

# JWJI Annual Report

2017-2018

**RAISING OUR PROFILE**



**EMORY**  
UNIVERSITY



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# Overview: Raising Our Profile

## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Annual reports are always a time of reflection. Writing them gives me an opportunity to assess how far we have come, and they suggest a path for our future trajectory. In the four years that I have had the pleasure of directing JWJI, I have been overwhelmed by the support and team spirit that has carried us to greater heights. And I am heartened by the possibility of future advancement.

When we started to rebuild JWJI in 2015, our goals were simple: continue the good work started by our founder and rebuild the Visiting Scholars Program. The 2017–2018 year highlighted the ways that we have achieved those goals. By 2017, we had rebuilt the Visiting Scholars Program into a thriving center of cutting-edge scholarship. In fall 2017, we welcomed the biggest cohort in JWJI history—11 fellows. This group was remarkable not only for its size but also for its enthusiasm and intellectual rigor. I cannot wait for you to meet the fellows in the pages that follow; similarly, I anticipate the day when I can brag about all the publications that will emerge from this fellowship year.

The large cohort exemplifies the theme of this year's report. This past year was a year of expansion. We grew our cohort, raised our profile, and set ourselves up for greater things to come.

Please join me in celebrating our successes. We do not intend for this moment to be a plateau, however. We will continue to grow, continue to innovate, and remain on the cutting edge of scholarship regarding race and difference.

We cannot do it without your help. Will you help us advance our mission? Support our scholarship? Hold us accountable to our ideals and vision? There is so much more we want to achieve, but we cannot do it without your support. Thank you again for being such a vital part of our mission.

Sincerely,

Andra Gillespie

Director, James Weldon Johnson Institute for the Study of Race and Difference



DIRECTOR ANDRA GILLESPIE

## YEAR IN REVIEW: MILESTONES OF 2017–2018

**August 2017:** Cohort Nine of the JWJI Visiting Scholars Program arrives on Emory’s campus for the school year.

**September 2017:** The Race and Difference Colloquium Series resumes with cosponsorship from the Emory Libraries.

JWJI launches the Public Dialogues in Race and Difference Series with the program “Becoming American: New Scholarship on Immigration,” featuring the following speakers:

- Alberto Dávila, University of Texas–Rio Grande Valley
- Christina Greer, Fordham University–Lincoln Center
- Terry-Ann Jones, Fairfield University
- Sophia Jordán Wallace, University of Washington
- Min Zhou, University of California–Los Angeles

**November 2017:** JWJI holds its second public dialogue, “Whiteness: The Meaning of a Racial, Social, and Legal Construct” in partnership with the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum. The speakers included:

- Richard Delgado, University of Alabama School of Law
- David Ikard, Vanderbilt University
- Nancy Isenberg, Louisiana State University
- Jane Junn, University of Southern California
- David Roediger, University of Kansas

**February 2018:** The Public Dialogues in Race and Difference Series resumed for the spring semester with the symposium “Black-Latinx Solidarity,” featuring:

- Alan Aja, Brooklyn College
- Andrea Benjamin, University of Missouri
- Darlene Rodriguez-Schaefer, Kennesaw State University
- Angela Stuesse, University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill

**March 2018:** The JWJI Faculty Advisory Board selects Cohort Ten of JWJI Visiting Scholars.

**April 2018:** JWJI finishes the 2017–2018 Public Dialogues Series with a keynote lecture from renowned civil rights historian Taylor Branch, “Lift Every Voice: Martin Luther King Jr. and James Weldon Johnson.”

As part of ongoing efforts to support Atlanta-focused scholarship and research, JWJI participated in the sixth annual Atlanta Studies Symposium, organizing the roundtable titled “Transnational Atlanta: Exploring Regional Diasporic Geographies.”



COHORT NINE



“BECOMING AMERICAN” PUBLIC DIALOGUE



“WHITENESS” PUBLIC DIALOGUE



COHORT TEN ADVISORY BOARD



2018 DISTINGUISHED LECTURE: JWJI DIRECTOR ANDRA GILLESPIE, TAYLOR BRANCH, EMORY PRESIDENT CLAIRE E. STERK, LANEY PROFESSOR OF MORAL LEADERSHIP ROBERT FRANKLIN, AND FORMER JWJI ASSISTANT DIRECTOR KALI-AHSET AMEN

# Achievements in 2017–2018



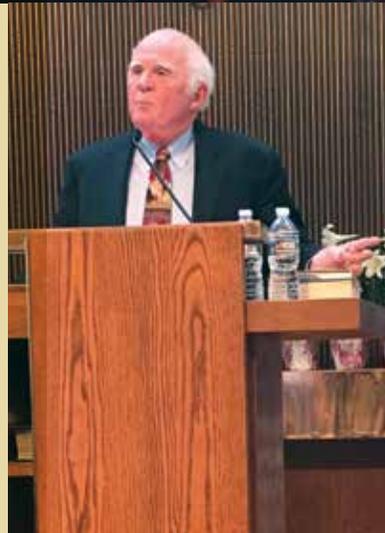
## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE YEAR

**TOP LEFT: JWJI FELLOW ALISON PARKER ENGAGES WITH PUBLIC DIALOGUE SPEAKER NANCY ISENBERG AT THE "WHITENESS" PANEL.**

**TOP RIGHT: LANEY GRADUATE FELLOW TAÍNA FIGUEROA AT THE PUBLIC DIALOGUE ON BLACK-LATINX SOLIDARITY. THE THEME OF THIS DIALOGUE WAS HER IDEA**

**MIDDLE: JWJI FELLOWS, STAFF, RAs, AND FACULTY HOSTS AT THE END-OF-THE-YEAR LUNCHEON**

**RIGHT: TAYLOR BRANCH DELIVERS THE 2018 JAMES WELDON JOHNSON LECTURE**



## SPOTLIGHT ON FELLOWS

The 2017–2018 academic year brought JWJI’s largest cohort of fellows to date. This fellowship cohort included scholars sponsored by a wide variety of sponsors including the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the American Council on Learned Societies, Emory College, and the Laney Graduate School. In addition, this was the first year JWJI hosted postdoctoral and dissertation fellows. The fellows came from a wide variety of backgrounds and research interests but formed an inseparable bond and a real intellectual community.

### MELLON POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

#### **Ashley Brown: Illuminating Athletes’ Place in Society and History**

Sports and the academy have had a typically uneasy relationship. Sports are an integral part of the college experience of many students at all types of schools, yet academics don’t always appreciate athletics or athletes as subjects of serious study.



That is changing, as scholars such as Emory professors Erin Tarver and Pellom McDaniels write about such disparate topics as sports fandom and black jockeys. Joining them is JWJI visiting fellow Ashley Brown, who is building her burgeoning academic career on scholarship and teaching about the history of sport.

#### **A student of Althea Gibson**

A recently minted PhD from George Washington University, Brown wrote her dissertation on Althea Gibson, the first African American, or person of color, to win a Grand Slam tournament in tennis. Gibson played in 19 major finals and won 11 titles, five in singles and one in mixed doubles in her relatively brief run to the top of women’s tennis. After taking a sabbatical from tennis, in 1960, she became the first black woman to earn playing privileges on the women’s professional golf (LPGA) tour.

Brown, who has a longstanding interest in sports and took up golfing in 2008, says, “I found myself not only falling for the game but developing an interest, of course, in the history of the game and realized that I needed to know more about the history of African Americans in golf.” Gibson is better known for her tennis accomplishments, says Brown, mostly because she wasn’t nearly as successful in golf. She came close to winning only one tournament. “Even as of now—2018—no African American woman has won an LPGA title,” says Brown. Black women, including Tiger Woods’s niece Cheyenne, have won collegiate titles and even international tournaments but no majors in the US so far.

#### **Handling the celebrity**

In deciding to study Gibson, Brown wondered, “What were her experiences in tennis? And then I imagined all sorts of hardships and really just the courage and temerity and support that must have gone along with breaking those barriers in tennis. What must she have gone through when she decided to pursue a career in golf?” Gibson’s accomplishments were celebrated in the black community and the black press, although the latter could sometimes be among her fiercest critics. She was the first black female athlete to appear on the cover of *Sports Illustrated*, yet was variously described as needing to “come down to earth,” “ugly,” and an “ungrateful jackass.”

That last remark came in 1957, says Brown, soon after Gibson won Wimbledon. “She stood her ground after she felt that she had been disrespected by some reporters,” Brown explains. “In Chicago, there was an incident in which she stood up for herself, and she received all kinds of bad press after this.” Gibson was a proud woman, who was grateful for the help and support that she received as an athlete, and who wanted to give back but never quite found herself in the position to do so.

Gibson had some health problems beginning in the late 80s and early 90s. “In the early 90s, she actually contacted her former doubles partner, Angela Buxton, and she suggested that she was going to commit suicide,” says Brown. Although Gibson had cycled through many doubles partners, she and Buxton had stayed in touch. “Buxton deserves a lot of credit for really swooping in and saving the day, as we might say,” Brown adds.

Although a barrier breaker, Gibson, who died in 2003, was not particularly visible as a tennis icon, even as women’s tennis became increasingly popular in the 1970s. Most likely it is because she was proud and headstrong, in Brown’s words. “She was someone who wanted to be independent, and these are not necessarily traits that were respected in women.”

#### **The agency of African American athletes**

As part of her fellowship, Brown taught a second-semester course, African Americans in Sports. They talked about Gibson, of course, but also about the boxer Jack Johnson, Frederick Douglass “Fritz” Pollard, the first black head coach in the NFL, and Paul Robeson, the gifted singer and actor who was an All-American football player at Rutgers University and later played in the NFL. “The students asked really thought-provoking questions about things like the agency of these athletes and the pressure that they are under to ‘represent,’ ” says Brown. “Then also, why it seems that people are more inclined to pay attention to athletes than folks who are leaders in other fields.”

As academia looks to catch up to the scrutiny athletes and sport receive in popular culture, young scholars such as Brown will continue to cast a critical eye on how the specter of competition and athletic play inform society and history.

#### **Felipe Hinojosa: Church Takeovers and Their Impact on Latino Religion**

Believe it or not, JWJI Visiting Fellow Felipe Hinojosa didn’t connect to history right away. Growing up in Brownsville, Texas, a border town, “None of us got any history of what it meant to be Mexican in the United States, what it meant to be the children of immigrants. My dad was an immigrant, born in Mexico, and my mom was born in Texas,” he says. “And in the school system we didn’t learn what it meant to live in a bicultural community, a border town, the way that we did.”



#### **“What’s my story?”**

It wasn’t until he was an English major at Fresno Pacific University, that his love of history emerged. Reading books by Edward Abbey and Terry Tempest Williams, “I started to ask deeper questions—Who am I? What’s my story, where do I come from,” he says. “It triggered questions for me that only history could answer, where I felt most satisfied when I went to the history books.”

Today as associate professor of history at Texas A&M University, Hinojosa’s teaching and research interests include Latina and Latino and Mexican American studies, American religion, social

movements, gender, and comparative race and ethnicity. In addition, he serves as director of undergraduate studies in the history department and is the cofounder and cocordinator for the Latina and Latino Studies Working Group, which is sponsored by the Melbern G. Glasscock Center for Humanities Research at Texas A&M University.

### **Studying the “apostles of change”**

While at JWJI, Hinojosa’s project was “Apostles of Change: Radical Politics and the Making of Latino Religion,” in which he explores how a handful of church takeovers in the 1970s—by groups such as the Young Lords and Católicos Por La Raza—inspired a Latina and Latino religious renaissance, both cultural and political. He investigates the role of theology and faith, and points to radical politics as fundamental to understanding the origins of Latina and Latino religious politics in the US.

“Now, the hook for me was that historians have written about these occupations and takeovers, but for the most part, they have ignored religious archives or what the church’s response was at a national level and at a denominational level. How did they respond to these activists and what happened after the activists were kicked out of those churches?” says Hinojosa. “Was there change, and not only a response from white clergy, but from the many Latinos and Latinas who were Protestants and Catholics in these institutions who were surprised and taken aback by this sort of revolutionary occupation of their church building? As soon as I looked at that, I discovered that this was much bigger and it carried much larger implications.”

### **Grants that made the research richer**

Hinojosa is grateful to JWJI for the intellectual community he was welcomed into at Emory and also for affording him the opportunity to focus. In the fall, he spent time writing, but he also took advantage of JWJI grants to research at archives including the United Farmworker collection at Wayne State University. And he crossed the US to conduct 12 oral histories with activists in Houston, Chicago, and Los Angeles. “I wanted to just get to know them. I had read about them, and so finding them and talking to them was a real privilege for me,” he says.

Spring semester Hinojosa taught Latino and Latina Civil Rights Movements in Emory College as he continued with his writing. Now back at Texas A & M, he will finish his book, which is under advance contract with the University of Texas Press, and then it’s on to the next project, he says. “My goal in all of this is to begin to think about Latina and Latino history as part of a larger narrative of civil rights history in the United States.”

### **Alison Parker: Righting a Historical Wrong**

Mary Church Terrell’s long, accomplished life will now get its due in a full-length biography.

Terrell was born enslaved in 1863 in the midst of the Civil War. She died in 1954, the same year as the Brown v. Board of Education decision, after decades-long efforts on behalf of equality for blacks and women. Despite her relative renown then and now—she was one of the founders of the NAACP—no full-length scholarly biography of Terrell has ever been written.



### **Terrell gets her scholarly due**

JWJI Fellow Alison M. Parker is working to rectify that historical omission with her upcoming book, “Unceasing Militant: The Life of Mary Church Terrell.” “She appears in other people’s works

about black women's activism, but nobody had devoted an entire book to her," Parker says. "Part of it may be that she did live such a long and rich life. It's almost overwhelming." Terrell warranted a chapter in Parker's second book, *Articulating Rights: Nineteenth-Century American Women on Race, Reform, and the State* (Northern Illinois University Press, 2010), in which she looks at how each of the women she profiled argued for rights and full citizenship in 19th-century America.

