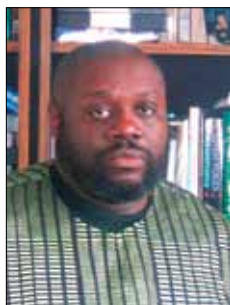


Vol. 15, No. 1 • Fall 2008

UJIMA

The Newsletter of the African American Studies Program





James L. Conyers, Jr.,
Ph.D.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

We are proud to present another edition of the Ujima newsletter. This publication has served as a valuable tool to share information and provide updates concerning the perspective of the African American Studies Program (AAS) at the University of Houston. Hence, my message is short and succinct.

Reflexive of our priorities, AAS has aggregated a common sense of tradition with activities such as: the Annual Scholarship Banquet; the Study Abroad Program to Ghana, West Africa; the Annual Africana Speakers Bureau; Africana History Month; and the Annual Africana Studies Research Symposium. Moreover, the year was successful. Yet, examining the 2007-2008 academic year and assessing how the program can become better requires reflection and analytic thinking.

We often take for granted the need for establishing a sense of tradition regarding continuity, tenacity, and creative efforts to study Africana phenomena on a global and national level. Simply put, it is with a team approach—postured from an Africana-centered perspective—that our staff receives incentive to exhibit a collective and community spirit. Thus, the concept of participation with the academy is constant, but necessitates a firmament of vigor.

In closing, the mission and goal of the African American Studies Program at the University of Houston remains uncomplicated, precise, and unbowed: to educate, disseminate, defend, challenge, encourage, mentor, and service citizens of the campus and greater Houston community. Agoo-Amen, Nzuri Sana, Shemhotep! James L. Conyers, Jr., Ph.D.

*Director, African American Studies Program
Director, Center for the Study of African American Culture
University Professor of African American Studies*

Fall 2008

UJIMA

Volume 15, Number 1

AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM

AAS Staff Team for 2008-2009

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University Professor of
African American Studies

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Linda Harris**

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AAS Teaching Initiative

New Courses in African American Studies



African American Studies welcomes Dr. Michael Tillotson, a May 2008 graduate of the Ph.D. program in African American Studies at Temple University, to the program as one of its two 2008-2009 visiting scholars.

In the spring 2009 semester, Dr. Tillotson will teach AAS 3307: *Africana Spiritual Transformation in the Social Sciences*. The course meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m., Room: TBA.

AAS 3307: AFRICANA SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

This course will examine racism and its concurrent configurations in America and other parts of the world. This course will explore the institutional realities of racism and illuminate the causal relationships that exist between social institutions and their bearing on the lives of members of oppressed groups. It will also examine the racist paradigm, its organizing principles and theoretical constructs.

INSTRUCTOR: *Tillotson, M.*

DAYS: *Tue, Thur* TIME: *10:00-11:30 a.m.* ROOM: *TBA*

Other New Course Offerings in African American Studies

AAS 3354: AFRICAN NATIONALIST THOUGHT AND ETHICS IN THE U.S.

This course provides a multidisciplinary survey of the various intellectual traditions, political movements, and symbolic motifs that have historically characterized the development of African determination in the United States. The course will incorporate the use of essays, film, poetry, and music to understand how African people in the U.S. have sought to fashion a collective consciousness by building sovereign and/or autonomous economic, political, and social institutions. It examines issues relating to ethical responsibilities and the historical struggles by U.S. Africans to create a world that reflects their own self-image and interests. On a basic level, the course questions the nature of how successive African nationalist movements and leaders have looked to interact with children, elders, ancestors, nature, community and families.

INSTRUCTOR: *Crawford, M.*

DAYS: *Mon, Wed* TIME: *2:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.* RM: *AH 628*

AAS 3394: SPECIAL TOPICS IN AAS—HIP HOP CULTURE AND HISTORY

The purpose of this course will be to discuss and analyze Hip Hop as a cultural phenomena, expression and experience for African American people. This course will cover the history of Black music, religion and resistance in America, the history of Hip Hop, the cultural, sociological and religious manifestations in Hip Hop as well as the views and understandings of Hip Hop artists and critics. It is hoped that this class will contribute to the growing research and discussion already taking place in and around many institutions of higher learning throughout the world.

INSTRUCTOR: *Easterling, P.*

DAYS: *Tue, Thur* TIME: *1:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m.* RM: *TBA*



Scholar to Campus Connections

Hip Hop Lecture Series



Julius E. Thompson

Dr. Julius E. Thompson, scholar, poet, and African American political biographer, made his transition on Friday, 26 October

2007. In addition to his work on the African experience in Mississippi, Dr. Thompson was both a participant and chronologist of the Black Arts Movement. On Friday, 12 November 2005, African American Studies co-hosted with the Creative Writing Program a talk by Dr. Thompson on the African American poetic response to the death of Malcolm X at the M. D. Anderson Library Honors College Lounge.

Umar Bin Hassan

On Thursday and Friday, 2 & 3 February 2006, African American Studies hosted a talk and performance by Umar Bin Hassan of the legendary poetry and music



group The Last Poets at the University of Houston and at the Shrine of the Black Madonna Cultural Center and Bookstore in Houston.



S. Craig Watkins

On Tuesday, 6 February, 2007 African American Studies hosted its first speaker in its annual Hip Hop Lecture Series, S. Craig Watkins,

author of *Hip Hop Matters: Politics, Pop Culture and the Struggle for the Soul of a Movement* (Beacon Press, 2005). Dr. Watkins teaches in the departments of Radio-Television-Film and Sociology and the Center for African and African American Studies at the University of Texas-Austin. His teaching and research interests focus on race, media, hip hop, and, most recently, youth digital media cultures.

Anthony B. Pinn

On Monday, 12 February 2007, African American Studies hosted Dr. Anthony B. Pinn, editor of *Noise and Spirit: Religious and Spiritual Sensibilities in Rap Music*



(New York University Press, 2003) as part of its annual Hip Hop Lecture Series. Dr. Pinn is the Agnes Cullen Arnold Professor of Humanities and

Professor of Religious Studies at Rice University. Dr. Pinn's lecture covered the religious nature of Hip Hop music.

M.K. Asante, Jr.

On Monday, 25 February 2008, African American Studies hosted a lecture by M.K. Asante Jr., assistant professor of English at Morgan State University.

Professor Asante is the author of *It's Bigger Than Hip-Hop: The Rise of the Post Hip-Hop Generation* (St. Martin's Press, 2008).




NCBS Sankore Award

The National Council for Black Studies honored the African American Studies (AAS) Program at the University of Houston with its Sankore Award. The award is given annually and recognizes the outstanding African American Studies program of the year and its contributions to the field of Africana Studies. "We are proud to receive this award that is a testament to our dedicated and hardworking staff and faculty," said James Conyers, professor of African American Studies and director of the program. "We look forward to advances in our program and to strengthening our faculty recruitment and development components."

The organization announced the

award during its 32nd Annual convention in Atlanta, Ga. Judges considered faculty research production and publication, partnerships in the community and academic excellence. Past award recipients have included the African American Studies programs at Georgia State, Dillard and Purdue universities. "The African American Studies program and its leadership exemplifies the two main principles of the organization—academic excellence and social responsibility," Charles Jones, president of the NCBS, said. "We considered the program's Study Abroad Program, its lecture series and its external links to the African American community, like the S.H.A.P.E. Community Center

and the Shrine of the Black Madonna."

