

# Thomas S. Burke

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## ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS

**Kellogg School of Management:** Evanston, IL, 2013. Certificate in Nonprofit Management; areas of study: branding, marketing & fundraising, strategic leadership, innovation & social entrepreneurship, and finance.

**University of Massachusetts:** Amherst, MA, 2007. M.F.A. in creative writing, concentration in fiction. Fellowship recipient.

**Peking University:** Beijing, China, August 2000. Bei Da Center for Teaching and Learning, Teaching English as a Foreign Language Certification.

**Union College:** Schenectady, NY, 2000. B.A. in English with Departmental Honors, French Minor.

## BOOK

*Eastbound into the Cosmos.* April 2019, MadHat Press, Asheville, NC.

- A contemporary realist novel based in Chicago and Hong Kong that explores loss, clashing cultures, and human needs—as well as the lengths some are willing to go to fulfill those needs.

## HIGHER EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

### **Northwestern University, Evanston, IL.**

#### *Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities*

**Assistant Director** (February 2014-present)

**Program Manager** (promoted from position: August 2012-April 2014)

**Program Assistant** (promoted from position: February 2012-August 2012)

- **Operations:** independently manage and oversee day-to-day operations of the Alice Kaplan Institute for the Humanities and the Kaplan Humanities Scholars Program; in collaboration with the directors, manage and oversee all Kaplan Institute and Kaplan Scholars operations and programming.
- **Communications:** compose large-scale, critical and confidential correspondence, and maintain constant communication with core constituency; draft press releases and design promotional materials as needed; serve as the Institute's primary interface and manage relationships with on- and off-campus partners.
- **Program and Curricular Development and Plan Implementation:** manage the Kaplan Institute's programming, including program planning, implementation, and the measurement of each program's success; develop and manage the execution of new and innovative Institute programs.
- **Budget:** approve financial transactions; in cooperation with directors, allocate and approve annual budget; assess monthly accounting statements and activate budget adjustments as needed; manage planning, long-term projections and transactions for five main Kaplan endowments.
- **Special Events:** shape and oversee the execution of the Institute's 50+ annual events.
- **Academic:** in cooperation with directors and faculty committees, select annual cohorts of Kaplan Associates and Kaplan Scholars; directly advise undergraduates in humanities courses and manage the humanities minor.

#### *Chapin Humanities Residential College*

**Faculty Chair** (2019-present)

- Faculty Chairs provide intellectual leadership for the college; nurture the fellows program of the college; and engage and mentor student members of the college; all while fostering and promoting an interest in the larger humanities conversation.

**Faculty Fellow** (2015-2019)

- Faculty fellows engage and mentor undergraduates in the residential college program by teaching intimate, credit-bearing courses, joining students for meals, and leading excursions into Chicagoland.
- Heyck Award Recipient (2018-2019) for outstanding service in the residential colleges (nominee in 2017-2018).

#### *Staff Advisory Board, Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences*

**Founding Member** (2013-2016, co-chair 2015-2016)

- The Staff Advisory Board provides a connection between the College and staff in the areas of

professional development, community building, and strategic planning & implementation.

***Faculty Honor Roll, 2016-2017.***

- Annual award recognizing outstanding faculty, as determined by student voting; sponsored by the Northwestern University's Associated Student Government

**Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY.**

***Chinua Achebe Center for African Writers and Artists,***

**Program Manager (March 2009-August 2011)**

- The Achebe Center identifies and promotes a new generation of writers and artists in Africa and the African Diaspora.
- Responsible for the successful execution of all the center's programming and activities, including publications, educational and promotional events on and off campus, grant writing, budget management, and liaising with other local and international arts organizations.

***Pilgrimages***

**Project Manager (January 2010-August 2011)**

- Pilgrimages sent fourteen writers to different cities in Africa and Brazil to write nonfiction travel writing books about urban landscape.
- Responsible for all aspects of the project, including management of the fundraising process; ensuring successful partnerships with local hosts and guides in each city; the creation and marketing of the project website; providing safe and meaningful trips for the writers; and overseeing finances and accounting.

