

January to December 2010 · Volume 6

# AFRICAN EDUCATION IN FOCUS

*A publication of the Center for African Education and the African Studies Working Group at Teachers College, Columbia University*

## **Journeys: 2010 in review**



# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Teachers College has renewed its interests in global affairs and brought into play its full range of expertise in the fields of education, health and psychology. These interests lie not solely with the domestic; nor solely with the international. They involve understanding education in both domains. The Center for African Education has been engaged in this journey of exploration directed toward promoting interest in Africa and African education in the United States and providing assistance to African countries. Together with the African Studies Working Group, a student organization, the Center has laid on events that have brought to Teachers College and Columbia University an array of educators, practitioners and scholars who have spoken about African affairs. These



events have pointed to the challenges confronting African peoples as they seek to overcome basic economic, educational and health problems.

This issue of *African Education in Focus* presents the range of events sponsored by the Center. It also attempts to cover the range of activities of faculty members and students as they reach out to New York metropolitan educators, undertake

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***"The Center provides a platform for the discussion of African affairs and African education and disseminates information on Africa within the field of education."***

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research on African immigrants and establish professional connections with African universities. The Center provides a platform for the discussion of African affairs and African education and disseminates information on Africa within the field of education. With the initial support of a Provost Grant, the Center has embarked on a major project, the *Teaching Africa* series. The intention is to produce four basic texts on West, East, South and North Africa for educators and the general public. The first volume on West Africa is well on its way to completion.

The Center encourages faculty members and students to undertake research on African immigrants and to lay on new Africa related courses. Professor Michelle Knight-Diop (together with two students, Ms. Ramatu Bangura and Mr. Vaughn Watson) is engaged in a fascinating piece of research on civic and political life of African immigrant youth. While Professor JoAnne

Kleifgen has turned her expertise in linguistics to examine issues in African and the Diaspora languages, Dr. Dominic Mentor from South Africa has developed an innovative course on the use of the mobile phone. The Center has also encouraged faculty and students to go to and report on their visits and internships in African countries. In this spirit Professor Judith Burton has provided us with a fascinating account of her journey in Ethiopia. Several students have written about their internships in different African settings. From these accounts

◀◀ Dr. George C. Bond, Director

# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

it is apparent that changes are taking place in African countries.

The intrusion of the “cold war” in Africa obscured many of the basic economic and social conditions impeding the formation of an infrastructure for achieving a number of public goals. With the ending of the “cold war”, and the growing opportunities for Africans to express their demands, African leaders are being forced to recognize the will of the people and provide for their social welfare. The problems are complex and multifaceted. During the initial phases of an anticipated “African Renaissance”, Teachers College is in the position to provide basic assistance. Its faculty members and students have the knowledge, experience and expertise to assist African leaders in meeting the expectations and aspirations of their peoples. Steps are being taken to forge connections between Teachers College and African institutions to provide collaboration and assistance. Examples are to be found in the joint activities of Professors Lesley Bartlett and Frances Vavrus (University of Minnesota) in holding teacher training workshops at Mwenge University of Education in Tanzania; Dr. Catherine Crowley’s developing programs on speech pathology at Korle Bu Hospital in Accra, Ghana; and Dr. Mary Mendenhall’s

initiating of a program on Education in Emergencies at the University of Nairobi in Kenya. These activities are undertaken in collaboration with African academics and involve the training of both local African and Teachers College students. The Center has also encouraged research. Professor Helen Verdeli’s (together with her two students, Mr. Eric Lewendowski and Ms. Annie Feighery) collaboration with the Center in pursuing her research on Group Interpersonal Psychotherapy treatment programs in Southern Uganda, a region where Professor Joan Vincent and I undertook research on HIV/AIDS during the initial phases of the epidemic, is one example. A research project by Ms. Janny Chang, a doctoral student, on the relation of Chinese and Zambian corporation managers in Chinese firms operating in Zambia provides another example. Thus, the Center encourages a wide range of research topics stemming from different disciplinary perspective and interests.

As this Issue illustrates, the Center emphasizes the study of Africa through academic training, research, practice and experience. It demonstrates Teachers College’s ability to help African countries achieve their goals by providing them with assistance in the fields of education, health, psychology and the social

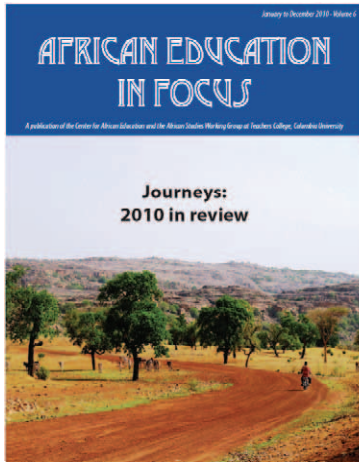
sciences. The Center will continue to promote the dissemination of information about Africa and African education primarily within the United States but also in other regions of the world.

On another note, the Center extends a warm welcome to our new Coordinator, Mr. Evan Hendon, a Master's student in International Educational Development with a concentration in Policy Studies. Mr. Hendon's experience and insights will be a great asset to the Center. The Center would also like to thank its two former coordinators, Ms Stephanie Bengtsson and Ms. Melissa Cushman, for their dedication to the Center and African-related issues. We wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors.



*"Friends Alike," an art piece made from recycled plastic and wire, by Collin Sekajugo. This piece, along with others were on display at an event that was sponsored by the Center, Columbia University's Committee on Global Thought, and the Institute for African Studies. See page 22 for more details.*

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## ONLINE :

Center for African Education:  
<http://www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/cae/>

African Studies Working Group:  
[www.tc.columbia.edu/students/aswg/](http://www.tc.columbia.edu/students/aswg/)

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# A.S.W.G. UPDATE

## ASWG Greetings

Hello to all those interested in education, international development, Africa and the African Diaspora! We are a group of dedicated individuals interested in education and its relevant issues in Africa and the Diaspora. Previously, we have hosted a variety of events such as a student symposium on African education, panel discussions, and social events. As always, we have a series of exciting events

scheduled for this school year such as the ASWG Pot Luck Discussion on Student Work in Africa and the Diaspora and a student symposium co-hosted with fellow student organizations here at Teachers College. Our listserv is a great way to stay in touch and learn about upcoming events. To join our listserv, or for more information about any of our activities, please contact us at [tc.aswg@gmail.com](mailto:tc.aswg@gmail.com). Our website is currently under construction, but

will be ready soon! Thank you for your interest and we look forward to meeting you!



*African Studies Working Group*

## ASWG's 2010 Symposium

Held on March 26, 2010 at Teachers College, the ASWG Symposium, themed, "Rethinking Aid: Solutions, Strategies, and Innovations for Education in Africa and the Diaspora," attracted a gathering of students and faculty members, who came to hear guest speakers from different backgrounds. Found below is a flyer listing all the noted speakers and panelists who participated in the annual event.



# CAE OFFERINGS

## Teaching Africa Series Update

by MELISSA CUSHMAN

Work is continuing on the Center's exciting *Teaching Africa* series, a project made possible by generous grants from TC's Provost Office, the Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER), and International Global Centers. This project aims to provide information and guidance to educators who wish to incorporate Africa in the classroom or who serve students who have recently emigrated to the United States from the continent.

A core component of this work is the production of four reference texts

on West, East, South, and North Africa. The first volume, which is currently under development, is entitled *Teaching West Africa: A Reference Text for Public School Educators*. This volume will consist of 16 chapters by key scholars and graduate students from a number of diverse fields on issues of importance to the West African region, ranging from formal and non-formal education, to family life and gender relations, to indigenous science and technology.

