

NOMMO

Power of the word Volume 7, 2010

Inside this issue

Program Reviews

- ♣ 2009 Symposium Review
- ♣ African Americans in the Marines 2010
- ♣ WEB Dubois 2010
- ♣ Harriet A. Jacobs 2010
- ♣ Talkin' & Testifyin' 2010
.....Pg. 2

Upcoming Events.....Pg. 3

- ♣ 26th Annual Symposium Announcement: Race, Reality & Mediated Truths.....Pg. 3
- ♣ Calendar of Events....Pg. 3
- ♣ Course Offerings.....Pg. 3

Student Focus:

- ♣ Goodbye to Graduate Students.....Pg. 4

Remmers Awards.....Pg. 6

2010 Annual NCBS ConferencePg. 5

Movie Review

- ♣ Precious.....Pg. 6

Faculty & Staff Listing
.....Pg. 7

Support AASRC
.....Pg. 8

From the Director

From the Director

Last year I began by noting that AASRC was in the midst of transitions. I could say the same thing this year. Last year, we lost affiliated faculty while this year we lost several seasoned graduate instructors to graduation and fellowships. These changes are of course bittersweet because it means welcoming new additions while sending others off to new adventures. Since our newsletters tend to be retrospective in nature, this issue is devoted to saying good bye to our students who have moved on to brighter circumstances; however, I would like to provide a sneak peak to our next issue by providing a brief welcome to the newest members of AASRC.

The faculty recently approved the affiliation of three faculty colleagues. Marlo David (English/WVS), Jennifer Freeman-Marshall (English/WVS), and Patrice Rankine (Classics). Each of these professors will extend the work of AASRC through their teaching and research. More will be said in the next newsletter, but do look for Dr. Freeman-Marshall's Black Women Writers (AAS359) course in the spring and Dr. Rankine's Classics and Black Literature (AAS491). In addition to new affiliated faculty, we have two new teaching assistants:

Elizabeth Canela and Tony Perry. Both are Masters students in the American Studies Program. Our new work study student is Kimberly Anton, an Elementary Education major. Please join us in welcoming the newest members of AASRC!

As always, we hope that those of you on or near campus will come out to one or more of our many upcoming events this academic year. In a few weeks, we will host the second annual Cummings-Perrucci Lecture On Class, Race, and Gender Inequality. This Lecture rotates each year between Sociology, AASRC, and Women's Studies. Harvard Professor, Annette Gordon-Reed, will be this year's speaker. We will hold our 26th annual symposium on African American Culture & Philosophy with the theme, "Race & Reality: Mediated Truths" on November 19th with Dr. Trudier Harris as our Scholar-in-Residence. In February, we will have our annual W.E.B. Du Bois Lecture featuring Dr. Jualynne Dodson of Michigan State University and in March, we will have our annual Harriet Jacobs Lecture with Dr. Jennifer D. Brody from Duke University. Please read the following pages for more information about these events and others.



Venetria K. Patton

The faculty recently approved the affiliation of three faculty colleagues. Marlo David (English/WVS), Jennifer Freeman-Marshall (English/WVS), and Patrice Rankine (Classics).

Programs in Review

2009 Symposium—New Directions in Feminism & Womanism



Dr. Rosalyn Terborg-Penn

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Rosalyn Terborg-Penn

University Professor Emerita at Morgan State University

Thursday, November 5, 2009

Stewart Center • Room 322 A&B 7:00 pm

Dr. Rosalyn Terborg-Penn delivered the Keynote Address, "Becoming African Diaspora Women: Migration and Trans National/Racial Identity Reformation." The lecture led to a rousing discussion of the impact of migration on racial identity.

