DID YOU KNOW?...

In 2004, Wangari Maathai became the first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize. Born in Kenya, she was an important activist for women’s rights. In 1970, Maathai became the first woman in East Africa to obtain her Ph.D. She later went on to found the Green Belt Movement, one of the most successful African environmentalist movements in history.

"To live is to choose. But to choose well, you must know who you are and what you stand for, where you want to go and why you want to get there."

-Kofi Annan

---

“STAGING BLACK RADICALISM”
PROFESSOR CEDRIC ROBINSON
UNIVERSITY OF SANTA BARBARA

BY SALIF DOUBARE, POMONA COLLEGE

On Tuesday, September 20, 2011, distinguished scholar and mentor Cedric J. Robinson spoke at Pomona College’s Rose Hills Theater. Dr. Robinson was born in Oakland, California, in 1940. He attended the University of California, Berkeley, where he earned a B.A. in Social Anthropology, and Stanford University, where he completed his graduate studies in Political Theory and received an M.A. and Ph.D. In 1979, Robinson joined the faculty at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he is currently a professor in the Department of Black Studies and the Department of Political Science. Dr. Robinson is the author of *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition; Terms of Order: Political Science and the Myth of Leadership;* and *Black Movements in America.* Of these works, he is best known for the first.

...(continued on page 9)
FEATURED FACULTY:

DAMIEN SCHNYDER

"THE NEW KID IN TOWN"

BY SEANNA CADÉ LEATH, POMONA COLLEGE

Rumor has it that our new Assistant Professor of Africana Studies, Dr. Damien Schnyder, is extremely helpful and accessible; after witnessing a line of students outside his office during office hours (and being among the waiting), I’d have to agree. Before joining the Claremont Colleges, Professor Schnyder completed his doctoral research at the University of Texas at Austin on public education and prisons, conducting ethnographic research at a Los Angeles County school for 18 months. When asked about his decision to accept the position at the Claremont Colleges, he mentioned the sense of faculty community that resonated with him during the interview process: “Everyone seemed really supportive and interested in the work I was doing, which is something you don’t find everywhere.”

Joining the ranks of our faculty, Professor Schnyder is already involved in the Editorial Board for the journal *Black California Dreamin*’, while also working with the Southern California Library, which houses some of the most important records for the Black History of Los Angeles. Along with being one of the faculty discussants for PASA’s October Film Series on Black Love, he’s also working on a book manuscript, “First Strike: Public Education, Prisons, and Masculinities in Southern California.” Professor Schnyder is interested in research that centers on the economic, political, and social impact of juvenile justice centers on Black youth, as well as Black music formation in Los Angeles. Outside the classroom, he enjoys listening to live music, playing sports like tennis, basketball, and yoga, as well as attending Long Beach Poly football games.

Here are some words of wisdom from our new faculty member:

**SL:** What’s a message you’d like to send to students—academically and personally?

**DS:** There’s much work to be done in the field of Africana Studies, and the 5-Cs are a perfect place to maximize the plentiful resources, as well as being a great time to dig in and get it started. Utilize the professors and everything that’s around you because it’s rare that you’ll receive this type of intense training ever again. Also, learn how to read to where you can pull out the main ideas and connect them with conversations in class and other theories. Personally, remember that life is so short; take advantage of all opportunities that the day presents; go out there and get the things that you want.

**SL:** What’s a difficult realization you had during undergraduate or graduate school?

**DS:** (Laugh) Writing doesn’t start until you start editing, and be prepared to take criticism; don’t take it personally.

**SL:** Taking a course with you, what should we know when we enter the classroom?

**DS:** (Another laugh) There will be a lot of thinking required and a lot of discussion. Some classes may have a lot of reading, but there will also be a lot of laughter. We will bring in many different texts from various sources: music, video, blog sites, and graphic novels from fiction sources. In general, there will be a lot of different things going on.

