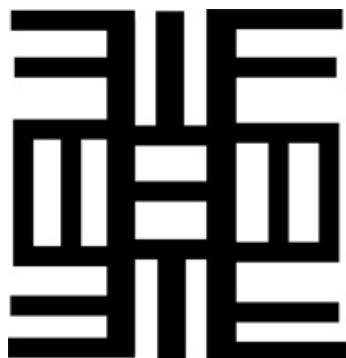


NEWSLETTER



WEST AFRICAN ADINKRA, SYMBOL OF
LIFE-LONG EDUCATION AND CONTINUED
QUEST FOR KNOWLEDGE.

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the Department of African and African American Studies (AAAS) at Fordham University! We are pleased to let you know that our Department has successfully completed its three-year plan (2011-2014), and we strive to continue to provide excellence in teaching and mentoring, as well as in the pursuit of excellence in the cultivation of new ways of thinking. Our Department will continue to emphasize a cross-regional and cross-cultural perspective and a comparative study of different African diasporas.

Our undergraduate students are drawn to our Department by the relevance of the courses to their professional career goals and our capable and supportive faculty and staff. Our course offerings provide strong theoretical base, professional and socially

oriented knowledge in African and African American Studies.

Our course requirements for majors and minors are designed to help prepare students for careers or graduate school. In addition to formal coursework and research, the department encourages students to explore careers in AAAS and provide community service by participating in internships and community service.

I invite you to visit our website and learn about our stated mission, our exciting course offerings, our student-centered and accomplished faculty, and our faculty excellence in teaching, research, and community service.

I hope that this Newsletter provides the information that you are seeking about our Department.

Sincerely,
Dr. Amir Idris,
Professor and Chair

Forthcoming Events

Fall 2014

**STUDENT-LED CONFERENCE ,
OCTOBER 4, 2014**

The fourth Student-Led Conference will be held in October 2014. The theme of the conference is "Debating African History and Politics". Selected students from LC and RH campuses will be presenting their final papers at the conference. The conference will be open to students, faculty, and members of the public. We expect 10 students from both campuses to participate.

Spring 2015

**PANEL DISCUSSION ON MASS
INCARCERATION,
FEBRUARY 7, 2015**

In collaboration with the Shabazz Center, the department will organize a panel discussion on mass incarceration. The panel discussion will include Malcolm's prison experience, the role of education for prisoners, the role of faith/spirituality in the prison experience, etc.

Learning from History to Craft Our Future: Lessons from the Life of Dr. Maya Angelou

DR. AIMEE COX
Tenured Assistant Professor

HISTORY, DESPITE ITS WRENCHING PAIN, CANNOT BE UNLIVED, BUT FACED WITH COURAGE, NEED NOT BE LIVED AGAIN.

— MAYA ANGELOU

We often come to know great people and inimitable figures through the words they leave behind. Maya Angelou is no different. Many of us can recite her quotes and list at least a few of the poems and books she penned to wide renown. However, on May 28th 2014, Maya Angelou left our earthbound world, charging us with the task of not just knowing but living her words. The title that most of us associate with Dr. Angelou is poet. And, although her rich language and rhythmic phrasing are unparalleled, it is her bold social commentary that infused her publications with the political importance that still resonates today with an entirely new generation of readers. As her writing floats from the page and travels beyond the audible reach of the spoken word, it inspires the type of individual reflection that leads to collective action. Maya Angelou's fluid engagements across art and action, poetry and politics are part of a long tradition of Black cultural production rooted in the belief that art, at its best, must serve a transformational purpose.

The functional role of art within community was, perhaps, most clearly evident during the late 1950s and 1960s when the urgency of the Civil Rights era highlighted the organic links between creative expression, the affective dimensions of aesthetics, and social justice. Upon her return to the United States following years spent writing and teaching in Egypt and Ghana, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. appointed Angelou the Northern Coordinator for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. During her sojourn in Egypt, she met Malcolm X and ultimately became instrumental in Malcolm's Organization for African American Unity prior to his assassination in 1965. Dr. Angelou's commitment to living courageously and intentionally prevented her from being solely defined by isolated labels such as writer, activist, teacher, actress, or historian, revealing the ineffectiveness of perceiving the world through a compartmentalized lens. Angelou responded to the impact of her contemporary social and political environment but also created the conditions under which people could imagine and potentially



PHOTO COURTESY OF SANTA BARBARA INDEPENDENT

enact new ways of living. She was much more than reactionary; she was a visionary whose passion for generating and building formed the basis of her cultural critique.

