Hallowed Grounds: Sites of African American Memory

In 2010 the late Dr. Manning Marable, presenting a lecture sponsored by the Black Cultural Center, posed two very important questions: “Where are our [African Americans] sacred places? Who will fight for their preservation once identified?” Ideas provoking Marable’s comments and answers to the above questions can be examined by engaging the Association for the Study of African American Life and History’s (ASALH) 2016 National Black History Month Theme: “Hallowed Grounds: Sites of African American Memories.” ASALH selected this theme to highlight the centennial of the U.S. National Park Service which turns 100 on August 25, 2016. There are more than twenty-five sites of African American memory operated by the National Park Service. Some of these include several buildings and a campus; for example, the Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site in Alabama which consists of the George Washington Carver Museum, The Oaks; the home of Booker T. Washington and the historic campus of Tuskegee University. Another is a route and/or highway as in the 54 mile trail from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama which includes stories of some of the marchers at interpretive centers along the trail. One site, Nicodemus, in Kansas, is the home of the oldest and only remaining Black settlement west of the Mississippi River and stands as a representation of African American participation in the westward expansion of the United States. Some of these locations preserve the homes, birthplaces and churches of African American leaders while others are the birthplace of African American cultural traditions.

Did you know that fourth graders are eligible to receive a free National Park pass through the White House’s “Every Kid in A Park” program? This program began in September 2015 as a White House initiative to encourage students and their families to visit sites operated by the National Park Service and also learn about our nation. For more information about the National Parks African American Heritage locations visit: http://home.nps.gov/history/aahistory/index.htm and for more information about the Every Kid In A Park program go to http://home.nps.gov/history/aahistory/index.htm

Cedar Hill, The home of famed abolitionist Frederick Douglass, is a National Parks African American Heritage site in Washington, D.C.

Juanita Crider, Editor
Embracing Our Historical Legacies

At the Black Cultural Center every month is Black History Month. That’s because we celebrate Black achievement year round, not just during the month of February. However that does not mean we do not take Black History Month seriously.

Knowing and appreciating our history is more than celebrating the past for prosperity’s sake. We must draw on Black History Month as an inspiration for the present and hope for our future.

Knowing and appreciating history is what allows you to see the possibilities beyond the impossible. It’s the kind of vision it took Richard Allen to establish the African Methodist Church in 1794, the first independent black denomination in the United States. It was the commitment to education that propelled David Robert Lewis to become the first African American graduate of Purdue University in 1894. It is the determination of pioneering physician and medical researcher Charles Drew who developed the American Red Cross Blood Bank in 1940 and the perseverance of Fredrick D. Gregory to be the first black to pilot a space shuttle when he led the Challenger on a seven day mission in 1985. Gregory later became the first black to lead NASA in 2005.

I encourage you to look for Black History Makers in your own community. My most admired Lafayette Black History Maker is David Hubbard. Mr. Hubbard was born in Alabama and will celebrate his 94 birthday this month. He is a graduate of Tuskegee University. While at Tuskegee he studied and learned the carpentry trade. He and his classmates worked on the construction of the Veterinary Medical Hospital and the Home Economics building on the campus of Tuskegee. Upon graduation he relocated to Lafayette, IN and worked for the Lux Agency as a professional trade person and built many homes in Tippecanoe County. He is a World War II veteran and he worked at ALCOA for 31 years. Mr. Hubbard rose through the ranks at ALCOA and became the first black Union representative and the first black leader of the ALCOA 25 year club. It is not just the physical structures that are part of his legacy. His kind and caring personality, strong Christian faith and commitment to serve others is remarkable. Mr. Hubbard personifies the importance of hard work, positive attitude and a good education. He is a dignified man, proud of his heritage.

We can all applaud the efforts of those individuals listed above. I encourage Purdue students to follow in their footsteps and proactively embrace our legacy of excellence.

Renee A. Thomas
Director
Funky Turns 40 Exhibit

Alexis Porter, Staff Writer

“[At the Black Cultural Center] We’re always looking for new and different exhibitions that highlight Black culture,” stated Black Cultural Center Librarian Jamillah Gabriel. This year the Black Cultural Center chooses to acknowledge Black History Month by displaying the art exhibit “Funky Turns 40: Black Character Revolution.”

