

used a “jazz model” of Africana Studies to describe the relationships among sub-disciplines and between schools of thought (Stewart, 2004).

Five characteristics I use to differentiate Africana Studies analyses from other types of inquiries are: (a) rejection of “victimology” orientations in favor of approaches focusing on efforts by African Americans to shape their own destiny (Africana agency), (b) interpretation of contemporary developments through a framework of analysis that explores the effects of historical forces in shaping current conditions (continuing historical influences), (c) use of multiple analytical methods and modes of presentation to understand and articulate the complexities of the experiences of peoples of African descent (wholism/ multidimensionality), (d) exploration of policy implications (simultaneous pursuit of academic excellence and social responsibility), and (e) exploration of historical and continuing cultural and political linkages between Africans in Africa and Africans in the Diaspora (pan-Africanism) (see Stewart, 1992).

Obviously no individual investigation can be expected to incorporate all of these elements. However, the absence of characteristics (a) and (b) generally suggests that a particular research study is more appropriately identified with a field of inquiry other than Africana Studies, per se. These criteria are used to discuss the sub-disciplines of Africana Women’s Studies and African Diaspora Studies.

### Africana Womens’ Studies

Africana Studies faces a continuing challenge of combating the invisibility of Africana women in the public sphere and the marginalization of their historical and contemporary voices. This challenge is not unique to Africana Studies, rather it is one that derives from the patriarchal nature of most societies and is reflected in all fields and modes of inquiry. As Omolade (1994, p. 15) argues:

The historical oppression of black women and men should have created social equality between them, but even after the end of slavery when the white patriarch receded, maleness and femaleness continued to be defined by patriarchal structures, with black men declaring wardship over black women. In the black community, the norm of manhood was patriarchal power, the norm of womanhood was adherence to it, though both men and women selected which aspects of these norms they would emphasize.

An Africana Studies approach to analysis would be expected to reflect the emphases on agency and the importance of historical forces in shaping current conditions. Scholars associated with Africana Studies must also be self-critical about the ways in which discussions of epistemological and methodological issues and research studies have marginalized Africana women. Given these requirements, the operative question is whether a distinct body of research exists that examines Africana women in a manner consistent with the view of Africana Studies outlined in the preceding sections.

Black Feminists (see, for example, Guy-Sheftall 1995; Hill-Collins 1991; Hull et al. 1982) are generally more closely aligned with Feminism and Women's Studies than with Africana Studies, *per se*. Ideologically, this feminist approach, while clearly recognizing the devastation associated with oppression based on race, prioritizes the issue of oppression based on gender and emphasizes the study of patterns of gender oppression among people of African descent. Africana Womanist scholars (see, for example, Aldridge 1989, 1991, 1992; Gordon 1987; and Hudson-Weems 1989, 1993, 1997) also recognize the importance of gender-based oppression, but emphasize its intersection and overlap with racial oppression as intertwined forces diminishing the well-being of Africana women.

Africana Womanists and Black Feminists interpret the historical record through very different lenses and there is, surprisingly, relatively little social-science based research that can inform continuing efforts to refine the competing perspectives. As Hill Collins observes (1991, 207) there is a need for a more focused social science-inspired research effort to resolve outstanding issues because:

“On certain dimensions Black Women may more closely resemble Black men; on others, white women; and on still others Black women may stand apart from both groups. Black women’s both/and conceptual orientation, the act of being simultaneously a member of a group and yet standing apart from it, forms an integral part of Black women’s consciousness.”

Efforts to address this research lacuna must make use of both quantitative and qualitative methods, as is the case for Africana Studies generally. Such an approach is absolutely essential to overcome existing biases that constrain the understanding of the gender dimensions of identity development, especially as it relates to women of African descent outside metropolitan capitalist countries As Vaz (1993, p. 96) opines, “alternative methods of carrying out research [are needed] that are not heavily dependent on technology, [so that] our information about women in developing countries [does not] become [simply] the study of women’s behavior in the developed world. Vaz’s comments emphasize the need to extend the scope of inquiry beyond the experiences of people of African descent in the United States.

#### African Diaspora Studies

Expanded study of populations of people of African descent living in parts of the African Diaspora other than the United States is an important recent development in the continuing evolution of Africana Studies. One of the most important contributions of this collective body of

research has been to introduce a comparative perspective into discourses about race, identity, patterns of oppression and exploitation, liberation struggles, and other issues. Comparative perspectives are imperative for refining constructs and perspectives in Africana Studies developed from studies focusing exclusively on descendants of Africans directly transported into what is now the US through the Atlantic slave trade.

As is the case for Africana Womens' Studies there are different schools of thought informing research agendas. The school of thought least aligned with Africana Studies has been advanced by "Black Atlantic" proponents (e.g. Gilroy (1993). This school of thought is informed by the European post-modernist "Cultural Studies" movement. Black Atlantic scholars challenge the usefulness of traditional racial classifications and emphasize hybridity as a construct for interpreting the experiences of people of African descent (outside of Africa). Interest in this approach within the US has been fueled, in part, by the increasing contemporary immigration of people of African descent into the US whose personal identities and reference group orientation differs from domestic African Americans and by the emerging domestic bi-racial movement.

The cultural-studies influenced approach to African Diaspora Studies can be usefully contrasted to one championed by Walker (2001). Walker's volume is the product of an international conference on the African Diaspora and the Modern World held in 1996. Contributors to the volume include historians, linguists, creative writers and literary scholars, social, cultural, and physical anthropologists; journalists, filmmakers; music and dance scholars; and political and cultural activists, reflecting the multi-disciplinary emphasis of Africana Studies. Walker (2001, 38) describes the overall thrust of the volume as "the beginning of a comparative analysis of African Diasporan societies and phenomena from an Afrogenic perspective that

focuses on African and African Diasporan agency, participation, and contributions.” For Walker (2001, 8)

“Afrogenic simply means growing out of the histories, ways of knowing, and interpretations and interpretive styles of African and African Diasporan people.” The overall view of the African Diaspora in the Americas projected by Walker is as “a vast, multi-dimensional puzzle in which some of the pieces were brought from Africa and have maintained recognizable identities, and other pieces were created in the Americas based on Afrogenic conceptual foundations” (Walker, 2001, p. x). Note that Walker’s approach to the study of the African Diaspora prioritizes the original involuntary formation of the Diaspora rather than late 20<sup>th</sup> century voluntary migration that cultural studies approaches foreground. Collectively, Walker (2001, p. 41) insists “the comparative study of African Diasporan societies and their roles in their nations, in addition to demonstrating similar patterns of misrepresentation, also highlights significant commonalities in both sociocultural forms and in the underlying principles that give them meaning.”

There is obvious greater alignment between Walker’s approach to African Diaspora Studies and the specification of Africana Studies presented previously. Whereas Walker’s approach emphasizes cultural similarities and historical continuities originating in Africa, the Black Atlantic model is an example of what Walker characterizes as the imposition of Eurogenic meanings rather than recognizing “the deep structural Afrogenic meanings of the same phenomena” (Walker, 2001, p. 29).

### Conclusion

Space does not permit a comparable discussion of the sub-disciplines of African Studies and Afro-Latino/a Studies. However, I submit that a similar type of analysis can prove useful in identifying those schools of thought and approaches within each sub-discipline that is most

closely aligned with the Africana Studies disciplinary matrix. As Africana Studies continues to evolve new sub-disciplines will emerge. As is demonstrated by the record of other disciplines the pursuit of disciplinary coherence should be one of the overarching objectives if Africana Studies is to achieve first-class status as a distinctive and valued intellectual enterprise.

## References

- Aldridge, D.(ed.) (1989). Black women in the American economy. Special issue of the *Journal of Black Studies* 20:2.
- Aldridge, D. (1991). *Focusing, black male-female relationships*. Chicago: Third World Press.
- Aldridge, D. (1992). Womanist issues in black studies: towards integrating Africana women into Africana studies. *The Afrocentric Scholar*1 (1), 167-182.
- Gilroy, P. (1993). *The black Atlantic : modernity and double consciousness*. Cambridge, MA : Harvard University Press.
- Gordon, V. (1987). *Black women, feminism, black liberation: which way?* Revised edition. Chicago: Third World Press.
- Guy-Sheftall, B. (1995). Introduction. In B. Guy-Sheftall (ed.) *Words of fire, an anthology of African-American feminist thought*. New York: The New Press, 1-22.
- Hill Collins, P. (1991). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. New York: Routledge.
- Hudson-Weems, C. (1989). Cultural and agenda conflicts in academia: Critical issues for Africana womens studies. *Western journal of black studies* 13 (4), 181-189.
- Hudson-Weems, C. (1993). *Africana womanism: Reclaiming ourselves*. Troy, MI: Bedford Publishers.
- Hudson-Weems, C. (1997). Africana womanism and the critical need for Africana theory and thought. *The western journal of black studies* (Summer), 70-84.

- Hull, G., Scott, P., & Smith, B. (1982). *All the women are white. All the blacks are men. But some of us are brave: Black women's studies*. Old Westbury, NY: Feminist Press.
- Kuhn, T. (1970). *The structure of scientific revolutions*. 2nd edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Omolade, B. (1994). *The rising song of African American women*. New York: Routledge.
- Stewart, J. (1992). Reaching for higher ground: Toward an understanding of black/africana studies. *The Afrocentric scholar* 1 (1), 1-63.
- Stewart, J. (2004) "Foundations of a 'Jazz' Theory of Africana Studies," in J. Stewart, *Flight in Search of Vision*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 191-202.
- Vaz, K. (1993). Making room for emancipatory research in psychology: A multicultural feminist perspective. In J. James & R. Farmer (eds). *Spirit, space & survival, African American women in (white) academe*. New York: Routledge, 83-98.
- Walker, S. (2001). Are You Hip to the Jive? (Re)Writing/Righting the Pan-American Discourse. In S. Walker (Ed.), *African Roots,/American Cultures, Africa in the Creation of the Americas*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.



