

KEIDRICK J. ROY

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ACADEMIC POSITIONS

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

Assistant Professor of Government (Political Theory), 2025 –

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Junior Fellow, Harvard Society of Fellows, 2022 – 2025

Faculty Associate, Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics, 2022 – 2025

THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY

Instructor of English / Senior Instructor of English (faculty appointments), 2015 – 2017

Assistant Director, Core Introduction to Literature Course, Fall 2015 – Spring 2017

EDUCATION

Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

Ph.D., American Studies, 2017-2022

Dissertation: *Jefferson's Map, Douglass's Territory: The Black Reconstruction of Enlightenment in America, 1773-1865*

- *Winner of Harvard's DeLancey K. Jay Prize for best work across the University "upon any subject relating to the history or development of constitutional government and free institutions in the United States or Great Britain or any other part of the English-speaking world at any period of history."*
- *Winner of Harvard's Helen Choate Bell Prize for best dissertation on any subject in American literature.*

The University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ

M.A., English (concentration in rhetoric), 2010

Thesis: *"Psychoanalysis, Liminality, and Optical Aberration: A Report on the Postmodern Urban Condition"*

The United States Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, CO

B.S., English, 2009

Distinction: Outstanding Graduate in English

Minors: Philosophy, Japanese

BOOKS

American Dark Age: Racial Feudalism and the Rise of Black Liberalism (Princeton University Press, October 2024)

Jefferson's Map, Douglass's Territory: The Black Reconstruction of Enlightenment in America, 1773-1865 (under contract with Princeton University Press)

JOURNAL ARTICLES & BOOK CHAPTERS

“Reframing America’s Enlightenment Liberal Tradition, 1800-1860” *The Cambridge History of Black Women in the United States: Volume 2—Bondage and Resistance*. Nikki Taylor and Crystal Webster, eds. (Cambridge University Press, commissioned).

“Racial Feudalism” *Modern Intellectual History* (2024): 1-32.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479244324000015>

“The Other Souls of Black Folk: George Washington Woodbey and the Spirit of Socialism” *American Political Thought* 12, no. 3 (Summer 2023): 319-356.

“The Fugitive Covenant: Reconstructing the Social Contract this Side of *Paradise*” *English Literary History* 90, no. 1 (Spring 2023): 273-308.

“Well-Wrought Black Thought: Speculative Realism and the Specter of Race” *New Literary History* 53, no. 3 (Summer 2022): 441-462.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Chapter contributor to *America: The Atlas* (The Smithsonian/Thunder Bay Press, 2023)

- “Introduction”
- “Preserving the Nation: 1900-1930”
- “The Depression Era: 1930-1950”
- “Questions of Progress: 1950-present”

“Dark Testament,” *Booklist*, American Library Association, in print and online (Feb 1, 2022).
<https://www.booklistonline.com/Writers-Readers-Dark-Testament/pid=9759182>

AWARDS & HONORS

RESEARCH

2022 DeLancey K. Jay Prize, Harvard University

2022 Helen Choate Bell Prize, Harvard University

2016 Outstanding Research Award, Department of English & Fine Arts, United States Air Force Academy

TEACHING

2020 Special Commendation for Extraordinary Teaching in Extraordinary Times, Harvard University

2019 Certificate of Distinction for Excellence in Teaching, Harvard University

2017 Outstanding Academy Educator Award, United States Air Force Academy
(awarded annually to twenty-four of the institution’s nearly six hundred educators)

2016 Outstanding Instructor Award, Introduction to Literature Course, Department of English & Fine Arts, United States Air Force Academy

2015 Distinguished New Faculty Award, Department of English & Fine Arts, United States Air Force Academy

SERVICE

2021 Powderhouse Award for Distinguished Service to Greater Somerville, City of Somerville Chamber of Commerce

2020 "Salute to Service" Honoree, National Football League

2020 Community Service Award, City of Somerville Museum

FELLOWSHIPS

2020 Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship, The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

