

LHC Newsletter

Langston Hughes Center Newsletter

Thursday, November 4, 2010

In this newsletter:

- 1. Upcoming Events:** 40 Years of Africana Studies: Reflection and Visualization (Nov. 3); Make It Funky II (Nov. 4); Giants (Nov. 7); Jesse B. Semple Brownbag (Nov. 8)
- 2. In the News:** The Seat Not Taken; Eric Foner; Virginia 4th Grade Textbook; and Maya Angelou Archive
- 3. General Information:** Art & Power in Movement; Call For Papers - The State of African American and African Diaspora Studies; Langston Hughes Visiting Professorship; NCBS - Call for Papers; ASWAD - Call for Papers

Sincerely,

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

Upcoming Events

"40 Years of Africana Studies" Reflection and Visualization

What: **"African Worlds in Rapprochement: Diaspora as Praxis"** – Michael Gomez, New York University

When: Wednesday, November 3, 2010 @3:30 pm - 5:00 pm

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

Cost per person: FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Sponsors of this Event: Langston Hughes Center and Kansas African Studies Center

About The Lecture Series: As part of a year long celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the African & African American Studies Department here at KU, the Langston Hughes Center and the Kansas African Studies Center, have teamed up to create a Seminar Series to stimulate an interdisciplinary dialogue concerning, the practice, the state, the history, and the future of African and African American Studies in the academy and beyond.

For more information see: http://www2.ku.edu/~lhcaas/LHC_KASC%20Seminar%20Series.html

Giants

What: "Giants: The Parallel Lives of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln" – John Stauffer, Harvard University

When: Sunday November 7, 2010 @3:00 pm

Where: Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site, Topeka KS

Cost per person: FREE and Open to the Public **with RSVP**
(RSVP by November 5 to (785) 235-3939 or rsvp@brownfoundationks.org)

About: To mark the 150th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's election as president, Dr. John Stauffer will speak about the parallel lives and evolving relationship of Lincoln and Douglass. These two self-made men helped transform American society through their vigorous actions and powerful words.

Douglass, the abolitionist who was formerly enslaved, saw the Civil War as an opportunity to end slavery. Early in the war Douglass chastised Lincoln for not embracing emancipation as a war aim. But Douglass eventually came to admire Lincoln's political skills and resolve to produce "a new birth of freedom" in the country.

"Viewed from the genuine abolition ground," said Douglass in 1876, "Mr. Lincoln seemed tardy, cold, dull, and indifferent; but measuring him by the sentiment of his country, a sentiment he was bound as a statesman to consult, he was swift, zealous, radical, and determined."

"The two men's personal conflicts often paralleled the nation's conflicts," wrote Stauffer.

"Douglass repeatedly lost faith in Lincoln, only to find it again. His changing perspectives chart not only the political journeys of both men but also the nation's journey to its Second Revolution."

John Stauffer is a leading authority on anti-slavery and social protest movements, as well as interracial friendship. He is a Harvard University professor of English and American Literature and Language in the Department of African and African American studies, and Chair of the History of American Civilization program at Harvard. His eight books include *Giants: The Parallel Lives of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln* (2008) and *The Black Hearts of Men: Radical Abolitionists and the Transformation of Race* (2002), which both won numerous awards. He is the author of more than 50 articles. His essays have appeared in *Time*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New Republic*, *Raritan*, and *The New York Sun*. He has appeared on national radio and television shows and has lectured widely throughout the United States and Europe.

For more information see <http://brownvboard.org/content/parallel-lives-douglass-lincoln-november-7-2010>

Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. daily
1515 SE Monroe • Topeka, Kansas

Make It Funky II

What: "Make It Funky II Symposium" - Panel Discussion "Funk Theory": Craig Warner, University of Wisconsin; Adam Banks, University of Kentucky; and Cheryl Keys, University of Los Angeles **Performance "Funk in Practice":** Duriel Harris, Illinois State University; and Makuza (AfroCuban Salsa Band)

When: Thursday, November 4, 2010 @3:30 pm - 5:00 pm (Panel Discussion) and 7:00 pm - 9:30 pm (Performance)

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

Cost per person: FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Sponsors of this Event: African and African American Studies and CLAS

Jesse B. Semple Brownbag Series

What: "Even Dead I Was A Threat To Them – The Assassination of Patrice Lumumba and the Fragmentation of the Black Freedom Movement" - Elizabeth Brickson, University of Kansas

When: Monday November 8 @11:30 am - 1:00 pm (11:30 -12:00 social period and brownbag lunch)

Where: Kansas Union, Alcove A (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.

In The News

The Seat Not Taken

John Edgar Wideman | October 6, 2010 | *New York Times*

At least twice a week I ride Amtrak's high-speed Acela train from my home in New York City to my teaching job in Providence, R.I. The route passes through a region of the country populated by, statistics tell us, a significant segment of its most educated, affluent, sophisticated and enlightened citizens.

