

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Guest Editor

Pushpa Naidu Parekh, PhD, is professor of English and director of the African Diaspora and the World program at Spelman College. Her areas of specialization are nineteenth- and twentieth-century British and comparative postcolonial literature, focusing on immigrant and diaspora (South Asian and African) literatures and studies. She has published three scholarly books: *Intersecting Gender and Disability Perspectives in Rethinking Postcolonial Identities* (Editor, 2008); *Postcolonial African Writers: A Bio-Bibliographical Critical Sourcebook* (Coeditor, 1998); and *Response to Failure: Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, Francis Thompson, Lionel Johnson, and Dylan Thomas* (Author, 1998). Dr. Parekh has received the Spelman College Presidential Award for Scholarship (1997), Distinguished Service (2013), and Excellence in Teaching (2016). She is an award-winning poet and the recipient of the 2019 Gerard Manley Hopkins Literary award, an annual recognition by the International Hopkins Society, Ireland. Her poem, "Peace," received the West Coast Tagore Festival prize at the International contest held by Vancouver Tagore Society, in summer 2016. Dr. Parekh has contributed critical and creative writing in various journals and collections published in the United States, India, Canada, and Ireland. Dr. Parekh has taught various courses, including African Diaspora and the World, Postcolonial Theory and Women's Literature, New US Immigrant Women's Literature, Contemporary African Literature, Images of Women in Non-Western Literature, Victorian and Modern British Literature, Images of Women in Literature, Introduction to Literary Studies, and First Year Composition.

Articles' Authors

Nayena Blankson, PhD, is a professor in the Department of Psychology at Spelman College. She is the primary statistician for the FITW project. Dr. Blankson's research interests straddle both developmental and quantitative psychology. Her developmental research interests include the organization and development of cognitive abilities as it relates to personality, parenting, schooling, and early academic achievement. Her quantitative interests include psychometrics, multivariate methods, moderated mediation, the design of psychological research, and structural equation modeling. Dr. Blankson is the author of numerous peer reviewed articles, published in journals such as *Child Development* and the *Journal of Educational Psychology*. She has received grants from several different funding agencies to support her research and to support training of students in research.

Robert Brown, PhD, is associate professor in the Department of Political Science at Spelman College, and he is a member of the retainer faculty for ADW. He earned his PhD in political science from the University of Michigan and MSPH in epidemiology from Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health. Dr. Brown's areas of expertise in his research and teaching are: data analysis and research methods, American politics, African American politics, race and American political development, and urban politics. His research has been published in the following journals: *Challenge: A Journal of Research on African American Men*, *The DuBois Review*, *The Journal of African American Studies*, *International Journal of Disability and Human Development*, *The Journal of Politics*, *National Political Science Review*, and *Urban Affairs Review*. He is currently completing a book manuscript tentatively entitled *Black Cities: Black Elected Officials During the Post-Civil Rights Era, 1970–1990*. Dr. Brown is a coeditor, with Todd Shaw and Joseph McCormick, of the forthcoming book, *After Obama: African-American Politics in a Post-Obama Era*.

Anne F. Carlson, PhD, is senior lecturer of French and lecturer in the African Diaspora and the World program at Spelman College. She earned her PhD in French from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her research interests include Francophone African women writers and filmmakers, immigration in France, and second language instruction and assessment. Her recent work includes a review of a critical edition and translation of Maïssa Bey's texts *Entendez-vous dans les montagnes* and *Sous le jasmin, la nuit*, published with the University of Virginia Press. She is currently working on an article about the relationship between *l'écopoétique* and the poems of Andrée Chédid.

Francesina R. Jackson, PhD, is the (retired) principal investigator of the First in the World (FITW) Project. She has served in a number of administrative positions in various colleges. Most recently, she directed the Student Success Program and chaired the Teacher Education Department at Spelman College. Her research focuses on study strategy effectiveness, metacognition, accreditation of teacher education programs and multiculturalism. She led several Fulbright-Hays study abroad programs in West Africa and the Caribbean for educators to study use of the arts to address social justice issues. Jackson has published in a number of professional journals such as the *Journal of Reading, Reading, Research and Instruction* and *Multicultural Perspectives*.

Kathleen Phillips Lewis, PhD, is associate professor of History, division chair for the Humanities, and former director of the African Diaspora and the World program at Spelman College. She teaches Caribbean, Modern

European, and African Diaspora history. Her works have appeared as articles in journals such as the *Journal of Caribbean History* and as chapters in several edited anthologies. She is currently completing revisions on her book manuscript on the Trinidad cacao industry for publication. Her most recent articles and second book manuscript in progress focus on the ways in which Afro-Caribbean women at home and in the diaspora use history, folklore, mythology, oral tradition, Anansi strategies, and fiction to address the individual and collective traumas of post-colonial existence and to find agency within.

Arturo Lindsay, PhD, is an artist/scholar/educator whose work is informed by the scholarly research he conducts on African spiritual and aesthetic retentions, rediscoveries, and reinventions in America. His research findings are manifested in works of art, as well as books, scholarly essays and lectures. Lindsay is the editor of *Santeria Aesthetics in Contemporary Latin American Art* a pioneering text that explores the legacy of the Yoruba aesthetic from antiquity to contemporary art theory and practice. He is professor emeritus and former chair of the Department of Art and Art History at Spelman College in Atlanta. He holds a doctor of arts (DA) degree from New York University (1990). His dissertation title is *Performance Art Ritual as Postmodern Thought, an Aesthetic Investigation*. Lindsay also holds a master of fine arts (MFA) degree in painting from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst (1975) and a bachelor of arts (BA) degree from Central Connecticut State College (1970.) He was the 2006 Distinguished Batza Family Chair at Colgate University and in 2005 he was named the Kemp Distinguished Visiting Professor at Davidson College in Davidson, NC. In 1999 Lindsay served as a Fulbright Senior Scholar at the University of Panama.

