

# Melissa Barton

Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
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## EMPLOYMENT

**Curator, Drama and Prose, Yale Collection of American Literature,** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, May 2013-present

**Lecturer, Department of English** (secondary appointment), Yale University, 2017-present

**Staff member, Mapping the Stacks Archives Project,** University of Chicago, 2005-2010

## PUBLICATIONS

### Books

*Gather Out of Star-Dust: A Harlem Renaissance Album.* New Haven: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library and Yale University Press, 2017. (Winner of Katharine Kyes Leab and Daniel J. Leab “American Book Prices Current” Exhibition Award)

### Peer-reviewed articles and chapters

“The Problem of the Hero’: The Ensemble and the Star between People’s Theatre and the Committee for the Negro in the Arts,” Chapter in 1940-1950 volume of *African American Literature: In Transition*, edited by Lena Hill and Michael Hill. Cambridge University Press. Under contract.

“Speaking a Mutual Language’: The Negro People’s Theatre in Chicago,” *TDR: The Drama Review*, Fall 2010.

### Other articles

“Teachers Unions into the Twenty-First Century: Lessons from the Chicago Teachers Union Strike.” Commentary for *Teachers College Record*. With Charles Tocci. November 25, 2012. <http://www.tcrecord.org/Content.asp?ContentId=16946>

“What We’ve Learned About Unions Since the Strike.” *Catalyst Chicago*. With Charles Tocci. 29 October 2012. <http://www.catalyst-chicago.org/news/2012/10/29/20560/what-weve-learned-about-unions-strike>. Reprinted in *Education Digest* January 2013.

## EXHIBITIONS

“BRAVA! Women Make American Theater,” Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Fall 2021.

“*Native Son* on Stage and Screen” in “Plus: The Art of Collaboration,” Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, January-April 2018.

“Gather Out of Star-Dust: The Harlem Renaissance and Beinecke Library,” Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, January-April 2017.

“Destined to be Known: The James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection at 75,” Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, September-December 2016. Co-curated with Nancy Kuhl.

Contributor, “New Acquisitions at Beinecke Library,” Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, September-December 2016.

“Casting Shadows: Integration on the American Stage,” Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, January-April 2015.

## **MAJOR ACQUISITIONS**

Gwendolyn Bennett Papers

Robert Olen Butler Papers

Sid Caesar Scripts

E. Simms Campbell, original artwork for *A Night-Club Map of Harlem*

Jonathan Dodd Collection of Stephen Sondheim, Tennessee Williams, and Edward Albee

Walter O. Evans Collection of James Baldwin

Brian Evenson Papers

Merill Joan Gerber Papers

Ming Cho Lee Designs and Papers

Jonathan Lethem Papers

David Milch Papers

Gregory Mosher Papers relating to David Mamet

Sarah Ruhl Papers

Irene Sharaff Designs and Papers

Maureen Stapleton Papers

Paula Vogel Papers

Maurine Dallas Watkins Papers

## **SELECTED EVENT PLANNING AND COORDINATION**

James Weldon Johnson Memorial Lecture, inviting a distinguished scholar of African American Studies, Beinecke Library, annually, 2014-present.

Pathways to Arts and Humanities Fall Orientation, Office of New Haven and State Affairs and Beinecke Library, September 2018.

*Native Son*: The Restored Print from Library of Congress, screening, Whitney Humanities Center, February 2018.

The Celluloid Paper Trail: Descriptive Cataloging, Evaluation, and Valuation of Film Scripts and Photographs in Twentieth Century American Cinema, Spring Master Class (Kevin Johnson, Instructor), Beinecke Library, May 2017.

The Negro Speaks of Rivers: Voice of the Harlem Renaissance, concert performance, Lisa Williamson, soprano, February 2017.

## **GRADUATE/UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING**

Lecturer, *African American Literature in the Archives*, Yale University, Fall 2017, Spring 2019, Spring 2020

A full-semester course meeting regularly at Beinecke Library.

**Dissertation Committee**, Shayne McGregor, untitled project on the history of African American literary criticism, English/African American Studies, Spring 2019-present

**Second Reader**, Senior Essay in African American Studies, Spring 2019

**Visiting Faculty**, The Archive: Theory, Form, Practice (Liesl Olson, Instructor), Newberry Library, Chicago, IL, December 2018

**Special Collections Classroom Presentations**, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT, 2013-present

Presented collection material and taught special collections research and interpretation methods to approximately 30 class groups of graduate and undergraduate students annually in the departments or programs of African American Studies, American Studies, Art History, English, History, Humanities, Forestry and Environmental Science, School of Drama, and Theater Studies

**Supervisor, Graduate Student Professional Development Fellowship Program**, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Yale University, New Haven, CT, 2016-present

Supervise advanced graduate students on project to create web content for the James Weldon Johnson Collection as part of new initiative in Graduate School of Arts and Sciences to provide non-teaching professional development fellowships for students.