Over the last four years, excluding summers, I have conducted a casual sociological experiment in which I am both participant and observer. It's a survey I began not because I had some specific point to prove by gathering data to support it, but because I couldn't avoid becoming aware of an obvious, disquieting truth.

Read the full article at the following link: http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/07/opinion/07Wideman.html?_r=1

Lincoln's Evolving Thoughts on Slavery, And Freedom

In 1854, Sen. Stephen Douglas forced the Kansas-Nebraska Act through Congress. The bill, which repealed the Missouri Compromise of 1820, also opened up a good portion of the Midwest to the possible expansion of slavery.

Douglas' political rival, former Illinois Congressman Abraham Lincoln, was enraged by the bill. He scheduled three public speeches in the fall of 1854, in response. The longest of those speeches — known as the Peoria Speech — took three hours to deliver. In it, Lincoln aired his grievances over Douglas' bill and outlined his moral, economic, political and legal arguments against slavery.

But like many Americans, Lincoln was unsure what to do once slavery ended.

"Lincoln said during the Civil War that he had always seen slavery as unjust. He said he couldn't remember when he didn't think that way — and there's no reason to doubt the accuracy or sincerity of that statement," explains historian Eric Foner. "The problem arises with the next question: What do you do with slavery, given that it's unjust? Lincoln took a very long time to try to figure out exactly what steps ought to be taken."

Read the full article and listen to the interview at the following link: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=130489804>

Virginia 4th-grade Textbook Criticized over Claims on Black Confederate Soldiers

Kevin Sieff | October 20, 2010 | *Washington Post*

A textbook distributed to Virginia fourth-graders says that thousands of African Americans fought for the South during the Civil War -- a claim rejected by most historians but often made by groups seeking to play down slavery's role as a cause of the conflict.

The passage appears in "Our Virginia: Past and Present," which was distributed in the state's public elementary schools for the first time last month. The author, Joy Masoff, who is not a trained historian but has written several books, said she found the information about black Confederate soldiers primarily through Internet research, which turned up work by members of the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

Read the full article at the following link: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/19/AR2010101907974.html?hpid=topnews>

Schomburg Center in Harlem Acquires Maya Angelou Archive

Felicia R. Lee | October 26, 2010 | *New York Times*

Maya Angelou's paper trail includes a rambling, typewritten letter from James Baldwin, dated Nov. 20, 1970, addressed to "Dear, dear Sister" discussing everything from his new book to his feelings about death.

And one from Malcolm X, written on Jan. 15, 1965, assuring her, "You can communicate because you have plenty of (soul) and you always keep your feet firmly rooted on the ground."

And a draft of her poem "On the Pulse of Morning," which she recited at the 1993 inauguration of President Bill Clinton, showing Ms. Angelou's changing the first line from "Rocks and Rivers and Trees" to the final, stark version: "A Rock, A River, A Tree."

Read the full article at the following link: http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/27/arts/design/27archive.html?_r=1&hpw

General Information

Art & Power in Movement: An International Conference Rethinking the Black Power and Black Arts Movement
University of Massachusetts - Amherst
November 18-20, 2010

The Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies will host a major gathering of scholars and activists, writers and artists, youth and elders, both to mark our 40th year on the University of Massachusetts Amherst campus, as well as to support the exchange of knowledge about the dynamic period in which academic Black Studies units like ours were established. Our conference will be held at the UMass Amherst Campus Center from November 18, 2010 to November 20, 2010. It will begin on Thursday with Melba Boyd on the Broadside Press Collection at the W.E.B. Du Bois Library followed in the evening with Randy Weston in concert. Friday and Saturday will be filled with keynote presentations, readings, panel sessions, film screenings, and scholarly presentations. You do not want to miss it. Please click the poster to go to the conference website and use it to help us make the Art & Power in Movement Conference the best that it can be.

Conference Participants include, among others: Amiri Baraka, Melba Boyd, Haki Madhubuti, Eugene Redmond, Judy Richardson, Sonia Sanchez, and Randy Weston

For more information about the Conference visit: <http://www.umass.edu/afroam/>

Call For Papers - "The State of African American and African Diaspora Studies: Methodology, Pedagogy, and Research"
New York, NY
January 6-8, 2011

The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and the Institute for Research on the African Diaspora in the Americas and the Caribbean at the City University of New York extend a call for papers for their regular conference on the state of scholarship in African American and African Diaspora Studies. Entitled, *The State of African American and African Diaspora Studies: Methodology, Pedagogy, and Research*, the conference will take place on January 6-8, 2011 at the Schomburg Center, located at 135th Street and Malcolm X Boulevard in Harlem, and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, located at 365 Fifth Avenue.

The conference is designed to bring together scholars, students, and the general public to assess the current state of African American and African Diaspora Studies as an intellectual field of inquiry. It will provide an opportunity for scholars to examine ways in which the study and teaching of the Black experience have evolved since the 1960s.

