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This issue is dedicated in memory of Dana Rodd Driskell
(December 14, 1951 – January 14, 2021)
Dana’s 2015 interview with the Bronx African American History Project:
https://research.library.fordham.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1281&context=baahp_oralhist
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

This past May I had the honor and privilege of representing Fordham University at a Memorial Day weekend commemoration held at Lakelawn cemetery sponsored by the New York City Department of Veteran Services (DVS). Present for the occasion were DVS Commissioner James Henson; Rear Admiral Charles Rock, Commander of the Navy’s Mid-Atlantic Region; various city and state officials as well as Congressman Jamaal Bowman (D-NY), 16th Congressional District, with whom I am photographed.

Listening to the speakers at this event, I was struck by the recurring themes mentioned by them all: freedom, liberty, justice and sacrifice. When sent into harm’s way, the men and women who have served in the Armed Forces and have given their lives in the defense of our nation, were not asked what religion or denomination they belonged to, they were not asked their race, they were not asked their ethnicity or what region of the country they came from. No, they were called upon, regardless of race, color or creed, to defend our nation from all enemies, foreign and domestic, and to defend the Constitution of the United States.

This year our country and its people have been tested. We, the people, have had to face enemies, foreign and domestic. But through it all, the Constitution has prevailed. Our democracy has endured. In meeting Representative Bowman this past Memorial Day weekend, I realized that I had met an American hero. On January 6th he witnessed the assault on the U.S. Capitol. He saw our democracy tested. But he and his fellow members of Congress upheld the Constitution. They upheld their oath of office. They protected us from a threat from within.

The events of the past year stress the need to protect not just the Constitution but also the right to vote. Too many Americans have died promoting and protecting voting rights. While the U.S. Constitution shields us from totalitarianism, it is up to us to ensure that the laws of the land are upheld by our elected and appointed officials, that the Constitution is respected. They only way this can happen is by registering and exercising our right to vote.

May the example of Rep. Bowman and all those who withstood the assault of January 6th give us hope and courage to face whatever challenges come our way in the defense of our nation.

Robert Bentley Anderson, S.J.
Chair and Associate Professor

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Dana Driskell, who passed away this year, was a supporter of Fordham’s Department of African and African American Studies for more than fifty years of his adult life, starting with the protest demonstration in 1969 which created the Fordham’s Institute of Afro-American Studies right up through the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Department in the Fall of 2019. A product of a vibrant black family in the Morrisania section of the Bronx, Dana was a leader of anti-war and anti-racist activism at Bronx Science High School and around the city before enrolling in Fordham’s Bensalem College. While at Fordham, Dana showed his passion for the intellectual mission of Africana studies by enrolling in many courses of the newly create Institute for Afro-American Studies, distinguishing himself by writing brilliant research papers and exams, but he also participated in the creation of a community school, located in the small building near the Bathgate entrance that now houses Public Safety, which served young people of color in the communities adjoining the Rose Hill Campus.

After a distinguished career of activism and scholarship during his years at Fordham, Dana was awarded a New York City Urban Fellowship, and also earned graduate degrees in Urban Studies at NYU and MIT. When he returned from MIT, he became the first District Manager of Community Board 3 (Morrisania and Claremont Village) where his mission was to help the community rebuild from the wave of disinvestment, abandonment and arson that swept through it in the early and mid-70’s. He then joined the New York City Department of City Planning, where he worked for many years in its Bronx Office, all while helping raise a family of seven children!

During Dana’s distinguished professional career, he always remained a strong supporter of Black Studies at Fordham, coming to lectures, concerts and cultural events the Department (which replaced the Institute in 1976) sponsored and graciously responding to scores of inquiries from students enrolled in Department courses, as well as students involved in the Fordham Urban Studies Program. When the Bronx African American History Project was founded at Fordham in the Spring of 2003, Dana became an enthusiastic supporter of this community based oral history project, contributing an interview about his experiences growing up in the Bronx, along with his history of student activism, that is still widely consulted. Dana also participated in community tours the BAAHP organized and was a regular attendee at jazz concerts the BAAHP sponsored.

Throughout his entire life, Dana Driskell embodied the three interlocking missions of Fordham’s Department of African and African American Studies—scholarship, activism and community engagement. His legacy provides a priceless window into the Department’s origins, as well as a guide to its promising future.

Dr. Mark Naison
Professor of African & African American Studies and History
Founder and Director, Bronx African American History Project
In the summer of 2020, during the height of the Black Lives Matter protests following the murder of George Floyd, I was contacted by Lisa Preti, a lifelong Bronx resident who worked in Student Financial Services, to see if there is anything that could be done to promote a more respectful approach to the Bronx and its people on the Fordham campus. She had heard about the work of the Bronx African American History Project and was told I was the person at Fordham to approach to challenge negative attitudes toward the Bronx at Rose Hill.

I responded to Lisa’s initiative with great enthusiasm, and with her help, launched a group called Fordham Bronx Advocates which would bring together Bronx residents with a history of activism with strategically placed faculty, staff and students at Fordham. Along with student researchers for the Bronx African American History Project and several Fordham alums who lived in the Bronx, the group attracted Allison Keller from the Women’s Basketball Team, Philosophy Professor Dr Judith Jones, Community Artist Lovie Pignata and Sara Bonizio from the Bronx Chamber of Commerce. After several meetings, we decided that the best initiative where Fordham people and Bronx people could work collaboratively would be a mural project. All we needed to do was find a local organization to give us a wall.

