



Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins

*“Republics exist only
on the tenure of
being constantly
agitated.*

*We cannot live
without the voice in
the
wilderness—
troubling the waters
that there may be
health in the
flow.”*

—from “Munroe Rogers”
editorial for the
Colored American Magazine,
November 1902

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The Newsletter of

The Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins Society

Volume 7

Winter 2015 - 2016

Connecting Spheres – Thoughts from the President

For the Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins Society, 2015 was an exciting year of creating and renewing relationships with higher education organizations that share our interests, in particular other female author societies and the African American Literature and Culture Society, high school educators and students, and the general public. Our efforts to build coalitions not only allow us to promote the celebration and study of Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins to as wide an audience as possible but challenge us to reimagine her writing and performance careers and their contexts. As president, I represented the PEHS on the 2015 American Literature Association roundtable “Women Writers and Author Societies” that discussed the impact of female author societies on the study of nineteenth-century American women writers. In my remarks, I argued that the success of female author societies should be evaluated based upon the number of publications about our women authors as well as our efforts to critique and transform in practical, tangible ways the activities, systems, and organizations that cause and facilitate the marginalization of women writers. In 2015, PEHS made small but important gains in transforming the public and academia’s perceptions of Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins.

Increasing Hopkins’s Online Presence

Officers and members of the PEHS are recording and spearheading efforts to make Hopkins’s works and research about it free and more accessible through a variety of formats. On one of the two engaging panels sponsored by the PEHS this past year at the ALA Conference, “Twenty-Seven Years of Hopkins Scholarship: Perspectives on the Past and Future” and “Roundtable on Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins’s *Of One Blood*,” Assistant Professor Brian Sweeney and Associate Professor Eurie Dahn of English at College of Saint Rose discussed their fascinating efforts to make available digital, color copies of the *Colored American Magazine*. Interestingly, PEHS’s webmaster Mary Frances Jiménez has also detected Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins’s inclusion in several blogs, confirming Hopkins’s contemporary relevance. The PEHS’s Facebook page has also continued to receive attention, but we need to explore approaches to maximizing the benefit of posts. Lastly, PEHS’s debut of an online credit-card payment option for present and potential members increased our membership as anticipated.

Crossing Educational Borders

During the “Women Writers and Author Societies” roundtable, it was clear that all of the author societies represented, including the Edith Wharton Society,

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**Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins Society
Annual Meeting Minutes
American Literature Association Conference
Boston, MA
May 23, 2015**

The annual meeting of the Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins Society was held on Saturday, May 23, 2015. April Logan, President, called the meeting to order at 2:16 p.m.

The minutes of the May 22, 2014, meeting, which were previously distributed, were approved.

Reports from Officers & Committee Chairs

April reviewed and summarized the officers' reports that were submitted in advance.

- President's report: April is excited about all that the Society has accomplished this year, particularly the new online payment system and our student essay and scholarly publication awards. She believes the fact that other author societies are following our model is another indication of our success.
- Facebook Manager's report: April summarized our dilemma with Facebook's posting algorithms (they penalize pages that do not receive a lot of likes for their posts). Action Item: April will send a note to the listserv to encourage members to forward Hopkins-related material to Amy Bennett-Zendzian to post, and to "like" posts from the Society's Facebook page.
- Web Master's report: Mary Frances Jimenez continued to maintain the website and listserv. She also helped set up the online payment system. April reminded us that although Mary Frances is willing to continue as Web Master, she is ready to step down if someone else is available to fill this position. Action Item: JoAnn Pavletich noted that the webpage needs to be updated with her information.
- Treasurer's report: The Society has \$3,855 in its account. April moved that the Society contribute \$100 to the African American Literature and Culture Society's reception since we have been a co-sponsor, and since we were permitted to present our essay contest award during the reception this year. The motion was approved.
- Newsletter Editor's report: The next submission deadline is December 1. We are all encouraged to submit items for the next issue, including interesting finds, notes on Hopkins pedagogy, etc.

JoAnn Pavletich gave her Program Chair's report. Hanna Wallinger helped review this year's proposals and JoAnn really appreciated having her as a sounding board. Although being Program Chair is a straightforward job, JoAnn would like our input when sending out CFPs, especially when we want something specific. For example, this year's panel focused on *Of One Blood* developed serendipitously, but we could consider another panel focused on a single text. April asked if there were enough abstracts received and if the officers should help distribute the CFPs. Joann responded that everyone's submission had been accepted, but the more proposals we receive, the better. The CFP was posted with ALA, the MLA Commons, SSAWW, UPenn, and the African American Lit and Culture Society, but Joann thinks it would be worthwhile to explore other areas like other author societies.