In this moment, it is helpful to return to Dr. Maya Angelou as an example for how we might understand the enduring significance of African and African American studies as a theoretical discipline within the academy and method for social analysis and action that extends beyond the academy. The majority of African and African American and Black studies departments emerged during the late 1960s and early 1970s from the fierce push back students offered against historically inaccurate, Eurocentric curricula in higher education. The brave cadre of multicultural young people who demanded intellectually rigorous and community accountable interventions in research and pedagogy were invested in a vision of the university that was deeply embedded within, instead of detached from, people living outside campus boundaries. Thus, the emergence of AFAM studies and its continuation today reflects a worldview similar to that expressed through the work of Dr. Maya Angelou. Arbitrary boundaries that circumscribe the actions and roles of individuals, and between contexts like university and community limit the possibilities for realizing our transformational aspirations. Dr. Angelou's passing requires an intentional circling back to our intellectual, creative, and activist legacies to uncover archives that are alive and pulsating with relevant blueprints for how we might perceive, and even transform, our current social realities. Angelou's transition from our material world marks this contemporary moment as an important time for future dreaming as we courageously view a past our history begs us not to repeat. •

Personal Reflections on African and African American Studies at Fordham

Speech from the 3rd Annual Student-Led Conference

Saturday, November 2, 2013

ALESSANDRO MONETTI



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALESSANDRO MONETTI

I am only 22 years old, but I have gone through a great deal of experiences, big and small, that have affected me in the way I see and go about the world. I was born in northern Italy, in Savigliano, a small town of less than 21,000 people, and grew up in Manta, one of the many surrounding towns, which was even smaller with just about 4,000 residents. Later, I also lived in Torino – Italy’s fourth biggest city – for two years, before moving to Los Angeles, California, in 2008. The three Italian towns I mentioned are located in the northwestern region of Piedmont, a predominantly conservative and highly religious region – Catholicism being the prevailing faith, considering that 88% of the entire country is Catholic. Piedmont severely lacks in diversity when it comes to race and ethnicity. Less than 9% of the region’s population is considered to be non-Italian. As you think about this fact, bear in mind that there is widespread closed-mindedness, which makes it so that if an individual who is not of Italian descent is born and raised in Italy, he or she is nonetheless considered to be an “other” even though he or she may be Italian in every respect. As a result – the notion of the “non-Italian” that I have mentioned often simply refers to non-whites and/or of foreign

descent – and not actually not Italian.

From my earliest years, I was aware that I was different from most, if not all, of the children that I saw every day in school. This had very much to do with the fact that I was born into a biracial, bicultural family. It might surprise you, but that is something that is quite uncommon in Italy. My father, who I lost at age 15, was 100% Italian, and he was born, raised, and lived his entire life in more or less the same 15-mile radius. My mother is perhaps what made me and my family so different from the typical Piemontese family. She was born in Los Angeles to Mexican American parents. Growing up as a minority in Southern California was in many ways the polar opposite of what my father and even I experienced in rural Piedmont.

Personally, I consider myself extremely fortunate to have been born into the incredible family that I have. I consider it a beautiful thing to have been born into a biracial family, especially in the society I was brought up in. It is not easy to be “the different one” in a society where everyone else is the same, because it is almost certain that obstacles will be met along the way. It was indeed the case that my family was viewed differently in a society where over 90% of the population is white. Skin color was never an issue with us in Manta, however, because of my mother’s fairly light complexion and my brother and I being perceived as simply white.

Growing up, I began noticing some of the double standards that existed in the environment that surrounded me with regards to race. Africans are generally frowned upon because in the eyes of the common white Piemontese they are imposing themselves on Italian society. No matter what, people assume that pretty much any African they encounter must have come illegally across the Mediterranean Sea on a raft and is living in the country illegally. Prejudice towards Africans is so prevalent, and this was noticeable during a recent event in Italy. As a result of the tragedy at Lampedusa, during which hundreds of people died as they attempted to migrate to Italy from the northern coast of Africa, the Italian government actually issued a National day of Mourning. This, however, was severely criticized by a vast amount of Italian citizens. Social media was pervaded by hateful messages with people saying things like, “I am certainly not mourning for these people who try to come here when they are not welcome.” The racism towards Africans that I grew up noticing is so fierce that the common term widely used to refer to them is *marocchino*, which literally means ‘Moroccan’. I mean, really: How ridiculous is it that the vast majority of the population, including many people who received my same level of education, call all people of African descent Moroccan, as if Moroccan is synonymous with black? It almost seems silly to have to specify that African immi-

Student Reflection

grants in Italy come from a plethora of different countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, Senegal, Nigeria, and more, and not just from Morocco.