The text will also include a supplemental curriculum which is cur-

rently being designed by two TC students. The curriculum will aim to help teachers incorporate the reference text into their classrooms.

Other TAS activities include an online portal on our website which features resources on West Africa, as well as the creation of the African Education Speakers Bureau, which offers TC students an opportunity to teach about Africa in NYC schools.

If you are interested in hearing more about this initiative, or would like to get involved, please contact us.

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## Certificate in African Education

The Center for African Education has been accredited by New York State to grant a Certificate in African Education to concentrators in African studies. The Certificate Program is open to all students. It allows students with an interest in Africa and the Diaspora to broaden their knowledge of and experiences with issues related to Africa. Those who pursue this certificate will be prepared for further academic studies as well as professional careers in teaching, policy-making, and international development.

Students pursuing the Certificate in African Education are expected to gain a high degree of proficiency in African studies and African education through the completion of:

(A) 15-credits of coursework, and

(B) an integrative paper or Master's thesis or doctoral dissertation addressing an essential issue of concern in Africa or for African Educators.

Of the 15 required credits, up to 3 credits may be fulfilled with an internship or independent study. Courses on Africa and African Education at TC and Columbia-wide, determined in consultation with an advisor, can count towards the remainder of the credits. Students are encouraged to consult with one of the faculty affiliated with the program or staff at the Center for African Education to select courses from other departments at TC as well as from programs at Columbia University.

Students interested in pursuing careers in Africa are encouraged

to take an African language, such as Wolof, Swahili, or Zulu, which are offered through Columbia's Institute of African Studies. Many Teachers College students work as interns for a number of international agencies focused on Africa-related issues. They have the option to take the internship for credit, and will work closely with a faculty member to monitor their own progress as an intern. Students interested in the Certificate in African Education should set up an appointment through the Center for African Education by email ([cae@tc.edu](mailto:cae@tc.edu)).

We are pleased to announce the first cohort of students who received the Certificate in African Education in Spring 2010: Congratulations to Kara Roop, Takako Shimizu, Chantal McGill, and Carolyn Casale.

# FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

## Professors Lesley Bartlett and Frances Vavrus | Destination: Tanzania

The fourth Teaching in Action (TIA) workshop took place at Mwenje University College of Education (MWUCE) from Sunday, 4 July – Saturday, 10 July, 2010. Professor Lesley Bartlett, accompanied by doctoral students Maria Jose Bermeo and Tamara Webb, joined Professor Frances Vavrus and two doctoral students from University of Minnesota in Moshi to collaborate with MWUCE faculty on the project. The 62 teachers in attendance came primarily from the Kilimanjaro and Arusha Regions in northern Tanzania. The primary objective of the TIA 2010 workshop was to enhance the ability of Tanzanian secondary school teachers at the O- and A-levels to use critical-thinking and learner-centered pedagogies to increase students' analytical and problem-solving capabilities. Through an intensive week of demonstrations, modeling, and peer feedback in the use of these teaching methods, the TIA participants made significant progress in their understanding and

utilization of new strategies to improve student learning and critical thinking.

A second objective of the TIA program was the professional development of Tanzanian teacher educators at Mwenje University. These are faculty who seek to use more critical-thinking and learner-centered pedagogies in their college-level classes, to learn how to conduct workshops for secondary school teachers, and to understand how to conduct qualitative, classroom-based research. Through a three-week training program for the MWUCE-TIA faculty to prepare for the workshop and to learn about qualitative research, the faculty members were able to connect the goals of the professional development program and to take leadership in the TIA program. During the first of these two weeks, Professor Lesley Bartlett led daily sessions on the principles and practices of qualitative research in education. In addition, Professor Frances Vavrus facilitated daily sessions with the nine MWUCE-TIA

faculty and the seven members of the U.S. team to prepare for the workshop. In the final week, the group finalized the design for a school-based qualitative research project, practiced the observation and interview techniques, and then field-tested the instruments. The doctoral students and MWUCE faculty then spent a month in six area secondary schools, collecting data on how teachers who had participated in the workshop took up and used learner-centered pedagogy. The team is now working on data analysis and expects to hold a conference on the findings at Mwenje next summer.



Dr. Leslie Bartlett

## Professor Steven Dubin | Destination: South Africa

Steven Dubin, Professor of Arts Administration, had a productive year in 2010 with a number of publications. He spent nearly three months in South Africa during the summer break. He wrote four articles: "Imperfect Pitch: Pop Culture, Consensus and Resistance during the 2010 World Cup," which will appear in *African Arts*; "Exile's Return," about the repatriation of art taken out of the country during the anti-apartheid struggle, for the November 2010 issue of *Art in America*; "Time Out," 'taking the pulse' of the art scene in Johannesburg, for the current issue of *Art South Africa*; and "Art Free for All: The Work Projects Administra-

tion's Community Art Centers," an essay for the exhibition catalog to The Kuniyoshi Collection: The WPA Children's Art Project Through a Modern Lens.

His book *Mounting Queen Victoria* was the subject of a panel discussion, "Dinosaurs or Dynamos: Is there a future for museums in South Africa?" held at the South African National Gallery in Cape Town, and he was the guest of the U.S. Consul General in Durban, who has invited him to present a program there under her auspices next year.

His review essay on two major books on African art appeared in *Art in America* in October 2010. His

book on the culture wars in South Africa, which highlights controversies over art, media, and social issues such as same-sex marriage, will be published by Jacana in South Africa, as soon as an American co-publisher can be found; and he is beginning a new book project on Hillbrow, a legendary, densely-populated inner city precinct of Johannesburg which went from a cosmopolitan mix of people in the 1960s and '70s, to a "grey area" (blacks and whites living together) in the waning years of the apartheid era, to its present-day embodiment as a haven for immigrants from throughout the African continent, a vibrant yet problem-laden district.

# FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

## Dr. Catherine Crowley and TC's Program in Speech-Language Pathology in Ghana

The program in speech language pathology (SLP) has established strong relationships in Ghana, West Africa. For the past four years, Cate Crowley, a lecturer in the program, and Miriam Baigorri, clinical supervisor, have brought 15 TC SLP students to Ghana to provide free speech and language services to children and adults with communication disorders. In the capital, Accra, they work with the University of Ghana teaching hospital, Korle Bu Hospital, with Dr. Kitcher the chair of the ENT Department and Dr. Paintsil the director of the hospital's craniofacial clinic. In Kumasi, the students work with Dr. Peter Donkor, Provost of K.N.U.S.T. university and teaching hospital and director of that university's

craniofacial team. Near Kumasi, the TC team works with teachers Belinda Bukari and Clement Ntim in "unit schools" providing speech and language services to students with moderately severe cognitive impairments, cerebral palsy, and autism.

The Ghana program is well-integrated into the TC masters' program. The TC students register for a two-credit seminar, taught in Ghana by Dr. Crowley that considers Ghanaian culture, language, and politics and how that might affect the efficacy of the services. The seminar, which takes place in the evenings providing speech and language services, is enriched by guest speakers and by the students own experiences there. While in Ghana, students keep daily journals reflecting their experiences and insights, which culminates in a final paper on the impact of the experience on them personally and especially on their development as SLPs.

One of the most important reasons for returning to Ghana each year is to establish effective supports and services for people with communication disorders,

especially for students with disabilities. In addition to the time actually spent in Ghana, the TC team maintains contact with their colleagues there throughout the



*TC students on the Ghana Program working with Ghanaian colleagues in one of the hospitals*

year, creating sustainable outcomes. The following are examples of this: 1) Central Coast Children's Foundation (CCCF) will provide Ms. Bukari with funding to attend international conferences and courses to acquire specialized strategies for working with persons with communication disorders in Ghana; 2) In December, teachers of students with special needs throughout Ghana will gather for the first conference on communication disorders based upon the work of the TC team; 3) At the request of the Division of Special Education of the Ministry of Education, and with input from her Ghanaian colleagues, Dr. Crowley prepared a "White Paper" on the need to

expand the number of day schools for students with moderately severe to severe disabilities and to increase funding for those schools, which the Minister of Education agreed to implement at a meeting with the TC team this January; and 4) Working at the behest of the deans and provosts of the two major universities in Ghana, Dr. Crowley developed a curriculum for the first Ghanaian speech-language pathology program in Ghana.