Nicole Aljoe summarized her report for the Awards and Monuments committee. The committee (Nicole, Lois Brown and Kerstin Rudolph) developed the CFP for both awards and sent them out several times between September 2014 and April 2015. Only two students entered the high school essay contest; no one entered the scholarly publications contest. The committee worked with Robert Hall (Northeastern Univ.), Kantigi Camara (Northeastern Univ.) and Daniel Johnson (826 Boston) to select the contest winner. The Society awarded the first-place prize (\$300) to Bethany Barrant, a senior at Boston Latin High School. \$150 was awarded to the runner-up, Toluwalope Moses, a freshman at Boston Latin High School. Action Item: Both essays will be available on the Society's website. There are a couple of issues we should consider going forward:

(continued from page 1)

Constance Fenimore Woolson Society, and Catherine Maria Sedgwick Society, deserve some if not much of the credit for the numerous publications about American women writers and, in some cases long-overdue, critical respect they now possess. However, panelists noted that more could be done to encourage their works, lives, and contexts to be taught and studied in high school and college classrooms. PEHS's successful 2015 High School Essay Contest, for the best essay on any aspect of social justice, achieved this goal and more.

We not only laid the groundwork for future collaborations with the winners' teachers and schools and thus possibly others but empowered these two young women by connecting them to a history of African American women's public intellectualism. I would like to take this moment to acknowledge the tenacity and dedication of Monument and Awards Committee Chair Nicole Aljoe, who organized the contest and conducted most of the outreach to Boston-area high schools. PEHS's participation in the female author societies roundtable also constitutes border-crossing because it inspired everyone present to explore how the various authors, literary traditions, genres, and eras embodied by our societies diverge, coalesce, and speak to one another. I especially enjoyed the multi-generational aspect of the panel, whereby established and recently-founded organizations, such as the Anna Julia Cooper Society and the Lydia Maria Child Society, exchanged ideas and renewed our commitments to mentoring and discovering the next generation of American women writers scholars.

Upcoming Events and Opportunities

The PEHS is pleased by our progress in the area of public awareness this past year; therefore, we intend to expand on our engagement with online platforms in 2016. However, we will maintain our proven record of supporting and highlighting significant contributions to Hopkins scholarship through traditional as well as new newly developed programs and events. We hope that you will participate, as a member and committee volunteer, in these efforts. To improve the reach of the PEHS Facebook page, we need to counter Facebook's posting algorithms that penalize pages that do not receive a lot of "likes" for their posts by showing any subsequent posts to smaller and smaller percentages of their page's followers' newsfeeds. Therefore, we encourage you to send posts to our PEHS Facebook Page Manager Amy Bennett-Zendzian, albz@bu.edu, and to "like" your own posts and those of others.

"Just Teach One: Early African American Print," an online project of the American Antiquarian Society and *Common-Place: The Journal of Early American Life* also will allow us to encourage high school educators to teach Pauline Hopkins and to possibly introduce their students' communities to her. It is a website that provides a digital copy of a short African American work published before the close of Reconstruction, lesson plans and other materials to help others incorporate the text into their curriculum, and virtual space for discussion by those who are interested in the work as educators and/or critics. The PEHS will propose a "Just Teach One" module on a Hopkins work, so please contact me, aclogan@salisbury.edu, if you are interested in assisting with this task. At ALA, many Hopkins scholars have admitted that they sometimes find it challenging to teach Hopkins texts due to their complexity. Among many, one of my hopes for a "Just Teach One" unit on Pauline Hopkins is that it will allow the PEHS to aid teachers at all levels to brainstorm about how Hopkins might be framed in relation to, and thus better understood, through unexpected but well-known literary, historical, or cultural periods such as the Harlem Renaissance, the Black Arts Movement, or the Black Lives Matter movement.