Funky Turns 40: Black Character Revolution commemorates the first positive Black cartoon characters in television history. These characters appeared during 1970 Saturday morning cartoons. The exhibition will display many of the original celluloids and drawings used to produce the characters.

Funky Turns 40 will feature various characters from animated series, such as Fat Albert and Peanuts. The exhibition includes sixty works of art, curated by Pamela Thomas, from the Museum of Uncut Funk Collection. The features will represent many historical firsts for Black television characters. Peter Jones, from The Hardy Boys, and Valerie Brown, from Josie and the Pussy Cats, will be depicted as the first positive Black cartoon musicians along with many other firsts. Funk Turns 40 will also display some historical figures that have been made into cartoon characters, such as Muhammad Ali and Martin Luther King Jr. Also images of the animated opening to Soul Train will be included.

Funky Turns 40 reaches out to all audiences; across cultures and generations. In New York, the exhibit was held at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Only 30,000 people were expected to attend the showing, but nearly 75,000 people ended up viewing the exhibit. The display has also been featured at the DuSable Museum in Chicago and the Northwest African American Museum in Seattle, Washington. The exhibit has also been featured in the New York Times. One article of Funky Turns 40 ended up on the front page of the Arts section. Funky Turns 40 has received other local and national press coverage; due to its coverage, Funky Turns 40 is a very popular exhibit.

The Funky Turns 40: Black Character Revolution exhibition is available to rotate around museums nationwide. The exhibit began circulating the nation in 2014 and will continue to do so until next year. This February the Black Cultural Center is hosting Funky Turns 40 in order to explore subject matters that aren’t seen typically. Through the representation of these Black cartoons, students are able to see their history and how they paved the way for Black television. Funky Turns 40: Black Character Revolution is a superb exhibit to feature during Black History Month. Come visit the Black Cultural Center to view Funky Turns 40: Black Character Revolution and discover more about Black history.
The BCC Welcomes Baraka Corley

The BCC welcomes Baraka B. Corley, the new BCC Program and facilities manager, who joined the BCC staff at the beginning of January. Originally from East Islip, New York. Baraka received his Bachelor’s Degree from Hofstra University and completing his Masters from SUNY Empire State College in Saratoga Springs, New York. Mr. Corley took the time to speak with me about joining the BCC staff at Purdue.

Walker: Why did you choose to apply for this position at Purdue?
Corley: First, Purdue University is a very well-respected research institution. The position opening prompted me to research the Black Cultural Center, its’ rich history at Purdue and in the West Lafayette/Lafayette communities. The results of that research played an important role in my applying for the position. More importantly, I chose to apply for this position based on the opportunity to be of service to students of color and assist in providing a safe, motivating, and enriching environment that will help them reach their goals.

Walker: What are your responsibilities as Program and Facilities Manager?
Corley: There are many facets to my position here with the BCC. Many of my responsibilities lie in facilities management. For that role, I oversee facility reservations and logistical support for programs held at the BCC. I am also charged with managing the repair, upkeep, and custodial functions for the BCC to ensure this top-notch facility remains that way. My program management responsibilities will allow me to work with students, particularly African American students, at Purdue on many levels. First, I assist with hiring, training, and supervising student employees. Second, I will be active in developing, implementing, and administering co-curricular educational activities and student development programs. In this role, I value serving as a resource to students as they navigate their way through the campus culture.

Walker: What are you looking forward to, and if any, what changes would you like to see to BCC programs and how do you plan to make those happen?
Corley: I look forward to being a part of the Black Cultural Center experience. I look forward to developing workshops, or events that tie into my research, experience, and passion. I am a huge proponent of culture, leadership, empowerment, and motivation for success. My psychology background enables me to creatively connect these areas to areas students find interesting (i.e. popular culture, music, politics, fashion, academics, and their futures). I think students will see this reflected in the types of workshops and/or events that I develop. My vision for changes to BCC programs are in alignment with my colleagues’ vision for change. We would like our programs to engage more students, while sharing with all students that the BCC is a safe space and valuable resource that can strengthen their college experience. My personal contributions through workshops, mentoring, professional responsibilities, and being supportive to our students are my efforts towards bringing about this change.

