Du Bois Department co-founder Eugene Terry died on Jan. 9 at his home in Amherst, where he was sustained over the long period of his illness by Esther Terry, his wife of 41 years; their son, Jules Michael; and other family members and friends.

He taught writing and Afro-American Literature in the Du Bois Department from 1978 through 1989, when his declining health led to his retirement.

He was born in Brooklyn, N.Y. in 1928, the only child of Lulu B. and Floyd Terry. With Floyd Terry having died some months before his son's birth, Lulu raised Eugene as a single parent. She greatly influenced his lifelong commitment to education, his love of music, and his insistence on social justice and equality. Art led to the creation of his own award-winning puppets and apple dolls. His talent was noted and praised by Leonard Baskin, with whom he enjoyed a long and warm friendship. Always an avid reader, Eugene discovered the work of Sterling A. Brown, the African American poet and social critic, while he was in high school and determined that he would attend Howard University in Washington, D.C., where Professor Brown was a member of the faculty of the English Department.

At Howard, Eugene was awarded both a B.A. and a Master’s degree, with his thesis, “Four Major American Folk Heroes,” directed by Professor Brown.

Upon graduating from Howard, Eugene taught for a brief period at Southern University in Baton Rouge, L.A., before accepting a post in the English Department at Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, N.C., which lasted for seven years.

At both institutions, he was inspired by his students no less than they were inspired by him; and he came to accept that teaching was his special calling. Over the years, many of his students have credited his patience, his gentleness, and his honest criticism with having contributed to their various successes.

In 1964, on the advice of his mentor and friend, Sterling Brown, Eugene enrolled in the English Department at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, to prepare for a Ph.D. in English under the guidance of Professor Sidney Kaplan. During that period, Professor Brown also encouraged several others of his students to study with Sidney Kaplan, whom Professor Brown held in highest regard as a scholar on the subject of Afro-American life and letters. Among those others were Bernard Bell, Michael Thelwell, and Esther Alexander, who later became Eugene’s wife.

Encouraged by Professors Kaplan and his colleague, Jules Chametzky, Eugene was among that group of graduate students who established an Afro-American Studies Program within the English Department. In 1970, that program became the W. E. B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies that today is one of the oldest and most respected such departments in the country. Prior to joining the faculty of the Afro-American Studies department, Eugene had taught at Hampshire College, where he was a member of the Five-College Black Studies Committee.

His unwavering love of family and his enduring relationships with former students throughout the United States and beyond will remain an important part of his legacy. A private funeral and burial took place in Warrenton, N.C., but a memorial service is planned for the UMass campus in the spring.
The white man is very clever…. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart. —Chinua Achebe’s Things Fall Apart.

African people from Chad to Haiti to Colombia to the U.S.A. are experiencing hard times. “Structural adjustments,” the sub-prime market crisis, the gross funneling of wealth into the hands of the already super-rich, wars and rumors of war form the knife that severs the things that have held us together. More & more than ever before it is dog eat dog. We are encouraged to hate foreigners with their alien languages and ways who illegally enter the country to take our jobs and ruin the supposedly united state of the culture of the USA. Never do we ask “who are we really?”

Alvin Poussaint & UMass alum Bill Cosby came to campus and talked about their new book Come On People: On the Path from Victims to Victors. Some of our students charged them up for the way their work silences a critique of poverty and injustice in favor of the old blame the victim rhetoric.

Never do we ask “who are we really?”
FACULTY NEWS

Professor Steven Tracy gave a two-hour presentation on Harlem Renaissance music and literature at a Black History month program on January 23rd at the UMass Amherst campus featuring music and literature on video and recordings and in live performance. He has been selected as a plenary speaker for a conference entitled August Wilson: The Second Half of the Cycle to be held on April 11-12th. The paper will subsequently be published in August Wilson—Completing the Cycle, edited by Alan Nadel for the University of Iowa Press.

Professor Tracy will be delivering a paper and performing on harmonica at the International Conference on Richard Wright in Paris, France on June 18-20th. He will also be performing in July at the Behringer-Crawford Museum: History In Motion in Covington, KY, with his Cincinnati band, Steve Tracy and the Crawling Kingsnakes, and continues to play a couple of times monthly with the King Bees in the Amherst area.

The Langston Hughes Center for African American Studies at the University of Kansas has published Professor Tracy’s lengthy contextualized chronology of Langston Hughes on its website at “http://www2.ku.edu/~lhcaas/”. The chronology places events of Hughe’s life in the context of other important events taking place in the world at the same time.


