

LA DONNA L. FORSGREN
Department of Film, Television, and Theatre
University of Notre Dame

- Office* Department of Film, Television, and Theatre, 230K DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN 46556; Cell: 541-321-3060; Email: lforsgre@nd.edu
- Education* Ph.D., Northwestern University, Interdisciplinary PhD in Theatre and Drama, Gender Studies Certificate, 2012.
- M.A., Brigham Young University, Theatre History, Theory, and Criticism, 2005.
- B.A., Western Oregon University, Theatre Arts, History Minor, 2002.
- Academic appointments* Associate Professor, University of Notre Dame, Department of Film, Television, and Theatre, 2020-Present; Assistant Professor, 2017-2020. Concurrent faculty, Gender Studies program. Affiliate faculty, Africana Studies.
- Assistant Professor, Miami University, Department of Theatre, 2016-2017.
- Assistant Professor, University of Oregon, Department of Theatre Arts, 2012-2016. “Acting” Assistant Professor, 2011-2012.
- Visiting Instructor, Luther College, Department of Theatre, 2010-2011.
- Publications— books* *Sistuh's in the Struggle: An Oral History of Black Arts Movement Theater and Performance* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2020).
- In Search of Our Warrior Mothers: Women Dramatists of the Black Arts Movement* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2018).
- Refereed articles* “*The Wiz* Redux; or Why Queer Black Feminist Spectatorship and Politically Engaged Popular Entertainment Continue to Matter,” *Theatre Survey* 60, no.3 (2019), pp. 325-354. Oscar G. Brockett Essay Prize, American Society for Theatre Research.
- “From the Black Arts Movement to the Contemporary Chitlin’ Circuit: An Interview with Woodie King Jr.” *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* 33 no. 2 (2019), pp. 61-80.
- “Performing Black Womanhood: A Dramaturg’s Guide to *Voyeurs de Venus*,” *Continuum: The Journal of Black Drama, Theatre, and Performance* 5 no.1 (2019), pp. 11-18.

Refereed articles

- “Breaking Down the ‘Walls of Whiteness’: Strategies for Teaching About Race and Social Justice in a ‘Very Black Year,’” *Theatre Topics* 27 no.2 (2017), pp. 151-162.
- “Black Folk’s Theatre to Black Lives Matter: The Black Revolution on Campus,” *Theatre History Studies* 36 (2017), pp. 301-309. Robert A. Schanke award-winning essay.
- “‘Set Your Blackness Free’: Barbara Ann Teer’s Art and Activism During the Black Arts Movement,” *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 36 (2015), pp. 136-159.
- “The Black Arts Movement (1965-1976): An Interview with J.e. Franklin,” *Callaloo: A Journal of African Diaspora Arts and Letters* 37 no.5 (2014), pp. 1139-1157.
- “Militancy and Ministry: Revolutionary Conversion in Ben Caldwell’s *Prayer Meeting* and James Baldwin’s *Blues for Mister Charlie*,” *New England Theatre Journal* 22 (2011), pp. 107-123.

Book chapters

- “The Remaining One-Third: Vinnette Carroll and the Urban Arts Corps” in *The Great North American Stage Directors*, eds. Henry Bial and Chase Bringardner (London: Methuen Drama, 2021) pp. 75-97.
- “Performing Blackness, Ecodramaturgy, and Social Justice: Toward a Radical Pedagogy” in *Teaching Critical Performance Theory in Today’s Theatre Classroom, Studio, and Communities*, ed. Jeanmarie Higgins (New York: Routledge, 2020), pp. 81-93.
- “From ‘Poemplays’ to Ritualistic Revivals: The Experimental Works of Women Dramatists of the Black Arts Movement,” in *The Routledge Companion to African American Theatre and Performance*, eds. Kathy A. Perkins, Sandra L. Richards, Renee Alexander Craft, and Thomas DeFranz (New York: Routledge, 2019), pp. 250-256.

