FREEDOM

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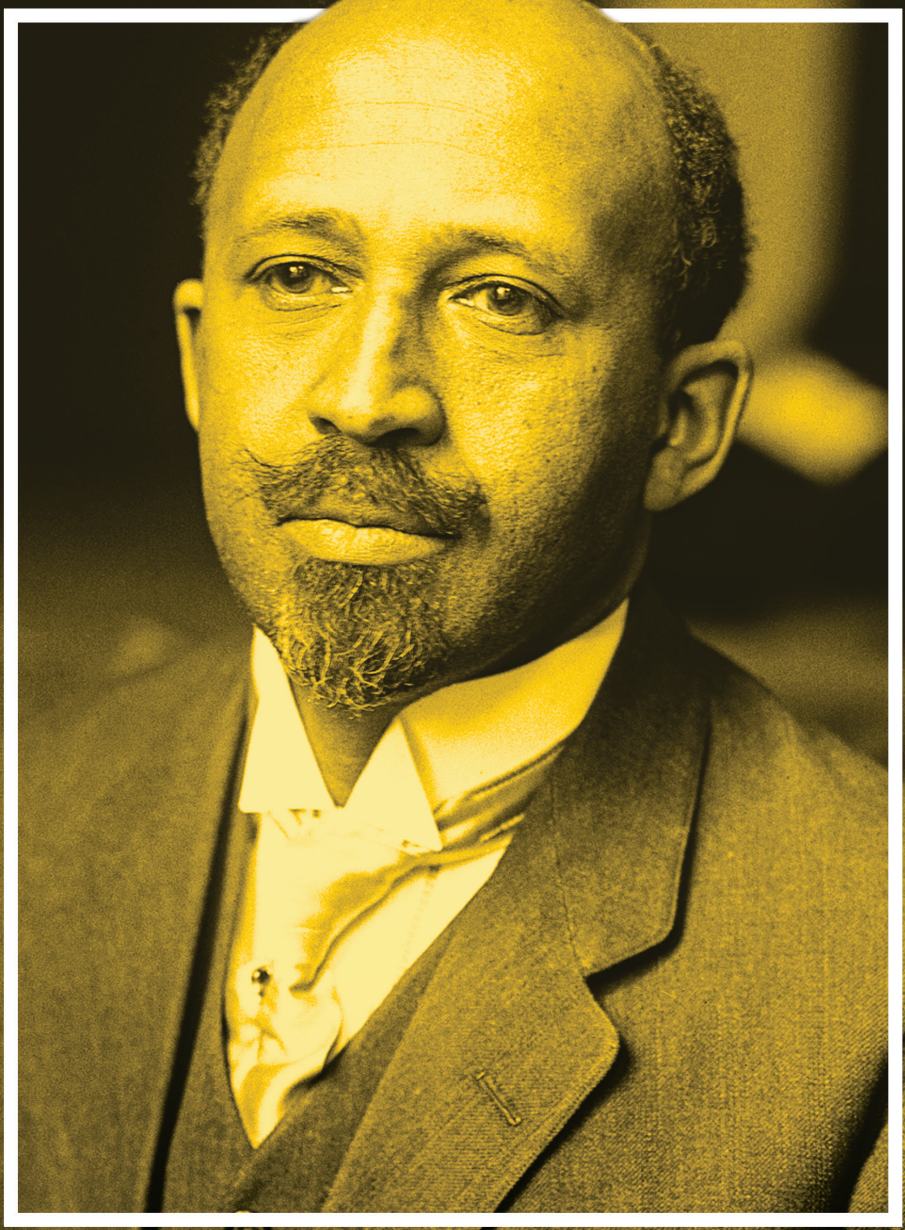

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General Information

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Statement from the Director

From Dr. Karen Cook Bell, Director
Du Bois Center for the Study of the Black Experience (CSBE)

> "Either America will destroy ignorance or ignorance will destroy the United States."
>
> —W. E. B. Du Bois

THIS STATEMENT BY DR. W.E.B. DU BOIS rings just as true today as it did when it was made in the early twentieth century. The Du Bois Center for the Study of the Black Experience is a new center established at Bowie State University that seeks to erase ignorance about the Black experience in America and the larger African Diaspora. This inaugural issue of *Freedom* comes at a critical time in this nation. A time in which we see attacks on the teaching of Black History in K-12 public schools in 18 states across the South, Southwest, and Midwest. A time in which we see attacks and laws passed against teaching about race and racism in places like the state of Florida because doing so would make some people feel uncomfortable. A time when institutions like the College Board decide that it is better to remove required lessons on Black Lives Matter and the movement for Reparations in this country from its AP courses on Black Studies, and cherry-pick which thought leaders in African American studies are most suited for inclusion, not based on their contribution to the field of Black Studies, but to assuage the politicians in Florida who object to their inclusion.

Because the study of Black people in America is a diasporic project about dispersal, loss, and community building, the Du Bois Center is committed to advancing the work begun by Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois who represents a model of engaged interdisciplinary and internationally minded scholar-activism that sees a necessary link between critical reflection upon issues of injustice, oppression, and freedom; radical commitment to developing solutions to eliminate injustice; and unwavering action to implement proposed solutions. As Du Bois stated: Now is the accepted time, not tomorrow, not some more convenient season. It is today that our best work can be and must be done."

Statement from the Editor

From Dr. Sheneese Thompson, Editor
Freedom: A Journal of Research in Africana Studies

> "The theory of democracy is not that the people have all wisdom or all ability, but it is that the mass of people form a great reservoir of knowledge and information which the state will ignore at its own peril."
>
> —W. E. B. Du Bois, "Diuturni Silenti,"
> in *The Education of Black People: Ten Critiques, 1906-1960* (1973).

One hundred years ago, W. E. B. Du Bois addressed the students, faculty, alumni, and administration of his beloved *alma mater,* Fisk University, regarding the institution's dereliction in maintaining its commitment to the necessary pillars of an institution of higher learning: freedom of spirit, self-knowledge, and recognition of the truth. The address, entitled "Diuturni Silenti," disrupted a long silence on issues facing the student body. It is our great hope that *Freedom: A Journal of Research in Africana Studies* contributes not only to the maintenance of these pillars at Bowie State University where it is housed, but also contributes to the extension of these pillars at other institutions that are dedicated to the serious study of the life, history, and culture of the African diaspora. *Freedom* seeks to disrupt the many silences impacting diasporic communities by generating dialogues between disciplines.

It is also our prerogative at *Freedom* to contribute to the "great reservoir of knowledge and information" that will help preserve democracy during these trying times that evidence the prophetic nature of Du Bois' cautionary words where institutions of higher learning and the United States government alike are ignoring the will, wisdom, and ability of the masses. In 2024, democracy is at stake, not just because it is an election year that requires Americans to reckon with their socio-political priorities, but also because, however thinly veiled, white supremacy and its attending oppressions are on the ballot. In editing and publishing the inaugural issue of *Freedom* during such historically significant times, it is our goal that the discourse generated by the essays herein will offer both theoretical and practical tools for our readers to prioritize and engage in liberational praxis.

The articles in this journal are arranged thematically and cover historical perspectives on the liberation work in the African Diaspora, education as liberation, academic and social activism of Black women and girls, and finally the liberational potential of mental health and healing. The first two articles address the historical structural barriers to self-determination that Black people endured and overcame. "Structural Disintegration and Race in the Sierra Leone Battalion Royal West African Frontier Force (RWAFF)," by Festus Cole, explores the complexities of British colonialism and racism in Sierra Leonian armed forces. British Mende-centrism in the military exacerbated existing conflicts in tribal politics. Cole contextualizes the circumstances under which the British mediation of indigenous tribal politics resolved itself in 1967 in alignment with the peak of the African independence movements.

"The Problem of the Color Line: Freedom and Black Progress in the Late Nineteenth Century South," by Karen Cook Bell, revisits the financial strides African Americans made following the collapse of Reconstruction and the onset of what Rayford Logan terms "the nadir," or the lowest point, in American history as it pertains to anti-Black racial terror. Cook Bell details the way Black families created infrastructure to support their own economic growth in the face of structural socioeconomic exclusion. Using the state of Georgia as a case study, Cook Bell details the tenacity of Black families in the quest for financial freedom.

The next three articles address educational practices as part and parcel of the liberational praxis of African Americans. "Washing Away Brokenness: A Narrative Reflection on Emblems of Black Education," by Kristin Kelly, engages with the unique balance that Black families had to strike between the necessity of labor to support the practical needs of the home and the availability of educational opportunities for children. Kelly centers the role of Black women in determining the socialization and education of Black children outside of the classroom.

"'There's No One Here That Looks Like Me': Nationbuilding as a Response to African American Underrepresentation in the Sciences," by LaTasha Thompson, Jomo Mutegi, and Julius Davis, details how African Americans build community to ensure mutual success in fields that might otherwise have pushed them out. It argues further that representation is an important feature of growing Black participation in STEM fields, which would be revolutionary. Thompson, Mutegi, and Davis see Black participation in STEM

fields as a critical liberational project, particularly in healthcare, as Black people are overrepresented in illnesses that are often understudied. The authors propose liberatory curriculum in STEM education to prepare Black students to take on and eradicate disparities in those fields.

