

Benjamin Torbert Curriculum Vitae

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Work:

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1 University Boulevard
Saint Louis, MO 63121
(314) 516-5598

Education:

August 2004 PhD in English, Linguistics concentration, Duke University
May 2000 MA in English, Linguistics concentration, North Carolina State University
May 1998 BA in Classical Languages, Duke University

Postgraduate Employment:

August 2013- Associate Professor of Linguistics, University of Missouri-Saint Louis

August 2007- Assistant Professor of Linguistics, University of Missouri-Saint Louis
August 2013

(Paternity Leave under FMLA – Fall 2010 semester)

August 2005- Assistant Professor of Linguistics, Mississippi State University
August 2007

August 2004- Visiting Assistant Professor of Linguistics, Mississippi State University
August 2005

Publications:

Singly Authored

Torbert, Benjamin. 2011. "Using Literature in the Linguistics Classroom." *American Speech* 86:234-46.

---. 2010. "The Saliency of Two Southern Vowel Variants: Fronted /o/ and Weak-Glided /ai/.
Southern Journal of Linguistics 34.2: 1-36.

---. 2006. "Dedicately Variationist." Article-review of *Sociolinguistic Theory*, by Jack Chambers,
second edition. In *American Speech* 81: 314-319.

---. 2002. *Hyde Talk: The Language and Land of Hyde County, North Carolina*. Video Documentary. 23
Minutes. Director and Producer. North Carolina State University Humanities Extension.

---. 2001. "Tracing Native American Language History through Consonant Cluster Reduction: The Case of Lumbee English." *American Speech* 76: 361-87.

---. Forthcoming 2016 or 2017. Book review in *Journal of English Linguistics*.

Jointly Authored

Reaser, Jeffrey, and Benjamin Torbert. 2013. "English Morphosyntax in the Bahamas." The Mouton print *World Atlas of Variation in English*, 169-80. Bernd Kortmann and Kerstin Lunkenheimer, eds. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter

Reaser, Jeffrey, and Benjamin Torbert. 2010. The Bahamas entry in Bernd Kortmann/Kerstin Lunkenheimer, eds. *The Electronic World Atlas of Variation: Grammar*. Max Planck Digital Library in cooperation with Mouton de Gruyter. (short: eWAVE)

Torbert, Benjamin. 2010. *Hyde Talk* anthologized with *Indian By Birth: The Lumbee Dialect* (for which I did camera work) and *The Other Side of the River as The Road Less Traveled*. Video documentary. 83 Minutes. North Carolina State University Humanities Extension.

Reaser, Jeffrey, and Benjamin Torbert. 2008. "An Inventory of Morphosyntactic Bahamian Creole Features" In Edgar Schneider (ed.), *A Handbook of Varieties of English*, Vol. 2, 591-608. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Wolfram, Walt and Benjamin Torbert. 2006. "When Linguistic Worlds Collide." In Walt Wolfram and Ben Ward (eds.), *American Voices: How Dialects Differ from Coast to Coast*, 225-32. Oxford, UK/Malden, MA: Basil Blackwell.

Wolfram, Walt, Becky Childs, Jeffrey Reaser, and Benjamin Torbert. 2006. "Islands of Diversity." In Walt Wolfram and Ben Ward (eds.), *American Voices: How Dialects Differ from Coast to Coast*, 183-88. Oxford, UK/Malden, MA: Basil Blackwell.

Wolfram, Walt and Benjamin Torbert. 2004. "African American English." *Language Magazine* vol. 3 no. 6: 40-45.

Wolfram, Walt, Becky Childs, Jeffrey Reaser, and Benjamin Torbert. 2003. "Islands of Diversity." *Language Magazine*. February 2003: 28-30.

Wolfram, Walt, and Erik Thomas, with Becky Childs, Elaine W. Green, Daniel Beckett, and Benjamin Torbert. 2002. *The Development of African American English: Evidence from an Isolated Community*. Malden, MA: Basil Blackwell.

Wolfram, Walt, Becky Childs, and Benjamin Torbert. 2000. "Tracing Language History through Consonant Cluster Reduction: Comparative Evidence from Isolated Dialects." *Southern Journal of Linguistics* 24: 17-40.

Childs, Becky, and Benjamin Torbert. 2000. "Tracing Language History through Consonant Cluster Reduction: Comparative Evidence from Isolated Dialects." *MIT Working Papers in Linguistics* 38: 67-81.

PhD Dissertation:

Torbert, Benjamin. 2004. *Southern Vowels and the Social Construction of Salience*. PhD Diss. Durham, NC.

MA Thesis:

Torbert, Benjamin. 2000. *Native American Language History Traced through Consonant Cluster Reduction: The Case of Lumbee English*. Masters Thesis. Raleigh, NC.