2020 José María Castañé Visiting Fellowship in 20th-Century History, Houghton Library, Harvard University

2018 Graduate Society Pre-Dissertation Summer Research Fellowship, Harvard University

2017 Graduate Prize Fellowship, Harvard University

2017 Pat Tillman Foundation Graduate Scholarship

GRANTS

2021 Collective Imagination for Spatial Justice Grant, The New England Foundation for the Arts

2020 Documentary Film Production Grant (\$15,000), City of Somerville Arts Council

2020 Socrates Scholarship, The Aspen Institute

2018 Research Grant, Center for American Political Studies, Harvard University

2017 Research Grant, United States Air Force Academy Division of Humanities and Social Sciences (for Toni Morrison Papers at Princeton University)

2017 Mellon Grant, "Beyond Black and Blue: Race and the Future of Civil-Military Relations," Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

2017 Marshall Fishwick Research Grant, Archives of African American Music and Culture, Indiana University Bloomington, Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association Endowment

2016 Research Grant, Ray and Pat Browne Library and Archives, Bowling Green State University

MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS, DOCUMENTARY PRODUCTIONS & APPEARANCES

Historical Commentator, *Frederick Douglass: In Five Speeches*, HBO, 2022 (film nominated for a Primetime Emmy). <https://www.hbo.com/movies/frederick-douglass-in-five-speeches>

Advisor & Contributor, “Dare to Know: Prints and Drawings in the Age of Enlightenment” Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, MA, 2022. <https://harvardartmuseums.org/exhibitions/5995/dare-to-know-prints-and-drawings-in-the-age-of-enlightenment>

Lead Curator, “Dark Testament: A Century of Black Writers on Justice” American Writers Museum, Chicago, IL, 2022. <https://chicagodefender.com/contributions-of-black-writers-recognized-in-new-exhibit/>

Sole Curator, “Creating the Racial State: Politics, Culture, and Purity of Blood in Hitler’s Germany” Harvard University Houghton Library, Cambridge, MA, 2022. <https://library.harvard.edu/exhibits/creating-racial-state>

Executive Producer, “‘We Are Here Too’: Race, Art, and Community after COVID-19” Documentary film, 2022 <https://www.thesomervilletimes.com/archives/117399>

- Film featured on the 10th-anniversary of “SR: Socially Relevant Film Festival,” New York City, NY, 2023.

Co-curator, “Frederick Douglass: Agitator” American Writers Museum, Chicago, IL, June 22, 2018 – June 9, 2019. *Chicago Review of Books* exhibition feature: <https://chireviewofbooks.com/2018/07/10/the-activist-legacy-of-frederick-douglass/>.

INVITED TALKS & LECTURES

“American Dark Age: Racial Feudalism and the Rise of Black Liberalism,” Program in Ethics and Public Affairs, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, December 2024

“Up from Feudalism: Frederick Douglass and the Black American Liberal Tradition,” Frederick Douglass Honor Society, Easton, MD, September 2024

“Last Exit Enlightenment? / Letzte Ausfahrt Aufklärung?,” The Humboldt Forum, Berlin, Germany, August 2024

“The Black American Enlightenment and its Critics,” Enlightenment in the World International Conference at the Einstein Forum, Potsdam, Germany, August 2024

“Liberalism and its Implications for Social Justice,” Liberalism for the 21st Century hosted by the Institute for the Study of Modern Authoritarianism, Washington, DC, July 2024.

