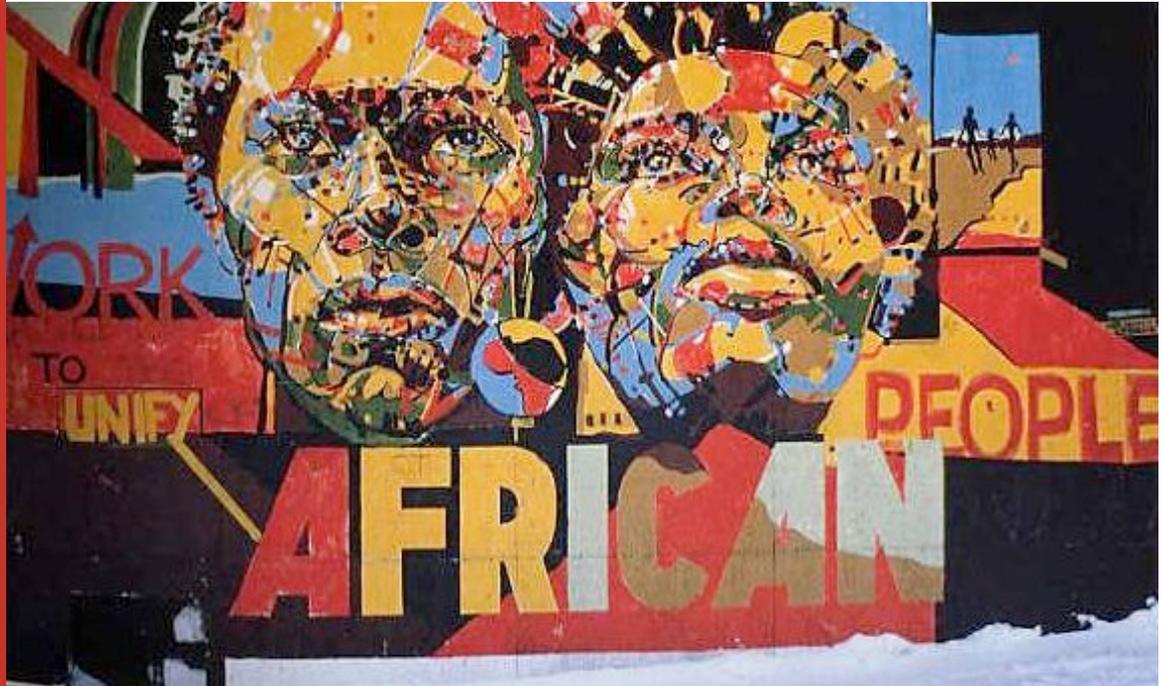


AFRICANA NEWSLETTER

Department of African and African-American Studies (AAAS) @ The University of Kansas

FALL 2010



Mural by Nelson Stevens

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About AAAS @ KU

We are where Africa, the Americas, Europe and the Middle East meet.

Founded in 1970, the Department of African and African-American Studies seeks to educate students to function in a multicultural environment and in a global community. In pursuing this goal, our Department contributes in vital ways to the University of Kansas' general education requirements, providing undergraduates throughout the College as well as in other schools with courses through which they can deepen their knowledge and enrich their understanding of the history, culture and experience of African people in Africa as well as the peoples of African descent in the Americas. Our undergraduate and graduate programs recognize the centrality of Africans to the initial establishment of these United States and the continuing significance of their descendants to the nation's social, cultural, political, economic and spiritual growth and vigor. These realities our Department teaches as integral to the American experience. Our programs (minor, BA, BGS, Graduate Certificate, and MA) also seek to impart a sound knowledge of Africa and its diaspora in the Americas as a necessary, specialized preparation for effective leadership and service both domestically and internationally.