The African American Studies program at UH was established in 1969 and focuses on the history, culture, life and contributions of people of African descent. Its mission is to provide students with a comprehensive, quality education and the opportunity for a creative, intellectual experience based on the critical and systematic study of the life, thought and practice of African peoples. Currently, more than 170 UH students are pursuing minors in African American Studies. Many are assisted by scholarships, and raising funds for scholarships is a priority for the program. 

AAS Visiting Scholar

New Scholar Prioritizes Service and Problem Solving

In pursuit of our broad mandate to advance excellence in academic research, undergraduate and graduate education, and intellectual exchange and service within the University and Houston communities, the African American Studies Program at the University of Houston annually invites two scholars whose demonstrated research and teaching are in the discipline of Africana Studies/Africalogy for a year-long visiting appointment. Visiting Scholars add to the richness and diversity of our undergraduate curriculum in Africalogy by teaching one course of their own design. In addition, the program prioritizes applications from scholars who demonstrate a commitment to generating research and publication in the discipline of Africana Studies/Africalogy. Successful candidates are, therefore, afforded an opportunity to add to the ongoing scholarship in the discipline by working toward the completion of a research project. The Visiting Scholars Program is designed to encourage scholars to contribute fresh and innovative teaching and research in the discipline of Africalogy.

African American Studies selected Dr. Michael Tillotson as one of two AAS Visiting Scholars for the 2008-2009 academic year. Professor Tillotson is a May 2008 graduate of the PhD program in African American Studies at Temple University.

In both his scholarship and everyday life, Tillotson has remained committed to the belief that scholars in the discipline of Africana Studies must be problem solvers for African people.

"As a terminal degree holder in African American Studies, my role is to produce relevant solution-centered scholarship that can be translated to African people in a digestible form. I view my work as a resource for African people—this is possible because I seek to maintain an organic connection to the unique challenges facing African Americans," Tillotson said.

For the past seven summers Tillotson has taught young people through the Upward Bound Program at the University of Louisville. Before his involvement as an

instructor at Louisville, he taught Upward Bound for two summers at Indiana University. While completing his doctoral degree in Philadelphia, Tillotson worked as the program's coordinator and curriculum developer for a program called the N.U.L.I.T.E.S.—the National Urban League Initiative Towards Excellence and Success.

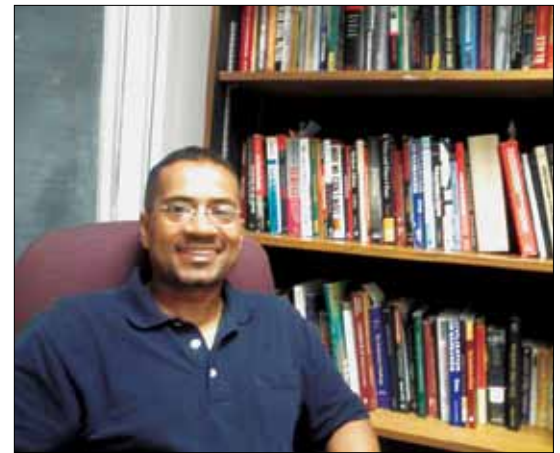
Although new to the ranks of the professoriate, Tillotson brings an impressive body of scholarly work with him to the University of Houston. He has a book chapter, journal article, three book reviews, an encyclopedia entry, two editorials, one radio interview, and a play in his list of publication credits at this early stage of his career.

After completing the A.A. and B.A. in Liberal Studies at Indiana University, Tillotson entered the graduate program in Africana Studies at the State University of New York-Albany where he studied advanced black psychology under Dr. Marcia Sutherland. He earned an M.A. in Albany and went on to the doctoral program in African American Studies at Temple University.

"I came to Temple with an idea about problem solving and agency, but my research skills were honed to a much higher level at Temple. The core faculty at Temple believe that the role of the PhD is to be a problem solver."


Tillotson credits his experience at Temple with having a tremendous influence on his future trajectory in Africana Studies. "I situated myself around a core group of scholars whose *raison d'être* is to solve problems for African people. My advisor and dissertation committee chair was Dr. Molefi Asante. On my dissertation committee was Dr. Emeka Nwadiora, Dr. Ama Mazama, and my external reader was Dr. Marcia Sutherland. If you look at the research agenda of those four scholars, you'll see that all of them are heavily invested in problem solving."

For the spring 2009 semester, Tillotson will be teaching a new course in African American Studies, AAS 3307: Africana



Spiritual Transformation in the Social Sciences. Under his direction, the course will examine the development of the racial paradigm and ideas such as bigotry, prejudice, discrimination, racism and domination as socio-political philosophies that have been absorbed into societal structures and historically used to suppress the life chances and opportunities of certain members of the human family. "We go back to the 5th century and look at the development of the racial project," Tillotson says. "Later on, we look at how [these ideas] started to imbed themselves in the institutional realities of America."

Tillotson's research interests center on the impact of ideas such as color-blindness, race neutrality, post-modernism, and essentialism on the lives of African people, while his broader interests concern critiquing domination within the social, structural, and institutional realities of American society. Tillotson suggests that "if we accept these ideas uncritically, overtime it will lead to a collective passivity," on the part of African people, "and further marginalize and oppress us as a people."

"The project that I am working on is a project in human agency because it reminds African people in the American context that it is too early to lay down the mantle of resistance. Until the statistical realities demonstrate that African people are being judged, as Dr. King once said, "by the content of their character and not the color of their skin," and we can measure those quality of life/social indicators in the structural realities for African Americans, it is not in the best interest of this population to accept these realities uncritically," Tillotson says. 

Alumni Briefs

Natasha Wade

Becoming a minor in the African American Studies Program provided a meaningful context to my work as a public servant. For example, one important principle that I learned as a student of African American Studies stems from Ghanaian culture—Sankofa. Sankofa literally translates to “return to the source.” In other words, we must learn from the past in order to move forward in the future.


It was this principle that guided me in understanding what Du Bois referred to as the “problem of the... color line,” and was also my starting point for approaching many of the issues that plague African American communities.

While working toward obtaining a certificate in Nonprofit Management, a

close friend urged me to look into the Ghana Study Abroad program sponsored by African American Studies. Our scholarly exploration of this region allowed me to learn and appreciate everything that makes African culture unique and beautiful. As I studied the histories of instrumental African persons such as Kwame Nkrumah, Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Maulana Karenga, I became even more inspired to create the same kind of change in impoverished communities where the majority of the populations affected are people of color. My journey to Ghana turned out to be the most influential experience of my life, especially my career. Upon returning to the University of Houston, I declared a minor in African American Studies and continued my education in various sub-

jects (e.g., Sociology, History and Art), as they pertain to people of African descent.

Currently, I am working at a non-profit organization, Houston HOPE, which assists residents with improving the quality of life in their neighborhoods. As project assistant, my many responsibilities include website management and fund development.

As I move forward in my profession, I will continue to benefit from the theories and methods learned through the African American Studies Program at the University of Houston. 



Willie Wright


The African American Studies (AAS) program was a refuge. It was a place where I could socialize with friends of my race, and utilize the computer lab during its midday vacancy. The professors would greet me cordially and show genuine interest in my daily affairs. After having been welcomed this way, I will never underestimate the power of a simple “Brother Wright, how are you doing?”