Program Review: Dr. Tara Hunter

Tera W. Hunter is an associate professor of history at Carnegie Mellon University, where she teaches courses in US history, specifically focused on African Americans, gender, labor, and Southern history. Her current research is on black marriages among slaves, free blacks, and ex-slaves during the nineteenth century. She spoke about her book focusing on the challenges blacks faced as slaves when marriage had no legal standing, their efforts to construct meaningful relationships, and the obstacles they encountered even after slavery ended.

Program Review: African Americans in the Marines—Captain Eugene Jones

The interactive presentation, titled "African Americans in the Marine Corps," traced the history of Black involvement in the military during the colonial times through the present by underscoring specific conflicts, such as World War II, in which Black men and women, despite pervasive racial discrimination, assumed a critical role in defending the nation. Captain Jones also provided an overview of notable Blacks in the military who displayed remarkable bravery while serving the nation such as Cook Third Class Doris "Dorie" Miller who assisted his mortally wounded

Program Review: WEB DuBois Lecture Series —2010 Dr. Stanlie James

Dr. Stanlie James, Professor and Director of African American Studies at Arizona State University, was the guest speaker for this year's W.E.B. DuBois Pan-African Lecture. Dr. James, who also holds a joint appointment in ASU's Women's and Gender Studies Program, is a well-published author on the subject of Black Feminism. For this lecture, Dr. James spoke to audiences about the link between the formulation of contemporary international human rights laws and feminism. Her lecture, entitled "From Civil Rights to Human Rights," also addressed the need for women's rights issues to be understood as universal human rights issues. To this end, Dr. James cited several examples of how women have been actively involved in the legislative efforts to come up with a global human rights agenda and about black women's participation in the post World War II Civil Rights Movement.

Program Review: Harriet A. Jacobs Series in the Humanities and the Arts—2010 Dr. Carolyn Henderson

In discussing Barbara Chase-Riboud's novel *Hottentot Venus: A Novel* and Harriet Jacobs' famed slave narrative *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Dr. Carol Henderson examines the intersection of race, gender and sexuality in the lives of two iconic Black women. The thesis of Dr. Henderson's presentation centered on the concept of Sarah Baartman (*Hottentot Venus*) and Harriet Jacobs (*Linda Brent*) as employing what she calls "surrogate" identities in traversing the sexual and racial politics associated with their status as Black women.

Program Review: Talkin' & Testifyin': Works in Progress Series—2010 Dr. Joseph Dorsey

Dr. Dorsey's presentation, "Religious Race Cards: Comparative Considerations for the Study of African American Priests and Nuns in the United States in the Nineteenth Century," examined the complexities of pre-twentieth century African American Catholics and the nuances for which their status as both a racial and religious minority impeded their full entrance and integration into the U. S. Catholic institutional order. He began the topic by summarizing the roles of African-descended priests, friars, and nuns in western Europe and colonial Latin America from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. It ended with a discussion of the ongoing struggle for black Catholic priests and nuns between the Age of Abolition and the Gilded Age. Overall, his talk served as a framework for, and an introduction to, his forthcoming book, *A French Lady from Baltimore: The Cultural Politics of Intersectionality in the Life and Times of an African American Nun, 1810-1892*.

Calendar of Events**Fall 2010****October**

10/7 Thursday 7:00 pm
2nd Annual Cummings-Perrucci
Lecture On Class, Race, and
Gender Inequality
Dr. Annette Gordon-Reed
Harvard University
Beering Hall Rm 2280

10/19 Tuesday 3:30 pm
Talkin' & Testifyin'
Dr. Cornelius Bynum
Stewart Center Rm 322

AASRC FILM SERIES
"Louisiana on My Mind"
Tuesday 6:00-9:00 pm
Beering Hall Rm 1284

9/14 Eve's Bayou	10/19 Angel Heart
10/12 The Courage of Love	11/9 A Lesson Before Dying

November

11/19 Friday 8:30—4:30
Symposium Race, Reality &
Mediated Truths
Stewart Center Rm 322