Greg Carr's "Introduction to Africana Studies: Towards a Freedom Course Design" explores how college and university courses can be liberated from the confines of traditional educational institutions to reach and radicalize a larger community of learners. Carr's article brings together liberational pedagogy and practice by exploring how to teach liberational course content in the discipline of Africana Studies and how technological advances offer faculty freedom to explore alternative methods of course delivery. Using his own Introduction to Africana Studies Course as a model, Carr offers us a scalable method to "jailbreak" historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

The next two articles address the academic and social activism of women and girls. Valethia Watkins' article, "Non-Aligned Women Unbound: Transgressing the Feminism/Womanism Divide in Africana Studies," analyzes the intellectual contributions of Black women who reject feminism as a viable means of achieving equity for women. The contestation of feminism as the default political/theoretical frame considers the conceptual limits of names, naming, and the power names confer. Watkins' interrogation of that power as exclusionary offers meaningful insight into the productive nuances of Black women's intellectual traditions.

Sadiyah Malcolm's article, "'Rock & Come In': The Healing Power of Black Girlhood Communion," offers a summary of the important liberational work of Black women on behalf of Black girls in Kingston, Jamaica. Where sexual and other violences as well as adultification are rampant, the interventions of the author indicate that community and communion are revolutionary necessities. Malcolm interrogates ethnography as a practice, her own positionality, and her interpretations of internalized sexism in intergenerational dialogue between women and girls on the quest to create a haven for girls who needed it the most.

The final two articles address mental health and wellness, oft-ignored elements of liberational thought and work. "Teaching the Sakhu: African Psychology as Liberational Theory and Praxis," by Otis Williams III, Mark A. Bolden, Marja Humphrey, and Carolyn Thorpe, engages ancient Kemetic (Egyptian) principles as foundational to the effective application of Afri-

can-centered psychology. The authors clarify the damaging impact of Western psychology on the African diaspora and the need for decolonization in the training of students and the accreditation of programs. The authors assert that African psychology offers a necessary method to decenter European standards in patient care and that HBCUs play an important role in the expansion and institutionalization of African psychology.

Finally, "Liberation Theory and Praxis," by Stephanie Strianse, uses Jordan Peer Recovery as a case study in the application of Liberation Theory to disrupt cycles of substance abuse in marginalized communities. Strianse asserts that a liberational approach to peer support is more effective than other interventions when serving communities of color. The case study provides compelling data to support that cultural relevance is a necessary feature in specialized care that encourages sustained sobriety in the communities being served in the state of Maryland.

The volume concludes with reviews of three books: Tara Bynum's *Reading Pleasures: Everyday Black Living in Early America* (2023); John Swanson Jacobs's *The United States Governed by Six Hundred Thousand Despots A True Story of Slavery; A Rediscovered Narrative, with a Full Biography,* edited by Jonathan D.S. Schroeder (2024); and Emile C.M.K. Jones's *Fambul dem, una Kushɛ, O: An Introduction to Sierra Leone Krio and its Writing Systems* (2013), all of which provide meaningful contributions to the study of Black life and experiences.

With extreme gratitude to the contributors in this volume and the grand legacy of W. E. B. Du Bois, upon whose shoulders we stand, I implore readers to consider how 100 years later, we can use Du Bois' prescient words as well as those of the contributing authors as a blueprint to not just preserve democracy but also to secure freedom.

Structural Disintegration and Race in the Sierra Leone Battalion Royal West African Frontier Force (RWAFF)

Dr. Festus Cole
Bowie State University

In the complex aggregations of colonial territories appropriated by the great powers following the Berlin West Africa Conference, ethnic configurations in former British West Africa and the resultant stigma of "tribal politics" were destined to take center stage in post-independent West Africa. Part of Britain's ambition to guard her colonial possessions in the sub-region against intrusions from rival powers was the formation of constituent battalions that comprised the Royal West African Frontier Force (RWAFF). Since its inception, Britain was however, soon caught up in a seemingly intractable dilemma to find indigenous recruits for the Sierra Leone Battalion, Royal West African Frontier Force (SL. Bn. RWAFF). This paper posits that the nuances in British colonial policies, the lack of educated recruits to join the military, Britain's avowed refusal to enlist the educated Krio, British discriminatory ethos punctuated by the lack of educational opportunities for recruits in the Battalion, her warped notions about the military potential of different tribes in Sierra Leone, and lack of provision for boots for indigenous recruits all combined to skew recruitment in favor of one ethnic group, the Mende, who primarily inhabit the southern and eastern provinces of Sierra Leone. The result was evident in a marked structural disintegration in the Battalion and a failure by British military authorities to establish a professional army that was thoroughly routinized in British military norms and traditions. The study further suggests that the resultant ethnic formations in the Battalion, fostered by Mende dominance in the ranks, exacerbated "tribal politics" among recruits, led to the gunners' mutiny of January 30, 1939, and finally resolved itself in the first military coup manqué of March 23, 1967.

IN THE COMPLEX AGGREGATIONS OF colonial territories appropriated by the great powers following the Berlin West Africa Conference, ethnic configurations in former British West Africa and the resultant stigma of "tribal politics" were destined to take center stage in post-independent West Africa. Part of Britain's ambition to guard her colonial possessions in the sub-region against intrusion from rival powers was the formation of constituent battalions that comprised the Royal West African Frontier Force (RWAFF). Following its inception, however, Britain was soon caught up in a seemingly intractable dilemma to find indigenous recruits for the Sierra Leone Battalion Royal West African Frontier Force (SL Bn. RWAFF).[1] This study posits that recruitment into Sierra Leone's Battalion was predicated on racial difference, white misconceptions of race, the development of the Victorian binary between perceived "civilization" and "barbarism," and the prevailing concept of the "noble savage." W. E. B. Du Bois was conscious of these racist tropes when he argued that, "Not only does Western Europe believe that most of the rest of the world is biologically different, but it believes that in this difference lies congenital inferiority; that the black, brown and yellow people [...] are naturally inferior and inefficient."[2] For Du Bois, therefore, colonies were "for the most part quite separate in race from the white peoples who control them."[3] The study argues that by the time of Joseph Chamberlain's accession to the position of Colonial Secretary, Sierra Leone's fortunes and those of Britain's West African colonies were at an inflection point. Now deeply enmeshed in imperial competition and rivalry, Britain was hard put to contain the expansionistic proclivities of the French in West Africa. Thus, buoyed by the belief in "the distinction reserved for the Anglo-Saxon race,"[4] which he contended was destined to be the "predominant force in the future

[1] Amelia Hill, "Racists Created the Noble Savage," *The Guardian*, April 15, 2001.
[2] Elias, "W. E. B. Du Bois, Race and Human Rights," *Societies without Borders* 4, no. 3 (2009): 287; W. E. B. Du Bois, "Prospects of a World without Racist Conflict," *American Journal of Sociology* 49 (March 1944): 450–456.
[3] W. E. B. Du Bois, "Colonialism," 20 September 1957, W. E. B. Du Bois Papers (MS 312), Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries.
[4] See Chamberlain's Speech in Toronto, December 30 1887. *Foreign and Colonial Speeches by the Right Hon. J. Chamberlain, M.P* (London: George Routledge and Sons Ltd., 1897), 6ff.

history and civilization of the world," Chamberlain's response was to raise the RWAFF to, *inter alia*, protect the far-flung frontiers of empire.[5]

Crucial for an appreciation of the internal dynamics of the Sierra Leone Battalion (SL Bn.) was the nature of Britain's colonial policies. The study adduces evidence to show that the lack of educated recruits, British discriminatory ethos punctuated by the lack of educational opportunities for recruits, British warped notions about the military potential of different tribes in Sierra Leone, her avowed refusal to enlist the educated Krio, and lack of provision for boots for the recruits all combined to skew recruitment in favor of one ethnic group, the Mende, who primarily inhabited the southern and eastern provinces of Sierra Leone. The result was evident in a marked structural disintegration in the Battalion and a failure by British military authorities to establish a professional army thoroughly routinized in British military norms and traditions. If Mende dominance in the ranks was seriously contested by another tribe, the Temne, Britain was still reluctant to recruit the latter who were detested for their perceived truculence and hostility to colonial rule. Thus, while places at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst would only be opened to Sierra Leonean recruits fifty-two years after the Battalion was constituted, the Mende continued to dominate the non-commissioned ranks, coupled with British non-commissioned officers (NCOs) from London, until the attainment of independence in 1961. The paper further suggests that these skewed ethnic formations in the Battalion, fostered by Mende dominance, exacerbated "tribal politics" among recruits and triggered the gunners' mutiny of January 30, 1939. The resultant impasse was to resolve itself in the first military coup on March 23, 1967.