Proposals should be submitted electronically and must include your name, title of the paper, panel, or roundtable, and an abstract of 150 words. They should also include the institutional affiliation of each presenter, phone numbers, and email addresses. Submit proposals by November 1, 2010 to:

Aisha H.L. al-Adawiya
State of African American and African Diaspora Studies
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture
515 Malcolm X Boulevard
New York NY 10037-1801

E-mail: aaladawiya@nypl.org

Langston Hughes Visiting Professorship – University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas

Since 1977, this visiting professorship has attracted prominent or emerging ethnic minority scholars to KU – from a broad range of disciplines and academic departments/schools. This one-semester appointment provides the recipient a stipend appropriate to the candidate's rank, a small travel allowance, and a furnished apartment near the KU campus. The recipient will teach two courses during the semester of their appointment and deliver a campus-wide symposium on a topic or issue related to their discipline.

To find out more about the Visiting Professorship visit KU's Diversity and Equity site: www.diversity.ku.edu <<http://www.diversity.ku.edu>>

Call For Papers – NCBS Cincinnati, OH March 16-19, 2011

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 perspective. 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, postcolonial, postmodernist 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. For town hall meetings submit a 500 word abstract specifying the roles of the facilitator(s) and recorder(s).

Submission Deadline: **MARCH 15, 2011**. For more information see: http://www.ncbsonline.org/conference_call_for_papers

Call For Papers – ASWAD "AFRICAN LIBERATION AND BLACK POWER: THE CHALLENGES OF DIASPORIC ENCOUNTERS ACROSS TIME, SPACE, AND IMAGINATION" Pittsburgh, PA November 3-6, 2011

In 1954, novelist and intellectual Richard Wright published *Black Power*, a provocative book in which Wright offered his reflections on his travels to the Gold Coast as it was in the process of becoming the independent nation of Ghana. The term "Black Power" that Wright used to signify the possibilities of freedom and development for Africans, as well as Pan-African cultural connections, would become a familiar notion to people of African descent around the world, who identified with its potent message for liberation and cultural revitalization. In so doing, Wright opened a new chapter in the long history of political and intellectual dialogue across the African Diaspora—one that revealed both the convergences and ruptures between people of African descent on the continent and in Diaspora.

For its sixth biennial conference, to be held in Pittsburgh, ASWAD explores the theme "African Liberation and Black Power: The Challenges of Diasporic Encounters Across Time, Space and Imagination." This conference intends to appreciate the Diasporic dimensions and articulations of Black Power, with special emphasis on Africa, Europe, the Caribbean, Latin America, and Asia by tracing the genealogies of the concept and challenging localized limitations of Black Power scholarship.

Though the term "Black Power" is most frequently associated with the political and cultural movement of the 1960s and 1970s in the United States, the drive to valorize blackness and Africanity/Africanité was broadly shared throughout Africa and the African Diaspora. Black

Power was a transnational phenomenon; in addition to the U.S., organizations, activists, artists, and politicians in Canada, Trinidad, Guyana, Jamaica, Bermuda, UK, South Africa, Zaire, and elsewhere explicitly identified themselves as adhering to Black Power. Each of these local movements responded in unique ways, but remained in dialogue with peoples of African descent and other peoples seeking creative responses to oppressive regimes. At the same time, 1970s black feminist organizations such as the Combahee River Collective (USA) and the Southall Black Sisters (UK), as well as writers such as Claudia Jones, Audre Lorde and Bessie Head, openly contested the masculinist, heteronormative tendencies within Black Power. Indeed, Diasporic feminists often imagined freedom in far more expansive political and aesthetic terms than their male counterparts.

In exploring Black Power as a global phenomenon, ASWAD encourages the submission of papers that interrogate the elements that define Black Power, its multiple locations, and articulations, its gendered and sexual contours, the transnational connections that informed and nurtured it as well as global and local cultural and political projects that revitalize it in the twenty-first century. In addition, we seek to identify the antecedents of Black Power, and historicize it within the trajectories of African and African Diasporic literature, culture, media, philosophy, politics, and the academy itself, as well as its relationship to health and environmental issues. The cultural and ideological foundations of Black Power had deep roots in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries and, as such, ASWAD encourages papers that excavate the origins of the cultural, intellectual, and political expressions that gave birth to the liberation struggles of the 20th century. All geographic areas will be represented, including Africa, the Americas, the Middle East, Europe, and Asia. Paper and panel proposals that incorporate women, gender, and sexuality as categories of analysis are encouraged.

Please send a two-page abstract (for either a single presentation or a panel) and a one-page CV (or multiple one-page CV's) by **MARCH 15, 2011**. They can be sent prior to submitting the registration fee, and are to be sent electronically via email attachment to: aswad2011@osu.edu

For more information see http://www.aswadiaspora.org/ASWAD_2011_CFP_01.html#registration

If you would like to unsubscribe send an email to lhcaas@ku.edu to let us know, and we'll remove you immediately.

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[< previous](#)

[next >](#)

