4th Annual Graduate Students in African Studies Symposium
Indiana University, Bloomington

African Innovation
Ideas Shaping Africa and the World

Saturday, March 1, 2014

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Clapperton Mavhunga
Associate Professor of Science, Technology, and Society, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Indiana University Graduate Students in African Studies (GSAS) invite proposals for our annual symposium that explore innovations, broadly defined.

How have Africans driven change through inventions, designs, experiments, technologies, ideas, artworks, stories, or skills? What ideas or methods (from within or outside the African continent) have shaped African lives?

Though “innovation” is often conflated with technological novelty, we seek to understand the diverse ways that ingenuity and creativity are manifested in African contexts and beyond—perhaps ways that are unnoticed or unorthodox. Whether generated by individuals, communities, or institutions, whether past or present, new ideas that respond to particular African contexts can have far-reaching social, cultural, and political effects.

Papers might consider, but are by no means limited to, the following areas:

- Visual and performing arts, literature
- Religious movements
- Political systems
- Entrepreneurship
- Invented or appropriated technologies
- Agricultural methods
- Philosophy
- Fashion, popular culture
- Media and communication
- Science, mathematics
- Healthcare and medicine
- New identities, the invention of traditions

We welcome proposals from current graduate students in any discipline. The symposium is open to investigations of any topic, time period, person or place considered in this light. By encompassing diverse perspectives from many areas of scholarship, this symposium aims to create a fruitful dialogue around concepts of creativity and change.

Presentations will be limited to 20 minutes. Please submit abstracts of no more than 300 words to iu.gsas.symposium [at] gmail [dot] com. The deadline for consideration of abstracts is November 30, 2013.