

AFAM News

A Publication of the Institute for African American Studies

Fall 2012

Point-Counterpoint: Two Views of the Tuskegee Airmen



When George Lucas's film *Red Tails* debuted this spring, IAAS asked John Morrow, Head of the University of Georgia Department of History to provide a larger context for the record of the Tuskegee Airmen. The result was his introducing a screening of *Double Victory*, a film shown on the History Channel and featuring interviews with Professor Morrow.

In the question and answer period following the documentary Dr. Morrow shared his expertise on the history of military aviation, as well as his memories of growing up in Talladega, northwest of Tuskegee. An interview with Dr. Morrow discussing the documentary can be found at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QDc0JmBB0tA>.

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Greetings from the director

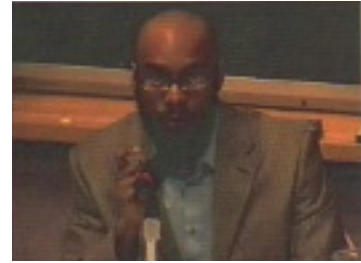
Welcome to this issue of AFAM News. To begin, I would like to express my deep gratitude to Dr. Freda Scott Giles for generously assuming the duties of interim director of the Institute for African American Studies. Under her able leadership the Institute has continued to grow. We can look forward to the start of our new Graduate Certificate in African American Studies, the expansion of the Apero brown bag lunches into the Apero lecture series, and the continued offering of new and innovative courses including an inaugural First-Year Odyssey Seminar titled African American Studies: Beyond the Classroom.



We continue our sponsorship of our successful student journal Mandala, which we invite you to visit online under the Research link on the IAAS webpage (<http://www.afam.uga.edu/>). Our students' hard work makes this a quality journal, and its current issue boasts contributions from poet and essayist Jaswinder Bolina, fiction writer Reginald McKnight, as well as their own fine pieces. Our African Diaspora Film Festival 2012 had as its theme "Black Manhood: Contemporary Connections," and we look forward to another season of stimulating films in the spring of 2013. Dates for these airings, all of which are open to the public, will be posted on our website. The work of our faculty and students continue to make ours a thriving program, and we encourage you to participate in events and to support the Institute. It is our mission to offer the finest academic education to our students, novel and informative cultural programming, and to be of service to the University and Athens communities. Come share in our mission.

Institute hosts Harvard Art Historian Dr. Cameron Van Patterson

“Diasporic Imagination: Race Difference and Memory in Contemporary Art” was a lecture co-sponsored by the Institute for African American Studies and the Lamar Dodd School of Art. Harvard art historian Cameron Van Patterson focused on the relationship between image and identity in the African diaspora and the many ways in which a dispersed group beyond its homeland create a diasporic imagination. According to Dr. Van Patterson, “race difference and memory reflected in contemporary art have contributed to the development of a diasporic identity. This subject continues to inform the contemporary African and African-American history in critical ways that have dramatically changed aesthetic discourse, curatorial practice and the broader landscape of art history.”



Hank Willis, A Place to Call Home Africa-America (2009)



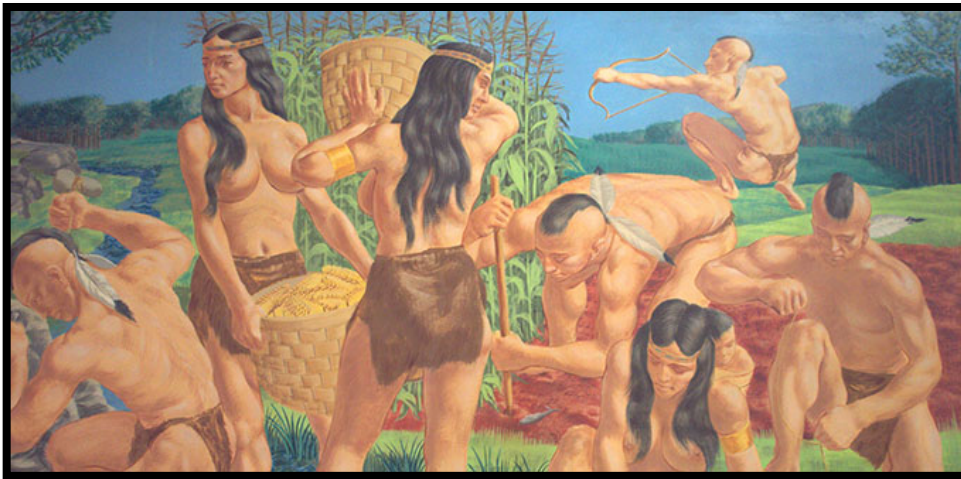
The Tradition Continues: The 6th Annual African Diaspora Film Festival