African Americans in Italy, on the other hand, are often faced with a different issue. At first, they may be subject to unfortunate racism because of their skin color, but very often once a closed-minded Italian realizes they are from the United States, things change. Black public figures from the United States – actors, musicians, athletes, politicians, and so on – are admired and even idolized by the Italians: Michael Jordan, Eddie Murphy, Beyoncé Knowles, and Barack Obama are all legends in Italy. Those who glorify them apparently forget that they too are of African descent, but they are idolized in part because America is seen by the average Italian as being an awesome far-away place

I should note, however, that in recent times, years after I moved to the United States, the common view of people of African descent residing on the Italian peninsula is very slowly changing. This is in great part due to the rise of Mario Balotelli, a professional soccer player who was born in Sicily to parents originally from Ghana, but was raised by Italian foster parents, the Balotellis. His skills led him to enter the world of professional sports at age 16, and in 2010 Balotelli became the first non-white member of the Italian national soccer team. Nicknamed Super

“REFLECTING ON THE IMPACT MY FAMILY HAS HAD ON ME, I HAVE COME TO REALIZE THAT APPRECIATION OF DIVERSITY AND THE PASSION FOR ATTEMPTING TO AFFECT POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE HAS REALLY BEEN IN MY BLOOD FOR MULTIPLE GENERATIONS.”

Mario, he is currently considered to be Italy's best striker. In any case, race relations in Italy still have a very long way to go before we can talk of real improvement. At the stadium, Balotelli is often still the victim of racial slurs, with fans of opposing teams chanting, “There is no such thing as a black Italian.”

To go back to the point I was making, I will say that during the time I grew up, I was hyper-aware of the prejudices and double standards related to race, but I was blessed with a worldview that differed immensely from that of my classmates and their families. I knew from early on that diversity was a major component of the world we live in. I was taught from the very beginning that I should not judge or discriminate against anyone based on where they come from, what they look like, or what color their skin is. I owe this for the most part to my family's own

diversity and to the possibilities I was afforded, particularly the trips to different countries in Europe, Africa, North and South America, as well as frequent visits to family members in Southern California, where I was able to navigate in a society that is synonymous with diversity.

Reflecting on the impact my family has had on me, I have come to realize that appreciation of diversity and the passion for attempting to affect positive social change has really been in my blood for multiple generations. My mother's grandfather came to the United States from Mexico during the Mexican Revolution, moving first to San Antonio and then to California. In 1926, he founded *La Opinión*, currently the largest Spanish-language newspaper in the United States and the second-most read newspaper in Los Angeles. My great-grandfather worked tirelessly so that the newly-founded newspaper was one of the few to provide comprehensive coverage of the deportations of Mexicans during the 1930s, as well as the Zoot Suit Riots of the 1940s, a period of violence that began in Los Angeles between white Marines and Latino youths, with some African Americans and Filipino Americans also involved. The incident triggered similar riots in a variety of American cities, including Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, and New York. In fact, according to a 1984 article in the *History Workshop Journal*, it was through the participation in the Detroit riots that the young Malcolm Little began a political education that transformed him into Malcolm X.

My grandfather was also and still is quite passionate about social change. Aside from working for the newspaper his father founded, he was also involved in politics. In 1964, he was appointed as a consultant to the United States Department of State by President Lyndon Johnson, and he also served on the California advisory committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights. In the late 70s he was the United States Ambassador to El Salvador for about a year, under the presidency of Gerald Ford. Though these facts are rarely talked about in my family, for reasons unknown to me, I am aware that my grandfather's political activity influenced my mother, who in turn influenced me.

My own interest in promoting social change, which eventually led me to African and African American Studies, is something that has blossomed to its full extent only in the last two years or so, and I truly owe most of it to a class called Black Prison Experience I had the pleasure of taking with Dr. Mark Chapman last fall. I may have only recently come to recognize how much I care about social work, but I do think it has been a quality that existed within me for years, and perhaps Dr. Chapman's course was just what I needed to trigger the final step in realizing this passion of mine. I will say this for the rest of my days: his class literally changed my life, and it was also a determining factor in my decision to pursue my

minor in African and African American Studies. When I signed up for the course, I had no idea what I was in for. I had no idea just how much the material we covered and the books we read were going to affect me. I have always been a sensitive person, but if it was in my subconscious until then, I was certainly aware of it now.

