

the insights + perspectives issue

AFRICAN EDUCATION IN FOCUS

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

insights
+
perspectives

In Memoriam: Beverlee Bruce · Mary Mendenhall
Profile · International Education Week Lecture
Screening · Growing Up With/In Zimbabwe · Dr.
Bond's ABA Legacy Award · American Anthropol-
ogical Association Conference · UNICEF Project ·
African Diaspora Film Festival · *Invictus* Movie Re-
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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Recognizing Insights and Perspectives

This issue of African Education in Focus recognizes the Insights and Perspectives of the different constituencies that make up Teachers College and share an interest in African Education and African Studies. The Center for African Education provides a platform for the expression of diverse views and opinions and accepts the fact that there will be profound differences amongst faculty members, students and staff in representing the peoples of Africa, especially in the fields of education, development, policy and the politics of identity. In the United States, February is celebrated as

Black History Month, a period during which the contribution of the peoples of Africa and those of African descent is given special recognition. It provides a brief intensive moment for teaching, learning and discovering the complexities of being African, of being of African descent, and for that matter, of being human. In their teaching, research and service Teachers College's faculty members and students have a history of exploring these complexities from a comparative perspective. They are aware that though the peoples of their research may be of African descent, the historical experiences and cultural manifestations of these peoples may differ.

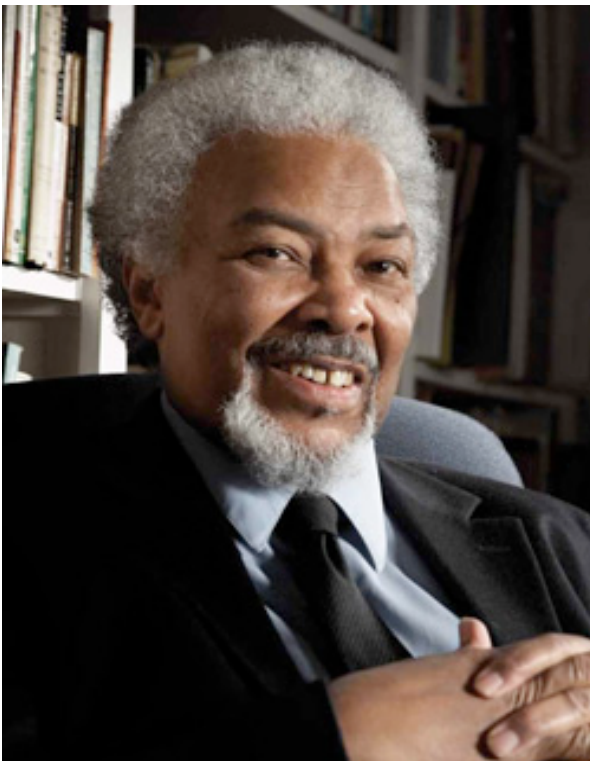
This year has presented the Center with an array of opportunities. We wish to welcome the return of Professors Monisha Bajaj and Lesley Bartlett from their extended periods of research. In addition, we welcome Professor Marc Hill who has joined the Teachers College faculty from Temple University.

Bajaj, Bartlett, and

Hill bring into play their own individual perspectives on the social, cultural and educational experiences of different populations. Their work is inclusive and not constrained by geography. Thus, their analysis of African materials is framed within a comparative perspective. Professor Bajaj, an Assistant Professor in International and Comparative Education, brings together a number of different regions and perspectives in the study of peace education, the main focus of her research. Her initial academic focus was on Zambia where she investigated the development and use of a human rights curriculum in a secondary school. Using this research project as a base she has now extended her interest to India where she spent a year researching human rights education initiatives.

During this period she retained an active interest in Africa attending Columbia University's Institute of African Studies conferences in Southern Africa. This year she returns to Teachers College with new insights on African Education.

Dr. Bartlett's initial research was on literacy, culture and schooling in Brazil. In New York City she has worked with Profes-



«« Dr. George C. Bond, Director

sor Ofelia Garcia on an additive, bilingual high school for Latino immigrant youth. During her recent sabbatical she pursued two main projects, one of which was in the Dominican Republic and the other in Tanzania. The Tanzanian project, undertaken collaboratively with Professor Vavrus of the University of Minnesota, explores the cultural politics of pedagogy in Tanzania. It pursues problems of teacher training and curriculum development and involves Teachers College students working with Tanzanian teachers. There seems to be a growing Tanzanian connection. Over the past three years Professor Marc Hill, an Associate Professor of English Education, has undertaken research in Tanzania, studying the role of national literacy campaigns and local English education projects. His interest in Af-



Dr. Monisha Bajaj, researching in India

"The Center for African Education provides a platform for the expression of diverse views and opinions and accepts the fact that there will be profound differences amongst faculty members, students and staff in representing the peoples of Africa, especially in the fields of education, development, policy and the politics of identity."



New faculty member: Dr. Marc Lamont Hill

rica 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 educa-

tional interest is exemplified in his research on Hip-Hop culture among urban youth and the comparative studies of literacy and culture in Tanzania and the United States.