“Racial Feudalism and the Rise of Black Liberalism” Political Theory Colloquium, Brown University, Providence, RI, December 2023

“Frederick Douglass’s Childhood Philosophy,” Frederick Douglass Week, Rochester, NY, July 2023

- “Racial Feudalism & The Black American Enlightenment,” Medieval and Early Modern Studies Lecture Series, Assumption University, Worcester, MA, March 2023
- “Centering African American Narratives in the 18th and 19th Centuries” Primary Source, Watertown, MA, March 2022
- “Race, Religion, and Black Political Thought in Antebellum New England” Tufts University Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, Medford, MA, February 2022
- “Abolitionist Visions of ‘Jubilee’: Past and Present” Central Square Congregational Church, Bridgewater, MA, January 2022
- “Thomas Jefferson, Maria Stewart, and the Specter of Racial Slavery in America,” Cary Lecture Series Centennial Address, Lexington, MA, October 2021
- “David Walker's Neighbors: The Black Reconstruction of Enlightenment in New England,” Symposium on Race & Slavery in New England (1700-1870), Newburyport, MA, October 2021
- “Frederick Douglass’s Childhood Philosophy,” Frederick Douglass Honor Society, Easton, MD, September 2021. Invited lecture and discussion with David Blight.
- “A Century of Black Writing on Justice from Francis Harper to Pauli Murray,” American Writers Museum, Chicago, IL, August 2021
- “What to US is the 4th of July?: Frederick Douglass and the Future of America,” Somerville, MA, July 2021
- “Beyond Demonstration: Alternative Forms of Protest and the Lessons of Martin Luther King Jr.” Somerville Human Rights Commission, Somerville, MA, January 2021
- “The History and Legacy of Frederick Douglass,” Frederick Douglass Honor Society, Easton, MD, September 2020. Invited discussion with John Stauffer.
- “Frederick Douglass: Advocate for Racial Justice,” Somerville Museum, Somerville, MA, July 2020. Project scholar & keynote speaker.
- “The 5th of July: Jefferson, Douglass, and the Definition of Freedom,” Somerville Museum, Somerville, MA, June 2019. Project scholar & keynote speaker.
- “The Postbellum Writings of Frederick Douglass,” American Writers Museum, Chicago, IL, June 2018.
- “Black Box, White Space: Tracing the Future of Race in the Academy,” Colorado College, Colorado Springs, CO, April 2017.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

HEAD TEACHING FELLOW, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

General Education 1133, The U.S. Civil War from Nat Turner to *Birth of a Nation*. Spring 2020

TEACHING FELLOW, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

General Education 1142, Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Question of Conscientious Citizenship.
Spring 2020

Ethnic Studies 139, Race, Coloniality and Catastrophe. Fall 2019

History 1636, Introduction to Harvard History. Fall 2019

INSTRUCTOR OF RECORD, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY, COLORADO SPRINGS, CO

English 495, Literature, History, and Philosophy Seminar.

What Hath We Wrought?: Race, Difference and Monstrosity from *Frankenstein* to *Native Son*.
Spring 2017

English 211, Introduction to Literature.

Erasure of the Human. Spring 2017

Reading Against Authority: Law, Interpretation and the State of Exception. Fall 2016

Fractured State/s: Invisibility, Alienation and the Constitution of Action. Spring 2016

Literature, Justice and Judgment. Fall 2015

English 111, Introduction to Composition and Research.

Race, Gender and Technology. Fall 2015

Claims, Evidence and Analysis. Spring 2015

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS

"New Directions in American Democracy," Society for Historians of the Early American Republic,
Providence, RI, July 2025

"Jefferson's Bible, Douglass's Faith" Society for U.S. Intellectual History, Boston, MA, November
2024

"Jefferson's Bible, Douglass's Faith: The Spiritual Discourse of Black Modernity" The Association
for Political Theory, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, November 2024

"Jefferson's Bible, Douglass's Faith: The Spiritual Discourse of Black Modernity" American
Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, September 2024

"Jefferson's Map, Douglass's Territory: The Black Reconstruction of Enlightenment in America"
Harvard University Safra Center for Ethics Book Manuscript Seminar, Cambridge, MA,
February 2024

"Why am I Black?: Frederick Douglass, Charles Mills, and the Case for Identity-Aware Liberalism,"
The Association for Political Theory, Schenectady, NY, October 2023