Presentations:

Refereed Presentations, Singly Authored

Torbert, Benjamin. 2015. "Using Literature and Song to Teach Linguistics" Presentation at Southeastern Conference on Linguistics (SECOL) 82, Raleigh, NC, April 2015.

---. 2012. "A First Look at Consonant Cluster Reduction in Mississippi Choctaw English." Presentation at Southeastern Conference on Linguistics (SECOL) 79, Lexington, KY, April 2012.

---. 2008. "Using Literature and Song to Teach Linguistic Syntax." Paper presented at the SECOL 75, Knoxville, TN, April 2008.

---. 2007. "Using Literature in the Linguistics classroom." Paper presented at South Atlantic Modern Language Association (SAML) Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA, November 2007.

---. 2007. "We're more Southern than You!" Paper presented at SECOL 74, Natchitoches, LA, April 2007.

---. 2006. "The Sociolinguistic Variable as an Anchor for Salience." Paper presented at SECOL 73, Auburn, AL, April 2006.

---. 2005. "Who are the Real Southerners?" Paper presented at the meeting of South Atlantic American Dialect Society in conjunction with SECOL, Raleigh, NC, April 2005.

- . 2004. "Doubt as the Essential, Missing Element: Mark Fortune in Flannery O'Connor's *A View of the Woods*." Paper accepted at M/MLA, Saint Louis, MO, November 2004.
- . 2004. "Where I come from, we don't front /u/." Paper presented at SAMLA 2004, Roanoke, VA, November 2004.
- . 2004. "Salience Measurements of Southern Vowels." Presentation at Language Variety in the South III symposium, Tuscaloosa, AL, April 2004.
- . 2003. "Multimedia Projects in Community-based Fieldwork." Presentation at SECOL 68, Washington, DC. April 2003.
- . 2002. "Testing the Salience of Southern Vowels." Paper presented at SAMLA 2002, Baltimore, MD, November 2002.
- . 2002. "How Salient is Southern Fronted /o/?" Paper presented at SECOL 66, Memphis, TN, April 2002.
- . 2002. "A Cross-Dialectal Comparison of Irregular Verbs in Isolated Varieties." Paper accepted at Annual Meeting of American Dialect Society. San Francisco, CA, January 2002.
- . 2001. "A First Look at Bahamian Past Tense Irregularity." Paper presented at SAMLA 2001, Atlanta, GA, November 2001.
- . 2001. "The Convergence of Consonant Cluster Reduction and Past Tense Unmarking in The Bahamas." Paper presented at SECOL 64, Knoxville, TN, April 2001.
- . 2000. "Native American Language History Traced through Consonant Cluster Reduction." Paper presented at SECOL 62, Oxford, MS. Modified paper presented at NWAV 29, East Lansing, MI, October 2000.

Refereed Workshops/Panels

American Dialect Society 2009 Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA, January 2009. I organized a panel of early-career faculty to talk about the job market in Linguistics..

Jointly Authored Presentations

Torbert, Benjamin and Cara Shousterman. 2013. "The Use of Media in the Linguistics Classroom: Teaching Language Variation with *The Wire*." Presentation at Southeastern Conference on Linguistics (SECOL) 80, Spartanburg, SC, April 2013.

Torbert, Benjamin, and Meredith Tenison. 2004. "The Language of Friends: Latino Students' English and Social Network." SAMLA 2004, Roanoke, VA, November 2004.

Tenison, Meredith, and Benjamin Torbert. 2004. "Carolina del Norte: Chicano English Meets Tobacco Road." American Dialect Society annual meeting at LSA, Boston, MA, January 2004.

With Walt Wolfram and Becky Childs, US Congressional Decade of Behavior Launch Event. 2000. "An Exhibition on Lumbee English." Cannon Building, Capitol Hill, Washington, DC. September 2000.

Childs, Rebecca, and Benjamin Torbert. 1999. "Tracing English History through Consonant Cluster Reduction: Comparative Evidence from Isolated Dialects." Paper presented at NVAV 28, Toronto, ON, October 1999.

Grants

"Mississippi Language Variation Fieldwork." UMSL Office of Research Administration. \$6520.00
Ongoing community-based fieldwork under this grant has yielded interviews with about eighty speakers in rural Mississippi. I conduct this fieldwork during summer break.

Conference panels moderated

2012 South Atlantic Modern Language Association Linguistics Session, Raleigh, NC, Nov. 2012

2010 SAMLA Linguistics Session, Atlanta, GA, November 2010.

2008 SAMLA Linguistics Session, Louisville, KY, November 2008

2005 South Atlantic American Dialect Society Session. Raleigh, NC, April 2005.

Media Appearances

18 December 2013 – KTVI *Fox 2 News in the Morning*. Discussion of uptalk and vocal fry.

7 May 2010 – KMOV *News 4 at 10 PM*. Discussion of language variation in Missouri and Illinois.

24 April 2010 – Metropolitan Opera international radio broadcast of *Tosca*, Toll Brothers Metropolitan Opera Quiz, panelist, first intermission feature.

