



# NEWS

## March 2012

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### ***Bunche Center Commentary***

This month we're pleased to welcome Professor Scot Brown as our guest commentator. Dr. Brown is currently Associate Professor of History and African American Studies at UCLA. His writings on African American social movements, resistance, and cultural nationalism have appeared in numerous publications including *Black Scholar*, *American National Biography*, *Journal of Black Studies*, *Journal of Negro History*, and *Contributions in Black Studies*. He contributed to the book, *Black Los Angeles: American Dreams and Racial Realities* (NYU Press 2010), where he wrote about the unique history of the Black-owned SOLAR record label, an acronym for the Sound of Los Angeles Records. In this issue, Dr. Brown examines the life, legacy and loss of Don Cornelius and his impact on the Black community and beyond.

### ***Don Cornelius: Cultural and Economic Innovator***

By Scot Brown



On February 1, 2012, Don Cornelius, legendary founder of *Soul Train*, passed away. The tragedy was further accentuated by the death of songstress extraordinaire, Whitney Houston, a mere ten days later. Back in 1985, Houston, a relative unknown in the initial phases of her ascent, delivered a dazzling performance on *Soul Train*. Houston, as did many of her predecessors, found in Cornelius' creation, a unique venue to push forward a budding musical career. African American history is replete with references to the moving vessel as a redemptive transportation force in the journey to freedom. Be it the chariot, locomotive, ship, train or spacecraft, it is the symbolic vehicle of mass movement that has blazed trails etched in Black historical memory and creative invocations of the future. The engine of the television series *Soul Train* ran without a hitch for more than 35 years, from 1971 to 2006. It was fueled by the talents of untold numbers of creative artists, professionals, entrepreneurs, activists, and most of all, audiences. These collective contributions notwithstanding, the *Soul Train* had but one conductor—Don Cornelius-- who commandeered an institution that was both a *tour de force* in economic as well as cultural empowerment. *Soul Train* was far more than simply a television show.

## ***Bunche Center Commentary (continued)***

It was an economic force that succeeded in employing unprecedented numbers of African Americans in television production and in the entertainment industry at large. The roots of Cornelius' push for economic empowerment extend to *Soul Train's* origins as a local phenomenon in Chicago. From the outset of its formation, Cornelius, former Chicago newscaster for WCIU-TV and host /executive producer of the Black music variety show *Soul Train*, considered his show to be part of the ongoing struggle for Black economic power. While the show's programming centered on Black music, Cornelius was interested in expanding African American leadership in the television industry beyond the entertainment level, stating that "There is a place in television for blacks who don't sing, dance or tell jokes." "This is," he continued, "what I set out to prove with '*Soul Train*.'" Within two years of *Soul Train's* debut in 1970 as a Chicago weekday program, the show emerged as a syndicated weekly program spanning media markets throughout the U.S. The capacity for Black financial cooperation to impact and potentially transform racially exclusionary segments of the American popular culture industry was perhaps best exemplified in *Soul Train's* co-sponsorship by Chicago-based Johnson Products--one of the largest African American businesses and manufacturers of Black hair care and cosmetics. Black freedom struggles across the globe have a long history of organizing in the economic sphere in order to create a basis for collective empowerment. Cornelius' work is steeped in this tradition.