The Center mourns the death Dr. Beverlee Bruce, one of its most distinguished members. Dr. Bruce brought to the Center a unique perspective based upon her experiences as an academic, scholar and practitio-

ner. She held strong views about Africa and how it should be represented, stemming from her long connection with Liberia.



Professor Lesley Bartlett

IN MEMORIAM

A Tribute to Beverlee Bruce

by KIRAN JAYARAM



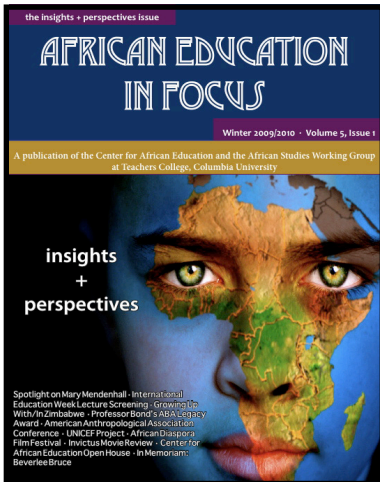
Conducting research for his dissertation in the Dominican Republic, Kiran Jayaram, a Ph.D. candidate in Applied Anthropology, and former staff member at the Center for African Education, was thrown right into a tragedy he could have neither prepared for nor expected. Across the border, an earthquake rippled across Port Au Prince, leaving an estimated 200,000 dead and millions more homeless. Kiran joined relief efforts there and returned to find an e-mail requesting him to write a few words in memory of a dear friend and mentor, Dr. Beverlee Bruce, who had passed away in New York on September 15, 2009. Kiran was unaware that she had passed, and like all those whose lives had Beverlee touched, was shocked and saddened. The following are his recollections: a fitting glimpse into the legacy of a remarkable scholar, leader, mentor and dear friend to many:

"I looked around the tables at the faces in front of names I had heard many times before (the World Bank, UNICEF, Save the Children, the Government of Liberia) and a few new ones (Phelps Stokes, Agency for Educational Development). Though I could recount the events leading up to me sitting down at the table, I could not for the life of me make sense of how I would successfully carry out what I was about to do. First, I was to speak on behalf of the Center for African Education and specifically Dr. George Bond (an extraordinary man from an extraordinary family whose members include, among many other noteworthy people, his father, a former President of the University of Liberia). Second, I was to make the case to the Liberian Ministry of Education that the CAE should play an important role in facilitating rehabilitation of part of the country's educational system.

Obviously, neither of these was easy, particularly given the company I was in. I had prepared and vetted talking points. I had assurances by Dr. Bond of my capacity to handle the task. However, when it was my turn to address the room, I hesitated, completely unnerved. It was at that exact moment when Beverlee Bruce leaned over and told me simply, "tell them what you've gotta say. You can do it." Her support was direct, effective, and soothing in its simplicity. No wonder I felt so comfortable during the cab ride from Harlem to midtown Manhattan in morning rush hour: Beverlee had relaxed me with her stories from her many years in Liberia. Armed with newfound courage, I not only accomplished my two goals, but I secured monies for a CAE pilot project and made solid in-country contacts. Perhaps I could have done it without her at my side, but I was glad she was there. The talented Liberian film-maker and social commentator Kona Khasu wrote of the death of Rev. William Lewis that a giant of Liberian culture and arts falls, and we do not cry. I had been out of the US doing dissertation research, so I learned of Beverlee's death days after returning from post earthquake Haiti. Though I had shed many tears already, I shed a few more and felt ill-at-ease, knowing that a giant promoter of Liberian culture and life was no longer here."

A giant has fallen. We weep.

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ONLINE :

Center for African Education:
www.cae.tc.edu

African Studies Working Group:
www.tc.columbia.edu/students/aswg/



SOUNDINGS

Calling All Students With Interests Relating to Africa!

Greetings from the African Studies Working Group! We are a dynamic group of individuals interested in education and its relevant issues in Africa and the African diaspora. In previous years we hosted a variety of activities including a student sym-

posium on African education, fundraisers, and social events.

This year, we are thrilled to announce the 2010 symposium on "Re-thinking Aid: Solutions, Strategies, and Innovation for Education in Africa and the Diaspora" a wonderful opportunity for all students, practitioners, and researchers to share their ideas and experiences in the field.

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 aswg@tc.edu or check out

our website at www.tc.columbia.edu/students/aswg. We look forward to meeting you soon!

Cheers,

Kathleen Dowling

ASWG Co-Chair

Sarah Hofmann

ASWG Co-Chair

Soo Park

ASWG Treasurer

Patricia Gibson

ASWG General Secretary



African Studies Working Group

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 dif-

ferent 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 preparing to undertake joint activities with educational institutions and international orga-

nizations 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.



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

All Smiles For Mary Mendenhall

by KATHARINE KEENAN

Not so long ago Mary Mendenhall was a student here at Teachers College, getting her EdD in International Educational Development. This year, Mary returned to our community as a Lecturer, and we're lucky to have her. Her professional and academic experiences make an exciting contribution to the department, and students have been benefiting from her expertise.

