



2015

*Annual Newsletter*



The Program in African & African American Studies  
Stanford University

# African & African American Studies 2015 Newsletter

Summer 2015



## Director's Welcome

By Professor H. Samy Alim

Faculty, students, friends, alumni, and affiliates, welcome to the Program in African & African American Studies (AAAS) 2015 Newsletter!

AAAS has just completed our 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a 3-year "Race in Post-Obama America" initiative with the generous support of the President's Office and numerous units across campus. While our focus has been on "new" and "emerging" racial issues, this has

been a tumultuous time for many of us, a time when the "old" and "enduring" racial problems of the past have once again become our present.

In this current moment, the complex and intertwined issues of race, mass incarceration, and the policing of Black bodies are now seen by many as a major crisis for American democracy. Given the unfolding protests across the nation over the past year, and the continued fatal shootings of unarmed Black (and other) citizens by police, a new Black radical politics has emerged under the broad banner of #BlackLivesMatter. In order to meet the demand on campus to make sense of these transformations, AAAS, in collaboration with IDA, offered a highly successful and widely-attended public course on "Race, Policing, and Mass Incarceration," with approximately 200 students enrolled, and hundreds of Stanford affiliates and broader community members attending each week.

The series of lectures, dialogues, and presentations not only gave our students opportunities to engage these political shifts intellectually, but these offerings continue to impact university-wide initiatives like OpenXChange that reach well beyond AAAS. We have also built campus-wide community by collaborating with numerous units, including the BCSC, the CAS, CCSRE, IDA, the GSE, and the Clayman Institute, among others. In addition, we continue to strengthen our relationship with Stanford's BOSP in Cape Town, South Africa.

Finally, I'd like to take a moment to reflect on this past year and the strength of our undergraduates. To quote students from what was a very moving graduation ceremony, this year has been "painful for all of us." Even as our students faced many difficult challenges, they were never afraid to speak up and out about the changes they would like to see happen in the world. Please join me in celebrating our students and celebrating 2015, another year in the continuing legacy of excellence that distinguishes Stanford's Program in African & African American Studies!



AAAS, the BCSC & IDA hosted a reception at the Black House with the Ferguson Panelists: David Banner, Tef Poe, Maria Chappelle-Nadal & Marc Lamont Hill

## Ferguson: America's Movement for Racial Justice

By Jessica Reed

Nearly three months had passed since the grasp of racism stole another Black life. On August 9, 2014, Darren Wilson, a white police officer in Ferguson, Missouri, shot and killed Michael Brown, an unarmed 18-year-old Black male. In an effort to process this repeated theft of Black lives, the Program in African and African American Studies (AAAS), the Institute for Diversity in the Arts (IDA), and the Black Community Services Center (BCSC) collaborated to spearhead the event "Ferguson: America's Movement for Racial Justice". Hosted at CEMEX Auditorium last October, this program attracted an audience of approximately 600 concerned students, staff, faculty, and community members. Just earlier that day, "Slow Down for Michael Brown" was the first of a series of student-led demonstrations that affirmed the importance of Black lives.

To begin the event, I had the privilege of sharing the stage with Tyler Brooks, Tucker Bryant, Adorie Howard, and Elliot Williams to perform "Black Paralysis". This spoken word piece not only explored our narratives of confronting racism, but it also emphasized the necessity to collectively resist stagnancy. Following this performance, I joined other student panelists to help facilitate a challenging and insightful discussion with hip-hop artists David Banner and Tef Poe (also a Ferguson native), Senator Maria Chappelle-Nadal, and scholar/journalist Marc Lamont Hill.

As the one year anniversary of Brown's death approaches, I can never forget that Black people in America continually face the fatal threat of racism. However, I am inspired by the #blacklivesmatter movement and the corresponding efforts to fight for a society in which every Black life is treated beautifully.



Student protest used to raise awareness of the killing of Michael Brown and the evening's Ferguson Panel



Student spoken word presentation before the Panel



Panelists Marc Lamont Hill, Maria Chappelle-Nadal, Tef Poe, and David Banner



AAAS & IDA went to SF to see a screening of "Dear White People"

## "Learning from Directors Spike Lee & Justin Simien"

By Mysia Anderson

On a Friday night, Cemex auditorium was filled to capacity for "Old School Meets New School: A Conversation with Two Directors, Spike Lee (Do The Right Thing) & Justin Simien (Dear White People)." Presented by The Stanford Business School Black Alumni Association and The Stanford Business School Hispanic Alumni Association on January 30, this event was met with great excitement and anticipation.