**Mentor, Student Research at YUL Fall Exhibit**, Yale University Library, Fall 2016 and Fall 2018

Mentored students in preparing an exhibition of current research for the fall joint student research exhibit. Advised on item selection, layout, and writing of exhibition text.

**Course Assistant**, The University of Chicago, Chicago IL

Black Women Writers in the 1940s and 1950s, Spring 2009

**Lecturer**, The University of Chicago, Chicago IL

Staging Race: African Americans and Theater in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (self-designed course), Autumn 2008

**Lecturer**, The University of Chicago, Chicago IL

Critical Perspectives, Winter 2008

**Course Assistant**, The University of Chicago, Chicago IL

Critical Perspectives, Autumn 2007

**Course Assistant**, The University of Chicago, Chicago IL

Ulysses, Winter 2007

**Graduate Student Mentor**, Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Summer Research Training Program, Summer 2006, 2007

Advised research project of a visiting recipient of the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship. Met weekly with student, demonstrated research methods, guided development of annotated bibliography, and read and commented on drafts of research proposal.

## **K-12 TEACHING**

**Teacher of English Language Arts**, Eric Solorio Academy High School, Chicago, IL, 2011-2013

**Resident Teacher**, Academy for Urban School Leadership, Chicago Academy High School, 2010-2011

**Teacher of English and Theater**, Westtown School, Westtown, PA, 2002-2004

**Instructor**, Excel Bennington/Putney Student Travel, Bennington, VT, Summer 2003

## **PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **Invited Lectures and Presentations**

“Hidden Archives and Archival Stewardship,” The Newberry Library, Chicago, IL, December 2018.

“The Harlem Renaissance Revisited,” Providence Athenaeum, Providence, RI, December 2018.  
With Nancy Kuhl.

“An Imagined Encounter: Langston Hughes and Xavier Villaurrutia,” Conversation with John Keene, Windham-Campbell Prize Festival, Yale University, September 2018.

“A conversation about Richard Wright and *Native Son*,” Yale Repertory Theatre, December 2017.

“Drama,” Guest Lecture, Introduction to Creative Writing, Yale University, October 2017.

Guest Speaker, Integrating Born-Digital Materials: Archival Standards and Approaches, Rare Book School (Bill Landis and Gabriela Redwine, Instructors), Yale University, June 2017.

“Jean Toomer’s *Cane* and Modernism,” Guest Lecture, The Harlem Renaissance, Yale University, March 2017.

“Gather Out of Star-Dust: The Harlem Renaissance and the Beinecke Library,” James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA, February 2017.

“New Wilder Materials in the Beinecke Library,” Thornton Wilder Society Annual Conference, Newport, RI, June 2015.

“The James Weldon Johnson Collection in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” Callaloo Conference, Atlanta, GA, October 2014.

“Adapting *Native Son*: A Conversation,” Panel discussion with Arnold Rampersad, Kenneth Warren, and Nambi Kelley, Court Theatre and DuSable Museum of African American History, Chicago, IL, October 2014.

Moderator, “Ideas Talk: Reggie Wilson and Zora Neale Hurston Scholars,” International Festival of Arts and Ideas, New Haven, CT, June 2014.

“Chicago in These Times: What Keeps School Reformers Going?” National-Louis University, Chicago Shakespeare Theater and Golden Apple Foundation, Chicago, IL, May 2011.

“Race in America: A Discussion with No Walls.” Timeline Theatre Company, Chicago, IL, December 2008.

### **Conference and Workshop Presentations**

“‘The Content of Their Character’: Integration and the Color of Method Acting,” *Theatre Symposium* Conference, May 2020. (Canceled by coronavirus pandemic)

“Those Lists Tho,” Black Bibliography Project Conference, Yale University, November 2019.

Co-Organizer, Black Bibliography Project Workshop, Beinecke Library, January 2019.

Co-Organizer, Black Bibliography Project Workshop, Beinecke Library, May 2018.

“‘The Problem of the Hero’: Staging Bigger Thomas’s Environmental Liberation,” Society for Novel Studies, Cornell University, May 2018.

“Pop-up Exhibit Assignment at Beinecke Library,” RIO (Reference, Instruction, and Outreach Committee) Lightning Talk, Yale University Library, August 2018.