As a student Mendenhall conducted research in Angola. "I was interested in understanding to what degree the enormous aid investments, particularly in teacher training, were transferred to the Angolan government once these organizations withdrew from the country post-crisis," she says. But her dissertation reflects a wider-reaching need. "It was about the sustainability of educational programs in the relief-to-development transition, and about finding ways to continually increase access to quality education in countries in crisis."

While still at TC Mendenhall was also the Network Coordinator for the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE). INEE is a global, open network of non-governmental organizations, UN agencies, donors, practitioners, researchers and individuals from affected populations working together within a humanitarian and

development framework to ensure the right to education in emergencies and post-crisis recovery. There she coordinated global advocacy activities; managed INEE's Steering Group and Task Teams; and was responsible for core administrative tasks that included fundraising, strategic planning and membership development. She has since returned periodically as a consultant.

Currently Mendenhall is an Academic Consultant with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and working on a project with the University of Nairobi (UoN) to develop the world's first Master of Education program in Education in Emergencies. The program is designed to help students and existing practitioners develop the essential skills and competencies to deliver quality education in complex emergencies. Her role as a consultant includes working with the UoN faculty to co-develop the new education in emergencies curricula and an accompanying faculty development program. She also hopes to bridge a relationship between TC and UoN by creating an exchange program, which would benefit people from both institutions. Students are already asking her when they can apply—Sorry, courses won't begin at UoN until 2010-2011!



Dr. Mary Mendenhall
Lecturer in International and
Transcultural Studies

Scholarly Interests:

- Education in Emergencies
- Role of Education in Conflict
- Educational Sustainability
- Relief-Development Transitions

Dissertation Research:

- Challenges to Sustaining Education Programs in the Transition from Relief to Development: Policies and Practices of International Organizations Working in Post-Conflict Countries.

Courses Taught:

- ITSF 4094: Educational Planning in IED
- ITSF 4199: Education in Emergencies

FEATURES

International Education Week

Creating Global Learning Communities

by STEPHANIE BENGTTSSON

This fall marked the tenth annual International Education Week (IEW) of the TC Office of International Student Services (OISS). This year's theme was "Creating Global Learning Communities". The week was filled with exciting events – from brown bag discussions, to poster sessions, to panels, to film screenings – on a wide range of topics. CAE and ASWG were invited to participate, and put together two Africa-related events with the support of OISS and the Society for International Education (SIE): a screening of lectures by two Africanists, and a brown bag discussion bringing together a group of young Zimbabweans for a conversation on growing up in the post-colony and their hopes for the future.

TED Talks:

Screening & Moderated Discussion

On Wednesday November 18, a small but enthusiastic group gathered to watch two lectures from the award-winning TEDTalks video site, part of a small nonprofit devoted to Ideas Worth Spreading. TED started in 1984 as a conference bringing people together from the spheres of Technology, Entertainment, and Design. Since then, TED's scope has widened significantly, as has its audience, which is now in the millions. Every few

months, TED invites the participation of some of the world's most fascinating thinkers and doers and challenges them to give the talk of their lives in under 20 minutes! Past speakers have included

As described on the TEDtalks website:

Researcher Hans Rosling uses his cool data tools to show how countries are pulling themselves out of poverty. He demos Dollar Street, comparing households of varying income levels worldwide. Then he does something really amazing.

Andrew Mwenda asks us to reframe the 'African question' – to look beyond the media's stories of poverty, civil war and helplessness and see the opportunities for creating wealth and happiness throughout the continent.

Jane Goodall, Al Gore, and Bono.

Thanks to the generosity of the TED organisation, and their goal of giving everyone on-demand access to the world's most inspiring voices, TEDtalks are available free from their website. After spending a great deal of time going through the multitude of lectures available on Africa, we selected Hans Rosling's "New Insights on Poverty" and Andrew Mwenda's "New Look at Africa", as we thought they would provoke much lively debate and discussion.

Sure enough, after the screening, the audience engaged with the speakers and their ideas, almost as much as if they'd been in the room at the time. Audience members asked insightful questions in relation to poverty and

Speaker Biographies

Hans Rosling is Professor of International Health at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, and the Director of the Gapminder Foundation, which hosts a free online tool, which helps users to analyse global trends and statistics related to development in new and exciting ways.

*

Andrew Mwenda is a Ugandan journalist and activist, and a fierce critic of current Western aid to Africa. He has worked with print, radio and television media and has produced documentaries and commentary for the BBC on the dangers of aid and debt relief to Africa. He was arrested and tried for sedition, for comments he had made about the Ugandan President in 2005.

aid, and started an animated conversation about what the future of aid should be, in light of Mwenda's presentation, which argued that up until this point, aid has been very ineffective and actually acted as an obstacle to development. One participant wondered whether or not Hans Rosling (as a non-African,

continued on next page

FEATURES

and therefore an 'outsider') was entitled to make comments about Africa's development, and this sparked a new discussion to do with identity, perspective and legitimacy. We encourage you to explore the

TEDtalks website (<http://www.ted.com/talks>), where you can find these and other "riveting talks by remarkable people, free to the world"! Also, for those of you with an interest in development

trends, we recommend visiting Hans Rosling's Gapminder website (<http://www.gapminder.org/>), where you can play with decades-worth of international statistics. Happy surfing!

