

## Brent M. Blackwell

Department of English  
Ball State University  
Muncie, IN 47306

Indianapolis, IN 46240

[bblackwell@bsu.edu](mailto:bblackwell@bsu.edu)

### EDUCATION

Ph.D., Purdue University, May 2004: English

Primary Areas: Theory and Cultural Studies, Contemporary American Literature  
Secondary Areas: Jewish Studies, Science and Literature

**Dissertation:** *Literary Topology: Modern Science and Contemporary American Fiction.*

Using the mathematical metaphor of topology (e.g. the Möbius band), a kind of qualitative reading is possible in which quantitative assumptions about the consistency of a given system of cultural relations are no longer hidden within the structure of the system. As such, certain American authors, not traditionally viewed as ethnically or racially sensitive, undergo a new reading.

Committee: John N. Duvall (Co-Chair), Arkady Plotnitsky (Co-Chair), Sandor Goodhart, Robert Paul Lamb.

M.A., Purdue University, 1997: English

**Master's Thesis:** *Perverse Repetition, Empirical Chaos, and Categorical Meaning: Becoming America in Poe, Crane, and Pynchon.*

Committee: Robert Paul Lamb (Chair), Wendy Stallard Flory, Daniel Morris

B.A., Purdue University, 1995: English

Minor: Medieval Studies, Philosophy

### Publications

#### Articles

“Literary Topology: An Introduction to Postmodern Mathematics.” *Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture* 4:4 (Fall 2004) (Online Journal). n.p. ISSN: 1547-4348. [www.reconstruction.ws](http://www.reconstruction.ws).

“Calvino and the Little People: the Poststructural Folk Tale,” *Romance Language Annual* XI (2000): 144-150. CD-ROM.

## Book Reviews

“Joseph M. Conte’s Design and Debris: a Chaotics of Postmodern American Fiction.” *Modern Fiction Studies* 50:1 (Spring 2004). 860-861.

## Encyclopedia Entries:

“Hedi Fried: Biography.” *Facts on File Companion to the World Novel 1900 to the Present*. Vol. 1. Edited by Michael D. Sollars. New York: Facts on File, 2008.

“Hedi Fried’s *The Road to Auschwitz: Fragments of a Life*.” *Facts on File Companion to the World Novel 1900 to the Present*. Vol. 1. Edited by Michael D. Sollars. New York: Facts on File, 2008.

“Primo Levi: Biography.” *Facts on File Companion to the World Novel 1900 to the Present*. Vol. 1. Edited by Michael D. Sollars. New York: Facts on File, 2008.

“Primo Levi’s *Survival In Auschwitz*.” *Facts on File Companion to the World Novel 1900 to the Present*. Vol. 1. Edited by Michael D. Sollars. New York: Facts on File, 2008.

“Kathy Acker’s *Don Quixote*.” *Facts On File Companion to the American Novel*. Vol. 3. Edited by Abby H. P. Werlock. New York: Facts on File, 2006.

## **Honorary and Invited Lectures**

Discussant and Representative for Judaism, Freshmen Connections Panel on Religion and the Environment, April, 2009.

“Who Do You Say that I Am?: Revisiting the Jesus Question in Judaism.” The Jewish Studies Summer Workshop Public Lecture, Ball State University, May 7, 2008.

“Why Do You Care?: Some Thoughts from an Honest English Teacher.” Keynote Address, National Society of Collegiate Scholars Integrity Day, Ball State University, April 9, 2008.

“Anti-Semitism in Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*?” Presentation for the Society of Open Minded Academics (SOMA), Ball State University, February 20, 2008.

“America: World Police.” Honorary Lecture, Krosno College, Krakow, Poland, May 2005.

“Shoah as the Necessary Consequence of Western Humanism.” Yom Hashoah Faculty Colloquium Presentation, Ball State University, April 2005.

## Conference Presentations

“Uncovering Layers of Meaning through Interdisciplinary Collaboration: A Study of Women of the Silk” Panel with E. Riddle, K. Metzger, and R. Peterson. My Paper: “Rhetorical Narrative Technique in *Women of the Silk*.” Indiana College English Association, Huntington, October 2009.