Our faculty conducts research that not only enhances our teaching of Africana but also establishes KU's leadership in Africana studies locally, nationally and internationally. Ours is the only department of its kind at a public or private University in Kansas and among the Big XII institutions. We provide general service and a specialized interdisciplinary blending of research and teaching that are critically germane to understanding the universality of human intellection, emotion, and development from a pan-Africanist perspective. Though our Department is situated within the humanities in the College, our academic wings are large enough to span a multitude of fields in the humanities, the social sciences and some professional schools. Our allied Centers and Institutes - the Kansas African Studies Center, the Langston Hughes Center, the Institute of Haitian Studies, and the Africana Leadership Institute - help strengthen our centrality to KU's mission.

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Message from the Chair: Dr. Peter Ukpokodu

As we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the founding of our Department, I seize this opportunity to express sincere gratitude to all those who have helped and supported the Department through thick and thin. I am amazed at how people of all races have come together and worked together for a common purpose. I thank our generous donors who have come bearing gifts. Where would we be and what would we do without you? Please, continue to support the Department. I thank my predecessors in this position—Jacob Gordon, John Janzen, and Arthur Drayton—who fought the good fight to establish and keep the Department alive, respectively. Within those 40 years of our existence, the Department established the BA and BGS degree concentrations in African Studies, in African-American Studies and, since last Spring, in Arabic & Islamic Studies. It created 4 minors (African American Studies track, African & African-American Studies track, African Studies track with 6 options, and Haitian Studies track). It created a Graduate Certificate program in African Studies and an MA degree program in African & African-American Studies. It established the Institute of Haitian Studies, the Kansas African Studies Center, the nascent Langston Hughes African-American Studies Center, and the nascent Africana Leadership Institute. It formed the Mid-America Alliance for African Studies, established the Marwa Africana Lecture Series, and Study-Abroad programs in Nigeria, Morocco, Tanzania, and South Africa and supported students who chose to study or do fieldwork in Botswana, Egypt, Ghana, Haiti, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Senegal, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. Our undergraduate students have won research

awards, including the KU top prize won by Mariah Beg last Spring, and our faculty have won research awards, received research and program grants, and won KU's various competitive teaching awards, including the Kemper and the Mortar Board. Even as we welcome Peter Ojiambo as our newest core faculty and language coordinator (this semester we are offering Amharic, Arabic, Haitian Creole, Hausa, KiSwahili, Nshona, and Wolof), Yusuf Al-Hassan as our Hausa instructor, Nini Negash as our Amharic instructor, and Kelly Lowe as an administrative assistant, and even as I congratulate Garth Myers and KASC for receiving the Title VI grant funding, I am keenly aware as to how far the Department has come, and how much we have achieved with the little we are given. This is why I am deeply grateful to our faculty, staff, students, alumni and donors who have helped us to keep the flame burning. We still have a lot to accomplish, including the full funding of the Langston Hughes Center. As KU embarks on a new fundraising campaign and as we celebrate our 40th anniversary, please continue your generosity towards our Department. We have been able to accomplish so much because of your support. Thank you. My special thanks to Shawn Alexander and Lisa Brown for this newsletter.



Departmental News:

Peter Ojiambo -- The Department of African & African-American Studies welcomes Peter Ojiambo to its faculty. Dr.



Ojiambo, an Assistant Professor of AAAS, earned his Ph.D from Ohio University in 2007. He is also a graduate of Moi University, Kenya (BED in Kiswahili and Religious Studies and MPHIL in Educational Foundations) and Ohio University (MA African Studies and International Affairs). Before joining the University of Kansas, Dr. Ojiambo taught at Ohio University and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Ojiambo's research and writing interests are in the areas of:

African language pedagogy; educational objectives, teaching theories, administrative and curriculum challenges; relational theory in education; school and society. His research focuses on African educa-

tion, especially in studies on Starehe Boys Center and School of Kenya. He has published in this area and on education, democracy and development. His recent book publication is an educational biography entitled *Teaching beyond Teaching: Dr. Geoffrey William Griffin and Starehe Boys Centre and School*. (VDM Verlag, 2008).