With African American vernacular style as its cargo, *Soul Train* nationalized and internationalized Black urban expression. Cornelius' move to the global media and entertainment center of Los Angeles in 1971, blurred traditional distinctions between "local" and "national" Black trends. Indeed, *Soul Train* was as much a part of the L.A. Black public sphere as it was an iconic Black national and international institution. The prize of appearing on *Soul Train* invigorated dance competitions in nightclubs, public schools, and neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles. Furthermore, the dances, fashions, and hairstyles popularized by the show were a reflection of the styles and tastes of African American youth in Los Angeles, and those transported westward by the steady migration of Black artists from other cities. In 1975, John Muir High school student Temille Porter and her dance partner, Charlie Allen, received an honorary mention at the radio station KDAY's "Ultra Sheen, Afro Sheen, 7-Up Dance Contest," held at the Whiskey a-Go-Go club on Sunset Boulevard. The prize for placing was an audition for *Soul Train* at the KTTV Studios. Two months later, the two of them—donning matching tropical print outfits, made by her mother, Mazree Porter—strolled gallantly down the *Soul Train* line. Two of the vocalists in the group of the late 70s and 80s group Shalamar—Jeffrey Daniel and Jody Whatley—had earned prior notoriety as dancers on *Soul Train* and contributed to the growth of numerous dance styles seen by national audiences on *Soul Train*; e.g. waacking, popping, robotics and backsliding (later popularized by Michael Jackson as moon-walking). Additionally, *Soul Train* popularized communal dance expressions, rooted in African traditions and ever-present in African American folk life; e.g. Black family reunions, weddings and holiday celebrations—the most notable of which was appropriately called, The *Soul Train* Line.

Don Cornelius' work stands as a virtual example of what Garvey envisioned for the Black Star Line a half century earlier. The *Soul Train* remains, even in its nostalgic presence, a force capable of moving communities together through creative exchange and inspiration in the spirit of "Love, Peace and Soul."



## Announcements



The Bunche Center is pleased to announce that Dr. Clayborne Carson will present  
**The 2012 Thurgood Marshall Lecture**

“Dr. King, Jr. and the Global Freedom Struggle”

Since receiving his doctorate from UCLA in 1975, Dr. Clayborne Carson has taught at Stanford University, where he is Professor of History and founding director of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute. Dr. Carson's publications focus on African-American protest movements and political thought in the period after World War II.

Under Dr. Carson's direction, the King Papers Project has produced six volumes of *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr.* -- a projected fourteen-volume comprehensive edition of King's most significant speeches, sermons, correspondence, publications, and unpublished writings.

Dr. Carson has also served as senior advisor for the award-winning, public television series, "Eyes on the Prize." He has lectured throughout the United States, and appeared on many national radio and television shows, including *Good Morning America*, *NBC Nightly News*, *CBS Evening News*, *Fresh Air*, *Charlie Rose*, *Tavis Smiley*, and *Marketplace*.



### Save the Date: Wednesday, April 4, 2012

5:30 pm Reception

7:00 pm Lecture

Grand Horizon Room, Covel Commons, UCLA

RSVP by Wednesday, March 28, 2012

to [atucker@bunche.ucla.edu](mailto:atucker@bunche.ucla.edu) or by phone (310) 825-4023

Parking: \$11 at Sunset Village - Enter at Sunset Blvd. & Bellagio Drive



### Save the Date:

On Friday, May 4<sup>th</sup> from 12:00pm to 1:30pm, the UC Irvine Department of Sociology Colloquium Series presents Darnell Hunt, Bunche Center Director and UCLA Professor of Sociology, speaking on Diversity & Inequality.

His lecture, *Dreaming of Black Los Angeles: A Multidisciplinary Project on Race, Representation, and Community*, will be held on the UC Irvine campus, Social Science Plaza B, Room 4206. For further Information: Ekua Arhin, [earhin@uci.edu](mailto:earhin@uci.edu) or 949-824-6800

## Programs & Events



Tuesday, March 6, 3:00pm to 5:00pm

### **Bunche Center “Author Meets Critic” Panel Discussion**

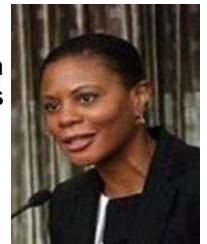
Bunche Library & Media Center, Haines Hall 135

