

***PERSONAL INFORMATION:***

Joanne M. Braxton, Ph.D.  
Frances L. and Edwin L. Cummings Professor of English and the Humanities  
College of William and Mary  
Department of English  
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***EDUCATION:***

Ph.D., American Studies, Yale University, 1984  
M.A., American Studies, Yale University, 1974  
B.A., Literature and Writing, Sarah Lawrence College, 1972

***POSTDOCTORAL STUDY:***

2008-2011 Master of Theological Studies, Pacific School of Religion, Graduate  
Theological Union, Berkeley, California  
1998 Studies in African Religions with Professor Wande Abimbola,  
Boston University and the W.E.B. Du Bois Institute, Harvard University

***ACADEMIC POSITIONS:***

1994- Frances L. and Edwin L. Cummings Professor of English and the Humanities  
English, College of William and Mary  
1989-1994 Frances L. and Edwin L. Cummings Associate Professor of American Studies and  
English, College of William and Mary  
1985-1989 Associate Professor of English  
College of William and Mary  
1984-1985 Assistant Professor of English  
College of William and Mary  
1980-1984 Instructor of English  
College of William and Mary

***SENIOR FELLOWSHIPS AND VISITS:***

2008- Dean's Scholar, Pacific School of Religion/Graduate Theological Union  
Berkeley, California  
2008-2009 Distinguished Visiting Research Scholar  
African American Literature, Religion and the Arts

- University of California at Berkeley
- 2006 Artist in Residence, Theatre Department  
Morgan State University, Baltimore, Maryland
- 2006 United States Department of State Senior Specialist Award
- 2000-2001 Fulbright Senior Professor  
University of Muenster, Muenster, Germany
- 1998, Fall Resident Fellow, W.E.B. Du Bois Institute,  
Harvard University
- 1996, Spring Andrew W. Mellon Visiting Professor of English,  
University of Pittsburgh
- 1993-1995 Senior Research Fellow, Commonwealth Center for the Study of American  
Culture,  
College of William and Mary
- 1984, Spring Mellon Scholar/National Fellow, Wellesley Center for Research on Women

***PUBLICATIONS AND CREATIVE WORKS:***

***Books:***

*Monuments of the Black Atlantic: Slavery and Memory*, an anthology of essays on the Afro-Atlantic experience, edited with Maria Diedrich. Lit Verlag, 2003. 156 pages. Print.

*Maya Angelou's I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings: A Casebook*, edited and with an introduction by Joanne M. Braxton. Oxford University Press, 1998. 162 pages. Print.

*The Collected Poetry of Paul Laurence Dunbar*, edited and with an introduction by Joanne M. Braxton. University of Virginia Press, 1993. 396 pages. Print. Appendix of variants of poems. Bibliography.

*Wild Women in the Whirlwind: The Renaissance in Contemporary Afro-American Writing*, an anthology of works by individual authors co-edited by Joanne M. Braxton and Andree N. McLaughlin. Rutgers University Press, 1990. 441 pages. Print. Winner of the 1990 Koppelman Book Award.

*Black Women Writing Autobiography: A Tradition Within a Tradition*. Temple University Press, 1989. 242 pages. Print. ACLS Dissertation Fellowship Award winner.

*Sometimes I Think of Maryland*. Sunbury Press, 1977. 53 pages. Poetry.

***Edited Books:***

*Sandra Cisneros: Crossing Borderlands*, by Carmen H. Rivera, *Women Writers of Color Biography Series*, edited and with a foreword by Joanne M. Braxton (Praeger Publishers, 2009).

*Zora Neale Hurston: A Biography of the Spirit*, by Deborah Plant, *Women Writers of Color Biography Series*, edited and with a foreword by Joanne M. Braxton (Praeger Publishers, 2007).

*June Jordan: Her Life and Letters*, by Valerie Kinloch, *Women Writers of Color Biography Series*, edited and with a forward by Joanne M. Braxton (Praeger Publishers, 2006).

*Lucille Clifton: Her Life and Letters*, by Mary Jane Lupton, *Women Writers of Color Biography Series*, edited and with a forward by Joanne M. Braxton (Praeger Publishers, 2006).

***Work in Progress:***

“A Dream of Flight: The Literary Biography of Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906)”

“Writing the Sacred Self: Faith Narratives of Progressive People of Color” (Anthology)

“Strategies of Narration, Prophetic Imperative, and the Failure of Redemptive Violence in Ernest Gaines’s *A Lesson Before Dying*” (essay)

Guest curator and catalogue editor, *Working in the Spirit: The Visionary Life and Art of Elder Anderson Johnson, 1915-1998*. Downing-Gross Cultural Arts Center, Newport News, Virginia.

