

Megan Obourn

Fall 2011

Department of English
SUNY College at Brockport
350 New Campus Drive
Brockport, NY 14420

40 Rowley Street, apt 10
Rochester, NY 14607
Phone: 585-330-2362
E-mail: mobourn@brockport.edu

EDUCATION

- Ph.D.** Department of English, New York University, 2006
Dissertation: "Critical Distances: Liberal Multiculturalism, U.S. Citizenship, and Contemporary American Literature," Director: Phillip Brian Harper
- M.A.** Department of English, New York University, 2000
- B.A.** English Literature & French Language and Literature, Tufts University, summa cum laude, 1998

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Professor of English, English Department State University of New York, College at Brockport	2007-present
Adjunct Professor, School of Liberal Studies and Continuing Education State University of New York, Purchase College	2007
Adjunct Professor, Gallatin School for Individualized Study New York University	2006-2007
Adjunct Professor, Department of Women's Studies and Department of English Pace University	2006-2007
Instructor, Department of English New York University	2004-2005
Teaching Assistant, Department of English New York University	2001-2003

RESEARCH & TEACHING SPECIALIZATIONS

American Literature and Culture, 19 th and 20 th Century	Gender and Sexuality
Multi-ethnic Literatures of the United States	Critical Race Theory
Literary Interpretive Methods and Theory	Critical Writing

PUBLICATIONS

Articles

- "Octavia Butler's Disabled Futures," provisionally accepted, *Contemporary Literature*.
- "Speaking with the Same Weapons: Voice Work in Wright and Hurston," forthcoming, *Twentieth Century Literature*.
- "Arturo Islas's *La Mollie and the King of Tears*," Hispanic American Literature Volume of *The Encyclopedia of Ethnic American Literature*. Ed. Luz Ramirez. Facts on File, 2008. 185-86.
- "Hybridity, Identity, and Representation in *La Mollie and the King of Tears*," *American Literature*, Volume 80, Number 1 (March 2008): 141-66.

“Audre Lorde: Trauma Theory and Liberal Multiculturalism,” *MELUS: The Journal of the Society for the Study of the Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States*, Volume 30, Number 3 (Fall 2005): 219-45.

Book

Reconstituting Americans: Liberal Multiculturalism and Identity Difference in Post-1960s Literature, August 2011, Palgrave.

Under Preparation

“White Guys in Wheelchairs: *Lost*, *Avatar*, and the Appropriation of Disability” (looks at representations of white masculinity as a “wounded” subject position in the recent TV series *Lost* and film *Avatar*)

Disabled Futures: Disability Theory and the Legacies of Identity Politics (book project)

This project looks at how writers including John Okada, Susan Choi, Audre Lorde, Miriam Engelberg, Arturo Islas, Cherrie Moraga and Octavia Butler utilize narratives of disability to represent a future-oriented politics of social identity in a non-idealist framework. Critics have challenged the identity politics model of the late 20th and early 21st centuries as being overly invested in histories of pain and oppression—what Wendy Brown has called “wounded attachments.” This project expands upon Lennard Davis’s suggestion that disability theory allows us to revalue wounds and thereby revalue the wounded attachments of social aspects of identity. The works I discuss exemplify disability theory’s insights that 1) Perhaps something that is wounded is not necessarily something we want to be rid of, 2) wounds can be a site for social identity and pride, and 3) that an ethical politics of identification aims to ameliorate the pain of these wounds without erasing them from existence or memory as a site of identity and identification. It also works to break down the apparently dichotomous nature of queer and disability approaches to futurism and kinship by examining literary texts that rethink and revalue parenthood (and particularly non-white motherhood) by using the limits of ability to expand the limits of intelligibility.

AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS

Nuala McGann Drescher Research Leave Fellowship	Spring 2011
United University Professionals Individual Development Grant	2009
Discretionary Salary Increase for Excellence in Teaching, SUNY Brockport	2009
Dean’s Dissertation Fellowship, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, NYU	2005
Tuttleton Dissertation Fellowship, Department of English, NYU	2004
MacCracken Fellowship, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, NYU	2000-2004

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED LECTURES

“Queering Through Crippling: Butler and Butler,” MLA, Los Angeles, CA, January 2011.

“Economies of Race in the Political Psyche,” co-presented with Annie Lee Jones, Psychoanalysis, Money and the Economy Conference, Birkbeck College & Freud Museum, London, July 2010.

“Jamaica Kincaid’s International Geographic,” American Studies Association of Korea, Seoul, October 2009.