Lastly, I invite you to attend our always thought-provoking panels, "'Inspired borrowings or plagiarism?' The significance of Pauline Hopkins's textual appropriations" and "Pauline E. Hopkins's Experiments with antiquity and law," at the 2016 American Literature Association Conference May 26-29 in San Francisco, CA. In addition, please consider nominating a work for our bi-annual scholarship competition for the best essay or book chapter on Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins. You are welcome to attend our annual Business Meeting at ALA as well. If you are considering becoming a member, it is a wonderful opportunity to learn more about our organization. If you are already a member, we will have a number of leadership openings this year. Any contribution that will help the PEHS connect spheres – collaborate with groups and individuals who have a stake in scholarship and pedagogy on Hopkins and thus allow us to expand our influence – in 2016 and beyond will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

April Logan, PEHS President
Salisbury University

2015 American Literature Association Hopkins Society Events

The PEHS hosted a panel and a roundtable at the 26th Annual Conference of the American Literature Association held May 21-24, in Boston, Massachusetts. A list of participants and their paper titles follows each session title:

Panel: "Twenty-Seven Years of Hopkins Scholarship: Perspectives on the Past and Future"

Chair: JoAnn Pavletich, University of Houston-Downtown

Respondent: Elizabeth Ammons, Tufts University

- "The Rise of Pauline Hopkins as a Blueprint for the Recovery of Other Writers and the Need for Hopkins Scholarly Editions," Hanna Wallinger, University of Salzburg and John Gruesser, Kean University
- "Digital Hopkins," Eurie Dahn, The College of Saint Rose and Brian Sweeney, The College of Saint Rose
- "The Other Book: Ellen Wetherell, Pauline Hopkins and the Colored Co-Operative Publishing Company," Alisha Knight, Washington College

Roundtable on Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins' *Of One Blood*

Moderator: JoAnn Pavletich, University of Houston-Downtown

- "Pauline Hopkins and the Gothic Tradition: The Self-Destroying Gothic Villain," Bridget M. Marshall, University of Massachusetts, Lowell
- "Birthmarks: Trauma in Pauline Hopkins's *Of One Blood*," Peter Chapin, Iona College
- "Signifying Specters: Haunting as Black Communication in *Of One Blood*," Jessica Mitzner, Tufts University
- "Distributed Agency among Pauline Hopkins, the *Colored American Magazine*, and *Of One Blood*," Michelle N. Huang, The Pennsylvania State University

Panelists:

Peter Chapin,
Bridget Marshall,
Jessica Mitzner,
Michelle Huang,
with JoAnn Pavletich (chair).



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Find us at <https://www.facebook.com/pehopkinssociety/>



- What do we want the judges to prioritize when evaluating submissions (style and precision, voice, or content)?
- Do we need to reconsider/refine the guidelines?
- Do we want to continue to offer a second place award for essays that are not as polished but are still meaningful in continuing Hopkins's legacy?
- The next awards cycle will be in 2017, but publicity should begin earlier.

Nicole recommended that we continue to work with community organizations because of their significant engagement with the Boston community. She also reminded us that she needs to step down as chair in 2016, but she is happy to remain on the committee and serve as a liaison to Boston organizations. April asked if we have any relationships with local teachers. Nicole answered that although she has reached out to teachers, developing a relationship has been difficult because they are already over extended and under compensated. April suggested that the teachers of the students who won the awards might want to teach Hopkins in the near future, which might inspire more students to participate. Action Item: April offered to help follow up with these teachers.

Alisha Knight indicated that the previously circulated meeting minutes would serve as her Secretary's report. She asked if there was a Membership Officer's report this year. April noted that a formal report had not been submitted, and that she wanted to discuss collapsing the Treasurer and Membership Officer positions (see below).

Discussion

2016 Panel Suggestions: April mentioned John Gruesser suggested a panel on Hopkins's borrowing and sampling of other writers. JoAnn is interested in this topic but is concerned about a conflict of interest that could result if she submitted a proposal. April explained this would not become a problem as long as the abstracts for this panel were reviewed by another officer. Additional panel suggestions included:

- A panel on a single text
- An author coupling, like Hopkins and Griggs, Hopkins and Anna Julia Cooper, Hopkins and Du Bois, or Hopkins and ? (the question mark could keep the panel more general)
- Hopkins as a Harlem Renaissance forerunner
- A pedagogy panel to promote the teaching of Hopkins.

Promotion Strategies: Overall, April is encouraged by the high school essay contest and increase in members from the online payment system. She noted that Eric Gardner's comparative study of other author societies shows that some of them have annual meetings/symposiums (once every few years), but we do not. Some also offer a journal, while we offer a newsletter. She asked if we should revisit making our newsletter available to members only. Alisha noted that last year we considered limiting the newsletter (and the listserv) to members only, but the consensus at that time was to keep it open; otherwise, there would be limited free opportunities to promote the Society.

