

THE DIASPORA

Spring 2015 edition

THE DIASPORA is a biannual publication 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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Ianna Hawkins Owen

COVER ART

“Wade In The Water” (2012)

Adee Roberson

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The Diaspora, Spring 2015

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Notes from the Chair

Na'ilah Suad Nasir, Department Chair and Professor

As another academic year comes to a close, I reflect on what a fabulous and tumultuous year this has been in the world and on our campus. We can't think about 2014-15 and Black folks without thinking about the #BlackLives-Matter movement. We have seen case after case in the last year of police killings of unarmed Black people—men and women—with little to no consequences for those that pulled the trigger. In fact, just this month a verdict was handed down in the Michael Brelo case. Michael Brelo was an officer in Cleveland who climbed onto the hood of a car, and shot 49 times into the unarmed bodies of Timothy Russell and Malissa Williams, killing them both. He was found not guilty. It is a grave time when these incidents are being videotaped and witnessed and still justice is not served. And yet, I am hopeful because this string of incidents has sparked a movement, #Black-LivesMatter, with chapters all over the United States, which has undertaken protests in communities, in the streets, and on college campuses. At UC Berkeley our Black Student Union took over the Golden Bear Center for over four hours sharing stories, sharing grief, and expressing outrage. And they did not stop there. Students have been protesting alongside the Berkeley and Oakland communities, and have worked to put together their own list of demands for our Chancellor on behalf of the Black community at Cal. It is extraordinary work, and we are so very proud of the leadership and care for

those coming after them that our students have shown! As a department, we produced a series of short essays on the Black Lives Matter movement, with pieces from graduate students, faculty, and staff. It is one of the things I am most proud of this year.

And it has been another an amazing year in the Department of African American Studies as well. Our undergraduate honors program, the VÉVÉ Clark Institute for Engaged Scholars of African American Studies continues to grow and it is an amazing community of student scholars. This year three of our former Clark Scholars are going on to PhD programs! We are also in the midst of more faculty hiring. Not only did we bring the fabulous and brilliant Professor Nikki Jones onto our faculty last year, but this fall we will be joined by three new junior faculty, Professor Tianna Paschel who studies Blackness in Brazil, Professor Jovan Lewis, an economic anthropologist who studies poverty across the Diaspora, and Professor Chiyuma Elliott, a poet and scholar of African American poetry. And since we didn't actually have the space for so many new faculty, we are undergoing a renovation of the department—tearing down walls, creating new office space and a new conference room, and completely revamping our front office area—we invite you to come by in early fall to see our new space. We are also undergoing a less happy (at least for us!) transition, as Stephanie Jackson, who

has been the administrative assistant in the department for over 30 years retires at the end of June. She has been instrumental in so many ways in building the department, and we will miss her greatly.

As this third year of my chair-ship comes to a close, I am simply awed everyday to have the honor to work with and for such an extraordinary group of students, staff, and faculty. My faculty colleagues teach with passion and humor, and shepherd students through course papers, honors theses, MA exams, and dissertations with grace and rigor. Our undergraduate and graduate student embrace the academic journey with integrity, openness, and with a willingness to contribute their brilliance and hard work. Lindsey Herbert, our department student advisor, goes above and beyond to ensure that students have all of the financial, informational, and emotional resources they need to make it through their program. Professor Leigh Raiford, our Head Graduate Advisor, has worked tirelessly to support and prod and provide professional socialization for our graduate students. Vernessa Parker, our department manager, keeps everything running smoothly—from staffing to budgets to space issues. We couldn't do what we do without you all. I am immensely grateful immensely grateful for your patience, your community spirit, your activism, and your huge hearts. I wish you all a beautiful relaxing and productive summer.

June 2015





Inside This Issue

Ianna Hawkins Owen, Editor and PhD candidate

Returning to the traditionally eclectic format of *The Diaspora*, this issue offers the staple articles you've come to love while also offering some exciting new features.

At the end of the issue you'll find a list of recent and forthcoming publications by department faculty, alumni and current graduate students. Spread throughout the issue you'll find 150-word "in brief" reviews of local performance, installation and film while PhD candidate Kimberly McNair provides a longer review of the play *Party People*. Candidate Amani Morrison shares her experience writing *for* a playbill, connecting her academic work to broader audiences.

Graduate life and concerns are reflected in several pieces. Charisse Burden, candidate, takes us on a narrative journey through her archival research process in Trinidad. Graduate student Kenly Brown summarizes a year of achievements for the graduate student workers' union, the UAW and her fellow cohort member Mariko Pegs summarizes the year's agenda for the Graduate Assembly.

Graduate student Michael Myers uses the lens of astrophysics to review a recent Cal symposium on settler colonialism in the United States. Candidate Robert Connell offers us an original interview with international journalist David Sheen on his work about anti-African racism in Israel.

Administrative Assistant Stephanie Jackson, well-loved by all in the department, reflects on her career in African American Studies at Cal and

Department Manager Vernessa Parker celebrates her labor on our behalf. You'll also be delighted to read reflections from VèVè Clark Scholars, Tamrin Stewart and Vanessa Oliphant, who both express gratitude to lecturer Cara Stanley for guiding them through their undergraduate careers. And, gone but not forgotten, former graduate student Carmen Mitchell is remembered by Graduate Advisor Lindsey Herbert who meditates on the necessity of self-care and collective-care in higher education.

Due to the rapid special issue of December 2014 on the #blacklivesmatter movement, many articles slated to appear in the original Fall issue appear in this Spring issue instead. Although their points of reference may be Summer and Fall of 2014, their content endures in relevance. I am excited for you to peruse the issue. It has been a pleasure serving as the editor of *The Diaspora* for the 2014-2015 academic year. I would like to express special thanks to Professors Na'ilah Suad Nasir and Leigh Raiford and Graduate Advisor Lindsey Herbert for both the creative freedom and the financial support to realize a new vision for the department publication. I hope you all have enjoyed reading and contributing as much as I have enjoyed producing these issues.

Image (Left): July 1, 2014. A view from Fort Coenraadsburg of the Bakatue Festival activities in Elmina, Ghana. The Bakatue Festival is a celebration by the people of Elmina to mark the beginning of the fishing season. Photograph by Dr. Mario Nisbett.

Artist Statement

Adee Roberson, Visual Artist



My work celebrates cultural imagery by illustrating the histories, triumphs, and struggles of Black people from the past and present. By re-contextualizing images in abstract environments rich with symbolism, and magical landscapes, I create works that transcend time and space while honoring my ancestral past and spiritual roots. My work is a visual dialogue that reshapes and expands the constructs of Blackness and “Black Art,” illuminating experiences of the African Diaspora in a new way. I make mixed media works on various materials such as canvas, paper, and wood. My paintings are saturated with bright colors and rich textures, enlivened by the use of collage techniques that incorporate photo-images, symbols, and recycled materials.

Adee Roberson was born in West Palm Beach, Florida in 1981, with strong familial ties to Jamaica. In 2003, she relocated to New Orleans, LA, where she participated in the Black Arts community and taught an arts program for youth at St. Marks Community Center. In 2011, Roberson was an artist in residence at Portland, Parish, Jamaica. She has exhibited and performed in numerous galleries, including Yerba Buena Center for the Arts and Art Gallery of Windsor. She is currently based in Oakland, CA, where she co-founded a multi-disciplinary artists’ collective for queer women of color, Black Salt Collective.



*An abstract portrait of Brandy Martell for the Her Resilience mural project in the Park Community Garden in Oakland to memorialize women impacted by violence. The image of Brandy was stenciled by collaborator Inés Ixierda. * Brandy Martell, a black trans woman, was murdered in Downtown Oakland in April 2012.*

Searching for Diaspora in the Eric Williams Special Collections

Charisse Burden, PhD candidate

On September 16, 2014 I embarked on a journey to the University of the West Indies in St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago to “do archival research.” After a brief but informative conversation with Professor Ula Taylor, reading several articles about navigating the archive, and a protracted email conversation with the West Indian and Special Collections division archivist, Maud-Marie Sisnette, I still had only a very vague idea as to what I would be doing. Lacking the training of a traditional historian, any previous experience conducting archival research, and an online finding aid to help navigate the Eric Williams Special Collection, I decided that I would let my passion for and interest in African Diaspora Theory guide me through this exciting but daunting experience. But how was I to search for Diaspora in the manuscripts, personal papers, correspondence, and speeches of a man who never explicitly utilized this analytic to articulate Black globality? And if “African Diaspora” was superfluous to his scholarship, why is it that for me, the Honorable Dr. Eric Eustace Williams represents the quintessential Diasporic subject, and his prodigious work, *Capitalism and Slavery*, is of paramount importance to my reconstitution of African Diaspora Theory?

The small and sterile room in which the Eric Williams Special Collection and Patricia Williams’ Eric Williams Collection were housed was freezing. After my fifth day of typing up documents from 8:00AM-6:00PM (photography was prohibited, and I was only allowed to copy 10% of any file), I was convinced that I

had carpal tunnel. My shamefully United Statesian ears made it nearly impossible for me to understand much of what was being said, irrespective of how much the Trinidadians enunciated their words out of amusement, irritation, or pity. Despite these somewhat trivial “first-world problems,” delving into the documents that gave me insight into the life and scholarship of Dr. Williams made my venture into the unknown, decidedly worthwhile. His terrible handwriting notwithstanding, I found his personal correspondence with Diasporic scholars including George Padmore, Sir Arthur Lewis, and W.E.B. DuBois as exhilarating as it was informative. Dr. Williams’ correspondence with his Thesis and Dissertation advisor, V.T. Harlow, elucidated his commitment to exploring the contours of the relationship between British capitalist accumulation, the Caribbean sugar plantation, race, and enslavement—a project that culminated in *Capitalism and Slavery*. I sympathized and connected with young Eric Williams when his advisor criticized him for being “cocksure” and “impetuous” and offered that “...a good historian must combine the detective powers of a Sherlock Holmes with the humility of a St. Francis Assisi!” I pondered 1940s racial politics as I read the slightly paternalistic tone of Melville Herskovits’ letter containing comments on the publisher’s copy of *Capitalism and Slavery*, and Dr. Williams’ somewhat obsequious response.

In addition to Professor and intellectual, Dr. Williams was also a statesman and institution builder. As the

first Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, he gave a speech on August 30, 1963 at the Independence Youth Festival during which he emphasized his dedication to reorganizing the colonial society, defending the economic and political interests domestically and abroad, and developing community and cooperation against the proliferation of personal ambition, selfishness, and individualism. In the opening speech to the Sixth Session of the FAO Cocoa Study Group on March 23, 1963, he demanded that the United Nations utilize its power to integrate the economically fragmented Caribbean to remedy the “centuries of European Rivalry for Caribbean possession.” In a tribute to Jawaharlal Nehru, the Honorable Dr. Williams made the following statement that gestures toward his Diasporic sensibilities: “It is the result of a feeling of spiritual kinship with a man who was at one and the same time a national symbol, a philosopher of anti-colonialism and a student of world history. It is the result also of a personal temperament and outlook which, rightly or wrongly, is more at ease with those who seek to expand freedom than with those who seek to restrict it, with a man of peace rather than with a man of war, with F. D. Roosevelt rather than with Theodore Roosevelt, with Lincoln rather than with Palmerston, with Nehru rather than with Churchill.” Serving in the capacity of the first Pro-Chancellor of the University of the West Indies, Jamaica (and one of its primary architects and advocates), the Honorable Dr. Eric Williams addressed the 1963 graduating class, explaining that their University was a symbol of academic and democratic freedom in the Caribbean, and that it was the students’ public responsibility to expand the university; contribute to their respective communities; apply

their technical skills to develop their newly independent societies or to help their country more rapidly move toward independence; and to “place national service above the glorification of self.”

Inasmuch as the term “African Diaspora” is scarcely articulated in the archive, did I fail to find Diaspora in the Eric Williams Special Collections? I don’t think so. To use Brent Hayes Edwards terminology, the practice of Diaspora is ubiquitous in the documents mentioned above and the others I collected. Through his protracted critique of capitalist exploitation in his scholarship and policy; mobilization of his vehemently anti-colonial praxis to build solidarity between Caribbean countries, African countries, and allies in the Global North; work toward the fair and self-determined economic development of Trinidad, the Caribbean, and the Third World generally; and sustained institution building for the purpose of uplifting formerly colonized subjects, Dr. Eric Williams provides the model for how I understand and theorize the African Diaspora. The materialities of racial capitalism and regimes of coloniality, and the ideological and epistemological violence of modernity constitute and are reproduced through conditions of Black abjection that provide the basis for the African Diaspora. Through intellectual production, restorative governance, self-determination, selective engagement with (and against) other Black populations, and anti-colonial activism, the African Diaspora serves as the space of mutual recognition among dispersed Black subjects over time and space. As such, I look to the work and life of Dr. Eric Eustace Williams to find Diaspora.

No Respite in the Holy Land: Anti-African Racism in Israel

Robert Connell, PhD candidate

As students and faculty in the UC system ponder and debate the significance of the recent graduate student union vote[1] to support Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) against Israel, the Department of African American Studies' collective stance on the issue arises as an important question, all the more pressing given the African and African descended communities situated in Israel. Briefly, BDS seeks to bring about a broad international isolation of Israel such that the Israeli government is compelled to end its occupation of Palestinian lands, recognize the right to full equality of its Arab-Israeli citizens, and respect for the right of return for Palestinian refugees.[2] However, the social conditions and experiences of Africans living in Israel is not a particularly well-researched subject in our department, nor is it prominent in the media focus on Israel and Palestine, so I took the opportunity to speak with David Sheen,[3] an Israel-based Canadian journalist who covers anti-African racism in Israel. This article is based on our conversation on the history of African presence in Israel/Palestine, the contours of anti-Black racism therein, and the dynamics of Black-Palestinian solidarity in the contemporary moment.

