

Special Thanks

We must express our appreciation for the great support that has been given to the association for this conference by the faculty, graduate students, and staff of the University of Memphis Philosophy Department. We would specifically like to thank Department Chair Dr. Deborah Tollefsen and Vice Provost of Graduate Studies, Dr. Karen Weddle-West, who helped fund this Third Ida B. Wells Philosophical Conference. Finally, we thank our tireless and timeless advisor Dr. Bill E. Lawson, Distinguished Professor of Philosophy.



The 3rd Annual Ida B. Wells



Philosophical Conference



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS

Department of Philosophy
The Ida B. Wells Association

Friday, Oct. 30, 2009 @ 3- 5 PM

Saturday, Oct. 31, 2009 @ 10 AM- 5 PM

Michael D. Rose Theater
Entertainment Room



PRE-CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

Thursday, October 29, 2009

6:30 Dinner with Bill & Renee Lawson

Friday, October 30, 2009

10:20 - 11:15 African American Philosophy

11:30 - 12:45 Meeting with Department Chair

12:45 - 2:30 Ida B. Wells Association Luncheon
(McCord Conference Room 207/208)

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

*(All sessions will take place in the
Rose Theater Entertainment Room)*

Friday, October 30, 2009

3:00 – 5:00 OPENING KEYNOTE ADDRESS

***“Philosophy is Not a Luxury: A Conversation with
Audre Lorde”***

Kristie Dotson is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Michigan State University. She received a M.A. and Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Memphis. She also received a MA from the University of Illinois at Chicago in Literature and a BA in African American Studies and English Literature from Coe College. Dotson does research in epistemology, African American philosophy (particularly Black

Contact List

Special Guests

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Kristie Dotson | <i>dotsonk@msu.edu</i> |
| Sybol Cook Anderson | <i>scanderson@smcm.edu</i> |
| Tina Botts | <i>tbotts@memphis.edu</i> |

Participants

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
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| Anthony Coleman | <i>10abc@williams.edu</i> |
| Michael Gumm | <i>michaeldevingummmc10@yahoo.com</i> |

Organizers

| | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|
| Avril Abiodun | <i>afuller1@memphis.edu</i> |
| William Allen | <i>wsallen@memphis.edu</i> |
| Bill Lawson | <i>belawson@memphis.edu</i> |

3:30 – 5:00 CLOSING KEYNOTE ADDRESS

“The State of Black America: A Philosophical Investigation”

Sybol Cook Anderson is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at St. Mary’s College of Maryland, St. Mary’s City. She specializes in social and political philosophy and the work of the 19th-century German philosopher, G.W.F. Hegel. Anderson also teaches courses in ethics and early modern philosophy. Anderson received her doctorate in philosophy in 2006 from Johns Hopkins University, and is the first African-American woman to receive the Ph.D. in philosophy from a Maryland institution. She spent a blissful year in the doctoral program in philosophy at the University of Memphis. Anderson’s most recent book is *Hegel’s Theory of Recognition: From Oppression to Ethical Liberal Modernity* (London: Continuum Publishing, 2009). Anderson is also co-editor, with Robert Bernasconi, of *Race and Racism in Continental Philosophy* (Indiana University Press, 2003) and, with Ellen Feder and Karmen MacKendrick, of *A Passion for Wisdom: Readings in Western Philosophy on Love and Desire* (Prentice-Hall, 2004).

5:30 – 7:00 DINNER AT ONIX
(412 SOUTH MAIN ST.)

feminism), feminist philosophy (particularly feminist epistemology), and Philosophy and Race. She edited with Robert Bernasconi a series of books entitled *Race, Hybridity, and Miscegenation*. Her most recent work involves examining how the practice of giving and receiving testimony, as an epistemic faculty, serves as a mainstay practice in the creation and maintenance of racial and social oppression.

6:00 DINNER AT NEELY'S RESTAURANT
(670 JEFFERSON)

Saturday, October 31, 2009

10:00 – 11:00 GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTATION

***“Natural Law Theory or Legal Interpretivism?
The Mature Frederick Douglass’s Method
of Constitutional Interpretation”***

Tina Fernandes Botts, J.D. is a third year Ph.D. student at University of Memphis who is presently a Dissertation Teaching Fellow in Law and Philosophy in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro. Her philosophical interests are primarily in philosophy of law. Her present research involves the deconstruction of the concepts of equality and race as these concepts inform the Supreme Court’s interpretation of “equal protection of the laws” as found in the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The working title of her dissertation is: *The Hermeneutics of Equal Protection Analysis: Suspect Class Doctrine and the Antisubjugation Principle*.

11:15 – 12:00

***“Paris is Burning: An Archive of the
Tension Between Ontology and Performativity”***

Anthony Coleman was born and raised in Memphis, TN with an appreciation for slow-roasted barbecue and sultry blues. Coleman is an undergraduate student at Williams College, where he majors in Political Theory and Africana studies. His intellectual interests span a number of philosophical topics including inquiries into phenomenology, performativity, and poststructuralism. Within these traditions, his studies focus on the theoretical and empirical spaces where the intersections of power, politics, and identity are most formative. He hopes to pursue these interests in depth in a doctoral program next year.

12:00-1:30 LUNCH

1:30-2:15

***“An Exploration of Liberatory Oppression
Theory in the Works of Maria Lugones and
Judith Butler”***

Desiree Valentine is currently a senior at Marquette University pursuing degrees in Philosophy, Communication Studies, and Women's and Gender Studies. Her interests across disciplines are focused in social, cultural, and political issues. Desiree is particularly interested in philosophical inquiry that is

grounded in lived experience addressing questions of identity, subjectivity, and embodiment in terms of one's gendered and raced social reality. She is also concerned with questions of understanding oppression(s), resistance and liberation. As a philosophy major, one of Desiree's main goals is to apply philosophical theory to everyday practice; therefore, she takes a keen interest in social activism and community organizing.

2:30 – 3:15

“Black Dialect: A Call To Be Recognized”

Michael Gumm is a senior majoring in philosophy at Morehouse College. His paper addresses how African Americans have created ways to combat the English speaking language due to oppressive notions that have been forced to ridicule and cause harm against black people and their various forms of “language.”