

JESSICA KENYATTA WALKER

FOOD IS A MAP

HAVEN HALL 4658 | 505 S. STATE ST | ANN ARBOR, MI
WALKERJK@UMICH.EDU

RESEARCH AREAS

Race and Domestic Science, Black Feminist Cultural Criticism, Critical Food Studies, Space and Place, Black Geographies, Domesticity.

EDUCATION

August 2016	Ph.D. Department of American Studies Women's Studies Graduate Certificate The University of Maryland, College Park
May 2009	B.A. Anthropology, Gender and Women's Studies Bowdoin College
October 2007-June 2008	General Course in Social Anthropology The London School of Economics and Political Science

APPOINTMENTS

2020-present	The University of Michigan Assistant Professor, Department of American Culture, Department of Afro American and African Studies Faculty Affiliate: Sustainable Food Systems Initiative, Institute for Research on Women, National Center for Institutional Diversity
2018-2020	The University of Michigan The College of Literature, Science, and the Arts Collegiate Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of American Culture

2017-2018	The University of California, Berkeley Lecturer American Studies Program
2017	The University of California, Davis Lecturer American Studies and Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies
2016-2017	Kenyon College Marilyn Yarbrough Dissertation/Teaching Fellow American Studies and Gender and Women's Studies

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Her Kitchen Is the World: Black Women and The Culture of Soul Food (forthcoming)

Articles

2022 "Scenes of Domestic Citizenship in Negro Home Demonstration Work 1921–1938" *Gender & History* 34, no. 3 (2022): 664-672.

2016 "Black Women's Food Work as Critical Space"
Co-author with Kimberly Nettles-Barcelón, Gillian Clark, Courtney Thorsson, and Psyche Williams-Forsen. "Black Women's Food Work as Critical Space." *Gastronomica: The Journal of Critical Food Studies*, 15, no. 4 (2016): 34-49.

Book Chapters

2016 "Nervous Kitchens: Consuming Sentimentality Narratives and Black/White Intimacy at a Chicago Hot Dog Stand." *Devouring Cultures: Perspectives on Food, Power, and Identity from the Zombie Apocalypse to Downton Abbey*. Ed. Came M. Sublette and Jennifer Martin. Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2016.

2015 "Mighty Matriarchs Kill it with a Skillet: Critically Reading Representations of Black Womanhood and Food." *Dethroning the Deceitful Pork chop: African-American Foodways from Slavery to*

Obama. Ed. Jennifer Wallach and Lindsey Swindall. Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2015.

2012 Co-Author with Psyche Williams-Forsen. "Food and Race" Routledge International Handbook of Food Studies. Ed. Ken Albala. London: Routledge, 2012.

Public Scholarship

2026 Introduction, From Scratch: Seeding Adornment, the art of Lakela Brown (Forthcoming)

2026 Foreword, Mrs. Hall's Recipe Book, The University of Michigan Press (Forthcoming in February 2026)

2024 "The Expansion of Soul Foods." Black Perspectives the blog of the Africa American Intellectual History Society. November 11, 2024. <https://www.aaihs.org/the-expansion-of-soul-foods/>

2017 "Black Kitchen Culture," MacGuffin No 4: The Sink, April 2017, 103.

Media

2018 All Things Considered, NPR Weekend Edition
[*How Corporate Branding Embedded Racist Stereotypes In American Culture.*](#) Interviewed by Tia Graham.

2021 [*Feminist Ingredients for Revolution: A Food and Queer History Podcast*](#) hosted by Dr. Alex Ketchum, Produced by Sadie Couture.

FELLOWSHIPS

2023-24 **The University of Michigan, The Institute for the Humanities**
Hunting Family Fellow

2017-18 **The University of California, Berkeley, The Center for Learning and Teaching**
Lecturer Teaching Fellow

2018 **New York University Food Studies Postdoctoral Fellowship (declined)**

2015	Ford Foundation Dissertation Completion Fellowship Honorable Mention
2015	Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation (declined) Career Enhancement Adjunct Faculty Fellowship
2015	Boston College's African & African Diaspora Studies Program (declined) Dissertation Fellowship
2015	Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (declined) Dissertation Grant
2007-09	Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Bowdoin College

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Internal

2025	Humanities Collaboratory Proposal Development Grant The Deadness Project
2025	Arts in the Archive Grant
2025	Inclusive History Project Course Re-design Grant
2024	Humanities Collaboratory 5x5 Grant, The University of Michigan Faculty working group the topic of "Longevity"

External

2017	Best Edited Volume, Association for The Study of Food and Society. Contributor to Dethroning the Deceitful Pork chop: African-American Foodways from Slavery to Obama. Ed. Jennifer Wallach and Lindsey Swindall. Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2015.
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2016	American Library Association Choice Outstanding Academic Title Contributor to Dethroning the Deceitful Pork chop: African-American Foodways from Slavery to Obama. Ed. Jennifer Wallach and Lindsey Swindall. Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2015.
2016	Most Valuable Professor Award Academic Support and Career Development, Athletics Department University of Maryland, College, Park
2014	Graduate Student Teaching Award University of Maryland Center for Teaching
2013	Future of Information Alliance Deutsch Seed Grant University of Maryland, College Park
2013	Graduate Student Merit Award University of Maryland, College Park
2012	College of Arts and Humanities Travel Grant University of Maryland, College Park
2012	Social Science Research Council/ Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Graduate School Enhancement Grant

INVITED TALKS

2022	Eisenberg Institute of Historical Studies, University of Michigan "Scenes of Domestic Discomfort."
2022	Michigan Local Food Council Network DEI Working Group "Euthenics and Early Black Food Sovereignty"
2020	Purdue University Department of American Studies "Vertamae's Nervous Kitchens."

