

Diaspora Calling

Spring 2021

DIRECTOR'S NOTE



Interim Director *Lori Latrice Martin*

Dear Friends of AAAS:

Thank you for your support of AAAS and its goals and initiatives. It is my pleasure to serve as Interim Director while our Director, Dr. Stephen C. Finley is on leave.

I look forward to working with each of you to continue our efforts to provide students with the knowledge and skills for success at LSU and across the course of their lives. Last year was surely challenging. Nevertheless, AAAS continued to thrive.

Here are some highlights from 2020. I anticipate many more wins in the coming year.

- Completed paperwork for an independent BA in AAAS
- Added a service-learning option to all sections of AAAS 2000
- Submitted proposal for AAAS to become a department
- Added eight new affiliates
- Offered faculty the opportunity to share their research and engage with other scholars as part of our professional development initiatives
- Created a formal mentoring program that matched instructors and junior faculty with senior faculty
- Reactivated the student organization, Society for African and African American Studies
- Met with development representatives to address fundraising needs
- Core faculty and Affiliates maintained rigorous research agendas
- Participated in on search committees for President/Chancellor of LSU, Assistant Professor of Social Work, and Assistant Professor of Political Science
- Served on virtual discussion about the African American experience including Race and the Pandemic, LSU Science Café; The Black Vote, NAACP of LSU; Perspectives, College of Human Sciences and Education; and Diversity Presentation to the Board of Supervisors
- Participated in Diversity retreat
- Participated on Subcommittees that were created as a result of the Diversity retreat, including Subcommittees on Hiring and Retention and Diversity Course Requirement
- Cosponsored a book discussion and lecture with the Athletics Department and a lecture featuring Princeton professor, Dr. Eddie Glaude.



AFRICAN AND AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

135 Howe-Russell Geoscience Complex

Baton Rouge, LA 70803

Telephone: 225-578-5246

Fax: 225-578-5257

aaas@lsu.edu



INTERIM DIRECTOR

Lori Latrice Martin

Professor, Sociology, African & African American Studies

DIRECTOR (On-Leave Spring 2021)

Stephen C. Finley

Associate Professor, Religious Studies and African & African American Studies

CORE FACULTY

Nikita Carney

Assistant Professor, Sociology African and African American Studies

Jas M. Sullivan

Professor, Political Science, Psychology and African & African American Studies

PROFESSOR EMERITUS

Thomas Durant Jr.

EDITOR

Ewart Forde

Graduate Assistant, Sociology

AFFILIATE FACULTY

John Bardes, History

Sarah Becker, Sociology and Women's and Gender Studies, Director of Center for Community Engagement, Learning, and Leadership

Michael Bibler, English

Eldon Birthwright, AAAS

Cassandra Cheney, School of Social Work

Annie Daniel, Director of Veterinary Instructional Design and Outcome Assessment

Melissa Crawford, Office of Strategic Initiatives

Tina Harris, Mass Communications

Fahima Ife, English

Joyce Jackson, Geography & Anthropology

Catherine Jacquet, History and Women's and Gender Studies

Herman Kelly, AAAS

Touria Khannous, Foreign Languages and International Studies

Ashley Mack, Rhetoric & Culture

Ruth Moon Mari, Mass Communications

Brianne Painia, Interdisciplinary Studies

Bryan McCann, Rhetoric & Cultural Studies

Roland Mitchell, Interim Dean, College of Education and Human Sciences

LaKeith Poole, Student-Athlete Mental Health

Petra Robinson, Leadership & Human Resource Development

Raquel Robvais, Communication Studies

Mark Schafer, Sociology

Elena Fitzpatrick Sifford, Art History

Christopher Tyson, LSU Law

Sonja Wiley, Business

AAAS INSTRUCTOR SPOTLIGHT: DR. RAQUEL M. ROBVAIS

Raquel M. Robvais is an Instructor in Communication Studies and African and African American Studies at Louisiana State University. She works within the fields of the Rhetoric of Health and Medicine and African American Studies, examining the symbolic nature and persuasive aspects of bodies, medical discourses, and scientific practices. More specifically, she considers how African American bodies have often been symbolized as disposable discursive sites that are stigmatized and discriminated against.

