

Vaughn Rasberry
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Department of English
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Academic Appointment:

- Stanford University, Assistant Professor, Department of English in collaboration with the Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity, July 2010-present
- Faculty member in Stanford's programs in Modern Thought and Literature, American Studies, and African and African American Studies

Education:

- Ph.D., The University of Chicago, English language and literature, August 2009
- M.A., The University of Chicago, Master of Arts Program in Humanities, June 2001
- B.A., Howard University, English language and literature, May 2000

Work in Progress:

Book Manuscript: *Race and the Totalitarian Century: World War and the Geopolitics of African American Culture*

Interweaving critical theory, literature, and historiography, this interdisciplinary project explores twentieth-century African American culture and its engagement with geopolitical discourses on totalitarianism. Revisiting the widespread claim that the Second World War and Cold War transformed race relations on a domestic and global scale, *Race and the Totalitarian Century* reads the work of African American writers who perceived the war effort as symbolic of democracy's contradictions but also as a discursive field ripe for strategic manipulation. Accordingly, it challenges accounts that portray black writers of this era in postures of reaction to larger ideological forces—namely U.S. liberalism or Soviet communism—and argues instead that many intellectuals were involved in a complex dialogue with totalitarianism, marked by events like the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935 to the Suez Canal Crisis and Hungarian Revolution of 1956. An experiment in historiography, *Race and the Totalitarian Century* delineates a reciprocal account of black intellectual culture and the global Cold War.

Research and Teaching Interests:

- American and African American Studies
- Twentieth-century American fiction
- The Enlightenment and its critics
- Philosophical theories of modernity

- Postcolonial theory

Academic Publications:

- “Now Describing You: James Baldwin and Cold War Liberalism,” in *James Baldwin: America and Beyond*, edited by Cora Kaplan and Bill Schwartz (University of Michigan Press, 2011)
- **“Black Cultural Politics at the End of History,” *American Literary History* (peer-reviewed, November 2012)**
- **“Invoking Totalitarianism: Terror, Ideology, and the Novel,” *Novel: a Forum on Fiction* (peer-reviewed, accepted for publication Spring 2014)**
- “World War II and the ‘Lost’ Years: African American Writers of the 1940s,” *The Blackwell Companion to the Harlem Renaissance*, edited by Cherene Sherrard (forthcoming, June 2015)
- “John F. Kennedy and the Global Anticolonial Movement,” *The Cambridge Companion to John F. Kennedy*, edited by Andrew Hoberek (invited submission in progress)
- “Ghana TV: The Unfinished Project of Shirley Graham Du Bois” (manuscript in progress)

Awards:

- **Annenberg Faculty Fellowship, Stanford University, September 2013-June 2015**
- **Early Career Residential Fellowship, Humanities Center at the University of Pittsburgh, Academic Year 2013-2014**
- Woodrow Wilson Career Enhancement for Junior Faculty, 2013-2014 (finalist, declined)
- Travel Grant, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, March 2012
- Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, University of Texas, Austin (finalist, declined)
- Fulbright Junior Lecturer Award, department of American Studies, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, 2008-2009
- Travel and Fees Award for the Dartmouth College Futures of American Studies Institute, Department of English, University of Chicago, Summer 2008
- Guest Lecturer Award, Tokyo International University, Summer 2008
- Consortium for Faculty Diversity in Liberal Arts Colleges, Lausanne Graduate Dissertation Fellowship, Willamette University, 2007-2008
- Walter Blair Dissertation Fellowship, Department of English, University of Chicago, 2006-2007
- Marcia Tillotson Travel Grant, University of Chicago, Summer 2007
- Division of the Humanities Travel Grant, University of Chicago, Spring 2007
- Trustee Fellowship, Humanities Division of the University of Chicago, 2001-2006
- Marcia Tillotson Travel Grant, University of Chicago, Winter, 2005
- Division of the Humanities Travel Grant, University of Chicago, Winter 2005
- Trustee Scholarship, College of Arts and Sciences, Howard University, 1997-1999

Invited lectures:

- “The Right to Fail: On the Cold War Career of Shirley Graham and W. E. B. Du Bois,” Humanities Center at the University of Pittsburgh, September 24, 2013
- **“Anticommunism and Black Fascism in McKay’s *Amiable With Big Teeth*,” Panel Discussion on Claude McKay’s *Amiable With Big Teeth*, Department of English, U.C. Berkley, November 28, 2012**
- **“William Maxwell’s *So Long, See You Tomorrow*,” Stanford Humanities Center, November 12, 2012**
- **“Invoking Totalitarianism,” Panel on Language and Politics: the Discourse of Power, Litquake San Francisco, October 9, 2012**
- “Invoking Totalitarianism: Jihadism versus Democracy in *The German Mujahid*,” Is the Novel Democratic? Conference, Stanford Center for the Study of the Novel, April 2012
- “African American Culture and the Cold War,” Department of English and American Studies, Universität Rostock, July 17 2009
- “Cold War Public Diplomacy and the Problem of Race,” The Future of Public Diplomacy Seminar, Martin Luther Universität Halle-Wittenberg, July 10-12
- “Richard Wright and the Totalitarian Century,” Department of American Studies, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, July 1, 2009
- “Black Women Writers in the Narrative of Cold War Civil Rights,” Department of American Studies, Universität Leipzig,” June 2009
- “Richard Wright and the Totalitarian Century,” the W.E.B. Du Bois Lecture Series, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, June 2009
- “Toni Morrison and the (Re-)Production of Bad History,” Deutsche Amerikanische Zentrum, Stuttgart, Germany, February 5, 2008

