

AARC *Newsletter*



AFRICAN AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER
YORK COLLEGE OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

New Black Studies Major approved by State, Begins 2012-3 school year – two new courses offered

Resulting from a two-year process by an inter-disciplinary group of scholars, York College revised the African American Studies major. The new Black Studies major reflects changes within the field based on new knowledge and perspectives in the 21st Century, particularly taking into account the transformations, connections and dislocations triggered by globalization, the intervention of Black feminists, and certainly the recent election of the nation's first Black president. As people, technologies, and ideas are moving across the globe, there is a greater understanding of Diaspora in general, the African Diaspora in particular. The new name reflects this greater inclusivity of people from Africa and the Caribbean, student populations that are large and increasing at York. See page 9 for the mission and goals.

Two of the new courses will be rolled out in the Fall 2012 semester. **Black Studies 286: Africa and the Columbian Exchange** will be offered as an online course. Dr. Jackie Southern, a geographer who regularly takes students on field trips to African heritage sites throughout the City, will be teaching the course.

This course introduces the contributions of Africa and Africans to the Columbian exchange—the global transfers of people, culture, plants, animals, and microbes that were initiated with the “discovery” of America. It explores social and environmental transformations set in motion then are still unfolding, while today's appropriations and global transfers of commons by transnational corporations inspire new forms of conflict and resistance.

As the world is becoming more aware of globalization and environmental issues, this course offers students the tools to understand how we got here and where we are going. The Columbian contact created the modern “New World” as we know it, including the U.S. and New York City. Unfortunately given European settlers' ethnocentric, even white supremacist, biases, the contribution of Africans has typically been erased. Nonetheless African peoples and cultures have played an integral role in the Americas and the modern world system as we know it.

Black Studies 102: The Unforgiving Mirror-Race and Racism in Contemporary Society is

a new introductory level course taught by a veteran instructor for both Cultural Diversity and the African American Studies program. Dr. Sharada Devi, a psychologist focusing on psychological impacts of racism, is looking forward to launching this course.

This is a course about race and racism in the Americas, with particular emphasis on the Black experience in the U.S. We will make use of several approaches – including critical race theory, the experiences of everyday people, and the politics of popular culture - to understand the institutional and structural power of racism, as well as the ways in which ordinary people have articulated extraordinary resistance to the material, social, and psychological effects of racism.

Racism has very powerful impacts on many individuals, from the psychological, symbolic, to the material: economic and political marginalization. Racism has changed faces since the election of the first African American president of the U.S., but it is still impacting the vast majority of York students, as members of minority groups.

The African American Resource Center promotes the study of the history, culture, and society of Africa and the African Diaspora. The Center is a resource, community space, and forum for colloquy, presentations and discussion. The Center is available to faculty, students and community groups in service of this AARC mission.

Stevie Wonder Mini-Symposium Rocks the College

Tom Zlabinger, Fine and Performing Arts



Photo (l to r): Profs. Martin Atangana, George White, LaForrest Cope, Tom Zlabinger, and Mychel Namphy.

I firmly believe that Stevie Wonder is currently the world's greatest, living composer. His compositional contribution is immeasurable. He has incorporated sophisticated harmonies with some of the grooviest rhythms. But if you also include his abilities as performer, the man becomes superhuman.

I had always wanted to do a tribute to Stevie Wonder with the York College Big Band. But at a planning meeting at the African American Resource Center I brought up the event and instantly others

wanted to get involved. What was originally a night of music became a week-long celebration simply known as the Stevie Wonder Mini-Symposium.

To kick off the event, the York College Music Club hosted a screening of Stevie Wonder's latest concert film *Live at Last* (2009) recorded in London at the O2 Arena (formerly the Millennium Dome) on Thursday, March 15th. Wonder performed all his classics spanning over five decades of hits with a large band that was thinking and feeling with one



Photo: T.K. Blue performing with the York College Big Band, Tom Zlabinger conducting

mind and heart. Wonder even included jazz standards like Miles Davis' "All Blues" (on harmonica) and Chick Corea's "Spain."

On the following Monday evening, March 19th, I had the honor to host a panel with four other York College faculty. The African American Resource Center was literally standing room only with over 85 people in attendance. We each spoke about a theme and how it related to Stevie Wonder and jazz focusing on Wonder's first album *The Jazz Soul of Little Stevie Wonder* (1963). George White gave an inspired talk on hip-hop and Stevie Wonder relating images in Wonder's lyrics to those of modern MCs. White also talked about Wonder's challenging notions of black identity. Mychel Namphy spoke next on rhythm and blues and Stevie Wonder, specifically comparing two strikingly different versions of Wonder's first single "I Call It Pretty Music But The Old People Call It The Blues" (1962) that emphasized Wonder's ability to dig deep into the rhythm and blues tradition. Martin Atangana spoke next on Africa and Stevie Wonder, emphasizing Wonder's fight against apartheid and his participation in *USA for Africa* (1984). Atangana also pointed out how many African pop musicians used Wonder's music and image as a source of inspiration. Finally, LaForrest Cope (a.k.a. LaLa)

spoke about poetry and Stevie Wonder. She examined Wonder's lyrics and also related a story about meeting Wonder in Los Angeles and having dinner with him. She also read a very moving poem in honor of the recently departed Whitney Houston, whose first hit song "You Give Good Love" was written by Prof. Cope. This poem is to be the epilogue in the novel that Cope workshopped in Fall 2011 as part of the Africana Colloquium Series (see story, page 8). The panel opened the floor to questions that led to a lively, interdisciplinary discussion.

Finally, the festivities closed Friday night, March 23, with a performance by the York College Big Band featuring saxophonist T.K. Blue at the York College Performing Arts Center. The Big Band prepared an evening of music including such Stevie Wonder hits as "Isn't She Lovely," "My Cherie Amour," "Don't You Worry About a Thing," "Too High," and "Superstition." The large auditorium was filled with over five hundred audience members. The evening concluded with a resounding version of Wonder's "Higher Ground." A review of the performance in the *Jamaica Examiner* had only one criticism of the performance: it was too short!

Looking back on the festivities, I am thrilled to have been able to open this small idea and have it embraced by the campus at large. I want to thank Ayush Prasad and the York College Music Club for hosting the concert film. I want to thank Mark Schuller and the African American Resource Center for hosting the panel. And I want to thank the panel for taking an idea, investing their time and talent in it, and creating some fantastic moments of insight and discussion. And last, I want to thank T.K. Blue, the York College Big Band, the York College Performing Arts Center, and all who attended for literally taking the music of Stevie Wonder to a higher ground. Music is a social activity and it should not be done alone. We at York College not only celebrated the man and his music, Stevie Wonder inspired us to come together and celebrate ourselves.

Bad Friday: Rastafari after Coral Gardens

Kelly Josephs, English



2012 marks the 50th anniversary of Jamaica's independence. This semester to prepare the African American Resource Center has planned two activities. The first, "Ode to the Downpressor," is listed below (page 6).

On Thursday, May 3rd, the African American Resource Center, in conjunction with the Male Initiative Program, will present *Bad Friday: Rastafari after Coral Gardens*, a documentary produced and directed by Deborah Thomas and John Jackson, Jr., in collaboration with Jamaican musicians Junior "Gabu" Wedderburn and Junior "Ista J" Manning. The final film of the semester in the African Diaspora Film Series offered by the AARC, *Bad Friday* focuses on a community of Rastafarians in western Jamai-

ca who annually commemorate the 1963 Coral Gardens "incident" popularly dubbed "Bad Friday." This occurred just after independence when the Jamaican government rounded up, jailed and tortured hundreds of Rastafarians. It chronicles the history of violence in Jamaica through the eyes of its most iconic community, and shows how people use their recollections of past traumas to imagine new possibilities for the future.

