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Curriculum Vitae

**Robert Burns Stepto**

Professor of African American Studies, American Studies and English  
Yale University

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**Education:** Ph. D., English and American Literature, Stanford University, 1974  
(Advisor in English Literature: Ian Watt; Advisor in American Literature: David Levin)  
M.A., English Literature, Stanford University, 1968  
B. A., Trinity College, Hartford, 1966 (*cum laude*, Honors in English)  
University of Chicago Laboratory Schools, 1951-1962

**Fellowships:** Yale Senior Faculty Fellowship, 1981-82  
NEH Research Fellowship, 1981-82  
Morse Fellowship (Yale), 1977-78  
1900 Fund Research Grants (Williams), 1972, 1973  
Woodrow Wilson Fellowship (used at Stanford), 1966-67

**Recent Lectures, Talks:** Inauguration of Meghan Hughes (Yale '95) as President of Community College of Rhode Island (September 2016); Panelist on Immersive Learning, Middlebury College (July 2016); Moderator, Colloquium on *The Life and Adventures of a Haunted Convict*, Yale (March 2016); Presenter, "Bearden and Lawrence: Migrations," Columbia University (February. 2015); Robert Hayden Centennial Celebration (AFAM/YUAG, December, 2013); Yale English 127 Plenary Lecture (on Ellison's *Invisible Man*; October 2013); Teaching Across the Arts Panel, Bread Loaf School of English (July 2013); Martin Luther King, Jr., January 2013 holiday presentation, Congregation B'nai Jacob, Woodbridge; International Institute, Madrid, lecture sponsored by the Yale Club of Madrid (March, 2012); Complutense University, Madrid, lecture sponsored by the US Embassy, Madrid (March. 2012); Trinity College Alumni Association Black History Month Lecture (February, 2012, New York City); Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences (February 2012); Reading, Calhoun College Fellows Meeting (February, 2012); Yale Art Gallery presentation, "Embodied: Black Identities in American Art," (April 2011); Peters Rushton Lecture in American Literature, U of Virginia (March 2011); delivered three W. E. B. Du Bois Lectures, Harvard (April 2009); Abernathy Lecture in American Literature, Middlebury (April

2009); read from "Greyhound Kind of Mood," African American History and Memory Conference, Yale (April 2009); "John Brown in the Art of Thomas Hovenden, Jacob Lawrence, and Horace Pippin," Gilder Lehrman Conference on John Brown, Yale (October 2009).

**Recent Publications:**

with David Blight, Foreword to Caleb Smith, ed., *The Life and the Adventures of a Haunted Convict* (Random House, 2016).

Reviewed Kimberly Hartnett's *Carolina Israelite: How Harry Golden Made Us Care about Jews, the South, and Civil Rights*, *Washington Post*, June 26, 2015.

Ed. with Jennifer Rae Greeson, *Norton Critical Edition of Charles Chesnutt's Conjure Stories* (New York: Norton, 2012). Introduction by Robert B. Stepto (pp. vii-xxvii).

*A Home Elsewhere: Reading African American Classics in the Age of Obama* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2010). This volume includes my 2009 Du Bois lectures at Harvard.

**Recent Interviews:**

NPR/**All Things Considered** (February 2016), about the Caleb Smith book cited above. US Embassy (Madrid, 3/2012); Trinity College **Reporter** (Winter 2012); **Issues in Higher Education** (IHE) with Serena Golden, 3/2010)

**Publication Awards:** Notable American Essay of 2001 and Pushcart Prize nomination for "Greyhound Kind of Mood," *New England Review* 22:1; Notable American Essay of 1997 for "Hyde Park," *Callaloo* 20:1; Notable American Essay of 1996 for "Black Piano," *Callaloo* 19:1; Notable American Essay of 1995 for "Woodlawn," *New England Review* 17:1

**Other Awards:** Trinity College: 175th Anniversary Alumni Award, 1999; Alumni Medal for Excellence, 1986

Bread Loaf School of English: Frank and Eleanor Griffiths Chair Professor of English, 2007; Robert Frost Chair Professor of English, 1995

**Teaching Experience-Full Time:** At Yale since 1974 in African American Studies, American Studies, and English; full Professor since 1984. At Williams College, 1971-74, as Assistant Professor of English and American Civilization.

