

# Catherine Amelia John

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## ACADEMIC POSITIONS

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Professor, Africana Studies	The University of Rhode Island	2021-Present
Associate Professor, English	The University of Oklahoma	2004-2021
Assistant Professor, English	The University of Oklahoma	1998-2004
Interim Chair, English	The University of Oklahoma	2013-2014
Faculty-in-Residence	The University of Oklahoma	2017-2020

## EDUCATION

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Ph.D. University of California at Santa Cruz, Literature Board	Dec. 1997
B.A. Boston College, Department of English	May 1988

## AREAS OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH AND TEACHING

African American and Afro-Caribbean Literature  
 Black Atlantic and African Diaspora Cultural Studies  
 French Caribbean Literature  
 Hip Hop Studies  
 Black Independent Cinema  
 Postcolonial Theory

## LANGUAGES

French: Proficiency - reading, writing and speaking  
 Spanish: Basic reading comprehension  
 Jamaican Creole: Fluency

## PUBLICATIONS

### BOOKS

***Afro-Indigenization and Marasa Consciousness: A Theory of Grassroots Cultural Practice***

[Under Review – Duke Press]

***Caribbean Memoir: The Life and Legacy of Cyril Bailey, Railroad Stationmaster in Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Jamaica***

[Manuscript-in-progress]

***Roast Breadfruit and Other Migration Mythographies***

[Creative Non-fiction manuscript-in-progress]

***Clear Word and Third Sight: Folk Groundings and Diasporic Consciousness in African Caribbean Writing***, [Monograph]

Co-Published by Duke University Press, 2003 &  
The Press of the University of the West Indies, Mona, 2004

#### ARTICLES

"Insurgent Attitude: The Shifting Ground of the Black Feminine," in *Cultural Dynamics: Decolonial Feminist Praxis* (forthcoming, Fall 2021.)

"The Prosperity Gospels of Superstardom: Kanye's Philosophy," co-authored with Leroy Myers, Jr. and Zachary Leacock. In *The Journal of Hip Hop Studies*, Vol. 6 [2019], Iss. 1, Art 1.

"Pedagogical Poetics and Curricular Design in the Interracial Classroom: A Black Female Perspective," in *Curriculum at the Crossroads: Women of Color Resist and Reflect*, Eds. Kirsten Edwards & Maria del Guadalupe Davidson, 8-21. New York: Rutledge Press, 2018 (20 pages).

"Blackness Through a Dual Lens: A Caribbean Journey into the African American Experience" in *Public: A Journal of Imagining America*, Syracuse Unbound, an imprint of Syracuse University Press, ISSN 2326-2567, 2016, (27 pages).

"Black Film Comedy as Vital Edge: A Reassessment of the Genre" in *The Blackwell Companion to Film Comedy*. Edited by Andy Horton & Joanna Rapf, 343-364. Malden, Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell Publishers, 2013.

"Caribbean Organic Intellectual: The Legacy and Challenge of Erna Brodber's Life Work." *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism*, SX 39, (Nov. 2012): 72-88.

"The Man in the Gutter is the God Maker: Zora Neale Hurston's Philosophy of Culture" in *The Inside Light: New Critical Essays on Zora Neale Hurston*. Edited by Deborah Plant. 165-179. Santa Barbara, California: Praeger Publishers, 2010.

"Brethren Thy Wandering Sheep Behold!: The Pioneering Life of Fitz Allen John," in *Caribbean Trailblazers: St. Vincent and the Grenadines*, Edited by Baldwin & Cheryl King, Madison, NJ: Kings SVG Publishers, 2010.

"Diaspora Consciousness and the Concept of Plenitude" in *Shifting the Geography of Reason: Gender, Science and Religion*. Edited by Marina Paola Banchetti-Robino and Clevis Ronald Headley. 200-210. London, England: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2007.

