

# COURTNEY R. BAKER, PH.D.

Associate Professor, Department of English

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## Areas of Expertise

Black Studies | African American Literature | Film & Visual Studies | Race Theory

## Book

*Humane Insight: Looking at Images of African-American Suffering and Death*. New Black Studies series.  
University of Illinois Press. September 2015. | Paperback published August 2017.

## Manuscript-in-progress

*Tyranny of Realism: Twenty-First Century Blackness and the Ends of Cinema*

## Academic Positions

2019–Present	Associate Professor, Department of English, University of California at Riverside
2017–2019	Chair and Co-Founder, Black Studies, Occidental College
2016–2019	Associate Professor, Department of American Studies, Occidental College
2015–2016	Director, Africana Studies, Connecticut College
2014–2016	Associate Professor, Department of English, Connecticut College
2008–2014	Assistant Professor, Department of English, Connecticut College
2006–2008	Instructor, Department of English, Connecticut College
2005–2006	Visiting Instructor, Department of English, Connecticut College
2004–2005	Visiting Instructor/Dissertation Fellow, English Department, Denison University

## Awards and Honors

2019–2020	Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, James Weldon Johnson Institute, Emory University
2018	Faculty Enrichment Grant, Occidental College
2018	Frederick Burkhardt Fellowship, American Council of Learned Societies (alternate)
2017	Faculty Enrichment Grant, Center for Teaching and Learning (additional funds supplied by the President and Dean of Faculty), Occidental College
2013	President's Fund Research Matters Award, Connecticut College
2011	Fellow, Center for the Critical Study of Race & Ethnicity, Connecticut College (declined)
2010–2011	Sherman Fairchild Fellow, Connecticut College
2004–2005	Pre-Doctoral Dissertation Fellow, Denison University
2004	Summer Research Fellow, Duke University
1998–2000	Duke Endowment Fellowship, Duke University
1999	Gender and Race Research Award, Women's Studies, Duke University

## Education

September 2008	Ph.D., Program in Literature, Duke University
September 2008	Certificate, African & African American Studies, Duke University
June 1996	B.A., <i>cum laude</i> , Women's Studies, Harvard University

## Peer-Reviewed Publications

- "Framing Black Performance: *Selma* and the Poetics of Representation." *Camera Obscura* 35.2. Fall 2020.
- "Elements of Post-Katrina African-American Documentary Film." *Journal of Cinema and Media Studies* 60.1 (Fall 2020): 4 - 25.
- "*I Am Not Your Negro's* Queer Poetics of Identity and Omission." *I Am Not Your Negro: A Docalogue*. Eds. Jaimie Baron and Kristen Fuhs. Routledge Press. June 2020.
- "Movin' on Up—and Out: Redrawing the Boundaries of Black Representation in 1970s Visual Culture." *Black Cultural Production after Civil Rights*. Ed. Robert J. Patterson. University of Illinois Press. September 2019.
- "Of Female Bondage: Reading Race, Gender, and Narrative in Toni Morrison's *A Mercy*." Revising for submission.
- "The Grift of Death: The Ethics of Murder Narratives." *Parallax*. 22.1 (2016). 51–65.
- "Emmett Till, Justice, and the Task of Recognition." *Journal of American Culture* 29.2 (2006). 111–24.

