

A publication of the Department of African American and African
Diaspora Studies at Indiana University



Welcome to Diaspora, the Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies' electronic newsletter. We are all connected to AAADS in one way or another, yet we are spread far and wide throughout the university, the community, and even farther afield. We are the AAADS Diaspora.

Events and News of Note

Professor Judith Rodríguez joins AAADS Faculty

- This fall, AAADS welcomed **Dr. Judith Rodriguez** as an assistant professor in the Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies and the Latino Studies Program. In 2019, she received her doctoral degree in Culture and Theory from the University of California, Irvine. Her dissertation, titled *Africana Profunda: The Aesthetic Blackening of Puerto Rico and its Diaspora*, maps formations of (anti)Blackness within Puerto Rican aesthetics from the 1930s to the present. This past year, she was a visiting scholar and School of Humanities and Social Sciences Predoctoral Fellow in Literature at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Her awards and honors include the University of California Presidential Dissertation Year Fellowship, a Competitive Edge Summer Research Fellowship and a Graduate Opportunity Fellowship. She received her B.A. in Comparative Cultural Studies and Theatre Arts from the Ohio State University and M.A. in Culture and Theory from UC Irvine. Dr. Rodriguez has published work in *Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies* and has a forthcoming chapter in the anthology *Punk: Las Américas* through Duke University Press.

School of Law and Humanities of China University of Mining and Technology (Beijing) Establishes a Research Center for the Study of African American Literature and Culture

- Working with AAADS, the School of Law and Humanities of China University of Mining and Technology (Beijing) established a Research Center for the Study of African American Literature and Culture at a “Globalizing Black Studies” inaugural ceremony on June 14, 2019. The Center will promote studies in African American literature and intercultural communication, as well as other aspects of black culture, including music, art, dance, and history. “This represents a significant step for us in promoting international cooperation and internationalization of education. I hope the Center will develop smoothly and grow into an important hub for African American Literature and Intercultural Communication,” said Professor Yin Shaoliang at the launching ceremony. The Center will bring the best ideas to “strengthen the cultural exchanges between our two countries and can make a positive impact on dispelling misunderstanding and perhaps removing trade frictions,” he noted. “Our vision is that the Center will help globalize basic, underlying philosophies and practices about the nature of black culture, how it works, as well as how it has impacted the world we live in,” said **Professor Calloway-Thomas**. In addition to conducting important research on black culture, the Center also will send faculty and students every year to do research at Indiana University. The Center is the culmination of many exciting cultural exchanges between AAADS and scholars in China from Beijing to Shanghai to Taiyuan, Shanxi Province. **Professors Valerie Grim and Jakobi Williams**, also representatives from AAADS and Indiana University, attended the ceremony and presented papers on historical aspects of black culture and Africana Studies.



School of Law and Humanities Faculty and AAADS Professors Calloway-Thomas, Grim and Williams at the Opening Ceremony in Beijing

Already, plans are being made for a “Globalizing Black Studies” conference in Beijing in July 2020 at which scholars and teachers from throughout China and neighboring countries will discuss research on black culture and how to infuse it into university curriculums. In this important way, the Center, in cooperation with scholars from AAADS, will serve as a platform for promoting world-class research on black culture and Africana Studies.

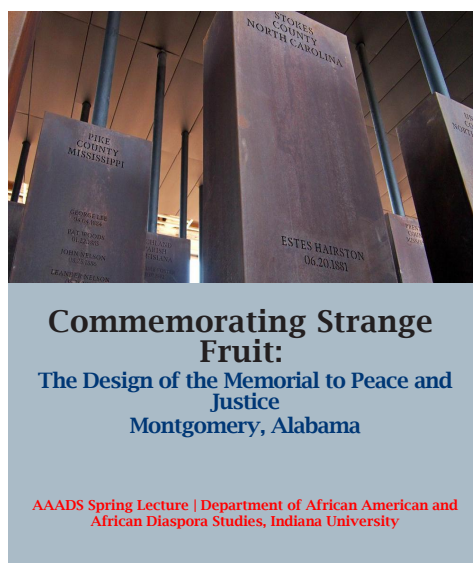
- In keeping with its goal of globalizing black studies, AAADS welcomed six new scholars from China and one from Ghana. They are conducting research on intercultural communication and African American literature and culture under the sponsorship of Professor Calloway-Thomas. All of the scholars have published books, monographs and articles in their areas of expertise, and have significant grants and awards to their credit.



