

Gregory Todd Bottoms
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Education

M.F.A., Creative Writing-Fiction, University of Virginia, 1998

M.A., English, Old Dominion University, 1996

B.A., English/Journalism emphasis, Old Dominion University, 1993

Publications

Books

**Lowest White Boy* (memoir/documentary/criticism), “In Place” series, West Virginia University Press, 2019.

**Pitiful Criminals* (memoirs and stories), Counterpoint Press, 2014.

**Spiritual American Trash: Portraits from the Margins of Art and Faith* (essays/profiles), Counterpoint Press, 2013.

**Swallowing the Past: Scenes from the Postmodern South* (memoirs/autobiographical novella), Texas Review Press, 2011.

**Fight Scenes* (memoirs and stories), Counterpoint Press, 2008.

**The Colorful Apocalypse: Journeys in Outsider Art* (travel/documentary), University of Chicago Press, 2007 and reprinted in 2015; Italian translation, Odoja Publishing House, Italy, 2009.

**Sentimental, Heartbroken Rednecks* (memoirs and stories), Context Books, 2001; Counterpoint Press, 2007.

**Angelhead: My Brother’s Descent into Madness* (memoir/biography), Crown Publishers (Random House), 2000; reprinted in paperback by Three Rivers Press, 2001; a second U.S.

paperback edition, University of Chicago Press, 2005; Headline Books, 2001 (U.K.); reprinted in paperback by Review Press, 2001 (U.K.); Turkish translation published by Phoenix Yayenevi in 2002.

Performance

“Imaginary Birds,” a short story included in *Sentimental, Heartbroken Rednecks*, was performed as a dramatic reading at Virginia Arts & Letters Live at The Empire Theatre in Richmond, VA, March 24, 2007. Rebroadcast on the Richmond National Public Radio affiliate. Collected on the CD *Best of Virginia Arts and Letters Live*.

“The Gospel According to James,” a biographical essay, was produced as a radio documentary for “Soundprint,” a literature/culture program on Radio New Zealand, and later was part of the “Crossing Boundaries” international documentary series.

Film

Rights were purchased to *Angelhead* and *Fight Scenes* by actor/director Ben Foster, March 2012.

Anthologies

“Black Preacher at the Family Reunion” in *Best Creative Nonfiction of the South: Volume I, Virginia*, edited by Casey Clabough and Thorpe Moeckel, Texas Review Press, 2016.

Excerpt from *Fight Scenes* (p. 119-128) in *Words Without Walls: Writers on Addiction, Violence, and Incarceration*, edited by Sheryl St. Germain and Sarah Shotland, Trinity University Press, 2015.

“Grace Street,” five narrative shorts, in *The Inevitable: Contemporary Writers Confront Death*, edited by David Shields and Bradford Morrow, W.W. Norton 2011.

“Bulldog” in *Between Song and Story: Essays for the Twenty-first Century*, Autumn House, 2011.

“1967” in *The Beacon Best of 1999: Creative Writing by Women and Men of All Colors*, edited by Ntozake Shange, Beacon Press.

Prose Narratives: memoirs, personal essays, stories

*“Old Teammates,” *River Teeth: A Journal of Nonfiction Narrative*, forthcoming spring 2021.

* “The Receiver,” *Brevity*, fall 2019 (online).

*“Pinball Wizard,” (excerpt from *Lowest White Boy*), *Harper’s*, July 2019, p.15-17.

*“Growing Up at Ground Zero of American Apartheid,” (excerpt from *Lowest White Boy*),
Literary Hub, May 2019 (online).

*“The Local,” *River Teeth: A Journal of Nonfiction Narrative*, p. 7-13, spring 2019.

*“Tricycle: On Truth, Memory, and Making Memoir,” *Agni* blog, July 2018 (online).

*“The Damage Done,” *Agni* blog, January 2018 (online).

*“Skittles,” *New World Writing*, March 2017 (online).

*“The Dropout,” *New World Writing*, August 2016 (online).

*“Two Misses,” *Killing the Buddha*, November 2015 (online).

*“A Couple of Ways to Kill Yourself,” *Storyville*, an app publishing one story a week, March 2015.