The motives that conditioned the formation of the Sierra Leone Battalion and the failure of attempts by the colonial authorities to define its roles in a colonial setting were to be reflected in the general structural dynamics which evolved during the colonial period. Consequently, the motives that informed

[5] For the creation of the Sierra Leone Battalion, Royal West African Frontier Force SL Bn. WAFF, see Donald Fortesque Wilbraham, *Ordinances of the Colony of Sierra Leone*, Vol. II, Revised Edition, 1900-1904 (London: Waterloo and Sons, 1909), 419ff.; S. C. Ukpabi, "The Origins of the West African Frontier Force," *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 3, no. 3 (1966): 485–501; Edho Ekoko, "The West African Frontier Force Revisited," *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 10, no.1 (1979): 47–63; Timothy Stapleton, *West African Soldiers in Britain's Colonial Army, 1860-1960* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2021), 12ff.; and Dominic M. Bray, "Joseph Chamberlain and Foreign Policy, 1895-1903," (PhD thesis, The University of East Anglia, 2015), 19ff.

the Battalion's formation and its perceived roles and structure came to embrace the basic tenets of imperial imperatives. It is against this background that this study examines the general structural drawbacks that characterized the SL Bn. RWAFF. Such drawbacks are predicated on the following considerations: British recruitment patterns, the problem of achieving tribal balance in the ranks, and the much-disputed factor of Mende dominance, the absence of any provision for advancement and training for the indigenous recruit, and the generally warped white perspectives about the combat capacity of indigenous recruits. The cumulative impact of these variables was to produce a makeshift structure essentially skewed towards the maintenance of British imperial interests in colonial Sierra Leone. The ripples were to be felt in the successor state, just six years after independence. Thus, the problems immanent in the Sierra Leone Battalion did not operate in a historical vacuum, contrary to what the literature would have us believe.[6]

The evidence suggests that the structure of the Sierra Leone Battalion revealed the manifestly racist attitudes of the colonial authorities. As a force raised *ad hoc* to meet imperial needs, it was assumed that European officers and British NCOs were indispensable for the staff and administrative work on which all armies depended. Thus, Sierra Leoneans were hardly considered fit to assume positions of command, and this was ensured in the almost ritual absence of provision of training and advancement for the indigenous recruit. In British military parlance, the people most indispensable to any army operation were the NCOs— those serving as quartermasters, those in charge of ordinance and vehicle mechanics, and the communications and signals men—who were all expatriates throughout the colonial period.[7] This policy inevitably robbed the indigenous soldier the chance of successfully inculcating British military norms and ethics. Thus, the level of professionalism, which existed on the eve of Sierra Leone's independence, remained confined to the expatriate cadre. In turn, British imperatives came to condition the quality of Sierra Leoneans recruited into the Battalion, with largely unforeseen consequences.

In considering the character of Sierra Leonean recruits, and its consequently negative impact on professionalism, certain questions merit attention. From where did the British recruit men for the Battalion? What groups of Sierra

[6] Thomas Cox, *Civil-Military Relations in Sierra Leone: A Case Study of African Soldiers in Politics* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1976), 12.
[7] J. M. Lee, *African Armies and Civil Order* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1969), 32.

Leoneans found their way into the Sierra Leone army? What factors constituted the probable motives for volunteering as a soldier or enlisted carrier? What opportunities for advancement did the colonial army hold out for the rank-and-file? It should be observed that the development of military and police forces was an essential concomitant of the extension of imperial rule in Africa. Thus, contingents of African troops and police forces were raised *ad hoc* to meet particular needs.[8] Gutteridge further notes that "the British encouraged recruitment and other policies that were specifically imperial in outlook rather than concerned in any way with the preparation of colonies for nationhood."[9] Thus, construed primarily in terms of the imperial situation, certain requisites came to dominate colonial thinking as far as recruitment was concerned. "Loyalty," "hardiness," "quiescence," "docility," "cheerfulness," and, above all, "illiteracy" constituted the basic conditions to be met before enlistment. "Loyalty" was the prime requisite, and warrior qualities soon came to be identified with it, though in time, however, emphasis came to be placed on literacy and education, albeit with least encouraging results.

The reliance on the so-called "martial races," a model fashioned in India, became conventional army wisdom in Sierra Leone. Moreover, as happened in her sister colonies of the Gold Coast, Gambia, and Nigeria, recruitment was pressed among groups with warlike traditions, who also manifested the useful attributes of cheerfulness and loyalty.[10] Recruits from within these groups invariably came from the farmers. This marked predilection for the martial races of the interior was no doubt predicated on the need for recruits with manageable aspirations. These, it was contemplated, were indeed men who were likely to be detached from, even hostile to, the urban African mob when problems of internal security arose. This desire by the British authorities to preclude the birth of local nationalist sentiments was grounded on the belief that an army that questioned the political apparatus or colonial policies was likely to question, in due course, the entire basis of colonialism. This was anathema to the British, who therefore resorted to subtle measures to develop and foster the concept of a non-political army. One should note, however, that these qualities were not necessarily found together in the men

[8] W. Gutteridge, "Military and Police Forces in Colonial Africa," in *Colonialism in Africa 1870-1960: The History and Politics of Colonialism*, vol. II, ed. L. H. Gann and P. Duignan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 286.

[9] Gutteridge, "Military and Police Forces," 287.

[10] Colonel A. H. Haywood and Brigadier F. A. S. Clarke, *The History of the Royal West African Frontier Force* (Aldershort: Gale and Polden, 1964), 11.

who eventually made their way into the Battalion. In Sierra Leone also, the growth of religious fanaticism as was evident among the Limba in the early 1930s was no less important in determining the choice of recruits. It was precisely this fear that decided Frederick Lugard to fall back on assumedly "excellent pagan tribes" who were not so liable to be infected by any wave of religious sentiments in Nigeria.[11]

The available evidence, gleaned from reports by Inspectors-General and comments on race classification for combatant ranks, indicate that there was no difficulty in securing recruits for the Sierra Leone Battalion. The army therefore tended to be a source of attraction for certain sections of the community. This appeal was however confined to groups from the Sierra Leone Protectorate, and the military value of the colony was estimated as "negligible."[12] In this regard, the factors which determined the lack of attraction to the military profession tended to range from the more peculiar attributes of the different tribes, and the diverse occupations to which they had grown accustomed over the years. Indeed, groups in the colony, then dominated by Freetown's Krio, exhibited a strong aversion to things military partly by dint of their exposure to the blessings of Western education, secured in government and missionary institutions. The blessings of a university education also ensured that this class was the first to supply barristers and medical practitioners in the colony. Indeed, many Krio also found themselves in junior positions such as government clerks, operators and artisans, etc., both with government and commercial houses. These factors partly explain the lack of a military spirit among the Krio.[13]

In the Protectorate, the elements of Semitism and nomadism effectively precluded the Fulahs from enlisting.[14] On the other hand, a perceived "degeneracy" and "lack of intelligence and knowledge of nothing of any country outside their own villages, made the Loko poor soldiers or carriers."[15] Furthermore, commercial attractions, a maritime orientation, and their predi-

[11] J. Barrett, "The Rank and File of the Colonial Army in Nigeria, 1914–1918," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 15, no. 1 (1977): 107.

[12] *Military Report on the Colony and Protectorate of Sierra Leone,* Vol. 1, 1933 (London: War Office, 1933), 215–20. This assessment held true for Freetown, Waterloo, Benguema, Russell, Tombo, Kent, Hastings, Songo, Newton, York, and Sussex Headquarters Judicial Districts. Sierra Leone Public Archive (hereafter, SLPA).

[13] *Military Report*, 117.

[14] *Military Report*, 119.

[15] *Military Report*, 107, 119.

lection for fishing sufficiently explain the absence of the Gallinas (Vai), Kru, and Krim recruits from the Battalion.[16] Though the Sherbro were accounted "intelligent and subtle" and "take rapidly to education," as fishermen, they were given to extreme seafaring and were "extremely adverse to organized labour; they display a hardy independence which may be summed up in the phrase—every man to his own canoe."[17]

As far as the authorities were concerned, the "best fighting material" in the country were drawn principally from the peoples of the north, such as the Susu, Koranko, Yalunka, and Mandingo.[18] It would appear that British preference for recruits from the north was a constant factor throughout their four territories in West Africa during the colonial period. Thus, the constituent battalions of the RWAFF in these territories came to be fashioned on recruits from remote groups. The desire by the traditionally combatant Yoruba and Hausa, for example, to pursue their "natural vocation" as traders one month before the outbreak of hostilities in 1914 led Lugard to fall on the northern province in Nigeria for Fulani cow herders, Kanuri (Beri Beri), Shua Arabs, Zabermas, and Munchis, etc.[19] In the Gold Coast, northern peoples, particularly the Moshis, Grunshi, and the Mamprussi, including the Fra-Fra, supplied 80 percent of the NCOs until 1961.[20] An analysis of the northern groups in Sierra Leone provides some insights into their fighting potential as perceived by the British. The Susu were reputedly a "hardy and somewhat truculent race." Although the Susu were occupied chiefly in the cultivation of rice, the British still thought that "they make very good soldiers."[21] Particularly important for recruitment purposes, the Koranko demonstrated qualities that chimed well with the expectations of British military authorities. Deemed pagans, they were reputed to be less progressive than the Yalunka, albeit "full of character and pluck." Though regarded as "very hardy" and "excellent soldiers," they were deemed very "difficult to enlist."[22] This latter quality was also to be found among the Yalunka, a reputedly more progressive and industrious race than the Koranko, and who also "make excellent

[16] *Military Report*, 117, 119.
[17] *Military Report*, 224; See also "SL. Bn. W. A. F. F. Regulations, 1923. Rates of Pay, British W. O. and N. C. O.s PER ANNUM," Sierra Leone Public Archive (SLPA).
[18] *Military Report*, 99.
[19] Barrett, "The Rank and File," 107.
[20] Haywood and Clarke, *The History*, 13.
[21] *Military Report*, 118.
[22] *Military Report*, 118.

soldiers when they can be persuaded to enlist."[23] Barring the Susu, Koranko, and the Yalunka, British military reports rated the Mandingo "the very finest type of soldier." Originally desribed as a "pagan race," they were reputedly "very proud and independent," and though by 1933 this group could boast of 1,392 able-bodied men out of a total Mandingo population[24] of 7,260 in Koinadugu district, they disliked enlisting as soldiers.[25] The probable reason for the low-level attraction exhibited by the Mandingo to the military profession was likely a function of their lack of territorial rights, as happened among the Fulah in the Protectorate. Hailing chiefly from neighboring Guinea and Liberia, the Mandingo were scattered in small numbers throughout the Protectorate.