York College has arranged for one of the producers of *Bad Friday*, Dr. Deborah Thomas, to attend the screening and participate in a special Q&A after the screening. Dr. Thomas is currently Professor of Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania. She is the author of *Exceptional*

Violence: Embodied Citizenship in Transnational Jamaica, Modern Blackness: Nationalism, Globalization, and The Politics of Culture in Jamaica. It was during research for her most recent book publication (*Exceptional Violence*) that she began recording footage about "Bad Friday," footage that she eventually extended and to co-produce the documentary film. *Bad Friday* had its official world premiere in 2011 at the Bob Marley Museum in Kingston, Jamaica. Subsequently, the documentary has been screened at various film festivals in the Caribbean and North America.

The York College screening of *Bad Friday* will take place from 6-8pm, on May 3rd in the African American Resource Center.

African Diaspora Film Series ending its Second Year

Mychel Namphy, English

The AARC's African Diaspora Film Series is concluding with its second year with *Bad Friday*, noted above, following an April 26 screening of Goran Olsson's edgy 2011 documentary *The Black Power Mixtape, 1967-1975*. In his *New York Times* review of Olsson's film, A. O. Scott asked "How did we get from the America of Stokely Carmichael to the America of Barack Obama, who represents a very different kind of black power? To what extent is it the same America?" These are the kinds of questions this film series has explored over the past two years.

Organized by Dr. Mychel Namphy and the AARC Steering Committee, we have invited the campus community to come together three to four times each semester on Thursday evenings to watch and discuss some of the most important and topical films that deal with the experience of being Black in the modern age.

Over two evenings in the wake of the 2010 earthquake in Haiti we screened Spike Lee's 2-part Hurricane Katrina documentary *When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts* (2006). Such films as *Antwone Fisher* (2002), *Dirty Pretty Things* (2002), and *Conspiracy* (2001), have challenged us to wrestle with the most painful and, simultaneously, the most redemptive aspects of the experience of immigration for people of color, the mentoring of young African-American men, and the way the Nazis brought the theory and practice of white supremacy to its highest level during World War II.

Dr. Namphy introduces each film and then leads a post-show discussion. He also attempts to work with faculty members to schedule films that are relevant to their courses. On several occasions other members of the AARC steering committee have selected films and served as hosts.

Last fall Prof. Tom Zlabinger of the Department of Fine Arts hosted an evening of jazz on film with his screening of *Texas Tenor: The Illinois Jacquet Story* (1992). And Prof. Andrew "Sekou" Jackson led a holiday film event in December when he screened Molefe K. Asante, Jr.'s 2008 documentary *The Black Candle: A Kwanzaa Celebration*. The series will continue during the coming year with a possible look at the work of young, emerging African-American filmmakers like Dee Rees and Rishaad Ernesto Green, and a group of films that deal with African-American soldiers in the U.S. Armed Forces.

The films are screened in the African American Resource Center, room 3B04. They are free and open to the entire campus community, and the Southeast Queens community that York College serves.

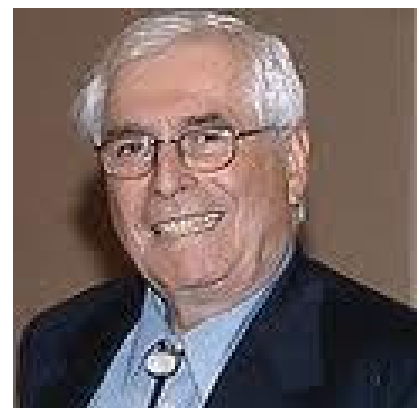
Scholar and Civil Rights Pioneer, William Loren Katz, Speaks at York

Andrew P. Jackson (Sekou Molefi Baako)

When the AARC committee began putting its fall calendar together we not only wanted to present research projects and literary projects faculty are involved in but guest speakers who would add to the body of knowledge of our student body as well. One of those presenters suggested by Prof Jackson was William Loren Katz, a Manhattan based historian and author of 40 books focuses on African American His-

tory, especially that of the Black West and the historical connection with African Americans and the Native American Nations. A popular lecturer, Professor Katz, some of his books include *Black Indians: A Hidden History*, *The Black West* and *Black Women of the Old West*.

On Tuesday, October 8th, Prof Katz spoke before an enthusiastic



group of faculty and students on

his years of historical research on the indigenous peoples, African guides and translators of the colonial era, the Black West and especially the connected history and alliances between African

Americans and Indians. Through his power point presentation, students were given a visual lecture learned of their rich history that began before 1680, and grew during and after the Civil War

and the impact of these unions. Following the lecture, an engaging question and answer session was held.

A Personal Reminiscence of a Day with Prof. William Loren Katz Mychel Namphy, English

One of the benefits of the events hosted by the AARC is that we structure them such that they allow students and faculty to have a more intimate, personal exposure to and connection with our guest scholars than would occur at many standard public lectures. I had the pleasure of personally hosting Prof. William Loren Katz throughout the day when he delivered a public lecture at York about the Black West last October. A new, updated edition of Prof. Katz's groundbreaking 1986 book, *The Black Indians: A Hidden Heritage* was coming out at the time and is now available, and this took me back to when I first read Dr. Katz's work when I was an undergraduate student in the 1980s. Reading that book all those years ago was such a validating experience. These were still the early days of what has come to be known as Black or Africana studies in the American academy. Such words as postcolonialism or Afrocentricity were rarely used and even more poorly understood at the time, and I was at an infant-like beginning of my reading of anything that could genuinely be called Black or African-American scholarship. Prof. Katz's *Black Indians* book provided me with so much clarity and hope, not just because of its content, but also because of the kind of scholarship it represented. This was serious, scholarly work that was being written from *our* perspective, as a direct response to the centuries of invalidation people of African descent have experienced. I asked Prof. Katz why he wrote that book, what he was thinking about when he did, and what he made of the various reactions to his book when it came out. I was particularly interested in how a white man grew into such a deep understanding of Black people, and such a critical understanding of the behavior of his own people. His responses wove a tale that took us through a childhood in Chicago, a deep appreciation of the music of Louis Armstrong and the Dixieland Jazz aesthetic, to an interest in African American history, particularly the history of African Americans and the American west, that serves as a model of fearless, activist scholarship in the anti-racist vein. Over many years I read Prof. Katz's "Education and Books" columns that appeared in *The New York Daily Challenge*. There seems not to have been a single aspect of the debates swirling around education and race that Prof. Katz wasn't analyzing in an academically rigorous, yet progressively partisan manner. As he presented his work to our students and colleagues, and as we spoke personally throughout the day, I felt as if I was walking through a living history that was important to myself and to the struggle of the African-American people. Prof. Katz is one of our elders, truly in the African way. Asante Sana, Professor Katz, for all you are doing and have done, and for taking the time to pass the lessons of your experience on to me.

Deanne Bell touches a nerve with "Ode To the Downpressor"

Ian Hansen, Behavioral Sciences

On Wednesday March 28, Dr. Deanne Bell, a liberation psychologist raised in Jamaica, treated the York College community to something she said could not be had in her home

country: an honest public discussion about classism, racism and middle class complicity in state violence. Dr. Bell, adjunct professor at College of New Rochelle, delivered her talk, "Ode

to the downpressor: A psychological portrait of racism, classism, denial and possibilities for social transformation in (post) colonial Jamaica," to a packed



room at the African American Resources Center. Bell introduced herself as a “middle class Jamaican”, with a grandfather who helped fight for Jamaica’s independence from Britain in 1962, and a father who had served as a minister in the democratic socialist government of the 1970’s. Then Bell began to attack the structures of privilege, violence and de facto apartheid that protect the safety of those with her racial and class background but treat the lives of poor black men and women in Jamaica as expendable at best.