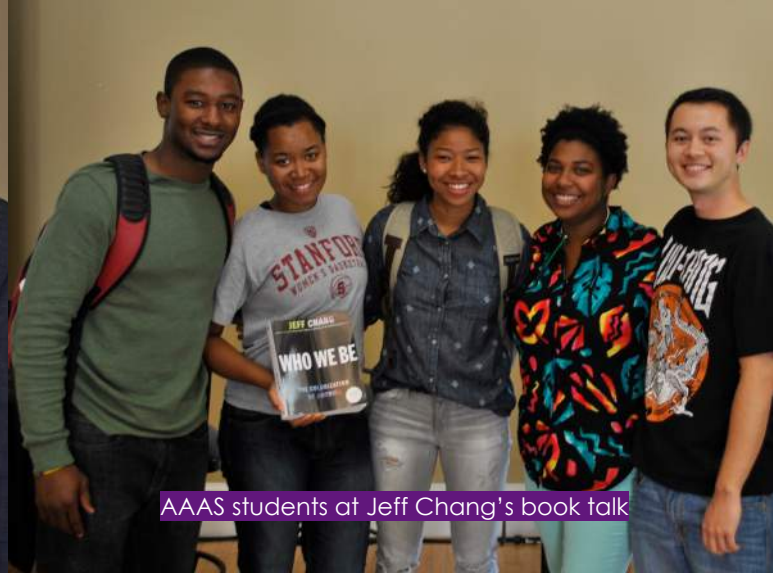
Following the 108 minutes screening, Lee and Simien were asked to join the stage with moderator Jeff Chang of the Institute for Diversity in the Arts. The conversation opened with remarks of gratitude and awe by Simien who could not believe that he was sharing the stage with the legendary Spike Lee. A self-described "fan boy," Simien told us the story of his first interaction with Lee, an obscure, unexpected text that said he was going to screen Dear White People in his class at New York University. Both directors shared their insights on the need for more people of color on-screen, behind the camera, and in the decision rooms. "America on the screen doesn't look like the America I live in," Simien said. He expressed feeling oppressed because of the erasure of his identity in popular culture and entertainment. Lee ended the talk with a challenge to people with capital to support black filmmakers. "We have the stories, we have the actors, we need the capital," Lee said. Simien ended the talk on a note of affirmation and love. "Be yourself. Put yourself in the culture."



Post film discussion with directors Spike Lee and Justin Simien, moderated by Jeff Chang



AAAS & CCSRE Directors (H. Samy Alim & José David Saldívar) with Professor Hobbs at her book



AAAS students at Jeff Chang's book talk

## The Year in Writing: Allyson Hobbs, Jeff Chang, & Issa Rae

African & African American Studies & Center for Comparative Studies in Race & Ethnicity Present

**A Chosen Exile**  
A History of Racial Passing in American Life

Between the rigidity and malice of racist culture, identity became American ground to which, leaving behind families and friends, race and community. It was, as Allyson Hobbs writes, a chosen exile, a separation from one racial identity and the hope for another. This passionate history of passing explores the possibilities and challenges that racial indeterminacy presented to men and women living in a country obsessed with racial distinctions. It also tells a tale of love.

Please join us for a book talk & signing with AAAS/CCSRE 2014-15 Faculty Fellow **Professor Allyson Hobbs** Thursday, October 2 12:00-1:30pm Black Community Services Center. Lunch will be served.

\*Co-sponsored by American Studies, Department of History & Faculty Women's Forum

This year AAAS was able to feature the works of three award winning/best selling authors. This was a great opportunity to highlight some of the creative and brilliant work done by AAAS affiliated faculty, staff and alums.

In collaboration with the Center for Comparative Studies of Race & Ethnicity (CCSRE) we hosted a book talk by Assistant Professor Allyson Hobbs on her recent publication "A Chosen Exile: A History of Racial Passing in American Life." Many students found passing to be a novel concept rarely talked about today and were intrigued by history of racial passing in the US. They were even more impressed when Professor Hobbs used her research to help provide a framework to contextualize the racial passing of Rachel Dolezal that became a media frenzy.