Lee D. Baker  
Associate Professor  
Cultural Anthropology  
and African & African American Studies  
Duke University

### **Risk Avoidance and Transfer: Thoughts on New Directions for Africana Studies**

What directions can and should Black Studies take in the twenty first century? This is an interesting and provocative prompt. The directions could be endless, but there are perhaps several important approaches that would continue to make Africana studies relevant, needed, and indeed indispensable within the academy and policy arenas. Scholars of Africana studies who focus on North America should systematically and carefully develop research and writing to address the pending crisis that are facing this country, but which have implications worldwide. Although some issues like employment, prisons, housing, and education have been standard fare within the social science discourse of Africana studies for years, scholars must continue along these lines to explore connections, intersections, and solutions in an attempt to stem the tide of what some scholars call the preemptive despair that engulfs many under educated Black men whose fragile dreams are often crushed under the weight of bad education, low opportunities, and high rates of incarceration.

Although globalization and a shift in the economy from manufacturing and industry to service, finance, and information impacts each of these intersecting race, class, and gender matters, scholars should bracket these areas, because focusing on globalization alone as the prime mover has become almost routine. Lumping a host of issues within the penumbra of globalization weakens or dilutes the sharp analysis needed to address the specific impact globalization has on people of the African Diaspora who have always already been linked to global flows of capital and commodities. Whether it has been the trafficking of bodies, the movement of music and art, or the flow of dollars and pounds in the form of paltry remittances that buoy the economies of Togo, Ghana, Trinidad, and others, people of the

African Diaspora have been integral to the processes of globalization throughout history.

Immigration to the United States is one aspect of globalization that has not been brought to the fore as a significant issue in African American Studies. Scholars have produced significant and suggestive studies exploring the movement of African peoples throughout Europe, the Caribbean, and the Americas, and have explored thoroughly the migration of African peoples to produce the Diaspora. These approaches should be sustained. However, the impact of Latin American immigrants to the United States also needs further exploration, and it is one direction I would like to see more research in Africana studies.

## **IMMIGRATION**

It is spring time in North Carolina. Second only to Texas, North Carolina has more miles of state-maintained highways than any other state in the Union- -each mile is well maintained. In mid April I was driving West on I-40 between Raleigh and Durham, it was bright, sunny, and 69 degrees. Various work crews were out along the highway- -picking up litter, doing construction, mowing medians, and planting wild flowers. As traffic slowed along a narrow strip near Research Triangle Park, I noticed two crews; each crew comprised about a dozen men. They were opposite each other on different sides of the highway. I distinctly remember how the day-glo vest each man wore paled in comparison to the pockets of brilliant-violet redbud tucked in between the equally bright-white flowers of the elegant dogwoods that bespeckle that particular stand of loblolly pines. Each crew was working very hard, each crew was working for the state of North Carolina; one crew was all Black, the other was all Latino. One crew had NCDOT (Department of Transportation) emblazoned across their vests with bold reflective lettering, the other crew had INMATE stamped across their vests. Chances are members of the Latino crew were immigrant day laborers that a contractor picked up that morning from the throng of young men who mill around the local Lowes Home Improvement store. And, if that was the case, then not one of those

hardworking men on either side of the highway had legal rights afforded to employees in the state of North Carolina, and each man was being exploited and sorely underpaid. Innocent or guilty, documented or undocumented, each man labored under a pall of criminality where their status as illegal or convict forced them to keep North Carolina highways beautiful. In some way, this tale of two crews has helped me to frame the immigration debate that has been roiling Congress, prompting protests in mass, and forcing everyone throughout the Americas to take stock of the tangled of issues that impedes comprehensive immigration reform.

Perhaps it is just the current round of partisan politics, but the issue of U.S. immigration, legal or otherwise, seems like one area that needs reasoned and systematic analysis by scholars of Africana studies. Topics such as education and taxation, job creation and competition, and fair housing and health care, should be systematically explored with pointed analysis and rigorous methods. At the same time, new and old forms of racism, assimilation and acculturation, and new constructions of race should be carefully scrutinized and unpacked with sophisticated theory and nuanced descriptions. Personally, I am fairly ambivalent about the annual 700,000 or more undocumented people from Latin America that flow across the U.S. border to find jobs, start families, and stake their claim on the American Dream.

I find myself cringing at the prospect of agreeing with President Bush who argues that we need a humane and respectful policy to address the needs of poor and exploited workers who risk everything to come and work in the United States. I am sympathetic to the claim that we did not cross the borders, the borders crossed us and impressed by early La Raza leaders, like Rodolfo Corky Gonzalez who organized the Chicano contingent for the 1968 poor people's campaign in Washington. I don't trust, however, the neo-liberal rational choice theorists who some how come off as liberal reformers and believe that the market will drive fair wages and efficiently direct the flow of poor and exploited workers to the chicken and hog processing plants in North Carolina, the manicured lawns of the

Hamptons, and the fields of crops in the San Joaquin valley. They are cast as laborers who simply fill a need, keeping prices low, wages down, and the American economy humming along. It seems like a naked play for cheap labor that is vulnerable, exploited, and simply a cog in the capitalist machine; a cog that does not get workmens compensation, cannot withdraw from Social Security, and does not have access to reasonable healthcare. This neo-liberal liberalism, to me, smacks of the happy Negro whose benevolent slaver tried to explain that they are better off here, enslaved, than free in their own country. I am equally loathed to write, speak, or teach about limiting Latino immigration, increasing border security, or cracking down on illegal aliens. The xenophobia and indeed racism inherent with this approach is not an option. The debate has thus been cast in either or terms; it seems like one must support a neo-liberal guest worker program and an eventual bid for citizenship, or one must support a racist and xenophobic position that closes the borders. The batten-down-the-hatches approach makes felons out of innocent people who are just trying to make an honest living from an honest wage, while the guest worker program institutionalizes a second class of non-citizens, whose only hope is to get in the back of the line and wish for that day they might get their bid for citizenship.

## 2050

Immigration to the United States is a formula for success that has worked for years, but seemingly it was only available to the millions that made up the storied huddled masses. It is worth repeating Emma Lazaruss famous poem that is graven in the stone base of the Statue of Liberty: Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempesttost to me.

For a century, these famous lines served as an unofficial immigration policy. Seared in the minds of many a grade school pupil, the mantra informs an open borders policy and underscores the value immigrants have played in making the United States a strong and diverse nation. If one simply

substitutes teaming boarders with shore, or turns to the shores of Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic, the tone and affect of the poem does not resonate in the same way. When Black and brown people come, some how the statue does not have the same welcoming embrace for the wretched refuse, homeless and tempest-tost..

By the year 2050, so-called racialized minorities will be the majority in the United States, and whites will once again be the minority -so goes the rhetoric of everyone from advertisers to demographers. However, if we look at countries within the African Diaspora we may be able to identify that this will not occur in the way most people predict. I think this is where scholars in Africana Studies, who study the process of racialization, can make an important contribution to the so-called immigration debate.

In a forthcoming article in *Transforming Anthropology*, Alisse Waterston writes a provocative article entitled *Are Latinos Becoming White Folk? And What that Still Says about Race in America*. She describes a process that many scholars are familiar with in South Africa, Surinam, Trinidad, Brazil, and indeed Florida where members of a one-time racialized minority group emerge as not-quite white, and begin to function as virtually white or as a buffer race between whites and African peoples who suffer the brunt of racism and exploitation at the bottom of the racial and class hierarchy. She employs the work of France Windance Twine, Jonathan Warren, Karen Brodtkin and others to help make sense of her own ethnographic experiences within advertising agencies which are in the process of actively segmenting Latino markets. Ad agencies and marketers employ the euphemisms English oriented and Spanish preferred to split this market, but she argues that these are simply color and class coded signifiers. Employing Brodtkin's notion of that an unholy trinity of corporations, the state, and monopolistic media produces and reproduces patterns and practices of whiteness with dreadful predictability, Waterston reminds readers that the media, including advertisers, have long played an

important role in the construction of race, and these color and class inflected monikers might portend the expansion of the borders and boundaries of whiteness (Brodkin 1998:177-178). The result is a new model minority with class mobility- -English oriented Latinos- - who will have access to the wages of whiteness, while the Spanish preferred will emerge as something like a model minority with class immobility. The pattern in Florida with the whitening of the pre-Marial boat lift Cubans, will extend its reach from Florida to Texas and California; for that matter it will extend to any locale where the light and often white Latino professional class- -deemed English oriented assimilates to an expanding and flexible racial category of whiteness. It is a scenario where ideas about la familia merge with family values; a strong work ethic complements the so-called protestant work ethic, and conservative Catholicism merges with the values of pro-life Protestants. More importantly, it is a scenario that leverages the century-long inertia of incorporating Irish, Italian, Jewish, and other racialized minorities into the specter of whiteness. The Republican Party, at least, hopes this will result in more voters who favor the likes of Alberto Gonzales and fewer voters who favor the likes of Antonio R. Villaraigosa.

## **RISK**

Access to the wages of whiteness is one thing; access to just plain wages is another. The so-called Spanish preferred Latinos- - usually darker, poorer, and more closely tied to their indigeneity - - are also playing an interesting role in shifting the labor markets. Although the neo-liberal liberals are quick to retort that undocumented workers take the jobs no other Americans want, I cannot help but juxtapose this rhetoric with those two work crews I witnessed on that sunny day, or with the findings in the latest spate of books discussing and documenting the grim plight of under educated black men between 20 and 39. Books such as *Reconnecting Disadvantaged Young Men* by Peter Edelman, Harry Holzer, and Paul Offner; *Black Males Left Behind* by Ronald B. Mincy; and *Punishment and Inequality in America* by Bruce Western each paint a grisly but all too routine picture of Black men in America.

Although the usual suspects - - jobs, education, and incarceration - - are trotted out one more time, I

think what also needs to be addressed is the fact that there is a perception that the so-called Spanish

preferred and often undocumented workers are better workers who will work for less money than that

cohort of Black men Erik Eckholm wrote about in his oft-cited March 20, 2006 *New York Times* article

Plight Deepens for Black Men. I dont need to recall of the specifics and statistics, but I hope scholars in

Africana Studies produce sophisticated, politically responsible research that explores how employment

opportunities are provided to some while being stripped from others. The concept of risk seems

important because employers risk committing a crime by hiring an undocumented worker because they

dont want to risk hiring someone who has committed a crime.

