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**Thoughts from the departing President:**

During my tenure as President of the Pauline E. Hopkins Society we saw a surge of interest in Hopkins’s writing, fueled by continuing recovery work arising from the field of African American print culture as well as the popularity of Afrofuturist discourse positioning Hopkins as a literary foremother. Contemporary speculative fiction authors such as Nalo Hopkinson blogged about the similarities between the film *Black Panther* and *Of One Blood*. Given the 2020 uprisings and protest marches sparked by acts of excessive policing during the lockdown summer, readers found Hopkins’s literary activism particularly prescient.



In fact, you could say Hopkins has been trending in popular culture. She was the focus of Tarisai Ngangura’s longform essay in *The Believer* and a feature on multiple podcasts, including one on Hopkins’s short story “Talma Gordon,” and another on her influence on fellow Bostonian Dorothy West. Our newsletter editor Dr. Elizabeth Cali recently crafted an episode on Hopkins’s prolific novel-writing, and our former Membership Officer, Dr. Alisha Knight crafted an episode on *Hagar’s Daughter*. Finally, new annotated editions of Hopkins’s novels from Broadview Press have made her texts widely available. A 2021 edition of *Hagar’s Daughter* edited by Dr. John Gruesser and Dr. Alisha Knight includes expert annotations. Together the editors produced an accessible text for students, scholars, and pleasure-readers alike.

THE  
PAULINE ELIZABETH  
HOPKINS  
SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER  
VOLUME 10  
July 2021- December 2022

“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.”

—from the Preface to *Contending Forces*, 1900

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“Fiction, Hopkins thought, could reach the many classes of citizens who never read history or biography, and thus she created fictional histories with a pedagogic function: narratives of the relations between the races that challenged racist ideologies.”

-Hazel Carby, Introduction, *The Magazine Novels of Pauline Hopkins* (New York, Oxford University, 1988)



With the onset of the pandemic, the Society had to be creative and nimble with our offerings. After the American Literature Association 2020 conference was postponed, our 2021 panel on “Pauline Hopkins and Social Justice,” shifted online. Fortunately, the new asynchronous format increased accessibility. Our 2022 panel, “Hopkins and her Contemporaries: Responses to Racial Violence, Appeals for Racial Justice” was held in person at ALA in Chicago and featured commentary by outgoing C19 President Dr. Edlie Wong.

The last few years have also seen a burst of energy around Pauline E. Hopkins’ scholarship. In particular, Afrofuturistic discourse has refreshed and updated conversations on *Of One Blood*. December 2022 ushered in key publications on Hopkins, including a new Broadview edition of *Of One Blood*, edited by Drs. Eurie Dahn and Brian Sweeney. Dr. JoAnn Pavletich’s highly-anticipated *Yours for Humanity”: New Essays on Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins*, featuring chapters from several established and emerging Hopkins scholars, many of whom are society members also came out in December 2022. Hopkins even makes a cameo in Dr. Daphne Brooks’ magnum opus *Liner Notes for the Revolution: The Intellectual Life of Black Feminist Sound* (2021) as an early theorist of Black feminist sound studies. Hopkins is also featured as an innovator in *Born in Cambridge: 400 Years of Ideas and Innovators* (2022).

It’s wonderful that, as I leave the office in the capable hands of President John Gruesser, Hopkins scholarship is alive and well. It was a pleasure and a privilege to serve as the Society’s President from 2019-2022.

Sincerely,

Dr. Cherene Sherrard-Johnson  
E. Wilson Lyon Professor of the Humanities &  
Chair of English, Pomona College



## Welcome New PEHS President



John Gruesser, of Kean University and Sam Houston State University, has graciously taken on the role of incoming President of the Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins Society.

The PEHS welcomes Gruesser's leadership as scholarship and public facing work on Hopkins expands and proliferates.

## 2022 ALA Events

### *The 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual ALA Conference*

The Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins Society hosted an excellent panel of scholars for the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference of the American Literature Association in May, 2022.

Panel Title: "Hopkins and Her Contemporaries: Responses to Racial Violence, Appeals for Racial Justice."

Panel Chair: John Cyril Barton, University of Missouri, Kansas City

Panelists:

John Gruesser, Kean University and Sam Houston State University

Amina Gautier, University of Miami

Alex Anderson, Purdue University

Karyn Hixson, University of Texas at San Antonio

Panel Respondent: Edlie L. Wong, University of Maryland



**“Hopkins and Her Contemporaries” – Respondent’s Remarks**

Dr. Edlie Wong, Professor of English, University of Maryland, College Park



Reflections on "Hopkins and her Contemporaries: Responses to Racial Violence, Appeals for Racial Justice" at the American Literature Association Conference.