April knows we are somewhat small, and she doesn't want to over extend our officers, but she wonders if we want to think about some type of symposium or workshop for K-12 teachers to broaden awareness of Hopkins beyond academia. JoAnn sees the teacher workshop as an opportunity to facilitate more student participation with the Society. Nicole thinks a one-day symposium before the conference could work. Action Item: April and Nicole agreed to work together to investigate a teacher workshop. Joann suggested another option would be to connect with SSAWW and other one-day, regional programs. Action Item: Joann agreed to look into a one-day symposium on Hopkins with SSAWW. Action Item: Bridget Marshall agreed to look into ALA's seminar discussion sessions to propose one on Hopkins.

The Scholarship Award (and lack of submissions): April suggested that we nominate people for consideration

for this award based on the work done by the Research and Publications committee. JoAnn suggested that we still allow self nominations. Bridget wondered if publication timelines are an issue since scholars often have moved on to other projects by the time their publications appear in print.

Additional Promotion Ideas: April suggested that we use the newsletter and the listserv to promote teaching Hopkins. “Just Teach One” is another initiative to consider. This program develops lesson plans and provides PDFs that contextualize a literary text. Nicole noted that the pedagogical philosophy behind this is to teach a short text in just one lesson. While this might not work for Hopkins’s novels, it could work for one of her essays or short stories. Brian Sweeney favored the idea of moving beyond “Talma Gordon.” Action Item: April agreed to look into this and find an appropriate short story to promote through this program.

Committee Opportunities: There are still opportunities on the Research and Publication committee, the Program committee, and the Awards and Monuments committee. Alisha expressed an interest in working on the Research and Publication committee.

Officer Vacancies and 2016 Election: The following positions will become vacant in 2016:

- Secretary (Note: Alisha is ineligible to serve a third consecutive term.)
- Membership Officer
- Treasurer (Note: Univ. of MT will continue to manage the online payment system, but the Society’s account would move with the new Treasurer.)
- Vice President
- President
- Awards and Monuments committee chairperson

April suggested that we collapse the Treasurer and Membership positions since there is some overlap in terms of managing membership dues and lists. She moved that she be charged with working with the officers to come up with the appropriate language to amend the bylaws to combine these positions. This language would be presented at the 2016 ALA conference. The motion was approved. Alisha agreed to serve on the Nominations committee, and to ask John Gruesser for his assistance.

The meeting adjourned at 3:31 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Alisha Knight
PEH Society Secretary

Hopkins Enters the Digital Age

The Hopkins Society webpage, www.paulinehopkinssociety.org, remains an important source of information for scholars and students, as well as for a general audience seeking greater knowledge of Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins and her era. An overview of her life by Prof. Ira Dworkin (Texas A&M University) receives frequent traffic, and the PEHS’s recent work to provide Hopkins’s *New Era Magazine* in .pdf format also draws many visitors to our site. Our website has also been cited by bloggers commenting on issues surrounding race in America today, including police violence against African Americans--proof that Pauline Hopkins has as much relevance to a modern audience as to the readers she energized in her own day, and that our Society has an important and ongoing role to play in sharing her work with the public.

Hopkins Society members are reminded to check the website for the latest calls for papers and conference information, and to share any updates to the bibliography with webmaster Mary Frances Jiménez, mf_jimenez@yahoo.com.

-- by Mary Frances Jiménez, PEHS Webmaster

The Pauline Hopkins Society

"Fiction is of great value to any people as a preserver of manners and customs--religious, political and social. It is a record of growth and development from generation to generation."

Contending Forces (1899)



Scholarship Award

2017

The Pauline Hopkins Society (<http://www.paulinehopkinssociety.org>) is pleased to announce the inauguration of its first bi-annual competition for the best essay or book chapter on Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins published between January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2016. If you have published an essay or chapter that discusses Hopkins and/or her work, we invite you to consider entering before the **April 15, 2017 deadline**.

Because entries will be judged through a system of blind reviewing we recommend that any self-citation, either in the body or in notes, be reworked to the third person.

How to Enter:

Essays should be double-spaced throughout, with your name appearing only on the cover sheet, along with your institutional mailing address and e-mail address.

Please send essay as a pdf email attachment by **April 15, 2017** to: PHSscholaraward@gmail.com

The award of a \$100 cash prize will be presented during a special ceremony commemorating Hopkins and her work in Boston during the American Literature Association annual conference in May 2017.

