



THE DIASPORA

Department of African American Studies • University of California, Berkeley

FALL-WINTER 2012

Faculty Profiles

Meet the New Graduate Cohort

African Diaspora and the Dutch World



THE DIASPORA

The Diaspora is the newsletter of the Department of African American Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Contributions are welcomed from UC Berkeley's faculty, staff, and students. We also invite submissions from guest columnists and scholars who may not be affiliated with the university. Articles may be edited for length, clarity, and style.

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THE DIASPORA

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Words from the Chair

by Na'ilah Suad Nasir

I write this as my first semester as department chair draws to a close. Reflecting back on the semester, I am struck by the amazing work we have done as a department so far this year!

There is no doubt that these are both challenging and exciting times on the UC Berkeley campus. The financial challenges in the UC system continue, and departments are continuing to learn new ways to raise funds, to budget wisely, and to be creative in utilizing resources. Thankfully, there were no new cuts or layoffs this year. However, we are still figuring out how to adapt to the prior round of staffing reductions and consolidation across departments. I am continually grateful for and in awe of our staff as they take on additional duties and keep the department running smoothly for all of us.

One of our great successes this semester has been welcoming the second cohort of undergraduate scholars to the VéVé Clark Institute for Engaged Scholars of African American Studies. The Clark Institute, named after our former colleague, Professor VéVé Clark, supports undergraduate African American Studies majors in deepening their understanding of the discipline, providing leadership within the department, and taking full advantage of the resources of a research university. This fall, we brought in a dynamic set of speakers from the local Bay Area to talk about engaged scholarship in the African American community, including Professor Julia Sudbury from Mills College, LaShawn Route-Chatmon, Executive Director of the National Equity Project, Professor Antwi Akom from San Francisco State, and Hodari Davis from Life Is Living. We also visited

some transformative community organizations, including TeachBar, a community based tutoring organization, and I-SEED, the Institute for Sustainable Economic, Educational, and Environmental Development, an innovative research and community service nonprofit in Oakland. We had the blessing of sitting in on an inspiring planning meeting of the African American Studies Department at Berkeley High School. And perhaps most notably, the Clark scholars began working on their own independent research projects this fall, with topics ranging from how Black men and women define their romantic relationships to the potential danger of concussion injuries for African American college football players. Applications for next year's cohort will be due this coming April.

Another exciting development was the kick-off of our new department speaker series. This series was made possible by the generous support of H. Michael and Jeanne Williams, through their donation of funds for an endowed chair in African American Studies. We brought three dynamic speakers this fall, beginning the series with the Barbara T. Christian Memorial Lecture by Professor Marisa Fuentes, Assistant Professor, Department of Gender and Women's Studies, Rutgers University and graduate of our PhD program. Her talk was titled, "*Ruinous Affairs: Distressed Sexualities, Race and Cultural Scandal in Eighteenth-Century Bridgetown, Barbados.*" Our second speaker was Nick Mitchell, President's Postdoctoral Fellow, UC-Berkeley, who gave a talk on his research "*Curricular Objects: 'Women of Color,' Official Anti-Racisms, and the Consolidation of Women's Studies.*"



Na'ilah Suad Nasir

And finally just before election day, we welcomed Professor H. Samy Alim, Associate Professor in the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Interdisciplinary Policy Studies in Education (SHIPS) and Educational Linguistics at Stanford University, who gave a talk based on his recent book, "*Articulate While Black: Barack Obama, Language and Race in the U.S.*" The talks brought together faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students for intellectual conversation.

We are also in the process of building in various other ways. We are in the final stages of completing our new department website, utilizing the newest web technology, which will allow us to communicate more effectively both internally and externally, so look for that to come online this winter. Our search for a new faculty member is also ongoing and we have an exciting pool of candidates. We plan to bring in the top candidates for campus visits early in the spring semester.

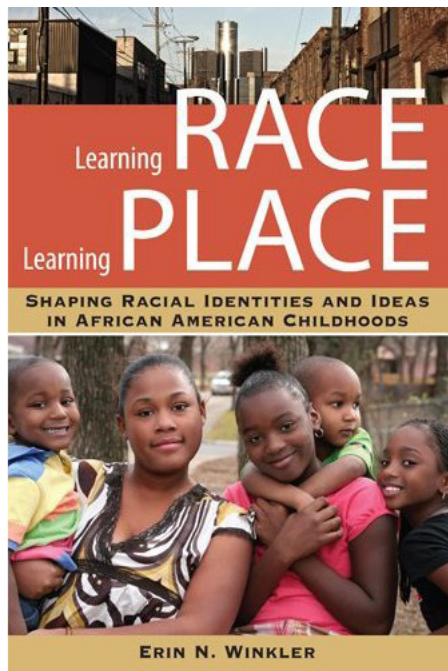
Perhaps the most noteworthy accomplishment this semester is the new department copy machine! We took a picture of the old machine as they wheeled it out, and thanked it for the many years of service it gave us. We look forward to being able to scan, make pdf's, and email documents with ease! Onwards and upwards!

