

A. Kamau Pope

he/him & they/them

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Education

Ph.D. Candidate, History, Duke University, Expected May 2027

Dissertation:

“Mapping the Movement: Land, Body, Spirit, Work and Queer Organizing in North Carolina”

Examines how the 1990 Senate Vote '90 campaign against Jesse Helms served as a political incubator for Southern queer organizing, leading to the founding of Southerners on New Ground (SONG) and the development of durable movement infrastructure in North Carolina.

Master of Arts in History, University of South Carolina, 2021

Master's Thesis: “Shaping a Queer South: The Evolution of Activism from 1960-2000”

Bachelor of Arts, Women's and Gender Studies and African American Studies, College of Charleston, 2016

Research Interests

Interdisciplinary historical work; gender, sexuality, and feminist studies, African American history; social movements; southern studies; Black feminist thought; masculinity; oral history; storytelling; cultural studies; ethnohistory

Publications

Published

- Pope, A. Kamau. “Shaping a Queer South: The Evolution of Activism from 1960-2000”, (Master's Thesis), 2021, <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/etd/6195>

Works in Progress

- Pope, Kamau. “CharlestonStrong Machine: Queer Performance and the Politics of Resilience in the U.S. South.” *Panorama: Journal of the Association of Historians of American Art*, forthcoming.
- Pope, A. Kamau. “We Outlasted Jesse Helms: Senate Vote 90 and a Vision for North Carolina”
- Pope, A. Kamau. “Sanctuary and Survival: Religion, Resistance, and Memory at Silver Bluff”

Digital Publications

- Byrd, Vance, Chinn, Ann, Edwards, Lee, Gibson, Stephanie, Hill, Jobie, Hogan, Wesley, Mason-Hogans, Danita, Hochschild, Ashlyn, Jorde, Peggy K., Parkinson, Anna, Pope, Kamau, Williams, Kimberly. 2024. John Hope Franklin Humanities Institute at Duke University. “[Reckoning and Justice: Better Practices for Memory Work](#)”
- Pope, A. Kamau. 2020. *Personal Website* “[Black Lives, Health, and Rage Matters](#)”
- Pope, A. Kamau. 2016. *Medium*. “[Welcome to the Friendliest City in the South](#)”
- Pope, A. Kamau. 2016. *Medium*. “[To Charlotte, From Charleston](#)”

Conference Participation and Speaking Engagements

Note: Presenters are underlined

- Pope, Kamau, and Patterson, Kayla. 2025. Early Career Scholars in Black Queer Public History. Presented at Queering Public History: At the Intersection of Memory and Space at North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC
- Smith, Barbara, Carter, Mandy, Naegle, Walter, & Pope, Kamau. 2023. Looking Back, Marching Forward: Honoring the 60th Anniversary of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom and the 30th Anniversary of the 1993 March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Equal Rights and Liberation. Virtual.
- Barrett, Vic, Pope, Kamau, Teter, Felicia, Sanchez, Love, and Arellano, Yvette. 2022. Movement Storytelling: How and Why Our Stories Matter, Presented at Students for Zero Waste Conference, Virtual.

- Corfman, S., Brook, Pivazyian, Arev, Aftab, Aqdas, & **Pope, A. Kamau**. 2021. Reading Trans Movements, Narratives, and Futurities. Presenting at the American Studies Association annual meeting, Baltimore, MD.
- **Pope, A. Kamau**. 2020. Word of Mouth in the South: LGBTQ+ Oral Histories. Presented at #CouchConnections with We Are Family, Virtual
- **Pope, A. Kamau**, and Kane, Chris. 2019. Student Activism: Beyond the Classroom. Presented at the Points of Intervention convening at Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI.
- **Pope, A. Kamau**. 2018. Black Joy: An Academic Symposium on Climate Change, Environmental Justice and Activism. Presented at New College of Florida's Black History Month Symposium, Sarasota, FL.
- Hollis, Princess, and **Pope, Kamau**. 2017. Queer Liberation in our Lifetime. Presented at Black Lives Matter North Carolina Summit for Southerners on New Ground, Durham, NC.

Relevant Experience

Research Experience

Research Assistant for Duke Institutional History Project, with *Dr. Thavolia Glymph*, Durham, NC

Aug. 2023-Dec. 2023

- Developed branding and marketing schemes for the Duke Institutional History Project
- Built webpages to promote, amplify, and share work regarding the project and the research conducted.

Curator, *Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History & Culture, Duke Rubenstein Library*, Durham, NC

Jul. 2022- Dec. 2023

- Organized the acquisition of collections, chose exhibition themes, and installed exhibit materials for the exhibition "Mandy Carter, Scientist of Activism."
- Documented, curated, and wrote about the life and career of Mandy Carter, a Black lesbian activist whose career was in community organizing within the South.
- Planned events for the campus and Durham community to examine the influence of activism and the legacies that influence Mandy Carter and young people's role in continuing her activist work.
- Moderated events for the public events related to the exhibit, including facilitating discussions with Mandy Carter, Walter Naegle, Barbara Smith, and Victoria Kirby York.

Research Assistant for Race, Racism, and Sports at Duke, with *Dr. Timothy Lovelace*, Durham, NC

Jan 2022-Jun 2022

- Collected archival material to support the documentation of racism and sports at Duke University to support ongoing research for the bicentennial anniversary of the institution's establishment.

Ethel Bolden Minority Fellow, *Richland County Library*, Columbia, SC

Sept. 2020-May 2021

- Conducted research and asset mapping of the rural Lower Richland community.
- Developed a database of local and community stakeholders and ways the Lower Richland community can support them.