❖❖❖ **PEHS High School Essay Winners Honored** ❖❖❖

By John Gruesser, PEHS Historian, and Nicole Aljoe, PEHS Monuments and Awards Committee Chair

On May 22, 2015, the Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins Society (PEHS) conferred its first bi-annual High School Student awards at the African American Literature and Culture Society's (AALCS) annual reception at the American Literature Association Conference. PEHS Awards and Monuments Committee Chair Nicole Aljoe, Associate Professor of English at Northeastern University, and PEHS Historian John Gruesser, Professor of English at Kean University, presented the first place award to Bethany Barrant and the runner-up award to Toluwalope Moses. Moses and Barrant, who were accompanied by their family members, were excited to be honored at the AALCS reception, which was attended by approximately 150 people.

Barrant, a senior at Boston Latin High School who will be starting in the Fashion Merchandising and Retail Marketing program at Johnson and Wales University in fall 2015, won \$300 for her essay "They Tell Me Racism Isn't Alive," which offered a personal reflection on the social justice movement #BlackLivesMatter. Moses, a freshman at Boston Latin High School who was born in Benin City, Nigeria, won \$150 for an essay focused on her desire as an immigrant to help the United States live up to its stated goals of social justice and equality. The Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins Memorial Award is a bi-annual prize offered to one or two college-bound African American female students in the Boston and Cambridge, MA, public school systems who submit essays on any aspect of social justice. PEHS's successful launch of the awards has inspired other author societies to also engage in public outreach. AALCS Treasurer Keith Byerman, Professor of English at Indiana State University, noted, "We have heard a number of very positive comments about your awards. Some societies are thinking of doing something similar. Impressive."

The award is intended to commemorate the life and work of the Boston and Cambridge-based writer Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins (1859-1930). A pioneering editor and journalist, noted public speaker, and extremely prolific writer, Hopkins first came to prominence when she won an award for an essay she wrote as a teenager on the "Evils of Intemperance and Their Social Remedy." The first female African American playwright, she went on to write short stories, novels, and the biographical series Famous Men of the Negro Race and Female Women of the Negro Race. She also served as the editor-in-chief of the *Colored American Magazine* and the *New Era Magazine*.

The next award deadline will be April 1, 2017, with presentation occurring during the American Literature Association conference in Boston in late May 2017. Submissions should be sent to PHShsaward@gmail.com

They Tell Me That Racism Isn't Alive

Since the never ending police caused atrocities that have traumatized the African American community have become such a daily, publicized, and ignored news report, it has come to my attention that contrary to popular belief, legal systematic oppression of a group of people is still alive and well today. It is evident in the courtrooms, the classrooms, and police "protected" streets that to many, Black lives simply do not matter. With the technological advances that have allowed these atrocities to be caught on camera, there is no excuse for the number of blue badged murderers that have endured minimal to no repercussions for their actions. It is absolutely heart wrenching that our legal system still believes that we as a people sincerely do not matter. As the #BlackLivesMatter movement has taken an effort to change this legal mindset, it is easy to look back on the Civil Rights Movement for inspiration to create the same (or greater) level of change that many, such as Martin Luther King Jr., have created for our people. As an individual looking to see what I can do to create change, Pauline E. Hopkins' works of prose are an inspiration to us all.



John Gruesser, Bethany Barrant (First Place Winner),
and Nicole Aljoe

Emmett Till. A 14 year old black boy beaten and killed in 1955 for simply whistling at a white woman. Ronald Cotton. A black man sentenced to life after being wrongly accused of raping a white woman in 1984. He carried out 11 years of his sentence until finally a DNA test was done to prove his innocence. Willie Bennett. A black man wrongly accused of shooting Charlie Stuart's white wife in 1989. Excessive police force carried out a man hunt to find Bennett and ignored the evidence that Stuart was the actual killer using Bennett as a scapegoat. DeShaun Currie. An 18 year old black teen adopted into a white family accused of being a burglar in his own home and then assaulted by the cops in 2014. Tyler Willock. A black teenage boy adopted into a white family was walking his younger sister - a white 13 year old girl - home after the two went to get ice cream in 2010. They were then stopped by the police who refused to believe that a little white girl would voluntarily walk around with a black teenage boy. That 13 year old girl is my best friend Caitlin. The racism in the police force has most definitely affected my friends as well as myself. And they tell me that racism isn't alive?! The same thing happens over and over again throughout history and in America

today yet I am constantly being told to stop complaining because this suffering only happened to my ancestors! The common mindset that black men are suspicious no matter the circumstances is taught to police officers as they are learning to profile suspects. And they tell me that racism isn't alive?! In the classrooms of my school the black children are the ones not equally heard, forgiven, and aided by the teachers because it is generally believed to be a waste of time to help those that supposedly will not be as successful as the other kids in the classroom. This mindset held by many teachers and our peers has an affect on the black kids, making them feel inferior. This is why we must speak up and remind our peers that black lives do matter, we are not a waste of time and we are not a waste of space; we are strong contributors to America's success.