New Alumni Publication

Learning Race, Learning Place: Shaping Identities and Ideas in African American Childhoods

Erin N. Winkler

Rutgers University Press, Series in Childhood Studies, 2012



How do children negotiate and make meaning of multiple and conflicting messages to develop their own ideas about race? *Learning Race, Learning Place* engages this question using in-depth interviews with an economically diverse group of African American children and their mothers. Through these rich narratives, Erin N. Winkler seeks to reorient the way we look at how children develop their ideas about race through the introduction of a new framework—comprehensive racial learning—that shows the importance of considering this process from children's points of view and listening to their interpretations of their experiences, which are often quite different from what the adults around them

expect or intend. Winkler examines the roles of multiple actors and influences, including gender, skin tone, colorblind rhetoric, peers, family, media, school, and, especially, place. She brings to the fore the complex and understudied power of place, positing that while children's racial identities and experiences are shaped by a national construction of race, they are also specific to a particular place that exerts both direct and indirect influence on their racial identities and ideas.

Erin Winkler graduated from UC-Berkeley's African Diaspora PhD program May 2005. She is now an Associate Professor in the Department of Africology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

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**LEARNING RACE,
LEARNING PLACE**
Shaping Racial Identities and
Ideas in African American Childhoods
Erin N. Winkler

"In *Learning Race, Learning Place*, Erin N. Winkler has pushed the literature on racial socialization in new directions by including children's perspectives and looking beyond the parent as sole socializer, and she has done so in an effective and accessible manner."

—Roberta L. Coles, author of *The Best Kept Secret*

"*Learning Race, Learning Place* goes beyond traditional studies of racial socialization by bringing in the geographic contexts where young people live and travel. Winkler crafts an engaging narrative about how kids both learn and create Blackness."

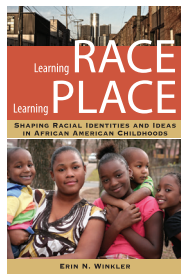
—Mary Pattilo, author of *Black Picket Fences: Privilege and Peril among the Black Middle Class*

How do children negotiate and make meaning of multiple and conflicting messages to develop their own ideas about race? *Learning Race, Learning Place* engages this question using in-depth interviews with an economically diverse group of African American children and their mothers.

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ERIN N. WINKLER is an associate professor of Africology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

A volume in the Rutgers Series in Childhood Studies, edited by Myra Bluebond-Langner



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African Diaspora and the Dutch World: Stephen Small and Kwame Nimako Explore the Legacy of Slavery in the Netherlands

by Kathryn Benjamin

This October, Professor Stephen Small delivered an inaugural lecture for his appointment to the chair of Extraordinary Professor of History of Dutch Slavery and its Legacy at the University of Amsterdam. His address, focusing on the complex and complicated legacy of slavery in the Netherlands, was very well received by the 250 attendees and within the significant public and media attention.



Responding in large part to a national tradition in the Netherlands that trivializes the historical reality of Dutch involvement in slave trading, slavery, and racism, Professor Small's research on Dutch public history and collective memory uncovers a legacy of slavery that lasted more than 200 years, involved hundreds of voyages, hundreds of thousands of Africans kidnapped and transported across the Atlantic, tens of thousands of Africans and their descendants enslaved throughout the Americas, and millions whose lives were disrupted or destroyed.¹ His work here at UC-Berkeley and at the University of Amsterdam resituates this Dutch national history and its

residual legacies of racism, evasion, and ambiguity within the larger context of the African Diaspora as inextricably linked to legacies of slavery, representations of race and slavery, and African descendants across the continents of Africa, Asia, the Americas, and Europe.

In a moment during his inaugural lecture Small asked, "What analytical insights can be derived from international comparisons?" Linking his work on slavery in Louisiana to his work on slavery in the Dutch colonies he continued, "Slavery in Louisiana and Suriname both involved state sponsored systems of exploitation based on race; both resulted in the kidnapping, and enslavement of tens of thousands of people; both resulted in violence, brutality and oppression. Both gave rise to ideologies of racial superiority and inferiority; and both involved a sustained refusal by the enslaved to accept inferiority, a refusal that involved resistance, rebellion and revolt... But the main benefit of comparison has to do with evidence, data, and research methods into slavery and its legacies."² Small emphasized that African Diaspora and comparative frameworks are integral to studying the legacy of slavery in the Netherlands.

The inaugural lecture also highlighted some of Professor Small's ongoing contributions to the field. His current research projects address the following questions, especially as they pertain to the Netherlands, England, and the United States: (1) how is the legacy of slavery manifested in institutions and society? (2) how is the legacy of slavery manifested in Black communities and organizations? and (3) how is the legacy of slavery

manifested in the international nexus between specific sites of the African Diaspora?³ Small's work on *21st Century Antebellum Slave Cabins and Public History in Louisiana* will be published in 2013, and he is currently co-writing a book with Professor Kwame Nimako on representation, public history, collective memory of slavery in the Netherlands and in England throughout the 1980s and 1990s that expands upon their recent publication, "Collective Memory of Slavery in Great Britain and the Netherlands" in Marten Schalkwijk and Stephen Small (eds.), *New Perspectives on Slavery and Colonialism in the Caribbean* (2011).



Professor Nimako is a Visiting Professor here in the Department of African American Studies. He visits us from the University of Amsterdam where he earned a PhD in Economics and has taught international relations at the Graduate School of Social Sciences, race and ethnic relations at the Centre for Race and Ethnic Studies, and economic development at the Department of Agricultural and Development Economics. Here at Berkeley, Professor Nimako is

currently working closely with Professor Small on the legacy of slavery in the Netherlands while teaching his specialty, economic development.

Interview with Kwame Nimako

I had the pleasure of sitting down to talk with Professor Nimako about the legacy of slavery in the Netherlands and about his work on the Dutch slave trade and the African Diaspora. What follows are some of the salient points of our conversation.

