1880-2010 (Autumn 2015)

Teaching Assistant for Prof. Sonnet Retman – American Ethnic Studies AFRAM 290, Black Aesthetics (Spring 2012)

Teaching Assistant for Prof. Sonnet Retman – American Ethnic Studies AFRAM 214,
African American Literary Genres (Winter 2011)

Thesis Advising

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE SECOND READER

Reem Mansour (Ph.D. Candidate, Haifa University)

“Our Diabolic Dye”: Revisiting Female Experience in Contemporary Speculative Neo-Slave Narratives

HONORS THESIS SECOND READER

Alejandra Cooper (English Honors Student, UC Berkeley 2022)

“Not Knowing is the Most Intimate”: The Transfiguring Potential of Zen in American Literature

Presentations & Conference Papers

“The Amazon Critic: Search Bar Satire in *The Sellout*”

University of California President’s Postdoctoral Fellows Retreat | Spring 2023

“Reading Public Formation and the Digital Commons”

University of California, Irvine Digital Humanities Exchange | Winter 2023

“The Anatomy of a Wikipedic Novel”

University of California, Merced Symposium on Interdisciplinary Arts | Fall 2022

“The Souls of Blog Folk: Black Male Fragility in Ishmael Reed’s *JUICE!*”

Department of English Faculty Colloquium at Haifa University | Spring 2021

“Streaming Selfishness and the Encyclopedic Sentence: Lucy Ellman’s *Ducks, Newburyport*”

Department of Foreign Literatures & Linguistics at Ben-Gurion University | Fall 2021

“The Souls of Blog Folk: Black Male Fragility in Ishmael Reed’s *JUICE!*”

Department of English at Lang College of The New School | Spring 2021

“Clickable Style in the 21st Century Novel”

The Modern Language Association - Online

Panel: Analog Persistence | Spring 2020

“How’d You Know That?: Genette, Pressed Words, & the Contemporary Novel”

The International Conference on Narrative, New Orleans

Panel: Becoming Part of the Narrative – Readers’ Authority in Books and Games | Spring 2020

“Cosmopolitan Point of View and the Web(site) of the Subject in *Open City*”

The Association for the Study of the Arts of the Present (ASAP), Oakland

Panel: Characters without Identity: Emergence, Process, and the Site of the Subject | Fall 2017

“The Metanarrative Critique in Ishmael Reed”
American Studies Association (ASA), Denver
Panel: Re-examining Resistance Narratives | Fall 2016

“Double-Taking History: Humor and Pastiche in the Neo-Slave Narrative”
Pacific Ancient Modern Language Association, Seattle
Panel: African American Humor | Spring 2013

“Slavery, Humor, and National Ethic”
The Leadership Alliance National Symposium, Hartford | Hartford, CT

Academic Service

Working Group Co-Organizer | UC Berkeley, 2016–2019
“Consortium on the Novel” - *Townsend Center for the Humanities*

Working Group Co-Organizer | UC Berkeley, 2016–2019
“Consortium on the Novel” - *Townsend Center for the Humanities*
Organized guest speaking engagements and panels for researchers specializing in the novel, collaborated with Stanford University’s Center for the Study of the Novel to run a semesterly conference, and established community conversations around topics including theoretical approaches to understanding “form,” teaching long novels, and autofiction

Working Group Co-Organizer | UC Berkeley, 2015-16 “Interdisciplinary Working Group on the Early US” *Townsend Center for the Humanities*

Working Group Participant | UC Berkeley, 2013-15 “Transnational Ethnic and American Studies Working Group” *Townsend Center for the Humanities*

Community Engagement & Pedagogy

Panelist, Canvassing Futures: Career Exploration and Project Management
UC Irvine School of Humanities | Irvine, CA
Invited to speak with graduate students from a range of humanities disciplines on applying their skills into business, non-profit work, and the private sector. Explained the mechanics behind starting a business, managing business relationships, forging connections with research and disciplinary interests, and sales and marketing.

Curriculum Designer (2017-18)
The Simpson Family Literary Project | Berkeley, CA
Conceived of and created eight ninety-minute lesson plans for three UC Berkeley creative writing instructors. They taught units on poetry, micro-fiction, creative non-fiction, and college personal statements to diverse communities at the Contra Costa County Juvenile Hall, Girls Inc. Alameda County, and Northgate High School.

English Instructor, Mentor, Advisory Board Member (2014 – 2018)
First Graduate | San Francisco, CA
First Graduate is a non-profit that provides free counseling, supplemental schooling, and extracurricular support to children who want to be the first in their families to attend and graduate from college. Mentored and over one-hundred potential first-generation college grad middle schoolers in the Mission District of San Francisco. Wrote and

delivered two English reading and writing curricula to sixty seventh-graders, along with one Secondary School Admissions Test curriculum annually for three years to fifty eighth-graders. Student population was 40% Hispanic, 25% African American, and 30% first-generation Asian, and 5% of other backgrounds.

Co-Founder (2017-19)

Open Story Prep English Language Center | Fremont, CA

Taught intensive SAT English classes to small groups of students (eight or fewer per class). Led creative non-fiction writing workshops supporting the drafting of college and graduates school essays. Offered private coaching to Silicon Valley executives in business communication.

Research and Editorial Experience

Research Assistant to Prof. Dorothy Hale | UC Berkeley, 2019-20

Provided bibliographic support for Prof. Hale’s book *The Novel and the New Ethics* (published 2020, Stanford University Press) and provided course planning support for her research seminar “William Faulkner’s Temporalities”

Research Assistant to Prof. Scott Saul | UC Berkeley, 2013-14

Collected permissions and copyright contracts from corporate and individual entities for the manuscript *Becoming Richard Pryor* (published 2014, HarperCollins)

Research Assistant to Prof. Nadia Ellis | UC Berkeley, 2013-14

Collated music, tracks, sources and preliminary background research for article “New Orleans and Kingston: A Beginning, A Recurrence” (published 2014, *Journal of Popular Music Studies*)

Editor’s Assistant for *The Black Scholar Journal* | Seattle, 2012-13

References

Dorothy Hale

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Theodore Martin

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Scott Saul

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Sonnet Retman

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