The following quote was on the front page of the course syllabus, “blacks make up roughly 13% of the U. S. population, but nearly 50% of the American prison population.” As soon as I read that, I was hooked. I was deeply disturbed by what I read about the struggle of African Americans in prisons throughout the United States and the harsh disparities between the incarceration rates of different races. I became interested in the prison industrial complex and extremely passionate about criminal justice reform. Black Prison Experience was the final component in the formation of my awareness of what I wanted to do, what studies I wanted to pursue, which path I wanted to take.

I have to say that Dr. Chapman himself has also had a tremendous influence on me. Through this course and another on Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X, he has taught me some of the most valuable lessons I have learned thus far. He has provided his full support for all of my research studies. He allowed me to call him for help and advice even when the project I was working on wasn't for his class, even staying on the phone with me way past 9pm. I will always be grateful for having encountered him and his wisdom.

By the time it was time to register for classes for the following semester, I already knew African and African American Studies was going to be my minor. I took a class rooted in anthropological and sociological perspectives taught by Dr. Cox called Racing the City, which once again proved to be exactly the kind of course I was looking for. One of the most rewarding things I have ever done at this point was a research study I conducted over a span of several weeks, a major assignment for this class. It differed from any of my previous assignments because from the very start, I knew I would have to eventually present it at a panel discussion with a visiting scholar. This alone gave me the incentive to put a lot of effort into it because embarrassing myself in front of an audience was definitely not on my list of goals. Along with that, it was also a unique project for me because of the nature of the research. We were not asked to simply go to the library, find books related to our topic, and write a traditional paper. It was far from that. While previous scholarship was a vital part of the study, the most crucial aspect was that we go out into different communities and conduct interviews with people we did not know.

The research study I conducted is concerned with the way that race operates in African American men's self-perception and identity. I was interested in speaking

directly to people who might help me in furthering my understanding of what it means to be a black man in America. At first, I was so nervous about having to interview strangers about such personal things. I thought that even if I managed to find people, they would just say a few words or give me easy answers rather than really getting into deep, meaningful conversations. I was wrong. I was pleasantly surprised to find individuals that were not only willing to sit down with me, but who provided me with such significant information and who told me things I would have never expected to hear in the settings

“I HAVE TO SAY THAT DR. CHAPMAN HIMSELF HAS ALSO HAD A TREMENDOUS INFLUENCE ON ME. THROUGH THIS COURSE AND ANOTHER ON MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. AND MALCOLM X, HE HAS TAUGHT ME SOME OF THE MOST VALUABLE LESSONS I HAVE LEARNED THUS FAR.”

we were in.

I wish I had more time to go into detail about my discoveries, but I will say that with this research I learned so much more than I thought possible – about myself, about my interviewees, and about topics that have yet to be fully addressed in scholarly work. I learned the value of listening to what others have to say – that, at times, this is the only way to gain a proper understanding of an issue – even if scholars before me who focused on similar topics have generally overlooked its importance. This research project alone, which was nowhere near as extensive as it could have been given the time constraints, taught me the importance of really thinking about the structures and the social and political framing that impact black identity. Lastly, it pushed me to think about how we talk about black male identity and how we go about researching it.

The research study I spoke of was so gratifying that it even influenced me during the process of refining a topic for my thesis in the area I majored in: Art History. When I was confronted with the dilemma of choosing what to focus on, I knew right away that I wanted to incorporate my minor into the research in some way. Looking back to the study on the perception of African American men, I began thinking about the way that figural representations of black men convey certain notions that can impact the larger society's perception and understanding of what black masculinity is and means. Going off of those ideas, I ultimately decided to focus on a critical analysis of Robert Mapplethorpe's infamous and enormously controversial Black Book, released in 1986, containing a

Student Reflection

collection of 91 photographs depicting black male nudes. Even though some consider the portraits to be some of the most astonishing and visually stunning photographs of black male nudity, there has been a huge amount of negative backlash following the book's release.