Terrell and her parents, both the offspring of their white owners, were emancipated at the end of the Civil War. Each of her parents became successful businesspeople in their own right. Her father, Robert Church, parlayed ownership of a saloon and hotel into large real estate holdings, eventually becoming Memphis, Tennessee's wealthiest black resident. Her mother, Louisa, owned a hair salon catering to white women. Terrell's parents sent her to the Model School of Antioch College in Ohio for her primary and secondary education. She stayed in Ohio, graduating from Oberlin College with bachelor's and master's degrees. "She ended up being able to speak five languages and taught Greek and Latin," says Parker. "She was well educated, which made her quite exceptional for any woman of her time—black or white."

Parker arrived at JWJI from SUNY–Brockport, where she is a professor of history, with her research materials collected and organized. During the fall semester of her fellowship, she was able to complete a first draft of nearly the entire manuscript, which she has since submitted to a major university press for review.

The fact that her book was so far along allowed Parker to take advantage of a benefit awarded to JWJI's Mellon fellows: the book workshop, which gave her the opportunity to choose four expert scholars to read and comment on her work. She had Emory faculty Carol Anderson, Charles Howard Candler Professor of African American Studies, and Kimberly Wallace Sanders, associate professor of American and African American studies, as well as Rosetta Ross, professor of religion at Spelman College, and Jacqueline Rouse, associate professor of African American history at Georgia State, review her work. "I received wonderful feedback from them," Parker says.

### **Letters between the Terrells**

Mary Church Terrell was married to Robert Terrell, who was also born enslaved but later graduated from Harvard University and Howard University law school. He became the first black municipal court judge in Washington, D.C. While conducting research for his biography of Robert Terrell, historian Stephen Middleton of Mississippi State University asked Parker if she'd be interested in personal letters between the couple he'd seen when visiting Terrell's ancestral home in Highland Beach, Maryland, the black resort community founded by Frederick Douglass's son, Charles. Absolutely, she told him. "I'm very interested in all aspects of Mary Church Terrell's life because what we mostly know about her involves the most public aspects of her life." Parker theorizes that negative stereotypes about the sexuality of black women, caricatures that Terrell fought so hard against, were a compelling reason for her and other black women to hold silent about their private lives. "In fact, that's one of the reasons [Terrell and others] organized their group, the National Association of Colored Women, to fight against some of the incredibly racist stereotypes they were subjected to."

Parker and Middleton visited Terrell's family together, spending a week reading not just the love letters but other documents they held. She was surprised to find this trove, as many of Terrell's papers and documents were in multiple archives. "It's been more than 60 years since her death, and the members of the Terrell family who are still alive are getting older themselves and were

concerned about making sure there is some kind of access to these materials in the future,” Parker says. She worked to assist them in this effort and proposed Oberlin as a repository, since Terrell had graduated from there.

The college was enthusiastic about receiving the papers, and made a promise to Terrell’s family that they would teach students how to preserve her letters, some of which dated from the 1890s and were crumbling. The college also agreed to host a symposium on Terrell’s life, inviting a host of scholars to campus in February 2016 including Parker and Middleton. Many current-day members of organizations in which Terrell played a role were on hand including Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. and the National Association of University Women, a group she helped found, a corollary organization for black women to the American Association of University Women.

For Parker, whose goal is to tell the full story of Terrell’s long and fruitful life, depositing her papers at Oberlin was a uniquely satisfying experience. The work of a historian isn’t just writing, she notes, “it’s also the chance to help with the preservation of history and providing access to these papers for many more scholars and students in the future.”

## MELLON DISSERTATION FELLOWS

### **Derek Handley: Sharing the History That Speaks to Him**

It was in the last year of his master’s of fine arts in creative writing at the University of Pittsburgh that JWJI dissertation fellow Derek Handley took a class called Rhetorical Education. “I thought, oh my gosh, what is this? I learned about Aristotle and Cicero and Quintilian and this history of rhetoric and rhetorical education,” he says. “And it just spoke to me in so many different ways that I knew I was going to explore it.”



Not long after, Handley began a PhD in rhetoric at Carnegie Mellon. “Some people see rhetoric as a pejorative term, but one definition is the art of persuasion,” he says. A class in rhetoric of place during his graduate work at Carnegie Mellon deepened his interest. “We learned about how place can be used rhetorically, how place can inform,” he says. “Even where a speech is given may be a rhetorical device. What if Martin Luther King Jr. didn’t give his ‘I Have a Dream’ speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial? How much did the Lincoln Memorial as a backdrop play to the meaning of the speech?”

### **The making of “rhetorical citizens”**

In his dissertation, “Strategies for Performing Citizenship: Rhetorical Citizenship and the Black Freedom Movement,” Handley looks at citizenship as a mode of rhetorical resistance used by African Americans to respond to urban renewal and housing policies during the 1950s and 1960s.

He examines the rhetorical and discursive strategies embraced by African Americans in Pittsburgh and Milwaukee in their attempts to protect their communities and assert their rights as citizens. He argues that African American residents operated as rhetorical citizens in a struggle for power with municipalities over the future of their neighborhoods.

“I wanted to know about the rhetorical strategies of ordinary people on the ground. How did they organize? What were they doing to get their voices heard?” he says. “The overarching framework is this notion of rhetorical citizenship, which thinks of citizenship in terms of types of

action. There are protests and marches, but it can be something as simple as the fact that these folks would form neighborhood clean-up drives, because if their neighborhoods were clean, then it would be harder for it to be declared blighted.”

#### **A crooked path got him straight to his interests**

When asked what path led him to this research and to JWJI, Handley laughs and says, “So, it wasn’t a straight line.” An English major at Hampton University, he entered the US Navy after graduation, working first as a helicopter pilot and then a writer in public affairs. Stationed with the US Navy in Fallon, Nevada, and working in PR, he sought out a teaching position in writing at Western Nevada Community College. That experience—teaching a class in basic writing—clicked.

“It was a wonderful experience. Some of my students were military veterans, some of them were local, some of them were from the nearby Paiute reservation,” he says. “And I said, this is what I want to do. I want to teach.” When his active duty was complete, he returned to Pittsburgh, teaching at Community College of Allegheny County, earning a master’s degree in creative writing, and taking that pivotal Rhetorical Education class. His PhD program at Carnegie Mellon followed, and the rest is (rhetorical) history.

#### **All the benefits of good company**

While at JWJI, Handley finished his dissertation and prepared for the next step on his path. As he applied for teaching positions, his varied background, including his position in the Department of English and his subspecialty of African American rhetoric, gave him great flexibility.

When he talks about what he has gained from JWJI, he points first to the people. The speakers who expanded his thinking and his network, and the insight gained from those with experience all around him. “A great thing for the dissertation fellows is just having access to the other fellows—the postdocs, the associate professors, the full professors who’ve already done what we’re trying to do,” he says. “The fellowship among the fellows has been amazing.”

#### **Kyera Singleton: Archival ‘Play’ Yields Dissertation Topic**

A port city, Baltimore was a destination for free and enslaved African Americans in the mid-19th century. Those who lived and worked on plantations were often there as hired help, leased by their owners, or were runaways. Kyera Singleton, a 2017–2018 dissertation fellow at JWJI working toward a PhD at the University of Michigan, discovered this vibrant history quite by accident, but it became the cornerstone of her thesis, “Containing Black Women: Gendered Geographies of Imprisonment in the American South, 1840–1900.”



#### **Adeline and other imprisoned black women**

Like most budding graduate students, Singleton had a broad idea of what she wanted to study—black women and slavery—but hadn’t narrowed down the topic. She had read the book *Southern Horrors* by Crystal N. Feimster, which profiles Ida B. Wells and Rebecca Latimer Felton, two women journalists and public figures on opposing sides of the lynching issue. In it, Singleton discovered the story of Adeline, who was sentenced to years of hard labor for stealing a few dollars. “At the time, I couldn’t wrap my mind around that,” Singleton says. “I had never really thought about black women and imprisonment in such an early period, but that kind of made me curious.”

When she told one of her dissertation committee members, Martha Jones, that she had never visited an archive, the professor invited Singleton to join her as a research assistant on a trip to

Maryland. When they arrived at the Annapolis archives, instead of giving Singleton work instructions, Jones, now the Society of Black Alumni Professor of History at Johns Hopkins University, told her to play around in the archives and see what she found, showing Singleton how to work with the archive database and other materials.

“When we think of black people and imprisonment, we mostly think about the convict lease system that starts after the abolishment of slavery,” says Singleton. “My research was thinking about what’s happening with all of these black people who are in this limited space—starting around the 1840s and 1850s—when slavery had not been abolished.”

Singleton started asking herself: “What would it mean to be several miles away from a plantation and then end up in Baltimore several hundred yards away from a prison or workhouse?” “Are there black people in the penitentiary, which was founded in the early 1800s?” “Are there black people in the workhouse and then, more specifically, what’s happening with black women?” To uncover answers to these and other questions, Singleton looked at Maryland penitentiary records, Baltimore city jail records, and plantation records. She also used slave and WPA narratives in her research as well as newspaper accounts and clemency petitions. Her work traces the racial, social and economic injustices endured by black women held captive in dungeons on plantations, stowed away at trader’s yards, confined to penitentiaries, or forced to labor in workhouses.

#### **Going wherever discomfort leads her**

Singleton went from never having visited an archive to conducting research at the National Archives. However, traveling across the country to examine original materials can get expensive. “At Michigan, I’ve been really fortunate to have funding to do my research. There are tons of different grants for graduate students to actually do the research,” she says. “Now that I’m here at Emory, the research funds that they’ve provided have also been really helpful as I’m in the last stages of the dissertation work.”

From the time Macalester College history professor Peter Rachleff tapped her to enroll in the Mellon Seminar for Mellon Mays Fellows, to her faculty mentor in archival research, to her dissertation adviser, Emory alumna Tiya Miles 95G, Singleton has had faculty mentors at every step of her journey toward becoming an historian. She’s now ready to give back and is looking toward working as a professor. “Being in classrooms and having amazing mentors are the reasons why I’m still here, and I want to be able to do that as well,” she says. Miles has especially inspired her as the type of public historian she’d like to emulate. Her time at JWJI was instructive as well. “The James Weldon Johnson Institute gave me the time and space to focus solely on my writing and build a community with other scholars from different disciplines and universities,” she says.

Digging into the messy truth of history makes many uncomfortable, but Singleton thinks we shouldn’t flinch from the discomfort. “Those uncomfortable spaces, those uncomfortable places, and those uncomfortable histories are how we can chart a path forward,” she says. “But if we’re so concerned about making everyone comfortable, then we never really learn because you have to dive into the muddiness and the complexities in order to see the larger picture.”

## LANEY DISSERTATION FELLOW

### Taína Figueroa: On the Road to Becoming a Latina Feminist Philosopher

Taína Figueroa's interest in philosophy began during her undergraduate years at Trinity College.



Philosophy captured her attention, she says, for three main reasons. "First, philosophy allows you to ask the big questions—questions that everyone asks themselves at some point—Why am I here? What is the point of life? Second, as an undergrad the very first philosophers I was introduced to were the ancient Greeks—Plato and Aristotle—writing over 2,000 years ago. As I read their work I could see echoes of their philosophies in the world I lived in," says Figueroa. "And third, as an undergrad I was frustrated by the narrow scope of who is accepted as part of the 'philosophical canon' and who actually works in the discipline. . . . I want to read and teach Latina feminist philosophy as a Latina professor."

Today, Figueroa is a PhD candidate in the Department of Philosophy at Emory, and her dissertation, "'Oigan Mi Gente (Hear My People)': On the Affective Power of Racial Pride," is inspired by the feeling of joy and pride she saw in racial identity that, she says, is important, powerful, and worthy of philosophical exploration.

"I have always been interested in the power of emotion and how emotion is understood in relation to identity formation and oppression—both the negative and positive emotional attachments racial minorities develop in relation to their racial/ethnic identity under systems of racial oppression," says Figueroa.

#### Lessons from a disaster

When Hurricane Maria ravaged Puerto Rico in the fall of 2017, Figueroa gained a new perspective on her dissertation. The small mountain town of Ciales where her family lives was devastated. Figueroa traveled to Ciales to check on her family and offer help in the form of solar lanterns, water filtration systems, and medical supplies. She went on to spend months raising money for supplies and to develop and install a solar panel system in her family's neighborhood.

"So little was being done to help Puerto Rico and so many people were and still are in need. It was hard to act like everything was normal when I felt like my world had been flipped upside down," she says. "Doing what I could to help my community was all that seemed important or motivated me after the storm."

The experience emphasized to Figueroa how important community was to the survival of Puerto Ricans in the aftermath of Maria.

"I came to understand that I had focused my work on racial/ethnic pride because it pointed to this greater thing—and this greater thing is what I needed to be writing about is the feeling of being in and a part of a community," she says. "Under our global system of white supremacy racial and ethnic oppressed peoples resist through the power being in community creates. It is Puerto Ricans in the diaspora and on the island organizing local food drives, contracting container ships, visiting the most remote parts of the island, checking in on my grandparents, collecting seeds to distribute to farmers, and doing so much more that are keeping the island going. I have therefore shifted my focus slightly in my dissertation to try and understand what community is for racial and ethnic minorities, particularly in the case of Puerto Rican and Latinx people and the power community holds for us."

As she shifted the emphasis of her dissertation Figueroa appreciated the cross-disciplinary nature of JWJI, which has always been an inspiration, first as a graduate fellow in 2016–2017, and later as a dissertation fellow. “I have learned so much from the very different perspectives one finds at JWJI, be it through their visiting fellows who come from various disciplines or the wide range of speakers and colloquia the institute puts on,” Figueroa says. “It has really helped me challenge and sharpen my thinking while being in dialogue with amazing scholars in various fields.”

## ACLS POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW

### Amrita Myers

How does a big-city girl survive in the cornfields? Amrita Chakrabarti Myers has an answer for that.



When Myers first came to Indiana University (IU) almost 13 years ago, she had lived in sprawling places: Edmonton, Alberta, Toronto, Montreal (where she was born), and New Brunswick, New Jersey. When she first got to Bloomington, Indiana, she confesses to feeling a bit of culture shock.