"From Nielsen Estate to Africa House: Ed"we"cation and Male/Female Relations in Rural Woodside, Jamaica," in Double Issue *Caribbean Quarterly: Gender Development and Civil Society in the Caribbean*, Volume 52, Number 2, June-September, 2006.

"Neo-Coloniality, Literary Representation, and the Problem of Disciplinary Solutions," in *Decolonizing the Academy in the Twenty-First Century*, Edited by Carole Boyce Davies. Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 2003.

"Complicity, Revolution, and Black Female Writing"  
*Race & Class* Volume 40 April-June 1999 Number 4.

#### BOOK REVIEWS

"Black Consciousness in the African Diaspora," entry in *The Encyclopedia of Race and Racism*, Gale, 2007.

Review of **Caribbean Creolizations**  
*New West Indian Guide* vol. 74, 3 & 4 (2000)

Review of **Women in Chains**  
*American Literature* Volume 72 Number 4 December 2000

## TEACHING

1998-present Designed and implemented 8 undergraduate courses, 4 graduate courses and 2 overseas study abroad programs

#### GRADUATE COURSES

"Africans in America: Civilization, Culture and Survival"

"Blackness, Coloniality, Gender"

"Black Critical Theory: Gender, Culture and Transformation"

"Introduction to Caribbean Literature and Theory"

"Postcolonial Literature"

"Introduction to African American Literature and Theory"

#### UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

"Introduction to Black Literature in the U.S."  
[Survey from 1800 to the Present]

"Black Literary Form and Cultural Expression"

[Comparative look at West African, African American and Afro-Caribbean literary forms]

"Civilization and Diaspora"

[Comparative analysis of Western versus African Diaspora definitions of Progress, Technology & Civilization]

"Hip Hop as Poetry, Literature, and Cultural Expression"  
[taught from 2006 to the present]

"Caribbean Literature and Cultural Consciousness"

American Literature Survey 1865 to the Present

### **FILM AND MEDIA STUDIES COURSES**

"Survey of African American Cinema"

"The Spike Lee Joints: Representing the Black Bourgeoisie"

Cultural Resistance and Contemporary Black Cinema

### **STUDY ABROAD COURSES**

"Black Women: Afro-Caribbean Literature, Cultural Expression & Self-Love

Jamaica Summer Experience 2016

Month-long OU Study Abroad Program

African Diaspora Studies Practicum, July 2002

Woodside Community, St. Mary, Jamaica

### **UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA COURSES**

Visiting Lecturer, "Caribbean Diaspora Women's Writing,"  
University of California, Santa Barbara

Writing Assistant, Student Opportunities for Academic  
Research,  
University of California, Santa Cruz

## **AWARDS**

### ***General Education Teaching Award – 2018***

A University wide award for excellence in teaching performance at the undergraduate level

### ***Good Teaching Award – 2012***

A University wide award to a senior faculty member for good teaching.

### ***Irene Rothbaum Award Recipient - 2004***

An award given to an assistant professor in the College of Arts & Sciences for Overall Excellence in Teaching and Research

***Barbara Jordan Award - 2000***

Outstanding Faculty Role Model

23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Big 12 Black Student Government Conference

Oklahoma State University

***Outstanding Black Faculty of the Year 1999, 2000, & 2001***

African American Student Services (OU)

**FELLOWSHIPS**

***Faculty Investment Program Grant – Spring 2016***

A \$15,000 internal university grant to support research and writing

***Faculty Enrichment Grant - 2008***

***President's Travel Fellowship Grant 2001-2004***

[Used to spearhead exchange program between University of Oklahoma and University of the West Indies]

***Vice President for Research Council Grant - 2001***

Project Title: "Folklore, Spiritual Practices and Caribbean Writing"