Then in February of 2021, Lisa contacted us to say that we had been given a wall by the Madison Boys and Girls Club on 189th street just off Bathgate Avenue, and that Lovie Pignata was willing to design and supervise it if we could raise $2000 to cover her labor costs (a community business was donating the paint and equipment.) At this point, the Bronx African American History Project stepped into action to make sure the mural was painted. With the help of the Fordham Development Office, we started a fundraising campaign among Fordham alum that raised over $2500—-including a $1000 donation from Karen Brifu, a Bronx born Fordham Alum who worked for the Federal Reserve Bank—got additional donations from the Fordham College Dean’s Office, the Chief Diversity Officer and the Center for Community Engaged Learning, and recruited 4 BAAHP student workers to help paint the mural—Bella Iazzetta Bethany Fernandez, Amanda Thomas, and Grace Schmidt.

Many young people from the Madison Boys and Girls Club also worked on the mural and it was honored in a Celebration on May 17 attended by more than 40 people including several Bronx community leaders along with Fordham students, alumni, faculty and staff. The beautiful mural, with a theme of health and food justice, is a monument to what can be done when there is true collaboration between people at Fordham and the people of the Bronx.
Clarence Barlow died from a gunshot wound to the chest on Saturday morning, June 29, 1996, in Grand Coteau, Louisiana. He had been shot by an officer from the Sunset, Louisiana, police force. Barlow was twenty-six years old. He was African American. The officer was white. Although Black Lives Matter did not exist 25 years ago in 1996, a black life did matter. The community of Grand Coteau made that clear.

The facts surrounding Clarence Barlow’s death are straightforward, to a point. In the early hours of Saturday, June 29th, Barlow, a resident of Grand Coteau, a small town in southwest Louisiana, traveled approximately two miles to the adjoining town of Sunset where he robbed the local convenience store. The store video camera caught the act on tape.

The Sunset police investigated. Once they had a positive identification, they obtained permission to enter the Grand Coteau municipality in order to apprehend Barlow.

What transpired next is not so clear. The police later explained that, having located Barlow, they attempted to apprehend him. Barlow, however, had found a piece of piping and was using it to fend off the officers. Backing away from him, one officer slipped and fell to the ground. Barlow allegedly then made a move towards the fallen officer. It was then that another officer shot and hit Barlow in the chest; he died at the scene.

Between the day of the shooting and the funeral the following weekend, the people of Grand Coteau carried out a series of peaceful marches, protesting the actions of the police. They attempted to reach Sunset’s city hall, but couldn’t. They had been denied a marching permit by Sunset officials. This was not surprising. The two towns were a tale of two cities: Grand Coteau was predominantly poor and Black; Sunset, predominantly rich and white.

Clarence Barlow’s funeral was my first. I had just been ordained a priest the month before. For the funeral homily, I preached on forgiveness and reconciliation. What I did not take fully into account (could not take fully into account) was the hurt the community felt, their sense of futility, and their anger. Towards the end of the service, a Barlow relative spoke. It was then, in one line, that we all heard the hurt and the anger of the community: “My cousin did not deserve to die like a dog”.

Later that year, the Department of Justice found no wrongdoing on the part of the police. Eventually the people of the area moved on with their lives; but with every incident involving the police and a young black man, one wonders how many in Grand Coteau and Sunset recall the shooting of Clarence Barlow. Twenty-five years ago, in June 1996, a Black life did matter. And while Clarence Barlow was no saint, he didn’t deserve to die like a dog.
“My cousin did not deserve to die like a dog”
My mother always suggested that I take at least one course of African American history when I enrolled in college. Originally giving her pushback as I ignorantly believed that I knew my history, I finally gave in and enrolled in a course my freshmen year. While what I was taught in high school about slavery, the civil war, and civil rights, wasn’t necessarily a lie, it wasn’t 100% the truth. In American history textbooks, Black people are depicted as weak, abused, and in a state of constant struggle. But through courses within the AAAS Department, I didn’t see weak people, I saw strength, not only abuse but resilience, and while there was and continues to be a state of struggle, I saw triumphs. I majored in African & African American Studies because I wanted to learn the stories of those who were silenced in our education system.

One of my favorite aspects of being an AFAM major is the ability to shape your degree however you desire. With a variety of history and policy classes to pop culture classes, my horizons were truly expanded. Though it is difficult to pick a favorite class as each served a purpose in my studies, if I had to choose, my top 3 courses would include Caribbean Peoples and Culture, Black Pop Culture, and From Rock-N-Roll to Hip-Hop. These 3 courses were also extremely helpful in the development of my thesis, Hamilton: An American Musical Contradiction. When given the task of writing a senior thesis, I wasn’t sure what topic to cover. Throughout my years at Fordham, I have written research papers on women of the Ivory Coast, Artists Against Apartheid movements in South Africa, the connection between West Africa and the Caribbean, and presented on the role cultural hegemony played in the popularization of Tommy Hilfiger’s clothing brand with the presence of Black bodies. Stumped with what my next research venture should entail, I knew I wanted to do something a little out of the ordinary. The truth is, the idea of writing about Lin-Manuel Miranda’s Broadway spectacular, simply came out of the obsession I had for his work. In short, my thesis covers the difference in the perception of hip-hop as the artists from which Miranda drew from are labeled as thugs whereas Founding Father, Alexander Hamilton, given the same themes, is not only a source of inspiration but considered a hero. To understand this topic, my thesis engages in conversations surrounding the role Miranda’s race plays in the acceptance of the play, colorism and the afro-latinx community, music as a form of cultural resistance, the meaning of hip-hop, and Black & White race relations.

While producing a piece of work that I was proud of was a victory within itself, receiving the W.E.B. Du Bois Award brought about a new level of gratification. Having recently used Du Bois’ work as a source for my thesis, to receive an award in his name truly felt like a full circle moment; it was an absolute honor.

