

OBRI J. RICHARDSON

rchrds28@memphis.edu

RESEARCH & TEACHING INTERESTS

African American/African Diaspora; 20th and 21st Century African American Literature; Black Studies; Genders and Sexualities Studies; Hip-Hip Studies; Oral Histories; Black Film (Post-1980); Black Liberation and Womanist Theologies and Ethics.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. English (Literary and Cultural Studies), University of Memphis, expected May 2027
Certificates in African American Literature and Women's and Gender Studies

S.T.M. Social Ethics, Union Theological Seminary of New York City, 2022

Extended Paper: "(Dis)Skeerifying Black Masculinity Through Black Literature: Resources for Theological Ethics in the Work of DuBois, Hansberry, and Morrison."

M.Div. Theology, Virginia Union University, 2021. *summa cum laude*

B.A. English, Morehouse College, 2018.

PUBLICATIONS

"Jeremiah Alvesta Wright, Jr.," *Encyclopedia of the Black Arts Movement*, 2nd. Edition, *forthcoming*.

"The Call for The Spirit of Justice in the National Baptist Convention," *MLK50: Justice Through Journalism*, 2024.

HONORS, GRANTS, AND FELLOWSHIPS

English Department Service Award, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN. 2023-2024.

African American Literature Concentration Award, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN. 2023-2024.

Union Tuition Scholarship, Union Theological Seminary of New York, New York, NY. 2021-2022.

Henry Mitchell Endowed Scholarship, Virginia Union University, Richmond, VA. 2020.

Louis D. Mitchell Endowed Scholarship, Virginia Union University, Richmond, VA. 2020.

Samuel DeWitt Proctor Endowed Scholarship, Virginia Union University, Richmond, VA. 2020.

UPS Community Scholars Program, Morehouse College, Atlanta, GA. 2017-2018.

LECTURES, PANELS, AND PRESENTATIONS

“A Source for Homiletical Use: African American Literature as Sacred Text” Invited Guest Lecture for PT1-615 Introduction to Womanist Preaching. Dr. Gina Stewart, Virginia Union University, Summer 2025.

“The South Got Something to Say”: Examining Healing Through Storytelling in the Works of Jesmyn Ward (Roundtable)-Special Session of the Jesmyn Ward Society, Presenter for College Language Association Convention, Vancouver, WA, Spring 2025.

“Birthed in Magic and Formed in the Garden: The Birthing and Forming of Me” Presenter for Ida B. Wells Conference, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN, November 1, 2024

“Black Prophetic Rhetoric as Protest: Examining Proclamation Through the Black Literary Tradition,” Presenter for College Language Association Convention, Memphis, TN, Spring 2024

“Toward the Destruction of a Hog: Ernest Gaines’ A Lesson Before Dying as a Source for Reimagining Manhood” Presenter for College Language Association Convention, Memphis, TN, Spring 2024

“Black Maleness and Hip-Hop: A Rhetorical Analysis of Kendrick Lamar’s *Aunties Diaries*” Invited Guest Lecture for COMM 3360: The Rhetoric of Hip-Hop. Prof. Ayo Morton, University of Memphis, Spring 2023.

“Reflections on Morrison” Invited Guest Speaker for PR 260: Race and Modernity: W.E.B. Du Bois, Lorraine Hansberry, and Toni Morrison. Dr. Cornel West, Union Theological Seminary of New York, Fall 2022.

“An Interpretation of Jesus: The Thoughts of Thurman” Invited Guest Lecture for English 366-Civil Rights Literature. Spring 2021. Dr. Corrie Claiborne, Morehouse College, Spring 2021.

“God-Breathed: African American Literature as Sacred Text” Invited Guest Lecture for CT1-621 Theology and Theological Thinking. Dr. Alison Gise Johnson, Virginia Union University, Fall 2020

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Graduate Research Assistant (Aug 2023-May 2024): For 20 hours weekly, I provided valuable assistance to the Literary and Cultural Studies concentration. My primary responsibilities involved researching comparable institutions' core curricula and English Major structure in preparation for the University of Memphis Department's forthcoming curriculum revision. Additionally, I supported professors in their research endeavors and provided classroom assistance as needed.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Memphis Shelby County Schools

Classroom Teacher

6th and 8th grade Creative Writing, 2025-present

Christ Missionary Baptist Church

Facilitator

Lenten Discipline Intensive featuring *Jesus and the Disinherited* by Howard Thurman, Memphis, TN, March 31-April 21, 2025 (Mondays)

University of Memphis

Instructor/Teaching Assistant

ENGL 1020: English Composition II/Rhetorical Analysis, Spring 2025.

ENGL 4372: Women of the Harlem Renaissance, Dr. Shelby Crosby, Fall 2024.

ENGL 1010: English Composition (First-Year Writing Course), Fall 2024.

ENGL 3325: Af/Am Lit thru Harlem Renaissance, Afrofuturism: Slavery & Beyond. Dr. Shelby Crosby, Spring 2024.

Virginia Union University

Teaching Assistant

PT1 615: Introduction to Womanist Preaching. Dr. Gina Stewart, Summer 2025 *intensive*

ID 607: Ethics and Politics: The Making of Race, Class & Violence in America. Dr. Alison Gise Johnson, Spring 2021

CT1 745: Theological Ethics. Dr. Alison Gise Johnson, Spring 2021.

PT1 614: Women in Ministry. Dr. Alison Gise Johnson, Spring 2021.

CT1 621: Theology and Theological Thinking. Dr. Alison Gise Johnson, Fall 2020.

PT 634: Preaching II/EPP. Dr. Ray McKenzie, Summer 2019. *intensive*

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

College Language Association Convention, Chair for “Narratives of Gender and Race” panel, Memphis, TN, April 12, 2024

Contemporary African Americanist Search Committee at the University of Memphis, Memphis, TN, Dec 2023-Feb 2024

Rhetoric & Religion As Resources for Resistance Conference, Chair for “Theology” panel, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN, October 20, 2023

Graduate Assistantship, Department of English at the University of Memphis, Memphis, TN, August 2023-Present

Office Manager, Episcopal Divinity School at Union Theological Seminary, New York, NY, August 2022- June 2023

Licensed Minister, Mt. Moriah Baptist Church of Atlanta, Georgia, December 31, 2018

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated

Sigma Tau Delta International English Honor Society

College Language Association

The Toni Morrison Society

American Academy of Religion

REFERENCES

Upon request