***Junior Faculty Summer Fellowship – 1998 & 1999***

College of Arts & Sciences

University of Oklahoma

***Dissertation Fellow – 1995-1996***

The Center for Black Studies

University of California, Santa Barbara

***Graduate Opportunity Fellowship, UC Santa Cruz, 1991-1995***

**CONFERENCE PAPERS AND INVITED TALKS**

"The House of Resistance and the UnderCommons: Black Women's Academic Leadership as Insurgent Fugitivity  
National Women's Studies Association Roundtable  
San Francisco, November 2019

"Configurations of Blacknesses: Advancing Interior Notions of  
Diaspora Subjectivities"

Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora  
The College of William and Mary, November 2019

"Insurgent Attitude: The Shifting Ground of the Black Feminine"  
Institute of Gender and Development Studies Conference  
Cave Hill, Barbados, November 2018

"African Jamaican Disruptions and Routes to Freedom"  
Erna Brodber and Catherine John (Co-Presenters)  
**Invited Talk** – March 15, 2017  
The College of William and Mary  
Williamsburg, VA 23187

"Race, Recurrent Memory & Resistant Futures" – [Chair]  
American Studies Association Annual Conference  
Toronto, Canada, October 2015

"Humor and Black Film: An Historical Perspective"  
**Invited Talk** – July 17, 2014  
Dartmouth College  
Hanover, NH 03755

"The Current Influence of Amiri Baraka's Concept of the  
Changing Same"  
**Invited Talk** – July 23, 2014 – 7:30pm  
Gloucester Writers Center  
Gloucester, MA 01930

"Who Claims Modernity: Afro-Indigeneity and the Changing  
Same"  
**Invited Talk** – November 6, 2012  
State University of New York at Stony Brook  
Stony Brook, NY 11794

"Ritual over Discourse" [Panelist & Organizer]  
Caribbean Studies Conference  
Barbados, May 2010

"From the Spook to the Gangster: Black Rage,  
White Anxiety, And Hollywood Cinema"  
*Blackspace Seminar*  
St. Mary, Jamaica, July 2008

"The Future of the Small Community  
is the Future of the Nation" [Panelist & Organizer]  
*Caribbean Studies Association Conference*  
Salvador da Bahia, Brazil, May 2007

"Changing History and Social Theory into  
Rural Caribbean Practice: The Erna Brodber Model"  
*Caribbean Philosophy Association Conference*

Kingston, Jamaica, June 2007

"Common Ground: Leadership & Diaspora"

**Keynote Speaker** – January 2006

African American Student Leadership Conference

Rust College, Holly Springs, Mississippi

"Maybe It's a Big Momma Thang: Reclaiming the Power of the Erotic from the Demonic Ground Of Black Female Sexuality"

**Invited Talk** – February 2006

For Women's Studies, English, and African American Studies

Rhodes College, Memphis, Tennessee

"The Rebirth of Rural Space: Refiguring the Emancipation Summer School in Woodside, St. Mary"

*Rural Community Development Conference*

Woodside, St. Mary, Jamaica, April 2004

"Diasporic Consciousness and the Concept of Plenitude"

*Caribbean Philosophy Association Conference*

Cave Hill, Barbados, May 2004

"Transformative Pedagogy: Racially Diverse Students and the Challenges of Diaspora Literacy"

*Caribbean Studies Association Conference*

Belize City, Belize, May 2003

"Spirituality as a Route to Diaspora Consciousness" [Panelist & Organizer]

*Caribbean Studies Association Conference*

Nassau, Bahamas, May 2002

"African Cosmology and Societal Transformation in Brodber's *Louisiana* & Schwarz-Bart's *The Bridge of Beyond*"

*From Kumblas to Blackspace: Symposium on Erna Brodber*

University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, April 2002

"Transformative Pedagogy: Racially Diverse Students and the Challenges of Diaspora Literacy"

Unsettling the Coloniality of Power: Comparative Colonialisms and the Production of Knowledge – *Coloniality Working Group Symposium*

Binghamton University, November 2000

"Maybe It's a Big Mama Thang: Reclaiming the 'Power of the Erotic' from the 'Demonic Ground' of Black Female Sexuality"