## Digital and Public Humanities

- "Operation Catsuit performance #1 by Ayana Evans," *Black One Shot, The Association for the Study of Arts of the Present Journal (ASAP/J): The Open Access Platform of ASAP/Journal*. July 2, 2020. <http://asapjournal.com/b-o-s-10-2-operation-catsuit-courtney-r-baker/>
- "Images Matter: Police on Film and Policing Black Lives." *Toronto International Film Festival*. June 16, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9d-lsiie1Ug>
- "Envisioning Blackness, Enacting Freedom." *Lunchtime Live Conversation*. AUC Art Collective. June 11, 2020. <https://www.instagram.com/tv/CBTYFNalx7H/>
- "Courtney R. Baker on Images of Black Suffering and Death," *Left of Black* S10 E11. March 7, 2020. <https://youtu.be/S8iFiff11eQ>
- "The Loud Silence of Monuments," *Dilettante Army*. April 22, 2019. <http://www.dilettantearmy.com/articles/the-loud-silence-of-monuments>
- "Authors on Issues: Courtney Baker on Childish Gambino's 'This Is America,'" *University of Illinois Press Blog*. May 30, 2018. <http://www.press.uillinois.edu/wordpress/authors-on-issues-courtney-baker-on-childish-gambinos-this-is-america/>
- "Cinema Notes/American Letters." (co-author) *The Association for the Study of Arts of the Present Journal (ASAP/J): The Open Access Platform of ASAP/Journal*. June 22, 2017. <http://asapjournal.com/cinema-notes-american-letters-elizabeth-reich-courtney-r-baker-and-michael-b-gillespie/>
- "The E-Snuff of Alton Sterling and Philando Castile." *Avidly: A Los Angeles Review of Books channel*. July 8, 2016. <http://avidly.lareviewofbooks.org/2016/07/08/the-e-snuff-of-alton-sterling-and-philando-castile/>
- "Sandra Bland's Face." *Avidly: A Los Angeles Review of Books channel*. August 9, 2015. <http://avidly.lareviewofbooks.org/2015/08/09/sandra-blands-face/>
- "Oak Creek Blues." *NewBlackMan (in Exile)*. August 8, 2012. <https://www.newblackmaninexile.net/2012/08/oak-creek-blues.html>
- "Outrage over the Death of a Lion, but Not Black Women and Men?" *Huffington Post Black Voices*. July 30, 2015. [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/outrage-over-the-death-of-a-lion-but-not-black-women-and-men\\_b\\_7903892](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/outrage-over-the-death-of-a-lion-but-not-black-women-and-men_b_7903892)
- "Project iPad." *NewBlackMan (in Exile)*. July 22, 2012. <https://www.newblackmaninexile.net/2012/07/project-ipad>

## Book Reviews

- "*Queer Times, Black Futures* by Kara Keeling." *Journal of Cinema and Media Studies* 60.1 (Fall 2020): 156 – 159.
- "*Film Blackness: American Cinema and the Idea of Black Film* by Michael Boyce Gillespie." *Cinema Journal* 57.4 (Summer 2018): 158–60.
- "*Cinema Civil Rights* by Ellen C. Scott." *African American Review* 49.3 (Fall 2016): 289–91.
- "*Black Feminism in Contemporary Drama, Harlem Crossroads, and Telling Narratives*." *American Literature* 80.4 (2008): 845–47.

## Art Reviews

- "Carrie Olson: New York [Art review]." *Art Papers* 34.3 (May/June 2010): 57–8.
- "A Historic Occasion: Artists Making History: North Adams, MA [Exhibit]." *Art Papers* 31.2 (March/April 2007): 68–9.
- "Trevor Paglen: New York [Art review]." *Art Papers* 31.2 (March/April 2007): 67.
- "Energy/Experimentation [Art review]." *Art Papers* 30.5 (September/October 2006): 61–2.
- "Island Thresholds, Contemporary Art from the Caribbean: Peabody Essex Museum: Salem, MA. [Art review]." *Art Papers* 29.5 (September/October 2005): 49–50.

## Children's Books

- Scholastic First Biographies: Rosa Parks*. New York: Cartwheel Books/Scholastic Inc., 2004.
- The Perfect Pet*. New York: Cartwheel Books/Scholastic Inc., 2003.
- Surprise! Snow Day!* New York: Cartwheel Books/Scholastic Inc., 2003.
- Scholastic First Biographies: Martin Luther King Jr.* Cartwheel Books/Scholastic Inc., 2001.

## Invited Talks

- Keynote. "Framing Black Performance: Looking Back, Looking Forward." Center for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Studies. University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. 28 February 2020.
- Keynote. "Black Humanity, Visible Violence, and Liberation Aesthetics." African & African American Studies 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Lecture Series. Duke University. 14 October 2019.
- Speaker. Five Hundred Years of Women's Work: The Lisa Unger Baskin Collection Symposium on Women across the Disciplines. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library. Duke University. 16 April 2019.
- Speaker. The Legacy of Lynching: Confronting Racial Terror in America. Equal Justice Initiative. Haverford College. 16 November 2018.
- Speaker. Women and Hate: Lynchings, Hate Groups, & Emmett Till. Center for Biotechnology & Global Health Policy 2017–18 Colloquium Series. University of California, Irvine Law School. 16 November 2017.

