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May/June 2008

2008

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## Faculty Focus

Liberty University

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### Recommended Citation

Liberty University, "Faculty Focus" (2008). *May/June 2008*. 4.  
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# Faculty Focus

June 25, 2008

Linda Nell Cooper is the head of Liberty University's Theatre Arts Department, where she teaches playwriting, acting, directing and dramatic literature.

Originally from Suffolk, Va., Cooper attended Liberty to pursue a youth ministries degree. But she was led by her professors to focus on her music and playwriting. She worked at Liberty as assistant band director with the marching band while studying for her master's degree and became an English professor at Liberty in 1992. She began directing theater in 1997.

## EDUCATION

- Bachelor's degree, Liberty University, 1986, double major in Music and English with a theater minor
- Master of Arts in Humanities, Hollins University
- Completed ABD of her Ph.D., University of Virginia

## MEMBERSHIPS & PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- BMI, registered songwriter
- Dramatists Guild of America, professional playwright
- Gospel Music Association, gospel music writer, lyricist and songwriter
- Southeastern Theater Conference Association, professional casting director
- Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, professional director
- Fee-Hedrick Family Entertainment, Inc., commissioned writer, director, producer

## HONORS:

- Charles M. Getchell national award for playwriting
- Four Kennedy Center American College Theatre Merit Awards for excellence in directing
- Finalist, national Lehman Engel Musical Theater Competition, 2002, for lyrics in "Rebel Cry"



- National finalist, 2003 David Mark Cohen Playwriting Competition sponsored by the Kennedy Center, for “Rebel Cry”
- Manny Award for documentary “Share Your Love”

## PRODUCTIONS

- “The Miracle,” at The Miracle Theater in Pigeon Forge, Tenn., now in its third year. Cooper was playwright and executive producer for the show.
- “Monte Cristo: The Musical” (showcased at American College Theater Festival)
- “Rebel Cry” (national finalist for original musical)
- “April Morning” (2004 semifinalist, Appalachian Festival of New Plays)
- “Ribs for Dinner”
- “June & Judd of the Blue Ridge”
- “Fireflies”
- “Who’s Your Best Friend”
- “Shenandoah Christmas”
- “Christmas at the Five & Dime”
- “One Holy Lamb”
- “To Each His Own”

This past Christmas, Cooper had five of her productions running somewhere in the country at the same time.

“My dream would be to have a theater built up here on the side of the mountain, where it’s built into the mountain ... part of the landscape. And the outside of the facility would be glass, so that as you’re standing in the lobby, you would look out over Lynchburg, just a beautiful view.”

For more information about Cooper's body of work see her biography on [Liberty University's Theatre Arts website](#).