



Chester Ronning Centre
for the Study of Religion and Public Life

Obama and Me

Wearing the Mask, Wanting to Scream in the 21st Century

Steve Bynum

A Ronning Centre Lecture

Being black and male in Western society means always having to say you're sorry—for expressing emotion—for suppressing emotion—for being fully human. No person exemplifies this dichotomy, on a larger stage, more than the 44th President of the United States, Barack H. Obama. Steve Bynum, an African-American professional journalist, feels empathy with the President's conundrum.

Bynum believes modern racism requires a black person to prove he or she is not a “race-baiter” or “race-conscious” by exhibiting a high tolerance for veiled or overt racial insult. He also believes the subtleties of modern racism demand that black men (including President Obama) make hard choices: Express one's emotions and be viewed as angry or militant; or be deliberate and patient and be labeled brooding, ineffectual or timid - Reveal brilliance and be “uppity”, or understated and be imbecilic.

Steve Bynum is Senior Producer for *Worldview*, Chicago Public Media's weekday global affairs program. From Nobel Peace Prize winners to Nicaraguan sweatshop workers, *Worldview* highlights a range of voices that go beyond the headlines.

A lifelong Chicagoan, Steve has a B.A. in American Studies from the University of Notre Dame and is completing a Master's Degree in Public Policy and Administration from Northwestern University.

Disclaimer note: Steve is speaking as a private citizen and *not* as a representative of Chicago Public Media. Any opinions expressed are entirely his own.

Thursday, 16 February 2012, 3:30 p.m.
9125 – 50 St NW, Room L116
King's University College, Edmonton



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