

## CALEB SMITH

Professor of English and American Studies, Yale University  
PO Box 208302  
New Haven, CT 06520

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### EDUCATION

Duke University, Durham, NC

PhD, English, 2005

University of California, Berkeley  
BA, English, 1999, Highest Honors

### ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Yale University, 2005-present  
Professor of English, tenured and promoted spring 2012  
Secondary Appointment in American Studies, 2007-present

### HONORS, FELLOWSHIPS, and EDITORIAL APPOINTMENTS

George P. Lacay endowed lecture, Georgetown University, invited for spring 2019  
Editorial Board, *American Literature*, spring 2017-present  
Contributing Editor, *Los Angeles Review of Books*, 2014-present  
Institute Faculty, Futures of American Studies Institute, Dartmouth College, 2008, 2013-2016  
Heyman Prize for Outstanding Scholarly Publication by a Junior Faculty Member in the  
Humanities, Yale University, for *The Prison and the American Imagination*, 2009  
Whitney Humanities Center Fellowship, Yale University, 2008-09  
Morse Junior Faculty Fellowship, one year research leave, Yale University, 2008-09  
Hilles Publication Award (subvention), Whitney Humanities Center, 2008  
Foerster Prize Honorable Mention, MLA Division on American Literature, 2006  
Middlesworth Award for outstanding work using Duke University Special Collections, 2005  
Ashbel Brice Dissertation Fellowship in American Literature, Duke University, 2003-04  
Steven Horne Teaching Award, Duke English Department, 2004  
Editorial Intern, *Bomb Magazine*, 2001  
Reader, *The Paris Review*, New York City, 2001  
W.W. Norton Scholar's Prize, 1999  
Pushcart Prize nomination, 1998

## **RESEARCH and PUBLICATIONS**

### Books

*Worldly Devotion: A History of Distraction and the Arts of Attention*. Manuscript in progress.  
Final draft planned for June 2020.

*The Life and the Adventures of a Haunted Convict*, by Austin Reed. Edited and with an Introduction by Caleb Smith, with a Preface by David W. Blight and Robert B. Stepto. New York: Random House, 2016. Paperback edition (Modern Library) January 2017.

Selected press: *New York Times*; National Public Radio; *Atlantic Monthly*; *O: The Oprah Magazine*; *Harper's*; *Washington Post*; *San Francisco Chronicle*; *Boston Review*; *Huffington Post*; *Smithsonian Magazine*; *Publisher's Weekly*; *Library Journal*; *Journal of American History*; *Reviews in American History*.

*The Oracle and the Curse: A Poetics of Justice from the Revolution to the Civil War*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013.

Selected reviews: *American Literature*; *American Literary History*; *College Literature*; *Commonplace*; *Choice Reviews*; *Civil War Book Rev.*; *Journal of Southern History*; *19th-Century Literature*; *Novel*.

*The Prison and the American Imagination*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009. Paperback edition, 2011.

Heyman Prize for outstanding publication by a junior faculty member in the humanities at Yale, 2009. Selected reviews: *NewYorker.com*; *American Literary History*; *American Literature*; *Chronicle of Higher Education Review*; *Novel*; *Crime, Media, Culture*.

### Special series/journal issue

*No Crisis: a Los Angeles Review of Books* special series and journal issue on criticism in the 21st century, edited by Merve Emre, Sarah Mesle, and Caleb Smith, online January-October, 2015. Print edition, *LARB Quarterly Review*, winter 2016.

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles and Book Chapters

“Disciplines of Attention in a Secular Age.” *Critical Inquiry* (forthcoming, accepted April 2018).

Preface to *Prison Pedagogy: Teaching and Learning from Imprisoned Writers*, ed. Joe Lockard and Sherry Rankins-Robertson. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2018.

“Histories of the Present in Law and Literature.” In Elizabeth S. Anker and Bernadette Meyler, eds. *New Directions in Law and Literature*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2017.

