

Adding Vitality to Creative Writing & the Arts: An Interview with Dr. Kevin Anglade



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This interview explores the life, literary journey, and cultural impact of Dr. Kevin Anglade, a poet, educator, and doctoral scholar of Africology and African American Studies. Dr. Dominique Carson engages Anglade in a thoughtful discussion about his evolution from writing detective fiction to embracing poetry, his academic path, and how Africology shapes his creative and professional endeavors. The conversation offers rich insight into the power of art, education, and Black cultural traditions in shaping identity and purpose.

Background

Dr. Kevin Anglade, a native of Southside Jamaica, Queens, New York, is a prolific writer, educator, and recent doctoral studies graduate at Temple University, where he studies hip-hop through the lens of African oral tradition. Holding a B.A. and M.A. in English Literature from CUNY, Anglade also served as an English educator through Teach for America and authored *A Flower That Rose*, a 2021 poetry collection. In this interview, Dr. Dominique Carson uncovers the layers of Anglade's personal, academic, and creative life, and his commitment to using language as a transformative tool.

Interview

Dr. Dominique Carson (DC): What made you decide to write poetry? What made you choose to express your art and your creativity through writing?

Dr. Kevin Anglade (KA): I remembered that in fall 2011, I was attending Queensborough Community College, which was my final semester. And I took a detective fiction course, a detective fiction writing class, which was excellent. The course delved into the intricacies of detective fiction, its history, and the art of crafting compelling narratives. I had the opportunity to learn about detective fiction, and I found it fascinating. So, I started writing my own detective fiction stories, aside from my classwork. I received a lot of support from my friends, who enjoyed the stories, and I appreciated their feedback. And that's all because of that kind of writing. And so, as I graduated and completed that semester in the fall of 2011, I then transferred to pursue my bachelor's degree in English at Brooklyn College. And I was in Brooklyn, where I was writing detective fiction, but it started to dissipate a little because I wanted to explore other avenues of creative writing. I recall stumbling across the BC slant, also known as the broken cow slant, and attending one of their events, where I saw them perform poetry, which was truly amazing.

So, because of that, I started writing my poems, and at first, I wasn't sure if they were that good, but I still kept writing. And then, you know, I thought about all of them, I thought about all of the challenges, the obstacles, and the pain that I've endured

throughout my life, you know, such as losing my father, you know, in fall 2010, and losing my older sister in the fall of 2007. And I was like, you know, what, I can make poetry my outlet for that. But it was the first time I started reading that hip hop as poetry was beginning to decode the lyricism from all the greats - you know, all the greats that we know, the most incredible artists. I'm like, 'Wow, I've always listened to this music, but I've always heard it on a surface level.'

DC: Sometimes, creatives are very sensitive about their writing, whether creative nonfiction, narrative, or any form of writing. But what made you decide to bring your writing to the center stage?

KA: I was still writing detective fiction at the time. I decided to muster up the courage and publish a couple of my detective fiction works, as I wanted to take that next step to see what kind of traction they would get. Additionally, to achieve some form of accomplishment in terms of publishing, I self-publish my works. And so, once I did that, I truly enjoyed the process, even though there wasn't a lot of fanfare or much work at the time; it was naturally appreciated that I just loved the practice. I love the work that went into it, and I love doing it. So, from there, I said, now that I've been doing poetry for about a good three or four years, I should encapsulate all of my poems within a poetry collection. And after stumbling across the Brooklyn College Slam team, I then started coming across, you know, black poets that were, like making huge names for themselves over already big names that had much notoriety around their homes, and there, like, oh, wow, like, not only can you do poetry, but many authors publish their work as well. I started writing more and compiling my poetry, and then, in 2016, I published my first poetry collection. My second one was just recently, in 2021, and I haven't looked back since.

DC: It was vital to hone your skills as a writer and poet. Why did you attend Brooklyn College out of all of the city universities?

KA: I had my reasons for going to Brooklyn. It was October 2011, and it was such a magical semester for me. It was my last semester at Queensborough, and things started happening for me. There was a college fair in the student union at Queensborough. So, let me focus on just Queens in Brooklyn. So, I went over to the tables and spoke to representatives from both colleges. And then what's happening with Brooklyn was that you know, they had, you know, a great English program, a great creative writing program. And I was like, 'Nah, Brooklyn is fabulous, but I'm still leaning more towards City College.' City College was my dream school for some reason. I have no clue. But what happened was, I said, You know what, let me go check out both schools and see what's up. So, I was accepted to both schools, but I also received an offer to attend the city as a

non-matriculated student. And then, I got accepted to Brooklyn College as a matriculated student. But Brooklyn bought me outright, and I went to the campus to register for classes.

DC: What were some of the intricate moments you loved about the college? Did you participate in extracurricular activities related to writing?

KA: I tried to take as many creative writing courses as possible, even though I only ended up taking one, which was okay, but I still enjoyed it. I wanted to be part of a formal class where students could exchange their thoughts and work together, which was enjoyable. So, I enjoyed that process. And then also. What did I do? I remember, Oh, yes, I took the initiative to say I couldn't graduate from this college without any other extracurricular activities under my belt, because essentially, at Queensborough, I didn't participate in any activities. I focus on my studies. So, you never actually graduate on time. Wow. Yeah, I decided to do as I said; I'm going to write in one of the newspapers. And I went over to the Kingsmen. And I asked him, 'I Expo, you know, I wondered if they were looking for any writers,' and they told me, 'No, but they'll try again about a semester.' So that's okay. Cool, I'll reconsider. So, I then went to ask the King the same question. And I was like, Yeah, we are. We're looking for writers, right? Now, we need a sportswriter. So, I thought, 'All right, no problem.' Cool. So, I decided to delve into writing sports for them. Then it was in the fall of 2012.

