

**Ericka Blount**  
**841 Reverdy Rd**  
**Baltimore, MD 21212**  
**443-889-8815**

**Professional Profile:**

Professor, Author, Journalist, Producer and Film researcher with extensive body of work in archival research including for the documentaries: *Time is Illmatic*, *Tupac (Untitled)* and PBS's *Finding Your Roots*. Sundance Fellow for Episodic Makers Lab and Women at Sundance Adobe Fellowship. Ruby Award winner and Saul Zaentz Innovation Fund Fellow. Deadline Club Award for Journalism, Columbia University. Comedy Central Fellowship.

**Relevant Experience:**

**2022: Contributor book.** Cracking “The Wire” During Black Lives Matter

**2022: Profiled** in Guest Editor Arthur Jafa’s Special Filmmaker edition of i-D. magazine.

**2021. Summer. Professor.** Co-taught an ethics course at Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism.

**2020-Present. Professor.** Howard University, Washington, D.C. Teach writing and reporting, digital editing, fact-checking, and courses that introduce students to writing in a professional environment, writing on deadline, the fundamentals of a news story, crime reporting and other beat reporting and feature writing techniques. Courses are rigorous and simulate an actual newsroom. Students are required to work as if they were in a professional environment.

**2018-2020.** Producer for The Real News Network. Produced former Black Panther Eddie Conway’s show entitled “Rattling the Bars,” which focused on the prison industrial complex. Duties: Writing scripts, creating content, booking guests, scheduling, editing, producing, writing print stories.

**2017-Present.** Researcher for “Untitled” Tupac Documentary directed by Oscar award winning director Steve McQueen (*12 Years a Slave*). Working with estate archivist in going through footage, archiving materials, creating interview questions, reading through material, contacting interviewees and setting up interviews.

**2016.** Ruby Grant Awardee for a writing partnership with cinematographer Arthur Jafa (*Eyes Wide Shut*, *Daughters of the Dust*, *Crooklyn*), for writing a science fiction screenplay that explores the themes of generational gaps, cycles of repetition, and what martyrdom does to the individual, especially as it relates to historical figures.

**2014. Researcher,** Skip Gates: “Finding Your Roots, Episode 206; We Come From People, Bassett/Jarrett/Nas.”

**2014. Director of Research, Documentary Film:** “Nas: Time is Illmatic” about the hip-hop artist Nas’s seminal album, “Illmatic.” The film opened Tribeca’s 2014 Film Festival and won critical acclaim after premiering in theaters around the world.

**2013-Present.** Regular contributor to People magazine, Theroot.com, Longreads, The Shadow League and MTV.com. Completed 100-page proposal for ghostwritten book. Journalism archives were acquired for first book and all other articles by Indiana University. First book was optioned by Koalaty Entertainment and working with the production team on writing the script.

**2013. Author,** “Love, Peace and Soul, The Behind the Scenes Story of America’s Favorite Dance Show, Soul Train,” Hal Leonard’s Backbeat Books, released Sept. 17, 2013.

**2011. Professor,** Philip Merrill College of Journalism, Univ. of MD, College Park, MD. Loyola University, Baltimore, MD. Taught media writing courses that introduced students to writing in a professional environment, writing on deadline, the fundamentals of a news story, crime reporting and other beat reporting and feature writing techniques. Courses were rigorous and simulated an actual newsroom. Students were required to work as if they were in a professional environment.

**2010. City Editor, Uptown magazine, Washington, DC. (2007-2010).** Conceptualized, wrote, and edited content for lifestyle related topics, including restaurant reviews, arts and entertainment profiles and other lifestyle issues.

**2009. Consultant/Writer/Editor: Radio One, Inc.** Wrote and edited content, implemented tools to increase traffic, aggregated content, advised on layout design and hired bloggers and writers for Newsone.com. Wrote feature stories, blogs, and breaking news stories for AOL’s Patch.com and AOL Black Voices.