“On +: The Art of Collaboration,” Mondays at Beinecke Series, January 2018. With Nancy Kuhl and Elizabeth Frengel.

“*Native Son* and Richard Wright at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library,” Yale Repertory Theater Will Power Teacher Workshop, October 2017

Presenter and Materials Workshop Coordinator, Black Bibliography Project Think Tank, Beinecke Library, October 2017.

“The 1917 Silent Protest Parade” in roundtable “Visual Cultures of Black Modernity,” Modernist Studies Association Conference, Amsterdam, August 2017.

“Gather Out of Star-Dust: The Harlem Renaissance and the Beinecke Library,” exhibition wrap-up, Mondays at Beinecke Series, April 2017.

Presenter, Black Bibliography Project Think Tank, Rutgers University-New Brunswick, March 2017.

“On the 1932 *Night-Club Map of Harlem*,” Mondays at Beinecke Series, January 2017.

Exhibition tour and presentation of Beinecke Resources for Cooperative Arts and Humanities High School Staff, Beinecke Library, October 2016.

Conference recap of “Mixing Hands-On with Do-Not-Touch,” SCOPA, Yale University Library, October 2016.

“Mixing Hands-On with Do-Not-Touch: Workshop Session on Teaching with Special Collections,” RBMS Conference, Association of College and Research Libraries, Coral Gables, FL, June 2016. With Molly Schwartzburg.

James Weldon Johnson Exhibition Preview for New Haven Public School Librarians, Beinecke Library, May 2016.

Workshop on Research, American Literature in the World, Yale University Department of English, April 2016.

Moderator, “A Conversation with Paula Vogel,” Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT, October 2015.

“Gallery Talk: Paul Robeson as Othello,” Mondays at Beinecke Series, New Haven, CT, February 2015.

“Claude McKay Papers from the James Weldon Johnson Collection,” Caribbean Collections Open House, New Haven, CT, November 2014.

“*Native Son* on Stage,” Research Workshop with Yale Lit, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, November 2014.

“Collecting Born Digital Material,” Round Table Discussion, Diasporic Literary Archives, Yale University, New Haven, CT, October 2014.

Respondent, “Preserving Print Culture: Scholarly and Pedagogical Challenges and Possibilities in African American Archives,” African American Expression in Print and Digital Culture, Center for the History of Print and Digital Culture, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI September 2014.

“The Problem of the Hero: Staging Bigger Thomas’s Environmental Liberation,” American Literature Association, Washington, D.C., May 2014.

Workshop on Research, American Literature in the World, Yale University Department of English, April 2014.

“Gallery Talk: *St. Louis Woman*,” Mondays at Beinecke Series, New Haven, CT, March 2014.

“Robust Vocabulary Development: Helping Kids Learn and Apply New Words in Any Class.” (With Julie Price Daly.) AMPS and Area 1 Summer Summit. Chicago Public Schools, Chicago, IL, June 2011.

“Voices from the South: Frances Ellen Watkins Harper’s *Iola Leroy* and Styles of Public Black Womanhood,” University of Chicago Department of English Graduate Conference, Chicago, IL, October 2007.

“Where the Civil War Failed’: Race, Region, and the Merit of Amalgamation in George Schuyler’s *Black No More*,” College English Association Annual Conference, San Antonio, TX, April 2006.

“Wright’s ‘Blueprint,’ Left-over Plans: Writers-Who-Are-Black Mapping a New Renaissance at Mid-Century,” American Cultures Workshop, University of Chicago, April 2006.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPERVISORY EXPERIENCE**

#### **Partner Repository Liaison, Black Bibliography Project, 2017-present**

Provide strategic advice on materials from James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection; liaise and coordinate between five-member team of catalog and metadata librarians from YUL for Mellon Foundation funded project

**Co-Chair, Instruction and Classroom Task Force**, Beinecke Library, 2017-2019

**Supervisor**, Beinecke Library Summer Internship Program for LIS Students, Summer 2018

**Lead Curator**, Beinecke Library, July 2016-August 2017

**Beinecke Library Strategic Planning Working Group**, Spring 2017

**Beinecke Library Department Heads**, Beinecke Library, July 2015-August 2017

### **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

**Cultural Heritage IT Steering Committee**, Yale University Office of the Provost/Information Technology Services, October 2017-present

**Cross-Collection Discovery Working Group**, Yale University Office of the Provost/Information Technology Services, 2018-present

**Cultural Heritage Rights Working Group**, Yale University Office of the Provost/Information Technology Services, 2020-present

**Windham-Campbell Prize Steering Committee**, Beinecke Library, May 2013-present (ex-officio)

**Instruction and Outreach Committee**, Association of College and Research Libraries, Rare Book and Manuscript Section, July 2017-June 2019

