



ALENA HAIRSTON
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WEBSITE <http://www.alenaHairston.com> – selected publications can be viewed at bottom of website in “Publication Links”

EDUCATION

Saybrook University Graduate College of Psychology and Humanistic Studies, San Francisco, CA

- 28 units of doctoral coursework in cross-cultural/transnationalist consciousness, spirituality, and creativity studies with focus on language psychology, liberation semiotics, and digital methodologies in teaching and writing literature.
- Sabbatical awarded for research in Personalist approaches (Bynum, 1994) to teaching pedagogy in basic skills and transfer-level composition and literature courses.

M.F.A., English and Creative Writing, Brown University, Providence, RI

- Highly competitive 2 year, full fellowship program (4 candidates chosen per genre from hundreds). Won various awards.
- Creative work spanned poetry, fiction (primary interests in formal structures within both poetry and fiction and the possibilities of their communion), play-writing, hybrid, and digital forms. Independent studies were done in theater work with graduate theater students, Brown's Theater and the Providence Black Repertory Theater. Independent language study of Tigrinya (major language in Eritrea, East Africa). Coursework was also completed in non-western women's literature (global focus). Intensive independent research was continued in Appalachian culture/historiography (especially coal-mining) as well as Eritrean/Ethiopian historiography. Research continued in experimental/nontraditional literature by U.S. and non-Western writers, focusing on writers from Africa, South America, and Canada. Participated in numerous literary and theater events in the Providence area.
- MFA Thesis *Eye Sight and Other Stories* is available at the John Hay Library at Brown.

B.A. with Honors, Guilford College, Greensboro, NC

- Double major in English and Integrative Studies (Africana Studies). Helped the college define and completed the requirements for the college's first Africana Studies Major via the honors thesis and intensive discussion/collaboration/and vetting with interdepartmental chairs in English, History, Music, Religious Studies, Social Sciences, etc. Was required to find an outside reader – an English professor at UNCG. The honors thesis is 188 pages, bearing 6 different signatures from various departments, and includes transcript of personal interview with eminent writer Thylis Moss.
- BA Honors Thesis *WomenWords: The Poetics of Thylis Moss, Sherley Anne Williams, and Carolyn Beard Whitlow* is available in the Rare Books collection at the Hege Library at Guilford.

Independent Studies and Scholarship

- African American/Diasporic and Non-Western literature, digital and computer based methodologies for teaching, learning, and new paradigms for literary theories and pedagogy in post-colonial/transnational/feminist literature and other cultural artifacts. Learning Management Systems (advanced, builder); open educational resources (advanced, contributor); Web/Internet development (intermediate – can handcode HTML/DHTML and style sheets), basic computer programming – Java and C+ (beginner); ethical pedagogy in online educational teaching and learning.
- Continued research in digital media and literacy with a human rights educational focus. Next steps include achieving basic fluency in French and Portuguese for research/travel with a focus on developing digital/electronic bridges among diasporic peoples and their literature. Future plans include an artist fellowship at Sacatar Residency in Bahia, Brazil and an NEH (or similar) fellowship to study language and culture of the Gullah Island people, as well as opportunities to research maroon colonies and other sustained forms of resistance in the Americas.

- Continued thematic/technical exegesis in arts and humanities contributions by Africana women (particularly US and aboriginal women), with emphasis in experimental/marginalized/progressive works addressing the deepening vortices of post-bellum/post-colonial/expatriate/immigrant/refugee/outsider/subaltern existence. Special interest in analyzing explicit and implicit continuums and hybridities among and between women artists in the diasporas of Canada, North and South America, the Caribbean, West and East Africa, Middle East, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand.