AAADS Welcomes Visiting Scholars from China and Ghana

Rui AI, a lecturer from North University of China in Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, is studying the teaching methods of intercultural communication between China and the United States. **Liying Chen** is conducting research on cross cultural communication and English language teaching. In her role as lecturer, she teaches English and literature at China University of Mining and Technology (Beijing). **Dr. Fiona Gibson** studies “Akan Queen Mothers and the Implications of Covert Gynocracy in Ghana.” Her doctoral degree is from Cardiff, United Kingdom. She has numerous publications and teaches in the areas of Gender Studies, Tourism, Marketing, Communication, and Media. **Jing Jiang**, a lecturer in the School of Foreign Language, Southwest Jiatong University, Chengdu, conducts research on cross cultural communication and comparative literature and pedagogy. **Ou Jing** is a lecturer in Foreign Linguistics and Applied Linguistics at the Foreign Languages Department, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, North University of China. Her primary research areas include Cross Cultural Communication and Second Language Acquisition. **Jing Xiao** is a lecturer and visiting scholar from School of Foreign Languages, Southwest Jiatong University, Chengdu, and her main area of research is intercultural communication. **Li Yao** is an associate professor of Foreign Language Center at Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Her research focuses on intercultural communication, second language acquisition and literacy development.

- The Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center and AAADS are hosting the fall 2019 “Black Table Talk Series” which will reflect on the legacy of Black IU. The event will be held Friday, October 11th at 10AM in Bridgewaters Lounge.
- AAADS presented its annual Spring Lecture on April 1, 2019. The keynote speaker was Dr. Olon Dotson, Associate Professor of Architecture at Ball State University. His talk was entitled, "Commemorating Strange Fruit: The Design of the Memorial to Peace and Justice, Montgomery, Alabama."



Prof. Olon Dotson
 Monday, April 1, 2019| 5:00 - 6:00 pm| Neal Marshall Grand Hall

AAADS Luminary Dr. Regina Bradley Returns to IU

- Dr. Regina Bradley, who received an M.A. in African American and African Diaspora Studies from Indiana University, will be returning to campus from October 27th through the 29th as part of the College of Arts and Science’s Luminaries Program, which seeks to connect current Indiana University students with outstanding IU Alumni who share academic and professional interests.



Dr. Regina Bradley

- On Saturday, March 30th, the African American and African Diaspora Studies Graduate Society presented the 13th Annual Herman C. Hudson Symposium, "Speculative Blackness: Imagining Black Future(s)" in the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center. The event featured a keynote event by Dr. Terri Francis and multiple student panels.

Whimsical News of Interest

- AAADS won the "Shout the Loudest" decibel level contest to welcome new faculty at the Annual College Reception on August 28, 2019. Our newest faculty member, Dr. Judith Rodriguez, was most impressed by the vocal power of her colleagues! A special thanks to all who attended the event.

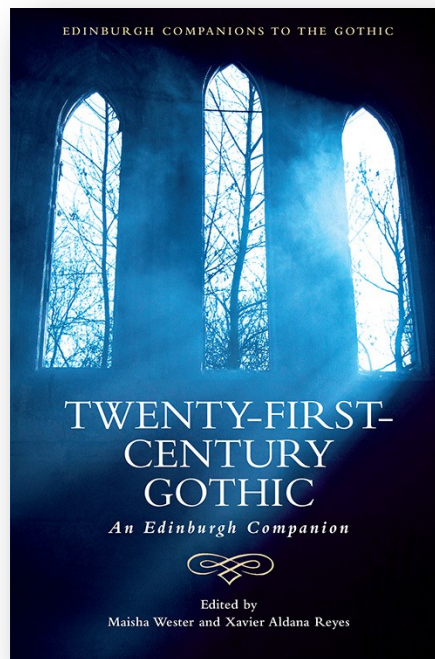


Drs. Abegunde, Grim, Rodriguez, Calloway-Thomas, Smith, and Wester at the College Welcoming Reception