Research Consultant, *Post-Landfill Action Network (PLAN)*, Columbia, SC

Aug. 2019- Aug. 2020

- Co-authored [the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Mandate](#) to inform how to foster better internal and external organizational structures within non-profit organizations.
- Recorded and created a six-week curriculum to further students' personal and professional development skills.

Teaching Experience

Graduate Teaching Assistant, *Dept. of History, Duke University*, Durham, NC

Jan 2023- Present

- Educated students about the historical legacy of colonization, slavery, and heterosexism to surface dialogue about power, privilege, and what a decolonial future can be.

curriculum vitae— Jan. 2026

- Facilitated discussions on topics such as racism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia with a classroom of fifteen students by engaging in various articles, interactive methods through accessible education, and required written reflections on weekly topics.
- Provided weekly evaluations of each classroom session to assess the success of each class meeting.
- Supported the instructor with grading, classroom content, and syllabus development.

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Dept. of History, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC

Aug. 2019-May 2021

- Independently instructed three weekly discussion sections for students in U.S. History since 1865.
- Graded writing assignments, quizzes, and exams for 78 students.
- Developed classroom content and lecture structure for courses.
- Led lectures on the gay liberation movement and the rise of conservatism in the late 20th century.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Experience

Race and the Professions Fellow, Kenan Institute of Ethics at Duke University, Durham, NC

Aug. 2021-May 2022

- Completed a year-long program to explore moral purpose by incorporating racial and social justice in the academic profession.
- Established a proposal for an online digital archive with interviews from activists and organizers that is secure and offers political education to Southern-based activists.

Coordinator, Racial Equity, Sundance Institute, Columbia, SC

May 2021- Aug 2021

- Supported Racial Equity Teams at Sundance Institute through meeting scheduling and synthesizing data that can drive racial equity initiatives.
- Supported dissemination of internal and external grant applications for BIPOC staff and BIPOC-led artist organizations.
- Developed curriculum for the summer internship and supervised racial equity projects.

Tour Coordinator, Post-Landfill Action Network (PLAN), Columbia, SC

Aug. 2017- Aug. 2019

- Developed and organized a national tour that visited college campuses nationwide to teach students about the consumption economy and environmental justice.
- Facilitated in-person speaking events and trainings at campuses about environmental justice, global waste crisis, and activism.
- Mentored students in the Students of Color Environmental Collective to support students' personal and professional development at UC Berkley.

Activism and Community Organizing Experience

Member Leader and Fellow, Southerners on New Ground (SONG), Charleston, SC

Apr. 2013 to July 2021

- Fostered dialogue with regional members on various social justice issues, both locally and across the southern region, through planning general membership meetings on political education, researching local court systems, and executing regional membership gatherings of over 100 people.
- Worked with elected officials through written and oral engagements on behalf of citizens to express satisfaction or dissent on local issues impacting the community, such as public school closure, Title IX inaction, and the community's relationship with local law enforcement.
- Coordinated local Free from Fear Campaign to challenge racial and gender injustice in Charleston, South Carolina.

Bonner Leader & Senior Intern, Bonner Leader Program, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC

Aug. 2012- May 2016

- Completed over 1,200 direct community service hours in the Charleston community over four years through AmeriCorps, primarily working with food security, accessible housing, and after-school youth programs.
- Supervised the Bonner Leadership Team to support the development of the direction of the Bonner Leader Program.
- Partnered with different donors and stakeholders to discuss aspects of the program and provide tangible results from their support.

Programming Coordinator, Carolina Youth Action Project (*née Girls Rock Charleston*), Charleston, SC

July 2013- May 2015

- Planned and implemented an after-school program, including the envisioning and creation of the first alternative to incarceration (ATI) program in the state of South Carolina.
- Educated youth on various topics such as social identity, music education, theatre, and social change theory for the semester.

Awards and Accolades

- 1. Grace O'Connor Advocacy Award, 2024, Duke University Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity**
 - For outstanding leadership and advocacy that leaves a lasting positive impact on LGBTQIA+ members of the Duke Community.
- 2. African American Studies Capstone Project Award, 2016: Department of African American Studies**
 - Acknowledges a graduating senior who best exemplifies the passionate commitment to inquiry that promotes significant academic achievement and the intellectual curiosity that leads to the development and pursuit of wide-ranging interests.
- 3. Consuela Francis Outstanding Student Award, 2016: Department of African American Studies**
 - Recognizes graduating seniors based on their GPA in the major, as well as extra-curricular activities that distinguish the award recipient.
- 4. Community Activism Award, 2016: Department of African American Studies**
 - Recognizes the outstanding service of an AAST major/minor to improve the campus or broader community concerning issues around racial equality and social justice.
- 5. Hall of Leaders Award, 2016: College of Charleston Gay-Straight Alliance**
 - Nominees must have given selfless time and leadership to the organization, made a significant contribution to the campus community, and encouraged and motivated others in the organization.
- 6. Community Impact Award, 2015: Excellence in Collegiate Education and Leadership**
 - Through this award, a leader of a student organization is recognized for their contribution to the campus community.
- 7. [Charleston's 50th Most Progressive, 2015, CHARLIE Magazine](#)**
 - Recognizes the most forward-thinking people making a positive impact on the future of Charleston.

Membership

- Board Member, **Post-Landfill Action Network (PLAN)**, 2021- 2025
- Member, **American Studies Association**, 2019-Present
- Leader, **Tigers Eye Collective: Queer Security, Cultural and Education Project**, 2016- 2023
- Alumni, **Bonner Leader Program at College of Charleston**, 2016-Present
- Member, **Southerners on New Ground (SONG)**, 2013-Present