

Archives of African American Music and Culture highlights Black radio during spring semester

February 1, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. -- Indiana University's Archives of African American Music and Culture (AAAMC) will be highlighting Black radio during the Spring 2016 semester through public lectures, exhibits, and historic radio programs. Topics will range from the history of Black-oriented radio, including its social and economic impact, to the role of gospel announcers in disseminating African American religious music beyond the Black church.

The first of these programs will launch in February during Black History Month.

On February 1, the AAAMC's online multi-media exhibit, "[The Golden Age of Black Radio](#)," will debut on the Google Cultural Institute website. Included are historic photographs, as well as audio and video clips of interviews with Black radio pioneers, many available to the public for the first time. The four-part exhibit traces the birth of Black-oriented radio in Chicago, the role of radio during the Civil Rights Movement, women in radio, and the role of personality deejays in "breaking the hits" and promoting Black music and artists. The AAAMC is one of 50 institutions partnering with Google to contribute 80 new online exhibits celebrating Black history.

On February 1, the AAAMC will provide online streaming access for the first time, via [IU Media Collections Online](#), to a rare hour-long video interview with Jack "The "Rapper" Gibson—considered by many to be the father of Black radio. Gibson recounts milestones in his career, beginning in 1945 as an actor on "Here Comes Tomorrow" (the first radio soap opera drama to feature an all-Black cast), as well as the history of Black-owned and operated radio stations and personality deejays. The interview was conducted in 1981 at IU by Dr. Portia K. Maulsby, and was recently preserved through IU's Media Digitization and Preservation Initiative. Brief clips of the interview are also included in the AAAMC's online exhibit "[The Golden Age of Black Radio](#)" (see above).

On February 9, an exhibit on Black radio will open in the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center's Bridgwater Lounge. Drawing upon collections donated to the AAAMC by award-winning radio producer Jacquie Gales Webb, the exhibit will highlight the history of Black radio and provide an overview of Webb's career. As producer of the groundbreaking 1996 Smithsonian radio series, "Black Radio: Telling It Like It Was," Webb was among the first to explore the history and development of Black-oriented radio through interviews with pioneering disc jockeys, producers, radio station executives and recording artists.

On February 13, in honor of UNESCO World Radio Day, the AAAMC will provide online streaming access for the first time, via [IU Media Collections Online](#), to the 1968 radio series, "What Must Be Done: Where Are We Today in Black-White Relations?" Moderated by pioneering civil rights attorney Percy E. Sutton, the 30-minute panel discussion aired weekly over WLIB ("the leading voice of New York's black residents"), beginning July 1, 1968, just three months after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

On February 22, a publicly accessible online multi-media exhibit celebrating the career of award-winning producer and gospel music announcer Jacquie Gales Webb will be added to the AAAMC's website: aaamc.indiana.edu.

On March 9, award-winning producer and gospel music announcer **Jacquie Gales Webb** will present a free public lecture in the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center's Grand Hall at 4:00 p.m. The lecture will be followed by a reception honoring her distinguished career and the establishment of the Jacquie Gales Webb Collection at Indiana University's Archives of African American Music and Culture. The collection will provide an invaluable resource for scholarly research and course development on Black-oriented radio, radio documentary production, media history, African American music—including gospel and jazz—as well as broader issues on music, communication and culture.

On April 6, award-winning gospel music announcer **Dr. Deborah Smith Pollard** will present a free public lecture in the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center's Grand Hall at 4:00 p.m. Dr. Pollard is Professor of English Literature and Humanities at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. For the past three decades she has been an iconic voice on Detroit radio, and currently is the host/producer of "Rhythm and Praise with Deborah Smith Pollard," a contemporary gospel music program heard Sunday mornings on MIX 92.3 FM. Dr. Pollard's lecture will be followed by a reception celebrating the establishment of the Deborah Smith Pollard Collection at Indiana University's Archives of African American Music and Culture.

SPEAKERS - LONG BIOS

Jacquie Gales Webb is an award winning producer and radio on-air personality. She has hosted the number one "Sunday Afternoon Gospel" music program in Washington, DC since 1990 on 96.3 WHUR. She is also a freelance arts reporter for WAMU in Washington, DC and the national arts program "Studio 360" at WNYC, New York.

Gales Webb's career in the nation's capitol began as a radio on-air personality and eventually manager of music and programming at Washington's first 24-hour Gospel radio station, WYCB-AM. She created and produced programming for six years at W*USA-TV Channel 9 in Washington D.C. She also served as host and producer of the award-winning public television broadcast "Melodies from Heaven," which explored African American Gospel Radio in Washington, DC. Her work in television has garnered six local Emmy Awards and 14 nominations from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

Gales Webb has also written and produced radio documentary segments for NPR and the Library of Congress. In 1995, she produced the ground breaking radio series, "Black Radio: Telling It Like It Was," which was the recipient of a Peabody Award from the University of Georgia and an Alfred I. DuPont Silver Baton from Columbia University. The IU Archives of African American Music and Culture also received a Peabody Award for its contribution to the series. In 1999, Gales Webb served as executive producer of the award-winning public radio

series "Remembering Slavery," carried over 198 radio stations through the Public Radio International network, and in 2001 she executive produced the 13-hour radio documentary "Jazz Singers" for the Smithsonian and Public Radio International.

