

Voices

African American & Diaspora Studies



A Little About AADS

AADS is one of seven interdisciplinary programs at the University of Wyoming. Committed to teaching and experiencing diversity, we provide individuals with the opportunity to study African people in America and throughout the world. AADS focuses on history, culture, media, and life from ancient times to present day. We are dedicated to providing rich dialogue through our courses, our student groups, and our sponsored events.

Save The Date!

Commencement

December 9, 2016

Do not forget to attend the University of Wyoming graduation on Friday December 9, 2016. Congratulations!

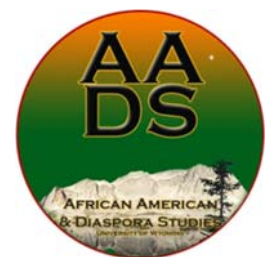
Spring Semester Begins

January 23, 2016

Happy Hibernating! We look forward to your return for the spring semester.

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Letter From the Director

Dr. Tracey Owens Patton



Happy Fall Everyone! What a long warm fall! I hope you were able to take time to visit the mountains that surround us here in the Laramie Valley and see the fall colors change. I always say that AADS is the best Academic Program on campus, and well....we are! We have faculty and students who are involved in campus and community efforts to help re-center and spotlight many of the erased contributions African Americans have made in the West, Mountain West, and Laramie. The biggest concern for us this fall semester centers on the changes and challenges that have happened at the University of Wyoming. UW declared financial crisis because it lost \$41 million in state funding, and the cuts began this fiscal year. The tremendous loss in state funding incentivized those who were able to take early retirement and has caused many faculty and staff to leave the university for positions elsewhere. The faculty loss has had a devastating effect on AADS because three faculty left UW; **Dr. Deborah McGriff** (Counselor Education and former AADS director took early retirement), **Dr. Kerry Pimblott** (left for the University of Manchester in England), and **Ms. Rosemary Stribling** (our athletic liaison left for the University of California, Bakersfield). As AADS has had to do even when times were financially “great” at UW, we have had to think creatively in order to lessen the effect of faculty loss in our program.

One of the biggest changes that AADS will undergo is that we will be merged as early as July 1, 2017. The Director of American Indian Studies (Caskey Russell) and AADS modified a Portland State model, called the School of Gender, Race, and Nations, to fit what we have created here at UW. We are very excited about what we have modified here, and other administrators at UW appear to be excited as well. Depending upon which programs join with us, the spring semester will involve all of our respective faculty figuring out how to make this transition as smooth as possible and as beneficial as possible for all involved. I will have much more to report in our next newsletter in the spring, and will need the help of all of our AADS Board Members to assist us in this transition process and also want the input of AADS students (current and alum).

Additionally, with the toxicity of the most recent presidential election and the overt forms of racism that were exploited and used, AADS, along with other programs that focus on centering People of Color, are on the frontlines of fighting against things like homophobia, oppression, racism, and sexism. Sadly, our fight for inclusivity and social justice for all people has made us targets. AADS advocates for equity, equality, and inclusivity.

Our way of operating from teaching our classes to our research is central to what it means to have an educated populous. Part of earning a university degree is to teach to the complete person so they can be educated, critical thinking citizens of the world, who value diversity and diverse perspectives not just a cog in the machine.

AADS students were busy this semester from going on study abroad to Ghana, Africa, led by **Dr. Marcus Watson** in June, 2016, and AADS double major **Richelle Clifton** and AADS scholarship recipient **Chrissie Henschler** attending the German Studies conference in September, 2016 (where they learned about Black diasporic German experiences).

On November 30th we held our Graduation Event and Annual Research Symposium. We had two student speakers: **Richelle Clifton** (AADS major) and **Robert Galbreath** (MA student in American Studies) and one faculty speaker: **Dr. Erin Forbes** (AADS and English). This event highlighted the amazing scholarship students and faculty have produced. The event took place at the Cooper House. See inside for images and details from the event. We have an exciting Spring semester of events scheduled, so please check out the “events” page on our website at <http://www.uwyo.edu/aads/> and also become a “fan;” join our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/AADS.UW/> This is a private group—and an active page—so request to be added!