Sheen, 41 years old, grew up in Canada but has been living in Israel for the last 15 years. For the last five years he has been a freelance journalist publishing in both local Israeli and international news media. On his interest in anti-Black racism in Israel, Sheen recounts:

“Having grown up in North America I learned about white supremacy, and the history of the slavery, and was horrified. However, at that time I was writing about ecological issues. But when I got to Israel I found anti-Black racism on an unheard-of scale. I needed to document it.” The African presence in Israel/Palestine is ancient and continual. Afro-Palestinians live in the cities and in the countryside, where they are better known as Bedouins. We should also acknowledge that geographically Israel is, in effect, north-east Africa and was widely perceived as such until construction of the Suez Canal, a project built to facilitate European colonialism, separated it from the continent. As such, people of color have always lived in and moved throughout Israel/Palestine.

In terms of the modern State of Israel, Sheen elaborates that the migration of Black people occurred in three distinct waves: “The first group of Black migrants were from the diaspora; African Americans who came to Israel in the late 1960s. They had a connection to the Black Power struggle in the United States and practiced a form of Afro-centric Judaism.” These are the African Hebrew Israelites. The second migration was that of the Ethiopian Jews, now known as Israelis of Ethiopian Descent or *Beta Israel*. They arrived through a series of Israeli organized airlifts in the 1980s and early 1990s and now number approximately 130,000 (2.15 percent of the Israeli Jewish population). The third wave, the focus of Sheen's investigation, are the African refugees

arriving in Israel between 2006 and 2012. This migration constitutes 60,000 people, 90 percent of whom come from Sudan and Eritrea. Unlike the previous waves of migration, this latest movement of people have no connection to Judaism. Although distinct in their histories and the push/pull factors of their migration, all three communities Israel share in common their struggles and confrontations with anti-Black racism in Israel. According to Sheen's analysis: "Israel is a unique colonial project; it does not actively seek external colonies like the Europeans did, but it is deeply white supremacist. The founders of the state [themselves almost all European Jews] wanted Israel to have an explicitly 'European flavor.' Indeed, the founder of the Zionist movement, Theodor Herzl, explicitly wanted Israel to be European." Sheen recounts a significant photograph from 1898 in the Museum of Jewish People in Tel Aviv. It portrays Theodor Herzl on a ship heading to Israel surrounded by migrants. Sheen explains: "The photo seems innocuous enough, but the original photo had Black people in it. They were deliberately cropped out of the photo while the white migrants were allowed to remain."

This erasure of a Black presence in the collective memory of Israel is coupled with the white supremacy run rampant in Israel today. Sheen states: "The Ethiopian Jews were the second last major wave of Jewish migration to Israel [Russian Jews followed in the 1990s after the collapse of the Soviet Union]. But no other group of Jews were forced to go through the humiliation of a second conversion [a sign of not being 'Jewish enough'], nor were any other Jewish women forced to go on long term birth control, nor was the blood of any

other Jews denied acceptance at blood banks."

As for the African Hebrew Israelites, who settled in the desert town of Dimona, once it became clear that they were not going to convert to "standard" Judaism (they practiced instead an interpretation of Judaism more in line with the Israelites of the Old Testament), the Israeli State began a process of depredations against the community, including the disinterring of bodies from their grave yard to be dumped in what would become the Dimona garbage dump, and attempted deportations. Fortunately, as US citizens, the African Hebrew Israelites were able to put pressure on congressional representatives who in turn pressured Israel to grant them residency status.

However, according to Sheen the most grievous situation for Africans in Israel is being experienced by the refugees. "In most of the world, 70 percent to 80 percent of refugees get status. In Israel it is zero percent; only 4 Eritreans have gotten status and no Sudanese. And this is all in the context of Israel being a signatory and founding member of the United Nations Refugee Convention." Sheen continues, "At the first the refugees were simply jailed. Then they were effectively interned as laborers in *kibbutzim* and *moshavim* [Israeli cooperative settlements] as a form of half-way house for them. You see, Israel, still somewhat concerned about its international image, did not want to be seen as deporting refugees en masse. But the bottom line is Israel does not want non-Jews to settle in the country. So although they were not deported, work permits were never issued to the refugees, effectively cursing them to abject poverty and homelessness. These are the



David Sheen, an Israel-based Canadian journalist who covers anti-African racism in Israel.

conditions of race riots. Poor Israelis, suddenly finding their neighborhoods flooded with destitute foreigners, and goaded by politicians seeking to gain political capital by calling African refugees a ‘cancer’, vented their frustration on the refugees. [From 2006 to 2012] vigilante gangs roamed the streets attacking Africans. Homes, and even a kindergarten, were firebombed. It was a pogrom.” Alarming, some one-third of Jewish Israelis supported the pogroms and 52 percent agreed with the term “cancer” to describe the refugees. The mob terror is largely over, but only because the state has reclaimed its monopoly on violence. Sheen continues: “The Israeli state is now legislating the creation of detention centers in the desert, so that the migrants can be swept up and imprisoned there. The idea is would be to make their lives so miserable that the majority of them leave Israel of their own volition. Even through this legislation has been squashed twice already by the Supreme Court, that does not stop the Knesset [Israeli Parliament] from continuing to propose the plan.”

Sheen is quick to caution against any assumption of automatic solidarity between Africans in Israel and the Palestinians, however. “Israel is using a divide-and-conquer strategy like in the European colonies. Ethiopians have the least privilege among Jews but have more [privilege] than non-Jews. In fact, they can sometimes be the most racist against Palestinians. For the other groups, there is generally a great hesitancy to get involved in [the Palestinian] struggle given the great bias most Israelis hold against Palestinians. Rather, they feel the need to convince the Israeli public that they are not cancers, but rather worthwhile members of society.”

In the din of war and occupation in Palestine it is all too easy to overlook Zionism’s other victims. And although there is no easy alliance or contiguity to be had between Black people in Israel and the Palestinians, the plight of Israel’s African populations should have a more prominent place in our discussions on the nature of the Israeli state and our responses to its actions.

Addendum: On April 30th, 2015, a mere day after penning this article, the Ethiopian Jewish community of Israel exploded in protest over racist police violence. Although triggered by the unprovoked beating of a black Israeli soldier by police caught on film, an incident all the more outrageous given the lionization of soldiers in Israeli society, these protests happen in the context of simmering tensions over ongoing patterns of police violence and systemic racism. It remains to be seen how these will play out, but intriguingly the several thousand-strong demonstrations in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv marched with banners proclaiming “Black Lives Matter” and “Baltimore is Here!” The explicit referencing to US struggles among Ethiopian Jews suggests the Black Lives Matter movement is taking on transnational dimensions with the potential to bring together disparate communities of the diaspora in solidarity and perhaps even common struggle.

Notes [1] On Dec. 4, 2014, UAW 2865 members voted to participate in the BDS movement with a tally of 1411 (65 percent) in favor versus 749 (35 percent) opposed. [2] Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions National Committee. 2014. “Introducing the BDS Movement.” Retrieved December 15, 2014 (<http://www.bdsmovement.net/bdsintro>). [3] David Sheen’s articles on anti-African racism can be found at: <http://www.davidsheen.com/racism/>



Surinamese women dress in traditional clothes during the Ketikoti (Break the Chains) commemoration on July 1st, 2014. Photograph by Professor Stephen Small.



Two UC, Berkeley graduate students – Kathryn Benjamin in African American Studies and Joy Hightower in Sociology – take part in the march to the Keti Koti events in Oosterpark. Both students were attending the two-week Black Europe Summer School program founded by Kwame Nimako. Photograph by Professor Stephen Small.



One section of the Static Slavery Monument in Oosterpark, Amsterdam. It conveys the facts of Dutch enslavement of Africans and their descendants. Photograph by Professor Stephen Small.



Participants in the Ketikoti commemoration dress in chains to convey the violence of Dutch slavery and its legacy. The caption on the banner reads – “Still No Apologies!” Photograph by Professor Stephen Small.

Writing for Encouragement

Amani Morrison, PhD candidate

In the spring of 2014, I was commissioned by California Shakespeare Theater in Berkeley to write an article on Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*. Patricia McGregor, a dynamic black woman artist, directed the Cal Shakes production, returning to Berkeley after directing Zora Neale Hurston's *Spunk* for the theater in 2013. My article was to illuminate the continued relevance of Hansberry's renowned play, providing a historical framing interwoven with present-day resonances.

A Raisin in the Sun presents one weekend of the Younger family's life in mid-century South Side Chicago. The Youngers are an African American family of five spanning three generations who, cramped in a two-bedroom kitchenette apartment, are eagerly awaiting the life insurance check of the late Mr. Younger. Choosing between a new life in a larger living space and the continued desolation and perhaps eventual destruction of her family, Lena Younger makes the only apparent choice she can. Hansberry filters the family's interactions and experiences through a socioeconomic lens, emphasizing the destructive power of money and the lack thereof. My article connected the economic struggles of the Hansberry's Younger family to the plight of African Americans today, with some of the highest unemployment rates and subjected to the largest earnings disparities compared to their white counterparts. But why take time out of my hectic schedule to write?

The commission was a perfect opportunity to ground myself and my unwieldy research interests, at least for a moment. In the spring semester, I happened to be enrolled in a course on twentieth century African American literature (to include works of theater) as well as a course on black performance. My final paper for my literature seminar would think through Hansberry's work within a different, but related, framework. Thus, the commissioned article would hardly require any extra legwork on my end. The piece married together my seminar foci while also situating my interests in the daily realities of countless black people across the nation. For the moment of writing the article, however fleeting its duration, I felt like I had purpose, and that purpose had currency. I could write something that had meaning and utility for me that would also inform the theater audience of the weightiness of both the historical past and the present. It would provide a buttress for the cause of keeping the arts extant, funded, appreciated, and, I dare say, revered. I was excited that my work in the academy could have some immediate traction in the lives of the community that was still very much playing to my strengths and stayed in my missional lane--I was not yet teaching and do not consider myself to be an activist or community leader, so I had been awaiting some such opportunity as this.

As an early career graduate student, it was easy

to get lost in the inundation of new knowledge, theories, and politics. I felt that while I was affirmed at various turns, I also felt as if I did not know enough in this new space to be able to contribute meaningfully. It was one thing to write a seminar paper, framed by the course's topic and geared toward a professor as audience. It was quite another to write for a general theater-going audience whose only known common investment was in Hansberry's play itself. While I could not yet put forth an effort worthy of dissertation-writing on the subject, I could write a playbill article. I was equipped for that. I felt confident enough to do that. And sometimes we have to do small tasks or activities outside of our daily academic roles to keep ourselves encouraged and motivated.

When we are hyper-aware of our insecurities and weaknesses in the academy, we may discount the wealth of knowledge and skills with which we already have facility. Writing that playbill article was a small way for me to put use to my knowledge acquisition outside of the seminar space and the ivory tower by sharing it with others; it was a way for me to remind myself that I am qualified to speak on some things, to participate in conversations, and I should. Mine was not the only article in the playbill, nor can I say that it was the best (although I can't say that it wasn't). However, my piece carried a significance for me beyond the others and beyond the play itself: I am doing this PhD student thing. I find value in it. I am valuable at all points through it. I am qualified at all points through it, though what I'm qualified for will look differently at each turn. I have

knowledge to gain, perspectives to share, and conversations to join. What I am doing here does matter. What I am doing here *does* matter. What I am doing here does matter.

Sometimes we need to remind ourselves. Sometimes I need the reminder.

Morrison's article for Cal Shakes entitled "Fifty-Five Years Later: What's So Different?" can be accessed at http://www.calshakes.org/v4/media/programs/2014/2014_Raisin_Program_final.pdf

A Wynter State of Mind: The Sine Qua Non Coup de Grâce of Settler Colonialism

Michael J. Myers, II, PhD student

On April 13, 2015, *The Center for Race & Gender* (CRG) hosted a one day symposium entitled, “Foundational Violence: Settler Colonial Articulations.” The “Indigeneity and Racial Regimes” panel featured Ben Olguín (University of Texas, San Antonio), Candace Fujikane (University of Hawai’i, Manoa), and Andrea Smith (University of California, Riverside). The symposium’s second panel, “Gendering and Queering Settler Colonialism,” was comprised of Joanne Barker (San Francisco State University), Mishuana Goeman (University of California, Los Angeles), and Mark Rifkin (University of North Carolina, Greensboro). As I reflect on the ideas put forth by these scholars, the shared dialogues between participants and attendees, and the pentptych of racialization, labor, gender, sexuality, and citizenship coterminously produced by settler colonialism, I keep returning to galaxy superclusters in general, and the Laniakea Supercluster in particular.

Among the most colossal cosmic structures known, galaxy superclusters are groupings of galaxies and other galaxy clusters that span up to a dozen billion light years throughout the observable universe. As a point of reference, the Milky Way galaxy is estimated to be anywhere between 100,000-180,000 light years in diameter. Our galaxy however is just one galaxy that be-

longs to the Local Group of galaxies that spans roughly roughly 10 million light years. And this cluster of galaxies is a subset of another subset of galaxy clusters, all of which ultimately comprise the Laniakea Supercluster. While clear demarcations of its boundaries are not yet fully known, this supercluster is comprised of several other superclusters and extends more than 520 million light years. For added perspective, light travels a distance of 5,880,000,000,000 miles in a year. Thus, the product of 5.88 trillion and 520 million equals the nearly incomprehensible amount of miles the Laniakea Supercluster extends throughout the universe. I begin my reflection here because like the Laniakea Supercluster, settler colonialism situates and advances generative spatial, temporal, and historical analytics that form *and* invisibilize structures of domination.