### Justice grows tall in the Midwest

Myers—the Ruth N. Halls Associate Professor of History and Gender Studies at IU—describes a commitment to social justice and activism as a “big big big part of who I am,” and specifically cites the Black Lives Matter movement. She continues, “Anyone who spends more than 10 minutes with me will find this out.”

To her great pleasure, she has found many of her IU colleagues to be all-in on this idea. Myers not only respects them as scholars and teachers; in addition, she notes, “they are out in the streets with me doing the hard work, at nights and on weekends. They are attending demonstrations, conducting workshops, and educating students, giving of their time and resources—in short, doing a lot of things they don’t get paid for. That is not why we are there. We are doing volunteer work because this is what matters to us.”

### Converts to a new way of doing history

The faculty’s activism also leads to stronger academic interest on the part of students, many of whom come to class for the first time saying, “I heard you speak at a rally last summer.” During Myers’s tenure at IU, the student body has changed in encouraging ways. They are, she says, “fierce and passionate” and light up every demographic: Jewish, Muslim, white, black, first-generation, and transgender. Recently, she is even seeing wealthy white students face their own privilege and work across barriers.

A black women’s historian and historian of slavery, Myers has crafted a new way of thinking about history. Students arrive believing it to revolve around memorization of names, dates, places, battles, and generals. Instead, she tells them, “This is not *Jeopardy*, not about recall. The discipline of history consists of stories of people like you and me. Historians must attend to why things happen, to the connections between events. Their analysis must cover the why and the how, not just the who and the what.”

### Forging ahead

Ensuring that her students are willing to follow sources where they lead is something that Myers herself needed to master, especially during her doctoral program at Rutgers University. Asked about the extraordinary success of her first book, *Forging Freedom: Black Women and the Pursuit of Liberty in Antebellum Charleston* (UNC Press, 2011), Myers confesses, “I didn’t understand fully what I had written until my dissertation was almost finished. I thought that I was going to write about enslaved women, but I actually wrote a book about free black women during the era of slavery.”

The recipient of many honors—including the George C. Rogers Jr. Book Award for best monograph on South Carolina history from the South Carolina Historical Society—*Forging Freedom* is a book in two parts: the first consists of topical chapters about how women of that era became free, the types of jobs they performed, the kinds of property they acquired, and so forth.

The second half is the volume’s lifeblood: studies of individual women and their families that might have remained beyond reach were it not for her dogged pursuit. The obstacles to Myers’s research were many: she was studying a population—black women—for whom education was illegal. She says, “There were no family papers, diaries, or a nice big collection of boxes, as we often have for whites. This is also a group with no leisure time to write.” Myers thus depended on items such as government records, tax material, legal records, and census data. It is not work for the impatient. She observes, “You have to be willing to sift through thousands of pieces of paper that are not indexed or collated in any way, much of which isn’t useful, to piece together black women’s stories. I spent a year in South Carolina vacuuming their archives.”

Myers thinks about the success of her first book in ways that go beyond its numerous awards, saying, “I am not just describing events of 200 years ago. Sadly, in some ways, especially in the political moment in which we live, people say that the book’s themes are very familiar. They can see their lives and struggles in those of their ancestors. For instance, the fight to find adequate jobs and housing, to accumulate wealth and pass it along to their children.”

### Chinn up

Now at work on her second book, titled “Remembering Julia: An Antebellum Tale of Sex, Race, Power, and Place,” Myers is investigating the decades-long relationship of Julia Chinn, a woman of color, and US Vice President Richard Mentor Johnson, a white man who served under President Martin Van Buren. The couple lived together openly in rural Kentucky during the early decades of the nineteenth century, despite public disapproval of interracial sex. It was this book she worked on while at JWJI.

Myers describes encountering the reference to Johnson and his “mulatto concubines” in a US survey textbook. The reference left her full of questions. After filtering through a series of trashy websites that sensationalized the couple’s relationship, Myers discovered a political biography of Johnson written in 1932. Driving to Kentucky to do her research, Myers says that, once again, “public documents saved my life.” Although the Chinn women were literate, no documents in their own hand have survived.

Chinn, whom Johnson referred to as his “wife,” and her daughters acquired a fair amount of social and financial power as a result of their connection to him. The limits of that power were clearly marked, however, and the privileges of white kinship declined for black women the farther they moved from the source of their power. Black women also discovered that any attempt to acquire the social niceties and respect extended to white women would bring swift retribution.

Myers gave a lecture on her manuscript in progress as part of the JWJI Race and Difference Colloquium series. It was a bittersweet moment, signaling the end of her fellowship and quality time with her cohort. Beyond the lively potlucks with other fellows and an outing to see *Black Panther*, they became, she says, “one another’s family.”

She described Derek Handley and the mentoring he received from the other fellows, which resulted in six campus visits and five offers. And, for herself, she is grateful to fellow Ashanté Reese, who aided her in developing a framework for how to talk about geographies of resistance. Admits Myers, I needed an anthropologist to help me with that; the historians wouldn’t have gotten me there.” She goes on, “I didn’t expect any of this when I came here. I will miss my JWJI colleagues like crazy.”

Asked where her scholarship might lead her after completing the narrative of Julia Chinn, Myers was uncharacteristically tight-lipped, saying only, “Julia deserves all my love right now.”

## EMORY COLLEGE POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW

*In 2017–2018, JWJI was pleased to offer, with the support of Emory College, postdoctoral fellowship support to an Emory faculty member. This JWJI Faculty fellowship is designed to provide critical, early career support to qualified Emory faculty whose work aligns with the mission of JWJI. Fellowships at the beginning of a young scholar’s career help faculty acclimate to the tenure track and provide valuable research and publication time.*

### Justin Hosbey: Back Home and Very Gainfully Employed

“Okay, I probably have no shot at getting this job, but I have to apply anyway,” an anxious Justin Hosbey told himself as put his name in the hat for a position as assistant professor in Emory’s anthropology department. Hosbey was completing his PhD at the University of Florida in 2016 when the position caught his eye.



Perhaps it seemed too good to be true: the job was in the field he loved, in a city he had lived in happily since he was six, and at an institution he respected and had been coming to since middle school as a member of Atlanta Public Schools’ Urban Debate League, which was sponsored by the Barkley Forum, Emory’s award-winning debate team and community service organization. No pressure to land this job, right?

Despite his nerves, Hosbey’s overture to Emory was no shot in the dark. He is the real deal—an immensely promising young scholar to whom Emory made this unique offer: he either could start immediately in the anthropology department or make his transition to Emory a bit more gradually—as a postdoctoral fellow at JWJI his first year.

He chose the latter for a variety of reasons, but primarily for the opportunity it affords to revise his dissertation, “Charter Schools, Black Social Life, and the Refusal of Death in Post-Katrina New Orleans,” into a book.

### “Where are you going with this?”

For many years, Hosbey imagined a career in journalism, majoring in it as an undergraduate at Georgia State University. That is, until he read about anthropology via—no kidding—a Wikipedia

entry. Once he took an anthropology course as a junior, he knew that his fate was sealed, even if the change of major required extending his timeline by a semester.

Turns out that some of the things he enjoyed about journalism—in his words, “exploring a passion for culture, for how humans situate themselves in spaces and construct their lives”—were more satisfying through anthropology because he saw greater room to explore issues using a critical lens.

It is no surprise that Emory’s interest in Hosbey was so strong: his career at University of Florida was extraordinary. Studying with the legendary Faye V. Harrison, Hosbey not only fulfilled the requirements for the doctorate in cultural anthropology, with a certificate in digital humanities, he also worked under Paul Ortiz as an oral historian for the Alachua County African American History Project and the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program’s Mississippi Freedom Project. Asked how he juggled all of the above, Hosbey notes, “The work I did in oral history, those were second and third jobs. I managed out of necessity. I have a passion for African American culture and life. It is almost like a spiritual thing.”

The seed for his doctoral research came in 2011, when Hosbey attended an American Educational Research Association conference. There, he listened to a talk by a former New Orleans teacher who was fired after Hurricane Katrina, along with the city’s entire workforce of instructors following a decision to convert the New Orleans public school system to charter schools in the immediate aftermath of the storm.

The teacher—“forceful and eloquent” in describing her own loss and that of the city—was by then working in another state, her career barely patched back together. But Hosbey continued to ponder the fate of New Orleans: on a neighborhood level, how were people responding to the destruction of the traditional schools?

“Nothing like this ever happened on this scale in the US after an environmental catastrophe,” he indicates. “It was so undemocratic. Imagine having an entire workforce lose their jobs simultaneously mere months after a devastating hurricane.” The replacements were primarily from the Northeast or Southwest, many of them affiliated with Teach for America. Most of the new teachers would call themselves progressives. “Yet,” says Hosbey, “despite the best of intentions, they reproduced structural inequality.”

Starting in 2007, a rich body of work on this full-scale conversion to charter schools emerged in the field of education. In 2010, former Education Secretary Arne Duncan famously declared the hurricane to be the “best thing that happened to the education system in New Orleans.”

“As an anthropologist, it was not my place to figure out a solution to what type of schools New Orleans should have,” says Hosbey. “Instead, I planned to explore the issue this way: How are we, as black people, affected on the cultural level when our schools are taken from our community?”

A first-generation college graduate in his family, Hosbey has enjoyed deep support from both parents for his accomplishments. But he smiles in recalling that his father, when he was in graduate school, asked, “Where are you going with this? You have been at this for 27 years.” Both father and son would soon find out.

**NO place he'd rather be**

To conduct his research, Hosbey spent a year living in the 7th Ward and Gentilly areas—historic multigenerational, black neighborhoods in New Orleans. Beyond wanting to understand the effects on the community of the radical change to the school system, he also wanted to understand better why New Orleans is such an important cultural site for black life in the US. “What constellation of history, culture, language, music, and magic come together to make New Orleans such an important place for black American culture?” Hosbey asked. And then he dove in, making himself part of the community, going to school board meetings, fundraisers, zoning meetings, and talking with parents and children in their homes.

Some parents in New Orleans viewed charter schools as a good thing. They saw an opportunity to place their children in better schools that were not bound by neighborhood zoning. What, though, were the dangers for students now often crisscrossing the city to arrive at school each day? For some kids, in that changed landscape, they had to be ready as early as 5:30 a.m. to catch the bus to school. And there were clear differences, based on class, in the ways that black parents could navigate the system, especially as the public transportation system slowly rebuilt itself after Hurricane Katrina. In addition, many historic schools that were important to black New Orleanians were either permanently shuttered or converted into charter schools after the hurricane.

Hosbey's fieldwork led him to argue that the destruction of neighborhood schools in low-income and working-class black communities has “fractured, but not broken, black space and place making in post-Katrina New Orleans.” Asked what his hopes were for his book, Hosbey indicates that, in many ways, it will be “a love letter to black educators.” He continues, “In thinking about my own life and education, it has been primarily black women teachers who have supported and mentored me.”

**Next stop: Atlanta**

As the book took shape, Hosbey enjoyed the camaraderie of mixing with the other JWJI fellows. It is “wonderful,” he says, “to be in a cohort with scholars at different stages of their academic career. Some are full professors, some recently got tenure, and some are like me—just starting out. Everyone is generous with their advice. I am so glad that I chose to do this my first year.”

Spring semester, Hosbey taught Blackness and the Politics of Space and Race. With units on South Africa, West Africa, the US South, and Caribbean, the course asked the following questions: How do black people make meaning within spaces that already are overdetermined by racism, segregation, and economic inequality? What are the joys and pains of black life under those constraints? Students were so excited about the course that they were adding—not dropping—it after the first day.

Hosbey's first book will lead naturally to his second project—on black social life in Atlanta. Among the things that interest him: What was the lure of the black mecca in the 1990s and 2000s? What were the realities? Here in Hosbey's hometown, he knows all too well that there is a level of dissonance. There is the glitz and glam of Atlanta's popular culture, for instance. But it also has the highest income inequality of any city in the US and a disturbing trend of steady downward mobility for succeeding generations of African American families.

At one point, Hosbey's father was able to see him present on his New Orleans research at a conference in Chicago. It was a moment for father and son. Hosbey says, “He could see the import and value of what I was doing.” Indeed, he then could answer for himself the question he had posed years ago. “Where is all this going?” Very far indeed.

## UNCF-MELLON FACULTY FELLOWS

*Rudolph Byrd always envisioned JWJI as a collaborative space. To that end, he established a partnership with the UNCF-Mellon Fellowship Program. The UNCF-Mellon program provides research fellowships to faculty at historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) to allow them to finish their work. JWJI is one of the host institutions for the UNCF-Mellon program. In 2017–2018, we were happy to welcome three UNCF-Mellon fellows to JWJI.*

### **Ashanté Reese: Dreaming of a More Just World**

Drop the names Zora Neale Hurston and Alice Walker, and watch Ashanté Reese's eyes light up. As someone who is Southern-born (Crockett, Texas: population, 6,544), and from a rural family, Reese says there were many things that resonated with her in both women's work.



For example, Reese was intrigued that Hurston had been trained by anthropology legend Franz Boas at Barnard College, where she would become its first black woman graduate. In the evolution that eventually led Reese to choose anthropology, she notes, "I wasn't initially driven by research questions but instead by the kind of writer I wanted to be."

After finishing her undergraduate education at Trinity University and teaching at the Coretta Scott King Young Women's Leadership Academy in Atlanta, Reese credits her students with helping define her research interests. At the King Academy, among other duties, Reese coached track, which meant that students sometimes came to her house.

Once, on a mission to feed them before returning them to their parents, they were in the grocery store. She noticed that her normally boisterous and lively students were acting more timidly inside the store, and indeed one student voiced what the others must have been thinking, saying, "We don't have anything like this in our store."

It was that spark, realizing that food access varies according to where you live—along with understanding the special burdens of a student with type-2 diabetes—that led to Reese's interest in the connections between food access and health disparities. And this pattern of influence is not unusual, says Reese, who claims, "My entire career is filled with stories of how I have changed based on the people I meet."

### **Historian turned ethnographer**

When Reese departed for American University in pursuit of a PhD, she was ready to go beyond her undergraduate focus, which had been on history and African American studies. Says Reese, "I like history, but I can't say that I like it as a discipline." Instead, she says, "My interests in graduate school were really driven by the lives of the students I taught in Atlanta."

