

DIASPORA CALLING

Fall 2017

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dr. Stephen Finley

*Director of African & African American Studies Program and
Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy &
Religious Studies*

Ways of knowing and experiencing the world are not universal, nor are they neutral and value free. They serve many different purposes, not all of which are healthy to the flourishing of people of the Africana World. Knowledge forms can be imperialistic, seeking to bring the world under the power of its epistemological center and to expand its center outwardly to the margins so that people come to see only one way of knowing that is marked by domination and colonial expansion. For this reason, it is necessary for scholars and organic intellectuals to produce knowledge that reflects the ways that Africana people know and experience the world: their histories, cultures, religions, their sciences and literatures. In other words, the study of the Africana World (AAAS), with special attention to data that are produced by Africana people and African Americans, is critical to a vision of an egalitarian world which can celebrate the contributions of all people and resist forces that flatten or deny the complexities of Black people in service of their subjugation in a hierarchical human taxonomy.



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Chief Diversity Officer

Mark Schafer, Sociology

Kenneth Fasching-Varner, Education

Sunny Yang, English

LET FREEDOM RING

Dari Green, AAAS Graduate Assistant and PhD Candidate in Sociology

Imagine a future where society actually acknowledges that Black Lives Matter, as opposed to it merely being a trending hashtag. Imagine a life where theory meets practice. After imagining, myself, for a while, I tried to make these things happen. I began my career as a student in the Department of Sociology in 2012 and found that while there was much research surrounding Black lives and communities, there was much more focus on deficiencies within these communities than there was an acknowledgement of their assets. Consequently, I believe that there is much that we don't know about how black communities, which have been amongst the most historically disadvantaged of all racial and ethnic groups, have remained resilient in the face of assaults both figuratively and literally on their bodies and indigenous institutions—such as the family, the black church and schools.

I decided to address this gap in literature by focusing on a historical community-based model that was successful during the Jim Crow era, which held some of the most overt manifestations of racism during the twentieth century. To combat the academic, social, and political exclusion produced by Jim Crow, many groups and organizations rose up during the Civil Rights Era to challenge these inequities. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was monumental in empowering Black people and communities during these times and their creation of the Mississippi Freedom

Schools in 1964 had a powerful impact on the lives of those involved. With the end of the Civil Rights Movement, there was also an end to the Mississippi Freedom Schools but in the early 1990s the 1964 Freedom School model was adopted by the Children's Defense Fund, as a result of its previous success.

In 2012, I came in contact with a lady by the name of Franceria Moore. Like many of you, my history books had missed this particular lesson, and Fran brought me up to speed with her personal encounter and leadership in a local Baton Rouge Freedom School. Over the past five years, through ethnographic research, I have seen the great need for a paradigm shift in the dominant narrative of a deficit ideology when speaking of the Black community.

Through my research and encounters with her, I have found that the same model that was fostered in 1964, could have a lasting impact on helping Black youth and families successfully navigate hostile system of society. Let's not let history repeat itself! Remember, as Ella Baker once said: "strong people don't need strong leaders, they just need a light." **Be a light!**



Dari Green photographed by Rick Weil

Summary Report of Student Interest in Current & Proposed Course Offerings in AAAS

We asked students enrolled in AAAS courses, AAAS majors and minors, to tell us which current and proposed courses they would take if offered. We also asked for suggestions on courses not listed and invited students to offer additional comments. A total of 54 students participated in the online version of the survey. Here are the findings.

At least 25% of respondents indicated a willingness to enroll in the following CURRENT courses. An asterisk (*) indicates at least 50% of respondents would enroll in the course.

African American Folklore

*Black Lives Matter

*Black Popular Culture

Law & Social Justice

Religion, Hip Hop and Culture

History of CRM

Pre-Colonial Africa

Race Relations

Sport, Race and Society

The Religious Thought of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X

*Religion, Hip Hop and Culture

At least 25% of respondents indicated a willingness to enroll in the following PROPOSED course. An asterisk (*) indicates at least 50% of respondents would enroll in the course.