Have a warm winter and holiday break,

Sincerely,
Dr. Prof. Tracey Owens Patton
Director, African American & Diaspora Studies
Professor, Department of Communication & Journalism



In Memoriam



“ Mrs. Harriet Elizabeth ‘Liz’ Byrd was an educator in Cheyenne for 37 years and was also the first African American senator of Wyoming. She was born on April 20, 1926 in Cheyenne to pioneer settlers Robert C. ‘Buck’ and Sudie Smith Rhone. Her grandfather, Charles J. Rhone, arrived in Wyoming in 1876 and worked as a cowboy and railroader near Cheyenne and Laramie. She earned her MA in Education from the University of Wyoming in 1976.

Of the many accomplishments in her career, the four-term state representative and two-term state senator was a champion for children, education, and safety. One highlight of her career included the passage and recognition of Wyoming’s Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. Mrs. Byrd was a recipient of a number of awards and honors, one of the most notable was sharing the pages with Oprah Winfrey, Rosa Parks and other distinguished African American women in the book, *I Dream a World*, published in 1999. Mrs. Byrd and her family have contributed to the University of Wyoming and the state for generations. To honor Mrs. Byrd’s many contributions, the African American & Diaspora Studies Program created the Harriet Elizabeth ‘Liz’ Byrd Speaker Series. Mrs. Byrd was truly a pioneer. African American & Diaspora Studies is proud to have known her and proud to have a speaker series in her honor. We miss her greatly.”

-Dr. Tracey Owens Patton



Faculty Kudos



Publications:

- Patton, T.O. (2016, July 28). Marketplace: Black Representation in Rodeo. National interview. The interview was aired on the national program, "Morning Edition," via Georgia Public Broadcasting.

Grants:

(2016, Fall). "Germany Meets the US": 2016 Campus Weeks. With Dr. Kristen Landreville (co-PI). This grant from the German Embassy is to educate Wyoming students and community about Germany and relations with the US. The University of Wyoming: \$7192.36. Events hosted in relation to the grant:

- **September 15, 2016:** Ambassador Peter Wittig. Kickoff Presentation: "A World in Turmoil: The Importance of the Transatlantic Partnership in the Context of Global Crises"
- **October 2016:** Music Concert about German Culture Celebration (October 6); Oktoberfest for the City of Laramie (October 14); Exhibition of Historical News on U.S.-German Relations (October 17-21 led by co-PI); Diplomat Stefan Schlueter "Immigration, Nationalism, and Racism: How is Europe Coping?" (October 31)
- **November 16, 2016:** NY Times Best Selling Author Jennifer Teege, My Grandfather Would Have Shot Me: A Black Woman Discovers Her Family's Nazi Past.
- **December 10, 2016:** Music Concert: German and American Compositions Spanning 300 years.

Conference Presentations:

(2016, November 10-14). Presentation Title: There is no Equality in Academia: Addressing

Racial and Sexist Microaggressions at a Predominantly White University in the Equality State. Panel Title: From Homelessness to the Ivory Tower: Examining Microaggressions

with Macro Effects. Critical and Cultural Studies Division at the National Communication Association Conference, Philadelphia, PA.

(2016, November 10-14). Presentation Title: Forging Alliances: The Centrality of Race within

Communication and the Classroom. Panel Title: Continuing the Conversation about Race, Ethnicity, and Diversity in Communication and Instruction Research: A Multi-Paradigmatic Approach. Instructional Development Division at the National Communication Association Conference, Philadelphia, PA.

(2016, September 29-October 4). Presentation Title: Because We're Embarrassed: Reflections of Memory, Race, and Rejection. Panel Title: Afro-German Identity, Memory, and Culture. Black Diaspora Studies Network at the German Studies Association Conference, San Diego, CA.

