

## Good afternoon,

Thank you for your interest in the Griot Institute at Bucknell University!

With this email, we share our February Newsletter with all the events that happened this past month at the Griot. This newsletter includes information about our upcoming move and our Spring Lecture and Performance Series, as well as a feature about our new member at the Griot.

In addition, our March events and our ongoing projects are listed at the bottom of the newsletter for your convenience and curiosity. Enjoy!

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Thanks again for your support of our work. If at any time, you wish to stop receiving our newsletters, simply send an e-mail to that effect to [griot@bucknell.edu](mailto:griot@bucknell.edu).

If you have a Facebook page, we're trying to boost our page and we need your help! We would be grateful if you would like/follow us on [Facebook](#)!! For additional information and updates on upcoming events, please check out our [website](#), too.

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## We're Moving!!!

The Griot Institute is moving over Spring Break to our new location on the 2nd floor of the Humanities Building! Hildreth-Mirza, the freshly renovated Demosthenean Hall, will house the Humanities Center starting on March 19th. We are excited to be moving into this new space, and we hope you'll visit us to check it out!



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## February Events, in Review:

Spring Lecture and Performance Series





February 14th, 2018:  
**Percival Everett & Erasure: The Novel**



Percival Everett is an author with what he affectionately calls Project Amnesia. In his household, he says, once a writing project is finished, he forgets almost everything about it. This forgetfulness makes talking with the author about his work both complicated and interesting. The Griot hosted a lunch discussion about Everett's 2001 novel *Erasure*, and he was able to be present for the event. In opening, he warned the group about his amnesia, and the discussion that followed blossomed slowly but became incredibly fruitful.



In this installation of our Spring Speaker Series, noted author Percival Everett spoke in the Gallery Theatre with Anthony Stewart, Professor of English and next year's Chair of the English Department. Percival read from his 2009 novel, [\*Am Not Sidney Poitier\*](#), and he answered questions about his process, his relationship to satire, and his 2001 novel, [\*Erasure\*](#). If you've never read any of his work, here's a rather salty passage from *Erasure* by this African American satirist about race to get you thinking:

“The hard, gritty truth of the matter is that I hardly

question why they feel the way they do. Nothing is to be taken for granted. Everett commented on this element of his work and gave us glimpses into other aspects of his process. Ultimately, his unadulterated honesty helped the group to better understand what kind of artist he is and what we can expect from him in the future.

not thinking about it. I don't believe in race. I believe there are people who will shoot me or hang me or cheat me and try to stop me because they do believe in race, because of my brown skin, curly hair, wide nose and slave ancestors. But that's just the way it is." (2)

Questions directed at Everett ranged in topic from the [Black Panther](#) film to gun shows and the American Dream, and his candor was absolutely appreciated. In closing, he reminded us to be cautious of restrictions put on art, for they always erase something important.

Check out a video of the event [here!](#)



February 21st, 2018:  
**C. Riley Snorton & Trans\*Erasure**

To continue with the Griot spring series on Black Erasure, the third speaker, C. Riley Snorton, visited Bucknell University this past month to discuss “Violence, Erasure, and the Invisibility of the Black Trans Community.”

In Professor Snorton’s discussion, he expressed that trans\* history is just as important as the current trans\* movement. His research looks into the past to see how the trans\* community was able to survive during times when it was

communities because the life expectancy of a trans\* individual is 33 years, and in a lot of cases, younger. This fact shocked the audience because the lives of trans\* individuals are not showcased or shown in the media as much.

In the end, Professor Snorton brought the awareness to Bucknell that there is a problem happening in our world that the media continues to erase. There needs to be more done in order to help save the lives of these individuals, and Professor Snorton has devoted his life so far to making sure their voices are heard.



February 27th & 28th, 2018:  
**The Hackney Brothers & A Band Called DEATH**



The documentary *A Band Called Death* officially introduces the world to the proto-punk band, Death, which was started by the Hackney brothers in the 1970s. Death started off being comprised of three members: David, Dannis, and



On February 28th, the Hackney brothers conversed with Pete Groff, Professor of Philosophy at Bucknell, about their experiences in the music industry. From their start in Detroit in the 1970s, the band called Death made less of

death in 2001, Dannis and Bobby felt the force of that loss but still play as a family in his honor.