Examining what she terms "the rise and fall of supermarkets along the lines of racial residential segregation," Reese also wanted to know something else: if inequalities are built into the food system, what does the life of someone experiencing that injustice look like? Conducting fieldwork in a predominantly black neighborhood in northeast Washington, D.C., Reese developed a theory she calls "geographies of self-reliance," which holds that history, racial solidarity, and a commitment to building self-reliant communities, in spite of racism, are embedded in the local geography. For Reese, what is so hopeful—in a field of study committed to illuminating injustice—is that black people are able to meet their needs despite inequality.

After a time at Rhodes College, Reese joined Spelman College as an assistant professor of anthropology in 2015 to build its program in food studies, which launched the next year. A fellow faculty member handles food chemistry, while Reese tackles the social implications of food. She finds that many of her students are activists, and she tells them, “The best activists are those who read and study. This is the perfect field to marry your academic and activist interests.”

She is a wildly popular teacher who, though modest, does acknowledge her “cult following.” Knowing that she is not an auditory learner has influenced Reese to keep lectures to a minimum and to vary her techniques to keep students engaged. Aware of Spelman’s being gated in Atlanta’s West End community, Reese ensures that her students travel beyond those boundaries, as they did recently when—on a mission to practice participant-observation—they walked to a neighborhood pizza shop and talked to the owner.

Reese speaks of “the honor of instructing black women” and is determined to “teach them how to own their ideas.” Part of driving that point home is the modeling, big and small, that she provides her students. Laughing, she offered this example of one of the small things: “My hair changes style depending on the month. My students say, ‘Wow. Check you out. You move through the world like this.’ ”

#### **Cooking up that first book**

As a UNCF-Mellon Faculty Fellow at JWJI, Reese focused on preparing her dissertation for publication. With the new title *Black Food Geographies: Black Self-Reliance and Food Access in Washington, D.C.*, UNC Press will publish the book in late April 2019.

Reese had no hesitation answering who this book is for, saying, “while I investigated the inequalities, the people were still living, doing, creating. I research food only because I care about what food means to black lives and black geography. My biggest hope is that people see this in the book.” She adds, “maybe I have made some progress in dreaming a more just world.”

As Reese pursues work on her book, she is overjoyed with her JWJI compatriots. The beauty of coming across town from Spelman, says Reese, is “that I get to be in a different place and still be here in Atlanta.” As an Atlanta resident, she often hosted the fellows for get-togethers. “Qualitatively,” she says, “my life is so much better knowing this group of people. Our research interests align. I have done a bunch of things in my career but, by far, this has been one of my favorite experiences. It feels like magic.”

#### **Future pathways**

What will the self-described “warrior for liberal arts education” do next? Armed with a grant from the Associated Colleges of the South, she and a former Rhodes College colleague co-taught a course in fall 2018 called Just Food in the US South. Students from both institutions will learn virtually and also have the chance to visit each other’s cities. Reese and her colleague also planned to collect material from food justice activists for a museum exhibit in Memphis and Atlanta.

Reese’s next food project will center on black women growers and activists in the South and the intersections of food and spirituality. One of the aims will be to explore precarity. Another will be to probe the relationships among spirituality, friendship, and the justice work these women pursue. She observes, “I’m particularly interested in understanding how they cultivate and maintain hope for a just world through their day-to-day activism and growing. These women are trying to prevent precarity for others. But what amount of it do they incur in their personal lives as a result of their work?”

There also is what she describes as a “super-secret” project on Hurston that she will undertake with a fellow ethnographer. So hush-hush that, at press time, no details were forthcoming. Stay tuned. This is a young scholar with energy for the long haul.

### **Charissa Threat: A Letter of Longing Enlivens Scholarship**

Of the 16 million Americans who fought in World War II, some 900,000 were African Americans, the largest cohort of the United States’ nonwhite population to serve. And more than 2.5 million black men registered for the draft. Black soldiers served nobly in all theaters of war and in the armed services. And while they most certainly did not miss the segregation and lack of opportunity back home, they did keenly miss the women and families they left behind. That’s what Charissa Threat found as she researched her first book, *Nursing Civil Rights: Gender and Race in the Army Nurse Corps* (University of Illinois Press, 2015), when an accidental discovery eventually became a new scholarly pursuit.



A 2017–2018 UNCF-Mellon Faculty Fellow at JWJI and former assistant professor of history at Spelman College, Threat uncovered a letter from two WWII GIs in the NAACP archives that piqued her interest. The soldiers wrote that they admired the work of the NAACP and felt the organization was the best resource for their request. They were asking the civil rights organization to collect images of black women to send to black soldiers overseas. “We feel we don’t have enough availability of our own beautiful women,” says Threat, paraphrasing their letter.

#### **Women Who Look Like Us**

An NAACP assistant secretary responded to them, telling the soldiers that the organization empathized with their plight but didn’t think it was the right outlet for their request. But the writer added, “We’ll forward your letter to a black newspaper and, if anything comes of it, we’ll send you the pictures.” Amused, Threat put the letter aside for many years, she says.

However, the content of the letter stayed with her, and Threat eventually did more sleuthing and found that the NAACP had indeed made good on its promise, sending the letter to the *Pittsburgh Courier* and other black newspapers in Chicago, Baltimore, and New York. The newspapers featured the soldiers’ requests and black women patriotically responded, for the most part sending images of themselves as the “respectable middle-class women” they were rather than sexy pinup photos. The newspapers also encouraged black service units to vote for their favorite sweethearts or pinups and explain their choices.

“The story about pinups and coming across personal letters in different collections got me to thinking about other ways of considering the experiences of African Americans as a whole during the war,” says Threat. It was this manuscript that Threat worked on during her semester-long fellowship leave at JWJI, which examines black female pinups and black soldiers as well as the home front from a black perspective, particularly notions of race, sex, gendered identities, and relationships during and after the war.

#### **Letters Reflect the Romantic and the Mundane**

During her fellowship, Threat examined collections at the Auburn Avenue Research Library and in Emory’s Rose Library. She was particularly struck by a collection of letters at Auburn Avenue between James Bryant Smith, a Tuskegee Airman stationed in Alabama, and his wife; they wrote to one another nearly every day for four years, amassing several hundred letters. Their letters are “part of a larger conversation about the very intimate ways in which African Americans are

interacting with one another as spouses and in the community during this time,” Threat says. “We don’t often hear narratives where black soldiers are writing intimate, detailed, passionate—or regular—letters. I think there’s a story to that.”

Threat is grateful that after the fellowship semester ended, she was able to retain her Emory academic credentials for the academic year, returning to the Rose Library and her JWJI office often while resuming her full teaching load at Spelman College. “I think what’s great about JWJI is they bring together folks who may be working on different projects for collaborative opportunities,” Threat says. The stimulating conversations she had with the fellows in her cohort pushed her to “do more and do better,” she says. Her project has gone beyond what she originally envisioned, thanks to the time she spent conducting archival research. “JWJI goes the extra mile to make sure fellows get introduced to specific archivists and archives,” says Threat. “I would not have known about several sources if not for the fellowship.”

Notably, Threat was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities grant for her current research last year, allowing her to take another semester leave to finish her pinup article for publication. She credits her application for the UNCF-Mellon fellowship at JWJI with helping her craft a strong application for the NEH award. She expects it will take another couple of years to complete her second book but says that the work during her time at JWJI has moved the project along much quicker than she would have been able to accomplish otherwise.

### **Alex Lockett, Spelman College**

In the journal *Enculturation*, Alexandria Lockett writes, “I’ve been on the border my whole life—switching back and forth from Standard White English and African American Vernacular English, Midwest Plain Style, and Decorous Southern Speech. I’ve used the invisibility and visibility of my identity to push the limits of argumentation beyond the confines of ‘normality.’ I’ve been translating language as long as I can remember, trying to understand these rules, poking fun at them, playing with them, succeeding or failing at remixing and subverting them to open up new paths for language use.”



She wrote those words when she was a graduate student at Pennsylvania State University. Currently an assistant professor of English at Spelman College, Lockett was a 2017–2018 UNCF-Mellon Faculty Fellow at JWJI. She is still poking, still playing, still subverting—in the process energizing students in ways that feel, and are, quite new.

#### **The limits of invisibility**

Lockett recounts of her high school self, “I wasn’t a bad student, but I wasn’t a model student. I wasn’t that kid.” Growing up in Texarkana, Arkansas, Lockett says that students of color naturally shied away from AP classes because no one who looked like them was in those classes. “I managed to take AP English, but I was dreadfully afraid of the other classes,” she says.

She did participate in one majority-dominated realm in her high school: debate. And it was an education not only in mastering language but in mastering what it took to hold her own with predominantly white, male, conservative students. When she entered their homes, it was an education in the differences between the haves and the have nots. By that time, her parents had divorced, and she lived in more modest circumstances with her mother.

It was the day that a guidance counselor told her to think about cosmetology school that she became visible once and for all. Having talked her mother into buying her a computer, the online world became her oyster. She told herself that she would get into college through her computer and use it to educate herself about scholarships and the application process.

Named a Gates Millennium Scholar, Lockett earned the second-most scholarship money in her high school. And because she does nothing halfway, Lockett bundled up everything she learned and created a packet for other students that she entrusted to her English teacher. She laughs about the materials, saying that her instructor was so grateful that she kept them “for the next 20 years.”

Lockett says she felt “natural” online and learned coding as well as how to build websites. She was a geek’s geek. But when the dot.com bust happened, she changed her major from computer science to English. Along the way, she would not forget the importance of what she calls “hacking language,” which is another way of saying that she looks under the hood at who is using language and how, and insists that her students do the same.

At Spelman since 2014, Lockett is well attuned to her students, saying, “At an HBCU for women, my students are there because they know the rules. When you think about that from the standpoint of the gifted black student, who has learned to acculturate in nonthreatening ways, how does that student draw attention to the limitations of that institution?”

#### **Enter Professor Lockett**

Lockett offers one example that she uses to open students’ eyes to the boxes in which they might get placed. She walks them through the process of receiving feedback on their papers, insisting they interrogate their own position and that of the reviewer. Is the feedback gendered, empowering/disempowering? Are the students too inclined to give the reviewer what they think the reviewer wants? Is the standard dance one of coercion and deference? What happens when one deliberately interrupts that dance?

A challenging teacher, she is equally a challenging scholar. Her intersection with JWJI came when she was chosen to take part in the UNCF-Mellon Faculty Residence Program. She is amused that her travels brought her no farther than across town, but she was grateful for all the resources JWJI made available during what was, for her, an incredibly productive year in which she would advance two book projects.

One is her coauthored “Race, Rhetoric, and Research Ethics.” The impetus for the book was knowing that hate crimes have risen 17 percent in the past year. Musing in her blog about how researchers could study black Twitter, she eventually delved more deeply into the topic and presented at a conference, at which attendees encouraged her to do a research methods book that focuses specifically on race.

Book number two grew out of her dissertation. Titled “Overflow: Rhetorical Perspectives on Leaks,” she starts with Harriet Tubman, slavery, and its leaks, with the inability of that system to control people. In her second chapter, she discusses Frank Wills, the black security guard at the Watergate complex—the man who saw the tape on the door indicating that a burglary had been committed. Wills was completely unknown to most whites, scorned by an angry White House, and yet a hero in the black community and a recipient of an NAACP Image Award. The book moves forward chronologically, eventually taking up more recent phenomena such as WikiLeaks and counter-surveillance as well as the influence of mobile technologies. Says Lockett, “Now everyone is a walking camera, and it changes the responsibility of bearing witness to injustice.”

Back at Spelman, Lockett is both inspiring to her students and sometimes a bit of pain. She doesn't require her students to buy textbooks, instead introducing them to free and open-source options. When she shows them edX—and the fact that one can take courses from the world's best universities—she is cheered. “Claim the rights you have to so much free information,” she insists. “Plenty of people have sacrificed to make these forms of knowledge available.”

But she hears some of the nays in her evaluations. “My approach intrigues and overwhelms them,” she says. “Every time I teach this way, I take a risk. In my evaluations, they want to know, ‘Why is it so hard?’ ”

Is it easier to write a paper in someone else's class than to learn to edit Wikipedia in Lockett's? Easier to buy a textbook than learn to use the library's databases? Easier to avoid using the “I” in writing for other professors than to claim agency in Lockett's course?

The answer to all these questions is probably yes, but the student interested in empowerment and “21st-century knowledge making”—which is the form Lockett's pedagogy takes—will choose that harder path and be better for it.

## FORMER RESEARCH ASSISTANT JONATHAN PERAZA

As long as he can remember, Peraza has wanted to use knowledge to empower others. He moved around a lot in his early years, the son of a single mother from El Salvador and a Guatemalan father. Gay, poor, and Latino, Peraza describes “feeling marginalized everywhere I went. I could always see that the world worked differently for my white peers. I never knew why.”



Never passive in the face of his struggles, Peraza was an activist in high school, regularly petitioning for LGBTQ and immigrants' rights. He acknowledges learning a lot from black student activists, especially through Black Lives Matter. And he credits his participation in the Mellon-Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program with showing him how academics and activism could be compatible.

Peraza had been aware of JWJI since his earliest days as a student, attending many of the institute's lectures and considering it the hub for Emory's research regarding issues of race and inequality.

Through contact with former JWJI Assistant Director Kali-Ahset Amen, Peraza secured the position of research assistant and started working with Felipe Hinojosa, who was a fellow at the time. Says Peraza, “Hinojosa was the first Latin American male professor I ever had met in my life, and it was amazing to work with him.”

Peraza assisted on Hinojosa's current book project, which looks at how church takeovers—by groups such as the Young Lords and Católicos por la Raza—inspired a Latinx religious renaissance in the 1970s. Through the research he did for Hinojosa, including the creation of a database of news clippings, Peraza says that he learned how “churches can make or break a community.” The knowledge gained in supplementing Hinojosa's research has made him think more about the power of religion as a force for social justice and determined to tap into that force in the course of his own career.

Peraza also enrolled in Hinojosa’s Latinx Social Movements course as well. He considers it one of the best classes he took at Emory—made more powerful, he says, for “having a Latino teach us our own history.” Peraza describes Hinojosa as very relatable in class, willing to tell his personal story—which includes being the first member of his immigrant family to attend college and go on to earn a doctorate.