Work in progress

- “Barbara Ann Teer” in *Women’s Theatre Theory and Dramatic Criticism*, eds. J. Ellen Gainor and Catherine Burroughs. Under contract with Routledge. Anticipated publication: 2021.
- “A Legacy of Feminist Possibilities: Sexual Abuse, Trauma, and Violence in the Early Choreopoems of Ntozake Shange” (under review)
- “Transculturation, Reclamation, and Adaptation: Approaches to Teaching *Father Comes Home from the Wars Parts 1, 2 & 3*” (under review)
- “Hands Up, Don’t Shoot: ‘Suicide,’ Black Gun Ownership, and Restoring Black Masculinity on Black Arts Movement Stages” (under review)

Work in progress (cont'd)

Black Girlhood and Black Queer Feminist Spectatorship in Contemporary Musical Theatre (monograph)

Rehearsing the Revolution: African American Theatre from WWII to the Black Arts Movement with Dr. Jonathan Shandell.

Book reviews

Review of Jonathan Shandell, *The American Negro Theatre and the Long Civil Rights Era* (Iowa City: Iowa University Press, 2018), *Journal of American History* 106 no. 4 (2020), pp. 1135-1136.

Review of Devorah Heitner, *Black Power TV* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013) and Fred Carroll, *Race News: Black Journalists and the Fight for Racial Justice in the Twentieth Century* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2017), *American Literature* 91 no 3. (2019), pp. 663-665.

Review of Malik Gaines, *Black Performance on the Outskirts of the Left: A History of the Impossible* (New York: New York University Press, 2017), *Modern Drama* 61 no. 2 (2018), pp. 244-246.

Review of Sandra G. Shannon (ed.), *August Wilson's Pittsburgh Cycle: Critical Perspectives on the Plays* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2016), *Theatre Topics* 26 no. 2 (2016), pp. 267-268.

Review of Brandi Catanese, *The Problem of the Color[blind]: Racial Transgression and the Politics of Black Performance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011), *Theatre Journal* 65 no. 2 (2013), pp. 302-303.

Review of Nadine George-Graves, *Urban Bush Women: Twenty Years of African American Dance Theater, Community Engagement, and Working It Out* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2010), *Theatre Journal* 63 no. 2 (2011), pp. 290-291.

*Awards*National Awards:

Oscar G. Brockett Essay Prize, American Society for Theatre Research, 2020. Awarded for "best theatre essay published in an academic journal."

Robert A. Schanke Theatre Research Award, Mid-America Theatre Conference, 2016. Prize includes publication in *Theatre History Studies*. Winner selected by MATC's Theatre History Symposium co-chairs Joanne Zerdy and Michelle Granshaw, all-conference respondent Kim Marra, and *Theatre History Studies* editor, Liz Mullenix.

Dissertation Fellowship, Consortium for Faculty Diversity at Liberal Arts Colleges, 2010.

*Awards
cont'd*

Notre Dame Awards and Honors:

Teaching Beyond the Classroom Grant, College of Arts Letters, \$500, Fall 2020.

Initiation Grant, Faculty Research Support Program, \$10,000, Fall 2019.

Small Grant for Research and Creative Work, Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts (ISLA), \$2,500, Fall 2019.

Large Humanities Research Grant, ISLA, \$14,940.51, Spring 2018.

Indexing and Copyediting Support, ISLA, \$900, Fall 2017.

Small Grant for Research and Creative Work, ISLA, \$2,500, Fall 2017.

Teaching Beyond the Classroom Grant, College of Arts Letters, \$1,300, Fall 2017

Other Institutional Recognitions and Honors:

Grant to Promote Research, Miami University, \$1,825, Fall 2017.

New Faculty Research Community Professional Development Grant, Miami University, 2017.

Other Institutional Recognitions and Honors:

Professional Development Grant, Teaching Enhancement Program, Miami University, 2016.

Humanities and Creative Arts Fellowship, College of Arts and Sciences, University of Oregon, \$5,000, Summer 2014.

Travel Grant, Center for Study of Women in Society, University of Oregon, 2012.

“La Donna Forsgren Scholarship” given to undergraduate in honor of candidate’s “exemplary qualities in teaching, research, and leadership,” Bowerman Foundation, University of Oregon, 2012.

*Invited
lectures*

“Sisthuhs in the Struggle” Invited Book Talk, Northwestern University. Evanston, IL, 3 March 2021.

“Black Women’s Art and Activism During the Black Arts Movement,” Utah Valley University. Orem, UT, 2 March 2021.

“*Uh Huh But How Do It Free Us?: The Art of Black Liberation*,” Duke University. 24 February 2021.

“The Black Arts Movement,” in 395 undergraduate seminar taught by Eleanor Russell, Northwestern University. Evanston, IL, 17 November 2020.