The African Diaspora Film Festival, organized and presented by Dr. Lesley Feracho, is in its 6th season. This year's theme was "Black Manhood: Contemporary Connections," and the films were: "Talk to Me" (Kasi Lemmons, 2007) ; "Night Catches Us" (Tanya Hamilton, 2010); "Black Dynamite" (Scott Sanders, 2009); and "Antwone Fisher" (Denzel Washington, 2002). We will be posting the movies for the 2013 festival on our web page shortly. All showings are free and open to the public.

Institute Participates in Beattie Mural Controversy



Recently the George Beattie murals once housed in the Georgia Department of Agriculture's downtown Atlanta building were removed. Speaking of the images that showed primitivized Native Americans and enslaved African Americans, newly elected agriculture commissioner Gary Black observed, "I think we can depict a better picture of agriculture." The Georgia Museum of Art decided to exhibit these murals and create a cultural context for understanding why some might find these images offensive. One of the professors they asked to assist was IAAS director Valerie Babb. "I don't think you learn anything by hiding history," noted Babb, "I think it's very important to have conversations both about why these panels were



taken down, as well as what that reveals about the way we as a culture and a society have changed." To see the full interview go to the Georgia Museum's YouTube page <http://beattieagmurals.blogspot.com/2012/07/valerie-babb-on-george-beattie-murals.html>

Speaker: Fear of ‘acting white’ costs blacks

By Lee Shearer
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A POWERFUL ACCUSATION

The fear of “acting white” may keep many black people away from activities they would like, and which could help them have better lives, according to University of Georgia researcher Bantu Gross, who spoke on campus Wednesday as part of the UGA Office of Institutional Diversity lecture series.

“Acting white” can be a powerful accusation against someone who considers themselves black, Gross notes. That’s especially true for young people, such as high school students, who face significant peer pressure, said Gross. And sometimes, pressure can come even from parents, he added.

On the issue of pressure at home, Gross, a graduate student in recreation and leisure studies, cited Olympic gold-medal swimmer Cullen Jones.

Jones has become a role model now, but faced teasing and hostility growing up in New Jersey.

“You’re an alien in your own territory,” said Gross.

See **RESEARCHER** on A3

(On February 8, 2012, graduate student Bantu Gross gave an Apero lecture on the fear of “acting white” as a limitation to black freedom of action. He was interviewed by Amber Yarnell, IAAS graduate student assistant.)

AY: How did you come to think of this issue? And what was your process?

BG: What really piqued my interest in this topic was the following quote:

“Go into any inner-city neighborhood, and folks will tell you that government alone can’t teach kids to learn. They know that parents have to parent, that children can’t achieve unless we raise their expectations and turn off the television sets and eradicate the slander that says a Black youth with a book is acting White” (Barack Obama, Keynote Address, Democratic National Convention, 2004).

After reading this I began to wonder, what is considered Acting White, and why is it when Blacks find success other Blacks ridicule them or call them White? From there I began looking at the research conducted by Signithia Fordham and John Ogbu on the ‘Burden of Acting White.’

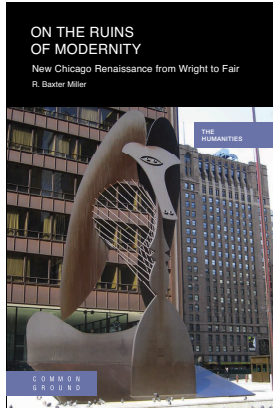
AY: How do you think the lecture went?

I thought the lecture was good and was well attended. I felt like those in attendance had a genuine interest in the topic and wanted to learn more. The questions asked by audience members helped me look for new ways to approach this topic and how to address issues I had not considered, like the media’s influence on African American’s leisure preferences.