“Crime Scenes: Fictions of Security in the Antebellum American Borderlands.” In Martha Nussbaum, Richard McAdams, and Alison LaCroix, eds. *Fatal Fictions: Crime and Investigation in Law and Literature*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016.

“Imprisonment without Justice.” In Austin Sarat, ed., *The Punitive Imagination*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2014.

“Prison.” In Glenn Hendler and Bruce Burgett, eds. *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2014.

“From the Critique of Power to the Poetics of Justice.” *J19: The Journal of Nineteenth-Century Americanists* 1:1 (Spring 2013). Invited contribution to inaugural issue.

“Harriet Jacobs among the Militants: Transformations in Abolition’s Public Sphere, 1859-61.” *American Literature* 84:4 (December 2012).

“Harry Hawser’s Fate: Eastern State Penitentiary and the Birth of Prison Literature.” In Michele Tarter and Richard Bell, eds. *Buried Lives: Voices from the Early American Prison*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011.

“American Undead: Teaching the Cultural Life of Civil Death.” In A. Sarat, M. Anderson, and C. Frank, eds. *Approaches to Teaching Law and Literature*. New York: Modern Language Association, 2011.

“Torture, Interrogation, and American Modernist Literature.” *Northern Illinois Law Review* 29:2 (Spring 2009).

“Detention without Subjects: Prisons and the Poetics of Living Death.” In *Cultures of Detention*, Special Issue of *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 50:3 (September 2008).

“Bodies Electric: Gender, Technology, and the Limits of the Human, Circa 1900.” *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature* 41:2 (June 2008).

“Emerson and Incarceration.” *American Literature* 78:2 (June 2006). Foerster Prize honorable mention from the MLA Division on American Literature.

## Essays

“In a Different Light.” In Okwui Enwezor, ed. *James Casebere: Fugitive*. Munich: Prestel, 2016.

“Gay Marriage Plots.” *Avidly/Los Angeles Review of Books*, September 2015.

“Introducing *No Crisis*.” *Los Angeles Review of Books*, February 2015.

“Charismatic Malediction, or Martyrdom in Antebellum America.” *The Immanent Frame*, October 15, 2014.

“Ferguson’s Literary History.” Group essay. *Avidly/LARB*, August 22, 2014.

“Say Hello to My Little Friend.” *Avidly/LARB*, July 17, 2013.

“Sad, but True.” *Avidly/LARB*, July 24, 2012.

“Williams’ ‘Pastoral (When I Was Younger).’” *Explicator* 64:3 (Spring 2006).

“Solitude and Freedom.” *Postmodern Culture* 14:3 (July 2004).

## Reviews and Interviews

“The Art of Debunking”: Review of *Credulity* by Emily Ogden. *The Immanent Frame* (forthcoming).

Review of *Civic Longing* by Carrie Hyde. *Nineteenth-century Literature* (forthcoming).

“Crime Genres as Curiosities.” Review of *Literature and Criminal Justice in Antebellum America* by Carl Ostrowski. *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* (forthcoming).

Review of *The Gist of Reading* by Andrew Elfenbein. *Critical Inquiry*, July 2018.

Caleb Smith and Bashaun Brown, “In for Doom: Austin Reed’s *The Life and the Adventures of a Haunted Convict*.” *Los Angeles Review of Books*, August 26, 2016.

Review of *Can’t and Won’t* by Lydia Davis. *Yale Review* (Fall 2014).

“Late Don Draper, or Television at Stage Nine.” *Avidly/LARB*, May 12, 2014.

## Reviews and Interviews (continued)

“Poe in Hard Times.” Review of *Terror of the Soul* at the Morgan Library and Museum. *LARB*, November 26, 2013.

“See Something Say Something: Chris Burden’s *Porsche with Meteorite*.” *Paper Monument* (online), Fall 2013.

“A Spectacle in Love.” Review of *The Great Gatsby*, dir. Baz Luhrmann. *LARB*, June 6, 2013.

