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# BOOK NEWS

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Constructing Black Female Identity

*LSU Press to publish Simone C. Drake's Critical Appropriations in May 2014*

**Baton Rouge**—From the novels of Toni Morrison to the music of Beyoncé Knowles, the cultural prevalence of a transnational black identity, as created by African American women, is more than a product of geographic mobility. Rather, as author **Simone C. Drake** shows, these constructions illuminate our understanding of a chronically marginalized demographic. In ***Critical Appropriations: African American Women and the Construction of Transnational Identity***, Drake contends that these fluid and hetero-geneous characterizations of black females arise from multiple creative outlets—literature, film, and music videos—and reflect African American women's evolving concept of home, community, gender, and family.

Through a close examination of Toni Morrison's *Paradise*, Danzy Senna's *Caucasia*, Gayl Jones's *Corregidora*, Erna Brodber's *Louisiana*, and Kasi Lemmons's film *Eve's Bayou*, as well as Beyoncé Knowles's *B-Day* album and music-video collaboration with Shakira, "Beautiful Liar," Drake reveals how concepts of hybridity—whether positioned as créolité, Candomblé, négritude, Latinidad, or Brasilidade—are appropriated in each work of art as a way of challenging the homogeneous paradigm of black cultural studies. This redefined notion of identity enables African American women to embrace a more complex, transnational blackness that is not only more liberating but also more pertinent to their experiences.

Drawing from this borderless exchange of ideas and a richer concept of self, *Critical Appropriations* offers a rewarding reconsideration of the creative implications for African American women, mapping new directions in black women's studies.

**Simone Drake** is assistant professor of African American studies at Ohio State University.

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