Walker: What do you like to do in your spare time?
Corley: I enjoy meeting new people and experiencing new things. I also enjoy working out (I am serious about my gym goals). I also have been boxing (as a hobby) for 6 years (I haven’t in about a year though). I enjoy mentoring young people. Yoga. Reading. Music. New York Knicks (Yes!), New York Yankees (Yes!), Most of all, spending time with family and good friends, over good food.

Javon Walker, Staff Writer
Rebuilding Black Women Narratives

Juanita Crider, Editor

When discussing the historical uses of respectability politics as resistance in the black community in *The Sisters are Alright: Changing the Broken Narrative of Black Women in America*, Tamara Winfrey Harris writes, “...perhaps now more than ever- when there are so many different ways to be black and to be a woman- this approach to liberation has the potential to harm more than uplift by reinforcing oppressive ideology and constraining the way African American women are allowed to live their lives” (8). Using the above statement as her thesis and motivator Winfrey explores how black women famous and not so famous are constructed by media forces while also reminding us many of these same women are constructing what it means to be a twenty-first century African American woman for themselves.

In seven engaging chapters the author intersects stories of women she interviewed for this project with the many ways their lives are changing the fractured narratives of black women. By doing this Winfrey Harris encourages readers to reflect on the African American women they know who are rebuilding the broken narrative.

The author covers a wide range of subjects from motherhood, singleness, mental & physical health to sexuality. These subjects serve as vehicles for Winfrey Harris to travel through the misinformation and negative stereotypes to the destination where Black women are thriving and living many authentic and individual truths. After reading this text you will definitely realize that most African American women live this way contrary to media narratives and a substantial amount of popular culture portrayals. I highly recommend this book for academic and non academic use. It is thought provoking, fun, and contemporary.

The BCC will feature Tamara Winfrey Harris as part of our Women’s History Month recognition on Wednesday, March 2, 2016 at 7 pm in Stewart Center - Room 302. This event is free and open to the public.

Congratulations to Dr. Venetria Patton who was recently appointed the inaugural Head of the School of Interdisciplinary Studies in the College of Liberal Arts. Dr. Patton was formerly the Director of the African American Studies and Research Center and is currently a Provost Fellow for Diversity and Inclusion. She also continues in her role as Professor of English and African American Studies.

Dr. Venetria Patton
Quincy Davidson: Connecting Alumni And Sharing their Stories

The BCC would like to introduce our readers to Quincy Davidson, Director of Development in the College of Liberal Arts. Davidson is from Montreal, Quebec Canada. Davidson completed his undergraduate work at the University of Indianapolis and received his Masters from Robert Morris University.

Walker: What is the University Development Office?
Davidson: The goal of University Development is to build and enhance positive relationships between students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends of the university to advance institutional goals by cultivating philanthropic resources

Walker: Why is it in the College of Liberal Arts?
Davidson: The development office is embedded in the College Liberal Arts (CLA) so that members of the college administration can have easier access to work collaboratively with the college leadership team and other partners within in CLA.

Walker: Do you feel like the College of Liberal arts is important for all Universities and if yes, what's it's impact at Purdue?
Davidson: The answer is yes. I benefitted from a liberal arts education myself and believe Liberal arts is an important component for success as most careers require the kind of critical thinking, teamwork, sensitivity to cultural, demographic, economic and societal perspectives that a liberal arts education provides. It’s impact on Purdue and society as a whole is enormous. Our CLA alums are contributing in fields that range from authors and lawyers to leading major for profit and nonprofit corporations and organizations. In addition, many of our Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics students and alums have been greatly influenced by the classroom experiences in the College of Liberal Arts.

Walker: Do you think the College of Liberal Arts is overshadowed at Purdue?
Davidson: At a University with kind of diverse academic offerings as Purdue there is certainly room for the College of Liberal Arts and Science to continue to seek opportunity to collaborate with others on campus for increased visibility and recognition.