**ARTS MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE**

***Words without Borders, New York, NY.***

**Events and Promotions Manager (2007-2009)**

- Words without Borders fosters international exchange through translation and publication of international literature.
- Responsibilities included generation and dissemination of promotional materials (from press releases to event posters), research and writing of grant proposals, event and special project design and execution, management of the organization's exhibits at trade shows, and general administrative work.

***Summer Literary Seminars Kenya, Nairobi and Lamu Island, Kenya.***

**Co-Director (2004-2009)**

- This is an annual creative writing program consisting of workshops and lectures that featured industry experts and award winning writers from around the world as faculty.
- Responsible for planning and executing all aspects of the program on a year-round basis. Work included design of the seminars, selection of faculty, recruitment of participants, budgeting and financing, grant proposal writing, website maintenance, supervision of staff, and management of all on-site logistics.

***Summer Literary Seminars Russia, St. Petersburg, Russia.***

**Assistant Director/Academic Coordinator (2003-2009)**

- Direct responsibilities included organizing and coordinating over forty workshops, lectures, and readings and managing a staff of fifteen Teaching/Program Assistants.

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE (2000-present)**

**English 208: Reading and Writing Creative Nonfiction:** Northwestern University, Evanston, IL.

- Part creative writing workshop and part literature discussion seminar, this course provides an introduction to some of the many possible voices, styles, and structures of the creative essay.

**Gen La 280-7: The Observant Writer:** Northwestern University, Evanston, IL.

- Creative writing workshop and literary seminar focused on close readings and observations of the world

via unconventional excursions outside the classroom.

**Gen La 280-7: Finding, Entering, and Writing a World:** Northwestern University, Evanston, IL.

- Writing workshop that used setting as a springboard to larger discussion of craft; students also participated in field research trips that served as writing prompts.

**Cape Town to Queens: New Writing from Africa and the African Diaspora:** Newberry Library, Chicago, IL.

- Lecture designed to introduce adult students to contemporary African prose. Students read and responded to work by Doreen Baingana, Olufemi Terry, Fatou Diome, and Billy Kahora.

**English GS226 Drama and the Short Story:** Wood Tobe-Coburn School, New York, NY.

- Lecture designed to introduce undergraduate students to fiction and drama. Students read and responded to work by Zadie Smith, Junot Diaz, Sherman Alexie, and Milcha Sanchez-Scott.

**English 297A You Are NOT a Hero: Writing the Humorous Memoir:** UMass Amherst, Amherst, MA.

- Writing workshop focused on the use of humor in nonfiction—explored how self-deprecation and the unexpected can diffuse or amplify the most unthinkable scenarios. Designed, proposed, and executed all aspects of the class. Students read and responded to work by Sandra Tsing Loh, Jonathan Ames, Sarah Vowell, and Chris Rock.

**English 354 Imaginative Writing:** UMass Amherst, Amherst, MA.

- Instructor of undergraduate students in fiction and poetry creative writing class. Curriculum of craft-based lectures and workshops. Students read and responded to work by Padgett Powell, Robert Hass, Czeslaw Milosz, and Grace Paley.

**English 362 Modern Novel: 1945 to Present:** UMass Amherst, Amherst, MA.

- Instructor of undergraduate students in class designed to explore the traditional conventions of novels from around the world, their forms, concerns, and contradictions. Students read and responded to work by Samuel Beckett, Saul Bellow, and Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

**English 297B Unfamiliar Spaces: Finding, Entering, and Writing a World—the Art of Place, Travel Writing, and Perspectives:** UMass Amherst, Amherst, MA.

- Creative writing workshop exploring the unknown and reevaluating the overlooked. Designed, proposed, and executed all aspects of the class. Assignments included fiction and creative nonfiction writing exercises. Students read and responded to work by Dai Sijie, Graham Greene, Binyavanga Wainaina, and Alexandra Fuller.

**English 140 Reading Fiction:** UMass Amherst, Amherst, MA.

- Designed lecture to introduce undergraduate students to the elements of fiction—theme, cultural context, tone, etc. Students read and responded to work by Jorge Luis Borges, Jamaica Kincaid, George Saunders, Ralph Ellison, and Nikolai Gogol.

