

Rychetta Nicolette Watkins

watkinsr@rhodes.edu

- 2005 **Ph.D., English**
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- 1999 **M.A., English**
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- 1995 **A.B., English and Psychology**
Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri

Dissertation

“Black and Yellow Power: The Intersections of Identity Politics and Literary Study”
Dissertation Director: Robert Dale Parker, English. Committee: William Maxwell, English; Mark Christian Thompson, English and Comparative Literature; Leslie Reagan, History.

Presently, global and diasporan paradigms, developed partly to counter criticisms of post-coloniality as irrelevant in the American context, dominate African and Asian American literary study. Rather than dismiss the insights into identity politics and cultural formation offered by post-colonial approaches, this dissertation complicates the “Power” moment to recover American appropriations of colonialism and propose the “guerilla” figure and subjectivity as key to understanding African American and Asian American literary production and study in the latter half of the twentieth century.

Research Interests

African American Literature 1865 to the present, Asian American Literature, Twentieth Century American Literature, Ethnic American Literature

Publications and Works in Progress

'We Shall Have to Struggle': *Black and Yellow Power and the Making of Revolutionary Identity* (Under Review)

"Book Review: *Soul Power*." *MELUS* 33.1 (2008).

"Reinterpreting the Southern Roots of the Revolutionary Activism of Ida B. Wells." *The Southern Quarterly* 45:3 (2008).

"Translating Fanon: African American and Asian American Appropriations of Colonialisms" (Accepted, *Asian American Literature and Postcolonial Theory*, Katherine Suggs, ed.)

"Terry McMillan," "Waiting to Exhale," "How Stella Got Her Groove Back" (*Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction*)

"Power Sells: Youth Culture and Contemporary Appropriations of the Visual Imagery of Black Power," *MELUS* (Society for the Study of the Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States) Conference, The Ohio State University March 2008

"The Guerilla in Literature," Southwestern University, Georgetown, TX January 2008

“The Functions of the Harlem Renaissance Anthology: Then and Now,” November 2007

23rd Annual Symposium on African American Culture and Philosophy,
Purdue University

“The Women of Bronzeville: Negotiating Work and Womanhood in October 2007

1940s Chicago,” Midwest Popular Culture Association, Kansas City, MO

“Black and Yellow Badasses: The Cross Cultural Origins of April 2007

Revolutionary Character,” Association for Asian American Studies,
New York City

“Finding Scarlett: The Search for Black Female Subjectivity in *Beloved* March 2007

and *Eve’s Bayou*,” Twentieth Century American Literature Conference,
University of Louisville

“Performing Revolution: Yellow Power and the Reconstitution of the November 2004

Asian American Body Politic,” Midwest Modern Language
Association, St. Louis, MO

“Colonialism and Cooperation: Black and Yellow Power and the April 2003

Development of the Guerilla Figure in Media and Rhetoric,” Blacks
and Asians in the Making of the Modern World, Boston University

“‘We Shall Have to Struggle’: The Construction of the Guerilla Figure
in Black and Yellow Power, Media, and Rhetoric,” American Culture
Association Conference, New Orleans, LA April 2003

“So Long Mammy: Talking Back to *Gone with the Wind* in
Films by and about African American Women,” American Women
Writers of Color Conference, Morgan State University October 1999

“(Re)Placing Gwendolyn Bennett: The Continuing Recovery
of a ‘Minor’ Harlem Renaissance Poet,” National Association
of African-American Studies National Conference, Houston, TX February 1998

Academic Honors

Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society 2001

English Department Fellowship Spring 2001 - Spring 2003
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Illinois Consortium for Educational Opportunity Fall 2000 - Spring 2004
Program Fellow

Richard Barksdale Fellowship Fall 1997
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Graduate College Fellowship

Fall 1996 - Spring 1997

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Teaching Experience

Rhodes College, Memphis, TN

Fall 2008 – Present

Assistant Professor of English

Courses Taught

Introduction to the African American Literary Tradition

Locating the Harlem Renaissance

William Jewell College, Liberty, MO

Fall 2005 – Spring 2008

Assistant Professor of English

Courses taught

Advanced Written Composition

Critical Theory

Major Minority Authors: James Baldwin

Major Minority Authors: Langston Hughes and the Harlem Renaissance

World Women Writers in English

Written Communication

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Department of English

Teaching Assistant

Fall 1997 – Fall 2004

Instructor, Department of English

Spring 2005

Courses Taught

African American Literature until 1865, Teaching Assistant

African American Literature from 1865 to the Present, Teaching Assistant

American Literature from 1914

Introduction to American Literature

Introduction to Composition

Postcolonial Literature

Lemoyne-Owen College, Memphis, TN

Summer 2002 & 2003

Advanced Degree Completion Program,

Courses Taught

Research Writing

Professional Experience

Consultant

Fall 2000 - Fall 2001

Writer's Workshop.

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Composition and Study Skills Tutor

June 2001 - August 2001

Bridge Transition Program

Introductory Literature Advisor

August 2000 - August 2001

Department of English, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Developed and executed enrichment opportunities for instructors of 100-level literature classes in the English Department.

Conference Planning Assistant

August 1999 - May 2000

Black Women in Africa and the African Diaspora.
UIUC, African and African American Studies and Research Program

Community Planner Coordinator and Copy Editor

June 1999 - Summer 2001

The Octopus Newspaper, Champaign, IL

Program Assistant

January 1996 - July 1996

Mentor St. Louis
Coordinated volunteers, created programs, and acted as liaison between school faculty and administrators for a nonprofit agency that matched St. Louis City School District kindergarteners with congregants from various faith communities throughout the metro area.

Program Coordinator

April 1995 - December 1995

Girls Incorporated of St. Louis
Created and conducted outreach programming for a nonprofit agency serving girls ages 5 to 18 throughout the St. Louis metro area.

Academic Service

UNITY: Multicultural Students Association May 2007 - Present

William Jewell College

Faculty Advisor

Humanitarian Service Committee Fall 2006 - Present

William Jewell College

Faculty Hiring Committee, Education Department. Fall 2006 -May 2007

William Jewell College

Non Profit and Community Involvement

Robert Frazier Gallery, Kansas City, MO

Community Advisory Board Member

Inroads – Kansas City, Presenter

Bethel Neighborhood Center, Kansas City, MO

Memberships

American Cultural Studies Association

Association for Asian American Studies

Midwest Modern Language Association

Modern Language Association

Society for the Study of Multi-Ethnic Literatures in the United States (MELUS)