Students were also excited to learn more about Jeff Chang's new book "Who We Be: The Colorization of America" in which he argues that race is a four-letter word, the greatest social divide in American life, a half-century ago and today. His presentation and the work that Jeff does as Executive Director of the Institute for Diversity in the Arts (IDA) really resonates with our students, who couldn't wait to read his book.

Students packed into the Black Community Services Center to welcome our third author, AAAS alum Issa Rae '07 back to campus to discuss her new book "The Misadventures of an Awkward Black Girl." Rae is an American actress and writer. She is the creator of the YouTube workplace-comedy series Awkward Black Girl as well as Ratchet Piece Theater, The "F" Word, and The Choir. Rae's comedic flair allowed our students to have a moment of comic relief during a very politically charged year. AAAS senior Elliot Williams reflects on her talk on the following page.

The Institute for Diversity in the Arts & the Program in African and African American Studies Present

**WHO WE BE:**  
THE COLORIZATION OF AMERICA

Thursday, October 23 - 12noon - 1:30pm WITH **JEFF CHANG**  
Black Community Services Center, Stanford University - 418 Serra Terrace St. Stanford, CA 94305

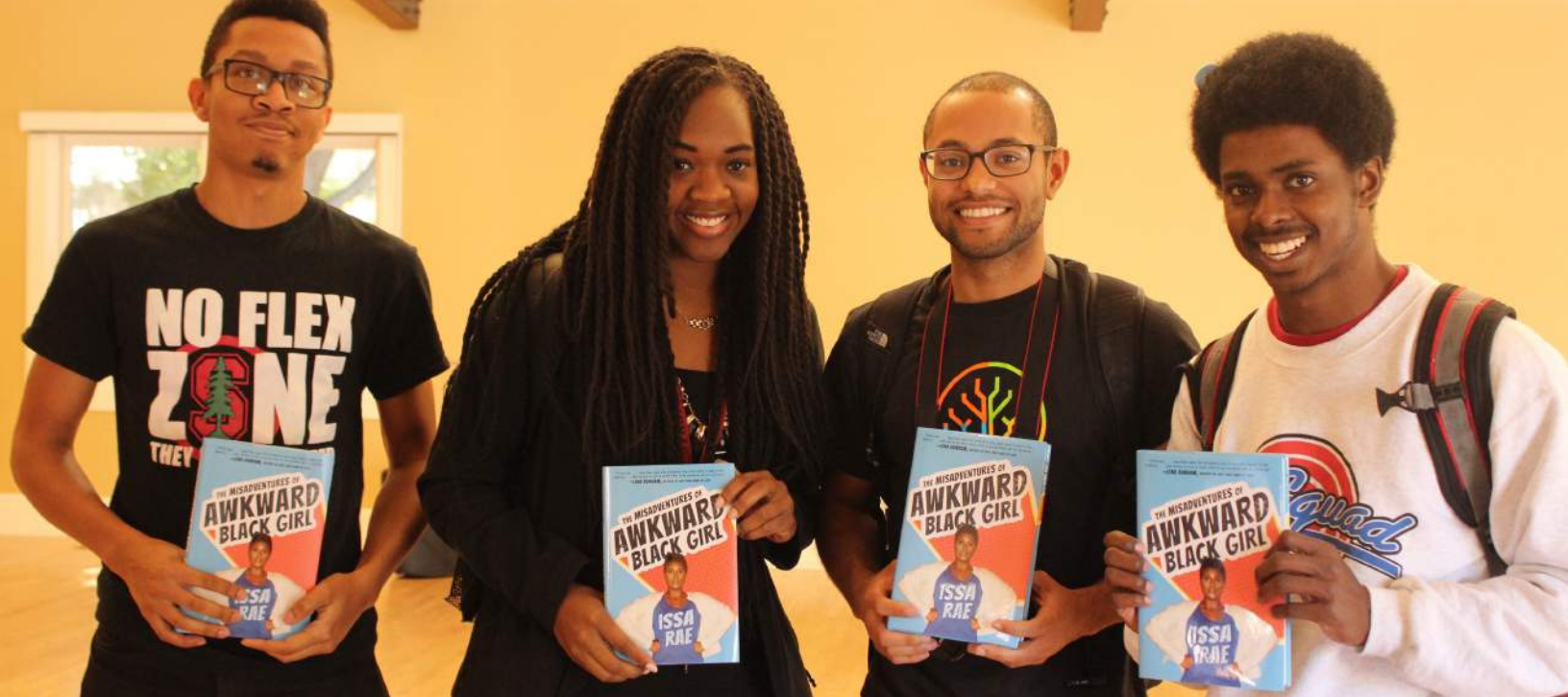
**RACE**  
A four-letter word.  
The greatest social divide in American life, a half-century ago and today.