Kathryn Benjamin: Tell me a little bit about yourself. How would you describe your background, both personally and academically?

Kwame Nimako: I was born in Ghana and I had my formative years in Ghana. But I went to school in the Netherlands, so I've had all of my university education in the Netherlands. I have an MA in Sociology and a PhD in Economics. I've taught race and ethnic relations and I've taught international political economy for the past twenty years or so.

KB: How do you use your background in economics to study legacies of slavery and African Diaspora?

KN: The study of economics is about a kind of social and historical totality. What I argue in my book, *The Dutch Atlantic*, is that the foundation of the world economy as we understand it is slavery and that has been disconnected and neglected in the discourse on international political economy. That is one. The second argument I make is that state formation in Europe was founded on slavery. Slavery has been crucial in the formation of states in Europe. So these are the two issues that I press. Economic roles, divisions of labor, and also the production of knowledge itself reveal parallel histories and intertwined belonging. Different histories produce different

knowledges – some people were in chains, working the land while others were holding whips and guns. Though they belong to the same world economy they have different historical experiences and divergent historical roles, including how labor was divided. These parallel histories need to be taken into account and have to be integrated into the narrative of the legacy of slavery, which has not happened. I argue that when the formerly enslaved became citizens after the abolition, these hierarchies and disparities remained. Citizenship became intertwined with belonging. Economic knowledge and the fact of economic data enabled many of these insights.

KB: What projects are you working on here at Berkeley?

KN: I'm teaching a course on the "Political and Economic Development in the Third World." That is what brought me here. I'm also working on a book with Professor Small about collective memory. We're expanding and developing the five prominent social movements or trends that we argue reflect the social significance of public history and collective memory of slavery and its legacies in the Netherlands: (1) the remembrance and commemoration movement; (2) the reparations movement; (3) the anniversaries and apologies trend; (4) the museum heritage and artifacts trend; and (5) the new anti-slavery movement. Our book project is comparative. We focus on these movements within the Netherlands and Britain. We also compare our analyses to other countries as well, particularly Brazil and the United States.

KB: That leads me to my next question. How do you see your work as being connected to African Diaspora and diasporic linkages?

KN: I welcome diaspora. In our book project, about 60% is about

the Netherlands and the rest is comparative. Our work is informed by developments in the African Diaspora.

KB: Why the Netherlands? What are the main issues of studying African diaspora in the Dutch Atlantic?

KN: The Netherlands is a small country with a big history. It's a small country, but it has a big history in the sense that it has survived the turmoil of war and has participated in major global events – that is slave trade, and colonialism. The Netherlands shaped some of these events and shaped much of global history itself, so the Netherlands is very important. It's small but it also has a big national tradition that can in many ways be linked to other spaces across the African Diaspora. That national tradition is to deny Dutch involvement in slavery or colonialism with arguments that the Netherlands can only account for 5% of the slaves brought to the Americas. So legacies of slavery in the Netherlands are not something that people can talk about as they are considered unimportant within the national narrative. The point is that people in the Netherlands do not need to talk about slavery or racism because it is a foreign issue – the Dutch have everything under control since they didn't have many slave colonies to begin with. Raising the issue of the legacy of slavery in the Dutch world is thought of as being the equivalent to imposing American or British problems on the Netherlands. These sentiments shape the national narrative and also shape the dominant perspectives on slave trade and slavery.

Kathryn Benjamin is a student in UC-Berkeley's African Diaspora Ph.D. Program.

(Endnotes)

1 Small, 2012

2 Schalkwijk and Small, 2012

3 Small, 2012

Gender, Creative Dissidence, and the Discourses of African Diaspora: A colloquium in Honor of Ama Ata Aidoo

by Selina Shieunda Makana



Ama Ata Aidoo

A three-day academic conference held on May 24th-26th at the University of California Santa Barbara brought together scholars from different disciplines. Organized by the Departments of Black Studies, Feminist Studies, Theater and Dance Performance, and History, the conference explored the works of the eminent Ghanaian author Ama Ata Aidoo. The colloquium which was well attended was held in honor of Ms. Aidoo's 70th birthday. As one of Africa's most influential literary artist, Ms. Aidoo has been at the forefront in articulating social issues on the continent.

In her keynote address at the Halten Theater, Ms. Aidoo spoke on her latest anthology of short stories, *Diplomatic Pounds*. Through her creative writing, essays and speeches, Aidoo has maintained her strong feminist voice. In her Regent's lecture, she said: "When people ask me rather bluntly every now and then whether I am a feminist, I not only answer yes, but I go on to insist that every woman and every man should be a feminist – especially if they believe that Africans should take charge of our lands, its wealth, our lives and the

burden of our own development. Because it is not possible to advocate independence for our continent without also believing that African women must have the best that the environment can offer. For some of us this is the crucial element of our feminism." Aidoo's literary work explores the tension between Western and African world views. In all her works, most of her protagonists are women who defy the stereotypical women's roles of their time. Women who through their common condition of "womanhood and motherhood" are not afraid to hold back the details of their lives, or the lives of those closest to them in shared stories and *tete-a-tete*. The result of these private conversations is always a shared social and cultural reality of our everyday lives.