The young professor is passionate about making things better for everyone, but particularly Black people, and loves to spend time with his wife and family. In the future, Professor Schnyder hopes to teach courses on political theory for Blacks in the United States as well as a class on Black music. Already teaching two great classes this semester, watch out for his fall courses: Introduction to Africana Studies A and a newly offered course on prisons in public education. We’re very proud to welcome Dr. Damien Schnyder to the Claremont Colleges as our first full-time, tenure track professor in Africana Studies. If you haven’t met him yet, he’s definitely a faculty member worth getting to know!
FEATURED STUDENT: SALIF DOUBARE
“HE TOO SINGS CLAREMONT”
INTERVIEWED BY: LEAH JANINE DONNELLA, POMONA COLLEGE

In August of 2008, Salif Gildas Doubare matriculated at Pomona College. As a Posse Scholar with an impressive record, Pomona knew that Doubare was an excellent student, but one thing was for sure—Claremont had no idea what it was in for when he arrived here from Chicago, Illinois. Since beginning college four years ago, Doubare has influenced the Claremont Colleges in myriad ways, from volunteering as a math tutor to starting BLOC (Building Leaders on Campus), his own 5C organization, to challenging the very notion of what it means to be a student in Claremont. Doubare worked at the Office of Black Student Affairs and was an active member of the Pan-African Student Association. During the spring of his junior year, Doubare studied abroad in Mombasa, Kenya, at which point he learned Swahili and started research for his senior thesis, which focused on “histories untold.” Doubare graduated this May, and the Claremont community is sure to be the lesser as a result of his absence. There are many things that could be said about this man; his list of accomplishments is great, and the list of things he has yet to achieve is even greater. But the words of such a distinguished scholar are better left unfiltered. So here it is, straight from the horse’s mouth.

Salif Doubare’s thoughts on:

Study Abroad: “It must be done by everyone. It’s an experience to go back to Africa and see life from a privileged standpoint... You notice that no matter how far you go from home, there are people like you all over the place. We clicked with [the African youth] right away.”

The decision to become an Africana Studies major: “The subject introduced itself to me and we grew up together. It happened naturally. I realized after a while that the classes I really enjoyed happened to be a certain type of class, they all happened to be in a certain type of department.”

Perceptions of Africana Studies: “One of the most negatively stigmatized majors. People don’t know what it is, they don’t know why, they don’t understand. ‘Why must you look at the world a different way? Why can’t you just do this and do that?’ It’s because I understand that the world was shaped from a certain lens, and I don’t believe I should be blinded. I believe I should see. Let me see it all. Let me see both sides and come to my own conclusion...I thank this department for existing to liberate the mind.”

Pomona College: “I have given this school just as much as it thinks it’s given me.”

Political Correctness: “I don’t like PC. I feel like it’s a tool to pacify true discourse that might combat ignorance by giving [people] safe words.”

Being a student of color in Claremont: “Any group of marginalized students on this campus cannot just be students... white students can just be, whereas us, at every turn, we have to combat. We’re teachers already. We’re the ones that are giving our experience of what black people are, which is ironic because I don’t see myself as solely black. Here, in this environment, all they see is that I’m black. I am black. But I’m also Salif. I’m myself at the end of the day, but nobody wants to see that. I have to fight for my identity.”

Life after Claremont: “I come from a long line of people who don’t work for people. I want to be my own boss. I’d be a great anything I decide to be. It’s just about deciding what I want and getting it. Because I’m capable. We’re all capable.”

Advice to incoming students: “Get out of your circle. Experience. Don’t listen to the he-said-she-said. Go find out for yourself. Open your mind. Never give up.”
Thomas Chatterton Williams’s premier book, Losing My Cool: How 15,000 Books and a Father’s Love Beat Hip Hop Culture, caused quite a stir when it was published in April 2010. Losing My Cool is an autobiographical coming-of-age story that delves into themes of race, culture, and philosophy. Throughout the book, Williams reflects on the formative moments of his youth, attempting to endow them with a philosophical significance that can be extended to many young adults of his generation. Williams writes his way chronologically through his life, describing his experience as a young boy who later goes to Georgetown University and ultimately winds up rejecting the ways of his childhood. Readers get an insider’s perspective into a life of competing influences—the wholesome support of family contrasted with the danger of unsavory peer relations. Williams begins his book with a particularly jarring moment: early in his childhood, he is sitting in a car with his white mother when he too is mistaken for being white. Confused and defensive, the young Williams resolves never to be so misperceived again. From that day forward, Williams is determined to transform himself into a paradigm of self-styled “authentic blackness.”