How do Americans see race now? How has that changed - and not changed - over the half-century?

After era: framed by words like "misbirthing" and "post-race," do we see each other any more clearly?

**JOIN US** for a presentation by IDA Executive Director Jeff Chang about his newly released book, followed by a student-led discussion and book signing. Lunch will be served.

To be entered in a drawing for a copy of WHO WE BE, please RSVP here: <http://go.igf/stan/jc102314>. Tweet questions for the Q&A to @GIZentrac or @IDAStanford



## Misadventures of an Awkward Black Girl: A Book Talk With Issa Rae

By Elliot Williams

Many know her from her web series "Misadventures of an Awkward Black Girl", where we can watch her struggle through a hilarious series of situations and relationship mishaps. But Issa Rae is so much more than her series. She's an extremely accomplished comedian and writer, sought after videographer, and visionary producer. On top of all that, she's a graduate of the program in African and African American studies at Stanford. This year we had the opportunity to host her as she discussed her new book, "Misadventures of an Awkward Black Girl". In this book she chronicles the series of events that made her who she is and helped shape her characters, as well as sharing hilarious advice with us. When she spoke to a full house at the BCSC, she shared with us not only a reading, but also insight about her journey and upcoming plans. She talked about how Stanford allowed her to think differently about media, and how the people around her inspired her first series, Dorm Diaries. She also spoke about what it is like to be in Hollywood, her pitch to HBO for a show, and stories from her life. Her insights, like her book and her presence were warmly welcomed by all.



AAAS majors Elliot Williams & Mysia Anderson interviewed AAAS alum Issa Rae about her new book



AAAS major Adorie Howard getting her book signed



Professor H. Samy Alim welcomes "Real Talk" students

## Experiencing "Real Talk: Intimate Discussions about the African Diaspora"

By Kenneth Tea

I took RealTalk at the beginning of my sophomore year in the fall of 2014. Looking back at my time in RealTalk, all I can say is that it was real. By real, I mean that all of the discussions we had in the class were extremely relevant to my life and the lives of people I care about whether it was Professor Rickford talking about how language is used to discriminate against people who don't speak "Standard English," or dream hampton talking about state violence in the US, South Africa, and Palestine. Speaking as someone from a Cambodian-American refugee family, these were all issues that my family had experienced first-hand. The discussions all made it very clear that racism still exists in the US, no matter how much we like to think of slavery and Jim Crow as things of the past. RealTalk made it clear that the issues I confront on a daily basis in my own life had a place in Stanford classrooms. The class showed me that my experiences did matter, and that there are incredible scholars at Stanford who care about achieving justice for our communities. I later ended up declaring a major in African and African-American Studies in the following quarter. My Stanford experience has been so much better ever since.

**STANFORD UNIVERSITY** THE PROGRAM IN **AFRICAN & AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDIES**  
at Fall Campus and International Campus in North and South America