May 27, 2022

Pauline E. Hopkins epitomized the dynamic tensions and contradictions of an era that Charles Chesnutt usefully designated as “Postbellum—Pre-Harlem,” which, in the words of Barbara McCaskill and Caroline Gebhard, “looked back to antebellum years and forward to a future glimpsed but not yet codified by the term ‘Harlem Renaissance’” (1).<sup>1</sup> Hopkins channeled the activist spirit of an earlier generation of Black abolitionists even as her explicit commitment to write for Black readers anticipated the future orientation of the New Negro Movement and even elements of the much later Black Arts Movement. This critical bifocality, the two-fold movement of looking backwards and forwards simultaneously, remains essential to understanding Hopkins as an editor and author and the neo-abolitionist and justice-oriented aims of her work.

We now know more about Hopkins than we did thirty years ago, yet new questions have arisen in the place of old ones. John Gruesser's talk entitled, "The Literary Lives, Deaths, and Rebirths of Pauline E. Hopkins and Sutton E. Griggs" began the session by asking us to reflect upon the similar literary trajectories and reception of Hopkins and Griggs. Once forgotten and obscure, these Black literary pioneers are now central figures within African American literature. Their critical recognition and prominence in the canon serve as an index of broader developments within--indeed, the professionalization of -- African American literary studies since the first wave of sustained Hopkins scholarship in the 1990s. This talk asks us to consider what *continues* to make these writers compelling to us--beyond literary recovery and establishment--in the twenty-first century. How do we study figures who no longer reside at the

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<sup>1</sup> Barbara McCaskill and Caroline Gebhard, eds., *Post-Bellum, Pre-Harlem: African American Literature and Culture, 1877-1919* (NYU Press, 2006).



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peripheries of American literature? The remaining three talks in this session begin to offer us some answers to the question of "why Hopkins and Griggs now."

Alex Anderson's talk entitled, "Eerie Peripheries: A Paratextual Reading of Pauline Hopkins' Serialized Novels" explores how digitization projects like Eurie Dahn and Brian Sweeney's *Digital Colored American Magazine* have expanded access to Hopkins's entire corpus in its original periodical format. Such digital archives in addition to the mass digitization of nineteenth-century books and periodicals and the development of keyword-based searching algorithms have produced new ways of reading Hopkins in the twenty-first century, allowing us to consider her complex compositional practices and strategic content management as an editor. Anderson's talk asks us to consider the peripheries of the *CAM*--its troubling advertisements for racialized beauty products and reprinted sensational news stories--as paratexts for Hopkins's fiction. These paratextual materials also help situate Hopkins's fascinations and interests within the broader context of Black literary production from this era. For example, we might consider Chesnut's *Marrow of Tradition* with its subplot of Blackface criminality and side commentary on skin-lightening products (in the tragically buffoonish character of Jerry) or Griggs's manipulation of gender masquerade in *Imperium in Imperio* or his many light-skinned, mixed-race heroines (such as Eina Rapona in *Pointing the Way*) in relation to these same paratextual materials.

Amina Gautier's talk entitled, "Displacements of Torture, or Two Almost-Lynchings in Pauline Hopkins' *Winona* and Charles Chesnut's *Marrow of Tradition*" situates Hopkins specifically in relation to Chesnut and highlights their anti-lynching advocacy in novels that focus on thwarted lynchings. Their detailed depictions of near, but not actual lynchings purposively displace the scene of anti-Black terror to reveal the premeditated savagery of white perpetrators and the communal aspects of such ritualistic violence. This discussion of *Winona* (May-October 1902) and *Marrow* (1901) made me think of how later lynching dramas such as Angelina Grimke's *Rachel* (1916), likewise, refused to portray the act of lynching (shifting it to the past) to focus on the impact of racial terrorism on the Black family and home, as Koritha Mitchell has usefully discussed.<sup>2</sup> I also wondered whether Hopkins's treatment of lynching in *Winona* might have been a stylistic or aesthetic choice related to the pacing or emplotment of her long- versus short-form fiction. Published a year later in November 1903, Hopkins's short story, "As the Lord Lives, He is One of Our Mother's Children" begins with the brutal lynching of an innocent Black man. Similar to Chesnut's *Marrow*, Hopkins's protagonist Jim is a well-educated, professional Black man who loses wife and child in the 1898 Wilmington massacre. Jim and a childhood friend named Jones attempt to start anew in the West, but are unable to escape the past when a white Wilmington man begins a ruthless campaign of racial harassment against their gold mining claim. Jones is later lynched while Jim manages to escape. By tracking the literary relays between Hopkins and Chesnut, this talk explores the shared novelistic aesthetics of their anti-lynching politics.