Unsettling the Coloniality of Power: Comparative Colonialisms  
and the Production of Knowledge – *Coloniality Working Group*  
*Symposium*  
Binghamton University, November 1999

"Migrations: Political, Economic, Cultural" [Invited Panel Chair]  
*Leadership and Community, 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference*  
Department of African & Afro-American Studies  
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, November 1999

"Social Status, Property and Personhood: East Indian and  
African *Groundings* in the Writings of Hodge and Lovelace"  
*Caribbean Studies Association Conference*  
Panama City, Panama, May 1999

"Individualism and the Politics of Cultural Identity in  
Contemporary Caribbean Writing at Home and in  
The Diaspora" [Panelist & Organizer]  
*Caribbean Studies Association Conference*  
St. John's, Antigua, May 1998

"Complicity, the Revolutionary Imperative, and the Production  
And Critique of Black Literature"  
*Africana Studies Conference*  
Florida International University, April 1998

"The Big House and the Sugar Plantation: Citizenship and  
Diasporic Consciousness in Simone Schwarz-Bart's  
*Pluie et vent sur Telumee Miracle*"  
*Caribbean Studies Association Conference*  
Baranquilla, Colombia, May 1997

## **INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR EXPERIENCE**

### JAMAICA

B l a c k s p a c e Summer Program Coordinator  
Woodside, St. Mary, Jamaica, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2015  
[Created the structure, and organized the logistics for  
International Summer Programs with varied activities]

## **PROFESSIONAL DEPARTMENT & UNIVERSITY SERVICE**

Taught Department Master Class on Sylvia Wynter  
February 2019

Committee A Member (Dept. Evaluation and Steering  
Committee) (2017-2019)  
Senior Faculty Search Committee Member (2017-2018)  
Department of African & African American Studies



University of Oklahoma

Co-Designed an *Unlearning Racism* workshop for faculty at OU. This involved designing a pilot for thirty future facilitators and training them to do workshops on an ongoing basis in the future. (2016)

Graduate College Academic Appeals Panel, Fall 2014 – 2017

American Literature Coordinator

[Works with American literature faculty to determine to rotation of undergraduate and graduate course offerings]

Undergraduate Committee Member – 1998-2004 & 2014 – to Present

Interim Director, Spring 2004

[This committee oversees the undergraduate curriculum]

Committee A Member (Dept. Evaluation and Steering Committee)

Department of English

2005-2007 and 2009-2011, 2013-2014, & 2016-2017

Committee A Member

Department of African American Studies

2016-2018

Committee A Member

Department of Film and Media Studies

2005-2007

College of Arts & Sciences Tenure and Promotion Committee  
2008-2010

College of Arts & Sciences Advisory Committee on Women's Issues

[This committee assessed work conditions for female faculty]  
2001-2004

Faculty Advisor, Caribbean Student Association (C.S.A.)

University of Oklahoma

1998-2004

## OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Consultant on ***A View from the Field*** documentary film on The Life and Work of Erna Brodber, Director – Mark

Purushotham

Produced for Vanderbilt University by

Another Puzzle, LLC, April 2020.

Consultant on ***The Maroons of the United States: Guerrilla Warfare from Florida to Oklahoma and Texas*** (documentary film by Haile Gerima) – was a grant writer and scholar in charge of website content during early days of the film's development (2004). Identified Oklahoma based interviewees for project and assisted in post-production (2019)

Consultant on ***Bury My Foot Chain*** (documentary by Julia John) – helped to identify interviewees, participated as an interviewer assisted with the development of the storyline. (2007)

Manuscript Reviewer for University of Virginia Press 2018

Manuscript Reviewer for Palgrave MacMillan 2016

Manuscript Reviewer for Duke University Press, 2004

Manuscript Reviewer for University Press of New England, 2004

Assistant Director of Undergraduate Admission & Minority Recruitment  
Boston College, 1988-1991