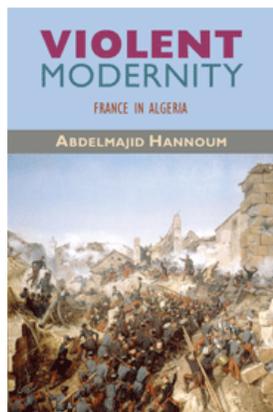
AAAS Celebrates 40 years -- This academic year, 2010-2011, the Department of African & African-American Studies celebrates its fortieth anniversary. In 1970, as Black Studies programs were being created throughout the country, the University of Kansas launched the African Studies Department, which was Diasporic in nature from its inception, including courses on Africa, the African American experience, and the Caribbean. To greater reflect that inclusiveness the department became the Department of African and African-American Studies in 1984. In recognition of AAAS's anniversary, the Department, working in conjunction with its allied Centers, is holding seminars, brownbags, and a mini-symposium to discuss the history of the Department and have general discussions about the disciplines of African and African American Studies.

New Major Concentration in AAAS -- A new AAAS concentration in Arabic and Islamic Studies began in the Spring of 2010. It is offered as a B.A. or B.G.S. degree in Arabic and Islamic Studies. This new major concentration will offer students grounding in Arab culture and Islamic Studies, especially in relation to African and diaspora cultures that have integrated Arab/Islamic cultural features over the past millennium in world history. It will also provide a forum in which KU students of Arabic language and related languages like Hausa, KiSwahili, and Wolof (all four of which are offered through the AAAS Department) can deepen the context for their studies. The creation of the concentration derives from consistent student requests over the past five years. No other unit in the college provides the combination of courses required for this major. Over the years our Department has consistently taught courses in this area which makes this concentration a feasible and a beneficial addition to our offerings.

AAAS MA Program -- On January 15, 2009, the Kansas Board of Regents approved the establishment of a Masters of Arts degree program in African & African-American Studies at the University of Kansas. The Program began in the Fall of 2009 with our inaugural class of students and in the second year we added five more students to our ranks. Our graduate students now include: Devon Lee (B.S., University of California, Davis); Elizabeth Brickson (B.G.S., University of Kansas); Hassan Bailey (B.A., University of Kansas); Erika Kraus (B.S., Benedictine College); Ginger Feather (M.A., George Washington University); Chloe Scott (B.A., University of Houston); Danielle Campbell (B.A., Purdue University); and Jessie Sirico (B.A., Emporia State University)

Faculty News:

Majid Hannoum, Assistant Professor of AAAS and Anthropology, has completed a book, entitled *Violent Modernity: France in Algeria*, on Harvard University Press. Additionally, Professor Hannoum completed an article, "Writing Algeria: On the History and Culture of Colonialism" for the *Maghreb Journal Center of Georgetown University* and presented a paper, "Algeria and Colonial Categories in the Postcolonial Discourse" at Johns Hopkins University in October 2010.



Beverly B. Mack, Professor of AAAS, is presenting a paper, "African Muslim Women Teaching American Muslim Women: A 19th C. Model for 21st C. American Muslimahs," and also chairing the panel for which the paper is being presented, "Religious Diasporas" at the annual meeting for the African Studies Association. In addition, Professor Mack led a Kansas Humanities Council book series discussion at the Lawrence Public Library for Marjane Satrapi's book "Persepolis."

Garth Myers, Professor of AAAS and Geography and Director of KASC, has been finalizing revisions for his book *African Cities: Alternative Visions of Urban Theory and Practice* for Zed Books. He also completed an edited volume with Byron Caminero-Santangelo, entitled *Environment at the Margins: Literary Studies and Environmental Studies in Africa*, for Ohio University Press. Additionally, Professor Myers published an article in *African Affairs* and will give a keynote address at the Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala, Sweden and another lecture at the Baraza in the African Studies Center at the University of Florida.