Presentations:

(2016, November 29). Graduate School and You. Lambda Pi Eta. The University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY.



- *Krautrock: German Music in the Seventies* was published by the University of Michigan Press.
- Presented on Krautrock at the Oktoberfest event in Laramie that was part of the “Germany Meets the U.S.” series.
- Presented a paper on “Donna Summer and the Culture of Dissemblance” at the American Studies Association meeting in Denver.



- (2016) “Do Black Ghosts Matter? Harriet Jacob’s Spiritualism,” *ESQ: A Journal of Nineteenth Century American Literature and Culture* 62.3.
- (2016) “Edgar Allan Poe and the Great Dismal Swamp: Reading Race and Environment after the Aesthetic Turn.” *Modern Philology* 114.4.
- “David Walker’s Living Dead: African Atlantic Ontologies of the Human.” American Comparative Literature Association. “Claiming the Human. Critiquing the Human” Seminar. Utrecht, Netherlands. July 2017.-Conference
- “Resisting Civil Government from Thoreau to #BLM and #NoDAPL.” Association for the Study of Literature and Environment. Detroit, MI. June 2016.-Conference



Faculty Spotlight



Please join us in congratulating Dr. Erin Forbes for being chosen as the first recipient of the American Literature Society’s 1921 Prize, in the untenured faculty category. The prize honors the best article in any field of American Literature in a given year. Dr. Forbes has won for her article on Harriet Jacobs, "Do Black Ghosts Matter? "Harriet Jacobs’ Spiritualism" (ESQ: A Journal of Nineteenth Century American Literature and Culture, Volume 62, pp. 443-479).

Description of the Award:

The American Literature Society is pleased to announce a new prize awarded to the best article in any field of American literature. The 1921 Prize is named for the year the organization was initially founded "to promote and diversify the study of American Literature." Judged by a panel of members of the American Literature Society Advisory Board and other scholars in the field, the competition will be divided in two categories: one for graduate students, scholars in contingent positions, and untenured faculty members; one for tenured faculty. The winner will be announced at the 2017 MLA American Literature Society panel.



Germany Meets the U.S.

KICK-OFF EVENT: GERMAN AMBASSADOR

Thurs., Sept. 15 @ 9:30 a.m. – Family Room, Wyoming Union
Ambassador Peter Wittig of the Federal Republic of Germany to United States
will speak about “A World in Turmoil: The Importance of the Transatlantic
Partnership in the Context of Global Crises.”

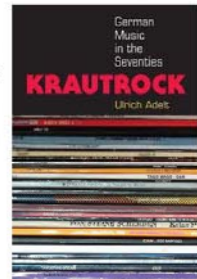


GERMAN & U.S. MUSIC: UW CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Thurs., Oct. 6 @ 7:30 p.m. – Buchanan Center for the Performing Arts, Concert Hall |
Featuring Dr. Beth Vanderborgh, Music Director and Solo Cello; Dr. Joan Griffing,
Solo Violin; Dr. Diana Phoenix-Neal, Solo Viola; and UW Department of Music Students.
Program features German masterworks by Stamitz and Reineke paired with contemporary
American music by composer Gwyneth Walker.

OKTOBERFEST & KRAUTROCK

Fri., Oct. 14 @ 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. – Shocktoberfest | Featuring Dr. Ulrich Adelt,
who will discuss his newly published book, *Krautrock*. A band will play traditional
Bavarian music and free German food will be available to the first 100 people who
arrive.

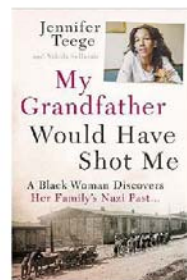


EXHIBITION OF HISTORICAL NEWS STORIES ON U.S.-GERMANY RELATIONS

Mon., Oct. 17 through Fri., Oct. 21 – Skylight Lounge – Wyoming Union
Take a walk through time from 1900 to today and view *New York Times* news
stories and Associated Press photographs from some of the most significant
events in the U.S.-Germany relationship.