Next to the Mende in numerical strength were the Temne, found chiefly along the banks of the River Rokel, the two Scarcies Rivers, and Port Loko Creek. Notwithstanding the Temne's numbers, many factors informed British prejudices against enlisting recruits from among this group, chief of which was a perceived Temne truculence and intransigence. By the late nineteenth century, the Temne had acquired a certain notoriety for turbulence and were the cause of much unrest due to their fetish practices and propensity to raid for slaves.[26] Indeed, the Temne penchant for river piracy did not in any way alter British prejudices against this group.[27] Sturdily built, they made excellent scouts and fair soldiers but not carriers.[28] In the Ashanti campaign of 1900, the Temne, together with Mende recruits, earned the highest praise from Sir James Wilcocks for their scouting prowess during the severe fighting through the forest and thick bush on the way to Kumasi.[29] Despite these manifestations of a combatant spirit, British military authorities exhibited a reluctant admiration for the military prowess of the Temne. Indeed, memories of British reverses at Tambi on March 14, 1892, after the rains had ended,[30] and, above all, memories of the Karene uprising that engulfed the Protectorate in 1898 and dealt a severe blow to British military prestige, were no doubt fresh in the minds of the authorities during periods of recruitment.

[23] *Military Report*, 118.
[24] *Military Report*, 99.
[25] *Military Report*, 119.
[26] Haywood and Clark, *The History*, 13.
[27] *Military Report*, 118.
[28] *Military Report*, 118.
[29] Haywood and Clarke, *The History*, 118.
[30] R. P. M. Davies, *The History of the Sierra Leone Battalion of the Royal West African Frontier Force* (Freetown: Govt. Printer, 1932), 32.

This strict aversion to Temne recruits was amply reflected in many colonial reports. In accounting for the rather low level of Temne recruits in 1939, the Inspector-General reported that "very few Temnes and Limbas are recruited as they are not as a rule amenable to discipline."[31] As early as 1932–33, the Officer Commanding (OC) of the Sierra Leone Battalion, "on taking command [...] went into the question of the best tribes and concluded that there was little evidence against any except Temnes and Limbas who had not good reputation."[32] In a similar vein, military reports for 1933 hardly carried a word of praise for the Temne as potential recruits. The evidence suggests that their proximity to towns, which was rendering the Temne "rather soft and semi-urban,"[33] and their reputation as boat builders[34] also explain the low numbers of Temne recruits in the combatant ranks. Of perhaps greater significance, a perceived Temne truculence and intransigence militated against the Temne being recruited in large numbers. Commenting on the availability of Temne recruits in Kono district in 1933, the report for the district opined that "where there are Temnes, their military value is not so good as they are more inclined to be nomadic and show less regard for their own rulers."[35]

Apart from the Mandingo who were reputedly "the very finest the of soldiers," it would appear that their demonstrations of a vigorous martial spirit made both the Kono and the Kissi admirable combatant material, as will be seen from an examination of statistical returns of the ethnic distribution of combatant ranks in the Battalion. Practically occupying the entire Kono district, the Kono were reported to be a "hardy and industrious race and make good soldiers."[36] In fact, there was no dearth of labor from the entire district, and, judged from a purely military standpoint, the inhabitants of Kono district were reputedly "cheerful and not without courage."[37] On the other hand, Kissi intractability ensured that they were the last tribe to surrender to British rule in Sierra Leone. Like the Kono, they were accounted "a fairly

[31] C.S.O. N.4/1939, Inspector General's Report 1938–1939, I.G., Form I, "Racial Distribution of African Combatant Ranks as at 28/2/39," C.S.O Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General, SLPA.
[32] C.S.O. N.53/1933, Inspector General's Report 1932–1933, I.G., Form 4, "Distribution of African Combatant Ranks as at 31/3/33," C.S.O. Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General, 1921–1942. Vol. 2. SLPA.
[33] *Military Report*, 118.
[34] *Military Report*, 118.
[35] *Military Report*, 223.
[36] *Military Report*, 119.
[37] *Military Report*, 223.

industrious race." Indeed, traditions of a turbulent Kissi spirit were not lost on the minds of the British authorities. Thus, in advocating more stringent action after the more protracted and daring Kissi raids into British territory in 1904,[38] Major Palmer wrote to the Colonial Secretary in January 1904, warning that "an enterprising [Kissi] spirit seems abroad on the boundary. I do not think action can well be delayed longer."[39] About a week later, he justified his recommendations for operations against the Kissi by opining, "Such an operation cannot therefore truly be characterized as a pursuit, but is rather a deliberate offensive movement against a masterless tribe of raiders who have continuously for three years been the terror of British subjects."[40] If these appreciations of the Kissi fighting spirit, together with the Kissi War of 1886 against the Kono, testified to the infantry potential of both tribes, so did the Kissi and Bandi wars of 1889 and 1890.[41] In fact, by 1933, recruitment into the Battalion was prosecuted principally from both the Kono and the Kissi, both constituting approximately 56 percent of the combatant ranks, as the following table illustrates.

Kono	34%
Kissi	22%
Mende	22%
N.T.*	8%
Koranko	8%
Temne	3%
Limba	3%

*Mandingo, Fula, Susu, Yalunka[42]

British disavowal of "truculence" and "intransigence" was not merely confined to the Temne. As a reputedly "cheerful" and "hardy race," the Limba, chiefly occupying the north and west of Bombali, and the north-west of Koinadugu district, made good carriers.[43] Notwithstanding these attributes, the Limba were accounted a very "indolent" race, this reason accounting for the significantly low percentage of Limba recruits among the combatant ranks

[38] Davies, *History of the Sierra Leone Battalion*, 68.
[39] Davies, *History of the Sierra Leone Battalion*, 70.
[40] Major Palmer to Colonial Secretary. In Davies, *History of the Sierra Leone Battalion*, 70.
[41] *Military Report*, 120.
[42] *Military Report*, 189.
[43] *Military Report*, 118.

throughout the colonial period. Reference has already been made to this fact concerning the Limba reputation for indolence and intractability by the OC, SL Bn., by Lt. Col. M. A. Green in 1932/33. This was to be repeated by the Inspector-General in 1938/39.[44] Conclusions of this nature were firmly connected with the manifestation of a militant Limba spirit, symbolized by the Kambia disturbances, spearheaded by one Haidara Kontorfili, a self-styled Mohammedan missionary, then residing at Bubuya, in the Tonko-Limba chiefdom, Kambia District, in the Northern Province. Initially a religious movement, the rebellion was assisted in its course by social, political, and economic stresses in this part of the Protectorate. In its wake, Haidara's "hot-gospelling" came to be colored by a millenarian outlook, which foreshadowed the doom and collapse of British rule and the eventual liberation of the African from "the necessity of paying the house tax."[45] The details of the rising do not concern us here, but construed from a military standpoint, it was significant for its effects on the troops in the Battalion and for gauging British attitudes towards Mohammedan recruits. Of greater import was its effect on the cause of proto-nationalism, prosecuted under the guise of religion—all crucial variables ignored in recent studies of the Kambia disturbances.[46]

Colonial records for the period indicate that the message of the millennium was beginning to strike deep roots among the troops, much to the chagrin of the authorities. The success of Haidara's gospelling and its effects on the troops could best be illustrated by census returns for 1931 for Kambia district. Of a total population of 108,342,[47] Mohammedans constituted 49 percent, Christians 0.2 percent, and pagans 57.5 percent.[48] In making recommendations for the future command of the Battalion, due in 1931, the outgoing OC, Lt. Col. W. A. Taaffe, argued that "the Kambia disturbances being to a certain extent a religious one had a disturbing effect on the troops."[49] The disturbances provided the perfect pretext for dismissing Mohammedans with

[44] C.S.O. N.53/1933, Inspector-General's Report, 1932–1933. SLPA.
[45] *Military Report*, 53–54.
[46] See for example, D. Moore-Sieray, "Idara Kontorfili (1890-1931) and the Insurrection in North Western Sierra Leone" (B.A diss., Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone, 1978).
[47] *Military Report*, 197.
[48] *Military Report*, 201.
[49] C.S.O. N.62/1931, Report by Outgoing Lt. Col. Taffe on the future command of the Sierra Leone Battalion, R.W. A. F. F., 15/3/31. C.S.O. Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General 1921-1942, Vol. 2. SLPA.

suspected or ephemeral loyalty from the Battalion. Lt. Col. Taaffe further deposed that

> It was necessary to discharge forthwith a Mohammedan corporal whose conduct was unsatisfactory during the affray and by whom an attempt was made afterwards to get enlisted a French soldier, known to be a friend of Idara's presumably with the object of propaganda work.[50]

The thrust of Haidara's message was significant enough to lead the troops to start questioning "the usefulness of the white man to the native people." Taaffe further commented on a report of a conversation overheard by a well-known Syrian, Mr. Anthony, a good friend of the WAFF officers:

> The report is of a conversation overheard by him recently [...] between some native troops, the gist of which appears to have been a contemptuous reference to white men in general and as to their usefulness to the native people. Mr. Anthony in all these years has never heard disloyal words spoken by the troops before. This points rather to the unsettling effects of the Kambia disturbances and to the propaganda work.[51]

From the foregoing comment, it was obvious that the troops were beginning to impugn the whole basis of colonialism, symbolized by the presence of the white man. Indeed, this was sufficient to generate fears in official circles of the likely consequences of revolt, fomented by the very instruments that had been established to serve colonial purposes. Though the Colonial Secretary found Taaffe's assessment "surprising," he responded in terms that adequately revealed morbid fears of a possible insurrection by the troops, were the latter to be subverted by Haidara's gospelling.

> My own view is that we always have some mischief makers in our midst; and it is quite likely that the troops with a large proportion of Mohammedans have no use for such disturbing elements as Idara. At the same time the trouble might come as before from rag-tag and

[50] C.S.O. N.62/1931, Report by Outgoing Lt. Col. Taffe, SLPA.
[51] C.S.O. N.62/1931, Report by Outgoing Lt. Col. Taffe, SLPA.

