

Benjamin James Murphy, Ph.D.

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Education

Ph.D., English, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	2022
B.A., Humanities & Writing, <i>summa cum laude</i> with honors, Houghton College	2014

Employment

Assistant Teaching Professor, English Department, Elon University	2022 - present
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Research & Teaching Areas

19th-20th-century American & African American Literature • Black Studies • Writing & Composition • History of Science • Literature & Science • Genre Fiction • Medical Humanities

Fellowships

Leadership Education Faculty Scholar, Elon University	2023-2024
Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship	2020-2021
Quarry Farm Short-Term Fellowship, Center for Mark Twain Studies	2020
Maynard Adams Fellowship for the Public Humanities, UNC-CH Public Humanities	2019-2020
Hobby Dissertation Fall Semester Fellowship, UNC-CH English Department	2019
Summer Research Dissertation Fellowship, UNC-CH Graduate School	2019

Selected Research Awards & Grants

Center for Teaching & Learning, Course Enrichment Mini-Grant: “Harlem Renaissance”	2026
Advancing Equity Requirement, Course Enhancement Fund: “Harlem Renaissance”	2026
ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship Alumni Research Microgrant	2025
Best Practices in Writing Pedagogy Grant Recipient: <i>part of group working on...</i> “Integrating Generative AI in the First-year Writing Classroom”	2025
Elon University’s A.I. Pedagogy Challenge: Selected in Top 50 Applications	2025
Committee on Elon History & Memory Faculty Engagement Grant	2023-2024
William Dougald Macmillan Award for Best Dissertation in the Academic Year (UNC-CH)	2022
Holman Award, Outstanding Record Writing a Diss. in pre-1900 American Lit. (UNC-CH)	2021
Travel Grant, UNC Center for the Study of the American South	2019
Graduate Student Transportation Grant, UNC Graduate School	2019
Travel Award, UNC Department of English, Keffer Fund	2017
Travel Award, Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts (SLSA) NSF Grant	2016, '17, '18
Best Graduate Essay in Comparative Literature, UNC English Department	2016
Best Graduate Student Essay, South Atlantic MLA - <i>Declined for journal publication</i>	2016

Teaching Awards

Erika Lindemann Award for Teaching Composition & Literature (UNC-CH English Dept.)	2018
Tanner Award, Excellence in Undergrad. Teaching (UNC Provost, 5 awarded annually)	2018
Student Undergrad. Teaching Award (UNC Student Government Association, 6 awarded)	2017

Publications

Peer Reviewed Scholarly Articles

“Mass Body Horror: Racial Fantasies of Aggregation and Counter-Assembly in *Ring Shout* (2020)”
Manuscript under review, abstract accepted for special issue on “body horror” *Textual Practice*

“Recovering *The American Lynching-Mob* (1906): Crowd Theory, Racial Violence, and Complicity”
R&R, manuscript under revision, *J19: The Journal of Nineteenth Century Americanists*

“Race, Crowds, and Resistance in Lovecraft’s Country: From Poe’s Old Old Weird to Victor
 LaValle’s New Black Gothic” *Studies in American Fiction* 52.1 (Spring 2025): 97-125.

“‘Multiplied without Number:’ Lynching, Statistics, and Visualization in Ida B. Wells, Mark
 Twain, and W. E. B. Du Bois.” *American Literature* 93.2 (2021): 195-226
 {Nominated by editors for 2021 “1921 Article Prize in American Literature”}

“Not So New Materialism: Homeostasis Revisited.” *Configurations: A Journal of Literature, Science, and
 Technology* 27.1 (2019): 1-36

Exceptional Infidelity: James Dickey’s *Deliverance*, Film Adaptation, and the Postsouthern.”
Mississippi Quarterly: The Journal of Southern Cultures 69.2 (2018): 206-225

