

LHC Newsletter

Langston Hughes Center Newsletter

Friday, November 2, 2012

Langston Hughes Center Newsletter

November 2012

In this newsletter:

- 1. Upcoming Events:** Make it Funky IV; Jesse B. Semple Brownbag
- 2. In the News:** LHC Blog; African American Literary Blog; Segregated Workplaces; John Hope Franklin Papers; Alice Walker & Pearl Cleage; President Obama and Race; Toni Morrison
- 3. General Information:** NCBS – Call for Papers

Sincerely,

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

Upcoming Events

Make It Funky IV

What: "Make It Funky IV: Tribute to Lauryn Hill" –

Panel Discussion: Meta DuEwa Jones – University of Texas, Austin

Nicole Hodges Persley – University of Kansas

Alysha Griffin - University of Kansas

Natasha Ria El-Scari – Kansas City

Performance: MC Storm, Kansas City

Keynote Performance: Jessica Care Moore – acclaimed poet, author and activist

When: November 1 @ 7:00 pm

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

Cost per person: FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Sponsors of this Event: Department of African & African American Studies, Department of

American Studies, Department of English, Project on the History of Black Writing, Black Faculty and Staff Council, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the Office of Diversity and Equity.

About:

It's a testament to rapper and singer Lauryn Hill's artistry that her lyrics resonate just as powerfully today as they did when her solo album was released in 1998. The poetry of her words will be the topic of discussion at a University of Kansas presentation from 7 to 9 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 1 at Alderson Auditorium. The event is free and open to the public.

"Tribute to Lauryn Hill" will feature performances from an acclaimed poet and a Kansas City-area female rapper, and a panel discussion with a question-and-answer session. It is the fourth installment in the "Make It Funky" lecture series.

The keynote performance of the evening will come from poet, author and activist Jessica Care Moore, who first came onto the scene at the "Showtime at the Apollo" competition in the 1990s. She will perform her own work and discuss the artistry of Hill's lyrics. Before Moore's performance, rapper MC Storm will perform. She has gained a reputation as one of the most lyrically talented artists in the region.

Panelists are Nicole Hodges Persley, assistant professor of theatre at KU; Alysha Griffin, graduate student in English at KU; Meta DuEwa Jones, associate professor of English, and African and African diaspora studies at the University of Texas, Austin; and Natasha Ria El-Scari, a Kansas City-based poet and fellow of Cave Canem poets collective.

The event will be followed by a book signing with Moore and Jones, who wrote "The Muse is Music: Jazz Poetry from the Harlem Renaissance to the Spoken Word."

Jesse B. Semple Brownbag Series

What: "*Accreditation and Challenges of HBCUs*" – Jerry Crawford, II, University of Kansas

When: Monday, November 12 @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

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/>

Many American Workplaces are Becoming More Segregated

Kevin Stainback and Donald Tomaskovic-Devey | October 25, 2012 | *Washington Post*

Earlier this month, the Supreme Court heard oral arguments of an affirmative action case that once again raised the contentious question of how best to create equal opportunity for all Americans. Interestingly enough, many on both sides of the debate over the University of Texas's use of race in college admissions seemed to accept that the United States has been steadily growing towards greater equality over the past generation.

But research we just completed for a new book, "Documenting Desegregation," tells a different story. In many workplaces, the United States has fallen off the path to equal employment opportunity, with racial and gender segregation on the rise in many firms and industries.

Read the full article at the following link: http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/therootdc/post/many-american-workplaces-are-becoming-more-segregated/2012/10/25/6c86e0a6-1e15-11e2-b647-bb1668e64058_blog.html#comments

John Hope Franklin Papers: A Historian Becomes History

Naomi Nelson | October 19, 2012 | *Huffington Post Black Voices*

The only way we can know our past is through the records we keep and pass on. No one was more keenly aware of this than groundbreaking American historian John Hope Franklin, whose papers were recently acquired by Duke University and will soon be open to the public.