*“The Box,” *Rappahannock Review*, winter 2015 (online).

*“Dirty, Racist White Kids: Two Stories,” *New World Writing*, fall 2014 (online).

*“The Minister’s Handyman,” *Killing the Buddha*, August 2014 (online).

*“from Black Preacher at the Family Reunion” (three chapters), *Shenandoah*, spring 2014 (online).

*“Black Preacher at the Family Reunion,” *Killing the Buddha*, Sept. 2013 (online).

*“Dear Mr. Eggleston,” *Killing the Buddha*, March 2013 (online).

*“My Old Friend,” *Texas Review*, Fall/Winter 2011-12, p. 88-93.

*“A Message from Prison,” *Killing the Buddha*, January 2012 (online).

*“In the Devil House,” *Killing the Buddha*, September, 2011 (online).

*“The Importance of Good Company,” *Guernica: A Magazine of Art and Politics*, July, 2011
(online).

*“Mountainous Harmony and Everlasting Peace,” *Killing the Buddha*, July, 2011 (online).

*“Ghosts in the Mirrors,” *Killing the Buddha*, March, 2011 (online).

*“Born Again,” *Texas Review*, Fall/Winter 2010-11, p. 45-54.

*“The Bike: A Parable,” *River Teeth: A Journal of Nonfiction Narrative*, Fall 2010, p. 95-98.

*“The Palm Reader and the Poet,” *Brevity: A Journal of Concise Literary Nonfiction*, Fall 2010
(online).

*“Grace Street,” five narrative shorts, in *Seattle Review*, 2010, p. 13-24.

- *“The Ring” and “Closer to the Earth” as “Two Ghost Stories” in *Killing the Buddha*, October 2009 (online).
- *“Black Specks,” *The Collagist*, October 2009 (online).
- *“Jesus Saves,” *Killing the Buddha*, July 2009 (online).
- *“Dinner with Strangers,” *Agni*, April 2009 (online).
- *“Love,” *Killing the Buddha*, March 2009 (online).
- *“Mothers,” *Killing the Buddha*, Nov. 2008 (online).
- *“Thieves,” *Killing the Buddha*, Oct. 2008 (online).
- *“The Colorful Apocalypse—an excerpt,” *Killing the Buddha*, March 2007 (online); reprinted by *The Revealer* (online), published by New York University’s Center for Religion and the Press, March 2007.
- *“Early dinner at Popeye’s Chicken & Biscuits,” *Arts & Letters: A Journal of Contemporary Culture*, Fall 2006, p. 120-126.
- *“Bulldog,” *Brevity: A Journal of Concise Literary Nonfiction*, Fall 2005 (online).
- *“Misogyny #2,” *River Teeth: A Journal of Nonfiction Narrative*, Spring 2004, p. 12-17.
- *“The Distance between Then and Now,” *Witness*, Spring 2004, p 191-194; named a “Notable Essay” in *Best American Essays 2005*, edited Robert Atwan and Susan Orlean.
- *“Misogyny: A Narrative,” *North American Review*, Jan./Feb. 2004, p 4-6.
- *“Monsieur Young and the End of Existentialism,” *Brevity: A Journal of Concise Literary Nonfiction*, Fall 2003 (online).
- *“Sam at the Gun Show,” *Brevity: A Journal of Concise Literary Nonfiction*, Fall 2002 (online); reprinted in *Creative Nonfiction*, Issue 27: “Writing it Short”; nominated for a 2007 Pushcart Prize.
- *“Patron Saint of Thrown-Away Things,” *Creative Nonfiction*, Issue 17, 2001: “Between the Lines,” p.58-66; reprinted, in abridged form, under the title “The Gospel According to James” in *Utne Reader*, March/April 2002; produced as a radio documentary for “Soundprint,” a literature/culture program on Radio New Zealand; named a “Notable Essay” in *Best American Essays 2002*, edited by Robert Atwan and Stephen Jay Gould; Spanish translation reprinted as “El Santo Petrono de los Desechos” in *Tememe: Nueva Literatura de Norteamerica*, Spring 2003.
- *“A Stupid Story,” *Mississippi Review*, Vol. 7 #1, Winter 2001, edited by Victoria

Lancelotta (online).