Public Writing: Essays & Interviews

- “True Croc Cinema: The Fossil Horror of *Crawl* in the Anthropocene” [ASAP/J](#) 2019
 Interview of John Warner, author of *Why They Can’t Write* and *The Writer’s Practice* 2019
[Pedagogy and American Literary Studies \(PALS\)](#)
 “Why Does *Annihilation* Perpetuate the Hidden Figure of Henrietta Lacks?” [PopMatters](#) 2019
 “Tree Time and Mortality in the Eyes of Hitchcock, Powers, and Le Guin” [The Millions](#) 2018
 Interview of Noah Heringman and Jonathon Sachs, with Travis Alexander, on 2015
 “Deep Time, Decline, and Nostalgia,” *ETHOS*
 Interview of Kate Marshall, with Sean DiLeonardi, on “The Nonhuman Turn” *ETHOS* 2015

Public Writing: Digital Work

Contributing Editor, “A Red Record,” a collaborative website to document 2019 - present
 and map lynching in the US South (lynching.web.unc.edu)

Public Writing: Book Reviews

- On Earth as it is Beneath* (Charco Press) [Necessary Fiction](#) 2026
Of Black Study by Joshua Myers (Pluto Press) [Full Stop](#) 2023
Singer Distance by Ethan Chatagnier (Tin House) [Full Stop](#) 2023
In the Black Fantastic ed. by Ekow Eshun (MIT Press) [Full Stop](#) 2022
When We Cease to Understand the World by Benjamín Labatut (NYRB) [Full Stop](#) 2022
Driving in Cars with Homeless Men by Kate Wisel (U. of Pittsburg Press) *Gulf Coast* 32.5 2020
The Rapture Index: A Suburban Bestiary by Molly Reid (BOA Editions) [Full Stop](#) 2020
Futures A Science Fiction Series (Radix Media) [PopMatters](#) 2020
GlassHouse by Louis Armand (Equus Press) [Full Stop](#) 2020
Whitman Speaks ed. by Brenda Wineapple (Library of America) [PopMatters](#) 2019
Good Enough: The Tolerance for Mediocrity in Nature and Society by Daniel S. Milo
 (Harvard UP) [PopMatters](#) 2019
Song for the Unraveling of the World, Brian Evenson (Coffee House) [Chicago Review of Books](#) 2019
Terra Nullius by Claire G. Coleman (Small Beer Press) [Full Stop](#) 2019
Samuel Johnson’s Eternal Return by Martin Riker (Coffee House) [Gulf Coast](#) 2019

<i>An Untouched House</i> by Willem Frederik Hermans (Archipelago Press) Full Stop	2018
<i>The Biopolitics of Feeling: Race, Sex, and Science in the Nineteenth Century</i> by Kyla Schuller (Duke UP) <i>symploke</i> 26: 453-456	2018
<i>The Gunners: A Novel</i> by Rebecca Kauffman (Counterpoint Press) The Carolina Quarterly	2018
<i>The Universe of Things: On Speculative Realism</i> , Steven Shaviro (U. MN Press) boundary 2	2017
<i>Experimental Animals (A Reality Fiction)</i> , Thalia Field (Solid Objects) Carolina Quarterly	2017
<i>A Collapse of Horses</i> by Brian Evenson (Coffee House Press) The Carolina Quarterly	2015
<i>Where the Bird Signs Best</i> , Alejandro Jodorowsky (Restless Books) <i>Carolina Quarterly</i> 65.1	2015

Selected Presentations

Conferences Organized

3 rd Annual Grad Student “Post45” Symposium (hosted by Yale University)	2018
1 st Annual Grad Student “Post45” Symposium (hosted by UNC-Chapel Hill)	2016