AY: What did it feel like reading about yourself in the Athens Banner-Herald?

BG: I was actually surprised a write up was done on the lecture, even though the writer was in attendance. I assumed if he did do a story it would be on the back pages, but then I found out the story made the front page when a friend text messaged me. After hearing that I called my wife, friends, and family to let them know I was in the paper. I found the article to be pretty accurate, but it failed to highlight some key points. So to draw attention to those points I sent a letter to the editor, which was posted online in the Athens Banner Herald. Also, reading the comments made by some posters further proved to me that there was a need for me to continue this research.

Faculty Notes



This year saw the publication of Dr. R. Baxter Miller's *On the Ruins of Modernity: New Chicago Renaissance from Wright to Fair*, (Common Ground Publishing), a study of the cultural and literary Chicago Renaissances.

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- ❖ Dr. Caroline Jones Medine was promoted to Professor of Religion.
 - ❖ Dr. Barbara McCaskill received a 2012 Fulbright Award as Visiting Research Chair in Society and Culture at Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia, Canada.
 - ❖ Dr. Layli (Phillips) Maparyan, a former IAAS faculty member, has been named Katherine Stone Kaufmann '67 Executive Director of the Wellesley Centers for Women, one of the nation's premier organizations conducting scholarly research and developing action programs for women and girls. IAAS celebrates the achievements of all our family, past and present.
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Dr. Freda Scott Giles directed an acclaimed production of *Ruined* by Lynn Nottage at the University Theatre. She also directed a stage reading of "Waiting to Be Invited" as a special event in the Aperó lecture series.

Do You Know Your History?

¶¶What were the three newspapers serving the free black population of Athens Georgia?

¶¶When did the American Congress prohibit the importation of enslaved peoples to the United States?

¶¶What movement was the forerunner of the NAACP?

¶¶Who was the first woman who refused to give up her seat on a segregated bus?*

Support AFAM

Gifts help up to fulfill our mission. We have diverse ways of giving and also welcome your ideas for ways to contribute. The Foundation Fund provides AFAM the flexibility it needs to offer cutting edge programs on campus and in the community. The Encouragement Fund will help us offer scholarships to support student research and study abroad. With your energy, enthusiasm, and financial assistance, we will continue to grow the Institute into a premier entity in the field of African American Studies. If you are considering including IAAS in your legacy you may do so through Planned Giving (including Bequests & Trusts). We encourage you to consider a recurring payment schedule for your gifts so that you establish ongoing participation in the life of the Institute.

If you would like to discuss your gifts and the programs they support, please do not hesitate to contact the IAAS AFAM office to schedule an appointment with the director. Please see the following link for details on giving: <http://afam.uga.edu/support/>. We thank you for your sponsorship!

**Answers: 1) The Athens Blade, the Athens Clipper, and the Progressive Era. 2) March 3, 1807. 3) , President Thomas Jefferson signed into act a bill approved by Congress the day before “to prohibit the importation of slaves into any port or place within the jurisdiction of the United States. 3) the Niagara Movement of 1905. 4) Claudette Colvin, a 15-year old student at Booker T. Washington, was arrested for her refusal to give up a bus seat in 1955, nine months prior to Rosa Parks.*

Apero Lecture Series

(All lectures will be held in Tate 481)

August 29: Dr. Toni Miles, Director, Institute of Gerontology: "Obamacare and the Supreme Court Decision: What Now?"

September 12: Dr. Rachel Gabara, French: "Colonial and Postcolonial Documentary Film in West and Central Africa"

September 19: Dr. Mary M. Atwater "Experiences of Black Science Education Faculty Members in Higher Education in the U.S."

September 26: Dr. Christina Grange, Center for Family Research: "Implementing Effective Family-centered Prevention Programs: the Science and the Practice"

October 10: Dr. Brad Hounkpati, Entomology: "Using Sound to Control Insects"

October 24: Dr. Talmadge Guy, Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy: "Media Representations of Race and the Presidential Election of 2012"

November 7: Dr. J. Marshall Shepherd, Geography/Atmospheric Sciences: "The Disproportionate Impact of Climate Change on the African American Community"

November 28: Dr. Lonnie T. Brown, School of Law: "Ramsey Clark and H. Rap Brown: an Attorney-Client Relationship"