

African and African American Studies Program Newsletter

Spring Quarter 2009

Wright State University
Dayton, OH

Volume 13 Issue 2

DIRECTOR'S CORNER:

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"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.

Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.

Hate multiplies hate, violence multiplies violence, and toughness multiplies toughness in a descending spiral of destruction....

The chain reaction of evil--hate begetting hate, wars producing more wars--must be broken, or we shall be plunged into the dark abyss of annihilation."

Martin Luther King, Jr., Strength To Love, 1963.

Dr. Lynette Jones, Associate Professor of English, has recently been appointed Assistant Director of the African and African American Studies Program at Wright State University.

On January 19, 2009, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial March and Rally was held in Dayton, Ohio to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The march and rally represented one of the many events to commemorate Dr. King's significance during the month of January. I participated in the march and I attended this rally that focused on Dr. King's significance. As I reflect on Dr. King's legacy and his

commitment to social justice and civil rights, it reminds me of the continued relevance of African and African American Studies progress has been made toward achieving his dreams, we must continue to promote the ideas of equity, justice, and fairness for all people.



Director: Dr. Paul R. Griffin

both nationally and internationally. When we consider what Dr. King stood for in terms of social justice, fairness, and equality and the attention paid to him and his memory, it is important to remind ourselves that while much

We must also continue to educate people locally, nationally, and internationally about African and African American Studies. Here, in 2009, it continues to be important to recognize the significance and importance of other individuals who were also extremely important and vital to the civil rights movement as well, since so many people have contributed to civil rights in various ways.

To be continued
on pg. 5

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AFS Spring CoursesMary McLeod-
Bethune

Malcolm X



Zora Neale Hurston



W.E.B. DuBois



Barbara Jordan



Martin Luther King

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AFS Spring Quarter 2009 Courses**AFS 401- Senior Research Project Dr. Paul Griffin**

Divided over two quarters, this course allows students to bring their study in the major to completion through a major research project that focuses on one specific aspect of African and African American life.

AFS 403/603 (WI)- Ideas of Race 1950-Present TR 2:15-3:55**Dr. Paul Griffin**

This course studies the religious ideas that defined and sustained anti-black practices from 1950 to the present.

AFS 499-02- Black Female Epistemologies at the Intersection of Race and Gender TR 10:25-12:05 Dr. Dana Patterson

The course will challenge the assumptions of Black female epistemology and ontology based traditionally on "whiteness" and "maleness" while providing a framework for understanding that embraces an Africana Womanist ideology.

PLS 428(WI)- Contemporary African American Problems TR 12:20-2:00 Dr. Tracy Snipe

The critical pedagogy of this course allows for an in-depth exploration of many problematic issues that assail African Americans from outside and within the black community itself. Several possible explanations and solutions will be addressed.

PLS 494/694(WI)- Black Women in Politics TR 4:10-5:50**Dr. Tracy Snipe**

This class discusses the impact of black women in politics in the United States and beyond. Issues of race verses gender will also be discussed.

COM 104- Introduction to Human Communication MWF 11:00-11:50 Dr. Martha Antolik

This course surveys major concepts, theories, and research approaches in the study of human communication. This course assists students in developing requisite knowledge and skills in the development of their own communication competence.

AFS Spring Quarter 2009 Courses

HIS 215- African American History Since 1877 MWF 9:45-10:50 Dr. Barbara Green

Survey of Black people in American society from Reconstruction to the present

HIS 490- Civil Rights Movement 1955-1958 MWF 12:15-1:20 Dr. Barbara Green

Examines topics drawing from the African American experience; may include black ideology and leadership, racial tension in urban society, and the civil rights movement

MUS 290 (01) African American Music: America/Beyond MWF 11:00-12:05 Dr. Brenda Ellis

Survey of development of African American Music from historical, sociological, and cultural perspective.

MUS 290 (02) African American Music: America/Beyond TR 10:25-12:05 Dr, Brenda Ellis (Course description same as above)

ENG 205 Afro-American Literature MWF 11:00-12:05 Dr. Lynette Jones

Readings in African American literature: for example, Phillis Wheatley to present, nineteenth-century freedom literature, twentieth--century black novel, and female African-American tradition.

ENG 310 Studies in African Literature TR 10:25-12:05 Dr. Alpana Sharma

The objective of this course is to introduce students to contemporary West African literature and film while paying attention to the cultural contexts embedded in and produced by the literature: conflicts between tradition and modernity in societies undergoing social change; government and economic development; African feminist topics; oral versus written traditions; and status of English and creative English language use.

ENG 470 Nigerian Literature, Yesterday and Today TR 12:20-2:00 Dr. Alpana Sharma

Intensive study of non-European literature, focused nationally, regionally, cross-culturally, thematically, and generically.

AFS Spring Courses



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AFS Spring Quarter 2009 Courses

EC 345- Economics of Diversity MWF 11:00-12:05

Dr. Evan Osborne

The course uses economic theory to explore the implications of ethnic, racial, religious and other kinds of diversity in the U.S. and globally.

SOC 399(06)- Conflict and Identity MWF 9:45-10:50

Dr. Julianne Weinzimmer

The class will sociologically examine conflicts surrounding issues of race, ethnicity, gender and class. We will discuss conflicts in Rwanda, Darfur, Israel/Palestine, Tibet/China, Canada, the U.S. and more.

SOC 442- Race and Conflict TR 12:20-2:00

Dr. Julianne Weinzimmer

Study of intergroup, racial, and ethnic group relations including the processes and consequences of conflict, prejudice, and discrimination.