**Teaching-Special Assignments:** Bread Loaf School of English, Summers, 1990-2016; Interim Director at Bread Loaf, Vermont, 1995-2000, 2006  
School of Criticism and Theory, Dartmouth, Summer, 1988  
Council for the Humanities, Princeton, Spring, 1988  
Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute Seminars, 1985, 1988, 1991  
NEH Summer Seminar for College Teachers, Yale, 1981  
Director, MLA/NEH Summer Seminar on Afro-American Literature, Yale, 1977

**Yale Administrative Experience:** African American Studies, Chair, 2005-08, Acting Chair, spring 2000, DGS, 22 semesters during 1978-99 & 2013-14, DUS, 1974-77; American Studies, Acting Chair, fall 1991, Acting DGS, spring 1991 & fall 1996; Chair, Theater Studies Advisory Committee, 2001-04

**Pertinent Committee Work at Yale and in Yale College:**

Advisor, Black Pulp! Exhibition, Yale School of Art, Fall 2014 & 2015  
Chair, Calhoun College Master Advisory Committee, Spring 2014  
Eli Whitney Student Advisory Committee, Yale College, 2009-10  
Faculty Advisory Committee for Beinecke Manuscript & Rare Book Library, 2005--  
Search Committee for an Associate Dean of Yale College, 2006-07  
Chair, Wrexham Prize, Yale College, 2000  
Morse Fellowship Selection Committee, 1998, 1999  
Yale College Executive Committee, most years, 1979-93, Factfinder, 1992-93, Chair of the Committee, four semesters, 1989-90  
Advisory Committee, Yale College Admissions and Financial Aid, 1995-present  
Chair, Minority Advisory Council, 1982-84, 1993-94  
Co-Chair, Yale College Mellon and Bouchet Fellowships, 1992-2000  
Faculty Chair, Yale Graduate School Compton Fellowships, 1980-84 Co-Director, Yale College Pre-Registration Program for Minority Freshmen, 1979, 1983, 1986  
Burke Marshall Committee on Minority Faculty  
Frank Turner Committee on the Executive Committee  
Adair Committee on Free Speech  
University Committee on Restructuring in the Arts and Sciences

**Pertinent Work in Professional Organizations:** In the American Studies Association, program committee, 1976-77, 1987-88; nominating committee, 1978; nominated for President, 1995; John Hope Franklin Prize committee, 1997-98  
Chair, MLA Commission on the Literatures and Languages of America, 1977- 78 & fall 1978

**Journal and Press Board Memberships:** *Callaloo*, Associate Editor, 1984-88, Contributing Editor, 1989 - 2010  
University of Chicago Press, Chicago Visions and Revisions Editorial Board, since 2003  
Cambridge University Press Studies in American Literature and Culture, 1990-98  
*American Quarterly*, 1991-94  
*American Literature*, 1987-88

**Consultantships-Evaluation of Manuscripts:** manuscripts have been read for the following university presses --Alabama, Cambridge, Chicago, Columbia, Harvard, Illinois, Massachusetts, Oxford, Rutgers, Wesleyan, Virginia, Yale (some of these, many evaluations)

**Consultantships-Evaluation of Programs and Grants:**

American Writers Museum Project, 2010- (National Advisory Council for the Project since 12/2011)

Smithsonian: Planning Committee, The National Museum of African American History and Culture, 2007

New York Public Library: Holte Prize, 1985-86

Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1985

Ford Foundation: Chair, Literature and Language Panel, Post-Doctoral Fellowships, 1983, 1984

Rockefeller Foundation: Panelist, Humanities Fellowships, 1982, 1984

NEA service: Panelist, Poetry Awards, 1979

NEH Service:

outside evaluator for "Inventing America," a seminar for all freshmen at Lewis and Clark College, Spring 1994, Fall 1996;

Summer Grants, 1984; State Humanities Programs, 1983; Special Programs, 1980-81;

Summer Seminars for the Professions, 1980; Connecticut Humanities Council, 1980-82.