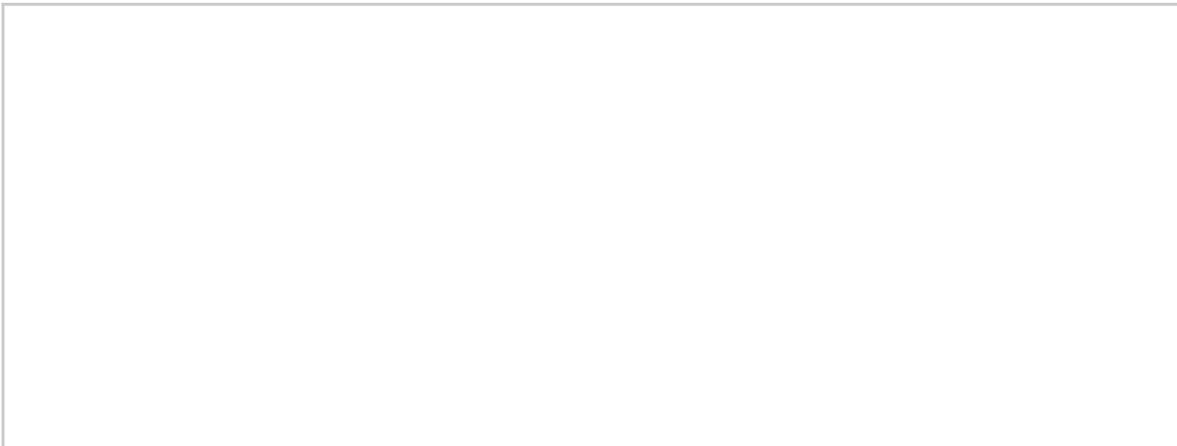
The documentary reveals the Hackney's past, their present, and their future in the world together and in the music industry. I loved learning that their musical trajectory started with their mother who loved Motown and extends into today with their installation in the Smithsonian's relatively new National Museum of African American History and Culture.

Additionally, the Hackney's story is truly inspiring. It's a story made of layers—layers of time, context, genre, and more. It's a great saga involving brothers with a dream of playing music to change the world and a prophet who knew the world wouldn't listen until the time was right. The story reverberates with the beauty of familial closeness and the timely miracle of the Hackney's success.

whether their race was the major deterrent to their success as a band, the brothers responded, "No. The worst deterrent we faced was our name. Turns out everyone was afraid of a band named Death!"

After decades of their proto-punk rock music being erased by a fearful industry, the Hackney brothers heard from Bobby's son that their music—not the Reggae they've been playing for decades, but the hardcore proto-punk of their youths—was gaining traction. They shared their experiences with music in their favorite genres: Reggae and Rock, and they talked about their brother David who was so much the heart, soul, and spirituality of the group.

Ultimately, Bobby and Dannis encouraged the audience to rethink what "death" means and to consider why people were so afraid of it in the past. "Death is as natural to life as birth is. Why be scared of it just because it's at the end while birth is at the beginning?" These kind and warm-hearted performers opened up to the crowd and inspired us to create no matter what.





Check out "Give it Back," Death's most recent single from 2018! It's all about the symbolism with this band, so they'd absolutely encourage you to read into their title choice.

Professional videos are being taken of each lecture during our Spring Series, and they're being made publicly available with time.

So far, we have [Rebecca Moore's](#) and [Pervical Everett's](#) lectures for your viewing pleasure, and more are forthcoming! Check back next month for the lectures of C. Riley Snorton and the Hackney brothers.

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## February Events, in Review:

Co-sponsored Events



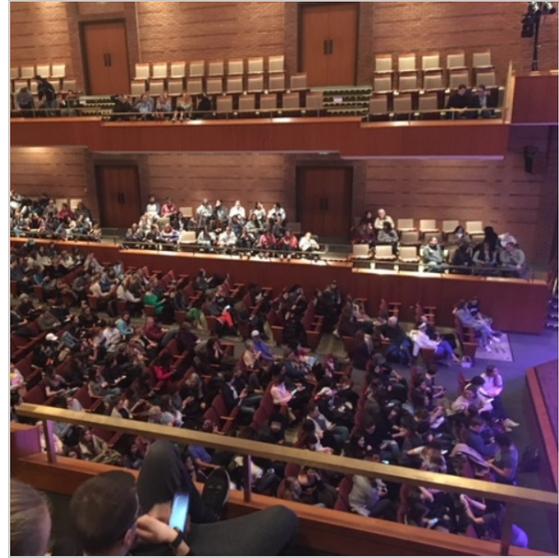
The Griot co-sponsored founder of the #metoo movement Tarana Burke's visit to campus. Burke spoke in the Weis Center on Sunday night, February 18th, and her talk titled "#metoo: What's Next in Activism and Healing" accomplished two main things.