> bobtail; and if the latter succeed in educating the troops, then the fat would be in the fire.[52]

The apprehensions generated by the religious euphoria led Taaffe to stop recruiting Mohammedans into the Battalion, and this was reflected in the significant –33. During this period, the number of Christians totaled 55, Mohammedans 47, and pagans 278, in an establishment with a total complement of 380 rank-and-file. The ban on Mohammedans persisted until 1933 when it was removed by Lt. Col. M. A. Green, who assumed command of the Battalion from Taaffe.[53]

Whatever the messianic content of the Kambia disturbances, seen from the history of active resistance in Sierra Leone, it was the nearest the Battalion came towards espousing the cause of proto-nationalism in colonial Sierra Leone.[54] The possibility of defection and threat of revolt was sufficient index of the fragility of the loyalty of colonial troops to the state apparatus. In this respect, we shall note that what became the Sierra Leone Army in the successor state had not all the while been standing outside the general political currents, nor was it a politically sterile establishment as Cox would have us believe.[55] The Kambia disturbance was to condition the pattern of Limba recruitment in succeeding years and, as in the aftermath of Bai Bureh's rising in 1898, the blow dealt to British authority was to be repaired by marches of two platoons through a portion of the northern province with the object of "showing the flag." The march, which proceeded from Kambia, through Bubuya and Wonkifu, and thence by stages to Port Loko, Songo, Newton, and Waterloo, and concluded on Saturday March 14, 1931, had, in the opinion of the government, "a very salutary effect."[56]

If, in British military opinion, the Temne and Limba were characterized by a truculent and intransigent spirit, British prescribed "virtues" for enlistment

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[52] C.S.O. N.62/1931, Colonial Secretary to Inspector-General, W. A. F. F., 16/5/31 in Colonial Secretary's letter to the Hon. Provincial Commissioner, Southern Province, 2 June, 1931, No. C.F. 162/31. C.S.O. Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General 1921-1942, Vol. II. SLPA.

[53] C.S.O. N.53/1933, Inspector General's Report 1932–33, I.G., Form 4. SLPA.

[54] Alone of all Africa's armies, Algeria's was different. This was borne of no colonial heritage but was organized to wage a war of liberation. See R. First, *The Barrel of a Gun: Political Power and the Coup d'État* (Allen Lane: The Penguin Press, 1970), 90.

[55] Cox, *Civil-Military Relations*, 38.

[56] *Military Report*, 59.

tended to inhere in the Mende. Numerically the strongest ethnic group in the Protectorate, the Mende occupied a considerable part of the Southern Province and large areas in the southern portion of the Northern Province. Reputedly "cheerful and amenable and hardy, they [were] probably the best carriers in West Africa but unfortunately [did] not make the finest type of soldier."[57] Colonial reports further commented that "where there is a predominant Mende population their military value may be considered good."[58]

Glowing accounts were recorded of Mende carrier work in the Great War of 1914. The attempt, for example, to cross the Fumban in the Cameroons through Bangetabe was bedeviled by marshes and swampy forest paths, obstructed by waist-deep mud and holes and low overhanging branches. Thus, "the five miles took seven hours to cover and the way in which the gun carriers from Sierra Leone managed to transport their loads was a source of astonishment and admiration."[59] Mende prowess as carriers had already been noted as early as the Ashanti War, in which the late Madam Yoko supplied 2,000 Mende carriers for the last expedition against the Ashanti.[60] In fact, the Mende were constantly requested to serve as carriers not only in Sierra Leone but also in other parts of West Africa,[61] and their potential for carrier work were underscored by favorable comments gleaned from many colonial reports filed by the military authorities. In inclining his recruiting to the Kono, the northern tribes, and the Koranko, the OC M.A. Green, in 1933, argued that "now I am intending to obtain Mendes as I think a good Mende can be the best type of soldier, but care is needed in the recruiting of this tribe."[62] While assessing the military potential of the best tribes in 1939, the Inspector-General argued that they were found in the Kono, Kissi, and Mende from the Southern province, and the Koranko, Yalunka, and Mandingo from the North.[63] Indeed, Mende country, on either side of the railway line to Bo, provided a ready pool of recruits. As early as the Bai Bureh rising of 1898, Lord Wolsey, with memories of Mende men serving under his

[57] *Military Report*, 118.
[58] *Military Report*, 224.
[59] *Military Report*, 49.
[60] *Sierra Leone Annual Report*, (hereafter cited *SLAR*), 1908, 60.
[61] *SLAR*, 1908, 60.
[62] C.S.O. N.53/1933, Inspector General's Report 1932–1933, I.G. Form 4. SLPA.
[63] C.S.O. N.4/1939, Inspector-General's Report 1938–1939, I.G. Form I. C.S.O. Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General. SLPA.

command in the Ashanti campaign of 1873-74, appointed an experienced staff officer to raise Mende recruits.[64]

Any assessment of recruitment among the Mende ethnic group, warrants an examination of the controversial question of the need to achieve tribal balance in the Battalion and the factor of Mende dominance in the combatant ranks. Though it was a declared British objective to achieve tribal balance within the establishment, certain factors precluded the attainment of this goal. Chief of these was the reluctance of certain groups to enlist. Once the immediate effect of the Mende uprising of 1898 had worn off, the military manpower pattern was established especially as Freetown's Krio were discouraged from enlisting, partly by a rule against the wearing of boots.[65] These factors ensured a picture of Mende dominance in the ranks, as will be seen from an examination of a random sample of statistical returns for combatant ranks for the years 1921, 1922, 1932, 1933, 1936, 1937, 1938, and 1939. Though Mende dominance in the ranks was hardly constant throughout these years, we argue that this phenomenon did not suddenly erupt in the 1960s, nor did it owe its origins to the administration of Sir Albert Margai, Sierra Leone's second prime minister. In 1914, half of the Reservist force of 80 were Mende.[66] As early as 1915, the question of Mende dominance in the ranks was proving a source of worry to the authorities, when the difficulties of achieving a balance in the selection of recruits compounded the problems of the colonial government in securing men to be trained in order to make good the wastage in the Cameroons. Though General Dobell had advocated the need to obtain all possible recruits,[67] the prevalence of Mende recruits in the ranks was highly problematic. It was therefore deemed "undesirable that the proportion of Mende in the ranks should exceed 50%."[68] Notwithstanding this call for caution, considerable difficulty was experienced in securing a sufficient number of suitable recruits from the Temne and other tribes to complete the establishment. Due to this latter difficulty, it was therefore considered expedient to locate the training depot for the Battalion within the Protectorate, either at Daru or some other center "which the natives have

[64] Gutteridge, "Military and Police Forces," 304 ff.
[65] Gutteridge, "Military and Police Forces," 304 ff..
[66] *Military Report*, 38.
[67] WAFF, C.S.O. Secretary of State, F.F.7/1915. SLPA.
[68] WAFF, C.S.O. Secretary of State, F.F.7/1915. SLPA.

become accustomed to associate in their minds with the WAFF and where the necessary buildings already exist."[69]

The failure to achieve a tribal balance in the Battalion was a constant feature throughout the colonial period and was fraught with significant consequences for the future role of Mende recruits in the army. While Mende predominance in the ranks became a firmly integrated element in the structural model bequeathed to independent Sierra Leone, it is difficult, however, to argue that this trend was a deliberate policy of recruitment nurtured and prosecuted by the British. Rather, one must search for the answer in typically fortuitous circumstances. Long before the dawn of independence, the Mende ethnic group had begun to make their influence felt even in the society at large. Having been exposed much earlier to the privilege of Western education than other tribes in the Protectorate (a circumstance expedited by the accidents of British education policies, which tended to favor the south), the Mende were well placed to rise to elite status, and they consequently came to dominate modern occupations in the country. The Annual Report for 1908 commented that the Mende were particularly prominent in the wage-earning sector because of their working powers.[70] The establishment of Bo School in the Southern province helped to set the pace for this occupational dominance in the police force,[71] and by virtue of the tribal ethos encouraged in the Bo School curriculum,[72] the Mende came to acquire a dominant outlook that was to make itself felt in their strident bid for political power between 1953 and 1960. The question of Mende dominance in the Battalion should therefore be approached with caution. This, it is argued, should be grounded on the antecedents to be found in the colonial period and on which Sir Albert Margai was to build with disastrous consequences. It is here contended that Mende dominance in the colonial army was no chance occurrence. The reluctance by other tribes to enlist, the accidents of British education, the reputation of the Mende as an "amenable race,"[73] and the British abhorrence for truculent and intransigent tribes combined to produce the picture of Mende dominance in the rank. Even then, much care was taken in the recruitment of this tribe.[74]

[69] WAFF, C.S.O. Secretary of State, F.F.7/1915. SLPA.
[70] *SLAR*, 1908, 60.
[71] *Annual Report of the Police Forces for the Year 1933* (Freetown: Govt. Printer, 1934), 9, in M. Kilson, *Political Change in a West African State: A Study of the Modernization Process in Sierra Leone* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1966), 78.
[72] *SLAR*, 1909, 31.
[73] *Military Report*, 118.
[74] C.S.O. N.53/1933, Inspector General's Report 1932–1933, I.G., Form 4. Vol. 2. SLPA.