AWARDS AND HONORS

- New Student Scholarship, Saybrook University
- Finalist, Poetry Society of America's Norma Farber First Book Award (2008)
- Finalist, Weatherford Award for Best Non-Fiction Writing on Appalachia (2008)
- Volunteers for Peace Travel Scholarship – Arabic/French/English exchange with family and international participants in Rabat, Morocco
- Cave Canem Fellowship in Poetry – worked with Yusef Komunyakka, Elizabeth Alexander, Erica Hunt
- Finalist, Rona Jaffe Foundation Writing Award
- Winner, Lexi Rudnitsky Poetry Prize, Persea Books/W.W. Norton
- Publishing Contract for *The Logan Topographies* (Persea Books, 2007)
- Selected Winner, Dorothy Brunsman Poetry Award, Bear Star Press
- Teacher of the Year Nominee, Solano College (twice)
- Finalist, Frith Press Open Poetry Chapbook Competition
- Fellowship in Poetry (Top Prize), Rhode Island State Council on the Arts
- Flash Fiction Contest Winner, *Doorknobs & BodyPaint*
- Zora Neale Hurston Scholar, Naropa University Summer Writing Program (Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics)
- John Hawkes Memorial Prize in Fiction, Brown University
- Departmental Honors, Guilford College
- Leora Sherrill O'Callaghan Scholarship for Excellence in English, Guilford College
- Honorable Mention for Writing in the Humanities, Guilford College
- Certificate of Achievement in African American Studies, Guilford College
- Presidential Scholarship, Guilford College
- Dean's List, Guilford College
- Graduation Speaker (female selection), Guilford College
- Graduate Thesis: *Eye Sight and Other Stories* (MFA)
- Undergraduate Thesis: *WomenWords: The Poetics of Thylia Moss, Sherley Anne Williams, and Carolyn Beard Whitlow* (BA w/Honors)
- Valedictorian, Logan High School

PUBLICATIONS

Links to certain works are embedded in this document and others may be available at <http://alena hairston.com>

Various poetry selections. *Angels of Ascent: A Norton Anthology of Contemporary African American Poetry*. Feb 2012. Print.

No One Talks to Me with Flowers in Her Teeth. Second poetry manuscript. Forthcoming (in circulation).

Link: http://www.all-write.net/images/NoOneTalkstoMewithFlowersinHerTeeth_rev10202011.pdf

"Poetry is Not a Widget: The Priceless Is Right." Essay arguing for the utility of open educational resources in preserving and promoting humanities, especially written arts. *College Open Textbook*. Web. 28 June. 2011.

<http://collegeopentextbooks.org/blog/2011/06/28/poetry-is-not-a-widget-the-priceless-is-right/>

"My Imperfect Mouth Names" and "Route 44 to Route 52." *Callaloo: A Journal of Diasporic Arts and Letters*. Winter 2010. ISSN 0161-2492. Print.

"She is small in this house." *Verse Wisconsin, Theme: Work*. Summer, Issue 103, 2010. Print.

"Femme But Not Fatal: Audacious Clarity in *The Hermit-Woman* and *Eva's Man*." Critical analysis of Gayl Jones' "blueswomen." *The Encyclopedia Project*. Fall 2010. Print.

Link: <http://www.all-write.net/images/gayljonessubmissiontoEncyclopediarev10192011.pdf>

"Up Bolt Mountain" and "Route 44 to Route 52." *Appalachian Heritage*. Summer 2008. ISSN 03632318. Print.

"Lithology" (sections), "Up Bolt Mountain," and "Route 44 to Route 52." Poems. *Drunken Boat*, Vol. 9. Winter 2007. ISSN 1537-0000 <http://drunkenboat.com>

The Logan Topographies. New York: Persea Books, 2007. (Winner of inaugural Lexi Rudnitsky Memorial Prize in Poetry). Full length collection of poetry.

"A Review of Jackie Kay's *Trumpet*." *Callaloo: A Journal of African Diaspora Arts and Letters*. Fall 2006. ISSN 0161-2492. http://www.all-write.net/images/bookreview_trumpet_ahairston.pdf

"A Perspective on Amadou Diallo's Death." Radio broadcast and commentary. KQED San Francisco – NPR Affiliate. April, 2000.