And, finally, Karyn Hixson's talk entitled, "Finding Truth: Tantamount Heredity in Pauline Hopkins's *Of One Blood* and Octavia Butler's *Kindred*" considers Hopkins in relation to

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<sup>2</sup> See Koritha Mitchell, *Living with Lynching African American Lynching Plays, Performance, and Citizenship, 1890-1930* (University of Illinois Press, 2011).



the contemporary science fiction writer to further examine these complex afterlives of slavery. Specifically, Hixon focuses on the scientific racism, heredity, and biologism that took root in Hopkins's era with devastating consequences in the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries, most recently in the racially motivated mass shooting in Buffalo, New York, which familiarized ordinary Americans with the white supremacist "great replacement" conspiracy theory. Hopkins was not alone in her literary explorations of racial science. Here, we might also benefit from Gruesser's suggestion that we study Hopkins and Griggs in tandem. In *Imperium*, Griggs channels a similarly perplexing exploration of racial science in the character of Viola and her adaptation of American eugenics and its alarmist threats of "race suicide" in the decline of white or "Anglo-Saxon" marriage and reproduction to the pointedly *contrary* project of Black nationalism (recall that Viola references John H. Van Evrie's 1868 *White Supremacy and Negro Subordination*).

Hopkins also later published a five-part ethnological series, "Dark Races of the Twentieth Century" in the rival *Voice of the Negro* magazine and self-published an ethnological pamphlet entitled, *A Primer of Facts Pertaining to the Early Greatness of the African Race*, the first imprint in a new educational series by P. E. Hopkins & Co., Publishers in 1905. A science of racial difference, ethnology considered human development and relations on a global scale. It came into popularity in the 1840s and 1850s as part of the search for more "scientific" methods of human classification. As Britt Rusert has compellingly argued, early Black ethnologies might be usefully understood as a genre of Black speculative writing not unlike Butler's *Kindred*.<sup>3</sup> They blended science and scripture to advance a monogenetic theory of racial origins that imaginatively mapped descent and genealogy across the African diaspora. In this fashion, Hopkins's manipulation of racial heredity and biologism in *Of One Blood* and in her other novels and nonfiction might be productively discussed in relation to her and other Black writers' interests in and deployment of popular pseudoscience to combat white supremacist ideologies and anti-Blackness.

Taken together, these four excellent talks underscore the significance of approaching Hopkins in a more comparative manner. By asking us to consider Hopkins *in relation*, this session begins to shift us away from the once useful, but now limiting discourse of literary exceptionalism that characterized Hopkins scholarship at the time of her initial recovery. Exploring Hopkins in relation to contemporaries such as Chesnut and Griggs, to more modern writers such as Butler, or to paratextual documents and female editorship writ large allows us to consider new facets of her politics and work as an editor and author, inspiring new readers and the next generation of scholars to come. Thanks to John Cyril Barton for organizing this terrific session on behalf of the Pauline E. Hopkins Society.

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<sup>3</sup> See Britt Rusert, *Fugitive Science: Empiricism and Freedom in Early African American Culture* (NYU Press, 2017).



***The 34<sup>th</sup> Annual ALA Conference***  
**Boston, MA**  
**May 25-28, 2023**

The PEHS is pleased to invite papers for the CFP listed below. We are also excited to announce a planned roundtable of contributors to Dr. JoAnn Pavletich's edited collection of essays on Hopkins.

**CFP: Pauline E. Hopkins in Comparative Perspective**

The Pauline E. Hopkins Society invites proposals that examine any aspect of Hopkins' work or life from a comparative perspective for presentation at the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual American Literature Association Convention, to be held in Boston, May 25-28, 2023. Papers may put Hopkins in dialogue with any of her contemporaries or examine her work in relation to any later writer(s), such as Gwendolyn Brooks, Toni Morrison, or Octavia Butler. We especially welcome submissions examining Hopkins in relation to popular culture (e.g. *Wakanda*, *Lovecraft Country*) and speculative fiction. Please submit abstracts of up to 300 words, with the subject line, "Hopkins in Comparative Perspective," to John Barton at [bartonjc@umkc.edu](mailto:bartonjc@umkc.edu) by Jan 15, 2023.