Obviously, I am pro social justice considering the fact that my people are receiving the brunt of the police injustices in America today. However it is hard for me to speak up for this problem with others who have varying opinions on the situation. For instance, I attend Boston Latin School where ignorance against the African American race is so popular. Therefore it is extremely hard to stay motivated to stand up for my people rather than be a bystander on the situation. I am appalled by the constant groans to African American literature, the proudly stated racist jokes, and the twitter arguments defending the police because "racism is dead we have a black president"(the words of a Boston Latin School Student). Another student stated "I don't feel sorry for black people. If you hate us so much GO BACH (spelling mistake of the Boston Latin School student who made this statement) TO AFRICA. We should have never brought you." What people

who make these statements and have these feelings fail to realize is that Black people don't hate all White people and voting Obama president obviously hasn't eliminated racism. The definition of racism is most definitely confused and a highly touchy subject when discussed between people of different races. Many use it incorrectly which weakens the arguments of those who do use the word correctly. Yes it is wrong to stereotype and make preconceived notions of someone based on their appearance, but sadly that is human nature, a survival instinct. However stereotyping isn't racism. Racism on an individual based level is allowing one's stereotypes to affect their actions towards a group of people. A social issue approved and enforced by our legal system, racism is also the systematic oppression on a group of people.

It is important to raise awareness about an issue that so many find easy to deny as a problem in 2015. We as a community have done well in speaking up for ourselves in protests, on social media, and in our daily conversations; but that leaves many of us wondering what our next step should be. Something needs to happen legally. Police officers should be forced to wear cameras so that they can't lie about situations and defend themselves if witnesses or victims lie on their behalf. We need to individually not allow racist comments in our daily conversations be stated without correction. We also need a leader, like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who can make changes in the legal systems to help those being wronged by it. In the meantime, our communities need to teach black men how to act with police officers to prevent future blue badged murders. There are so many things that could be done to bring this issue to justice and it is important that we strive to create change until our black men can walk the streets without fear of the police because Black lives do matter.



Toluwalope Moses
Boston Latin School
4/7/2015

Social justice is defined as “the distribution of advantages and disadvantages within a society.” If I understand this definition correctly, the glaring inequity is this: the distribution of *disadvantages* within a society. Language is a manmade concept, idea, invention that we, humans, needless to say, invented; we are the ones who coined the term “social justice.” I’ll point out now that this term would not exist if there were no such things as inequality or racism.



John Gruesser, Toluwalope Moses (First Runner Up), and Nicole Aljoe

I will not feign firsthand experiences of mistreatment or claim any right to say that I really, and *truly* know what it means to be a young black girl in America, because, frankly it's just not the truth, not yet. I'm not sure I *really* know the depth of what's going on here, the depth of the underlying current of exploitation, missusage, or corruption of things such as the police force in America. What I'm really saying here is I'm still learning; I'm still observing the world, the environment around me and I don't *have* a right to claim any insightful knowledge on this subject. What I do have a right to claim, to offer you, is an honest, sincere, and authentic account of *my* understanding, *my* perception of the term “social justice.”

I was born in Benin City in Nigeria, a country in Africa. I lived there up until I was two when my parents decided to start a new life in America, where I and my sisters' education would benefit from first-class institutions. My father fervently believes that America is the right place to be: a fast and competitive first world country,

coupled with all its opportunities. Though I did not grow up in Nigeria, the culture followed me to this foreign place called America.