**English 112 Honors College Writing:** UMass Amherst, Amherst, MA.

- Class designed to promote thoughtful and effective writing. Students worked individually and collectively through multiple drafts of various essay forms, including research-based essays, essay-response papers, and personal narratives. Class met in computer lab and utilized web tools, such as WebCT. Students read and responded to work by Gloria Anzaldua, Geeta Kothari, and Malcolm Gladwell.

**English 112 College Writing:** UMass Amherst, Amherst, MA.

- Class designed to promote thoughtful and effective writing. Students worked individually and collectively through multiple drafts of various essay forms, including research-based essays, essay-response papers, and personal narratives. Students read and responded to work by James Baldwin, Eli Clare, Mark Edmundson, and Barbara Kingsolver.

**English Teacher:** Pinggang Zhong Xue, Longgang, China. (August, 2000 to July, 2001)

- Employed by the Chinese government as a full time teacher of spoken English and grammar—living, working and earning income on same basis as local Chinese teachers. School is provincial boarding school and students are high school seniors designated for college. Received high rating in class presentation and teaching ability from school supervisors and students.

**Guest Lecturer:** Shenzhen Special Zone Press English Salon, Shenzhen, China.

- Selected by government-sponsored agency to present on creativity, fiction writing, and the creative process to group of 100+ Shenzhen scholars and residents.

### **ONE-ON-ONE TUTORING**

**Writing Tutor:** Evanston Township High School, Evanston, IL. (spring 2015)

- Volunteer writing tutor for high school student pursuing creative writing interests.

**Writing Tutor:** Bard College Prison Initiative, Eastern Prison, Napanoch, NY. (2009-2010)

- Volunteer writing tutor for prison inmates enrolled in the Bard College Prison Initiative. Provided one-on-one writing advice on academic and creative writing projects, from brainstorming and outlining to final editing and proofreading.

**Writing Tutor:** Writing Center, Union College, Schenectady, NY. (1997-2000)

- Peer writing tutor at the college. Provided one-on-one writing advice on academic and creative writing projects, from brainstorming and outlining to final editing and proofreading.

### **PUBLISHING AND EDITING EXPERIENCE**

**Editor:** *but here are small clear refractions*, Achebe Center at Bard College.

- Book of prose poetry that explores terrorism on the coast of East Africa. Published by the Chinua Achebe Center at Bard College, Annandale on Hudson, NY, 2009.

**Editor:** *Remembering Future Africa*, Achebe Center at Bard College.

- A script for a dramatic reading published in book form and featuring work by emerging African literary talents. Published by the Chinua Achebe Center at Bard College, Annandale on Hudson, NY, 2009.

**Co-Editor:** *The Original Text Wrestling Book*, UMASS Writing Program.

- Staff member involved in selection of essays, layout, writing introductions, and creating multiple tables of contents for the Writing Program's primary textbook. Published by Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, Dubuque, Iowa, 2005.

**Member:** *PEN Translation Committee*, New York, NY, 2008-2009.

- Volunteer position to help execute the committee's ongoing commitment to ensuring translators' rights and recognition.

**Development Consultant:** *St. Petersburg Review*, Concord, NH, 2007-present.

- Volunteer grant writer and development consultant for nonprofit literary magazine with a special emphasis on international literature.

**Editorial Intern:** *The Massachusetts Review*. Amherst, MA, 2005-2006.

- Selected to work with UMASS faculty on quarterly literary journal. Work involved editing, layout, promotion, and daily clerical tasks.

**Marketing Intern:** *The Onion*, Chicago, IL, 2002.

- Worked with regional and national marketing promotions, including idea generation, management of local events, and writing promotional material and correspondence.
- Work also included the preparation of marketing databases and general office responsibilities.

## **PUBLICATIONS AND AWARDS**

### **Authored:**

*Frogpondia*: *Six Things Found in Michael Cohen's Office that Didn't Make the Headlines*, April 2018.

*The Rumpus*: *The Sunday Rumpus Interview: Jeff Parker*, September 2014.