In the AAS program, I began to take my education seriously and regard my scholastic experience as one that transcended exams and lectures. I was encouraged to understand the program as a discipline and as such, for me, my writing



became an extension of this discipline and myself. In the spring of 2007, I received the Kwame Nkrumah International Scholarship and took part in the annual summer study abroad in Ghana, West Africa. Once on African soil, the notions of my peers and I became centered and our perceptions of the historic country and continent renewed, crafted by our experiences and the communities that welcomed us.

The result of my minor in the AAS program is evident: I write from my office in

the Pan-African Studies Department at the University of Louisville where I am a graduate assistant and candidate for a Master of Arts in Pan-African Studies. Though challenged by the rigorous work set before me, I am encouraged, continually, by professors and peers, not unlike those who ushered me to my current state. Therefore, I declare, unequivocally, that the AAS program was the medium by which I came to view myself as a scholar full of potential and bound for success. 

Willie Wright
Department of Pan-African Studies
University of Louisville
Master's Program

Student Briefs


Cory J. LaFevers

Cory LaFevers graduated this May with a B.A. in History. He successfully completed his Senior Honors Thesis, *The Sound of Revolution: Radio Free Dixie, Robert F. Williams, and Music as Protest and Propaganda*. During his undergraduate career Cory worked closely with the AAS department and has been a guest lecturer for Intro to AAS and for Dr. Robertson's Black Leadership Typologies classes. Cory

received a scholarship to study at Syracuse University, beginning in the fall of 2008, in their Masters Program in Pan-African Studies.

Cory's research interests include cultural history and artistic expression of the African Diaspora within a comparative and transnational context, with an emphasis on African Diasporic music and protest movements. His research involves the interaction between various Diasporic populations and the role music played in forging these

connections. Additionally, Cory is interested in how music was utilized within various protest struggles and how music contributed to the formation and spread of Pan-Africanism. Geographically, his general focus is the U.S., the Caribbean, and Latin America.

Cory plans on continuing his graduate studies at the Ph.D. level after Syracuse and he eventually hopes to work as a professor. 

AAS Minor Cuts Teeth on Capitol Hill

As a research assistant and undergraduate minor in African American Studies (AAS), Eronn Putman has that unique mix of intellectual keenness and gritty self-determination that all university faculty and staff prize in aspiring young students. Such strengths, which appear so self-evident in her character, have not gone without acknowledgment here at the University of Houston. For the past two years, Ms. Putman has received the Sylvester Turner Academic Excellence Award from AAS. Yet, her character and development as a student has given her something beyond that which the accumulation of accolades could offer, ultimately shaping and exposing Ms. Putman to her future career objective—life as a public servant.

From January to May 2008, Ms. Putman participated in the George Thomas “Mickey” Leland Congressional Internship Program coordinated through the University of Houston’s Center for Public Policy.

“I heard about it through my former academic advisor, Claudia Baba, who’s now working for the Houston Chapter of the World Affairs Council,” Putman recalls. “She brought it to my attention because I was always in [her] office looking for any new classes, visiting lectures, and just any new activities on campus.”

The internship program matches local college students with congressional representatives from the State of Texas, giving students an opportunity to observe and experience the obligations of public officials on a national level. In 2008, the program selected interns from UH-Main Campus, UH-Downtown, Texas Southern University (TSU), and Thurgood Marshall School of Law at TSU. Ms. Putman worked in the office of Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee during her time in Washington, D.C. As Ms. Putman recalls of their first encounter, the congresswoman and her have a lot in common, including a voracious work ethic.

“The first time [that] I met Congresswoman Jackson Lee it was a little bit intimidating, obviously, because she was actually really busy,” Putman said. “She was like, ‘I’m going meet you guys at a later date.’ That later date didn’t come until two



weeks later. But when she met us, she just pretty much told us at the beginning that [her] office works hard.” Despite the intense work pace demanded of the new recruits intern-

ing in the congresswoman’s office, Ms. Putman remained poised, accountable, and proactive during her time in the nation’s capitol. Her duties as an intern included drafting numerous floor speeches, memos, press releases, congressional resolutions, researching current and past policy issues, and monitoring various committee hearings.

“On my first day, I wrote a floor statement in recognition of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated honoring their hundredth year anniversary,” Putman states. “Congresswoman Jackson Lee gave that speech on the floor of the house, which was an honor to me because I wrote that on my first day here. I did the research and it went in the congressional record.”

Ms. Putman also assisted in drafting three additional resolutions while interning on Capitol Hill. The resolutions honored former president Lyndon B. Johnson on the hundredth anniversary of his birthday, poet-novelist and scholar Maya Angelou on the occasion of her 80th birthday, and Specialist


Monica Brown for bravery shown during combat operations in Iraq.

Still, the hard work and long hours that came with the internship were not without their benefit. Ms. Putman had a chance to meet several of the nation’s most admirable political leaders while in Washington, D.C., including Rep. Nancy Pelosi [D-Cal], Speaker of the House of Representatives; Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice; Martin Luther King, III; Senator John Kerry [D-Mass]; and, Rep. John Conyers [D-Mich], Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee.

From these encounters and her experience as an intern, Ms. Putman has gained an understanding of the various nuances that attend a career as a public servant. “It’s really hard. I sympathize with the representatives, senators, and even the president,” she says. “These public figures have the world on their shoulder, but will never please everyone [despite] having to make one decision that will change the lives of a lot of people.”

Ms. Putman comes away from the experience on a positive note, believing that she has made substantive contributions to serving the interests of her community.

“Just by being in Washington, D.C. and trying to write legislation, I felt that I was actually giving back. It’s a very big process, but by holding hearings and meetings, I felt like things were actually going somewhere.” And, throughout the process, Ms. Putman states, “Congresswoman Jackson Lee was like a mentor to me.”

Eronn Putman is an African American Studies minor looking to study law upon completion of her Bachelor of Science degree. 

New Scholarship

Dr. Julius Thompson Memorial Book Scholarship in African American Studies

Established by African American Studies in 2008, the Dr. Julius Thompson Memorial Book Scholarship in African American Studies assists students with their book fees. In the spring 2008 semester, AAS awarded the following four students book scholarships: Kymberly



Keeton, Leniqua Dominique Jenkins, Eronn Putman, and Tamara Spiller. 

AAS in a nutshell

Student Funding Support

- **John Rueben Sheeler Memorial**

Scholarship: Established in 1981 by the widow of Dr. John Rueben Sheeler, historian and chair of the Department of History and Geography at Texas Southern University, this scholarship provides funding to academically talented students who have declared minors in African American Studies and whose GPAs are at least 3.0. The amount of this award is \$1,000.

- **Mrs. Debbie Haley Academic Scholarship:**

Established by Mrs. Debbie Haley and African American Studies, this scholarship provides funding to students who have declared minors in African American Studies and whose GPAs are at least 2.5. The amount of this award is \$1,000.

- **Friends of African American Studies**

Scholarship: Established in 1999 by supporters of African American Studies throughout the Houston community, this scholarship provides funding to students who have declared minors in African American Studies and whose GPAs are at least 2.5. The amount of this award is \$1,000. Scholarships are awarded annually in the name of an important person of African world heritage.

