

Letter to the Editor of *Dædalus*

Cambridge's first African Ph.D.?

November 26, 2003

To the Editor:

I was struck by the statement in the Summer 2003 issue of *Dædalus* that Kwame Anthony Appiah “is reputed to be the first African to have received a Ph.D. at Cambridge” (page 104). It is quite certain that this is false, and I would expect there to have been a number even before 1939.

However, I only need to find one previous to Appiah's in 1982 to substantiate this, and I myself remember Ben Laing from Ghana who took his Ph.D. in 1958 from R. A. Fisher's department of genetics. I believe he became a professor of botany in Accra. So far as I know he is African on both sides of his family.

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Dædalus welcomes correspondence from its readers. Letters to the Editor should be sent to *Dædalus*, 136 Irving Street, Cambridge MA 02138, or emailed to daedalus@amacad.org.
