

Yolanda Denise Covington-Ward, PhD

Department of Africana Studies

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Education

- December 2008 **University of Michigan**, Ann Arbor, Michigan
Ph.D. in Anthropology
- December 2003 **University of Michigan**, Ann Arbor, Michigan
Masters of Arts in Anthropology
- 2002 – 2004 Graduate Program in Performance Studies, Center for World Performance
Studies
- May 2001 **Brown University**, Providence RI
Bachelor of Arts in Afro-American Studies, with Honors
- Fall 1999 **University of Ghana**, Legon, Ghana
Semester of Study Abroad

Research and Teaching Interests

Group identity, Performance, Body and Embodiment, African Christianity and Religious Movements, Congo, Liberia, Social Determinants of Immigrant Health, Social Integration of African Immigrants, Power Relations, Africa and African Cultures, African Diaspora, Liberian immigrants, Women of Africa and African Diaspora

Academic Positions

- 2017 – present University of Pittsburgh, Department of Africana Studies
Associate Professor
Secondary Appointment: Department of Anthropology (since 2015)
Affiliated Faculty Appointments:
African Studies Program, Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies Program, and
Global Studies Center
- 2008 – 2017 University of Pittsburgh, Department of Africana Studies
Assistant Professor
- 2008 – 2009 University of Michigan, Center for Afro American and African Studies &
Dept. of Anthropology

Research Fellow and Visiting Assistant Professor

Administrative Experience

2016-2018 Co-director, Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program Grant (UISFL), Department of Education (PI, Macrina Lelei)
African Studies Program, University of Pittsburgh

- Organized faculty development workshops
- Coordinated new “Critical Research on Africa” lecture series
- Organized small conferences and symposia on Africa-related topics
- Participated in selection committee for African studies program faculty grants and travel awards
- Sought relevant campus unit co-sponsorships for program events
- Successfully applied for and received additional campus funds to support programming
- Contributed to the expansion of an Africanist faculty intellectual community on campus

Publications: Books

2016* *Gesture and Power: Religion, Nationalism, and Everyday Performance in Congo*
(Religious Cultures of African and African Diasporic Peoples Series, Duke University Press)

Awards: *** Winner, Elliot P. Skinner Book Prize, Association for Africanist Anthropology (2017)
Finalist, Clifford Geertz Book Prize, Society for the Anthropology of Religion (2016)

Reviews: 2017. *Reading Religion* (a publication of the American Academy of Religion, reviewed by Genevieve Nrenzah, Christ Apostolic University College, Kumasi, Ghana)
2017. *Journal of Anthropological Research* (reviewed by Jeremy Rich, Marywood University)
2017. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (reviewed by Annalisa Buttici, Utrecht University)
2017. *Religion* (reviewed by Terry Rey, Temple University)
2017. *Church History* (reviewed by Emma Wildwood, University of Cambridge)
2017. *The Journal of Religious and Theological Information* (reviewed by Nicole Westerdahl, Syracuse University Libraries)
2016. *Choice Magazine* (reviewed by Allen F. Roberts, UCLA)

- In Progress *Transforming Communities, Recreating Selves: Displacement, Conflict, and Identity Formation in the Liberian Diaspora* (sole-authored monograph)
- Embodiment and Relationality in Religions of Africa and its Diasporas* (Edited Volume, Co-edited with Jeanette Jouili)

Publications: Journal Articles (*peer-reviewed)

- 2017* Yolanda Covington-Ward, Kafuli Agbemenu, and Annamore Matambanadzo. “We feel like it was better back home”: Stress, Coping, and Health in a U.S. dwelling African Immigrant Community” *The Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved* (Accepted)
- 2017* Yolanda Covington-Ward. “Back Home, People Say America is Heaven”: Pre-Migration Expectations and Post-Migration Adjustment for Liberians in Pittsburgh” *The Journal of International Migration and Integration* (Forthcoming, DOI: 10.1007/s12134-017-0511-7)
- 2017* Yolanda Covington-Ward. “African Immigrants in Low-Wage Direct Health Care: Motivations, Job Satisfaction, and Occupational Mobility.” *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health* 19(3):709-715.
- 2016* Carlos Siordia and Yolanda Covington-Ward. “Association Between Perceived Ethnic Discrimination and Health: Evidence from the National Latino & Asian American Study.” *Journal of Frailty and Aging* 5(2):111-117.
- 2014* Yolanda Covington-Ward. “Your Name is Written in the Sky”: Unearthing the Stories of Kongo Female Prophets in Colonial Belgian Congo, 1921-1960” *Journal of Africana Religions* 2(3):317-346.
- 2013* Yolanda Covington-Ward. “Transforming Communities, Recreating Selves: Interconnected Diasporas, Performance, and the Shaping of Liberian Immigrant Identity.” *Africa Today*. 60(1):28-53.
- 2012* Yolanda Covington-Ward. “Vive l’ABAKO! Vive l’Indépendance! Joseph Kasavubu, ABAKO, and Performances of Kongo Nationalism in the Congolese Independence Movement,” *Journal of Black Studies* Vol. 41, No. 1: 71-93.
- 2011* Yolanda Covington-Ward, Siatta Dennis, Katie Reding, Anthony Simpson, and Megan Willison. “The Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Recent Liberian Immigrants to the United States: An Update” *Liberian Studies Journal* Vol. 36(1): 25-52.
- 2009 Yolanda Covington-Ward. “A Guide to Africanist Research in the Archive of the American Baptist Historical Society.” *African Research and Documentation* No. 111:21-29.