Professor Strickland gave a public lecture at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton on “Black History and Black Politics: Past, Present, and Future.” Later that month, on February 11th, he was awarded a plaque by Virginia for State University (VSU) in recognition of his support for VSU’s Jim Crow Exhibit, Hateful Things, a two week traveling art exhibit “of pictures, signs and items from the late nineteenth century to the present that embody the terrible effects of Jim Crow.” Professor Strickland also gave the keynote address at the opening ceremony.

Professor Thelwell was invited to speak at the National Arts Club at its Black Tie affair on November 16th, where the eminent writer, scholar, and former Du Bois Department faculty member Chinua Achebe received its Gold Medal of Honor for Literature.

Charles de Kay, the literary and art critic for the New York Times for eighteen years, founded the National Arts Club in 1908. The Club’s mission is to stimulate, foster and promote public interest in the arts and educate the American people in the fine arts.


Professor John Bracey and Joyce Vincent were invited to Brown University to address Professor Rhett Jones’ class Native American and African American Relations. Bracey and Vincent have used Professor Jones’ writings in their course and have exchanged ideas and potential course materials with him over the years. While at Brown we had the opportunity to dine with Aisha Rahman former director of the New Africa House Cultural Center. She is still writing—plays and a novel—and sends her regards to all who shared her stay in the Valley.

October 31st: Dean Joel Martin attended AfroAm 397B Native Americans/African Americans to lead a discussion of his book The Sacred Revolt: The Muskogee’s Struggle for a New World which is one of the required readings. The defeat of the Muskogee in 1813-1814 ended the largest uprising of Native peoples in the nation’s history, the largest loss of Native lives, and the largest lost of land in the Southeast.

November 5th: Professor Bracey appeared on Channel 40 News as a commentator on the significance of the noose and lynching in the history of African Americans. The story involved the local high school and the response to what was thought to be a noose produced by a student.

December 7-8: Professor Bracey participated in the third segment of the NAACP Civil Rights School. The “Schools” are structured as a combination of free flowing discussions between scholars and NAACP activists and leaders, dialogue with college students of the hip-hop generation, and individual interviews focused on specific aspects of the history of the NAACP. Held at Harvard University this segment was devoted to the Roy Wilkins Years. Drawing on the knowledge gained as co-editor of the Papers of the NAACP, John Bracey participated in the scholar-activist sessions that included Herb Boyd, Scot Brown, Lorenzo Morris and Patricia Sullivan as scholars and Kweisi Mfume, Mildred Roxborough, Mel King and Hilary Shelton representing the NAACP. Denton Watson wore both his hats as ex-staff member, now historian. The NAACP Hollywood Bureau led by Vic Bullock and his staff is producing and directing the Civil Rights Schools as part of a larger project to create by 2009 a film commemorating the 100th anniversary of the NAACP’s founding. It is the Hollywood connection that enabled the participants to attend a pre-release screening of Denzel Washington and Oprah Winfrey’s “The Great Debaters.” A final segment of the Civil Rights School will be held at N.Y.U. in April. John Bracey expects to participate in that one also.

February 7th: as part of the OAH Distinguished Lecture Program John Bracey visited Norfolk State University. The lecture entitled “Black Power Scholarship: New Paths and Deadends” was in response to an initiative by Tanya Mears (Alumnus ’05) now an assistant professor in their History Department. Tanya sends her regards to all. The students were interest and engaged, and on display in the library was an outstanding collection of African art and artifacts. William P. “Doc” Robinson, Sr. an old friend from Bracey’s youth on Howard University’s campus has a building named after him, and his papers and a portrait are in the library archives. In 1969, “Doc” Robinson became the first African American elected to the Virginia legislature since Reconstruction. All in all, a wonderful trip.

February 21st Professor Bracey received a certificate from the United States Army Corps of Engineers, New England District in appreciation for participation as a keynote speaker at their 2008 Black History Month Celebration.

February 27th: Professor Bracey was a keynote speaker at the MCI Shirley Correctional Facility where he spoke on “The History of the Black Intellectual, and their importance within the Black Liberation Movement” with particular focus on W.E.B. Du Bois.
In celebration of African-American History Month, on February 21st the Department of Afro-American Studies and the University Store presented a multimedia presentation. After the event both faculty and local authors will be available to sign copies of a selection of their most recent books. Professor John H. Bracey, Jr., and Wally Swist, the General Book Manager of the University Store, collaborated in the planning of the event.

James Carroll opened the event by playing an original jazz composition and the King Bees provided the coda for the evening’s rich agenda by performing blues numbers. The King Bees, featuring Professor Steven Tracy on vocals and harmonica, were a crowd favorite two years ago when the event was last held.