It helped students, many of whom were Latinx, feel more confident that what he achieved is doable by them. He practices, says Peraza, “intentional inclusion, creating a community-centered class where students felt a high level of engagement.” With Hinojosa occasionally lapsing into Spanglish, it sometimes felt, says Peraza, “as if we were in our living rooms at home. He makes teaching fun and challenging at the same time, and I intend to apply his teaching strategies in my own career.”

Peraza remains in touch with Hinojosa, still receiving mentoring and enjoying the friendship they forged. By being able to tap into the strength that Hinojosa projects, says Peraza, it helps him remain mindful that Latinx history, though in some ways a history of oppression, is also, “and most important,” says Peraza, “a history of resistance.”

Peraza is a man spinning plates rapidly. He is pursuing a master’s degree at Georgia State in the social foundations of education; he worked at Emory as an adviser for the National Scholarships and Fellowships Program. In January, he headed to Guatemala as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant.

For anyone who marvels at Peraza’s drive, he is direct about why such a level of commitment matters. “The work is not done,” he says. “Inequality persists.”

## CATCHING UP WITH FORMER FELLOWS

### **Mab Segrest, Connecticut College**

JWJI FELLOW, 2009–2010

#### **A Groundbreaking Work on Georgia’s Central State Hospital**

In almost any state in the US in the 1950s, the possibility of being institutionalized for a mental disorder was understood as a profound threat, given the bleak condition to which state mental hospitals had fallen during that period. For Mab Segrest, the Fuller-Maathai Professor Emerita of Gender and Women’s Studies at Connecticut College and a JWJI Fellow in 2009–2010, the threat was close to home. In Alabama during her youth, children often threatened each other with being “sent to Bryce’s,” and some parents held out the specter as well.



Then Segrest learned through an aunt a long-kept family secret: that her paternal grandfather had been placed in Alabama’s Bryce Hospital, a state psychiatric facility, in 1902 and died about six months later from an infection. The “trip wire” that caused his family to commit him, her aunt revealed, was that he had been in the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia in its bloodiest battles, then had walked home after the Civil War. Was it PTSD, Segrest’s aunt pondered, or pellagra, an epidemic caused from nutritional deficiency sweeping the South in the early 20th century?

A longtime devotee of Carson McCullers, Segrest well remembers the gender-bending adolescent Frankie Adams in *The Member of the Wedding* being threatened by her black caretaker Bernice with “being dragged off to Milledgeville,” by which she meant Georgia’s Central State Hospital. In 2004, having just finished a book, Segrest decided to follow up on these familial and literary leads.

### **A personal and professional curiosity stirs**

She googled “Central State Hospital” and, in a few key strokes, discovered that it had been the largest state hospital in the world when McCullers was writing her novella in 1945. A heart-breaking 1997 article in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* described Central State’s graveyard of more than 25,000 patients. In it, former employee Joe Ingram described “rows upon rows of numbered, small, rusted markers as far as you can see. No names, just numbers. Unknown human, shunned when living, deprived of their very names in death—and literally known only to God.”

In these convergences, Segrest recognized one hell of a story with broad relevance and with a horror and beauty that would require her best skills. She was hooked. The result is *Administrations of Lunacy: Racism and the Haunting of American Psychiatry*, expected out in February 2020, a story of national scope told from the perspective of “Milledgeville.”

The title is taken from the Georgia institution’s most famous superintendent, T. O. Powell, who in 1897 described the Southern “speciality” of his profession as “lunacy administration,” saying: “What the race problem is to our whole section, so is the question of the colored insane to our speciality.” As the subtitle indicates, the arc of the story Segrest tells is a new perspective on how racism shaped the emergence of asylum psychiatry in the United States in ways that impact us significantly today—thus, the “haunting” in the title. When asked by a colleague at the National Humanities Center, where both were fellows last year, if the book would be “anti-psychiatry.” (“No,” Segrest said, “it is anti-racist.”) “Psychiatry is a complex history that encompasses a broad set of practices,” she explains. “Racism is a distortion that can corrupt any of them.”

### **Acknowledging racism’s legacy**

Using a range of archival sources, and especially uplifting the lives and voices of asylum-sanitarium-state hospital patients over decades and centuries, Segrest makes clear this is a haunting that impacts us all. It is evident in today’s psychiatric crises in which 90 percent of psychiatric beds in the United States are located in jails and prisons and in the fact that the most recent *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* has been broadly contested within and beyond the profession. These professionals charge that its latest version overdiagnoses vulnerable populations and privileges biological interpretations of behaviors void of “sociocultural variation”—what Segrest knows is “history.”

Segrest is also attuned to the ways in which psychiatry shaped the culture’s sense of who felt, which of those feelings counted, what ideas stood in for common sense realities, and how major historical events (for example, lynching) were lost in official narratives of the state. “Such patterns as the absence of lynching narratives in the entry ledgers of African American patients in the 1870s help us more fully interpret, for example, the cell phone footage over the past decade of police killing black people in the most mundane of circumstances, often with no more provocation than their fears that a cell phone was a pistol,” she says.

Segrest argues, “In the 1870s, such horrendous events as lynchings fell into what one theorist called an ‘interpsychic tomb,’ and that tomb is still there today to swallow up narratives that disturb the state’s. Lynchings were traumatic events that affected the psyches of black individuals and communities, but these traumas were not recorded in asylum history. Lynchings were not seen either in terms of the lynchers’ pathologies or very seldom as the lynchers’ crimes.”

As Segrest colorfully describes the delicate state of some records, she says, “I have chased this story all over Georgia. Things burned down, they got stored up in the attic and squirrels got to them, storms came through, or they were thrown out.” But by using libraries and collections across Georgia and online, she has assembled annual reports, patient ledgers from 1842 to 1924, Supreme Court cases, troves of articles from the digitized *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, and oral histories and conversations with former patients and staff from more recent decades. “What I found most riveting were case histories from 1909 to 1924 that contained doctors’ verbatim entry interviews with patients, in which Georgia patients in Milledgeville finally got their say, many of them in ways funny, persuasive, poignant, or fierce,” Segrest says. For *Administrations of Lunacy*, patients’ stories anchor every section and most chapters.

Milledgeville also was home to Flannery O’Connor, a fact not lost on Segrest, whose PhD was in English literature and whose particular passion has been Southern writers. “I never really understood where Flannery O’Connor’s folks were coming from until I realized that many of them walked straight out of the state hospital into her stories,” Segrest reflects. “In the final chapter of my book, O’Connor appears as a character—along with the great anticolonial psychiatrist Franz Fanon (although he is in Algeria, not Georgia, so they do not meet).” Segrest explains how so many of Georgia’s writers in the 20th century used the state hospital in their works to show “how insanity was being what we now call ‘socially constructed’ and how the larger effects of failing mental institutions spread deeply into a state’s family networks in often traumatic ways.”

### **The fellowship of coming to JWJI**

Segrest is grateful for how much her time at JWJI as a fellow aided her ability to tell this important story. Finding friends and allies among the faculty and other fellows, Segrest terms it nothing less than a “wonderful year,” one in which she had the benefit of excellent research assistants. It was here she started writing, used the Georgia Archives in Morrow, traveled the state, and eventually published three articles on the subject before turning to the book-length study.

One faculty connection she made was with Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, who traveled with Segrest’s class to tour what remains of Central State Hospital, a bond that resulted in Garland-Thomson’s agreeing to do a symposium on disability at Segrest’s Connecticut College.

Segrest’s fellowship at JWJI took place while founder Rudolph Byrd was living. She marveled at his intellectual preeminence and at the institution he had built. During her tenure as a fellow, Segrest also taught a class, *Milledgeville and the Mind*, and served on a dissertation committee.

This project has been the work of a patient author who wants to get every detail right at the same time she travels the narrative’s deeper currents. “I bit off a lot to chew,” she says. Asked about a project beyond this one, Segrest would not go there. Her commitment, she says, is “to make sure that this volume gets out into the world as fully as possible.” In that light, she is looking forward, following the book’s publication, to events in both Atlanta and Milledgeville and also to taking the stories back to other Georgia communities from which patients were “dragged off to Milledgeville.”

For anyone—and, again, that is many of us—who have had a loved one “disappear” into a state system as a result of mental health problems, or who struggles today with insufficient “community care” or inadequate health insurance or treatment, Segrest has done her level best to exorcise the racism and inhumanity of this legacy by describing it relentlessly and uplifting the practices that contribute to what she terms the “ecologies of sanity” that also have been there all along.

“It has been quite a journey,” she says, “and I am almost to the station.”

**Vincent Lloyd, Villanova University**  
 JWJI FELLOW, 2010–2011

**How Broad Conversations Make for Broad Accomplishments**

According to Lloyd, a freshman seminar at Princeton University helped spark his eventual research interests and career path. On St. Francis and the Franciscans, the course examined how religion can be approached in an interdisciplinary way, factoring in history, art, and philosophy, among others.



Beyond the personal benefit of this seminar, Lloyd says, “Courses of this sort let faculty teach things outside the core of academic disciplines and engage with subjects they are passionate about.” That boundary spanning would become a key element of Lloyd’s scholarship.

It was not just the influence of texts and classroom discussion that nudged Lloyd toward his interests. As an undergraduate, he also was involved with labor organizing on campus, observing how religion motivated students and workers alike to take a stand for better conditions, including a higher minimum wage—a goal they ultimately achieved.

While a graduate student at University of California–Berkeley, Lloyd felt at home in the Rhetoric Department, which—despite its narrow-sounding name—actually was the nexus for the interdisciplinary study of humanities and critical theory. There, Lloyd undertook research on Gillian Rose, a philosopher and memoirist who was born Jewish but embraced Christianity at the end of her life, as she was battling cancer. Using her as a means to comment on contemporary religion and politics, Lloyd published *Law and Transcendence: On the Unfinished Project of Gillian Rose* (Palgrave) in 2009.

He followed that volume with *The Problem with Grace: Reconfiguring Political Theology* (Stanford University Press, 2011), suggesting that political philosophy must begin with political theology. In that study, to help make his case, he assembles a perhaps unexpected roster of thinkers whom he describes as “too Jewish to be Christian and too Christian to be Jewish.”

After earning his PhD, Lloyd’s first academic home was at Georgia State University. While giving his job talk there, Lloyd fielded the question: “Does what you have discussed illuminate anything about Martin Luther King Jr.?” Lloyd confesses to being a bit frustrated by the query, unsure whether his audience had taken the philosophical content of his lecture seriously. However, the discussion prompted him to pay more attention to King’s writing and thinking—and soon he had taken a much deeper dive into the traditions of African American religion and politics, discovering in the process that “African Americans were trying to deal with the same questions of religion and public life that I had been studying in the European context.”

For Lloyd’s year as a JWJI Fellow in 2010–2011, his focus was exploring in greater depth the references in King’s speeches and writing to God’s law, higher law, or natural law. It was clear, says Lloyd, “that King was not doing so just for rhetorical oomph. He was participating in a natural law tradition that could be put next to a Christian natural law tradition.”

Lloyd joined JWJI in its early years, when it bore the unmistakable stamp of founder Rudolph Byrd, who, says Lloyd, was so skilled at “bringing smart people with a variety of interests

together and letting them find commonalities.” He continues, “From his example, I try to create that same space in my administrative work.” Now having experienced his share of humanities centers, Lloyd comments, “JWJI is somewhat unique in its focus on race. I found that care for racial justice at JWJI particularly valuable.”

During his time at Emory, Lloyd found inspiration working with Candler colleagues and the workshops associated with theological studies. He also developed strong ties to two Fellows, Devin Fergus and Shana Redmond. In fact, after Lloyd left JWJI and was a Kingdon Fellow at the University of Wisconsin’s Institute for Research in the Humanities in 2015–2016, he brought both scholars there to help provide greater exposure for their work.

In the preface to the book that emerged from his JWJI year, *Black Natural Law* (Oxford University Press, 2016), Lloyd makes a disturbing statement and a bold promise. He declares the collapse of the black natural law tradition that had endured through slavery, the Civil War, Reconstruction, and decades of Jim Crow, citing a black intellectual class that became disconnected from social movement organizing and beholden to white interests. His book, notes Lloyd, “recovers the lost black natural law tradition.” As someone always interested in widening conversations, Lloyd was pleased that the book garnered both “expected and unexpected conversation partners”—the latter including a number of Catholic institutions as they, in Lloyd’s words, “broaden their commitment to, and understanding of, natural law.”

Two more books followed *Natural Law*, including *In Defense of Charisma* (Columbia University Press, 2018), which looks at King, Anna Julia Cooper, and Frederick Douglass as figures who mobilized communities for social justice action. Given that both Adolf Hitler and King can be described as charismatic, says Lloyd, he wrote the book to try to describe “when charisma leads us astray and when it leads us toward something positive.”

Now an associate professor of theology and religious studies at Villanova University, as well as coeditor of the journal *Political Theology*, Lloyd exults in the variety of religious ideas and practices being actively investigated across his institution, from environmental ethics to reproductive justice to incarceration. Speaking of the latter, the indefatigable Lloyd is, with coauthor Joshua Dubler, writing now on that very subject—a work titled “Break Every Yoke: Religion, Justice, and the Abolition of Prisons.”

A \$200,000 grant in 2017 from the Henry Luce Foundation allowed the creation of the Political Theology Network (PTN), which Lloyd helps coordinate. PTN is an interdisciplinary hub for exploring the intersection of religious and political ideas in research, the classroom, and the public arena. Lloyd is proud of the work he and others have done to develop PTN’s website and podcast, *Assembly*. His aim is to bring robust programming to faculty interested in religion and public life, especially social justice. In that light, he especially cites the success of the 2017 event “Dignity from the Margins,” in which dignity—an idea crucial to Catholic thought, international law, and European intellectual history—was examined through many lenses, including the rights of AIDS victims and anticolonial struggles.

Prolific and passionate in equal measure as a scholar, Lloyd has more than lived up to the values he learned in that freshman seminar long ago: working across boundaries to conceive, and act upon, ideas that matter to people’s lives.

