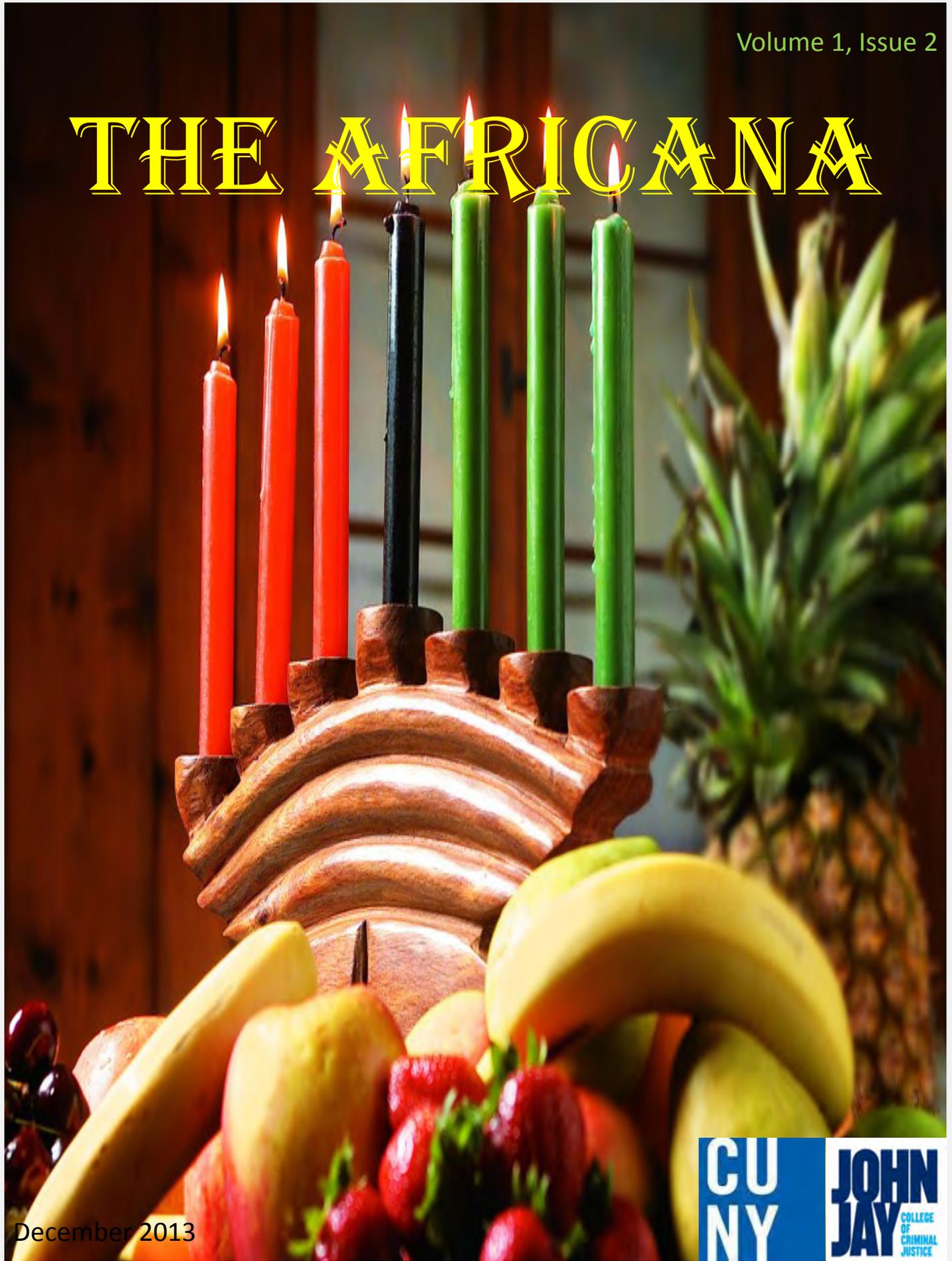


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# THE AFRICANA



December 2013

**CU**  
**NY** **JOHN**  
**JAY** COLLEGE  
OF CRIMINAL  
JUSTICE

# Happy Holidays!

With the holiday season fast approaching, the Africana Studies department is working hard to promote awareness and celebration of the various cultures, holiday traditions, and practices of communities in the Diaspora. This time of year is a time of gathering and so, the department has also been strengthening efforts to keep its' community of students, faculty, and staff connected. One of the seven principles of Kwanzaa is *ujima* (collective work and responsibility) and we believe that any and all steps we take to improve as an academic unit must be grounded in what we have **all** recognized as critical for progress.

That is why, as we get closer to the end of the semester, the department encourages feedback from both staff and students on their experiences. Academic programs such as ethnic and gender studies were born out of a sincere need for diversity and the inclusion of accurately represented experiences of minority groups that were virtually nonexistent in America prior to the social movements of the 1960s and 70s. So, the success of these programs, by their very nature, can never be measured by how well they “stick to the script” but by how far they reach and how well they insure that no voice is left out.