- 2006* Yolanda Covington-Ward. "South Bronx Performances: The Reciprocal Relationship between Hip-Hop and Black Girls' Play." *Women and Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* Volume 16, No. 1: 117-132.

Publications: Book Chapters (*peer reviewed)

- 2013* Yolanda Covington-Ward. "Fighting Phantoms: Mammy, Matriarch, and other Ghosts Haunting Black Mothers in the Academy," In *Laboring Positions: Black Women, Mothering, and the Academy*, Sekile Johnson, Editor, Demeter Press, Pp. 236 – 256.
- 2007* Yolanda Covington-Ward. "Threatening Gestures, Immoral Bodies: The Intersection of Church, State, and Kongo Performance in the Belgian Congo," In *Missions, States, and European Expansion in Africa*. Chima Korieh and Raphael Njoku, eds. New York: Routledge Press. Pg 73-100.

Manuscripts in Progress

- Yolanda Covington-Ward. "*I Am Here a White Man*": *Congo Recaptives in Nineteenth Century Liberia* (Book Manuscript in Progress)
- Yolanda Covington-Ward. "Centering the Body in Africana Studies: Using Performance Pedagogy to Teach about Africa" (in preparation for the *Journal of African American Studies*)
- Yolanda Covington-Ward. "Digital Peacekeeping in Sonic Diasporas: Liberians Creating a Transnational Community of Reconciliation through Online Radio" (in preparation for *American Anthropologist*)
- Yolanda Covington-Ward. "Trembling Bodies, Inspired Visions: Bangunza Narratives and Embodied Callings in the Lower Congo" (in preparation for *The Journal of Religion in Africa*)
- Yolanda Covington-Ward. "'Some call you Slave': Racial Discrimination and African Origin Prejudice as Occupational Stressors for African Immigrant Direct Health Care Workers" (in preparation for *Medical Anthropology: Cross-Cultural Studies in Health and Illness*)
- Kafuli Agbemenu, Yolanda Covington-Ward, Annamore Matambanadzo, Charlotte Brown, and Isok Kim. (second author). "Stress and Depression among African Immigrants in Pittsburgh" (in preparation for *The Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*)

Publications: Book Reviews

- 2014 Yolanda Covington-Ward. Book Review of "The Making of the Pentecostal Melodrama." *American Anthropologist* 116(4):887-888.
- 2014 Yolanda Covington-Ward. Book Review of "A Dance of Assassins." *Anthropos* 109 (2):737-738.

- 2013 Yolanda Covington-Ward. Book Review of “The Predicament of Blackness.” *Cultural Dynamics* 25(3):334-338.
- 2010 Yolanda Covington-Ward. Book Review Essay: “Danced Nations, Performed Identities: Ethnographic Perspectives on Power and Performance in Africa.” *Transforming Anthropology* Vol. 18(2):207-210.
- 2009 Yolanda Covington-Ward. Book Review of “White Men’s God.” *Journal of Religion in Africa*. Vol. 39, No. 4:462-464.
- 2008 Yolanda Covington-Ward. Book Review of “Prayer has Spoiled Everything: Possession, Power, and Identity in an Islamic Town in Niger.” *Transforming Anthropology* Vol. 16, No. 1:83-84.
- 2004 Yolanda Covington. Book Review of “Performing Africa.” *African Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 7, No. 4: 50-51.

Publications: Conference Abstracts

- 2016* Kafuli Agbemenu, Yolanda Covington-Ward, and Annamore Matambanadzo. “Stress Management and Coping Strategies Among African Immigrant Communities in Southwestern Pennsylvania.” *Nursing Research*, 65 (2): E84.

Publications: Policy Briefs

- 2016* Yolanda Covington-Ward. “African Immigrants Experience Prejudice and Limited Mobility in Low-wage Health Care Jobs.” *University of California Davis, Center for Poverty Research Policy Briefs* Vol. 5, No. 1 (October)

Research Grants

- 2017 Univ. of Pittsburgh, Arts and Sciences Type II Third Term Res. Grant (\$1820)
Project: Recreating National Belonging: Displacement, Repatriation, and Identity among U.S. Diaspora Returnees in Liberia
Role: PI
- 2014 – 2015 Ford Institutional Allowance, National Academies (\$1500)
Project: Transformations of Group Identity in the Congo and the Liberian Diaspora
Role: PI
- 2013 - 2014 UC Davis Center for Poverty Research Small Grant (\$24193)
Project: African Immigrants in the Low Wage Health Care Labor Market: Incorporation and Poverty

