

NOMMO

Power of the word Volume 10, 2013

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From the Director

AASRC is engaging in some exciting new ventures. In May we collaborated with the Black Cultural Center on our first study abroad trip to Ghana. More details about the trip are provided on page five of the newsletter, but this trip is part of a curricular recommitment to study abroad for our program. Ms. Stokes and I have attended study abroad workshops and I am working on curricular changes which will regularize study abroad opportunities for our students and incorporate them into the course requirements. These developments build from faculty discussions of a three-prong approach to study abroad involving Africa, Latin America, and Europe, so stay tuned for further developments as we work with university initiatives to enhance student study abroad opportunities.

The study abroad initiative is just one of the projects under way. Since our last issue of Nommo, Dr. Cornelius Bynum has accepted the position of Associate Director of AASRC with the goal of revitalizing our grant activity and enhancing our programming. Dr. Bynum will be on leave this spring, but we expect to see some things come to fruition in the near future. He has already begun conversations with new affiliated faculty member, Dr. Chrystal

Johnson, Associate Professor of Education, regarding several grants and the three of us are currently at work on a NEH grant to support a summer institute for school teachers. These

conversations have sparked a lot of additional energy in the center and we hope to have good news to report in the near future.

We are very pleased to welcome our newest faculty member: Dr. Nadia Brown, who joins us from St. Louis University. We are currently searching for additional faculty, so we hope to continue to grow our faculty numbers and better represent the breadth of our interdisciplinary field. You will also see from our Welcomes and Farewells that our Teaching Assistants like to graduate, so we are often bringing in new TAs as old ones leave. While we are enjoying our new additions, we miss those who leave us for greener pastures. Speaking of which, you will see that Dr. Patrice Rankine has left us to be Dean of Hope College in Michigan. I think this suggests that AASRC is a wonderful launching pad for future endeavors!



Venetria K. Patton



Programs in Review

TNT— NICHOLAS KREBS

As a part of the *Talkin' and Testifyin'* series, Nicholas Krebs offered a presentation on the now infamous incident of rapper Kanye West's interruption of country music artist Taylor Swift's acceptance speech at the 2009 MTV Video Music Awards (VMA). According to Krebs, West's interruption of the ingénue, while admittedly rude, was especially controversial due to the racial implications associated with an African American male's perceived lack of deference towards a young white female. Undergirded by a critique of neoliberalism, Krebs' presentation provided much needed insight into how neoliberalism is but another tool of social control that, while offering an opportunity for personal comeuppance of individual minorities, is ultimately designed to reproduce the racial privilege afforded to white heterosexual males within the American capitalist system.

2012 Symposium — Houston Baker

Thursday, November 13, 2012
Stewart Center



Dr. Houston Baker

Houston A. Baker was born in Louisville Kentucky. He received his BA from Howard University, and his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of California at Los Angeles. He has taught at Yale, University of Virginia, University of Pennsylvania, and Duke. He is currently Distinguished University Professor and Professor of English at Vanderbilt University. His awards and honors include: Guggenheim and National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowships, resident fellowships at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences and the National Humanities Center, and honorary degrees from a number of US colleges and universities. He has served as President of the Modern Language Association of America, and is the author of articles, books, and essays devoted to African American Literary Criticism and Theory. His book *Betrayal: How Black Intellectuals Have Abandoned the Ideals of the Civil Rights Era* received an American Book Award for 2009.

LUNCH PLENARY SYMPOSIUM

The AASRC Symposium Plenary Luncheon was held on November 16th from noon until two o'clock pm in the West Faculty Lounge of the Purdue Memorial Union. Jolivette Anderson and Juanita Crider — graduate students in American Studies and employees of the Black Cultural Center — performed poetry and spoken word. Dean of Liberal Arts, Irwin Weiser, was in attendance and spoke about the quality of the program and our director Dr. Patton, a colleague from his time in the English Department. Dean Weiser also described his envy of the important conversations the symposium was engaging while he was locked away in meetings.