**Consultantships – Review of Academic Departments:**

External Review Boards for Departments of English:

Hunter College, CUNY (chair of the review, 2000), Rice Univ. (2000), Trinity College, Hartford (1976)

External Review Boards for African American Studies:

Northwestern (1991), Indiana (1985), Simmons College (1984), UNC Greensboro (1983), Illinois, Chicago (1981), Maryland, College Park (1979)

**Consultantships - Boards of Trustees:**

Board of Trustees, Trinity College, 1982-92; Board of Fellows, Trinity College, 1980-82  
Committee of Trustees, Hopkins School (New Haven), 1991-94

**Lectures:** Bowdoin, Bread Loaf, Brown, Bryn Mawr, UC Berkeley, UC Santa Cruz, Chicago, Colby, Columbia, Eastern CT State, Emory, Harvard, Haverford, Howard, Howard Divinity, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Miami (OH), Middlebury, Minnesota, Mississippi, National Research Council, UNC Greensboro, NYU, Northwestern, Ohio State, Pennsylvania, Princeton, Rutgers, Sacred Heart (CT), Spelman, Stanford, Trinity (CT), Tufts, Vermont, Virginia, Washington (MO), Wesleyan (CT), Western CT State, Wheelock, Williams

(I have lectured at many of these institutions more than once)

Abroad: the Universities of Copenhagen, Odense, Aarhus (Denmark); Firenze and Perugia (Italy); Oslo and Trondheim (Norway); Bonn, Frankfurt, Munich (Germany); Complutense (Spain)

**Papers, Comments, Workshops:** MLA, ASA, OAH meetings; symposia at Brown, Georgetown, Haverford, Hofstra, Long Wharf Theater, New Haven Historical Society, New Rochelle Fund for Educational Excellence; Penn Center- St. Helena, Poetry Center-

92nd St. Y, Rutgers, Rutgers-Newark, Shubert Theater, So. CT Library Council, Trinity, Whitney Humanities Center, Yale, Yale Art Gallery, Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale Repertory Theater, Yale Visiting Scholar Program

Abroad: American Studies symposia at Bonn and Falkenstein (Frankfurt), Amerika Haus (Stuttgart), Istituto di Studi Nordamericani (Firenze), Nordic Association for American Studies (Copenhagen)

**Publications-Books:**

**A Home Elsewhere: Reading African American Classics in the Age of Obama**

(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010)

**Blue As The Lake: A Personal Geography** (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998, paperback, 1999)

**From Behind the Veil: A Study of Afro-American Narrative** (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1979; 2nd. ed., 1991)

**Publications-Edited Volumes:**

Ed. with Jennifer Rae Greeson, **Norton Critical Edition of Charles Chesnut's Conjure Stories** (New York: Norton, 2012)

ed. with Donald McQuade *et al*, **The Harper American Literature** (New York: Addison Wesley Longman (all editions since 1993))

ed. with an introduction, afterword by Harold Bloom, **The Selected Poems of Jay Wright** (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987)

ed. with Michael S. Harper, **Chant of Saints: A Gathering of Afro-American Literature, Art, and Scholarship** (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1979); a shorter version appears in the *Massachusetts Review* 18:3&4 (1977)

ed. with Dexter Fisher, **Afro-American Literature: The Reconstruction of Instruction** (New York: Modern Language Association, 1978)

**Publications-Articles and Essays:**

Romare Bearden's *Li'l Dan the Drummer Boy: Coloring a Story of the Civil War,* will appear in *Crossing Borders*, a collection of essays honoring the career of Professor Amritjit Singh (2016)

“Introduction: Charles Chesnutt’s Conjure Stories,” **Norton Critical Edition of Charles Chesnutt’s Conjure Stories** (New York: Norton, 2012), vii-xxvii.

“Introduction: Frederick Douglass Writes His Story,” Frederick Douglass, **Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, Written By Himself** (Boston: 1845; Cambridge: John Harvard Library edition, Harvard University Press, 2009), vii-xxviii.

“Introduction,” reissue of Willard Savoy, **Alien Land** (New York: Dutton, 1949; rpt. Hanover, NH: Univ. Press of New England, 2006), vii-xix.

"Greyhound Kind of Mood," New England Review (22:1, Winter 2001), 35-48.

"March Marshal," Callaloo (23:4, Fall 2000), 1195-1200.

"Black American Literature at Year 2000: A New Presence," *U.S. Society & Values*, 5:1 (February 2000), 26-29.

"At the Crossroads of Bronzeville," afterword for **Southside Chicago: The Photographs of Wayne Miller** (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2000).

"Response to Houston Baker's 'Modernism and the Harlem Renaissance,'" in L. Maddox, ed., **Locating American Studies: The Evolution of a Discipline** (1998)

"Hyde Park," Callaloo 20:1 (Winter 1997), 36-46; also in Steven Shepherd, ed., **Our Fathers** (Boston: Beacon, 2001), 134-153.

"Black Piano," Callaloo 19:1 (Winter 1996), 94-100.

"Woodlawn," New England Review 17:1 (Winter 1995). 94-102.