As part of the three day conference, there was an opening of the production of *Anowa*, Aidoo's famous play. Set in a village called Yebi in Ghana, West Africa, in the year 1870, the play tells the story of Anowa, an independent-minded young woman who rejects the suitors her parents suggest and marries a Fante trader for love. Anowa ultimately becomes an unwilling collaborator in the African slave trade, which drives her to a tragic end. Framed by proverbs and village gossip, *Anowa* depicts the richness of the African oral tradition while spinning a tale with universal appeal.

Conference presentations were organized into three themes that touched on the African Diaspora and women's issues globally: "Gender, Sexualities, and Cultural Politics"; "Mapping the Diasporic Imagination"; and "Narratives of Memory and Identity." Each theme

had three panelists who presented high standard and comprehensive discussions. The panelists included:

Carol Boyce (Cornell University): "Sexuality and Ama Ata Aidoo's vision of African Women's Intellectual and Political Lives"

Boatema Boateng (UC-San Diego): "How **Not** to Write about African Women: Breaking Stereotypes with Ama Ata Aidoo's *Changes*"

Meredith Heller (UC-Santa Barbara): "Production and Reproduction: Ama Ata Aidoo's *Anowa* and the Reconception of Womanbeing"

Anne V. Adams (Cornell University): "Ja, das Schwar[t]ze Madchen: The Trajectory of Self-Consciousness in Two Generations of Autobiographical Writings of Afro-German Wo0.0625 in Vincent Odamtten(Hamilton College): "Story-Telling as Performance: From *No Sweetness Here* to *Diplomatic Pounds*"

Kwaku Larbi Korang (Ohio State University) : " Lost in Betrayal, Sought in Retrieval: Community and Identity in Ama A ta Aidoo's Literary Project"

There was an all conference response that had participants discuss the place of African woman today in feminist writings as well as black women writing in general as a form of replacing victimhood with self-recovery. Most participants reiterated the fact that it is women who bear the burden of modernity, and it is women who produce the voice of transnationalism.

Selina Shieunda Makana is a student in UC-Berkeley's African Diaspora Ph.D. Program.

Editor's Note

In the past four decades, our department has attracted a host of scholars whose work is inspiring, productive, and pushing the field in ways many of its founders may not have anticipated. The newsletter provides a space for these voices to be in conversation with each other and with the larger audience of Africana Studies. Here faculty, graduate students, undergraduates, and independent scholars come together to share their thoughts, celebrate their achievements, and announce personal and professional milestones.

We welcome Kianna Middleton and Amani Morrison, a small but dynamic new graduate cohort. The Vèvè Clark Institute for Engaged Scholars of African American Studies is growing at the undergraduate level, and six graduate scholars have made the transition from student to PhD candidate. Our students, alumni, and faculty continue to share their work through conferences, symposia, and through publication, and our speaker series has brought a number of unique voices to campus. The department is rapidly growing to encompass the wealth of a growing field of study. Our new chair, Professor Na'ilah Suad Nasir, has spear-headed a number of new changes in order to preserve the department's legacy while we continue to develop and evolve.

Thank you to all those who have contributed to the Fall/Winter 2012 issue. We hope to continue to keep our readership abreast of the happenings of our department; to highlight the growth of the field; and to provide a space for a diversity of voices to come together.

-Lia Bascomb



Truth

by Jason Hendrickson

Americans want Truth hot
and handed through a drive-thru window
with their Change,
heavily salted
to make its taste last
(whatever
it
may be);
Supersized Truth,
fizzed in powdered fountain drinks,
Nice-n-Quick;
Nice going in...
Quick going out...
...whatever
it
may be.

Americans want Truth sweet(ened) -
Half-n-Half of it
to make bitter brown wake-ups go smooth.
Sweet Truth;
artificial substitutes;
Sweet-n-Low
(but not Equal).
Sweet Tooth;
(Do you drink the Kool-Aid?)
...Type II Veritas

What happened to that home-cooked Truth?
Truth that cooks and simmers?
Seasoned arguments bubbling, fomenting
crisp, fresh, ripe from fertile minds?
What happened to the Truth
that came in different flavors,
served with care, with love,
that "mmm"d into your being,
emptying the emptiness?
When did Truth become
something to be chewed in sound bites?

Bring that old Truth back
because we are
what we eat.

And right now,
we are full of it.

Jason Hendrickson is a poet, educator, and scholar. His research focuses on the African-American literary tradition. He is finishing his Ph.D. in Afro-American Studies at UMASS and teaches at CUNY-LaGuardia Community College.

Meet the Fall 2012 Graduate Cohort

Kianna Middleton



Kianna received her Bachelor's degree in English with a concentration in Creative Writing from Colorado State University in the spring of 2006 as well as a Master's degree in Ethnic Studies from Colorado State University. In the spring of 2012 Kianna successfully defended her Master's thesis, "'I Feel, Therefore I Can be Free': Black Women and Chicana Queer Narratives as Differential Consciousness and Foundational Theory." Kianna's essay, "Generational Survival, the Repetition of Memory, Autonomy and Empowerment in Gayl Jones' *Corregidora*" was printed in SUNY Oneonta's Women's and Gender Studies journal *Praxis: Gender and Cultural Critiques* in the Spring/Fall 2010 issue. This essay and Kianna's Master's thesis continue to inspire her to do the work of queer theorizing, tracing generational memory and trauma, and recovering and contributing to the existence of queer Black women in literature and academia.