The conference began with Corrina Gould of the Ohlone People illuminating the irony of a settler colonialism symposium at UC Berkeley because of its usurpation of sacred indigenous land from her ancestors. This point was not lost and Dr. Glenn, the director of the CRG, cogitated on this irony and asserted the importance of settler colonialism as a field of study using the work of two seminal scholars, Patrick Wolfe and Lorenzo Veracini. Wolfe notes that settler colonialism “is a structure,

not an event”[1] and Veracini argues this structure is a distinct transnational paradigm with distinct analytical definitions – rather than mere descriptions – to understand the logics of native genocide.[2] Similar to the galaxy clusters enmeshed within the Laniakea Supercluster, the symposium’s speakers discussed the various ways in which the following structures of systematic domination are entangled across space and time with settler colonialism: racialization and assimilation; violence and erasure; tourism and settler colonial map-making; imperial modes of both enforcing heteropatriarchy and disciplining queerness; and (even) the framing of resistance and strategies of settler decolonization. This last point anent settler decolonization, while perhaps implicit, is suggestive of how settler colonialism skews our sight for envisioning what is possible. I use the remainder of this piece to think through Ralph Ellison’s concept of the inner eye to reflect on the multivalent and parallaxic modes of sight that frames our vision. Specifically, I find Sylvia Wynter’s (re)conceptualization of ontological categorizations, Noelani Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua’s framing of settler allyship, and the ideas advanced at the symposium by Professors Candace Fujikane and Andrea Smith in particular, to be useful in this exercise.

Similar to the dark matter entangled within the structures of the Laniakea Supercluster, all of the symposium’s speakers spoke about invisibility within the structures of settler colonialism. Professor Fujikane discussed how the U.S. settler state works *pari passu* to invisibilize Native Hawaiians vis-à-vis the erasure of cultural epistemologies and the constitutive

modalities through which settler laws displace the Native from the land. Fujikane referenced how U.S. cartography practices in the early 1900s precipitated the summit of Mauna Kea being defined as both a wasteland and *terra nullius* when in fact it was a source of food and survivance for Natives. The veneers through which the settler state perceived Mauna Kea are particularly poignant considering the ongoing efforts to build the Thirty Meter Telescope at the summit,[3] an endeavor led by the University of California. While global protests contributed to the temporary halt in its construction, it is instructive to know that the W.M. Keck Observatory, another astronomical observatory located near the summit of Mauna Kea, withstood sixteen years of protest prior to its eventual opening. This dialectic promulgated by the settler’s gaze to invisibilize the Native in an attempt to see a priori invisible objects in space is a curious proposition. On one hand, the Keck Observatory discovered quasar UM287, making visible for the first time the entangled web of filament that comprises the Laniakea Supercluster.[4] This discovery explains why galaxies within the Laniakea Supercluster seem to move closer to each other despite the ongoing expansion of the universe. On the other hand, the ability to see these structures is coterminously predicated upon notions of unseeing and unbeing – that is, the persistent pandiculations of settler interests perpetually render Natives ontologically imperceptible. Ralph Ellison refers to this predicament of seeing and unbeing as a “peculiar disposition of the eyes,” that is shaped by the “inner eyes, those eyes with which they [the settler] look through their physical eyes upon reality.”[5] Ellison’s framing is

useful because it signals the extant forces which engineer how we see and perceive structures of domination in our society.

Sylvia Wynter elucidates how sight is always and already framed by our subjective symbolic representations that contribute to humans creating both the systems in which they live and the mechanisms by which these systems work. Wynter notes that our sight works to institute human systems that affect “the dynamics of an autopoietics whose imperative of stable reproduction has hitherto transcended the imperatives of the human subjects who collectively put it into dynamic play.”[6] To demonstrate this point, Professor Andrea Smith asked those present at the symposium to close their eyes and to imagine the perfect university. We all laughed when she asked how many imagined UC Berkeley and nobody signaled in the affirmative. Smith posited that most conversations anent bringing to fruition the perfect university are predicated upon reform rather than constructing the university we actually want due to perceived impracticalities. And because our sight is always entangled within the structures of power we inhabit and the epistemologies that make them legible, the optics through which we perceive are necessarily molded by the logics of settler colonialism.[7] Thus, the following question arises: if we can develop new ways of seeing the ways in which dark matter unites the structures of the Laniakea Supercluster, what does settler decolonization look like and what are the implications for praxis?

Taiaiake Alfred, an Indigenous scholar and activist long ago posited the following question concern-

ing a praxis predicated upon decolonization: “How do we create a political philosophy to guide our people that is neither derived from the Western model nor a simple reaction to it?”[8] At the symposium, Professor Andrea Smith argued the need to be Indigenous. That is, rather than thinking of Indigeneity as a noun, Indigeneity ought to be a verb, that Indigeneity ought to be measured by our actions. And perhaps this is what Noelani Goodyear-Ka’ōpua meant when she defined a settler ally: settlers that take responsibility for the land(s) on which they reside by working to help reestablish and rebuild Indigenous structures with Natives while always informed with the understanding of our historical, racialized, and gendered positionalities.[9] At the same time however, I recall lessons from Audre Lorde[10] and Sylvia Wynter, respectively[11]: the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house because the vision required to construct the house was/is built upon a foundation that only assumes the biological abnormal normality of existence, always yoked to concepts of “real” humans and varying forms of the other – Natives, hyphenated Americans, gender binaries, and ultimately, exogenous others and non-humans.

While this scenario for settler decolonization may appear to be an aporia, I remain critically optimistic. I recall Dr. Charles Henry’s interview with Dr. Leigh Raiford in the Fall-Winter 2011 edition of *The Diaspora* in which he reflects on how the field of Black Studies has changed during his time in our department. He seemed excited about the new modalities through which questions were being explored and of the methodologies being developed and utilized to do so. While I am

just beginning my doctoral studies, and am likewise still in the nascent stages of developing my inner eyes to see my way through and beyond these entangled structures of domination, I share a similar sense of hopefulness and excitement, particularly as it relates to the ways in which Black Studies scholars are engaging with settler colonialism.[12]

As discussed by the symposium's scholars, seeing our way through and beyond the systems of domination and logics of genocide requires us to understand that the radical hegemonic cultural shift that birthed 1492 is the same radical hegemonic cultural shift de rigueur to move beyond our current conceptualizations of being human. In other words, the same forces that created the Keck Observatory on sacred Native land atop Mauna Kea are also embedded within our attempts to move beyond the strictures of our inner eyes that invisibilizes Native lives. Or put another way, the same forces that led to the discovery of quasar UM287, which provided new ways of thinking about our place within the universe as a result of seeing for the first time the ways in which galaxies and galaxy clusters within the Laniakea Supercluster move across space is part and parcel of the same forces that will enable us to value a plurality of epistemologies rather than only those of the Global North. For it is only after we create new epistemologies of *being* and new ways of *seeing*, can we ever break from the forces that have shaped/continue to shape our ability to think through settler colonialism specifically, and oppression generally. As Sylvia Wynter's life work so powerfully demonstrates, only until "the grammarians of the social order"[13] begin to construct avenues

that enable us to conceptualize new modes of being, can we truly deracinate and deliver the coup de grâce to settler colonial ambitions.

Yours in the intellectual struggle.

Notes [1] Patrick Wolfe. *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (London: Cassell, 1999), p. 3. [2] Lorenzo Veracini. *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). [3] For further explanation, see here: <http://mixedracepolitics.com/2015/04/16/protecting-mauna-a-wakea-the-space-between-science-spirituality/> [4] For a more detailed (and awesome) explanation, see here: <http://www.astronomy.com/news/2014/11/spooky-alignment-of-quasars-across-billions-of-light-years> and here: http://www.keckobservatory.org/recent/entry/ucsc_scientists_capture_first_cosmic_web_filaments_at_keck_observatory [5] Ellison, *Invisible Man*, 3. [6] Sylvia Wynter, "The Ceremony Must Be Found: After Humanism," *Boundary 2* 12 (3)/13 (1) (1984): 44. [7] Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Over-Representation—An Argument," *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3 (2006): 306. [8] Taiaiake Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto* (Ontario, CA: Oxford University Press, 1999), xvii. [9] Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua. *The Seeds We Planted: Portraits of a Native Hawaiian Charter School* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013). [10] Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (New York: Random House Publishing, 2007). [11] Sylvia Wynter, "1492: A New World View," in *Race, Discourse and the Americas: A New World View*, ed. Vera Lawrence and Rex Nettleford (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 5-57. [12] See: King, Tiffany, "In the clearing: Black female bodies, space and settler colonial landscapes" (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2013). [13] Wynter, Sylvia, "No humans involved": An open letter to my colleagues." *Voices of the African Diaspora* 8, no. 2 (1992): 42-71.

The Black Room: Re-Visiting Fundamental Questions

Zachary Manditch-Prottas, PhD candidate

“But it was not the room’s disorder which was frightening; it was the fact that when one began searching for the key to this disorder, one realized that it was not to be found in any of the usual places.”

--James Baldwin, Giovanni’s Room

The 2014-2015 academic year has featured the addition of an exciting scholarly collective. *The Black Room: Revisiting “Blackness” in the Global 21st Century* is an Institute for International Studies Interdisciplinary Faculty Working Group. The core faculty is composed of English Department faculty members Nadia Ellis, Bryan Wagner and Stephen Best and African American Studies faculty members Leigh Raiford and Darieck Scott; *The Black Room* represents a “cross disciplinary cohort” whose varying scholarly interests are united by a common central inquires; what is blackness? And, what does it mean to belong to the Black Diaspora?

The Black Room’s call to revisit the meaning of blackness in the context the global 21st century is as much a call for a reorientation to a room never left as it is a call for (re)entrance. While *The Black Room* is comprised of scholars rooted in the humanities the nature of its guiding questions are suspended at the cross section of African Diaspora Studies interdisciplinarity. Urging a return to that basic inquiry, “what is blackness?” doubles as reminder of the thematic

continuity that undergirds African Diaspora Studies scholarship. This grounding inquiry can be deceptive in its suggested ambitions. It might, for some, seem that this question suggests the yearning for *an*, or better yet, *the* answer. However, following paradigmatic theorizations which emphasis the Diaspora as an agentive project/process rather than exclusively a coerced condition, the answers are many and variances are anticipated, and encouraged. *The Black Room* seeks to provide an inclusive space where intellectual splintering represents not irresolvable divergences in search of absolute conclusions but, rather, differences as mutually constitutive within the context of shared engagement in a common project.

If the brilliance of the core faculty isn’t enough, one of *The Black Room’s* primary initiatives is facilitating a guest lecturer series featuring visiting scholars and artists “whose work engages with blackness not as a historical condition whose meaning is already known but instead as a problem for thought”. The group’s inaugural Fall 2014 line-up represented a strong start in welcoming preeminent scholars dedicated to these goals. The flagship event featured Harvard University Professor of History and Professor of African and African-American Studies Vincent Brown who delivered a talk entitled “Designing Histories of Slavery for the Age of the Database”. Professor Brown utilized innovative multi-media

cartography to consider the dehumanizing effects of empiricism and to nuance the utility of Historical Archives of Transatlantic Slavery as tools to reconsider “how history has been, could be, and should be represented”. Subsequently, *The Black Room* welcomed acclaimed alumni author/activist and Stanford University’s Executive Director of the Institute for Diversity in the Arts, Jeff Chang. Chang’s talk, “Who We Be: The Colorization of America,” considered the inextricable relationship of culture and politics in national conceptions of meanings of race. Via a cultural history spanning roughly the past half-century Chang emphasized the interplay of art, activism and discursive meanings of race and ultimately puts forth the compelling prospect that perhaps “art might make possible a new politics”.

With bar set high *The Black Room* was not let down in the Spring of 2015. The second semester of the project featured a visit from author of the acclaimed book *Charisma and the Fictions of Black Leadership* and Associate Professor of English at the University of California, Riverside Erica Edwards. Edwards talk “Black Femininity and the Seductions of Emergency: African American Literature after 9/11” examined Condoleezza Rice’s memoirs and the television series *Scandal*, to argue that post 9/11 national threat and protection are “visible as a raced and gendered logic of the security apparatus, one that positions black women like Rice at the center of a new imaginary of U.S. power.” *The Black Room* concluded the year’s speaker series with Black Culture Studies pioneer and continued vanguard Professor in History of Art and African American



Studies at Yale University, Kobena Mercer. Mercer’s talk, “Afromodern versus Post-Black? A Diasporic Historiography for African American Art” considered how the ostensibly recent analytical tool termed “Afromodernism” was in fact, “waiting for us in the picture book Alain Locke published in 1940, *The Negro in Art*”.

The Black Room lecture series and reading group discussion series will continue in the 2015-2016 academic year. You can join our mailing list by contacting *The Black Room* graduate student assistant Zach Manditch-Protas at: zprottas215@berkeley.edu

Image credit: Professor Leigh Raiford.



Barbara Chase-Riboud: in-brief

Essence Harden, PhD candidate

The towering sculptures of Barbra Chase-Riboud commanded and enveloped the second floor of the Berkeley Art Museum in February-April of 2014. The luring bronze cast steles stand near ten feet tall seemingly floating on woven threads of rayon, silk and wool. The juxtaposition of soft and hard materials, of rigid and fluid structure, of West African aesthetics with those of Western Europe aid in the abstract fruition of Chase-Riboud's work.