Works published under "elen gebreab":

gebreab, elen and Sandy Florian. "Sanctions." Short-short story collaboration. *dANDelion: the "disaster" issue*. Vol. 30 Num. 1: 2004. ISSN 0383-9575

gebreab, elen. "Mother's Day." Short story. *In Our Own Words: A Generation Defining Itself*. Vol. 6. Ed. Marlow P. Weaver. Cary, NC: MW Enterprises, 2005. ISBN 0965413675.

"22 Mountain." Poetry sequence. *Obsidian III*. Vol. 6, Num. 1: Spring/Summer 2005. ISSN 1542-1619.

"After R." Poem. *Elixir*. Vol 4, Num. 2: 2005. ISBN 1-932418-06-7.

"Devil's Tea Table." Poetry sequence. *nocturnes (re)view: a review of the literary arts*. Num. 3: Winter, 2004. ISSN 1525-3325.

"frewieini." Digital text and image collage. *BathHouse: A Journal of the Hybrid Arts*. Vol. 2, Num 1: Winter 2004 <http://www.emich.edu/studentorgs/bhouse/oldbhouse/v2n1/gebreab1.html>

"Frewieini and Akbeh." Flash fiction (contest winner). *Doorknobs and BodyPaint*. Issue 29: Feb, 2003.

"Teaching the Dogs." Poem. *SideReality: A Journal of Speculative and Experimental Poetry*. Vol. 2, Issue 4: Winter 2003. ISSN 1543-0316.

"After." Poem. *Avoid. Strange Men*. Fall, 2002.

"Old 52," "For AJ," "After Listening to The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born." Poems. *the lighthouse*. Guilford College. Fall-Spring 1995-1996.

INSTITUTIONAL, DISCIPLINARY LEADERSHIP AND WORK

Humanities Academic Senator (Solano College, 2010-11)

- Elected position to represent professional, curricular, and academic interests to college administration under the aegis of the State Academic Senate for California Community Colleges.

Master Reviewer Panelist for Federal Dept. of Labor (Summer, 2011)

- Hired by the Federal Dept. of Labor to review and score approximately 15 college and university grant applications under the Trade Adjustment Assistance and College Training Programs Grant Competition for national community colleges.

Blogger, colleageopentextbooks.org/blog (OER, 2011)

- Research, analyze, and write essays in support of open educational resources pedagogy and policy.

Reviewer, OpenTextbooks project, OERConsortium.org (2010-present)

- Reviewer for open/free resources vetted for English and Humanities curricula.

Faculty Creative Writing Reading Series (Solano College, 2004-present)

- As a Creative Writing faculty member, I worked with the English and Arts department to institutionalize regular literary/arts events promoting regional writers/artists as well as faculty writers/artists. Currently working to establish Creative Writing as a major with links to area 4 year institutions offering creative writing and professional writing degrees. Regularly promote area events to students and campus community.

Maximum Achievement Project Consultant for Learning Communities (2008-present)

- Curriculum developer and consultant for program focusing on academic and personal advocacy for African American male students as well as other marginalized students. In conjunction with college counselors, I teach developmental and transfer level English to prepare students for successful transfer to the 4 year level.

Puente Program Co-Coordinator and Instructor (Solano, 2006-present)

- Under the aegis of the University of California Office of the President, I develop English curriculum in collaboration with a Puente guidance counselor/instructor advocating for the successful transfer of at-risk, underprepared students from the 2 year level to the 4 year level and beyond. Coordinate regular mentorship and academic events for students.