Brodkin, Karen

1994 How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says about Race in America. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

### **The Pursuit of Africology: On the Creation and Sustaining of Black Studies**

**Molefi Kete Asante**  
Temple University

Without a doubt the Black Studies revolution of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century has profoundly

impacted the curricula of most institutions of higher education in the United States. Taken

together with the infusion of students of African origin and the presence of multinational

Africans as faculty, the advancement in curricula at American colleges and universities is a

quantum leap from what it was at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. No traditional discipline, such as

Anthropology, history, sociology, or literature, can be the same since the revolution that brought African American Studies into existence. “Black Studies” was a term that grew out of the political and academic climate of the 1960s. When students at San Francisco State campaigned in 1967 for courses that reflected the experiences of African people they called for “Black Studies” since so much of the curriculum was “White Studies” parading as if it were universal.

The immediate academic aim was to create the opportunity for “a black perspective” in the American academy in social sciences, arts, and humanities. A number of names emerged to describe the course of study and group of subjects under the umbrella of “Black Studies.” Among the more popular names were “Afro American Studies” as in the UCLA Center for Afro American Studies; “Africana Studies” as in the Cornell University Africana Studies Research Center; “African American Studies” and “Pan African Studies,” as in the Temple University Department of African American Studies; “Africa World Studies” as in the Miami University “Africa World Studies” program; “African Diaspora Studies” as in the Ph.D. program at UC Berkeley; and “Africology” as in the Department of Africology at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee. A few departments, such as Ohio State University and California State University, Long Beach, retain the title of “Black Studies.” Increasingly, and for critical reasons, I believe the term “Africology” should gain recognition as a name and objective of our intellectual pursuit.

### Setting the Agenda

During the early days of the campaign for Black Studies the most critical need was for faculty guidance about the courses being proposed. Students often developed syllabi, courses of study, and bibliographies and presented these to the various deans as indicative of what could be the core of Black Studies. But the list of faculty who could assist the students was limited.



Eventually, this would lead to the issue of black faculty to teach the courses. Most major universities had a few token blacks who had been on campus for several years, but many of them did not relate to the innovations sought by the students.

. When students completed their tomes of syllabi and bibliographies they would often march to the offices of the university leaders with their work in one hand and a list of demands in the other. They wanted, among other things, additional black faculty members, black cultural centers, lecture programs of outstanding black scholars, and sensitivity classes for white faculty members. The institutional leaders were quick to call the police to the campuses. Many African American students were arrested during that period and some were given unfairly long sentences. They remain the heroes of the struggle for equal education and their legacies are in the thousands of students who have been taught in African American Studies though those early pioneers seem forgotten.

### A Search for Faculty

Another issue that faced the incipient movement was who would teach the courses and where would the university find professors. This proved to be a critical issue, one that has continued to shape, and in some senses, to distort the field. The terminal degree for most academic disciplines is the doctorate. While there were hundreds of African Americans with this degree in the 1960s, the overwhelming majority of them taught at predominantly black institutions in the South. The only other sources of African-descended doctorates were continental Africans who had been educated in the United States. African Americans entered the predominantly white institutions of higher education in large numbers in the late 1960s, but it would be several years before Black Studies departments would have the benefit of their

education, and even then, there would be inherent theoretical and philosophical issues. Eager to attract and hire black professors many universities hired continental African professors. This proved to be a challenging action both for the professors and the students who had campaigned for their hiring.

The continental Africans who had doctoral degrees were usually trained by white professors who had very little appreciation of the history of African Americans. This meant that the continental Africans had to be quick studies in the African American experience in order to be successful as professors in Black Studies. They had to abandon the attitudes of some of their white professors and adopt a consciousness that was African American. The scores of Africans who did so were exceptionally brilliant in the classrooms..

In some cases the universities, desperate to find faculty, opted to employ African Americans who were degree-less or who did not have the terminal degree although they had other degrees. This meant that significant community activists could teach in their own fields of expertise and achievement. Among the prominent individuals who came to lecture at universities under those circumstances were Sonia Sanchez, Bayard Rustin, Gwendolyn Brooks, Eldridge Cleaver, Amiri Baraka, Margaret Walker, Charles Fuller, and numerous others. Some major universities, to gain African American professors, even raided the faculties of predominantly black institutions such as Howard, Fisk, Tuskegee, and Hampton. Arna Bontemps, nearly retired, left Fisk to join the faculty at Yale University, for instance.

### The General Revolution

There have been three movements for academic enrichment within the general revolution initiated by the Black Studies revolution. Each movement was pegged to one of the terms for the

concentration: Black Studies, Africana, and Africology. Furthermore, each of these movements had as its political objective the freeing of the minds of the students so that they might reflect on a vast and diverse universe of knowledge.

### The Black Studies Movement

The Black Studies Movement did not arise out of a primordial *nun*, but rather from an organized group of ideas that formed a core philosophy for use in confronting the status quo in education. There was a powerfully raw energy to the creation of the Black Studies Movement. It was unlike any other transformation in the Academy. Groups of students from various colleges, acting simultaneously, almost as if they were collectively programmed, passed through the same processes in order to establish Black Studies on their campuses. First, it was necessary to define the missing links in the institutional chain of delivering information, subsequently, the students would have to insist that those links could be supplied with information and scholarship, and finally the students would have to oversee the initiation of the program to assist the institution. All over the United States from Boston to San Francisco, from Detroit to Miami, the African American students projected their vision. It was often resisted, students were arrested, and many attacked by police. In the end, when the dust had settled, African American students had opened most of the doors at major American universities.

What constituted the Black Studies Movement? Like the Black Power Movement and the Black is Beautiful Campaign, the Black Studies Movement was a move for self- definition, self-determination, and mental liberation. In this regard it was in line with the most radical elements of the contemporary objective of securing for African Americans a more positive place in the curriculum. By its projection as “Black” the movement suggested its ethnic and cultural energy

and by its use of the word “Studies” indicated its intellectual component. This was new and different because never before had “Black” and “Studies” been used in the same term.

The defining moment in the Black Studies Movement was the publication of Maulana Karenga’s *Introduction to Black Studies* (1979). When this book was published the field had its first attempt to draw the boundaries of a new area of study broad enough for the multiplicity of programs that emerged from struggle. What Karenga did in *Introduction* was to state precisely how the field should be conceptualized, discussed, and projected. One could no longer assume that the field of study did not have precursor ideas, a core of intellectuals, and approaches to phenomena that constituted a whole new area of inquiry. This book was first published in 1979 and immediately created a stir in the field because until its appearance no one had conceived of Black Studies in such a holistic fashion. Karenga organized the field into seven key areas: history, mythology, motif, ethos, social organization, political organization, and economic organization. In 1986 a second book, *Introduction to Afro-American Studies*, was published by Abdul Alkalimat and Ron Bailey with the objective of defining Afro-American Studies as different from “mainstream” disciplines and with an emphasis on social change.

### Africana Studies Movement

The National Council for Black Studies was the first professional organization in the field and it had increasingly referred to the field by the name “Africana” so that by the mid-1980s there were a good number of departments with that name. The aim was to make the field more academic and less political by changing the name of the departments around the nation. The Africana Studies Movement was initiated by members of the Cornell University faculty who were among the first to adopt the name Africana Studies for their Department. The term was

quickly adopted by other departments in the Northeast part of the United States and soon spread to the Midwest because of the popularity of the professors from Cornell.

Seeking to offset any criticism, the faculty who subscribed to the utility of the name “Africana” presented two arguments for its acceptance. First, Africana was meant to embrace the African world. Secondly, it was intended to de-politicize the study of African phenomena. As such Africana was meant to be a step away from confrontation, that is, black versus white. To say “Africana” was more than saying “African American” it was a statement about the nature of the African experience in the world. This meant that the scholar could embrace the Caribbean, South America, and the African continent as a part of the field of study. Indeed, Black Studies that had been limited to the African American experience was now enlarged to include African issues on the continent, political upheavals in South America, literary developments in Haiti, and numerous other issues. One could just as easily research and discuss the Esie stones of Nigeria as one could the meaning of economic liberation among African Americans in Stone Mountain, Georgia.

### The Africological Movement

The Africological Movement, emerging in the mid-1980s, was trans-generational and transcontinental in scope. In my book, **Afrocentricity** written initially in 1980 and revised several times since, I had spoken of a discipline of “afrology.” This term was refined to “africology” by the University of Wisconsin professor, Winston Van Horne. I have since employed this term, using the definition I once gave afrology, that is, “the Afrocentric study of African phenomena.”

Temple University's doctoral program established in 1987 quickly adopted the new movement as a way to advance a disciplinary approach to the area of study. Africology as the Afrocentric study of African phenomena was more than an aggregation of courses about African people. One could find at a number of institutions a list of courses on African subjects, but it was only when there was a discipline, as defined by philosophy, methods, and orientation to data, that one could speak of a discipline. Africology was being used at Wisconsin and Temple to signal that there was no longer a field, but a discipline of study. It had become fashionable to speak of Black Studies or Africana Studies as a field of study with numerous disciplines contributing to the study of African people. This was based on the old ethnic studies or area study model. For the Africologist this was a dead-end model that would lead neither to the growth of the study of African phenomena, nor to the advancement of scientific methods.

Africologists repeat the dictum that a department is not a discipline and a discipline does not constitute a department. A department is an administrative, not an intellectual project. Although it takes intelligence to organize a department so that the administrative functions of the faculty members can be carried out, the real intellectual discourse is around philosophical orientations and theoretical emphases that create a discipline. It is clearer today than ever before among scholars who articulate the Africological Movement position that there are numerous interests, such as social work, social institutions, literary studies, historical experiences, psychological questions, and linguistic issues, but only one discipline.

Those who accept this view are growing in numbers as well as in influence. Fundamental to this project is the belief that Cheikh Anta Diop was correct to argue that until Africans dare to connect Ancient Egypt to the rest of Africa there could be no true interpretation of African history (Diop, 1976).. Diop understood the significance of examining the classical civilizations

of Africa as a prelude to any discourse on anything African. Separating the study of African culture or civilizations by the Atlantic Ocean is a peculiar saline demarcation that does not exist in any real sense. Thus, to speak of a black Atlantic makes no real intellectual sense when you assume that Brazil, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Jamaica and Panama do not have anything to do with Africans in England or the United States. Indeed, all Africans on both sides of the Atlantic are inextricably joined by a common experience and a common cultural response, however tailored the response is to specific histories.

### The Issues of Theory and Method

The challenge to Africologists in the post-modern era is to devise ways to explore African phenomena that avoid the worst pitfalls of Western theories and methods. This means that the source of the theories must be in the historical and lived-experiences of the African people wherever they appear in the world. Congruent theories of African phenomena have symmetry to African life. This does not mean that we cannot learn from theories developed in other places, but rather that symmetry to one's own phenomenological history is a better way to view reality. I think that the issues of method are similar.