Faculty

- **Professor Carolyn Calloway-Thomas** presented two talks at School of Law and Humanities at China University of Mining and Technology (Beijing) in conjunction with the department's "Globalizing Black Studies" project, which was launched at Indiana University in October 2018. She gave one lecture on "The Otherness of the Other: Diversity, Tribalism, and Empathy" and a seminar presentation titled, "Two Roads to Freedom: The Rhetoric of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr & Nelson Mandela." At the World Communication Association conference, which convened in Wellington, New Zealand in July 2019, Dr. Calloway-Thomas presented her paper, "Empathy in the Global World," and organized a conference-wide celebration in honor of founder, Myung-Seok Park, who passed away in 2019. In March 2019, she received the National Council for Black Studies' Paul Robeson and Zora Neale Hurston Award for Outstanding Leadership and Promotion of African American Humanities. She also was interviewed by National Public Radio's Boston Station, WGBH's program "*Under the Radar*" with Callie Crossley regarding the rhetoric of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. On September 26, 2019, Carolyn received good news from the Central States Communication Association (CSCA) that the Calloway-Thomas Inclusivity Series Speaker Award is fully funded. The series, named in honor of Professor Calloway-Thomas for her contributions to the Association and for promoting social justice and inclusivity throughout the fourteen-state region and beyond, will feature a panel devoted to black women in the academy at the CSCA April 2020 conference. Finally, Calloway-Thomas's introduction to *First Generation College Student Experiences of Intersecting Marginalities* (Peter Lang, Publishers) and her preface to Professor Cindy Li's two volumes on *Chinese and North American Festival Culture* were published in January and June respectively.

- This summer, **Dr. Tyron Cooper** won an Emmy award in the category of Musical Composition/ Arrangements for his music in the PBS documentary film, "Eva-A-7063." This is Dr. Cooper's fourth Emmy award! In September, Dr. Cooper submitted his tenure dossier to the college!
- **Dr. Candis Smith's** entries for "Angelina Weld Grimke" and "Eulalie Spence" were accepted for publication in Venetria Patton and Kwakutil Dreher, eds., *The Harlem Renaissance: An Encyclopedia of Arts, Culture, and History*, which will be published in 2020. Dr. Smith was also awarded a Scholarship Teaching and Learning Grant - Phase I from the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL) for 2019-2020 academic year. Her project, entitled "Inclusion Where it Counts--In the Student's Mind," investigates how undergraduate thinking and perceptions are influenced when taking a course where a minoritized population is the center of inquiry. Dr. Smith is using A210 (Black Women in Diaspora) as the course for the study. She will present her paper, "'The Joke's on U.S.': The Enduring Legacy of African Languages in the U.S.," at the biannual meeting of the Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora (ASWAD) at the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA in November 2019.
- **Dr. Maisha Wester's** co-edited book *Twenty-First-Century Gothic* was published by Wales University Press on July 31, 2019. In June, Dr. Wester served as a Keynote speaker at the conference *Absent Presences: Shifting the Core and Peripheries of the Gothic Mode* hosted at Manchester Metropolitan University in the United Kingdom. Her keynote talk was entitled, "Unspeakable Things [Un]Spoken: Locating the EthnoGothic." Dr. Wester also filmed an interview on "Southern Folk Tales as Gothic Horror" for the documentary *Woodlands Dark and Days Bewitched* (produced by Severin Films).



- In the spring, **Dr. Phoebe Wolfskill** submitted her tenure materials! In May, she won a Trustees Teaching Award through the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs. Dr. Wolfskill's "'I Wish to Reveal': A Conversation with Joyce Scott," was published in May as part of an online exhibition catalogue, "Fragments of a Crucifixion," for the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. The catalogue can be found here:

<https://mcachicago.org/Publications/Websites/Fragments-Of-A-Crucifixion>

In July, Tom Roznowski of Indiana Public Media (WFIU) interviewed Dr. Wolfskill about the visual arts of the Harlem Renaissance for his radio program "Porchlight." Also, her chapter, "The Enduring Legacy of the Harlem Renaissance" will be published in Edward Chambers, ed., *Routledge Companion to African American Art* (New York: Routledge, 2019) in December. At the request of Dr. Shawnya L. Harris, the Larry D. and Brenda A. Thompson Curator of African American and African Diasporic Art at the Georgia Museum of Art in Athens, Georgia, Dr. Wolfskill will write an essay for the exhibition

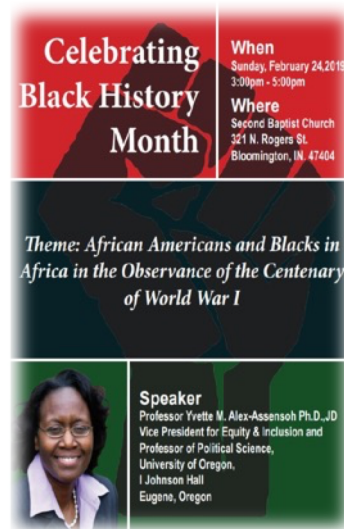
catalogue to accompany the museum's 2020 exhibition on Amos's career.