Jacque Gales Webb received a Bachelor of Science in Speech, cum laude, from Emerson College in Boston, Massachusetts. In 2012, the National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses presented Ms. Webb with a Lifetime Achievement Award for continuous service and support of gospel music. Her performance and body of work in the gospel music industry was instrumental in WHUR receiving the 2009 Stellar Award for Major Market Station of the Year. In 2014, Gales Webb was inducted into the WERB Hall of Fame at Emerson College, and in 2015 the Coalition for African Americans in the Performing Arts (CAAPA) recognized Jacque Gales Webb's artistic contributions.

Jacque Gales Webb Collection at the Archives of African American Music and Culture

In 1996, following the AAAMC's collaboration with Gales Webb on the production of "Black Radio: Telling It Like It Was," copies of the original interviews, interview transcripts, historical radio airchecks, and research and production files were deposited by Webb at the AAAMC (see the [Collection Finding Aid](#)). Over the years, these primary source materials have been used more frequently than any other holdings at the AAAMC, aiding scholarly research and contributing to many articles, books, and multi-media projects. In 2015, the AAAMC established the Jacque Gales Webb Collection to include production materials related to her many projects and radio programs. The official launch of the Jacque Gales Webb Collection will be celebrated on March 9, 2016 in IU's Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center.

Dr. Deborah Smith Pollard is Professor of English Literature and Humanities at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. She earned her doctorate from Michigan State University where her focus was American Studies. Besides her courses in English literature and African American culture, she teaches a popular class, Introduction to Gospel Music, every fall at UM-Dearborn where she has held several administrative positions and won two of the highest awards the campus bestows: the Distinguished Service Award and the Susan B. Anthony Award. A fixture on Detroit radio for three decades, she is currently host/producer of "Rhythm and Praise with Deborah Smith Pollard," a contemporary gospel music program heard Sunday mornings on MIX 92.3 FM Detroit. From the early 1980s through 2005, she was the co-producer of McDonald's Gospelfest and the Motor City Praisefest in Detroit, festivals that attracted thousands of fans each year. In 2006, she was named Gospel Announcer of the Year at the Stellar Awards, widely known as "The Grammys of Gospel Music."

Dr. Pollard has lectured nationally and internationally on gospel music. The Library of Michigan named her book *When the Church Becomes Your Party: Contemporary Gospel Music* (Wayne State U. Press) a "2009 Notable Book." The chapters cover praise and worship in the urban church, the changing dress code in the Black church, the gospel musical stage play, women gospel announcers, and Christian rap. Her research has also been featured in several anthologies, including *Black Women and Music: More than the Blues* (University of Illinois, 2007), *Rhythms of the Afro-Atlantic World: Rituals and Remembrances* (University of Michigan, 2010), and *Christian Congregational Music: Performance, Identity and Experience* (Ashgate, 2013). She is currently at work on a new book manuscript that will extend her discussion of gospel music in new directions.

Deborah Smith Pollard Collection at the Archives of African American Music and Culture

In 2015, the AAAMC established the Deborah Smith Pollard Collection, which currently includes interviews conducted by Dr. Pollard with gospel music artists, as well as Detroit radio programs and a wide range of gospel music industry magazines. Additional materials will be deposited over the coming year. With the addition of the Deborah Smith Pollard Collection, the AAAMC will become one of the leading repositories for gospel music research in the United States.

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About the IU Archives of African American Music and Culture

Established in 1991, Indiana University's Archives of African American Music and Culture (AAAMC) is a repository of materials covering a range of African American musical idioms and cultural expressions from the post-World War II era. Collections highlight popular, religious, and classical music, with genres ranging from blues and gospel to R&B and contemporary hip hop. The AAAMC also houses extensive materials related to the documentation of Black radio. Many of the images from the AAAMC's Black radio collections can be viewed on [Image Collections Online](#), hosted by the IU Digital Libraries Program

The AAAMC supports the research of scholars, students, and the general public worldwide by providing access to holdings which include oral histories, photographs, musical and print manuscripts, audio and video recordings, educational broadcast programs, and the personal papers of individuals and organizations concerned with Black music. To explore the AAAMC's collections, publications, and other resources visit aaamc.indiana.edu.

For additional information contact the AAAMC: aaamc@indiana.edu or (812) 855-8547

Website: [Archives of African American Music and Culture](#)