The March Bunche Center “Author Meets Critic” Panel Discussion looks at *Invisible Families: Gay Identities, Relationships and Motherhood among Black Women*, written by Mignon Moore, Associate Professor of Sociology and African-American Studies, UCLA. Moore brings to light the family life of a group that has been largely invisible—gay women of color—in a book that challenges long-standing ideas about racial identity, family formation, and motherhood. Drawing from interviews and surveys of one hundred black gay women in New York City, the book explores the ways that race and class have influenced how these women understand their sexual orientation, find partners, and form families. In particular, the study looks at the ways in which the past experiences of women who came of age in the 1960s and 1970s shape their thinking, and have structured their lives in communities that are not always accepting of their openly gay status. Overturning generalizations about lesbian families derived largely from research focused on white, middle-class feminists, *Invisible Families* reveals experiences within black American and Caribbean communities as it asks how people with multiple stigmatized identities imagine and construct an individual and collective sense of self. The panel will feature Andreana Clay from San Francisco State University, Ange Marie Hancock from USC, Jane Ward from UC Riverside, and Aisha Finch from the UCLA Women’s Studies Department. A reception will follow.

Wednesday, March 14, 4:00pm to 6:00pm

### **New Directions in Gender and Sexuality Studies**

Humanities 193



Alondra Nelson, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Columbia University, discusses *New Directions in Gender and Sexuality Studies – The Postgenomic Family*. Author of *Body and Soul: The Black Panther Party and the Fight Against Medical Discrimination*, Dr. Nelson is working on a new book project, *The Social Life of DNA*, which examines how claims about race and ancestry are marshaled together with genetic analysis in a range of social ventures, including family history projects, reparations politics, economic development schemes and transnational philanthropy. The event is co-sponsored by the Bunche Center; the UCLA Division of Social Sciences; the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; the UCLA Departments of Women’s Studies, Anthropology, English, LGBT Studies and World Arts and Cultures/Dance; the UCLA Center for Society and Genetics; the UCLA Center for the Study of Women; the UCLA School of Law, the UCLA Mellon Postdoctoral Program in the Humanities, and the UCLA Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy.



Friday, March 16, 12:00pm to 1:00pm

### **Bunche Center Circle of Thought**

Bunche Library & Media Center, Haines Hall 135

Bunche Center Circle of Thought presents *An Afternoon with Fred Ho*. Ho is an American jazz baritone saxophonist, composer, bandleader, playwright, writer, and social activist. He is credited with co-founding several Asian American civic groups such as the East Coast Asian Students Union while a student at Harvard, The Asian American Arts Alliance in New York City, The Asian American Resource Center in Boston, and the Asian Improv record label. Of Chinese descent, Ho specializes in the combining sometimes asynchronous tunes and melodies of various musical traditions, creating what many have described as both brilliant and chaotic sounds. He is the first to combine Chinese opera with traditional African American music. He leads the Afro Asian Music Ensemble (founded in 1982) and the Monkey Orchestra (founded in 1980). This event is co-sponsored by the Bunche Center, the UCLA Department of History, and the UCLA Asian American Studies Center.

**Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies at UCLA**

160 Haines Hall, Box 951545 • Los Angeles, CA 90095-1545 • (310) 825-7403

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## Accolades & Awards

During Black History Month, Bunche Center affiliated faculty member and School of Nursing Dean Courtney H. Lyder was presented with a resolution honoring his achievements and his "exceptional role in education" by Councilwoman Jan Perry and the Los Angeles City Council. Lyder was the first African American dean at UCLA, and is the first minority male dean of a nursing school in the United States.



Bunche Center affiliated faculty member and Professor of Sociology, Mignon Moore, won the UCLA Academic Senate and Office of Instructional Development Distinguished Teaching Award for Undergraduate Mentorship.

Bunche Center affiliated faculty member Gary Orfield, professor of education and director of the Civil Rights Project at UCLA, was recently quoted in an Education Week article about California legislators' efforts to protect funds for public school bus transportation. To read the article, visit: [www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/02/08/20transport\\_ep.h31.html?tkn=OLQFen%2B5L5H%2Frf1%2BnvRz2i6ggfaw7ZIGYsw2&cmp=clp-edweek](http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/02/08/20transport_ep.h31.html?tkn=OLQFen%2B5L5H%2Frf1%2BnvRz2i6ggfaw7ZIGYsw2&cmp=clp-edweek)



In Celebration of Black History Month, on February 12, 2012, UCLA History Professor and Bunche Center affiliated faculty member, Dr. Brenda Stevenson, participated in the Carter G. Woodson African American History Lecture Series at the California African American Museum. Following a one hour screening from the "Eyes on the Prize" documentary series, Drs. Stevenson and Marne Campbell of Loyola Marymount spoke about America's Civil Rights Movement from 1954-1965.