To examine theory and method is to confront the problem of Western science's attempt to bifurcate the study of human experiences. In most departments of Africology we are faced with deciding whether we are in the social sciences or the humanities. Here we are at Eshu's crossroads, presented with a choice. If we claim to be social scientists, studying the nature of human behavior, we wonder about our interests in the creations of human beings, in art, literature, and music. If we claim to be in the humanities, then we are left asking questions about our interests in how African people survive under the pressures of racist brutality and

discrimination. So we are caught between the Limpopo and the Zambezi, if we cross the first we are leaving behind the Great Zimbabwe and if we cross the second, we also leave behind the Great Zimbabwe. The resolution of this issue can only come from our own cultural center. As we stand on the pinnacle of the Great Zimbabwe, we must see our world going out to the various ends but not being defined by one or the other.

All departments of Africology should have the ability to articulate both interests as a part of the philosophical project. In the first place the study of African phenomena for us does not subscribe to the Western division where you separate behavioral type studies from creative type studies. Our concentrations in Cultural Aesthetics or in Social Behavioral is intended to suggest that what passes for social sciences includes far more than psychology or sociology and what passes for arts and humanities includes far more than writing and dancing.

### Living with Athens and Rome

Our confrontation with the social sciences and humanities occurs because the American Academy was essentially defined with a Greek or Roman head at the beginning of all academic knowledge. Since African American studies departments exist within American academies they are victims of the categories of Western society. Each of the Western liberal arts, comprising the core of the humanities, is accredited to either a Greek or Roman founder.

Unfortunately, Africologists have often bought into this system of thinking which prevents them from examining the records that exist before the Greeks and the Romans. The earliest philosophers in the world are African philosophers. The names and works of Imhotep, Ptahhotep, Kagemni, Amenemhat, Amenomope, Akhenaten, Merikare, and Duauf must be



studied in our departments in order to gain a clear conception of the origin of even the Western ideas of liberal arts (Asante, 2000).

When I created the first Ph.D. program in African American Studies in 1987 at Temple University I had to keep uppermost in my mind the fact that African intellectual traditions were not anti-people. In fact, the doctoral program in African American Studies had to be a people-affirming program. Writing and defending a program that was considered to be far from the usual university development fare had its disappointments and rewards. I understood precisely what we were up against when the proposal went to the Graduate Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences. Not only were there people with Neanderthalian ideas but some who did not want to see any challenge to the hegemony of European education even if it meant that they would be less educated if they did not know the information. They were in bliss in their ignorance. When the first 35 graduate students entered the university in the Fall 1988 they changed forever the nature of education at predominantly white institutions in America. But they changed something else as well, the intellectual basis for African American Studies. The only way that I could justify the creation of a doctoral program was that we were teaching something that was not being taught anywhere else. This meant that those of us who worked in the department had to commit discipline suicide from our old doctorates and work feverishly to flesh out this new discipline that was not African American history, not African American literature, not Women's studies, not African American sociology, and not Studies in Racism.

We confronted the turf wars with other departments and won on the merits of what it was that we were doing. We found the energy and the time to write the texts and establish the sequences that would demonstrate that we were as much a discipline as any other group of

scholars. The process is not over; it has really only just begun. In Africology it ought to be possible to point to texts that written by scholars in our field, not in literature, English, Sociology, and history, as significant for our graduate students. We are doing more in this regard with the annual Cheikh Anta Diop Conference, the student conferences, the Nommo symposia, and the publication of fundamental works such as *African Intellectual Heritage*, and the editing of numerous journals. Finally, the pursuit of Africology is nearly completed but will not be truly accomplished until contemporary Black Studies departments begin to refurbish their faculties with Ph.D.s who have completed the terminal degree in the field. When we have reached the level of having more than half of our faculty members with degrees in African American Studies we can say that the discipline is secure.

## References

- Asante, Molefi Kete. **Afrocentricity**. Trenton: Africa World Press, 2001. Revised and Expanded.
- Asante, Molefi Kete. **The Afrocentric Idea**. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999. Revised
- Asante, Molefi Kete. **The Egyptian Philosophers**. Chicago: African American Images, 2000.
- Asante, Molefi Kete and Abu Abarry. **The African Intellectual Heritage**. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996.
- Diop, Cheikh Anta. **The African Origin of Civilization**. New York: Lawrence Hill, 1976.

Du Bois, W. E. **The Philadelphia Negro**. Introduction by Elijah Anderson. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996.

Karenga, Maulana. **Introduction to Black Studies**. Los Angeles: University of Sankore Press, 1993

Keita, Maghan. **Race and the Writing of History**. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Mazama, Ama. **Langue et Identité en Guadeloupe: une perspective afrocentrique**. Pointe-a-Pitre: Editions Jasor, 1997.

### **Question 5**

#### **What directions should new scholarship on the field take?**

Unlike other academic disciplines offered by colleges and universities, Black Studies evolved out of the struggles of black students during the 1960s. San Francisco State University in 1968 when it initiated the first Black Studies Department on a four year college campus did so in response to the drive for more racial equity in educational knowledge bases. It was a call for a response to the Westernization of education in the United States and the driving need for another voice, another lens through which the world could be viewed. Black Studies has been emerging since that time and seeking its rightful place in the academy. It has become the dinosaur of

intellectual integrity that will not go away. Black Studies is continuously demanding its rightful place as an acceptable discipline within the academy.

Hence, for many in academe, black Studies evolved and continues to represent an answer to campus unrest and a solution to a problem that would not go away. *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* overthrowing the ideology of separate but equal as well as earlier Supreme Court decisions that stated that racial disparities has no place in graduate school education opened up the doors for black students to earnestly seek undergraduate education which included them from the perspective of their socio-cultural background—the African and African-American experiences. The call for Black Studies demanded social change and social justice. Thus, Black Studies emerged without a model to emulate or courses offered and recognized for their intellectual and academic standards as known and revered by the academic community. The lack of knowledge as to how such an area of study should be developed resulted in the creation of Black Studies as interdisciplinary in philosophy and approach. It appears that it is this approach, which has become the role model and which in its efforts to “keep peace,” has resulted in problems such as marginalization and piecemeal curriculum offerings. After 31 years Black Studies should be a well defined academic discipline within collegiate institutions. However, not unlike many disciplines it has spawned, Black Studies is still emerging. Important challenges still remain.

Present challenges focus on such concerns as whether or not Black Studies is a viable area of study that therefore should be maintained by colleges and universities. Controversy is still alive around the validity of the discipline, the usefulness of the discipline as a preparatory major for students seeking careers in law, business, medicine and other types of employment, the concern over whether or not the information being imparted as Black Studies meets the standards

given to academic disciplines, the credibility of the credentials of scholars teaching in the field, and the value and viability of the discipline for colleges and universities today.

Thus, the future directions new scholarship in the field should take provide the greatest challenge to the discipline since its inception in 1968. The new scholarship needs to include a number of precursory acts: a common nomenclature that provides the framework for a common theoretical perspective or perspectives which ultimately guide the administrative structure, the mission and vision for the discipline, the curriculum offered, and the faculty recruitment and retention criterion. Therefore, the new scholarship in the field should be based on the intersectionality of race, class and gender. This approach to the new scholarship can according to Inez Reed provides an opportunity for scholarly revision of historical and cultural myths related to people of African descent throughout the Diaspora. Intersectionality of race, class and gender necessitate an understanding of their interrelationship as well as their effect upon each other. This approach removes, it seems, the notion that Blacks can be viewed independent of each. In other words, intersectionality removes the assumption that one is either black or male, or black or female but rather that one is both black and male or black and female. Further, this removes the notion that all experiences are male/white or white/female. It is just this notion that contributed to the struggle for Black Studies as a separate entity and area of study.

The new scholarship is about the intellectual and academic integrity of the need for all students, not just blacks, to understand that African-American/black history is American history. This inclusion would lead to more research being initiated by black Americans about Black Americans in the Americas and throughout the Diaspora. People of African descent have given away the documentation of their history to the other. The new scholarship requires a reconnect with the history as fact and not as a romantic ideology whose time has arrived. This agenda calls

for the legitimization of Black Studies by college/university administrators, faculty and students. This approach necessitates a call for the revision of Black Studies based on traditions and scholarship defined by those in the field of Black Studies. Further, it mandates a revisiting of the American societal traditions which reinforce sexism, racism and classism.

While multiculturalism and ethnic studies are the driving forces of today, Black Studies cannot allow itself to be consumed under these dimensions and thereby lose its impact on the study of race as it exists within our society. The subject area has to include a thorough investigation of race and ethnicity. This suggested area of scholarship is not about race hating, but about the challenges related to the meaning of race within the American society. This suggested area of scholarship is not about race hating, but about the challenges related to the meaning of race within the American society. The new scholarship demands that perhaps the discussion begins with such a definition of racial formation as offered by Michael Omi and Howard Winant and move toward a definition that places blacks elsewhere than as outsider. Omi and Winant define racial formation as “the sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed and destroyed. . . .race is a matter of both social structure and cultural representation.”<sup>2</sup> Black Studies in the new scholarship must include a more thorough presentation of race as factor in other inequities such as class and gender.

Moreover, the new scholarship should include the study of black women in the Americans, on the Continent and throughout the Diaspora. James Turner, Delores Aldridge, Maulana Karenga and others call for Black Studies to aggressively include gender and women’s histories in any revisions undertaken by the discipline. The inclusion and recognition of black women as advocates and contributors to the revolution for Black Studies is are long overdue.

---

<sup>2</sup> Michael Omi and Howard Winant, “Racial Formation,” in Lisa Heldke and Peg O’Connor, *Oppression, Privilege, and Resistance*, (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2003), 117.

The inclusion of black women, not as objects, but equal partners in the building of or revision of black life requires academic reform by black men, white men, white women and black women. It further requires that black women permit their voices to be heard—to represent a new lens through which to understand black life and traditions. Black Studies, from its inception to the present, has emerged as male dominated even though black women were initially involved in the struggle for inclusion of Black Studies on college campuses. The intent of the new scholarship is not to create a divide between black men and black women, but rather to enhance the learning opportunities for those engaged in Black Studies. To minimize either group, that is black men or black women, is a destructive act. Both must be included in the curriculum. The new scholarship must offer essential strategies for the inclusion of women in the discourse, to teach varied course offerings and not just Women’s Studies and to solicit their input in the revamping/redesign of the discipline.