DC: So now, with all these excellent writing skills and expertise from Brooklyn and Queens College, why teach?

KA: I was pursuing an English major in New York City; there's not much you can do with it, especially if you're a person of color. Unfortunately, they're strong. So I took up a college assistant job at an office for the Assistant Secretary at Queensborough. While I was working there for three years, I decided to return to school and enroll in a master's program in English at Queens College. And so, a friend of mine, whom I had gone to elementary school with, reached out to me. He told me that he was part of Teach for America. And he said, you know, he was doing his Teach For America course in North Carolina. And he told me that when you apply, they place you depending on your interests and location, and you can be placed anywhere throughout the country.

DC: So, you taught them English or Creative Writing?

KA: It was English, ELA. However, I incorporated creative writing into every opportunity I could. Creativity was displayed; I encouraged my kids to be creative. Sometimes I would look at the scripts and plays they created in class. And I thought, 'Wow, this is good.' I would try to do that. And I would help shape and roll out the potential that I saw in myself. I remember every February, except for the Black History unit. I always ensured that not just I, but also my fellow friends from New York City, had invited another poet to come to Connecticut.

DC: Now, Ph.D. becomes a priority in your life. So why did you decide to pursue a Ph.D.?

KA: Getting a Ph.D., it's not something that just happened all of a sudden, you know, over the last board this current school year, I had actually been dreaming, and as well as just envisioning myself as a Ph.D., since 2016. And the reason why I say that is because I genuinely fell in love with the process. My job has always been a passion for learning. But I mean, I think a lot of especially as people of color, we go to college, because for one of the reasons why right, we go to college one because I parents would like to see us do better than paying that piece of paper to ensure our safety net of having not only just a career but having money to take care of ourselves.

When was I out on the job at Queensborough to deliver a package to the English department? Mind you, I'm working

on a speech. Wow, I'm speaking to you. I work in the Speech and Communications Theatre Arts Department. I remember many people, such as Dwight Watkins, a prominent author from Baltimore, MD. I was listening to Dr. Dyson speak to Jabril Muhammad, who happens to be the great-grandson of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad of the Nation, as well as sitting there, listening to them talk about race in America, and everything pertains to black people, you know, they have always been my thing. It's almost as if God told me right there, 'I want you to pursue your doctorate.' And I thought, 'Yes, I'm applying for a Ph.D. again.' This time, I applied to Temple University, but not in the English program. Someone told me many black people were of color when they used English. Many professors have studied the concept of retained interest. I didn't realize I made that mistake because I majored in English for my undergraduate degree. I did my master's in English. So a Ph.D. in English was the right way. And I said, 'You know what, let me switch up my topical focus. What do I love?' And so they brought me back to the National Black Writers Conference, and I was like, Well, I love hearing these brothers talk about race relations and politics about black people.

DC: To conclude our interview, what are your thoughts on your publishing company, your writing, your teaching, and now your major in Africology? How do you think Africology will reshape your vision in your definition of creative writing, and how do we use the arts to express our creativity to others?

KA: After being accepted to the program, and Africology, in a sense, molded and shaped my perspective so that once I graduate, I can utilize it in a way that resembles an announcer impacted and changed for the better of this world. And first, I would like to say that the whole discipline of Africology is a particular form of Black Studies, which was significant. Africology presents the study of Africans. And when I say 'Africans,' they mean everyone has an African diaspora. So not just Africans in Africa, but you know, Africans in America, Africans in Guadeloupe, Africans in Haiti, Jamaica, no matter what part of the world you are in, as long as you are black, you represent an African. Africology is the study of presenting the perspective of Africans through their lens and their phenomena in their events from their own eyes, not the views of any other form or ethnic race of people.

Conclusion

Dr. Kevin Anglade's journey is a testament to the power of interdisciplinary learning, creative exploration, and cultural grounding. His dedication to Africology, literature, and teaching embodies the potential of using writing not just as art but as activism. Through his work, he empowers others—students, readers, and communities—to find their voices and rewrite their narratives.

Biography:

Dr. Dominique Carson, LMP, is an award-winning massage practitioner. She launched her mobile massage business, Mani Benedette (Blessed Hands), in Italian in the spring of 2025, after five and a half years of performing mobile massages part-time. She was the lead massage practitioner at the former award-winning Green Leaf and Pebble Med Spa in Virginia Beach for three years. In addition to her impact on wellness, Dr. Carson is also an accomplished journalist, orator, and author. The Brooklyn, New York, native interviewed over 100 public figures in popular culture, including renowned musicians, actors, pastors, and community leaders. Her ability to tell powerful stories has made her a respected name in the media industry. Dr. Carson's work continues to inspire future generations of massage therapists, wellness advocates, writers, and public speakers. Her overall mission is to facilitate people's lives with her hands and words.