Amani Morrison



Amani, originally from Hampton Roads, VA, is a first year student in the program. She graduated magna cum laude from the University of Richmond in 2012, receiving a B.A. in American Studies. Amani's research interests include representations of black masculinity in literature, film and popular culture; African American identity formation; twentieth-century African American literature; and the "bad Negro" archetype of the African American folklore tradition and its presence in contemporary culture.

Welcome to the 2012 cohort of Vèvè A. Clark Institute Scholars

Now in its second year the Vèvè A. Clark Institute for Engaged Scholars of African American Studies is a small cadre of scholars majoring in the discipline of African American Studies and preparing to meet the rigor and intellectual demands of top research university graduate programs, professional schools and postgraduate careers.



from left to right: Peace El Henson, Maya Lefao, Dominique Collins, Erma Sinclair, Chioma Amaechi

Conversations: Department of African American Studies

Marisa Fuentes

Assistant Professor, Department of Gender and Women's Studies, Rutgers University

Wednesday, October 10

Barbara T. Christian Memorial Lecture

"Ruinous Affairs:

Distressed Sexualities, Race and Cultural Scandal in Eighteenth-Century Bridgetown, Barbados



Fuentes's talk used the court records of a 1743 case of adultery in Barbados to explore the ways in which gender, race, and class collided in historical records. She mined the archives producing a tale of what she terms "white female distressed sexuality." As a gender studies scholar and Caribbean historian Fuentes uses this case to investigate eighteenth century sexual standards in Barbados and the role that race plays in how they are articulated and how they are remembered.

Kicking off the Conversations Speaker Series, Marisa Fuentes returned to her alma mater to deliver the first Barbara T. Christian Memorial Lecture. Christian, who passed away in 2000, was dearly loved by colleagues and students alike. She worked tirelessly to devote as much attention as she could to each scholarly endeavor, whether it be her own research, her teaching, or her mentorship. The Department of African American Studies is honoring her legacy through a memorial lecture that invites alumni to share their work here in their intellectual home.

In Fuentes's inauguration of the Memorial Lectureship, she continued Christian's legacy of departmental support by leading a workshop with current graduate students. As the recipient of several fellowships and awards, including a Carolina Postdoctoral Fellow for Faculty Diversity at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and a Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship, Fuentes has been highly successful in writing fellowship and grant applications. She shared her insights about the process with her junior colleagues.



**Conversations:
Department of African American Studies
Fall 2012 Speaker Series**

Wednesday October 10, Barbara Christian Memorial Lecture
4-10:45pm, 852 Barrows Hall

**Marisa Fuentes, Assistant Professor,
Department of Gender and Women's Studies, Rutgers University**

**"Ruinous Affairs: Distressed Sexualities, Race and Cultural Scandal in Eighteenth-Century
Bridgetown, Barbados"**

Through fifty-five hand written pages of depositions in a 1743 case of adultery between a white man and woman, none of which include the testimony of the three slaves who were implicitly involved, Dr. Fuentes interrogates constructions of what she calls "white female distressed sexuality" against the impossible configurations of "sexuality," consent, and shame inscribed on black women in the slave society removed of free. This talk thus centers on the 1743 Barbados court case where the specters of race, gender and sexuality talk beneath a tale of adultery, cross dressing, attempted murder and immorality between a white family and a white male sexual interloper and the men and women they enslaved. The purpose of interrogating this case is to shed light on the sexual culture of eighteenth-century Bridgetown, Barbados in a effort to both denigrate white women's Georgian—and perhaps more fluid than previously imagined—pre-Victorian sexuality with the distinctly unprotected, racialized "sexualities" of enslaved women and men.

Wednesday October 17, 4-10:45pm, 852 Barrows Hall

Nick Mitchell, President's Postdoctoral Fellow, UC-Berkeley

"Curricular Objects: 'Women of Color,' Official Anti-Racisms, and the Consolidation of Women's Studies."

This talk offers a genealogy of the category "women of color" as a way of thinking about the institutional relationship between black studies and women's studies that emerged in the 1970s. Drawing a provisional distinction between the category's use for political organizing and coalition building, and its uses in naming and consolidating a body of knowledge for academic institutions, Dr. Mitchell argues that attention to "women of color" as the outcome of institutional strategies for the management of racial difference can reveal histories that are often obscured when the self-consciousness of "women of color" in this way, Dr. Mitchell suggests, means that we cannot understand the institutional formation of women's studies without also attending to that of black studies, and vice versa.

Monday November 5, 4-10:45pm, 852 Barrows Hall

**H. Samy Alim, Associate Professor in the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Interdisciplinary
Policy Studies in Education (SHIPs) and Educational Linguistics, Stanford University**

"Articulate White Black: Barack Obama, Language and Race in the U.S."

Barack Obama is widely considered one of the most powerful and charismatic speakers of our age. Without missing a beat, he often moves between Washington insider talk and culturally Black ways of speaking—as shown in a famous "You'll like it" clip, where Obama declined the chair offered to him by a black customer in a Washington, D.C. restaurant with the phrase, "Nah, we straight."

Articulate White Black addresses language and racial politics in the U.S. through an insightful examination of President Barack Obama's language use—and America's response to it. Reveal how major debates about language, race, and educational inequality erupt into moments of racial crisis in America, in much the same way that Cornel West revealed nearly two decades ago that "race matters." Articulate White Black shows how deeply "language matters" to the national conversation on race—and in our daily lives.