“Rethinking Subjective Universality: Aesthetics and Politics in a Post-post-Kantian Moment,” American Comparative Literature Association Conference, Harvard University, March 2009.

“A Critical Race Analysis of Intrapsychic Space,” Invited lecture, co-presented with Annie Lee Jones, Mental Health Service Grand Rounds, NY Harbor Health Care System, Brooklyn, NY, December 2008.

“Abstract Embodiment and Allegories of Asian Americanness,” MLA, Chicago IL, December 2007.

“Liberal Multiculturalism and the Aesthetics of Internal Distantiation,” SAMLA, Atlanta GA, November 2007.

“Audre Lorde’s *Zami*: Queerness and Culture in the City,” Invited lecture, Faculty Resource Network on Multiculturalism, Cosmopolitanism and Contemporary New York Writing, NYU, June 2007.

“Licensing Whiteness: the Raced and Gendered Metaphorics of the Dead Mother,” Psychoanalysis and Democracy, Association for the Psychoanalysis of Culture and Society, Columbia University, New York NY, October 2004.

“Narrative, Trauma, and the Liberal Multicultural Subject,” Narrative Conference, Society for the Study of Narrative Literature, UVM Middlebury, April 2004.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

SUNY Brockport: Courses Designed and Taught

Asian American Literature (graduate seminar)
American Literature 1920-1950: Lead-up to Civil Rights (graduate seminar)
Critical Approaches to Literature (senior capstone & MA “swing” course)
American Literature after 1950 (senior & MA “swing” course)
Race, Sex, Gender and the Public Sphere (senior seminar)
African American Women Writers (cross-listed with Women’s Studies)
American Women Writers: Women with Weapons (cross-listed with Women’s Studies)
Sex and Gender in Literary Theory (cross-listed with Women’s Studies)
American Literature II Survey: 1865-present
College Composition

SUNY Purchase: Courses Designed and Taught

The Search For Equity: Race, Class, and Gender in America Since 1945

Gallatin School for Individualized Study, New York University: Courses Designed and Taught

Multiculturalism in American Political Thought and Literature
Freshman Writing Seminar: Self-Representation in Writing

Departments of English and Women’s Studies, Pace University: Courses Designed and Taught

Women’s Bodies: Violence and Resistance (Freshman Writing component to a Learning Community, interdisciplinary pairing with Introduction to Women’s Studies)
Women in Literature (cross-listed with Women’s Studies)
Introduction to Women’s Studies Through Civic Engagement (Women’s Studies)

Department of English, New York University: Courses Designed and Taught

Representations of Women
Literary Interpretation (English major gateway course)
Writing New York, Teaching Assistant
American Literature I Survey: beginnings-1865, Teaching Assistant

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES & SERVICE

Faculty Sponsor, SOUL (Sexual Orientations United for Liberation)	2011-present
Faculty Sponsor, English Department Club, SUNY Brockport	2008-present
Chair, Academic Convocation Committee, SUNY Brockport	2009-2010
Member, Women and Gender Studies Board, SUNY Brockport	2007-present
Member, Women and Gender Studies Curriculum Committee, SUNY Brockport	2008-present
Member, English Department Curriculum Committee, SUNY Brockport	2008-present
Organizer, Graduate Student Organizing Committee (GSOC/UAW), NYU	2006
Research and Writing Assistant, Professor Jerome Bruner, NYU	2005-2006
Research Assistant, Professor Elizabeth McHenry, NYU	2000-2004

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Modern Language Association	Society for the Study of Multi-Ethnic Literature of the US
Society for the Study of Narrative Literature	American Comparative Literature Association

REFERENCES

Professor Phillip Brian Harper	New York University Department of English and American Studies 19 University Place, 503; New York, NY 10003 212-998-8831; phil.harper@nyu.edu
Professor Janie Hinds	The College at Brockport, SUNY, English Department 350 New Campus Drive, Brockport, NY 14420 585-395-5712; jhinds@brockport.edu
Professor Elizabeth McHenry	New York University Department of English 19 University Place, 510; New York, NY 10003 212-998-9069; elizabeth.mchenry@nyu.edu
Professor Cyrus R. K. Patell	New York University Department of English 19 University Place, 504; New York, NY 10003 212-998-8827; cyrus.patell@nyu.edu
Professor Ross Posnock	Columbia University, Department of English and Comparative Literature 610 Philosophy Hall; New York, NY 10027 212-854-3215; rp2045@columbia.edu