

LHC Newsletter

Langston Hughes Center Newsletter

Wednesday, October 2, 2013

Langston Hughes Center Newsletter

October 2013

Hello Everyone,

This is the e-newsletter for the Langston Hughes Center (LHC). The Langston Hughes Center (formerly the Langston Hughes Resource Center, founded in 1998) is an academic research and educational center that is building upon the legacy and creative and intellectual insight of African American author, poet, playwright, folklorist and social critic, Langston Hughes. The Center coordinates, strengthens and develops teaching, research and outreach activities in African American Studies, and the study of race and culture in American society at the University of Kansas and throughout the region. Each month the LHC sends out an e-newsletter to inform you about upcoming events at KU and throughout the region, as well as provide you with any recent news of general interest to those concerned with the work of the Center.

See below for the latest LHC e-newsletter. More information about our events and programs can be found on our website at <http://www2.ku.edu/~lhcaas>. Please feel free to pass this information along to friends and colleagues.

In this newsletter:

- 1. Upcoming Events:** Jesse B. Semple Brownbag; Tuttle Lecture; Byron Caldwell Smith Book Award Lecture; LHVP Lecture
- 2. In the News:** LHC Blog; African American Literary Blog; 14 Caribbean nations sue; Legacy of Slavery; '12 Years a Slave'; Benjamin Jealous; Remembering Civil Rights Rightly; The Fifth Little Girl; Terrorism is Part of Our History; Did the NAACP Learn Anything
- 3. General Information:** Call For Papers NCBS; *Women, Gender, and Families of Color*; MELUS & *Ralph Ellison Centennial*;

Sincerely,

Shawn Leigh Alexander
Associate Professor of African and African-American Studies
Director, Langston Hughes Center
University of Kansas

Upcoming Events

Jesse B. Semple Brownbag Series

What's "An End of Innocence: African American High School Protest in the 1960s and

What: *An End of Innocence: African-American High School Protest in the 1960s and 1970s* – Shirley Hill and John Rury, University of Kansas

When: Monday, October 7 @11:30 am - 1:00 pm (11:30 –12:00 social period and brownbag lunch)

Where: Langston Hughes Center, Room 1, Bailey Hall (University of Kansas, Lawrence Campus)

Cost per person: FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Sponsors of this Event: Langston Hughes Center

About The Jesse B. Semple Brownbag Series: The Jesse B. Semple Brownbag, every second Monday of each academic month, is an informal forum for the African Americanist community and those who are interested in the general study of race, culture, and American society. The forum discusses activities on campus, historical and current issues related to race, and culture and social relations in America. It offers opportunities for visiting scholars, KU faculty, and KU students to present their ongoing research.

Langston Hughes' character Jesse B. Semple, or Simple first appeared in the *Chicago Defender* on February 13, 1943. Semple became a voice, often in comic or satirical fashion, through which Hughes could comment on international relations, current events and the everyday concerns of the African American community.

6th Annual Tuttle Lecture

What: *"The Education of Barack Obama: Race and the Politics in the Age of Fracture"* – Thomas Sugrue, University of Pennsylvania

When: October 10 @ 4:00 pm

Where: Kansas Union, Woodruff Auditorium (University of Kansas, Lawrence Campus)

Cost per person: FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Sponsors of this Event: *Departments of American Studies, History, Political Science, and the School of Public Policy & Administration*

For More Information see: <http://americanstudies.ku.edu/tuttle>

The Byron Caldwell Smith Book Award

What: *"Chosen People: The Rise of American Black Israelite Religions"* – Jacob Dorman, University of Kansas

When: October 17 @ 7:30 pm

Where: Hall Center Conference Hall, Hall Center for the Humanities (University of Kansas, Lawrence Campus)

Cost per person: FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Sponsors of this Event: Hall Center for the Humanities

For More Information see: <http://www.hallcenter.ku.edu/~hallcenter/cgi-bin/index.php/calendar/event/jacob-dorman-chosen-people-the-rise-of-american-black-israelite-religions>

Langston Hughes Visiting Professor Lecture

What: *"Race, Religion, and Ritual: Afro-Cuban Poets in the Age of Revolution"* – Matthew Pettway, Bates College