In January 2011, the team returns for another visit with 17 TC SLP students. This year, two foundations--the Wyncote Foundation and CCCF--provided materials for the work in Ghana, funding for conferences to disseminate information, and funding for the TC students. With each visit the TC team creates stronger ties with its colleagues in Ghana and it becomes more effective. With the strong relationships developed over the years, the TC SLP team looks forward to more successful projects in Ghana.



*TC students involved in the Ghana Program working in a school*



# FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

## Professor Michelle Knight-Diop

The past year for Professor Michelle Knight-Diop has been intellectually rich and rewarding with opportunities to collaborate with faculty colleagues as well as current graduate students on topics that she is extremely passionate about and which keep her grounded in addressing societal and educational inequities. She participated in a year-long interdisciplinary faculty seminar with ten TC colleagues to examine notions of globalization, citizenship and education. This seminar culminated in a special issue for *Teachers College Record* in September 2010. Professor Knight-Diop's article is entitled, "It's Already Happening": Learning From Civically Engaged Transnational Immigrant Youth." In this article she examined the transnational life of an African immigrant youth as it intersects with new

and old technologies of civic engagement. Professor Knight-Diop is also working with two graduate students, Ramatu Bangura and Vaughn Wat-



*Dr. Michelle Knight-Diop*

son on two research projects. The first project examines the civic and political life of 20 second- and 1.5-generation African immigrants in New York. They presented three conference papers re-

lated to this topic at the American Education Research Association in Denver, Colorado in 2010. Recently, Professor Knight-Diop was awarded the Faculty Diversity Research Award from the Dean's Office and the FEC subcommittee on Race, Culture and Diversity. She is conducting a pilot study with Ramatu Bangura and Vaughn Watson to investigate how a community-based immigrant women's organization, Sauti Yetu Center for African Women in New York City, shapes the bicultural resiliency of African immigrant adolescent girls, and the implications these findings have for extending notions of bicultural resiliency and the strengthening of youth programming for the organization. She sincerely hopes that you are also experiencing the joy of your intellectual passions and pursuits.

## Professor Dominic Mentor

The innovative Mobile phone learning course offered at Teachers College, the first of its kind in the USA, gleans many lessons from Africa, ranging from mobile money transfers to mobile health projects. The most successful example of mobile money transfers is the Kenyan M-PESA, which borrows from the Swahili word for money. The M(obile)Pesa idea launched in 2007 became popular as a way for city employees to send money back to their families in rural areas. mPesa's popularity spread phenomenally throughout Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda, where it is used to pay for school fees and taxi drivers. Apart from the convenience of not having to queue at the bank on a weekly or monthly basis, and for drivers not to deal with large amounts of cash, or

change, the mPesa system is also eco friendly. mPesa was also adopted in South Africa and has made its way to the UK, Dubai and Afghanistan, where it is used to pay that countries police force. Money can be sent from the UK with no charge to the recipient. The mHealth projects from Africa, highlighted in the course, range from tracking nutritional child development in Malawi (a UNICEF project), medical appointment reminders, drug adherence and peer support for the terminally ill. These health care and money transfer projects provide enormous personal, economic and developmental benefits. The course was conceived by Dominic Mentor and developed and co-taught with Nabeel Ahmad. Dr. Mentor drew inspiration from the ability to receive

SMS text messages from his sisters in South Africa through instant messaging during his studies in the USA. They had text message conversations for hours at only 1 cent per sent text message. The mobile phone learning class is a non-technical course that caters for all students and exposes the unique learning opportunities with the most basic of mobile phones.



*Dr. Dominic Mentor*

# FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS



Dr. Helen Verdeli  
Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology

Dr. Helen Verdeli, is an Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology at Teachers College, Columbia University, where she has been teaching graduate psychology students on research and practice of empirically based treatments, specifically IPT and CBT with adolescents and adults. In terms of her work in sub-Saharan Africa, her focus has been in Uganda. In 2000 and 2005, she was a member of a team led by Paul Bolton of The Johns Hopkins University that studied interpersonal therapy (IPT) in AIDS-afflicted communities there. In 2010, she, along with two assistant student researchers, Eric Lewandowski and Annie Feighery, conducted a fascinating qualitative study in rural Uganda. The study, funded by World Vision International, explored the long term impacts of a long-standing Group Interpersonal Psychotherapy treatment program for depression in communities that have been decimated by poverty and HIV and AIDS. Specifically, the study looked at both anticipated and unanticipated effects of the treatment program for people who participated in the treatment, their families (in particular children), and also for the community at large.

Professor Marc Hill, an Associate Professor of English Education at Teachers College has undertaken research in Tanzania, studying the role of national literacy campaigns and local English education projects. His interest in Africa is not solely academic. He has worked in the non-profit sector, serving as a liaison for the Sullivan Foundation, which promotes economic and educational development through out Africa and the Diaspora. His broader educational interest is exemplified in his research on Hip-Hop culture among urban youth in the United States. His work, which covers topics such as hip-hop culture, politics, sexuality, education and religion, has appeared in numerous journals, magazines, books, and anthologies. Dr. Hill has lectured widely and provides regular commentary for media outlets like *NPR*, *Washington Post*, *Essence Magazine*, and *New York Times*. He is currently a political contributor for *Fox News Channel*, where he appears regularly on programs such as *The O'Reilly Factor*, *Huckabee*, and *Hannity*. Prior to joining *Fox News*, Dr. Hill was a regular guest on *CNN*, *MSNBC*, and *CourtTV*. A nationally syndicated columnist, his writing appears weekly in metropolitan newspapers. For video clips and updates about his life and work, visit his website at [www.marclamonthill.com](http://www.marclamonthill.com).



Dr. Marc Lamont Hill  
Associate Professor of English Education  
and political correspondent

**With  
interests  
in Africa and  
beyond...**



**Ellen Livingston,** an Instructor and doctoral student in the Program in Social Studies, is teaching a course in the Spring 2011 semester entitled *Teaching About Africa Through Film and Service Learning*. This course is designed to help teachers find creative ways to integrate meaningful instruction in African history, culture, and current issues into secondary classrooms. Ellen's interest in Africa has taken her to Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and South Africa over the past two summers with the US-Africa Children's Fellowship, a New York-based organization that sends books and school supplies to African schools. This past July (2010), she spent a week working with teachers and students in the Umzingwane region of Matabeleland South in Zimbabwe.

**Professor Monisha Bajaj,**'s most recent research endeavor took her to India, where she was examining human rights education on a Spencer Fellowship. Prior to India, her intital research work was in Zambia, where she investigated the development and use of a human rights curriculum in a secondary school.



**Dr. Portia Williams** is the Director of International Affairs and an Assistant Professor of International and Transcultural Studies at Teachers College Columbia University. Prior to joining the TC staff, she worked in international educational development in East and Southern Africa, Eastern Europe, and the United States. Most recently, Dr. Williams served as the regional programming and training advisor to U.S. Peace Corps programs in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi, and Madagascar. She has also designed and directed education and other development programs in South Africa, Albania, and Washington D.C.