The exhibition *Barbara Chase-Riboud: The Malcolm X Steles* featured six sculptures, two of which were of the Malcolm X series, and several graphite and charcoal drawings on paper. Yet, as the exhibition title suggested it was those figures dedicated to the memory of Malcolm X that resoundingly strike and compel the viewers gaze. Begun in 1969, four years after Malcolm's death, Chase-Riboud's series utilized her now signature abstract aesthetic in sculptural homage to the slain civil rights leader. Malcolm X #3 standing just above eight feet, is a fractured wax cast of bronze with a golden polish floating atop rods of rayon and cotton which sweep the floor beneath it. Malcolm X #10 (seen on the left) levitates blackened bronze, which reads as leather, on woven and braided black and white fibers refusing the logic of gravity. These, and the other four striking sculptures present a unique paradox through the disruption of forms, materials, and senses. thus imaging something wholly powerful, wholly beautiful in its seeming impossibility. *Image credit: The Berkeley Art Museum.*

"Interrogating the African Diaspora: Transnationalism, Development, & the Politics of Culture" Working Group 2014-2015 Review

Charisse Burden, PhD candidate

The "Interrogating the African Diaspora" working group, sponsored by the Townsend Center for the Humanities, was born out of a meeting of graduate students in the African Diaspora Studies program who were interested in attending the 2015 Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora Conference. The initial purpose of the working group was to get those who were presenting at ASWAD better acquainted with the field, especially key issues, debates, trends, and themes. In the application to the Townsend Center, we articulated the research and intellectual aims thus:

This working group seeks to explore the multifarious ways that the African Diaspora as a concept, analytic, and field of inquiry can be used to engage issues of the 21st century. Racialization, neoliberalization, transnationalism, migration, space-time compression, cross-cultural contact, and growing disparities in wealth are just a few of the problems with which modern Diasporic subjects must contend. Because African Diaspora Studies is inherently interdisciplinary, utilizing methods, approaches, and theories from disciplines ranging from English to Anthropology, interdisciplinarity will be essential to our working group... Ultimately we would like to hold a lecture on campus that

would explore some aspect of the African Diaspora. for the Study of Worldwide African Diaspora Conference that will be held in Charleston in 2015.

Many of the objectives of the working group were achieved, including the organization of an ASWAD panel, entitled, "Insurgent Diaspora Studies: Toward New Futures in the Field," comprised of Charisse Burden, Jarvis Givens, Selina Makana, and Kimberly McNair.

The year's meetings kicked off on October 4, 2015, and at this meeting we discussed the scope of the field; different uses of the African Diaspora analytic; the ways in which different members theorized Diaspora; and a bevy of articles by authors including Paul Zeleza, Deborah A. Thomas, Kamari Clarke, Tavia Nyong'o, and Kenneth Warren. We continued to meet monthly, discussing a range of topics including the relationship between Diaspora Studies, African American Studies, Black Studies, and Africana Studies; multidisciplinary, interdisciplinarity, and transdisciplinarity; gender, sexuality, and queerness; and non-traditional routes in the African Diaspora. The working group participants' diverse areas of specialization made for rich and interesting discussions, especially relating to the continued

utility of the African Diaspora as an analytic for the global Black experience.

The intellectual efforts of the Working Group culminated in the organizing of Michelle Wright's March 19, 2015 lecture, spearheaded by Charisse Burden and Selina Makana. Dr. Wright, associate professor of Black European and African Diaspora studies in the Department of African American Studies at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, and author of the seminal text *Becoming Black: Creating Identity in the African Diaspora*, gave a talk, luncheon and book signing focused on her latest text, *Physics of Blackness: Beyond the Middle Passage Epistemology* (University of Minnesota Press, 2015). For the luncheon, the working group prepared a set of questions for Professor Wright to address. Some of these questions were: What does Diaspora look like if we centralize issues of gender, sexuality, and queerness as constitutive of, not additive to, the theorizing of Diaspora? Scholars like you, Tina Campt, Gloria Wekker, Jacqueline Nassy Brown, and Jane Ifekwunigwe advocate moving away from Americocentrism and the Middle Passage epistemology in theorizing Diaspora; what are the new narratives that might emerge from this move? How does theorizing gender undergird this move away from the Middle Passage? What do you hope to accomplish with this reconstitution of Diaspora? And, how is Africa as a contemporary and "modern" geospatial reality relevant to the theorizing of Diaspora inasmuch as the latter typically relies on Africa as a historically static progenitor of culture?

In her talk, Professor Wright argued that our use of "Newtonian" spacetime in Black Diaspora studies unintentionally creates the marginalization of Black women, Black queers and Black communities and individuals who are not directly interpellated through an epistemology of the Middle Passage. By revealing how most ideations about time and space in physics are being refashioned and reformulated through contemporary conceptual explorations of Blackness in the academy, including afro-futurism and afro-pessimism, she mapped out a "physics of Blackness" in which agency, diversity and inclusion are the norm rather the exception. Finally, at the book signing at University Press, Professor Wright continued an informal discussion of her alternative framework of the African Diaspora as she signed copies of her book for students and professors.

Our last meeting of the year was dedicated to a discussion of *Physics of Blackness*, with particular attention paid to how participants would be incorporating the text into Qualifying Exam position papers, dissertation chapters, or other scholarly publications. Collectively, we were particularly excited by the space opened up by Professor Wright's emphasis on populations that had generally been excluded or marginalized in dominant Diasporic discourse. Having covered the history of African Diaspora Studies and contemporary debates and issues in the field, it was fitting to end with possibilities for more inclusive Diasporic futures outlined in Professor Wright's text. It is my hope that the Interrogating the African Diaspora Working Group participants will be instrumental in shaping these possibilities.

Diaspora Dialogues: The ADS Graduate Forum

Jarvis R. Givens, PhD candidate

During this past academic year I had the opportunity to organize the African Diaspora Studies Graduate Forums. This consisted of monthly lunches where one professor and one advanced graduate student presented on their current intellectual projects. The ADS forums created opportunities for graduate students to learn about the work of their peers and faculty members, and to get more exposure on formally presenting the academic work that we spend so much time on. When discussing the idea of these forums with Kim McNair, our departments' graduate liaison, we envisioned them serving as a model for conference presentations for our colleagues and an opportunity to learn about the valuable and diverse intellectual projects taking form in our departmental community.

The warm response from the department, by both students and faculty, made planning these events easy and tremendously rewarding. I sent out the call, ordered food, and reserved the conference room for the event and the department did the rest. There was great attendance throughout the year, and the presenters offered diverse and intellectually rich topics as demonstrated by the list below.

Overall, I believe that these events helped to contribute to towards cultivating a healthy academic community within the department. It's important for graduate students to feel comfortable sharing their work

and being intellectually vulnerable amongst their colleagues and professors—the forums created the space for this to happen. I thoroughly enjoyed planning these events as a departmental citizen and I hope to see it continue in the future, in one form or another.

I would like to close with a special thank you to all the presenters that participated in this year's graduate forums. The work of African Diaspora Studies at Berkeley is in great hands!

Please see the following page for a record of the the 2014-2015 ADS Graduate Forums schedule.

Fall 2014

September 18th

- Michael McGee, Jr., “Promises & Compromises: Freedom, Race, and National Unity”.
- Dr. Ula Taylor, “Trumphing Patriarchy”

October 23rd

- Charisse Burden, “The (Re)Turn to Political Economy in African Diaspora Theory: Articulating the Cultural to Economic Realities”
- Dr. Sam Mchombo, “Issues of Language in Education in Africa.”

November 18th

- Ameer Loggins, “Black *Selfsploitation* in the Context of Social Networking.”
- Dr. Nikki Jones, “Police and Citizen Encounters in the Filmore District in San Francisco”

Spring 2015

February 17th

- Mario Nisbett, “Roots/Heritage Tourism in the African Diaspora: The Jamaican Maroons and Their Partnerships in Development”
- Dr. Ugo Nwokeji, “The Slave Trade, Hydrocarbons and Globalization in the Niger Delta”

March 10th

- Zachary Manditch-Prottas, “Zealous Watchmen: James Baldwin, Eldridge Cleaver and Homosocial Discourses of Authenticity”
- Dr. Leigh Raiford, “The Here and Now of Eslanda Robeson’s *AFRICAN JOURNEY*”

April 14th

- Selina Makana, “Ready for Combat: Women and Armed Struggle in Angola”
- Dr. Kwame Nimako, “Race Resistance Institutions and the Emergence of Black Europe Summer School”

Gender in the Post-Beijing Era

Selina Makana, PhD candidate

On December 9, 2014 at the Blum Hall, the Departments of Gender & Women's Studies and Sociology held a panel discussion that featured Dr. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, the Executive Director of UN Women, and a panel of UC Berkeley faculty from the departments of Sociology, Geography, History, Asian and South East Asian Studies, Anthropology, Energy and Resources Group, Gender and Women's Studies, and Disability Studies. This vibrant and historic panel discussion engaged with the various ways gender intersects with pertinent issues of nationalism, sexuality, migrant workers, labor laws, water and environmental sustainability, culture, and disability.

The theme of the panel discussion 'Gender for New Century: Countering Violence and Social Exclusions,' was meant to coincide with the overall focus for the UN Women on the importance of women's human rights to every sphere of life. The panelists reflected on the challenges faced by women in different societies since the 1995 Beijing Declaration that guaranteed equal rights of men and women in the areas of health, education, political participation, economic well-being, freedom from violence, among many others.

In her response to the concerns raised by panelists, Dr. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, The United Nations Under-Secretary General, acknowledged that while significant strides have been in areas of education

and healthcare, women continue to be at the bottom of the economic ladder. Dr. Mlambo-Ngcuka, emphasized the need for vibrant research on gender and women's issues, mobilization, advocacy campaigns and transnational solidarities as a way to help push forward key elements of the gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment goal in the post-2015 development agenda.

Indeed, the issues raised at this event by all panelists are relevant to those of us invested in the African diaspora as a field of inquiry. Taking stock of the milestones achieved in the post-Beijing era also involves contending with the ways in which despite the *de facto* and *de jure* equality for women, neoliberal ideologies continue to deny many women of color—both in the West and the developing world—from fully exercising their political, social and economic rights. Take the criminal justice system as an example. In her book *The Meaning of Freedom* (2012), Angela Davis reminds us that the criminal justice system has emerged as a new form of global structural racism which functions as a privileged site into which the surplus, marginalized and impoverished populations of the world are deposited.



Top left: Tyreka Lewis and other Panther alumni.

Top right: Kimberly McNair and Tyreka Lewis.

Bottom left: Carole Hyams (left) wife of Elbert Big Man Howard and unknown Panther alumni (right)

Photographs by Kimberly McNair.

"My Heart Falls to Pieces"

PARTY PEOPLE at the Berkeley Repertory Theater

Kimberly McNair, PhD candidate

"MY HEART FALLS TO PIECES
WHEN I SEE HOW YOU LOOK AT ME
THERE'S MORE TO THIS THAN BLACK EYED
PEAS
THERE'S MORE TO THIS THAN RICE AND
BEANS."[1]

In the fall of 2014, *PARTY PEOPLE (Revisited)*, a powerful play created by the UNIVERSES Ensemble Theater Company, enjoyed a six-week critically acclaimed run at the Berkeley Repertory Theater.[2] The play first premiered at The Oregon Shakespeare Festival in 2012, and was re-developed by the BRT Ground Floor with a new premiere at Berkeley Rep in 2014.

The play revolves around a reunion gathering, in an unnamed urban city, of former members of the Black Panther Party and the Young Lords Party. My reading of the story centers on three main characters – Clara, a young woman orphaned by her parents who were members of the Young Lords Party; Malik, the son of a former Panther and political prisoner serving a life sentence for most of his son's life; and Jimmy, a young arrogant and charismatic artist and promoter. Malik and Jimmy are infatuated and inspired

by the photographic record and oppositional style of those movements. But each character is disheartened and confused by the history and fiction surrounding the martyrs, leaders, and rank and file members of those movements. The play is very much about the specter of past radicalism that haunts today's youth movements, be it Hip Hop as a cultural movement or today's socio-political movements against the criminalization of communities of color and systemic racism in the justice system, education, immigration, health care, and other institutions.

I had the privilege of being in the audience on both opening and closing night. The play's run was book-ended by the cases of both Mike Brown (18, Ferguson, MO) and Eric Garner (43, New York, NY) whose deaths ignited a radical wave of uprisings and protests nationwide and the growing Black Lives Matter movement that began with the Trayvon Martin (17, Sanford, FL) case in 2012. As I write this review, our nation is now in the wake of the murder of Walter Scott (50, N. Charleston, SC) and yet another incident of gross injustice in the case of Freddie Gray (25, Baltimore, MA), who's death brought on what's now being called – BLACK SPRING – a reference to Arab Spring of 2010. The

palatable tensions of the present were coupled with the remnants and emotions of the past battles won, lost, and continued.

PARTY PEOPLE is a very timely, thought provoking, and thoroughly researched play that speaks to the gaps and absences in black and brown collective memory, and dismemory. The generational connections and disconnections are at the heart of the play. *What is the price for being a “revolutionary”? What is the unknown cost levied on those who come after? And what happened to those revolutionaries who did not die?* The story is about legacy, inheritance, and distinguishing between the image of these organizations in the national imaginary and the content of their politics. It represents the embrace and distancing from a politics reduced to surface level aesthetic and images appropriated and reused because of their incorporation into mainstream media and popular imagination.[3] Throughout the play, the previous generations attempts to demystify that history and their legacy. Clara, Malik, and Jimmy represent a generation that had to “fill in” the blank and “fill in” for absent parents and leadership. Clara, Malik and Jimmy are the youth in the streets of Baltimore, Ferguson, New York, Oakland...

PARTY PEOPLE was an excellent production and exploration into issues that still resonate today.

Notes [1] UNIVERSES (Mildred Ruiz-Sapp, Steven Sapp, William Ruiz a.k.a NINJA), *PARTY PEOPLE*, Stage Play Directed/Developed by: Liesl Tommy, Berkeley Repertory Theater Draft, October 29, 2014. [2] UNIVERSES is national ensemble theater company, of multi-disciplined writers and performers of color, who fuse theater, poetry, dance, jazz, hip hop, politics, down home blues and Spanish boleros to create moving, challenging and entertaining works for the stage. For more information visit: <http://www.universesonstage.com/> [3] n.b. Kathleen Cleaver “Liberation, Imagination, and the Black Panther Party” (2001) and Angela Davis “Afro Images: Politics, Fashion, and Nostalgia” (1994).