GERMAN CONSUL GENERAL STEPHEN SCHLUETER

Mon., Oct. 31 @ 2 p.m. – Wyoming Union Senate Chambers Room | German Consul
General Stephen Schlueter will give a presentation on immigration, nationalism, and
cultural issues that Germany is currently dealing with. He will field questions from
the audience as well.



FEATURED SPEAKER: JENNIFER TEEGE, AUTHOR OF "MY GRANDFATHER WOULD HAVE SHOT ME"

Wed., Nov. 16 @ 7 p.m. – Business Auditorium | Teege will discuss her *New York Times* Bestseller, which
describes how Teege, a black woman, discovered her family's Nazi past. Teege will also
field questions from the audience about her book and experiences.

Sponsored by:



GERMANY MEETS
THE US

GERMAN & U.S. MUSIC: ANDREW HARLEY & JOHN FADIAI

Sat., Dec. 10 @ 3 p.m. – Buchanan Center for the Performing Arts, Recital Hall | This
musical bridge across the Atlantic features German and American
compositions spanning 300 years, by J.S. Bach, Virgil Thomson, Aaron Jay
Kernis, Johannes Brahms, and John Corigliano.

Germany Meets the U.S.



Empire: An African American Homesteading Community in Wyoming



A photograph of the Sheep Creek Cemetery located a mile over the Nebraska border where two unidentified graves of African American children who lived in Empire are located. These are the only remains left of Empire. Source: personal photograph

Empire was a small community of African American homesteaders located ten miles northeast of Torrington, Wyoming, settled in 1908 by the families of Charles, Joseph, John, and Radford Speese, along with three branches of the Taylor family headed by Otis, Russell, and Baseman. The Speeses' and Taylor's arrival in Wyoming paralleled a larger migration of African Americans who sought opportunity in the West far from the racial strife and poverty that gripped the American South after the collapse of Reconstruction and the re-imposition of white supremacy. Some of these African American migrants were part of collective efforts to build autonomous, self-sufficient agrarian communities, and all-Black towns cropped up across the Great Plains.

Empire was the first and only attempt by African Americans to form a farming town in Wyoming. The people of Empire, descended from slavery, worked to embody the American ideal of the yeoman farmer, previously the exclusive domain of white men. The settlers arrived in Wyoming as the state's economy shifted from ranching and cattle grazing to farming. Efforts by the federal Reclamation Service to irrigate the plains, coupled with new "scientific" dryland farming techniques and the Enlarged Homestead Act, worked to turn the arid American interior into productive farm land.

Life in Empire centered around the farm, school, and church. Education was highly valued in Empire and in 1909, the residents made a successful bid to county officials to build their own school. In 1912, Russell Taylor, an ordained minister with a divinity degree from Bellevue College in Omaha, Nebraska, arrived in Wyoming to lead Empire's school and preach at the local Grace Presbyterian Church. The Speese brothers led the way in farming, and Joseph Speese consistently won first place prizes for his dryland produce at regional fairs.

The early 20th century was an intensely violent period for African Americans, and a low point in the history of race relations. Wyoming was no exception to the racism that infected every aspect of American society. The state enacted laws that prohibited miscegenation and allowed school segregation. Wyoming's newspapers, the main conduits of information at the time, de-humanized African Americans with sensationalized stories of lynching, racist advertisements, and degrading cartoons. At least five men were lynched by white mobs in Wyoming between 1904 and 1918.



A portrait of Reverend Russell Taylor taken while he was a student at Bellevue College in Omaha, Nebraska circa 1896. Source: Hastings College Archives, Hastings, NE.