“New and Used Poems,” a collection of new poems and poetry published in magazines and journals since *Sometimes I Think of Maryland*.

Two plays, “Fiery Furnace” and “The Lakes.”

***Selected Essays, Poems, Chapters in Books:***

“Organic Universalism in Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*,” in *The Inward Light: Critical Essays on Zora Neale Hurston for a New Millennium*, edited by Deborah G. Plant for Praeger, 2010), 239-253.

“Behold This Dreamer: The Vision of Anderson Johnson (1915-1998)” in *ARTS: Arts in Religious and Theological Studies* 21.1 (2009): 31-39.

“Autobiography and African American Women’s Literature,” Chapter 7, *Cambridge Companion to African American Women's Literature*, editors Angelyn Mitchell & Danille K. Taylor, (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 128-149.

“Dunbar, the Originator,” *African American Review* 41 (2007), 205-14.

“The Spiritual, the Sexual, and the Sublime in Barbara Chase Riboud’s *Tantra Series*,” *International Review of African American Art* 21.3 (2007), 16-19.

“Langston Hughes on the Historically White Campus,” chapter in *This is What Democracy Looks Like: A New Realism for a Post Seattle World*,” edited by Cecelia Tichi and Amy Shrager Lang (Rutgers University Press, 2007), 222-228.

“Conversion,” a poem in *Every Goodbye Ain't Gone: An Anthology of Innovative Poetry by African Americans*, ed. Aldon Lynn Nielsen and Lauri Ramey (University of Alabama Press, 2006), 57-60.

“Harriet 'Linda Brent' Jacobs' Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl and the Redefinition of the Slave Narrative Genre,” in *Feminism and Literature: A Gale Critical Companion, 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Volume 3* (Thompson-Gale, 2005), 224-228. Originally published in the *Massachusetts Review*, Vol. XXVII, No. 2 (Summer, 1986), 379-387.

“Zoning” and “Invisibles,” two poems in *Beyond the Frontier: African American Poetry for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, ed. E. Ethelbert Miller (Black Classics Press, 2002), 10-11, 441.

“Symbolic Geographies and Psychic Landscapes: Decoding the Hegemonic Discourse of Urban Renewal,” in *Keep Your Head to the Sky: Interpreting African American Home Ground*, edited by Grey Gundaker and Tynes Cowan (University of Virginia Press, 1999), 177-192.

“A Song of Transcendence: Maya Angelou,” essay in *Modern Critical Interpretations: Maya Angelou's I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*,” edited by Harold Bloom (Chelsea House, 1998), 81-93.

“Introduction,” Nellie Arnold Plummer’s *Out of the Depths or the Triumph of the Cross* (1927), reprinted in the series *African-American Women Writers, 1910-1940*, with an introduction by Joanne M. Braxton (G.K. Hall, 1997), i-xxv.

“Visual Culture: Inside a Brazilian Terreiro,” *International Review of African American Art*, Hampton University Museum, 13.4 (1997), 46-49.

“Paul Laurence Dunbar,” in *Oxford Companion to African American Literature*, edited by William Andrews, Trudier Harris and Frances Foster Smith. (Oxford University Press, 1996).

“Introduction,” Laura E. Wilkes's *Missing Pages of American History* (1919) and Leila Amos Pendleton's *A History of the Negro* (1912), jointly reprinted in the series *African-American Women Writers, 1910-1940*, with an introduction co-authored by Joanne M. Braxton and Sharon L. Zuber, (G.K. Hall, 1996), i-xx.

“Ancestral Presence in the Works of Renee Stout and Winnie Owens Hart” in *My Magic Pours Secret Libations*, Monifa Love, ed. And curator, Museum of Fine Arts, Florida State University School of Visual Arts and Dance (1996), 54-58.

“Silences: What I Learned from Harriet 'Linda Brent' Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861) and the Study of Black Women” in *New Essays in Feminist Criticism*, edited by Shelley Fisher Fishkin and Elaine Hedges, (Oxford University Press, 1994), 146-156.

“Ida B. Wells: Crusader for Justice” in *African American Autobiography: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by William L. Andrews, (Prentice Hall, 1992), 90-112.

“Charlotte Forten Grimké and the Search for a Public Voice” in *The Private Self: Theory and Practice in Women's Autobiographical Writings*, edited by Shari Benstock (University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 254-271.

“Introduction,” Gertrude Mossell’s *The Work of the Afro-American Woman* (1894), reprinted in the series *Schomburg Library of 19th Century Black Women Writers*, with an introduction by Joanne M. Braxton (Oxford University Press, 1988), xxvii-xlii.