Spring 2011**January**

1/27 Thursday 3:00 pm
Book Signing and Discussion
Dr. Cornelius Bynum
PMU 118

February

2/8 Tuesday 7:00—8:30
WEB Du Bois Lecture
Dr. Jualynne Dodson
Stewart Center Rm 322

March

3/31 Thursday 4:00 pm
Harriet Jacobs Lecture Series
Dr. Jennifer Brody
Stewart Center Rm 322

April

4/12 Tuesday 3:00 pm
Talkin' & Testifyin'
Dr. Leonard Harris
Stewart Center Rm 318

Upcoming**Symposium Announcement**

**African American Studies and Research Center
Announces its 26th annual Symposium on
African American Culture and Philosophy
"Race & Reality: Mediated Truths."**

**November 19, 2010
Stewart Center**

Symposium Scholar in Residence

Trudier Harris, J. Carlyle Sitterson Professor Emerita, taught courses in African American literature and folklore at undergraduate and graduate levels at UNC from 1979 until her retirement in July of 2009. On November 19, 2010 she will speak on the writings of Symposium presenters at the 26th Annual African American Studies Symposium on Culture and Philosophy.

Course Offerings Spring 2011

AAS 27100 3 credits	Introduction to African American Studies	MWF 9:30—10:20	Ms. Elizabeth Canela
AAS 27100 3 credits	Introduction to African American Studies	MWF 1:30—2:20	Dr. Niambi Carter
AAS 27100 3 credits	Introduction to African American Studies	TTH 9:00—10:15	Ms. Courtney Thompson
AAS 27700 3 credits	African American Popular Culture	MWF 11:30—12:20	Mr. Arthur Banton
AAS 370 3 credits	Black Women Rising	TTH 10:30—11:45	Dr. Titilayo Okoror
AAS 37100 3 credits	The Black Athlete	MWF 10:30—11:20	Mr. Jamal Ratchford
AAS 47300 3 credits	Blacks in Hollywood Film	TTH 2:30—3:20	Dr. Joseph Dorsey
AAS 47300 L	Blacks in Hollywood Film	W 6:00—8:00	Mr. Tony Perry
AAS49100/ CLCS 59300 3 credits	Classics and Black Literature	MWF 12:30—12:20	Dr. Patrice Rankin
AAS35900/ENGL 35900 3 credits	Black Women Writers	TTH 10:30—11:45	Dr. Jennifer Freeman- Marshall

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>

Congratulations Mindy

Mindy Tan will be leaving African American Studies in the Fall to accept a PRF with the Department of Philosophy. We wish Mindy good luck with the next phase of her education. We will miss Mindy very much her support of faculty and staff has been outstanding and her talents will be greatly missed. Congratulations Mindy!!

Goodbye Kevin

Kevin Brooks has accepted the Assistant Professor of Education position at Paine College in Augusta, Georgia. The faculty and staff at Purdue's African American Studies and Research Center along with the members of the college of Education will miss you. Congratulations on your accomplishments.

Goodbye Gilmer

Gilmer has accepted a tenure-track Assistant Professor position in the Rosary College of Arts and Sciences at Dominican University (IL) where he will teach in the English and Black World Studies departments. Gil we will miss you very much. We congratulate you on your job in Illinois. Best Wishes, Gil, from the Faculty and Staff in African American Studies at Purdue University.

Goodbye Margaret

Margaret Brennan was a work study student for African American studies for the last 3 years. While in our employment she also received the Outstanding Senior Award from Interdisciplinary Studies at Purdue University. Margo will be greatly missed, she was self motivated and a self starter, her talents greatly improved the look of the African American Studies display cases and she was wonderful at creating fliers for some of our programs. We all want to congratulate Margaret on her graduation from Purdue University. Best wishes for a successful career in what ever you choose to do.