**African American Studies UC Berkeley
1970-2010**

Nick Mitchell

President's Postdoctoral Fellow, UC-Berkeley

Wednesday, October 17

"Curricular Objects:

'Women of Color,' Official Anti-Racisms, and the Consolidation of Women's Studies."



Nick Mitchell earned his doctorate at the University of California, San Diego. He joins UC-Berkeley's Department of African American Studies as Presidential Postdoctoral Fellow. The UC President's Postdoc began in 1984 and encourages underrepresented PhD recipients to pursue their careers within the UC system, by providing a research stipend and faculty mentor. Mitchell's work attracted a diverse audience of scholars from across the University of California campuses. His talk gave a history of the term "woman of color," placing the terms various usages in conversation with the formation of women's studies and black studies within the university. Mitchell detailed the institutional relationship between the two fields and the ways in which both the term "women of color" and women's and black studies sit within discourses of racial difference often hidden within the university structure.

H. Samy Alim

Associate Professor in the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Interdisciplinary Policy Studies in Education (SHIPS) and Educational Linguistics, Stanford University

Monday November 5

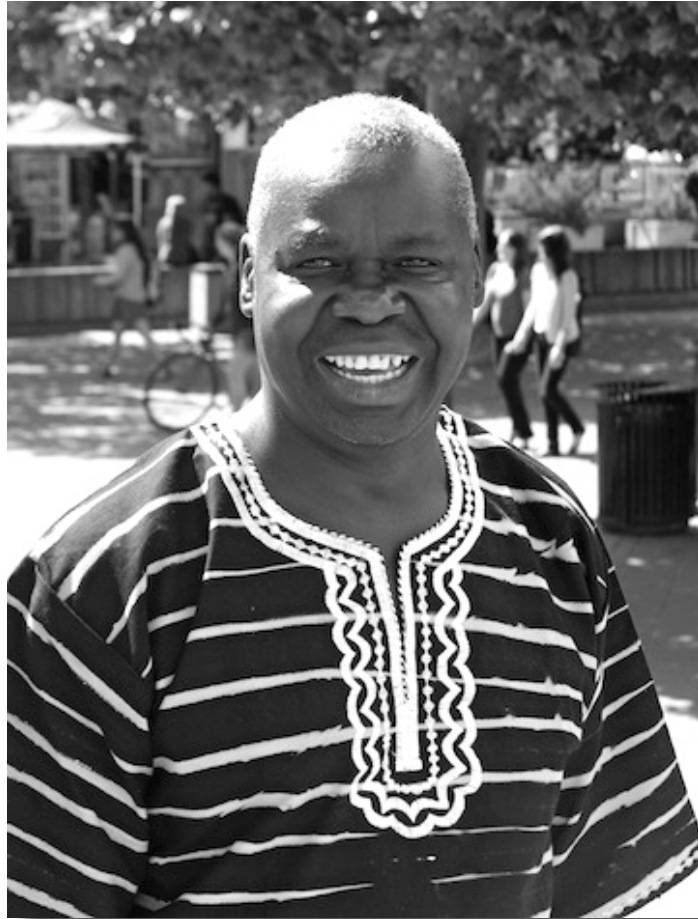
"Articulate While Black: Barack Obama, Language and Race in the U.S."

Only a day before the presidential election, H. Samy Alim examined President Barack Obama's use of language. His talk was part of a larger book project also titled *Articulate While Black* and co-written with Geneva Smitherman of Michigan State University. Alim scrutinized key speech acts, and scrutinized audience reactions to them. In doing so he demonstrated the ways in which President Obama has become the center of an exceptionalist discourse whereby the fact that he is articulate contradicts his U.S. expectations of black men, and how, to some observers, Obama's ability to speak black vernaculars is an attempt at racial solidarity. In looking at President Obama's code-switching skills and various audience reactions to his language, Alim sought to locate the ways in which language matters in the racial discourses of politics.



Faculty Profiles

Associate Professor Sam Mchombo



Sam Mchombo has a Ph.D. in Linguistics from the University of London. He went on to pioneer the Department of African Languages and Linguistics at the University of Malawi. Dr. Mchombo has taught at MIT, Stanford University, and San Jose State University before coming to the University of California, Berkeley's Linguistics department. He transferred to the Department of African American Studies in January of 2010. As a researcher Dr. Mchombo focuses on linguistic theory and structures of Bantu languages. He also writes on political and social developments throughout the African continent.

When I was in my first year at Cal, Professor Mchombo's name was always mentioned, but it was not until my third year that I was given the opportunity to finally meet him. I remember the first time I met him. I was enrolled in his African American Studies 11B Swahili class. He had walked in to tell us that he was not going to be the one teaching the class and introduced Edwin O'kongo. The whole class was disappointed, especially myself. I had taken this class because of Professor Mchombo and we were finding out that this was no longer going to happen. However, that was not the last I would see of Mchombo. Professor Mchombo and I have had many occasions where I would just come to his office to say "hi." He is a Professor who leaves a lasting impression. He is always smiling and very passionate about his culture and his work. He has always been very kind and nice on a consistent basis. His energy passes through you and he could bring a laugh or smile to anyone. I never got the chance to be his student, but I have had the opportunity to enjoy his company outside of class. Thank you Professor Mchombo for all the laughter and smiles you have brought to my life.

Eliza Pierre is an undergraduate student at UC-Berkeley.