**Grants  
and  
Funding**

The Center for African Education's 2010 activities were generously supported in part by:

- the Vice President's Community and Diversity Initiative grant for the Who is African event series
- the Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER) grant for the Teaching Africa series
- the Vice Provost's Fund for the Teaching Africa Series
- International Global Centers

# FACULTY REFLECTION

## Hello Ethiopia!

*a personal account from an artist and educator who spent her sabbatical abroad*

by JUDITH BURTON

Last Spring during my sabbatical I was fortunate enough to visit Ethiopia where I had two cousins living and working as Veterinarians. They had come north from Kenya several years ago when the political situation had deteriorated and had fallen in love with the country and its people, I was soon to see why. Arriving in Addis Ababa I was quickly whisked into the hot and dusty city by a cheerful driver navigating an ancient Russian Lada stick shift. Almost before I knew it, and still trying to ground myself in the warm and colorful exuberance of the city I



*Village town hall meeting.*

was airborne again this time in a small commuter plane en-route to the famed rock-hewn churches of Lalibela, the ancient medieval capital in the north. My cousins had told me much about the churches which, as an artist, they thought would fascinate me and which were widely regarded by the Ethiopians as the eighth wonder of the world.

Ethiopia nestles on the east coast of Sub-Saharan Africa its borders encircled by those of Somalia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Sudan and Kenya. There has been considerable political activity on the borders and I was warned not to venture too close; the center of the country, however, appears a model of peaceful tranquility. The landscape is extraordinary and the small aircraft flew low enough for me to appreciate

its vast expanse. Scenically the land combines a fertile high plateau with grassy moorland and high sandstone cliffs surrounded by thinly populated desert; to the north-west the blue Nile escarpment is dotted by extinct

volcanoes, crumbling lava flows and beautiful lakes. Ethiopia is a true revelation. Lalibela itself is set high in the mountains and a one-hour drive from the tiny airport up a tortuous narrow mountain track with no guardrails; the setting is glorious. The rock churches themselves while over one thousand years old continue to be active Christian shrines and the center of the towns religious life. There are two clusters of churches ranging in size from large to exceedingly small, each built largely underground and into the mountain side and ringed by trenches and courtyards into which are carved baptismal pools, graves and hermit cells. The small churches that comprise the clusters are joined by a tangle of rough-hewn pathways and tunnels which

give narrow passageways to priests and the faithful but admit little light. The rock itself is a soft pink which appears to glow warmly as the sun moves its deep and dark shadows across each day.

Removing ones shoes and consigning them to a shoe bearer who transports them from church to church, one steps gingerly into these dim and mystical interiors with their uneven floors covered by traditional silk carpets and as ones eye become accustomed to the dark, and with the assistance of tiny flashlights kindly provided by the priests, one is transported by the sheer beauty and decorative

artistry of these ancient architects, carvers and painters. For in spite of the gloom all surface are decorated: the walls with carefully rendered biblical stories, and elaborately carved columns and ceilings with an almost endless cornucopia of richly colored designs. Some of the churches echo early Grecian temples while others are more modest and cave like. Each church has its own priest, wondrously garbed, whose pride is to show to visitors the beautifully made crosses and recount one of the many legends which gives history to the site. Of all the rock churches the one called Bet Giyorgis is perhaps the most startling. A monolithic construction close to 15 meters in height it is built entirely below ground level in a kind of sunken courtyard enclosed by

# FACULTY REFLECTION

sheer walls with no guardrails! Carved in the form of a cruciform tower the church is dedicated to St. George.

While in Lalibela I was taken on several excursions into the countryside to visit the villages and talk with the people. In one village I was invited into the school by the children—a small round branch-woven hut with thatched roof in which the youngsters sat on stones and worked on slates; they explained to me that they had that day free because their teacher was attending a workshop but she had left them with a great deal of math homework! On another day I was invited to sit with a group of elders (men) while

they discussed village affairs much like our own town councils. I was quickly aware of the cycle of activities that gave purpose to village life: people rose early to catch the light, the men heading in family clusters to the fields, and the women to collect water from the parched streams as well as brushwood to make the fires for cooking. Children appeared to be everywhere, crawling, swinging from trees, skipping and running, whispering and giggling, and running after any visitors who came by. In the evening families reunited, lights were lit and sparked in the dark clear African night, and singing, story telling and chattering marked the early evening before sleep. It was magical.

Back in Addis I discovered a relatively modern city center circled by traditional African life. I visited the university of Addis Ababa now set in the former imperial palace of Haili Se-

lassi within which is housed a fascinating ethnographic museum including medieval to modern paintings with which I was largely unfamiliar but delighted to discover. The palace is surrounded by lush and beautiful gardens

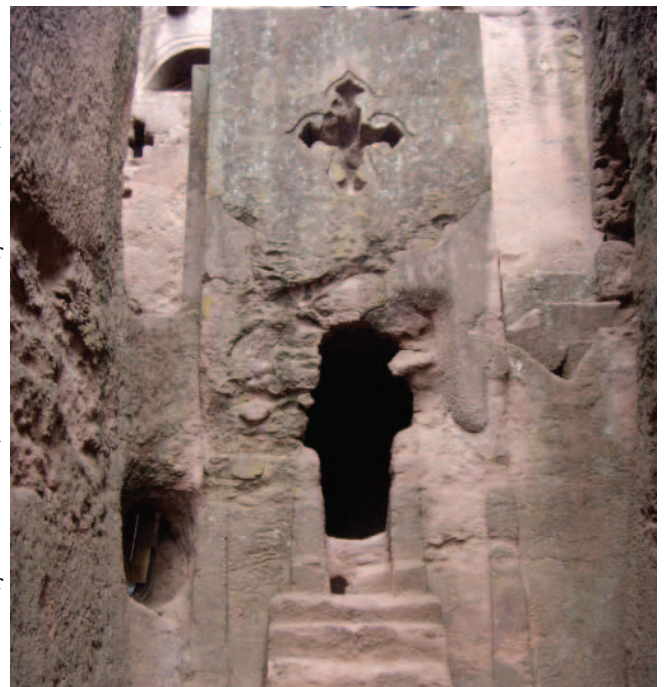


*Lalibela rock churches' burial sites*

in which the university students sit singly or in groups working on their computers under the broad shade of acacia trees! I thought of West 120th Street! The National Museum of Ethiopia is fascinating and has a great diversity of fine artifacts including a replica of the 3.5 million year old skull of Lucy a hominid woman discovered in Ethiopia. This discovery, of course, precipitated a re-thinking of human genealogy setting it back some 2.5 million years than previously supposed. Outside the hushed interiors of the museums it is perhaps the vast commercial hub of the Mercato that

is best known and most captivating. The Mercato is said to be the largest market in Africa; smelling of incense, spices and rotting vegetables, the area is lined with small shops and kiosks and stalls where one can find and bargain for just about anything from DVDs to cement mixers and where, for the unwary, pick pocketing is rife!

My time in Ethiopia was all too short and I hope to return. I had heard about falling in love with Africa now I know what this means. It is not an uncritical love of course as one finds oneself reflecting on values, practices, beliefs and ways of life in terms unchallenged by living in the West. The challenge is a two-way street and profound; for myself as an artist and educator, it offers a great deal for imaginative contemplation.



*Lalibela rock church entrance*

# STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

## Summer Living: TC Students Head to Different Locales for Research and Work-Related Opportunities



Theresa Yohannas  
(International Education Development:  
Humanitarian Issues)  
Michigan State University

Theresa received a Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship (FLAS) to study Elementary Amharic, one of the common languages spoken in Ethiopia. She conducted her fellowship at the Summer Cooperative African Language Institute (SCALI) where--in addition to intensive language instruction--she is participating in several research forums, lectures, and cultural events. Her desire to learn Amharic was motivated by her interest in gender/humanitarian issues that impede education in Ethiopia and greater East Africa. A favorite experience for Theresa was connecting with African professionals and area researchers who have shared their perspectives and country expertise with her. In the future, Theresa hopes her language acquisition will support her goal to study and work in the region.