Racism and racial violence was a lived reality for the African Americans in Empire. On many occasions, they were denied service and boarding in restaurants and hotels in Torrington and other Wyoming towns. People in the community also feared legal harassment from their white neighbors. In 1911, Charles Speese was wrongly accused of cattle theft by prominent stockmen. In 1913, Baseman Taylor was arrested for allegedly damaging property in Torrington. Goshen County Sheriff Michael A. Hayes took Taylor into custody and held him for the next three days in the Torrington Hotel (the town lacked a jail at the time). On November 6, the *Torrington Telegram* reported that Baseman had died in the sheriff's custody from "a pain in his head." Russel Taylor, Baseman's brother, filed a wrongful death suit a year later. Witnesses stated that Sheriff Hayes and his deputies beat and tortured Baseman Taylor to death. Russell Taylor's lawsuit was dropped by the white district court judge for insufficient evidence.

The people of Empire did not remain silent against their oppressors. Russell Taylor emerged as the prominent voice for the community. Taylor advocated for his people at local, state, and national events. Taylor also wrote editorials to local papers in Torrington and larger periodicals published in Cheyenne protesting against racism. In 1918, Taylor penned a passionate letter in the *Wyoming State Tribune* against the lynching of an African American man, Joel Woodson, in Green River.

By the mid-1920s, Empire had vanished from the landscape. The bust in crop prices after World War I and subsequent agricultural depression affected many homesteaders in the region, including the farmers in Empire. Yet white homesteaders continued to flood into the state and many remained in Wyoming. Racism and isolation had taken a toll on Empire's residents. Outside of Cheyenne, the state's African American population was small and scattered, offering little in the way of organized community support. The fear of racism, harassment, and even death wrought by the overwhelming white majority likely caused many people to leave Empire. Today the only remains of the once thriving community are a few unmarked graves in a cemetery located over the Nebraska border.

-Robert Galbreath

-(Fall 2016) Received a grant from the Cultural Trust Fund approving the funds to created a historical marker on Empire. The plan is to have the historical marker place by May of this coming spring.

Spring 2017 Courses

<p align="center">AAST 1000-01,40: Intro to African American Studies (D)</p>	<p align="center">AAST 2990-01: Tps: Baseball and the Colorline</p>
<p>Multiple sections available. Check WyoWeb.</p> <p>This course surveys African presence in America. Selected teachings are designed to give the student a concise understanding of the heritage of African people in America.</p>	<p align="center">MWF 1:10-2:00 p.m., Aaron Lozano</p> <p>This course accommodates seminar series and/or course offerings including those by interdisciplinary teams and visiting faculty in African American and Diaspora Studies not covered by program courses.</p>
<p align="center">AAST 3000-01: African American Music (H)</p>	<p align="center">AAST 3260-40: African Spirits in the New World (G,H,UCNW)</p>
<p align="center">TR 2:45-4:00 p.m., Dr. Ulrich Adelt</p> <p>This course surveys African American music from its origins in Africa to current, popular jazz, rock, soul and rap forms.</p>	<p align="center">Online-Dr. Mary Keller.</p> <p>This course begins with Yoruba roots in Africa travels with the African Diaspora focusing on spirit possession in Haitian Vodou Cuban Santeria, Jamaican Revival Zion, and Jamaican Rastafarianism.</p> <p>Cross listed with RELI 3260</p>
<p align="center">AAST 4100-40: African American Religious Culture (D, WC)</p>	<p align="center">AAST 4455/5455-01: Literature of Enslavement (D)</p>
<p align="center">Online-Dr. Mary Keller</p> <p>This course studies African American religious celebration, primarily in the context of Afro-Christianity, but touching on Islam, Candomble, "Voodoo," Santeria, and Rastafarianism.</p> <p>Cross listed with RELI 4100.</p>	<p align="center">TR 11:00-12:15 p.m., Dr. Erin Forbes</p> <p>This course encourages an in depth study of the literary voices that emerged from the history of enslavement in the Americas from colonial times through the end of Reconstruction in 1877.</p> <p>Cross listed with ENGL 4455</p>
<p align="center">AAST 4675-01: U.S. Women of Color (D)</p>	<p align="center">AAST 4990-01: Tps: Democracy in Lit of America</p>
<p align="center">T 4:10-7:00 p.m., Dr. Lilia Soto</p> <p>This course examines in comparative the social conditions that shaped the experiences of Chicanas/Latinas in the U.S.</p> <p>Cross listed with AAST/WMST 4675, AIST 4990</p>	<p align="center">TR 2:45-4:00 p.m., Dr. Scott Henkel</p> <p>This course will investigate how writers in the Americas have understood the ideas and forms of democracy and have imagined its alternative possibilities.</p> <p>Cross listed with ENGL 4640.</p>