Associate Professor Janelle Scott



Dr. Janelle Scott, who currently holds a joint appointment in U.C. Berkeley's Department of African American Studies and School of Education, is a scholar whose erudition is rivaled by her modesty, whose commitment to producing original research is matched by her unflagging dedication to mentorship, and whose professionalism is mirrored by her disarming levity. It is no such exaggeration to claim that Janelle represents the highest expression of intellectual generosity and achievement at the University of California, Berkeley.

Janelle Scott has donned many hats at U.C. Berkeley since first arriving as a faculty member in the fall of 2008 as a Berkeley Diversity Research Initiative (BDRI)¹ scholar. Her joint appointment reflects a conscious effort on behalf of the university to recruit and retain faculty members committed to the rigorous production of scholarship examining social inequality across disciplinary fields. The noteworthy depth and breadth of Dr. Scott's work and service to the university won her tenure last spring and represents her most recent scholarly accomplishment.

Though Dr. Scott seems to thrive as a jointly appointed faculty member, she acknowledges a steep learning curve that constantly requires negotiation between potentially destabilizing disciplinary norms and departmental cultures. "I welcome the challenges and opportunities of a joint appointment, and honestly, some of the challenges are pretty pragmatic," recalls Scott. "I

have more meetings than I would in one department." At the same time, she says, "my joint appointment enables me to work in a way that's more congruous with how I live; it allows me to challenge the limits of disciplinary thinking and theorizing. And more importantly, it allows me to build important bridges between my work on the racial politics of K-12 education and the politics of advocacy and school choice." Janelle Scott views her joint appointment as impetus to think in nuanced and intellectually rich ways that don't necessarily reflect the structure of individual disciplines. She says, "rounding-out the limitations of traditional disciplines allows me to fill gaps in various fields." For example, "it's virtually impossible to talk about racial formation without a discussion on how it applies to citizenship, or, for that matter, education."

Since her arrival in 2008—her return, really—she's enjoyed reconnecting with Cal, her undergraduate alma mater. Before returning to Cal Dr. Scott taught at NYU, and though she enjoyed her experience in "the City," she's says that she's energized by teaching at a public institution. "We're trying to remain a public institution here and that has implications for the kind of students we attract." As most of Janelle Scott's scholarly work focuses on the complexities of the privatization of public education, Cal provides the perfect laboratory to test theories and to challenge prevailing models of public education advocacy networks.

Though Dr. Scott is reluctant to make comparative claims she cites “the students at Cal” as what distinguishes it from other universities. “Students here are engaged citizens and being engaged in the world brings a certain richness to intellectual discussion.” At Cal, the “street” helps to inform the “seminar” and vice-versa, a synergy that she appreciates. Janelle Scott credits her students—both graduate and undergraduate—for opening her up to different ideas. “Well-intentioned people may disagree, but that’s exactly when the growth occurs, that’s the hallmark of a relevant education.”

When Dr. Janelle Scott isn’t busy teaching or mentoring her students she’s publishing widely and prolifically. She’s currently working on a number of empirical projects that “examine the role of intermediary organizations—advocacy groups—in producing research on market-based educational policy reform, explicitly, advocacy for organizations that address educational access and equity for kids of color.” Janelle is also engaged in a study of Teach for America (TFA), a nationally recognized organization that facilitates teacher placement in high need urban and rural school districts. “I’m interested in how the TFA experience shapes participant views of educational access and equity.”

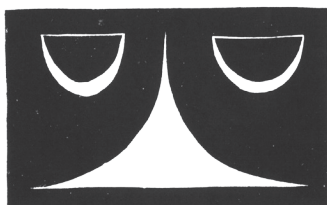
The visionary nature of Dr. Scott’s work is worth noting. More than just a researcher, Janelle Scott is a cultural seismographer, of sorts. She has a knack for recognizing slight shifts in cultural attitudes and policy positions in the world of education. Attend one her seminars; you’ll see.

Although Janelle Scott is a talented mentor, she’s careful about the type of counsel she offers her students. “Advice is overrated,” she says as she chuckles. “Have fun, and always remember the curiosities that brought you to graduate study. A healthy willingness to have all of your suspicions challenged is important. Think deeply, flexibly, and enjoy the process!”

Christopher Petrella is a candidate in UC-Berkeley’s African Diaspora PhD program.

(Endnotes)

1 The Berkeley Diversity Research Initiative has since been renamed the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society.



Aparajita Nanda: Projects in the Works



Aparajita Nanda earned her PhD from Jadavpur University in Calcutta. She has taught African American Studies throughout the world before finding a home here at UC-Berkeley. Dr. Nanda teaches many of the department’s Reading and Composition courses. Here is a glimpse of the work she produces outside of the classroom.

Books

Black California: A Literary Anthology. Berkeley: Heyday Books, 2011.

Book Chapters and Articles

“Re-writing the Bhabhian “Mimic Man”: Akin, the Post Human Other in Butler’s Adulthood Rites” *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature*, Vol. 41, 2010.

“Writing the Self in ‘Heterotopic’ Spaces: Reading Nawal Sadaawi’s *Woman at Point Zero*,” *From the Cradle to the Grave Life-Course Models in Literary Genres*. Eds. Sabine Coelsch-Foisner & Sarah Herbe. University Press of Heidelberg, 2011.

Forthcoming Publications:

The Strangled Cry: The Communication and Experience of Trauma (forthcoming, 2013).

Ethnic Literatures and Transnationalism (forthcoming).