Conference Panels Convened or Chaired

Chair, “From the Southern Border to the North and Beyond—A Reverse Reading of America from Below.” (American Studies Association) Baltimore	Nov. 2024
Chair & Convener, “Crowds and Race in the 19th Century” (American Studies Association) Honolulu, HA	Nov 2019
Chair & Convener, with Antoine Traisnel “The Emergence of Emergence,” (Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts) Toronto	Nov 2018
Chair & Convener “Health & Environment: Tracking Ecological Metaphors (Association for the Study of Literature & the Environment) Detroit, MI	June 2017
Conference Papers Delivered	
“[A]nd this is why I hate crowds”: Holding Ground Against the Mob in Afrilachia Poetry and Black Speculative Fiction” (American Studies Association) Baltimore	Nov. 2024
“An Unread Red Record: D. R. Babbitt’s Unpublished Anti-Lynching Crusade and Lynching” (C19) Coral Gables, FL	April 2022
“(Anti)Fascism Across the Color Line: Fighting Mob Violence in the Nadir” (Modern Language Association) [Panel: Antifa before Fascism] Washington, DC	Jan 2022
“Poe in Lovecraft Country: The Old Weird and the New Black Gothic” MLA (Modern Language Association) [Panel: Reading Poe Now] Washington, DC	Jan 2022
“Lies, Damned Lies, & Statistics: Gender, Numbers, & Lynching in Mark Twain and Ida B. Wells” (Modern Language Association) Virtual	Jan 2021
“An Unread Red Record: Unpublished Abolitionism, Crowd Psychology, and Lynching” (C19) - <i>No presentation due to COVID-19</i>	April 2020
“Charles Chesnutt’s ‘Age of Crowds’: Crowd Psychology and Racial Violence in the 1890s” (American Studies Association) Honolulu, HA	Nov 2019

- “Stephen Crane’s Almost Mob: Crowd Psychology, Emergence, and Literary Form” (Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts) Toronto Nov 2018
- “Betwixt human and brute life’: Romancing the Biopolitical in *The Marble Faun*” (Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts) Tempe, AZ Nov 2017
- “Twitter, Drones, and Literature: Teju Cole on Undifferentiation” (UNC-KCL Workshop) London, UK Aug 2017
- “Diagnosing Eco-Theory: Tracking Health & Environment” (Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment) Detroit, MI June 2017
- “Homeostasis and the Ecology of Bodies” (Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts) Atlanta, GA Nov 2016
- “Combative Adaptation: Media and Deliverance in Novel and Film” (Southern Atlantic Modern Language Association) Durham, NC Nov 2015
Winner of “Best Graduate Student Paper Award” – *declined to publish.*
- “Damning the River of Deliverance” (Association for the Study of the Arts and the Present) Greenville, SC Sept 2015
- “Scientists of the Future’: Anthropocene Stories in *Beasts of the Southern Wild*” (American Culture Association/Popular Culture Association) New Orleans, LA April 2015
- Invited & Internal Talks**
- “Teaching the ‘Elon Committee on History and Memory’ [ECHM] in the African American Literature Classroom” March 2025
- “Questioning (as) Leadership: Discussion Pedagogy in the AER Classroom” April 2024
Elon University, Leadership Education Faculty Scholars Colloquium
- “Poe in Lovecraft Country: Blackness and Crowds from the Old Weird to the New Black Gothic” Oct 2023
Elon University, Faculty Research Seminar
- “The Color of Crowds: Antebellum Fiction and the Race of Revolt” Oct 2020
Houghton College, Alumni Lecture
- “Going to Grad School in the Humanities” Sept 2020
Houghton College, English Department, “Texts and Tea Colloquium”
- Panelist, “Overhearing Frederick Douglass’s *The Heroic Slave*” (UNC Public Humanities Virtual Happy Hour: “Religious Traditions of Solitude”) May 2020

Teaching Experience

Elon University, Department of English

ENG 1100: Writing—Argument and Inquiry [10 sections*]

*2 sections of ENG Dept. Pilot: “A.I. Instruction in First-Year Writing” (Spring 2025)

ENG 1705: Zombie Fiction and Film [4 sections]

ENG 1718: Black Speculative Fiction (*Advancing Equity Requirement class*) [3 sections]

ENG 2250: African American Literature Before 1945 (*AER*) [1 section]

ENG 2260: African American Literature After 1945 [1 section]

ENG 3590: African American Novels (*AER*) [1 section]

Elon University, Global Education Center

GBL 1235/2235: Spain: Art and Revolt (Winter Term Study Abroad) [2 sections]

Elon University, Interdisciplinary Studies

IDS 2810 & 2820: Liberal Arts Forum (Student Club/Organization Course) [5 sections]

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Dept. of English and Comparative Lit.