Introducing the performers, Dr. Patton reflected on how both Jolivette and Juanita demonstrate the caliber of students and strength of AASRC and affiliated programs at Purdue. Jolivette Anderson is a native of Shreveport, Louisiana. She received a B.A. in Speech/Theater from Louisiana Tech University and a M.A. in Humanities/Liberal Studies from Grambling State University. A graduate of Ball State University with a B.A. degree in History, Juanita Crider is currently completing her M.A. in American Studies. Graduating in May, she plans to enter the American Studies PhD program.

TNT— ARTHUR BANTON

On Tuesday, February 19th, 2013, Arthur Banton (Ph.D. Candidate in American Studies) presented his "work-in progress" titled "Running for Integration: The story of the first racially integrated college basketball team to win the National Championship." This work is a considerable portion of his dissertation research. At the middle of the 20th century, a CUNY school was the first team to win both the NIT and NCAA championships within the same year. In Arthur's presentation, he spoke about the significance of this milestone in collegiate and sports history while simultaneously providing personal narratives of the basketball players who were a part of this community. Banton effectively contextualized the athletic and socio-cultural backgrounds of the players to provide a glimpse into one of the most underrepresented (yet poignant) stories about the complexities of college basketball and urban life.

PROGRAM REVIEW: HARRIET A. JACOBS SERIES IN THE HUMANITIES AND THE ARTS — DR. PATRICE RANKINE

Dr. Patrice D. Rankine, Associate Professor of Classics and Comparative Literature gave a talk titled: "Black Venus(es): The Body and the Text" for the March 2013 Harriett Jacobs Lecture. The lecture focused on the black body, theatre and performance theory. Rankine claims those contemporary Black dramatists such as Suzan Lori Parks, August Wilson, and Eugene O'Neil place black actors and their bodies on stage in opposition to the classical body, which is white and male. In doing so, Rankine argues that this opposition is civil disobedience. The examination of black bodies speaking as classical texts and posing new meaning in classical literature ignites new and meaningful conversations about African American identity, gender, race and sexuality. The presentation was a prelude to Rankine's forthcoming book titled: *Aristotle and Black Drama: A Theatre of Civil Disobedience* published in the summer of 2013.

Upcoming Event

Cummings — Perrucci Lecture Series

**African American Studies and Research Center
Presents: Michelle Alexander
November 14, 2013, 7:30 pm
Purdue Memorial Unions South Ballroom**

Fall 2013

November

**Michelle Alexander
November 14, 2013
7:30 pm
Purdue Memorial Union
South Ballroom
Book signing
9:00 pm**



Spring 2014

March

**TNT
Dr. Chrystal Johnson
March 13, 2014
3:30 pm
STEW 318
Harriet Jacobs Lecture Series
TBA**



Michelle Alexander is a highly acclaimed civil rights lawyer, advocate, and legal scholar who currently holds a joint appointment at the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity and the Moritz College of Law at The Ohio State University. Prior to joining the Kirwan Institute, Professor Alexander was an Associate Professor of Law at Stanford Law School, where she directed the Civil Rights Clinics.

In 2005, she won a Soros Justice Fellowship, which supported the writing of her first book, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (The New Press, 2010). The book is considered one of the top African American books of 2010 and it won the NAACP Image Award for “outstanding literary work of non-fiction.” The book has been featured on national radio and television media outlets, including *NPR*, *The Bill Moyers Journal*, the *Tavis Smiley Show*, *C-Span Washington Journal*, among others.