My advice to any students who are hesitant about majoring in AFAM is simply, “GO FOR IT!”

Even if you are not sure you want a degree in AFAM, it doesn’t hurt to take a course in the department. You will gain more knowledge and a deeper understanding of racial and social issues that we are faced with today. Yes, there will be times where you may feel uncomfortable as certain topics are mentally and/or emotionally taxing, but through that discomfort, you are graced with the key to our future, the key to social change, the key to a better tomorrow. It is because of my major that I can walk confidently into my next chapter in life. This upcoming fall, I will be attending Fordham University School of Law and it is because of the keys that I have acquired that I can open the door to endless possibilities.
Throughout my undergraduate classes at Fordham, I became increasingly aware of the importance of global finance in addressing world poverty, international corporate abuse, and political conflict. While researching for my thesis senior year, I recognized how limited my knowledge of finance was. My thesis helped to inspire an interest in finance which has led me to currently pursue a Master of Science in Global Finance at Gabelli School of Business. In my graduate program, we learn how to understand the story behind each number on a financial statement. We are taught to recognize the complex strategies that must be created to sustain a multinational corporation. But, most importantly students are consistently reminded of the injustices corporations have committed when ignoring their larger community in pursuit of pleasing shareholders. It is common knowledge that the main goal of most international corporations is to generate profit. But what is needed now and going forward, is a shift in corporate mindset. International corporations have the resources to promote positive social change and should not see doing so as conflicting with their initial goal. Millennials and Generation Z want to invest in companies that are working to address issues like climate change and income inequality. It is no longer enough that companies offer good quality products. They must also serve the needs of the people who are their consumers, employees, and shareholders.

My master's program has shown me how crucial financial literacy is and how those without it can be exploited.

We make the best financial decisions based on the information we have access to. For some, this can lead to disastrous outcomes in the future. An example of this is discussed in the book "The Color of Money: Black Banks and the Racial Wealth Gap" by Mehrsa Baradaran. The author discusses how loan borrowers who qualified for prime loans were persuaded to take on subprime loans that have a higher interest rate and fees. These loans are typically offered to borrowers with less-than-ideal credit but as shown were also offered to many Black families who qualified for prime loans. Since interest rates were higher on subprime loans the mortgage brokers made higher premiums. While mortgage brokers and investors benefited, families, looking to provide generational wealth for their children suffered. It would be unwise to suggest that general knowledge of financial markets is enough to protect people from being exploited. Financial markets must be efficient and safe to attract investors and cannot be if people feel there is deception and fraud in the industry.

I intend to apply to law school following the completion of my master's. The Master of Science in Global Finance continues to provide the skills and resources necessary to feel confident pursuing a career in corporate law. My long-term goal is to work for a global corporate firm in the hope that I can work to address the issues previously discussed. Finally, I would like to thank the African and African American studies department. It was in my time as an undergraduate at Fordham that I was truly inspired. My relationship with my professors, has most informed my present outlook. By having someone that broadens and challenges your prior conceptions, you are forced to confront the issues that you see every day. I began to recognize not only why these issues must be addressed but also how they can be.
Virtual Interdisciplinary Faculty Seminar: James Baldwin’s America – October 28, 2020

Since 2017, AAAS has been hosting the faculty seminar that brings together faculty from different departments and programs to discuss selected articles, books, and scholarship of junior faculty at Fordham. By including faculty from across the University, the seminar is intended to promote interdisciplinary conversation among its members. Members of the Seminar read and discussed Eddie S. Gaude, Jr.’s Begin Again: James Baldwin’s America and Its Urgent Lessons for Our Own via a virtual gathering in December 2020. Faculty from English, History, Comm. & Media Studies, Theology, Modern Languages, Sociology & Anthropology, Political Science, and Psychology were invited to participate in the Seminar.

Freedom and Slavery Working Group: 2020-21 Virtual Workshops – October 26, 2020, February 12, 2021 & March 5, 2021

For the 2020-2021 academic year Laurie Lambert, Associate Professor of African and African American Studies and Yuko Miki, Associate Professor in the department of History, were granted another year of generous funding from A&S Deans, AAAS, and LALSI to support “Narrating Slavery,” a multi-disciplinary project to study the Trans-Atlantic slave trade from historical, literary, and theoretical perspectives which they began in 2019-2020. This project is concerned with archival, historical, and literary representations of slavery and its aftermaths. The group met once in fall semester and twice in the spring semester creating a collaborative space for faculty and graduate students working on questions related to slavery to share work and receive feedback on their research-in-progress. The first meeting was on October 26, 2020, Prof. Laurie Lambert had a conversation with Prof. Ronald Cummings (Brock University) on her recently published book, Comrade Sister: Caribbean Feminist Revisions of the Grenada Revolution (Virginia, 2020). The Book Talk was held via Zoom at 6pm with over 50 online registrants in attendance. The second meeting was held on February 12, 2021 via Zoom at 10am. Prof. Westenley Alcenat presented a chapter from his book-in-progress, "An Asylum for Mankind" to "An Empire of Liberty:" Reversing the Sails of Black Emigration in the Revolutionary Atlantic. The final meeting was on March 5, 2021, Prof. James Cantres, from Hunter College CUNY, had a conversation on his recently published book, Blackening Britain: Caribbean Radicalism from Windrush to Decolonization (Rowman & Littlefield, 2020). The Book Talk was held via Zoom at 12pm.
Black History Month Webinar: Black Lives Matter and the American Political Landscape – February 18, 2020

Each year for Black History Month the Department of African and African American Studies at Fordham University invites a guest speaker to address the Fordham community. For February 2021 the department put together a panel of Fordham women scholars. This was a virtual panel discussion hosted by Dr. Laurie Lambert, Associate Professor in the Department of African & African American Studies. The panel consisted of Doctors Christina Greer, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Fordham University; Catherine Powell, Professor, Fordham University School of Law; and Michele Prettyman, Assistant Professor, Department of Communication and Media Studies. More than 130 registrants attended this event which was co-sponsored by The Center of Race, Law and Justice at Fordham School of Law.