**RealTalk: Intimate Discussions about the African Diaspora**

<p><b>Thurs. 9/25 H. Samy Alim</b> Professor of Education and Co-Director, Anthropology and Linguistics Director, African &amp; African-American Studies (AAAS) Director, Institute for Diversity in the Arts (IDA)</p> <p><b>Thurs. 10/2 Allyson Hobbs</b> Assistant Professor of History Author of <i>A Choice of Color: A History of Racial Passing in American Life</i> <small>This event will be held at the Black House (Sharon Jackson Family Room)</small></p> <p><b>Thurs. 10/9 Michele Elam</b> Professor of English Co-Director, Family University Fellow in Undergraduate Education Former Director of AAAS (2007-2013)</p> <p><b>Thurs. 10/16 Arnetta Ball &amp; Elliot Williams</b> Professor in the Stanford Graduate School of Education AAAS Educational Research Association, LLC Representative Former Director of AAAS (2010-2013)</p> <p><b>Thurs. 10/23 Jeff Chang</b> Executive Director for Institute for Diversity in the Arts (IDA) Author of <i>Who We Are: The Colorization of America</i> <small>This event will be held at the Black House (Sharon Jackson Family Room)</small></p> <p><b>Thurs. 10/30 dream hampton</b> Director, Arts, Research, &amp; Community Organize AAAS/AAAS Africa, Winter 2014</p> <p><b>Thurs. 11/6 Grant Parker</b> Senior Lecturer in Education Senior Center for African Studies (SCAS) Director, Fellow in '2009</p> <p><b>Thurs. 11/13 John R. Rickford</b> J.C. Wallace Distinguished Professor of Linguistics and the Humanities &amp; (by courtesy) Education Co-Director, Center for Race, Ethnicity and Language (CREAL) Former Director of AAAS (1998-2002)</p> <p><b>Thurs. 11/20 Cheryl Brown &amp; Jessica Reed</b> Assistant Director, African &amp; African-American Studies College Director in Preceptor Group/Distance Education <small>Class of 2016 AAAS-Map</small></p> <p><b>Thurs. 12/4 Vaughn Rasberry</b> Assistant Professor in English African American, Postcolonial, and Third World Literature</p>	<p><b>THURSDAYS</b> <b>12:00-1:00pm</b> <b>Bldg-360-362B</b></p> <p><b>AFRICAAM 31</b> <b>1 UNIT COURSE</b> Students will engage in an intellectual discussion about the African Diaspora with leading faculty at Stanford across departments including African Studies, Anthropology, Classics, Education, English, Institute for Diversity in the Arts, History and Linguistics over lunch. Open to freshmen and sophomores.</p> <p><b>LUNCH WILL BE SERVED!</b></p>
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Lunch with Professor John Rickford



Professor Clayborn Carson



Lunch with Professor Michele Elam



Professor Cornel West in conversation with Professor Shaun Harper about the role of higher education in responding to racism

## Stanford Community Engages with Cornel West

By Stewart Isaacs

Cornel West's visit to campus had a profound impact on my thinking about justice and the role I play in achieving it for everyone. When I initially heard that he would be speaking on campus, I was frustrated. Having been involved in some of the #BlackLivesMatter demonstrations earlier in the school year, listening in on national organizing phone calls, and keeping up with the movement via social media and online articles, I was convinced that the current movement was started and sustained by young people.

Therefore, it made no sense to me to bring anyone over 30 to speak about what was happening. However, Cornel West showed me that elder activists can contribute to the movement in a meaningful way by sharing their wisdom.



Rather than speaking about the horrors of police brutality or dropping statistics about race disparities, Dr. West shared with us the principles that guide his life. Principles adapted from a W.E.B. Dubois quote that describes the challenge of staying true to one's principles in the face of adversity. Although I understand he's a professor, West's words inspired me to approach the movement from an emotional perspective rather than from an academic one more concerned with numbers than individuals. A major takeaway from the talk was his popular quote "Justice is what love looks like in public". I often refer back to this statement when I try to imagine a more just world.







Professor Angela Davis with the students in her spring seminar course

## On The Meaning of Freedom: AAAS Spring Course taught by Angela Davis, Civil Rights Icon

By Measha Ferguson-Smith

Words cannot articulate the gratitude I have for the opportunity to take part in On the Meaning of Freedom with Professor Angela Y. Davis. Over a ten week period, our windowless classroom was converted into a space of solidarity and examination. Professor Davis is my history in the flesh. Her knowledge so thorough, relevant and intimate that my questions were unceasing. She matched every inquiry with generosity. Every sentence was an invaluable gem. It was like receiving a love letter full of wisdom again and again.

We spent the quarter “freedom dreaming” after a revelatory reading of Robin Kelley’s text, Freedom Dreams. We dared to conceive of a transformed society where Black people were free. Exercising the power of the Black imagination, we explored alternative realities, the possibilities of radical Black feminism, land, wealth, self-sufficiency, and the relationships between Blacks in America and our oppressed families in this nation and around the globe, among many other topics.

I rarely encounter a course in which the exploration of my freedom was a requisite. My identities, experiences, worries, loves, fears and those of my peers were all welcome – even necessary – for this course to thrive. This safety was life-affirming in the never-ending historical moment in which we fight to preserve the sanctity of Black life. Professor Davis enabled me to not simply consume content but to think in a way that was constantly questioning and deconstructing the world, always moving toward my particular liberation. For this I am immeasurably grateful.