The images raise some important questions about the representation of African American men in art, especially in art created by white artists like Mapplethorpe. The artist fetishized and over-sexualized the black male, providing an altogether negative image of African American men. I believe that the *Black Book* is rooted in stereotypical notions about black masculinity and sexuality. It carries connotations that give it a deeply problematic quality, and the work just can't be seen as a mere collection of pretty pictures. Some of the questions I sought to address in the thesis relate to the effects that Mapplethorpe's portraits have on white society's perception of African American men; the significance of Mapplethorpe's fascination and infatuation with the black male body and what that says about the general attitude toward black masculinity; and what different takes on the *Black Book*

"...I HAVE FOUND THE ENTIRE EXPERIENCE WITHIN THE AFRICAN AND AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES DEPARTMENT AT FORDHAM TO BE TRULY ENLIGHTENING. I LEARN SOMETHING NEW AND I THINK, WOW – IF ONLY EVERYONE WAS REQUIRED TO TAKE THIS CLASS, WHAT A BETTER PLACE THE WORLD WOULD BE!"

convey about race relations at the time the works were produced and even today.

Another part of my thesis was concerned with Glenn Ligon, an African American artist still active today, who in 1993 created an installation in response to Mapplethorpe entitled *Notes on the Margin of the Black Book*. In this work, the artist was able to capture the breadth and intensity of the public debate surrounding the portraits. It was my intention to assess the ways in which Ligon's and other black male artist's responses to the *Black Book* can be seen as examples of African American men gaining or regaining control of their own image. And also, I examined what an artwork like Ligon's expresses about black men's own view of themselves, as well as what it conveys about black men's attitude towards works that claim to represent them while often objectifying their bodies and stripping them of their personalities and human characteristics.

In closing, I just want to say that I have found the entire experience within the African and African American

"I WISH I HAD MORE TIME TO GO INTO DETAIL ABOUT MY DISCOVERIES, BUT I WILL SAY THAT WITH THIS RESEARCH I LEARNED SO MUCH MORE THAN I THOUGHT POSSIBLE – ABOUT MYSELF, ABOUT MY INTERVIEWEES, AND ABOUT TOPICS THAT HAVE YET TO BE FULLY ADDRESSED IN SCHOLARLY WORK."

Studies department at Fordham to be truly enlightening. I learn something new and I think, Wow – if only everyone was required to take this class, what a better place the world would be! Coming from the environment I grew up in, a society that is still so far from recognizing, accepting, and embracing diversity, I find it even more important because I have learned so much that Italy as a whole still needs to grasp.

Right now, racial tension in Italy seems to have reached an all-time high, following Prime Minister Enrico Letta's appointment of Cecile Kyenge as Italy's first black cabinet minister. Born in the Democratic Republic of Congo, she currently serves as the Minister for Integration. She has been extremely focused on promoting mutual awareness, integration and cooperation between Italy and Africa. She also is a fearless fighter for the rights of migrants in Italy. Some groups severely criticized her nomination, which was met by racist insults and campaigns from individual politicians as well as large portions of the population. One politician accused her of wanting to impose "tribal traditions" in Italy, and another insulted her by stating that she has "features of an orangutan." The Economist has put it in simple terms: Kyenge's treatment as the country's first black minister has been nothing short of shameful, and quite frankly, nasty. But as despicable as it is to us, this is unfortunately only one of the painful examples of the racism of my home country, something I know could be changed through studies like the ones I have been able to pursue.

I have found the African and African American Studies program to be so important because it seeks to end injustice and unfair treatment by shedding light on the simple truths about a culture that has been deemed pathological by the dominant society for way too long. I believe that addressing and thoroughly analyzing the demoralizing effects of mistaken assumptions, prejudice, and stereotypes are necessary steps to provide a better, safer space for all. •



FARAI CHIDEYA AND KRISTEN CLARKE/ PHOTO CREDIT: PATRICK VEREL

Black History Month 2014: Civil Rights in 21st Century

On February 22, 2014, the African and African American Studies Department in collaboration with Fordham Law School presented a Symposium, Civil Rights in the 21st Century, as part of the planned celebrations of Black History Month at the Lincoln Center campus. The Symposium commemorated the 50th Anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the landmark legislation marking one of the most important moments in the long struggle for civil rights in the United States. The keynote speaker was Kristen Clarke, Bureau Chief of the Civil Rights Division of the New York State Attorney General's Office and respondent was Farai Chideya, multimedia journalist and political analyst. Christina Greer, Assistant Professor of Political Science moderated the program.

In her talk Attorney Kristen Clarke recounted the accomplishments of the Civil Rights Act passed in June of 1964 as well as the resistance to the legislation. She noted the Law's protections in em-

ployment, education, public accommodations and housing while she also emphasized current challenges in enforcement and combating discrimination. Armed with a convincing set of statistics covering a number of categories –discrepancies in net worth between Whites, Blacks and Latinos, differences between Blacks and Whites in arrest, conviction, and incarceration rates for similar crimes, a surprising percentage of segregated schools today relative to the era of Brown, etc.—Kristin Clarke demonstrated why civil rights issues are still critical today. She also discussed the imperative to protect the rights of immigrant communities, domestic violence victims, and the importance of marriage equality. In conclusion she offered that 2014 was not the time to abandon the fight for civil rights and the possibility of a transformative vision in which there will be one set of rules for all.