It is to be noted that “Throughout history, Black/Africana Studies has opened doors for black men and women to create a new relationship and scholarship.”<sup>3</sup> Laverne Gyant adds: “a relationship that has cross disciplines, a relationship that has made it possible for the field to grow in areas of theory, leadership, and policy. . . . They see their teaching, e, and leadership in Black/Africana Studies as contributing to and expanding the history and culture of people of African descent.”<sup>4</sup> Another challenge confronting women and the new scholarship is related to Delores Aldridge’s ideas about the integration of African Women into Africana Studies. Aldridge notes that is a need for the “Continued involvement of Africana women with womanist perspectives in leadership positions in the professional bodies for Africana Studies so that

---

<sup>3</sup> J. Cole and M. M. Gordon, “Black Women As Colleagues in Black Studies,” *New England Journal of Black Studies*, 1981, 3-8.

<sup>4</sup> Laverne Gyant, “The Missing Link: Women in Black/Africana Studies in Delores Aldridge and Carlene Young, eds. *Out of the Revolution: The Development of Africana Studies* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2000), 181.

programs and policies reflect their perspectives. . . .Increased attention to developing new and restructuring old curricula to reflect a balance that is inclusive of Africana women.<sup>5</sup> The new scholarship will require that gender differences are placed aside in order to ensure the continuation of Black Studies as an academic discipline.

Class becomes an issue because of the disparities confronting Black Americans growing out of race and gender issues. Class differences need to be included in the new scholarship that will address the pertinent needs of blacks and provide some strategies for helping students understand the dynamics of economics and its impact on Black Americans. Class differences have impacted the black community and courses on Black Economics in relationship to the dominant group can enhance the quality of life for Black Americans as a group and as a community. Class is also a marker in terms of how blacks are viewed on college campuses. So views impact how administrations, white faculty and some black faculty relate to Black Studies as an academic discipline. Thus, the new scholarship can help dismantle the master's house.

In conclusion, the new scholarship in the field of Black/Africana Studies will need to embrace the notion of intersectionality, specifically race, class and gender.

This approach does not eliminate the need for continuous or new scholarship in the areas of internationalism and environmental justice. The new scholarship demands that Black scholars cannot afford to address the challenges of interdisciplinarity and its impact on the continuation of Black Studies. Black Studies scholars are now in a position to design the model for departments on college campuses.

---

<sup>5</sup> Aldridge and Young, 200.



Josephine B. Bradley, Clark Atlanta University

## SUSTAINING BLACK STUDIES: FUNDING CHALLENGES Beverly Guy Sheftall

While there is a considerable amount of scholarship on all aspects of Black Studies, including the status of the field, relatively little is available on the subject of funding.<sup>1</sup> There is no question that the institutionalization of Black Studies in the academy can be linked in significant ways to funding by the Ford Foundation which began in 1969 (five grants went to HBCUs and five to majority institutions). In fact, between the earliest round of grants through the late 1990s, the Foundation “donated over twenty million dollars to both graduate and

---

1 See Delores P. Aldridge and Carlene Young, eds., *Out of the Revolution: The Development of Africana Studies*(2000), which includes a timeline, important demographic data, and bibliographic material.

undergraduate programs and to departments of African American studies.”<sup>2</sup> So it is safe to say that Ford has been critical to the success of the field as it relates to financial support.

Among the many challenges facing Black Studies at this juncture of its history, the issue of funding looms large. This would include funding for both undergraduate and graduate programs, especially at under resourced colleges and universities, particularly HBCUs; specialized Black Studies journals,<sup>3</sup> both disciplinary and interdisciplinary; conferences; research; endowed and visiting professorships; organizations (such as the Association for the Study of Afro American Life and History); and research centers/institutes and libraries.

A number of issues emerge when considering funding issues for Black Studies: 1) How might foundations determine priorities for continued funding? 2) What would constitute cutting edge research in the field and how might these efforts be supported? 3) Should well established programs be privileged? 4) What is the feasibility of substantial funding at wealthy majority universities? 5) In what ways should HBCUs be supported? An overarching issue is the impact of technology on the development of the field and the funding implications for these new developments.

With respect to the particular issue of funding alternatives for sustaining Black Studies over the long haul, there are no easy solutions, especially if the Ford Foundation substantially decreases its support. Rather than speculate about what such alternatives might be, I would suggest the following. Sustained discussions need to occur with respect to barriers that prevent continued financial support of a range of Black Studies initiatives/projects. An examination needs to be undertaken with respect to the history of foundation support for Black Studies (other

---

2 Noliwe M. Rooks, *White Money, Black Power* (2005), 131.

3 These would include *Black Scholar*, *Journal of Negro Education*, *Western Journal of Black Studies*, *African American Review*, *Journal of Black Studies*.

than Ford) since its inception in the early 70s. Which foundations among that group are likely to continue such funding and what new foundations can be identified. What have been some effective strategies over time for attracting foundation funding and what lessons have we learned with respect to both successes and failures? In the present climate of hostility to affirmative action and other race based initiatives, what arguments can be mounted for the urgency of funding Black Studies in the academy?

As we ponder the future of Black Studies, it would be instructive to engage in dialogue about what our most urgent funding priorities might be at the present time and over the next five to ten years. It would also be instructive to conduct a survey of the present level of funding that the over four hundred Black Studies programs are now receiving and the extent to which their funding is generated outside the college or university. Are the resources that the most well funded programs receive used effectively and if so, for what purposes? Since doctoral programs are increasing, what are the funding implications of this new trend? What might we learn from an examination of funding sources for other interdisciplinary programs, such as Women's Studies and other Area Studies? Are there effective collaborations that could be forged in light of scarce resources, especially at less affluent institutions? Is the future of Black Studies tied to the availability of external funding by foundations? What is the likelihood that Black Studies can attract substantial funding from individuals? What has been the history of wealthy individuals contributing to Black Studies? What strategies might be crafted to attract funding from such individuals, including within African American communities? Are there counterparts among Black communities to wealthy feminists who support women's studies projects, including publications such as *Ms.* magazine. Do disasters such as Katrina or the HIV/AIDS pandemic make it more difficult to attract funding for academic programs? How does one respond to the

argument that funding for direct services to embattled Black communities might be a better use of scarce resources?

While solutions to the importance of funding for Black Studies remain somewhat elusive, it is important to engage in discussions with practitioners and foundation officials, as well as corporate executives, about how the important field of Black Studies can not only survive but thrive.

*Do national Black Studies organizations have a role to play in the institutionalization of the field? Describe key elements of that relationship?*

*Response of Ms. Sylvia Cyrus Albritton, Executive Director of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, ASALH.*

Black Studies organizations play a crucial role in the institutionalization of the field. They serve several functions vital to the success of any field. Among those functions are: hosting conferences, publishing scholarly journals, linking scholars to primary and secondary teachers, and linking scholars to the public.

While Black Studies organizations play a critical role in the field, their financial viability is always tenuous, especially the more they emphasize academics. No better case can be found than the history of ASALH.

In the late 1960s, as student protests brought Black Studies to predominately white campuses, ASALH enjoyed a renaissance by serving the rising Black Studies movement. In 1965, Charles Wesley retired from Central State in Ohio and became the full-time, unpaid executive director. Taking advantage of the rise of the modern Black Studies Movement, Wesley republished complete runs of the *Journal of Negro History* and sold them to libraries and sought and received outside funding from foundations, including a large grant from the Ford Foundation. As young scholars entered graduate programs and received their degrees, ASALH conferences grew, averaging roughly 2,000 for several years.

Despite the growth, ASALH began to struggle financially again by the mid-1970s. *The Journal of Negro History* no longer kept a regular publishing schedule, driving its institutional subscriber list from over 12,000 to less than 400 by the year 2000. The annual meetings declined in registration, reaching a low of 250 in 2002. By the late 1990s, the conferences were running large deficits. The membership fell to fewer than 500, most of whom were life members. ASALH stayed alive by selling capital assets.

Since 2003, ASALH has rebuilt itself and it is financially in the black for the first time in over thirty years. The Journal of African American History, edited by V.P. Franklin, is published on time. Institutional memberships to the journal are stable at over 900 a year. The membership is again over 2,000. The conferences have grown by 25% a year, and we anticipate over 1,000 registrants this year when we meet in Atlanta.

Though scholars have started returning to the conference and renewing their memberships, ASALH has been revitalized not by appealing to scholars and certainly our financial stability is not a result of membership dues. ASALH is on the mend because we have returned to our origins—serving teachers and the general public. In 1926, when Woodson established Negro History Week, he transformed the organization from one with a mission to inform the educated elite to one that sought to educate the public about the role of people of African descent in the history of mankind. The public responded, and teachers and lay people became the primary supporters of the association. Woodson created products to serve the needs of teachers, who were looking for materials on black history to teach their students. In 1937, he started the *Negro History Bulletin* which aimed at providing them materials to aid them in teaching. Shortly after starting Negro History week, the demand for black history clubs led him to promote the creation of branches. The public responded to the Association's efforts by joining ASALH and donating their funds to the cause. The Association had been financially strapped since the death of Carter G. Woodson in 1950. Woodson had made up the Association's deficits via donations from his for-profit corporation, the Associated Publishers. Without the funds, without the dedicated leadership driven by service rather than careerism, the Association slowly declined until the renewed philanthropic interests of the late 1960s.

Charles Wesley understood that for the Association to thrive, it would have to find revenue outside of those provided by membership dues and the foundations. He and a series of executive directors sought to gain those resources via the Associated Publishers but were never able to put the publishing house on a sound financial footing. Yet over the years, the rising academics in the organization emphasized the academic functions of the organization, and a rift developed between the scholars and the lay people. Ironically, when the academics ceased to join and attend the conferences, it was the lay people, operating through branches, who kept ASALH alive.

Over the past two years, we have taken strides to appeal to our entire constituency—teachers, the history conscious public, as well as academics. Towards that end, we have hired a Director of Membership Services, whose focus is on starting new branches and seeking out teachers for memberships. We have changed the format of the Black History Bulletin. Originally established as a journal for teachers, it became a publishing place for scholarly articles written by historians. It is now a journal for teachers by teachers, edited by scholars who specialize in teacher training. We have created a black history magazine, a general interest publication, to reach the public. At our convention, we have incorporated a day for youth, which brings in students from our host city to learn leadership skills by focusing on black history. We have also expanded and enhanced our teachers' workshop. Additionally, we have started programming with our branches in mind.