First, it addressed her own history and the creation of #metoo to clear up any misunderstandings that may have spread during the movement's past four months of fame. Secondly, she answered questions from the audience regarding the movement and its future.

Some of the coolest things we learned about her and the movement were that her family was filled with black arts- and black power-loving individuals who empowered her from the start, that she was panicked when the hashtag started trending, and that her dream for the movement is that it firmly establishes helpful pathways for people to engage with right *after* they say, "Me too."

What an all-star, this woman is just amazing. She has such a presence, and the work

Her message to the group was to get engaged in your community, to change the culture where it's flawed, and to have the courage to share your story and to extend empathy to others in pain. The audience was positively captivated by Burke, and I think everyone left having learned something powerful and impacting.



## FEATURE

Interview with the Griot's Undergraduate Assistant, Lina Hinh:

### "New Member Alert"

This semester, the Griot Institute for Africana Studies is happy to welcome Lelinna Hinh to the Griot family. Lelinna Hinh is junior double majoring in Sociology and Women's and Gender Studies. Lelinna helps the Griot and its projects run smoothly, working on projects ranging from updating the social media, to taking pictures, conducting research, and resolving tech issues. She enjoys helping at the Griot and learning from Sam Lauer, Griot's Graduate Assistant, and Michelle Lauver, the Griot's Administrative Assistant. What Lelinna particularly loves about this work is that the Griot provides opportunities to gain a better look at the intersectionality of women's and gender studies and Africana studies, especially when it comes to erasure.

Lelinna is passionate about helping victims of human trafficking and participating with the Griot this semester has allowed her to delve more deeply into the powerful and packed concept of "erasure." She stated, "A lot of erasure that people do not

shown that African-Americans' narratives are susceptible to erasure, Lelinna wants to help bring narratives about human trafficking within the U.S. out of the shadows. She is planning to take this work into the future as she applies for graduate schools. In particular, she's seeking out schools that provide dual degrees in Law and Public Policy with a concentration on Women's and Gender Studies.

Through BCCSP (Bucknell Community College Scholars Program), Lelinna came to Bucknell this academic year, and she has enjoyed the intimacy of the campus community and the many campus events. Before coming to Bucknell, Lelinna was juggling work and studying. Now, she is a full-time student working as a student assistant at the Griot and the intern for the Women's and Gender Studies department. Lelinna can be seen around campus attending WRC events or pouring over books in the library. She's wonderful, so stop by the Griot to say hi and welcome Lina anytime!

-Christine Cha, Griot Undergraduate Assistant

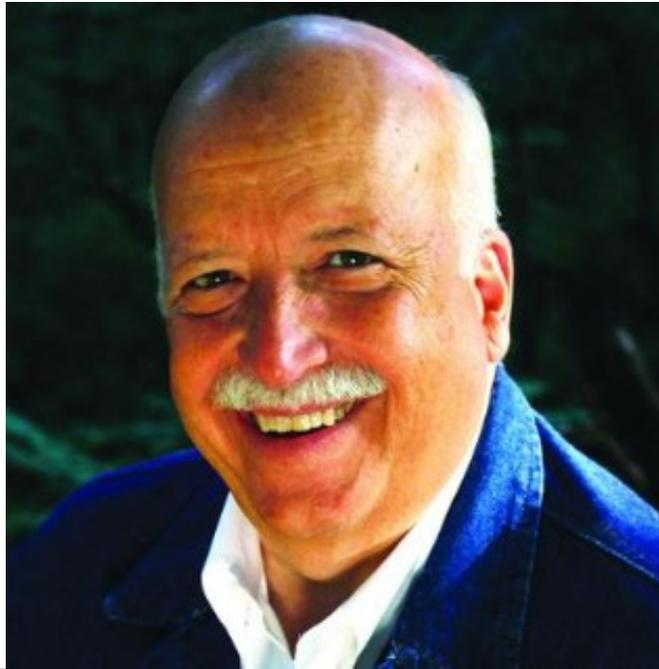


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**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**Spring Lecture Series ERASURE, "Blackness and the Fight Against Invisibility"**