Framing her talk was a painting by Charles Campbell called “Lock Up”, an artistic critique of the October 22, 1992 lock up of over 100 people, mostly poor black men, by Kingston police (image, above). None of the men were charged with anything, but 19 were put in a cell meant for 2 people. After being beaten and then detained in the badly-ventilated cell for more than 40 hours, 3 of the men died from suffocation. Campbell’s painting shows three pairs of feet packed tightly together, with a floor plan below the feet that reproduces the floor plans from the *Brookes* slave ship. Bell recalled that there was no public discussion or

outrage about the event at the time—it was seen as a prison condition issue rather than as an issue of race and class oppression.

Bell noted pointedly that Jamaica has the highest homicide rate in the world, with police murdering one out of five persons killed. And almost all of those killed by police, she said, were poor black men. Issues like these led Bell to join Jamaicans for Justice, an organization that monitors state violence in Jamaica. Through her engagement with this organization, something she had previously not given much thought to became clear to her: “I had no reason to fear transgressions like the 100 men scooped up on the street or the 19 men held in the cell for 40 hours, or the 3 who died, because my social class and mixed race heritage (in Jamaica they’re intertwined) provide me protection.”

It is the middle class bystander/oppressor that Bell refers to when she uses reggae giant Peter Tosh’s term “downpressor.” Her Ph.D. dissertation was devoted to investigating two related questions: how the downpressor middle class of Jamaica can turn a blind eye to the suffering of Ja-

maica’s disenfranchised and casually murdered poor, and how the consciousness of the downpressor might eventually be transformed.

Bell diagnoses the downpressor’s condition as “percepticide”—a term invented to describe the moral and perceptual numbing that Diana Taylor identified in her study of Argentina’s “Dirty War.” Percepticide is the “the annihilation of the perception and understanding of atrocities.” One of the remedies Bell prescribes for percepticide is a “renaissance of the consciousness” though perception-jostling media like surrealist art. According to Bell, surrealist art can represent repressed emotions, ideas and truths in unrestrained ways, and thus draw its audiences in and force them to uncover what they have repressed.

Bell herself is currently composing a work of surrealist art for this purpose—a reggae opera based on the music of Bob Marley and the Wailers. The goal of the opera, Bell says, is to depict “downpressor passivity toward state terror, denial, its effects, and possibilities for radical social change.” Bell chose Bob Marley’s lyrics not only for their di-

rectness, but because Marley “imagines and articulates down-pressor transformation as freedom from psychic colonization.” To illustrate what she meant, she played a little-known song by Marley –*Guiltiness*--for the riveted audience:

These are the big fish
Who always try to eat down
The small fish
Just the small fish
Woe to the downpressor
They eat the bread of sorrow
Woe to the downpressor
They eat the bread of sad tomorrow

Bell finished her talk in half an hour, but clearly it touched a nerve as the discussion went on for over an hour afterwards, and several audience members—many of them hailing from Jamaica also—noted that it was exciting to finally talk about these issues in a public forum. The audience strongly enjoyed the exploration and honest articulation of these issues, and there was a palpable sense of hunger



for more discussion of this kind in the future. To help further meet this need, Dr. Bell promised to make York College one of the first venues of her opera when it is completed.

THE AFRICANA COLLOQUIUM SERIES

George White, History and Philosophy

The Africana Colloquium Series (or “ACS”) was founded by affiliated faculty members Dr. Kelly Baker Josephs (English) and Dr. George White, Jr. (History & Philosophy). The ACS serves as a forum for the presentation of scholarly works-in-progress by York faculty. The presenters are those scholars working on material related to Black Studies; all College faculty are invited to participate in the discussion of the works-in-progress. The purpose of the forum is to foster constructive critique and exchange between the presenter and faculty participants. The ACS is designed to serve as an incubator for scholarship, as we help presenters hone their ideas into material that will be published in academic journals or by academic or commercial presses.

The ACS enjoyed another year of robust activity. The Fall 2011 installment of the series opened in extraordinary form with a discussion of Dr. Joseph’s work “Displaced Subjects, Displacing Sexuality: The Outsider as Corrupting Influence in the Caribbean.” In November, Tom Zlabinger, a professor in the Performing and Fine Arts Department,

presented “Free From Jazz: The Jazz and Improvised Music Scene in Vienna, 1971-2011.” Later in the semester, the group addressed an excerpt from LaForrest Cope’s (English) novel *Soul Shakers*.

Most recently, we reflected on a paper presented by Dr. Mark Schuller, entitled “Pa Manyem Fann Nan Konsa: Intersectionality, Structural Violence, and Vulnerability Before and After the Earthquake.” The next presenter will be Keisha Wiel, who will be discussing a paper, “Critical Discourse on the Ideology behind Papiamentu’s Position within Education,” on Wednesday, May 2, from 2 – 3:30 p.m. Those who have attended ACS sessions – including occasional students – have felt invigorated by the subject matter and the high level of critical discussion amongst supportive colleagues. The continued success of the ACS is a tribute to the collegiality of the participating faculty, the intellectual heft of the presenters, and the level of academic talent connected to the York College Black Studies Program.

More on the new Black Studies Major

Mission

The mission of the Black Studies Program is to provide an interdisciplinary intellectual arena in which students learn to critically examine, analyze, and interpret the African, African American, and Caribbean experiences. The Program offers a broad selection of courses addressing historical, cultural, sociological, political, economic, and psychological factors that affect the lives of African, African American, and Afro-Caribbean peoples. The curriculum stresses the skills necessary to think critically, write clearly, argue persuasively, and problem-solve effectively. Students are exposed to theory and research in a variety of subject matter and are encouraged to engage in active service and research beyond the classroom. The Annual Student Research Day, a recently created initiative, is a college-wide conference that gives outstanding undergraduate students the opportunity to present their own research to a forum of peers, family, faculty, and friends. Faculty in the Black Studies Program expect that our students will participate regularly in this event. In addition, faculty and students will be heavily involved in promoting participation in the CUNY Pipeline Program, encouraging students of color to attend graduate school.

Goal

The goal of the Black Studies Program is to prepare its majors and minors to take roles of effective agency, participation, and leadership in the intellectual and research domains of professional and community life. The program's curriculum will prepare students for the rigors of professional schools and graduate work in traditional disciplines or in interdisciplinary fields of study. Moreover, the program's curriculum aims to enhance the cultural life of the College and surrounding communities in association with SEEK, the African American Studies Club, and other student and community organizations through joint cultural activities, adult education, lectures, and tutorials. We anticipate that Black Studies majors will matriculate into such diverse career arenas as higher education and administration, law, primary and secondary education and administration, social work, medicine, cultural and artistic institutions, law enforcement, and local/state/federal public service.

Black Studies learning objectives:

Upon completing a Black Studies degree, graduates should:

- 1) Demonstrate an interdisciplinary understanding of the diversity of experiences within the African Diaspora
- 2) Understand the importance and distinction of various approaches to knowledge about Black peoples
- 3) Possess and apply skills necessary to think critically, write clearly, argue persuasively, and problem-solve effectively
- 4) Sharpen critical citizenship skills: effective agency, participation, and leadership in the intellectual and research domains of professional and community life
- 5) Be ready for leadership in the community and post-graduate study

MAJORING IN BLACK STUDIES (30 credits)

- 1) 3 credits in a 100-level course
- 2) 9 credits in all foundation courses (section B): HIST 276, BLST 202, and HIST 272
- 3) 15 credits elective courses, from section C, D, and E (at least 6 credits at the 300-level)
- 4) 3 credits capstone course (section F): Seminar (401) or Independent Study (490)

MINORING IN BLACK STUDIES (15 credits)

- 1) 3 credits in a 100-level course
- 2) 6 credits in the foundation courses (section B): HIST 276, BLST 202, and HIST 272
- 3) 6 credits in elective courses, from section C, D, and E

Looking at Haiti from Haiti

First published in the *Boston Globe* January 15, 2012

By Francie Latour

Two years ago, in one of the worst natural disasters recorded in the western hemisphere, a 7.0-magnitude earthquake shook the island nation of Haiti, leveling the capital of Port-au-Prince, taking more than a quarter-million lives, and leaving 1.5 million homeless.