**Roundtable: "Yours for Humanity," New Research and Readings in Pauline E. Hopkins**

Celebrating the publication of JoAnn Pavletich's *"Yours for Humanity": New Essays on Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins* (U of Georgia P, 2022), this roundtable brings together several contributors to Pavletich's edited collection to discuss Hopkins scholarship and criticism today.

For details about the 2023 ALA Convention, please consult the following website:  
<https://americanliteratureassociation.org/ala-conferences/ala-annual-conference/general-call-for-papers/>



## Public Events Featuring Pauline Hopkins

### *Pauline Hopkins Highlighted in Podcasts*



#### **“Pauline Hopkins’s Hagar’s Daughter”:**

Professor of English and American Studies and Associate Provost of Diversity and Inclusion & Senior Equity Officer at Washington College, Dr. Alisha R. Knight (pictured left), authored a podcast episode on the reception history of Pauline Hopkins’s novel *Hagar’s Daughter*. The episode is part of the [Remarkable Receptions](#) podcast series hosted by Dr. Howard Ramsby, II.

In the episode, Knight discusses key responses to *Hagar’s Daughter*, and Hopkins’s responses to the reception of her novel.

#### **“3 Novels, 3 Years: Pauline Hopkins”:**

Associate Professor of English at SIUE, Dr. Elizabeth Cali, authored a podcast episode on Hopkins’s remarkable creative output. The episode, also part of the [Remarkable Receptions](#) podcast series, explains the impact of Hopkins’s editorial role on the rapid publication of three of her novels.



Enjoy listening to these and other episodes of [Remarkable Receptions](#), a podcast about popular and critical responses to African American novels.\*

\*The Remarkable Receptions podcast is part of the Black Literature Network, a joint project from African American literary studies at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and the History of Black Writing at the University of Kansas. The project was made possible by the generous support of the Mellon Foundation.





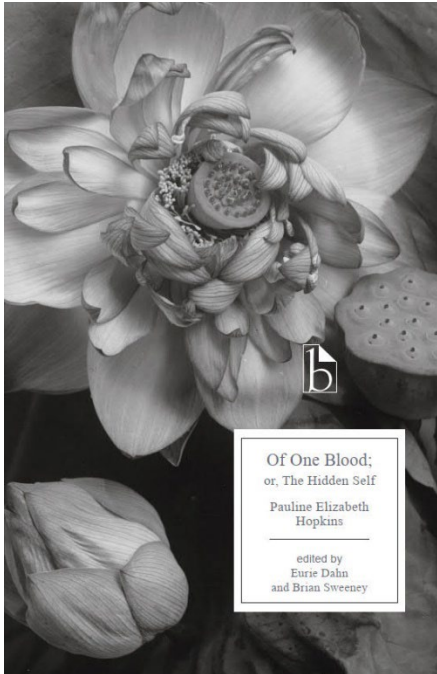
## Awards for Scholarship on Pauline Hopkins

### *The Pauline Hopkins Memorial Student Scholarship*

The PEHS is pleased to announce Ebelechiyem Okafor as the recipient of the 2022 Hopkins Student Scholarship Award for their short story “Freeman.” Okafor’s short story is creative, engaging, and deeply deserving of this award. Thank you to Dr. Madeline Gottlieb for her commitment to supporting and fostering the student scholarship opportunity!

## New Scholarship on Pauline Hopkins and Her Work

### *Broadview Press New Edition, Of One Blood (2022)*

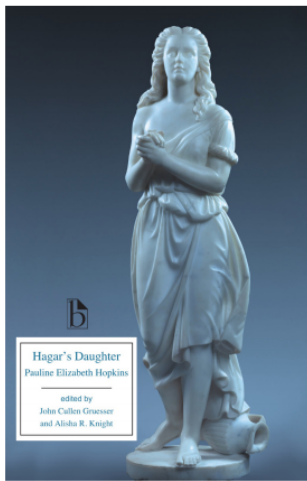


The Broadview edition of Hopkins's *Of One Blood*, edited by Eurie Dahn and Brian Sweeney, foregrounds three key current threads in Hopkins studies: speculative fiction and Afrofuturism, periodical studies, and intertextuality. This edition will provide an apparatus for thinking about the novel as a work of speculative fiction by including appendices that contain Hopkins’s source materials about an imagined Africa, mesmerism, spiritualism, scientific discoveries, and more. Through the genre of speculative fiction, Hopkins’s reclamation of Ethiopian civilization and the wonders of Black history and culture, more generally, advances her lifelong aim to imagine alternative futures for Black Americans, futures that are alternatives to the ones offered by the grim realities of the Jim Crow era. The edition will also highlight the novel’s status as a magazine text by including a rich sampling of relevant materials—essays, stories, ads, and photographs—from the pages of the *Colored American Magazine*.