**2005. Writer/Editor, The National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth, JBS International, Inc., Silver Spring, MD** Wrote and edited grant proposals, and print and electronic publications, in English and Spanish, on topics related to at-risk youth. Translated technical knowledge for general audiences. Products ranged from booklets to quarterly periodicals to full-length guidebooks. Also created podcasts for diverse audiences on topics related to at-risk youth

**2005. Professor, Morgan State University, Baltimore, MD.** Taught media writing courses that introduced students to writing in a professional environment and to the styles of writing for the mass media; these forms included news stories for print and broadcast and advertising and public relations copy. In addition, taught courses that prepared students for the workforce with on and off campus internships, guiding students through the process of obtaining and succeeding in a media internship.

**2003. Interim Communications Director, Recreation and Parks, Baltimore City, MD.** Wrote speeches for Director of Recreation and Parks, Baltimore, MD, City Council President, Baltimore, MD, and former Mayor Martin O’Malley, Baltimore, MD. Wrote press releases, guidebooks, and other media materials relating to youth for the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks. Conducted event planning and garnered news media and local politicians for events.

**2003-Present. Freelance writer, Baltimore, MD (2003-present).** Contributor to *Spin*, *Wax Poetics* magazine, *American Way*, *The Baltimore Sun*, *Baltimore* magazine, *The Crisis*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Heart and Soul*, *Black Enterprise*, *Baltimore City Paper*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington City Paper*, *The Washington Post Style* section, *JazzTimes*, *NY Daily News* and *The Source* among others. Freelance editor for *Simon and Schuster* and stringer for *ESPN*, *the Magazine*. (see: [www.erickablount.com](http://www.erickablount.com)). Notable interviews have included Floyd Mayweather, Lenny Kravitz, Quincy Jones, Olu Dara, Nas, Jackie McLean, Etan Thomas, David Simon, Ed Burns and Ernest Dickerson.

**2002. Staff writer, The City Paper, Baltimore, MD** Obtained an exclusive interview with President Fidel Castro while traveling with the National Black Farmers Association to Cuba for a story on them negotiating a deal to sell produce to Cuba. Responsible for covering weekly hard news stories in addition to covering feature stories and political campaign stories.

**2000. Staff writer, The Press of Atlantic City** Covered hard news, police stories, music, features, and enterprise stories on three neighborhood beats—Absecon, Port Republic, and Pleasantville.

**1997. News assistant, The Wall Street Journal** Wrote feature stories and proofread copy for national news desk. Notable interviews have included Andy Rooney, Frank O. Gehry, Richard Meier, former Mayor Ed Koch, and Sheila Bridges.

**1996. Researcher, Vibe magazine** Fact-checked articles, reported on and wrote news and feature articles.

**1994. Staff writer, The City Sun** Covered politics, police, music, and feature stories in and around New York City. Notable interviews included Tupac Shakur, Jay Z, and Kenny Gamble, among others.

#### **Education:**

MS in Journalism from Columbia University, 2004

BA in English and African American studies, University of Pennsylvania, 1994

Additional coursework from The University of Ghana, African studies, 1993

#### **Website:**

[www.erickablount.com](http://www.erickablount.com)

#### **Awards:**

2020: Sundance Institute Makers Lab/Comedy Central Comedy Fellowship.

2019: Sundance Fellow for Episodic Makers Lab and Women at Sundance Adobe Fellowship, 2019 Saul Zaentz Innovation Fund Fellow

2017: Ruby Award Winner

2015: Journalism archives acquired by Indiana University

2012: Cover story on the band Earth, Wind and Fire in Wax Poetics magazine was selected to appear in the annual series, the book, "Best Music Writing of 2012," with guest editor Questlove

2006: Second place for story, "This is My Neighborhood," in Community Service category, Baltimore magazine, Society of Professional Journalists

2004: Nominated for A.D. Emmart Award for reporting in the Humanities, Baltimore magazine, "This is My Neighborhood."