Janny's research situates itself on the intersection of "China" and "Africa" in Zambia. She is interested in the interactions among Chinese and Zambians across multiple work settings, including the telecommunications, construction, and textile industries. Specifically, she wants to know how larger political, economic, and historical processes shape the Chinese and Zambian experience, bringing them together in the most unlikely of circumstances, and how they themselves negotiate their positions, understand and construct their experiences within these larger processes. In previous fieldwork, she closely examined Chinese and Zambian interactions at a Chinese-owned multinational telecommunications company. Next year, she hopes to do long-term fieldwork using the data I previously collected and comparing the data to Chinese and Zambian interactions in the construction and textile industries. Janny's research aims to localize studies on China and African relations and try to ascertain how people are relating to each other on the ground. Janny's summer field work research was graciously funded by the following sources at Columbia University: the Weatherhead East Asian Institute's Sasakawa 2010 Young Leaders Fellowship Program Award, the Weatherhead East Asian Institute's Daniel and 2010 Mariane Spiegel Fund, and the Institute of African Studies' Leitner 2010 Fellowship Program.

Janny Chang  
(Applied Anthropology, Ph.D. candidate)  
Zambia and China



# STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

Samantha received a Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship to learn Swahili. After taking an intensive Swahili course, she used her stipend to fund a one-month research trip for her IP to Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Her data collection goal was to capture the personal narratives of natives because she wanted to find out what relationships and experiences shape daily life in eastern Congo and western Rwanda in order to understand how her interactions with these stories could be used in development discourse to initiate relevant positive changes.

She started in Kigali, Rwanda, where she stayed at a local guesthouse owned by an American man and his family. Samantha took the bus to Goma, DRC where she traversed the volcanic-rock-ridden “streets” that resembled mountain passes rather than roads to interview school teachers, domestic servants and children selling peanuts at the port. She then talked with a group of boys who made their living doing freelance photography for special occasions and girls selling corn. She also walked inside homes of displaced people from the recent civil war to see their suffering and hear their voices. During a day trip to the small village of Kitchanga with the head of a Congolese NGO, Samantha interviewed the Mayor about the major problems and solutions to development in his area. In the beginning weeks of August, Samantha took a 7-hour ferry ride on Lake Kivu from Goma to Bukavu, where she toured the city and met UN troops.

Samantha continued 15 minutes over the border to Kamembe in Cyangugu, Rwanda where she stayed with her Swahili teacher’s Uncle Jacques, a doctor at a local hospital, and his family. Here she toured schools and watched the Rwandan elections unfold. She then flew out of Kigali to return to New York and begin consolidating her research for her IP. She is currently working on a short video and picture presentation to show to New York high school students.

Samantha will integrate these videos and pictures into her IP.

Samantha Basile  
(International Education Development:  
Policy Studies, M.A. candidate)  
Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda



Sharon Kim  
(International Education Development:  
Policy Studies)  
Uganda

Sharon spent her summer working in Uganda for BRAC, a southern development organization whose mission is to empower people and communities in situations of poverty, illiteracy, disease and social injustice. Her focus was on understanding the context of the complex gender issues that are hindering the rights of young girls and women in Uganda. Through BRAC's Empowerment and Livelihood for Adolescents (ELA) program, Sharon was able to engage in qualitative research to help identify key issues in the girls' communities and to use this information for the development of a new program/intervention to help mitigation such issues.

# STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

Melissa, a 2nd year student in the International Education Development program, spent this last summer in Rwanda doing research on language policy in education and the use of learner-centered teaching practices. She volunteered for the American-based NGO, the International Education Exchange, where she helped with the monitoring and evaluation of their school-based teacher training pilot program. This program placed teacher trainers at schools across the country in order to provide Rwandese teachers with daily training in English and learner-centered teaching strategies. Melissa also guest taught on human rights at the Akilah Institute for Women. Akilah is a vocational school for women, which offers certificate programs in hospitality, tourism, and leadership.



Melissa Cushman  
(International Education Development:  
Peace Education, M.A. candidate)  
Kigali, Rwanda

Ellen Frierson  
(International Education Development: Language, Literacy, and Technology, M.A. candidate)  
Limbe, Cameroon

Ellen interned with two local community-based NGOs in Limbe, a coastal city in the Southwest region of Cameroon. One of the NGOs is the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Foundation (LUKMEF), which has program areas in peace, social justice, and sustainable development. LUKMEF brought Ellen on to develop a new initiative within the social justice program called the Media Justice Project. Her primary goal this past summer was laying the groundwork for that project and trying to find sustainable funding for it. Once the project gets off the ground, it will provide support and training for journalists and attempt to promote a free, reliable, and independent media sector in Cameroon.

Ellen's also interned with the Eden Media Group, a program of the Centre for the Environment and Rural Transformation (CERUT), a local agricultural development NGO. Eden Media is LUKMEF's partner for the Media Justice Project. Their projects include the Eden newspaper and radio station, and they focus on using the media for peace, rural development and community outreach. Ellen worked with the Eden journalists to produce the weekly Social Justice Radio Program, assist with editing for the newspaper, write a column on children's issues, facilitate workshops on human rights, and write proposals for the Media Justice Project.





# STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

Eric Lewandowski, MS candidate, and Annie Feighery, MPA/EdM candidate, were in Masaka, Uganda for three weeks in May 2010 as part of an inter-departmental collaboration between the departments of Counseling and Clinical Psychology, International and Transcultural Studies, and Health and Behavior Studies. The collaboration was supported by World Vision International and the Provost's Fund at Teachers College. The research project explored the long-term impact of a Group Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT-G) program for the treatment of depression in rural communities of southwestern Uganda. The regions of Masaka and Rakai were devastated by the Tanzania War first, and then by the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS--with local prevalence rates as high as 30% at one point. Qualitative research in the region established a strong link between HIV/AIDS prevalence in a community and high rates of depression. In 2002, Dr. Helena Verdeli, who is Eric Lewandowski's mentor at Teachers College, collaborated with colleagues at Johns Hopkins University and World Vision International to implement the IPT-G. Preliminary findings of Eric and Annie's work suggest that in addition to the treatment of depression, the IPT-G program had important impacts more broadly on communities as a whole. The implications for this research are critical to global health, as depression emerges as the single greatest cause of disability adjusted life years (DALYs) worldwide and impoverished communities have disproportionately high rates of all mental health problems, particularly depression.