*“Nostalgia for Ghosts,” *Salon.com*, August 22, 2001.

*“Heroism,” *Boldtype*, Vol. 4 #8: “Crisis,” December 2000 (online, published by Random House).

*“Gray World,” *Exquisite Corpse*, Issue 3, 2000 (online).

*“God, Glass, LSD: A Memory,” *Creative Nonfiction*, Issue 13, 1999: “The Brain: A Nonfiction Mystery,” p.40-45; reprinted in *Salon.com*, Dec.13, 1999; reprinted, in abridged form and under the title “God: A Memory,” in *Esquire Magazine*, Dec. 2000.

*“Intersections,” *Prism International* (Canada), 37: 2, Winter, 1999, p. 73-82.

*“1967,” *Alaska Quarterly Review*, Vol. 17 #1 and 2, Fall/Winter 1998, p. 159-168; reprinted in *The Beacon Best of 1999: Creative Writing by Women and Men of All Colors*, edited by Ntozake Shange; named a “Notable Essay” in *Best American Essays 1999*, edited by Robert Atwan and Edward Hoagland.

*“Secret History of Home Cinema,” *Another Chicago Magazine*, 32/33, Spring/Summer 1997, p. 94-100; reprinted, in abridged form, in *Nerve.com*, March 12, 1999.

Cultural Essays: reviews, review-essays, essays, criticism, literary journalism

*“The Semiotics of Trump,” *Religion Dispatches* (online), November 2016.

*“The Conformist,” *Oxford American Magazine*, “The Education Issue,” Fall, 2011, p. 74-75.

*“Cultural Dissonance,” *Oxford American Magazine*, “The Food Issue,” Spring 2010, p. 122-123.

*“Falling into Song,” *Oxford American Magazine*, “The 11th Annual Southern Music Issue,” Winter, 2010, p. 143.

*“Painting a Hidden Life: The Art of Bill Traylor,” *Bookforum*, April/May 2009.

*“In Their Own Words” column, New York Foundation for the Art’s *Current* magazine, March 28, 2007 (online); reprinted in *Saranac Review*, Fall 2008.

*“Uneasy Does It,” *Bookforum*, Sept./Oct./Nov. 2006, p. 20.

*“Past Imperfect,” *Bookforum*, Oct./Nov. 2005, p 51.

*“On George W.S. Trow’s *The Harvard Black Forest* and His Formally Unique Cultural Criticism: A Tape-Recorded Monologue, with Annotations,” *The Believer*, Sept. 2005, p. 28-32.

*“Past Due,” *Bookforum*, April/May 2005, p. 41.

*“Mamas and Papas,” *Bookforum*, Spring 2004, p.29.

*“Whittling Dixie,” *Bookforum*, Fall 2003, p.46.

*“Visions of Finster,” *Oxford American Magazine*, Issue 44, March/April 2003, p. 29-36.

*“The Art of Reading: Sentimental, Heartbroken Rednecks,” *Poets and Writers*, Sept./Oct. 2001, p. 19-25.

*Interview with Evan S. Connell, *Bookforum*, Winter 2001. p. 28-29.

*“Brilliant Careers: Evan S. Connell,” *Salon.com*, July 18, 2000; reprinted in *Salon.com’s The Best of Brilliant Careers 2000*, edited by Douglas Cruickshank.

Teaching Experience

Colgate University Writer’s Conference, June 16-22, 2019.

Florida Center for the Literary Arts, Writers’ Institute, Guest Writer-Teacher, May 4-7, 2011.

Old Dominion University, Writer-in-Residence, MFA, Sept. 17-22, 2008.