With Jay-Z as his mentor and BET as his muse, Williams embarks on a journey of self-repression, stifling his intelligence, upbringing, and economic standing in order to project a ghetto-fabulous caricature of black male America. The lifestyle that he embodies, which promotes misogyny, substance abuse, and violence, is what Williams identifies as “hip-hop” culture.

Williams comes from a middle-class background. His family, while not wealthy, has the means to send him to a private school of his choosing, and to provide a comfortable home free from want. Williams’s parents are extremely well-educated, holding graduate degrees. Both of his parents venerate education and instill values of hard-work, dedication, and persistence in their son. Thomas Chatterton Williams, unlike many of his peers, grows up in a stable household with positive role models and, as he says, over 15,000 books. The fact that he ultimately winds up at a good college is less than extraordinary. Indeed, the first half of this book is not so much about Williams’s father’s powers of salvation, as the title would suggest, but rather, the immensely seductive power of “hip hop” culture. Perhaps a more suitable subtitle for this memoir would read, “How Hip Hop Culture Almost Beat 15,000 Books and a Father’s Love.”

Williams’ real intellectual transformation takes place when he leaves home to matriculate at Georgetown University. For the first semester of school, Williams isolates himself within a certain sector of the black communities at Georgetown and nearby Howard University. He struggles to eschew “blackness,” which in his eyes means partying, missing classes, demeaning women, and the like. When winter break finally arrives, he wonders why he is coming home with few friends and on academic probation.

Then comes the “aha” moment. Williams has a breakthrough where he connects with a white classmate at Georgetown. From that day forward, his eyes are opened. He suddenly realizes that the world has more to offer him than dope beats and pumped up kicks. He learns that there is something called a “baguette,” and that it is something that he likes very much. By the time Williams returns home for the summer, he is ready to reject every semblance of “black culture” that he has ever known. He can no longer connect with former friends and feels isolated from his community.

In the final chapters of his memoir, Williams has some rather unexpected insights. He seems to conclude that in order to progress, young men and women of color need to stop trying to be cool and learn to integrate into mainstream society so that they can learn something real. Williams makes valid observations about his experiences, and by the end of the book seems to have legitimately grown as a person. His insights are sound when it comes to embracing new cultures and moving beyond the limited spectrum of one’s own experiences, but when it comes to acknowledging the value of his culture, I can’t help but wonder whether Williams missed the point of his own journey. He is eager to reject the negatives of hip hop culture, but he also appears to be noticeably ignorant of the wealth of meaning inherent in hip hop culture. Hip hop has always been a way for marginalized people to create their own narratives and define their own experiences. It is not based on an ignorance of white America, but a conscious rejection of the values that accompany white America. Over the course of his long relationship with it, Williams has always been a consumer of hip hop culture, and never an active participant in it. And for all of his professes intellectualism, he seems to have arrived at a literal interpretation of a symbolic resistance.

For further reading check out:
http://elemnzalozg7o.com/hs0452w07/kelley.pdf (Brief history of hip hop)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ih4PF6zRChY (Interview with author and his father)

*Subsequent editions of the book have revised the subtitle to “Love, Literature, and a Black Man’s Escape from the Crowd.”
‘ER TALK’UM ‘BOUT LIB LANWIDGE
(HER TALK ABOUT A LIVING LANGUAGE)

BY: BRITTANI SERNA, PITZER COLLEGE

Dr. Simanique Moody is a postdoctoral fellow in the Linguistics Department of the University of California, Santa Barbara. On October 4th, 2011, she gave a lecture entitled “Cultural Diversity and Linguistic Continuity of African Americans in Southeast Georgia.” The title alone sparked the interests of new and veteran scholars. Dr. Moody graced the Claremont Consortium with her insightful analysis of data she has been collecting on the grammatical structure, phonology, and semantics of English varieties such as African American English, Gullah-Geechee, and Haitian Creole spoken in Southeast Georgia. Her research serves as a contribution to descriptions of the Gullah-Geechee and Southeastern Georgian English variations, as well as scholarship on social and cultural views of this population of Black Americans and the legacy of their ancestors.