In February, Bunche Center affiliated faculty member Gail E. Wyatt, Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences, visited the White House to serve as the invited speaker at the President's Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS. The topic of Wyatt's lecture was, "Women, Trauma and HIV."



Last month's *Chronicle of Higher Education* features a review of "Africa Speaks, America Answers: Modern Jazz in Revolutionary Times," a new book by Robin D.G. Kelley. Kelley is a Professor of United States History, and a Bunche Center affiliated faculty member. To read the review visit: <http://chronicle.com/article/American-Jazz-Africas-Voice/130795/>

## ***Support the Bunche Center***



Gifts to the Bunche Center support our commitment to teaching, research, and service, ensuring that a UCLA education remains accessible and that the caliber of its scholarship and research is peer to none.

Private philanthropy at UCLA:

- \* Inspires scholars
- \* Spurs research
- \* Energizes students
- \* Entices world-class faculty, and
- \* Throws open the doors of academic opportunity & exploration



Your individual gift helps support vital research, programs and services. For information on how to include the Bunche Center at UCLA in your giving plans, please contact (310) 825-7403 or go to: <https://giving.ucla.edu/bunche>

## ***Library & Media Center***



The Bunche Center Library and Media Center is open during regular hours to students, researchers, and the general public. Research and reference questions by phone and email are always welcome. The Librarian can be reached at 310-825-6060 or by email at [dhunter@bunche.ucla.edu](mailto:dhunter@bunche.ucla.edu). The LMC is located in 135 Haines Hall.

For more about the library visit: [www.bunchecenter.ucla.edu](http://www.bunchecenter.ucla.edu), click on Library and Media Center.

## ***Interdepartmental Program Afro-American Studies***



**SAVE THE DATE—Afro-Am Graduation,**

**Saturday, June 16, 11:30am**

The UCLA AFRO-Am Graduation for Afro-Am majors, double-majors, minors, MA and MA/JD students will be held on Saturday, June 16.\*\*\* The Ceremony will be from 11:30a.m. to 1:30p.m. in the Fowler Museum, Lenart Auditorium. A reception will follow. A limited number of free tickets for the event are available and information on obtaining tickets is forthcoming.

\*\*\*Please note – this event is NOT the same as the *Afrikan Graduation* on Sunday, June 17. For additional information, please contact: 301 825-9821 or visit [www.afro-am.ucla.edu](http://www.afro-am.ucla.edu)

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## Research

### NEW RELEASE

#### **Bunche Research Report, Vol. 6, No. 2 (February 2012)**

##### **Defending Affirmative Action**

The affirmative action battle rages on in the United States. Legal arguments are being heard at the federal appeals level and, beginning in fall 2012, at the Supreme Court level. In light of the cases being presented to the Sixth and Ninth Circuit Federal Court of Appeals, the Bunche Center presents the following brief submitted by the California Social Science Researchers and Admissions Experts as Amici Curiae in support of the plaintiffs, *Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action, et al. v. Brown, Yudof, and Connerly*. The brief was co-authored by the Bunche Center Director and Assistant Director and based on Bunche Center research.

California's Proposition 209 amended the state constitution to ban the use of race-conscious admissions at state universities. Amici have an interest in presenting to the Court the 14 years of empirical data that documents the detrimental effects California Proposition 209 has had on underrepresented minorities in the state who seek access to the University of California. Although Proposition 209 also has constrained the access of underrepresented minorities to the University of California's transfer student, graduate, and faculty ranks, this brief focuses primarily on the negative effect on freshman admissions. It pays particular attention to the case of African American students in California, since the effects of Proposition 209 on this group have been most pronounced. The empirical evidence in this brief is relevant to the Court's determination of whether Proposition 209 violates the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

For more information about this brief and affirmative action issues, please visit the Bunche Center's [Affirmative Action](#) page and [www.facebook.com/DefendingAffirmativeAction](http://www.facebook.com/DefendingAffirmativeAction).