"Washington Park," in G. Fabre and R. O'Meally, eds., **History and Memory in African American Culture** (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1994), pp. 272-283.

"Idlewild," Callaloo 14:1 (Winter 1991), 20-36; also in R. Pack and J. Parini, eds., **American Identities** (Hanover, NH: Univ. Press of New England, 1994), pp. 277-297.

"Let's Call Your Mama and Other Lies About Michael Harper," Callaloo 13:4 (Fall 1990), 801-804.

"Nobody's Land," *Offstage Perspective* (Spring 1989) [this is a Long Wharf Theater publication; the article discusses Nancy Fales Garrett's "Some Sweet Day," which premiered at Long Wharf that Spring]

"Sterling Brown: Outsider in the Harlem Renaissance," in A. Singh *et al*, eds., **Harlem Renaissance: Revaluations** (New York: Garland, 1989), pp. 73-82.

"Response to Richard Yarborough's 'The First Person in Afro-American Fiction,'" in H. Baker and P. Redmond, eds., **Afro-American Literary Study in the 1990s** (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 121-128.

"Afro-American Literature," in Emory Elliott *et al*, eds., **Columbia Literary History of the United States** (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1987), pp. 785-799.

"Uncovering the Weave: An Introduction to Jay Wright's Poems," the introduction to **The Selected Poems of Jay Wright** (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1987), pp. ix-xv.

"After the 1960s: The Boom in Afro-American Fiction," in M. Bradbury and S. Ro, eds., **Contemporary American Fiction** (London: Edward Arnold, 1986), pp. 89-104.

"Sharing the Thunder: The Literary Exchanges of Harriet Beecher Stowe, Henry Bibb, and Frederick Douglass," in E. Sundquist, ed., **New Essays on Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin** (London and New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1986), pp. 135-153.

"Distrust of the Reader in Afro-American Narratives," in S. Bercovitch, ed., **Reconstructing American Literary History** (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1985), pp. 300-322.

"'The Simple But Intensely Human in Our Life of Slavery: Storytelling, Fiction, and the Revision of History in Charles Chesnut's Uncle Julius Stories,'" in G. Lenz, ed., **History and Tradition in Afro-American Culture** (Frankfurt and New York: Campus Verlag, 1984), pp. 29-55.

"'The Aching Prodigal: Jay Wright's Dutiful Poet,'" *Callaloo* 19 (Fall 1983), 76-84.

"'When de Saints go Ma'chin' Home: Sterling Brown's Blueprint for a New Negro Poetry,'" *Kunapipi* [Denmark] 4:1 (Summer 1982), 94-105. Also in *Callaloo* (Fall 1998).

"Storytelling in Early Afro-American Fiction: Frederick Douglass's **The Heroic Slave**," *Georgia Review* 36 (Summer 1982), 355-368.

"The Phenomenal Woman and the Severed Daughter: Maya Angelou and Audre Lorde." *Parnassus* 7 (Fall-Winter 1979), 312-320.

"Introduction: On Anthologies," Harper and Stepto, eds., **Chant of Saints** (1979), pp. xiii-xviii.

"After Modernism, After Hibernation: Michael Harper, Robert Hayden, Jay Wright," Harper and Stepto, eds., **Chant of Saints** (1979), pp. 470-486.

"Introduction," Fisher and Stepto, eds., **Afro-American Literature: The Reconstruction of Instruction** (1978), pp. 1-6.

"Teaching Afro-American Literature: Survey or Tradition? or, the Reconstruction of Instruction," in Fisher and Stepto, eds., **Afro-American Literature: The Reconstruction of Instruction** (1978), pp. 8-24.

"Intimate Things in Place: An Interview with Toni Morrison," *Massachusetts Review* 18:3 (Fall 1977), 473-489.

with Michael S. Harper, "Study and Experience: An Interview with Ralph Ellison," *Massachusetts Review* 18: 3 (Fall 1977), 417-435.

"I Thought I Knew These People: Richard Wright and the Afro-American Literary Tradition," *Massachusetts Review* 18:3 (Fall 1977), 525-541.

"Afro-American Literature: Crises in Conception," *Parnassus* 5 (Spring-Summer 1977), 235-242.

"Michael S. Harper, Poet as Kinsman: The Family Sequences," *Massachusetts Review* 17:3 (Fall 1976), 477-502.

"Michael Harper's Extended Tree: John Coltrane and Sterling Brown," *Hollins Critic* 13 (Summer 1976), 1-16.