Virtual Student Spotlight Series- February 10, 2021, March 26, 2021 & April 21, 2021

For the past ten years, the department has hosted an annual Student-Led Conference, where we select 8-12 outstanding students from the previous semester to give a short presentation on their final papers. Rather than having a marathon day of zoom presentations, we decided to spread out the panels over the months of February, March and April. Student Spotlight events, each highlighted an area of research or concentration of the department: Africa, U.S., and the Caribbean. This was more a conversational style interaction with the professor discussing with his/her students their research projects. In addition to being a live event, the spotlights were recorded and short clips of these events were posted to the department website. This allowed us to publicize student research to a broader audience than usual. The first Student Spotlight event, "Opposing Apartheid," was held on February 10th and it was hosted by Fr. R. Bentley Anderson, S.J. Jade Crichlow FCRH'21 and Eric Purisic FCRH'22 had a lively discussion based on their final papers for their Fall 2020 History of South Africa course. The event was featured on Inside Fordham.

The second event, "Caribbean Spotlight," was held on March 26th via Zoom. Dr. Laurie Lambert moderated a conversation with Jemima Molines FCRH'21 and Alyssa Cantrell FCRH'22 with a focus on Jamaica and Haiti based on the Fall 2020 Caribbean Literature course. The final Student Spotlight event, "Anti-Blackness in the Bronx” was held on April 21st via Zoom. Dr. Mark Naison had a very candid conversation with three of his students from the Fall 2020 Bronx: Immigration, Race & Culture course. Gabriel Yancy FCLC'22, Amanda Thomas FCRH'22, and Ian Smith FCLC'22 discussed some of the factors that affect the livelihood of Bronx residents as well as how these realities are reflected within the Fordham campuses.
As one of the largest community-based oral history projects in the nation, The Bronx African American History Project is one of the most unique organizations housed at Fordham. As one of the only campus organizations allowed to host visitors from outside of the Fordham student body, the project’s impact stretches far beyond the gates of the university. Working for the Bronx African American History Project, means working with and for the people of the Bronx. It means allowing Bronxites to share their visions, stories, and art how they best see fit. With this vision in mind, the co-founders of the Bronx COVID-19 Oral History Project (Carlos Rico, Bethany Fernandez, and Veronica Quiroga) strived to lead an initiative that would help the people of the Bronx tell their stories during one of the most challenging times in history—a global pandemic.

Borrowing heavily from the research methodologies implemented by the BAAHP, the Bronx COVID-19 Oral History Project relies on ‘distanced’ interview and research methods. By conducting interviews over Zoom, the project provided both accessibility and safety for both research participants and student researchers during the height of the most threatening plight of modern history. The website hosts a digital archive, a highlights and statistics page (related to policing and other inequalities rampant in the Bronx), as well as a featured artist/business page.

In addition to conducting interviews with essential workers, the project strives to amplify the voices of artists, business owners, students, and philanthropists of the Bronx whose work and lifestyles have been inherently impacted by the proliferation of the virus. As one of the hardest hit boroughs in the nation, many witnessed the Bronx be berated during the early months of the pandemic. The numbers and statistics presented by most media outlets told the story of an undaunted borough, one facing the consequences of irresponsible citizenship. However, the reality was so much more nuanced and complicated than that.

The Bronx COVID-19 Oral History Project was important for two reasons: it provided coverage of the story of Bronxites facing the pandemic and it displayed the power of student leadership and initiative. The Bronx was one of the hardest hit places within New York State, let alone New York City. When the pandemic first reached New York, one of the first containment areas was in New Rochelle, which is only a matter of exits on the I-95 to the Bronx. The Bronx also has connections to Manhattan and Queens, places where Bronxite essential workers were commuting for their livelihood. Even with these considerations, there was not much word or news about the Bronx and how it was affected by the pandemic. Given everything going on, it was necessary for us to amplify the voices of Bronxites. It was important to share the stories of how Bronxites had to adapt, whether it be online learning, telehealth, following the ever-changing COVID guidelines for businesses, and the mental toll of adjusting to these new environments in a fast manner. This does not even touch on the reality that Bronxites were also grieving while going to work and handling their responsibilities. Knowing all of this, it was important to show that during the interview period, we cared about each participant’s story and how they were doing.

Given what we saw, the Bronx COVID-19 Oral History Project gave us the opportunity to give back to the Bronx community. While we did work under the auspices of the Bronx African American History Project, we were given relatively free reign to arrange, conduct, and manage interviews. The Bronx COVID-19 Oral History Project was a student-led and run research project. This is one out of many examples of the ability of the youth to make an impact in the world around them. The work that we do follows a long history of youth advocacy including the founding and formation of the Student Non-Violence Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Black Panther Party and the Black Lives Matter movement. It is important to continue and echo that the young people are able to get involved and advocate. It definitely may seem impossible, but the Bronx COVID-19 Oral History Project serves as one of many examples of how this type of work is possible for anyone. Through our work and dedication, I believe that this message shines through with the dedication placed into this project, and everything we were able to learn.