When: October 23 @ 3:00 pm

Where: Kansas Union, Kansas Room (University of Kansas, Lawrence Campus)

Cost per person: FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Sponsors of this Event: *Office of the Provost, Office of Diversity & Equity, and Department of Spanish and Portuguese*

For More Information see: <http://www.diversity.ku.edu//event/55013>

In The News

Langston Hughes Center Blog

See news entries related to African American Studies at the following link: <http://afs.ku.edu/~lhcaas/The%20LHC%20Blog/The%20LHC%20Blog.html>

African American Literary Blog

See entries from various authors at the following link: <http://projecthbw.blogspot.com/>

14 Caribbean nations sue European countries for slavery reparations

| September 27, 2013 | Aljazeera America

Fourteen Caribbean nations are suing the governments of the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands for reparations over what the plaintiffs say is the lingering legacy of the Atlantic slave trade.

In a speech Friday at United Nations General Assembly, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Ralph Gonsalves said the European nations must pay for their deeds.

"The awful legacy of these crimes against humanity – a legacy which exists today in our Caribbean – ought to be repaired for the developmental benefit of our Caribbean societies and all our peoples," Gonsalves said. "The European nations must partner in a focused, especial way with us to execute this repairing."

The lawsuits – which are likely to amount to a lengthy battle – are being brought by The Caribbean Community, or Caricom, a regional organization that focuses mostly on issues such as economic integration. They will be brought to the U.N.'s International Court of Justice, based in The Hague in the Netherlands. It is not immediately clear when court proceedings will begin.

The countries will focus on Britain for its role in slavery in the English-speaking Caribbean, France for slavery in Haiti and the Netherlands for Suriname, a Caricom member and former Dutch colony on the northeastern edge of South America.

Read the full article at the following link: <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/9/27/14-caribbean-nationssueeuropeancountriesforreparationsoverslaver.html>

Legacy of Slavery Still Fuels Anti-Black Attitudes in the Deep South

Susan Hagen | September 24, 2013 | *Black Agenda Report*

"Without slavery, the South today might look fairly similar politically to the North."

Although slavery was abolished 150 years ago, its political legacy is alive and well, according to researchers who performed a new county-by-county analysis of census data and opinion polls of more than 39,000 southern whites.

The team of political scientists found that white Southerners who live today in the Cotton Belt

where slavery and the plantation economy dominated are much more likely to express more negative attitudes toward blacks than their fellow Southerners who live in nearby areas that had few slaves. Residents of these former slavery strongholds are also more likely to identify as Republican and to express opposition to race-related policies such as affirmative action. Slaves were concentrated in counties where cotton thrived, as shown in the above map based on the 1860 census. White Southerners in these same areas today express more racial resentment and are more likely to be Republican and oppose affirmative action, than other Southerners.

Read the full article at the following link: <http://blackagendareport.com/content/legacy-slavery-still-fuels-anti-black-attitudes-deep-south>

'12 Years' Star Alfre Woodard: 'You're Never Too Young For The Truth'

| August 6, 2013 | *NPR Tell Me More*

Alfre Woodard has been a familiar face on television over the course of her three-decade career. She was up for an Emmy Award on Sunday for her role in the Lifetime remake of *Steel Magnolias*. She didn't win that one, but she still has on her mantle previous Emmys for programs like *The Practice* and *L.A. Law*. Woodard is also a powerful presence on the big screen, as evidenced by her Oscar nomination for the 1983 film *Cross Creek* and roles in acclaimed features like *Primal Fear* and *Love & Basketball*.

Now she returns with a disarming and provocative role in *12 Years a Slave*, which opens in theaters next month. It's the highly anticipated film by director Steve McQueen, based on a true story about a free black man who was kidnapped into slavery in the 1800s.

Woodard spoke with *Tell Me More* host Michel Martin about the beauty and brutality of *12 Years a Slave*, and how she's not always the serious actress people may see her as.

