

Letters:

Dear Colleagues,

Ms. Robyn Michaels' letter in the July/September issue of *ASA News* touched a nerve. In past years, I have written disappointed letters to annual program committees only to receive replies that are best summed up: "You don't appreciate how much work we have done." But, time and again the result is the same tired pattern of scholarly papers being read to colleagues. One recent annual meeting boasted that it had accommodated 900 of these, meaning that almost everyone present was on some panel or other.

Presentation of papers is not in itself a bad thing, and I have offered several myself. What is missing are all the other dimensions of African Studies. Where are the interactions we used to have with U.S. State Department officials, with IMF and World Bank decision-makers, with NGO executives? Since the Baltimore meeting, I have seen no dissident groups competing for our attention. Indeed, one wonders if anyone cares what "professional Africanists" believe.

The Philip Curtin exchange last year in Orlando was its most exciting moment. The emotions it stirred should remind some of the exodus in the late 1960s of members who felt that the ASA was studiously ignoring their concerns. We need to debate the connection between African and Diaspora studies and many other questions. Imagine, San Francisco 1996 has no debate/discussion on the rising crisis in Burundi! Perhaps in 2006 someone will have a learned paper on it.

Sincerely,
Norbert Brockman, Ph.D.

African Political Posters

Have you ever wondered what to do with those fading or curled up political posters from African liberation movements, election campaigns, or African liberation support movements abroad that no longer grace the walls of your office or home? Let me recommend that you donate these important historical materials to an organization that will treat them with respect and use them for educational purposes—the Center for the Study of Political Graphics (CSPG).

CSPG is a non-profit, tax-exempt educational archive which collects, preserves, documents, and exhibits domestic and international posters relating to historical and contemporary movements for peace and social justice. CSPG is the only major archive in the United States dedicated to both preserving and continually exhibiting this visual heritage to a broad and diverse audience. Often quickly produced, controversial, anonymous, and non-commercial, the political protest poster has been culturally marginalized. Few universities, museums, or public libraries collect them, and the collections which do exist are rarely accessible to the public. CSPG actively collects and preserves these rare visual records, exhibiting them in order to challenge and enlighten present and future generations.

The Center's traveling poster exhibitions make it a unique resource. All exhibitions are presented from a multi-issue and multicultural perspective, including translations and educational materials. Venues range from museums and libraries to community centers, religious institutions, and high schools. Representative traveling exhibitions from CSPG include "All Power to the People: Graphics of the Black Panther Party," "Peace & Justice Posters from Central America," "Women Hold Up Half the Sky: International Women's Rights Posters," and "Southern Africa: The Struggle Continues."

Although the Center's growing collection of over 25,000 posters includes apartheid among its many topics, in general Africa and African support movements are underrepresented in its collection. When I learned that Executive Director Carol Wells welcomes donations from individuals, I decided to donate posters from Mozambique, Angola, South Africa, and domestic liberation support movements that I had collected over the past three decades to the Center, where I know they will be in safe keeping and put to good use. All donations are tax-deductible.

If you are interested in donating African political posters to the CSPG, please contact: Center for the Study of Political Graphics, Peace Building, 8124 West Third Street, Suite 211, Los Angeles, CA 90048-4309. Tel: (213) 653-4662, fax: (213) 653-6991, e-mail: cspg@igc.apg.org.

If anyone wants to contact me about the Center, I can be reached by e-mail at alpers@history.ucla.edu. I will also bring some brochures from the CSPG to the ASA Annual Meeting in San Francisco.

Ned Alpers, UCLA
Past President of ASA

Greene Elected VP

The ballots from the 1996 Vice Presidential and Board elections were counted on August 20th. Sandra Greene defeated Joseph Inikori for VP with 375 votes to his 268 votes. A total of 658 ballots were received of which 15 were blank.

Winners in the Board of Directors election were Judith Byfield (359 votes), Frank Holmquist (317), and Omofolabo.A. Soyinka (315). Unsuccessful candidates were Biodun Jeyifo (253), Alfred Kagan (225), and Ray Kea (265). There were 5 blank ballots in the board election.

Members of the 1996 Elections Committee were Abdullahi An-Na'im (Emory), Herschelle Challenor (Clark Atlanta), Mohammed Hassen (Georgia State), and Chris Koch (ASA). The Association thanks the committee for its hard work.

New Directory to be Published

Early in 1997 the ASA will publish its third Membership Directory. The new directory will list all individual members who's dues are current at the time of publication. It will also be cross-referenced by discipline and geographic area of specialization.

Members will have the chance to up date their statistical data and to order the new directory at a low members only pre-publication price if they renew their membership in a timely fashion. Please note that only Life Members and paid-up 1997 members will be listed.

Conover-Porter Award Finalists

At the Annual Meeting in San Francisco, the Africana Librarians Council of the African Studies Association will present the ninth biennial Conover-Porter Award for excellence in Africana bibliography or reference work. Such works published in 1993-1995 were eligible for nomination; there are 5 short-listed books from the larger number nominated. Alphabetically by author they are:

Jua Kali Literature: An Annotated Bibliography. Nairobi: Kenya Rural Enterprise Programme. 1993.

Lindfors, Bernth. *Black African Literature in English, 1987-1991.* London: Hans Zell. 1994.