University of Vermont: Professor of English, with a specialty in creative writing-prose, 2011- ; Associate Professor of English, with a specialty in creative writing-prose, 2007- ; Assistant Professor of English, 2003-2007. Research/teaching interests in creative nonfiction writing, including the essay, memoir, cross-genre writing, experimental nonfiction, documentary narrative, and autobiographical/personal art and cultural criticism; short fiction, development of the short story, autobiographical and experimental fiction. Courses taught: Engs 360: Autobiography and Critique; Engs 281: Contemporary American Autobiography; Engs 281: Memory, Imagination, and the Limits of Narrative; Engs 281: The Narrative Essay; Engs 212: Memoir Workshop; Engs 120: Writers’ Workshop; Engs 118: Advanced Writing, Fiction; Engs 117: Advanced Writing, Nonfiction; Engs 114: Doing Documentary; Engs 114: Writing Memoir; Engs 114: Travel Writing; Engs 114: Writing about the Arts; Engs 113: American Travels; Engs 53: Introduction to Creative Writing (poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction); Engs 50: Expository Writing; Engs 05: Reading and Writing the Literary Essay; Engs 05: Introduction to Creative Writing; Engs 05: Autobiographical Eye.

Sweet Briar College, 2000-2003: Writing and Teaching Fellow (full-time, non-tenure track at the Assistant Professor level), short fiction and creative nonfiction: responsible for teaching upper- and intermediate-level fiction courses; an advanced creative nonfiction workshop; introductory-level creative writing survey courses of creative nonfiction, fiction, and poetry; introductory essay courses; and a literature/writing seminar in autobiography/life-writing (across the genres of prose poetry, fiction, and nonfiction) and the relationships between imagination and fact, memory and invention, the past and narrative.

University of Virginia, Department of English, 1997-98: Henry Hoyns Creative Writing Fellow in Fiction, responsible for teaching two introductory-level undergraduate fiction workshops.

Related Experience: Writing, Editing, Research

Nonfiction editor, *Texas Review*, 2012-2016.

Book review contributor, *Bookforum*, 2001-2009.

Associate Editor/Books, *Gadfly Magazine*, 1999. (*Gadfly* won the 1999 “Alternative Press Award” for Best Cultural Coverage from *Utne Reader*.)

Assistant Editor, *Gadfly Magazine*, 1998-1999.

Regular contributor of essays, narrative journalism, and arts criticism, *Gadfly Magazine*, 1998-2000.

Contributor of essays, criticism, reviews, and reportage, *Salon.com*, 1998-2001.

Creative Nonfiction Editor, *Dominion Review*, 1995-96.

Awards, Accolades, and Fellowships

Dean’s Lecture Award, 2015, University of Vermont College of Arts and Sciences.

Pitiful Criminals was longlisted for the Story Prize, 2014.

Pitiful Criminals was chosen as a Top Indie Fiction pick for summer 2014 by *Library Journal*.

Swallowing the Past: Scenes from the Postmodern South was long-listed for the Frank O’Connor Prize in the Art of the Story, 2011.

The Colorful Apocalypse named a Favorite Book of 2007 by online magazine Stride, U.K.

The Colorful Apocalypse: Journeys in Outsider Art was named a Booksense Pick by independent booksellers in the U.S. in April of 2007.

Faculty Research Grant, University of Vermont, 2003-2004.

Sentimental, Heartbroken Rednecks was an “Editor’s Pick” of *The San Francisco Chronicle* and a “Favorite Book” of *The Hartford Courant* in 2001.

Angelhead was named a “Book of the Year” and listed as one of the five best works of nonfiction of 2000 by *Esquire Magazine*.

1997-98 Individual Artist Fellowship in Fiction from the Virginia Commission for the Arts.

Henry Hoyns Fellowship in Fiction, University of Virginia, 1996-98.

Tennessee Williams Scholarship in Fiction, Sewanee Writers' Conference, 1997.

University Academic Honors Fellowship, Old Dominion University, 1995-96.

Selected Readings and Presentations

Colgate University-Featured author, Living Writers Series, Oct. 2020.

Colgate University, craft talk on memoir: “William Eggleston’s Tricycle: On Memory, Memoir, and Truth,” June 2019.

Colgate University, reading from *Lowest White Boy*, June 2019.

University of South Dakota, talk and q&a via Skype with creative writing students, spring 2019.

Mary Washington University, talk and q&a via Skype with creative writing students, spring 2017.

Mary Washington University, talk and q&a via Skype with creative writing students, fall 2016.

Knox College, reading, May 2011.

Florida Center for the Literary Arts, reading, May 2011.