AAST 4990-02: Tps: Rhetorical Theory & Criticism (A&S G)	AAST 4990-05: Tps: African Philosophy
<p>TR 1:20-2:35 p.m., Dr. Tracey Patton</p> <p>This course explores how various critical methods can be utilized to gain a stronger understanding of public communication texts, including newspapers, speeches, music and film.</p> <p>Cross listed with ENGL/COJO 4061/5061</p>	<p>TR 1:20-2:35 p.m., Dr. Edward Sherline</p> <p>Cross listed with PHIL 3000/INST 4990</p>

Summer 2017 (tentative)

AAST 1000-01: Introduction to African American Studies (D)
<p>Online, Lucas Stricker</p> <p>Surveys African presence in America. Selected teachings are designed to give the student a concise understanding of the heritage of African people in America.</p>



AADS and 7220 Spring Film Series

(All Dates are Tentative)



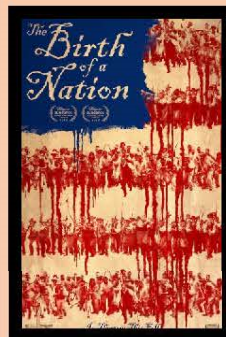
“Moonlight” (February 3rd) (R, 1h 15m)

A young man deals with his dysfunctional home life and comes of age in Miami during the "War on Drugs" era. The story of his struggle to find himself is told across three defining chapters in his life as he experiences the ecstasy, pain, and beauty of falling in love while grappling with his own sexuality.



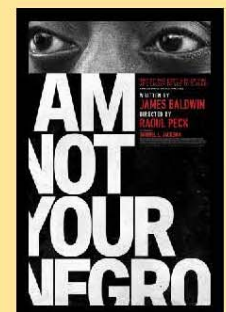
“Loving” (Mid-February) (PG-13, 2h 3m)

Interracial couple Richard and Mildred Loving fell in love and were married in 1958. They grew up in Central Point, a small town in Virginia that was more integrated than surrounding areas in the American South. Yet it was the state of Virginia, where they were making their home and starting a family, that first jailed and then banished them. Richard and Mildred relocated with their children to the inner city of Washington, D.C., but the family ultimately tries to find a way back to Virginia.



“Birth of A Nation” (End-February) (R, 2h)

Nat Turner is an enslaved Baptist preacher who lives on a Virginia plantation owned by Samuel Turner. With rumors of insurrection in the air, a cleric convinces Samuel that Nate should sermonize to other slaves, thereby quelling any notions of an uprising. As Nate witnesses the horrific treatment of his fellow man, he realizes that he can no longer just stand by and preach. On Aug. 21, 1831, Turner's quest for justice and freedom leads to a violent and historic rebellion in Southampton County.



“I Am Not Your Negro” (March) (PG-13, 1h 35m)

Writer James Baldwin tells the story of race in modern America with his unfinished novel, *Remember This House*.