Role: PI

- 2013 Univ. of Pittsburgh, Arts and Sciences Type II Third Term Res. Grant (\$1000)
Project: Liberian Immigrants and the Creation of Community Online
Role: PI
- 2011-2015 Univ. of Pittsburgh, Central Research Development Fund (\$14811)
(no-cost extension)
Project: Immigrant Identity Formation: The Liberian Diaspora
Role: PI
- 2011 Univ. of Pittsburgh, Arts and Sciences Third Term Research Stipend (\$4000)
Project: Gesture and Power
Role: PI
- 2011 Univ. of Pittsburgh, Global Studies Faculty Research Grant (\$4000)
Project: The Changing Role of Women in Kongo independent Churches
Role: PI

Conference Planning Grants

- 2016 Humanities Center, University of Pittsburgh (\$3800)
Year of Diversity, University of Pittsburgh (\$5000)
Faculty Research and Scholarship Program (\$2668)
(Co-Applicant with Jeanette Jouili, Department of Religious Studies)
- Conference: Embodiment and Relationality in Religions of Africa and its
Diasporas (Co-organizer with Jeanette Jouili, Department of Religious Studies)

Honors, Fellowships, and Other Grants

- 2017 Arts and Sciences Third Term Type II Research Grant (\$1820)
- 2017 African Studies Program Faculty Travel Grant (\$1723)
- 2016 NIH National Research Mentoring Network Fellow (\$1000)
(GUMSHOE Program)
- 2016 Faculty Fellow, Humanities Center, University of Pittsburgh (course
release)
- 2015 African Studies Conference Travel Grant (\$500)
- 2015 Richard D. and Mary Jane Edwards Endowed Publication Fund
- 2015 New Connections Training Grant (SAS workshop) (RWJF) (\$945)
- 2014 Global Studies Course Dev. Grant (with Michele Reid-Vasquez) (\$1500)
- 2012 Honors Summer Research Award (with Robert Ogum) (\$3500)
- 2012 Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship (\$40000)
- 2012, 12/14/15/16 Dean's Discretionary Funds for Courses (\$1065)
- 2011 Joint Program in Survey Methodology Short Course Fellowship (\$800)
- 2011 Honors Research Assistantship (with Katie Reding) (\$600)
- 2011 Recognized as Fab 40 Honoree (New Pittsburgh Courier)

2010/11/12/13/16	Hewlett Grant (Conference Travel), UCIS (U. of Pittsburgh) (\$6277)
2010	Writing in the Disciplines Faculty Seminar (U. of Pittsburgh) (\$1200)
2010	Women's Studies Course Development Grant (U. of Pittsburgh) (\$1000)
2010	Speaking in the Disciplines Faculty Seminar (U. of Pittsburgh) (\$1200)
2009	Bowman Travel Grant (U. of Pittsburgh) (\$2000)
2009	African Studies Course Development Grant (U. of Pittsburgh) (\$3000)
2007-2008	Institute for the Humanities, Grad. Fellow (U. of Michigan) (\$20640)
2007-2008	Ford Foundation Diversity Dissertation Fellowship (declined)
2002-2007	Rackham Merit Fellowship (U. of Michigan) (\$88000)
2002, 2004, 2006	Africa Initiatives Research Award (U. of Michigan) (\$6500)
2005-2006	Fulbright Award (Int. Inst. of Education)- Dem. Rep. of Congo (\$28000)
2005	Rackham Discretionary Funds (U. of Michigan) (\$2250)
2005	Dept. of Anthropology Supp. Research Funds (U. of Michigan) (\$2026)
2005	Anna Alcott Smith Award/Outstanding Women Grad. Students (\$5000)
2003-2005	Council of Alumnae Women Alison Meyers Scholarship (\$4000)
2003, 2004	Roy A. Rappaport Outstanding Grad. Student Instructor Award (\$200)
2004	Summer Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship (KiKongo) (\$3000)
2003, 2004	Center for World Performance Studies Research Grant (\$4000)
2002, 2003	International Institute Pre-dissertation Award (\$3000)
2002	Department of Anthropology Research Grant (\$1500)
2001-2002	Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship in Humanistic Studies (\$17000)
2000-2001	National Gates Millennium Scholar (\$5000)
1997-2001	National Ron Brown Scholar (\$40000)

Conference Paper Presentations

June 2017	Johannesburg, South Africa *Invited Presenter for Mellon Funded Seminar on Performance Arts and Political Action in Africa Title of Paper: Seditious Songs and Menacing Gestures: Spirituality as Performance and Political Action in Colonial-era Belgian Congo
Mar 2017	Ramapo, NJ Annual Conference of the Liberian Studies Association Title of Paper: "The Liberian Diaspora, Discourses of Reconciliation, and the Negotiation of Diaspora-Homeland Tensions in Online Radio"
Dec 2016	Washington, D.C. Annual Conference of the African Studies Association *Chair of a Panel entitled "Refugee & Belonging in Exile" Title of Paper: "The Liberian Diaspora, Experiences of Displacement, and Shifting Sentiments of National Belonging"
Nov 2016	Minneapolis, MN Annual Conference of the American Anthropological Association *Co-Organizer of a panel entitled "Embodiment, Identity, and the State: AfroDiasporic Bodies as Sites of Evidence and Resistance"

Title of Paper: "I Don't Even Know Monrovia in the First Place": Displaced Bodies and Shifting Identities in the Liberian Diaspora"