1999: Third place for breaking news story, New Jersey newspapers,

1999: Deadline Club Scholarship for Journalism, Columbia University, 1999

1994: Arthur Fauset Award for Community Service, University of Pennsylvania, 1994

**Selected Speaking Engagements:**

Society of Professional Journalists

National Association of Black Journalists

Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism

University of Pennsylvania

Barnard University

Morgan State University

Sidwell Friends School

State Department and schools around the island of Jamaica

**Community Service:**

Alpha Kappa Alpha Service Sorority

WHUR radio committee

### **Other Expertise:**

Taught 7<sup>th</sup> grade English in Montgomery County public schools, substitute teacher in Washington, D.C. and New York City public schools Volunteered as a tutor and counselor for youth. Edited and proofed 7<sup>th</sup> grade English textbooks for Simon and Schuster

### **Language Competency:**

Spanish: Proficient. Traveled extensively to Cuba, Mexico and Puerto Rico. Garnered exclusive interview with Fidel Castro.

### **Selected articles:**

#### **People magazine:**

<https://people.com/music/new-prince-album-welcome-2-america-inside-the-release/>

#### **Coverage of Freddie Gray: From Death, Uprisings, the Complete Trial and the Aftermath:**

Samples (complete coverage is available at <https://kinja.com/erickablountdanois>)

<http://www.theroot.com/peaceful-protests-and-funeral-for-freddie-gray-eclipsed-1790859606>

<http://www.theroot.com/peaceful-protests-and-funeral-for-freddie-gray-eclipsed-1790859606>

<http://www.theroot.com/beaten-up-arrested-jailed-1790860491>

<http://www.theroot.com/2nd-officer-s-trial-doesn-t-provide-many-answers-to-mys-1790855359>

<http://www.okayplayer.com/news/ericka-blount-freddie-gray-fallout-op-ed.html>

<http://www.theroot.com/the-vilification-of-marilyn-mosby-1790857112>

#### **On Beyoncé's Lemonade:**

<https://www.theshadowleague.com/story/the-power-brilliance-and-business-of-Beyonce>. The Shadow League. 2016<sup>SEP</sup><sub>SEP</sub>**On the Undoing of Stax Records:**

Wax Poetics magazine. 2013.

<http://www.waxpoetics.com/blog/features/articles/the-soul-of-stax/>

#### **The Anniversary of Maxwell's Urban Hang Suite: Okayplayer.com. 2013.**

<http://www.okayplayer.com/news/maxwells-urban-hang-suite-20th-anniversary.html>

#### **My Love Affair with Go-Go Music: MTV. 2017.**

<http://www.mtv.com/news/3019154/go-go-forever/>

**On Roquel Billy Davis and Mad Men TV Show: Ebony Magazine, 2013.**

<http://www.ebony.com/entertainment-culture/will-the-final-season-of-mad-men-get-any-blacker-999#axzz4nwibJOVp>

**Food Fight in Brooklyn, Wall Street Journal, 1998.**

Article on the highest grossing Pathmark grocery store in the nation located in the heart of the inner city Brooklyn. Article discusses how retailers are realizing the bottom line potential of inner city consumers. ([www.erickablount.com/food.htm](http://www.erickablount.com/food.htm)).

**Jazz Meets Hip Hop, JazzTimes magazine, 1998.**

Interviews with Quincy Jones and son QDIII, Horace Silver and son Greg Silver, Jackie McLean, Rene McLean Sr., and Rene McLean Jr., Aaron Bell and Kenyatta Bell, Olu Dara and Nas, and Marion Brown and Djinji Brown on jazz musicians critiques of hip hop with commentary from their sons who are involved in the hip hop industry. ([www.erickablount.com/jazz.htm](http://www.erickablount.com/jazz.htm)).

**Creating an Oasis in Inner City of Desert, New York Times, 1998.**

Article on the growth of black-owned bed and breakfast establishments around the country. ([www.erickablount.com/oasis.htm](http://www.erickablount.com/oasis.htm)).