The wall-to-wall coverage of destruction and death riveted the world community and triggered a massive response, with billions in pledged foreign aid and private donations. But as relief turned to stalled recovery, Mark Schuller, a New York anthropologist who also teaches at the State University of Haiti in Port-au-Prince, realized he was seeing a pattern he had seen before: The voices shaping how the world saw Haiti were almost exclusively Americans and other foreign outsiders.

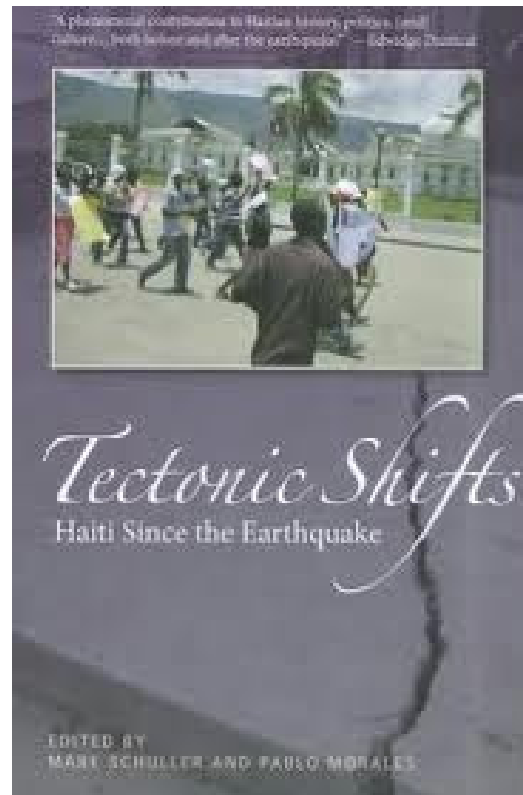
The narrative in those accounts was familiar: one of inept governments, helpless victims, and an aid community doing all it can to bypass the first in order to save the second. In response, Schuller and Latin America specialist Pablo Morales gathered 59 contributors who were either Haitian or knew the country deeply and assembled a new, wide-ranging anthology, “Tectonic Shifts: Haiti Since the Earthquake.”

Published last week [January 5, 2012], the book features analysis from leading scholars, journalists, and activists. There’s a

strong New England contingent: Boston Haitian Reporter editor Manolia Charlotin, Wesleyan sociologist Alex Dupuy, BU School of Medicine professor Marshall Fleurant, Brown University Haitian language specialist Patrick Sylvain, and Partners in Health physicians Louise Ivers and David Walton.

Through these eyes, a much more unsettling narrative emerges—one of an aid community dominated by unwieldy, out-of-touch nongovernmental organizations, also called NGOs, and past foreign interventions that set the stage for the quake’s epic death toll. It’s a narrative, the book argues, that is critical to understanding a country where some 500,000 people remain homeless.

“This is the first collective attempt to open up a dialogue that has been for the most part shut out,” said Schuller, who teaches African American Studies and Anthropology at the City University of New York’s York College. “We need to listen carefully to Haitian people and the articulation of their needs, and I hope this book will be the first step in that conversation.”



Schuller spoke to Ideas via Skype from Port-au-Prince.

IDEAS: What distinguishes “Tectonic Shifts” from other books about the 2010 earthquake?

SCHULLER: Of the 46 chapters in this book, half of the chapters were written by Haitians in Haiti and translated into English. There are a couple serious books that have come out, like [Partners in Health founder and UN Deputy Special Envoy for Haiti] Paul Farmer’s book. But so far, very few of the voices that have been heard have been from Haitians living in Haiti before, during, and after the earthquake.



Schuller conducting research in an IDP camp

IDEAS: How would you characterize the conversation about Haiti post-earthquake?

SCHULLER: If you look at the news coverage of Haiti, it's almost singularly negative about Haitian people, and singularly positive about foreign people and their intentions. That does an extreme disservice to Haitian people, who are analyzing the situation and working to change the situation.

IDEAS: The first chapter, by University of Haiti anthropologist Rachel Beauvoir-Dominique, examines Hurricane Jeanne in 2004, which killed roughly 3,000 people in Haiti and left 300,000 homeless. Why open a book about the earthquake with a different natural disaster?

SCHULLER: To show that the problems that occurred after the earthquake are not new. And they are structural. They're not about good people doing bad things, or bad people doing good things. They're about structures that are broken.

IDEAS: Describe some of those broken structures.

SCHULLER: Looking at Haiti before the earthquake, you had an ineffective system in place of NGOs, a very top-heavy, top-down structure. With the earthquake, you essentially had billions of dollars being sent into that very broken, top-heavy structure, which was made far worse by this massive infusion of many more NGOs. So you have NGOs who can't communicate internally, because the decision-makers of these NGOs, who are making decisions on a UN military base and don't speak Haitian Creole, can't communicate with Haitian staff in the field who know what the problems are, who know what's working and what's not working. You have competition between NGOs, and competition and suspicion between NGOs and the government.

IDEAS: The widespread perception, though, is that the Haitian government is corrupt.

SCHULLER: Well, it's a very binary kind of thinking. You have to have good on one side and bad on the other side. In a binary system, you don't have room for a third actor, and that's the problem. So, people correctly see the legacy of Duvalierism, the legacy of Haiti's military elite and mercantile elite, and they think, OK, Haitians must be corrupt. When they see the Haitian government doing things they shouldn't be doing, they don't think to question what the UN or the US or the World Bank might be doing to reproduce that.

IDEAS: Are there positive signs of what the government can achieve?

SCHULLER: Let's look at the cholera outbreak following the earthquake... If we look at just the prevention efforts, inside the IDP [Internally Displaced People] camps, water and sanitation services became critical to cholera prevention. The only institution that had any public accountability to people in the camps to access those services was the Haitian government. But the NGOs were the ones with all the funding, the billions of dollars to meet the needs of the displaced. Where the NGOs acted as camp management agencies, they did a good job of getting services to the field— but by August 2010, 40 percent of camps did not have water. You had one toilet being shared by 273 people, where the humanitarian standard is one toilet for every 20 people.

Interestingly, where progress was made was in [the poor neighborhood of] Cité Soleil. Why is that significant? Because the Haitian government, both the national government and the city halls, were empowered to play a coordinating role working with the UN and NGOs. Rather than meet at the UN base, they met in city halls with the local government and representatives, and they made 100 percent coverage to camps in Cité Soleil a priority, and they succeeded.

IDEAS: What do you say to accusations that the camps are now home to so-called fakes,

people who are not actually homeless?

SCHULLER: Some 600,000 people left Port-au-Prince after the earthquake because they were afraid of the concrete. They were afraid of the aftershocks, of the insecurity. So if someone leaves and then walks into a camp in April 2010, does that make them a fake victim? I think that's extremely cynical, and puts the blame on the victim

and deflects the attention away from the failures.

IDEAS: If a person texted \$10 to help Haiti, what happened to his or her money?

SCHULLER: I wish I could tell you, and that's part of the problem—lack of accountability. There are some groups, like Partners in Health, that did an excellent job. They are a good case study: They were already

on the ground, with great relationships with Haitians on the ground, and they were working with, not around, the Haitian government.

To the people who texted to Wyclef [Jean, founder of Yele Haiti] or the Red Cross or Oxfam GB, I'm sorry but I have no idea. But I'd say there are questions one should really ask when donating to an NGO.