Listen the segment at the following link: <http://www.npr.org/2013/09/23/225404416/12-years-star-alfre-woodard-youre-never-too-young-for-the-truth>

Benjamin Jealous on Why He is Leaving the NAACP

| September 20, 2013 | *Democracy Now*

Ben Jealous is stepping down as president of the NAACP after a five-year term. After a busy tenure that saw him lead campaigns around issues including the death penalty, voting rights and police racial profiling, Jealous joins us to discuss his future plans: spending more time with his family, educating youth, and exploring the formation of a new political action committee.

Watch the segment at the following link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pq4K11AkLdU&feature=player_embedded

Remembering Civil Rights 'Rightly'

Eddie S. Glaude and Imani Perry | September 14, 2013 | *The Root*

Violence broke out on the streets in Birmingham, a city with a long history of resistance to Jim Crow that reached further back than the nationally recognized "Birmingham Campaign" led by Martin Luther King Jr. and local activist Fred Shuttlesworth. That afternoon a 16-year old black boy, Johnny Robinson, also in Birmingham, was shot in the back by a white police officer for allegedly throwing rocks with other youngsters at a car filled with whites waving confederate flags. The people in the car were celebrating the church bombing.

Eighteen days earlier, Dr. King delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech, and hundreds of thousands of Americans gathered at the Lincoln Memorial to demand freedom and jobs. The Birmingham bombing snatched white America back to reality: The rapture of the march gave way to the brutal violence of the South, revealed the complicity of the federal government with the violence and forced the nation to confront the irrevocable fact that four -- no, five, no, six -- babies were dead. (Two white Eagle Scouts on their way to the National States Rights Party's headquarters in the city killed Virgil Ware, a 13-year old black paperboy.)

And here we are today. Just 18 days removed from the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington. We witnessed the Rev. Al Sharpton's gathering on Aug. 24 to "Realize the Dream" and President Obama's keynote address at the official commemoration of the march. One seemed to be a coronation for the next supposed leader of black America. The other yoked more tightly the story of black freedom to an American exceptionalist narrative, and in doing so placed the blame for continued racial inequality squarely on the shoulders of black folk.

Read the full article at the following link: <http://www.theroot.com/views/remembering-civil-rights-rightly>

The Fifth Little Girl: Birmingham Church Bombing Survivor Still Seeks Compensation

| September 17, 2013 | *Democracy Now*

Fifty years ago this week, four young girls — Denise McNair, Carole Robertson, Cynthia Wesley and Addie Mae Collins — were killed when the Ku Klux Klan bombed the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. The bombing came less than a month after the landmark March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Hundreds gathered in the nation's capital last week to honor their memory when lawmakers posthumously awarded the girls the Congressional Gold Medal. We're joined by Addie Mae's sister, Sarah Collins Rudolph, who is often referred to as the bombing's "fifth victim." Just 12 years old when the church was attacked, Collins Rudolph was hit with shards of glass, lost an eye and was hospitalized for months. Today, she continues to live in Birmingham, suffering from the physical, mental and emotional effects of the bombing. She says she has yet to receive any compensation.

Watch the segment at the following link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dsXRIWYX0EY&feature=player_embedded

Terrorism is Part of our History: Angela Davis on '63 Church Bombing, Growing up in "Bombingham"

| August 29, 2013 | *Democracy Now*

Sunday marked the 50th anniversary of the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, a watershed moment in the civil rights movement. On Sept. 15, 1963, a dynamite blast planted by the Ku Klux Klan killed four young girls in the church — Denise McNair, age 11, and Carole Robertson, Cynthia Wesley and Addie Mae Collins, all 14 years old. Twenty other people were injured. No one was arrested for the bombings for 14 years. We hear an address by world-renowned author, activist and scholar Angela Davis, professor emerita at University of California, Santa Cruz. She spoke last night in Oakland, California, at an event organized by the Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project at Northeastern University School of Law.

Watch the segment at the following link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RFrVI78Qs_Y&feature=player_embedded

Did the NAACP Learn Anything from Meeting with the KKK?

| September 6, 2013 | *Tell Me More*

"I think all my first dates were probably less awkward than this," says Jeremy Fugleberg, referring to the NAACP's meeting on Saturday night with the Ku Klux Klan in a hotel conference room in Casper, Wyo. Fugleberg is assistant managing editor for news at the *Casper Star-Tribune* and reported on the gathering.