- **Sylvester Turner Academic Distinction**

Scholarship: Established in 2006 to provide funding to students who have declared minors in African American Studies and whose GPAs are at least 3.5. The amount of this award is \$1,000.

- **John J. Moores, Sr. Academic Achievement Scholarship:** Established in 2006 to provide funding to students who have declared minors in African American Studies and whose GPAs are at least 3.0. The amount of this award is \$1,000.

- **Dr. Ira B. Bryant, Jr. Academic**

Scholarship: Established in 2005 in honor of the great Houstonian educator and civil rights leader, this scholarship provides funding to students who have declared minors in African American Studies.

- **Dr. Kwame Nkrumah International Study Scholarship:** Available to UH-matriculated undergraduate students enrolled in six (6) credit hours of African American Studies Summer IV Session International Study courses to the University of Ghana, University of Cape Coast, and Kwame

Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Ghana, West Africa.

- **Dr. Julius Thompson Memorial Book Scholarship in African American Studies:**

Established by African American Studies in 2008, this scholarship assists students with their book fees.

- **African American Studies Graduate**

Assistantship: This award, established in 1995, was initiated to recruit outstanding students for graduate study at the University of Houston pursuing M.A. or Ph.D. degrees in research related to or in the disciplinary field of African American Studies. Graduate assistants work 20 hours weekly on various assignments as required by the African American Studies Program.

International Study and Conference Exposure

- **Summer International Study Program—**

Ghana, West Africa (Summer Session IV, annually): UH students take three (3) or six (6) credit hours of African American Studies courses that integrate lectures by Ghanaian academics at the University of Ghana, University of Cape Coast, and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology with work at the University of Houston. Study includes educational travel.

- **National Model African Union—Washington, DC (First Week in March, annually):**

UH students participate in the annual National Model African union hosted by Howard University in Washington, DC, during the first week in March. UH students compete with undergraduate and graduate students from colleges and universities from across the United States who represent the 54 states on the African continent. The African Union is the newly founded transnational institution created to replace the Organization of African Unity, which was formed in 1963.

- **National Council for Black Studies Conference (Third Week in March, annually):**

The National Council for Black Studies is the leading organization of Black/Africana Studies professionals in the world. In addition to establishing standards of excellence within the discipline, NCBS serves as a major outlet for the scholarly dissemination of African-centered knowledge and modes

of inquiry regarding the life and experiences of African people. UH students are encouraged to attend and present research-based papers at the annual conference, which convenes during the third week of March each year. The conference exposes UH students to research generated by the leading theories and methodologies in the discipline, as well as introducing them to peers from leading institutions for the purpose of sharing and comparing ideas. In the past, AAS minors have presented papers and achieved academic distinction such as induction into the Ankh Maat Wedjau Honor Society and placement in the NCBS Student Essay Competition.

New Teaching Initiatives

- **Graduate Certificate in African American Studies:** The Graduate Certificate in African American Studies is a nine-hour disciplinary concentration open to students in all UH graduate and professional degree programs. It is also open to post baccalaureate professionals (including teachers, social service providers, policymakers, and others) interested in enhancing their knowledge and understanding of Africana phenomena.

The graduate concentration provides intellectual breadth to a student's course of study, increasing the depth and coherence of the student's work within her/his primary field of study on critical issues concerning Africana phenomena.

- **Undergraduate Minor Degree Program:**

Established in 1989, the undergraduate minor draws from the African American Studies Program's 42-credit hour inventory of permanent courses. Students take 18 credit hours in Africana Studies courses in areas of both humanities and social sciences.

Ankh Maat Wedjau Honor Society of the National Council for Black Studies, University of Houston Songhai Chapter: The Honor Society's overall mission is to establish for students a strong foundation in the discipline of Africana Studies at the University of Houston through extracurricular engagement in intellectual and active learning experiences.

Publication and Research

Africana Studies, A Review of Social Science Research: A new peer-reviewed academic annual serial published by

continued next page


African American Studies at the University of Houston

Ankh Maat Wedjau Honor Society

In the spring of 2008 the African American Studies Program at the University of Houston reestablished its chapter of the Ankh Maat Wedjau National Honor Society of the National Council for Black Studies. The overall mission of the Songhai Chapter of the Ankh Maat Wedjau Honor Society is to establish a strong foundation of knowledge and wisdom in the field of Africana/Black Studies at the University of Houston. It is the hope of members in the honor society that the knowledge and wisdom shared will help students grow within themselves academically, mentally and spiritually. In this regard, a key goal of the honor society is to grasp conceptually the interconnectedness of African people world wide and to stimulate conversation and thought.

As an organization Ankh Maat Wedjau Honor Society discusses and examines works from various authors, artists, musicians, movie makers, contemporary figures and historical intellectuals. These subjects allow the honor society to gain a holistic understanding of the issues and problems facing African humanity. Furthermore, this chapter is designed to be an open forum of ideas, in which rich conversation and thought will be shared. Participants will also enjoy opportunities to attend various conferences and colloquia in the field of Africana/Black Studies, such as the National Council of Black Studies Annual Conference and the Model African Union Conference.

Another important aspect of the Honor Society is on and off campus outreach. The honor society encourages all of its mem-

bers to participate in its various activities and initiatives. The initiatives sponsored by the honor society include its newsletter, community service/outreach, campus service/outreach as well as social and physical activism. Each of these initiatives challenges students to become intimately involved with campus and community life. Once again, the Ankh Maat Wedjau Honor Society's number one goal is to function as an organization that is dedicated to strengthening and empowering the lives of others on the University of Houston campus, the surrounding neighborhoods, schools (on all levels), and the Houston community as a whole. In short, this honor society is designed to bring students, faculty and local communities together in order to enrich the lives of all those involved. 

Expansion of African American Studies International Initiative


Model African Union -> United Nations

Every spring the African American Studies Program sends a team of University of Houston international scholars to Washington, D.C. to participate in the annual Model African Union conference sponsored by Howard University. This conference hosts 30-40 different universities every year with each institution bringing anywhere from 4-10 students to engage in the mock sessions of the African Union. Given this, the Model African Union conference is an excellent way for students to network with other universities, with other students from these universities, and gain

an international experience which is vital for a growing global world.

African American Studies has been successful in the years we have attended the conference and as a result the program has been invited to participate in the Southern Regional Model United Nations held in Atlanta, Georgia every fall. This is a very similar conference with the major difference being that students represent themselves as member countries of the United Nations rather than the African Union. This will allow our students to represent African countries as well as Caribbean and South/

Central American states, giving AAS students an opportunity to maintain a global Pan-African posture in the midst of world struggles and issues. It is hoped that the African American Studies program will begin participating in this conference in the fall of 2009.

This program is open to all students to participate. Further, we strongly encourage students to participate in any and all activities related to some form of international studies because, in the global world, it is imperative for students to know and understand the issues affecting the world community. 

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Transaction Publishers in New Brunswick, New Jersey, the new journal offers an important contribution to research and scholarship in the discipline of Africana Studies. The annual serial's inaugural issue was published in 2004.

African American Studies monograph series, Transaction Publishers: The series features original studies and recovery works within the discipline of Africana Studies.


African Americans in the American West monograph series, University Press

of Colorado: The series publishes original studies and recovery works on the Africana experience in the western United States from diverse disciplinary perspectives.