The new Department Chair, Professor Amilcar Shabazz, served as keynote speaker for the event, and delivered a carousel of thought on Africana Studies. Three graduate students from the department, Keli Stewart, McKinley Melton, and Jason Hendrickson gave readings from their own poetry as well as from prominent African-Americans.

Ron Welburn, a Professor of English at UMass since 1992, who is of Gingaskin and Assateague/Cherokee/African American heritage, read from his poetry. Watercolor artist Richard Yarde delivered a lecture with slides regarding his painting, entitled “Ringshout.” Alona H. Horn, in an article in American Visions, refers to Yarde’s painting as work that “defies the concept that watercolor paintings should be small, charming renderings of landscapes or flowers.” At the unveiling of Yarde’s series of watercolors, Mojo Hand, that his general notion of it is: “...Some kind of charm or spell that is sometimes used for healing, sometimes for other purposes.”

“It is illusive,” Yarde continues, “and it is not something that can be described in a linear way. For me, it was a question of putting some things together that are random that can be put together for the purposes of healing.”

Authors and members of the Graduate Faculty of the UMass Afro-American Studies Program include: Ernest Allen, Jr.; John H. Bracey, Jr.; A. Yemisi Jimoh; Amilcar Shabazz; Manisha Sinha; James Smethurst; William Strickland; Esther M. A. Terry; Michael Thelwell; Steven Tracy; and Robert Paul Wolff.
**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

**FEBRUARY**


2/21 An Evening with the Du Bois Department, 7:00 p.m. Memorial Hall, UMass Amherst.

2/23 Trip to Du Bois Homesite in Great Barrington with faculty, staff and students.


**MARCH**


3/19 NCBS conference at the Downtown Renaissance Hotel in Atlanta, GA. See [www.ncbsonline.org](http://www.ncbsonline.org) for details.

3/25 Max Roach Memorial. See our website for details.

**APRIL**

4/2  *Film: Culture of War* introduced by Directory James Der Derian. UMass Amherst, 8 p.m., RM 137 School of Management.

4/9  *Film: Darfur Now!* introduced by Director Ted Braun. Amherst College, 7:30 p.m., Stum Auditorium.

4/16 *Film: Black Houston: Digital Storytelling* introduced by filmmaker Carroll Parrott Blue. UMass Amherst, 7:30 p.m., Room 137, School of Management.

4/23  *Film: Lieux Saints (Sacred Places)* introduced by filmmaker Jean-Marie Teno. UMass Amherst, 7:30 p.m., Room 137, School of Management.


4/26 Body Politics directed by Keli Stewart. An original production about women of color and body image.

4/30  *Film: Look Back and Wonder: The Rise of Black Studies* at UMass Amherst introduced by Director and Professor Ernest Allen. 7:30 p.m., Room 137, School of Management.

**MAY**

5/3 Eugene Terry Memorial Celebration, Memorial Hall.

5/3  Scholars of the 21st Century End-of-Year Conference Campus Center, UMass Amherst.

5/13 Last Day of Classes!!

5/16 Retirement Celebration for Robert Paul Wolff! Marriott Center, Campus Center 11th Floor.

5/23 Graduate and Stockbridge Commencement.


5/24 Undergraduate Commencement.

**ALUMNI LINES**

Dr. Christopher Lehman (’02)
Assistant Professor, History, St. Cloud University.

The Colored Cartoon has been published and A Critical History of Soul Train on Television is due for publication by McFarland & Company this spring.

Dr. Shawn Alexander (’04)
Assistant Professor, African and African American Studies, University of Kansas, has been appointed as Interim Director of the Langston Hughes Center for African American Studies. Professor Alexander’s essay, “Vengeance Without Justice, Injustice Without Retribution: The Afro-American Council’s Struggle Against Racial Violence,” has been published in the Great Plains Quarterly and won the 2008 Frederick C. Luebke Award for outstanding regional scholarship. His forthcoming anthology on T. Thomas Fortune is scheduled for publication in June. He is also completing a larger monograph on African American civil rights activity in the post-Reconstruction era for the University of Pennsylvania Press.

Dr. Stephanie Y. Evans (’03)
Assistant Professor, African American Studies and Women’s Studies, University of Florida in Gainesville.

Professor Evans has recently published an article entitled “Women of Color in American Higher Education” in the National Education Association’s Journal Thought & Action (Fall 2007).

Dr. Jennifer Jensen-Wallach (’04)
Assistant Professor, History, Georgia College and State University.

Professor Wallach’s book “Closer to the Truth” is forthcoming by University of Georgia Press.