- Sep 2016
New York, NY
United States Conference on African Immigrant and Refugee Health
*Chair of a panel entitled "Disabilities and Stress"
Title of Paper: Lessons from the Field: Recruiting for Qualitative Research Studies in African Immigrant and Refugee Communities
(presented with Kafuli Agbemenu and Annamore Matambanadzo)
- Nov 2015
Denver, Colorado
Annual Conference of the American Anthropological Association
Title of Paper: Embodiment, Movement, Personhood: The Role of Spirit-Induced Trembling in Becoming Bangunza in the Lower Congo
- Nov 2015
Charleston, South Carolina
Biennial Conference of the Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora (ASWAD)
Title of Paper: "Some Call you Slave": Racism and African Origin Prejudice in Everyday Experiences of African Immigrant Direct Care Health Workers
- Oct 2015
Davis, California
Center for Poverty Research, UC Davis, Small Grants Recipients Conference
Title of Paper: African Immigrants in Low Wage Direct Care Occupations: Motivations, Mobility, Prejudice, and Poverty
- Dec 2014
Washington, DC
Annual Conference of the American Anthropological Association
* Organizer of a Panel entitled "Digital Diasporas: African Migrants, Mediated Communication, and Transnational Identities"
Title of Paper: Digital Transnationalism, Sonic Diasporas: Liberians Connecting through On-line Radio
- Nov 2014
Indianapolis, IN
Annual Conference of the African Studies Association
Title of Paper: "Embodiment, Belonging, and Self-Making in Religious Conversion Narratives in the Lower Congo"
- Oct 2014
Indianapolis, IN
Annual Conference of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion
Title of Paper: "The Body as Center: Embodiment as a Method in the Study of African Religious Movements"
- Nov 2013
Chicago, IL
Annual Conference of the American Anthropological Association
* Organizer of Double Panel entitled "African Migrants and the Politics of Place: Identity, Community, Power" with 10 panelists and two discussants

Title of Paper: "Eating FuFu in the Steel City: The Social Integration of Liberian Immigrants in Pittsburgh"

* Discussant on Panel Entitled "Powers of Narrative: Spiritual Imaginaries and the Ethnography of the Particular"

- Oct 2013 Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
7th Biennial Conference, Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora (ASWAD)
* Chair of Panel Entitled "Media, Culture, and Public Expression in the African Diaspora"
Title of Paper: Sonic Digital Diasporas: Liberians Creating Community through Online Radio"
- Dec 2012 Philadelphia, PA
Annual Conference of the African Studies Association
Title of Paper: "Trembling Bodies, Inspired Visions: *Bangunza* Narratives and Embodied Callings in the Lower Congo"
- Nov 2012 San Francisco, CA
Annual Conference of the American Anthropological Association
Title of Paper: "Trembling Prophets and Performative Encounters: Embodied Resistance in Colonial Belgian Congo, 1921-1960"
- Sep 2012 Pittsburgh, PA
Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History
Title of Paper: "Female Saints, Nationalism, and Everyday Performances in Early 18th century Kongo."
- Mar 2012 Ithaca, NY
Cornell University
Annual Conference of the Liberian Studies Association
Title of Paper: "Connecting Diaspora and Homeland: Liberians Creating Community through On-Line Radio"
- Feb 2012 Carlisle, PA
Central Pennsylvania Consortium Africana Studies Conference
Title of Paper: "Everyday Performances in the Liberian Diaspora: Creating Community through On-Line Radio Discourse"
- Nov 2011 Montreal, Canada
American Anthropological Association Annual Conference
Title of Paper: "Gesture and Power: Bundu dia Kongo and Embodied Nationalism in the Congo"
- Nov 2011 Pittsburgh, PA
Assoc. for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora, 6th Biennial Conference

*Chair of Panel Entitled “Performance & Black Power: Agency, Resistance, and the Cultural Politics of Identity in Africa and its Diasporas”
Title of Paper: “Embodied Revolutions: The Body Politics of Bundu dia Kongo”

- April 2011 Charlotte, NC
University of North Carolina Dept. of Africana Studies Annual Conference
Title of Paper: “Transforming Communities, Recreating Selves: The Role of Dance in Shaping Liberian Immigrant Identity”
- Mar 2011 Cincinnati, OH
National Council for Black Studies Annual Conference
Title of Paper: “Small Miracles: The Shifting Roles of Women and the Holy Spirit in a Kongo Church”
- Nov 2010 Leuven, Belgium
KADOC, Religion, Colonisation, and Decolonisation in the Congo, 1885-1960
Title of Paper: “Your Name is Written in the Sky”: Unearthing the Stories of Female Prophets in Kongo Colonial History, 1921-1960.”
- Nov 2010 New Orleans, LA
American Anthropological Association National Conference
*Chair of Panel Entitled “African Expressions: Performance and Artistic Engagements”
Title of Paper: “The Circulation of Dances: The Changing Role of the Grand March in Liberian and Liberian-American Identity”
- May 2010 West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV
African Research Consortium Meeting
Title of Paper: “Shaping Identities and Symbolizing Nations: The Grand March in Liberia and the Liberian Diaspora”
- April 2010 Columbia University, New York, NY
Building an African Presence Conference, Committee on Global Thought
Title of Paper: “Shifting Representations, Transformational Dances: The Grand March and Liberian Identity”
- Dec 2009 Philadelphia, PA
American Anthropological Association National Conference
*Chair of Panel Entitled “History, Tradition, Modernity, and the State in Africa”
Title of Paper: “Performing the Nation in the Bedroom: Political Animation, Coercive Authority, And Gendered Dancing Bodies under Mobutu”
- Nov 2008 San Francisco, California
American Anthropological Association National Conference
Title of Paper: “Revelations and Ritual, Purity and Danger: White Cloth and Spiritual Power in the DMNA Church”