From an analysis of random samples for the years 1921, 1922, 1932, 1933, 1936, 1937, 1938 and 1939, it would appear that the Kono ethnic group sometimes had an edge over the Mende, as far as recruitment into the ranks was concerned. For the eight years under review, Kono recruits approximated 136 percent while that for the Mende stood at 124 percent. In 1933, out of a total battalion strength of 370, the Kono provided 40 percent of the combatant ranks, doubling that of the Mende strength of 20 percent.[75] This picture of Kono dominance was also exhibited in 1937, when they accounted for 36 percent of the rank-and-file, while the Mende provided 20 percent.[76] The deduction from this analysis underscores the need to approach the question of Mende dominance with care, for it is clear that Mende dominance in the ranks was never constant throughout the colonial period, though they dominated the carrier corps.

Notwithstanding their reputation for combat worthiness, statistical returns for the Kissi during the period under review indicate a downward trend from 20 percent in 1921 and 1922, to 19 percent in 1933, 16 percent in 1937, and 11 percent in 1938–39.[77] During these eight years, the Koranko provided 38 percent of the battalion strength, falling close behind the Temne strength of 39 percent. Though the Yalunka were reputed to be "excellent" soldiers,[78] returns for enlistment among this tribe during the same period show conspicuously low percentages, these never exceeding 3 percent at any one time. The same is true for the Limba, who, during this period contributed 16 percent of the battalion strength. Attention has already been drawn to the factors

[75] C.S.O. N.53/1933, Inspector General's Report 1932–1933, I.G., Form 4. Vol. 2. SLPA.
[76] C.S.O. N.79/1929, "Notes on the Land and Air Forces of the British Overseas Territories, Dominions, Protectorates and Mandated Territories," Race Classification Returns, SL. Bn. for 1 March 1937, C.S.O. N.53/1933, Inspector General's Report 1932–1933, I.G., Form 4. Vol. 2. SLPA, Open Policy Files on the Navy and Royal West African Frontier Force. SLPA. See also, C.S.O. N.37/1937, Inspector-General's Report on the SL. Bn. R.W.A.F.F., 1936/37, Freetown, 5 April 1937. C.S.O. Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General, 1939–1942. SLPA.
[77] C.S.O. N.52/1921, Inspector General's Report, Attached Form "E". Race Classification as at 6 May 1921. C.S.O. Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General, 1921-1942, Vol.2., SLPA; C.S.O. N.62/1922, Inspector-General's Report on SL. Bn. W.A.F.F., 1922, "Race Classification, SL. Bn. W.A.F.F. as at 25 May 1922, Appendix "F," C.S.O. Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General, SLPA.; C.S.O. N.53/1933, Inspector General's Report 1932–33, I.G., Form 4, SLPA; C.S.O. N.79/1929, "Notes on the Land and Air Forces of the British Overseas Territories, Dominions, Protectorates and Mandated Territories, and C.S.O. N.37/1937, Inspector-General's Report on the SL. Bn. R.W.A.F.F., 1936/37, SLPA; C.S.O. N. 4/1939, Inspector-General's Report, 1938–1939, I.G. Form I, "Racial Distribution of African Combatant Ranks, 28/2/39, C.S.O. Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General, SLPA.
[78] *Ibid.*

which informed such low returns, and these adequately explain the very insignificant representation among the Bandi, Susu, Sherbro, Konia, Loko, Fulah, Seracouli, "Colony born peoples" (Krio), Tormah, Gallinas, Kommendi, Sankaran, and Aku.[79]

If Mende dominance in the ranks was seriously contested by the Kono or the Kissi, their dominance at Headquarters (HQ Coy), the administrative branch of the Battalion, was incontestable: the Mende sometimes approximating half or more of the total complement of this division. In 1922, of a total of 52 recruits at HQ Coy, the Mende strength stood at 24 or 46 percent,[80] while that for the Kono, Kissi and Temne (18) combined stood at 35 percent,[81] and the rest of the seven tribes represented providing 19 percent.[82] In 1938–39, the Mende strength at HQ Coy (49) more than doubled the total complement of 85, accounting for 58 percent, while that of the seven tribes represented (36) accounted for 42 percent.[83] This numerical dominance of the Mende at HQ Coy was a function of the educational levels attained by this group. In fact, by the 1950s, when the strength of the force approximating about 1,000 dictated recruitment on the basis of up to 200 annually, almost all Mende recruits had some education, generally up to secondary-school level. Thus, while it was colonial policy to avoid too many sophisticated recruits in the Battalion, those inevitably recruited had the advantage when promotion or the need to fill key specialist posts were in question. The unwillingness of Freetown's Krio to enlist, except as potential officers, coupled with intense Temne–Mende rivalry contributed to an unhealthy situation even in subunits in the Sierra Leone Regiment.[84] More importantly, the numerical dominance of the Mende at Headquarters shows that service in the army was not necessarily regarded as a low-status occupation. The records therefore point to the fact that the army was beginning to attract educated recruits. Barret found a similar case and drew the same conclusions in Nigeria, where census figures for 1921 indicated the inclusion of many Malams and at least one chief from Yoruba land, as well as Ibos from the East.[85] Barring the more crucial variable of education which tended to favor the Mende, the fact that

[79] C.S.O. N.52/1921, Inspector General's Report, Attached Form "E." SLPA and C.S.O. N.62/1922, Inspector-General's Report on SL. Bn. W.A.F.F., 1922, SLPA.
[80] C.S.O. N.62/1922, Inspector-General's Report on SL. Bn. W.A.F.F., 1922.
[81] C.S.O. N.62/1922, Inspector-General's Report on SL. Bn. W.A.F.F., 1922.
[82] C.S.O. N.62/1922, Inspector-General's Report on SL. Bn. W.A.F.F., 1922.
[83] C.S.O. N. 4/1939, Inspector-General's Report, 1938–1939, I.G. Form I.
[84] Gutteridge, "Military and Police Forces," 308.
[85] Barrett, "The Rank and File," 108.

there was no fixed quota as far as recruitment was concerned also helps to explain the picture of Mende dominance. Thus, though it was official policy to keep the Mende strength down, the ratio was occasionally exceeded. We would therefore note that the aversion to things military was not merely confined to the Krio as has, perhaps, been too frequently stated. Observations of this nature ignore other variables which tended to affect enlistment. These include, *inter alia*, the peculiar tribal attributes and occupations, British preferences and criteria for enlistment, the accidents of educational opportunities, and the general motives for enlistment. Perhaps what could be stated with some degree of certainty is that aversion to the military was strongest among the Krio than the other groups, chiefly because of British reluctance to enlist educated recruits.

MOTIVES FOR ENLISTMENT

The question of tribal balance in the Sierra Leone Battalion inevitably merges into a consideration of the probable motives of the troops to enlist. Throughout the colonial period, there was never a dearth of recruits for enlistment, and colonial records commented favorably on this display of enthusiasm. By 1928, when it was considered necessary to raise the strength of the Reserve force from 100 to 200, 46 men who had left the colors were on the waiting list, anxious to join the force.[86]

On assuming command of the Battalion in 1931, Lt. Col. Green observed that there was no difficulty in obtaining recruits.[87] This picture was, however, not the same throughout, and the incidence of desertion may serve to indicate compulsion and fear or flogging. For example, a total of 12.45 percent recruits deserted between 1920 and 1921, as the following table illustrates.[88]

Year	Average strength	No. of desertions	Percentage
1920	661	44	6.65%
1921	637	37	5.80%

[86] C.S.O. N.25/1929, Open Policy Files on the Navy and R.W.A.F.F.
[87] C.S.O. N.53/1933, Inspector General's Report 1932-33, I.G., Form 4.
[88] C.S.O. N.62/1922, "Return of Desertions from SL. Bn. W.A.F.F." in I.G. Form. Report for 1922, Appendix "F." C.S.O. Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General, 1921–1942, Vol. II. SLPA.

The fact that the majority of recruits depended on farming[89] is important for gauging their motives for enlisting in the RWAFF. It would seem that recruitment figures soared during the dry season and dropped during the rainy season, because "during the rains, the men are occupied with their crops."[90] While Lugard found a similar picture in Nigeria,[91] in Sierra Leone, the absence of other spheres of employment and the attractions to the wage economy led many men to enlist in the Battalion. This observation is predicated on the premise that many of the recruits were drawn from areas hitherto effectively sheltered from the economic benefits of British rule and where army employment therefore offered one of the few openings to young men. While it is doubtful what inspiration was provided by the need to meet the requirements of the new tax system in the Protectorate, it is clear that by enlisting, the peoples of the true north were provided with an alternative source of revenue and livelihood. The same economic motive induced many "time-expired" men to join the Court Messenger Force. It also explains the reluctance of these soldiers to re-engage for the Reserve force. "They preferred to try for [the] Court Messenger Force which was pensionable," commented the Inspector-General in 1937.[92]

EDUCATION AND SRUCTURAL DRAWBACKS IN THE BATTALION

The preceding analysis has attempted to throw some light into the determinants of British recruitment practices and to provide a framework for judging the quality of recruits and the impacts on the Battalion. If the structural mechanism of the colonial army ensured the virtual absence of any provision for education, training, and promotion for the native soldier, this, ironically, was largely in keeping with the needs of the colonial establishment. Colonial armies, after all, were needed as reliable instruments against any stumbling blocks to the spirit of empire. The lack of educational opportunities for Sierra Leoneans drafted into the Battalion left behind its peculiarly negative impact. Only partially immersed in British military norms and traditions, it complicated the character of troop psyche, precipitated conflicts with the

[89] *Military Report*, 215–246.
[90] *Military Report,* 169. Though this held largely true for the Carrier Corps, the same may have applied to the combatant ranks.
[91] C.S.O. 20/5, 158/17, cited by Barret "The Rank and File," 108.
[92] C.S.O. N.37/1937, Statistical Returns for the period, 1st March, 1938, to 28th February, 1937. Inspector-General's Report, 1937. Freetown 5 April 1937, C.S.O Confidential on Armed Forces General, SLPA.

civilian population, and sowed the seeds of military praetorianism in post-independent Sierra Leone. On the whole, the structure of the colonial army was to proscribe whatever level of professionalism the British may have envisioned. Native recruits could hardly rise above the rank of NCO and even when the opportunity was conceded, this was done grudgingly. Very little attention was devoted to developing the "intelligence" of the Sierra Leone soldier, and whatever effort was made in this direction was done in an ad hoc manner. Part of paragraph 90 of the SL Bn. RWAFF Regulations read:

> It has been found that company officers can do much in this direction by simple verbal lectures in the form of question and answer and that by this means the men not only get to understand their military duties but also pick up a knowledge of simple English phrases.[93]

Furthermore, it was inconceivable that in the circumstances under which the RWAFF was created, opportunities would exist for Sierra Leoneans to enter the ranks of the officer cadre. Whether by design or default, the conditions to be met precluded the native recruit from the officer corps from 1901 until 1952, when the first Sierra Leonean, David Lansana, who enlisted as an Other Rank OR in 1947, received his commission. While adequate provision existed for courses for white officers and NCOs at British military institutions, there was none for the Sierra Leonean recruit, and the constraints of economy rendered it impossible for the indigenous soldier to assume positions of command for a long time to come.