Dr. Moody opened the lecture with an introduction to lay the foundation for the conclusions she reached after her extensive analysis of the language used and cultural practices of the 45 years and older Black working-class population living in Southeast Georgia. Dr. Moody captured her audience’s attention with raw examples of what the varieties of English spoken within this region actually sound like. Her unique perspective on the cultural significance of language, particularly among the adult population Moody chose to study, demonstrated the undeniable link between language and culture.

Moody presented examples found in her research linking language and culture such as “Callin’ the Baby’s Spirit” and “Speaking into the Baby’s Mouth.” Narratives and anecdotes collected in her years of research served as fully equipped vessels to take Moody’s audience of eager, yet skeptical, academics on a journey to Southeast Georgia. Through her own words of wisdom and analysis of the wise words of her participants, Moody demonstrated the power of language.

Moody’s work, accompanied by her ability to provoke thought and dialogue via an oral presentation, speaks to the value of oral tradition in the culture of the academic world. Gullah-Geechee speakers testify to the power of the spoken word to cure ills and ailments, just as Moody serves as the Voodoo doctor of languages, seeking to remedy the effects of an illness called ignorance through the power of the tongue.
Fazia Aitel (Modern Languages/Africana Studies, CMC) was awarded tenure and promoted to Associate Professor.

Alicia Bonaparte (Sociology/Africana Studies, Pitzer) presented a paper in San Diego, with a student, at the Pacific Sociological Association meeting: "I'm a Mother Now: Teen Mothers, Sexual Decisionmaking, and Self-Agency," on March 24, 2012. She will be teaching a new course, "Juvenile Delinquency," in the fall.

Marlene Daut (Cultural Studies/Africana Studies, CGU) published a scholarly article in the journal, Nineteenth Century Literature. She was also awarded a 2012 Ford Postdoctoral Fellowship and just published "The 'Alpha and Omega' of Haitian Literature: The Baron de Vastey and the U.S. Audience of Haitian Political Writing" in the journal, Comparative Literature.


Eric Hurley (Psychology/Africana Studies, Pomona) will begin serving as Chair of the Psychology Department at Pomona College as of July 1, 2012. In addition, next year, he will take over as the Faculty Mentor in the Posse Program at Pomona.


Damien Schnyder (Africana Studies, Scripps) published the article, "Masculinity Lockdown: The Formation of Black Masculinity in a California Public High School" in Transforming Anthropology, Volume 20, No. 1, 5-16. He offered two new courses this year: "Africana Political Theory" and "Prisons and Public Education" (also to be offered in the fall of 2012). In addition, he presented at two conferences, the American Studies Association annual conference in Baltimore, MD (Title: "In Remembrance of Clyde Woods") and the American Anthropological Association conference in Montreal (Title: "Beyond Coal and Diamonds").

Valerie Thomas (English/Africana Studies, Pomona) was invited to contribute an essay on diasporic vertigo and the aesthetics of Black music titled "The Break" to the new book, Black Cool: One Thousand Streams of Blackness, edited by Rebecca Walker. She also participated in two readings and two panels on Black Cool at EsoWon bookstore in Leimert Park and Vroman's Bookstore in Pasadena during Black History Month. And she hosted Rebecca Walker and novelist Rachel M. Harper for a conversation on Black Cool as part of the English Department's Literary Series during Black History Month. Her essay, "Dust to Cleanse Themselves, A Survivor's Ethos: Diasporic Disidentifications in Zeitoun" will be published Fall 2012 in a special issue of the journal Biography. Professor Thomas was interviewed about the process of creating a Buddhist sand mandala for Avalokiteshvara at the Land of Enlightenment Buddhist Center in Pomona by the San Jose Mercury News and Inland Valley Daily Bulletin. Her new course, ENG122 "Healing Narratives," will be offered in Fall 2012.

