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UNH Professor Publishes New Book, Receives State Award

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DURHAM, N.H. – John Ernest, associate professor of English, director of composition, and director of African American Studies at the University of New Hampshire, has been selected to receive the Higher Education Faculty Member Award from the New Hampshire College and University Council next month.

The award is presented to a faculty member who exemplifies outstanding excellence in classroom teaching, has strong rapport with students and colleagues, and is recognized for encouraging independent thinking and intellectual development.

Ernest, who has been at UNH since 1993, has also published a new book, “Liberation Historiography: African American Writers and the Challenge of History, 1794-1861,” in which he demonstrates that early 19th century African Americans wrote a history counter to the one recorded by white historians, an approach to history that would present both the necessity of and the means for the liberation of the oppressed. According to Ernest, antebellum African American historical representation was both a reading of source material on black lives and an unreading of white nationalist history through an act of moral imagination.

Ernest received the university’s Outstanding Assistant Professor Award in 1997, the UNH Diversity Support Coalition's Positive Change Award in 1998, and the 2003-2004 Jean Brierley Award for Excellence in Teaching. His other publications include “Resistance and Reformation in Nineteenth-Century African-American Literature,” three editions of nineteenth-century African American writing, and various articles on literature and teaching.