**Michelle Gordon, Emory University**  
 JWJI FELLOW, 2015–2016

**The Ties That Bind**

When Michelle Gordon, a Marietta, Georgia, resident, registered for the ACT as part of her college application process, she was assigned to take the test at Woodruff Library. “I didn’t know there was more than one, so I went down to the Atlanta University Center (AUC), ready to take the test, and they asked, ‘What are you talking about?’ ” The two academic libraries on the AUC and Emory campuses share the same donor, name, and city but can sometimes seem worlds apart. The teenage Gordon probably never imagined that someday her work would serve as a kind of bridge between these two institutions as a specialist in African American literature whose scholarship and colleagues span both locations.



A JWJI Fellow in 2015–2016, Gordon impressed her temporary faculty colleagues in African American Studies enough to warrant earning a visiting professorship from the department the following academic year. She had come from the University of Southern California, where she was the only faculty member teaching African American literature as a specialty, a challenging time for her. At JWJI, she worked on finishing her book on the Chicago Renaissance and Black Arts Movement and gave several public talks.

Gordon arrived on campus at a time when many African American studies faculty specializing in literature were transitioning out of Emory. “I was somewhat in the right place at the right time,” Gordon says, “but it was also, I think, a good fit.” Last year, she became a permanent faculty member as senior lecturer and director of undergraduate studies. “This has been a really amazing place for me to be, where I have been hired to teach in my primary specialty,” she adds.

This is a vibrant time for African American studies at Emory, with several new faculty hires and more to come. In addition, the major is growing at Emory. “We’re graduating students who are going into top PhD programs. Some of these are first-generation college students who are now getting fellowships and financial aid to study at the PhD level,” she says. Gordon introduces her own classes to scholarly research early, frequently taking them to Rose Library to pore over manuscripts, periodicals, letters, and ephemera in the library’s African American collections.

As busy as her teaching duties keep her, Gordon retains a foothold in JWJI, even asking the AAS department to schedule her classes around its noon colloquium series on Mondays. “To be able to come here and sit down with other fellows, with faculty and staff, just enabled a different kind of depth to the kinds of conversations I could have,” she says. Since becoming an Emory faculty member, she joined the fellows for part of their orientation last year—traveling with them to Oxford College—and served as faculty host for UNCF-Mellon Fellow Alexandria Lockett.

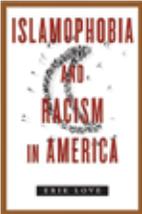
Gordon likens herself to a kind of unofficial director of graduate studies for each incoming group of JWJI fellows, given that their courses are typically offered through AAS. “I answer any questions they have about teaching at Emory but also give them some sense of the students and what it’s like to teach here,” Gordon explains. As someone who’s been in their shoes before, Gordon emphasizes to them that their primary role as JWJI fellows is to do research and be productive on their projects while here and that their class should flow with that aspect and not against it. The students get really excited about the courses the visiting JWJI fellows teach

in the spring semester, says Gordon. “Some of our best students—and not just African American studies students, but students that I know from history, from English, and sociology—are taking these classes.”

Gordon hopes her close relationship to JWJI will forge an even tighter bond between the institute and African American studies. She already sees the ways in which JWJI is building a strong black studies faculty contingent across Atlanta, routinely seeing Morehouse College and Spelman College faculty at its public programs and weekly colloquia. Doing so makes Emory appear a much less elitist and much more engaged partner with the city’s other higher education institutions, Gordon believes. She’s excited by the prospect. “To be coming home and contributing to the institutionalization of black studies in Atlanta really has been awesome. I feel like that’s part of what I was trained for.”

## NEW ALUMNI PUBLICATIONS

**Erik Love** (2016 Postdoctoral Fellow) is an assistant professor of sociology at Dickinson College. He studies civil rights advocacy organizations in the United States and teaches courses on social movements, race and racism, and qualitative methods.



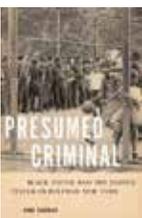
*Islamophobia and Racism in America* (2017) looks at how the number of hate crimes committed against Middle Eastern Americans of all origins and religions has increased, and how civil rights advocates struggle to confront this striking reality. He draws on in-depth interviews with Middle Eastern American advocates. He shows that, rather than using a well-worn civil rights strategy to advance reforms to protect a community affected by racism, many advocates are choosing to bolster universal civil liberties in the United States more generally, believing that these universal protections are reliable and strong enough to deal with Islamophobia. In reality, Love reveals, these cherished civil rights protections are surprisingly weak and do not offer enough avenues for justice, change, and community reassurance in the wake of hate crimes, discrimination, and social exclusion. A unique and timely study, *Islamophobia and Racism in America* wrestles with the disturbing implications of these findings for the persistence of racism—including Islamophobia—in the 21st century. (from the back cover of *Islamophobia and Racism in America*)

**Ashanté M. Reese** (2017 UNCF-Mellon Fellow) is an assistant professor of anthropology at Spelman College, a 2017 Southern Foodways Alliance Smith Symposium Fellow, and the author of a forthcoming book (April 2019), *Black Food Geographies*, published by UNC Press.



In the book, Reese makes clear the structural forces that determine food access in urban areas, highlighting black residents' navigation of and resistance to unequal food distribution systems. Reese examines the history of the majority-black Deanwood neighborhood of Washington, D.C. Based on extensive ethnographic fieldwork, her book not only documents racism and residential segregation in the nation's capital but also tracks the ways transnational food corporations have shaped food availability. By connecting community members' stories to the larger issues of systemic racism and gentrification, Reese shows that there are hundreds of Deanwoods across the country. Her geographies of self-reliance offer an alternative to models that depict black residents as lacking agency. (from the back cover of *Black Food Geographies*)

**Carl Suddler** (2015 Postdoctoral Fellow) is an assistant professor of African American history in the Department of History at Florida Atlantic University. As a scholar of African American history, his research interests lie at the intersections of youth, race, and crime in the United States. He is the author of *Presumed Criminal*, forthcoming in July 2019 from New York University Press.



A stark disparity exists between black and white youth experiences in the justice system today. Black youths are perceived to be older and less innocent than their white peers. When it comes to incarceration, race trumps class, and even as black youths articulate their own experiences with carceral authorities, many Americans remain surprised by the inequalities they continue to endure. In *Presumed Criminal*, Suddler brings to light a much longer history of the policies and strategies that tethered the lives of black youths to the justice system indefinitely. The criminalization of black youth is inseparable from its racialized origins. In the mid-twentieth century, the United States justice system began to focus on punishment rather than rehabilitation. As Suddler shows, by the time the federal government began to address the issue of juvenile delinquency, the juvenile justice system shifted its priorities from saving delinquent youth to purely controlling crime, and black teens bore the brunt of the transition. (from the back cover of *Presumed Criminal*)

## COLLOQUIUM SERIES

### Must-See Scholarship

JWJI's weekly Colloquium Series is appointment viewing for some

Most who are regular viewers of television shows and radio programming such as *60 Minutes* or *All Things Considered*, or even podcasts, have reluctantly tuned into a topic that wasn't on first mention particularly interesting but then find themselves pleasantly engrossed in the subject matter.

Those who regularly attend JWJI's weekly Colloquium Series often might feel the same way. For more than three years on Mondays at noon during the academic year, the series has become appointment viewing for certain Emory faculty, staff, students, and community members owing to—and in spite of—the breadth of scholarship featured and its interdisciplinary nature. In planning these 90-minute lectures each week, JWJI staff schedule and host scholars from across the country, arrange book signings, and feed attendees lunch each week. We checked in with four regulars to let us know why they started attending and why they keep coming.

"Racial and social justice must be a central focus of moral education in the US," says Peter Wakefield, professor of pedagogy and director of undergraduate studies at Emory's Institute for the Liberal Arts. "I began attending because of announced topics. I have continued to come to the lectures—often when I have little familiarity with the topic—because I have so often been stretched to learn new aspects of history and to understand new disciplinary methods of analysis, always around topics of pressing interest."

Weslie Robinson, director of prospect research in Emory's division of Advancement and Alumni Engagement, agrees. "There have been so many times that the lectures have exposed me to concepts that I hadn't previously considered and opened my eyes to a whole new world."

Jerrold Brantley, senior associate at Emory's Woodruff Library, likens the colloquium series to barber-and-beauty-shop conversations at a scholarly level. Even when the topics go over his head, he says, "there's always one person in the audience who can engage the presenter in genuine dialogue to the point that all who hear the conversation are enlightened."

Michelle Gordon, a member of the African American studies faculty and former JWJI fellow (see p. 29), has been a presenter as well as a regular colloquium attendee. "I feel like it's given me refreshers in and new education on the state of race and difference now, which really does keep me abreast of the new scholarship in a variety of fields," she says. "I've always been an interdisciplinary scholar with a foot very firmly in literary studies and cultural studies. [The colloquium] has really helped me stay abreast in a broader sense and also in a not narrowly African American sense, which I think is important."

Like a cluster of migrating birds, the size and composition of colloquium audiences vary by speaker and topic. That gives the event a sense of novelty, even though it's held weekly. "At many of these symposia, I have seen past professors and friends from other areas of campus and enjoy the opportunity to catch up," says Robinson. Proximity and regularity form new relationships as well. "I have become friends with several other staff persons who frequently attend the JWJI lectures," says Brantley. "We meet and talk outside of Mondays at noon. No one can make every single lecture. We share with one another and summarize what we missed when one can't attend."

"I have begun to plan my schedule around this calendar, just so that I can attend these regular lectures," adds Wakefield. "I am impressed, not only by the excellent lineup of speakers but by the hard work the small staff at JWJI must do to mount such high-quality lectures every week."

JWJI's Monday Colloquium Series is typically held in Woodruff Library's Jones Room from noon to 1:30 p.m. To see a current lecture schedule, visit [jamesweldonjohnson.emory.edu/home/colloquium](http://jamesweldonjohnson.emory.edu/home/colloquium).

## FALL SEMESTER 2017

*September 18, 2017*

**James Forman Jr.**, Yale Law School, 2018 Pulitzer Prize Recipient

### *Locking Up Our Own*

In recent years, debates about America's criminal justice system have taken on increasing urgency. But what if we only know half the story? In *Locking Up Our Own*, Forman explores the tragic role that some African Americans played in escalating the war on crime. As he shows, the first substantial cohort of black mayors, judges, and police chiefs took office around the country at a time when crime and violence had risen to unprecedented levels. As murder rates rose and open-air drug markets proliferated, many black officials, including Washington, D.C., mayor Marion Barry and federal prosecutor Eric Holder, came to believe that tough measures—such as mandatory minimum sentences for drug and gun offenses, warrior-style policing, and "pretext traffic stops"—were needed to protect black communities. Some politicians and activists saw criminals as a "cancer" that had to be cut away from the rest of black America. Others supported harsh policies more reluctantly, believing they had no other choice in the face of a public safety emergency. Whatever their intentions, Forman shows the devastating impact these policies have had on residents of D.C.'s poorest African American neighborhoods. He also discusses recent progress toward a more humane criminal justice system.



*September 25, 2017*

**Gina Perez**, Oberlin College

### *Citizen, Student, Soldier: Latina/o Youth, JROTC, and the American Dream*

Since the 1990s, Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) programs have experienced unprecedented expansion in American public schools. The program and its proliferation in poor, urban school districts with large numbers of Latina/o and African American students is not without controversy. Public support is often based on the belief that the program provides much-needed discipline for "at-risk" youth. Meanwhile, critics of JROTC argue that the program is a recruiting tool for the US military and is yet another example of an increasingly punitive climate that disproportionately affects youth of color in American public schools. In this talk, based on her book *Citizen, Student, Soldier*, Perez intervenes in these debates, providing critical ethnographic attention to understanding the motivations, aspirations, and experiences of the increasing number of students who participate in JROTC programs. Perez also highlights the ideological, social, and cultural conditions of Latina/o youth and their families who both participate in and are enmeshed in vigorous debates about citizenship, obligation, social opportunity, militaries, and, ultimately, the American Dream.



October 2, 2017

**Noelle Morrisette, University of North Carolina–Greensboro**

*Reading the Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man in the 21st Century*

In this talk, Morrisette discusses the reception of James Weldon Johnson's novel, *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*, contemporaneous to its anonymous publication in 1912, emphasizing unfinished chapters of Johnson's novel in our age and reading culture.

October 16, 2017

**Treva Lindsey, The Ohio State University**

*Black Feminist Legacies of the Chocolate City*

This talk explores the unique and significant role of black women in shaping the nation's capital. For Lindsey, the freedom struggles waged by black women in D.C. are and were anchored in a desire for equality and justice. Understanding the contours of the racial, gender, class, and sexual politics of the black foremothers of modern Washington provides insight into the current political climate of a rapidly gentrifying and changing urban landscape. Through the stories of black women in early-twentieth-century Washington, Lindsey develops a fuller understanding of the Jim Crow era and the afterlives of legal segregation.



October 23, 2017

**Talitha LeFlouria, University of Virginia**

*Chained in Silence: Black Women and Convict Labor*

In 1868, the state of Georgia began to make its rapidly growing population of prisoners available for hire. The resulting convict-leasing system ensnared not only men but also African American women, who were forced to labor in camps and factories to make profits for private investors. In this vivid work of history, LeFlouria draws from a rich array of primary sources to piece together the stories of these women, recounting what they endured in Georgia's prison system and what their labor accomplished. She argues that African American women's presence within the convict-lease and chain-gang systems of Georgia helped to modernize the South by creating a new and dynamic set of skills for black women. At the same time, female inmates struggled to resist physical and sexual exploitation and to preserve their human dignity within a hostile climate of terror. This revealing history redefines the social context of black women's lives and labor in the New South and allows their stories to be told for the first time.



October 30, 2017

**Mab Segrest, National Humanities Center/Connecticut College (JWJI Alumna)**

*Administrations of Lunacy: Race, Psychiatry, and Georgia's State Hospital*

In this talk, Segrest traces the nexus between settler colonialism and US psychiatry through a social history of 170 years at Georgia's mental hospital.