This Broadview edition will be the first edition of *Of One Blood* to footnote not only explicit allusions to writings by Milton, Tennyson, and others, but also interpretively significant, uncited borrowings from other sources which have been identified by scholars. In addition, the appendices provide lengthier extracts from significant sources, affording readers and students the opportunity to dig deeper into questions concerning the intertextual nature of Hopkins's text including its engagement with musical culture and Black women's activism.



***Broadview Press New Edition, Hagar's Daughter (2021)***



**HAGAR'S DAUGHTER**  
**A STORY OF SOUTHERN CASTE PREJUDICE**

Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins  
Edited by John Cullen Gruesser & Alisha R. Knight

\$18.95 print | \$12.95 eBook | 386pp | NEW 2020  
9781554814985

*Hagar's Daughter* is Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins's first serial novel, published in the Boston-based *Colored American Magazine* (1901-02). The novel features concealed and mistaken identities, dramatic revelations, and extraordinary plot twists, including a high-profile murder trial, an abduction plot, and a steady succession of surprises as the young black maid Venus Johnson assumes male clothing to solve a series of mysteries. Because *Hagar's Daughter* demonstrates Hopkins's keen sense of history, use of multiple literary genres, emphasis on gender roles, and political engagement, it provides the perfect introduction to the author and her era.

*"This deliberately curated modern edition of Hagar's Daughter provides a rich contextual literary, social, and historical backdrop for one of Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins's most engrossing novels. Readers, students, and teachers alike will be engrossed by the novel itself and enriched by the illuminating primary and secondary materials that reveal the challenges of race, prejudice, and family in post-bellum America and illuminate Hopkins's far-reaching creative genius."*  
— LOIS BROWN, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

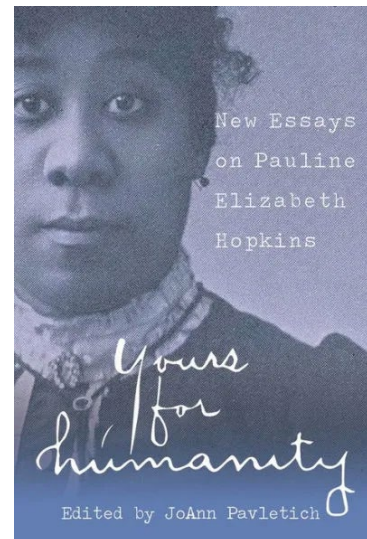
We are pleased to announce the publication of a much anticipated new edition of *Hagar's Daughter*, edited by Hopkins Society members John C. Gruesser & and Alisha R. Knight, published by Broadview Press.

Sam Houston State University sponsored a virtual book signing event celebrating Gruesser and Knight's work on February 10, 2021.

***New Essays on Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins (2022)***

*Yours for Humanity* is the first collection of critical essays on Pauline Hopkins since the 1996 publication of *The Unruly Voice*. This collection, *Yours for Humanity: New Essays on Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins*, is in print and digital formats from Georgia University Press. I invite you to review the collection at <https://ugapress.org/book/9780820363134/yours-for-humanity/>

The subjects and critical frameworks engaged in these essays are as varied as the concerns and strategies Pauline Hopkins brought to her own work. Of course, there is substantial discussion of Hopkins's use of material that did not originate with her. These sensitive and insightful essays discuss Hopkins's stenographic career, and her manipulation of utopian fiction. They engage closely with some of Hopkins's source texts; they offer new ways to understand Hopkins's deeply complex writing process.





Other essays break new ground in discussions of lynching; on her editorial efforts at *The Colored American*, including her contentious use of literature by women and one of her heretofore unknown pseudonyms; on popular culture; and on reading Hopkins in the classroom. All of the essays make explicit the importance of our efforts and the importance of Hopkins to a full and accurate understanding of her era and her role in cultural and literary studies.