Already the shift in emphasis to teachers and the public has paid off. Since 2002, our annual convention has grown at a pace of approximately 50% a year. This year in Atlanta we expect registration to reach between 1,200 and 1,500. More importantly, our convention now produces a positive revenue stream that pays a significant percent of our staff cost. The academic sessions have grown from 35 to 90, but the real growth has come from the teachers'

workshops and youth activities. Sponsors are willing to underwrite the cost of events for teachers and youth much more often than they are willing to pay for academic development.

Whereas ASALH has struggled to gain institutional memberships from Black Studies and History Departments and has had only modest success in selling journal subscriptions to university libraries, we have had much greater success with public schools. Maryland is taking steps to provide institutional memberships for all the public schools in the state. With the so-called “no child left behind policy,” we have found that corporations are concerned about the decline of the social sciences and have received funding to address this problem by providing institutional memberships to schools.

Another source of revenue over expenses for ASALH comes from our annual convention, where the academic program is seen as only one of the major features of the conference. Since 2003, ASALH has held a Youth Day, an outreach program for teenagers in our host city. Since 2004, ASALH has placed a greater emphasis on teacher workshops. These two activities account for bringing the annual conference a positive revenue flow. Sponsors are willing to donate funds for children to learn history and to train teachers to teach them. Very few philanthropists are willing to assist in helping scholars develop their careers.

In the last two years, ASALH’s major grants have come from funding sources not connected to the tradition of scholarship and service to the academy. Indeed, they are interested in ASALH’s development of its traditional mission—service to teachers and the public at large. *Farmers Insurance* has partnered with ASALH and developed a multimedia DVD—*Freedom Song*—that comes with printed lesson plans for teachers for use in primary and secondary schools. The relationship continues, and we expect it to expand to more efforts to reach teachers and the black community. Our efforts to bring black history to the public has resulted in ASALH’s receiving a major grant from Wachovia to redevelop our Black History product line for the black community at large and further extend our efforts at serving teachers.

Historically, ASALH has played a vital role in the institutionalization of Black Studies and it has every intention of continuing to do so. Without the *Journal of African American Studies* and without the academic program at our annual convention, Black history in the academy would be seriously hampered. We are well aware that when our journal was published irregularly, careers were affected and the field was largely adrift. Young scholars in history lacked a critical place to publish. When our conventions dwindled in the number of participants, the opportunity to debate the past and the direction of Black Studies was affected.

Yet there must be a recognition that the membership dues of scholars—at least at the rate they can afford to pay—are not sufficient to make for a vibrant institution, as the history of ASALH shows. It suggests that there is a need for philanthropy concerned about Black Studies to assist in underwriting the cost of academic endeavors. The *JAAH* is published regularly only because of the sacrifices of our editor, V.P. Franklin. He works for a pittance, and he has only one assistant. If ASALH had to replace V.P. Franklin today with a scholar of comparable standing, we would have to double the editor’s stipend, pay tuition remission and stipends for at least two graduate students, and hire at least one associate editor.

Our success at attracting high school, college, and graduate students is a development in which we take great pride and we consider it vital to developing scholars. Indeed, young scholars find our conference the perfect place to be launched into the academic world, and every year we hold sessions on professional development. Established originally with funds from the Ford Foundation, we continue our essay contest for undergraduates and graduate students.

Yet, the cost of nurturing young scholars is great. With student memberships at \$20 and student conference registration at \$25, ASALH loses money on each student member. Indeed, \$20 does not even pay for the per unit cost of the journal, not to mention the other publications and mailings. Since the original grant, the essay contest receives some sponsorship from time to time, but we often must fund it with our own resources. Funding that defrays the cost of student membership and assists them in convention attendance would go a long way in assuring the future of Black Studies.

Without funding from foundations that historically have valued scholarship, ASALH will continue its core mission of promoting and advancing scholarship and scholars. Yet financial viability will dictate that the organization give greater attention to teachers, youth, and the general public—areas valued by corporate funding sources. Without funding, the production of new knowledge will undoubtedly take a back seat to disseminating existing knowledge to the public.

## **Bringing the Community Back In Black Studies**

**By  
Charles P. Henry**

**Abstract:** By many accounts Black Studies programs across the country have abandoned a central theme of their creation over thirty-five years ago—service to the “Black community.” This paper explores the reasons for the disappearance of community service, some clarification of the meaning of community and role of Black intellectuals in it, and some best practices.

In the spring of 1968, Black students at the University of California at Berkeley, like Black college students across the country, demanded that school officials establish a Black Studies program. Their proposal to the administration said, “[t]he college and university campuses of America are a long way from where most of us come. Our homeland (known to white folks as the GHETTO) is hardly conducive to the growing of ivy. ‘Mother wits’ was our thing, not encyclopedias.”<sup>i</sup> They went on to critique what they found on campus: “[e]ducation in America, as we have come to know it, is a strictly utilitarian endeavor. The colleges and universities have not been established for the sake of education.”<sup>ii</sup> The students determined that these institutions of higher learning perpetuated and continued a national life that wrought “unspeakable horrors” upon its citizens of color. Knowing this, they moved to “institute all those changes prerequisite to our survival in an openly hostile country.” They demanded a “program of ‘BLACK STUDIES’, a program which will be of, by, and for black people.”<sup>iii</sup>

on social science. Citing a Black intellectual tradition linking theory with practice, Marable contends that the now classic texts used in Black Studies and written before the 1960s were largely produced either outside the academy or at segregated all-Black colleges.

Marable's implied contention that those with an organic connection to the Black community produce the best work in Black Studies has long been a subject of debate. One of those now classic texts, Carter G. Woodson's *The Mis-education of the Negro*, argues that "[w]ith 'mis-educated Negroes' in control themselves, however, it is doubtful that the system would be very much different from what it is or that it would rapidly undergo change. The Negroes thus placed in charge would be the products of the same system and would show no more conception of the task at hand than do the whites who have educated them and shaped their minds as they would have them function.<sup>x</sup> In 1933, Woodson calls on scholars to get out of the classroom and scientifically investigate the Negro community.

Almost thirty years later, E. Franklin Frazier issues an even stronger condemnation of American Negro intellectuals. He believes they are unconcerned about the impact of Western Civilization on traditional Black culture and instead tend to deal with superficial aspects of the material standard of living. The cause in part, says Frazier, is due to the anti-intellectualism of the Black middle-class. Which makes its intellectuals dependent on White philanthropy. He goes so far as to say the only significant studies of the Negro in politics have come from White scholars.<sup>xi</sup>

Of course, the Black Studies movement was aimed at correcting the very problems identified by Woodson and Frazier. Yet Cornell West argues that there were "more and better black intellectuals prior to the sixties."<sup>xii</sup> The reasons for this says West are the possibility of a decent grounding in a Black college or participation in a literate subculture—especially in large urban centers—of writers, painters, musicians and politicians. West believes Black intellectuals today mostly fall within two camps. The "successful" ones are distant from the Black community and the "unsuccessful" ones are disdainful of the White intellectual world. West advocates the creation or reactivation of institutional networks that promote high-quality critical habits primarily for the purpose of Black insurgency.<sup>xiii</sup>

Whether the Black intellectuals of today are better or worse than their predecessors still leaves us with the question of where do we go from here? First, I believe we need to demystify and complicate the concept of the "Black community." As Adolph Reed, Jr. notes "[a]ssertion of links to, roots in, messages from, or the wisdom of 'the community' is more a way to end a conversation about politics than to begin one."<sup>xiv</sup> Using it as a big trump in a game of one-upmanship to legitimate one's identity, authenticate one's position or curtail dissent is dishonest at best and detrimental at worst.

The "Black community," like any other community that does not meet face-to-face on a continuous basis, is an "imagined community." It is composed of individuals of various classes, genders, religions and ideologies with different interests and issues. Due to progressive changes in immigration laws and the growing class gap in the Black population, the national Black community is more diverse and therefore more fragmented than ever. Therefore when we propose a community activity or program we need to specify exactly who will benefit and who will bear the cost.

Second, we need to establish a register or clearinghouse for best practices. Recognizing there is no template for a successful community program that fits every situation, we can nonetheless begin to delineate programs that seem to work from those that do not. Are Black Studies programs better off sticking to their expertise in education or are there models of success



Yet, the cost of nurturing young scholars is great. With student memberships at \$20 and student conference registration at \$25, ASALH loses money on each student member. Indeed, \$20 does not even pay for the per unit cost of the journal, not to mention the other publications and mailings. Since the original grant, the essay contest receives some sponsorship from time to time, but we often must fund it with our own resources. Funding that defrays the cost of student membership and assists them in convention attendance would go a long way in assuring the future of Black Studies.

Without funding from foundations that historically have valued scholarship, ASALH will continue its core mission of promoting and advancing scholarship and scholars. Yet financial viability will dictate that the organization give greater attention to teachers, youth, and the general public—areas valued by corporate funding sources. Without funding, the production of new knowledge will undoubtedly take a back seat to disseminating existing knowledge to the public.

## **Bringing the Community Back In Black Studies**

**By  
Charles P. Henry**

**Abstract:** By many accounts Black Studies programs across the country have abandoned a central theme of their creation over thirty-five years ago—service to the “Black community.” This paper explores the reasons for the disappearance of community service, some clarification of the meaning of community and role of Black intellectuals in it, and some best practices.