- Mar 2008 University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
Black Humanities Collective Conference
Title of Paper: “Performing Kongo Pride: Cultural Performances Transforming
Modern Society”
- May 2007 University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario
Joint American Ethnological Society/Canadian Anthropological Society
Conference
Title of Paper: “The Angels Sing with Us”: Trembling Hands, Christian Hearts,
and Dancing for Nzambi in the Congo”
- Nov 2006 Westin St. Francis Hotel, San Francisco, CA
International Conference of the African Studies Association
Title of Paper: “Dumuka mu Mvita! (Jump into the fight!): Bundu dia Kongo and
the Restoration of the Kongo Kingdom”
- May 2006 Depaul University, Chicago, IL
Theorizing African/Black Diaspora Conference: History, Memory, and
Representation
Title of Paper: “Rebuilding the Kingdom: The Kongo Diaspora in Bundu dia
Kongo.”
- June 2002 Panama City, Panama
International Conference of the Association of Black Anthropologists
Title of Paper: “Congos and Embodied Histories”

Invited Lectures and Discussions

- July 2018 International Society for Gesture Studies
Capetown, South Africa
Invited Plenary Lecture
- Dec 2017 Princeton University
Program in African Studies
Lecture Title: Gesture and Power: Religion, Nationalism, and Everyday
Performance in Congo
- Oct 2017 Vanderbilt University
Africa at a Crossroads: Challenges and Prospects
Lecture Title: Gesture and Power: Religion, Nationalism, and Everyday
Performance in Congo
- Oct 2017 Temple University
Foundations of African Religions class (instructor, Prof. Terry Rey)
Skype Discussion on “Gesture and Power” with graduate level class

- May 2017 University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
Constructing African and Caribbean Identity class (instructor, Prof. Camee Maddox)
Skype Discussion on “Gesture and Power” with two sections of the course
- March 2017 Global Studies Program and Department of Anthropology
Colby College, Waterville, ME
Discussion of Gesture and Power with students in “Anthropology of Creativity” and “Religion and Social Change” classes (instructors, Britt Halvorson and Chandra Bhimull)
- March 2017 Global Studies Program and Department of Anthropology
Colby College, Waterville, ME
Discussion of Liberian immigrant research with students in “Public Anthropology” course (instructor, Catherine Besteman)
- March 2017 Global Studies Program and Department of Anthropology
Colby College, Waterville, ME
Departmental Lecture: “Gesture and Power: Religion, Nationalism, and Everyday Performance in Congo”
- Feb 2017 Sharing Food and Words: The African and Africana Research Forum
Hillman Library, University of Pittsburgh
Lecture Title: “Gesture, Power, and the Body as Method in African and Africana Studies”
- Feb 2017 Guest Lecture, Religion and Culture Course
University of Pittsburgh
Lecture Title: “Kongo Female Prophets, Divination, Healing, and Embodiment as Method”
- Feb 2017 African Studies Seminar Lecture Series
Penn State University, PA
Lecture Title: “I Don’t Even Know Monrovia in the First Place”: Displaced Bodies and Shifting Identities in the Liberian Diaspora
- January 2017 Institute of African Studies Speaker Series
Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
Lecture and Book Signing: Gesture and Power: Religion, Nationalism, and Everyday Performance in Congo
- January 2017 Humanities Center Colloquium
University of Pittsburgh
Paper Title: Digital Peacekeeping in Sonic Diasporas: Liberians Creating a Transnational Community of Reconciliation through Online Radio
- December 2016 Africa Workshop Series
University of Michigan

Lecture Title: “We Do Not Want Chiefs Anymore”: Embodiment, Kongo Prophetism, and the Right to Self-Determination in the Belgian Congo (1921)

- November 2016 Program for Scripture and the Arts
Boston University
Keynote Lecture Title: Gesture and Power: Religion, Nationalism, and Everyday Performance in Congo
- June, 2016 Bridging the Gap Lecture Series, Union of African Communities
University of Pittsburgh
Panel Discussant, on identifying challenges to and seeking solutions for collaboration between African, Afro-Caribbean, and African-American Communities; also assisted with planning/locating sponsors
- April 2016 “Meet the Author” Session at the “Doing the Body” Conference
Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies Program
University of Pittsburgh
Session for Discussion of new book *Gesture and Power* (Duke Univ. press)
- Mar 2016 Department of Sociology and Anthropology & Global Studies Program
Lehigh University
Digital Peacekeeping: Liberians Creating a Transnational Community of Reconciliation through Online Radio
- June 2015 Bridging the Gap Lecture Series, Union of African Communities
Duquesne University
Panel Discussant, on identifying challenges to and seeking solutions for collaboration between African, Afro-Caribbean, and African-American Communities
- May 2015 Black Performance Theory Working Group
New York University
“The Sound of Neurons”
Group Presentation/Performance with Tavia N’yongo, Jayna Brown, Uri MacMillan, and Zakiyyah Iman Jackson
- August 2014 Seshemet Community Council Lecture Series
CCAC, Homewood Branch
“Africans and African-Americans”
- June 2014 Rights and Responsibilities
Carnegie Library, East Liberty Branch
Panelist and Discussant, “Dark Girls” Film Screening
- Dec 2013 RISE Student Mentoring Dinner
University of Pittsburgh
“What are you doing with your summer? Summer Research Opportunities”