Professor Angela Davis signing the wall back stage in Cemex Auditorium before her lecture for our Spring series Race, Policing, and Mass Incarceration

## Race, Policing, and Mass Incarceration: Angela Davis Racism and Criminalization: Neglected Dimensions



In addition to teaching an AAAS seminar this spring, Professor Angela Davis gave a lecture entitled “Racism and Criminalization: Neglected Dimensions” in our larger lecture series on Race, Policing and Mass Incarceration. Prior to her lecture the 200 students enrolled watched a documentary about her life that gave context to the loss of her job at UCLA and ultimately the arrest and trial that catapulted her into a global icon. Her fight for justice against police brutality, racism and oppression resonated with people all over the world. In her lecture for the class

she went on to discuss who continued belief in our need to imagine a place where social justice prevails in ways that help to create a society where we no longer need prisons. She identified herself as a prison abolitionist and expressed the problems with our current practices of policing, prison and jails. She acknowledged the oppression of members who identify as LGBT who are often overlooked in the discussion about policing, prisons and jails. She encouraged people to not give up on pushing for and imagining change. Her lecture, the first in the series, helped to kick off an important series which captured the attention and attendance of students, faculty, staff, activists, organizer and community members from all over the peninsula and great bay area.





AAAS Directors, Professor H. Samy Alim and Dr. Cheryl Brown with 2015 St. Clair Drake honored lecturer, Professor Jennifer Eberhart and police chiefs Paul Figueroa and Chris Magnus

## St. Claire Drake Lecture Policing and Protecting Black Lives in the 21st Century: A Lecture by Professor Jennifer Eberhart & Dialogue with Local Police Chiefs By Di'Venci Lucas



On April 22nd, I had the pleasure of attending the AAAS annual St. Clair Drake Memorial Lecture. MacArthur Fellow, Dr. Jennifer Eberhardt, was selected as this year's guest lecturer. As someone familiar with Professor Eberhardt's work, I knew to expect a discussion of implicit racial bias. However, I was not prepared to bear witness to the mountain of research that illustrates our society's racial biases.

I learned that the mere presence of a Black face can lead us to detect weapons more quickly while a White face results in slower weapon detection (Eberhardt, Goff, Purdie, & Davies, 2004). In simulation, people shoot faster when there is a Black person holding a gun (Correll, Park, Judd, & Wittenbrink, 2002). With no stimulus, people are more likely to concentrate on a White face, yet when a crime is suspected, are more likely to concentrate on a Black face. When reviewing death-sentencing results, the more stereotypically Black-looking individual has double the chance of being sentenced (Eberhardt, Davies, Purdie-Vaughns, & Johnson). The more stereotypically black a person's movements are, the more threatening they are perceived to be.

After nearly a year of campus engagement and discussions surrounding police brutality, social inequality, extrajudicial killings of black people, and #BlackLivesMatter this lecture stood as a confirmation that we, as both a University hint in which direction to look: towards data collection, persistence, and perseverance. But above all, we cannot give up pursuing solutions to remedy our racial biases and societal inequality.

The Program in African & African American Studies presents the 2015

# ST. CLAIR DRAKE

Memorial Lecture

OUR HONORED SPEAKER IS  
**Professor Jennifer Eberhardt**

Policing and Protecting Black Lives in the 21st Century:  
A LECTURE & DIALOGUE WITH LOCAL POLICE CHIEFS

CEMEX Auditorium  
641 Knight Way  
Stanford, California  
94305

WEDNESDAY  
April 22  
7:00 PM

Professor Eberhardt's talk will be followed by a conversation with  
AAAS Director Professor H. Samy Alim  
Inland Empire Police Chief Chris Magnus  
Oakland Assistant Police Chief Paul Figueroa.



## Race, Policing, & Mass Incarceration: Van Jones How Do We Cut the Prison Population in Half? By Kristen Powers



To say the crowd was riled up that night is an understatement. For those of us entering CEMEX auditorium for AFRICAAM 34: Race, Policing and Mass Incarceration hours earlier, few predicted the looming upheaval. CNN analyst Van Jones launched the lecture with his activism history, ending at his latest initiative to reduce the prison population with #Cut50. Jones explained that African-Americans increasingly “go to prison and bring back slavery (bonded labor)” and “leave prison and live under Jim Crow through the absence of voting rights.” The timing of his statements resonated with students and community members still processing the death of Freddie Gray. Sophomore DV Lucas asked Jones about the “Mother of the Year” video that showed an African-American mother chastising her protesting son. This one question set off the crowd. The conversation was supposed to end promptly at 9 PM, but spilled over thirty minutes as the room tried to



reconcile the raw feelings that had resurfaced over these tough issues. While there are many take-aways from the night, perhaps the most relevant moment was when Van Jones shared that his former boss, Joan Gibbs, once chastised him, highlighting the number of essential texts he had not read. Gibbs told Jones: “You talk real pretty, but you ain’t historical with your sh\*\*.” Jones gave similar advice to students.