Conferences and Presentations:

- **“Strategies of Containment in Africa: Black American Writers on the Suez Crisis and the French-Algerian War,” American Studies Association Conference, November 14, 2012**
- “Post-Mortem Terror: Totalitarianism and Anticolonial Critique,” Post45 Conference, California Institute of Technology, November 11, 2011
- “‘I Am an Algerian’: Black Literary Intellectuals and the French-Algerian War,” Disputing Diaspora: Reading Black Transnational Literature Against the Grain, American Comparative Literature Association Conference, April 2, 2011
- “On Cosmopolitanism and the Postcolony: Rethinking Richard Wright on Culture,” Richard Wright at 100 Conference, Department of Letters at the University of Beira Interior, Portugal, November 28-29, 2008
- “African American Literature, Totalitarianism, and the Cold War,” Research Colloquium, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, November 4, 2008
- “From Revolution to *Ressentiment*: Purging Slave Morality in Richard Wright’s *The Outsider*,” Futures of American Studies Institute, Dartmouth College, June 20, 2008
- “Black Women Writers in the Narrative of Cold War Civil Rights,” Thinking Gender Conference, UCLA, February 1, 2008

- “Black Writing in the Twilight of Jim Crow,” Faculty Colloquium Presentation, Willamette University, September 28, 2007
- “Baldwin and the Crucible of New Liberalism: U.S. Illegitimacy and Cold War Culture,” James Baldwin: Life, Work, Legacies Conference, Queen Mary, University of London, June 28-30, 2007
- “From Negro Problem to World Color Line: Periodizing Anticolonialism with W.E.B. Du Bois,” American Cultures Workshop, The University of Chicago, May 24, 2007
- “Du Bois, Hannah Arendt, and the End(s) of Western Civilization,” Eyes on the Mosaic Graduate Student Conference, The University of Chicago, April 21, 2007
- “Du Bois, Hannah Arendt, and the End(s) of Western Civilization,” New Directions in African American Literature, Theory, and Cultural Studies Conference, Northwestern University, April 5-6, 2007
- “Liberalism and State of Nature Theory,” Cultural Dynamics of New World Visions and Representations Conference, Université de Grenoble III, Stendhal, December 8-9, 2005

Teaching:

- American Literature and Fascism (Ph.D. seminar), Stanford University, fall 2011
- Introduction to African American Literature, Stanford University, fall 2011
- African American Literature and the Retreat of Jim Crow, spring 2011
- American Culture and the Cold War, Stanford University, fall 2010
- Race and Reunion, with Shelley Fisher Fishkin and Bryan Wolf, Stanford University (postdoctoral teaching fellow)
- Theories of Colonialism, Anticolonialism, and Modernity, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, spring 2009
- African American Literature and Cold War Civil Rights (master’s seminar), Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, spring 2009
- Toni Morrison: Intersections of Race, Gender, and Black Culture, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, fall 2008
- American Culture and the Cold War, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, fall 2008
- The American Novel and the Twilight of Jim Crow, Willamette University, spring 2008
- Postwar American Fiction, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, spring 2007
- Perspectives on Slavery, Ancient and Modern, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, fall 2006
- Perspectives on Slavery, Ancient and Modern, University of Chicago, summer 2006
- Introduction to Literary Criticism and Theory, North Central College, fall 2004
- The Eighteenth Century, North Central College, spring 2004
- The Age of Washington and Du Bois, with Kenneth Warren, University of Chicago, fall 2003 (teaching assistant)
- Introduction to Fiction, with William Veeder, University of Chicago, spring 2003 (teaching assistant)
- Introduction to Research and Composition, Olive-Harvey College, fall 2002

University Service:

- **Faculty participant, Teagle Foundation Project on Collaborative Teaching and the Future of the Humanities, Stanford University, 2012-2013**
- Engaging With Faculty presentation: “From the European Enlightenment to the Global Cold War—Via African American Studies,” New Student Orientation, Stanford University, September 22, 2011
- **Annual guest lecture, Stanford African and African American Studies Program:** “Race, The Second World War, and African American Culture,” Stanford University, February 2, 2011, February 15, 2012, and **October 25, 2012**
- Faculty Mentor for Stanford Mellon Mays Program

Undergraduate and Graduate Supervision:

- **Honors Thesis Advisor for Taylor Dewberry (American Studies) and Annalise Lockhart (English)**
- **Dissertation Committee Member for Ronmel Navas (MTL)**
- **Outside Examination Chair for Sara Mayeaux (History), Adam Morris (DLCL), Andrew Hammann (History), Dennis Jones (DLCL), Raechel Lee (DLCL), Kwami Coleman (Music)**

Professional Service:

- Reader for the *Journal of American Studies*
- Reader for *Telos: Critical Theory of the Contemporary*
- Reader for the U.S.-Poland Fulbright Commission

References:

- Kenneth Warren, University of Chicago, kwarren@uchicago.edu, (773) 702-9761
- Lauren Berlant, University of Chicago, lberlant@aol.com, (773) 702-9760
- Deborah Nelson, University of Chicago, dnelson@uchicago.edu, (773) 702-8540
- Martin Klepper, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, martin.klepper@staff.hu-berlin.de