“Finding Life/Work Balance,” in Professional Development Seminar taught by Dr. Henry Bial, University of Kansas. Lawrence, KS, 30 October 2020.

*Invited
lectures
cont'd*

“Transculturation, Reclamation, and Adaptation: Approaches to Teaching Suzan-Lori Parks’ *Father Comes Home from the Wars Parts 1, 2 & 3*,” Literature and Humanities Series, Columbia University. New York City, NY, 26 October 2020.

“Sistuh in the Struggle” in Theatre History graduate seminar taught by Megan Sanborn-Jones, Brigham Young University. Provo, UT, 26 October 2020.

Expert Panelist, “The Journey from the Black Victorian to Black Lives Matter: A Conversation Inspired by *Relentless*,” TimeLine Theatre Company. Chicago, IL. 24 September 2020.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MPY-OSbKj6I>

“In Search of Our Warrior Mothers: Women Dramatists of the Black Arts Movement,” Texas Tech University. Lubbock, TX, 4 February 2019.

“In Search of Our Warrior Mothers,” Brigham Young University. Provo, UT, 26 October 2018.

“In Her Own Words: Constructing an Oral History of Black Arts Movement Theatre and Performance,” Brigham Young University. Provo, UT, 25 October 2018.

“*The Bronx is Next: Revolutionary Theatre of the Black Arts Movement*,” Brigham Young University. Provo, UT, 25 October 2018.

“Research Methods,” University of Missouri. Columbia, MI, 8 October 2018.

“In Her Own Words: Constructing an Oral History of Black Arts Movement Theatre and Performance,” Alumni Reunion, Northwestern University. Evanston, IL, 5 October 2018.

“Black Folk’s Theatre to Black Lives Matter: The Black Revolution on Campus,” University of Missouri. Columbia, MI, 13 April 2017.

“Barbara Ann Teer and the National Black Theatre,” 8th Annual African American Intellectual Thought Symposium, California State University. Fresno, CA, April 2014.

“Edutainment: or How I Learned to Survive the University Classroom,” University of Oregon. Eugene, OR, 26 October 2013.

“Modern Stereotypes: Welfare Mother, Welfare Queen, Angry Black Woman, and Video Vixen,” Luther College. Decorah, IA, 30 March 2010.

“Martie Charles and Black Revolutionary Drama: Negating Distorted Images of Black Motherhood,” Luther College. Decorah, IA, 29 March 2010.

Professional conferences Panel organizer and moderator:
“Pedagogy of Extraordinary Bodies,” co-chair with Jessica Brater and Michelle Liu Carriger, American Society for Theatre Research (ASTR), San Diego, 17 November 2018.

“Emerging Scholars,” Mid-America Theatre Conference (MATC), Cleveland, 7 March 2014.

Panel moderator:

“Race & Performance in the U.S.,” MATC, Minneapolis, 17 March 2016.

“Invention, Diaspora, & Mobilities,” MATC, Cleveland, 6 March 2014.

“Feeding, Fighting, and Fornicating: Consumption and Myth,” MATC, St. Louis, 9 March 2013.

Papers presented:

“Arousing the Public: Black Women Intellectuals Remember the Revolution,” Plenary, ASTR, Arlington, 7-10 November 2019.

“*The Wiz* Redux: or Why Queer Black Feminist Spectatorship Continues to Matter,” ATHE, Orlando, 9 August 2019

“Arousing the Masses: Black Women Remember the Revolution,” Affective Arousal Plenary, ASTR, San Diego, 17 November 2018. Accepted; conference cancelled.

“Myths, Memories, and Monuments: From Emancipation Park to The Beguiled,” ATHE, Boston, 5 August 2018.

“Introducing Blackness as a Performative Gesture,” MATC, Milwaukee, 16 March 2018.

“Teaching African American Performance and Activism in a ‘Very Black Year,’” MATC, Houston, 18 March 2017.

“‘The play is the thing’: Spectatorship, Revolutionary Theatre, and Community in August Wilson’s ‘The Janitor,’” Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE), Chicago, 13 August 2016.

“Black Folk’s Theater and the Black Revolution on College Campuses,” MATC, Minneapolis, 17 March 2016.

“Re-visioning Wonderland: Adapting Victorian Literature for 21st c. Spectators,” ATHE, Scottsdale, AZ, 26 July 2014.

