

# *Decolonizing the Classroom*

September 27<sup>th</sup>-September 29<sup>th</sup> 2019  
Smith College, Northampton Massachusetts



**Location:** [Smith College Conference Center](#)  
49 College Lane, Northampton, Massachusetts

## **“Decolonizing the Classroom”**

Africa Network’s Biennial Conference

Smith College, Northampton Massachusetts- September 27-29, 2019

Africanist teaching and scholarship has long fought to bring African voices to the center of scholarly debate. However, structural inequality and prejudice has also allowed colonial hierarchies within the academy to remain. Following the lead of growing African social movements like #RhodesMustFall, the Africanist community in the West must now grapple with their own traditions of power, privilege and exclusion. In 2018, outgoing African Studies Association president [Jean Allman](#) called on the scholarly community to rethink this history of inequality within the Africanist academy under the banner #HerskovitsMustFall. Thus as organizations like ASA begin to grapple with the politics of knowledge production, Africa Network’s Biennial Conference will explore how these important ongoing debates inform the undergraduate classroom.

From introductory surveys to individual mentorship of student research, how do we challenge students and the broader system of higher education to prioritize African voices and African issues within the undergraduate curriculum? We seek proposals which address the broad themes of decolonization and expanding attention to African issues and voices within undergraduate teaching.

“Decolonizing the Classroom” is a part of [Africa Network’s](#) broader mission is to promote the study of Africa within the liberal arts curriculum. Our conferences are designed to bring together an interdisciplinary group of

Africa Network is an officially approved 501c(3) non-profit organization, and is registered as a nonprofit educational institution in the State of New York. The first national conference of Africa Network was held in 2004 on the campus of Hofstra University. The founding Chairman of the Board of Directors, and now Emeritus Chair, is Thomas L. Benson, the President Emeritus of Green Mountain College and the Executive Director of the World Education Corps.

The Organization’s mission is to enhance the study of Africa within the liberal arts curriculum. As a small, but national organization, our membership is drawn primarily from university faculty teaching across the undergraduate curriculum. As a coordinate member of the African Studies Association, our conferences and activities focus on pedagogical discussions related to our mission.

## **Friday September 27th**

**3-7 pm Welcome and Registration:**

**4- 5.30 pm Panel I “African History: Bridging College Teaching Back to the High School Classroom”**

Chair: Matt Carotenuto, [mcarotenuto@stlawu.edu](mailto:mcarotenuto@stlawu.edu), History, St. Lawrence University

Wendy Urban-Mead, [wum@bard.edu](mailto:wum@bard.edu), History, Bard College

Michael Panzer, [hstryman@hotmail.com](mailto:hstryman@hotmail.com), History, Marist College

Joshua Hatala, [pjhatala1@gmail.com](mailto:pjhatala1@gmail.com), independent school history teacher

**5:30 – 7:15pm Refreshments and Dinner**

**7.30 - 8.45 pm Keynote lecture (Seelye Hall 201)**

Trevor Getz, [tgetz@sfsu.edu](mailto:tgetz@sfsu.edu), History, San Francisco State University,  
“Unexpected Learning: African Lessons for American Students”

## **Saturday September 28th**

**8.30-10.30 am Panel 2 “Africa in Movies: Not Just Black Panther!”**

Chair: Anene Ejikeme, [aejikeme@trinity.edu](mailto:aejikeme@trinity.edu), History, Trinity University

Joseph L. Mbele, [mbele@stolaf.edu](mailto:mbele@stolaf.edu), English, St. Olaf College  
“A Documentary on African Storytelling”

N.Andre Siamundele, [n.siamundele@maine.edu](mailto:n.siamundele@maine.edu), French, U of Maine  
“Refocus Sembene: Colonial Confrontation as Decolonial Practice”

Brian Yates, [byates@sju.edu](mailto:byates@sju.edu), History, Saint Joseph’s University  
“Popular Culture Pedagogy and African Studies: Using the Black Panther to teach African History”

Steven Fabian, [Steven.Fabian@fredonia.edu](mailto:Steven.Fabian@fredonia.edu), History, SUNY Fredonia  
“Black Panther and the Black Atlantic”

### **10.30-10.45 am Refreshments and Break**

### **10.45 am-12.15 pm Panel 3 “Decolonizing Praxis: Challenging Paradigms and Pedagogy”**

Chair: Jeff Ahlman, [jahlman@smith.edu](mailto:jahlman@smith.edu), History, Smith College