Urbanization through Students' Eyes

Jacquelyn Southern

In fall 2011, our class on urbanization—AAS285—considered ideas and questions useful for understanding the concentration of African Americans in cities and the many issues that confront them there. Using a fairly conventional historical framework (industrial, postindustrial, and neoliberal cities) and concepts of urban form, we explored a wide range of topics, including migration, immigration, and the modern diaspora, changing urban work and economies, forms of segregation north and south, impacts of urban renewal, ghettoization and suburbanization, private and public housing, urban culture, and urban politics. We grounded this exploration in three close studies: the two waves of the Great Migration, the rise of hip-hop in the postindustrial city, and gentrification in present-day Harlem.

Although this was an online class, students participated very actively. Cities are a subject close to most New Yorkers' hearts, and the students brought their own expertise in living in the city with them. The assigned books were "good reads" that held their interest, and their reading journals and participation in the discussion board exceeded what was required of them. When they had a group project (on Jacob Lawrence's *Migration Series*), they threw themselves into it with goodwill and enthusiasm.



Photo: Angela Roachford, "From Brooklyn to Manhattan"

But the heart of the class was their own research. Students had a choice of two projects. Most chose to conduct an oral history interview, with either a veteran of the Great Migration or an immigrant from Africa or the Caribbean. For most of the students, this was an opportunity to hear stories

directly from a grandparent, uncle, aunt, parent, in-law, or family friend who had taken the plunge and moved to New York. Whether this occurred years ago—in the context of southern segregation, violence, and lack of opportunity—or more recently, especially from abroad, the stories that the students recorded were rich and evocative. They were able to connect them very clearly with the themes and concepts they had studied.

A smaller number of students prepared photoessays on the contemporary city, for which they chose their own open-ended questions and themes to pursue. Samples of some of their work

are included here. Angela Roachford explored aspects of urban quality of life. Vianca Pujols investigated Occupy Wall Street and the issues it raised for African Americans living, working, and attending school in the city. Alphonso Jackson documented changes in Brooklyn as part of a complex process that affects not only African American neighborhoods and opportunities, but the taken-for-granted evidence all around us of generations of history and culture. His essay showed both the incursions of new “development” and the creative responses of African American communities to changing times.



Photo: Alphonso Jackson. “Homelessness”



Photos: Alphanso Jackson. Left, “Once the birthplace of baseball’s first interracial team, the Brooklyn Dodgers, the stadium that introduced the world to Jackie Robinson has now become known as Ebbets Field housing projects.” Right, “A symbol of righteousness, justice and power within the black communities.”



Drummers’ circle at Zuccotti Park. Photograph by Vianca Pujols.

Nana Kimati Dinizulu Presents His Family History with West African Religion and Culture at the AARC

by Andrew P. Jackson (Sekou Molefi Baako)

On Wednesday afternoon, March 7th, Nana Kimati Dinizulu, the leader of the Akan West African community gave a presentation on the history of his family to a packed audience in the African American Resource Center. Using online family photographs, Dinizulu shared his lineage from Harlem to Queens and Ghana, West Africa. His family's journey began with the early lives of his father, a former photographer and his mother, a NYC civil service employee, along with other family members, (who also worked traditional civil service jobs while becoming more and more involved in West African tradition and religion. His father, Nana Opare Dinizulu I, was introduced to traditional African culture in his twenties, become a master drummer and learned the intricate history, practices and traditions of Akan Ghanaian culture while his wife, Alice Dinizulu, became a key dancer for Asada Dafora's Dance Company-the first dance company to put African dance and music on Broadway in the U.S. from the 1930's to 1950's. In time, Nana Yao Opare Dinizulu I established Bosum Dzemawodzi in New York out of which came the famed Dinizulu Drummers and Dancers, one of the most revered African dance troupes of that generation from the late 1960's. As a result of his commitment and dedication to African religion and culture was given leadership status



as the Omanhene and Okomfohene of Akans in America.

Nana Kimati Dinizulu, introduced to African percussion instruments in his youth, is now a master drummer like his father. He told the audience his father steered him to playing the drum to keep him off the streets and out of trouble that he seemed to be getting into. Kimati soon developed a passion for percussion and the drum and has studied his craft ever since, spending two years in Ghana, West Africa mastering his craft and learning the spiritual and religious connections of the drum. He has studied with percussion masters on the African continent and here in America. "A major influence on his musical growth and creative energies was his involvement in Fanti's Asafo (warrior) music, a tradition dating back many centu-

ries." (Wikipedia) In addition, Kimati has studied with Haitian master drummers, studied various forms of traditional music from Brazil, African and African American hand drumming and many other forms. He has conducted extensive research with the Maroons of Jamaica, the Ewe of Togo, the Orisha worshippers of Trinidad and Tobago, Rada ritual musicians of Haiti and the Ring Shouters of the Georgia Sea Islands. He has worked with stateside and international cultural organizations; the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture; Queens Library's Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center and performed music and conducted traditional African drum and libation rituals.

Over the years, Kimati has performed with artists such as Ma-

vis Staples, Buddy Guy, Mos Def, Angelique Kidjo, many jazz artists, performed at Nelson Mandela's 70th Birthday Tribute, worked with Toni Morri-

son in her production *N'Orleans-A Storyville Musical*. He performed in Broadway's *Death and the King's Horseman*; co-wrote the composition

"Divining"-Judith Jamison's first ballet for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and at Radio City Music Hall in the "Salute to the Blues".

Langston's Tribute to Gil Scott-Heron

By Andrew P. Jackson (Sekou Molefi Baako) and Selena T. Rodgers



l to r: **Herb Boyd** (activist/author/journalist), **Tony Medina** (Associate Professor of English of Creative Writing/Howard University), **Sonia Sanchez** (author/poet/activist), **Camilla Gilyard** (Elementary School Teacher/Daughter of Dr. Keith Gilyard), **Nana Camille Yarbrough** (musician/actress/poet/activist/television producer/author) and **Atiba Kwabena-Wilson** (musician/poet/storyteller/Djeli)

In celebration of National Poetry Month, Executive Director Andrew P. Jackson (Sekou Molefi Baako) of the Queens Library's Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center hosted *Good Vibrations...A Tribute to Gil Scott-Heron* on Saturday, April 7, 2012. *Good Vibrations...* is the fourth installment of Jackson's creation for the Langston Hughes Community Library's

Tribute Series. Over the past two years, photo journalist/filmmaker Gordon Parks, actor Frank Silvera and activist playwright August Wilson were featured. The tribute to Scott-Heron (April 1, 1949 - May 27, 2011) began following his transition. Scott-Heron is a great influence and favorite performing artist of Jackson's, who admired Scott-Heron for having his mind and hand on the politi-

cal pulse of America and Black America. Scott-Heron is a self-proclaimed "Bluesologist" through his Afrocentric spoken word and poetic lyrics, stage presentation, blues-funk rooted music, political commentary, comedic narration and charismatic style. In Jackson's eyes, Scott-Heron was a constant thorn in the side of America who engaged the mind, body and spirit.

The first hour of the day's events opened with the playing of a cross section of Scott-Heron's recordings from his early albums, *Pieces of A Man* (1971), through his last recording *I'm New Here* (2010). In all, twenty-five recordings of his work are now available. While the audience enjoyed listening to Scott-Heron, they viewed the table display from Jackson's personal collection of posters, vinyl albums, cds, dvds and books from Scott-Heron's four-decade career. The afternoon continued with the viewing of the walking tour documentary of Washington, DC and the city's black wax museum—*Black Wax Gil Scott-Heron* (1982). Queens poet David Mills followed the film with a free flowing, five poem recitation to Gil Scott-Heron's poems reflecting the turmoil in the civil rights awareness years of America (*The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*, *Winter in America*, *In The Bottle*) and two that personalized the demons within Scott-Heron, (*Spirits Past* and *The Other Side I, II and III*).