### ***Selected Book Reviews, and etc.***

A Review of Gerda Lerner’s *Living With History/Making Social Change*, *Women’s Review of Books*, (May 2010).

A review of Eleanor Alexander’s *Lyrics of Sunshine and Shadow: The Tragic Courtship and Marriage of Paul Laurence Dunbar and Alice Ruth Moore, a History of Love and Violence Among the African American Elite. Resources for American Literary Study*, Vol.29 (November, 2005), 387-390.

A review of Paula Gunn Allen’s *Pocahontas: Medicine Woman, Spy, Entrepreneur, Diplomat*. *Women’s Review of Books*, Vol. 21, No. 8 (May, 2004), 11-12.

“Interview with Paula Gunn Allen” *Women’s Review of Books*, Vol. 21, No. 8 (May, 2004), 13.

“When Lost Voices Speak,” a review of *Give Us Each Day: The Diary of Alice Dunbar-Nelson*, edited by Gloria T. Hull, and Zora Neale Hurston’s *Dust Tracks on a Road: An Autobiography*, in *Women’s Review of Books*, Vol. 21, No. 10 (July, 1985), 5-7.

### ***Plays:***

*Crossing a Deep River: A Ritual Drama in Three Movements* (part of a trilogy including “Fiery Furnace” and “The Lakes.” ) Staged readings: Harvard (1998), William and Mary (2000), Ensemble Studio Theatre Summer Playwright Conference (2004) and the National Black Theatre Festival Frank Silvera Reader’s Theatre Series of New Plays (2005). Morgan State University Theatre Department built a course and a community evening program around the work in 2006.  
<http://www.wm.edu/middlepassage/play/>

“Torda,” a one act play on the Treaty of Torda commissioned by the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Oakland, California for performance in April 2009. Directed by Eva Patko, a Ph.D. candidate in theatre from Transylvania.

### ***Photographic Exhibition:***

*African Odyssey* Photographic Exhibit, funded by Dean of Graduate Studies, College of William and Mary 27 framed color prints of African American “sites of memory” in Ghana, Ivory Coast and Senegal, with antiqued captions in verse.700 square feet. *African Odyssey* has been exhibited at the

Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia; Muenster University in Germany, the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; The Newsome House Museum and Cultural Center, Newport News Virginia; The Pearl Bailey Public Library, Newport News, Virginia; Piedmont Virginia Community College, Charlottesville, Virginia; The College of William and Mary; the Williamsburg Regional Library; and Lafayette High School in Williamsburg, Virginia.  
<http://web.wm.edu/middlepassage/exhibits/odyssey/?svr=www>

***Selected Readings, Keynotes and Talks:***

“Intellectual Activism,” panel presentation with Paula Giddings and Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, John Hope Franklin Research Center, Duke University (February, 2011).

“Toward an Organic Universalism: Forrest Church and the Challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” talk, Unitarian Universalist General Assembly Meeting, Minneapolis, Minnesota (June, 2010).

Chair, “Slavery in the Historic Triangle and Tidewater of Virginia” panel, Origins of the African Diaspora in the Historic Triangle, Africana Studies Symposium, College of William and Mary (March, 2010).

“Behold this Dreamer: The Vision of Anderson Johnson,” Department of African American Studies, University of California at Berkeley (March, 2009).

“Organic Universalism in Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*,” talk, Zora Neale Hurston Foundation Annual Festival, Eatonville, Florida (April, 2009).

Three Talks: “African American Autobiography,” “Contexts for Approaching the John W. Blassingame Papers,” “Facilitating Archival Research by Undergraduates,” John Hope Franklin Research Center, Duke University (November, 2009).

“Voices of Lakeland: A View from the Lakes,” Public Reading and Presentation, Prince George’s County Memorial Library, Hyattsville, Maryland (April 2008).

“A Tribute to Grace Paley: Things My Teacher Taught Me”  
Public Reading, Teachers and Writers, Inc., New York, New York (April, 2008).

“Lyricism and the Quest for Meaning in Black Poetry,” Keynote Address, Langston Hughes Festival, City College (October, 2007).

“Seeing the Life and Work of Paul Laurence Dunbar in Fresh Context,” Keynote Address, *Reassessing Paul Laurence Dunbar, a Centenary Symposium*, University of Massachusetts, Amherst (October, 2006).

Poetry Reading, New Africa House, University of Massachusetts at Amherst (October, 2006.)

“Paul Laurence Dunbar: The Originator,” Keynote Address, *Paul Laurence Dunbar Centenary Conference*, Stanford University (March, 2006).