Lana Lockhart, PhD, has been teaching in the Spelman English department since 2016. She is also the coordinator of the First-Generation Scholars Program. Her research interests include African American literature, women's studies, and composition and rhetoric. Lana has taught courses such as African Diaspora and the World, Twentieth-Century Black Women Writers, Advanced Grammar, and Composition. Her scholarly interests are often centered on the Black Arts Movement and using culturally relevant literature to teach writing. Lana also enjoys working with first-generation college students.

Soraya Mekerta, PhD, is an associate professor of French and Francophone Studies at Spelman College. She is the former director of the African Diaspora and the World Program (ADW), and she is a past president of the African Literature Association (ALA). Dr. Mekerta holds a PhD in French (University of Minnesota), a master's degree in French (University of

Minnesota), a *Maîtrise* and a *license* in English (Université Paul Valéry, Montpellier, France). Additionally, Dr. Mekerta received training as a performer at the Conservatoire d'Art dramatique in Nîmes, France. She teaches in French and in English, a variety of discipline-based and interdisciplinary courses. These include all levels of French and Francophone language, culture, civilization and literature, Francophone Film, the African Diaspora and the World, a required two-semester course sequence for all first-year students. Occasionally, she teaches Introduction to North Africa and the Middle East, and Women Studies. Dr. Mekerta is the recipient of the Vulcan Teaching Excellence Award from Spelman College (2009). A comparatist, Dr. Mekerta works at the intersection of several interdisciplinary fields. She has presented at national and international conferences, and other venues, and has published articles both in the area of pedagogy, French and Francophone literature, and global social movements.

Alix Pierre, PhD, teaches African Diaspora Studies at Spelman College and he is the director of Cultural Orientation. His research focuses on the diasporan retention and transformation of culture that includes the feminist perspective. He favors a transnational approach to diasporic cultural production(s) beyond the boundaries of nations-states. He explores the representation and visualization of black bodies, voices, thoughts, and aesthetics across media. Since 2015, he has been collaborating with the Miami-based Diaspora Vibe Cultural Arts Incubator (DVCAI) as co-project manager and scholar-in-residence. He has led the incubator's International Cultural Exchanges to Guadeloupe (2015, 2017), Jamaica (2018), and Belize (2019). His publications have appeared in several journals and he is the author of *L'image de la femme résistante chez quatre romancières noires: vision diasporique de la femme en résistance chez Maryse Condé, Simone Schwarz-Bart, Toni Morrison et Alice Walker* (Presses Académiques Francophones: 2014). He is the recipient of the GLAM (2016-present) and CAORC-WARC (2019) fellowships.

Anastasia Valecce, PhD, is an associate professor of Hispanic studies in the Department of World Languages and Cultures at Spelman College. Her research centers on contemporary Caribbean studies with a special focus on Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic. Her work includes film studies, queer and gender studies, visual art, visual culture, literature, performance studies, and pop culture. Her book titled *Neorealismo y cine en Cuba: historia y discurso entorno a la primera polémica de la revolución (1951–1962)* [Neorealism and Cinema in Cuba: History and Discourse on the First Polemic of the Revolution (1951–1962)] (Purdue University Press, Forthcoming 2020) retraces the dynamics behind the formation of the revolutionary ideology in Cuban film production. Her latest works include articles on contemporary cultural, visual, film, and queer productions in Puerto Rico;

Dominican cinema; and on film, visual and cultural production, and media and digital studies in contemporary Cuba.

Angelino Viceisza, PhD, is an associate professor in the Department of Economics at Spelman College and a research associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research. He specializes in the fields of development and agricultural economics, experimental and behavioral economics, and entrepreneurship. Dr. Viceisza designed the FITW field-based randomized controlled trial conducted at Spelman. His research examines the microeconomics of poverty and wealth creation, particularly in developing countries. His research has been published in several peer-reviewed journals, including *Agricultural Economics*, *Economic Inquiry*, *Experimental Economics*, the *Journal of Development Economics*, and *Review of Behavioral Economics*. A wide variety of agencies have supported his research.

Bruce Wade, PhD, was a professor in the Department of Sociology. He served Spelman College for 31 years and was the original statistician on the FITW Leadership team. Dr. Wade specialized in analyses of college student health attitudes and behaviors, the sociology of health, health care and wellness, research methodology and computer applications. Deeply involved in community research, education and evaluation research/consulting, he conducted seminars and training sessions in these areas across the state of Georgia.

Jimmeka Guillory Wright, PhD, is an associate professor in the Department of Psychology at Spelman College. Her research interests include the various levels of conscious experience associated with memory. Specifically, her research focuses on the persistence of misinformation in memory, metacognition, and student learning. She applies recent advances in cognitive science to education practice. Her research on metacognition in the classroom serves as the foundation for the FITW grant awarded to Spelman College by the Department of Education. Her publications are in several journals including the *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology*, *Applied Cognitive Psychology* and *Consciousness and Cognition: An International Journal*.

