

UC SANTA BARBARA

# THE *Current*

April 29, 2014

[Sonia Fernandez](#)

## **Author and Historian Gerald Horne to Deliver the Shirley Kennedy Memorial Lecture**

Gerald Horne, a University of Houston professor whose research focuses on excavating untold histories relating to race and racism, will deliver UC Santa Barbara's Shirley Kennedy Memorial Lecture on Thursday, May 8, at 4 p.m. in the campus's MultiCultural Center Theater. Horne's lecture is presented by [UCSB's Center for Black Studies Research](#).

In the lecture, Horne will discuss his newest book, "The Counter-Revolution of 1776: Slave Resistance and the Origins of the United States of America," released in April 2014. This book revises the foundational myths of the U.S. by arguing that the American Revolution of 1776 was in part a reaction against the rising tide of abolitionism in Britain and its colonies. As Africans in the American colonies increasingly supported the British, slaveholders pushed for revolution in order to avoid an abolition decree from London and prevent insurrection at home. For the founders of the United States, therefore, "freedom" meant the freedom to keep others enslaved. This definition of liberty, Horne argues, inscribed racism deeply into the country's politics, with consequences continuing into the present.

Critics have hailed the book as a groundbreaking and valuable corrective to common understandings of U.S. history. David Waldstreicher at Temple University called it "utterly original . . . A remarkable and important contribution to our understanding

of the creation of the United States.” The book received similar praise in the magazine *Kirkus Reviews*: “Horne returns with insights about the American Revolution that fracture even more some comforting myths about the Founding Fathers. The author does not tiptoe through history’s grassy fields; he swings a scythe. . . . Clear and sometimes-passionate prose shows us the persistent nastiness underlying our founding narrative.”

“People here recognize the significance of Gerald Horne’s scholarship,” said Diane Fujino, director of the Center for Black Studies Research. “The response has been immediate and enthusiastic. His work — on influential but overlooked historic figures, organizations, movements — has opened up whole fields of research and reshaped scholarly and public discussions of race, labor and global relations.

“His writings are daring and provocative in that they present perspectives that contest the mainstream narrative,” Fujino added. “But they are always based on extensive research. Incredibly, he has produced close to 35 books by digging deep into the archives and providing detailed narratives and densely footnoted books.”

Horne is the Moores Professor of History and African-American Studies at the University of Houston, and the author of more than 30 books. His research analyzes race and racism in a variety of contexts such as labor, civil rights, international relations, war and the film industry. His books include: “*Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s*” (1995); “*Race Woman: The Lives of Shirley Graham Du Bois*” (2000); “*Class Struggle in Hollywood, 1930-1950: Moguls, Mobsters, Stars, Reds and Trade Unionists*” (2001); “*Black and Brown: African-Americans and the Mexican Revolution*” (2005); “*The Deepest South: The U.S., Brazil and the African Slave Trade*” (2007); and “*Blows Against the Empire: U.S. Imperialism in Crisis*” (2008). In addition, he has authored more than 100 scholarly articles and reviews in academic journals.

Horne taught at UCSB from 1988 to 1996 in the Departments of History and of Black Studies. He was the chair of UCSB’s Department of Black Studies (1988-93) and also directed the Center for Black Studies (1990-91) during this time.

The Shirley Kennedy Memorial Lecture honors one of Santa Barbara’s most outspoken advocates for women and people of color. A political and social activist and Black Studies lecturer at UCSB, Kennedy helped transform the Santa Barbara community with her commitment to social justice, activism and democracy.

The event is free and open to the public. A reception will follow at 5:30 p.m.

---

## **About UC Santa Barbara**

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.