Mommy Is Coming: in-brief

Grace Gipson, PhD student

Mommy is Coming is the first in what Feminist Porn award-winning and Oakland-native Director Cheryl Dunye promises will be a Berlin trilogy. This LGBT art-house film parodies typical relationship romantic comedies and interrogates queer sexuality in ways that aim to disrupt our ideas of porn. Strategically using interviews, Dunye pushes the boundaries of the roles we play while acting sex and the act of sex. Thinking critically about the portrayal of pornography and adult comedy, *Mommy is Coming* employs an international lens to discuss taboo topics such as BDSM and queer slapstick humor. *Mommy is Coming* is a film that does a stimulating job of visualizing the different possibilities and complexities for bringing sex and sexuality into public view. Through a series of fortunate events, kinky lesbian porn, romantic comedy, and ode to the lusty Berlin leather scene *Mommy is Coming* brings a whole new meaning to “room service.”

Image credit: Post-screening discussion with filmmaker and director Cheryl Dunye and queer porn star Jiz Lee, sponsored by African American Studies, Gender and Women's Studies, and Theater, Dance and Performance Studies. Photograph by Lilith Claire.

VèVè Clark Institute for Engaged Scholars: Student Reflection

Tamrin Stewart, Clark Scholar and undergraduate major

“There is a difference between a student and a scholar.” Cara Stanley’s words epitomize how the Clark Institute has challenged me to grow in my time here at Cal.

During my freshman year living in the African American Theme Program—affectionately referred to as the “Afro Floor”—, one of my friends happened to come into my room to encourage me to accompany her to the Clark information session. Coming into Berkeley as a freshman, I knew that I was interested in taking African American Studies courses and planned to minor in the discipline. However, after the info session, I knew that I had to participate in the Clark Institute. Although I understood double majoring would be hard and questioned whether it would be the best option, I was so moved by the mission of the Clark Institute that I decided to double major so that I could be eligible.

As its mission, the Clark Institute for Engaged Scholars provides students majoring in the African American Studies with the mentorship and resources necessary to prepare us for the rigor of top graduate schools and professional schools. As cliché as it sounds, the Clark Institute has meant far more to me.

The Clark Institute has been so valuable to me because it has allowed me to feel a true sense of belonging within the department. Last year, J. Finley, who recently graduated from the PhD program, took Clark scholars and the Clark Steering Committee on a “ride

along” to a women’s stand-up comedy show in San Francisco. While it was definitely a fun outing, Finley explained to us how she conducts her field studies and interviews. Experiences like this have been so essential to my understanding that as Clark Scholars we are part of a community that is supportive to us as students while also having high expectations for our intellectual growth as scholars.

Inspired by the mentorship I have received from everyone involved in the Clark Institute, I am excited to begin on my own path in research. This summer, I will be participating in the Leadership Alliance program at the University of Chicago. I will be conducting an original research project and mentored by a University of Chicago professor. While I have not solidified what my project will be on, I am particularly interested in studying the current rising of Black Nationalism as the Obama Era comes to a close. At the end of the summer, I will present the results of my study at the annual Leadership Alliance national symposium.



Clark Institute: Student Reflection

Vanessa Oliphant, Clark Scholar and undergrad major

The VèVè Clark Institute has a special place in my heart and is one of the wisest decisions I made here at Cal. I applied because I had no guidance, no one to talk to, and was literally blindsided by the reality of being the first to attend college. I worked so hard in high school to ‘make it out’ but now that I ‘made it’ what do I do now? I was conflicted, frustrated, and was slowly losing my faith and determination. I knew this was problematic. I knew I needed to find someone or something before this institution ate me up. Thank God he sent me Professor Cara; in Summer Bridge she told me to apply to be a VèVè Clark scholar. I loved her and I loved the idea of becoming a scholar, so I applied. I didn’t have a major, I no longer wanted to be a lawyer, and I was lost. But after experiencing Professor Cara’s class in the summer, something inside me told me to step out, take a chance, and dream. Why did I major in African American studies? Because I hated being black, I hated being identified as dumb and incompetent, but most importantly I discovered that I hated myself. According to Professor Cara, this is called internalized hatred. The ability to identify and name hegemonic forces was the most liberating experience of my life. Thus, I declared African American Studies, I am learning how to love myself, and I am surrounded/supported by strong and powerful individuals. I strongly recommend applying for this institute; it’s not only inspiring, but it’s a beautiful example of how we too can succeed. I am blessed and honored to be a VèVè Clark scholar.

Professor VèVè Clark. Photograph by Francine Price.

Meet the 2014-2015 First Years



Jamal A. Batts hails from Virginia Beach, VA. He holds a B.A. in African American Studies from Virginia Commonwealth University and an M.A. in American Studies from California State University, Fullerton (CSUF). While a student at CSUF, he served as an Editorial Assistant for the *American Quarterly*, while housed at the University of Southern California. He has presented scholarly and performance work related to his research interests, including black studies, queer studies, and visual culture, at a number of conferences and spaces. He is a recipient of the Eugene Cota-Robles and Townsend-Mellon Discovery Fellowships and received the Peter C. Rollins Award (for the “best presentation having to do with a popular culture issue”) at the 2013 Southwest Texas Popular/American Culture Association Conference. In 2013, he was selected to attend and participated in significant academic institutes including Northwestern University’s Summer Institute in Performance, themed “Performance, Technology, and Biopolitics.”



Michael J. Myers II is from Buffalo, NY. A first-generation college student, Michael graduated with honors from SUNY Buffalo State with a B.S. in Criminal Justice. He then went on to earn an M.P.A. from SUNY Binghamton and an M.S. Ed in Education Policy from the University of Pennsylvania. Michael's research interests include the relationship between neoliberal urban governance and school-to-prison pipelines and the political economy of grassroots organizations working towards community-controlled schooling. His work has been published in *Black Educational Choice: Assessing the Private and Public Alternatives to Traditional K-12 Public Schools* (2011) and *Alpha Phi Alpha: A Legacy of Greatness, the Demands of Transcendence* (2011).

Prior to enrolling into the doctoral program in the Department of African American Studies at the UC Berkeley, Michael taught education, political science, and sociology courses at an HBCU in Texas. He also worked alongside both African American and Indigenous grassroots organizations in their efforts to resist the privatization of education in their communities.

In addition to his research interests, Michael enjoys listening to Jay Z and Clipse, cheering for the Buffalo Bills, learning quantum physics, traveling, teaching, and spending time with his family.



John A. Mundell graduated cum laude and with distinction from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2010 with a B.A. in Spanish, a B.A. in Latin American Studies, and a minor in African and Afro-American Studies. He earned his M.A. Ed. in Spanish and Portuguese Education from Wake Forest University in 2011, after which he moved to Salvador, Brazil to live and study for three years. There, at the Universidade Federal da Bahia (UFBA), he defended his ethnographic research on gay black masculinities in and out of family culture in the city of Salvador, being awarded his M.A. in Ethnic and African Studies. He also had the chance to present some of his research at the triennial Gender Studies conference *Fazendo Gênero* in Florianópolis, Brazil in 2013. While at UFBA, he designed and annually taught a course called “The African American Experience through Poetry,” having been highly influenced by his summer reading apprenticeship under the late Dr. Maya Angelou at Wake Forest.

Here at Berkeley, John’s research interests include black queer and heteronormative expressions of gender and sexuality, particularly black queer and heterosexual masculinities, in Latin America and the U.S. and how these are expressed in varying historical and social contexts, such as slave narratives, mainstream and non-mainstream fiction, the family, sex, homosociality, public education and health, and the penitentiary system. He is looking forward most to working with a cohort and faculty with diverse interests, as well as teaching undergraduate students. This semester, he is a Portuguese GSI teaching accelerated Portuguese for Spanish-speakers.

American Trained Barber: in-brief

Christina Bush, PhD candidate

Amidst the visual and kinesthetic cacophony that marked the diversity of works and performances showcased at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts' *Field of Inquiry: The Body Politic*, Essence Harden and Jihaari Terry's installation "American Trained Barber" offered, in its quietude, a delightful rupture. Akin to the space of the barbershop, the installation offered respite without compromising critical provocation on issues of race and masculinity-but rather fomented them on its own terms. The artists' adroit use of multifarious materials, textures, and media ranging from austere images-as captured by the six black and white photographs that neatly framed the back wall, to the more brilliant hues of red, yellow, blue, green, and brown embellishing the wooden barbershop accoutrements thrust upon the playful floral motif that adorned the floor captured the hodgepodge play with a/symmetry often associated with black aesthetics particularly as they manifest within unfettered black cultural spaces. Finally, the installation was capped by an overtly interactive element as audience members were extemporaneously incorporated into the installation as the recipients of haircuts from a barber (American, trained, presumably)- ultimately providing the corporeal fodder for the figuring and refiguring of black visual and aesthetic production through stylization that is at the center of the piece.

Image credit: Essence Harden.



Congratulations to Our 2015 M.A. Recipients

Masters of Arts in African American Studies



Mariko Pegs



Olivia K. Young

Congratulations to Our 2015 M.A. Recipients

Masters of Arts in African American Studies



Kenly Brown



Gabriel Regalado

Congratulations to Our New PhD Candidates

Doctoral candidates who have passed their qualifying exams in 2014-2015



Essence Harden



Selina Makana

Congratulations to Our New PhD Candidates

Doctoral candidates who have passed their qualifying exams in 2014-2015



Amani Morrison

Position papers by Harden

“Gendering Diaspora”

“Considering a Black Masculine Performance”

Position papers by Makana

“Subaltern Liminality: Gendering Diasporic Identities through Black Women’s Literary Imagination”

“Narrating Political Lives: Theory and Practice of Women’s Autobiography in Africa”

Position papers by Morrison

“Toward an Interdisciplinary Methodology for Constructing Black Historical Narratives”

“Diaspora: Remaking Home”

Congratulations to Our PhD Recipients

Doctors of African American Studies, 2014-2015



Dr. Mario Nisbett

Dissertation Title: “The Work of Diaspora: Engaging Origins, Tradition and Sovereignty Claims of Jamaican Maroon Communities.”

In examining how “Black” communities engage diaspora, my project focuses on four post-colonial Maroon communities of Jamaica, the oldest autonomous polities in the Caribbean, which were established by escapees from slave-holding authorities during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Maroons, as a Black community, are being positioned next to the amorphous concept of diaspora. The term “diaspora” typically refers to people who have been dispersed from their place of origins but maintain tradition and connections with kin in abroad. However, I complicate this and argue that the “African Diaspora” is the condition that produces the collective consciousness of sameness rooted in the idea of common African origins based on a common experience of Black abjection. I argue that Black communities, using the tropes of “origins” and “tradition,” articulate diaspora to carve out independent space for Black autonomy or sovereignty. Thus, the dissertation demonstrates in employing articulation and critical practice of diaspora that Black communities—such as the Maroons—are able to pursue full sovereignty.

Dr. Nisbett is relocating to Africa for a year to do consulting with a start-up incubator (Employtech) in Kenya, while being affiliated with Kenyatta University. There, he will conduct research on pan-African cooperation on issues of economic co-development focusing on Kenya, Ethiopia and Ghana.

Congratulations to Our PhD Recipients

Doctors of African American Studies, 2014-2015



Dr. Jasmin Kaur

Dissertation Title: “Spectacular Visualizations of Abjection in High Fashion Photography : Critical Practices of Queer and Diaspora”

My project examines the visual space of high fashion as an instantiation of privilege, power, and sophistication and the possibilities these offer for contesting and exposing racial difference and sexual/gendered normatively. It interrogates the relationship between abjection and difference through a series of high fashion images in contemporary print and digital advertisements – a space in which visualizations of abjection are glamorized, celebrated and valued, and where tropes of the abject are unashamedly capitalized to entice consumption.

Dr. Kaur has accepted a Post Doctoral Fellowship at the Centre of Diaspora and Transnational Studies , University of Toronto.

A Vital Second Home

Patrick Johnson, PhD candidate

As a student in the Graduate School of Education's Social and Cultural Studies (SCS) program, I have encountered an incredibly supportive environment in the Department of African-American Studies. As my research investigates how black youth understand blackness through popular culture and the myriad ways past black media shape black cultural memory, it is imperative that my work is in direct conversation with the knowledge produced in the Department of African American Studies and black studies more broadly. Black studies provides a space where my interdisciplinary curiosity is not only valued but encouraged.

My engagement with the department is vital for my research, particularly when it comes to mapping the terrain of black popular culture. As part of the Race, Gender and Popular Culture working group, we grapple with many of the questions Stuart Hall posed over 20 years ago. In our attempts to understand the black in black popular culture, we return to some core questions. What is popular? What signifies blackness within the public sphere? How do representations within popular culture relate to everyday black life? As I have noted, these questions are not new. In fact, black people asked them long before black studies became institutionalized within higher education. However, these questions remain particularly salient within the current political and social context. In the face of multi-prong attacks on black humanity, it is also important to examine spaces where black pleasure and joy are experienced. In com-

bating oppression, joy functions as a powerful form of resistance. Through my engagement with the department, I have also discovered one of Berkeley's most productive pedagogical environments—the VêVê Clark Student Lounge. The lounge is a vibrant space where scholars freely collaborate and share resources. As scholarship is an iterative process, I appreciate opportunities to build with other graduate students and flesh out ideas. This counters elements of the academy that incentivizes individualism at the expense of collectivity. The communal forms of pedagogy that are foundational to African American educational praxis inform learning within the department, both in and outside of the classroom. The department's professors have also been tremendous resources. They have welcomed me in their courses and have shown a genuine interest in my development as a scholar. Their tutelage has pushed my research in unexpected and exciting directions.

Ultimately, I am incredibly thankful for the Department of African American Studies. Navigating Berkeley would be exponentially more difficult without the support of the community of scholars in the department. I encourage undergraduate and graduate students to establish homes in multiple departments as stepping outside of our departmental silos can provide the intellectual and emotional sustenance necessary to continue our educational journeys.



"Who Taught You To Love Yourself? Black Womyn!" a #SayHerName photography series by April Martin at Omi Gallery, Oakland. Photograph by Ianna Hawkins Owen.