We hope that you will all take advantage of the opportunity to make your voices heard and not be shy about asking the really tough questions. Not only are these questions welcomed but they are integral to the survival of Africana Studies as a discipline. If solutions regularly presented themselves before the questions were even asked, there would never have been such a struggle to have these kinds of programs in American universities to begin with.

Please continue to be apart of our community as we keep making strides and have a wonderful holiday season.

# Kwanzaa Takes New York;

## A Look at Some Events Happening In and Around the City

One of Africana Studies' very own, faculty member and gifted Griot, Linda Humes will be hosting the 35th annual Kwanzaa celebration at the American Museum of Natural History. Activities will include theatre, poetry, dance, and fun for the entire family. This even takes places on Saturday, December 28th from 12:00 to 5:00 p.m. Please visit <http://www.amnh.org/calendar/kwanzaa-2013-35th-anniversary-celebration> for more details.



Ms. Humes is a sought after storyteller and lectures extensively about Kwanzaa. Her CD and workbook, *Kwanzaa, A Time To Celebrate*, won the Silver Honors Parent Choice Award in 1999.



Forces of Nature Dance Theatre;  
[apollotheater.org](http://apollotheater.org)

Forces of Nature Dance Theatre company will take the stage at the Apollo Theater on Friday, December 27th at 7:30 p.m. Dancers and drummers will delight the audience with a mixture of West African and modern music and movement. See [http://www.apollotheater.org/all/details/124-kwanzaa\\_celebration](http://www.apollotheater.org/all/details/124-kwanzaa_celebration) for more information.

Sponsored by Brooklyn Arts Council, A Feed the Needy and Kwanzaa Celebration Event to be held at Medgar Evers College on December 18th. Hosted by The People of the Sun Middle Passage Collective, the event provides residents from local shelters with meals and gifts as well as entertainment for the whole community including drumming and spoken word. Go to <http://www.brooklynartscouncil.org/documents/1646> to find out more.



KowTeff African Dance Company;  
[brooklynartscouncil.org](http://brooklynartscouncil.org), [kowteff.org](http://kowteff.org)

## Styling and Profiling:

# South African Short Skillfully Blends Charm, Fashion, and Urban Mystique in Under Four Minutes



Boys of Soweto; okayafrica.com



The “Boys” swoon as a beautiful woman passes by; Boys of Soweto; okayafrica.com

Boys of Soweto (B.O.S.), a South African “style and fashion group”, according to their Tumblr page, are the heart of filmmaker, Meja Shoba’s short film by the same name. The six-member group attempt to look their snazziest in an effort to capture the attention and affection of a silent and sultry young woman walking past them on the street. The film is set against the backdrop of their hometown of Soweto on a beautiful, dusky late afternoon.

The environment appears to be as much of a character in the story as the woman and young men are. “I wanted to let the sensibility of story be the core of the film, and let all other elements such as the guys’ chemistry and rapport with each other, the fashionable suits, the beautiful young lady, and the Soweto location all enhance the look and feel of the film” said Shoba in an interview with OkayAfrica.com (see <http://www.okayafrica.com/2013/09/19/boys-of-soweto-south-africa-short-film/> for full interview and film).

Meja Shoba is a graduate student at UCLA, studying film.

You can also learn more about fashion group, Boys of Soweto at <http://boysofsoweto.tumblr.com/>.

# Merry Christmas in Four Different Languages; Christmas Traditions Throughout the Africana World



Caroling band in Martinique; bellemartinique.com

## Martinique. Joyeux Noël!

Natives of this overseas region of France like to spend the few weeks leading up to Christmas caroling in a tradition called “Chanté-Noël”—old school carols sung in a uniquely Antillean creole style.

## Brazil. Feliz Natal!

Salvador da Bahia is notorious for its’ festas, so it’s no wonder that Christmas celebrations in this city last well beyond December 25th. The Festa da Lapinha, an observance of the biblical magi’s visit to baby Jesus, begins on January 3rd and ends January 6th.



Festa da Lapinha, also known as Festa de Reis, Salvador, Bahia;

bahia.com.br



Coptic Christians in Ethiopia on Christmas; ewflocaltwo.org

## Ethiopia. Melkam Yelidet Beaal

Christmas in Ethiopia (Ganna) falls on December 25th on the Julian calendar (which is January 7th in the West). On Christmas Eve, many Christians fast the entire day. Members of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church often attend mass, dress entirely in white, and enjoy a wonderful feast the day after.

## Nigeria. E ku odun, e hu iye’ dun!

Decorating homes with palm leaves/fronds during this holiday is a truly unique, Nigerian custom. The palm is believed to symbolize peace and is hung to bring harmony in the Christmas season.