Brown Bag Discussion: Growing Up With/In Zimbabwe

by THIENVINH NGUYEN

On Thursday, November 19, 2009, during International Education Week, a group of students who grew up in Zimbabwe came together to discuss their experience. The conversation, which was moderated by Frederick Bengtsson, a Columbia University Ph.D. candidate in the Department of English and Comparative Literature, brought together four other 20- and 30-somethings who reflected on the three decades of Zimbabwean independence. Through reflections on childhood, education, and young adulthood, the participants provided personal insights on the big issues confronting Zimbabwe today: the unity government and the country's political future, land and property rights, race and ethnic identity, and Zimbabwe's place in a global society

All the participants, Stephanie Bengtsson, Frederick Bengtsson (Ms. Bengtsson's brother), Vusumuzi Sibanda, Leigh Reilly, and Nkosilathi Vuma, spoke about the interesting racial dynamics of the country upon independence while the country was majority black, there was a minority of whites (many of whom were European transplants) who were usually well off. Despite the racial dimen-

sions, all the participants agree that they were products of a strong, quality education, which they feel is currently in a state of dismay.

With the economic downturn, Zimbabwe's future is uncertain, though the participants are remaining optimistic.

To learn more about the current situation in Zimbabwe, please visit the website of the New York based civil society organization at <http://www.zimcouncil.org/>.



Frederick Bengtsson, a PhD student at Columbia University, moderated the discussion.



Leigh Reilly is an Ed.D. student at Teachers College.



Nkosilathi Vuma, is currently a PhD student at New York University.



Stephanie Bengtsson is an Ed.D. student at Teachers College.



Vusumuzi Sibanda is a Master's student at Teachers College.

HAPPENINGS

Director George C. Bond Receives ABA Legacy Scholar Award

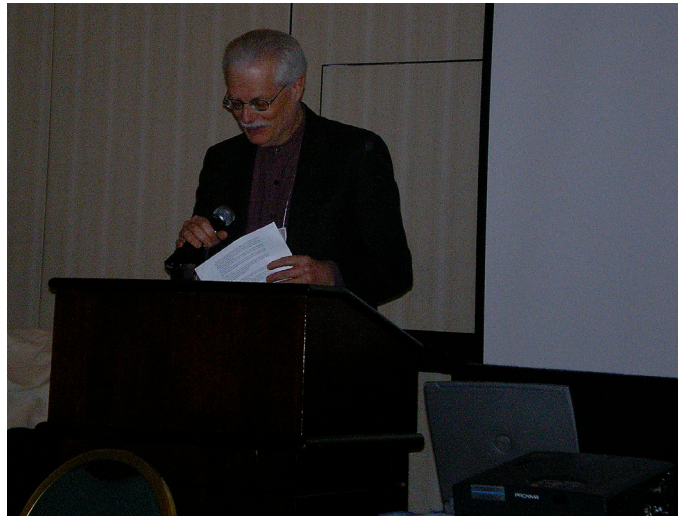
by LAUREN BAE

The evening of Friday, December 4, 2009 marked a night of celebration for one of Teachers College's very own, Professor George C. Bond, at this year's American Anthropological Association's Annual Meeting in Philadelphia. Hosted by the Association of Black Anthropologists (ABA), the banquet room overflowed with those who came to support the recipients of the first ever ABA Legacy Scholar Awards. The festive ceremony began with a dimly lit room that was soon filled with the sounds of drumbeats and singing performed by the "Voices of Africa," a local choral and percussion ensemble group, as the recipients and presenters were led in by a dancing ensemble member.

ABA President Kimberly Simmons warmly welcomed the audience and special guests before introducing Janis Hutchinson, the Legacy Scholar Awards Committee Chair. Hutchinson took great pleasure in recognizing the recipients as well as distinguished members of the audience who represented the history and foundation of Black anthropologists. This event was the first of many by the Committee which anticipates honoring two or three Black anthropologists annually in the years to come.

Dr. Roger Sanjek, esteemed

anthropologist, CUNY professor and dear friend, presented and accepted the award on Bond's behalf. Recovering from a burst appendix just after the Thanksgiving weekend, Bond was unable to attend the ceremony himself. Despite his absence, Bond's current and former



Dr. Roger Sanjek, esteemed anthropologist and CUNY professor presented and accepted Dr. Bond's award

students and colleagues participated in the event as a show of support for the decades of contributions which Bond continues to bestow to the field of anthropology. This has been an extensive journey, which Sanjek meticulously laid out for the audience, that begins in 1939 and meanders through memories such as sitting in the back of a police car at the age of thirteen, attending the London School of Economics in the 1960s before meeting Sanjek at Columbia in 1968 shortly after the famed protests, extensive fieldwork and publications on Zambia

and the impressive list of co-edited books which continues to this day. Bond most recently published a book (*The Languages of Africa and the Diaspora: Educating for Language Awareness*) co-edited with Professor Jo Anne Kleifgen (also at Teachers College) which got a nod from Noam Chomsky.