November 6, 2017

**Josef Sorett, Columbia University**

**Religion and the Quest for a Black Aesthetic**

Sorett's talk draws upon the arguments of his 2016 book, *Spirit in the Dark: A Religious History of Racial Aesthetics*, which examines the relationship between African American literature and American religious history across much of the twentieth century. Most academic and popular accounts of African American literature foreground its modern, and therefore secular, ethos and ambitions during this time period. *Spirit in the Dark* challenges this orthodoxy by illuminating how religion was an animating and organizing force in black literary visions from the New Negro movement in the 1920s through the Black Arts movement at the end of the 1960s. Sorett discusses how such terms as "church" and "spirit," and a broader range of religious ideas and practices, provided black artists and intellectuals with a robust spiritual grammar through which they constructed, contested, and critiqued the very idea of black art and culture.



November 13, 2017

**Shana Redmond, University of California–Los Angeles (JWJI Alumna)**

**'I go on singing': The Hypermedia Afterlife of Paul Robeson**

Though once the most recognizable black artist in the world, Paul Robeson (1898–1976) has faded from common knowledge in the US. The victim of a comprehensive political erasure by the federal government, he nonetheless recurs in the music, poetry, exhibitions, and landscapes of working people throughout the African world. In this lecture, Redmond situates his labors as a singer and activist through his repetition as a series of metaphysical states during the midcentury moment of his persecution as well as the years following his death.



November 20, 2017

**Melanye Price, Rutgers University**

**Barack Obama, Black Lives Matter, and the Politics of Belonging**

The talk explores the central themes of Price's book, *The Race Whisperer: Barack Obama and the Political Uses of Race*. The book examines the ways Obama used his unorthodox biography and understanding of diverse racial grammars to mobilize political support. Obama begins and ends his presidency dealing with conflict between blacks and the police. Henry Louis Gates's arrest shortly after Obama took office demonstrated the ways that America's first black president was limited in his ability to voice the concerns and political perspectives of African Americans. Ultimately, Price argues that this even shaped Obama's subsequent interactions with Black Lives Matter activists at the end of his presidency.



November 27, 2017

**Devin Fergus, University of Missouri (JWJI Alumnus)**

**The Modern Origins of Today's Racial Wealth Gap and What the Trump White House Plans to Do about It**

For every dollar of net worth a white person holds, an African American today only has 6 cents. This gap is near its widest margin since government began recording this statistic almost 30 years ago. What accounts for the decreasing chances to achieve upward mobility in contemporary America? Do these reasons explain why African Americans in particular have experienced sharp increases in economic inequality during the last generation? How has higher education—long thought the nation's great social leveler—exacerbated the racial wealth gap? This talk identifies the reasons—



such as the extraction of wealth through student loans and auto insurance—for the recent rise of economic inequality and the impact of this gap on African Americans and other vulnerable populations such as women, Latinos, the working poor, the elderly, and increasingly the middle class. Fergus considers the ways in which the Trump White House threatens a return to the failed policies of earlier administrations in everything from higher education to housing—policies that proved disastrous for the nation as a whole and African Americans in particular.

*January 29, 2018*

**Charissa J. Threat, Spelman College (JWJI Fellow)**

**Nursing Civil Rights in the Army Nurse Corps**

Threat investigates the parallel battles against occupational segregation by African American women and white men in the US Army. As she reveals, both groups viewed their circumstances with the Army Nurse Corps as a civil rights matter. Each conducted separate integration campaigns to end the discrimination they suffered. Yet their stories defy the narrative that civil rights struggles inevitably arced toward social justice. Threat tells how progressive elements in the campaigns did indeed break down barriers in both military and civilian nursing. At the same time, she follows conservative threads to portray how some of the women who succeeded as agents of change became defenders of exclusionary practices when men sought military nursing careers. The ironic result was a struggle that simultaneously confronted and reaffirmed the social hierarchies that nurtured discrimination.



*February 5, 2018*

**Lakeyta Bonnette, Georgia State University**

**Pulse of the People: Political Rap Music and Black Politics**

This talk examines the relationship between hip hop culture, politics, and political attitudes. On January 11, 2018, newly elected Atlanta mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms announced her 38-member transition team. Among the business and educational leaders she identified two activists, native Atlanta rappers T. I. and Killer Mike. As Bonnette argues, hip hop culture is important and embedded in many aspects of American life, including movies, marketing, law, politics, the arts, pedagogy/education, and social justice. Lance Bottoms as well as Barack Obama recognized the influence and involvement of hip hop culture, and both have strategically utilized elements of the culture symbolically and politically. (Obama's relationship with Jay-Z, his meeting with Ludacris before he ran, and the invitation of Kendrick Lamar to the White House are a few examples.)



*February 12, 2018*

**Barbara McCaskill, University of Georgia**

**Black Love/Lives in the Transatlantic Archive**

In this talk, McCaskill examines what early African Americans' unpublished and periodical archives, though fragmented and incomplete, can tell us about relationships among African American activists and their family members. McCaskill focuses specifically on the private and public productions of the "Georgia Fugitive" Ellen Craft (1826–1891) and the Rev. Peter Thomas Stanford (c. 1860–1909), both formerly enslaved persons whose transnational impact as educators and institution builders extended into the turbulent decades after the Reconstruction. To locate and critique such productions is an important project that demonstrates how African Americans collaborated strategically to attain the promises of liberation and to pass down shared cultural values amid the realities of racial violence, economic instability, and physical displacement.



*February 19, 2018*

**Darrick Hamilton, New School for Social Research**

**Working Hard Ain't Enough for Black Americans**

High-achieving black Americans, as measured by education, still exhibit large economic and health disparities relative to their white peers, especially in the domain of wealth. In this talk, Hamilton discusses how the postracial politics of personal responsibility and “neoliberal paternalism” tropes discourage a public responsibility for the conditions of poor and black Americans and instead encourage punitive measures to “manage” these “surplus populations.” Hamilton presents an alternative frame, stratification economics, to better understand this paradox. Ultimately, he explores the potential physical and psychological costs of stigma and, ironically, exerting individual agency. In the context of a racist or stigmatized environment, it limits the role of education and income as protective factors for blacks relative to whites.



*February 26, 2018*

**Amrita Myers, Indiana University (JWJI Fellow)**

**Remembering Julia: A Tale of Sex, Power, Race, and Place**

This is the story of Julia Chinn, a black woman, and Richard Mentor Johnson, a career politician. Set in rural Kentucky in the mid-1800s, it is a tale unfamiliar to many people today. It is also a narrative that seems quite typical at first glance: an enslaved woman had a long relationship with a white man and had children by him. If we dig a little deeper, however, it is clear that this union has much to teach us about antebellum attitudes toward interracial sex. Careful analysis of this partnership reveals where the lines of societal acceptance were drawn for members of mixed-race households in the Old South while illuminating the importance of locale in shaping the boundaries of power for women of color. What did it mean to be the black wife of a white man in the slave South? How much privilege did that association bring, and where were the limits of power for said woman? What did life look like for the children of such couples? How did a man attain the vice presidency in a slave-based society while acknowledging his ties to a black woman and their children? And, how did this story remain in the shadows for more than 150 years? These are just some of the questions this talk addresses as it moves Julia from the margins to the center of US history.



*March 5, 2018*

**Sherie Randolph, Georgia Institute of Technology (JWJI Alumna)**

**Florynce “Flo” Kennedy: Black Feminist Radical**

Often photographed in a cowboy hat with her middle finger held defiantly in the air, Florynce “Flo” Kennedy (1916–2000) left a vibrant legacy as a leader of the Black Power and feminist movements. In the first biography of Kennedy, Randolph traces the life and political influence of this strikingly bold and controversial radical activist. Rather than simply reacting to the predominantly white feminist movement, Kennedy brought the lessons of Black Power to white feminism and built bridges in the struggles against racism and sexism. Randolph narrates Kennedy’s progressive upbringing, her pathbreaking graduation from Columbia Law School, and her long career as a media-savvy activist, showing how Kennedy rose to founding roles in organizations such as the National Black Feminist Organization and the National Organization for Women, aligning herself with both white and black activists such as Adam Clayton Powell, H. Rap Brown, Betty Friedan, and Shirley Chisholm.



*March 19, 2018*

**Daniel Kim, Brown University**

**The Korean War in Color: 'Tan Yanks' and the Intimacies of Conflict**

Although the Korean War is known to most Americans mainly as “the forgotten war,” one aspect of it that has generally been remembered is that it was the first in which African American military men served in integrated combat units. This talk explores how this novel aspect of soldiering was addressed by African American newspapers and Hollywood films in the 1950s. These depictions helped pave the way for the emergence of what the historian Melanie McAllister has termed “military multiculturalism,” an ideology that celebrates the forms of interracial intimacy that emerge among the US fighting men during wartime. Kim examines the difficulties posed by this ideology: the fact that the enemy that these soldiers sought to kill and the civilian populations that they ostensibly sought to protect were also people of color. As such, this talk also takes up writings by Toni Morrison and Clarence Adams that grapple with what W. E. B. Du Bois famously termed “the problem of the color line—the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea”—as it pertained to the Korean War.



*March 26, 2018*

**Alison M. Parker, State University of New York–Brockport (JWJI Fellow)**

**Unceasing Militant: The Life of Mary Church Terrell**

Mary Church Terrell (1863–1954), the first president of the National Association of Colored Women and a cofounder of the NAACP, mobilized black women for an equal rights agenda that included women’s suffrage, antilynching, and opposition to segregation. In this presentation, Parker joins with those who are writing life histories of black activist women that grapple with all aspects of their interior lives, including the psychological and physical costs of racism, sexual desire, and other taboo subjects. Until now, Terrell’s health problems have been virtually ignored. Yet her reproductive illnesses fundamentally shaped her public work and reform priorities, including training programs for black nurses and the creation of infant nurseries, daycare, and kindergartens. Drawing on disability studies, Parker demonstrates how race, gender, and illness interconnected in one black woman’s life. By exploring the painful experiences that Terrell kept hidden from all but her closest family members, Parker reveals the personal costs of her illnesses and her silence while providing insights into how these experiences shaped her public activism.



*April 2, 2018*

**Felipe Hinojosa, Texas A&M University (JWJI Fellow)**

**Apostles of Change: Radical Politics and the Making of Latino/a Religion**

This talk examines how a few and relatively unknown church takeovers—by groups such as the Young Lords and Católicos por la Raza—inspired a Latino/a religious renaissance, both cultural and political, in the 1970s. Hinojosa’s analysis not only investigates the role of theology and faith—a story common to other Latina/o religious narratives—but centers radical politics as fundamental to understanding the origins of Latina/o religious politics in the US, themes that the literature on Latina/o religion has for the most part ignored.



*April 9, 2018*

**Ashley Brown, University of Wisconsin–Madison (JWJI Fellow)**

**Althea Gibson, Femininity, and Homophobia in the Integration of American Sports**

This talk argues that tennis champion Althea Gibson's stature as a symbol of black excellence during the Cold War and early civil rights movement was compromised by her longstanding gender nonconformity, which evoked the social taboo of lesbianism. Gibson's tomboyish traits were accepted and celebrated in her working-class black community in South Harlem in the 1940s. However, her selection as the player to integrate elite amateur tennis necessitated her adoption of a more feminine mien amid the rising, post–World War II stereotype of the lesbian female athlete and Cold War antagonism toward gays and lesbians.



*April 16, 2018*

**Elizabeth Pérez, University of California–Santa Barbara**

**Soul Food and the Making of Black Atlantic Religion**

Before honey can be offered to the Afro-Cuban deity Ochún, it must be tasted, to prove to her that it is good. In African-inspired religions throughout the Caribbean, Latin America, and the United States, such gestures instill the attitudes that turn participants into practitioners. Acquiring deep knowledge of the diets of the gods and ancestors constructs adherents' identities; to learn to fix the gods' favorite dishes is to be "seasoned" into their service. In this talk, Pérez reveals how seemingly trivial "micropractices" such as the preparation of sacred foods are complex rituals in their own right. Drawing on years of ethnographic research in Chicago among practitioners of Lucumí, the transnational tradition popularly known as Santería, Pérez focuses on the behind-the-scenes work of the primarily women and gay men responsible for feeding the gods. She reveals how cooking and talking around the kitchen table have played vital socializing roles in Black Atlantic religions.



## PUBLIC DIALOGUES

*JWJI continued its evening programming series, hosting four vibrant discussions in 2017–2018.*

### **Becoming American: New Scholarship on Immigration**

On September 28, 2017, the institute hosted five eminent scholars of immigration. From understanding contemporary migration patterns to the US (including the Latinx, Asian, and African diasporas) to understanding how current debates over immigration change political identities and voting behavior, this program explored the diversity of contemporary US immigration and how it is politicized.

### **Whiteness: The Meaning of a Racial, Social, and Legal Construct**

In the wake of Donald Trump's election and bestselling books such as *Hillbilly Elegy* and *White Trash*, there is a growing realization that whiteness is as much a social racial and political identity as being African, Latinx, Asian, or Native American. On November 16, 2017, in partnership with the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum, the institute hosted a multidisciplinary panel that explained why race—including whiteness—still matters in America.

### **Black-Latinx Solidarity: A Symposium**

Black and Latino/a/x people are often portrayed in academic and popular discussions as comrades in inequality and discrimination. Even as there are numerous examples of cross-group collaboration, there are also distinctions in black and Latinx experiences that sometimes lead these groups to different, and sometimes competing, policy preferences. Under what conditions do black and Latinx groups forge collaborations and what conditions exacerbate tensions between the groups? On February 22, 2018, the institute convened an interdisciplinary panel of scholars who study the relationships between these groups to explore the possibilities for cross-group solidarity.

### **2018 Annual James Weldon Johnson Distinguished Lecture**

Each spring, the institute sponsors a major address by a distinguished race scholar and public intellectual. On April 5, historian and award-winning author Taylor Branch delivered the 2018 lecture titled, "Lift Every Voice: Martin Luther King Jr. and James Weldon Johnson." Branch's talk examined the following question: Looking back 50 years to 1968 and 100 years to 1918, what can we learn today about race and democracy from these two seminal leaders?

This event was cosponsored by Ebenezer Baptist Church and the Laney Legacy Program in Moral Leadership at Candler School of Theology.