AADS' Scholar in Residence

Spring 2017

Briallen Hopper will tentatively be teaching in the Race and Nature and Literature of Enslavement classes, as well as to offer a reading and workshop on campus that would be of interest to the wider community. Her work on Black religion, politics, and culture is much needed and our students will benefit from seeing their reading on Black experiences reinforced and perhaps challenged by your expertise.



Briallen Hopper teaches in the Yale English department and holds a PhD in American literature from Princeton. Her essays on race have appeared in publications including *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, *The New Republic*, *Newsweek*, *The Huffington Post*, *Religion & Politics*, and *Killing the Buddha*, as well as in the scholarly collections *James Baldwin: America and Beyond*, *American Cinema and the Southern Imaginary*, *Keywords for Southern Studies*, and *The African American National Biography*. She is an Associate Editor at the independent press & Other Stories, and a 2016-2017 Faculty Fellow at the Yale Center for the Study of Race, Indigeneity, and Transnational Migration. Her collection of creative nonfiction essays is forthcoming from Bloomsbury. During her time at UW, Dr. Hopper will be guest teaching for AADS, offering workshops for the campus community, and giving a public reading of her creative nonfiction.

AFRICAN AMERICAN & DIASPORA STUDIES

FALL RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

“Police Violence in America: Killing African Americans both Physically and Emotionally”

-Richelle Clifton



“Empire: The African American Homestead Experience in Wyoming”

-Robert Gallbreath



“David Walker’s Living Dead: Black Politics Beyond the Grave”

-Dr. Erin Forbes



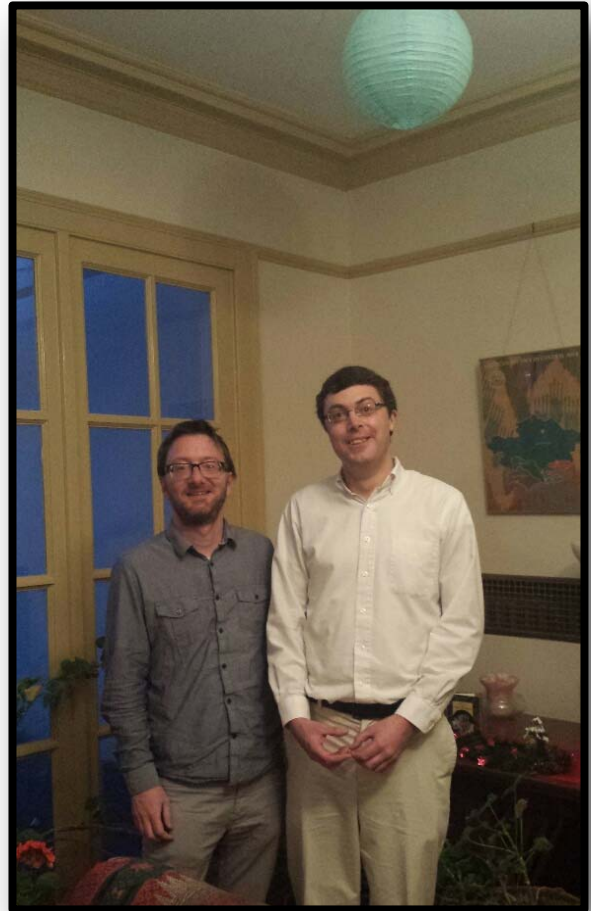
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30