What was discovered through our research was a dedicated, authentic, and human picture of the Bronx unlike any project has seen before. Despite one of the darkest eras of the city in recent memory, the light of community, family, and perseverance shown through in the voices of the Bronx COVID-19 Project. When food insecurity became prevalent, Mariel Gonzalez aided in giving food back to her community. When protests arose and the cry for a more just nation became louder, Diontay Santiago organized and marched onward for change. When her non profit faced uncertainty, Paige Fraser committed to serving her community through virtual programs, events, and sessions to make sure that they were still heard.
As the city and the world begin to recover from this pandemic, there is an uncertainty of whether life as we once knew it will ever return. No matter the case, the people that are featured in the Bronx COVID-19 Project are all dedicated to making this city a better place, for themselves, for their families, and for their communities. The feelings of doubt and exhaustion are ones that are synonymous with this past year, especially regarding the dialogue and conversation surrounding leadership and community, both on a local and national level. What has been revealed over the past year, especially through this project, is that there are heroes and leaders everywhere, though they might not necessarily be in front of a camera or pulpit. In recognizing, uplifting, and sharing the voices of the Bronx and local leaders, may the change that so many Americans seek become a reality. It is in the way that history is written, honored, and told that affects the fabric of our national story. Already, this project has changed the way history is being told, having been featured at the Museum of the City of New York in an exhibition titled New York Responds: The First Six Months.

As countless books, articles, and stories will be written about the past year, it is the spirit of those who dared to rise up and fight for their community, despite all odds, that will be felt for generations to come.

ONE PEOPLE ONE BRONX!
AMIR IDRIS

"Is there hope for South Sudan after 10 years of failure," The Hill, July 7, 2021.

"Why the U.S. needs to rethink its policy in the Horn of Africa," The Hill, February 26, 2021.


"South Sudan’s fragile independence is falling apart," The Hill, July 16, 2020.

MARK NAISON


"Trump’s Anti-Intellectualism: As Important As His Racism," LA Progressive, February 1, 2021.


ROBERT BENTLEY ANDERSON


TYESHA MADDOX


"Can Mutual Aid Withstand Pandemic Fatigue," Bloomberg CityLab, April 16, 2021.

Wrote several entries for DK The Back History Book (2021).

LAURIE LAMBERT

Fordham Faculty Challenge Grant (in collaboration with Yuko Miki), 2020-21.

AFFILIATED FACULTY

The Department of African and African American Studies (AAAS) is pleased to announce a new joint program of Affiliated Faculty in AAAS. Recognizing the interdisciplinary nature of the department, this initiative seeks to expand the research and other networks that support it across Arts and Sciences. Furthermore, it’s a step toward fulfilling a goal in Fordham’s Anti-Racism Action Plan, which is to increase support for the Department of African and African American Studies and to elevate the department’s visibility. We extend our sincerest congratulations to all the newly appointed Affiliated Faculty Member in AAAS.
Brandeise Monk-Payton
Assistant Professor | Communication & Media Studies
Brandy Monk-Payton is Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication and Media Studies and affiliated faculty in African & African American Studies at Fordham University. Her academic interests include the theories and histories of African American media representation and cultural production. She is currently writing her first book, Blackness in the Limelight, which focuses on the aesthetics and cultural politics of contemporary Black celebrities. She is also working on a long-term research project on television and Black Lives Matter. Her work has been published in edited collections such as Unwatchable and From Madea to Media Mogul: Theorizing Tyler Perry as well as the journals Film Quarterly, Women’s Studies in Communication, Feminist Media Histories, and Communication, Culture and Critique.

Caitlin Beach
Assistant Professor | Art History & Music
Caitlin Meehye Beach is an assistant professor in the department of Art History and Music. Her teaching and research focus on transatlantic art histories of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with special attention to histories of colonialism, enslavement, and racial capitalism; African and Asian diasporas; labor and industry; and sculpture. Her first book, Sculpture at the Ends of Slavery, is in contract with the University of California Press and will be published in 2022 as a recipient of the Phillips / UMD Book Prize. This research has been supported by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Center for Advanced Studies in the Visual Arts, the Paul Mellon Centre for British Art, the Smithsonian Museum of Art, and the Royal Academy of Arts. She has also written for publications including British Art Studies, Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art, Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide, and the volume Republics and Empires: Italian and American Art in Transnational Perspective, 1840–1970 (Manchester UP, 2021). Before coming to Fordham, Beach taught in the Core Curriculum at Columbia University. She holds an A.B. from Bowdoin College and a Ph.D. from Columbia University.

Christina Greer
Associate Professor | Political Science
Christina M. Greer, PhD is an Associate Professor of Political Science and American Studies at Fordham University (Lincoln Center Campus). She was the 2018 Fellow for the McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research at New York University Silver School of Social Work. Her primary research and teaching interests are racial and ethnic politics, American urban centers, presidential politics, and campaigns and elections. Her additional research interests also include transportation, mayors and public policy in urban centers. Her previous work has compared criminal activity and political responses in Boston and Baltimore as well as Baltimore and St. Louis. Prof. Greer’s book Black Ethnicity: Race, Immigration, and the Pursuit of the American Dream (Oxford University Press, 2013) investigates the increasingly ethnically diverse black populations in the US from Africa and the Caribbean and was the recipient of the WEB du Bois Best Book Award in 2014 given by the National Conference of Black Political Scientists. Professor Greer is currently working on a manuscript detailing the political contributions of Barbara Jordan, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Stacey Abrams. She recently co-edited Black Politics in Transition, which explores gentrification, suburbanization, and immigration of Blacks in America.
Clara Rodriguez
Professor | Sociology