The venerable company of Dr. Johnnetta Cole and Dr. Audrey Smedley joined Bond as the ceremony's awardees. Dr. Cole's award was presented by former Emory University student Riche' Barnes (professor at Smith College). Cole was the first female president of the historically black Spelman College, and is well-known for her efforts there. Dr. Smedley accepted her

award from Shomarka Keita, a bio-anthropologist who shares Smedley's interests in the origins of race. Smedley earned her Ph.D. from the University of Manchester and worked under Max Gluckman.

Being among the first recipients of this honor attests to the significance that Bond's career holds in anthropology and especially for the members of the ABA. The adulation of this article's subject could continue, but in Bond's own words, "I see that it is time."

Congratulations Professor Bond!

HAPPENINGS

African Highlights at the American Anthropological Association Conference

Reflections from a TC Africanist

by JANNY CHANG

Anthropologists around the world convened in Philadelphia for their annual conference, which took place from December 2 – 6, 2009. As an Africanist, I was especially excited to listen to and report on issues affecting the continent.

One sub-theme of the presentations delved into the challenges of international NGOs and aid organizations in meeting the needs of the local people. Brenda Kombo at Yale University offered insight into the lack of understanding of local family and kinship networks that prevent women's NGOs in Camer-

rica" included the challenges facing the international development and aid community due to disjunctures between paradigms adopted by organizations and practice. Michael Walker of Michigan State probed the implementation of neoliberalism, which he defined as a "body of ideas, power, self...and socio-political programs" based on individual rationality and the market. His research focused on the implications of the ways in which discourses of development relied on neoliberal assumptions and framed the Mozambicans as responsible for their own development and capable of change through individual effort. Similarly, Nicole Hayes Bennesch in the same panel challenged a rights-based framework and discussed how Malawians at her fieldwork site understood notions of "rights," "freedom," and "democracy," and the influences of their interpretations upon the growing rate of HIV/AIDS in Malawi.

The panels on Africa indicated that some issues remained the same, such as the problems associated with development and neoliberalism, while others more recently came to the fore. The China-Africa panel represented a newly emerging issue that dramatically impacts the day to day lives of Africans. In the panel, Jamie Monson from Macalaster University examined a specific period in history in which African women nationalist lead-

ers, such as Bibi Titi Mohammed, engaged in national and international agendas along with Chinese diplomats. Gordon Matthews examined the negotiations of African traders in Hong Kong who purchase mobile phones, clothing and other items to sell back home. Although the panel was well-executed, more controversial issues regarding labor relations among the Chinese and Africans, as well as resistance against what some have deemed as Chinese imperialism, were excluded, except in the question-answer panel.

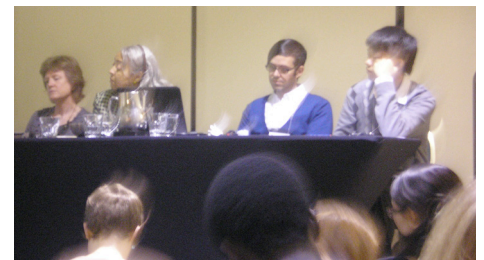
Overall, the panels covering Africa illustrated a wide breadth and diversity of issues facing Africans and those who do research there. Topics ranged from the African diasporic identities in Latin and South America to problems of food security and violence in other parts of



Brenda Kombo giving her talk about domestic violence in Yaounde, Cameroon

eroon from truly helping the women and children affected by domestic violence. In this same panel, titled "Local Negotiations of Globalizing Theory and Global Institutions," Rebecca Peters from Brown University discussed the repercussions of an audit culture and its intersection with myriad forms of power in international development in Angola.

A common thread among the presentations in the panel called "All That is Solid Melts into Air: Changing Lifeways in Southern Af-



Panel called "China in Africa/Africa in China"

the continent. Most panels concentrated on the problems of development and neoliberalism. Perhaps, in keeping with the theme of the conference, "The End/s of Anthropology," the presentations next year will encompass more topics, signaling the end of certain discourses and the inception and growth of others.

RESEARCH

Schools as Centres for Care and Support: A Child-Friendly Initiative in Five African Countries

A personal, inside-look into a UNICEF project

by STEPHANIE BENGTTSSON

In September 2007, fellow doctoral student and Africanist Annie Smiley and I found ourselves presented with the exciting opportunity to work as part of a research team on designing a five-country research project for UNICEF, entitled *The Learning Plus Initiative: Schools as Centres for Care and Support (A Five-Country Research Study of the Provision of Essential Services Through Primary Schools in Sub-Saharan Africa)*. The study involved active collaboration with academics, researchers, and UNICEF programme officers from the five countries in question – Lesotho, Nigeria, Rwanda, Swaziland, and Tanzania – who undertook the research on the ground. Our team completed the project during the Fall 2009, with the submission of a synthesis report, which will be available online in the next few months.

This study aimed to answer the following research questions:

- What sorts of risks and threats to educational quality, care and protection (focusing specifically on risks and threats to inclu-

sion, participation, and gender equity) exist in the schools and their surrounding communities?