Next, **Dr. Aldon Nielsen** of Pennsylvania State University, gave a PowerPoint presentation of his ongoing research on Scott-Heron and his personal remembrances as a student of Scott-Heron's at Washington D.C.'s Federal City College in the early 1970's. "My professor was but two years older than me, but had already had two books published" said Dr. Nielsen (*The Vulture* (1970), *The Nigger Factory* (1972)). In short order Professor Nielsen gained a high level of respect

for the depth and strength of Professor Scott-Heron's mind.

The core of the day's tribute was an engaging panel discussion moderated by **Herb Boyd**, a Harlem based activist journalist, on the life and contributions of Gil Scott-Heron. The panel included:

Dr. Tony Medina, a product of and student activist at New York City College in his undergraduate years. A talented poet, Professor Medina published childrens' poetry storybooks include *Love to Langston*, *Bob Marley* and *DeShawn Days*, as well as spoken word volumes, *Bum Rush the Page*, with the late, activist poet, Louis Reyes Rivera, and *Roll Call: A Generational Anthology of Social and Political Black Literature and Art*. **Sister Sonia Sanchez**, Poet, Mother, Educator/Temple University (1977-1999) is one of America's greatest activist poet/scholars of the 20th Century with over 16 books; national and international lecturer on Black Culture and Literature, Women's Liberation, Peace and Racial Justice; lectured in over 500 colleges and universities; contributing editor *Black Scholar* and *The Journal of African Studies*. **Nana Camille Yarbrough**, Professor of Black Studies Department at the City College (CUNY), award winning poet/author (Cornrows, 1979), cultural activist and performer from the Village of Harlem. Founder of Ancestor House "It's our story... more than 500 years of tradition." **Djeli Atiba Kwabena-Wilson**, is one of the most multifaceted

cultural warriors based in New York City's Village of Harlem today. Wilson is an Africana historian, storyteller, vocalist, musician (djembe drum, harmonica, flute, piccolo), composer, lecturer and political activist. **Ms. Camilla Gilyard**, a South Queens elementary school teacher and daughter of Dr. Keith Gilyard, read her father's prepared comments and spoke to Scott-Heron's legacy in her generation as usefulness in the teachings to engage her fifth grade students in their English lessons. Dr. Gilyard is a Professor of English at Pennsylvania State University and a published poet and author of *John Oliver Killens A Life of Literary Activism* (2010). Gilyard was a former Corona resident and friend of Scott-Heron's before his rise to stardom. The event ended with music by Atiba's blues ensemble, *The B fo' quo'tet*, with a guest horn player and the poetry of David Mills and Tony Medina.

Located at 100th Street and Northern Boulevard in Corona, the Queens Library's Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center was founded by activists from the Corona-East Elmhurst neighborhood as part of the Anti-Poverty programs of the 1960's. It is the first public institution named for the "Poet Laureate of Harlem." Visit: www.queenslibrary.org and www.libraryactioncommittee.org.

Tiffany Cudjoe thanked her mentor and poetess, Professor Selena T. Rodgers for encouraging her to attend the tribute to



l to r: **Andrew P. Jackson (Sekou Molefi Baako)** (Executive Director, Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center/York College), **Tiffany Cudjoe** (York College Student) and **Sonia Sanchez** (author/poet/activist);

Scott-Heron. Tiffany also extended a heart-felt thank you to Professor Andrew Jackson for introducing her to Ms. Sanchez and Ms. Yarbrough as a rising star at York College and for granting her permission to photograph the event. Dr. Rodgers and Tiffany had the tremendous opportunity to engage in three-way dialogue with Ms. Sanchez about her journey as a poet, au-

thor and activist. “My experience at the Langston Hughes Library was beyond amazing. I used my camera to capture participants’ tributes to Mr. Gil Scott-Heron. I also absorbed the profound wisdom, poetry and stories offered by Ms. Sonia Sanchez and other distinguished guests” stated Tiffany.

Tiffany Cudjoe is a Cardinal Crew member and York College Ambassador, helping to create a student-friendly environment for incoming freshmen. Mr. Michel Hodge, Executive Director of Enrollment Management at York College is also the York Cardinal Crew Director and a Rising Star Honoree. Hosted by Metropolitan Hospitality, Rising Star Awards are presented to young professionals who exemplify outstanding leadership skills. On January 26th, 2012, Mr. Hodge introduced Tiffany to award winning domestic and international photographer Michelle Kawka of Michelle’s High Heel Studio. Tiffany is currently interning with Ms. Kawka at the “Rising Star Awards Ceremony”. Tiffany is also a Change Agent Intern with

CUNY Creative Arts/Project Change, educating to inform and empower high school and college students about health issues HIV/AIDS and obesity through facilitation, drama, mentorship, and advocacy.

Her interests include graduate studies as a Photo Essayist, combining her passion for research, photography, social work and sociology with a focus on social and health-related issues impacting people of African ancestry. She was a featured photographer in the March 2012 Rochdale Village, Inc. Bulletin. The Newspaper is issued monthly to over 25,000 residents living in the world’s second largest housing cooperative.

Tiffany Cudjoe, a Percy E. Sutton SEEK student, is graduating in 2012 from York College of The City University of New York with her BA in Sociology, Social Sciences Program/School of Health and Behavioral Sciences.



Photo: Attendance at Langston Hughes Library and Cultural Center. Front row: : **Dr. Aldon Lynn Nielsen** (Department of English/Pennsylvania State University) and **Sister Sonia Sanchez** (retired professor/Temple University)

*Some of the new classes in the new major are: **The Unforgiving Mirror: Race and Racism in Contemporary Society; Intersections: Black Women in the Atlantic World; Contemporary Legacy of Slavery in the U.S.; Environmental Justice in North America; Africa and the Columbian Exchange; Heritage, Culture, and Memory; Race, Housing, and Community; and Boys to Men: from Black Macho to Black Male Feminist***

CUNY political scientist speaks to York about Haiti's elections

Michael Sharpe, Behavioral Sciences

On October 18, 2011, Dr. François Pierre-Louis, Associate Professor of Political Science Queens College/CUNY gave a presentation on "Haiti, Elections, Cholera and the International Community" at the African American Resource Center. The event was cosponsored by the York College Political Science program. In 2010, President René Préval of Haiti reluctantly agreed to call for presidential and legislative elections to renew the members of parliament and elect a new president.

Since Préval was the only president in recent years to have been elected twice to the presidency and successfully completed his two terms, he was seen as the leader that would usher Haiti into an era of stability and economic growth. Instead, the 2010 elections were overwhelmingly rejected by the population and the country once more faced a long period of violence and instability. In his talk, Pierre-Louis argued that the international community, through MINUSTAH and CARICOM, failed miserably in Haiti to support the transition to democracy because their agenda

is in contradiction with the wishes of the Haitian people.

Prof. François talked about the election of Haiti's new president, singer Michel Martelly a.k.a. "Sweet Micky," who had recently spoke at York, the short lived candidacy of hip-hop artist Wyclef Jean, and the events surrounding the cholera outbreak that many think was inadvertently brought to Haiti by United Nations peacekeepers from Nepal. The event was attended by York students, faculty, as well as representatives of non-governmental organizations working in Haiti.

"A New Era of Social Justice and Civil Rights"

By Selena T. Rodgers, Social Sciences



On April 4th, 2012, Dr. Selena T. Rodgers (Assistant Professor of Social Work at York College/CUNY) and Tiffany Cudjoe (student research assistant/York College/CUNY) commemorated

Up Social Workers: From Vicarious Trauma to Posttraumatic Growth" focused on the preliminary findings of past personal trauma, the presence of vicarious

the 44th anniversary of Civil Rights Leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination and 38th day after the killing of Trayvon Martin by co-presenting at The National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW) 44th Annual Conference. The annual forum was hosted in Atlanta, GA. Aligned with the conference's theme "A New Era of Social Justice and Civil Rights," their presentation, "Rise

trauma symptoms, and coping strategies in a national sample of social workers. Social workers encounter and respond to unprecedented trauma-related experiences, including youth violence, unconscionable killings of Black males—including Trayvon Martin—and the pandemic of HIV/AIDS predominately affecting Black women in metropolitan areas. The presenters' preliminary research findings revealed the need for competent training of social workers in areas of trauma, using strength-based approaches.