Isaie Dougnon
Assistant Professor | Modern Languages

Isaie Dougnon’s research examines migration, work, and lifecycle in West Africa. Before coming to Fordham, Isaie was a professor of Anthropology at the University of Bamako in Mali where he taught courses on the anthropology of development, migration, and local knowledge. After publishing his first book, *Travail de Blanc, Travail de Noir* (Karthala 2007), Dr. Dougnon published several articles contributing to current debates on child labor. His work uses historical and anthropological approaches to offer a local perspective on labor and migration in colonial and post-colonial Africa. From 2008-2012, he directed the UNESCO-University of Bamako research program Water and Migration. He is currently finishing a book manuscript, *Crises of Passage*, which examines how Malian civil servants engage in secret societies and ritual practices to overcome career impasses and moral crises. Dr. Dougnon has contributed to the debate on the Malian political and humanitarian crisis of 2012 by publishing essays in local and international newspapers and journals. His most recent research examines the crisis of academic freedom and higher education in Mali after the end of dictatorship. He has held several fellowships, including at the Humboldt Foundation, Re:Work (Humboldt University, Berlin), and the Fulbright Foundation. His work has appeared in many journals and edited collections, including *Humanity*, *African Economic History*, *African Identities*, and *Hommes & Migrations*.

Jordan Alexander Stein
Professor | English

Jordan Alexander Stein is a book historian whose research focuses on methods for literary history—-with particular interest in the ways that social identities (including religion, race, and sexuality) inflect material practices (like reading, editing, or printing). With Lara Langer Cohen he co-edited *Early African American Print Culture* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), and in the same year co-directed the American Antiquarian Society’s summer seminar in the history of the book, on “African American Cultures of Print.” A scholarly monograph on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century reading in the Protestant Atlantic, *When Novels Were Books*, was published in 2020 with Harvard University Press. Stein also writes critical non-fiction for venues such as *Avidly, The Awl, The Los Angeles Review of Books, Public Books, Salon, and Slate*. A book-length extension of this work, on reading literary theory in the 1990s, was published on the “Avidly Reads” series from NYU Press in 2019. A related monograph, *Fantasies of Nina Simone*, will be published in 2023. He’s currently thinking a lot about textual transmission and doing some research on print practices in early Haiti.
Julie Kim  
*Associate Professor | English*

Julie Chun Kim is an Associate Professor of English. She has published articles on eighteenth-century Afro-Caribbean medicine, indigenous land rights, natural history, and early Caribbean plantation economies. She is currently writing a book manuscript about the Afro-Caribbean artist John Tyley and his work as a botanical illustrator in the early Atlantic world. Her research and teaching interests include early Caribbean literature and culture, the early Americas, the eighteenth century, empire and colonialism, slavery, the history of science, food, and the environment.

Julie Kleinman  
*Assistant Professor | Anthropology*

Julie Kleinman is an urban anthropologist specializing in migration and social activism in Mali, Senegal, and France. Her 2019 monograph, *Adventure Capital: Migration and the Making of an African Hub in Paris* (University of California Press) received the Laurence Wylie Prize in French Cultural Studies honorable mention. This book examines how West African migrants retool French urban infrastructures to create alternative pathways toward social and economic integration where state institutions have failed. Since 2013, she has been conducting fieldwork in Mali and Senegal for a second book project on everyday pan-Africanism as seen through African migrants’ experience in Mali, deportee rights activism, and returning migrants’ novel approaches to political participation and development projects. Dr. Kleinman’s work has been funded by the SSRC and the Mellon Foundation and has received prizes from the Society for the Anthropology of Europe and the Society for Urban, National, and Transnational/Global Anthropology. In the Spring of 2018, she held the McMillan-Stewart Fellowship at the Hutchins Center’s W.E.B. Du Bois Research Institute of Harvard University.

Michele Prettyman  
*Assistant Professor | Communication & Media Studies*

Michele Prettyman is a scholar of African American cinema, visual and popular culture, and a media consultant. Her recent publications include “The Persistence of Wild Style: Hip Hop and Music Video Culture at the Intersection of Performance and Provocation” in the In Focus Series on Black Liquidity issue in the Journal of Cinema and Media Studies. She also contributed an essay to a recent anthology called, The Lemonade Reader entitled, “To Feel Like A “Natural Woman”: Aretha Franklin, Beyoncé and the Ecological Spirituality of Lemonade.” In 2019 she co-edited and contributed to a "Close Up" series in Black Camera journal focusing on the "New York Scene of black independent filmmaking in New York. She also published in the online journal World Records in its recent issue "Documenting Blackness at the National Museum of African American History and Culture” in 2020.
Monica Rivera Mindt  
*Professor | Psychology*

Dr. Mónica Rivera Mindt, a board-certified neuropsychologist, is Past-President of the Hispanic Neuropsychological Society and a tenured Professor of Psychology, Latinx Studies, and African & African American Studies at Fordham University with a joint appointment in Neurology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. Her multidisciplinary, community-based research is funded by the NIH/National Institute of Aging (NIA) and Genentech. Her work primarily focuses on the intersection between cultural neuroscience and health disparities in cognitive aging. Her current studies are examining genetic, cerebrovascular, and sociocultural risk factors for cognitive impairment and dementia in Latinx, Black, and Indigenous adults, as well as ways to increase diverse representation in cognitive aging and Alzheimer’s disease (AD) research. In addition, she is Co-Lead of the NIA-funded Alzheimer’s Disease Neuroimaging Initiative’s (ADNI) Diversity Task Force. She has authored ~100 peer-reviewed publications and book chapters dedicated to three lines of inquiry, including: 1) the effects of biopsychosociocultural factors on cognitive aging; 2) how sociocultural factors impact the expression of neurologic disease, cognition, and health behaviors; and 3) the identification of resilience and modifiable factors to promote brain health in vulnerable and underserved populations.