## History Department



The horrific 1921 race riot in Tulsa, Oklahoma was the largest single incident of racial violence in American history, one that resulted in an untold number of fatalities and the destruction of more than one-thousand African American homes and businesses.

Yet despite its magnitude, the history of the riot--and of the flourishing black community that was destroyed--was actively suppressed and minimized. Dr. Ellsworth's talk will bring this dramatic and long marginalized story back to life.

Dr. Ellsworth is a PEN Award winning writer described by Booklist as "a historian with the soul of a poet." Born and raised in Tulsa, Oklahoma, he has spent nearly four decades researching, writing about, and breaking the silence over the 1921 Tulsa race riot, the single worst incident of racial violence in American History.

Dr. Ellsworth has appeared on the TODAY Show, ABC News Nightline, National Public Radio, the BBC, The American Experience, and the History Channel, while he served with Dr. John Hope Franklin as the chief historians for the Tulsa Race Riot Commission.

Dr. Ellsworth's classic book on the riot, [\*Death in a Promised Land: The Tulsa Race Riot of 1921\*](#), has now been continuously in print for thirty-five years, while riot artifacts he collected are now on display at the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. Dr. Ellsworth currently teaches in the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies at the University of Michigan.

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**Tuesday, 3.20** -- Jason Osder, "*Let the Fire Burn* & Black Erasure: Film Screening and Conversation," 7pm, Campus Theatre Downtown, co-sponsored by Film & Media Studies & the Campus Theatre



On May 13, 1985, a longtime feud between the city of Philadelphia and controversial revolutionary group MOVE came to a deadly climax. By order of local authorities, police dropped military-grade explosives onto a MOVE-occupied rowhouse. TV cameras captured the conflagration that quickly escalated—and resulted in the tragic deaths of eleven people, all African American and including five children, and the destruction of 61 homes. Using only archival footage, *Let the Fire Burn* brings to life one of the most tumultuous and largely forgotten clashes between government and citizens in modern American history.

After the screening, director Jason Osder will lead an extended discussion of issues raised by the film, including historical relevance, systemic racism, collective memory and erasure.

Jason Osder is the director and producer of the award-winning documentary [LET THE FIRE BURN](#), assistant professor at The George Washington University's School of Media and Public Affairs, and a partner at Amigo Media, a color-correction, postproduction, and training company. LET THE FIRE BURN premiered at the 2013

For more information, please see <https://smpa.gwu.edu/jason-osder> and <http://jasonosder.com/archives/category/let-the-fire-burn>.

**Add Jason Osder's Event to your calendar:**

[Apple](#) [Google](#) [Outlook](#) [Outlook.com](#) [Yahoo](#)

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**Wednesday, 3.21** -- Ramona Africa, "MOVE & Black Erasure," 7pm ELC Gallery Theatre



Ramona Africa will be talking about the need for people to stop looking to politicians, to this system, for solutions.

*My name is Ramona Africa. I spent 7 years in prison as a MOVE political prisoner, from 1985 through 1992; I was imprisoned after the May 13, 1985 Holocaust where MOVE members, 6 adults and 5 babies were murdered, burned alive. I am the only adult to survive, along with one little boy.*

*I grew up in a middle class Black family in west Philadelphia and went to Catholic school from first to eighth grade. I went on to graduate from Temple University in Philadelphia where my aspiration was to become a lawyer. I was set to go to law*

*I've spent 7 of my many years working with MOVE in prison, not because I'm a criminal, but rather because I'm a committed MOVE member and because I survived the murderous police attack on me and my family in 1985. I served my entire seven year sentence, without being paroled because I, like several other MOVE family members, refused to agree to a "special condition of parole" that I have no contact at all with any MOVE member, whether they have a police record or not. We were being told to denounce our religion and our family: We all refused to do that, so we were forced to serve our entire sentence.*

**Add Ramona Africa's Lecture to your calendar:**

[Apple](#) [Google](#) [Outlook](#) [Outlook.com](#) [Yahoo](#)



**ONGOING PROJECTS:  
Caribbean Outreach Partnership**

This spring, the Griot Institute will again be collecting supplies to send down to the Caribbean. Last spring, we sent donated school supplies to VOJN Primary School in Nevis, and we sent medical supplies to Antigua this past fall.