The Black Houston History Project: An initiative committed to the research, study, and preservation of the history of African American people and institutions in the city of Houston, Texas, from the nineteenth through the twentieth centuries.

Center for the Study of African American Culture: Approved by the University's Division of Research, the Center for the Study of African American Culture is com-

mitted to interdisciplinary research revived in the multiple dimensions of African American life and culture.

Visiting Scholars Program: Each year, at least two scholars from across the United States participate in a one-year visiting appointment in African American Studies. They teach one course of their own design while working toward the completion of a research project. The Visiting Scholars Program is designed to encourage new scholars to contribute new and innovative teaching and research in the discipline of Africana Studies. 

Ghana Summer International Study Program Scholarship Awardees



1 AAS Nkrumah Scholars visit Dr. W.E.B. DuBois's house in Ghana, West Africa

2 On the streets of El Mina

3 "Forwards Ever, Backwards Never": A photo of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's statue located at the Nkrumah Memorial



The Summer Study Tour to Ghana,

West Africa is a program that has been a very important element of African American Studies at the University of Houston since 2003.

This program allows students to experience the beauty, history and culture of Africa and its people from a very intimate firsthand basis.

In the country of Ghana students study at the University of Ghana at Legon, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology and the University of Cape Coast on a variety of subjects that range from the history of slavery and enslavement to the culture and religious practices of the Akan. In 2008 five University of Houston students, Alieshia Baisy, Van Garrett, Alexis Guidry, Sherail Jordan, and Tamara Spiller were provided with funding to participate in this rich and fulfilling program. In all, since 2003 the African American Studies program has sponsored over thirty students to travel to Ghana and continues to encourage students to become international scholars in this growingly global world.



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4 2008 AAS Nkrumah Scholar Sherail Jordan reviews the finished Kente products

5 Inside a Kente weaving factory

6 2008 AAS Nkrumah Scholar Alexis Guidry tries weaving an Adinkra cloth

7 The courtyard of the slave dungeon in El Mina, Ghana

8 A view of the harbor and port facilities of El Mina's fishing district

9 2008 AAS Nkrumah Scholar Tamara Spiller pauses to evaluate the photos of her experience in Ghana



8



7



9



10

10 AAS Scholars deliver school supplies to a primary school in northern Ghana

11 Ghanaian primary school students receiving instruction

12 AAS Scholars receiving instruction in the process of making Adinkra cloth



12



11

Graduate Certificate



The graduate certificate in African American Studies is a nine-hour disciplinary concentration that introduces students to advanced discussions, analyses, theoretical perspectives, and research methodologies in the discipline of Africana Studies. In addition, it provides intellectual breadth to a student's course of study, increasing the depth and coherence of the student's work within her/his primary field of study on critical issues concerning Africana phenomena.



Alieshia Baisy

During my undergraduate career at the University of Houston, I took a limited amount of AAS courses. I was a psychology major and had my eyes open to one thing: graduation. I graduated in the fall of 2004 and began my career as a teacher in the public school system. Working at an underserved neighborhood school, I continued to see that the curriculum did not reflect the experience of the young readers. I left the public school sector after a year and joined a public charter school whose sole purpose is to educate children in the 3rd Ward community.

I went from teaching about the life cycle and erosion to filling tomorrow's leaders with their history across the Atlantic. We write our own curriculum, allowing for instructors to tap into topics such as Pan-Africanism, sankofa, and

genocide in the twenty-first century. I enrolled into the AAS graduate certificate program at the University of Houston to immerse myself in knowledge about great leaders, research, methodology and ethnographic study so that I could be the change that I wished to see in the lives that I teach each day.

In the spring of 2009, I plan to enroll as a candidate in the Masters of Education in Professional Counseling program, with an emphasis on new trends in treatment by African American psychologists. My ultimate goal is to take counseling and therapy into the Black community to dispel the ever-popular belief that seeking help in the form of counseling is a "black" coping mechanism.

I recently received the Kwame Nkrumah International Study Abroad Scholarship and traveled with other UH students to Ghana, West Africa. The trip changed my perspective not only on Africa, but the exceptional work of the African

American Studies program. The scholarship provided each student the opportunity to reconnect with ancestors and see Africa's resilience and prosperity.

In regards to the professors, they have been more than supportive and encouraging for students—like me—returning to school. I value the genuine feedback and constant urge to be a part of the AAS family and local community.

I am originally from Waco, TX and moved to Houston in 2001 to pursue a B.S. in psychology from UH. Upon graduating magna cum laude in the fall of 2004, I joined the work force as an elementary teacher with HISD. I am currently a founder at KIPP Liberation College Prep, where I serve as the fifth and sixth grade level chair, director of special events, and dean of values. We serve underserved students from diverse backgrounds. I love to travel and cook and am currently pursuing my dream of becoming an event coordinator and caterer.

Graduate Certificate *continued*



Jason McCrady

I chose the graduate certificate program to further my education and advance toward my ultimate goal of pursuing a Masters of Arts degree in African American Studies. When I found out about the program, I was taking post graduate courses at another university. I thought this would be a better opportunity for me to obtain the graduate certificate before applying for a Masters program.

I received my undergrad in history from Southern University in Baton Rouge, in 2004. Ultimately, I would like to become a professor of African American studies, teaching history courses in an African American Studies department. I want to give back what my professors gave to me: knowledge about African Americans that you don't find in the typical textbook at the typical public or private grade school—informing students what we weren't taught; what's not in the books.

This is my second semester in the certificate program and the experience has been great and interesting so far. This is a very good program, very instrumental in furthering someone's education. The things that I am learning take me beyond what I thought I knew about Africana studies. The information is out there but not in the mainstream, so the certificate is helping me find more information and history on something I am very interested in.

Currently, I work as a social service coordinator in Alief ISD. I do counseling, uniforms assistance, medical assistance, etc.

Kiffany Dugger



I have always been fascinated with our culture and rich heritage. It seems that I thrive on learning more about my people, our struggles and our evolution. One of my goals is to teach African American studies on a collegiate level. When I look around, I see a great deal of young people that don't seem to

have a clue of where they come from or the struggles that our forefathers have gone through just to afford them the right to walk the streets freely. I want to educate the masses as well as myself about my people. The graduate certificate in African American Studies will place me a step ahead of my goal. I plan to pursue a Masters of Arts in African American Studies. The certificate will give me an advantage and help with my admission into a graduate program.

I love the class that I am currently taking. Dr. Conyers, director of African American Studies, is like a walking encyclopedia. I look forward to enrolling in my next class.

I am currently a social worker for a private agency. I am quite active in my church here in Houston and my community in Mississippi. I am working toward starting my own nonprofit organization geared toward motivating and promoting self esteem for victims of abuse/neglect. My hobbies include writing. I am currently working toward self publishing my first fiction novel entitled *The Green Eyed Butterfly*. The novel is set to be released in the spring of 2009.

Porshe Chiles



I have always had an interest in Africana Studies, but my previous university offered no classes on the subject. After viewing the university's website, I realized that obtaining a graduate certificate in African American Studies was an option and jumped at the opportunity. I have truly had a positive experience in the certificate program. There has been a refreshing feel of Umoja (Unity).