I am so very involved in my culture that I even had the idea some Africans tend to have that the African black, is the better black, that we are smarter, more authentic in culture, more respectful. Obviously, that perception has since changed as a result of time and experience. But I also came to the conclusion that I was at the root of the problem: I saw myself as the superior version of a race in which we were all the same, with the same brown skin, a beautiful array of shades, light-skinned, brown, dark-skinned, a race where we all originate from the same place, Africa, maybe just not immediately for some. Besides that division, there is the division of light vs. dark. Of the few direct experiences I've had relating to such a topic, this is number one: the idea that light is better, another division within the race that could arguably be said to be the most at a disadvantage in America, the land of opportunity. I've heard the inequities that Black Americans face, and the division between light and dark-skinned in rap songs, even among children my own age.

In a place like America, so revered by someone like my father, there was no thought in my mind that the killers of kids such as Michael Brown or Trayvon Martin would go free. I was confused, shocked, and felt a sharp, inexplicable pang of betrayal. It was only when my sister started BLACK, Black Leaders Aspiring for Change and Knowledge in my school that I became aware that the social issues concerning people of color in America are much more subtle than in the past, but still present. I've attributed the acquittal of these perpetrators of crime as white privilege and have since become very aware of the white kids in my school. Not to say that I began seeing them in a bad light, but I revisited this question more than once in my mind: What is the real state of the dynamic between the whites and colored (any nonwhite group of individuals) in this country?

Among the innumerable array of causes of the issue of unjustful acts committed against nonwhites, social *injustice*, to me, among the most important is the perpetuation of stereotypes, the internal racism or predisposed opinions we have of a particular person because of their apparent race. On an even more detailed level, it comes back to the circumstances that most of the youth in a particular race are in, the opportunities available to them, and the perhaps known or unknown prejudices they face everyday, simply because of background.

I'm a firm believer in that stereotypes carry some truth to them, but I also believe that with time, they can become grossly exaggerated and lose any semblance of truth that they once held. It's not just a simple matter of educating people. Mellody Hobson couldn't have articulated the concept of what I am trying to say here any better: "The goal is to become comfortable with being uncomfortable." She goes on to explain she wants people to be color brave, to be comfortable with discussing race, instead of viewing it as a sensitive subject. Only when we have achieved this, will we be able to say we have truly demolished the barriers of predisposed notions. Social justice is many things. It is on the list of the inexorable rights any true human being is born with, if not the first. It is a sort of freedom, the freedom to say and believe that your community has your best interests at heart. Everyone should have a right to believe that they are under full and complete care in the society they live in, to be able to expect everyone to reverence that universal law. Social *injustice* is a kind of slavery, a threat, like a slow poison that spreads in the justice system if no justice is served due to the expression of discontentment in the voice of the people, as one body, one mind. It is the match that lights the fire between two groups of people, the advantageous, and the disadvantageous.

As I've said before, I don't have a right to claim an absolutely clear insight on this topic, I don't know too much. But I do know this: I want to help. I want to do whatever needs being done, whatever is necessary to eliminate these problems, to reverse the damage these unfair trials and problems are causing. Most of all, I want to seal the widening gap, to stop the expanding block of space dividing races.

I resemble that of a nonentity in the grand-scheme of things but, needless to say, change always begins with only one person pushing down the first domino in a long line of them.

It will be the job of the answerers to the call of reform to sustain the domino effect, to keep the pieces falling. It starts with not just opening people's eyes to the disadvantage Blacks face in their everyday lives but to open their eyes to the privilege of whites, and understand the fundamental ideologies of racism, the root of the problem. Today, social justice is a freedom denied to too great a number of black youth, and we, the instigators of societal transformation hold the key to all unlocked doors of success in societal development: an innovative take on the concept of freedom, rights, and civilization.

PAULINE E. HOPKINS SOCIETY
Panel Lineup
American Literature Association
27th Annual Conference
May 26-29, 2016
San Francisco, CA

The Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins Society will sponsor two sessions at the 27th Annual Conference of the American Literature Association.

Panel One: "Inspired borrowings" or plagiarism? The significance of Pauline Hopkins's textual appropriations.

John Gruesser, Kean University, chair

1. "The Hidden Voices of *Hagar's Daughter*," Lauren Dembowitz, University of California, Riverside.
2. "Black Livingstone: Pauline Hopkins's Appropriations of African Exploration," Ira Dworkin, Texas A&M University.
3. 'The Practice of Power: Pauline Hopkins's Plagiarism in *Winona*,' JoAnn Pavletich, University of Houston-Downtown

Respondent: Richard Yarborough, University of California, Riverside

Panel Two: Pauline E. Hopkins's Experiments with antiquity and law.