## Invited Consultations

- Participant. A Site of Struggle: Making Meaning of Anti-Black Violence in American Art and Visual Culture. Mary & Leigh Block Museum of Art. Northwestern University. 25 October 2018.
- Committee Member. Academic Advisory Committee on Promoting Diversity throughout the Huntington Research Program, The Huntington Library, San Marino, CA

## Academic Conferences and Lectures (selected)

- Presenter. Black Cultural Production after Civil Rights. American Studies Association Annual Conference. Honolulu, Hawai'i. November 2019.
- Commentator. The Violence of "Violence." Native American and Indigenous Studies Association Annual Conference. Hamilton, New Zealand. June 2019.
- Presenter. "White Out Conditions: White Artists Bringing White Supremacy into View." Audiovisual Appropriation, Cultural Appropriation, Ethics. Society for Cinema and Media Studies Conference. March 2019.
- Presenter. "The Scene of the Crime: A Black and Red Hauntology of *In Cold Blood*." Murderous Feeling: The Form and Content of Retribution and Violence in Black and Indigenous Literature. American Studies Association Annual Meeting. Atlanta, Georgia. November 2018.
- Presenter. "Sonic Invasions: The Queer and Black Registers of *In Cold Blood*." Association for the Studies of Arts of the Present, 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference. Tulane University/Pelican Bomb. October 2018.
- Commentator. Of Blackness and Indigeneity. Native American and Indigenous Studies Association Annual Conference. Los Angeles. May 2018.
- Presenter. "W.E.B. Du Bois and the Aesthetic Impulse." American Comparative Literature Association National Conference. University of California, Los Angeles. March 2018.
- Moderator. Black Women's Fantasies in the Moving Image. Black Portraiture IV. Harvard University. March 2018.

- Presenter. All Monuments Must Fall. College Arts Association. Los Angeles Convention Center. February 2018.
- Organizer and chair. Combahee and Her Daughters: Black/Queer/Feminist/Women's Practices of Survival and Resistance. American Studies Association Annual Meeting. Chicago, Illinois. November 2017.
- Presenter. "From Eye to I: Black Humanity as Statement and Spectacle." Exposure: Ninth Annual Dark Room Symposium. Mount Holyoke College. May 2017.
- Presenter. "Home/Invasion: The Black & Queer Aesthetics of *In Cold Blood*." American Studies Association Annual Meeting. Denver, Colorado. November 2016.
- Presenter. "W.E.B. Du Bois and the Aesthetic Impulse." Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association Conference. Pasadena, California. November 2016.
- Presenter. "Disobedient Cinema: Film as Terrain of Struggle in *12 Years a Slave* and *Selma*." Cinema and Black Visual Historiography. Society for Cinema and Media Studies Conference. March 2016.
- Chair. Violent Intimacies: Producing Racial Terror in American Visual and Material Culture. American Studies Association Conference. October 2015.
- Panelist. Race in the Media. Arresting Patterns Conference. Artspace New Haven & Yale University Art Gallery. September 2015.
- Conference Speaker. "Disobedient Cinema: Film as Terrain of Struggle." (UN)Civil Mediation: A Civil Rights and Visual Culture. University of Washington, St. Louis. April 2015.
- Organizer and chair. Without Photography: Visualizing Violence in Non-Photographic-Documentary Media. American Studies Association Annual Meeting. Los Angeles, California. November 2014.
- Chair. Migrating the Black Body. Sponsored by the Volkswagen Foundation. Hanover, Germany. September 2014.
- Speaker. "Wandering through Literature." All Who Wander Are Not Lost. TEDx Connecticut College. Connecticut College. April 2014.
- Presenter. "(Looking at) Life and Death in Black New Orleans." Multi-Ethnic Studies: Europe and the Americas. Barcelona, Spain. June 2012.
- Organizer. Beyond Art: African-American Comic Book Culture. Speakers: John Jennings, Rebecca Wanzo, Qiana Whitted, Jonathan Gayles. Connecticut College. April 12–13, 2012.
- Presenter and chair. "Imprisoned Viewers: *Prison Valley* and the Simulacrum of Interaction." Society for Cinema and Media Studies. Boston, Massachusetts. March 2012.