Gitti Salami, Assistant Professor of AAAS and Art History, spent the Spring semester in Washington DC as a Smithsonian Postdoctoral Fellow at the National Museum of African Art and the National Museum of Natural History, working on a monograph entitled, *Postcolonial Yakurr Studies: An Aesthetics of Mud, Soot, and Sharp Blades*. While in DC she also obtained a book contract from Wiley Blackwell Publishing for a co-authored anthology entitled, *A Companion to Modern African Art*. It provides 33 case studies and surveys the modern and contemporary art of Africa, beginning with 15th Century ivory souvenir objects from Sherbo island and ending with 21st century translational art.

Elizabeth MacGonagle, Associate Professor of AAAS and History, was invited to a workshop at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada, to participate in a discussion about "Remembering Africa and its Diasporas" in October 2010. She also continues to work on her book project about history and memory at several UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Africa.

Peter Ojiambo, Assistant Professor of AAAS, completed a book chapter (co-authored with Francis Godwyll) entitled "Empowerment Brewed in the African Pot for Education, Governance and Democracy: A Concoction of the Old and New." It will be published in the edited volume, *Perspectives on Empowering Education* by Nova Science Publishers. In addition, he has completed a journal article, entitled: "Beyond the Methods Course: Using Exploratory Practice for Graduate Student Teacher Development," that will appear in *American Association of University Language Supervisors and Coordinators* (AAUS).

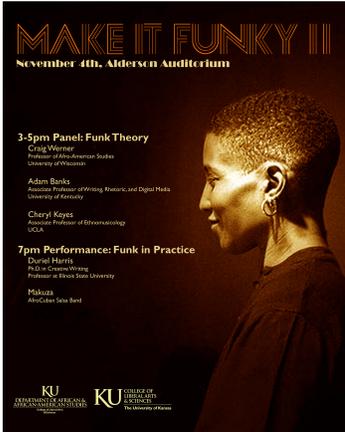
Shawn Leigh Alexander, Assistant Professor of AAAS, is completing his manuscript, *We Know Our Rights and Have the Courage to Defend Them: African American Civil Rights Organizations in the Age of Accommodation, 1883-1909*, for the University of Pennsylvania Press. He is also working on a reprint of William Sinclair's *After-*

math of Slavery (1905) for the University of South Carolina Press's Southern Classics Series and a volume for Bedford/St. Martin's History and Culture Series entitled, *Reconstruction, Violence, and the Ku Klux Klan Hearings, 1866-1872*. Additionally, Professor Alexander participated in a NEH workshop at Wilson's Creek National Park in June 2010. He gave two lectures, "Race, Violence, and the Civil War in Cultural Memory" and "Race, Violence, and the Civil War," the former with John Stauffer of Harvard University. Finally, he chaired four panels and presented one paper, "The Afro-American Agitator: T. Thomas Fortune and Struggle of Historical Memory," at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History.

Other Noteworthy News:

Make It Funky II

On November 4, 2010, Tony Bolden, Associate Professor of AAAS, convened a successful mini-symposium, "Make It Funky II." The event was divided into two parts, a panel, "Funk Theory" and a performance, "Funk in Practice." The panel featured Professor Craig Werner, a professor of African American Studies at the University of Wisconsin, Adam Banks, Associate Professor of Writing, Rhetoric, and Digital Media at the University of Kentucky, and Cheryl Keyes, Associate Professor of Ethnomusicology at UCLA. The performance featured Duriel Harris, professor at Illinois State University and the AfroCuba Salsa band, Ma-kuza.



Student and Alumni News:

Arabic Summer Institute -- Dr. Beverly Mack led AAAS and KU students to the Arabic Summer Institute at Al-Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco, in the summer of 2010. Apart from studying Arabic intensively, the students visited interesting sites in Casablanca, Marakesh, Meknes, and Fes.