In response, Farai Chideya agreed with the speak-

Spotlight on 2013-2014 Events

er's analysis and conclusion. She related a case of housing discrimination from her own experience, which she ignored in her rush to find an apartment. She highlighted the importance for all to resist discrimination when it occurs. However, she also suggested another somewhat provocative perspective. In her view civil rights laws alone can never complete the quest for an equal society. In addition or simultaneously, we must also strive for social relations which bring us closer to love, wherein we not only tolerate and respect others but offer them our love as well. She explained agápe from the Greek as an act of the will in which we resist hierarchies in our relations with others and offer love, even to those who hate us. Both presentations provoked lively discussion from the audience and several pointed questions from the Moderator. Over 100 students, faculty and staff members from both campuses were in attendance.

The program was organized by a faculty committee from FCLC and Fordham Law, led by Professors Watkins-Owens, Christina Greer and Olivier Sylvain.

Understanding Africa in the 21st Century: Student-Led Conference

On Saturday, November 2, 2013, the Depart-

ment of African and African American Studies held its 3rd Annual Student - Led Conference focusing on selected themes on African Studies at Lincoln Center Campus, McMahon Hall, from 9am-2:30pm. Students' papers discussed selected themes such as slavery, and the slave trade; legacies of colonialism; race and color; religion, gender, and migration. In the first session, moderated by Dr. Amir Idris, Alessandro Monetti presented the keynote speech titled "Personal Reflections on African and African American Studies". In the second session, titled "Slavery and the Slave Trade", moderated by Dr. Aimee Cox, Stephanie Baldwin and Anastasiya Guzshenko presented two papers titled, "Africa's Enslavement after Freedom", and "Slavery in Africa and the Americas: how does it differ?," respectively. In the third session, entitled, Legacies of Colonialism", chaired by Dr. Jane Edward, Dalia Muhieddine delivered a paper titled "Colonialism as a virulent Architect in Rwanda", and Roumaissa Zoui presented a paper entitled "The Unjustified 'Scramble for Africa". The final session, titled "Postcolonial Challenges: religion, Gender, and Migration", moderated by Dr. Bentley Anderson, brought together three students Lauren Giangrasso, Robert Moore, and Benjamin Calderon who presented three papers titled, "Not Tragically Female: The continued fight towards the empowered African women", and "Connotations



AIMEE COX AND ANASTASIYA GUZSHENKO/ PHOTO COURTESY OF ROBERT B. ANDERSON



EDMUND YAKANI (VIA SKYPE) AND AMIR IDRIS/ PHOTO COURTESY OF JANE EDWARD

and Complexities: Islam and Christianity in African Continent”, and “The Consequences of Brian Drain on Western Africa”, respectively.

A lively Q&A discussion followed the presentations in which presenters and moderators of each panel engaged each other as well as the audience. Approximately 50 students, faculty and community members attended the conference. Breakfast and lunch were provided for all in attendance.

Symposium on Perspectives on National Reconciliation in South Sudan: Lessons Learnt from South Africa, Rwanda and Sudan

In response to the political crisis in South Sudan, the Department of African and African American Studies held a symposium on national reconciliation in South Sudan on April 5th, from 10:00am-4:00pm. The symposium discussed some of the challenges of political reconciliation and justice in South Sudan. The speakers offered different perspectives on the crisis and explore policy options for peace, democracy, and development in South Sudan. Outstanding academics, policy makers, and human rights activists from South Sudan debated possible ways of addressing these pivotal

issues. In the first session titled, “Human Rights and Citizens’ Perspectives”, chaired by Dr. Amir Idris of Fordham University, Edmund Yakani, Executive Director of Community Empowerment for Progress based in Juba, South Sudan, presented the findings of the recent survey conducted by his organization on the citizens’ perspectives on the causes of the conflict and the way forward. Jehanne Henry, from Human Rights Watch in New York City, presented a perspective on the crisis of human rights in South Sudan. The second session, titled, “Political Reform, Civil Society, and National Reconciliation”, was moderated by Dr. Irma Watkins-Owens of Fordham University. In this session, Sarah Cleto Rial of Sister’s Keeper, presented a paper titled, “Strengthening the Role of Women in Peacebuilding and reconciliation in South Sudan”, and Dr. Amir Idris delivered a paper titled, “Does South Sudan Possess the Leadership to Resolve the Conflict?”. In the third session titled “Challenges and Opportunities for Reconciliation”, Dr. David Bassiouni, Chairman and CEO of the Bassiouni Group, presented a paper titled, “The Challenges and Opportunities for Reconciliation in South Sudan Crisis”, and Dr. Jok Madut Jok of Loyola Marymount University and Sudd Institute, delivered a paper titled, “South Sudan’s Justice System and the Challenges of Peace and

Spotlight on 2013-2014 Events

Reconciliation”.