(...)continued on page 7.)
FACULTY NEWS (CONT’D)

Sheila Walker (*Psychology/Africana Studies, Scripps*) presented papers at two conferences: a paper on biracial identity at the Western Psychological Association Annual Meeting in San Francisco (April) and a paper on intersectionality and identity at the "How Class Works" 2012 Conference (June) at SUNY Stonybrook. Professor Walker offered a new course this past semester, "Native American Psychology," and was faculty organizer of the Spring 2012 Scripps Humanities Institute series: "Continuing Invasion': Resistance, Resilience, and Re-invention among North American Indigenous Peoples."

Nicole Weckes (*Neuroscience/Africana Studies, Scripps*) was appointed Associate Dean of Faculty Development and Diversity at Pomona College, effective July 1, 2012, and was selected as one of the country’s Top 300 Professors.

STUDENT NEWS

Leah Donella (*Pomona*) is currently studying in Brazil.

Seanna Cade Leath (*Pomona*) will spend the summer conducting research at Vanderbilt University with Dr. Velma Murry, who does work with rural Black families.

GRADUATING SENIORS:

Salif Doubare (*Pomona*) will join "Teach for America" in Chicago, while working on his teaching certification in history at Dominican University.

Asha Gipson (*Pomona*) was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to teach in Prague, Czech Republic. After her Fulbright stint, she will begin a doctoral program in psychology at Columbia University.

Savannah Ross (*Pitzer*) will be working at the Intercollegiate Department of Africana Studies during the summer. Afterwards, she will apply to become a Doctor of Physical Therapy.

Ashleigh Schoecraft (*Scripps*) will be attending Stanford University's Teacher's Education Program, starting this summer.

Amina Simmons (*Pomona*) was admitted to the MA Program in Counseling Psychology at the University of Missouri, Columbia. She will be working with Dr. Robin French.

Elisha Whitman (*Pitzer*) will be teaching for Teach For America at View Park Preparatory Middle School in Los Angeles, CA. She will be teaching Special Education.
JUST GET MOVING!
TONI YANCEY, M.D.

BY ASHA GIBSON, POMONA COLLEGE

UCLA School of Public Health professor and co-director of the UCLA Kaiser Permanente Center, Tony (Antronette K.) Yancey, was April’s Africana Studies guest speaker. Her primary research interest is in chronic disease prevention with a focus on organizational practices and policy changes. In particular, Dr. Yancey is interested in interventions that target underrepresented communities.

Dr. Yancey, who was introduced by Professor of Psychology KaMala Thomas, delivered a much anticipated address titled, “Active by Default: Getting the Afro-American community moving 10 minutes at a time.” Her talk featured chilling facts about the state of public health today, as well as easy and effective ways to improve overall health.

Most adults do not meet the 30-minutes of moderately intensive exercise a day minimum. Similarly, less than half of children meet the 60-minutes a day of physical activity recommendation. Yancey asserts that the decrease in incidental activity has led to extremely low levels of physical activity in adults and children today. “We have engineered most of the physical activity out of our lives,” states Yancey. As a result, the health of Americans is suffering, as physical activity in all levels of society continues to plummet.

The solution is simple: more physical activity and less sedentary behavior. The health benefits of regular exercise are hard to ignore. Regular physical activity is associated with a reduced risk of obesity, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, depression, stress, and even some types of cancer. In addition, swapping out sedentary behaviors for more active ones can lead to an increase in health benefits.