Derrais A. Carter, an alum of the program and currently a graduate student in American Studies at the University of Iowa, published an article, "Blackness, Animation, and the Politics of Black Fatherhood in *The Cleveland Show*," in the June issue of the *Journal of African American Studies*.

De'veon Lee, a graduate student in AAAS, presented a paper entitled, "The Construction of Blackness on the Central American Caribbean Sea Coast," as part of the Center for Latin American Studies' "Latin Americanist Graduate Research Competition". Mr. Lee also received a Black Faculty and Staff Coun-

cil Achievement Award, was a Tinker Grant Alternate, and traveled to Central America this past summer to take a course and do fieldwork for his MA thesis on black consciousness in Belize. Additionally, Mr. Lee is currently the president of the Black Graduate and Professional Student Association.

Elizabeth "Libby" Brickson, who graduated with honors from our program, and is currently pursuing an MA degree in AAAS, attended the annual convention of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History in Raleigh, NC.

Kathleen Korphage-Williams, who earned her bachelor's degree in AAAS in 2003, went on to receive a Master's of Arts degree in African Studies from UCLA in 2006 with a thesis project on the role of popular culture in facilitating cultural change. She is currently a PhD candidate in Culture and Performance and a teaching associate within UCLA's department of World Arts and Cultures. Her dissertation, "American Liberation Mythologies: democracy and domination in US visual culture," focuses on narratives of liberation within US visual culture and pays particular attention to the relationship between popular culture and foreign policy. She currently lives in Los Angeles with her husband and two small children. For their sake, she has been active in the recent struggle to defend public education in the state of California and beyond.

Steven Groene, who earned his bachelor's degree in AAAS in 2008, has been teaching English in northeastern France since October 2009 in the lovely city of Nancy. He was also accepted to the Peace Corps and in June began a 27-month tour as a biology teacher in Burkina Faso.

Alexandria Fuller, a graduate student in AAAS and graduate assistant to KU's women's basketball team, left the program to take a coaching position at Tennessee Tech.

AAAS would like to hear from its students and alumni!

Please send us news about yourself to:

afs@ku.edu

Letters:

Printed below is a letter from our alumnus, **Brendan Walsh (AAAS 2000)**. "Dear Professor Ukpokodu, Thanks so much for the note you sent late in January, and sorry for the delay in my reply. It was great to look over the newsletter and see that things are going so well in the AAAS department -- it seems to have grown a lot since I was a student there.

I live in Mexico City now, which is why I'm so late in replying to your letter (my parents forward my mail from Minnesota). Since graduating from college, I worked as a reporter at a newspaper in Corpus Christi, Texas, for

about a year and a half, then moved to New York City. For three years there I worked as an editor at Dow Jones Newswires, then switched over to a competitor, Bloomberg News. I got married in August 2006.

Since October 2007, I've been a Mexico City-based editor on the Bloomberg team that covers Latin American governments and economies. I also manage a team of freelance reporters based in countries where we don't have regular bureaus. On the government side I edit and shape stories about the drug war in Mexico, Chavez's quest for power in Venezuela, the return of Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua and other such issues. Stories about macroeconomics have also been really important of late -- we cover topics like currencies, bonds, remittances, sovereign debt and trade.

While I'm not working in a field directly related to African Studies, I think the AAAS education that I received has definitely helped me be able to better understand cultures outside the U.S., reminding me to be curious and always question perceived truths. That's helped me as a journalist.

Again, thanks so much for your note and the newsletter. Please keep in touch and say "hi" to anyone in the department who may remember be.

All the best,
Brendan Walsh"

With thanks, Dr. Ukpododu notes that Brendan is a consistent donor to the Department.

Africana Club

The Africana Club is a social and intellectual gathering of AAAS majors and minors, and of students interested in Africa, African-America, and the African Diaspora in general. It is also affiliated with the Global Awareness Program (GAP). As an active member of the Africana Club, a student could receive 5 points per semester and an additional 5 points for each event that the student participates in. Officials of the club represent students in departmental matters.