If you would like me and/or one of the contributors to discuss Hopkins and/or the collection, please be in touch! Drop me a line at [pavletichj@uhd.edu](mailto:pavletichj@uhd.edu).

With Kind Regards,  
JoAnn Pavletich

### *Notable Books Featuring Hopkins*



Brooks, Daphne A. *Liner Notes for the Revolution: The Intellectual Life of Black Feminist Sound*. Harvard UP, 2021.

Commander, Michelle and Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, editors. *Unsung: Unheralded Narratives of American Slavery & Abolition*. Penguin, 2021.

Pittman, Coretta M. *Literacy in a Long Blues Note: Black Women's Literature and Music in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*. UP of Mississippi, 2022.

Pochmara, Anna. *The Nadir & the Zenith: Temperance and Excess in the Early African American Novel*. U of Georgia P, 2021.

Ross, Tia, editor. *Black Sci-Fi Short Stories: Anthology of New and Classic Tales*. Flame Tree Publishing, 2021.



Stabel, Meredith and Zachary Turpin, editors. *Radicals: Audacious Writings by American Women, 1830-1930*. U of Iowa P, 2021.

Weintraub, Karen and Michael Kuchta. *Born in Cambridge: 400 Years of Ideas and Innovators*. MIT Press, 2022.

Wolfe, Andrea Powell. *Black Mothers and the National Body Politic: The Narrative Positioning of the Black Maternal Body from the Civil War Period through the Present*. Lexington Books, 2021.

### ***Notable Journal Articles on Hopkins***

Chapnick, Max L. "Girls' High School and 'Wild Facts' of Race in Pauline Hopkins's *Of One Blood*." *The New England Quarterly*, vol. 95, no. 2, 2022, pp. 192-228.

Clark, Tanya N. "Hagar Revisited: Afrofuturism, Pauline Hopkins, and Reclamation in *The Colored American Magazine* and Beyond." *CLA Journal*, vol. 65, no. 1, 2022, pp. 141-62.

Davies, Vanessa. "Pauline Hopkins' Literary Egyptology." *Journal of Egyptian History*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2021, pp. 127-44.

Fladager, Daniel. "Traumatic Communities and the Problem of the Past in the Utopian Narratives of Pauline Hopkins and Sutton E. Griggs." *Studies in the Novel*, vol. 53, no. 3, 2021, pp. 250-65.

Gibson, Scott. "Domestic Disturbances: Remapping Mulatta Fiction in Pauline E. Hopkins's 'Talma Gordon.'" *Studies in the American Short Story*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 93-112.

Gilmore, Samantha, et al. "The Hopkins-Hamedoe Identity." *American Periodicals: A Journal of History & Criticism*, vol. 31 no. 1, 2021, p. 54-67.

Knadler, Stephen. "Neurodiverse Afro-Fabulations: Pauline Hopkins's Counterintelligence." *American Literature*, vol. 94, no. 2, 2022, pp. 301-29.

Taylor, Rod. "At the Foot of the Racial Mountain: Pauline Hopkins's Literary Exodus in *Peculiar Sam*, or *The Underground Railroad*." *Mississippi Quarterly*, vo. 74, no. 4, 2021, pp. 423-40.



## Membership and Officers

### *Become a Member or Renew Your Membership*

Join the Pauline E. Hopkins Society for the first time, or renew your membership today! Our membership period runs on a calendar year, from January 1 to December 31. Membership benefits include:

- Participation in a vibrant society dedicated to “increasing public awareness and perpetuating the study and appreciation of the life, career, works, communities and legacy of Pauline Hopkins.”
- Opportunities to shape the Society through participation as an officer, committee member, or voting member.
- Submission and presentation opportunities for the PEHS’s annual ALA conference panels.
- Support of and opportunity to submit to the Society’s professional scholarship award, with cash prize.
- Support of the study of Hopkins in secondary schools through the Society’s high school scholarship awards.

We need a strong and diverse membership to strive toward our goals, and we hope you will consider joining us.

Join or renew your Membership for \$15/yr [Online](http://www.paulinehopkinsociety.org/online-membership-form/):  
<http://www.paulinehopkinsociety.org/online-membership-form/>

Membership questions can be emailed to JoAnn Pavletich at [PavletichJ@uhd.edu](mailto:PavletichJ@uhd.edu)

To submit information for possible inclusion on our website, please contact Mary Frances Jiménez, [mf\\_jimenez@yahoo.com](mailto:mf_jimenez@yahoo.com)



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