In the spring of 1968, Black students at the University of California at Berkeley, like Black college students across the country, demanded that school officials establish a Black Studies program. Their proposal to the administration said, “[t]he college and university campuses of America are a long way from where most of us come. Our homeland (known to white folks as the GHETTO) is hardly conducive to the growing of ivy. ‘Mother wits’ was our thing, not encyclopedias.”<sup>i</sup> They went on to critique what they found on campus: “[e]ducation in America, as we have come to know it, is a strictly utilitarian endeavor. The colleges and universities have not been established for the sake of education.”<sup>ii</sup> The students determined that these institutions of higher learning perpetuated and continued a national life that wrought “unspeakable horrors” upon its citizens of color. Knowing this, they moved to “institute all those changes prerequisite to our survival in an openly hostile country.” They demanded a “program of ‘BLACK STUDIES’, a program which will be of, by, and for black people.”<sup>iii</sup>

in other areas of outreach? The Community Extension Center run by the Black Studies department at Ohio State University, for example, has done a comprehensive analysis of its College Education Opportunity program, which was established in 1976. The list of recommendations flowing from that report is an important reference for those Black Studies programs contemplating similar efforts today.<sup>xv</sup>

Third, we need to distinguish between programs that deliver a particular service to the community such as tutoring and those that draw on community needs to construct a larger theoretical paradigm. James Jennings cites Kenneth Clark's methodology in *Dark Ghetto* as a conceptual model growing directly out of his experience with youth employment programs in Harlem, e.g., HARYOU.<sup>xvi</sup> Joy James would agree with Jennings that theory needs to reflect the conditions of those most vulnerable to state violence.<sup>xvii</sup>

An excellent example of bringing the community back in Black Studies comes from the field of social work. Mekadu Graham demonstrates the importance of African-centered social work paradigms in her discussion of life cycle development programs (rites of passage). She believes that African-centered orientations in these programs are helping change the social work profession's ambivalent attitude toward spirituality as a key dimension of the human condition.<sup>xviii</sup>

Fourth, the issue of independence remains a central one. Ambitious programs of community outreach and involvement are generally funded by external sources. Typically Black Studies departments and programs are limited to a few sources of external funding. Increasing and diversifying those sources is a key in creating significant new programs for and linkages to the "Black community."

Finally, the reward structure of the university itself does not reward and often punishes those academics that engage in community service. We are unlikely to see significant new initiatives to external communities until we reform our own academic community.

Nathaniel Norment, Jr.,  
Associate Professor, Chair  
[nnorme01@temple.edu](mailto:nnorme01@temple.edu)  
Temple University  
Department of African American Studies  
Gladfelter Hall 809  
1115 W. Berks Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19122  
215-204-5073

## **Department and Program Administration**

Most surveys and reports conducted within African American Studies over the past twenty years recommend the department as the most stable academic structure in terms of permanency and autonomy.

Active support of and commitment to the department are key elements for successful program administration in African American Studies. The roles and responsibilities of Chairs/program administrators at Temple and elsewhere encompass a broad range of

management and leadership functions. It is the Chair who influences the climate of the department by providing leadership. An African American Studies department Chair also needs skills in key areas such as managing a budget, dealing with myriad personnel issues, developing a comprehensive assessment plan/self-study as well as recruiting and evaluating faculty members. Empowered to implement academic policy, communicate, facilitate, and administer the philosophy, goals, mission and/or objectives of the discipline and of the (respective) department, the Chair serves as liaison between the university, extra academic communities, faculty and staff.

At Temple University, the roles and responsibilities of Chairs of Departments have changed dramatically in the past three years, due to a number of factors: increased enrollment, competition for students, the increased reliance on part-time faculty as a result of shrinkage in full time, tenured faculty, increased expectations for productivity and external funding, teaching and service and faculty workload. Thus, at Temple, departments have become the “most critical organizational units” and departmental chairs considered among the “most important academic leaders” in the university.

The current academic culture demands that chairs/program administrators and departments consistently refashion, develop, utilize and/or implement techniques to fulfill the roles and responsibilities of effectively managing the academic unit. Some of these include:

- **Maintain open line of communication/open door policy with faculty, students, and administration**

Constant interface between the chair, faculty, administrative staff and students in the department is necessary for open, honest and critical dialogue, exchange of ideas, suggestions, as well as transparency.

- **Consistently request additional full time, tenured faculty appointments or recruit competent part-time faculty (i.e. doctoral candidates; recognized experts; practitioners etc.) to meet increased enrollment and/or compensate for drastic reduction in full time, tenured faculty**

In order to maintain the academic integrity of the discipline under the department model, at least 10 to 15 full time, tenured faculty are needed to teach undergraduate and graduate curricula.

- **Maintain active teaching load of two courses---one core/introductory undergraduate and one graduate (in conferred area of expertise)---per academic semester**

Provides the opportunity for chair/program administrator to contribute in teaching of and enrich students' experiences in the foundational courses of undergraduate and graduate curricula

- **Develop standardized undergraduate major/minor core curricula**

Establishes benchmark for the goals/objectives of the discipline

- **Develop core (course) competencies**

Establishes benchmarks for content of knowledge base, critical analysis, effective oral/written communication, etc. for each course and competencies critical analysis

- **Maintain a close working relationship with faculty in developing a framework for course scheduling**

- **Ensure university facilities are made available to student organizations, CDCs and other extra academic community groups/associations**

- **Establish and maintain working partnership with school districts to assist in the development of African American Studies curricula, syllabi, instructor/teacher training, co-sponsoring of events, etc.**

- **Town Hall Meetings and Community Forums**

Large and small scale gatherings between faculty, students, university and extra academic communities provide a forum to address major issues confronting African American communities

## **African American Studies and Pedagogy**

African American Studies as a teaching profession refers to the techniques by which specific/distinct bodies of knowledge are applied to areas of academic research and instruction within the discipline as well as areas of public policy in African American communities.

Teaching absorbs by far the largest part of the activities of African American Studies' major energies; approximately three fourths of those holding the Ph.D. in African American Studies teach in university or college programs. Those who teach African American Studies must incorporate a pedagogy which transmits the principal ideals of African Centered, culturally relevant knowledge. There is no greater task for those of us who teach within the discipline.

African American Studies must have a basic commitment of service to African American Studies students through intellectual preparation and teaching competence of the highest order. It must be steeped in the historical, cultural, intellectual, and socio—political experiences of people of African descent and value based in so far as the integrity of the learning process must be respected and teachers must possess self-respect and acknowledge that there are variegated cultural and communal responsibilities for all.

### **African Centered Pedagogical Strategy/ies**

The African Worldview introduces students to different theories, schools of thought and methodologies within African American Studies; it provides opportunities for students to engage

in systematic and rigorous examination, interpretation, and application of African American Studies. It constructs an intellectual paradigm to develop African Centered knowledge base, curricula, assessment plans, and pedagogy. Teaching African American Studies requires the utilization of African/African based values, traditions, and rituals to develop African Centered models to advance the process of education and liberation. Knowledge of and adherence to the African Worldview first establishes Africans' contributions to humankind and provides students with a strong foundation for understanding and appreciating the past, critically interrogating the present and longitudinally planning for the future.

Teachers of African American Studies must expose students to African centered pedagogical strategies within the discipline. African Centered pedagogy and African Centered education enable students in African American Studies to experience the world with African and African American beliefs and values as the center. Not only should instructional and curricular approaches present different paradigms in students' worldview, but they should seek to facilitate a "reorientation" of values and behaviors as well. Moreover, African Centered pedagogy in African American Studies must function as the change agent in an applied discipline which leads to positive and lasting change in cultural, political and social in African American communities. A number of ways by which this occurs is to:

- **Ensure undergraduate and graduate core/introductory courses serve as anchor/gateway to the discipline**
- **Use of specific course(s) to develop student research and teaching skills commensurate with departmental philosophy; curricula; syllabi; etc.**
- **Undergraduate/Graduate Research Forums**

- **Expansion of curricula through the addition of Special Topics/Seminar courses to provide students the opportunity to engage in critical issues/topics (e.g. hip hop music and culture; African American gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual experiences ; African American women’s studies; etc.) not traditionally dealt with in African American Studies**
- **Utilization of peer evaluation of all presidential, part time faculty, and teaching assistants**

### *Applied African American Studies*

African American cultural and historical knowledge, techniques, and perspectives must be applied to the range of courses taught in the discipline. Now more than ever, African American Studies researchers and scholars must become actively involved in community and social organizations as well as develop, implement, and evaluate solution-oriented programs that seek to simultaneously both address and improve the socio-cultural, political and economic life conditions in African American communities.

In the tradition of DuBois’ seminal Atlanta University Studies, contemporary African American Studies scholars need to work in an applied context along the areas of health, education, family, relationships, the criminal justice system, and the like. African American linguists, for example, must evaluate the effects of Black English Vernacular and dialect differences on classroom learning. Ethnographers need to study actual schoolroom behavior in an attempt to improve the educational system for African American children. Simply put, we need complete comprehensive investigations of all areas that affect African American communities.

The development of strong research networks requires that all the participants have substantial knowledge of (major) areas of inquiry in African American Studies and related disciplines. By making use of long distance communication, we can assign different task need to solve a problem to different groups in different parts of the nation/world. Existing Ph.D. programs at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, University of California-Berkeley,



Harvard and Yale Universities should establish consortia with historical Black colleges (e.g., Temple University with Lincoln University, Morgan State, Howard University, Morehouse, Spelman and Clark Atlanta University). With the aid of rapidly advancing technologies, networks of researchers could easily develop and establish extensive cooperative, joint projects among different departments, universities, agencies and the like; the more knowledge about African American Studies disseminated and researched the greater the impact of improving African American communities.

In recent years, many African American Studies graduates have chosen to utilize their specialized training in a variety of nonacademic careers by working in federal, state and local government, international agencies, healthcare centers, nonprofit associations, research and scientific institutes, and program offices. At present, there is no discernible limit for African American Studies graduates with B.A.'s, M.A.'s and Ph.D.'s targeting the nonacademic realm for employment. One area which is ideally targeted for the aims and objectives of Applied African American Studies is the realm of public policy.

### **African American Studies and Public Policy**

It is readily apparent that African American Studies has not fulfilled an important mission of the discipline's initiation, and indeed, policies generated by the Education, Welfare and Crime Bills/Drug Laws have been formulated and enacted without our input. African American Studies researchers and scholars then, need to build on extant relationships and develop new liaisons in concert with local, regional, and national professional organizations, civic, religious and political groups, with the goal of developing and implementing specific policies in African American communities.

In this sense, an African American Studies practitioner is simultaneously a theorist, a reformer, and an agent of/for change. Her/his job is not only to provide studies in cultural heritage and "consciencization," but to apply the research, scholarship and activity in attempt to (significantly) improve the lives of the black masses. An African American Studies scholar must

be well trained in a multitude of subjects, but her/his interests in these areas must be further distinguished by his or her total commitment to the betterment of African American communities.