ENG 105: Writing in the Disciplines [9 sections]

ENG 128: Major American Authors [1 section]

CMPL 142: Intro to Visual Culture (served as Graduate Research Consultant)

ENG 144: Popular Genres [1 section]

ENG 261: Intro to Literary Criticism (served as Graduate Research Consultant)

ENG 268: Literature, Medicine, and Culture (served as Teaching Assistant)

ENG 344: Lit. of the American West (served as Graduate Research Consultant)

Departmental Service

Member, Committee for ENG 1100 Curriculum Revision	Fall 2025
Instructor for 2 sections of Dept. Pilot for “A.I. Instruction in First-Year Writing”	Spring 2025
Member, Search Committee for TT position in Latinx and/or Native American Lit.	2024-2025
Member, Student Professional Development and Internships Committee	2023-2024
Member, Search Committee for TT position in Latinx and/or Native American Lit.	2022-2023
Peer Mentoring Committee, Elected position for pedagogy mentoring	2017-2019
Dept. Revision and Editorial Team, <i>The Tarheel Writing Guide</i>	2018-2019
Conference Assistant, “ Novel Sounds ” at the National Humanities Center	2016
Co-Chair and Organizer, Duke-UNC Americanist Speaker Series	2015-2018
Research Assistant, Studio for Instructional Tech. in English Studies (SITES)	2014-2015
Research Assistant, Critical Speakers Series, dept. lecture series	2014-2015

University Service

Faculty Mentor, “Black Studies Book Club” (sponsored by Phi Beta Cappa)	2025-present
Faculty Mentor, Advancing Equity Summer Workshop, Elon University	2024, 2025
Faculty Advisor, Liberal Arts Forum, Elon University	2023-present
Advisory Committee, African & African-American Studies at Elon (AAASE)	2023-present
Mentor, Virtual Prison Writing Center, UNC Correctional Education	2021-2022
Editor (Book Reviews), The Carolina Quarterly , UNC literary journal	2017-2019
Editor (Website), The Carolina Quarterly , UNC literary journal	2014-2015
Editor (Interviews), <i>ETHOS: Digital Review</i>	2014-2015
Editor-in-Chief, <i>The Lanthorn</i> , Houghton College Literary Journal	2013-2014

Professional Service

Peer Referee, <i>Life Writing</i>	2025
Peer Referee, <i>South Asian Review</i>	2024
Peer Referee, <i>Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience</i>	2024
Editorial Assistant, <i>American Literature</i> , Duke University Press	2019-2022
Co-Founder and Steering Committee, Post-45 Graduate Collective	2015-2018

Related Work Experience

Staff Writer, <i>PopMatters</i>	2019-2022
Processing Specialist, UNC Music Library	2015-2019
Tutor, College Essay Specialist, ColPrep Tutoring , Chapel Hill, NC	2016
Tutor, UNC Academic Support Program for Student-Athletes	2016
Tutor, Writing Center, Houghton College	2012-2014
Circulation Desk, Willard J. Houghton Library, Houghton College	2011-2014

Languages: Reading proficiency: French, Spanish

References:

Matthew Taylor, Diss. Director, Associate Prof. of English (UNC-CH) mattheta@email.unc.edu
 Priscilla Wald, Prof. of English (Duke University) pwald@duke.edu
 Jane Thrailkill, Associate Prof. of English (UNC-CH) tkill@unc.edu
 Gregory Flaxman, Associate Prof. of English (UNC-CH) gflax@email.unc.edu
 Danielle Christmas, Assistant Prof. of English (UNC-CH) dchristmas@unc.edu