Jemadari Kamara, [adjarra@yahoo.com](mailto:adjarra@yahoo.com), Africana Studies, U Mass Boston

Keith Jones, [Keith.jones@umb.edu](mailto:Keith.jones@umb.edu), American Studies, U Mass Boston,

Wendy Wilson-Fall, [wilsonfw@lafayette.edu](mailto:wilsonfw@lafayette.edu), History, Lafayette

### **Lunch 12.15- 1.15**

### **1.30-3.30 pm Panel 4 “Engaging Students”**

Chair: Eric Washington, [emw23@calvin.edu](mailto:emw23@calvin.edu), History, Calvin College

Molly Christie Gonzalez, [mchristie@dance.umass.edu](mailto:mchristie@dance.umass.edu), Dance/Dance  
Education

UMass Amherst and Five College Dance

“Decolonizing the Undergraduate Dance Classroom: Applying Katherine  
Dunham’s Pedagogical Framework”

Jennifer Lofkrantz, [Jennifer.lofkrantz@aun.edu.ng](mailto:Jennifer.lofkrantz@aun.edu.ng), History, American  
University of Nigeria

“The AUN History Minor: Designing a History Program for a 21st Century  
African University”

Lucy Mule, [lmule@smith.edu](mailto:lmule@smith.edu), Education & Child Study, Smith College

“Bringing African Studies into the Undergraduate Curriculum: Barriers and  
Facilitators in two Examples”

Stephen Volz, [volzs@kenyon.edu](mailto:volzs@kenyon.edu), History, Kenyon College

“Americans in Africa: Decentering the History of American-African  
Relations”

Anna West, [amwest@haverford.edu](mailto:amwest@haverford.edu), Health Studies, Haverford College  
“A Dual Imperative for Decolonization: African Studies in the Global Health Classroom”

### **3:30-3:45 Refreshments and Break**

### **3.45 - 5.15 pm Panel 5 “Study Abroad & Beyond”**

Chair: Todd Watkins, [taw4@lehigh.edu](mailto:taw4@lehigh.edu), Economics, Lehigh University

Thomas L. Benson, [bensontom789@gmail.com](mailto:bensontom789@gmail.com) President, International Association for Senior Debate, cofounder & former Chair of the Board, Africa Network  
“Decolonizing the Lifelong Learning Classroom”

Kariuki Kirigia, [evan.kirigia@mail.mcgill.ca](mailto:evan.kirigia@mail.mcgill.ca), Anthropology, McGill  
“Knowledge Production for a Decolonized Classroom”

Lamont A. Slater, [slaterl@augsborg.edu](mailto:slaterl@augsborg.edu), CGEE Augsburg University, Namibia  
“Deconstructing the traditional and study abroad classroom through Ubuntu, decolonized methods and experiential learning”

### **5:15-5:30- Refreshments and Break**

**5.30-7.30 pm “The Cut,” film & discussion with director Peter Wangugi Gitau & staff from partner non-profit AMREF Dagoretti Child Protection Center, Nairobi**

<https://filmfreeway.com/1330647>

### **7.30: Dinner and Cocktails**

## **Sunday 29 September**

### **8.30 - 10.30 am Panel 6 “Sources & Voices”**

Chair: Barry Bilderback

Barry T. Bilderback, [bbilder@uidaho.edu](mailto:bbilder@uidaho.edu), Music History and Ethnomusicology, University of Idaho/Lionel Hampton School of Music  
“Ghana’s True Gold: The Practice, the Principles, and the Power of Ghana’s Kpanlogo Drum and Dance Tradition.”

Rachel A. A. Engmann, [RAECSI@HAMPSHIRE.EDU](mailto:RAECSI@HAMPSHIRE.EDU), Christiansborg Archaeological Heritage Project (CAHP),  
“Autoarchaeology at Christiansborg Castle (Ghana): Decolonizing Knowledge, Pedagogy and Praxis”

Cacee Hoyer, [choyer@usi.edu](mailto:choyer@usi.edu) History, U of Southern Indiana  
“Prioritizing African Voices: A Case Study for Teaching an African History Topics Course”

Erik Johnson, [ejohnson@stlawu.edu](mailto:ejohnson@stlawu.edu), St. Lawrence University  
“Text and Context: Critical Lessons with African Primary Sources”

**10:45 am-11.30 pm General meeting:** All participants welcome to participate in the Africa Network board meeting used for planning future activities.