- October 2013 K-12 Teacher's Workshop
Global Studies Center, University of Pittsburgh
"Global Issues Through Literature: The House at Sugar Beach"
- April 2013 Black Performance Theory Working Group
University of Texas, Austin
"What is Africa to Me?: Black Gold"
Group Presentation/Performance with Xavier Livermon and Omi O. Jones
- Dec 2012 Interracial Relations Group RAP Meeting
Center for the Study of Race and Social Problems
University of Pittsburgh
"Danced Nationalisms, Transformed Consciousnesses: Everyday Performances under Mobutu Sese Seko"
- July 2012 Leadership Alliance Annual Conference (Hartford, CT)
"Alumna Reflections on Leadership Alliance"
- May 2012 Interdisciplinary Humanities Center/African Studies Research Focus Group
University of California, Santa Barbara
"A War Between Soldiers and Prophets: Embodied Resistance in Colonial Belgian Congo"
- Feb 2012 Black History Month Program
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Pittsburgh, PA)
"Black Women, Her-Story, and the Challenge of Self-Definition"
- Nov 2011 K-12 Teacher's Workshop
World History Center, University of Pittsburgh
"Historical Connections Within Africa"
- July 2011 Liberian Community Association, Pittsburgh, PA
Liberian Youth Event, Independence Weekend
"Unity, Education, Persistence"
- May 2011 Black Performance Theory Working Group
University of California, Santa Barbara
"Transformative Gestures in Southern Rotation"
Group Presentation/Performance with Raquel Monroe and Grisha Coleman
- Feb 2011 K-12 Teachers Workshop
World History Center, University of Pittsburgh
Title of Paper: "Africa in World History: Twentieth Century Africa"
(Co-presented with Rebecca Shumway, Dept. of History)
- Dec 2010 Religious Studies Colloquium Series
Department of Religious Studies, University of Pittsburgh

Title of Paper: "Embodying the Spirit: Kongo Female Prophets and Religious Movements in the Lower Congo"

- Oct 2010 Anthropology Lecture Series
Department of Anthropology, University of Pittsburgh
Title of Paper: "Dancing with the Invisible: Gender, Performance, and the Cult of Mobutu in Post-Colonial Congo"
- August 2010 Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo
American Cultural Center, Embassy of the United States of America
Title of Paper: "Le Geste et le Pouvoir dans la culture Kongo" (Delivered in French)
- July 2010 Luozi, Democratic Republic of Congo
Université Libre de Luozi
Title of Paper: "L'enseignement Supérieure et Universitaire quelque organize aux Etats Unis d'Amerique" (Delivered in French)
- Oct 2006 University of Michigan
"Africa and its Diasporas" class, Center for AfroAmerican and African Studies
Lecture on "Kongo Cosmology and Kongo Christianity"
- Jan 2006 Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo
Centre d'Etudes et de Diffusion des Arts à L'Institut National des Arts
Title of Paper: "Les Makinu des BaKongo comme expression de l'Histoire" (Delivered in French)

Invited Attendance

- June 2013 New Connections Symposium, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Princeton, NJ

Courses Taught

University of Pittsburgh:

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| Introduction to Africana Studies | Fall 2009, Spring/Fall 2010, Spring/Fall 2011, Spring 2012, Summer 2012, Spring 2014, Spring 2016 |
| Women of Africa and the African Diaspora | Fall 2009, Spring 2011, Spring 2014, Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018 |
| Cultures of Africa | Spring 2010, Fall 2011, Fall 2013, Fall 2015, Spring 2017 |

Power and Performance in Africa	Fall 2010, Spring 2012, Fall 2013, Fall 2015
Global Diasporas: Contemporary African and Caribbean Migration	Fall 2014, Fall 2016
Contemporary Africa	Spring 2018

University of Michigan:

Black Performance Culture in the Atlantic World	Winter 2009
Introduction to Anthropology (co-taught)	Winter 2009