Eric Lewandowski  
M.S. candidate, Counseling and  
Clinical Psychology



Annie Feighery  
M.P.A. and Ed.M. candidate, Counseling  
and Clinical Psychology

## Reflections from former CAE Coordinator and Ed.D. candidate, Stephanie Bengtsson

As I find myself edging ever closer to crossing the finish line of the marathon that is the dissertation process, it seems as good a time as any to pause briefly, reflect, and take stock of what has taken place over the last year (though I can't pause for too long, or this dissertation will never get finished...). 2010 has proven to be quite the year! Spring 2010 was my final semester as coordinator of CAE, and thanks to the passion and dedication of the CAE staff – Melissa, ThienVinh, Katie, and Vusa – and the leadership and direction of Professor Bond, it was a semester to remember, with book breakfasts, panel discussions, film screenings and more. It has been quite a treat returning to TC this fall as I can now attend the multitude of fabulous CAE events as an interested and engaged spectator instead! African issues have proven central to my own research as well. This year, I had the wonderful

opportunity to co-write a chapter with Professor Bartlett entitled “From Child-Friendly Schools to Child-Friendly Research Methods: Lessons Learned on Child-Centred Research from UNICEF’s



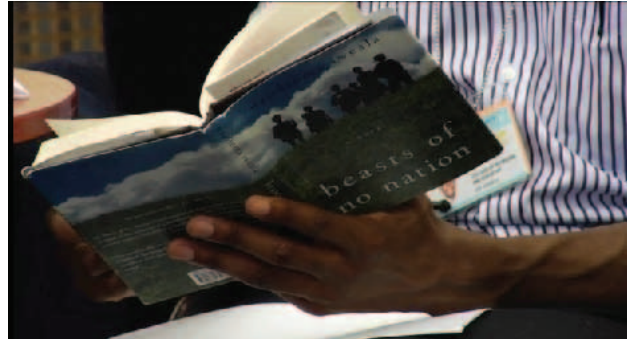
Learning Plus Initiative” for a book, *Education in Conflict: A Tribute to Jackie Kirk* to be published in 2011. The chapter is based on a mixed-methods study for a UNICEF initiative in five African countries we worked on from 2008 to

2010. (For a more detailed description of the study, please see the previous issue of *African Education in Focus*). Through my dissertation research – a critical analysis of the global education aid discourse around fragile states – I examine the terminology that is used to talk about Africa and the so-called developing world in aid, consider the potential impact of that terminology, and aim to bring about a positive linguistic change within the discourse in order ultimately to improve aid mechanisms. With the support of Dr Mary Mendenhall and Professor Bajaj, I was able to put together a shorter chapter based on this research for a special issue of the *Oxford Studies in Comparative Education*. As I said before, 2010 was quite the year. I should now really get back to that marathon, but I look forward to crossing paths again with you all in the years to come!

# PAST EVENTS

## WHO IS AFRICAN?: Writing About Africa and the Diaspora A three-part event series

### Part I: Book Talk with *Beasts of No Nation* Author, Uzodinma Iweala



With collaboration from TC's Gottesman Libraries, on April 8th, 2010, Nigerian-American author Uzodinma Iweala came to TC to read from and discuss his debut novel, *Beasts of No Nation* (Harper Collins, 2005), as well as his forthcoming nonfiction work on AIDS/HIV in Nigeria. The former tells the story of a young boy soldier, Agu, who is forced into the army in an unnamed country in West Africa. Despite his love for school and dream to become a doctor, Agu enters a guerilla war that he finds both horrifying and fascinating. He faces a series of despicable crimes that begin with the killing of an unarmed soldier, ultimately causing him to lose his religious faith. Noted for its direct and idiosyncratic use of the first person narrative, as well as provocative content, Iweala's book has received critical acclaim in numerous sources, including *The New York Times*, *Time Magazine*, *Rolling Stone*, and *The London Times*.

### Part II: Student Writing Workshop



Dr. Mendenhall served as the workshop facilitator.

On April 23rd, the Center for African Education and the African Studies Working Group organized an event, where participants were given a unique opportunity to work on dispelling commonly-held views of Afro-pessimism, and to broaden the range of channels through which people think and converse about Africa by participating in a writing workshop, facilitated by Dr Mary Mendenhall, a former lecturer in the International

& Transcultural Studies Department at Teachers College.

Participants had the opportunity to hear from a number of students at various stages of the writing process, watch clips and engage with readings on current representations of Africa in the world arena, and work together in groups to identify and attempt to address some of the pitfalls associated with writing about Africa.

# PAST EVENTS

## Part III: Panel Discussion and Reception

The three-part "Who is African?" event series culminated in a panel discussion and reception event on April 29, 2010. The goal of this event was to explore how Africa is represented in a number of different spheres including academic writing and research, journalism, and documentary making and the impact of these representations on public opinion of the continent. The event endeavored to promote new knowledge, tolerance, and respect for the diversity of linguistic, racial and ethnic differences that exist in Africa and diasporic communities around the world and invited participants to critically engage with representations of Africa.



Professor Bond introduced the event.



Yoruba Richen, a director, showed a trailer of her upcoming documentary, "Promised Land." (See page 23 for a review of the film). As a filmmaker, she spoke about the ways in which media images paint a portrayal of a homogeneous, struggling Africa. She challenged the audience to watch films that showed Africa as a complex place, full of diversity and complex peoples.



The audience



Kambale Musavuli of Friends of Congo discusses the ways in which the conflicts that take place in the Congo are quite complex. He elaborated on how American corporate interests, and America's need for minerals (like coltan, a mineral used in many electronics) perpetuate the cycle of violence and corruption in the Congo.



Laura Heaton, a writer/editor for the Enough Project -- a project of the Center for American Progress, which aims to end genocide and crimes against humanity -- talks about how journalism can tend to oversimplify or dramaticized Africa.

# PAST EVENTS

**Oct. 19th:  
"Higher Education in  
Rwanda" panel**



"Higher Education in Rwanda:  
A Panel Discussion with Students and Staff of Generation Rwanda  
and  
the Akilah Institute for Women"

Also co-sponsored by the African Studies Working Group and the Gottesman Libraries, this panel discussion on the topic of higher education in Rwanda. The panel consisted of the following guest speakers: Gisele Bahati and Anita Umutoni, students from the Akilah Institute for Women; Patricie Uwase and Phillip Mulari, students involved with the organization Generation Rwanda; and Executive Director of Generation Rwanda, Michael Brotchner.

**Oct. 19th: Jane  
Boorstein on her innovative  
approach to family  
planning , funded by Bill and  
Melinda Gates  
Foundation**



Jane K. Boorstein, Teachers College alumnus; Director of the Partnership for Sustainable Families and Communities at Teachers College; and Trustee of the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction, spoke on the innovative approach to family planning that she developed and implemented in Ethiopia. Funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Learning Our Way Out project was implemented in fifteen villages, reached some 90,000 people, and became a model, bottom-up multi-discipline learning approach. This event was also co-sponsored by the African Studies Working Group and Gottesman Libraries.

*For a video excerpt of Jane Boorstein's talk, please visit the Gottesman Video Collective, at <http://gvcollective.pressible.org/> and search for the event*

# PAST EVENTS

**Oct. 21st, Discussion with Dr. Cream Wright, formerly, Global Chief of Education and Associate Director in the Programmes Division at UNICEF**



Dr. Cream Wright's lecture, titled "On Being African: The Political Ideology of Self Identity and Conferred identities" focused on a range of factors influencing identity and the making of the modern African (e.g. legal, geographic, language, history, genealogy, etc). He also discussed the role of education and culture as determinants of what it means to be an African in today's global environment. He is currently the Head of REDI4Change LLC, a Think Tank & Consulting Firm.

photo courtesy: Western Cape Education Department



**Nov. 4th: Dr. Sigamoney Naicker, on "The Education Challenge in South Africa"**

Dr. Sigamoney Naicker, the Chief Director of Curriculum Development at Western Cape Department of Education, discussed the implementation of educational policy as a complex and difficult task in post-apartheid South Africa. The paradigmatic nature of change in South Africa post-1994, which involved the unpacking of a new way of thinking that departed from the apartheid doctrine, was a unique challenge. Support for policy implementation varied depending on the audience, the context, etc. Despite these complexities, much has been achieved over the last 18 years. However, there remain challenges that still have to be resolved concerning social class, race and class.

**Nov. 9th: TC Professor Erica Walker**



Dr. Erica N. Walker, a professor of Mathematics Education in the Department of Mathematics, Science, and Technology, lectured on selected findings from a three year study of African American mathematicians and discussed the networks that facilitate their mathematics success across the lifespan, from early childhood through adulthood.