From the creation of the Battalion in 1901 until 1922, no provision was made for a Battalion school master, the relevant item, No. 48, being struck off the 1922 estimates for the army.[94] In the succeeding decade, up to 1932/33, attempts to improve the educational standards of the rank-and-file were still half-hearted and cumbersome. The two African school masters on the establishment then were simultaneously engaged as part-time clerks in the orderly room and quartermaster's store respectively, both providing some educational value. This notwithstanding, their attempts to teach the men to speak good English and to increase their vocabulary hardly produced the expected results to justify their retention on the staff. These soldier-clerks had been selected from the rank-and-file, their only qualification for the appointment

[93] *Sierra Leone Battalion, W.A.F.F., Regimental Standing Orders*, 1923, SLPA, Paragraph 90.
[94] C.S.O. N.62/1922.

being a knowledge of reading and writing obtained before their enlistment. Both were consequently written off as being of little value as clerks.[95] By 1937, the low level of education evident among indigenous recruits was to engage the attention of the Inspector-General (IG), and the generally *ad hoc* practice of teaching English to the recruits as they joined the Battalion came in for much scrutiny in his report. The IG was to recommend that "every effort should be made to eliminate pidgin English."[96] At best, however, this remained a mere recommendation, and no prescription or practical effort was made to remedy a fast deteriorating situation. Thus, by 1939, there was a conspicuous lack of educational opportunities for the native soldier. Up to this time, recruits were only taught English and to count the days of the month and year by indigenous NCOs, and though provision was made for a school master in the estimates, none was appointed.[97] In fact as early as 1920, the dearth of literate recruits had begun to cause some alarm in the establishment. The signaling school, which had recently been created, needed personnel who could read and write, but the number of Sierra Leoneans who could do so was practically negligible. The OC, WAFF, SL Bn., requested enlisting literate men as signalers, but the number anticipated was "likely to be small." This problem was also encountered in the efforts to re-enlist personnel trained in other branches such as Lewis and machine gunners.[98]

If openings in the Battalion were generally limited for educated Africans, this drawback was compounded by the strong aversion exhibited by literate Sierra Leoneans to enlisting in the military. Evidence for this observation is drawn from the period of World War II, at a time when the area commander reported that in order to secure reinforcements for West African troops overseas, 2,500 men from Sierra Leone would be required in 1944 and 3,200 in 1945, these figures allowing some margin for deserters.[99] Though a quota of 63 men a month was fixed to secure literate recruits from Sierra Leone, it was difficult to obtain this number on a monthly basis. Thus, by April

[95] C.S.O. N.53/1933, Inspector General's Report 1932-33, I.G., Form 4.
[96] C.S.O. N.37/1937, Inspector-General's Report on the SL. Bn. R.W.A.F.F., 1936/37. Freetown 5 April 1937, Form B/153, 10. CSO Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General 1929–1942. SLPA.
[97] C.S.O. N. 4/1939, Inspector-General's Report, 1938–1939, Attached Form B/153, 10. C.S.O. Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General, SLPA.
[98] C.S.O N.119/1920, O.C. W.A.F.F., SL. Bn. to Colonial Secretary. C.S.O Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General, Vol. III, 1920–1942, SLPA.
[99] West African War Council (W.A.W.C), 189, 24 April 1944. Summary and Conclusions of 14th Meeting, held at Freetown, 14–19 April 1944, 2.

1944, only 28 literate men had been recruited. The difficulty encountered in securing literate recruits centered around the reluctance to volunteer for service overseas[100] and the proviso that men could not be sent for service overseas until the age of 18.[101] To solve recruit literate men from the age of 16 in order to release older men for service overseas. Despite this attempt, for the entire period of 1944, the ratio of literate men to uneducated recruits from the Protectorate was about 1 to 3,000.[102] The authorities also attempted to attract secondary-school graduates, but this move was also unsuccessful, and though schools were circularized by recruiting vans, the results were far from encouraging. Thus, by June 1944, the number of literate men recruited from Sierra Leone was barely 48. This was a far cry from the anticipated 378 recruits had the monthly quota of 63 been secured during the first half of 1944. These difficulties were not unique to the Battalion. For the same period, 1,488 literate recruits were required from the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Gambia. On the whole, 444 were recruited in the Gold Coast, 309 from Nigeria, and 43 from Gambia.[103] These figures show that only the Gold Coast was fulfilling its target. This led the authorities to extend the period of recruitment for an indeterminate period, for as long as the war lasted.[104] Thus, the quality of Sierra Leoneans drafted into the Battalion left much to be desired.

While provision for advancement for Sierra Leonean recruits remained a forlorn hope, there was no such lack of provision for British officers and NCOs. Recruitment into the officer corps of the WAFF was very rigorous, and recruits were only selected for appointment after a personal interview at the Colonial Office (CO) by the Army Council, "subject to the concurrence of the Secretary of State for the colonies."[105] Candidates for appointments to the WAFF were drawn from the officer corps of the Regular Army, Militia, Territorial Army, or Reserve Force and were required to have completed two years of actual regimental duty at home or abroad, exclusive of any service in the ranks, or, if a Militia or Territorial officer, three periods of training with his own battalion or its equivalent in embodied service, or while attached

[100] *Ibid.*
[101] *Ibid.*
[102] *Ibid.*
[103] *Ibid.*, 16 May 1944. "Conclusions," 190.
[104] *Ibid.*, 16 May 1944. "Conclusions," 5.
[105] Sierra Leone Battalion, W.A.F.F., *Regimental Standing Orders*, 1923, 10.

to the regular force.[106] Officers from the Militia or Territorial Force were to hold an officer's certificate from the School of Small Arms at Hythe or its equivalent and were to be reported as fit for promotion to the rank of captain. The conditions governing the recruitment of British Warrant Officers and NCOs into the WAFF differed slightly. Whereas officers were selected after an interview at the CO, warrant officers and NCOs "volunteered for service [...] with the approval of the Army Council."[107] They were also required to hold at least a second class certificate of education.[108] British officers, warrant officers, and NCOs attended courses at various military schools and institutions. These included the senior officers' school at Woking for majors, the artillery school at Larkhill for artillery officers, the school of military engineering at Chatham for pioneer officers, the Signal Service Training Centre in Maresfield for signaling officers, the machine gun school at Netharavon for machine gun officers, and the small arms school in Hythe for infantry officers. Provision was also made for officers of any arm of the service to attend special courses at the school of physical training at Aldershot and the school of administration in Chiseldon.[109] In all cases, the expense for all courses was borne by the CO.

The structural drawbacks in the Sierra Leone Battalion were not only limited to the lack of provision for advancement for native recruits. There were also glaring disparities in privileges, rates of pay, and emoluments.[110] British officers were entitled to a field allowance at the rate at which civil officials drew travelling allowances when in the field,[111] as well as quarters free of rent for single officers. Field allowance was also provided in lieu of permanent

[106] Sierra Leone Battalion, W.A.F.F., *Regimental Standing Orders*, 1923, 11.
[107] Sierra Leone Battalion, W.A.F.F., *Regimental Standing Orders*, 1923, 15.
[108] Sierra Leone Battalion, W.A.F.F., *Regimental Standing Orders*, 1923.
[109] Sierra Leone Battalion, W.A.F.F., *Regimental Standing Orders*, 1923, 20.
[110] See SL. Bn. W.A.F.F. Regulations, 1923, "Rates of Pay, Officers," 48. SLPA; SL. Bn. W.A.F.F. Regulations, 1923, "Rates of Pay, British W.O. and NCOs Per Annum, 49-50. SLPA. This included the loss of an eye or limb or injury equivalent to such loss, SL. Bn. W.A.F.F. Regulations, 1923, "Compensation for African Soldiers and Carriers of W.A.F.F. for Injuries Received in the Discharge of Ordinary Military Duties" 52. SLPA; SL. Bn. W.A.F.F. Regulations, 1923, "Gratuity Rates for African Soldiers Who on Discharge Were Temporarily Disabled either Totally or Partially," 52. SLPA. See also, SL. Bn. W.A.F.F. Regulations, 1923, "Pensionable Rates For African NCOs, Man or Carrier Permanently and Totally Disabled," 50–51. SLPA; SL. Bn. W.A.F.F. Regulations, 1923, "Gratuity Rates for African Soldiers and Carriers Who on Discharge Were Permanently Partially Disabled," 51.
[111] This applied to such officers when travelling or when on active service within the actual sphere of operations as defined by the governor. See Sierra Leone Battalion, W.A.F.F., *Regimental Standing Orders*, 1923, 53.

quarters, in accordance with the local regulations operative in the colony or protectorate in which they served. Married officers also received an allowance of £72 annually, on reaching the age of 30, as defined in the Royal Warrant.[112] Furthermore, the opportunities for advancement through participation in courses of instruction also provided allowances, paid from colonial funds, for both officers and British NCOs. Such allowances, payable after the successful completion of courses leading to certificates of proficiency, were extensive. These ranged from a training allowance of five shillings a night for lodging, if quarters were unavailable; an allowance for officers, equivalent to the amount of the return railway fare from his residence in the UK and back again on the commencement and termination of the course; to an allowance of five shillings daily for living expenses in the absence of rations; two shillings and six pence nightly to meet the cost of lodging in lieu of free quarters; and a field allowance, paid at the same rate at which class B civil officers drew travelling allowances, in the case of British Warrant officers and NCOs.[113] Officers employed in signaling duties also drew an allowance of two shillings and six pence daily,[114] while engineering sergeants received a daily rate of one shilling and six pence.[115] Thus, it is impossible to speak of opportunities for training and advancement for native recruits during the colonial period. The impact of this drawback was to be felt soon after independence.

