

Stauffer Receives CLA Distinguished Alumni Award

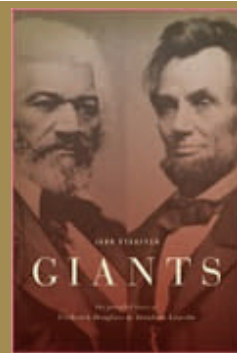


Professor John Stauffer and John Contreni, former Justin S. Morrill Dean of Liberal Arts

John W. Stauffer, Professor of English and African American Studies, and Chair of the History of American Civilization program at Harvard University, received a Distinguished Alumni Award from Purdue's College of Liberal Arts on April 17, 2009. Professor Stauffer completed the M.A. in American Studies in 1993 at Purdue and the Ph.D. from Yale. Since 1986, the CLA Distinguished Alumni Award has recognized individuals for their professional achievements, dedication to their communities, and involvement with Purdue. While on campus, Dr. Stauffer was a keynote speaker for the annual American Studies Symposium. Purdue University History Professor Susan Curtis nominated Professor Stauffer: "John's many accomplishments as a scholar, teacher, public intellectual, and administrator at Harvard University more than fulfill the promise we all saw when he was an M.A. student here at Purdue University in the early 1990s. As a student, John's curiosity, diligence, and writing ability were unbounded. It was a privilege to have had him as a student and to be able to honor him as a Distinguished Alumni."

Professor Stauffer is one of the world's leading scholars of antislavery, protest movements, and interracial relations. He has written and lectured widely on slavery and abolition, social protest, the dilemmas of self-making, and photography. Stauffer's *The Black Hearts of Men: Radical Abolitionists and the Transformation of Race* (2002) won four major awards.

Professor Stauffer's 2008 book, *Giants: The Parallel Lives of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln*, made the *Boston Globe's* best seller list. It is prominently displayed on President Barack Obama's bookshelf, according to *Time* journalist David Von Drehle.



Faculty and Students Participate in WALLA Courses

This semester a unique opportunity was given to students and faculty in the American Studies program. The Wabash Area Lifetime Learning Association (WALLA) offers intellectual, cultural, and social opportunities for individuals 50 years and older.

"Contemporary African American Experience" was the theme for the Fall 2009 courses, which were coordinated by Caroline McKenzie, American Studies Ph.D. student. The courses included "Introduction to African American History" by Professor Susan Curtis, "Contemporary African American Music" by Ph.D. student Erik Wade and Arthur Banton, "Jazz and Social Change" by American Studies Director Bill Mullen, and "Barack Obama's Presidency" by Caroline McKenzie, as well as a roundtable discussion and resources for exploration.

This opportunity was a terrific way for students and faculty alike to give back to the community. We look forward to a continued collaboration with WALLA in upcoming years.