# PAST EVENTS



*When xenophobic attacks broke out across South Africa in 2008, many were shocked by violence that felt like a violation of the principles of their newly democratic nation. Where Do I Stand? is a window into the lives of seven young people thinking deeply about their actions during and after this violence. They include a Rwandan refugee, a girl wrestling with the reality of foreigners in her township, a boy facing calls of cowardice, a girl whose family sheltered their gardener. Where Do I Stand? captures the optimistic voices of youth carving out their own places in this complex and divided country.*

**Nov. 16th:  
Film screening and discussion with director,  
Molly Blank**

**Nov. 29th:  
Talk with Dr. Alcinda  
Honwana, author of  
*Child Soldiers in Africa***

photo courtesy: International  
Institute of Social Studies



With a packed house, Dr. Honwana began her lecture by telling a story about a boy whose initiation to becoming a child soldier involved killing his father. From there, Dr. Honwana deconstructed the definition of a child soldier, from its oxymoronic label to the many reasons why a child takes up arms. She further elaborated on how the phenomenon of child soldiers aren't endemic to Africa, and that there are female soldiers who are forced into conflict as well. Throughout her lecture, Dr. Honwana told heartbreaking true stories that made the lecture vivid in detail, while providing a strong context for theorizing about child soldiers.

## The Rebirth of Rwanda: Art Exhibition and Talk

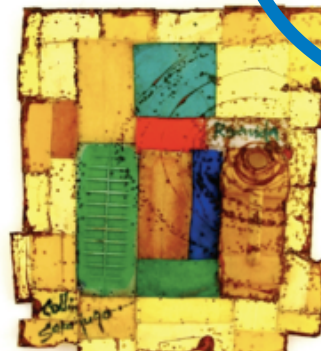
### The Rebirth of Rwanda

**Wednesday, December 1, 10:00 am**  
(Exhibit runs until December 29, 2010)  
**Low Library, Rotunda, Columbia University**

While promoting unity and reconciliation, Rwandans have for the last 15 years been working tirelessly to reconstruct the once war-torn country. The artists of **Ivuka Arts Kigali** have used their inspirations, motivations, and life experiences to portray the lifestyles of Rwandans today.

For more information on Ivuka Arts Kigali, please visit  
<http://www.ivukaarts.com/>.

This exhibit will be on view in the Rotunda of Low Library until December 29th, 2010. It is free and open to the public.



In  
collaboration  
with Columbia  
University's Committee on  
Global Thought and  
the Institute for African  
Studies

# REVIEW

## "Promised Land" documentary tackles the land reform issue in post-apartheid South Africa

by NICOLE WASHINGTON

In the new documentary, *Promised Land*, director Yoruba Richen highlights the tensions of land reform through the lens of two African communities who are seeking the return of land, and, on the other hand, the white farmers and developers who contend to be the rightful owners of the land. Fifteen years post-apartheid, South Africa finds itself entrenched in a tangled web of ownership and land claims between blacks, whites and the government that are "unsustainable" and a "ticking time bomb." The documentary gives an outsider a particularly acute

look at the issues of race, space, and power in the juxtaposition of an impoverished tribe and a middle class educated family contending for land. The 9,000 member large Mekkareng community, with only one letter to prove their forced expulsion, still struggles to reclaim 40,000 acres of land from which they were displaced 40 years ago. While the middle class descendants of Abram Momamu, with resources and attorneys, received land back from the government after a white landowner was expropriated. After receiving the land, the family continued to demand more from the government by way of materials and training, while the land lay unused.

The film also provides the pro-

This movie is a definite must-see for anyone interested in the politics of post-apartheid South Africa. I found the film both moving and humbling because I wasn't aware of the level of complexity of land reform in South Africa. The film is critical of the government's strategy, but also shows the



A scene from the film: Protesters demanding that the government fulfill their claims of land reform for black South Africans.

difficult position they find themselves in trying to redistribute land. In reality 15 years post-apartheid, the government is far from its promise that 30% of land would be returned to blacks and there is a real potential for backlash from these communities. The enmity between the black and white South Africans and the government is almost palpable.

The enmity between the black and white South Africans and the government is almost palpable. *Promised Land* was available for viewing last spring (2010) in Harlem as part of the "Harlem Library Cinema Series," as well as other locations around the US and South Africa. The film was also broadcasted on PBS. For more details about the film, visit <http://www.promisedlandfilm.com>.

For more details about the film, visit <http://www.promisedlandfilm.com>.

# REVIEW

## Fela! On-Broadway, with special guest Michelle Obama

by THIENVINH NGUYEN

By chance of discounted student-rush tickets, my out-of-town friend got her wish of seeing *Fela!*, a Broadway show about the life of the Nigerian musician, Fela Kuti, when she came to visit me in New York City. She and I sat in a sold-out Thursday night show of *Fela!* on November 18, 2010. Even though this was a wish-list tourist item for Rosa, she didn't know much about Fela or what the show was going to be about. She told me that she had heard that there was good music and good dancing.



*The stage of Fela! on-Broadway*

We both got more than we bargained for. The biography-driven plot of *Fela!*, played wonderfully by Kevin Mambo, follows his burgeoning musical career in Nigeria, to his political activism in the United States, to his sensational shows throughout the U.S. and the world, to his return and ultimate death in Nigeria. It tells the tale of his life, through his music, manner of presentation (including his ridiculously flamboyant stage pant-suits), and sensational dance moves. More

importantly, it told the tale of a man who was complex: a Black Panther supporter and pan-Africanist; a radical activist who argued against corporations, government corruption (especially in Nigeria), and the forces of colonialism; a ladies' man and polygamist; and a loving son who adored

his mother. He was the father of Afrobeat, who influenced musicians throughout Africa and the world. He was a man who cried when his mother (played by Patti LaBelle) was brutally murdered in the hands of the Nigerian army when they invaded and burned down his autonomous compound in Lagos, probably because he was seen as threat.

Imagine this whole story unfolding before you, but mostly through dance and songs. His lyrics conveyed

so much, and his beats were innovative and captivating.

And then, imagine this whole story unfolding in this beautifully decorated stage with dancers shaking their body ferociously in beaded costumes, with Michelle Obama, the First Lady, in the audience. Her very

presence there was interesting, for when Fela declares that he will be the first Black president, eyes gravitated towards her. When he declares that he loves African-American women, eyes again gravitated her again. Mine included.

All of this is to show that his history, his music, continues to make us think and question our very place in this world, a world that is divided by race, and a world where his themes of corruption and oppression still resonate. And a world in which a Black president is pioneering, and his wife's presence at a particular Broadway show is very sensational indeed, in more ways than one.



# WORLD CUP SOCCER

## Living in South Africa during World Cup Fever

by MARY CLAIRE ABBOTT

Four boys. Two girls. (Not a one over the age of twenty-one.) One two-bedroom craigslist apartment. Six weeks in Johannesburg.

What may read as a plug for Real World South Africa turned out to be my summer 2010. Two high school friends and I went in on the first World Cup ticket lottery. To the disappointment of my bank account (and un-forewarned parents), I won, the boys lost. Over the next year, fence-sitting friends were wooed and gaps in our ticket itinerary were filled (at the cost of many babysitting hours). We secured an apartment posted

on craigslist (the owner was a member of the Lion King Las Vegas production, confirmed face-to-face by one of our own trip-mates) and we booked our transcontinental flights. For all intents and purposes, we were ready for kick-off.