Her most current research explores the preoccupation and durability of blackness as a “medicalized marker of difference.” She is drawn to the reification of blackness in medical discourse and scientific research, particularly in America during the 19th and 20th century, as these practices and ideologies established paradigms for understanding how race gets written onto bodies and into diseases. The historical processes of racializing diseases are the foundation for her scholarship, which focuses on Sickle Cell Anemia.

Publications

Book Reviews Robvais, R. (2018). Rhetoric Through Everyday Things, by Scot Barnett & Casey Boyle eds. (review). Technical Communication Quarterly.

Robvais, R. (2018). Blood Sugar: Racial Pharmacology and Food Justice in Black America, by Anthony Ryan Hatch Technical Communication Quarterly (review). .

Robvais, R. (2104). Hearing the Hurt: Rhetoric, Aesthetics, & Politics of the New Negro Movement, by Eric King Watts

Rhetoric Society Quarterly, 44:5, 502-505 (review).



Photo of Dr. Raquel Robvais

AAAS AFFILIATE PROFILE: SONJA D. WILEY



Sonja D. Wiley received her Ph.D. from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. She joined LSU, jointly in the College of Business and the Center for Computation Technology in 2002. Associate Professor Wiley is the Donald Lindley and Ruby Wright Phillips Developing Scholar Professor and the Diversity Advisor, for the Stephenson Department of Entrepreneurship & Information Systems; Diversity and Inclusion Faculty Advisor, Office of Business Student Success - E. J. Ourso College of Business.



AAAS celebrated the program's silver anniversary in 2019. As part of our ongoing efforts to commemorate the program's humble beginnings, AAAS seeks to raise \$100,000. The funds will support scholarships for students, beautification of the AAAS office suite, and operating costs. Named scholarships include, Durant Scholars and the Troy Allen Service Award. In keeping with the theme of the campaign, prospective donors are asked to consider giving \$25, or \$250, or \$2,500, or \$25,000, etc. Donations at any level are greatly appreciated. Please send checks to AAAS, 135 Howe-Russell Complex, LSU, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 70803. Make checks payable to AAAS. You may also visit our website (www.lsu.edu/aaas) to make a donation online.

AAAS DIRECTORS

2021

Lori Latrice Martin, Interim Director

2016-Present

Stephen C. Finley

2017-2018

Lori Latrice Martin, Interim Director

2010-2016

Joyce Marie Jackson

2004-2010

Angeletta Gourdine

2001-2004

Leonard Moore

1994-2001

Thomas Durant, Jr.

DID YOU KNOW?

STEPHEN C. FINLEY, BIKO MANDELA GRAY, AND LORI LATRICE MARTIN continues to be a formidable collaboration. Check out their recent book, *The Religion of White Rage*. (Edinburg University Press)



HOW TO MAJOR IN AAAS

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

- A required core of nine (9) hours: AAAS 2000; AAAS 3024 or 3044 (CxC); & AAAS 4020.
- A minimum of 6 hours must focus on a geographical area outside of the U.S.
- 3 hours in a Service Learning or Communication across the Curriculum (CxC) course
- Only 12 hours from courses numbered below 3000-level may count towards degree.

Sign up today to get started!



DID YOU KNOW?

The African & African American Studies Program (AAAS) at LSU is an interdisciplinary program that promotes critical thinking and challenges students to attain the highest levels of intellectual achievement and personal development through the study of ideas, practices, theories, and experiences of Africans, African Americans, and other diasporic communities.