Papers presented (cont'd):

“Set Your Blackness Free: Barbara Ann Teer’s Ritualistic Revivals,” ATHE, Scottsdale, AZ, 27 July 2014.

“Black Foils and Female Guides: A Spiritual Search for Black Manhood in Amiri Baraka’s *Madheart*,” Amiri Baraka: A Retrospective Conference, Institute of Contemporary Arts, University of Kent, UK 12 April 2014.

“Revision and Recovery: Adapting Nina Simone’s ‘Four Women’ (1966) for the Black Arts Movement Stage,” MATC, Cleveland, 6 March 2014.

“Women Playwrights of the Black Arts Movement: Their Work and Legacy,” The Black Arts Movement and Its Legacies, Uni. of California-Merced. Merced, CA, 2 March 2014.

“Defying Death: A Search for Black Manhood and the True Black Woman in the Black Arts Movement,” National Council for Black Studies. Indianapolis, 14 March 2013.

“Topsy Turvey: Adapting the African Trickster Tale for 20th Century Spectators,” MATC, St. Louis, 8 March 2013.

“Living Trademarks: Aunt Jemima and the Performance of Black Women’s Labor (1893-1964),” MATC, Chicago, 2 March 2012.

“The ‘Negro’ to ‘Black’ Conversion: Militancy and Ministry in Ben Caldwell’s *Prayer Meeting* & James Baldwin’s *Blues for Mister Charlie*,” ATHE, Black Theatre Association Debut Panel, Los Angeles, 4 August 2010.

“Colonialism and the Staged Irishman: Performing Whiteness in Dion Boucicault’s *The Octoroon*; or, *Life in Louisiana*,” MATC Graduate Debut Panel, Cleveland, 2 March 2010.

“A ‘Classless, Crass and Deplorable Stunt’: The Technological Consumption of Janet Jackson’s Deviant Black Female Body.” Society for the Interdis. Study of Social Imagery, Colorado Springs, 10 March 2007.

Panelist on a Roundtable or Working Group:

“Radical Inclusion Two: A Continuing Discussion Offering Tactics for Creating Productive Learning Spaces for Engaging with Race,” sponsored by American Theatre and Drama Society (ATDS), ATHE, Boston, 1 August 2018.

“Spotlight on New Works: Discussion of Newly Published Books from the ATDS, BTA, and LIA Focus Groups,” Presenter (Respondent: Soyica Colbert, Georgetown University), ATHE, Boston, 3 August 2018.

“Transgressing Theatre History: New Modes of Teaching About Extraordinary Bodies,” Pedagogy of the Extraordinary Bodies Working Group, ASTR, Atlanta, 16 November 2017.

Panelist on a Roundtable or Working Group (cont'd):

“Teaching African American Performance and Activism at a HWCU,”
Roundtable, ATHE, Las Vegas, 6 August 2017.

Notre Dame presentations “Sistahood is Powerful: Recovering Black Women Intellectuals of the Black Arts and Black Power Movements,” *Literatures of Annihilation and Resistance*, 4 December 2020.

Panelist, *Crazy Rich Asians* post discussion sponsored by the Liu Institute and Department of Film, Television, and Theatre, 29 November 2018.

Presenter, “The Sexual Harassment Project,” sponsored by the Office of Research and the Program on Law and Market Behavior, 9 May 2018.

Panelist, *The Mountaintop* (L.A. Theatre Works) post play discussion sponsored by the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, 19 January 2018.

Service

Service to the Field:

Associate Editor, *Theatre Survey*, American Society for Theatre Research, 2021-2022

Editorial Board, *Theatre Topics*, Association for Theatre in Higher Education, 2021-Present

Executive Committee, Mid-America Theatre Conference. Elected positions:

- Vice President/Conference Planner, 2020-2021
- Associate Conference Planner, 2018-2020

Editorial Committee, *Journal of American Theatre and Drama*, American Theatre and Drama Society (ATDS) 2019-2020.

Manuscript Reviewer, Iowa University Press, 2020.

Program Committee Member, Community Theatre for Social Justice Action, South Bend, Indiana, 2018.

Peer Reviewer, *Theatre Practice*, 2018.

Peer Reviewer, *Theatre Journal*, 2018.

Peer Reviewer, *Theatre Topics*, 2017-2020.

Peer Reviewer, *Theatre History Studies*, 2017-2019.

Emerging Scholars Panel Mentor, Mid-America Theatre Conference, 2017.