Dr. Jennifer Jensen-Wallach (’04)
Assistant Professor, History, Georgia College and State University.

Professor Wallach’s book “Closer to the Truth” is forthcoming by University of Georgia Press.

Congratulations to Chris and his wife, Yolanda, on having a baby boy, Erik, on Feb. 9th!!

*(Photo at left)* Ligaya Edge

(Professor John Bracey’s daughter Kali and granddaughter Zora!)

Congratulations to Keli Stewart and Chris Martin on having a baby boy, Khyet Solomon, on April 2nd.
THE WAR ON TERROR BLOWBACK: We Are Not Safer

By Bill Strickland (The full essay, “The Runaway Politics of Insanity,” can be found at www.blackcommentator.com)

Those people who mistakenly believe that George Bush’s John Wayneism has made us safer are delusional because exactly the opposite is true. In point of fact, terrorist attacks have increased not decreased since 9/11!

According to a study conducted last year, NYU’s Center on Law & Security found that fatal terrorist attacks around the world had increased over 600% since the US invaded Iraq!! They occurred in the Madrid train station in 2004, on London buses in 2005, and in a foreigner-frequented nightclub in Bali, Indonesia where Americans were known to hang out— but wound up killing mostly Australians. (When Bush subsequently visited Indonesia, his handlers, fearful for his safety, flew him back thirteen hours to the safe haven of Hawaii rather than risk his spending the night in that most Muslim land. Indeed there is nowhere in the world—except in Rumsfeld’s “New Europe,” or in carefully sanitized Republican events here at home—that Bush can go where he is not the target of outraged protests.)

There have also been terrorist attacks in Saudi Arabia … on a housing compound where Americans used to reside as well as attacks in Pakistan, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait et al, and, of course, in Afghanistan where the suicide bombing strategy, perfected in Iraq, has now been exported with lesson-learned perfection.

What these attacks all have in common is that they were directed against states and individuals seen as collaborators with the United States which means that we are now living in a new age; facing a new peril whose guiding principle seems to be: Collaboration with the U.S. = Death.

One sees that equation especially at work in Iraq where Iraqis working for the United States, go to great lengths to hide that fact from their fellow Iraqis. Indeed many, to save their lives, have been forced, like their two and half million fellow-citizens, to flee to Jordan and Syria who now, unable to support the massive exodus, have closed their borders.

Again, to reiterate the point about what is now categorically different… In decades past those nation states alleged to be “enemies” by the United States, like Russia, Cuba, China, North Korea, etc. always distinguished between the United States government and the American people but that is no longer the case. We are now no longer dealing with nation states but with mobile groups and individuals who perceive America to be what the late Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran dubbed her: The Great Satan, and perceive Americans in general to be as culpable as their government.

Why is that you ask? Well, there are several reasons. One is due to the failure of the Democratic party to make it clear to the world that Bush stole elections 2000 and 2004. Thus, despite the recent rebuttal by the women’s bridge team in China, that “We didn’t vote for Bush,” most of the world believes that a majority of Americans support Bush and his policies of rendition, torture, military tribunals, elimination of habeas corpus, unilateralism, etc. Or as one British newspaper asked after the 2004 election: “How can 59 million people be so stupid?”

But the Islamic world is more potently aggrieved— Remember that the latest estimates of civilians killed in Iraq range from 600,000 to 1.2 million or ten to twenty percent as many as the number of Jews killed by the Nazis in the Holocaust. But few Americans put these deaths into context or call them by their proper name: war crimes. And what animus do you think the relatives and friends and co-religionists of these deceased bear toward the United States?

Well, we don’t have to guess because one terrorist group has asserted that Muslims have the right to kill four million Americans, including two million children, in proportionate revenge for those whom Bush has killed in Iraq and Afghanistan. So are we safer? I don’t think so.

Is it not clear therefore that the depths to which American political culture—and its political system—have sunk cannot be overcome by conventional politics; that an unprecedented political movement is needed to save us from—and empower us to prevail over—the fools and fanatics who now rule, or aspire to rule, over us…and who, in supporting or capitulating to Bush and Cheney’s imperial dementia, have placed us all, wittingly and unwittingly, in mortal danger?