This drive will support the community of Nevis once again by sending both school supplies and children's books.

campus: **the ELC CAP Center in Mike Duignan's office, Taylor Building's lobby, the Library's lobby (school supplies the first week, books the second), and the Griot Institute itself.**

Make sure if you're donating at the Griot's office, you come drop off the goods in our new location on the Humanities Center's 2nd floor!

As far as school supplies, the children have requested:

- pencils & pens
- rulers, erasers, and stencils
- crayons & markers
- notepads & filler paper

And the books they'd like fit these guidelines:

- Please provide books for students ages 6-12
- The school has a preference for stories with morals, up-beat stories, and/or adventure stories; social studies and science texts; stories that feature children of color and/or positive TV characters; books that aid in building health habits; and BIG books for the infants would be a "great treat"

As always, feel free to contact [sci016@bucknell.edu](mailto:sci016@bucknell.edu) for more information, and check back soon for more details about this drive.

# SCHOOL SUPPLY AND BOOK DRIVE

Benefiting Violet O Jeffers Nichollas (VOJN) Primary School on the Caribbean Island of Nevis

The Griot will once again be hosting supply drives to benefit the VOJN where approximately 100 elementary-school-aged students attend grades ranging from kindergarten to sixth. This semester, we are holding TWO drives to benefit VOJN.

**FOR THE SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE**

- Pencils and pens
- Rulers, erasers and stencils
- Crayons and markers
- Notepads and filler paper

**FOR THE BOOK DRIVE**

Please provide books for students ages 6-12. The school has a preference for:

- stories with morals, up-beat stories, and/or adventure stories
- social studies and science texts
- stories that feature children of color and/or positive TV characters
- books that aid in building health habits
- BIG books for the infants would be a "great treat"

Donations will be gathered from March 19 – 30, in the following locations:

- Taylor Building lobby (8 – 4 p.m. Monday – Friday),
- Library lobby (school supplies the first week, books the second; during library hours),
- CAP Center – Mike Duignan's Office (8 – 3 p.m. Monday – Friday), and
- The Griot Institute on the 2nd floor of the NEW Humanities Center (8 – 3 p.m. Monday – Friday).  
*The Griot is moving from Carnegie Building to its new location during Spring Break, so stop by to see us in our new space between the Library and Dana with your donations!!*

## MARCH 19 – MARCH 30



## West African Drumming Lessons

This program of free, weekly lessons in West African Drumming will not be continuing into the Spring Semester, due to the Griot Institute's upcoming move into the Humanities Building once it's finished.

Stay tuned for the possibility of African Drumming lessons next year! For more information, questions, or comments, contact Michelle Lauer, Griot Assistant, at [mll030@bucknell.edu](mailto:mll030@bucknell.edu).

## Civil Rights Project

As a project that's been the brain-child of the Griot for many years, this Civil Rights Project uses the online museum-like database "[Omeka](#)" to host a virtual museum, complete with exhibits and collections, related to Bucknell's advocacy, activism, and stubbornness during the Civil Rights Era.