Perhaps the greatest lesson we can all learn from this wild, controversial night is that conversation and debate are important for growth. But to be at our best, we must educate ourselves and get “historical with our sh\*\*.”



Grassroots organizers share their work around race, policing, and mass incarceration

## Race Policing & Mass Incarceration: Grassroots Activists on the Decades Long Fight to End Police Brutality and Mass Incarceration

By Adorie Howard

During one session of the Race, Policing, and Mass Incarceration Public Lecture Series, artist and activist dream hampton facilitated a conversation between current organizers within the Black Lives Matter Movement and the audience. The panel of activists included Patrisse Cullors (BLM co-founder), Monifa Bandele (Senior Campaign Director of MomsRising.org), Mike de la Rocha (Director of Strategic Partnerships for Californians for Safety and Justice), Malachi Garza (Director of W. Haywood Burns Institute), Yusef Bunchy Shakur (CEO and Founder of Yusef Bunchy Shakur Consulting), and Dante Berry (Director of Million Hoodies Movement for Justice and Digital Organizer with Center for MediaJustice). The class began with presentations from each guest and ended with a panel directed by questions from the audience. Overall, it was very helpful to hear people talk about all of the different avenues for people to plug into the movement. Sometimes in social justice work, it seems as if there is only one right way to make change, but as Dr. Angela Davis says, "the revolution must happen at all levels." Most of the organizers emphasized how important it is for each and every one of them to reflect on their own experiences and knowledge in order to determine where they want to concentrate their efforts. BLM co-founder Patrisse Cullors linked the police brutality in her own family to her work in the Black Liberation Movement, and similarly, Yusef Shakur expressed his history of incarceration and gang violence in order to ground his current work in Detroit. The panelists had so much insight to offer, the event could have been twice as long. Although students left wanting to continue the conversation, I am grateful to have had the opportunity to sit in an auditorium at the feet of speakers dedicated to reimagining and transforming our criminal justice system and society at large.



BLM co-founder  
Alicia Patrisse Cullors



Mike de la Rocha  
shared his work



AAAS Senior Wayne  
Lyons deeply  
engaged in the  
dialogue



Lyracist and Activist Talib Kweli discusses arts activism in Black Lives Matters with Jeff Chang from Institute for Diversity in the Arts

## Race, Policing, & Mass Incarceration: Talib Kweli Revolutions Per Minute: Art, Social Movements & The Way Forward By Kareem Alston



The incredible part about having Talib Kweli speak at Stanford is the fact that throughout the years, he's been one of Hip Hop's most respected cultural commentators. In addition to his reputation for being a lyrical mastermind and his ability to create tracks that have been catalogued as instant classics to Hip Hop aficionados over the last 15+ years, Kweli has exercised an acute consciousness of society's most insidious flaws and has thus contributed to national conversations about race and oppression. Most recently, Kweli has provided analyses of life as

an independent musician in today's music industry. He's also been vocal about what it means to be Black in America in the wake of recent events in Ferguson, Missouri.

Among the many topics that were addressed in his talk, moderated by the Executive Director of the Institute for Diversity in the Arts Jeff Chang, Kweli provided a very interesting point of view about the role of an artist to speak on issues that affect their fans and communities. He stated that it wasn't necessarily fair to expect an artist whose background isn't social justice or cultural commentary to suddenly be an expert on the prison industrial complex. Growing up in a household with Professors for parents, Kweli had progressive values instilled in him on a daily basis. He thus does not expect others who didn't have that upbringing to speak about the same issues.



Personally, I have been guilty of placing a certain standard on the music that artists make, specifically because they have a unique platform to spread messages that can impact Black and brown youth in a positive way. However, if Kweli, one of Hip Hop's most respected 'conscious' rappers believes that this is an unfair standard to hold to artists, then I am inclined to listen. While I appreciate musicians, like Kweli, who are able to incorporate a revolutionary message in their music, it should not be an expectation but a gift from those artists who choose to spread those ideas to their fans.