For more information please contact student representative Greer Adkins-Heljerson at afs@ku.edu

If you are receiving this newsletter via mail and would like to receive it electronically, please contact AAAS and provide us with your email address.

afs@ku.edu

News from our Allied Centers

Kansas African Studies Center (KASC)

Garth Myers, Director and Professor of AAAS and Geography.

The Kansas African Studies Center (KASC), having earned National Resource Center status for 2010-2014, has been busy setting up the implementation of NRC grant activities. KASC is offering Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships to 6 graduate students and 3 undergraduates for this academic year, including 2 Masters and 3 undergraduate AAAS students, and will be offering at least 4 summer FLAS fellowships. KASC is running its seminar series this Fall in collaboration with AAAS and the Langston Hughes Center, to celebrate 40 years of Africana Studies in the Midwest and the 40th anniversary of the department. KASC hosted the major international conference on Medical Anthropology in Global Africa in September, followed by the Mid-America Alliance for African Studies in October. Keep up with KASC on our website <http://www.kasc.ku.edu>, since we are planning a full slate of exciting programs for Spring 2011.

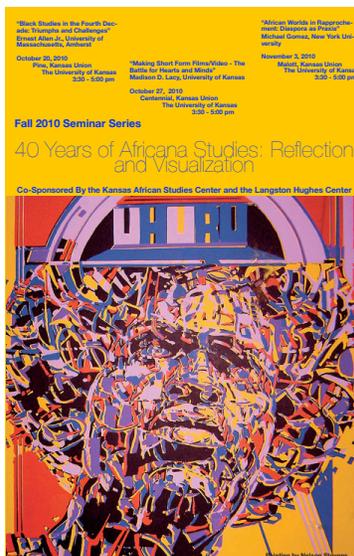
Langston Hughes Center (LHC)

Shawn Leigh Alexander, Interim Director and Assistant Professor of AAAS.

The Langston Hughes Center (LHC), formerly the Langston Hughes Resource Center, relaunched its activities at the University of Kansas and throughout the region in 2008-2009. This Fall the LHC continued its Jesse B. Semple Brownbag series with three lectures, "boundlibertybelles" (DaMaris Hill, KU), "After Lunch Poems" (William J. Harris, KU), and "Even Dead I Was A Threat To Them: The Assassination of Patrice Lumumba and the Fragmentation of the Black Freedom Struggle" (Elizabeth Brickson, KU). In addition to this, the LHC has co-sponsored a seminar series on the disciplines of African and African American Studies, entitled "40 Years of Africana Studies: Reflection and Visualization". The lecturers included Ernest Allen, Jr. (University of Massachusetts); Madison D. Lacy (KU); and Michael Gomez (NYU).

Finally, the Center is continuing to work with African Americanists and scholars generally interested in the study of race and culture in American society at KU to outline the future activities of the LHC. Central to those activities will be the LHC's commitment to becoming a strong academic research and educational center built upon the legacy and creative and intellectual insight of African American author, poet, playwright, folklorist and social critic, Langston Hughes. To that end the Center's director is working with African Americanists at KU to seek grants and funding to carry out these activities.

For more information about the LHC including programing and scheduling go to <http://www2.ku.edu/~lhcaas/>



Support AAAS

Why support African and African-American Studies @ KU?

By giving to AAAS, you contribute to the continued development of African and African-American academic activities, outreach, lectures, seminars and research programs at KU and throughout the region. You also strengthen our international outreach.

Your donations will also aid in supporting student scholarships, faculty research, teaching awards, service awards, and overall improvement of the Department.

To support AAAS please send your donation, clearly marked for the **Department of African and African-American Studies**, to the following address:

Gift Processing Department
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PO Box 928
Lawrence, KS 66044-0928

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or go to: <https://www.kuendowment.org/GiveNow/> and select AAAS as the destination of your donation.

Thank you for your support.



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