

Contributions in Black Studies

A Journal of African and Afro-American Studies

Volume 6 *The Blues Vision*

Article 1

1984

Front Matter

Charles Frye
Hampshire College

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarworks.umass.edu/cibs>

Recommended Citation

Frye, Charles (1984) "Front Matter," *Contributions in Black Studies*: Vol. 6 , Article 1.
Available at: <http://scholarworks.umass.edu/cibs/vol6/iss1/1>

This Front Matter is brought to you for free and open access by the Afro-American Studies at ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. It has been accepted for inclusion in Contributions in Black Studies by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. For more information, please contact scholarworks@library.umass.edu.

Contributions in
BLACK STUDIES

A Journal of African and Afro-American Studies

Number 6, 1983-1984

Published annually by the Five College Black Studies Executive Committee with the support of the Five Colleges Incorporated: Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke and Smith Colleges and the University of Massachusetts

INTRODUCTION

2

THE CRISIS IN THE CONTEMPORARY CARIBBEAN

Franklin W. Knight

3

GRENADA: HISTORY, NEOCOLONIALISM, AND CULTURE
IN THE CONTEMPORARY CARIBBEAN

Roberto Marquez

20

HOW TO THINK BLACK: A SYMPOSIUM ON TONI CADE
BAMBARA'S *THE SALT EATERS*

*Charles A. Frye, Charlyn Harper,
Linda James Myers, Eleanor W. Traylor*

33

NOTHING PERSONAL

James Baldwin

49

CONTRIBUTORS

61

CONTRIBUTIONS IN BLACK STUDIES

Editor: Charles A. Frye, School of Humanities and Arts, Hampshire College
Five College Black Studies Executive Committee: Ernest Allen (UMass),
Johnnella Butler (Smith), Mavis Campbell (Amherst),
and Charles A. Frye (Hampshire)

Secretary: Carrie Bell

Introduction

Eleanor Traylor asserts that the “blues vision” is the vision of modernity, just as the tragic vision was the vision of antiquity. In the tragic tradition, the protagonist ends up mad, blind, castrated, or dead. In the blues tradition, the protagonist descends into his pain, claims it and whatever lessons it holds, and then ascends to live again.

Stated another way, if Oedipus and his mother/wife had been contemporary blacks, she would not have hanged herself and he certainly would not have blinded himself. (Lord knows there are already enough blind blues singers.) Instead, he would have composed a foot-thumping (no pun intended), head-shaking refrain. Then son/husband and mother/wife would have cried *and laughed* about life’s ironies, bought each other drinks, and gone on about their business—the business of living.

Similarly, in spite of the assassination of Maurice Bishop and the rape of Grenada, Grenada’s peoples and poets, presented here by Franklin Knight and Roberto Marquez, *still* sing and prophesy. The blues tradition demands it. There is no end. Setbacks, yes. Even death. But no end to the imperative to go on living, in spite of. . . .

Of course, no one articulates the blues vision better than our own prophet laureate, James Baldwin. Reprinted here, with the author’s permission, is Baldwin’s text from a book of photographs by Richard Avedon, *Nothing Personal* (Lucerne, Switzerland: C. H. Bucher, 1964).

This entire issue of *Contributions* is dedicated to the vision, life, and work of Mr. Baldwin in this, his sixtieth year.

Charles Frye, Editor
August 1984