Currently, I am working on a M.A. in Communications. I would like to explore, understand, and break down the messages sent by institutions of higher education to young African American males. For example, is the goal of institutions of higher education to further an athlete's education, or simply put points on a scoreboard? This will question the intent of those messages.

I am originally from Dallas, Texas. I completed my Bachelors of Science degree from the University of Texas at Tyler, where I studied Communications with a minor in Marketing. I am a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and love volunteering with youth.

Rebecca Parks




I decided to do post graduate work towards the certificate to get a feel for if I would like to come back as a full time student. I received my bachelors in anthropology from the University of Houston eight years ago.

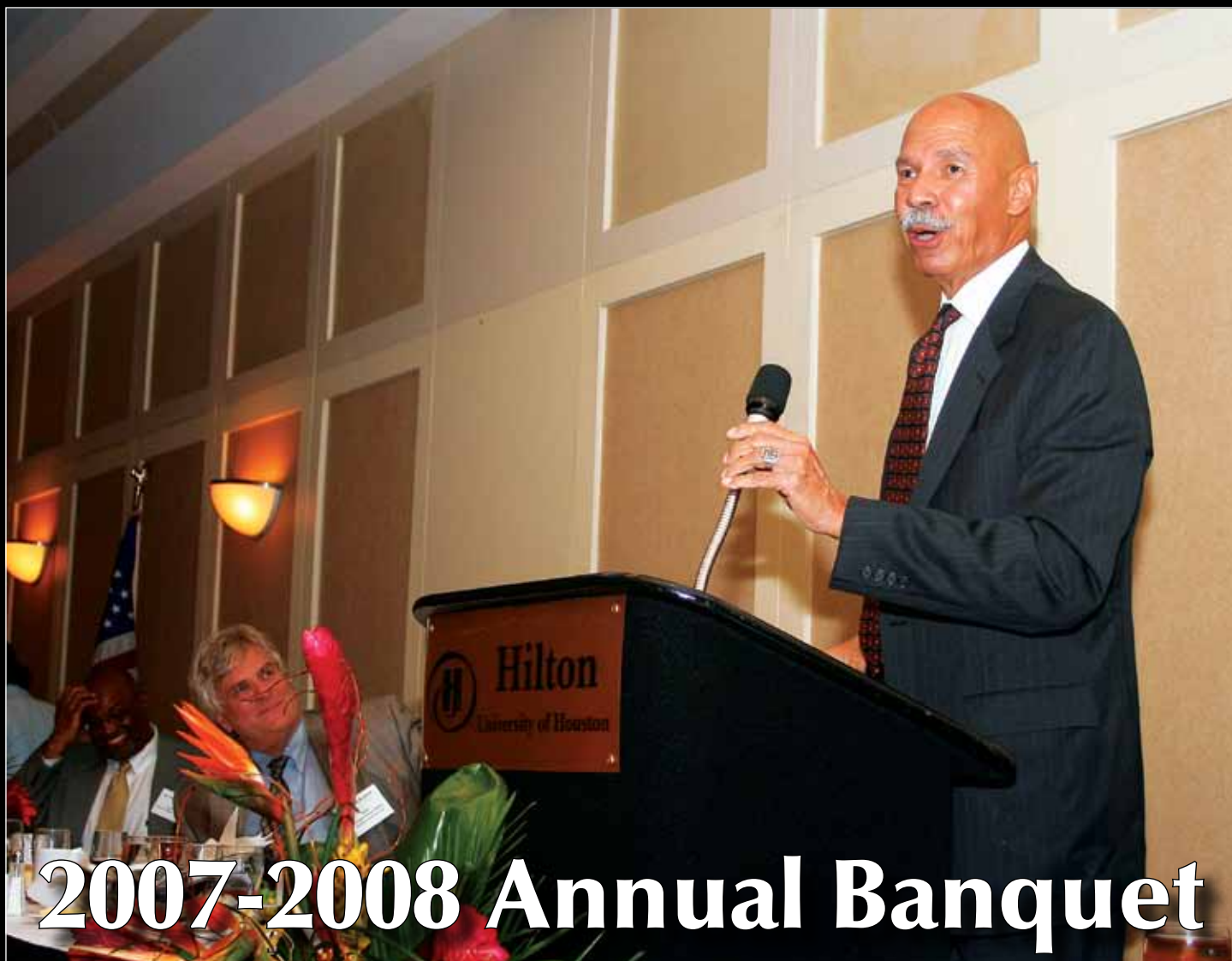
My Bachelors of Arts degree is in anthropology with an emphasis in dance anthropology: learning about different cultures through their dance style. I've studied the dance styles of other cultures, such as Nigerian and Zulu, and I wanted to research if African Americans had a particular style of dance in celebration. I know that we dance at clubs and parties, but I would like to see if we have a particular style of celebratory dance.

I find the certificate classes easier, convenient, and more beneficial because they are smaller than the undergraduate classes at the University of Houston. I really enjoy the small class size and the specifics of the work schedules.

I am very excited about the current African American Studies program because I recognize that the program has changed for the better after my eight year absence from the University. The program now has a competent international component to it with more opinions and fresh blood. I like the fact that Dr. Conyers and his assistant director are from out of town, this gives students different perspectives on things. I just wish that the program offered a major in African American Studies.

I haven't really decided yet if I will return as a full time student, but I know that I definitely will finish the program.

Currently, I am working in an alternative certificate program specializing in special education. 



2007-2008 Annual Banquet

In the spring of 2008, African American Studies hosted its annual scholarship banquet at the University of Houston Hilton Hotel. The banquet, aptly themed "One World, One People" and headed by Dr. Clara Meek and The Friends of African American Studies, with collaboration from the AAS staff, was a remarkable success. With the coordination of their efforts, the program and dinner provided a welcoming and inspiring atmosphere for all those who came

to embrace the young scholars of the University of Houston. The program featured an array of entertainment and scholarly presentations for those in attendance.

The event, which was emceed by News Anchor Melanie Lawson of KTRK TV Channel 13, included two dance performances by Sunanda's Performing Arts Center, a musical selection by Mr. Hanq Neal, Minister of Music, Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church, and

a dynamic live auction conducted by Mr. Alan Helfman, co-owner of River Oaks Chrysler Jeep, and Mrs. Georgia Provost of Mr. Randall Robinson, human rights activist, author, founder and past president of TransAfrica, an organization that spearheaded the movement to influence U.S. policies toward divestment in apartheid South Africa, delivered the profound keynote address on American foreign policy. He was also honored with the 2008 AAS Humanitarian Award.

continued page 16

This Page: Randall Robinson, renowned human rights activist, delivers 2008 AAS Scholarship banquet Keynote Address
Opposite Page, from left to right: • Texas Rep. Sylvester Turner, D-Houston, presents Rep. Alma A. Allen, D-Houston, with the 2008 Community Service Award, • Dr. Carl Carlucci, vice president, Administration and Finance, enjoying a laugh with Dr. Suresh Khator, professor of industrial engineering in the Cullen College of Engineering, • A dancer from Sunanda's Performing Arts Center captivates the banquet with her artistic talent, • The honorable Calvin Botley, U.S. Magistrate Judge, Southern District-Houston Division, holds the 2008 Distinguished Achievement Award with wife, Jean Botley, • Autographed professional sports paraphernalia on display during the banquet's silent auction.