Remembering Carmen

Lindsey Villarreal, Graduate and Undergraduate Advisor

The Fall semester is such an energizing, exciting and busy time of the year in academia. As the semester begins we are reminded that not only is it a fresh start to a term, but it is also a new academic year. Incoming freshman begin flooding the campus, transfer students are warily making their way through the crowded halls and Sproul Plaza, new and continuing doctoral students surface after what seemed like the fastest summer of their lives just came to a jarring stop, and everyone is filled with a combination of hope, excitement and dread.

As an advisor I am swept in by this energy, not to mention my duties that come with this time of year as I check to make sure people are hired, paid, have keys, get their classes and navigate through the bureaucracy known as the University of California. At times it is such a powerful and energizing pull that time flies by and I later wonder how we ended up in finals week. But in the past few years at some point during this stressful yet invigorating time, I am pulled in another direction, a more somber and reflective space. Some time during this period I am stopped in my tracks and the memory of one who should be here hits me like a ton of bricks...I am reminded of Carmen Mitchell. Since 2010 the beginning of the fall semester will always invoke the memory of Carmen for me. Carmen was an intelligent, creative, loving and beautiful woman who was not only a student I worked with, but became a dear friend who has taught

me so much about life. It was early in the Fall semester of 2010 that I recall getting the dreadful news that my beloved student and friend had passed; that moment my life changed in ways I never imagined. To this day I still have not reconciled losing a friend and graduate student by way of suicide.

I will never forget the new graduate cohort coming in fresh and excited as I sat there feeling like my soul had been ripped from me, wondering how this could happen “on my watch” and how I could inspire and assist new graduate students with this dark cloud hanging over the Department (and me). I was plagued with thoughts of what I could have done differently, what I could have done better, and why I couldn’t prevent this tragedy from happening. Carmen was a special soul. She loved being a doctoral student (in the beginning of her journey). She loved her research on house music. She loved being a DJ, dancing and touching lives through music. She loved learning and writing. She taught and lived in Japan. Young people loved her. Older people loved her. She was inspirational. She was strong. She was incredibly focused, organized and on top of everything. How on earth could someone like that just pluck herself from this world? From our world and our community? It has taken years for me to come to terms with her death and while I don’t think I will ever fully come to terms

with it, here are some of the things that I remember to help ease the pain. I remember that Carmen loved what she did and that she chose African Diaspora Studies at UC Berkeley just as much as we chose her. I remember that she left a legacy in the department and in my personal and professional life. I remember that sometimes, if not always, we need to **listen** more carefully. I remember that even when someone looks beautiful and together on the outside they may be struggling severely on the inside. I remember that it is hard to make a person understand how loved and valued they are if they are in an emotional or psychological space where they don't feel that. I remember that I must live love and show love through my actions as frequent as I can. I remember that there is no challenge that we can't overcome without time and support. I remember that students (people in general) are so much more complex than what we see in our interactions on campus, in classrooms and in office hours. I remember that I need to remind my children as often as possible that they are loved and that their struggles are valid, even if I am not walking in their shoes. Because I have not walked in Carmen's shoes, but I recall her love for walking, and how it was such an outlet for the stress she was encountering, I offer my advising time in the form of walking, in the spirit of Carmen and in the spirit of building community. Walking advising sessions are offered as a means of detoxing from the daily toxins we consume as part of the academic journey and as part of being a citizen of this world. This is just one way to remember Carmen Mitchell.

Pictured right: Carmen Mitchell.



Reflections Upon Retirement

Stephanie Jackson, Assistant III

It was the 27th of August 1980, yet unlike the legendary refrain from the Temptation's song "Papa was a Rolling Stone," that was the day that I started my career in the African American Studies Department at Cal! During this period in my life I was a sideline militant, married with a nine-month-old baby and my husband was transitioning jobs from the Ford Motor Company to a local beer company and I needed to work. My sister-in-law was employed at Cal in the Doe library and she suggested that I apply to Berkeley. After looking at numerous positions I applied for the Afro-American Studies Department's Senior Typist Clerk/Receptionist appointment. Although I had interviewed for several positions, the Afro-American Studies job description captured my imagination. I felt that working with intellectuals, scholars, and the community, plus learning various aspects about my heritage, would be exciting. I knew this was where I wanted to work and where I could make a difference. Administratively representing the Department in a positive light has been my goal over the last 34 years.

As I look back technology-wise, we have come a long way since the early '80s. There was no Telebears, students enrolled in classes with punch cards. Course materials were reproduced on ditto or mimeograph machines and there was no bCourses online system. It's hard to imagine no e-mail but back then we communicated

by rotary phones and a campus operator; memos were duplicated with carbon paper. There were no computers and we typed from handwritten manuscripts. I remember typing several pieces for Dr. Barbara Christian and this is when I was introduced and learned about great black women writers, such as Alice Walker, Paule Marshall, Toni Morrison, Zora Neale Hurston and others. I was fascinated by her critiques and was inspired to read works by these outstanding women writers.

During my tenure I have met many personalities that have taught courses, lectured, and were guest speakers for the Department and they include Betty Shabazz, Ruby Dee, Michael Eric Dyson, Ayi Kwei Armah, Julianne Malveaux, the adorable playwright Adrienne Kennedy, Danny Glover and Beah Richards, to name a few. I didn't get a chance to visit our classrooms to see our faculty in action; however, I did get to know them on a personal level largely because of our daily conversations. I enjoyed hearing Dr. Hintzen's stories of his childhood in Guyana and Trinidad, Dr. Henry's adventures and Dr. Laguerre sharing of important information. I was introduced to the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame yearly event by Dr. Roy Thomas and the late Professor Albert Johnson. I always enjoyed the welcome and holiday gatherings at Drs. Hintzen and Henry's homes and the occasional Warrior tickets courtesy of Dr. Reginald Jones. The late Dr. Erskine Peters was

a joy to be around and Dr. Margaret Wilkerson's Black Theatre Workshop students have gone on to be great actors and actresses. I admire the dedication and tenacity of Dr. Ula Taylor's teaching and love the late Dr. VèVè Clark had for incoming freshman/sophomore students and the phytocillin remedy she gave all of us. I've enjoyed the basic Swahili lessons from Dr. Sam Mchombo and Dr. David Kyeu and Dr. Hardy Frye's sharing of his activists experiences. I'm amazed by our new and younger faculty and the great strides they are making in African American Studies along with our innovative graduate and undergraduate students. I've witnessed so many students graduate from this Department and go on to become postdocs, professors, doctors, lawyers and judges.

Over the years I have had the pleasure to work with numerous staff. Frances Carter, Toni Whittle Ciprazo and Vernessa Parker all served as my immediate supervisor. I worked with Fran the longest (20+ years) but I learned a great deal from each and I truly appreciate their efforts. I also worked with numerous undergraduate advisors including Quamé Patton and Dorcas Gaines and graduate advisor Lindsey Herbert. I am most thankful for their support and friendship and the work study students I value our relationships tremendously.

One of my most exciting accomplishments was being part of the development of the graduate program. Initially, the department didn't have a Graduate SAO; therefore, as a Graduate Assistant I learned the ins and outs of a Graduate Program, (admissions, administrative

forms, distribution of funds, etc.) and 18 years later the program is still flourishing. I also enjoyed using my design skills to renovate the VèVè Clark Graduate Student Lounge.

I've always loved the Aesop Fable of the Hare and the Tortoise. The tortoise reminds me of myself. I am thankful and grateful to everyone who contributed to my turtle collection from all over the world. Everyone wants to find their dream job. I was blessed with mine in African American Studies because I like to serve others, it's my passion and I love it. There is nothing more meaningful and gratifying than to help someone. Sometimes I got frustrated; nonetheless, it is what I enjoyed doing. Like the old fable of the Hare and the Tortoise, I'm the tortoise, slow but always moving and on a sturdy path about to cross the finish line. I'm also reminded of Edwin Starr's soulful tune, Twenty Five Miles: "Over the other hill just around the bend / Although my feet are tired, I can't lose my stride" because my job is about to end!

I am so excited about my future time with my husband (Ellis), sons (Marcus and Derek) daughters-in-law (Darrione and Nasa) and my four grandchildren, and of course my beloved mother Helen Woods.

Pictured on the following page: Stephanie Jackson (left) and Vernessa Parker (right).



Celebrating Stephanie Jackson's Career: A Retirement Party Toast

Vernessa Parker, Department Manager

Congratulations to Stephanie on her retirement! Stephanie was hired, under what was then called "Afro-American studies" in August 1980 with the title of Senior Typist/Clerk. At that time Frances Carter (now retired) was her supervisor. In later years, Stephanie reported to Antoinette "Toni" Whittle. In 2004, Stephanie was reclassified to the title of Administrative Assistant III. In 2008, I became her supervisor.

Stephanie's experience in the African American Studies Department spans over 34 years! Over the years Stephanie has performed many duties for the Department. Initially serving as a receptionist, as the years went by she was responsible for managing the curriculum scheduling for AAS, payroll, student hiring, purchasing supplies, supervision of the Erskine Peters Reading Room, and assisting on issues related to the graduate program including admissions, payroll for Graduate Student Instructors (GSIs) and block grants. In July 2011, AAS was restructured and clustered with Ethnic Studies and Gender and Women's Studies. At that point, Stephanie took on additional duties by working for the ES Department and having responsibility for the hire of GSIs for AAS and ES. When Campus Shared Services (CSS) was implemented in July 2014, Stephanie took on responsibilities to coordinate with CSS all of the employment process for GSIs and GSRs and Readers. Stephanie embraced this new role and responsibility to the fullest. Stephanie learned

many new systems that the University implemented over the years and she has used them effectively. Stephanie has been a great influence for the Department where she oversees and ensures the daily administrative operations of AAS and provides front-line support and information to visitors, students, faculty and staff. She provides friendly and professional customer service, supervises work-study and handles various tasks to support faculty. Stephanie is the "go to" person for AAS, and a great team player. Stephanie has received many "Thank You" cards and toy turtles for her collection from students and faculty over the years and she has been a tremendous influence on students.

Reflecting on our time together, I have enjoyed my conversations with Stephanie about our grandchildren growing up, our love for our spouses, and our native roots in the Bay Area; we both graduated from Oakland Technical High School in different years. Stephanie has been an inspiration for her two sons as she went back to school to complete her AA degree. Based on conversations with Stephanie, I feel I've intimately known Professors who have passed because she has shared with me her fond memories of Professors Barbara Christian, June Jordan and VeVe Clark. The way she described them made me feel I knew them. During the challenging times I've had as Manager of three departments, Stephanie has inspired me to have a positive attitude in face of issues like the budget cuts and restructuring. One thing I admire about Stephanie is her faith in God and her positive spirit.

Stephanie has done an outstanding job for AAS and the Cluster. I appreciate her individual and teamwork and dedication to the Department. Stephanie is a highly valued member of our community and I wish her health, love and success and the best in her retirement.

Year in Review: UAW Local 2865 Major Accomplishments

Kenly Brown, PhD student

“UAW 2865 is the union representing 12,000 Academic Student Employees – Tutors, Readers, and Teaching Assistants – at the nine teaching campuses of the University of California. The union negotiates a collective bargaining agreement (contract) that sets out the pay and benefits and the rights and protections of every Academic Student Employee (ASE) that works at UC.”
www.UAW2865.org

Safe Workplace: All-Gender Bathrooms: The UAW continues to tirelessly fight for the right to have all-gender bathrooms at UC-Berkeley. Institutional and bureaucratic hold ups to forestall the implementation of all-gender restrooms attempted to detract the move to create a safe workspace and place for all people including those who are trans and gender non-conforming students and workers. The UAW, graduate students, undergraduate students, and additional allies pushed the implementation of all-gender restrooms via petitions, “shit-ins”, and presented Chancellor Dirks with a “Gold Plunger” as an attempt to “unclog the bureaucratic mess.” The Bathroom Brigade additionally hosted a Gender Pronouns workshop for GSIs; UAW members put an art installation in Wurster Hall to exemplify the struggle over all-gender restrooms and conversations surrounding political action; and organized an action to illustrate UC-Berkeley’s reluctance to re-designate bathrooms.

Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS)

Pledge Against Human Rights Abuses: During the summer of 2014, Israel egregiously violated Palestinians human rights. The UAW drafted a pledge of divestment resolutions as a response to a 2005 call from Palestinians to support their effort to achieve freedom and rights. The pledge UAW members were asked to vote on included whether or not to join the global movement for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions until Israel complies with international law and respects Palestinian human rights. Additionally included on the ballot were terms that described how UAW 2865 would join the movement e.g. call on the USA government to end military aid to Israel and call on the University of California and UAW international to divest their investments from Israeli state institutions and international companies complicit in human rights violations against the Palestinian people. A majority of those who voted ratified the proposed resolution.

Stewards Council: This year the UAW held their first Stewards Council meeting as a way to learn more about how other departments organize and strengthen our relations to one another across disciplines at Cal. The UAW created the Stewards Council as a way to further promote the utility of the union, the role of a steward, and how to do it. Ultimately, it served as an opportunity to learn about what initiatives are going on in different departments and what has and has not worked in the past when organizing. The inaugural meeting was this past April.

Graduate Assembly 2014-2015 Report

Mariko Pegs, PhD student and GA delegate

As Graduate Assembly (GA) delegates for our respective departments, our responsibilities are to represent the interests of our department peers, as well as graduate students in general. Throughout the academic year, the GA is involved in a number of activities designed to support graduate students in ways that help improve work-life balance. Each year, an Advocacy Agenda is voted on for the academic year to significantly address issues identified by delegates as high priority. This year, we focused on advocacy in the areas of Diversity, Wellness, and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response.