**DOWNLOAD [Bunche Research Report-February 2012](#) at [www.bunchecenter.ucla.edu](http://www.bunchecenter.ucla.edu)**

##### **IAC Research Grant Program Applications are now available Deadline is 5:00 pm, April 20, 2012**

The Institute of American Cultures, in conjunction with the American Indian Studies Center, the Asian American Studies Center, Bunche Center for African American Studies, and the Chicano Studies Research Center, invites applications for support of research on African Americans, American Indians, Asian Americans, and Chicanas/os for 2012-2013. The Institute also invites proposals on interethnic relations that will increase collaboration between the Centers and/or between the Centers and other campus units. UCLA faculty, staff, graduate students, and IAC postdoctoral fellows are all eligible to apply.

The Research Grant Program is on a reimbursement basis only. Ordinarily, faculty projects will be funded for no more than \$10,000 and graduate student projects for no more than \$7,000. Funds for the purchase of permanent equipment will be provided only under exceptional circumstances. Conference travel, whether the applicant is presenting or attending, is ineligible.

Applications are available now and must be received no later than 5:00 p.m., April 20, 2012. Awards will be announced by the third week in June. If you are interested in applying to the Bunche Center, contact Ana-Christina Ramon at [acramon@bunche.ucla.edu](mailto:acramon@bunche.ucla.edu) or call 310-825-7403. Once you have discussed your project with the Center's IAC Coordinator, please complete the application form. Applications may be obtained at [www.gdnet.ucla.edu/iacweb/applic.htm](http://www.gdnet.ucla.edu/iacweb/applic.htm), or from the IAC Office.

For additional information about grant opportunities visit the newly updated Bunche Center website at [www.bunchecenter.ucla.edu](http://www.bunchecenter.ucla.edu), click Research, Fellowships & Grants.



## ***In the Community***

### ***March Events***

Now through May 28, 2012  
Justice, Balance and Achievement:  
African Americans in the California Courts  
California African American Museum



The California African American Museum presents an exhibition that examines the achievements of African American judicial leadership and how some court cases have shaped the experiences of African Americans in California. Through objects and photos, the exhibit also celebrates the 17 African American justices who served on the Supreme Court and Courts of Appeal in California, also highlighting significant 19th and 20th century cases that influenced and shaped our communities. All exhibitions and education programs at CAAM are free and open to the public. For more information call (213) 744-2024 or visit: [www.caamuseum.org](http://www.caamuseum.org).



March 8, 6:00 p.m.  
Teira Church  
Fowler Museum, UCLA

If you caught Teira Church last spring during Fowler Out Loud's Women in Jazz concert, you know about her soulful voice and creative interpretations of jazz standards. Church returns for a solo performance sure to enchant. The program is free and open to the public. For more information visit: [www.fowler.ucla.edu/events/fowler-out-loud-teira-church](http://www.fowler.ucla.edu/events/fowler-out-loud-teira-church)

March 10, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Sickle Cell Disease Foundation of California  
2nd Annual Sickle Cell Disease Walk  
Rancho Cucamonga



Founded in 1957, the Sickle Cell Disease Foundation of California was the first non-profit, social service sickle cell disease organization established in the United States. With a growing population of individuals with sickle cell disease and sickle cell trait, the primary focus of the SCDFC is to educate, screen and counsel those persons at risk of having children with sickle cell disease and other hemoglobin disorders. Join this walk to raise funds to support the research and programs conducted by the foundation. Prizes will be awarded to walkers who raise the most money in each category. Prizes include airline tickets and Disneyland Park Hopper Passes. For more information call 310-693-0247 or visit:

<https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?llr=7fy6tgdab&oeidk=a07e5imxlfr28dd5cdd>

Visit Our Newly Re-launched Website at [www.bunchecenter.ucla.edu](http://www.bunchecenter.ucla.edu) and at

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