3:15-5:00 PM

COOPER HOUSE



Fall Research Symposium



ROSA PARKS'S

Featherlite Peanut Butter

PANCAKES

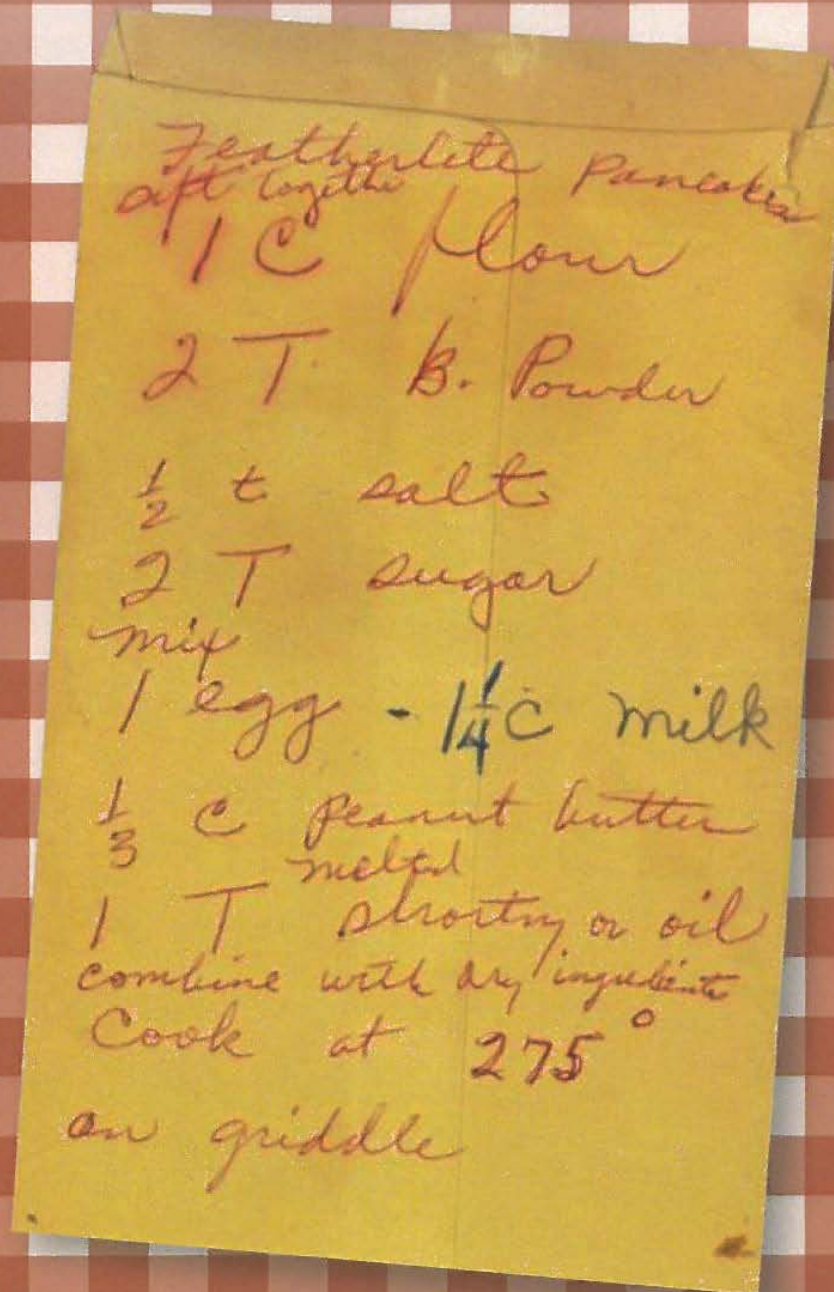


Image used with permission of the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development, whose purpose is "To motivate youth ages 11-17 to reach their highest potential through training in life skills; exposure to historical/educational research that brings civil rights history to life; and to develop character by modeling the Rosa Parks' philosophy of 'Quiet Strength,' pride, dignity and courage in a comfortable environment of peace." Read more about the Institute at <http://www.rosaparks.org>. Photo courtesy of Library of Congress.

Happy Hibernating!



We have been thrilled to share such a wonderful fall semester with our students, faculty, and campus community. This semester was filled with incredible events and progressive dialogue that would not have been possible without our student and faculty efforts. Go now and enjoy your winter break! We look forward to seeing you again when we are done hibernating!

Congratulations to the 2016 fall graduates!

Contact Us:

African American & Diaspora
Studies

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Enjoy!