Congratulations

Congratulations to Christopher Petrella

on completing his Qualifying Exams in the areas of Race, Policy, and Theories of Political Economy; Race, Marginality, and Incarceration; and Race and Radical Education, on the 11th of April 2012.

He submitted the following position papers in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the PhD Qualifying Exam in African Diaspora Studies:

“Global Capital and the Production of Black Prison Diasporas”

“The Racial Dialectics of Post-Secondary Prison Education”

and on his recognition as the



2011-2012 Louise Patterson Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor.



Congratulations to Charisse Burden-Stelly

on completing her Qualifying Exams in the areas of Neoliberal globalization; Race and Enlightenment Thought; and Political Economy of the African Diaspora on the 10th of May 2012.

She submitted the following position papers in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the PhD Qualifying Exam in African Diaspora Studies:

“Racialized Global Capitalism, Black Abjection and Diaspora”

“The Persistence of Racialization in the Longue Duree of Globalization and Neoliberalization”

Congratulations

Congratulations to Gabrielle Williams

on completing her Qualifying Exams in the areas of African American and Pan-African history (with emphasis on social movements and historicity); Literature and Literary Criticism; Cultural Studies; and Performance Studies on the 11th of May 2012.

She submitted the following position papers in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the PhD Qualifying Exam in African Diaspora Studies:

“Transcending Babylon: African Diaspora Studies through the lens of Pan-Africanism

“‘I Spect I Growed’: Dis/articulating ‘Mammy’ from Black Feminist and Cultural Studies Perspectives”



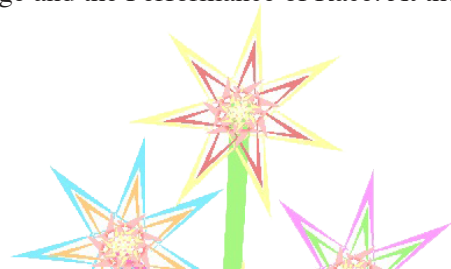
Congratulations to Kim McNair

on completing her Qualifying Exams in the areas of African Diaspora Studies; Black Performance Theory; Black Visual Culture; and African American History and Popular Culture, on the 24th of August 2012.

She submitted the following position papers in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the PhD Qualifying Exam in African Diaspora Studies:

“Agnostic Diasporology: Troubling a Concept”

“Black Image and the Performance of Race: At the Crossroads of History”



Congratulations

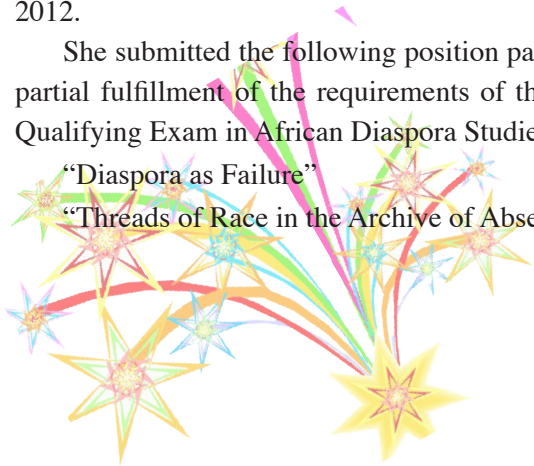
Congratulations to Ianna Owens

on completing her Qualifying Exams in the areas of Black Diaspora Theory; Critical Whiteness Studies; and Race and Sexuality, on the 11th of November 2012.

She submitted the following position papers in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the PhD Qualifying Exam in African Diaspora Studies:

“Diaspora as Failure”

“Threads of Race in the Archive of Absence”



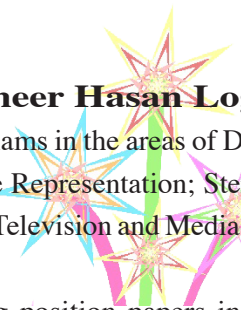
Congratulations to Ameer Hasan Loggins

on completing his Qualifying Exams in the areas of Diaspora Theory; Black Male and Female Representation; Stereotype and Stigma Theory; and Reality Television and Media, on the 30th of November 2012.

He submitted the following position papers in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the PhD Qualifying Exam in African Diaspora Studies:

“The ‘African’ Diaspora”

“Progeny of the Persecuted”



SCHEDULE OF CLASSES ***summer 2013***

Department of African American Studies **Summer Courses**

Session A (May 28-July 3)

R1B 4 credits each MTuWTh F MTuWTh F MTuWTh F	Freshman Composition sections Aparajita Nanda 9-11 am 11am-1 pm 2-4 pm
4A 4 credits MTuWTh	Africa: History and Culture Ugo Nwokeji 12:30-3pm
139 3 credits MTuW	Teaching Freedom: The History of African American Education Jarvis Givens 10am-12:30pm
159(1) 3 credits MTuWTh	Black Popular Music and Culture: From Be-Bop to Hip Hop Ricky Vincent 10am-12pm
159(2) 3 credits MWF	Black Bodies: Race, Sexuality, and Popular Culture Lia Bascomb 10am-12:30pm

Session C (June 24-August 16)

W111 3 credits	Race, Class, Gender Stephen Small online course
W124 3 credits	The Philosophy of Martin Luther King Charles Henry online course

Session D (July 8-August 16)

4B 4 credits MTWTh	Africa: History and Culture Arif Gamal 10:30am-1pm
159(3) 3 credits TWTh	Spike and Mike: Representations of Black Masculinity in Popular Culture Christina Bush 10am-12:30pm