**Standing Committee on Beinecke IT**, Beinecke Library, Fall 2017-2019

**College/First Year Adviser**, Silliman College and Timothy Dwight College, August 2015-present

**Mentor**, Mellon-Mays Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program, Yale University, Summer 2018

**Mentor**, HistoryKeepers Archives Program, Yale Manuscripts and Archives and Afro-American Cultural Center, 2017-2018

**Mentor**, Gallery 344 Exhibit Program, Beinecke Library, 2018

**Search Committee for Processing Archivist**, Beinecke Library, November 2018

**Search Committee for Wilder Family Papers Project Archivist**, Beinecke Library, Fall 2016

**Search Committee for Visiting Archivist for African American Collections**, Summer 2016

**Working Group on Use of Third-Party Digital Images and Audio-Visual Materials**, Yale University Office of General Counsel, January-May 2016

**Standing Committee on Professional Awareness (SCOPA)**, Yale University Library, January 2014-June 2016

**Search Committee for Assistant Head of Access Services**, Beinecke Library, October 2015-February 2016

**YFAD + ArchivesSpace Working Group**, Yale University Library, October 2015-present  
Responsible for assisting with the implementation of the ArchivesSpace Public Interface at Yale, reporting to the ArchivesSpace Committee; provide feedback and testing on design, development, and user experience.

**Staff Communication and Content Management Working Group**, Beinecke Library, September-December 2013

**Search Committee for Processing Archivist**, Beinecke Library, May 2014-July 2014

**Search Committee for Catalog-Metadata Librarian**, Yale University Library, June-July 2014

**Small Learning Communities (Advisory) Committee**, Eric Solorio Academy High School, 2012-2013

**Project-Based Learning Professional Learning Community**, Eric Solorio Academy High School, 2012-2013

**Delegate**, Chicago Teachers Union, 2012

**Reading Intervention Professional Learning Community**, Academy for Urban School Leadership, 2011-2012

**Coordinator**, The University of Chicago American Cultures Workshop, 2006-2008

**Co-Chair**, English Department Graduate Student Policy Committee, 2005-2006

**Member**, Graduate Student Evaluation Committee for Spring 2006 Tenure Review

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **Workshop and Course Participation**

Mastering Difficult Conversations, Yale Learning Center, July 2018

Appraisal, Accessioning and Ingest of Digital Records, Society of American Archivists, New Haven, CT, June 2016

Copyright for Educators and Librarians, Duke University non-credit Coursera course, August 2014

The American Book in the Industrial Era, Michael Winship, Rare Book School, Charlottesville, VA, August 2013

Born Digital, Matthew Kirschenbaum and Naomi Nelson, Rare Book School, Charlottesville, VA, June 2013

## **FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS**

Katharine Kyes Leab and Daniel J. Leab “American Book Prices Current” Exhibition Award, 2018

Walter and Carol Blair Dissertation Year Write-Up Fellowship, 2009-2010

Century Fellowship, The University of Chicago, 2004-2009

Billops Hatch Research Fellowship, Emory University Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library, 2009

First Place, *TDR* Student Essay Contest, 2009

Provost Summer Fellowship, The University of Chicago, 2007

Maramarco Research Travel Award, Department of English, The University of Chicago, 2007

Marcia Tillotson Travel Award, Department of English, The University of Chicago, Spring 2006

Phi Beta Kappa, Yale University, 2002

Ralph Paine Memorial Prize for Best English Senior Essay, Yale University, 2002

William Pickens Prize for Excellence in African American Studies, Yale University, 2002

## **TEACHING AWARDS**

Nominee, Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Teaching, 2013

Maclean Fellowship, Department of English, The University of Chicago, 2007-2008

## **EDUCATION**

**Ph.D. in English Language and Literature**, December 2012

The University of Chicago, Chicago, IL

Dissertation: "Staging Liberation: Race, Representation, and Forms of American Theatre, 1934-1965." Advisors: Kenneth Warren and Jacqueline Goldsby

**M.A. in Teaching**, June 2011

National-Louis University, Chicago, IL

**M.A. in English Language and Literature**, December 2005

The University of Chicago, Chicago, IL

**B.A. with distinction in English Language and Literature**, *magna cum laude*, May 2002

Yale University, New Haven, CT

## **LANGUAGES**

Spanish: proficient reading and speaking

German: basic reading

Latin: basic reading

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

Modern Language Association

American Studies Association

American Library Association, Association of College and Research Libraries, Rare Book and Manuscript Section

Theatre Library Association