

THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**MEMPHIS.**

Department of Philosophy

*presents*

## The Inaugural Ida B. Wells Conference

October 26-27, 2007



**Program**

### **WELCOME!**

Earlier this year the Council of Graduate Studies honored the University of Memphis with its prestigious Peterson's Award for Innovation in Promoting an Inclusive Graduate Community in recognition of the Philosophy Department's success in recruiting and graduating African American graduate students. No other department in the country has come close to our record of graduating six African American doctoral students in four years, with another 12 currently pursuing their Ph.D. To celebrate this contribution to the larger philosophical community, Dr. Karen Weddle-West, as Vice Provost for Graduate Studies, helped fund this Inaugural Ida B. Wells Philosophy Conference.

The Conference is being organized by the Ida B. Wells Association, founded seven years ago by University of Memphis graduate students to promote discussion of philosophical issues arising from the African American experience and to provide a context in which to mentor undergraduates. In this spirit, we have invited Professors Lucius Outlaw and Donna Marcano to share their expertise and experiences with a new generation of Memphis students and a select group of African American undergraduates drawn from around the country.

For the uniquely supportive atmosphere which has led some of the very best African American students to choose the University of Memphis, we must thank each and every member of the Philosophy Department (students, faculty and staff). Yet we have also benefited from outside help. We single out for acknowledgment Professor Howard McGary of Rutgers University, whose Summer Institute in Philosophy for Minority Students has helped bring many young philosophers into the academy (and this department) and whose assistance in identifying students for this particular occasion is greatly appreciated.

Enjoy your visit!

## PRE-CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

### Thursday, October 25, 2007

- 2:30 – 4:30 Class visit: *Social Political Philosophy* with Bill Lawson (CL 213)
- 4:30 – 5:30 Break
- 5:30 – 6:30 Class visit: *Collective Agency* with Deborah Tollefsen (CL 123)
- 7:30 Dinner with Bill & Renee Lawson

### Friday, October 26, 2007

- 10:30 – 11:15 Meeting with Graduate Student Advisor
- 11:10 – 12:30 Individual meetings with professors
- 1:00 – 2:30 Ida B Wells Association Luncheon

## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

*(All sessions will take place in Clement Hall 213)*

### Friday, October 26, 2007

- 3:00 – 5:00 OPENING SESSION

**“Engaging Possibilities: Black Feminism and Philosophy”**

*Donna-Dale Marcano is an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Trinity College in Hartford, CT. She received*

*her Ph.D. from the University of Memphis in 2004 and now teaches courses in what could be broadly termed 'social and political philosophy' including courses on Hannah Arendt, Justice and Truth Commissions, Sartre's Political Philosophy, Race and Philosophy, and Feminism. Her published works include articles on Sartre and Julia Kristeva. Currently, Prof. Marcano's research interests center on Black Feminism and Philosophy. She will contribute to upcoming edited volumes on African-American and Latino-American Voices in Philosophy and on the oeuvre of bell hooks (a critical reader), as well as on Black Feminism and Philosophy.*

5:00 RECEPTION (1016 Audubon Dr)

9:00 MEMPHIS MUSIC (Marmalade 153 E Calhoun)

### Saturday, October 27, 2007

10:00 – 11:00 GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTATION

**“*Thin Skin, Thick Blood: The Non-Philosophical Underpinnings of Black Solidarity*”**

**Camisha Russell** is a fourth year doctoral student at the University of Memphis. Her research and teaching interests include social-political philosophy, African American philosophy, race studies, feminism, and ethics. She decided to pursue graduate studies in philosophy after attending the Summer Institute in Philosophy for Minority Students at Rutgers University in 2000. Before beginning graduate school, she spent two years working as a Peace Corps volunteer in Togo, West Africa in the Girls' Education and Empowerment program. She currently holds a Provost's Predoctoral Diversity Award and is the 2007-2008 recipient of the University of Memphis Society Doctoral Fellowship.