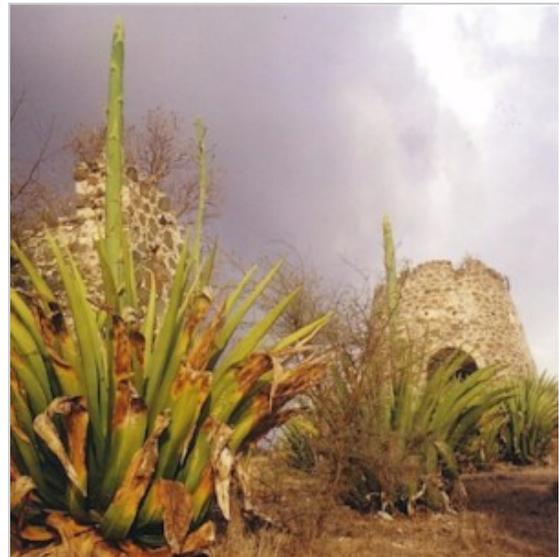
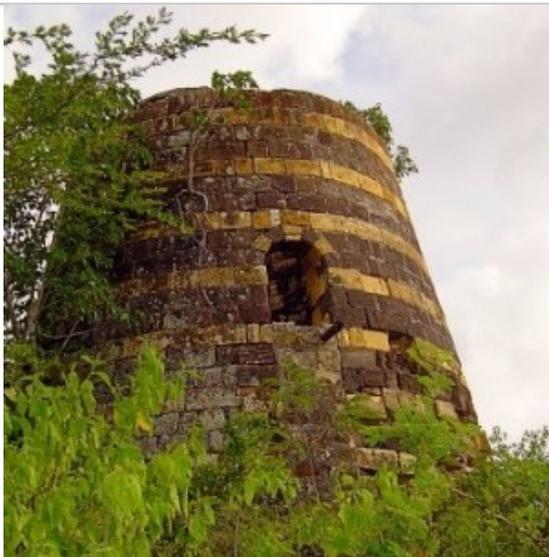
Students have been searching through Bucknell's archives for additional items to add to Omeka, and they're working with Graduate Assistant, Sam Lauer, to put all those new items into the database.

## Sugarmills GIS Project (Antigua)

As part of a summer 2016 course in the Caribbean, Carmen Gillespie of the Griot and a group of students began surveying the land on the island of Antigua with a keen eye towards the island's history. In specific, their project is interested in the numerous sugar mills on the island, which totaled about 200 despite the size of the space--about the same size as Union County!

The end goal of this project is an interactive, web-based map of the island that includes each of its six parishes and every sugar mill that existed in its history. The interactive map will provide information about each mill, its ownership chronology, additional information about the mill, and information about the enslaved peoples that worked there.

Griot Assistants Lina Hinh, Christine Cha, and Sam Lauer are currently working on updating the map so that it will be publicly accessible by the end of the semester!



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## SUMMERTIME HAPPENINGS: Bucknell in the Caribbean

Bucknell in the Caribbean is a summer program offered by the English Department. The trip takes several students each year to the Caribbean to experience the culture, history,

From June 18-July 10, Carmen and a group of 8 students will be embarking for this summer's course abroad and we're very excited to get started! We'll be sure to share some photos of the group and the landscapes of the Caribbean after the course is complete.

Please feel free to reach out to either Michelle Lauver ([mll030@bucknell.edu](mailto:mll030@bucknell.edu)) or Carmen Gillespie ([crg004@bucknell.edu](mailto:crg004@bucknell.edu)) for more information if you're interested in applying for next year!



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**Did you know that many of the Griot's events, lectures, and performances are made possible by generous donors?**

**Financial contributions, in any amount, enhance our opportunities for intellectual and creative engagement through an interdisciplinary exploration of Africa and the African diaspora. Use this [link](#) or click "Give Here" below to renew or increase your support of the Bucknell Griot Institute online today!**

**Thank you for your continued commitment to our mission and for your support as alumni, faculty, staff and community members.**

The logo for the Griot Institute for Africana Studies features the text "GRIOT INSTITUTE FOR AFRICANA STUDIES" in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The text is centered over a dark, textured background that appears to be a close-up of a natural surface, possibly a rock or tree bark. The words "GRIOT" and "INSTITUTE" are stacked on the top line, "FOR" is on the second line, and "AFRICANA STUDIES" is on the third line.

**GRIOT  
INSTITUTE**  
FOR  
AFRICANA STUDIES

Be sure to check your email in the beginning of April for a newsletter about the Griot's March events and what to expect for the end of the semester. Stay tuned!

If you have any suggestions or feedback regarding these newsletters, please feel free to email Sam Lauer ([sc1016@bucknell.edu](mailto:sc1016@bucknell.edu)) or Lina Hinh ([lh041@bucknell.edu](mailto:lh041@bucknell.edu)) to share your ideas!

From all of us at The Griot Institute,  
thank you, and have a great week!

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