Goodbye Adrienne

I am pleased to announce that I have submitted my signed contract for a tenure-track, Assistant Professor position at Texas A & M University. Since Texas A & M University often mentions that it is seen as the Purdue University of Texas, I'm sure you can appreciate what a great opportunity this offer is for the next phase of my career. I am most grateful for your encouragement, support, and advice while I navigated the job market options this year. Congratulations Adrienne!

Goodbye Heidi

For the 2010-2011 year, Heidi will be taking a position as a Riley Scholar for Feminist & Gender Studies at Colorado College in Colorado Springs. The position is a dissertation fellowship that guarantees a second year post-doctoral fellowship. Hopefully within those two years, the program will secure funding for a tenure-track position. Congratulations, Heidi! We will miss you here at Purdue.

NCBS 2010 Participants

Purdue & NCBS



Black Studies is a new discipline. Since its inception in 1968, 23 graduate programs have been established. Six of those programs exist at Big Ten schools. Purdue is not one of those schools. They join Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, and Penn State as Big Ten institutions that solely offer undergraduate degrees. In contrast to more established departments such as Harvard, Temple, and UMASS, Purdue features a relatively small number of faculty, staff and graduate students. While Harvard consists of 33 faculty, six staff, and 22 graduate students, Purdue has ten faculty, one staff, and six graduate students – a mismatch indeed. One could argue that by numbers alone, Purdue is typical of many Black Studies departments and programs across the country – small and without much impact on the national and international stage. However, this is not the case.

Since 2004, Purdue stamped its imprint on Black Studies and as of today, leads initiatives that are central to the future of the discipline. Much of the credit should be given to Dr. Venetria Patton, Director of the African American Studies and Research Center (AASRC). In 1998, Dr. Patton began attending the National Council for Black Studies (NCBS), the leading organization in the field, and she also coordinated the African American and African Studies program at the University of Nebraska from 1999-2002. In 2003, she took the reins at Purdue and never looked back. Her unflinching leadership grew the annual AASRC conference, added new courses for study, funded over 25 students to attend NCBS, and trained numerous students to excel in their home departments and African American Studies. In 2008, Dr. Patton became a board member for NCBS. In this capacity she worked on the nominating committee and currently chairs the membership and special elections committees. Also in 2008, NCBS recognized and awarded her with the Zora Neale Hurston Celebrated Elder Award for outstanding leadership and service in the promotion of African humanity.

Mentorship is central to Dr. Patton and she has trained numerous students for academic careers in Black Studies. Two in particular have built on her leadership and national impact in Black Studies. Kevin Brooks, a Ph.D. candidate in Education, and Jamal Ratchford, a Ph.D. candidate in History, are graduate instructors in AASRC that benefitted from her tutelage. In 2005, Brooks became one of the inaugural recipients of the NCBS Civic and Community Engagement Education and Grants Program for his tireless commitment to Tippecanoe County youth in his Rites of Passage Program. In 2008, he was an inaugural member in the Tsehloane C. Keto Student Leadership Development and Mentorship Program. Also known as the Keto Fellowship, five students from a national pool are trained to become future leaders in Black Studies and selected to serve on the board of trustees for two years. In 2009, Brooks and Ratchford were selected from a competitive national pool to participate in the inaugural NCBS Summer Institute. Hosted by Georgia State, the home of NCBS, fifteen Ph.D. students were trained by distinguished professors in seminars on Black Studies. Ratchford, an African American Studies major at Morehouse College, was top ranking senior and president of the majors, minors, and concentrates club for two years. In 2004, he won the Reanitsa K. Butler Memorial Scholarship Contest and Lillie Newton Hornsby Memorial Collegiate Essay Contest from the Southern Conference on African-American Studies Incorporated, and first prize in the undergraduate essay contest from NCBS. In 2008, he earned first prize in the NCBS graduate division and in 2009 he joined Brooks as a Keto Fellow. In a short span, Ratchford worked closely with Dr. Patton on the membership committee and recently was named student leader for the student committee. To date, Purdue features three of the 39 total NCBS board members – tied for first with Georgia State.