- In April 2019, Dr. **Maria Hamilton Abegunde** gave an invited paper presentation for the inaugural Jean C. Robinson Symposium at IU Bloomington: "I Talk to the Dead for a Living: Ritual, Embodiment, Research Writing Down the Bones." In July 2019, Dr. Abegunde was invited to lead a workshop for Indiana University Development Chicago Advancement. There, she gave the Keynote talk, "You are the moment, the moment is now!"
- In May 2019 the Hutton Honors College's International Experience Program organized its first study abroad program to West Africa. The College's "Culture and Health Study Abroad" program recruited **Dr. Nana Amoah-Ramey** to serve as coordinator of student services for the team that traveled to Ghana. She helped coordinate the four-week pre-travel classes at the Honors College to prepare students for the month-long study abroad program to Ghana from May 28 to June 26, 2019. In Ghana, students visited many tourist sites, including private and public hospitals, herbal centers, healing shrines, and the formidable slave castles and dungeons situated along the coast of Ghana. Not only did students learn to be tolerant of other cultures, but also they came back to the United States as renewed global students and educators.



Professor Amoah-Ramey with Study Abroad Honors Students

In September, Dr. Amoah-Ramey gave a lecture “Being an American in Western Africa: Body Language, Behavior, and Cultural Awareness” to a group of 20-25 senior-level personnel set to be deployed to West Africa through the Indiana National Guard. The Language Workshop and Culture training center located at The Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies received a significant grant via the department of defense to provide this training for different branches of the US Armed Forces. In February, in honor of emancipated Blacks in America and Africa, who were drafted to serve in America and erstwhile colonial Armed Forces overseas in World War 1, the Second Baptist Church in Bloomington organized a month-long program to commemorate this history. As co-chairperson for this event, Dr. Amoah-Ramey invited former distinguished IU Professor Yvette Alex-Assensoh, who is currently the Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion at the University of Oregon, as the keynote speaker for the occasion. The title of her talk was “African Americans and Blacks in Africa in the Observance of Centenary of World War 1, 1918-2018.”



- Last spring, Professor of Practice **Stafford Berry** led the African American Dance Company Spring Show at Buskirk-Chumley Theater. On Saturday, September 7, at 2:00 p.m. in Peoples Park (501 E Kirkwood Ave, Bloomington, IN 47408), Professor Berry presented “Kuadimisha: A Black Culture Celebration,” an outdoor performance free and open to the public.

The event included Professor Berry, members of the IU African American Dance Company, and guest dancers McDaniel Roberts, Kenneth D. Eaddy, Cherelle Brown, and Andre Rosa-Artis.

- Director of IU Soul Revue Professor **James Strong** organized and co-produced a recording session at Jacob School of Music with Bootsy Collins for a remix of “Indiana Fight,” which was reported in the Hoosier Times Online:

https://www.hoosiertimes.com/herald_times_online/news/iu/iu-musicians-bootsy-collins-remix-indianafight/article_f0135087-dc84-5071-9950-fffa8f316254.html

In May 2019, Professor Strong directed and co-organized the IU Soul Revue trip to Los Angeles. See the below news items:

IU Soul Revue makes West Coast premiere, taking center stage in L.A.