The symposium concluded by offering possible alternative perspectives for an inclusive national and political reconciliation. The symposium was taped and aired by South Sudan in Focus Program of Voice of America (VOA). Here’s the link to the VOA news article:

<http://www.voanews.com/content/blunt-instrument-good-step-south-sudan-comment-us-sanctions/1888225.html>

Lecture: Cocoa, Slavery and Colonial Africa

Dr. Catherine Higgs, professor of African History at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, was on campus April 10th for a lecture presented to students of the “Exploring Africa” and “African American History I” classes as well faculty; some 50 individuals were in attendance. In “Chocolate, Slavery, and the Humanitarian Impulse in Colonial Africa”, Higgs discussed the role that Christian ethics and business practices played in purchasing cocoa by the English chocolate firm Cadbury Brothers, Ltd., from plantations on the African Equatorial islands of São Tomé and Príncipe. Not glossing over the reality that slave labor was used on the “Chocolate islands” to raise cocoa, Higgs’s presentation on Cadbury business practices was a nuanced narrative intended to arouse questions, evoke critical analysis, and lead to ethical discussions. What role does religion play in one’s business practices? What role should it play? When profits and the viability of a commercial enterprise are at stake, what is the ethical thing to do when dealing with labor? While these questions arose in the early twentieth century, Higgs’s presentation resonated with contemporary international labor concerns and fair trade issues. Cadbury Brothers, Ltd., she explained was started by the Quaker, William Cadbury in 1824. By the end of the nineteenth century, William’s heirs had made Cadbury chocolate drink and candy bars a national and international best seller. However,

in the early twentieth century, charges that slave labor was used on the Chocolate islands caused the Quaker-raised Cadburys to send a team to investigate and evaluate the situation. The Brothers would eventually have to decide what ethical and business decisions to make regarding the fair trade and just labor practices. Our students were led on a similar journey through Catherine Higgs’s presentation. •

Recent Faculty News and Publications



FORDHAM UNIVERSITY
THE JESUIT UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Department of African and African
American Studies

Faculty

AMIR IDRIS

Chair and Professor

R. BENTLEY ANDERSON S.J.

Assoc. Chair and Assoc. Professor

MARK L. CHAPMAN

Associate Professor

AIMEE MEREDITH COX

Tenured Assistant Professor

JANE KANI EDWARD

Clinical Assistant Professor

CLAUDE J. MANGUM

Emeritus Associate Professor

FAWZIA MUSTAFA

Associate Professor

MARK D. NAISON

Professor

IRMA WATKINS-OWENS

Associate Professor

Dr. Aimee Cox has been appointed a tenured member of our faculty effective September 1, 2014. We are very pleased and honored to have her as part of our faculty.

Dr. Jane Edward has been reappointed as a Clinical Assistant Professor through academic years 2014-2017.

Dr. Amir Idris has been awarded a fellowship from Makerere University's Institute of Social Research, Kampala, Uganda for the 2015-2016 academic year which will be deferred until 2016-2017

Dr. Mark Naison

Publication:

Pure Bronx Augustus Publishing, 12/10/13.

ISBN-13: 978-1-935-88341-8, ISBN-10:

1-88341-0, 8.2 x 5.2 x 0.9 inches, 300 pages

PURE BRONX is a story about the vast diversity of people who make the Bronx what it is—hustlers, gang bangers, immigrants, and the working poor and powerful interests trying to make money off its struggling people. And it's about love—what you sacrifice, and what you accept for a chance at real happiness.

Badass Teacher's Unite! Reflections on Education, History and Youth Activism Haymarket Books, 5/13/14.

ISBN-13:978-1-608-46361-9, ISBN-10:

1-60846361-3, 7.6 x 5 x 0.5 inches, 200 pages

In this inclusive collection of essays, educator and activist Mark Naison draws on years of research on Bronx history and his own experience on the front lines of education wars to unapologetically defend teachers and students from education "reform" policies that undermine their power and creativity.