“Letters and Liberation,” U.S. Black History Month Lectures. Department of State, Office of International Information Programs. Guest lecturer for faculty and student at U.S. Embassy Contacts in Madrid, Berlin, Skopje (Macedonia) and Tbilisi (Georgia) Interactive digital video broadcast from W&M (February, 2006).

“Every Goodbye Ain’t Gone: African American Poetry, Preservation and Innovation,” Paper and poetry reading, *Modern Language Association Convention*, Washington, D.C. (December, 2005).

“What is Ritual Drama Anyway? Toward a People’s Theatre,” *Black Theatre Network Annual Conference*, Winston-Salem, North Carolina (August, 2004).

“Paul Laurence Dunbar: Prophet of a New Generation,” Paper, *American Literature Association*, San Francisco, California (May, 2004).

“To Africa and Back Again: My Experience as an ‘Academic Tourist’ on West Africa’s Slave Coast” Keynote, Speaker, *Sankofa Conference*, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, (November, 2004).

“African Odyssey: Slave Castles on the West Coast of Africa as Sites of Memory,” gallery talk, *Sankofa Conference*, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (November, 2004).

“Reflections on Maya Angelou’s *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*: A Community Dialogue,” Forsyth County Public Library, Winston-Salem, North Carolina (October, 2004).

Gallery talk, opening of “African Odyssey” Photo Exhibit Newsome House Museum and Cultural Center, Newport News, Virginia (2003).

“International Exchanges: Who Benefits?” Talk. Fulbright Commission *Transatlantic Communities—Setting Standards Conference*. Fulbright Berlin Seminar (March, 2001).

“African American Women Writers Today,” Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany (February, 2001).

“The Future of Poetry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, *Landelijke Poeziedag* (National Poetry Day), Amsterdam. Lecture hosted by the John Adams Institute (January, 2001).

“Approaches to Teaching Maya Angelou’s *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*,” a workshop for German teachers of English, sponsored by Public Affairs section of U.S. Consulate General, Muenster, Germany (November, 2001).

“Mediations of the Self: Performance, Play and the Sacred Text,” paper given at University of Paris *African Diasporas Conference* (September, 2000). Repeated for English Department Colloquium, University of Muenster, Germany (October, 2000) and later at Regensburg University (March, 2001), the Center for American Studies, Rome (May 2001) and Bochum University (July, 2001).

“The Blood That Binds Us, The Waters that Divide Us: Teaching About the Middle Passage,” paper given at the annual meeting of the Association of Black Anthropologists. Havana, Cuba (July, 2000).

“In My Mother’s House,” 70th Anniversary Commencement Address, Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, New York (May, 1999).

“Crossing Consciousness: Birthing *Deep River*,” Keynote Address, *Black Liberation in the Americas*, Biennial Conference, Collegium of African American Research, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität, Münster, Germany. Also presented at Universiteit Leiden, the Netherlands, in the same month (March, 1999).

“Paul Laurence Dunbar: Linguistic Innovator and Prophet of a New Generation,” Keynote Address, *Washington, D.C. Historical Society* (October, 1998).

“Paul Laurence Dunbar: the Literary and Cultural Context,” invited lecture, *United States Library of Congress Internal University*, Washington, D.C. (April, 1998).

“Writing Literary History: Paul Laurence Dunbar,” critical paper, “*Furious Flower*”: *A Revolution in African American Poetry Conference*, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, Virginia (October, 1994).

#### ***Selected Honors and Distinctions:***

- 2010- Adam Clayton Powell Fellow, Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology  
Virginia Union University, Richmond, Virginia
- 2006 *U.S. Speaker and Specialist Award, United States Department of State*  
International Information Programs, Spain, Germany, Macedonia and Georgia.
- 2002 *Oni Award, International Black Women’s Congress*  
“...for uncompromising commitment to uplifting the lives of African people.”
- 2000-2001 *Fulbright Senior Professor, University of Muenster, Muenster, Germany.*  
*Franco-American Commission for Educational Exchange Award*  
*Spanish-American Commission for Educational Exchange Award*  
*Italian-American Commission for Educational Exchange Award*
- 2000 *Umoja Humanitarian Service Award, Umoja Incorporated, Williamsburg, Virginia.*
- 1999 *Sarah Lawrence College Alumnae/i Lifetime Achievement Award.*
- 1999 Commencement Speaker, Sarah Lawrence College.
- 1998 *Artist-in-Residence/W.E.B. DuBois Institute Fellow, Harvard University.*
- 1992 *State Council for Higher Education in Virginia Outstanding Faculty Member.*
- 1988 *Society of the Alumni Teaching Award, College of William and Mary.*
- 1986 *Thomas Jefferson Teaching Award, College of William and Mary.*
- 1984 *Mellon Fellow, Wellesley College Center for Research on Women.*
- 1984 *American Council of Learned Societies Dissertation Fellow*
- 1976-1984 *Roothbert Foundation Graduate Fellow*
- 1976-1979 *Junior Fellow, Michigan Society of Fellows, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.*
- 1972-1976 *Danforth Fellow, Yale University; Junior Fellow, Calhoun College, Yale University;*  
*Fellow, Society for Values in Higher Education.*