Sexual violence is a persistent issue on college campuses, and 31 students at UC Berkeley have already filed lawsuits against the institution.[1] Survivors of sexual violence not only suffer the trauma during the mental and physical assaults, but they must also navigate the hostile waters of the administration's policies and inaction. Until recently, Berkeley's response to sexual assault and harassment was inadequate and dangerous because of the risks involved with ignoring traumatic student experiences. Students felt their complaints were trivialized and disregarded without appropriate actions. Hence, the current multi-complainant lawsuit against UC Berkeley that alleges it "failed to investigate reports of serial rapists, took months to adjudicate sexual assault cases and dismissed rape threats as a joke, according to two federal complaints filed Wednesday by 31

current and former students."[2] The GA's advocacy around the improvement of prevention and response related to sexual violence has worked to address these issues. In February of this year, UC Berkeley hosted the National Conference on Campus Sexual Assault and Violence, with Anita Hill as the featured speaker. Speaking on the importance of understanding that each step in finding the truth is vital, she stated, "Process matters. The investigation matters, informed tribunals matter, the process for getting to the truth matters."[3] It not just that the process be fair and take appropriate steps to get at the truth, but that while doing so, survivors are treated with respect and dignity. Resources for survivors are crucial to helping survivors to stay mentally and physically healthy while also working to heal and complete their studies.

The Director of Sexual Assault Prevention and Student Advocacy, Mari Knuth-Bouracee, attended the December GA meeting to inform delegates of the services she provides. As a "confidential advocate" that uses a "non-judgmental, caring approach to exploring all options, rights, and resources" for survivors of sexual assault and harassment, Knuth-Bouracee encourages students to contact her offices for support.[4] One of the ways the Berkeley administration seeks to address sexual violence prevention is through a newly established campus policy. The policy requires incoming freshman

and transfer students to complete more detailed and expanded education and training designed to increase awareness about sexual violence and harassment. Enforcement of the required policy is linked to student registration, which is blocked if new freshman and transfer students do not adhere to the completing the education and training. Addressing the need for more diversity, “the GA Delegates passed a resolution urging the university to include graduate student representatives on all faculty hiring committees.”[5] Ultimately, we hope that the inclusion of at least one democratically elected graduate student for each department hire, with equal voting authority, and access to all needed decision-making materials, is implemented. Commenting on the lack of faculty diversity, GA External Vice President Iman Sylvain states, “We are in a public institution, and yet we don’t have mentors or faculty that reflect our student body...How can we claim to be “cutting-edge” when 70% of our faculty is old white men?”[6] Two examples within the last academic year alone underscore the need for diversity, and for sincere efforts to achieve it: The denial of tenure to Dr. Carolyn Finney, the only African American woman professor in the Environmental Science, Policy, and Management Department (ESPM), and racist comments related to the Black Lives Matter Movement made by Dr. Steven Segal, a professor in the School of Social Welfare.

With respect to the ESPM department’s rejection of Dr. Finney’s contributions and scholarship, which includes her book, *Black Faces White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans*

to the Great Outdoors, her potential absence affects a wide range of people in and outside the campus community. The graduate students advised by Dr. Finney are particularly impacted by the decision. Their anxiety about Dr. Finney and their own academic careers jeopardizes the student’s scholarship and mental health. One of Dr. Finney’s students, Frances Roberts-Gregory, stated recently that, “some folk in my department and university cannot handle innovative environmental social science research and have a problem with sexism as well as Negrophobia. The department’s inability to cope with unfamiliar interdisciplinarity can manifest as outright neglect or micro-aggression.”[7]

Roberts-Gregory’s assessment of her department accurately describes the feelings of many Black graduate students specifically, as well as underrepresented and marginalized students in general, throughout the campus that must regularly defend their existence in the White spaces of UC Berkeley. The inappropriate and insensitive comments and actions by Dr. Segal during a Black Lives Matter event (Feb 9), and in his classroom the following day, demonstrate his ineffective training in social welfare and the pervasiveness of institutional racism.

While discussing the Black Lives Movement in his mental health course, Segal read “aloud a rap with lyrics suggesting that the movement needed to stop scapegoating the police.”[8] One student reports that at a certain point, a “student was sitting down in her seat, he [Segal] was standing up, and his voice was raised, and he had interrupted her and stated that only he was

allowed to talk.”[9] Dr. Segal is a professor with 40 years of service at Berkeley in the area of mental health. Yet, his attitude toward the oppression and brutalization of Black bodies by police remains anchored in the belief that Black people create and deserve the state-sanctioned violence against them. The lack of diversity in faculty hiring, tenure approval, and cultural training, is just one of many issues that impairs graduate student’s physical and mental health. Consequently, student wellness as a GA priority is undeniably necessary.

The GA approved the Resolution for a Wellness Initiative and Workgroup to address student well-being in the 2013-2014 academic year. A Wellness Workgroup was established to gauge student wellness and develop services to “enhance the student experience and academic success.”[10] The outcome of the group was a Wellness Referendum that included a Wellness Initiative Fee of \$146, allows for additional student services. Of the \$146, \$54 of it is an additional student cost. The referendum passed in April and the alteration of services is as follows:

“The referendum will extend drop-in hours at the Tang Center’s urgent care ward and its Counseling and Psychological Services, or CPS, on select weekdays and weekends. The referendum will create relaxation spaces on campus; offer stress-management and nutrition classes; and expand yoga, cardio and strength training spaces. It also provides for wellness programs for underserved groups, including students of color, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students; student-veterans; international students; and differently abled

students. Additionally, the referendum renews existing fees that support the RSF.”[11]

Overall, the goal is to rethink student wellness by making a paradigm shift in the way we shape the student experience. For example, the current Recreation Sports Facility (RSF) is a sports-centered space, but the Wellness Initiative allows more inclusivity for all students in the RSF and attends to a preventive healthcare model. Since stress is an inherent part of experiencing academia, a more effective framework is to offer spaces where students can easily access self-care programs, instead of reacting to stress at its peak.

Notes [1] <http://ga.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/SV-Advocacy-Memo-2014-2015.pdf> and <http://articles.latimes.com/2014/feb/26/local/la-me-berkeley-assaults-20140227> [2] http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/26/uc-berkeley-rape-students-complaint_n_4855816.html [3] <http://newscenter.berkeley.edu/2015/02/26/berkeley-sexual-assault-conference/> [4] <http://sa.berkeley.edu/dean/confidential-care-advocate> [5] <https://ga.berkeley.edu/ga-position-on-faculty-hiring/> [6] <http://www.theberkeleygraduate.com/2014/11/introducing-the-external-affairs-vice-president/> [7] (personal interview, 2015) [8] <http://www.dailycal.org/2015/02/26/graduate-students-voice-concerns-professors-comments-black-lives-matter-movement/> [9] Ibid [10] <http://www.votewellness.com/background/> [11] <http://www.dailycal.org/2015/03/31/wellness-referendum-will-create-a-healthier-more-inclusive-campus/>

2015 Valedictorian Address

Maliq Hunsberger, African American Studies undergraduate major and Valedictorian

It is an absolute honor to stand in front of all of you today, and to have been introduced by Professor Catanese. She taught the course that made me fall in love with this department freshman year, and her guidance throughout my time at Cal has allowed me to advance as a student in ways I never would have imagined. When we began reading the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, she told the class that this history is too important for us to come in “sloppy” and unprepared, and that simply “showing up” wasn’t enough. That day she instilled in me a pride associated with this discipline that has since been similarly fostered by the dedication of the rest of the faculty on this stage, who have also been endlessly generous with their time and knowledge. I also want to thank my family and friends, many of whom are here today. I am extremely lucky to have so many loving people in my life and their support is the reason I was able to attend Cal in the first place, much less to have the strength to finish. Lastly, I want to thank my fellow graduates who make me overwhelmingly proud to soon be an alumnus of this department.

Seemingly every day I’m asked to explain how a blonde, blue-eyed kid gets the name Maliq. I generally walk through an extremely well-rehearsed bit about my racial background, how crazy genes are, and let the person know that I understand their confusion. But since declaring as a major, that conversation has added another

question about why I’ve devoted my collegiate life to African American Studies. My answer always starts the same way: “This is what I grew up studying.” And it’s true, I was named after El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, formerly known as Malcolm X. With my name and upbringing, my family imparted a racial consciousness upon me that could have easily instead been replaced with lessons in passing. Because of my early education in this discipline I questioned my teachers who positioned my namesake as the violent antithesis to Dr. King, and I questioned my teachers for claiming that Abraham Lincoln was “the Great Emancipator.” But it wasn’t until I came to Cal, and sat in Professor Catanese’s course in the fall of 2011 that I realized I could be in a classroom surrounded by other people who had also been taught to question.

Initially I thought my degree would come from the Psychology and Molecular Cell Biology side of campus. But that quickly changed, and I am incredibly happy it did. The education that the African American Studies department has provided has truly made me a better thinker. Now, that may seem like an odd remark, and I’m sure the term “thinker” is not the academic title my fellow graduates will use to apply to jobs, but I truly believe it is the most important skill we are leaving this department with.

People assume that a college education focuses

on learning to think, but most of the time it doesn't. Most people leave their college experience with a number of skills, but it is the added interdisciplinarity of African American Studies that forces its students to act as the integrating force between so many seemingly separate fields. It requires a lot of active thought to craft a coherent narrative from so many different spaces, and it is because we have become "thinkers" that we are prepared for a world outside academia. It is also because we are "thinkers" that we can use completely made up words like "interdisciplinarity" in a speech in front of hundreds of people.

When Malcolm Little was a young man he lived in Lansing, Michigan. In Lansing he had a teacher named Mr. Ostrowski. One day, Mr. Ostrowski told Malcolm: "Malcolm, you ought to be thinking about a career. Have you been giving it thought?" Malcolm replied: "Well, yes sir, I've been thinking I'd like to be a lawyer." Mr. Ostrowski was surprised, and took a second to gather himself, before replying: "Malcolm, one of life's first needs is for us to be realistic. Don't misunderstand me, now. We all here like you, you know that. But you've got to be realistic about being a [Negro]. A lawyer—that's no realistic goal for a [Negro]. You need to think about something you can be. You're good with your hands—making things. Everybody admires your carpentry shop work. Why don't you plan on carpentry?"

Just as the world needed Malcolm, the world needs others to be unrealistic. The professors behind me are unrealistic for knowing they have something to

teach the world. For believing that Black history began before the Trans-Atlantic slave trade and that racism didn't die with the election of Barack Obama. Your family is unrealistic for believing that they were capable of raising a child who could aspire to become something other than a carpenter. And your fellow graduates are unrealistic for thinking they could attend, much less complete a degree, from an elite university. As we leave here today, and the Berkeley campus tomorrow, it is our job to continue to be unrealistic. Because although our studies have taught us to honor the women and men who have devoted their lives to get us where we are today, we know that a nation where Black bodies experience the violence hidden behind claims of "colorblindness" is no "post-race" society. It's our responsibility as "thinkers" to continue to fight against what's expected, what's acceptable, and what's realistic. Thank you, it's been an honor.



“Historic Site in Journalism: On this site, Frederick Douglass (1817-1895) published an antislavery newspaper, The North Star, and succeeding journals from 1847 until 1863. He had escaped from slavery in his youth and became one of the most eloquent speakers and aggressive journalists in the abolitionist movement. He won recognition as the leading spokesman for the black cause after the Civil War and received several federal appointments in that capacity. Marked this 23rd day of April, 1976 by The Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi.” Plaque text, Rochester, NY.

Photograph by Ianna Hawkins Owen.

On “Black Grad Matters”

Christine Chilaka, African American Studies undergraduate major

College—as I’m sure for many of you—has been a goal of mine ever since I was a child. I always dreamt of myself walking across a stage like this, shaking hands with prominent scholars and officials, and receiving a diploma. Of course, after getting here, I realized that it wasn’t that simple. I realized that my initial ideas about college were in fact a mere dream. Dreams. A succession of images, ideas, emotions, and sensations that occur involuntarily in the mind during certain stages of sleep. To think that I could navigate through the trenches of UC Berkeley as person of color, specifically a Black woman, without any scratches, forks in the road, or self-doubt meant that I was indeed asleep and dreaming. Being black on this campus is no easy task. I specifically use the word “task” because while a task can be a difficult and tedious undertaking, the process to completing it invokes determination, growth, and perseverance. We are sitting here today because we have completed that task. We are sitting here today because we turned a succession of images, ideas, emotions, and sensations into late nights, early mornings, endurance, and reality.

And the true beauty of it all is that we did it together. I mean that’s what Black Grad is essentially for. It celebrates community. It allows us to reminisce about joyous moments as a freshman or recognize moments of pain as what may be the last time we all can be to-

gether. And that celebration matters. This very moment matters because it not only honors our achievements, but it also honors moments of failure. It honors those times when we felt stretched a little too thin or a little unsure of us purpose, calling, and identity. It resonates with feelings of isolation when walking on campus and seeing no one that looks like you. It appreciates the peace of mind that you get when you see a familiar or unfamiliar Black face. You see, all of these moments and so many more matter because they represent the interweaving of our community.

So, when I heard about the theme of this ceremony, I must admit, I was a little annoyed. “Black Grad Matters.” To whom must we reaffirm our existence? To who must we remind that a celebration that has been happening on this campus since 1977 exist? From its inception in the backyard of a faculty member’s home with four students to the Greek Theater and Zellerbach Hall, to who must we proclaim that black grad matters? But then I started to think. I thought about Michael Brown, Reika Boyd, and Yvette Smith. I thought about microaggressions, the hyper sexuality of black women, and the hyper masculinity of the black male. Then it hit me, there is a chance that while weeding through the surge of police brutality that disproportionately affects our community, experiencing the less than 3% of black students enrolled in this university, and remaining calm

when someone refers to Africa as a country out of a fear of being that “loud” black individual, we might of forgot that things like this matter. We might have forgotten that it is imperative, it is critical that we have our own pomp and circumstance. Because we came in together, we laid on the steps of Sproul together, and we shall end together.