<https://news.iu.edu/stories/2019/05/iub/14-soul-west-coast-premiere-la.html>

The Herald Times: IU Soul Revue to follow up spring With Trip to LA

https://www.hoosiertimes.com/herald_times_online/entertainment/iu-soul-revue-to-follow-up-spring-concert-with-trip/article_ca532c8c-9e9d-529c-ac10-4780cb60343e.html

The Indiana Daily Student: IU Soul Revue to follow Saturday performance with a trip to Los Angeles (April 2019)

<https://www.idsnews.com/article/2019/04/iu-soul-revue-to-follow-saturday-performance-with-a-trip-to-los-angeles>

Professor Strong also directed IU Soul Revue Spring Show at Buskirk-Chumley Theater in April 2019: <https://aaai.indiana.edu/news-events/archive-events/rev-spring-concert-2019.html>

- Under the direction of **Dr. Raymond Wise**, the African American Choral Ensemble (AACE) performed its annual spring concert in May 2019. AACE also performed at the annual Extensions of the Traditions Concert. This year's concert featured Jacobs School of Music vocal performance and instrumental majors along with the African American Choral Ensemble performing signature arts songs, instrumental suites,

and choral works by African American composers. The African American Choral Ensemble opened and closed the concert with choral works by Lena McLin (Let The People Sing Praise Unto The Lord) and Roland Carter (Hold Fast To Dream).



Dr. Wise traveled to Hamburg, Germany May 5-14th to conduct gospel workshops with the Harburg Gospel Choir. He taught sessions on the history of gospel music and trained the choir in gospel vocal techniques. The choir learned twelve songs and performed a concert of African American gospel music and spirituals at St. Paul Kirche in Harburg, Germany. Dr. Wise also got to work with the Soul Bridges Gospel Quartet to coach them on performances of gospel music for upcoming performances.



Dr. Wise conducted a workshop with the Fairfield County Children's Choir in Fairfield, Connecticut, which was comprised of over 300 singers. He presented a masterclass on the history and performance practices of black gospel music, and also worked with the choristers on various aspects of Gospel music performance to prepare for a culminating concert performance. Dr. Wise attended and presented at the National American Choral Director's Association (ACDA) convention in Kansas City, MS. This convention attracted more than 13,000 choral directors from across the United States. One of his recently published compositions entitled "There Is A Balm" published by Hinshaw Music, was selected to be presented in the multicultural new music reading session. The second of Dr. Wise's recently published compositions entitled, "Lord Send Your Spirit," published by GIA Music Publishers, was accepted for performance by the ACDA Middle and Junior High School Honor Choir.

Dr. Wise will perform an original concert telling the history of music of the Black church spanning from Africa to the present titled "Hallelujah, Amen!! Celebrating the Music of the Black Church" on Saturday, October 19, 2019, 5:30 p.m. at Second Baptist Church, located at 321 N Rogers St, Bloomington, IN 47404. This live 90-minute concert performance will be turned into a special WTIU television program to debut in February 2020 as an Indiana thread companion alongside the PBS national program "Say Amen: The History of the Black Church," featuring Henry Louis Gates Jr.

- In September, Emeriti Professors **John** and **Audrey McCluskey** were invited to join the radio program, "Bring It On" to share their memories and thoughts on the career and works of Toni Morrison. The program will aired September 9th, 6-7 PM on WFHB 91.3FM.

Graduate Students

- In May 2019, **Khadijah Edwards** and **Zeba Khan-Thomas** received their PhDs! Congratulations professors! Dr. Edwards works as a researcher for the Cornell Belcher polling group, and Dr. Khan-

Thomas is an assistant professor (tenure-track) at Tennessee State University.

- PhD student **Taylor Duckett** won third place in the Terry Kershaw Student Essay Competition this past March for her essay, “Epistemological Distortions as a Means of Oppression.” Find more information here: <https://ncbsonline.org/students/student-essay/>



Taylor Duckett is pictured second from left

Taylor also published a music review under her pseudonym Just Duléa on Black Grooves through the Archives of African American Music. Please see here: <http://blackgrooves.org/tenesha-the-wordsmith-peacocks-other-savage-beasts/#more-20356>

- In February 2021, PhD candidate **Anne Mahady-Kneller** will present her paper, “Unfixing the Folk: Palmer Hayden and 20th-Century African American Art Pedagogy” at the College Art Association’s annual conference in Chicago.
- Last semester, PhD student **Brandon Stokes** was awarded a travel grant through the college to present a paper at the National Council for Black Studies annual conference. This fall, Brandon became an Associate Instructor for the Atkins Foundational Course. Brandon also wrote a grant for a Chicago area nonprofit “360 Nation.” The foundation was awarded \$10,000 from the MacArthur Foundation through the Chicago Community Trust.

Diaspora is edited by Dr. Phoebe Wolfskill and is published in the fall and spring semesters. Following the contours of the academic calendar, AAADS issues the newsletter at the end of September and May.