WMS 399/599- Privilege: Race, Class, Gender and Nation

W 4:10-7:45 PM Dr. Judith Ezekiel

This class will look at systems of domination from the point of view of the oppressed, discussing how some intersecting "identities" are more-or-less freely chosen and others assigned and policed by the institutions of society. But it will also focus on the perpetrators and the beneficiaries of these systems. Using historical and theoretical readings, along with practical exercise, we will focus on "everydayness" of oppression and privilege.

"Living well is an art which can be developed. Of course, you will need the basic talents to build upon; they are a love of life, the ability to take great pleasure from small offerings, an assurance that the world owes you nothing, and that every gift is exactly that, a gift."

-Maya Angelou

DIRECTOR'S CORNER (con't)

We must also consider the continued significance of issues related to social justice and equity globally.

As I reflect upon the classes that I and other faculty teach at Wright State University, these issues continue to be relevant. During winter quarter 2009, I am teaching AFS 200 (What is the African and African American Experience?). In AFS 200, I, along with guest lecturers participating in the African and African American Studies program, focus on the journey from slavery to freedom as well as important issues in relation to the African and African American experience through reading assignments, lectures and film; I also intend to devote a portion of the class to the Civil Rights Movement. During the previous quarter (fall quarter 2008), I taught ENG 205 (Afro-American Literature), which focused on poetry, fiction and nonfiction by writers from 1700s to contemporary times. I also taught about Dr. King in that course and the Civil Rights Movement in relationship to African American literature as well. In spring quarter 2009 I plan to teach ENG 205 again.

At Wright State University and many other institutions of higher learning, African and African American Studies continues to be a relevant and important academic field of critical thinking, discussion, writing, teaching, and research. The courses offered at Wright State University connected with African and African American Studies testify to the continued meaningful aspect of these courses and forms of inquiry for everyone. As I reflect upon my experience at the march and rally on MLK Day and my thoughts afterward, I think it is important for us to continue to think about and reflect upon the importance of African and African American Studies in our lives locally, nationally and internationally.

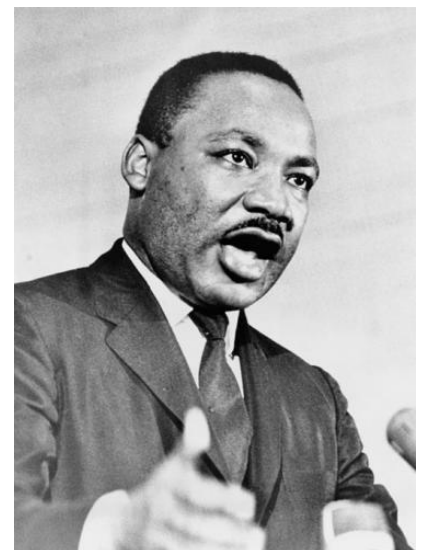


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FACULTY REFLECTION



Toward a More Perfect Union

By Dr. Dana Murray Patterson

On the morning of January 20, 2009 I moved only baby steps toward the capital building in Washington D.C. amongst throngs of people who had also come to witness this historic event but in my heart, each step represented crossing over mountains and swimming across oceans “towards a more perfect union”. It was a day that I and my ancestors had anticipated for a very long time. And truth be told, it had been too long. Certainly it was momentous because we were able to see the inauguration of the first Black President in the history of these United States of America but it was momentous for me, and I suspect many other voters, because we were able to see the evidence of promises made by a union that has not always felt united. Regardless of the obstacles and the hurdles, it was clear on this day that “we the people” made a choice and finally our collective voices were heard.

The opportunity to attend the inauguration was granted to me via my sister, Jarens Banks, who appealed to our state congressman Steve Austria just one day after the election. To suspect that the request would not be granted is not to know my sister. She is relentless and when she intends to make something happen, it usually does. We planned a short trip that would afford us an opportunity to pick up our tickets after arriving by plane the day before the inauguration and leave for the airport immediately following the ceremony. Looking back on the festiveness in the air both prior to and following, I wish we could have basked in those moments a few more hours.

I have seen the satellite pictures of people lining the streets for miles on that day and it is hard to think of them as “many”. We felt like one. Standing in the sea of people was unexplainable but I will try. People demonstrated genuine concern for each other. There was no pushing or shoving, loud or aggressive talk or even the occasional disrespectful glance. You could overhear spontaneous song break out with renditions of “My Country Tis of Thee” and “This Land is My

Land, This Land is Your Land”. Although the temperature was cold, warm spirits kept the chill off. It was a community of people dedicated to making sure that Obama’s day was drama free and he was ushered into office without incident.

I met so many people who also felt inevitably drawn to that place at that time. It was like an internal clock that the ancestors set in my DNA for such a time as this. So it was not that I really chose to go but in reality, I was summoned. I was summoned by freedom’s sons and daughters who said go and see this thing that I fought and died for with your own eyes. Go and become the container for the story. Be the vehicle for those of us that cannot go but knew the day would come. Go and stand tall on our shoulders and let Barack and Michelle and Sasha and Malia know that we are with them. Our blood covers them and our blessings follow them. In obedience I went, I heard, I felt and I saw.

The most memorable moment I can recall aside from the actual swearing in was when Aretha Franklin began to belt out her version of the National Anthem. I held my sister’s chilly fingers and without speaking we looked at each other and cried. We knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that standing close enough to see without aid of a monitor, is exactly where we were supposed to be. Mind you, we still have many miles to go and many oceans to cross but at least we are headed towards “a more perfect union”.

Dr. Dana Murray Patterson in the Director of the Bolinga Black Cultural Resources Center here on campus. The center is located in 140 Millett Hall. Dr. Patterson was fortunate to attend the inauguration of the 44th President of the United States, Barack Hussein Obama. Her reflections are her personal perspective of the momentous event.



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AFRICAN AND AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM**

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Enlightenment

is a key to

Liberation

The quest
for knowledge

must be never ending.