When asked why Purdue is so successful on the national stage Brooks replied, “The AASRC has been successful on the national stage in black studies because of its longstanding commitment to the mission and educational vision of academic excellence and social responsibility. The program is also dedicated to collaborating and building alliances with other academic units and educational centers, as well as fostering relationships with surrounding local communities through mentoring, tutoring, and various engagement initiatives.” In some ways Purdue has defied the odds. Perhaps someday they too will have a graduate program, over 20 faculty, and a larger staff in African American Studies.



Post Katrina Recovery Project

with the Lower 9th Ward NENA

(Neighborhood Empowerment
Network Association)

March 16-18, 2010



Remmers Award Launches Students

Two time Remmers Award recipient, Adrienne Carter-Sowell began working this semester as a tenure-track assistant professor at Texas A&M University. Although the Remmers Award is not responsible for Dr. Carter-Sowell's success, it certainly contributed. 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 had coordinated the selection of Remmers Award recipients. We are pleased to have contributed to the success of many Purdue alumni, but now we would like to take it up a notch. AASRC is working with the College of Liberal Arts Development Office to increase the endowment for the Remmers Award to \$100,000. This will allow us to provide even greater support to up and coming academics. Please join us in this endeavor by dedicating a portion of your contribution to AASRC for the Remmers Award.

Taking a Closer Look at *Precious*

This past spring, Arthur Banton, a graduate instructor in the African American Studies & Research Center screened the 2010 academy award-nominated film, *Precious* based on the novel *Push* by Sapphire, a victor of two academy awards, in the African American Cinema course. Directed by Lee Daniels, *Precious* was nominated for six academy awards, including best director and best picture – the first time an African American was nominated for such an award. The academy award winners were Mo'Nique for Best Supporting Actress and screenwriter Geoffrey Fletcher, for Best Adapted Screenplay.

An overwhelming majority of the students were viewing the film for the first time and expressed a variety of emotions to the very sensitive subject matter. Kristen Franklin, a freshman in the College of Engineering noted, "I was really excited because I had heard about the film but when my mom saw the trailer [she] was not open to the messages." Melissa Robertson, a Junior and Film/Video Studies major in the College of Liberal Arts who read the original novel *Push* by Sapphire which *Precious* is based upon and recently attended a presentation by Dr. Marlo David, an assistant professor with a joint appointment in English and Women's Studies, was also very interested and as a film/video major she had the opportunity to examine the film with the luxury of knowing the story "It's always interesting to see the film interpretation of a book." Robertson added, "but a lot of it stayed pretty true to form which I was very pleased about. Certain scenes were obviously taken out of time and put in a different spot to fit the narrative a little better but still [was a] very emotional film."

Set in Harlem, in 1987, *Precious* tells the story of Claireece Precious Jones, an illiterate teen, pregnant with her second child who is invited to enroll in an alternative school with the hope that her life can head in a new direction much to the chagrin of her mother, who feels such an endeavor could interrupt her subsistence on public assistance. The content of the film moved the class quite a bit and was a stark departure from other films screened in the course. For some students including Franklin, the fervent emotions induced very uncharacteristic behavior, "Me and another girl were talking throughout the film because we could not believe what was happening. I was raised pretty sheltered but it really opened [up] my world."

The film was not part of the original scheduled screenings, however, the instructor Mr. Banton wanted to provide his students with something more contemporary and impactful for his students to understand the trajectory of African American Cinema since its inception in the early 20th century. "The timing was ideal to introduce the class to a body of work with historical implications." Though the nature of the film was somewhat disturbing the students really appreciated the screening of a film, they heard so much in the media, received various accolades, implemented almost immediately in their academic instruction. As part of their assessment, students are required to write critiques in response to screenings but have the option of selecting the film. Numerous students chose *Precious* including Robertson and Franklin who expressed gratitude for the screening by noting, "it was awesome."

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