

# April Shemak

## Education

Ph.D. English, University of Maryland, December 2003  
M.A. English, University of Maryland, 1998  
B.A. English and French, University of Wisconsin, 1993. Graduated with Distinction

## Professional Licensure and Certification

Women's Studies Graduate Certificate, University of Maryland

## Peer-Review Publications

"Re-Membering Hispaniola: Edwidge Danticat's *The Farming of Bones*." *Modern Fiction Studies* special issue: "Postmodernism and the Globalization of English" ed. Michael Bérubé. 48.1 (Spring 2002): 83-112.

"Alter/Natives: Myth, Translation and the Native Informant in Pauline Melville's *The Ventriloquist's Tale*." *Textual Practice* 19.3 (2005): 353-372.

"A Wounded Discourse: The Poetics of Disease in Cristina Garcia's *Dreaming in Cuban*." *Postcolonial Text* 2.3 (June 2006): 1-23.

<http://postcolonial.org/index.php/pct/issue/view/11/showToc>

## Professional Activities

### Invited Lectures

"Breaking the Surface: Kamau Brathwaite's 'Dream Haiti,'" Focus on Haiti, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, April 25, 2007.

"*Testimonio* in Francisco Goldman's *The Ordinary Seaman*," College Park Scholars Seminar on American Cultures, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, November 29, 2004.

### Conference Presentations

"The Law/s of Hospitality? U.S. Congressional Hearings and Humanitarian Discourse." American Studies Association, Washington DC, November 2009.

"Julia Alvarez's Post-Refugee Narratives." Southwest Council on Latin American Studies (SCOLAS), Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, March 2009.

"Environmental Histories in Dionne Brand's *At the Full and Change of the Moon*," Afro-Caribbean Diaspora Conference, Texas Southern University, Houston, Texas, November 2008.

"False Witnessing: U.S. Coast Guard Photography of Haitian Boat Refugees," American Studies Association Conference, Albuquerque, New Mexico, October 2008.

“Translating Haitian Women’s Oppression in *Walking on Fire: Haitian Women’s Stories of Survival and Resistance*,” 11<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Association of Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars, Grenada, West Indies, May 2008.

“Transnational Labor and Testimonial Narrative in Francisco Goldman’s *The Ordinary Seaman*,” International Conference on Narrative, Austin, Texas, May 2008.

Session Organizer, Presider, and Respondent, MLA Special Session, “Writing the Caribbean in(to) the United States,” Modern Language Association Convention, Chicago, December 27-30, 2007.

Co-organizer and Presenter, “Misconceptions of the Third World: Islam and Haiti,” Diversity Leadership Conference, Sam Houston State University, February 2007.

“Narrating the Abyss: The Figure of the Haitian Refugee,” International Conference on Caribbean Literature, Port-au-Prince, Haiti. November 2006.

“Rights of Passage: The Refugee Narratives of Kamau Brathwaite and Edwidge Danticat,” United States Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies Conference, Santa Clara University, San Jose, CA, October 27-29, 2006.

“Julia Alvarez and the Eth(n)ics of Consumption,” Cultural Studies Association Conference, Fairfax, VA, April 2006.

“Female Economies of Violence in Edwidge Danticat’s *Krik? Krak!*” College English Association Conference, San Antonio, TX, April 6-8, 2006.

“The Refugee Narratives of Edwidge Danticat and Kamau Brathwaite,” Caribbean Philosophical Association, San Juan, Puerto Rico, May 2005.

“Absolut Alvarez: The Ethnic Writer as Native Informant,” Association of Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars Conference, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, April 21-24, 2004.

Session Organizer, MLA Special Session, “Bio-Tropics: Latin American Discourses of Disease,” Modern Language Association Convention, San Diego, CA, December 27-30, 2003.

“Communicating Disease: Cristina Garcia’s *Dreaming in Cuban*,” Modern Language Association Convention, Special Session, Bio-tropics: Latin American Discourses of Disease, San Diego, December 27-30, 2003.

“Discourses of Endo/Exogamy in Pauline Melville’s *The Ventriloquist’s Tale*,” Caribbean Studies Association Conference, Belize City, Belize, May 22-27, 2003.

“In the Limbo Space: Constructions of Race, Ethnicity and Gender in Elizabeth Nunez’s *Beyond the Limbo Silence*,” Color, Hair and Bone: The Persistence of Race into the 21st-Century, Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA, September 26-28, 2002.

“The Shifting Voices of Macunaima in Pauline Melville’s *The Ventriloquist’s Tale*,” Association of Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars Conference, Trois-Islets, Martinique, April 2-6, 2002.

“Testimonial Discourse in the Congressional Hearings on Haitian Cane Cutters in the Dominican Republic,” Caribbean Studies Association Conference, St. Martin, May 2002.

“Rites/Rights of Passage: The Transitional Narratives of Cristina Garcia and Edwidge Danticat,” Postcolonial Studies Conference, California State University-Long Beach, Long Beach, CA, March 2001.

“Solidarity or Sovereignty: Testimonial Discourse in Edwidge Danticat’s *The Farming of Bones* and the U.S. Congressional Hearings on the Plight of Haitian Canecutters in the Dominican Republic,” MELUS 2000, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA, March 2000.

“Re-membering Hispaniola: Julia Alvarez’s *In the Time of the Butterflies* and Edwidge Danticat’s *The Farming of Bones*,” American Studies Association, McGill University, Montreal, Canada, October 1999.

“‘Family Land’, Legitimacy and Identity in Michelle Cliff’s *No Telephone to Heaven*,” Gendered Landscapes: An Interdisciplinary Exploration of Past and Space, Pennsylvania State University, State College, PA, May, 1999.

“Land, Class and Gender: Revolutionary Caribbean Spaces in Michelle Cliff’s *No Telephone to Heaven*,” Seventh Annual Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars Conference, St. Georges, Grenada, May, 1998.

“Revolutionary Narratives: Julia Alvarez’s *In the Time of the Butterflies* and Merle Collins’ *Angel*,” Women’s Studies Graduate Conference, Institute for Research on Women, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ, April, 1997.

### **Work or Professional Experience**

#### Sam Houston State University

Assistant Professor, Department of English (2005-present)

#### The George Washington University

Adjunct Asst. Professor, Regular Part-time, University Writing Program (2004-05)

University Writing 20: Testimony, Truth, Justice and the Nation (Fall '04; Spr.'05)

#### Georgetown University

Lecturer, Department of English (2003-2005)

#### University of Maryland-Baltimore County

Adjunct Asst. Professor, Women’s Studies (Spring 2004)

#### University of Maryland at College Park

Teaching Assistantship, Department of English (1997-2003)

### **Honors and Awards**

Enhancement Grant for Professional Development, Sam Houston State University, June 2008-May 2009. \$7,797.

Enhancement Grant for Professional Development, Sam Houston State University, June 2007-May 2008. \$10,461.

Faculty Research Enhancement Grant, Sam Houston State University, Summer 2006. \$5,000.

Research and Travel Grant, Committee on Africa and the Americas, University of Maryland, 2002.

Jacob K. Goldhaber Travel Grant, University of Maryland Graduate School, 2002.

Travel Funds, University of Maryland, Department of English, 2002.

Graduate Fellow, University of Maryland Graduate School, 1995-96; 1996-97.

#### Other Competencies

Manuscript Review for *Modern Fiction Studies*

Manuscript Reviewer for *MELUS: Multi-Ethnic Literatures of the United States*.

Manuscript Reviewer for *Wadabagei: A Journal of the Caribbean and Its Diaspora*.