Palm holds not only spiritual significance in Nigeria, but practical and economical as well; today, however, many species are in danger of extinction; bbc.co.uk

# What's Cooking?: The Many Faces of African–American Traditional Cuisine



Family dinner scene from the movie *Soul*  
*Food*, 1997; [ivillage.com](http://ivillage.com)



African–American food historian, Leni Sorenson;  
[beyondtheflavor.com](http://beyondtheflavor.com)



Lowcountry/Gullah dish;  
[southernliving.com](http://southernliving.com)

Leni Sorensen, African–American Research Historian at Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello in Charlottesville, Virginia, knows a thing or two about food. And when it comes to what’s popularly referred to as *soul food*, she insists that the common visions of collard greens, baked macaroni and cheese, and sweet potato pie gracing the Black Thanksgiving dinner table just barely scratches the surface of African–American cuisine. “ ‘...The iconic list of greens and pork chops and cornbread...is only a minor list of all of the different foods that people eat within their own communities?’”, she says.

One such example being Gullah cuisine, a tradition prevalent among the community of the same name in the South Carolina Sea Islands and coastal Georgia. It’s the added Caribbean flavor of the Gullah/Lowcountry cooking style to its blend of African, European, and Native American influences that distinguish it from the soul food of the deep, mainland south. Unsurprisingly, this diet integrates a great deal more seafood into many of its recipes, including crab, shrimp, and oysters. Oyster pie might not make it to the table on Christmas Day for the soul food–loving family, but in certain Lowcountry households, it just might not be the holidays without it!

Please visit <http://www.theroot.com/views/what-our-black-ancestors-ate-holidays> to learn more about the diversity in African–American holiday cuisine.

## •Featured Scholarship•

### Malcolm/King Leadership Award



There is still time to apply for the Malcolm/King Leadership Award!

This award was established to encourage students to nurture their sense of awareness of the social issues affecting the communities in which they live, work, and learn; apply that knowledge to engaging effectively in social activism; and utilize their experience as activists to build meaningful careers in the social sciences.

Undergraduate students must have a 3.2 GPA or higher to be considered; graduate students must have a minimum GPA of 3.5; and seniors must have 90 or more credits. All candidates must have completed at least three courses in ethnic studies and submit an essay of 500 words on their commitment to public service and how they utilize social activism to embody the legacies of Malcolm X and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Applications are due on Friday, December 13th.

For more details and/or to submit your essay applications, e-mail [mkbreakfast@jjay.cuny.edu](mailto:mkbreakfast@jjay.cuny.edu).

The Malcolm/King Breakfast for scholarship recipients will be held on Friday, February 18th at 9.00 a.m.

# Africana Studies Faculty

**C. Jama Adams, Ph.D. (Chair)** is a graduate of John Jay College (B.S., Psychology) and the CUNY Graduate Center (M.A. and Ph.D., Psychology). His research interests include masculinities, fatherhood, and black identity in the age of cultural ambiguity.

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**Teresa A. Booker, Ph.D.** graduated from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (B.A., Political Science) and the CUNY Graduate Center (M.A., M.Phil, Ph.D.). Her research focus is on the Sudan, restorative justice, and human rights.

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**Jessica Gordon-Nembhard, Ph.D.** earned her Ph.D. and M.A. degrees in Economics from the University of Massachusetts Amherst as well as an M.A.T. in Elementary Curriculum and Teaching from Howard University. Her specializations include racial wealth inequality and community-based economic development and approaches to justice.

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**Kwando Kinshasa, Ph.D.** is a graduate of Hunter College (B.A. and M.A., Social Communications) and NYU (M. Phil. And Ph.D., Sociology). His research focuses on 19th century African-American history with particular emphasis on migration.

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**I. Xerxes Malki, Ph.D.** earned his Ph.D. in Economics and Social History from Oxford. His research areas of interest are immigrant communities of West Africa and his field work has taken him to various countries in the area such as Ghana, Nigeria, Lebanon, and Syria.

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**Charlotte Walker-Said, Ph.D.** completed her Ph.D. in History at Yale University. Her research interest include the history of law, Christianity, and society in Francophone Central Africa.

# Adjunct Faculty

**Angeline Butler**'s area of expertise are cultural studies and performing arts. She has studied at Fisk University, the Julliard School of Music, UCLA, and Columbia University where she earned a Master's degree in Music and Ethnomusicology.

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**Linda Humes** earned her M.A. in Arts Administration at New York University. Founder of Yaffa Cultural Arts Inc., she is also a storyteller and folklorist who performs and leads workshops both domestically and abroad.

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**Herbert Johnson** is a graduate of Fordham University (MSW). He has thirty-five years of educational experience in the areas of cultural/ethnic diversity and human relations.

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**Carl Paris, Ph.D.** graduated from Temple University (Ph.D., Dance and Cultural Studies) and New York University (M.A., Dance and Dance Education). His areas of scholarly interest include Black Cultural Theory, Black Performance, Critical Pedagogy, and Gender Studies.

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