Research Experience

Summer 2017	Ethnographic Research , Monrovia, Liberia <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducted interviews on the experience of Liberian diaspora returnees who formerly lived in the United States and have returned to live in Liberia
2015 - 2016	Mixed Methods Research on Stress and Coping among African Immigrants in Southwestern PA (with Dr. Kafuli Agbemenu and Dr. Annamore Matambanadzo) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Led focus groups and currently collecting survey data on sources of stress and coping strategies among African immigrants in SW PA
2014	Ethnographic Research , Pittsburgh Area <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducted individual interviews on the entry, experiences, and occupational mobility of African immigrants in low wage direct care occupations
2013 - 2015	Online Survey Research <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Performed survey research on Liberian immigrants, their online and offline social networks, and self-assessed health and well-being
2009 - 2015	Ethnographic Research , Pittsburgh, Detroit, and other cities in United States <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducted ethnographic research, newspaper research, interviews, and focus groups on community identity formation in the Liberian Diaspora
Summer 2012	Archival Research , Baptist Miss. Society, Angus Library (Oxford, UK) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducted archival research on British Baptist reactions to the prophetic movements inspired by the Prophet Simon Kimbangu in colonial Belgian Congo
Summer 2010	Ethnographic Research , Luozi, Democratic Republic of the Congo <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducted ethnographic research on Kongo female prophets, the status of women in the DMNA church, and negotiating power through gestures

- Summer 2009 **Archival Research**, American Baptist Historical Society (Atlanta, GA)
• Conducted archival research on American Baptist reactions to the prophetic movements inspired by the Prophet Simon Kimbangu in colonial Belgian Congo
- Summer 2006 **Archival Research**, Brussels and Tervuren, Belgium
• Conducted archival research in the African Archives of the Minster of Foreign Affairs and the Royal Museum for Central Africa
- 2005-2006 **Ethnographic Research**, Luozi and Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo
• Conducted ethnographic and archival research for dissertation on Kongo embodied practices and cultural performances
- Summer 2002;
Feb 2003 **Ethnographic Research**, Portobelo and Panama City, Panama
• Performed ethnographic research on Congo dance traditions in Portobelo

Public/Media Appearances

- Feb, 2016 KQV Radio (Pittsburgh), 1410 AM, Interview for *Gesture and Power*
Dec, 2015 Pittsburgh Tribune-Review Newsmaker for new book
Oct, 2014 Part of Pittsburgh Tribune-Review story on Liberians and ebola
Fall 2014 Featured in Article entitled “New Outbreak, Old Wounds for Liberians at home and in the US” in the Newsletter of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation
- Sep, 2014 Ebony Spectrum Talk Show, 88.3 FM, Pittsburgh
March, 2011 Panelist on Winning Images Show, Pittsburgh Public Television
Feb, 2011 Profiled in the Pitt Chronicle Newspaper
October, 2011 Dancer in Kongo Dance Piece (Mbongi Dance Theatre) with Nego Gato Performance Group, “From Kongo to Brazil” (Kelly Strayhorn Theater)

Pedagogical Training

- Fall, 2010 Writing in the Disciplines Faculty Seminar, Univ. of Pittsburgh
Spring, 2010 Speaking in the Disciplines Faculty Seminar, Univ. of Pittsburgh
Summer, 2007 Preparing Future Faculty Seminar, Univ. of Michigan
• Designated a Michigan Teaching Fellow
- Fall, 2006 Training for Multicultural Classroom Facilitation, Univ. of Michigan

Methodological Training

- Sep, 2015 SAS Virtual Workshop (Center for Statistical Consultation and Research (CSCAR), University of Michigan)
- Nov, 2012 Text Analysis Workshop (American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA)

Nov, 2011	Social Network Analysis Extended Workshop (American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Montreal, Canada)
Oct, 2011	Focus Group Training Short Course (Joint Program in Survey Methodology, Washington, DC)

Mentorship and Independent Study

Spring 2010	First Experiences in Research Mentor (Nadia Johnson and Emily Livingston)
Spring 2011	Independent Study (Black Cultural Research Tours) (Titilope Akinlose)
Spring 2011	Independent Study (Liberian Immigrants and Grand March) (Siatta Dennis)
Spring 2011	First Experiences in Research Mentor (Katie Reding and Megan Willison)
Fall 2011	Independent Study (Socio-demographics of Liberian Immigrants) (Anthony Simpson and Megan Willison)
Fall 2011	Honors Research Assistantship Mentor (Katie Reding)
Spring 2012	Independent Study (Liberians Online) (Malika James)
Spring 2012	First Experiences in Research Mentor (Elizabeth Tubito)
Summer 2012	Honors Summer Research Award (Robert Ogum)
Spring 2016	First Experiences in Research Mentor (Zoe Creamer, Noah Coco, Eden Hailu, Amiya Kalra)
Summer 2016	Summer Undergraduate Research Award (Brandon Small)
Summer 2016	Independent Study (Vashti Webb)
Fall 2016	Independent Study (Katherine Eldridge)
Spring 2017	First Experiences in Research Mentor (Saline Pressimone, Nanno Dandi)
Spring 2017	Community-based Research Fellowship (Noah Coco)

Student Thesis Committees

2012	Cory Rodgers (B Phil, University of Pittsburgh, Committee Member)
2014	Devin Tatro (Honors Thesis (Anthropology), Bates College, External Member)
2015	Elizabeth Tubito (B. Phil, University of Pittsburgh, Committee Member)