Still, something didn't sit quite right. I have been fortunate enough, at my young age, to have traveled far and frequently, but never before had I travelled for the sake of a sporting event. Despite my countless saving (I started budgeting four years earlier, while still in high school) and unguarded enthusiasm about watching a real, live, professional cup match, this trip reeked of worrying contradictions: what kind of meaningful interactions could take place when we were going to be living in a distanced self-contained suburb? What are the ethical implications of being a privileged, white traveler staying for a brief visit to a coun-

try less than two decades free of apartheid? Was the kind of development taking place in South Africa for the sake of tourists like me going to have any meaningful and lasting impact on its citizens?

To the latter question, I have come

few people roll down the windows to tell us we were being downright suicidal.

Still, it was during our adventures navigating the city that we were able to see more than just the football-crazed side of Johannesburg. Limited to a student-sized budget, we found ourselves in a Jo-burg suburb without a car. To us, this naturally meant that we would take public transportation. In one light, our experiences can be read as hostile and uncomfortable: the shared taxis consisted of a dizzying unspoken code of hand gestures and etiquette. Sometimes we would ask if we were confused, but most of the time we tried to learn by observation, which meant that most of the time we were doing something blaringly wrong. On more than one occasion we found ourselves in a "no-go-zone" at a "no-go" hour. Still it was aboard the minibuses that we learned bits and pieces of South African culture. We learned that instead of "excuse me," South Africa says "sorry." We learned Zulu catchphrases and how to click in Xhosa. We were invited to braais (the South African variation of a backyard BBQ), reggae nights, college parties and concerts. We gave our phone numbers out to more people than I have in my address book on my phone here in the States.

I have no misperceptions about the extent to my understanding of South Africa: limited. But I do know that despite the cautionary tales of crime and racism (not to belittle anyone's experience of either), the Johannesburg I saw was willing to share a seat, eager to share their city with a few scruffy American college students on the public bus.

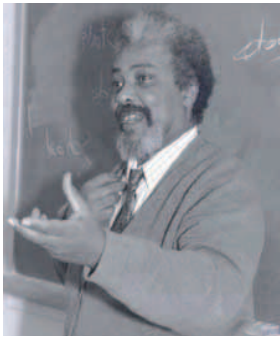


*Fans cheering at a World Cup soccer game.*

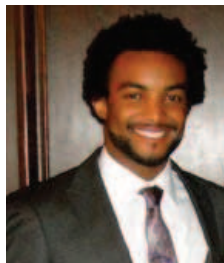
to no satisfying resolution. There is a fair argument to be made that the World Cup was in fact a massive waste of national spending, better appropriated towards HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, education, and the improvement of living conditions in slum conditions. The pricetag for the stadiums alone amounted to over \$1.3 billion, nearly six times the original estimate when South Africa won its bid in 2004. Overall government spending rounded out to a less-than-pretty \$6billion, not including hefty contributions made by host cities.

My concern over the difficulty of meaningful interaction was in fact worthy of anxiety: Johannesburg proved itself to be an indoor city. When we walked (which we had to do every time we left the confines of our apartment complex), we were the subject of many quizzical stares, and even had a

# CAE STAFF PROFILES



*Professor George C. Bond,  
Director*



*Evan Hendon,  
Incoming Coordinator*



*Melissa Cushman,  
Outgoing Coordinator*



*ThienVinh Nguyen,  
Graduate Assistant*



*Staci Johnson,  
Graduate Assistant*

Dr. George Clement Bond is the Director of the Center for African Education and William F. Russell Professor for Anthropology and Education at Teachers College, Columbia University. His interests include education and elite formation in the United States and Africa; African studies; African religions and politics; agrarian transformations; and cultural dimensions of urban and minority populations. He has conducted research on political and religious change among the Tumbuka-speaking peoples of Zambia and Malawi; social dimensions of AIDS in Southern Uganda; and privatization, democratization and the plight of the poor in northern Zambia. Dr. Bond has been the Director of the Institute of African Studies at Columbia University and President of the Association for Africanist Anthropology. His most recent publications include *Contested Terrains and Constructed Categories: Contemporary Africa in Focus* (2002) and *Witchcraft Dialogues: Anthropological and Philosophical Exchanges* (2001). He holds a Ph.D. in Social Anthropology from the London School of Economics.

Evan is a MA student in International Educational Development with a concentration in Policy Studies. Before matriculating at Teachers College, he was a corps member with Teach For America-Kansas City, where he had the opportunity to teach both 6th and 10th grade students in Economics and African American history, respectively. During his undergraduate career, Evan focused on black liberation philosophy and Pan-Africanism, with particular attention given to the U.S., Caribbean, and African context. Currently, his academic interests center around post-colonial education and endogenous development and their relationship to national development throughout the African Diaspora. Evan graduate from Brown University where he double concentrated in Africana Studies and Political Science.

Melissa is a MA student in International Education Development with a concentration in Peace Education. She co-founded and co-directed Umubano Sister School program which facilitated relationships between students in Rwanda and the United States. Melissa has worked for the Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center as an Education Assistant. She has consulted on education projects, guest taught on human rights, and conducted research in Rwanda both in 2010 and 2007. Her interests include critical pedagogy, human rights, conflict resolution, global citizenship education and arts for social changes. Her area of interest is the central east region of Africa. Melissa graduated magna cum laude from the University of Washington Bothell with a BA in Global Studies and minors in African Studies and Human Rights.

ThienVinh (pronounced TIN-vin) is a MA student in the Anthropology and Education program and a graduate assistant with the Comitas Institute For Anthropological Study. She has studied and conducted research on eco-villages and government attitudes toward sustainability in Ghana. In addition, she has traveled throughout West Africa (Togo, Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Mali). ThienVinh's interests include food, agriculture, sustainability efforts, environmental education, tools of empowerment, and the meanings of space and place. ThienVinh holds two BA degrees from UCLA—one in Geography, the other in Sociology—as well as a minor in Education Studies.

Staci is a MA student in International Educational Development with a concentration in Peace Education. She taught at a public high school in the Marshall Islands for three years before beginning her studies at Teachers College. Staci's undergraduate research surrounded questions of identity and linguistic colonization in Senegal. She has lived and worked across the United States, France, Senegal and the Marshall Islands. Her current research interests include critical peace education and college access initiatives for migrant populations, as well as post-colonial education and language policies. She graduated cum laude from Colorado College with a BA in French culture and an emphasis on linguistics.

# AFFILIATES

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# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Center for African Education Mission Statement

The Center for African Education promotes research and teaching about education, broadly defined, in Africa and the African Diaspora. Its central aim is to create a community of students, faculty, and staff with common interests and commitments to the fields of Education and African Studies. Interdisciplinary study and discussion across Teachers College and Columbia University are promoted through research projects, conferences, lecture series, and courses. The Center integrates the

study of African education in different programs at the College. It also promotes linkages with African universities by hosting visiting scholars, policy makers, practitioners, and activists who will present their research and experience from different disciplinary and theoretical perspectives. The Center provides a forum for students to discuss their research and interests with African scholars, Africanist faculty, and colleagues at conferences, public lectures, and seminars. It is also prepar-

ing to undertake joint activities with educational institutions and international organizations in New York City and with universities, research centers and non-government organizations in Africa, Latin America and other regions of the world. In accordance with Teachers College's main focus on education, psychology and health, the Center will pursue problems within these domains as well as contribute to the College's understanding and promotion of educational equity.



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+find our fan page and "like" us on facebook.com

*We're proud to announce that we've received the Teachers College Vice President's Diversity and Community Initiatives Grant for the 2010-2011 year. We will be organizing a three-part series that explores the theme of "Everyday Africa."*

*The following activities are currently being planned:*

- Food-Tasting Event
- Movie Night
- Panel Discussion & Reception

*Please check out our website for updates on events, programs, internships, and other resources!*

## NEWSLETTER EDITORIAL TEAM

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