11:15 – 12:30 SESSION A

***“The Moral Status of Nature”***

**Milena Abayneh** is a Biology major and a Philosophy minor at New Jersey City University. Pursuing philosophy has helped her gain insight into moral issues in biology and concerning the environment. Her interests in philosophy include moral philosophy, ethics, metaphysics and continental philosophy. As the acting president of the philosophy club at her school, she has helped foster student interest in philosophy. She hopes to integrate her strong biology background and continuing interest in philosophy in obtaining a Ph.D. in philosophy.

***“Inactive Metaphysical Properties Related to Theism”***

**Dory Smith** is a junior at Loyola Marymount University, in Los Angeles, California. Her primary concentrations in philosophy are metaphysics, ethics, axiology and linguistics. Currently she is working on a paper that she hopes will be published within the next year. This is the second conference she has attended in her time as a philosophy student. She aspires to pursue a dual degree (Ph.D./J.D.) with a doctorate in philosophy and a law degree that heavily emphasizes human rights. She plans on studying abroad this year at Oxford University and, later on in the summer, traveling to Holland in order to develop a comparative exegesis of hers regarding ‘The Human Diaspora.’

12:30 – 2:30 LUNCH

2:30 – 3:45 SESSION B

***“Civil Disobedience, American Democracy and Violence”***

**Janelle Lattimore** was raised in Montclair, a very large, diverse and liberal area of northern New Jersey. She graduated from Rutgers University with a major in Philosophy with honors and a minor in Political Science. She is a member of Phi Sigma Tau national philosophy honors fraternity. She discovered philosophy in high school and has been studying it ever since. Her philosophical interests include epistemology, political philosophy, and ancient philosophy, specifically Aristotle. She is currently taking a year off to work and to volunteer in local politics. She hopes to complete a Ph.D. in philosophy and to work as a professor.

***“Peace at All Costs?”***

**Hosanna Keough** is a philosophy major in the Honors Program at Marymount University. She has attended and participated in various conferences nationally, which have motivated her to pursue graduate studies in philosophy. Her interests include continental philosophy, political philosophy, logic, ethics, and metaphysics, with a particular interest in language and philosophy of language. She hopes someday to teach in her native Ethiopia, to make the discipline of philosophy more accessible, and to encourage the linking of philosophy to community service (including concern and advocacy for third world countries). She is also interested in the translation of philosophical texts. She speaks Polish, Amharic, French and English, is learning German, and plans to study Latin and Greek as well.

4:00 – 5:30 KEYNOTE ADDRESS

***“No Choice but to Philosophize: Black Folks and Experiences in U.S. America”***

**Lucius Turner Outlaw (Jr.)**, formerly the T. Wistar Brown Professor of Philosophy at Haverford College (Haverford, Pennsylvania), is Professor of Philosophy and of African American and Diaspora Studies, and Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, at Vanderbilt University with responsibilities, as Associate Provost, for the Bishop Joseph Johnson Black Cultural Center, the Margaret Cuninggim Women’s Center, the Office of Honors Scholarships and ENGAGE, Ingram Scholars Program, Chancellor’s Scholars Program, Army and Navy ROTC Programs. (Outlaw has also been a member of the faculties of Fisk University and Morgan State University; a visiting professor at Spelman College, Howard University, and Hamilton College. For the 1996-98 academic years Outlaw was the David S. Nelson Professor of Boston College.) Outlaw teaches, researches, and writes about race and ethnicity, African Philosophy, African American Philosophy, Marx, Critical Social Theory, Social and Political Philosophy, and the history of Philosophy in the “West.” Born in Starkville, Mississippi, he is a graduate of Fisk University (B.A., Philosophy, 1967, Magna Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa) and of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of Boston College (Ph.D., Philosophy, 1972). His essays have been published in *Philosophical Forum*, *Journal of Social Philosophy*, *Man and World*, *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal*, *The Journal of Ethics*, and a number of anthologies. A collection of several of his essays, *On Race and Philosophy*, was published by Routledge (1996). Another book, *Critical Social Theory in the Interests of Black Folk*, was published by Roman & Littlefield (2005).

5:30 – 7:00 RECEPTION & FAREWELL (2909 Central Ave)

## Contact List

### Special Guests

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### Organizers

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