“Spaces of Punitive Violence.” Review of *Prisons of Poverty* by Loïc Wacquant, *Criticism* (Winter 2013).

Review of *The Flame Alphabet* by Ben Marcus. *Yale Review* (December 2012).

Review of *Someday This Will Be Funny* by Lynne Tillman. *Yale Review* (January 2012).

Review of *The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet* by David Mitchell. *Yale Review* (April 2011).

“Prison as Resurrection: Ten Questions for Caleb Smith.” *Religion Dispatches*, Oct. 23, 2009.

Review of *Forced Passages* by Dylan Rodriguez and *Fitting Sentences* by Jason Haslam, *American Literature* (March 2007).

Review of *Surrealism and the Exotic* by Louise Tythacott, *American Anthropologist* (March 2005).

“The Collaborator and the Multitude: An Interview with Michael Hardt” (with Enrico Minardi). *Minnesota Review* 61 (Spring 2004).

Review of *Edison and the Electric Chair* by Mark Essig, *Bomb* (Fall 2003).

Interview with Reynolds Price. *Bomb* (Summer 2002).

## Invited lectures and presentations

“Disciplines of Attention.” University of Toronto, March 2018; University of Colorado, April 2018; UCLA Americanist Research Colloquium, May 2018.

“Attending to Earthly Things.” Dartmouth Summer Institute for American Studies, June 2016.

Invited lectures and presentations (continued)

- “Race and Performance in the Prison Archive: *The Life and the Adventures of a Haunted Convict*.” Cornell University, October 2015; Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, June 2016; American Antiquarian Society, September 2016; Northwestern University, October 2016; University of Texas, November 2016; University of Rochester, February 2017; University of Tampa, February 2018; University of Southern California, February 2018.
- “On the Type of Writing Known as ‘Reading.’” Dartmouth Summer Institute for American Studies, June 2015.
- “Crime Scenes: Fictions of Security in the Antebellum American Borderlands.” University of Maryland, May 2014; University of Texas, February 2014; University of Pennsylvania, February 2014; University of Chicago Law School, February 2014.
- “Symptoms, Surfaces, and the Poetics of Justice.” Penn State University, April 2014.
- “Imprisonment without Justice.” University of Pennsylvania, February 2014; Mahindra Institute, Harvard University, November 2013; Princeton University, April 2013; University of Alabama Law School, September 2012.
- “Charismatic Abjection.” Dartmouth Summer Institute for American Studies, June 2013; Syracuse University, April 2013.
- “The Prison Crisis and the Historical Imagination,” Princeton University Center for African American Studies, March 2011; CUNY Graduate Center, April 2011.
- “Blasphemy and Evil Speaking ‘At the Court of Hell,’” Vanderbilt Univ., March 2011.
- “The Prison and the American Imagination.” Carleton Lecture, Bates College, spring 2010; Hunter College, spring 2010; Connecticut College, spring 2010; Hartman-Hotz Lecture in Law and Liberal Arts, Univ. of Arkansas Law School, Nov. 2009.
- “The American Curse: Law, Language, and the ‘Confessions of Nat Turner’ (1831).” Plenary lecture, Dartmouth Summer Institute for American Studies, June 2008.
- “The ‘Mongrel’ Atlantic: Herman Melville’s Afterlives.” Plenary lecture, *The Literature of the Middle Passage* conference, Nkrumah Centre, Univ. of Ghana, November 2007.
- “New Egos: Modernism and the Media.” Communication Theory Group, Univ. of Louisiana, March 2007.

## **TEACHING and ADVISING**

Areas of specialization: American literature, including African American and American Indian literatures; law and literature; prison studies; critical theory.