Teaching Experience:

August 2013-present Associate Professor, University of Missouri-Saint Louis

Spring 2017 EN 4830: Sociolinguistics
EN 5800: Sociolinguistics (graduate)

Fall 2016 EN 4800: Introduction to Linguistics
 EN 4810: Descriptive English Grammar

Spring 2016 EN 4820: History of the English Language (overhauled, with more SocioLX)

Fall 2015 EN 4800: Introduction to Linguistics
 EN 4810: Descriptive English Grammar

Spring 2015 EN 4820: History of the English Language
 HON 3010.002: Revelations of Grace: The Fiction of Flannery O'Connor

Fall 2014 EN 4800: Introduction to Linguistics
 EN 4810: Descriptive English Grammar

Spring 2014 EN 4800: Introduction to Linguistics
 EN 5800: Graduate Seminar in Sociolinguistics

Fall 2013 EN 4810: Descriptive English Grammar
 EN 5950: Language, Ethnicity, and Inequality in HBO's *The Wire*

August 2007-August 2013 Assistant Professor, University of Missouri-Saint Louis

Spring 2013 EN 4810: Descriptive English Grammar
 EN 4820: History of the English Language

Fall 2012 EN 4800: Introduction to Linguistics
 EN 4810: Descriptive English Grammar

Spring 2012 HON 3010/EN 4950: Language, Ethnicity, and Inequality in HBO's *The Wire*
 EN 4820: History of the English Language

Fall 2011 EN 4800: Introduction to Linguistics
 EN 4810: Descriptive English Grammar

Spring 2011 EN 4810: Descriptive English Grammar
 EN 4820: History of the English Language

Fall 2010 **none – family medical leave – paternity leave**

Spring 2010 EN 4820: History of the English Language
 EN 5800: Graduate Seminar in Sociolinguistics

Fall 2009 EN 4800: Introduction to Linguistics
 EN 4810: Descriptive English Grammar

Fall 2008 EN 4800: Introduction to Linguistics
 EN 4810: Descriptive English Grammar
 HON 3010/EN4950: The Linguistic Study of African American English

Spring 2008 EN 4820: History of the English Language
 EN 5800: Graduate Seminar in Sociolinguistics

Fall 2007 EN 4800: Introduction to Linguistics
 EN 4810: Descriptive English Grammar

August 2005-August 2007 Assistant Professor, Mississippi State University

Summer 2007 EN 6/4413: History of the English Language
 EN 2203: Introduction to Literature

Spring 2007 EN 6/4633: Sociolinguistics
EN 6/4413: History of the English Language
Fall 2006 EN 6/4403: Introduction to Linguistics (2 sections)
EN 3423: Descriptive English Grammar
Summer 2006 EN 2203: Introduction to Literature (2 sections)
Spring 2006 EN 6/4623: Language & Culture: Linguistic Study of Af.-American English
EN 6/4413: History of the English Language
Fall 2005 EN 6/4403: Introduction to Linguistics
EN 3423: Descriptive English Grammar

August 2004-August 2005 Visiting Assistant Professor, Mississippi State University

Summer 2005 EN 2213: English Lit I
EN 2203: Introduction to Literature
Spring 2005 EN 6/4633: Sociolinguistics
EN 2213: English Lit I
EN 6/4413: History of the English Language
Fall 2004 EN 6/4403: Introduction to Linguistics
EN 3423: Descriptive English Grammar
EN 2213: English Lit I

Spring 2003-Spring 2004 Graduate Lecturer, Duke University

Spring 2004 ENG 169CS: Revelations of Grace: Flannery O'Connor's Fiction
Spring 2003 LIN 199.01S: Variety in Language

Fall 2000-Spring 2004 Part-time Lecturer, North Carolina State University

Spring 2004 ENG 324: Modern English Grammar
Fall 2001 ENG 324: Modern English Grammar
Fall 2000 ENG 210: Introduction to Linguistics

Fall 1998-Spring 2000 Teaching Assistantship in Literature, NCSU

Spring 2000 ENG 208: Studies in Fiction (Behn, M. Shelley, C. Bronte, Rhys, Marquez)
ENG 261: British Literature 450-1700
Fall 1999 ENG 208: Studies in Fiction (Cervantes, Austen, Trollope, Conrad, Faulkner)
ENG 261: British Literature 450-1700
Spring 1999 ENG 261: British Literature 450-1700
ENG 252: American Literature 1600-1865