Approximately 700 participants attended the NABSW national conference. Twelve students previously enrolled in the Social

Research Methods for Social Work course taught by Professor Rodgers at Medgar Evers College of The City University of New York along with Professor Elaine Reid (Social Work Program/MEC) were present and highly engaged in the workshop. Ms. Cudjoe, a first time presenter at a national conference, received positive feedback from attendees. Tiffany was selected as a featured speaker for the lunch session at York College's 3rd Annual Student Undergraduate Research Day on April 19th, 2012. She engaged in a conversation with her research advisor Dr. Selena T. Rodgers, highlighting her research experience. Tiffany is grateful to SEEK and the Academic Affairs office for her travel to the conference.

In remembrance of the civil rights leader, Tiffany and Dr. Rodgers visited the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site in Atlanta, GA on Thursday, April 5, 2012. The historic site was established in 1980 to pre-

serve and honor "M.L.K.'s" birthplace, work, worship, life and legacy. The gravesite of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King and statue of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi "The Mahatma" (1869-1948) were among the photographs taken by Tiffany. Her future plans for "New Era of Social Justice and Civil Rights" include connecting her enthusiasm for research, photography, social work and sociology.

While at the conference, Rodgers talked at length with NABSW National Conference Co-Chair Melissa Smith-Haley about the need for student, as well as academics/practitioners and student joint presentations. Ms. Smith-Haley recalled the first time she presented as a student with her father Dr. Fredrick E. Smith in Houston at a NABSW conference nearly 20 years ago—"That experience helped me tremendously in starting my career and cementing my love for the organization" stated Ms. Smith-Haley,

NABSW New Orleans Chapter. The National Association of Black Social Workers Inc. is committed to enhancing the quality of life and empowering people of African ancestry through advocacy, human services delivery, and research www.nabsw.org/



On April 9, 2012, Sharika Holloway, a baccalaureate social work student at Medgar Evers College, won the NABSW Office of Student Affairs Secretary. Sharika is member and President-elect for the ABSW student chapter at MEC and a former research student of Dr. Rodgers.

Resource Center hosts graduate school discussions

Michael Sharpe, Behavioral Sciences

October 3, 2011, the Political Science Program and the African American Resource Center cosponsored an event entitled "A Talk about Graduate School in International Affairs". The guest speaker was Ms. Leigh Morris Sloane, Executive Director, the Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs (APSIA). APSIA has some 60 full and affiliate member schools including the University of Maryland, University of Texas at Austin, University of Pittsburgh,

Duke, Georgetown, George Washington, Tufts, Columbia, Harvard, Princeton, and Sciences Po (France). The event was held at the African American Resource Center. Ms. Sloane talked graduate study in preparation for careers in international affairs. She spoke extensively about the process of applying to graduate schools of international affairs including personal essay, GPA, GRE, and internships. The event was attended by students with interests in diplomacy, interna-

tional development, and humanitarian assistance.

Since 2009, the African American Resource Center has held at least one graduate school workshop per semester. Since 2011, we partnered with the CUNY Pipeline Program. This year, Graduate Center Writing Fellows led workshops on writing personal statements. For information about the CUNY Pipeline program, visit <http://web.gc.cuny.edu/oeodp/pipeline.asp>

York Students go to Washington



Photo: Stephanie Semé, Sabine Bernard, Tracey Ulcena, Adlin Noël at Congressional Black Caucus Briefing.

On Tuesday, March 27, 2012, five York College students accompanied their professor, interim coordinator Mark Schuller, in a visit to Washington, DC in advance of the Society for Applied Anthropology meetings. The students are Sabine Bernard (African American Studies and Anthropology), Sandy Nelzy (Nursing), Adlin Noël (Physicians' Assistant), Stephanie Semé (Psychology), and Tracey Ulcena (African American Studies and Psychology).

On the invitation of Rep. Yvette Clarke (Brooklyn), whom they met in the fall, York students led a panel for the Congressional

Black Caucus that discussed Haiti's Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps, the subject of the research they conducted with Prof. Schuller in the summer of 2011. Prof. Schuller and TransAfrica Forum and Center for Economic and Policy Research distilled policy solutions.

Following this briefing, the students met at the U.S. State Department, meeting with the two Deputy Haiti Coordinators, again discussing their research findings and potential solutions that the U.S. government can take to ensure greater aid accountability and respect for IDP rights.

The next day, March 28, the students presented their research at a panel of the Society for Applied Anthropology, for which Schuller chairs the Human Rights and Social Justice Committee. Anthropology and Psychology student Vijaya Sarju also presented at the conference on her research on Domestic Violence in the Caribbean community in Queens.

Former York professor Elgin Klugh at Coppin State University invited the five Haitian students and Dr. Schuller to present their research. Like York, Coppin is a diverse student body with a large

African American and Caribbean community.

Funded by a National Science Foundation grant and supported by the CUNY Haiti Initiative, the students were paired with a student from the State University of Haiti (where Schuller has taught since 2003) and visited one IDP camp every day for five weeks. Students conducted direct observation, 100 household interviews (for a total of 791) with a 56-question survey, and 10 semi-structured audio-taped interviews.

The study yielded some very timely results. For example, despite the discourse about not being “real victims,” only there for the free services, 92% of people preferred to leave the camps, and only 3.5% came since the earthquake. Also, on average, families lost .8 people in the earthquake, which would suggest that higher estimates of Haiti’s official death toll are plausible. One of the longest-lasting impacts of the aid delivery is the fissuring of Haiti’s

households: average size went from 5.37 to 3.36. This was likely because of policies from aid agencies to distribute aid (food, hygiene kits, tents, etc.) to heads of households. So following this reward structure, many families decided to split up to maximize their access to life-saving resources. But this has a downside: Haiti’s extended family ties are the first and last resort for solidarity, which explains how Haiti’s people can survive in very difficult times. Whether this rupture in solidarity ties is repairable in future disasters remains uncertain.

What is certain is the immediate need for this research: over two years following the tragic earthquake, almost half a million people still live in tents. Those who remain have fewer choices: in the summer of 2011, 80.5 percent living in tents were renters before the quake, and as of January 2012 when Schuller returned, 95 percent are. These people, with no other alternatives, are now being threatened with arson.

In March, three camps were set on fire, at least one by the police, in order to force people to leave.

This kind of on-the-ground research, and the students’ own lived experience and poise, is being sought out. Members of Congress and their legislative aides, the State Department, and Coppin students and faculty implored the students to publish their research. They will, on Schuller’s blog on *Huffington Post* and submitting to the journal *Practicing Anthropology*, published by the Society for Applied Anthropology.

The students so impressed Rep. Clarke the first time they met that she hired alumna Sabine Bernard as an intern. Bernard is organizing a presentation for the Haitian community in Brooklyn, where Rep. Clarke will unveil policy solutions drafted with Schuller and his colleagues at TransAfrica Forum and Center for Economic and Policy Research.

MEET OUR FACULTY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mesfin Araya is Associate Professor of African American Studies at York, where he teaches intro to Africa, the Black Family, Black Revolutionary Thought, and Historiography in Black Studies. He produced numerous scholarly works on Ethiopia and Eritrea from a political science perspective; his next book analyzes Eritrean nationalism.