“The Beginning Again of Literature: Literary Plagiarism in Hedi Fried’s *The Road to Auschwitz: Fragments of a Life*.” Women and the Holocaust, Jagellonian University, Krakow, May 2005 .

Panel Chair, “Fascism and Literature II.” Central New York Conference on Language and Literature, SUNY Cortland, October, 2003.

Panel Chair, “Fascism and Literature.” Central New York Conference on Language and Literature, SUNY Cortland, October 2002.

“The Complementarity of the Image: Quantum Mechanics in H.D.’s Trilogy,” Lost Measure: a Conference on H.D., Lehigh University, September 2002.

“Mathoepoetics: a Topological Reading of H.D.’s Trilogy,” American Literature Association Annual Conference, Long Beach, May 2002.

Discussant, Panel on “Ethics and Responsibility in the Academy,” Fourth Annual Theory and Cultural Studies Colloquium, Purdue University, March 2002.

“Against Fascism: the Critical Practice of Gilles Deleuze,” Third Annual Theory and Cultural Studies Symposium, Purdue University, September 2001.

“The Calculus of Fascism,” Second Annual Theory and Cultural Studies Symposium. Purdue University, April 2001.

“Why all the Math?: the Here and the Now of Deleuze’s ‘Many Politics,’” First Annual Theory and Cultural Studies Symposium, Purdue University, April 2000.

“Initiating and Supporting a Cross-Curricular Learning Community at Purdue,” Council of Writing Program Administrators Annual Conference, Purdue University, July 1999.

“Calvino and the Little People: the Poststructural Folk Tale,” Eleventh Annual Purdue University Conference on Romance Languages, Literatures, and Film, October 1999.

“Topology and Pynchon’s *The Crying of Lot 49*,” Twentieth Annual Meeting of the Semiotic Society of America, San Antonio, October 1995.

“Concepts of Unmanliness in Old Norse Literature,” Twenty-third International Medieval Congress, University of Western Michigan, April 1993.

## HONORS AND AWARDS

C. Warren VanderHill Award for Distinguished Teaching in Honors Education, 2012  
2013.

Ball State Scholar of the Year, National Society of Collegiate Scholars, 2011.

## COMMITTEE WORK

Strategic Planning Committee for Fraternity and Sorority Life, 2012.

Presidential Task Force on Academic Rigor, 2012.

English Department Contract Faculty Committee, 2014 (most recent).

English Department Review of Merit and Scholarship Committee, 2012 and 2016.

Jewish Studies Program and Advisory Board, 2003-present.

Freshmen Connections, 2003-2010.

BSU Greek Life, 2010-present.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

**Lecturer in English: Aug. 2002 - 2004** (Responsible for entire course: syllabus design, assignments, lecturing, grading, and conferencing).

*Composition:*

English 103 English Composition I, Ball State University.

English 104 English Composition II, Ball State University.

English 114 Honors Composition, Ball State University.

**Assistant Professor of English: Aug. 2005 - Now** (Responsible for entire course: syllabus, assignments, lecturing, grading, and conferencing).

*Composition:*

English 103: English Composition I, Ball State University.

English 104: English Composition II, Ball State University.

*Literature:*

English 205: Masterpieces of World Literature, Ball State University.

English 206: Masterpieces in World Literature, Ball State University.

English 210: Introduction to Literary Studies, Ball State University

English 230: Reading and Writing about Literature, Ball State University.

English 299X: Introduction to the Holocaust, Ball State University.

English 299X: Introduction to Jewish Studies, Ball State University.

English 402: Cultural Studies, Ball State University.

English 603X: Introduction to the Holocaust, Ball State University.

*Honors:*

Honors 189: Symposium in Global Studies, Ball State University.

Honors 201: Inquiries in the Ancient World, Ball State University.

Honors 202: Inquiries in the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Enlightenment, Ball State University.

Honors 203: Inquiries in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Ball State University.

Honors 296: The Physical Sciences and Society, Ball State University.

Honors 390: Honors Colloquium, Ball State University.

### **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

Modern Language Association

The Society for Literature and Science

The Leibniz Society of North America

The Don DeLillo Society

The American Literature Association

The H.D. International Society