During his prolific career, Franklin spent hours in archives and libraries pouring over letters, diaries, obituaries, business records, photographs, and publications, seeking to tell a new more inclusive American history. His research itself was a form of activism. The staff in many southern libraries and archives in the 1940s and 1950s had never imagined that an African American scholar might wish to use their collections. While they could not deny that Franklin had a right to use the materials, they refused to offer him the same levels of service offered to white researchers. At North Carolina's State Department of Archives and History, for example, the director made him wait for several days while they arranged for a separate research area for him.

The archive's white staff, unwilling to serve a black researcher, required him to retrieve and reshelve the materials he used. (This latter requirement was soon dropped when white researchers complained that Franklin could browse the closed stacks while they could not -- an exquisite example of the ironies of segregation.) From his intensive engagement with historic materials emerged a long list of books and articles that would expand and enrich our understanding of American history, including *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African-Americans*, *The Emancipation Proclamation*, *The Militant South*, *The Free Negro in North*

Carolina, George Washington Williams: A Biography, and A Southern Odyssey: Travelers in the Antebellum North.

Read the full article at the following link: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/naomi-nelson/african-american-history_b_1973636.html?utm_hp_ref=black-voices&ir=Black%20Voices

Walker, Cleage, & Boyd Creativity Conversation

| October 9, 2012 | *Emory University*

Atlanta-based novelist and playwright Pearl Cleage joins writer Alice Walker for a conversation that focuses on their creative influences, the writers they read, and how they've been inspired by each other's work. The conversation, hosted by Rosemary Magee, is moderated by University of Georgia journalism professor and author Valerie Boyd.

Watch the conversation at the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=01GqEaPr5Ok&feature=plcp>

Barack X: Race and the Obama Presidency

Jelani Cobb | October 8, 2012 | *The New Yorker*

It's mid-March in Harlem and the streets are an improvised urban bazaar. Young men hawk umbrellas, vintage vinyl, and knit caps. The aromas of curry and fried plantains waft out from the Caribbean spot, and just ahead of me is a teen-ager so slight that I scarcely notice him at first. There's a perfectly calibrated swagger in his stride. He's swaddled in an oversized black leather jacket, his jeans cinched five inches below the waist, his footwear immaculate. I've nearly passed him before I notice something that makes me pause for a second and then snap a picture with my cell phone: stitched onto the back of the jacket, in dimensions broader than his back, is the seal of the President of the United States. He is standing on Malcolm X Boulevard, and a generation ago that jacket would've been emblazoned with a defiant X in homage to a man who defined radical black dissent. There are a dozen questions I could ask him—whether there are metal detectors in his school or when was the last time he was frisked by the N.Y.P.D., whether he sees his future as an amorphous blob of curtailed possibilities or if he has real plans. But I don't have to ask how the most revered symbol of the American establishment came to adorn his jacket.

In the halcyon days after Barack Obama's inauguration, newspapers ran stories marvelling at an Obama effect that seemed to lift black students beyond the achievement gap. Some openly hoped that his election would inspire increased numbers of black law-school applicants, the way that "C.S.I." spawned a generation of forensic-science majors. In a poll taken just after the inauguration, some seventy per cent of respondents said that they expected his tenure to bring an improvement in race relations. Obama himself played to this dynamic early on, saying that in a crowded field of talented Democratic contenders the rationale for his campaign was that his election would tell every child in this country that anything was possible. And for a brief moment, it seemed that might actually be true.

Read the full article at the following link: <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/newsdesk/2012/10/barack-obama-and-malcolm-x.html>

Toni Morrison on race in contemporary America

Razia Iqbal | October 5, 2012 | *BBC*

Watch the interview at the following link: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-radio-and-tv-19827316>

General Information

**Call for Papers – NCBS
Annual Conference
March 13-16, 2013
Indianapolis, IN**

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, 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).

Conference proposal deadline December 14, 2012.

http://www.ncbsonline.org/conference_call_for_papers

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

Contact Information:

Langston Hughes Center
1440 Jayhawk Boulevard
Room 9 Bailey Hall
Lawrence, KS 66045-7574, USA
Phone: (785)864-5044
Fax: (785)864-5330

Director:
Shawn Leigh Alexander
Associate Professor of African & African American Studies
lhcaas@ku.edu