2017	Institute for Historical Studies, The University of Texas at Austin "The Invention of Soul Food: Politics of Cuisine in the Soul Aesthetic." The Invention of Food. Austin, Texas.
2014	Northeast Region Mellon Conference, Wesleyan University "Soul Food Kitchens: African-American Foodways and the Environment."
2012	Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture "Creole to Soul: The Journey of African-American Cooking Traditions."

SELECT CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2025	Food in The City Symposium, University of Amsterdam "Gardens In the House: Detroit House Music and African American Foodscapes"
2019	Oxford Food Symposium: Food and Power, Oxford University "The Power of Health in Soul Food: Vertamae Grosvenor and Edna Lewis Weigh In."
2019	Making a Mess: Intersectionality and Food Studies, The University of Minnesota. "Intersectionality and Food Studies: Where are We Now?"
2018	Association for The Study of Food and Society The State of Race and Food Studies Roundtable
2017	Black Geographies Symposium. The University of California, Berkeley "Her Kitchen is The World: Vertamae Grosvenor's Black Kitchen Politics."
2016	American Studies Association Annual Meeting. Denver, Colorado

"Soul Food, Domesticity, and Excess in The Beulah Show."

2015

**National Women's Studies Association Annual Conference.
Milwaukee, Wisconsin**

"A Culinary Killjoy in The Soul Food Imaginary."

2013

**National Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association.
Washington, DC**

"Mighty Matriarchs Kill it with a Skillet": Reading Popular
Representations of Black Women and Food."

2013

American Studies Association Annual Meeting. Washington, DC

"The Good, The Bad, The Unforgivable: Black Women's Food Work as
Creative Spaces of Dissent and Strategic Acquiescence."

2012

Association for The Study of Food and Society. New York, New York

"Nervous Kitchens: Racialized Sexualities in a Fast-Food Service Space."

2012

Food Networks: Gender and Foodways, University of Notre Dame

"The Soul of Soul Food: Toward a Dis-identified Soul Food Politic."

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

The Department of American Culture:

Undergraduate:

311: Food in American Culture (Race and Ethnicity requirement),

305: Food Literacy for All (with School for the Environment, Sustainable Food Systems
Initiative)

Graduate:

498: The Biopolitics of Food (cross listed with Afro-American and African Studies)

The Department of Afro-American and African Studies:

Undergraduate:

103: African American Foodways

498: Food and Belonging in The African Diaspora

358: Black Food in Popular Culture

Telluride Association Summer Seminar (Co-Faulty along with Cristina Perez)

The Biopolitics of Food: From Agriculture to Abolition (Summer 2024)

The University of California, Berkeley

The Program in American Studies

191 Senior Thesis Seminar, Fall and Spring 2017-2018

101: Race, Class and Nutrition in The Progressive Era, Spring
2018

The University of California, Davis

Lecturer, Department of American Studies

AMS140 The Lives of Men in America, Spring 2017.

Lecturer, Department Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies

WMS180 Women of Color Writing in The United States, Spring 2017.

The University of Maryland, College Park

Lecturer, Department of American Studies

Amst429T Perspectives in Popular Culture; Race in Popular Music, Fall 2016.

Amst450 Seminar in American Studies, Fall 2016.

Graduate Instructor, Department of American Studies

Amst205 Material Aspects of American Life, Fall 2011, Fall 2012, Winter 2012, Winter
2013, Fall 2013, Summer 2014, Winter 2015.

Amst289A: Shifting Sands: Constructing Cultural Margins and Mainstreams in The U.S.,
Spring 2013.

Process Tutor

Academic Support and Career Development Unit

University of Maryland Department of Intercollegiate Athletics. Fall 2011-Spring 2011.

Kenyon College

Visiting Instructor, Program in Women's and Gender Studies, American Studies, and African Diaspora Studies

WGS291 Gender and Domesticity in the United States, Fall 2105

Amst291Special Topics African American Material Culture, Spring 2016

Bowdoin College

Lead Faculty Instructor

Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Summer Research Program, June –July 2016.

Co-Instructor/Senior Program Assistant

Interrogating The Academy, Summer 2012.

Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Summer Research Program.

Writing Group Facilitator/ Summer Research Assistant

Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Summer Research Program, June –July 2009.

Teaching Professional Development

Association for The Study of Food and Society Graduate Network Mentorship Program

Mentor

The University of Michigan

Center for Research on Learning and Teaching Large Course Initiative (2020)

Teaching Climate Change Workshop and Panel (2025)

Inclusive History Project Teaching Grant for course redesign (2025)

Telluride Association

Transformative Justice Orientation (2024)

Faculty Advisory Board (2024)

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Manuscript Review

University of Illinois Press

Peer Reviewer

Food and Foodways. Fall 2014, Spring 2020, Fall 2024, Fall 2025

African Literatures. Fall 2017

Western Folklore. Summer 2019

Southern Cultures. Fall 2019

Mentor

Bowdoin Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program

Fall 2015-Spring 2016

Participant

University of Maryland, College Park Department of Women's Studies Summer
Technology Institute, Summer 2014.

American Studies Graduate Student Representative

ARHU Graduate Student Advisory Committee

The University of Maryland, College Park.

Jan 2011-May 2011.

MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Studies Association

National Women's Studies Association

Association for The Study of Food and Society