Event Briefs

On Friday, 21 September 2007, co-hosted with the Department of Sociology "Are We Really a Melting Pot: How Religion and Race Differences Impact Beliefs about the American Nationality," featuring **Dr. Jason E. Shelton**, Postdoctoral Fellow on Race, Religion and Urban Life (CORRUL), Rice University

On Thursday, 27 September 2007, hosted lecture "Africana Studies and Womenism," by **Dr. Shawn R. Donaldson**, Associate Professor of Sociology RSCNJ



On Thursday, 11 October 2007, hosted lecture "Deep Structures, Helixes, and Feathers: On Beauty and the Africana Aesthetic," by **Dr. Melanie**

E. Bratcher, Assistant Professor African American Studies, University of Oklahoma

On Thursday, 8 October 2007, hosted lecture "Pan Africanism and the Contemporary Politics of Africa," by **Professor James Small**, New York based Independent Researcher

On Monday, 5 November 2007, presented "John Ford/ John Wayne: The Filmmaker and the Legend," by **Sam Pollard**, Producer/ Director/ Writer/ Emmy Award Winner/ Academy Award Nomination



On Monday, 26 November 2007, hosted lecture "Successful cases of Publishing dissertations as books," by **Mary Lenn Dixon**, Editor-in-Chief Press Consortium, Texas A&M College University

On Thursday, 6 December 2007, hosted for UH and Houston Community the **Annual Holiday Reception**, "Winter Wonderland Cultural Explosion."

On Tuesday, 5 February 2008, hosted lecture "Fearless Studies: Beyond Cultural Genocide and Miseducation to the Wisdom Tradition of African Deep Thought," by **Dr. Linda Myers**, Chairwoman of the Graduate School of Psychology, New College of California

On Monday, 11 February 2008, hosted lecture "White Power: One Historian's Journey through Black History," by **Dr. Alex Byrd**, Assistant Professor of History, Rice University

On Tuesday, 12 February 2008, hosted lecture "Nap Boule: Haitian Resistance From Slavery to Occupation," by **Dr. Akinyele Umoja**, Associate Professor of African American Studies, Georgia State University



On Tuesday, 19 February 2008, hosted lecture "African American and the Law," by **Professor Crisarla Houston, JD**, Director of the Legal Writing

Program and Assistant Professor of Law, Florida A&M University College of Law

On Thursday, 21 February 2008, hosted lecture "Silly Caucasian Girl Likes to Play with Samurai Swords: Neo-Colonial Passing and the Erasure of Black Women in the Interpreter," by **Dr. Kimberly Brown**, Associate Professor of English and director of the Africana Studies Program, Texas A&M University

On Monday, 25 February 2008, hosted lecture "Artivism: By Any Medium Necessary," by **M.K. Asante, Jr.**, Assistant Professor of English, Morgan State University



On Thursday, 28 February 2008, hosted lecture "Contribution of Black Women

Voices to Black Scholarship," by **Dr. Rajack Talley**, Associate Professor, Vice Chair, and director of graduate studies in the Department of Pan-African Studies, University of Louisville



On Thursday, 6 March 2008, hosted lecture "Binga Bank and the Development of Bronzeville," by **Beth Johnson**, Founder of FOCUS (Forum on Cultural Sites Architectural

Historian)

On Thursday, 3 April 2008, hosted lecture "The Noose and the Cross: Race, Religion, and the Redemption of Violence in the Works of W.E.B. DuBois," by **Dr. Edward J. Blum**, Assistant Professor of History, San Diego State University



On Thursday, 10 April 2008, hosted lecture "Genealogy and Diversity," by **Professor Kimberly M. Gay**, Academic Reference and Instruction

Librarian, John B. Coleman Library, Prairie View A&M University

On Monday, 14 April 2008, hosted lecture "Atlantic World Combat and the Creole Label," by **Dr. T.J. Desch-Obi**, Professor, Department of History, Weismann School or Arts and Sciences Baruch College



New AAS Library Resources



Nora Dethloff is the new African American Studies library liaison. Ms. Dethloff has an M.A. in English from Ohio State University, an M.F.A.

in English and Creative Writing from the University of Notre Dame, and an M.L.I.S. from Kent State University. Before joining the UH libraries she worked in the reference departments of Otterbein College and Montgomery County Public Library.

Ms. Dethloff is available for research assistance, course-related library instruction, requests for materials, or any library questions.

She can be reached at ndethloff@uh.edu, or by phone at 713-743-9747.

Be sure to watch for the new African American Studies virtual library!

New Books in African American Studies at the M.D. Anderson Library

With all deliberate speed: implementing Brown v. Board of Education

Edited by Brian J. Daugherity and Charles C. Bolton

(ANDERSON LIBRARY CALL # KF4155 .W58 2008)

A respectable woman: the public roles of African American women in 19th-century New York

By Jane E. Dabel

(ANDERSON LIBRARY CALL # F128.9.N4 D33 2008)

In search of the Black fantastic: politics and popular culture in the post-Civil Rights era

By Richard Iton

(ANDERSON LIBRARY CALL # E185.625 .I76 2008)

Toni Morrison: conversations

Edited by Carolyn C. Denard

(ANDERSON LIBRARY CALL # PS3563.O8749 Z46 2008)

Burning faith: church arson in the American South

By Christopher B. Strain

(ANDERSON LIBRARY CALL # E185.92 .S82 2008)

CSAAC

Research Symposium on Africana Psychology


In April 2008, the Center for the Study of African American Culture (CSAAC) hosted its fourth annual research symposium at the University of Houston Hilton Hotel. The symposium centered on examining theoretical and pedagogical issues in the field of Africana psychology. Scholars from across the country, representing a variety of academic disciplines and from a broad field of professional backgrounds participated in the event.

The list of scholars presenting at the conference included: Dashiell Geyen, visiting assistant professor of psychology, Texas Southern University, "Felling Katrina's Stress;" Paul Easterling, program manager of African American Studies, University of Houston, "The Culture Shock of Africana Studies on African People;" Autumn Raynor, adjunct professor of African American Studies, University of Houston,

"An Investigation of the relationship between language variety and information seeking behaviors of African American English speaking newcomers;" Serie McDougal, assistant professor of Africana Studies, San Francisco State University, "Indigenizing Pedagogy;" Malachi Crawford, assistant director of African American Studies, University of Houston, "Perceptive Discourse: Epistemic violence against US African Determinist Movements of the 20th Century;" M. Nicole Coleman, assistant professor of educational and counseling psychology, "A Hip Hop Sexual Screening Model;" James L. Conyers, Jr., university professor of African American Studies, University of Houston, "Karenga's Three Schools of Psychology."

The symposium, as a CSAAC research initiative, is focused on the presentation



and publication of thematic ideas which contribute to the growth and expansion of knowledge and research in Africana life and culture. It contributes to the growth and expansion of research and publication at the University of Houston, bringing together scholars from across the country in a moderated and academic forum. 

In Memoriam

Leona Deborah “Debbie” Haley



A Sophisticated Lady February 24, 1935—January 12, 2008 Leona Deborah “Debbie” Haley was more than just a person. She was a personality. Debbie was well-known, loved, and enjoyed for her characteristic free-wheeling frankness. Debbie was a New York state of mind living in the great state of Texas. What a fertile combination! Her sassy observations were always sewn with brevity. Each seed contained an insightful kernel of truth. As an egalitarian, she delivered her quips to family, friend, and foe with uncompromising honesty, precision, and love... at least in her mind! Debbie’s volunteer activities and the lives she touched are too many to enumerate. Debbie humbly described herself as a housewife and mother. She was actually a prolific volunteer and activist.