## Summary

As we move forward in the twenty-first century, as an academic discipline, African American Studies must continue to examine and expand its theories, methodologies, and epistemologies to impact on the academic terrain; ideally, it must appeal to all facets of the intellectual community. At this juncture, we need to seriously consider and evaluate the role(s) African American Studies has traditionally occupied: (1) Politically, has it sought to strengthen and influence the activities and policies of African American leadership in the service of African American communities; (2) Intellectually, has it created an arena and elevated the level of discourse so that the historical and contemporary life experiences of people of African descent are viewed as significant, instructive, and unique; (3) Socially, has it provided a space in which students are mentored, recognized and supported in their efforts to realize their full academic and individual potential; (4) and Culturally, has it presented people of African descent with ways of viewing the world and living out African based ideas, beliefs, values, and mores.

---

<sup>i</sup> Proposal for Establishing a Black Studies Program, Submitted to University of California by the Afro-American Student Union, Spring 1968, p. 1.

<sup>ii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>iii</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>iv</sup> Proposal For A Third World College, n.d.

<sup>v</sup> Ama Mazama, "Interdisciplinary, Transdisciplinary, or Unidisciplinary?" in Molefi Kete Asante and Maulana Karenga (eds.), *Handbook of Black Studies*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006), pp. 3-15.

<sup>vi</sup> Nathan Hare, "Questions and Answers About Black Studies," in Nathaniel Norment, Jr. (ed.), *The African American Studies Reader*, (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2001), p. 17.

<sup>vii</sup> Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Manning Marable, "A Debate on Activism in Black Studies," in Manning Marable (ed.), *Dispatches from the Ebony Tower*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), p. 187.

<sup>viii</sup> Bill Fletcher, Jr., "Black Studies and the Question of Class," in Marable, (ed.), *Dispatches...*, p. 160.

<sup>ix</sup> Gates and Marable, "A Debate on Activism in Black Studies," in Marable, (ed.), *Dispatches...*, p. 191.

- 
- Strickland, William. (1975) "Black Intellectuals and American Social Science," *The Black World*, 25 (November) 4-10.
- Turner, James, (ed.) (1984) *The Next Decade: Theoretical and Research Issues in Africana Studies*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Weber, Shirley. (1984) "Intellectual Imperative and Necessity for Black Education," in James Turner, (ed.), *The Next Decade: Theoretical and Research Issues in Africana Studies*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, pp. 63-75.

**Question: What will it take to establish intergenerational leadership succession?**

**Answer: A greater focus on methodology in Black Studies.**

Intergenerational succession already exists in Africana Studies. A case might be made that such succession is better structured than in more traditional academic departments. In part this is the result of attacks that have triggered this very Symposium. As a discipline regularly under assault by forces both outside and inside the academy, unity was forced on Africana Studies. Senior and junior colleagues have, for much of our field's history, huddled together to cope with attacks, plan defenses, and devise strategies for the further development of our discipline. A kind of siege mentality existed as well as an understanding that if you opted to

---

be a part of Black Studies, rather than a part of an established discipline, you opted for struggle. You signed up for something very different from a standard academic career.

Ironically, the success of Africana Studies and its complete incorporation---in some universities---at a level equal to that of established disciplines eliminated this source of unity. In some places the goal sought by those (of us) who founded Black Studies, that our students and faculty would be able to operate much as is the case in other departments, has been achieved. Black Studies courses are routinely taught, its students routinely mentored, its faculty routinely hired, and research support routinely provided. Despite this success on some campuses other colleges continue to run near phantom Black Studies programs organized around a few generous faculty (holding appointments in established disciplines) willing to offer courses on what was called in the early 1970s, "the black experience." These programs are often cited in the media reports critical of Africana Studies. The National Council for Black Studies has long insisted that such programs will not work and that departmental status is as essential for Africana Studies as for any other field.

So the issue is not merely one intergenerational succession, but one of cross-institutional understanding and cooperation. There are haves and have-nots in Black Studies. While our field needs to better relations among scholarly generations, it also needs to better relations among institutions. These two tasks are related as some colleges are still stuck back in the near-volunteer programs that were the norm in the early 1970s while others are successful departments with established strong 21<sup>st</sup> century graduate programs. Methodology is one way of drawing these groups together.

---

Methodology is the illegitimate, ugly stepsister in Africana Studies locked away in the closet in the darkest corner of the sub-cellar and only occasionally tossed a scrap or so in a footnote. She has pretty much had to make it on her own. Theory has been the handsome, proud, legitimate sister and she has---as the most cursory reading of any Black Studies anthology will reveal---gotten all the attention. Afrocentrists, Black Feminists, Black Nationalists, Cultural Nationalists, Leftists, Marxists, Multi-Culturalists, New Leftists, Pan-Africanists, Womanists to say nothing of those so comfortably embedded in mainstream academy that they shudder at the thought they might be labeled, have fought their most bloody (and public) fights over theory. These folk have had great fun, no real people have died, and their battles openly fought over the best way to interpret blackness have benefited all.

Because methodology has received so little systematic attention in Africana Studies it constitutes near neutral space in which the future of our discipline might be discussed. While essential the work of Black Studies methodology carries no (well almost no) intellectual baggage. Black Studies theorists of at least three generations are in regular discussions with one another but these debates are generally undertaken in segregated theoretical spaces. So, for example, scholars on the left are still fighting over how American ideas of race might best be negotiated into their Marxist framework. And Afrocentrists debate one another over the many ways Africanity has manifested itself in the Americas. Afrocentrists use Marxists as strawmen, and the reverse is true. Suggested here is not that Africana Studies scholars ought to surrender theoretical high ground---developing and refining theory is crucial ---but that they should be willing to grovel around about in some methodological muck as well.

While theory knits Africana Studies scholars together in a working intergenerational framework and therefore provides needed structure for our field, at the same time it separates

---

scholars into theoretical camps. At present there is no organized constituency in Black Studies for methodology. Methodology mostly comes along as an ideological or disciplinary afterthought. Ideology, theory, methodology, and disciplinarily are all tied together. This package is supported not only by pan-faculty agreement, but by administrators and such funding sources as the Ford Foundation. For nearly three decades the Foundation has generously supported examinations of Africana Studies. But it has mostly confined itself to theoretical, historical, and “current state of the field” explorations. To the best of my knowledge the Ford Foundation has never supported a study of Africana Studies methodology. Nor has any other funding agency.

Yet method is all. Historians ask when, geographers ask where, psychologists ask why, and anthropologists ask how. All these fields (and many other disciplines) then draw on their established methodologies to answer their questions. Their research strategies are not static and evolve over time, but such evolution largely takes place within a discipline.

Methodological suggestions from outside the field are ignored, resented, and resisted. So, for example, literary scholars for the most part, fiercely and nastily fought methodological suggestions from psychologists as to how they might interpret novels. As a new field Africana Studies has boldly asserted what it intends to study, but has devoted little attention to the ways in which this study ought to take place.

Focus on---and discussions around---methodology would not only assure inter-generational leadership, but would shed needed light on important issues in Black Studies. For example, is Africana Studies an interdisciplinary field, a multidisciplinary field, or an entirely new field distinct from other areas of study? This question is typically debated at the theoretical level, although some have attempted to shift the debate from what Black Studies ought to do

---

theoretically to what it actually does. This, as suggested above, is a thorny issue because so many Black Studies Programs are multi-disciplinary by administrative fiat. Faculty involved in the Program are there because they have volunteered, were assigned by the administration, or encouraged (or at least not discouraged) by their home departments. Under these circumstances, the Program becomes a de facto multi-disciplinary one, whether or not those involved would like it to be. But what if the question of the disciplinary identity of Africana Studies was approached from a methodological perspective instead a theoretical one?

Perhaps it would turn out that research training---presently determined by the traditional disciplines---had established such great barriers among Africana Studies scholars that the field could never rest on more than generous willing cooperation among mutually respectful colleagues. Perhaps it would turn out that---at the level of methodology as distinct from disciplinary training and theory---there was much commonality among Black Studies scholars. Who knows? A focus on methodology might help to answer these questions.

Does Africana Studies need a unified methodology to be a unified discipline? Other areas of study regarded as disciplines are divided along methodological lines. Anthropology has for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century been divided into archaeology, cultural Anthropology, linguistics, and physical Anthropology. Though debate is taking place within that discipline about the four fields, each one has a different methodology. In History a formal division is not acknowledged, yet those historians who use the traditional methodology of document scrutiny have gradually (often grudgingly) conceded that ethnohistorians, oral historians, and even folk once snubbed as antiquarians, may sit at the High Historical table. Many established disciplines have legitimated a wide range of methodologies. Clearly, a scholar can be accepted in the discipline of Psychology while employing one of many methods.

---

supposedly known came to be known. They would not just read *The Philadelphia Negro*, but aggressively query the research on which it rests. In turn, Juniors and Seniors, might for example, be asked to figure out why, from a methodological vantage point, such a book as *The Mark of Oppression* is not part of the Black Studies Cannon, while *Black Bourgeoisie* is. Finally, Africana Studies graduate students should be given as much encouragement to study methodology as they are now given to study theory.

In sum, one certain way---no claim is here made that it is the only way---of advancing intergenerational leadership succession in Black Studies will be to give more attention to methodology. A focus on methodology will force new, old, and middle Africana Studies scholars to grapple with how our discipline really works. This examination will create new places in which intergenerational Black Studies leadership will naturally grow.



## Question 8 & Panelists

**Question:**

What role can chief administrators play in the sustaining Black Studies?

**Panelists:**

Ronald W. Bailey – Northeastern  
Malauna Karenga – CSU-Long Beach  
Claudia Mitchell-Kernan – UCLA

**NOTE: The number of the question does not denote its order in the meeting. Paper requirement:**

- 1) Each position paper be completed and emailed to our office no later than April 11, 2006. Your paper will be copied and distributed to each participant prior to the symposium for the purpose of familiarity. (We ask that you not distribute the paper to others or collaborate with each other on your papers.)
- 2) For technological consistency, the paper should be written in word processing software capable of saving the document in either “.doc,” “.rtf,” or “.txt” format. Microsoft Word that is the program we will use to print copies, therefore, the format must be compatible with that program.
- 3) Each paper should be double-spaced using Times New Roman 12 pt font with a maximum of 1750 words and 1” margins.

Think of the paper as a document from which you will give a 5-minute summary of its key issues.

marilyn thomas-houston  
Symposium Coordinator

--



Participants Alphabetical Order.c Question 8.doc Blk Studies Confirmation Lette