Yancey calls for a profoundly different approach, introducing “Instant Recess,” a new paradigm for fitness and public health that promotes well-being and a sense of community. These simple and easily replicated 10-minute activity breaks can be incorporated into any school, work, or community environment, not to mention that these breaks are a lot of fun! The energetic movements are designed to appeal to people who are in the highest risk groups. In short, Dr. Yancey’s line of Instant Recess workout tapes have inspired many to take their health into their own hands and “get moving...."
“STAGING BLACK RADICALISM”...(continued from pg. 1)

Dr. Cedric Robinson’s talk focused on “Staging Black Radicalism: Eugene O’Neill’s ‘Emperor Jones,’” a 1920 play which tells the tale of Brutus Jones, a Black man who kills another man, goes to prison, escapes to a Caribbean island, and sets himself up as emperor. In September of 1920, Charles Sidney Gilpin, who was the first black American to receive the Drama League of New York’s annual award, played Emperor Jones. For political reasons, O’Neill claimed that Gilpin was a drunk and replaced him in 1924 with Paul Leroy Robeson. Dr. Robinson described this play as well as four others by O’Neill, for he “found them sinister and wanted to know why they were said to be exceptional.” He argues that Emperor Jones was used to create a wedge between “Africans” and Southern Blacks because primitivism is the dancing comparison throughout scenes 2-7, which are all from Emperor Jones’s perspective. These scenes, which depict a prisoner going to an island from America and becoming a ruler, dismiss the capability of individuals already on the island. Dr. Robinson puts this play in historical context, for it was done five years into United States occupation of Haiti, which lasted from 1915-1935. O’Neill used Emperor Jones, the character and the play, as a tool to revise African, Caribbean, and American history.

Dr. Robinson says the question was not just about black resistance, but rather, “can black people handle independence?” Robinson believes that O’Neill’s answer was no, which is interesting since he comes from a history of minstrel shows (his father was a minstrel actor.) As an Irish American who experienced the legacy of minstrel shows, O’Neill claimed to hate them. Nevertheless, he was unconsciously reproducing that legacy through “Emperor Jones.” Though he put blacks on the screen, the question became, “what message is being transmitted?” Although Paul Robeson did play the role of Emperor Jones, he later realized the work that the play was doing and tried to buy all the copies back so that no one else would see the film. With this information, Dr. Robinson concluded his talk, leaving audiences with a final message: “Being Black is insufficient. Being part of the Black Liberation movement is the requirement.”
Fall 2012 Africana Studies Courses

AFRI 10 A – 01 Intro to Africana Studies
   D. Schnyder

AFRI 120 AF – 01 Prisons & Public Education
   D. Schnyder

144B AF. Daughters of Africa: Art, Cinema, Theory, & Love.
   P. Jackson (Pomona)

178AF. Africana Aesthetics and the Politics of (Re)presentation.
   P. Jackson (Pomona)

9A AF ST. Black Feminist Community Learning and Creative Writing.
   L. Harris (Pitzer)

103. Third Cinema.
   I. Balseiro (HMC)

122 AF. Healing Narratives.
   V. Thomas (Pomona)

164AF. Harlem Renaissance: Gender, Class, and Sexuality.
   L. Harris (Pitzer)
Fall 2012 Africana Studies Courses (cont’d)

170JAF. Special Topics in American Literature: Toni Morrison. V. Thomas (Pomona)

40AF. History of Africa to 1800. S. Lemelle (Pomona)

143AF. Slavery and Freedom in the New World. S. Lemelle (Pomona)

188AF. Seminar in African American Psychology. H. Fairchild (Pitzer)

51. Caste, Class, and Colonialism. D. Basu (Pitzer)

AFRI190 AF. Africana Studies Senior Seminar. E. Hurley.

AFRI 199 AF – 01 Independent Study: Research & Writing. Staff

125c AF. Introduction to African American Literature: In the African-Atlantic Tradition. V. Thomas (Pomona)
Congratulations, Graduates!

Sailf Doubare (Pomona)
Daria B. Dulan (Pomona)
Asha N. Gipson (Pomona)
Ti’esh N. Harper (Scripps)
Savannah M. J. Ross (Pitzer)
Ashleigh P. Shoecraft (Scripps)
Timothy K. Smedley (Pomona)
Elisha J. Whitman (Pitzer)

Intercollegiate Department of Africana Studies

The Claremont Colleges
Lincoln 1105
647 N. College Way
Claremont, CA 91711