Membership

2014 – present	<i>Member</i> , Population Association of America
2012 – present	<i>Member</i> , Emerging Scholars Interdisciplinary Network
2012 - present	<i>Member</i> , Central African Studies Association
2012 – present	<i>Member</i> , Congolese Studies Association
2012 – present	<i>Member</i> , Assoc. for Study African Am. Life & History
2011 – present	<i>Member</i> , Liberian Studies Association
2011-present	<i>Member</i> , Assoc. for Study of Worldwide African Diaspora
2009 – present	<i>Member</i> , National Council for Black Studies
2008 - 2010	<i>Volunteer</i> , Alumni Interviewing Team (Brown University)
2007 – present	<i>Member</i> , Association for Africanist Anthropology
2003- present	<i>Member</i> , African Studies Association
2001- present	<i>Member</i> , American Anthropological Association
2001- present	<i>Member</i> , Association of Black Anthropologists
2001- 2008	<i>Member</i> , Students of Color of Rackham (SCOR)
2001- 2003	<i>Member</i> , Bichina Bia Congo Dance Company

2003- 2005 *Volunteer Coach*, Tappan Middle School Step Team

Professional Service Activities

Service to the Department of Africana Studies

2015 *Member*, Africana Literature Search Committee

2014 *Chair*, Postdoctoral Fellowship Selection Committee

2014 *Member*, Faculty Search Committee for New Department Administrator II position

2014 *Member*, Humanities and Social Science Search Committees

2011 *Organizer*, Black Cultural Research Tours Feasibility Study

2010 *Discussant*, Department Film Series

Service to the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences

2016 *Member*, Assessment Committee, Writing Intensive Courses (Social Sciences), Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences

2015 – present *Member*, Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences Diversity Committee

2015 *Respondent* for D. Soyini Madison
Humanities Center and Department of Theatre Arts
University of Pittsburgh
Spectacles of Labor: Performance and the Working Class Symposium

2014 *Respondent* for Armando Garcia
Faculty Fellows Colloquium
Humanities Center, University of Pittsburgh

2014 *Respondent*, Session IV: “Blooded Thought, Embodied Engagement”
Public Praxis: Performing, Race, History (symposium)
Department of Theatre Arts, University of Pittsburgh

Service to the University of Pittsburgh

2017 *Student Orientation Faculty Panel Member*, BRIDGES Program, Office of Undergraduate Research

2017 *Interview Committee Member*, BRIDGES coordinator position, Office of Undergraduate Research

- 2016 – 2017 *Committee Member*, Writing Assessment Committee
- 2017 *Application Reviewer*, Central Development Research Fund (CRDF)
- 2017 *Application Reviewer*, Nationality Rooms Scholarships
- 2016 *Discussant*, Film Screening of “Blackening Up: Hip Hop’s Remix of Race and Identity,” University Center for Teaching and Learning
- 2016 *Commentator* for Catherine Besteman for Moving: Gendered Experiences of Migration, Gentrification, and Displacement, A Workshop
Global Studies Center
- 2015 *Panelist and Discussant* for film “Pray the Devil Back to Hell”
Global Health Film Series, Global Health Students Assoc.
Graduate School of Public Health
- 2014 – present *Faculty Advisory Board Member*, African Studies Program
- 2013 – 2014 *Search Committee Member*, Director of the University Center for International Studies (UCIS) and Senior Director of International Programs (appointed by the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies)
- 2013 – 2014 *Boren Awards for International Study Campus Interview Committee*, University Honors College
- 2010 – 2012 *Faculty Advisor*, Pan African Graduate Students Association
- 2011 *Invited Speaker*, Black History Month Program
Xi Delta Chapter, Zeta Phi Beta, University of Pittsburgh
Title of Lecture: “Correction! I KNOW I’m Bad! Black Women and the Challenge of Self-Definition”
- 2011 *Selection Committee*, UCIS Hewlett Grants
- 2010 *Selection Committee*, FLAS Fellowships (UCIS)

Service to External and Professional Organizations

- 2017 *Grant Reviewer*, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (Canada)
- 2016 *Member*, Paper Award Committee, Central African Studies Association
- 2009 - present *Secretary*, Association for Africanist Anthropology
- 2012 - present *Member*, African American Advisory Committee (Heinz History Museum)

- 2010 – present *Article Manuscript Reviewer*, American Ethnologist (twice), International Journal of African Historical Studies, PLOS ONE, Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities, Journal of Africana Religions, Journal of Black Studies, Social Science and Missions, Syllabus, Alif: Comparative Journal of Poetics, Journal of Urban Health, Sage Open, Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health, Journal of International Migration and Integration, Meridians
- 2013 – 2014 *Head of Award Review Committee and Member*, Selma Jeanne Cohen Award, Society of Dance History Scholars
- 2012 - present *Advisory Board Member*, Union of African Communities of Southwestern Pennsylvania
- 2010-2011 *Local Organizing Committee*, Biennial Conference, Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora (ASWAD), Pittsburgh 2011
- 2010-2011 *Selection Committee Member*, John Gwaltney Scholarship, Association of Black Anthropologists (ABA)

Language Proficiency

- French* Intermediate reading, writing and speaking ability
Spanish Intermediate reading, and basic writing and speaking ability
KiKongo Basic reading, writing, and speaking ability