Nana Osei-Opare  
*Assistant Professor | History*

Nana Osei-Opare is an Assistant Professor of African and Cold War history in the History Department at Fordham University. He is working on a manuscript tentatively titled, *Socialist Decolony: Ghana’s Cold War, 1957-1966*. *Socialist Decolony* gives the first-ever comprehensive treatment of Ghana-Soviet relations and how those connections shaped Ghana’s political-economy, Pan-African program, and its modalities of citizenship during the Kwame Nkrumah era. He is also interested in questions of historical methodology and sources, the global Cold War, and Black political thought. Osei-Opare's work has been supported in part by the Office of the President of the University of California, Fulbright-Hays DDRA, UCLA International Institute, Fordham, and Stanford University’s Hoover Institution Library and Archives. His research has also appeared in the *Journal of African History, Journal of West African History, The Washington Post, Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies*, and *Foreign Policy Magazine*, amongst other places.

Sasha Panaram  
*Assistant Professor | English*

Sasha Ann Panaram is an Assistant Professor of English and an Affiliated Faculty Member in African & African American Studies at Fordham University. She received her doctoral degree in English from Duke University in 2020, where she also completed certificates in African & African American Studies, Feminist Studies, and College Teaching. Her research focuses on twentieth and twenty-first century African American and Caribbean literature and culture, with a particular interest in women’s and gender studies and slavery studies. Panaram is currently working on a book that examines rewritings of the Middle Passage in fictive works by African American and Caribbean writers with an eye towards Black movements that outlive the transatlantic slave trade. Her academic writing has been published in *The Black Scholar*. Other public writing has appeared in *The Los Angeles Review of Books, The Brooklyn Rail, Hyperallergic*, and *Black Perspectives*, the award-winning blog of the African American Intellectual History Society. From 2018 to 2020, she served as co-host of the weekly webcast *Left of Black*, a series featuring interviews with Black Studies scholar-activists who work on art, literature, history, and politics.
Shellae Versay  
*Assistant Professor | Psychology*

Shellae Versey is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Fordham University. Her research focuses on aging in place, neighborhoods, and housing. Shellae's work engages themes of research and advocacy, exploring how older adults aging in place experience neighborhood change. One of her current projects include the Fighting Displacement Study, a nationwide study examining drivers of displacement (e.g., eviction) among precariously housed women. Shellae graduated from the University of Michigan with a PhD in Psychology, and MS in Epidemiology. Her teaching now focuses on social psychology, issues of intersectionality, housing and environmental justice.

Subha Mani  
*Associate Professor | Economics*

Subha Mani is an Associate Professor of Economics and a Research Associate at the Center for International Policy Studies at Fordham University. Subha also holds a Research Affiliate position at the Population Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania and Research Fellow positions at the Institute for Labor Economics (IZA) and Global Labor Organization (GLO). She has her BA (honors) degree in economics from Delhi University, Masters degrees in economics from Mumbai University, and a Ph.D. degree in economics from the University of Southern California. Her areas of specialization are development economics, labor economics, health, education, program evaluation, field experiments, applied econometrics, and applied microeconomics. Subha’s main area of interest is in understanding the causes and pathways through which human capital (health, education, vocational training, language training) can be accumulated for young children and adults and has examined these issues specifically using large scale panel data sets from Indonesia, India, Ethiopia, Peru, and Vietnam. Subha has worked on numerous experimental and non-experimental evaluation studies. She has additionally undertaken extensive primary data collection, fieldwork, and management in India, Sierra Leone and Azerbaijan. Her scholarly work has received external funding from the International Growth Center – India Central, 3ie (International Initiatives for Impact Evaluation), and Grand Challenges Canada.

Thomas De Luca  
*Professor | Political Science*

Tom De Luca is a life-long New Yorker, and Professor of Political Science at Fordham University, where he created and is Director of its International Studies Program. He specializes in the study of democracy and politics in the U.S. and abroad, with additional interest in China. Before coming to Fordham, he was an activist and directed public interest advocacy organizations working on issues of peace and social justice. De Luca is the author or co-author of four books, including: *Liars! Cheaters! Evildoers! Demonization and the End of Civil Debate in American Politics*. He comments on politics for major national, international, and local TV, radio, and print and has written op-eds for *The New York Times, Chicago Tribune, Boston Globe, Christian Science Monitor, Baltimore Sun*, and other outlets. He was the Thomas Jefferson Distinguished Fulbright Chair in American Social Studies, at the University of Amsterdam, and Honorary Professor of Political Science at Sun Yat-sen University, and China University of Political Science and Law, P.R.C.
Vivian Lu  
**Assistant Professor | Anthropology**

Vivian Lu is a cultural anthropologist broadly interested in the politics of profit and identity in contemporary capitalism. My first book project focuses on the extensive migratory circulations of Nigerian businessmen amongst contemporary commercial sites across Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Drawing from academic genealogies in the anthropology of capitalism, critical race studies, and postcolonial African studies, my work examines how transnational south-south diasporic formations have transformed Nigerian social imaginaries and discourses of postcolonial political and economic sovereignty. She is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Fordham and a faculty affiliate of the Department of African and African American Studies. Before coming to Fordham, she was previously a race and ethnicity studies graduate fellow at Stanford University, a visiting PhD student at the University of Lagos (Nigeria), and an African Studies postdoctoral associate at Yale University. She is involved in the Association for Feminist Anthropology and the Lagos Studies Association, and is broadly interested in the politics of knowledge production in African Studies, Africa-China Studies, and cultural anthropology.