- “American Dark Age,” African American History Seminar Series, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA, September 2023
- “Why am I Black?: Frederick Douglass, Charles Mills, and the Case for Identity-Aware Liberalism,” Social Philosophy Workshop at Harvard University Safra Center for Ethics, Cambridge, MA, April 2023
- “Childhood and Catastrophe: The Genesis of Frederick Douglass's Critical Theory of Race,” African American Intellectual History Society, University of North Carolina, Charlotte, NC, March 2023
- “American Dark Age: Racial Feudalism and the Rise of Black Liberalism,” Dartmouth Ethics Institute Book Manuscript Seminar, Hanover, NH, January 2023
- “Frederick Douglass's Childhood Philosophy,” American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Montréal, Canada, September 2022
- “Responding to the Present: Race, Pedagogy, and Public History,” Massachusetts History Conference, College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA, June 2021
- “Dark Times: Toni Morrison’s *Paradise* and the Paradox of Necrosovereignty,” American Studies Association, Baltimore, MD, November 2020 (canceled due to COVID-19)
- “Remaking the City: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Possibilities of Civic Engagement,” New England Museum Association, Arlington, MA, July 2020
- “Sacred or Secular?: Racial Capitalism and the Religious Roots of the Black Radical Tradition” Subversive Theories of the Political Conference, Colorado College, Colorado Springs, CO, October 2018
- “Becoming Posthuman: Miscegenation, Gender, and Radical Intersubjectivity in *Invisible Man*” Ralph Ellison Society, American Literature Association, Boston, MA, May 2017
- “Inverted Colors: Teaching Citizenship and Race in *Paradise*” Toni Morrison Society Pedagogy Roundtable, American Literature Association, Boston, MA, May 2017
- “Harboring the Exception: Black Sovereignty and the Long Middle Passage of Toni Morrison’s *Paradise*” MELUS, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA, April 2017
- “Mixed Messages: Revisiting the ‘Glance’ in Du Bois’s *Souls*” Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association, San Diego, CA, April 2017
- “Reading Black/male: *Native Son* and the Master’s Signifier” Rhetoric Society of America, Atlanta, GA, May 2016
- “(Re)sounding Texts: Repetition, ‘Rememory,’ and Alternate Realities in Ralph Ellison and Richard Wright” Psychoanalysis and Freedom: An International Conference on Jacques Lacan, Colorado Springs, CO, April 2016

“Invisible (L)inks: Aural Tradition and Ontological Design in *Invisible Man*” Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association, Seattle, WA, March 2016

“Rage Against the Machine: (Post)masters, Post Offices, and Post-traumatic Growth in Morrison’s *Jazz*” Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association, Santa Fe, NM, October 2015

“Linear Transgressions: Derrida, Deleuze, and the De/Sign of the Sinusoid” Rhetoric Society of America, Minneapolis, MN, May 2010

“Peripheral Post-pedagogy: Critical Theory, Poststructuralism, and the Postmodern Classroom” New Directions in Critical Theory, The University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, April 2010

“(Experi)mental Paralogics” Research Network Forum, Conference on College Composition and Communication, Louisville, KY, March 2010

“Sustainability of the Other: The Globalization of Commodious Discourse” African Literature Association Conference, Tucson, AZ, March 2010

“The Serresian Parasite, Postmodernism, and Politics of Consumption” Southwest English Graduate Symposium, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ, February 2010

“Erasure Marks: (Re)Tracing the Presence of the Individual in Public Discourse” Interdisciplinary Intersections Graduate Student Conference, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ, January 2010

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Co-authored annotations for Norton Critical Edition of *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* with Joshua Bennett, 2021

Research assistant to Mayra Rivera for revising Harvard University’s Program on Ethnicity, Migration, and Rights, 2019

Exhibition Contributor, “Faith in the City,” Somerville Museum, 2019

Research assistant to Gregory Laski for *Untimely Democracy: The Politics of Racial Progress in American Literature after Slavery*, Oxford University Press, 2017

ADVISORY POSITIONS

Member, American Writers Museum Project Board of Advisors (2024)

Member, Somerville Museum Advisory Council (2023-)