So, when I heard about the theme of this ceremony, I must admit, I was a little annoyed. “Black Grad Matters.” To whom must we reaffirm our existence? To who must we remind that a celebration that has been happening on this campus since 1977 exist? From its inception in the backyard of a faculty member’s home with four students to the Greek Theater and Zellerbach Hall, to who must we proclaim that black grad matters? But then I started to think. I thought about Michael Brown, Reika Boyd, and Yvette Smith. I thought about microaggressions, the hyper sexuality of black women, and the hyper masculinity of the black male. Then it hit me, there is a chance that while weeding through the surge of police brutality that disproportionally effects our community, experiencing the less than 3% of black students enrolled in this university, and remaining calm when someone refers to Africa as a country out of a fear of being that “loud” black individual, we might of forgot that things like this matter. We might have forgotten that it is imperative, it is critical that we have our own pomp and circumstance. Because we came in together, we laid on the steps of Sproul together, and we shall end together.

I want to reiterate that being black at the

University of California, Berkeley is no easy task. But you all have done it, WE have done it. And no one can take that away from us. Lena Horne once said “It’s not the load that breaks you down, it’s the way you carry it.” And not only am I honored to be among a community that carries it with distinction, valor, and finesse, but also proud to say that I am unbroken. A little tired, sore, and bruised, but unbroken. Thank you.

Pictured right: Former BSU Chair Gabrielle Shuman called the Charleston shooting a “massacre” and an “act of terrorisim” at Charleston shooting vigil at UC Berkeley. Photograph by Rasheed Shabazz.



Award Recipients

Awards accepted by department members during the 2014-2015 academic year

Faculty Awards

Lecturer David Kyeu was awarded a travel grant from the Berkeley Language Center.

Lecturer Aparajita Nanda was awarded a Professional Development Grant from UC Berkeley.

Professor John S. Powell delivered the 25th Annual Thurgood Marshall Lecture at UCLA, and received a prestigious award for being the 25th Thurgood Marshall Honoree. The Thurgood Marshall yearly lecture series features prominent civil rights scholars, practitioners, and advocates.

Associate Professor Leigh Raiford received an American Council of Learned Societies Collaborative Research Fellowship for a project entitled “Visualizing Travel, Gendering the African Diaspora” with Dr. Heike Raphael-Hernandez (University of Wurzburg, Germany) and Dr. Cheryl Finley (Cornell University). The period of the grant is January 2016 - December 2017.

Associate Professor Janelle Scott received the 2014 Distinguished Scholar Award from the American Educational Research Association’s Committee on Scholars of Color.

Graduate Awards

Jamal Batts, Social Science Matrix award to support Prospecting Seminar, “Social Death: Race, Risk, and Representation”

Kenly Brown, Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship
Charisse Burden, Five Colleges Residency Disserta-

tion Fellowship at UMass Amherst

Grace Gipson, Berkeley Center for New Media Summer 2015 Research Fellowship Award and the 2015 USC Annenberg Summer Institute on Diversity in Media and Culture research participant

Jarvis Givens, Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship and the MMUF Dissertation Grant

Selina Makana, The Rocca and Ezeru Emeka Kalu Fellowship in African Studies and the VêVê Clark Travel Grant

Kimberly McNair, Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship alternate

Amani Morrison, Black Metropolis Research Consortium Short-Term Fellowship

Michael J. Myers, II, 2015 Summer Fellow at the Haas Institute for a Fair and Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society and the VêVê Clark Travel Grant

Ianna Hawkins Owen, MMUF Dissertation Grant and the LGBT Studies Outstanding GSI Award

Gabrielle Williams, African American Studies Outstanding GSI Award

Olivia K. Young, National Council for Black Studies Essay Award

Undergraduate Awards

Peace And Love El Henson (major), National Council for Black Studies Essay Award

Myles Santifer (major), Moore Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program at UNC Chapel Hill

Recent and Forthcoming Publications

A selection of publications by faculty, alumni, and current graduate students

Recent faculty publications

Books

Allen, Robert. *The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters: C.L. Dellums and the Fight for Fair Treatment and Civil Rights.* Paradigm Publishers, 2014.

Edited volumes

Nanda, Aparajita. ed. *Ethnic Literatures and Transnationalism: Critical Imaginaries for a Global Age.* Routledge, 2014.

Nasir, Na'ilah and Cabana, C., Shreve, B., Woodbury, E., & Louie, N. eds. *Mathematics for equity: A framework for successful practice.* Teachers College Press, 2014.

Scott, Janelle and Lubieniski, C. & DeBray, E. *Educational Policy.* 28.2 (2014).

Articles and chapters

Kyeu, David. "Kuwakosoa Wanafunzi Kidiplomasia 'Correcting Students' Errors Diplomatically." *Journal of the African Language Teachers Association (JALTA)* 2 (2014).

Nanda, Aparajita. "Black Frontier." *Cambridge History of California Literature.* Cambridge University Press, forthcoming.

Nanda, Aparajita. "The Absent Presence and the Art of Autobiography in Barack Obama's Dreams From My Father." *Soderton University English Series.* Soderton

University Press, forthcoming.

Nasir, Na'ilah and Cvencek, D., Nasir, N., Wischnia, S., O'Connor, K., & Meltzoff, A. "They say Chinese people are the best at math. The development of math-race stereotypes." *Journal for Research on Adolescence.* (2014).

Nasir, Na'ilah and Scott, J., & Trujillo, T. "The socio-political context of teaching." *Handbook of Research on Teaching,* forthcoming.

Nasir, Na'ilah and Louie, N. "Derailed at Railside." *Mathematics for equity: A framework for successful practice.* Teachers College Press, 2014.

Nimako, Kwame. "Location and Social Thought in the Black: A Testimony of Africana Intellectual Tradition." *Postcoloniality-Decoloniality-Black Critique.* Campus Verlag, 2014.

Nimako, Kwame. "Conceptual Clarity, Please! On the uses and abuses of the concepts of 'slave' and 'trade' in the study of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and Slavery." *'Race', racism and knowledge production: debate on history, political struggles and the academia in Europe and the Americas.* Palgrave, forthcoming.

powell, john a. and Stephen Menendian, "Fisher V. Texas: The Limits of Exhaustion and the Future of Race-Conscious University Admissions." *University of Michigan Journal of Law Reform.* 47.4 (2014).

powell, john a. and Stephen Menendian, "Race vis-à-vis Class in the U.S.?" *America's Growing Inequality The Impact of Poverty and Race.* Lexington Books,

2014.

powell, john a. and Kaloma Cardwell, "Homeownership, Wealth, and the Production of Racialized Space." *Homeownership Built to Last: Balancing Access, Affordability, and Risk after the Housing Crisis*. Brookings Institution Press and the Harvard University Joint Center for Housing Studies, 2014.

Scott, Darieck. "Big Black Beauty: Drawing and Naming the Black Male Figure in Superhero and Gay Porn Comics." *Porn Archives*. Duke University Press, 2014.

Scott, Darieck. "The Literature of 'What If ..?'" *The Cambridge History of Gay and Lesbian Literature*. Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Scott, Janelle and Jabbar, H., Goel, P., DeBray, E., & Lubinski, C. "How policymakers define "evidence": The politics of research use in New Orleans." *Special Issue Commemorating the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. Policy Futures in Education*. 2014.

Scott, Janelle and Quinn, R. "The politics of education in the post-Brown era: Race, markets, and the struggle for equitable schooling." *Educational Administration Quarterly*. 50.5 (2014).

Creative Work

Kyeu, David. "Mchumba Haramu/Inappropriate Spouse." *Vagabond Multilingual Journal*. (2014).

Recent alumni publications

Books

Germain, Felix. *Decolonizing the Republic: African and Caribbean Migrants in Postwar Paris (1946-1974)*. Michigan State University Press, forthcoming.

Morehouse, Maggi. *War Stories: African American Soldiers and the Long Civil Rights Movement*. Bedford MacMillan, 2014.

Rivera-Rideau, Petra R. *Remixing Reggaetón: The Cultural Politics of Race in Puerto Rico*. Duke University Press, forthcoming.

Robeson, Taj Frazier. *The East Is Black: Cold War China and the Black Radical Imagination*. Duke University Press, 2014.

Edited volumes

Germain, Felix. *Palimpsest: A Journal on Women, Gender and the Black International: special issue on Caribbean women in contemporary societies*. 3.2 (2014).

Articles and chapters

Bailey, Marlon M. with Beth E. Meyerson, Roberta E. Emetu, Stephanie A. Sanders, Priscilla T. Ryder, and James Armstrong. "Preferences of Gay and Bisexual Men for Pharmacy-Based HIV Testing and Over-the-Counter HIV Tests," *LGBT Health*. 00.00 (2014).

Bailey, Marlon M. with Meyerson, Barnes, Emetu, and Ohmit. "Institutional and structural barriers to HIV testing: Elements for a theoretical framework." *AIDS Patient Care & STDs*. 28.1, (2014).

Bailey, Marlon M. "Engendering Space: Ballroom Culture and the Spatial Practice of Possibility in Detroit," *Gender, Place and Culture: The Journal of Feminist Geography*. 21.4 (2014).

Bailey, Marlon M. "Love and Money: Performing Black Queer Diasporic Desire in Cuban Hustle." *Black Queer Performance: A Performance Anthology*. Duke University Press, forthcoming.

Bascomb, Lia T. “Productively Destabilized: Black Studies and Fantastic Modes of Being.” *Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture, and Society*. 16.3-4 (2014).

Bascomb, Lia T. “Rude Girl, Big Woman: Power and Play in Representations of Caribbean Women.” *Palimpsest: A Journal on Women, Gender, and the Black International*. 3.2 (2014).

Bascomb, Lia T. “‘I’m So Proud to Be Your Queen’: Alison Hinds and Queenliness as a Diasporic Resource.” *Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism*. 13.1 (2015).

Bascomb, Lia T. “Freakifying History, Remixing Royalty.” *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal*, forthcoming.

Germain, Felix. “Mercer Cook: The Father of Black French Studies.” *French Politics, Culture & Society*, forthcoming.

Germain, Felix. “A “New” Black Nationalism in the United States and France.” *Journal of African American Studies*. 8.3 (2014).

Morehouse, Maggi. “African Diaspora Theory: Here, There, and Everywhere.” *Diasporas and Cultures of Mobilities, Vol 2, Diaspora, Memory and Intimacy*. Presses Universitaires de la Méditerranée, forthcoming.

Morehouse, Maggi. “Civil Rights Pioneers: Building Race Consciousness.” *Diasporas and Cultures of Mobilities, Vol 3, African Americans, ‘Race’ and Diaspora*. P.U.L.M., forthcoming.

White, Elisa Joy. “The Unacceptable Local: Positioning African Diaspora and Black Identity in Contemporary Hawai‘i.” *They Followed the Trade Winds: African Americans in Hawai‘i* (2nd Edition). University of Hawai‘i

Press, 2014.

White, Elisa Joy. “Representations of Blackness and the Popolo Problematic in Hawai‘i.” *They Followed the Trade Winds: African Americans in Hawai‘i* (2nd Edition). University of Hawai‘i Press, 2014.

Recent graduate student publications

Articles and chapters

Gipson, Grace. “Afro-Futurism’s Musical Princess Janelle Monae: Psychedelic Soul Message Music Infused with a Sci-Fi Twist.” *Afrofuturism 2.0: The Rise of Astro-Blackness, Vol. II*. Lexington Books, forthcoming.

Givens, Jarvis with Na’ilah Nasir, kihana ross, and Maxine McKinney de Royston. “Modeling Manhood: Reimagining Black Male Identities in School.” *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, forthcoming.

Givens, Jarvis. “A Grammar for Black Education Beyond Borders: Exploring Technologies of Schooling in the African Diaspora.” *Race Ethnicity and Education*, forthcoming.

Makana, Selina. “Owning Her Rightful Place: The Intellectual and Activist Life of Charlotte Manye Maxeke.” *Journal of Women, Gender and Families of Color*, forthcoming.

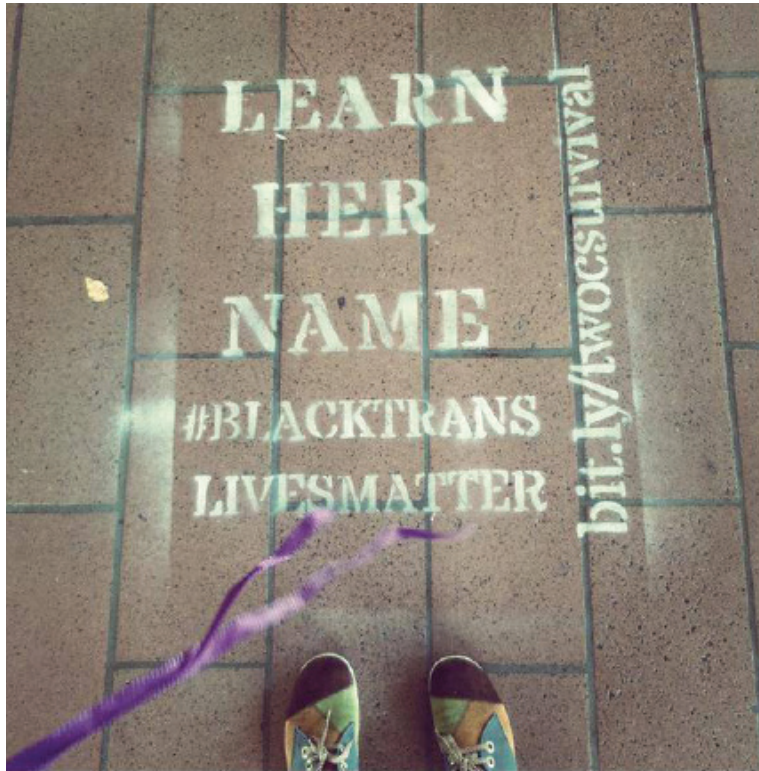
Owen, Ianna Hawkins. “On the Racialization of Asexuality.” *Asexualities: Feminist and Queer Perspectives*. Routledge, 2014.

Creative work

Mundell, John A. “O espelho despedaçado: cinco poemas para uma memória negra.” (“The shattered mirror: five poems for a black memory.”). *Lucero*, 25 (forthcoming).



Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged, established by Tubman in 1908, now a National Historic Landmark. Located in Auburn, NY. Photograph by Ianna Hawkins Owen.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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