African American Music

Black Aesthetics

Black Baton Rouge

Black Feminism

*Black Girl Magic

*Colorism

Dimensions in racism

Internship

Mass Media and the Black Community

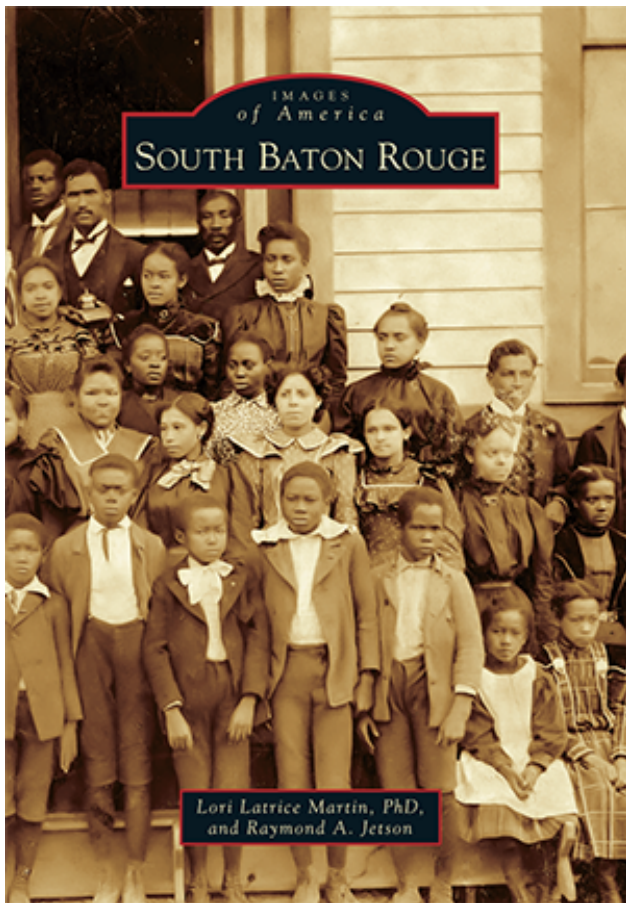
Racial Inequality and Wealth

*The Black Family

The Black Male Experience

*Urban Black Politics

COMMUNITY PROFILE



Dr. Lori Latrice Martin, an associate professor of African and African American Studies and sociology at Louisiana State University, and Pastor Raymond A. Jetson, pastor of Star Hill Church and CEO of *MetroMorphosis* are authors of the newly released book, *South Baton Rouge*. The book covers the history of South Baton Rouge from antebellum America until the historic visit by President Barack Obama. South Baton Rouge, sometimes referred to as Old South Baton Rouge, is an African American community located in Baton Rouge. It was one of the first places African Americans could receive a high school education in the state. The three-mile community around historic McKinley High School was the site of the nation's first

successful bus boycott. When laws restricted where African Americans could live, work, learn, and play, South Baton Rouge was a refuge. African American restaurants, theaters, gas stations, and other businesses populated the community, and change-makers, including African American lawyers, judges, clergy, educators, and nurses, helped to sustain the community and other portions of the southern half of Louisiana's capital through the end of legal segregation and beyond.

SAAAS CORNER



Pictured above is Sebastian Brumfield-Mejia, president of the Society for African and African American Studies. The Society for African & African American Studies is a new organization open to all students interested in learning about African & African American Studies, getting involved on-campus, and connecting with a diverse and inclusive membership. We invite you to become a part of SAAAS today

**LIBRARIAN & LIAISON:
LINDA SMITH-GRIFFIN**

Ms. Linda Smith Griffin is the African & African American Studies' Program Librarian. In addition to instructing students enrolled in AAAS courses about library resources, Mrs. Smith- Griffin also creates important guides for a number of AAAS courses, including African & African American Studies, Black Popular Culture, Black Rhetorical Tradition, the Civil Rights Movement, Sport, Race, and Society, and The Obama Legacy. Each guide contains reference sources, books, journals, databases, and multimedia related to the aforementioned courses.

Mrs. Smith-Griffin provides easy access to nearly 40 databases for faculty and students interested in AAAS. African American Newspapers from 1827 to 1998 is just one of the databases. This database provides online access to approximately 270 U.S. newspapers, chronicling a century and a half of the African American experience. This unique collection, which includes papers from more than 35 states, features many rare and historically significant 19th-century titles. The other databases include Afro-Louisiana Genealogy (1719-1820), Black Studies in Video, and Oxford African American Studies Center.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



“While I'd like to fancy myself the purest of academics--a strict professional--my decision to major in AAAS was deeply personal. I had always hoped to somehow change the world by studying religions and doing my part to educate and dispel the harmful myths, surrounding Islam, in particular. However, after a course on American Religions and another on Race and Religion in Film my Sophomore year. Two things became painfully clear: 1) One didn't have to look to foreign affairs to find, fear, ignorance, intolerance, and injustice and 2) I was nowhere near as informed or progressive as I thought I was. In fact, I was riddled with cliché American biases, I wanted to be rid of. I have yet to shed myself of all of them, but I've gained so much, in terms of, experience, knowledge, and humility, that just having grown as a person is enough to justify the major--for now.”

-Katherine Evans, AAAS Major

MY THEME FOR ENGLISH III

Jeremiah Rogers, Ogden Honors Student & undergraduate concentrator

My English teacher told me to write a poem,
Modeled after Langston Hughes.
But Langston Hughes spoke with only one
hue,
but I am vibrance.