### Service to Institution and Profession

- 2020–Present Co-editor (with Qiana Whitted and Tyina Steptoe), Cultures of Resistance book series, University of South Carolina Press
- 2020–Present Council Member, American Studies Association
- 2018–Present Associate Editor, ASAP [Association for the Study of Arts of the Present]/Journal
- 2014–Present Visual Culture Caucus Committee, American Studies Association
- 2016–2018 Co-director (with Erica Ball) of Black Studies Initiative at Occidental College
- 2015–Present Ford Fellowship Predoctoral, Postdoctoral, & Dissertation Reviewer
- 2016 Manuscript review (anonymous) for University of Illinois Press.
- 2015–2016 Dean of Admissions Search Committee, Connecticut College
- 2011–2016 Co-Director of the Concentration in Race and Ethnicity in the English Major, Connecticut College
- 2011–2016 Grievance Committee, Connecticut College
- 2007–2016 Steering Committee, Center for the Comparative Study of Race and Ethnicity, Connecticut College
- 2005–2016 Steering Committee, Film Studies, Connecticut College
- 2015 Stark Foundation Visiting Filmmaker Committee, Connecticut College
- 2014–2015 Co-chair, Africana Studies Task Force, Connecticut College
- 2014–2015 Ombudsperson, Connecticut College
- 2014 Africana Studies Summer Working Group, Connecticut College

2013–2014	Search Committee, Film Studies, Connecticut College
2012	Department of Literatures in English Assessment Subcommittee, Connecticut College
2011	Environmental Model Committee, Connecticut College
2010–2011	Search Committee, Film Studies, Connecticut College
2007–2011	Committee Member, Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, Connecticut College
2008–2009	Search Committee, Center for the Comparative Study of Race and Ethnicity
2007–2009	Director, Honors Thesis Program, Department of English

### **Membership – Professional Organizations and Projects**

American Studies Association  
 Association for the Study of Arts of the Present  
 Dark Room Collective for the Study of Visual Culture  
 Society for Cinema and Media Studies

### **Courses Taught (Partial List)**

Undergraduate:

African-American Women Writers (intermediate seminar)  
 African-American Film: 1967 – Present (intermediate lecture)  
 Black Women in Print and on Screen (upper level seminar)  
 Exquisite Corpses: A Narratological Study of Death (upper level seminar)  
 Introduction to African-American Literature (introductory lecture)  
 Introduction to Black Studies (introductory lecture)  
 Literature and Race Criticism (intermediate seminar)  
 Race and Documentary Film (upper level seminar)  
 Reading America in Black Literature (upper level seminar)  
 Representation and Visual Culture (first year seminar)  
 Thrills, Chill, and Tears: Black Genre Fiction (upper level seminar)  
 Toni Morrison and Self-Fashioning (upper level seminar)

### **Senior Undergraduate Theses and Comprehensive Projects Directed**

Reilly Torres. “Death-Worlds and Literary Form: Capturing Black Death in Jesmyn Ward’s Novels.” Black Studies Senior Comps. Occidental College. Spring 2019.

Reilly Torres. “Blues Texts as Narratives of Identity during the Great Migration.” American Studies Senior Comps. Occidental College. Fall 2018.

Hannah Feeney. “Women’s Bodies as Metaphors for Ireland in the Poetry of Seamus Heaney and Paul Muldoon.” English Senior Thesis. Connecticut College. AY 2015–16.

Abbye Woodward. “We’ll Eat You Up, We Love You So: The Narrative Implications of Bodily Transformation in the Picturebook.” English Senior Thesis. Connecticut College. AY 2014–15.

Kolton Harris. “Flying in Place: Black Superheroes and Their Origin Stories.” English Senior Thesis. Connecticut College. AY 2013–14.

Christina Fogarasi. “The Murderer’s Threat to the Indigenous Human Temporal Order: Temporality’s Chaotic Death and its Uncanny Afterlife.” English Independent Study. Connecticut College. Fall 2012.

Andrew W. Davis. “Constructing Identity: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in Nella Larsen’s *Quicksand* and *Passing*.” English Senior Thesis. Connecticut College. AY 2005–06.