

CASEEN GAINES
caseen.gaines [at] gmail.com

- EDUCATION** **Rutgers University – Newark, M.A.**, American Studies, January 2011
Rutgers University – New Brunswick, B.A., American Studies, English, Journalism and Media Studies, May 2007
Scholarships: James Dickson Carr Scholarship, Flip Wilson Memorial Scholarship
Focuses: Twentieth-century race and pop cultural studies, cinema studies, black studies, drama
Distinctions: Triple-majored, earned departmental high honors in American Studies – Qualifying Paper: “Race in Dystopic American Cinema” (advised by Professor Nicole R. Fleetwood)
- EXPERIENCE** **English Teacher**, Hackensack High School, 2007-present
Implemented successful strategies to augment the writing level, reading level, and education of students, while also meeting departmental, school, and district policies, procedures, and deadlines; received professional development and gained fluency with educational technology such as Apple iPad, Turnitin.com, and SMART Board; actively collaborated with colleagues on lesson planning, assessments, and learning activities; actively participated in after-hours activities such as eighth grade orientation, summer school, and Saturday tutoring; successfully directed the school’s stage productions since 2010, including productions of *The Wiz*, *Grease*, and *Rent: School Edition*.
Artistic Director, Hackensack Theatre Company, 2005-present
Founded non-profit organization to bring economical, high-quality community theater to residents of Northern New Jersey; directed nearly a dozen stage productions, including productions of *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Dreamgirls*, *12 Angry Men*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Fences*, and *The Vagina Monologues*; raised over \$3000 for charities such as Broadway Cares/Equity Fights A.I.D.S., Shelter-Our-Sisters, and the American Red Cross Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund.
Resident Advisor, Rutgers University, 2004-2007
Implemented organizational and university standards to ensure the safety and protection of over fifty undergraduate residents a year; collaborated effectively to produce creative, educational, and engaging cultural and social programs to develop a sense of community; enforced organizational and university rules of conduct to maintain the most comfortable and equitable living environment for all students; responded quickly and effectively to medical emergencies, in compliance with organizational training.
Contributing Writer, *The Daily Targum*, Rutgers University, 2006
Upholding journalistic standards and meeting print deadlines; conducting and transcribing interviews; traveling to various locations in New Jersey to report on news relevant to the university community.
- PUBLICATIONS** *We Don’t Need Roads* (Plume, 2015 – anticipated release date)
A Christmas Story: Behind-the-Scenes of a Holiday Classic (ECW Press, 2013)
Inside Pee-wee’s Playhouse: The Untold, Unauthorized, and Unpredictable Story of a Pop Phenomenon (ECW Press, 2011)
The Obama Movement: Why Barack Obama Speaks to America’s Youth (contributing essayist; ed. Joseph Vogel, iUniverse, 2007)
- ADDITIONAL INFORMATION** Distinctions: Recipient of Independent Book Publisher’s Award (Silver Medal) for *Inside Pee-wee’ Playhouse: The Untold, Unauthorized, and Unpredictable Story of a Pop Phenomenon*; subject of featured articles in *Ain’t it Cool News* (Chicago), *The Record* (NJ), and *The Star-Ledger* (NJ); recipient of positive book reviews from *Publisher’s Weekly* and *Library Journal*; featured pop culture expert in *The Cast of A Christmas Story: Where Are They Now* (TV Guide Network, 2012); featured actor in *Lock-Load-Love* (Feenix Films, 2009), *Nicky Newark* (Feenix Films, 2010), and *Zombies of New Milford* (Seamus & Nunzio LLC, 2014).
Interests: American theater (musicals, dramas, and comedies), popular culture, cinema studies, popular music, children’s television, American literature, American politics, social media, nonfiction writing, literary analysis, and oral history.
Certification: NJ teacher certification in Secondary English; passing score on Speech Arts and Dramatics Praxis II.
- REFERENCES** Available upon request