Course Offerings Spring 2014

AAS 27100 3 credits	Introduction to African American Studies	MWF 2:30—3:20	Ms. Lisa Young
AAS 27100 3 credits	Introduction to African American Studies	TTH 9:00—10:15	Dr. Su’ad Khabeer
AAS27100 3 credits	Introduction to African American Studies	MWF 9:30—10:20	Ms. Keturah Nix
AAS 27700 3 credits	African American Popular Culture	MWF 10:30—11:20	Mr. Arthur Banton
AAS37100 3 credits	The Black Athlete	MWF 11:30—12:20	Ms. Casarae Gibson
AAS37000 3 credits	Black Women Rising	MWF 1:30—2:20	Dr. Nadia Brown
AAS37300/AMST20100 3 credits	The Wire	TTH 12:00—1:15	Ms. Heather Moore
AAS37100/PHIL24200 3 credits	Philosophy & Culture	TTH 3:00—4:15	Dr. Leonard Harris
AAS39200 3 credits	Caribbean History	TTH 1:30—2:45	Dr. Joseph Dorsey
AAS49100/ EDCI 49000 3 credits	Contemporary Black Education	MWF 9:30—10:20	Dr. Chrystal Johnson
AAS37300/ ENGL 41100 3 credits	Toni Morrison	TTH 9:00—10:15	Dr. Marlo David

Please contact the center for more details and the class schedule. The class schedule can also be found online at: <http://www.cla.purdue.edu/african-american/courses/spring.cfm>

WELCOME

Welcome—Dr. Nadia Brown

Dr. Nadia E. Brown joins Purdue as an Assistant Professor of Political Science and African American Studies. She comes to Purdue from St. Louis University where she specialized in American politics with a distinct focus on Black politics as well as Women and politics.

Welcome aboard Dr. Brown, we are extremely happy to have you here at Purdue University.

Welcome—Ms. Jessica Kaiser

Welcome Ms. Jessica Kaiser. Jessica is a Ph.D student in American Studies she joins African American Studies this year as a T.A. for Dr. Neil Bynum. Welcome aboard Jessica.

Welcome—Ms. Lisa Young

Welcome Ms. Lisa Young, Lisa comes to us from American Studies and she is working on her Ph.D. She will teach AAS271, Introduction to African American Studies. We are happy you have joined us.

Welcome—Ms. Keturah Nix

Welcome to Ms. Keturah Nix; she comes to us from American Studies and will T.A. for Dr. Nadia Brown in AAS27100 Introduction to African American Studies. Welcome aboard Keturah.

FAREWELL

Goodbye—Dr. Patrice Rankine

We bid a fond farewell to Dr. Patrice Rankine, who will start his new position at Hope College as Dean for the Arts and Humanities and Professor of Classics. Patrice, you will be missed.

Goodbye—Ms. Mariedith Ashford

Mariedith was a Ph.D. student in American Studies, she says goodbye to the university to return to her home state. We will miss you Mariedith, best of luck.

Goodbye—Mr. Nicholas Krebs

Nicholas graduated with his Master's degree in American Studies at Purdue University with a focus on the formation and transmission of cultural knowledge. Currently he is teaching in the Brian Lamb School of Communication. We will miss him, but wish him well in his new position. Good luck Nick

Goodbye—Dr. Christopher Warren

Christopher received his Ph.D at Purdue University. His areas of specialization include: Critical Education, Post-Racial Theory, Issues in Race, Class and Gender. Chris has published an article in the *Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies*, and is awaiting publication of another article in the *Journal of Black Studies*. We say goodbye to Chris as he moves on to his next assignment! We will miss you, Chris.

STUDY ABROAD IN GHANA WEST AFRICA



In May, AASRC collaborated with the Black Cultural Center to offer a Maymester Study Abroad trip to Ghana. This was a transformative educational experience which allowed twelve students to earn 3 to 6 credits while engaged in study on campus and in Ghana. The courses included “Black Women Writers,” which emphasized the writing of African American and African women in order to draw connections between the African American experience and the African experience as depicted in black women’s literature and “Pan-Africanism and Black Power Ideology,” which