Learning Communities Committee (Solano, 2005-present)

- Developed curricula for 3 Learning Communities courses bridging English, Social Science, Sociology, and History. Courses emphasized community learning, co-teaching with instructors of various disciplines, and integrated assignments utilizing the writing across disciplines approach for 1-2 semesters. Course titles include: Umoja – Learning Community (Psychology, Counseling, and English); Roots and Rivers (Sociology of African Americans and English); The African American Experience (African American History and English)

Composition Mastery Exam Norming Committee (Solano, 2005-present)

- Contributed to and vetted pedagogically sound approaches to an institutional writing exam administered as the final for students in basic and developmental English courses.

Researcher and Writer for Humanities Workload Study (Solano, 2005-07)

- Developed a database and collected Humanities instructors' self-reported data evincing the workload and hours performed above contractual stipulations. Findings were presented to faculty union and college administration in the effort to effect sound contractual policy changes in workload factors for faculty whose courses require increased hours in teaching reading, writing, critical thinking, and one to one counseling with students.

Ethnic Studies / Enlightenment Series Lecturer and Sponsor (Solano, 2004-present)

- Presented various campus lectures on the Harlem Renaissance, Multi-Cultural Literature, Student Citizenship. Promoted the series to colleagues and students as core efforts to institutionalize student and faculty participation in collegial dialogue about critical sociopolitical issues regionally, nationally, and globally. Developed and promoted fund-raising efforts to host lecturers and defray costs related to programmatic needs.

Hip Hop Nation Club and Black Student's Association Faculty Advisor (Solano, 2005-06)

- Advised students in club organization, programmatic integrity, and peer mentoring. Built coalitions among other student groups and faculty in order to enhance academic and professional growth among students.

Organizer for Solano College Peace Vigil

- Due to the military community returning young veterans of war and the high incidence rate of violence among students and their communities due to poverty, marginalization, racism, unemployment, incarceration, etc., I worked with various faculty and staff to host several vigils and community forums to address student concerns and provide resources. Built media contacts within the community to bring area attention to the issues. Advocated for faculty and staff to use institutional resources to assist students.

Volunteer Grant-Writer for Oasis Community Credit Union (Providence, RI, 2000-01)

- Advised local business leaders in impoverished area of Providence on business plan development and grant application protocol. Lead grant-writer for \$500,000 award that the credit union received.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE**English Instructor, Berkeley City College, Merritt College, Diablo Valley College, 9/07-Present (adjunct)**

Design and teach courses in Creative Writing, Critical Thinking, College Composition, Basic Skills, Developmental English, and English Tutoring. Designed and taught online courses in College Composition and Critical Thinking.

English Instructor, Solano Community College, 8/04 – Present (tenured)

Design and teach a range of English courses, including Basic and Developmental English, transfer-level courses such as Critical Thinking and Composition, and specialized humanities courses such as Learning Communities (courses co-taught with instructors from other disciplines), Puente, Multi-Ethnic Literature, and Creative Writing I and II. Courses are geared toward introducing students to various genres of academic writing by presenting students with a progressive sequence of rhetorical situations and purposes, including expository, argumentative, literary, and research writing.

Tutor students in basic and developmental writing and reading skills in Writing and Reading Labs.

Meet with and advise students independently to address students' work and progress.

Evaluate students' performance through written and verbal assessment of portfolio, mastery exams, and learning center activities, including partnering with the Writing /Reading Skills Labs to ensure student success.

Participate in division and departmental activities, including special committee assignments.

Perform Guest Lectures on African American history for Solano College's Lecture Series, a campus-wide event.

Organize Solano College Peace Vigil.

Lecturer, African American Literature, Santa Clara University, 9/03 – 3/04 (adjunct)

Designed and taught survey of African American literature from the 18th century into the present. Special course: "Slavery and Mastery in the Literary Imagination" (upper-division) Texts: *Corregidora* (G. Jones); *Kindred* (O. Butler); *Cannibals All!* (G. Fitzhugh); *Clotel* (W. Brown); *Narrative...*(F. Douglass); *The Interesting Narrative...*(O. Equiano); *Benito Cereno* (H. Melville); *Incidents* (H. Jacobs); *Playing in the Dark* (T. Morrison). Taught critical reading, thinking, and composition using a variety of interdisciplinary methods. Met with and advised students independently to address students' work and progress.