Debbie’s many contributions stretch over a long time period. Debbie was born in Jamaica, New York. A graduate of Queens College in New York City, Debbie taught public school in New York and Nashville. Once in Houston, she remained active in education, working with Volunteers in Public Schools. She served on the Board of IDRA, a leading think tank for multicultural education policy. Debbie also served for many years on the Board of the United Negro College Fund. She and her husband, Ronald Haley, M.D., are past Co-chairs of the UNCF Gala.

Debbie also supported the African American Studies Program at the University of Houston, where a scholarship is named in her honor. Debbie served on the Board of St. James School. Her greatest educational contribution was Debbie’s investment in her children’s pedagogy.

Debbie was a political activist. She was a candidate for the Houston Independent School District Board, a delegate to the 1976 Democratic National Convention, and founded the Texas Black Caucus – a non-partisan statewide advocacy organization. Debbie’s activism extended from feeding striking African American sanitation workers to supporting young politicians early in their careers who are current and past leaders throughout Texas and in Washington. Her civic service and volunteer work included the arts, church, and social clubs. Debbie was President of the Cultural Arts Council of Houston and Harris County, a leading funder of the arts. She was a member of the St. James Episcopal Church Vestry. Debbie was also an officer in the Women’s Auxiliary to the National Medical Association, and was a member of the Carrousel and the Moles. Among her many awards for civic service, Debbie was recognized during Black History Month in 1998 by the Houston Harris County Metropolitan Transit Authority.

Debbie was a devoted mother of four.

Debbie was a loving wife, and Ron loved her back. Married on Valentine’s Day in 1959, this year would be their 49th anniversary. Debbie spread more insight and love with a pithy well-timed remark than most folks could communicate in a soliloquy. Honesty, straightforwardness, articulation, and love for family, community and God. These are the qualities of a Sophisticated Lady. May the seeds of her ideas germinate within us, and inspire us to give more of ourselves to our families and communities. Leona Deborah Haley was the daughter of Edward and Rella Penn, and the sister of Barbara and Irvin Penn, who preceded her in death. She is survived by her husband, Ronald Haley, M.D., and their children: son, Anthony and his wife, My-Cherie; son, Sean and his wife, Christine; Kyle; and, daughter, Rhonda and her husband, Efreem Sewell. She is also survived by her grandchildren, Elijah and Evan Sharpe, and Nina Haley; and, Joshua Sewell. Her passing is mourned by a host of family members and friends. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Saint James Episcopal School, or the University of Houston African American Studies Program Mrs. Debbie Haley Academic Scholarship.

Published in the Houston Chronicle on 1/16/2008. 


AAS Banquet *continued*

The 2008 Community Service Award was presented to The Honorable Dr. Alma A. Allen (State Representative, 131st Legislative District of Texas). The Achievement Awards were given to The Honorable Calvin Botley (U. S. Magistrate Judge, Southern District-Houston Division), and The Honorable Vanessa D. Gilmore (U. S. District Court Judge, Southern District-Houston Division).

The evening concluded with the presentation of the student scholarship awards. Caleb Alexander was a recipient of the John Rueben Sheeler Memorial Scholarship. Jasmine Black, Brian Harris and Sherail Jordan were recipients of the

Bryant Scholarship. Eronn Putman, Tamara Spiller, Leniqua Dominique Jenkins and Kymberly Keeton were recipients of the Julius Thompson Book Scholarship Award. Leniqua Dominique Jenkins received the Mrs. Debbie Haley Academic Scholarship. AAS awarded Kymberly Keeton with the Friends of African American Studies Scholarship. Eronn Putman received the Sylvester Turner Academic Distinction Scholarship. Tamara Spiller was awarded the John Moores Humanitarian Scholarship. Alexis Guidry, Sherail Jordan, Kymberly Keeton and Tamara Spiller received the Dr. Kwame Nkrumah International Study Scholarship enabling them to study abroad

at the University of Ghana, University of Cape Coast, and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Ghana, West Africa.

The Annual African American Studies Scholarship Banquet continues to satisfy its primary objectives to recognize outstanding alumni and community leaders for their achievements and community service and to recognize and reward outstanding students at the University of Houston. African American Studies offers courses on the history, culture and contributions of people of African descent to a cross-section of students from various disciplines. 

Process

Bead Making

The process of bead making in West Africa dates back for over several millennia. In various West African societies, people have used beads for currency, fertility, adornment, spiritual concerns, and to symbolize authority. The 2007-2008 Nkrumah Scholars had an opportunity to observe the very detailed and complex process of making beads firsthand.



Breaking the Glass - The first step in bead making requires collecting several glass bottles that will be crushed to dust by pounding with a mortar and piston.

Shaping - The glass dust is then shaped into the desired forms.



The Oven - The shaped glass dust is then put into a fire oven (made from termite clay) until the dust solidifies into beads.

Polishing - After cooling, the beads are polished with water and sand before being string together and put on display.



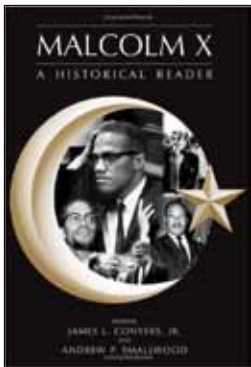


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University of Houston
African American Studies
629 Agnes Arnold Hall
Houston, TX 77204-3047

AAS Faculty Publications

New Publications in African American Studies

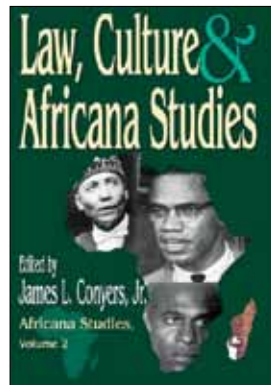


In the spring of 2008, Dr. James L. Conyers, Jr., University Professor and director of African American Studies, co-edited a work entitled

Malcolm X: A Historical Reader (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2008) with Dr. Andrew P. Smallwood, coordinator of African American Studies at Austin Peay State University and former 2004-2005 AAS visiting scholar. The editors assembled an impressive array of contributors whose works reflect their expertise in the fields of history, sociology, social work, religion, literature, labor and management, and Africana studies. These essays fuse social science, humanistic, and professional

studies methods as they look at Malcolm X and his contributions in place, space, and time.

Dr. Conyers also edited the second volume of Africana Studies, the annual series published by Transaction Publishers. This particular volume, entitled Law, Culture & Africana Studies, reviews the past in order to evaluate the present and move ahead with appropriate policies for the future. The authors focus



on issues of affirmative action, legal culture, theories of black culture, and methodologies of scholarly work in Africana studies.

AAS Adjunct and Affiliate Faculty Publications

Gerald Horne, John and Rebecca Moores Professor of History, had a particularly productive publication year with: *The End of Empires: African Americans and*



India (Temple University Press, 2008); and, *Blows Against the Empire: U.S. Imperialism in Crisis* (International Publishers, 2008).