Member, Board of Directors, Somerville Media Center (2021)

Member, Board of Trustees, Somerville Historical Society / Somerville Museum (2020 – 2021)

Member, Center for Peace, Justice, and Sustainability Board, Golden West College (2017 – 2018)

SERVICE TO PROFESSION

Reviewer: Oxford University Press; New York University Press; *American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal 18: A Journal of Eighteenth-Century Art and Culture*, *Community Literacy Journal*

Module Designer, Educating for American Democracy Professional Development Program (directed by Danielle Allen), 2025-2026

Chair, "Slavery's Legacies" The Association for Political Theory, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA, November 2024

Award Committee Member, Best Dissertation Award, American Political Thought section of the American Political Science Association, 2024

Organizer and Chair, "Miscegenation in the American Literary Imagination" Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association, San Diego, CA, April 2017

Organizer, "Beyond Black and Blue: Race and the Future of Civil-Military Relations" Mellon Symposium on Civilian-Military Academic Cooperation, Colorado Springs, CO, March 2017

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE

Reviewer and Respondent, "Confederate Infamy: The Proslavery Rebellion as Global Menace" for Dartmouth History Manuscript Review Workshop, July 2024.

Moderator, "In Conversation with Melvin Rogers," Nelson A. Rockefeller Center for Public Policy, Dartmouth College, January 2024.

Respondent, "Irony and the Politics of Pessimism in African American History and Theory" Philosophy, Social Thought, and Criticism in African American Studies, Harvard University, October 2020

Interviewed for faculty training seminars on the best practices for remote instruction, Harvard University Bok Center for Teaching Excellence, June 2020

Member, Academy's institution-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion committee, United States Air Force Academy, 2016 – 2017

Internal reviewer, Academy Diversity Inclusion Hiring Committee, United States Air Force Academy, 2016 – 2017

Co-organizer, "Civil Disobedience: A Conversation on Rights, Liberties, and Protest," United States Air Force Academy, October 2016

Faculty Chair, "The Future of Flight" Colorado Springs Undergraduate Research Forum, University of Colorado, 2016

Humanities representative, Academy Classroom Design and Technology Committee, United States

Air Force Academy, 2015 – 2016

Academic advisor, United States Air Force Academy, 2015 – 2016

Director of budget & resources (acquired institution's first \$461,000 digital humanities grant),
Department of English & Fine Arts, United States Air Force Academy, 2015 – 2016

Faculty Co-director, Way of Life Committee (institution's largest minority student organization),
United States Air Force Academy, 2015 – 2016

Member, Superintendent's speechwriting/publishing staff, United States Air Force Academy, 2015

Writing tutor, Undergraduate Writing Center, United States Air Force Academy, 2015

DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE

Speaker, "Two Visions for America: Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X" Guest Lecture for
Introduction to African American Studies, Harvard University, April 2022

Member, Search Committee, Assistant Professor of English, Department of English & Fine Arts,
United States Air Force Academy, Fall 2016

Speaker, "Contextualizing (Toni Morrison's) *Paradise*" Departmental Talk at the United States Air
Force Academy, November 2016

Respondent, "*Macbett*: Ionesco's Bête Noir" Department of English & Fine Arts, United States Air
Force Academy, September 2016

Organizer, "The Theory and Practice of Research" Faculty Speaker Series, Department of English &
Fine Arts, United States Air Force Academy, Fall 2016

Speaker, "Annotations & ErasureMarks: Using Wordpress and the Google Suite in the Classroom"
Departmental Talk at the United States Air Force Academy, May 2016

Executive Officer, Department of English & Fine Arts, United States Air Force Academy, Spring
2016 – Spring 2017

Assistant director of information technology, Department of English & Fine Arts, United States Air
Force Academy, 2015 – 2016

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Contributor, Digital Civics Learning Guide, Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, New
York, NY, January 2023

Moderator, "Frederick Douglass: One Life," Frederick Douglass Week, Rochester, NY, July 2023.