English vibrates within my mind,
resonating off of its corners.
Now, being put in a corner,
I must express myself with language.

I am black.
No, I am colored.
Colored with wind and sawdust.
I am wooden.
My tongue stiffens then straightens like
the rod of Moses,
As I began to hiss the language that rejects
my people.
English.
Our tongues have bent backwards,
slit by the edges of our teeth,
Until we, as a people,
concocted our own language.
Ebonics.
Showing off our ebony complexions with a
cocoa butter shine,
We are one.
And, I, a part of one:
A fraction,
Fragmented between being colored and
being human.

Being brought into humanity in May,
I bring posies to commemorate the dead.
The colored dead,
Now colorless,
Drenched in burgundy,
Sprawled onto asphalt:
A miserable masterpiece.

I must master the art of peace,
By piecing myself together:
From scrape to scar,
From smile to smell,
From skin to soul.
I am finding my peace.

Crafted from the earth:
Eyes of the amber,
Skin of the sandstorm,
Body of the hourglass.
Perfection is within our colors.
Within the colored.
We can only find peace.
By finding our pieces.

I am colored
to illuminate darkness,
I am colored
To love beyond grayscale.



DID YOU KNOW?

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Paul M. Hebert Law Center have partnered together to launch a new 3+3 program, allowing students to receive a bachelor's and law degree in six years time. As a student in AAAS you can take full advantage of this opportunity!



HOW TO MAJOR IN AAAS

A concentration in AAAS requires a total of 33 credit hours including:

- A required core of nine (9) hours: AAAS 2000; AAAS 3024 or 3044 (CxC); & AAAS 4020.
- In addition to 9 hours of required courses, students must complete 24 hours from at least two divisions and three different departments.
- A minimum of 6 hours must focus on a geographical area outside of the U.S.
- 3 hours in a Service Learning or Communication across the Curriculum (CxC) course
- Only 12 hours from courses numbered below 3000-level may count towards degree.

Sign up today to get started!



DID YOU KNOW?

Angela Bassett received her BA in African-American Studies from Yale University. She along with many other notable names, like: Michelle Obama, Mae Jemison, Aaron McGruder, even Marc Morial, pursued degrees in African and African American Studies. A major or minor in AAAS provides a firm academic foundation for pursuing career options in numerous fields.

Spring 2017 Course Offerings

<i>Course #</i>	<i>Day/Time Offered</i>	<i>Instructor</i>	<i>Title</i>
AAAS 2000.1	Online Course	Jas Sullivan	Intro to AAAS
AAAS 2000.2	T 4:30-7:20pm	Kenneth Faschings-Varner	Intro to AAAS
AAAS 2050	T/TH 12:00-1:20pm	Gibril Cole	Contemporary Africa
AAAS 2410	M 4:30-7:20pm	Troy Allen	Black Pop Culture
AAAS 2511 cross listed w/ SOCL 2511	T/TH 12:00-1:20pm	Dari Green	Race Relations
AAAS 3044	T/TH 7:30-8:50am	Herman Kelly	The Black Rhetorical Traditions
AAAS 3902.1	T/TH 9:00-10:20am	Stephen Finley	Hip Hop, Religion, and Culture
AAAS 3902.2	T/TH 10:30-11:50am	Kenneth Faschings-Varner	#BLACKLIVESMATTER
AAAS 3902.3	T/TH 12:00-1:20pm	Herman Kelly	The History of the Civil Rights Movement
AAAS 4020	W 4:30-7:20pm	Jas Sullivan	Stereotypes
AAAS 4124 cross listed w/ REL 4124	T/TH 3:00-4:20pm	Solimar Otero	Studies in African Diaspora Religions
AAAS 4400 cross listed w/ REL 4400	T/TH 12:00-1:20pm	Stephen Finley	MLK & Malcolm X
ENGL 3674	MWF 12:30-1:20	Fahima Ife- Weusi	Survey of African-American Literature: Black Girl Magic
ENGL 4674	W 4:30-7:20pm	Sunny Yang	African-American Literature & the Law
ANTH 1003	MWF 1:30-2:20pm	Kerry Chance	Introduction to Cultural and Social Anthropology

NEWS AND NOTES

We extend a huge congratulation to Dr. Joyce Jackson and Dr. Roland Mitchell, as they both have been promoted to full professorship!

Congratulations to Dr. Petra Robinson and Dr. Isiah Lavender on receiving the LSU Alumni Association Rising Faculty Research Award!

Congratulations to Dr. Lori Martin and Dr. Michael Bibler on receiving the LSU Alumni Association Faculty Excellence Award!

Congratulations to Dr. Kenneth Fasching-Varner. Dr. Varner was recently recognized with the Engagement Award from College of Human Sciences and Education!