## **Representative Governance at the College of William and Mary:**

**Arts and Sciences and University Wide**--Faculty of Arts and Sciences Dean of the Faculty Search Committee, Affirmative Action Equal Opportunity (AAEO) Committee, AAEO Officer Search Committee, Faculty Research Committee, Faculty Affairs Committee, Educational Policy Committee, Student Affairs Committee, Writing Across the Curriculum Committee, Lemon Project Committee, Vice Provost for Research and Graduate/Professional Studies Evaluation Committee, numerous committees (some of which I chaired) to evaluate holders of endowed professorships in different disciplines across the university.

**American Studies**--Founding Committee for establishment of the American Studies Graduate Program and Commonwealth Center for the Study of American Culture, Executive Committee, Graduate Program Committee, Admissions, Personnel Committee, Search Committees for Program Director (and professors of American History, African American History, and Material Culture), Library Committee.

**Black Studies/African Studies/ Africana Studies**-- Director, Middle Passage Project, Founding Committee to create Black Studies Program, Black Studies Program Executive Committee, Convener, "Monuments of the Black Atlantic" International Conference, African Studies Program Executive Committee, Committee to Merge African Studies and Black Studies, Founding Africana Studies Program Executive Committee, Search Committee for Assistant Professor of African American History, Director, Africana House Living Learning Community.  
<http://web.wm.edu/middlepassage/?svr=www>

**Department of English**--Chair, Committee for the Evaluation and Improvement of Teaching, Co-Chair, Search Committee for Assistant Professor in African American Literature (jointly with American Studies), Personnel Committee, Graduate Program Committee (now abolished), Undergraduate Program Committee, Honors Committee, Patrick Hayes Writers Festival Committee, Writer in Residence Committee, Cloud Lecture Series Committee, Freshman Advising.

### ***Selected Service:***

2011-	Delegate Assembly, Modern Language Association
2011-	United Church of Christ, "Faith Practices" writing team
2010-	Diversity Consultant/Workshop Leader, Unitarian Universalist Association
2009-	Consultant, John Hope Franklin Research Center, Duke University
2008-	Board Member, Lakeland Community Heritage Project
2007-2011	Convener and acting president, Paul Laurence Dunbar Society
2003-2006	National Board Member, Paul Laurence Dunbar Project
1998-2001	U.S. Library of Congress Women's History Resource Guide Editorial Board
1998-2001	Member, Board of Trustees, Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, New York
1997-2002	Founding Board Member, Society for the Study of American Women Writers
1990-present	<i>African American Review</i> Editorial Board
1990-present	<i>a/b: Auto/Biography Studies</i> Editorial Board

***Memberships:***

American Studies Association  
Association for the Study of African American Life and History  
College Language Association  
Fulbright Association  
Modern Language Association  
International Black Women's Congress  
Dramatist's Guild of America  
Author's League

***Reader/Reviewer:***

*a/b: Auto/Biography*  
*African American Review*  
*American Quarterly*  
Columbia University Press  
Harvester-Wheatsheaf  
Oxford University Press  
Praeger-Greenwood Publishing Group  
Rutgers University Press  
Simon and Schuster International.  
Temple University Press  
The Library of America  
University of Pennsylvania Press  
University of Virginia Press  
University of Wisconsin Press  
U.S. Library of Congress /U.S. Printing Office

***Selected Media Appearances:***

"I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings." Diane Rehm Show, March 18, 2009.  
<http://wamu.org/programs/dr/09/03/18.php#24965>

*Paul Laurence Dunbar: A Documentary*, by Frederick Lewis, Central Region Humanities Center at Ohio State University and the National Paul Laurence Dunbar Project. I

"Remembrances: Paul Laurence Dunbar's Legacy of Language," Weekend Edition with Aileen LeBlanc, National Public Radio, Sunday, February 12, 2006.  
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5200796>

*Women's Life Writing*, a half hour broadcast for "WHAT'S the WORD?," a weekly National Public Radio program sponsored by the Modern Language Association, produced by Sally Placksin. Program #109, 2002.