### Dissertation committees

Tom Koenigs (2009-2014), Assistant Professor of English, Scripps College  
Leslie Jamison (2011-2015), Assistant Professor of Writing, Columbia University  
Ryan Carr (2008-2016), Post-doctoral fellow, Newberry Library (spring 2018)  
Sarah Robbins (2014-present); Stephen Krewson (2014-present); Jason Bell (2016-present); Ittai Orr (2017-present)

### Graduate seminars

Transformations of the Confession: Slavery, Secularism, Sexuality  
Reading, Attention, and Distraction  
Prison Studies and Prison Literature  
Literary Studies and the Critique of Power  
Antebellum American Literature and Culture

### Undergraduate lectures and seminars

Love and Hate in the American South (lecture)  
American Literature, Civil War to World War I (lecture)  
The Literature of the Middle Passage (senior seminar traveling to Ghana, fall 2007)  
William Faulkner (senior seminar)  
Law and Literature (junior seminar)  
American Literature and the History of Punishment (junior seminar)  
Early American Literature: Savages, Witches, Prisoners, Slaves (junior seminar)  
American Literature in the Electric Age (junior seminar)  
Readings in American Literature (introductory)

### Prison education

Readings in American literature, summer 2018, Walker-MacDougall Correctional Institution through Yale Prison Education Initiative  
Readings in American literature, spring 2015, Cheshire Correctional Institution through Wesleyan University Center for Prison Education

## PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS and SERVICE

### Memberships

Modern Language Association  
American Studies Association  
C19

### Service

#### *In the fields of literary and cultural studies*

Fellowship application reviewer: National Endowment for the Humanities; Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada; Beinecke Library

Book manuscript referee: University of Chicago Press; Harvard University Press; NYU Press; Yale University Press

Article manuscript referee: *PMLA*; *American Literature*; *American Quarterly*; *Journal of the Early Republic*; *J19*; *ESQ*; *Post-45*; *Mosaic*; *Society and Space*; *Journal of Law, Culture, and Humanities*.

Promotion and tenure referee: University of Texas; Indiana University; Fordham University; CUNY/Hunter College; University of Wyoming; Scripps College; Georgetown University; Tufts University; University of Toronto; University of California, Santa Barbara; Macalester College; University of Rochester.

#### *At Yale (University-wide)*

Humanities Tenure and Appointments Committee, 2015-16, 2017-present  
Beinecke Library Advisory Committee, 2012-2016  
Beinecke Library curator search committees, 2012, 2014  
Freshman Advisor, Calhoun College (now Hopper College), 2007-08, 2014-15  
Chair, Graduate School Committee on Academic Grievances, Fall 2013  
Fact-finder to the Executive Committee, Yale College, 2012-13  
Yale College Course of Study Committee, 2011-12  
Frederick Douglass Prize Review Committee, Gilder Lehrman Center, 2011  
Beinecke Research Fellowship Committee, 2010-11, 2012-13  
Committee on Teaching in the Residential Colleges, 2009-10  
Symposium organizer, *From the Plantation to the Prison*, 2008



*(Service, continued) In the Departments of English and American Studies*

Director of Graduate Studies, English., January 2015-present  
Senior Appointments Committee, English 2014-15, 2017-18  
Promotion Review Committee Chair, English and African American Studies, 2017  
Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies, English., 2009-10, 2011-13  
Promotion Review Committee Chair, American Studies, 2015  
Aims and Procedures Committee (elected), English., 4 academic years  
Undergraduate Studies Committee, English., 2007-08, '09-10, 2011-13  
Convener, Theory and Media Studies Colloquium, English., 2011-12  
Americanist Colloquium, English., ongoing  
PTAI (Graduate Student Teaching) Committee, American Studies, 2007-08  
Director, Graduate Student Colloquium, Duke English Dept., 2001-05

**LANGUAGES**

Italian: advanced speaking, reading and writing knowledge. Graduated with highest honors, Università per Stranieri, Siena, Italy, Spring 1998.

French: reading and speaking knowledge. Completed five semesters, including upper-division reading and composition, UC Berkeley, 1995-97.

Spanish: basic reading and speaking knowledge. Private instruction, 2007-2009.