Courses in Development – 2016

Reading Life: An Introduction to the Humanities, 1000-level
Selected Southern Writers, 4000-level
The Wire resupply: the landmark TV series after Ferguson

Service at University of Missouri-Saint Louis

Departmental

Director of Graduate Studies, 2014-indefinite
Symposium Committee, 2010-12
Advisory Committee to the Chair, 2008-09
Graduate Committee, 2007-08, 2011-indefinite
Library Committee, 2007-08; 2009-12
Graduate Composition Committee, 2007-08
Search Committee for Rhetoric position, 2012-13
Chair of Committee for Lauren Obermark's 3YR, teaching portion, 2015-16
Ad Personam Committee for Kurt Schreyer's P/T, service portion, 2013-14
As Personam Committee for Barbara VanVoorden's promotion, 2013-14 and 2014-15

College of Arts & Sciences

Dean's *ad hoc* Committee on Conferral of Latin Honors, 2012

University-level

Chancellor's Cultural Diversity Initiative, 2011-indefinite
Graduate Council, 2013-2016
Graduate Program Director's Committee 2014-indefinite
Faculty Senator 2012-15

CCDI subcommittee on work climate for hourly employees, 2014-16
UM-Saint Louis Climate Assessment Task Force, 2011-2013
UM-Saint Louis Climate Assessment Task Force, 2016-
Chair of the Faculty Senate Bylaws and Rules Committee, 2013-14
Faculty Senate Bylaws and Rules Committee, 2014-15,
Faculty Senate Curriculum and Instruction Committee 2014-2016
Faculty Senate Fall Research Panel, 2016

Extramural

Treasurer for Southeastern Conference on Linguistics, 2012-2017
Program Committee for 2009 Annual meeting of American Dialect Society
External Reviewer for UM system Research board
External Reviewer for *Journal of English Linguistics*
External Reviewer for *New Ways of Analyzing Variation* 41 and 42 conferences

Service at Mississippi State University:

Departmental:

Linguistics Committee Chair, 2006-2007
Linguistics Visiting Asst. Professor Search Chair, 2007

Maymester *ad hoc* Committee, 2006
Peyton Williams Scholarship committee, 2006
Linguistics/TESOL Search Chair, 2005-06
MLA English Department Interview Team, 2005-06
English Department Faculty Mentor for first-year Faculty (Scott Crossley), 2005-06
Gwin Scholarship Committee, Mississippi State University, 2004-2007

College-level:

General Liberal Arts Committee, 2005-2007
College of Arts & Sciences Tailgate Committee, 2005-2007
Faculty Teaching Evaluations *ad hoc* Committee, 2007

University-level:

Mentor, Freshman Mentoring Program, Mississippi State University, 2005-2007

Other Administrative Appointments:

Administrative Assistant for the North Carolina State University CHASS Dean's Ad Hoc Faculty Task Force on Interdisciplinary Programs. December 2002 - May 2003. My primary responsibilities included taking minutes; editing the final report, *Report and Recommendations: Interdisciplinary Studies in CHASS*; and making travel arrangements. Some of the proceedings of this Task Force can be found at http://www.chass.ncsu.edu/chass/task_force_interdisc/

Co-Coordinator, with fellow graduate student Becky Childs, of NWA 30, international conference in Sociolinguistics, Raleigh, North Carolina, October 11-14, 2001. My primary responsibilities included all scheduling for the conference, and editing of the program materials.

Dissertation Committees:

Schaenen, Inda. 2010. *Structure and Flow: Towards an Organic Approach to Critical Multiliteracies in a Writing Workshop*. PhD Dissertation. Saint Louis, MO: UMSL.

PhD prelim/MA Thesis-Comp. Committees:

Alicia Aiken Barnes (Spanish), Mississippi State University, October 2011
Natasha Moore (Education), UM-Saint Louis, April 2011
Inda Schanen (Education), UM-Saint Louis, May 2009
Tinuka Okojie-Boulder (Education-ESL), Mississippi State University, April 2006
Chun Fu Lin (Education-ESL), Mississippi State University, April 2006
Joseph Smith (German), Mississippi State University, April 2006
John Paul Dove (German), Mississippi State University, April 2006
Rocío Salas (Spanish), Mississippi State University, November 2005

Brian Tollison (Spanish), Mississippi State University, June 2005

Professional Memberships:

Southeastern Conference on Linguistics: 1999-present

American Dialect Society: 2000-present

South Atlantic Modern Language Association: 2001-present

Linguistic Society of America: 2001-present

Society for the Study of Indigenous Languages of the Americas: 2004-2007

Modern Language Association: 2005-2008

References: Edna Andrews (Duke University); Walt Wolfram, Erik Thomas (NC State University); Richard Raymond, English Chair (Mississippi State University); Gary Myers, Provost (Young Harris College); Francis Grady, English Chair (UMSL)