Lecturer, Composition and Rhetoric, Santa Clara University, 9/03 – 12/03 (adjunct)

Designed and taught first-year course geared toward introducing students to various genres of academic writing by presenting students with a progressive sequence of rhetorical situations and purposes, including expository, argumentative, literary, and research writing. Met with and advised students independently to address students' work and progress.

Evaluated students' performance through written and verbal assessment of portfolio, projects, and activities.

Instructor, Basic Writing and Basic Reading, Merritt College, 8/03 – 5/04 (adjunct)

Designed and taught courses geared toward introducing students to the writing and reading process through the reading, writing, revising of paragraphs and small essays. Taught basic skills in grammar, mechanics, vocabulary, and critical reading and thinking. Required student participation in writing centers and tutorials.

Met with and advised students independently to address students' work and academic/social progress.

Provided drop-in tutoring in reading, writing, and critical thinking in the Learning Center.

Instructor, Prose into Progress, Brown Learning Community, 4/03 – 6/03 (adjunct)

Designed courses including the selection and implementation of materials, the development of writing exercises and projects, and the development of methods of assessment for graduate and post-graduate students. Designed and facilitated writing workshops in which students work together on assignments and critically respond to each other's work. Met with and advised students independently to address students' work and progress. Encouraged students' participation in literary programs and events.

Instructor, Basic Writing Skills, Rhode Island College, 1/03 – 6/03 (adjunct)

Designed and taught two courses geared toward introducing students to the writing process through the writing and revising of paragraphs and small essays. Taught basic skills in grammar, mechanics, vocabulary, and critical thinking.

Provided private ESL tutorials in English grammar, mechanics, and vocabulary. Required student participation in writing centers and tutorials. Met with and advised students independently to address students' work and academic/social progress.

Instructor, Introduction to Literary Studies, Bryant College, 9/02 – 6/03 (adjunct)

Designed and taught two first-year courses geared toward introducing students to critical examination of four genres of literature: poetry, fiction, drama, and film. Special projects: a four week exploration of Richard Wright's *Native Son* and Gay Jones' *Eva's Man*. Prepared students for academic writing by teaching them different genres of written discourse: journal writing, informal reaction, analytical essays, and research essays. Met with and advised students independently to address students' work and academic/social progress. Evaluated students' performance through written and verbal assessment and grading of revised papers, journals, projects, and quizzes. Encourage students' participation in campus and off-campus literary activities.

Instructor, Introduction to Academic Writing, Rhode Island College, 9/02 – 6/03 (adjunct)

Designed and taught two first-year courses geared toward introducing students to various genres of academic writing by presenting students with a progressive sequence of rhetorical situations and purposes. These situations include the autobiographical, the observational, the reflective, the conceptual, and the argumentative.

Met with and advised students independently to address students' work and academic/social progress.

Encouraged students' participation in campus and off-campus literary activities.

Evaluated students' performance through written and verbal assessment of portfolio, projects, and activities.

Adult Education Teacher, Sawyer School, 7/02 – 9/02

Taught students basic English skills, including grammar, vocabulary, and critical thinking.

Prepared students for the Wonderlic and ABT tests by teaching them test-taking strategies and best study habits. Passing these tests granted them entry into the GED preparation program.

Acted as a mentor and tutor to students by encouraging their confidence, counseling them in their academic and personal affairs, and by being a positive role model.

Instructor, Beginning and Intermediate Fiction Writing, Brown University, 9/01 – 5/02

Designed courses including the selection and implementation of materials, the development of writing exercises and projects, and the development of methods of assessment.

Designed and facilitated writing workshops in which students worked together on assignments and critically responded to each other's work. Met with and advised students independently to address students' work and progress.