**Gray Areas, HBO Returns to Baltimore's Corners with "The Wire," Baltimore City Paper, 2002.**

Exclusive interview with directors and actors from The Wire—pre-production. ([www.erickablount.com/gray.htm](http://www.erickablount.com/gray.htm)).

**Ahead of the Curve, Despite the State of Baltimore's Public High Schools, Some Students Make the Grade, Baltimore City Paper, 2003.**

Article on the most systematic reform in over 30 years of Baltimore's largely dysfunctional high schools. ([www.erickablount.com/curve.htm](http://www.erickablount.com/curve.htm)).

**Meet the Featherstones—Two Generations of Professional Musicians, Educators, and Now Hitmakers, Baltimore City Paper, 2003.**

Article on parents who are classical and jazz musicians and their children who are hit songwriters and musicians. ([www.erickablount.com/playstogether.com.htm](http://www.erickablount.com/playstogether.com.htm)).

**Little Melvin on HBO's The Wire, Baltimore magazine, 2004.**

Article on former drug kingpin "Little Melvin" Williams acting as a preacher on the HBO series, "The Wire." ([www.erickablount.com/melvin.htm](http://www.erickablount.com/melvin.htm)).

**Parapalegic Gets his Stroke Back, The Washington Post, 2004.**

Article on former Olympian swimmer coming back after being paralyzed and swimming the English Channel. ([www.erickablount.com/jason.htm](http://www.erickablount.com/jason.htm)).

**Gentrification in D.C., Crisis magazine, 2004.**

Article on a group of tenants who mobilized and bought their building in the face of gentrification. ([www.erickablount.com/gentrification.htm](http://www.erickablount.com/gentrification.htm)).

**This is My Neighborhood, Baltimore magazine, 2004.**

Article on an unlikely pair of friends who were behind the birth of the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of African American History and Culture. ([www.erickablount.com/museum.htm](http://www.erickablount.com/museum.htm)).

**In Remembrance of Gil Scott-Heron.**

Wax Poetics magazine. 2011. (<http://erickablount.com/gil.pdf>)

**Cosmic Heights, A Retrospective on Earth, Wind and Fire.**

Wax Poetics magazine. 2011. ([www.erickablount.com/EWF.pdf](http://www.erickablount.com/EWF.pdf)). Awarded to appear in the Best Music Journalism anthology edited by Questlove.

**Books:**

Contributed 10,000 word essay to book: "The Regional Guide to Hip-Hop" focused on regional style, fashion and lyrics of Queens born hip-hop artists.

"Love, Peace and Soooooouul! The Behind the Scenes Story of America's Favorite Dance Show" published in 2013 by Hal Leonard's Backbeat Books. Optioned by Koalaty Entertainment for a screenplay for a feature film.

**Works-in-progress:**

Essay in anthology: *Cracking The Wire: Looking Back at HBO's Critically-Acclaimed Drama in the Era of Black Lives Matter*, Fayetteville Mafia Press

By Design: The story of the McKissack family- architects and builders since before they were enslaved in America and now a multi-millionaire architecture firm.

The story of Plainfield and P-Funk - Rutgers University Press

Sundance Episodic Maker's Lab: Pilot script "Fifty-Two"

Television/Radio interviews:

2014: WYPR: <https://www.wypr.org/post/love-peace-and-soul-train>

2015: WNYC: <https://www.wnyc.org/story/race-and-mad-men/>

2017: ITV: Autopsy: Don Cornelius

2018: MSNBC: The Story of Cool

2020: TV One: The Beat Don't Stop – Go-Go documentary

2021: Interviewed for NPR on Soul Train's legacy:

<https://www.npr.org/2021/09/14/1037118049/soul-train-hanif-abdurraqib>

**Film/Web based shows:**

**Time is Illmatic Trailer:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNFCnS9c1E>

**Rattling the Bars pilot episode:** <https://therealnews.com/stories/rattling-the-bars-more-arrests-and-jail-time>