studied the relationship between African Americans and Ghanaians who led the struggle for civil rights in the United States and Ghana. While in Ghana, students visited Accra and participated in lectures with University of Ghana professors and toured the W.E.B. Du Bois Center and the Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum and museum. Students visited the Volta Region and the Tafi Atome Monkey Sanctuary. While in Kumasi, we visited Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology and heard faculty lectures about traditional festivals and African dance. Our visit to Kumasi included a stop at the Aburi Botanical gardens, the Manhyia Palace, and the Ashanti craft villages of Ahwiaa and Bonwire. In Cape Coast, students saw UNESCO World Heritage Site, Cape Coast Castle. Students talked about the impact of the trip on their perspectives about both Africa and the United States. I believe our own TA, Lisa Young put it best: “Yet, even though Ghana wasn’t at all what I expected, it completely surpassed even my highest expectations. The lectures that we attended and the various activities we did allowed me to develop a greater appreciation for Ghanaian music, dance, clothes, and traditions. Ghana holds an important place in African American history and it was great that we were given the chance to explore these linkages and draw connections. We discovered so much about Ghana’s journey towards gaining its independence and got to connect with many Ghanaian college students. As a PhD student whose work deals with African American studies, I am grateful to have been able to experience history first-hand at Cape Coast Castle where we took a guided tour through the slave dungeons and walked through ‘The Door of No Return’. It was a very emotional, but necessary part of the trip.” The students on our first trip to Ghana referred to it as a once in a lifetime experience, but we hope to institutionalize the trip by making it available to future students on a regular basis.



Remmers Award Launches Students

Our annual Remmers Award Program was held on April 9, 2013, from 3:00-4:00 pm. The Remmers Award supports students pursuing social science research at both the masters and doctoral level. In the process of completing theses and dissertations, students are often faced with additional expenses related to printing surveys, transcribing interviews, and coding data; however, awards such as the Remmers Award provide additional funds to offset these expenses. Since the 1985-86 academic year, AASRC has coordinated the selection of Remmers Award recipients. We are pleased to have contributed to the success of many Purdue alumni.

This year's awardees are:

**MS. CANDRIENNE CLEM
MASTERS AWARD WINNER
SOCIOLOGY**



**MR. THEON HILL
PH.D. AWARD WINNER
BRIAN LAMB SCHOOL OF
COMMUNICATIONS**

Purdue University at NCBS 2012 Indianapolis, IN



Over the years, Purdue has gotten a reputation for its active participation in the annual conference of the National Council for Black Studies. Last year, we had the added distinction of serving as one of the sponsors as the conference was held down the road in Indianapolis. Sponsorship support came from the office of the Vice Provost and the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts. The dean also provided additional support to allow several of our students to participate. African American Studies had two faculty, one instructor, five TAs and two undergraduate students on the program. In addition to the current AASRC contingent, there were several other Purdue students and former Purdue students in attendance for a total of 24 participants with Purdue affiliations. Purdue, as always, was well represented. In closing, I would like to share the words of one of our undergraduates, Alexandra Hoff, who attended for the first time: "The NCBS conference was an extremely rewarding and absolutely wonderful experience for me. I am very pleased that I was able to attend, as well as present my own paper on a panel. It was very exciting for me to share my work with others. I also found that a lot of the sessions I attended echoed things that I have learned in my classes here at Purdue, while also building on that knowledge. On more than one occasion, I have been able to refer to these sessions and the knowledge I gained and apply them to my current coursework." This is exactly why our program invests in student research and attendance at the annual conference. The NCBS conference provides a rare opportunity for students to interact with well-known academics by including a few student sessions on the program. Year after year students participate in this conference and come back with a better appreciation for their classroom experience and often a desire to pursue graduate studies.

**NCBS Call for Papers
March 5-8, 2014, Miami, FL**

NCBS is accepting abstracts for individual papers, posters, panels, sessions, roundtable discussions, workshops, town hall meetings that explore the black experience locally, nationally, and /or globally from a variety perspectives.

www.ncbsonline.org

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Credits

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