Spring 2021 Course Offerings

<i>Course #</i>	<i>Day/Time Offered</i>	<i>Instructor</i>	<i>Title</i>
AAAS 2000.1	Online Course	Eldon Birthwright	African & African American Studies
AAAS 2000.2	T/TH 7:30-8:50	Herman Kelly	African & African American Studies
AAAS 2050	Online Course	Gabril Cole	Contemporary Africa
AAAS 2410.1	Online Course	Eldon Birthwright	Black Pop Culture
AAAS 2511.1 cross listed w/ SOCL 2511	Online Course	Nikita Carney	Race Relations
AAAS 2511.2 cross listed w/ SOCL 2511	Online Course	Nikita Carney	Race Relations
AAAS 3044.1	Online Course T/TH 10:30-11:50	Raquel Robvais	The Black Rhetorical Traditions
AAAS 3425	TBA	Briana Painia	Black Women in America
AAAS 4020 Cross listed W/SOCL	Online Course	Jas Sullivan	Senior Seminar
AAAS 4900	Online Course T/TH 1:30-2:50	Herman Kelly	Civil Rights
AAAS 7901	TBA	By Special Permission	African and African American Readings

NEWS AND NOTES

- Congratulations, **Dr. Tina M. Harris!** Dr. Harris won the Francine Merritt for Outstanding Contributions to the Lives of Women in Communication.
- **Dr. Lori Latrice Martin** received the Black Student-Athlete Summit Athletic Leadership Award on January 6, 2021.
- **Drs. Cassandra Cheney and Sonja Wiley** introduced a resolution to the Faculty Senate regarding requiring all students complete AAAS 2000 prior to graduation. The idea for the resolution was initiated by the Black Student Athlete Association at LSU and supported by AAAS and a university-wide committee on a diversity required course. **Drs. Stephen C. Finley and Lori Latrice Martin** were members of the university-wide committee.
- The LSU Board of Supervisors recently approved the independent BA in AAAS.
- **Dr. Lori Latrice Martin** is part of the LSU President/Chancellor Selection Committee.
- AAAS cosponsored an event with LSU Athletics feature Princeton professor, Dr. Eddie Glaude. Watch Dr. Glaude's powerful commentary at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jqLctINfn-E&feature=youtu.be>
- **Dr. Finley** held the Executive Director position of the Society for the Study of Black Religion (SSBR).
- **Dr. Martin** is President of Research for ABIS. The organization, which launched in September 2020, is dedicated to addressing racial inequities in sports.

Here are selected recent publications from AAAS faculty.

Keating, K.S., **Becker, S.**, Davis, I., Chandler, T., Slack, T., and Beedasy, J. 2020. Families Coping with Financial Loss Following the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. *Family Relations*. 69(5): 887-906.

Gray, B.M., **Finley, S.C., and Martin, L.L.** (2019). High-Tech Lynching: White Virtual Mobs and University Administrators as Policing Agents in Higher Education. *Issues in Race and Society*. 8:147-176. Published 2020

Gray, B.M., **Finley, S.C., & Martin, L.L.** (2020). "The Soul of White Folk": Race, Affect, and Religion in the Religion of White Rage." In Finley, S.C., Gray, B.M., and Martin, L.L. (Eds). *The Religion of White Rage*. (1-26). Edinburgh University Press.

Martin, L.L. (2020). "American (Un) Civil Religion, the Defense of the White Worker, and Responses to NFL Protests. In Finley, S.C., Gray, B.M., and Martin, L.L. (Eds). *The Religion of White Rage*. (73-84). Edinburgh University Press.

Martin, L.L., Finley, S.C., and Gray, B.M. (2020). “ Race, Religion, and Labor Studies: The Way Forward.” In Finley, S.C., Gray, B.M., and Martin, L.L. (Eds). *The Religion of White Rage*. (227-239). Edinburgh University Press.

Martin, L.L. (Editor). (2020). *Introduction to Africana Demography*. Brill.

Please send your news and notes to aaas@lsu.edu so we can acknowledge and celebrate you!



Emeritus Professor
Dr. Thomas Durant, Jr.