Student Accomplishments

Brandon Mogrovejo, one of our majors, was Fordham's 2014 Truman Scholar Finalist.

Bernie Moore (International Studies Alumni) who worked with Dr. Idris on his senior thesis as well as Bentley Anderson, S.J. for his scholarship and grad student applications, was awarded a University Scholarship for Doctoral Studies at Michigan State University.

Black Student Alliance (BSA) was named the Best Student Organization of the Year at Lincoln Center.

New Core Courses

In 2013-2014 the Department proposed and received approval for the following new courses in the core:

AFAM 3190, "Mapping Southern Africa"

This course maps the development of southern Africa from the late 15th century to the late 20th. While a cartographer's knowledge of the region is the starting point, this course will examine the political, socio-economic, and cultural geography of southern Africa, including Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Botswana, South Africa, Angola, and Mozambique. Emphasis is placed on the colonial and post-colonial evolution of this region in the context of cultural identity, independence movements, and Cold War politics.

AFAM 3630, "Harlem Century"

Examines a century of Harlem place-making, politics, and culture. Course in history and literature.

Recently cross-listed course:

PHIL/AFAM 3720, "African American Philosophy"

Using text by Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, W.E.B. DuBois, Alain Locke, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, James H. Cone, Angela Davis, Cornel West, Patricia Hill Collins, Howard McGary, William E. Lawson, Leonard Harris, Lucius Outlaw and others, this course will focus on pillars, prophets and prospects for African American philosophy, a 'philosophy born of struggle' created by profound critical and transformative voices from times of chattel slavery to the present that plays an influential role in American philosophy and American society today.

Fall/Spring 2014-2015 Course Listings

This is a brief listing of our course offerings for 2014-2015. To view the complete listing and descriptions, please visit our website at www.fordham.edu/aaas.

FALL 2014

AFAM 1600 R01 Understanding Hist. Change: Africa
AFAM 1600 R02 Understanding Hist. Change: Africa
AFAM 1600 C01 Understanding Hist. Change: Africa
AFAM 1650 L01 Black Popular Culture
AFAM 3132 R01 Black Prison Experience
AFAM 3134 R01 From Rock & Roll to Hip Hop
AFAM 3136 E01 Civil Rights/ Black Power
AFAM 3139 R01 Buffalo Soldiers: Race and War
AFAM 3141 R01 Women in Africa
AFAM 3148 R01 History of South Africa
AFAM 3148 E01 History of South Africa
AFAM 3630 L01 Harlem Century
AFAM 3634 C01 Film and the African American
AFAM 3693 L01 Contemporary African Literatures
AFAM 4000 R01 Affirmative Action: American Dream
AFAM 4650 C01 Social Welfare and Society

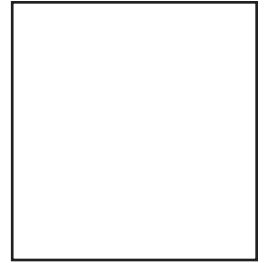
SPRING 2015

AFAM 1600 R01 Understanding Hist. Change: Africa
AFAM 3002 R01 African American History II
AFAM 3037 R01 Being and Becoming Black
AFAM 3037 C01 Being and Becoming Black
AFAM 3071 C01 African Intellectual History
AFAM 3115 R01 ML King & Malcolm X
AFAM 3120 R01 Black Religion and Politics
AFAM 3146 R01 Contemporary African Immigration
AFAM 3632 E01 Harlem Renaissance
AFAM 3667 L01 Caribbean Literature
AFAM 3692 L01 Social Construction of Women
AFAM 3695 L01 Major Debates in African Studies
AFAM 4192 R01 Race & Religion in the Transatlantic
AFAM 4650 L01 Social Welfare and Society
AFAM 4650 C01 Social Welfare and Society
AFAM 4890 R01 Research Seminar



FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

THE JESUIT UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK



Department of African and African American Studies

Department Office, Rose Hill Campus

Nelsy Rivera, Senior Secretary

441 E. Fordham Road
Dealy Hall – Room 641
Bronx, NY 10458
Phone: (718) 817-3745
FAX: (718) 817-3385

Department Office, Lincoln Center Campus

Sandra Arnold, Senior Secretary

113 West 60th Street
Lowenstein Building – Room 422
New York, NY 10023
Phone: (212) 636-6360
FAX: (212) 636-7253

Email: aaas@fordham.edu