Adjudicator, Black Theatre Association Debut Panel, Association for Theatre in Higher Education, 2016-2017.

Service

Service to the Field ((cont'd):

Adjudicator, AGE and the Arts Grant (\$35,000 professional theater grant), 2016.

Full-Length Play Committee Reader, Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, Region V, 2015-2016.

Co-Chair, Emerging Scholars Panel, Mid-America Theatre Conference, 2013-2015.

Playwriting Judge, ACT-SO, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Eugene, Oregon Branch, 2013-2014.

Playwriting Judge, Northwest Ten Playwriting Competition, Oregon Contemporary Theatre, Eugene, Oregon, 2012.

University Service:

Provost Office Representative, Faculty and Staff Experience Subcommittee, Committee for the Experience of Students of Color, appointed by Provost Miranda, 2020-present.

Undergraduate Studies Committee member, 2019-2020.

Faculty Senate, 2017-2019.

College of Arts and Letters Service:

Center for Race Board member, appointed by Dean Mustillo, Fall 2020-Present.

Creative Writer Search Committee, appointed by Mark Sanders, Fall 2020.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee member, appointed by Dean Mustillo, Fall 2020.

Center for Race Committee member, appointed by Dean Mustillo, Spring-Fall 2020.

Anti-racism Accountability Committee, Shakespeare@ND, invited by Peter Holland, 2020-Present

Special Committee member, Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts, 2018.

Department Service: Gender Studies & Film, Television and Theatre

Season Selection Committee, 2017-Present.

Senior Thesis Advisor, "Layered," by Zoë Spence, 2020.

Senior Thesis Reader, "America's Next Top Activist: The Mediation of Contemporary Girlhood Activism Discourse in U.S. Mass Magazines," by Samantha "Sammy" Viqueira, 2020.

Department Service: Gender Studies & Film, Television and Theatre (cont'd)
Senior Thesis Advisor, "God's Gonna Trouble the Water," by Tyrel London,
2019.

International/Identity Curriculum Committee, 2017-2018.

Theatre History Curriculum Subcommittee, 2017-2018

*Service at
other
institutions*

Miami University:

Committee Member, Undergraduate Recruitment Committee, Theatre
Department, 2016-2017.

Dramaturgy Supervisor, Theatre Department, 2016-2017.

Committee Member, Dean's Advisory Committee, College of Art, 2016-2017.

University of Oregon:

PhD Exam Committee Member, Jessica "J.K." Rogers, Theatre Department,
2016.

Honor's Thesis Second Reader, "The Object in Science Fiction Theatre and
Marked: A Play in Two Acts," by Nicolas Maurer, 2016.

Honor's Thesis Second Reader, "A Game Called Dying: Playing with Death &
Family Through Playwriting," by Thomas Varga, 2014.

Dissertation Chair, Rachel Foran, Theatre Department, 2013-2016.

Honor's Thesis Second Reader, "In the Rays of the Sun" and "Depth Perception,"
by Evan Marshall, 2013.

Master's Thesis Reader, "Clowns Ex Machina: An Investigation of the
Relationship Between Gender and Clown," by Kimberley Bates, 2012.

Honor's Thesis Second Reader, "Assistance: An Original Play," by Maddie
Downes, 2012.

Dramaturgical Advisor/New Play Development Coordinator, New Voices
Playwriting Competition, Theatre Department, 2012.

Theatre Season Selection Committee Member, Theatre Department, 2011-2016.

Search Committee Member (Technical Director), Theatre Department, 2011-
2012.

*Selected
theatre
experience*

Dramaturg, “August Wilson Project,” South Bend Civic Theatre, South Bend, IN, 2018-2019.

Dramaturg, *Stage Kiss* by Sarah Ruhl, Robinson Theatre, directed by Zeina Salame, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR, 2016.

Director and Playwright, *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, Hope Theatre, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR, 2014.

Playwright, adaptation of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR, 2014.

Dramaturg, *Arcadia* by Tom Stoppard, directed by Scott Kaiser (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), Robinson Theatre, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR, 2013.

Director, *I Ain’t Yo’ Uncle: The New Jack Revisionist Uncle Tom’s Cabin* by Robert Alexander, Hope Theatre, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR, 2012.

*Professional
memberships*

American Society for Theatre Research

American Theatre and Drama Society

Association for Theatre in Higher Education

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November 2, 2020