Walker: What do you feel can be done to bring more attention to the College of Liberal Arts?
Davidson: It is important that the CLA faculty continue research, publish and maintain the quality of classroom teaching so that we can highlight their accomplishments as well as those of our students. We will continue to connect our alumni and share their stories with our campus community for sustainability.

Walker: What are some of your hobbies?
Davidson: I thoroughly enjoy mountain biking and outdoor activities. I also enjoy watching college athletics.

Javon Walker, Staff Writer
Between the media, peers, and photoshop – it can be difficult for people to have a positive body image. Despite knowing that many photos in the media are altered and that many celebrities are wearing makeup and body shaping clothes, being confident with one's body isn't something that is easy to obtain.

“Issues with weight and negative body image are not something that only affects a select few,” said Jennifer Walsh, a staff therapist and group therapy coordinator at Purdue University, who is also in charge of Purdue's observance of National Eating Disorder Awareness Week. “These struggles affect all genders and ethnicities, and it is important that as a campus we are aware and provide thoughtful help and support. We know that treatment for these issues is necessary and often that first starts with more education and awareness, which is why National Eating Disorder Awareness Week began.”

According to the National Eating Disorders Association (2015) “in the United States, 20 million women and 10 million men suffer from a clinically significant eating disorder at some time in their life. Eating disorders include anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge eating disorder and OSFED (other specified feeding or eating disorder).” It has been suggested that 25% of college students attempt to control their weight using behaviors associated with bulimia nervosa, according to the Renfrew Center Evaluation from 2003.

“For students that may want more information or wonder whether they may have an eating disorder, I would encourage them to take a screening. Anyone can take an anonymous online screening for eating disorders on the National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) website, which helps to determine if it would be beneficial to seek professional help,” continued Walsh. Purdue University will be paying attention to the troubling issue of eating disorders from February 22nd to February 26th, where Boilermakers can participate in workshops, listen to speakers, and learn more about the ever prevalent issues of eating disorders. Walsh said, “It is an annual campaign to bring more community attention to these issues and it generally occurs during the last week of February. This year at Purdue we are honoring this week by providing activities with a body positive message.” Attend the various events during National Eating Disorder Awareness Week to help spread awareness of eating disorders, but most of all – to be gain the body positivity everyone deserves.

Purdue’s National Eating Disorder Awareness (NEDA) Week Events

Monday, February 22: Speaker: Kara Richardson Whitely, author of Gorge – My Journey up Kilimanjaro at 300 pounds, 7-8pm, Boilermaker Bldg., free
Tuesday, February 23: “Complimints” & Body Positive Tabling Event, 5-7pm, CoRec; Superfoods Cooking Demonstration, 7-8pm, Boilermaker Room, free
Wednesday, February 24: Scale Decorating Experiential Event, CoRec; Belly Dancing Workshop, 7-8pm, Wellness Conference Room, free
Thursday, February 25: Supermarket Smarts Wellness Workshop, Wellness Conference Room, free
Friday, February 26: Love Your Body Zumba, Feature Gym, CoRec

All activities will be held in the Cordova Rec Center
Reading is Fundamental...

Juanita Crider, Editor

I have always been a bibliophile; a lover and collector of books. In addition to collecting books, I enjoy audio books for long trips and was very excited when I discovered that there is a decent collection of classic stories and books available on the music service Spotify. I recently finished listening to The Complete Fairy Tales of Hans Christian Anderson and now am currently enjoying Tarzan of the Apes by Edgar Rice Burroughs as a pre-sleep ritual. Reading is fundamental. My knowledge of this phrase dates me because I remember first encountering this phrase in my childhood when the organization, of the same name also known as RIF began running commercials. The organization still exists and turns 50 years old this year. While reading is fundamental, reading across cultures is essential. Several years ago when taking an American Studies class on Transnational American Studies with several students visiting from East China Normal University I learned that the African American author, Toni Morrison was gaining popularity in China and that several of her works were available in translation for study there. I was excited because Morrison is a favorite of mine. However, I also realized that I had not read any Asian or Asian American novelists. I made a decision to intentionally expand my reading across cultures. I challenge you to do this also. It will expand your horizons but most importantly it will allow you to identify points of connection across cultures which has the possibility to inform how you connect with others you encounter day to day.