JoAnn Pavletich, University of Houston-Downtown, Chair

1. "Excavating Ethiopia: Pauline Hopkins's Archaeological Appropriations," Molly Robey, Illinois Wesleyan University
2. "By Jove!": Ovidian Desire and Deanimation in Pauline Hopkins's *Of One Blood*," Nicole Spigner, Columbia College Chicago
3. "The Courtroom Drama of *Hagar's Daughter*: Evidence Law and Black Testimony." Valerie Sirenko, The University of Texas at Austin
4. "Industrial Censorship: Lessons from Pauline Hopkins' Editorial Ideology," Rhone Fraser, Howard University

Get Involved! PEHS Committees

The Pauline Hopkins Society needs you! Please consider joining one of our committees and offering your time and expertise to help advance Hopkins scholarship. From our bylaws:

The Program Committee shall serve as a liaison to various societies and associations; draft, generate, and circulate calls for papers for conference panels; help establish a Pauline Hopkins presence in like-minded organizations; select conference panel participants; propose projects and programs; and present slates of proposed panels to the Executive Committee for approval.

The Research and Publications Committee shall compile an annual list of scholarly publications, creative projects and research efforts concerning the life and writings of Pauline Hopkins and information pertinent to the purpose of the Society. It shall also work to help keep the writings of Pauline Hopkins in print and available to students, teachers and readers.

The Awards and Monuments Committee shall make recommendations for citations for outstanding scholarly work published on Pauline Hopkins in book and article form as well as other noteworthy projects that advance the purpose of the Society. It shall make recommendations for sponsorship of monuments and memorials to be erected in honor of Pauline Hopkins at sites and on occasions appropriate to the purpose of the Society. It shall also make Society Honorary Membership recommendations to the Executive Committee.

Volunteer for a committee by indicating your interest when you return your membership form or by contacting our Membership Officer, Tanya Clark: clarkt@rowan.edu.

We Need Membership Renewals!

If you have not already done so, please take a moment and **renew your PEHS membership now**. Our society needs your participation in order to continue promoting study of the life and work of Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins.

The Hopkins Society also offers new and old members the chance to join at the Lifetime Membership level. We strongly encourage scholars committed to Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins's work and legacy to consider this membership level.

The \$250 fee may be paid as a single lump sum or through two consecutive annual payments. In addition to the convenience of never having to renew your membership, this option protects you from any possible dues increase(s) during your lifetime. Even if dues remain the same for the next three decades, the Lifetime Membership will put you ahead, as it is equivalent to 17 years at the current Regular Member level.

But most importantly, this initial investment will lay the groundwork for the Society's future meetings and projects to honor Hopkins. Please consider supporting these efforts by **filling out the membership form on page 13** and choosing the Lifetime Membership level.



Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins Society

Membership Form for 2016-2017



Name: _____

Institutional Affiliation: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone: _____

This membership is: _____ a renewal (or) _____ a new membership

Membership Category:

_____ Founding Member. Annual dues: \$15

Note: Founding Member status is open *only* to members who joined before 31 August 2010.

_____ Regular Member. Annual dues: \$15

_____ Graduate Member. Annual dues: \$10 Open to current graduate students

_____ Student Member. Annual dues: \$10 Open to current undergraduate and high school students

_____ Institutional Member. Annual dues: \$250

_____ Lifetime Member. Single payment of \$250 or two consecutive annual installments of \$125.

If paying by installments, this is installment _____ of two.

Hopkins Society Service: Please circle committees on which you might be willing to serve.

Research/Publication Committee
Awards/Monuments Committee

Program Committee
No committee at this time

This application and your payment can be mailed to:

Prof. Jill Bergman, Hopkins Society Member
Department of English
University of Montana
32 Campus Dr.
Missoula, MT 59812

Checks/money orders should be made payable to the University of Montana, which currently houses the Society accounts. **Or you can pay online with a credit card at <http://hs.umt.edu/pehs/>.** Payments through check, money order, or credit card must be made in U.S. funds. International scholars are encouraged to contact the membership officer to discuss other options if this presents difficulties.

Membership questions can be emailed to Tanya Clark at clarkt@rowan.edu.

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**The
Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins
Society**

Requests to join the HOPKINSSOCIETY listserv may be submitted to Mary Frances Jiménez, listserv administrator: mf_jimenez@yahoo.com.

To submit information for possible inclusion on our website, please contact Mary Frances Jiménez, mf_jimenez@yahoo.com

<http://www.paulinehopkinssociety.org>