Δ
GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS & VIEWS

Chris Tinson, who is hard at work on his dissertation research on Black radicalism and the Liberator magazine, 1960-1971, has also been teaching two courses this semester. A course he designed that is modeled after Professor Ernie Allen’s Black Power course is entitled Black Radicalism in the U.S. and Beyond: 1960s and 1970s, and is being offered at Hampshire College. At the University of Connecticut, Storrs he is teaching Introduction to African American Studies. Along with fellow W.E.B. Du Bois Department comrades Jonathan Fenderson and Anthony Ratcliff, Chris co-edited and wrote an article for the current issue of the Black Scholar (see cover at right). In addition, Chris is one of the lead organizers of an upcoming conference that will feature activists and artists from around the country; Triggering Change: Hip-Hop, Media Justice and Social Responsibility, which will be held April 25th (Food for Thought Books) & April 26th at the Isenberg School of Management. For more information about the conference, please go to: http://www.triggeringchange08.blogspot.com/

David Lucander was awarded the Gilder Lehrman Research Fellowship for the Spring 2008 semester. David is conducting research for his dissertation entitled, “It is a New Kind of Militancy: The March on Washington Movement, 1940-1946,” at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York City. The W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies would like to acknowledge the participation of several of its graduate students and faculty at a recent conference held at the University of Connecticut, The Harlem Renaissance Revisited: Politics, Arts & Letters. H. Zahra Caldwell, Jason Hendrickson, Allia Matta, and McKinley Melton presented their research on a panel entitled “Named and Being Named: Womenspace, Gender, Topos, and Self Definition in the Harlem Renaissance.” Dr. Ousmane Power-Greene, Assistant Professor in History at Clark University, shared his current research on Hubert Harrison and New Negro Black Literary Criticism. Department Chair Amilcar Shabazz, Ph.D., was also in attendance, presenting his work on the Black Press and the New Negro. The conference, which featured thoughts and reflections from poet Amiri Baraka and film director Spike Lee, was held from March 27-29 in Storrs, CT.

Dissertation Defenses

Thomas Edge
April 11th, 2008
“The Social Responsibility of the Administrator”: Mordecai Wyatt Johnson and the Dilemma of Black Leadership

Daniel McClure
March 7th, 2008
“A Woman of Action: Ms. Elma Lewis, the Arts and the Culture of ‘Uplift’ in Roxbury, MA, 1950-1990”

Marieta Joyner
August 23rd, 2007
“Education of Deaf African Americans in Washington, D.C. and Raleigh, N.C. during the 19th and Early 20th Centuries, Through the Eyes of Two Heroes and a Shero”

Zebulon Miletsky
August 17, 2007
“City of Amalgamation: Race, Marriage, Class and Color in Boston, 1900-1930”

CONGRATULATIONS!!!


SUMMER 2008 IN NEW AFRICA HOUSE

AFROAM 151
Literature and Culture Instructor: Kabria Baumgartner
1st Session: (June 2 - July 10)

AFROAM 236
History of the Civil Rights Movement Instructor: McKinley Melton
2nd Session (July 14 – August 20)

Visit http://www.umassulearn.net for details!
Blast from the Past!

NEW AFRICA HOUSE DEMONSTRATION 1976

DRUM MAGAZINE
Donating to the  
W.E.B. Du Bois Department  
of Afro-American Studies

Let me thank you, on behalf of our faculty and students, for your interest in contributing to the Department’s continuing work. We are especially appreciative, because your support comes at a particularly opportune time.

As you know the W.E.B. Du Bois Department has for over thirty years been devoted to Dr. Du Bois' example of intellectual excellence and to his commitment to rigorous standards of popular education. Like the Doctor, we believe this to be a right due the citizenry.

During this time we believe our work had influenced the undergraduate education and to academic culture of the University for the better. Several years ago we sought to extend the Department's reach and mission to the training of scholar educators. To this end we have established a doctoral program in Afro-American Studies, the second in the nation.

While the university administration has understood and supported these initiatives, it is no secret that in the prevailing atmosphere of commercial globalism, we, like all state institutions of higher learning, are compelled to seek private support to help realize any extension in the services we offer. That is why your contribution at this time is especially important and greatly appreciated. With the continued support of our friends to augment that of the commonwealth, the Department will continue to move forward.

To make a contribution on-line please visit http://www.umass.edu/development/give. For information on matching gift program details, or to find out if your company has a matching gift program, please visit “www.matchinggifts.com/umass.”

Please mail the form below, along with your check made payable to the University of Massachusetts Amherst, to:

Records & Gift Processing  
Memorial Hall  
University of Massachusetts Amherst  
134 Hicks Way  
Amherst, MA 01003-9270

I/we give $___________ to Afro-American Studies, University of Massachusetts Amherst.

$5,000 ___  $1,000 ___  $500___  $250 ___  $100____  $50 ____  $25 ____  Other _____

Date:

Name:

Class (if applicable):

Street:

City, State, Zip: