In 1965, Sterling Brown, the “dean” of black literary and cultural studies at Howard University, was winding down his teaching career. He urged young scholars like Esther Terry to go to UMass Amherst to do their graduate studies with Sidney Kaplan. In the late 1960s, when the Black Studies surge occurred she, classmate Mike Thelwell, and others, were deeply involved in creating the new field.

In 1969, the UMass Board of Trustees voted to create the W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies. Faculty members who joined Terry and Thelwell (the first chair) to build the unit included Chinua Achebe, Johnetta Cole, James Baldwin, Archie Shepp, Shirley Graham Du Bois, Max Roach, plus current faculty members like John Bracey, Bill Strickland, and Ernest Allen.

In 1988, Terry became department chair. During hard times for black studies nationwide, she led it to many important achievements, most notably the creation of the Ph.D. program. This past June nine graduates marched and obtained their doctorates, the department’s largest class yet.

These and other Du Bois Ph.D.s are now professors at other universities defining the field for the 21st century.

Straight Ahead
Terry, who continues as professor and Associate Chancellor, passes the torch to Amilcar Shabazz who became the new chair of the Du Bois Department after a national search. He serves as the seventh chair.
Message from the Chair — by Amilcar Shabazz

Nuff Rispek. What else can I say? When I had my picture taken behind Dr. Du Bois’s desk in Accra, Ghana (see photo at right) I had no idea that a few years later I would be Chair of the prominent Africana Studies department named for the prodigy from Great Barrington, MA. With his intense gaze over my shoulder, I get by with the help of my new colleagues and friends. What the department has achieved and continue to do inspires me.

The flagship reputation of UMass Amherst, its high quality teaching and learning, the ripples and waves of change that have come from the nearly 40 years of the departments work are aspects of the legacy that brings me here. Excellence in scholarship and community engagement are both hallmarks and signposts.

In the face of a monumental and operational unit of such importance, I must give all due respect, assess how I can do my best work, and get to it. The reviving of the department’s newsletter Du Bois Lines is just a start of things to come as we rise to fulfill our mission. Use its pages to tell our story to the world and to each other. Writing and editing positions are open!

Visit me too—our New Africa House is your house. Help me to help you and the Du Bois Department achieve the highest heights. Forward together in peace.

Remembering Max

Continued from page 1

to pop my head in his door and ask casually “what was it like to play with Charlie Parker as a teenager?” or “what exactly was the nature of your beef with Charlie Mingus?”

When we weren’t talking music or politics the topics of choice for Max were family, the problems of raising black children in the U.S., and the differences between the lives of artists and academics. Max was an excellent teacher though he often expressed concerns about his effectiveness, and whether he was giving the students what they deserved. Max always seemed most relaxed and at home sitting behind a set of drums and cymbals, teaching by example.

Despite the ups and downs of the years, I always kept in touch with Max. He always seemed easy ones, he has earned his rest. Our department and the campus were very much enriched by his presence. I am going to dig out those old albums with Clifford Brown, Sonny Rollins, Abbey Lincoln, and listen to a master artist and craftsman.

After Max left the Valley as a permanent resident, he still came back for summer institutes and concerts in Bezanson Hall which served to remind me that even as he was aging he still set the standard for modern drummers.

I last saw him when he spoke at the funeral of Wilson Driver, an accomplished drummer in his own right and the father of Sonia Sanchez. That was several years back, and for the first time Max, who always seemed to be stuck at some indeterminate point between thirty-five and fifty, manifested the gait and speech of an elder.

His last years were not always easy, he has earned his rest. Our department and the campus were very much enriched by his presence. I am going to dig out those old albums with Clifford Brown, Sonny Rollins, Abbey Lincoln, and listen to a master artist and craftsman.

As befitting Max’s standing the music was awesome. Two trios (Cecil Bridgewater, Billy Harper and Reggie Workman; Gary Bartz with Harper and Workman) played several of Max’s signature pieces.

To my mind, and judging by the reaction of the audience, the most memorable tributes were an amazingly beautiful and complex piano solo by Randy Weston, and Jimmy Heath’s soprano saxophone rendition of “There Will Never Be Another You.” Cassandra Wilson also sang. Elvira Green represented the Black religious tradition with “City Called Heaven” and “Precious Lord.”

Max was present in a video of a concert with Israeli and Palestinian drummers, and in the recessional which consisted of a recording of several of his drum solos.

Amiri Baraka and Sonia Sanchez eulogized Max in verse. Bill Cosby gave a humorous account of how seeing Max in person as a teenager ended his aspirations to become a jazz drummer.

Current and former UMass Amherst folk in attendance included: Frederick Tillis and daughter Pamela, Mr. and Mrs. Yusef Lateef, Nelson Stevens, Acklyn Lynch, Sandra Oyawole, Muriel and Roland Wiggins, and Donald Byrd, Jr. Of course Janus Adams was present as well as Raoul, Ayo and Dara now all grown up. Ed Cohen was on hand to capture the funeral and reception with his cameras.

Though Max was a lifelong member of Concord Baptist Church, Reverend Calvin O. Butts, III of Abyssinia Baptist Church preached the Eulogy. Outside the church a group of drummers had gathered across Riverside Drive and played until Max was driven away to Woodlawn Cemetery where he rests on a hill overlooking a circle of musicians including Miles Davis, Duke Ellington, Illinois Jacquet and Lionel Hampton.
Three Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies faculty members teamed with other scholars to co-edit three books this year. Such exciting new works set the stage for future research.

James Smethurst joined with Rachel Rubin (UMass Boston) and Chris Green (Marshall) to co-edit the volume Radicalism in the South Since Reconstruction. This book broadly frames the scholarly conversation about southern radicalism, putting essays covering a range of historical periods and topics in dialogue with each other so as to get a sense of the range of southern politics and history. Palgrave Macmillan published Radicalism early in 2007.

Manisha Sinha and Penny Von Eschen (Michigan) co-edited Contested Democracy: Freedom, Race and Power in American History. With essays on U.S. history ranging from the American Revolution to the dawn of the 21st century, the book illuminates struggles waged over freedom and citizenship throughout the American past. Guided by a commitment to democratic citizenship and responsible scholarship, the contributors to this volume insist that rigorous engagement with history is essential to a vital democracy, particularly amid the current erosion of human rights and civil liberties within the U.S. and abroad. Columbia University Press published the book in August.

Amilcar Shabazz with Rhoda Johnson (Alabama) and Celia Daileader (Florida State) co-edited Women & Others: Perspectives on Race, Gender and Empire. Discussing intersecting discourses of race, gender and empire in literature, history and contemporary culture, the book begins with the metaphor of ‘the other woman’ as a repository for the ‘otherness’ of all women in a masculinist-racist society and shows how discourses of race and sexuality thwart the realization of true inter-racial sisterhood. Women & Others creatively unites African American, literary, and Women/Gender Studies scholarship. Palgrave Macmillan will publish the book this November.

Steve Tracy delivered a plenary paper for the Langston Hughes Symposium of the International Conference on 20th Century American Poetry in Wuhan, China in July. He also chaired two sessions, and performed on the International Poetry Night program with “Fast Speaking Woman” Anne Waldman, poet and theorist Charles Bernstein, and critic and former MLA president Marjorie Perloff. His paper will be published in Foreign Literature Studies, and a DVD of the conference and poetry performances is in the works.

Manisha Sinha is on a Charles Warren Fellowship in American History at Harvard University. The Warren Center's 2007-08 fellowship theme is “Politics & Social Movements.” While there Professor Sinha will work on her manuscript (under contract with the Harvard University Press) on the history of black abolitionism from the American Revolution to the Civil War. Get ‘er done, Dr. Sinha!

On October 10, Ernest Allen, Jr., participated in an Action Speaks! Forum, on “An Underappreciated Date that Changed America: The day in 1964 when Cassius Clay became Muhammad Ali.” Recorded at AS220 in Providence, the forum was rebroadcast on Rhode Island’s NPR station, WRNI 1290 AM. Co-panelists included history professor Elliot Gorn and Men’s Basketball coach Craig Robinson both at Brown University.

The National Arts Club has invited Ekwueme Michael Thelwell to speak at its Black Tie affair on November 16th, where the eminent writer, scholar, and former Du Bois Department faculty member Chinua Achebe will receive 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 1898. The Club’s mission is to stimulate, foster and promote public interest in the arts and educate the American people in the fine arts. If Professor Thelwell appears at the gala affair dressed in black tie & tails, we will be sure to run pictures in the next Du Bois Lines. On October 13, Professors Thelwell and Esther Terry offered remembrances of James Baldwin at a panel at Hampshire College. The event celebrating Hampshire’s new Baldwin Scholars was a majestic tribute to the great writer and activist. ∆
Congratulations to Our Recent Ph.D. Graduates

Snap Shots!!

“Nine Afro-American Studies Doctoral Candidates March at UMass Amherst Commencement on May 25, 2007”

Above photo from left: Ph.D. graduates W.S. Tkweme, Paul Udofia; Professors John Higginson, Esther Terry, John Bracey; and graduates Lloren Foster and Andrew Rosa.


Fall Semester 2007 Schedule of Events

**SEPTEMBER**
- 9/11—Departmental Open House
- 9/13— Brazilian Minister Matilde Ribeiro lectures and 9/17 visits New Africa House.
- 9/21—Reception at the Historic Deerfield Inn. Thanks for 19 years as chair Dr. Terry; welcome, Dr. Shabazz.
- 9/22—Trip to Du Bois Homesite in Great Barrington, MA.
- 9/23—5 Colleges Black Studies chairs meet—Amherst College.

**OCTOBER**
- 10/3-7—Faculty and students attend ASALH conference.
- 10/21—“Genius” filmmaker Charles Burnett at Amherst Cinema screening *Killer of Sheep* and *My Brother’s Wedding*. On 10/22 he visits New Africa House for an exclusive screening of his newest work *Namibia: The Struggle for Liberation*.

**NOVEMBER**
- 11/22-25—THANKSGIVING RECESS.
- 11/26—His Excellency Mr. Antonio Mascarenhas Monteiro, the first democratically elected President of the Republic of Cape Verde, gives Du Bois International Lecture, 5:00 p.m. in the Amherst Room, Campus Center Room 1009. Free admission; a reception will follow.
- 11/28—Whitney Battle-Baptiste, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, will present in our *The Fire Next Time* Colloquium, 5:00 p.m., in 203 New Africa House. The title of her paper is “Landscapes of Resistance: African Diaspora Archaeology at Andrew Jackson’s Hermitage Plantation.”

**DECEMBER**
- 12/14—End of the year gathering. Contact the main office for details (413) 545-2751.
Welcome to Our Incoming Class

Roll out the red carpet for the Du Bois Department’s newest graduate students: Markeysha Davis, Ernest Gibson and Tammy Smith!

Markeysha Davis comes to us from Detroit, Michigan. A graduate of Wayne State University, she majored in journalism and Africana Studies. She is keenly interested in African American expressive culture. Her emphasis will be in the literary/cultural studies track.

Ernest Gibson joins our program after receiving his BA in Religious and Philosophical Studies from the historic Fisk University and his MA in American Studies from Purdue University. His research interests include black literature, philosophy and culture with a particular concern with the Black Intellectual Tradition and 20th century African American Literature. In his work at Purdue, he explored the metaphoric relationship between black intellectual struggles and greek mythological odysseys.

Tammy Smith has lived in three areas of Northwest Mississippi: Carrollton, Greenwood, and Winona. She received her B.A. in English with a concentration in creative writing from Mississippi University for Women. She comes to us having just received a M.A. in English and graduate certificate in African American Studies from Eastern Michigan University. She is keenly involved in mentoring and reading to children. She is likewise interested in black children’s literature and the oral tradition.

Join us in wishing them well in their first year in the doctoral program — “Lifting as We Climb!”

Anthony Ratcliff is completing his dissertation “Liberation at the End of the Pen: Writing Pan-African Politics of Cultural Struggle” on the Black Arts Movement. He is a Fellow of the Northeast Consortium for Faculty Diversity for 2007-08, at Stonehill College in Easton, MA, where he will teach a class on Hip-Hop Literature. On 10/25, he was in conversation with Pop Master Fabel about the past, present and future of hip hop culture at the Crossroads in the Study of the Americas program Keep It Movin’. He is co-editing a special issue of the Black Scholar entitled “Revisiting Pan-Africanism.”

Successful Defenses at Summer’s End!!

Congratulations to Marieta Joyner (below) and to Zebulon Miletsky (right) who successfully defended their dissertations in August. Kudos also to the faculty members who gave summer time to read their work.

Du Bois Lines — The Newsletter of the W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst

Thomas Edge, a sixth-year student in the doctoral program, is nearing completion of his dissertation on the first Black president of Howard University, Mordecai Johnson. This semester, Tom is also serving as a visiting lecturer in the History Department at Trinity College in Hartford. He has recently submitted a review of Stephen Lawson and Charles Payne’s “Debating the Civil Rights Movement, 1945-1968,” to the Journal of African American History, and is also working on an article about academic freedom issues at historically-Black colleges and universities through the 1960s.

Ph.D. candidate David Lucander’s favorite novel from Major Works: is Go Tell It On The Mountain. Here he is in the Tetons telling it. Go David!
Alumni Lines

We welcome news from all our former students. Here’s the scoop on some of our Ph.D. graduates

Dr. Lindsey Swindall ('07)—Assistant Professorship in History at Franklin College in Indiana. ASALH '07

Dr. Lloren A. Foster ('07)—Assistant Professor of English at Hampton University. He has taught the honors seminar: “The HBCU: Do We Still Need Them?”

Dr. Shawn Alexander ('04)—Assistant Professor of History at University of Kansas. Concentrating on 19th & 20th century African American social and intellectual history, his forthcoming works include an anthology, T. Thomas Fortune the Afro-American Agitator: A Collection of Writings, 1880-1928; and a monograph, We Know Our Rights & Have The Courage To Defend Them: African American Civil Rights Organizations in the Jim Crow Era, 1883-1909. ASALH '07

Congratulations to Shawn and his wife, Kelly Farrell, on having twin boys, Leiham and Francis, on July 8th!!

Dr. Rita Reynolds ('07)—Visiting Assistant Professor of History at the University of Hartford. ASALH '07

Dr. Christopher Lehman ('02)—Associate Professor in the Ethnic Studies Department of St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, Minnesota. He is the author of American Animated Cartoons of the Vietnam Era and a second book, The Colored Cartoon, is scheduled for publication in December 2007. He lives in St. Cloud with his wife Yolanda and daughter Imani, and a second child is due in February of next year.

Dr. Ousmane Power-Greene ('07)—Assistant Professor of History at Clark University in Worcester, MA.

Congratulations to Ousmane and his wife, Melissa, on having a baby girl, Imanni, on October 16th!!

Dr. David A. Goldberg ('06)—Assistant Professor of Africana Studies at Wayne State University and finishing an edited volume entitled, Black Power at Work: Community Control Movements, Affirmative Action, and the Ongoing Struggle for Racial Justice in the Construction Industry, as well as the forthcoming monograph, Courage Under Fire: African American Firefighters & The Struggle for Racial Equality.

Dr. Jennifer Jensen-Wallach ('04)—Assistant Professor of History at Georgia College and State University. Her first book entitled, Closer to the Truth Than Any Fact: Memoir, Memory, and Jim Crow is forthcoming in 2008. ASALH '07

Dr. Francis Njubi Nesbitt ('02)—Associate Professor of Africana Studies at San Diego State University.

Dr. Andrew Rosa ('06)—Oklahoma State University Assistant Professor of History and at work on his book: In the Service of God, Race & Man: St. Clair Drake, A Scholar Activist in the American Century.

Dr. Stephanie Evans ('03)—Assistant Professor of African American Studies & Women’s Studies at the University of Florida. She is the author of Black Women in the Ivory Tower, 1850-1954. Her next book, African Americans and Community Engagement in Higher Education, is in press. ASALH '07

Dr. Brandon Hutchinson ('04)—Assistant Professor of English at Southern Connecticut State University.

ASALH 2007—Oct. 3-7, twenty Du Bois Department students, faculty and alumni participated in the 92nd annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History. Our contributions to its success were appreciated and recognized!

Dr. W.S. Tkweme ('07)—Assistant Professor in Pan-African Studies at the University of Louisville. ASALH '07

Dr. Sandra Duvivier ('06)—Assistant Professor in English at James Madison University. She is currently working on a book manuscript entitled, Beyond Nation, Beyond Diaspora: Mapping Transnational Black American Women’s Literature, which explores the symbiotic and intersectional relationship of black American literature from various geographical locations. Her courses, curricular manifestations of her interdisciplinary research, foreground the experiences and contributions of people of color and women.

Dr. Trimiko Melanson ('05)—Assistant Professor of English at Auburn University. Specializes in African American literature and culture, with a particular concentration in twentieth-century black women’s literature and feminist theory. She is currently working on her book manuscript entitled, Unbought and Unbossed: Transgressive Black Women and the Politics of Representation.

Du Bois Lines

would like to hear from all our Afro-American Studies graduates! Please send us news about yourself to: tlovelan@afroam.umass.edu
Brazilian Minister Visits UMass Amherst

Matilde Ribeiro, Special Secretary for the Promotion of Racial Equality (SEPPIR) in the government of Brazil’s President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva since March 2003, visited UMass Amherst. In a public lecture in the Campus Center on September 13, she shared news of the continuing struggle for social justice and equal rights in the Federative Republic of Brazil. She also visited New Africa House on September 17.

Esther Terry, UMass Associate Chancellor introduced Minister Ribeiro’s lecture on black women, racism and affirmative action in Brazil, topics very close to her duties as Minister of SEPPIR, and areas to which she has dedicated her life’s work. Catarina Fritz, Visiting Assistant Professor of Sociology, and Amilcar Shabazz, Du Bois Department Chair and a Fulbright Senior Specialist to Brazil, were invited to speak as respondents to the Minister’s lecture. A reception followed.

Minister Ribeiro was responsible for developing a program entitled “Brazil without Racism,” which led to the creation of the SEPPIR, the first ever cabinet-level post aimed at eradicating racial discrimination in Brazil. She is responsible for managing the country’s policies for promoting racial equality and protecting the rights of racial and ethnic groups.

Born in Florida Paulista in the state of Sao Paulo, Minister Ribeiro graduated from Catholic University Pontificia with a degree in Social Sciences and a Masters degree in Social Psychology. As a longstanding activist in the Afro-Brazilian and feminist movements, Minister Ribeiro has published various articles on race and gender as well as environmental and state politics. The Du Bois Department, The Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies, together with Minister Ribeiro and constituents in Latin America are developing a research project that compares the practical experiences of governmental units in the Americas with a mission to eradicate racism and to uphold equal rights. Keep reading Du Bois Lines for updates on the work.

Chancellor Cole Tours Du Bois Homestite

On 9/22, State Senator Benjamin Downing, Professor Bill Strickland and Chancellor Thomas Cole prepare to leave Clinton A.M.E. Church to tour W.E.B. Du Bois’s birthplace and boyhood homestite in Great Barrington. UMass Amherst owns the property the sage once lived. The Du Bois Legacy Group is actively exploring ways to develop the historic site.

10/21: Filmmaker Charles Burnett (wearing cap) at Amherst Cinema with Professors Michael Thelwell, Ernest Allen, and Yemisi Jimoh after screening Killer of Sheep. The Du Bois Department honored him for his integrity and achievements as an artist over the past thirty years.

Our Du Bois International Distinguished Lecturer for 2007 is His Excellency Mr. Antonio Mascarenhas Monteiro, the first democratically elected President of the Republic of Cape Verde. He will speak at 5:00 p.m., 11/26, in the Amherst Room of the Campus Center. A reception will follow. The public is welcome. Admission free is, but parking is not.

Du Bois Lines
The Drum
(for Max Roach)

A bearer of music
and dance
from the soul of earth

Born of the flesh
of trees, humans and stones
vibrations of ghosts and bones

Then there are soulmates
shells, chains and cymbals
metals, beads, wood and wind chimes

Now and again
there is the tuff hide of alligators
and tender skin of cows and sheep

Sounds teased from hollow earth
music that only time can keep
the voice of thunder, the way God speaks.

The lingering spirit and toll of bells
made of metal; hollow flesh, or shells
A source of moods and mystery casting a spell.
A memory of good deeds, when things end well.

~Frederick C. Tillis — 19 August 2007