AAAS Majors and Minors

## Why I majored in AAAS? What I gained from it?

By Zainab Taymuree '16



"All men are created equal..." I major in African & African American Studies because this "truth" is not self-evident in America. I arrived at the doorstep of AAAS as I sought scholars and seminars who interrogated "All men are created equal" as a historical artifact rather than a sanctified ideal.

To identify as a student of AAAS is to refuse to be relegated to a special history month and to develop an expanding literacy of race, power, and resistance. I stepped into an academic community that understood the urgency and the stakes of our education. Studying African American histories has given me insight into an architecture of America that I navigate today. On a more personal level, it has pushed me to reframe my story as a young American in an Afghan family and as a Muslim woman, beyond a suffocating national security narrative. The holes in stories of 'democracy' that sat uneasily with me now have sharper contours.

Most importantly, I have gained transferable knowledge for the world outside the AAAS classroom. I have a compass for contexts apathetic about Sojourner Truth, silent on Ida B. Wells, tokenistic about Angela Davis. AAAS complicates as much as it clarifies for me. My major should come with a warning label from Baldwin: that we will uncover an American history "more beautiful and more terrible than anything anyone has ever said about it."





Seniors at their weekly seminar focused on thesis development

## Honors & Senior Theses

Scholarship & Activism: An Analysis of St. Claire Drake Lectures Given by Professor Angela Davis and Mr. Harry Belafonte

**Tianay Pulphus**



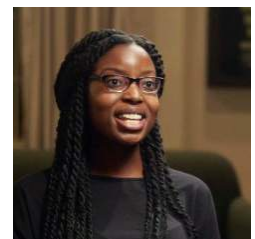
The Perceptions of Juvenile Youth Who Are Reentering Schools

**Chasson Randle**



Unsung Counter-Narratives: Black Women's Accounts of Combating Racial and Gender Violence in the 21st Century

**Jessica Reed**



The Race on Your Head: Understanding Perceptions of Black Women's Hair in the Tech Job Market

**Theresa Shropshire**



Hood As Homeland: Conceptions of Space and Place in the Black Community

**Elliot Williams**







## Celebrating the AAAS Class of 2015

### *Majors*

**Tianay Pulpous** B.A. in African & African American Studies

**Chasson Randle**, B.A. in African & African American Studies with Honors, M.A. Psychology

**Jessica Reed**, B.A. in African & African American Studies with Honors, & minor in Creative Writing

**Theresa Shropshire**, B.A. African & African American Studies & Psychology with Honors

**Elliot Williams**, B.A. African & African American Studies with Honors

### *Minors*

**Heather Aholt**, B.A. in Biology & a minor in AAAS

**Theresa Asuquo**, B.A. in Human Biology & a minor in AAAS

**Isaac Halyard**, B.A. in Economics & a minor in AAAS

**Wayne Lyons**, B.S. in Engineering & a minor in AAAS





AAAS Faculty, Directors, and students in the Graduating Class of 2015

## 2015 AWARDS

Each year AAAS gives out five awards to outstanding undergraduates. Below we recognize this year's recipients.

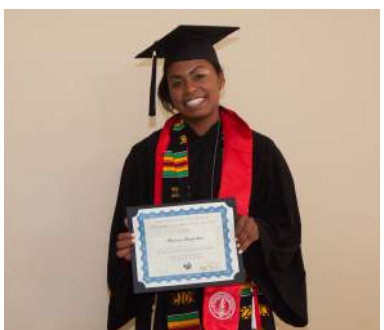


The James L. Gibbs Jr. Award for Superior Academic Performance  
**Jessica Reed '15**



Trustee Leadership Award  
**Tianay Pulphus '15**

The Kennell Jackson Award  
**Jessica Reed '15 & Theresa Shropshire '15**



The Academic Achievement & Service Award  
**Maysia Anderson '17**

The Shanta Annan Memorial Award  
**Brandon Williams '18**

# THE PROGRAM IN AFRICAN AND AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES

**H. Samy Alim, Ph.D.**

AAAS Director

Professor, Stanford Graduate School of Education  
Co-Director, Center for Race, Ethnicity, and Language (CREAL)  
Faculty Director of The Institute for Diversity in the Arts (IDA)

**Cheryl A. Brown, Ph.D.**

AAAS Associate Director

**Jessica Anderson**

AAAS Student Services Coordinator

For More Information Visit:

**AAAS Website**

<http://www.stanford.edu/dept/AAAS/>

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