Martin Atangana holds a Ph. D. in History from the University of Paris 1-Sorbonne (France), a M.A. in History from the University of Paris X-Nanterre (France), and a B.A. from the University of Yaoundé (Cameroon). He is currently an Associate Professor of History at York and The Graduate Center (CUNY). His research interests focus on the relationship between West Africa and Europe with a special emphasis on Franco-Cameroonian relations. He is the author of *The End of French Rule in Cameroon* and *Capitalisme et Nationalisme au Cameroun au lendemain de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale*; *French Investment in Colonial Cameroon*; and articles published in *Matériaux Pour l’Histoire de Notre Temps*, *African Studies Review*, and *The Canadian Journal of African Studies*. In addition to doing research and teaching, Dr. Atangana is an accomplished musician who had worked with artists such as Paul Simon, Jean Luc Ponty, Many Dibango, and Ronald Shannon Jackson. He frequently performs with band “African Blue Note.” His solo albums include *Oyenga Fam* and *Mot Songo*.

Coleen Clay is Associate Professor of the Department of Teacher Education at York. Dr. Clay teaches courses in literacy development, child and adolescent development and teaching and learning in urban schools and supervises

student teachers. From 1999- 2001 she was an Associate Professor of Education at CUNY Medgar Evers College. From 1994-1999 she was the Coordinator of Educational Programs and Research at the Caribbean Research Center, Medgar Evers College. Early in her career she was a member of the Faculty of Education and Educational Research at the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, WI where she taught both undergraduate and graduate courses in child development and education. She is a member of the Editorial Board of WADABAGEI, a scholarly journal of the Caribbean and its Diaspora. In the 1990's she served on the New York City and New York State Committees on Education of Caribbean Creole Students and the Bilingual Special Education Advisory Council.

As former Executive Director of the Center for Constitutional Rights and a veteran social and political activist, **Ron Daniels** has an extensive familiarity with issues and policy affecting African Americans and other people of color. In addition, Daniels is conversant with First Amendment issues, the Patriot Act, torture, rendition and related issues. As former Deputy Campaign Manager for Rev. Jesse Jackson's 1988 presidential campaign and a former independent candidate for President, Daniels regularly comments on electoral and political issues in weekly column Vantage Point and a WBAI show. His principal international work is Haiti via the Institute of the Black World 21st Century and the Haiti Support Project. Daniels is conversant with U.S. policy towards Haiti and political trends in Haiti.

Andrew P. Jackson (Sekou Molefi Baako) has been executive director of Queens Library's Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center since August 1980. He is President of the Black Caucus of the National Library Association. He is also a Library Consultant and Advisor. A graduate of York College with a BS in Business Administration and Queens College's Graduate School of Library and Information Studies with a Master of Library Science, Andrew is a published author, essayist, lecturer and adjunct professor at both of his alma maters. He is the author of *Queens Notes: Facts About the Forgotten Borough of Queens, New York* (2010), *In Honor Of... Libraries Named for African Americans* (2011). He wrote the Foreword to the 9th and 10th editions of the *African American Almanac* (2003 and 2007) and numerous articles on Africana history and culture. His most recently published work is *The 21st Century Black Librarian in America: Issue and Challenges*, by Scarecrow Press, Inc. April 2012.

Kelly Baker Josephs is an Assistant Professor of English at York College/CUNY, specializing in World Anglophone Literature with an emphasis on Caribbean Literature. She teaches courses in Anglophone Caribbean Literature, Postcolonial Literature and Theory, Literatures of the African Diaspora, and Gender Studies. Her current book project, "Disturbers of the Peace: Representations of Insanity in Anglophone Caribbean Literature," considers the ubiquity of madmen and madwomen in Caribbean literature between 1959 and 1980. Professor Josephs serves as Managing Editor of *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism*, published by Duke University Press, and *sx salon: a small axe literary platform* (www.smallaxe.net/sxsalon). She also co-organizes the Caribbean Epistemologies Seminar at the CUNY Graduate Center, which involves managing *The Caribbean Commons* website.

For over a decade, **Mychel J. Namphy** has been lecturing, teaching, and writing about African American literature, culture, and politics, in such diverse venues as churches and mosques, police academies and drug treatment centers, Ivy League colleges, graduate schools, high schools, elementary schools, and prisons. His B.A. is from Columbia University, and he completed his Ph.D in English and African American literature at Princeton. Dr. Namphy currently has a book manuscript, titled *Malcolm's Mood Indigo: A Theodicy of Literary Contests*, being reviewed by various academic presses. This book is a study of Malcolm X as an aspect of contemporary history, and a close analysis of Malcolm's collaboration with Alex Haley that in 1965 produced *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, one of the most dynamic spiritual and political autobiographies of our time. Dr. Namphy has held teaching positions at Princeton University and at Rutgers University. At York College, he teaches courses on African American and Native American literature, art, and music, and constantly encourages his students to explore the connections between our cultural practices and our struggle for freedom, justice, equality, and dignity.

Jonathan Quash is the director of the York College's Men's Center/ the Male Initiative, as well as an instructor in the Performing Arts (Music). Quash is the director and faculty advisor to the Gospel Choir at York. An accomplished musician, Quash has several CDs and recordings with a range of artists, including Mark Adams and K. Joy. Quash graduated from York College and is completing his Ph.D.

Selena T. Rodgers is an Assistant Professor of Social Work and Director of Social Work Field Education. Professor Rodgers' research focuses on posttraumatic growth and socio-cultural factors in multi-cultural and multi-ethnic groups living in refugee-like situations, child sexual abuse and secondary trauma. Her scholarly publications focus on areas of intimate partner violence, sexual abuse/violence and immigration experiences in the United States. Dr.

Rodgers is an Associate Editor for an international journal. She is also a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with over 17 years of experience in the field, specializing in administration. Prior to her appointment at York College, Dr. Rodgers was the Associate Vice President for Safe Horizon's Queens Community and Criminal Justice Programs. Dr. Rodgers is the recipient of the Eleventh Annual Fred Kuo, Jr. Memorial Award for fostering "respect and understanding" in people, a National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Emerging Leader Honoree, New York City Chapter and is a former Hartman Child & Family Scholar. The Honorable Helen M. Marshall, President of the Borough of Queens in the City of New York, declared Friday, March 30th, 2012 as "Dr. Selena T. Rodgers Day" in Queens in recognition of her research on Posttraumatic Growth and years of service to the social work profession.

Interim Coordinator of the African American Resource Center, **Mark Schuller** is Assistant Professor of Black Studies and Anthropology and affiliate at the Faculté d'Ethnologie, l'Université d'État d'Haïti. Supported by the National Science Foundation and others, Schuller's research on globalization, NGOs, gender, and disasters in Haiti has been published in twenty book chapters and peer-reviewed articles as well as public media, including a column in *Huffington Post*. He is the author of forthcoming *Killing with Kindness: Haiti, International Aid, and NGOs* (Rutgers, 2012) and co-editor of four volumes, including *Tectonic Shifts: Haiti Since the Earthquake* (Kumarian Press, 2012). He is co-director / co-producer of documentary *Poto Mitan: Haitian Women, Pillars of the Global Economy* (Documentary Educational Resources, 2009). He chairs the Society for Applied Anthropology's Human Rights and Social Justice Committee and is active in many solidarity efforts.

Michael Sharpe is Assistant Professor of Political Science in the Department of Behavioral Sciences. His areas of specialization are comparative politics and international relations and his research interests include looking comparatively at globalization, the politics of international migration, immigrant political incorporation, and political transnationalism. The research has thus far been published in a journal, encyclopedias, and forthcoming chapters in books. Dr. Sharpe volunteered with Operation Crossroads Africa in Kajiado, Kenya when he was an undergraduate and remains interested in the African Diaspora all over the world. He is a board member of the United Nations affiliated NGO, the International Movement Against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism (IMADR).

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