- What strategies are used to overcome these risks and threats?
- Specifically, what policies, practices

from each of the five countries in the study, Annie and I proposed designing an index for an ideal care and support school, which would draw on the *Index for Inclusion, the INEE Minimum Standards for Education in*

Emergencies, Chronic Crises, and Early Reconstruction, and the Sphere Project and would provide indicators for six different categories of service provision:

1. Education
2. Psychosocial support
3. Physical health
4. Water and sanitation
5. Nutrition
6. Safety and security

At this point, the massive scope of this exciting project was fully realised and two more doctoral students – Christine Pagen and Radhika Iyengar – were brought on board. Our team then

and intersectoral partnerships exist to facilitate schools as centres of quality education, care and protection?

The lead research team was based at TC and led by our own Dr Lesley Bartlett. Other faculty members included Monisha Bajaj, George Bond, Lynn Kagan, and Frances Vavrus.

After conducting an extensive literature review with our New York-based colleagues, and building on literature reviews



RESEARCH



used the index we had developed to design a wide array of quantitative and qualitative research instruments, including a range of child-friendly research methods. In fact, this focus on children's perspectives was a key feature of this study, because UNICEF felt that attempting to understand how the children themselves perceived and participated in essential service provision at schools was fundamental to the success of the initiative.

In February 2008, Dr Bartlett and I travelled to Rwanda with Dr Moira Wilkinson from UNICEF (herself a TC Alum!) to facilitate a workshop for the lead African researchers, UNICEF officers, and Ministry of Education representatives from each of the five countries, where instruments were modified and tested at local schools by the group. I was inspired by the dedication with which workshop participants went about their work and engaged with the materials and with each other. As Dr Bartlett put it, "The workshop was truly phenomenal." Such a memorable trip to the 'Land of a Thousand Hills', a country so beautiful that the Rwandans say, "although God goes all over the world during the workday, he comes back to sleep in Rwanda."

The lead researchers returned to their respective countries and began work on translating the instruments and training their teams. Data was collected by the five country teams from March through May 2008.

Annie and I travelled to Lesotho in June 2008, to lead a workshop for the Basotho and Swazi researchers on undertaking qualitative data analysis. We had such a fantastic time with our African colleagues, sifting through and analysing pages and pages of data. I think a highlight for everyone was the day devoted to analysing the data collected using the child-friendly methods – drawings, essays, photographs and more! With support from our team, the five country teams undertook the huge task of analyzing data and putting together their individual country reports.

Our team spent a number of months producing a synthesis report and finalising the index, which, it is hoped, will circulate among schools, organisations, universities, Ministries of Education, and other stakeholders, as a valuable tool for ongoing research and improved practice, and for monitoring and evaluation of school programmes.

Looking back over the last two years, I feel lucky that I had the chance to be part of this unique project with such a dynamic group of people, and that I have been involved in something that has the potential to make a real positive impact on the lives of vulnerable children across Africa.



AFRICAN DIASPORA FILM FESTIVAL

The African Diaspora Film Festival "celebrates richness and diversity of the global Black experience through films – shorts and features, dramas, documentaries, classics and new releases" (www.NYADFF.org). The themes presented in these films are far-ranging in nature. The most recent festival, which took place from November 27 to December 15, 2009, showcased 101 films from 46 countries at six different venues. Of these films, there was one world pre-

miere and 39 U.S. premieres. For a complete listing of the films, please visit the African Diaspora Film Festival website (www.NYADFF.org).

From a full-length documentary about a segregated African American unit fighting in Italy during WW II by Afro-Italian filmmaker Fred Kudjo Kuwornu (titled "Inside Buffalo") to full-length features about displaced Afro-Colombian women to a short about a son wishing to fulfill his father's dream of skiing in

the Alps, these diverse films provide insights that seek to educate the audience about the experiences of being black, or being labeled as such.

Teachers College continues to be one of the Festival's venues. This season, a number of films were screened at the campus; some are featured below. Although the Festival is over, there are currently free film screenings every last Friday of the month at Teachers College. Check them out!

"WHEN THE CITY BITES"



Sara and her cousin arrive at Charles de Gaulle Airport from Brazzaville. They are soon put to work in a prostitution ring. When Omar, the pimp, kills Sara's cousin in a brutal beating, Sara decides to take matters into her own hands. A role that shows the range of lead actress Aïssa Maïga ("Bamako"). By Dominique Cabrera, 2009, France, 60min, thriller in French with English sub-titles.

"100 DAYS"

Set in the breathtaking natural beauty of the Rwanda countryside, this first ever fiction film made about the Rwanda civil war tells a powerful story of genocide and human survival with compassion and integrity. The film centers on a pair of young lovers; Baptiste is more than ready to have sex with his girlfriend Josette, but she refuses, arguing that when they are married they can have all the sex they would like. Meanwhile, powerful Hutu leaders have had enough of Tutsi rebels and call on all Hutus to kill their Tutsi neighbors. As chaos breaks out, the Tutsis flee and the lovers are separated. By Nick Hughes, Rwanda/U.K, 2001, 96, drama in English, English sub-titles.

"SOLIDARITY IN SAYA"



Juan Angola Maconde, an Afro-Bolivian economist, writes eloquently about the African presence in Bolivian culture. His book "Raíces de un Pueblo" ("Roots of a People") speaks about the little known Afro-Bolivian population. "Solidarity in Saya" is a visual document about the Afro-Bolivian. Through music and very revealing interviews, Maya Jensen exposes us to a very interesting aspect of Latin American culture. By Maya Jensen, Bolivia, 2009, 30mins, documentary in Spanish with English Subtitles.

"ANOMALY"



Barack Obama's presidency highlights the continued struggles around U.S. race issues. "Anomaly" provides a thought-provoking look at multiracial identity by combining personal narratives with the larger drama of mixed race in American culture. The characters use spoken word and music to tell their stories of navigating a complex racial landscape. By Jessica Chen Drammeh, 2009, 47 min., documentary in English. Q&A with the director after the screening.

"NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH"

"Nothing But The Truth" is a gripping investigation into the complex dynamic between those Black South African who remained in South Africa and risked their lives to lead the struggle against apartheid and those who returned victoriously after living in exile...Winner Silver Stallion - Fespaco 2009. By John Kani. South Africa, 2008 118min, drama in English, French.

Stay Connected!

**FREE FILM
SCREENINGS**

**Every Last Friday of the Month
at Teachers College,
Columbia University**

Online: <http://www.nyadff.org/>

REVIEW

A Critical Look at the film *Invictus*

Examining Nelson Mandela's effort to unite a country around rugby

by VUSUMUZI SIBANDA

Of all the attributes that South Africa is endowed with, the one that never ceases to astound me is the beauty of that country's languages and the poetry and philosophy that not only pivot them, but that they also exude ever so effortlessly. More than anything else, in my imaginations, it is the voices and sounds of South Africa that, as metaphor, have come close to symbolizing the profound depth, history, stories and aspirations of the country.

Given these musings, I went to watch Clint Eastwood's *Invictus* understanding very clearly that Hollywood had stripped it clean of the very material that would have tugged most strongly at my heart's strings. I watched the movie, instead, through the almost tangible ambiance of the people who had gathered to watch it at the AMC Loews Theater in Lincoln Square, ten weeks after its release. With them, I allowed myself to be captivated by the story that is

Mandela; to drink in the intoxicating power of a man who commits himself to defending the dignity of those who had persecuted him; a



For the love of the sport? Rugby in post-apartheid South Africa

Flickr/Jim Grady

man who embodies the very idea of forgiveness and reconciliation. That magic did not fail. We hung on to the movie's every image; from the stark depiction of apartheid's racial separation and inequalities, past the triumph of Mandela's release and all through the treacherous path to reconciliation that Mandela walked and negotiated.

As the movie concluded in rapturous celebration of how Mandela and a rugby captain had met to unite, even if temporarily, a country teetering on a past that threat-

ened to destroy it, we remained rooted in our seats, in complete awe of this man whose noble regality in life Morgan Freeman had painstakingly tried to recreate on screen. We remained seated as the credits rolled by: a bold dose of African names matching the cast, and fewer and fewer such names as the outline of the film's powerbrokers emerged. What a human being, we applauded; what a story, we exclaimed, fittingly.

As we got up to leave, I tucked away the nostalgia that the images of South African faces had evoked. I shelved too, the yearning for a Mandela film made by South Africans – a film that will coincide with that day, perhaps, when the Xhosa will say, "Let us tell the story of our son". It will not happen soon – the global film industry has to contend with profits and less with stories that tug at the hearts of those who insist on stories – but for the sake of the world, it's something that has to happen at some point.

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 and the Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER) at Columbia University. 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 15 chapters by key scholars from a number of diverse fields on issues of importance to the West African region, ranging from formal and non-formal education, to economics to family life and gender relations, to indigenous science and technology.

We are reaching out to teachers in New York City, to establish how we can best support them in bringing Africa into their classrooms. We are currently developing an online portal on our website to help teachers access resources on Africa, and facilitate discussion about the continent and the diaspora.

As part of our outreach efforts, we will be hosting a number of events on West Africa, which will be open

to members of the TC and Columbia communities and NYC teachers. For example, during the spring semester, we will be inviting a couple of the contributors to the *West Africa Volume* to speak about their work.

There are currently discussions taking place about possible future components of this project, including offering courses here at Teachers College that would offer similar material as in the textbook series and workshops, and allow our students with an interest in teaching and Africa the opportunity to build their expertise and skills in this area.

If you are interested in hearing more about this initiative, or would like to get involved, please email cae@tc.edu.

Certificate in African Education

As many of our readers are already aware, the Center for African Education has now 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 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).

We are pleased to announce that, thanks to the efforts of our Registrar, we will be awarding our first certificates to students who have completed the necessary requirements this spring semester.

CAE OPEN HOUSE

THE PROGRAM | January 26, 2010

WHAT IS CAE?

Welcome and Introduction
Professor George C. Bond, Program Director

The Certificate in African Education and Upcoming Events
Stephanie Bengtsson, Program Coordinator

The Teaching Africa Series
Melissa Cushman, Project Intern

African Studies Working Group
Kathleen Dowling, ASWG Chair

FACULTY & STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

Asst. Professor Lesley Bartlett
Currently Teaching ITSF 5007: Race, Class and Schooling
ITSF 4090: Issues in International Education Development

Professor Nancy Lesko
Currently Teaching C&T 4002: Curriculum Theory and History
C&T 4032 Gender Difference and Curriculum

Dr. Louis Cristillo
Currently Teaching ITSF 4011: Social Contexts of Education
ITSF 4199: Issues—Islam and Politics in Africa

Dr. Mary Mendenhall
Currently Teaching ITSF 4094: Educational Planning in IED
ITSF 4199: Education in Emergencies

Asst. Professor Helen Verdeli, with Eric Lewandowski
Currently Teaching CCPX 4937 Intro to Cognitive Behavioral Theory
Recent Research: Courses and Congo research

Janny Chang
Student Research: Chinese Zambian Relations

INTRODUCTION TO COLUMBIA'S INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES

Sarah Walsworth Diouf, Asst. Director at Institute of African Studies

LIBRARY SERVICES

Jennifer Govan, Gottesman Libraries
Yuusuf S. Caruso, African Studies Librarian

MUSICAL GUESTS

Thandi Bhengu, South African Vocalist, and her friend Tuelo



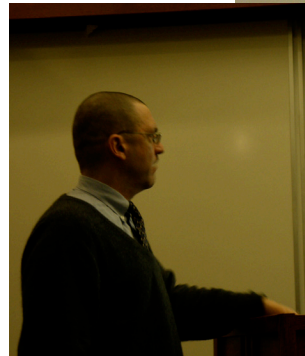
Professor Lesley Bartlett



Janny Chang, discussing her research in Zambia



Eric Lewandowski, elaborating on his research grant to Uganda



Yuusuf Caruso, African Studies Librarian

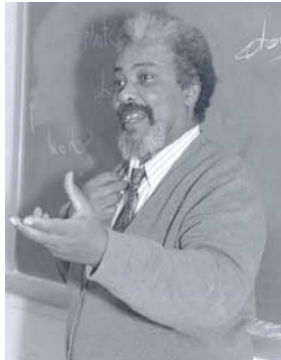


Professor Nancy Lesko



Tuelo, one of the musical guests

CAE STAFF PROFILES



Director, Professor George C. Bond

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.



Stephanie Bengtsson, Coordinator

Stephanie Bengtsson is a doctoral student in the International Educational Development program. She has worked as a consultant and intern at the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies and as a consultant and researcher on Africa for UNICEF. She is currently working on her doctoral dissertation, a critical analysis of the global education policy discourse surrounding fragile states, exploring definitions and conceptualizations of fragility and education, in order to contribute to a smoother education aid mechanism. Stephanie holds an AB (cum laude) in English from Harvard University, and an MPhil in Special and Inclusive Education from the University of Cambridge.



Katharine Keenan, Graduate Assistant

Katharine is a Ph.D. student in Applied Anthropology and President of the Society for Anthropological Studies at TC. She has served as Managing Editor of the *Journal of Current Issues in Comparative Education*. She has studied in Germany and the Republic of Ireland, and has done fieldwork in Belfast, Northern Ireland, on political murals and the construction of social space. She currently lectures in Introductory Anthropology at York College, City University of New York. Her B.A. is in Anthropology from Boston University, 2004.



ThienVinh Nguyen, Graduate Assistant

ThienVinh Nguyen (pronounced TIN-vin-Winn) is a Masters student in the Anthropology and Education program and a graduate assistant with the Comitatus Institute of Anthropological Study. She has studied and conducted research on eco-villages and government attitudes toward sustainability in Ghana. 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.



Vusumuzi Sibanda, Graduate Assistant

Vusumuzi is a Masters student in the Computing in Education program. He is interested in the emerging literacies that digital technology affords, especially in their relationship to social and economic mobility in African and African descendant youth. Vusumuzi holds a BA in Africana Studies and English from Cornell University. He has worked in various capacities with youth in Zimbabwe and New York City and looks forward to deepening his understanding of the Harlem community during his time at Teachers College.



Melissa Cushman, Intern (Teaching Africa)

Melissa is an MA student in International Education Development with a concentration in Peace Education and is pursuing a certificate in African Education. Melissa co-founded and co-directed Umubano Sister School program which facilitated relationships between students in Rwanda and the United States. She has also worked for the Washington State Holocaust Education Resource Center as an Education Assistant. She has conducted research in Rwanda on education and human rights and participated in a human rights delegation in Rwanda during the summer of 2007. 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.

AFFILIATES

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Director, Center for African Education,
Teachers College

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Teachers College

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Africanist Librarian,
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Portia Williams
Director, International Affairs,
President's Investment Fund

UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, March 26, 2010;
10 am – 6 pm

AFRICAN STUDIES WORKING GROUP
STUDENT SYMPOSIUM
"Rethinking Aid: Solutions, Strategies and
Innovation for Education in Africa and the
Diaspora"
179 Grace Dodge Hall
Teachers College,
Columbia University

April 2010
(dates to be announced)

WHO IS AFRICAN:
WRITING ABOUT AFRICA AND THE AFRICAN
DIASPORA
(Events include: book breakfast, expert panel,
reception, student panel and workshop)
Teachers College,
Columbia University

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