Westenley Alcenat  
**Assistant Professor | History**

Westenley Alcenat is an historian of the nineteenth century U.S and Caribbean. He serves as Assistant Professor of History, and is Affiliated Faculty in African & African-American Studies, American & Urban Studies programs at Fordham University in the Bronx, NY. His scholarship covers the shared histories of African-Americans and Afro-Caribbean peoples in connection with the wider African Diaspora in the Atlantic World. His manuscript in revision, “Children of Africa, Shall Be Haytians:“ Prince Saunders and the Foundations of Black Emigration to Haiti, 1815-1865 is a study of the radicalism and ideologies of African-American settlers who emigrated to Haiti in the nineteenth century. Wes’s academic interests have intersected with public history and equity in higher education to highlight histories of marginalized groups inside the university and provide critical policy recommendations. Since 2015, he has served as an Academic Director in the Great Books Summer Reading Program at Amherst College. Wes has taught undergraduate courses and seminars in various topics, including: Black Urban Political History, Merchants and Slaves in Atlantic Capitalism, the Radical Tradition in U.S History, and the “Modern Caribbean: From Columbus to Castro/From Slave Ships to Cruise Ships.”

Yuko Miki  
**Associate Professor | History**

Yuko Miki is Associate Professor of History and Latin American and Latinx Studies at Fordham University, specializing in slavery in Brazil and the Nineteenth-Century Atlantic World. She is the author of Frontiers of Citizenship: A Black and Indigenous History of Postcolonial Brazil (Cambridge, 2018), in which she demonstrates how the intersecting histories of the African diaspora and the indigenous Americas were foundational to the formation of race, citizenship, and nation in nineteenth-century Brazil. Frontiers of Citizenship won numerous awards including the 2019 Wesley-Logan Prize for African Diaspora History from the American Historical Association and the Warren Dean Memorial Prize for Brazilian History from the Conference on Latin American History (CLAH). She is currently writing her new book, Emancipation’s Shadow: Stories of Illegal Slavery, for which she has received fellowships from the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, among others. She has authored various works in English in Portuguese and is also working on a project on a Kongo-based society in mid-nineteenth-century Brazil, in which she interrogates the possibilities and limitations of documentary archives in writing about African people’s lives under slavery. In 2021 Fordham recognized Miki’s scholarship with a Distinguished Research Award in the Humanities. She serves on the Editorial Board of The Americas and is Chair-Elect of CLAH’s Brazil section.
This is a brief listing of our course offerings for 2021-2022. To view the complete listing and descriptions, please visit our website at www.fordham.edu/aaas.

**FALL 2021**
AFAM 1600 R01 Understanding Historical Change: Africa
AFAM 1600 R02 Understanding Historical Change: Africa
AFAM 1600 R03 Understanding Historical Change: Africa
AFAM 3002 R01 African American History II
AFAM 3037 R01 Being & Becoming Black in the Atlantic World
AFAM 3115 R01 Martin Luther King Jr. & Malcolm X
AFAM 3115 E01 Martin Luther King Jr. & Malcolm X
AFAM 3141 R01 Women in Africa
AFAM 3150 R01 Caribbean Peoples and Culture
AFAM 3560 R01 "We Can't Breathe...": The History of Black Protest
AFAM 3633 R01 The Bronx: Immigration, Race, and Culture
AFAM 3637 C01 Black Feminism: Theory and Expression
AFAM 4000 R01 Affirmative Action: American Dream

**SPRING 2022**
AFAM 1600 R01 Understanding Historical Change: Africa
AFAM 1600 L01 Understanding Historical Change: Africa
AFAM 1600 C01 Understanding Historical Change: Africa
AFAM 3030 R01 African American Women
AFAM 3132 R01 Black Prison Experience
AFAM 3134 R01 From Rock & Roll to Hip Hop
AFAM 3142 R01 Women, Power, Leaders: Africa
AFAM 3150 R01 Caribbean Peoples and Culture
AFAM 3192 L01 U.S., Africa & The Cold War
AFAM 3560 C01 "We Can't Breathe...": The History of Black Protest
AFAM 3637 C01 Black Feminism: Theory and Expression
AFAM 4105 L01 Queer Caribbean and Its Diasporas
AFAM 4890 R01 Research Seminar
MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

AAAS MAJOR REQUIREMENTS (9 COURSES)
1. AFAM 1600 Understanding Historical Change: Africa
2. AFAM 3150 Caribbean People and Culture
3. AFAM 3001 African American History I
4. AFAM 3037: Being and Becoming Black
5. AFAM 4890: Senior Research Seminar
6-9. And four (4) AFAM electives

MINOR REQUIREMENTS

AAAS MINOR REQUIREMENTS (6 COURSES)
1. AFAM 1600 Understanding Historical Change: Africa
2. AFAM 3001 African American History I
3-6. And four (4) AFAM electives

AFST MINOR REQUIREMENTS (6 COURSES)
1. AFAM 1600 Understanding Historical Change: Africa
2. AFAM course from a Social Science discipline
3. AFAM course from Arts & Humanities offerings
4-6. And three (3) African Studies elective

Language Requirement: Two (2) courses– including one 2001-level course in the following approved languages: Swahili, Twi, Zulu, Arabic, Portuguese, Spanish, or French.

*Some requirements for the AAAS major/minor may be fulfilled with courses in English, Literary Studies, History, Art & Music History, Political Science, or any field that has been cross listed by the department. Speak to your major/minor advisor for approval.