## **Special Program of Note**

### **Textures of the Diaspora**

On September 29, 2017, JWJI hosted "Textures of the Diaspora," a public panel exploring black women's cultural and spiritual heritage work across two African diaspora locations: the state of Alabama and Bahia, Brazil. Focusing on the varied uses of textile-based arts in Africana sacred ritual and ancestral communication, the conversation featured master quilter Mary Margaret Pettway from Gee's Bend, Alabama as well as Iyalorixá Valnizia de Ayra and Vandrea Amaral from the Terreiro do Cobre Candomblé Community in Bahia, Brazil.

This event was cosponsored by the Michael C. Carlos Museum, Emory Center for Creativity and Arts, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, Veterans of Hope, and Ceremony Music and Events.

## 2018–2019 Programming Calendar

DATE & TIME	CATEGORY	LOCATION	TOPICS & SPEAKERS
MONDAY, 9/10 12:00–1:30 PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	CANDIS WATTS SMITH ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC POLICY, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA—CHAPEL HILL <b>“BLACK FLIGHT: THE POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS OF BLACK INTERSTATE AND INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT”</b>
MONDAY, 9/17 12:00–1:30 PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	JUDITH CASSELBERRY ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF AFRICANA STUDIES, BOWDOIN COLLEGE <b>“SOLVING THE MYSTERY OF GRACE JONES: IT’S THE HOLY GHOST”</b>
MONDAY, 9/24 12:00–1:30 PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	JUSTIN DRIVER HARRY N. WYATT PROFESSOR OF LAW, UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LAW SCHOOL <b>“THE SCHOOLHOUSE GATE: PUBLIC EDUCATION, THE SUPREME COURT, AND THE BATTLE FOR THE AMERICAN MIND”</b>
THURSDAY, 9/27 4:30–6:00 PM	PUBLIC DIALOGUE PROGRAM	OXFORD ROAD PRESENTATION AUDITORIUM	<b>“BEYOND BLACK AND WHITE: MULTIRACIALISM IN AMERICA”</b> PANELISTS: GREGORY CARTER, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN—MILWAUKEE; MICHELLE ELAM, WILLIAM ROBERTSON COE PROFESSOR OF MODERN THOUGHT AND LITERATURE, STANFORD UNIVERSITY; TANYA HERNANDEZ, ARCHIBALD R. MURRAY PROFESSOR OF LAW, FORDHAM UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW; AND NATALIE MASUOKA, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA—LOS ANGELES
MONDAY, 10/1 12:00–1:30 PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	LISA MILLER PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, RUTGERS UNIVERSITY <b>“RACE, INEQUALITY, AND FAILED STATES: THE POLITICAL ORIGINS OF VIOLENCE IN THE AMERICAS”</b>
MONDAY, 10/15 12:00–1:30 PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	DANIELLE CLEALAND ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY <b>“THE POWER OF RACE IN CUBA: RACIAL IDEOLOGY AND BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS DURING THE REVOLUTION”</b>
MONDAY, 10/22 12:00–1:30 PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	BETH LEW-WILLIAMS ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY <b>“THE CHINESE MUST GO: VIOLENCE, EXCLUSION, AND THE MAKING OF THE ALIEN IN AMERICA”</b>
MONDAY, 10/29 12:00–1:30 PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	VINCENT LLOYD ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES, VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY <b>“SAMUEL BECKETT AND BLACK STUDIES”</b>
MONDAY, 11/5 12:00–1:30 PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	ROBBIE LIEBERMAN PROFESSOR OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES, KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY <b>“RESISTANCE AND REPRESSION: THE ‘TRIPLE EVILS’ AND THE BLACK AND RED SCARE FROM WORLD WAR I TO THE 1970S”</b>

DATE & TIME	CATEGORY	LOCATION	TOPICS & SPEAKERS
THURSDAY, 9/27 4:30–6:00 PM	PUBLIC DIALOGUE PROGRAM	WHITE HALL 205	<p><b>“FILM SCREENING AND DISCUSSION: MAYNARD”</b></p> <p>PANELISTS: WENDY ELEY JACKSON, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER OF THE FILM AND DAUGHTER-IN-LAW OF MAYNARD JACKSON; MAURICE HOBSON, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES AT GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY; AND TERI PLATT, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AT CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY.</p>
MONDAY, 11/12 12:00–1:30 PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	<p>CHRISTINE HONG ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF CRITICAL RACE AND ETHNIC STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA–SANTA CRUZ</p> <p><b>“THE PRICE OF INCLUSION: RACE, MILITARISM, AND THE PAX AMERICANA IN COLD WAR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC”</b></p>
MONDAY, 11/19 12: – 1:30 PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	<p>LUCRETIA MONIQUE WARD ARTHUR F. THURNAU PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN–ANN ARBOR</p> <p><b>“GENDER IDEOLOGIES, BODY IMAGE, AND ADOLESCENT SEXUAL DECISION MAKING”</b></p>
MONDAY, 11/26 12 – 1:30PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY JONES ROOM	<p>ANGEL ADAMS PARHAM ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY, LOYOLA UNIVERSITY-NEW ORLEANS</p> <p><b>“THE RACIAL PALIMPSEST: NEW ANALYTICAL LENSES FOR UNDERSTANDING RACE AND MIGRATION”</b></p>
MONDAY, 1/28 12:00–1:30 PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	<p>CHRIS ZEPEDA-MILLÁN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC POLICY AND CHICANA/O STUDIES, UCLA</p> <p><b>“LATINO MASS MOBILIZATION: IMMIGRATION, RACIALIZATION, AND ACTIVISM”</b></p>
MONDAY, 2/4 12:00–1:30 PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	<p>REGINA BRADLEY ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH AND AFRICAN DIASPORA STUDIES, KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY</p> <p><b>“CHRONICLING STANKONIA: OUTKAST AND THE RISE OF THE HIP HOP SOUTH”</b></p>
MONDAY, 2/11 12:00–1:30 PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	<p>CHERYL FINLEY ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ART HISTORY, CORNELL UNIVERSITY</p> <p><b>“CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN DIASPORA ART, PHOTOGRAPHY, AND PERFORMANCE”</b></p>
MONDAY, 2/18 12:00–1:30 PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	<p>KEESHA MIDDLEMASS ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, HOWARD UNIVERSITY</p> <p><b>“POLITICS AND POLICIES OF PRISONER REENTRY”</b></p>
THURSDAY, 2/28 6:00–7:30 PM	PUBLIC DIALOGUE PROGRAM	CARLOS MUSEUM	<p><b>“BLACK MASCULINITIES: A CONVERSATION ON VISUAL ART AND POPULAR REPRESENTATION”</b></p> <p>PANELISTS: FAHAMU PECOU, RENOWNED VISUAL ARTIST; R. SCOTT HEATH, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH, GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY; ZANDRIA ROBINSON, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY, RHODES COLLEGE; AND JERICHO BROWN, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF CREATIVE WRITING, EMORY. EMORY PROVOST DWIGHT A. MCBRIDE PROVIDED THE INTRODUCTION.</p>
MONDAY, 2/25 12:00–1:30 PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	<p>TERA HUNTER EDWARDS PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AND AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES, PRINCETON UNIVERSITY</p> <p><b>“BOUND IN WEDLOCK: SLAVE AND FREE BLACK MARRIAGE”</b></p>

DATE & TIME	CATEGORY	LOCATION	TOPICS & SPEAKERS
MONDAY, 3/4 12:00–1:30 PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	RAY BLOCK, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY <b>“RACE, GENDER, AND MEDIA DEPICTIONS OF MICHELLE OBAMA”</b>
MONDAY, 3/18 12:00–1:30PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	ASHANTÉ REESE ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ANTHROPOLOGY, SPELMAN COLLEGE <b>“BETWEEN A CORNER STORE AND A SAFEWAY: RACE AND FOOD ACCESS IN THE NATION’S CAPITAL”</b>
MONDAY, 3/25 12:00–1:30PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	CARL SUDDLER ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY, FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY <b>“PRESUMED A CRIMINAL”</b>
MONDAY, 4/1 12:00–1:30 PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	KEISHA BROWN, JWJI VISITING FELLOW, TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY <b>“WAS IT ALL JUST FOR SHOW? RACE AND POLITICS IN THE PRODUCTION OF SINO-AFRICAN AMERICAN PROPAGANDA”</b>
MONDAY, 4/8 12:00–1:30PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	JEREMIAH FAVARA, JWJI VISITING FELLOW, UNIVERSITY OF OREGON <b>“ADVERTISING INCLUSION: DIFFERENCE, MILITARY RECRUITING, AND STATE VIOLENCE”</b>
MONDAY, 4/15 12:00–1:30PM	COLLOQUIUM	WOODRUFF LIBRARY, JONES ROOM	LINDSAY LIVINGSTON, JWJI VISITING FELLOW, BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY <b>“PERFORMANCE, RACE, AND GUN CULTURE IN THE U.S.”</b>
THURSDAY, 4/18 4:30–6:00PM	PUBLIC DIALOGUE PROGRAM	CANNON CHAPEL	<b>ANNUAL JAMES WELDON JOHNSON DISTINGUISHED LECTURE: NELL IRVIN PAINTER</b>

# Preview of 2018–2019

## 2018 FELLOWSHIP SELECTION PROCESS

We continued to enjoy success with our fellowship application process, with the applicant pool continuing to grow. We had approximately 198 applicants for the postdoctoral award and 54 applicants for the dissertation award.

The selection committee—consisting of Karen Stolley (Emory, Spanish and Portuguese), Daniel LaChance (Emory, History), and JWJI alumni Nikki Brown (Cohort Seven), Michelle Gordon (Cohort Seven), Kai Jackson-Issa (Cohort Three), Trimiko Melancon (Cohorts One and Two), Emily Pope-Obeda (Cohort Eight), and Katie Schank (Cohort Eight)—helped us arrive at our final choices.

### **The following scholars joined us in August 2018:**

Postdoctoral Fellows:

**Keisha Brown** (Tennessee State University, History)

**Jeremiah Favara** (University of Oregon, Media Studies)

**Lindsay Livingston** (Brigham Young University, Theater Studies)

Dissertation Fellows:

**Dwight Lewis** (University of South Florida, Philosophy)

**Timothy Rainey** (Emory University)

**Rafael Solórzano** (UCLA, Latina/o Studies)

## 2017–2018 COHORT OF VISITING FELLOWS

### **JWJI Mellon Postdoctoral/Advanced Visiting Fellows**

#### **Ashley Brown**

Assistant Professor of History and Afro-American Studies

University of Wisconsin–Madison

Project: “The Match of Her Life: Althea Gibson, Icon and Instrument of Integration”

#### **Felipe Hinojosa**

Associate Professor of History

Texas A&M University

Project: “Apostles of Change: Radical Politics and the Making of Latino Religion”

#### **Alison Parker**

Professor of History

College at Brockport, State University of New York

Project: “Unceasing Militant: The Life of Mary Church Terrell”

### **JWJI Mellon Dissertation Completion Fellows**

#### **Derek Handley**

PhD candidate in Rhetoric

Carnegie Mellon University

Project: “Strategies for Performing Citizenship: Rhetorical Citizenship and the Black Freedom Movement”

#### **Kyera Singleton**

PhD candidate in American Studies

University of Michigan

Project: “Containing Black Women: Gendered Geographies of Imprisonment in the American South, 1840–1900”

### **JWJI Laney Dissertation Fellow**

#### **Táina Figueroa**

PhD candidate in Philosophy

Emory University

Project: “ ‘Oigan Mi Gente (Hear My People)’: On the Affective Power of Racial Pride”

**UNCF-Mellon Faculty Fellows****Alexandria Lockett**

Assistant Professor of English  
Spelman College

Project: "Troubled Waters: Leak Warfare and Live Wires"

**Ashante Reese**

Assistant Professor of Anthropology  
Spelman College

Project: "Between a Corner Store and a Safeway: Race and Food Access in the Nation's Capital"

**Charissa Threat**

Assistant Professor of History  
Spelman College

Project: "Black Female Pinups and Black Soldiers during World War II"

**American Council for Learned Societies Fellow**

In collaboration with the Department of African American Studies, JWJI is also pleased to host a visiting scholar who is supported by the American Council for Learned Societies.

**Amrita Chakrabarti Myers**

Ruth N. Halls Associate Professor of History and Gender Studies  
Indiana University

Project: "Remembering Julia: A Tale of Sex, Race, Power, and Place"

**Emory College of Arts and Sciences Incoming Faculty Fellow**

This year, through a partnership with Emory College, JWJI hosts an incoming faculty fellow. This unique opportunity allows an incoming Emory faculty member doing work on race a year's time to focus on research while he or she acclimates to campus culture.

**Justin Hosbey**

Assistant Professor of Anthropology  
Emory University

Project: "Charter Schools, Black Social Life, and the Refusal of Death in Post-Katrina New Orleans"

# How You Can Help



Contribute to the lifeblood of the JWJI by supporting its **Visiting Scholars Program**. By so doing, you will aid the promising work of new PhDs, faculty members, and independent scholars. Help be their stepping stone to completion of a major project examining the origins, evolution, impact, and legacy of race and difference and the modern quest for civil and human rights.



The **Colloquium Series** already is our most visible public venture, having expanded to a weekly series in fall 2015. With your support, the series will become the destination in Atlanta for learning about cutting-edge research on race and difference across disciplines from a stimulating lineup of speakers.



Our **Public Dialogues** address salient issues related to race and difference and assemble provocative panels of scholars and practitioners to share insights and offer policy prescriptions where applicable. With your help, the JWJI can bring the best of the classroom to the community.



Your gift in support of **JWJI general operations** advances our communications and community outreach efforts, and helps to sustain the student apprenticeships we provide through our Research Assistants program.

# How to Support the James Weldon Johnson Institute

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Please mail your gift to the Office of Gift Records, Emory University, 1762 Clifton Road, Suite 1400, MS: 0970-001-8AA, Atlanta, GA 30322-4001.

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**Give by Phone**

To make a gift by phone, please call 404.712.GIVE (4483) weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (EST).

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