*Matrix*: *The Devil and the Detective*, spring 2014.

*Playboy.com*: *Love and Bourbon for Everyone*, May 2014.

*Playboy.com*: *XO on the Rocks: There's a New Whiskey in Town*, April 2014.

*Playboy.com*: *Why a Trusted Tailor Is Your Best Accessory*, April 2014.

*Playboy.com*: *7 Tips to Survive Jury Duty*, February 2014.

*Paper Tape*: *Super Happyman*, February 2014.

*Hobart Pulp*: *Holiday Festival Invitations*, September 2013.

*Marginalia*: *On Professor Achebe*, April 2013.

*Tarnished*: *Stiff Competition*, Nonfiction Anthology, Pinchback Press, May 2011.

*The Times* (Cape Town, South Africa): *The Pilgrims' Progress in Africa*, July 2010.

*Wolf in a Field*: *Everett and the Cosmos* (novel excerpt), March 2010.

*St. Petersburg Review*: *Yellow Brick on Market Street*, fall 2010.

*Words without Borders*: *The 2<sup>nd</sup> Pan-African Culture Festival*, August 2009.

*Tin House*: *The Long-Form Burrito Champion of the World*, spring 2009.

*Matrix*: *Closet*, spring 2009.

*Brooklyn Rail*: *Thumbs Up*, May 2008.

*Vibrant Grey*: *Stiff Competition*, spring 2007.

*The Literary Review*: *Earthquake I.D.* by John Domini, spring 2007.

*Muse & Stone*: *My Brother*, spring 2007.

*Crate Magazine*: *Urban Sink Hole*, spring 2004.

*Crate Magazine*: *I Am Pluto*, fall 2003.

*Shenzhen Daily*: Shenzhen, China, 2001. Frequently sold articles to the leading English language newspaper in Guangdong Province.

*The Idol*: *Shadow Diving*, spring 2000.

### **Awards:**

*Notable Submission*: *The Best American Nonrequired Reading 2010*, edited by Dave Eggers.

*Residency*: Ledig House, Omi International Arts Center, Ghent, NY, fall 2010.

*AWP Intro Journal Nomination*: UMass Amherst, 2004 and 2005. Sole winner of university-wide contest qualifying for the Associated Writing Program's national competition in creative nonfiction. UMASS judges: James Tate (2005) and Peter Gizzi (2004).

*MFA Fellowship*: UMass Amherst Program for Poets and Writers, Amherst, MA, 2003.

*Eugene I. Yudis Prize*: Union College, 2000. College-wide contest for the best submission in fiction.

### **Lectures and Readings:**

*Fiction Reading*: Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec, June 2011.

*Nonfiction Reading*: KGB Bar, New York, NY, March 2011.

*Fiction Reading*: KGB Bar, New York, NY, November 2010.

*Fiction Reading*: University of Rochester, Rochester, NY, November 2011.

*Lecture*: *Publishing in Africa*, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA, October 2010.

*Fiction Reading*: *The Flying Object*, Hadley, MA, October 2010.

*Fiction Reading*: International Fiction Evening, Pan-African Culture Festival, Algiers, Algeria, July 2009.

*Lecture*: *MFA Programs and Publishing in the US*, Nairobi, Kenya, December 2009.

*Roundtable Discussion*: *Literary Translation*, Blue Metropolis Festival, Montreal, Quebec, April 2008.

*Fiction Reading*: Sunday Salon, Brooklyn, NY, October 2008.

*Fiction Reading*: Livelit, Amherst Books, Amherst, MA, September 2008.

## **OTHER SKILLS**

**Computer Knowledge**: Microsoft Office Suite, Outlook, html/web design and Adobe products (Photoshop, InDesign, Dreamweaver, Acrobat), Blackboard, WordPress, and NU Portal, among others.

**Languages**: French-proficient; Spanish, Mandarin and Russian-some knowledge.

**Travel:** Traveled extensively in North America, Europe (including Russia and Lithuania), China, India, Nepal, Southeast Asia, Ecuador, Africa (including South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana and Algeria), and Central America (including Belize and Costa Rica).