Speaker, "Black History and Testament," The University of Chicago Association of Black Alumni,
Chicago, IL, Jan 2023

Narrator, "Life in Talbot County Through the Eyes of Frederick Douglass," Frederick Douglass Honor Society, Easton, MD, September 2022

Speaker, "Remembering The Racial State," Harvard University Houghton Library, Cambridge, MA, April 2022.

Panelist, Auschwitz Jewish Center American Service Academies Program, New York, NY, Jun 2021

Selection Committee, Pat Tillman Foundation Scholarship, Chicago, IL, May 2021

Moderator, "To Protect and Serve: Applying Service, Scholarship, and Opportunity to Address Racism and Police Brutality" Pat Tillman Foundation, Chicago, IL, August 2020

MEDIA APPEARANCES

SELECTED NATIONAL INTERVIEWS

"Salute to Service" *National Football League*, Nov 19-23, 2020.

<https://www.nfl.com/videos/emmitt-smith-surprises-u-s-air-force-veteran-with-video-call>. National televised broadcast.

"Honors for Frederick Douglass in an Age of Racial Reckoning" *Public News Service*. Sep 25, 2020. Radio Interview.

"Frederick Douglass' Admonition on the Moral Rightness of Liberty for All" *CBS Sunday Morning*. Jul 5, 2020. Interviewed by Kelefa Sanneh of *The New Yorker*.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/frederick-douglass-admonition-on-the-moral-rightness-of-liberty-for-all/>. National televised interview.

"What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?" *Harvard Gazette*, National & World Affairs Section, Jun 30, 2020. <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2020/06/reading-to-explore-the-resonance-of-douglass-famous-speech>. Interview.

"On America's Most Political Holiday, Clashing Visions Are Nothing New" *Christian Science Monitor*, July 2, 2020. <https://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Politics/2020/0702/On-America-s-most-political-holiday-clashing-visions-are-nothing-new>. News Story.

SELECTED REGIONAL & LOCAL INTERVIEWS AND STORIES

"Writers on the Wall" *The Chicago Reader*, Sep 29, 2022. <https://chicagoreader.com/news-politics/writers-on-the-wall-2/>. Interview & News Story.

"The artistic journeys of Somerville women of color during pandemic" *The Somerville Times*, Jun 22, 2022. <https://www.thesomervilletimes.com/archives/117399>. News Story.

"Lexington speaker explores first African-American woman to deliver public political lecture" *Lexington Minuteman*. Oct 18, 2021. <https://www.wickedlocal.com/story/lexington-minuteman/2021/10/18/lexington-speaker-explore-political-thinkers-silenced-due-race/8473745002/>. Interview.

"Reading Frederick Douglass Together." *WBUR* (Boston's NPR Affiliate). Jul 1, 2021. Radio Interview.

“Somerville Museum Hosts Summer Discussion Series on Race and Antiracism” *Somerville Journal*, July 20, 2020. <https://somerville.wickedlocal.com/news/20200720/somerville-museum-hosts-summer-discussion-series-on-race-and-anti-racism>. Interview.

“Reading Frederick Douglass Together.” *The Somerville Times*, Jul 8, 2020. <https://www.thesomervilletimes.com/archives/101333>. News story.

PROFILES

“Aiming High.” *Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences*, Feb 16, 2021. <https://gsas.harvard.edu/news/stories/aiming-high>.

CERTIFICATES

Digital Humanities Summer School, 2019
The University of Oxford (in residence)

Professional Certificate in Marketing & New Media, with distinction, 2013
The University of California, Los Angeles Extension

Professional Certificate in Copyediting, 2012
The University of California, Berkeley Extension

NON-ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Nuclear operations officer, United States Air Force, 2010-2014
Technical writer, Air Force nuclear operations procedures & scenarios, 2012

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIPS

American Political Science Association
The Association for Political Theory
American Historical Association
African American Intellectual History Society
Society for U.S. Intellectual History
National Conference of Black Political Scientists

REFERENCES

Available Upon Request