The meeting took months to set up. It was prompted by a number of assaults on African-American men in Gillette, a town about 130 miles north of Casper. Jimmy Simmons, the president of the local NAACP chapter, said he was concerned that the attacks might have been racially motivated because the men were reportedly attacked after hanging out with white women. Klan literature began appearing in Gillette. So Simmons negotiated with the Klan for a sit-down meeting with John Abarr, a klaner in the United Klan of America.

The meeting took place last Saturday night, and Fugleberg was one of the few members of the media invited to attend. He shared his observations with *Tell Me More* host Michel Martin.

Listen to the segment and read the transcript at the following link: <http://www.npr.org/blogs/codeswitch/2013/09/16/219665721/did-the-naacp-learn-anything-from-meeting-with-the-kkk>

General Information

**Call for Papers – NCBS
Annual Conference
March 5-8, 2014
Miami, FL**

NCBS is accepting abstracts for individual paper, poster, panel, session, roundtable discussion, workshop, town hall meeting that explore the Black experience locally, nationally, and/or globally from a variety of perspectives. Of particular interest are presentations that comparatively explore these experiences, as well as those that examine the discipline of Africana/Black Studies using multi-layered frameworks and methodologies. Papers that incorporate various combinations of race/nationality, class, gender, and sexuality, through the lens of but not limited to Afrocentric, cross and multicultural, diasporic, feminist, post-colonial, post-modernist or transnational interpretative schemes are welcomed. Send a 150-400 word abstract for a panel (one for the panel subject and one for each panelist), and/or individual paper and poster presentations. For roundtable discussions submit a 500 word abstract that explores the discussion topic.

Conference proposal deadline January 11, 2014.

http://www.ncbsonline.org/conference_call_for_papers

**Call for Papers – Women, Gender, and Families of Color
US Immigration: Women's Rights and Realities
Manuscripts Due: 12/15/13**

Women and families across racial and ethnic groups have historically moved to the US in search of better living conditions, safety, and opportunities. These women disproportionately suffer from poverty, assault, unfair labor practices, poor health, a lack of health services, and ambiguous protections and educational access for themselves and their children.

This special issue is devoted to scholarship that explores the historical and contemporary social, economic, cultural, and political aspects of living as documented/undocumented women of color emigrants. Possible topics include but not limited to:

- *separation from children, partners, and kin
- *emotional challenges
- *abuse and violence
- *reproductive rights and health care

- *labor issues
- *managing families and households
- *living conditions
- *documented and undocumented women
- *legal rights and protections
- *education

Contact: Editor, Jennifer Hamer, JHamer@KU.edu Guest-Editor, Jacqueline McLeod, Metropolitan State University of Denver

**Call for Papers – MELUS Conference & The Ralph Ellison Centennial Symposium
March 6-9, 2014
Oklahoma City, OK**

In his essay "Going to the Territory" (1980), Ralph Ellison wrote that "[i]n the United States all social barriers are vulnerable to cultural styles." This was so, Ellison recalled, even in the Oklahoma of his youth, where many arenas of public and private life were racially segregated. Although black Oklahomans lived under conditions of "social and political unfreedom," they enjoyed more than a little cultural freedom: the freedom to give to, take from, and adapt other U.S. and world cultures.

The 28th Annual MELUS Conference brings together scholars and creative writers to answer some of the questions raised by Ellison's essay. How have "social barriers" shaped culture in the U.S.? In what particular ways have ethnic literary cultures crossed social barriers in particular locales and regions, or in the nation at large? And how have these crossings transformed regional, national, and global cultures?

Deadline for proposals and abstracts (250 words in Microsoft Word): Nov. 1, 2013.

Please email conference abstracts and proposals to melusokc2014@gmail.com. To be considered for the graduate student travel award cc: mdennihy@gmail.com. All presenters, chairs, and moderators must be members of MELUS. Membership information can be found on the MELUS website at www.melus.org.

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[< previous](#)

[next >](#)