City College of Technology, NY, reading, Dec. 2008.

Old Dominion University Literary Festival, fall 2008.

Vermont College, MFA, fiction/creative nonfiction reading, Jan. 2008.

University of Iowa, “Autobiography and Critique” panelist, NonfictionNow Conference, Nov. 1-3, 2007.

Colgate University, lecture; reading from new creative work, Oct. 3-4, 2007.

Dartmouth College, Visiting Writer; reading from new creative work, May 10, 2007.

Yale University, Guest Lecturer (teleconference), Susan Nolen-Hoeksema’s Abnormal Psychology Class, where students are assigned my memoir *Angelhead*, April 2007.

Georgia College and State University, Visiting Writers Series, featured creative nonfiction reader, Nov. 2006.

University of Iowa, NonfictionNow Conference, Nov. 2005: Reading and discussion of the nonfiction “short short” as part of a panel sponsored by the journals *Brevity* and *Creative Nonfiction*.

Reed College’s Visiting Writers Series, Portland, Oregon, Nov. 2005.

West Virginia Book Festival, Oct. 2002: Panelist, with novelist John Casey and others, discussing the work and legacy of West Virginia short story writer Breece DJ’ Pancake; reading and talk about literary memoir and the family in literature.

24th Annual Old Dominion Literary Festival, Oct. 2001: Featured Reader.

Virginia Festival of the Book (University of Virginia), March 2001: Reading and talk about issues attendant to the writing of memoir.

Academic Service

English Department, University of Vermont

Chair, Curriculum Committee, 2020-

Chair, Fiction Writing Search Committee, 2015-16.

Director of Undergraduate Studies, 2012-2015.

Chair, Curriculum Committee, 2012-2015.

Chair, Fiction Writing Search Committee, fall 2011-spring 2012.

Writers’ Workshop Reading Series –Coordinator, 2010-2011.

Faculty Advisor, *The Water Tower*, student-run humor paper, 2007-2012.

Medieval Search Committee member, fall 2007-spring 2008.

Curriculum Committee member, 2007-

Publications Committee member, 2007.

Writers’ Workshop Reading Series—Coordinator, 2006-2007.

Rhetoric and Composition Search Committee member, fall 2004-spring 2005.

Marion Berry Allbee Awards in Nonfiction Prose—Coordinator, fall 2004-2006.

Marion Berry Allbee Awards in Nonfiction Prose—judge, spring 2004.

English Department Personnel Committee Member, 2003-2007.

Writer's Workshop Reading Series member—responsible for coordinating visits from nationally recognized creative nonfiction writers, 2003-present.

College of Arts and Sciences, UVM

Co-director, Reporting and Documentary Storytelling Minor, 2019-.

Member, Journalism working group, 2016-18.

TAP Advisor, multiple years.

University of Vermont

Catamount Commitment Faculty Advisor, 2017-.

Member, Journalism working group, 2016-17.

Faculty senate representative for English: 2004-7, 2010-12.

National

Outside reader, Syracuse University Press, for an anthology of travel essays, fall 2018.

Outside reviewer, tenure case, UMass-Lowell, 2017.

Outside Reader, University of Arkansas Press, for a book of text and photography on a Southern folk artist, fall 2014.

Outside Reader, Yale University Press, for an anthology of literary journalism on American religion, spring 2013.

Outside Reader, University of Chicago Press, for a memoir under consideration, spring 2011.

Judge, Golfarb Family Fellowship in Creative Nonfiction, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts (VCCA), summer 2009.

Judge, Jacobson Short Fiction Award for undergraduates, Ohio State University Creative Writing Program, spring 2008.

Outside evaluator, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation "Genius" Fellowship, 2007.

Rona Jaffe Foundation Awards Judge, 2005-6—responsible, with two other judges, for assessing 50+ nominated women writers for an award (for the top six) of \$15,000.

Rona Jaffe Foundation nominator—responsible for nominating an emerging woman writer of prose and/or poetry for a \$10,000 award to help with a current creative project, 2004 and 2007.

Outside evaluator, *Creative Nonfiction: Eye & I* textbook, Pearson, 2006.

References

Upon Request