Required and encouraged students' participation in literary programs and events.

Planned and hosted semester-end class reading.

Volunteer Instructor, S.P.A.C.E. (Space in Prison for the Arts and Creative Expression), 1/01 - 5/01

Conducted writing and arts workshops in the women's wing of the Adult Correctional Institution.

Developed and implemented writing and arts exercises and projects such as biographical writing, freewriting, playwriting, poetry, writing to music, etc. Published a book of women's writing at end of the semester.

Private English/S.A.T. Tutor, Greensboro, NC, 1994 - 1996

Tutored high school students in the grammar section of the S.A.T.

Tutored intermediate and high school students in language arts, reading, social studies, and report writing.

Tutor/Mentor, National Black Child Development Institute, Greensboro, 1995 - 1996

Tutored youth in reading, math, social studies, and language arts.

Mentored young girl by being a positive role model.

Authored two papers analyzing the nature and impact of the tutorial process on black youth.

Tutor, Academic Skills Center, Guilford College, Greensboro, NC, 1995

Tutored Continuing Education students in language arts and report writing.

Prepared ESL students for the T.O.E.F.L. (Test of English as a Foreign Language).

Peer Mentor, Psychology 401, Guilford College, 1994

Advised student in selections of literature by women writers and critiqued and graded student's final paper.

Resident Advisor, Guilford College, Greensboro, NC, 1993 - 1994

Advised and assisted student residents (30+) in the personal, social, academic, and administrative arenas of collegiate life.

Developed programs which addressed issues within the above arenas.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Open Educational Resources Consortium; California Psychological Association; American Psychological Association; California Community College League; Modern Language Association; Conference on College Composition and Communication; National Council of Teachers of English; Associated Writing Programs; California Teachers' Association; Conferences attended: Fire and Ink (2002); CCCC (2005, 2006); California Community College League (2005)

Top Poetry Fellow – RISCA (Rhode Island State Council on the Arts) -- 2004
Poetry Fellow, Cave Canem Poets – 2007-09

PRESENTATIONS AND READINGS

Presenter and consultant for Umoja Learning Communities for the Maximum Achievement Project (MAP), Merritt College.

Presenter and proposal writer, "Learning Communities: Teaching Across the Disciplines," California Community College League, 2005 Annual Convention.

Readings have been performed at inaugural Poetry Reading Series at West Virginia Wesleyan College, Pegasus Books, AWP 2007, Albany Solano College Faculty Reading Series, Cave Canem Reading Series, Writers with Drinks / *Other Magazine* (CA), CCCC 2006 Annual Convention (Poetry Series), Atlas Bower Books (RI), Laurel Bookstore (CA), Diesel Books (CA), and Java California (CA), the 2008 Annual San Francisco LitQuake (CA) <http://litquake.org>, and the 2007 West Virginia Book Festival.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT AND CREATIVE/ SOCIAL INVOLVEMENTS

Act in plays, videos and films; perform poetry and play readings at various venues. Work includes: *A Raisin in the Sun* (performed at the PBRC) and *Women Pharaohs* (Discovery Channel).

Volunteer for Volunteers for Peace.

Volunteer for American Red Cross.

Co-founder of writing collective, Colored Paper (2003).

Volunteer grant-writer for Oasis Community Development Credit Union (2000-01).

Producer/Project Manager for Headland Digital Media / Pearson Publishers (1999-00).

Volunteer for Op-Net and Access Online (1999 –00).

Web Product Coordinator for Thomson Learning (1998-99).

Project Analyst/Technical Writer for Pacific Gas and Electric (1997-98).

Administrative Assistant for American Friends Service Committee (1996).

Editor, *the lighthouse*, Guilford College's literary magazine (1995-96).

Volunteer for UNITE Local 2603 (1995-96).

Volunteer for New Employment for Women (1987-1996).