These structural drawbacks, and the consequently poorly educated recruits who found their way into the Battalion, derived partly from white perspectives about the Sierra Leonean recruit. While these perspectives were hardly favorable, they offer a valuable yardstick for assessing the colonial impact. Though there was no dearth of men who volunteered for enlistment, there was the perennial problem of "getting good ones"[116] with the required "physical standard."[117] It was therefore concluded that men from the Protectorate made very poor infantry material. Particularly illuminating was the report for 1938/39, in which the Inspector-General, Major-General Gifford, erroneously suggested that "the native of Sierra Leone can be trained up to being smart and soldier like and proficient in arms, but he does not come

[112] Sierra Leone Battalion, W.A.F.F., *Regimental Standing Orders*, 1923, 53.
[113] Sierra Leone Battalion, W.A.F.F., *Regimental Standing Orders*, 1923, 54.
[114] Sierra Leone Battalion, W.A.F.F., *Regimental Standing Orders*, 1923, 53.
[115] Sierra Leone Battalion, W.A.F.F., *Regimental Standing Orders*, 1923.
[116] C.S.O. N.53/1933, Inspector General's Report 1932–33, I.G. Form 4.
[117] Form I.

of warrior stocks and is excitable and easily led away."[118] This rather warped opinion about the capacity of the native soldier to be susceptible to other influences contrasted sharply with British opinion about the firmness of purpose shown by the Ibo recruit who "did not bolt or show signs of panic if the camp was attacked."[119] At a time when the need for economy dictated streamlining the Battalion, and when it was deemed necessary to establish a constabulary force to replace it for purposes of internal security, Governor Wilkinson wrote of recruits from the Protectorate in very unfavorable terms:

> Most of the Protectorate tribes supply poor material for infantry [...] and though it may be possible by very costly organization to turn poor infantry into passable infantry, I do not think that we should be making the best use of the material gifts of the Protectorate African if we tried to make of him what nature never intended him be. He is a carrier, a road maker, pioneer; he is not a born infantry man.[120]

Nowhere else was this manifestly warped perception of the Sierra Leone soldier demonstrated than at the outbreak of international hostilities in 1939 when the billeting of wives of African soldiers came up for consideration.[121] It was then contemplated giving the women the option of being housed at Daru or finding accommodation at their own expense in and about Freetown, with a grant of four shillings a month to meet the cost of outside accommodation as an emergency measure.[122] Though the governor argued that he was not averse to spending the estimated £900 a year to defray this cost,[123] it was clear that the need for economy relegated the soldiers' welfare to second place. As far as colonial thinking ran, the preservation of British imperial interests was to be given priority. What was paramount was the maintenance of the "*esprit de corps* of the African soldier," though the existing facilities for

[118] C.S.O. N. 4/1939, Inspector-General's Report, 1938–1939, I.G., Attached Form B/153, 12.
[119] C.S.O. 20/5. N.C./1917, Assessment of Lt. Gov. Moorehouse. Cited by Barrett, "The Rank and File," 107.
[120] C.S.O. 119/1920, Governor Wilkinson to Secretary of State, 9 June 1921. C.S.O. Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General, 1920–1942, Vol. III. SLPA.
[121] C.S.O N.182/1939, O.C. SL. Bn. R.W.A.F.F. to Hon. Colonial Secretary, 5/934. C.S.O. Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General 1938–41, Vol. IV. SLPA.
[122] C.S.O. 189/1939, C.S.O. Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General, 1938-1941, Vol. IV, SLPA, 4.
[123] C.S.O. 189/1939, Governor's Dispatch to Colonial Secretary, G.G. C.S.O. Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General, 1938–1941, Vol. IV. SLPA.

accommodation were palpably appalling.[124] In outlining his perception of the peculiar capacity of the native recruit to thrive in filth and squalor, the governor argued with unrestrained confidence:

> I have been long enough in Africa to know that the African soldier does not mind possibly almost prefers overcrowding and living higgledy-piggledy in conditions which would appear quite shocking to Lt. Col. Richards and myself and still more so the Medical authorities. At any rate it is quite certain that they, speaking generally, would infinitely prefer this mode of life to allowing their wives to live from 8 p.m. onwards in someone else's house.[125]

From the foregoing, it is clear that the conditions necessary for cultivating a professional ethic in the Battalion scarcely received the attention they deserved. Organizationally speaking, the cumulative impact of poorly educated recruits, discriminatory pay scales and emoluments, the heterogeneous character of the Battalion, compounded by the difficulties of achieving a tribal balance in the ranks, the absence of provision for advancement and training for the native recruit, and the generally warped white perspectives about the Sierra Leone soldier combined to produce a makeshift structure geared towards the maintenance of British imperial interests in Sierra Leone. The ripples were to be felt in the successor state just six years after the attainment of independence.

While this organizational drawback inevitably took its toll on the efficiency of the Battalion, it also precluded the cultivation of a sound and efficient reserve force. With the advent of war in 1914, and the obvious need to deploy the Battalion overseas, it was considered necessary to establish a Reserve Force.[126] Thus, by 1912, enquiries were being made from respective district commissioners regarding the feasibility of using ex-frontiers, drawn from the Sierra Leone Frontier Police, and then employed as Court Messengers, to constitute a Reserve Force.[127] It was obvious, however, that the use of ex-fron-

[124] C.S.O. 189/1939, Governor's Dispatch to Colonial Secretary.
[125] C.S.O. 189/1939, Governor's Dispatch to Colonial Secretary.
[126] C.S.O. F.F./42, 8 May 1942. The object of the Force was to assist the Battalion in military operations in the Colony and Protectorate, to take the place of the Battalion in engagin in military operations near the borders of the colony and the Protectorate, and to take the place of the W.A.F.F. engaged in military operations over the sea.
[127] C.S.O. F.F.42, 15 May 1912.

tiers was likely to impinge on the smooth flow of district administration. Moreover, in the absence of Court Messengers, other recruits would have to be deployed temporarily. This, in turn, was bound to entail additional expenditure.[128] Considerations of efficiency also militated against a positive response from district commissioners, for the old frontiers were generally regarded as the best messengers who were also required for finding hidden *fakais* and houses after the collection of the hut tax.[129] Thus, results of training for musketry for the reservists in 1912 fell far below the required standard, the classification showing 2 first-class and 52 third-class shots.[130] The results for 1913 were equally disappointing. The results showed 1 first-class, 6 second-class, and 50 third-class shots. Twenty-four in the latter category failed to obtain the necessary points in the qualifying session. These poor results were attributed to the inaccuracy of the carbines being used, which were either very old or obsolete. This necessitated proposals to re-arm a third company of the Battalion with the short L. E. Mk. III rifle and to hand over their rifles for the use of the Reserve Force.[131]

The difficulties envisaged in creating a reserve force were amply borne out in 1912 when it became necessary to mobilize the reservists of the Railway and Ronietta districts in November, following some disturbances in Kono country. Of 69 reservists in both districts, only 25 presented themselves at Daru. This was due to a dearth of sufficient court messengers at the disposal of the district commissioners who could be deployed as reservists. Furthermore, many men could not be found at their homes at the time, nor could they be located for some time.[132] By 1914 also, musketry training had not improved. That same year, Bandajuma and Makeni were opened as training centers in addition to Daru, ostensibly to induce more men who lived some distance away from Daru but nearer these stations to present themselves.[133] Barring the difficulty of getting men to enlist at the proper time, many who had been discharged for misconduct and those deemed medically unfit, attempted to take advantage of the absence of the Battalion and presented themselves, hoping to dodge recognition. In 1915, there was a huge reduction in the

[128] C.S.O. F.F.42, 15 May 1912.
[129] C.S.O. F.F.42, 3 August 1912, Acting D.C., Koinadugu District to the Colonial Secretary, Freetown. SLPA.
[130] C.S.O. F.F.93/1912, Dispatch by O.C. W.A.F.F. to Secretary of State, W.A.F.F. no. 37. SLPA.
[131] C.S.O. F.F.88/1913, O.C. SL. Bn. W.A.F.F. to Colonial Secretary, 1/11/13. SLPA.
[132] C.S.O. F.F.88/1913, O.C. SL. Bn. W.A.F.F. to Colonial Secretary.
[133] C.S.O. F.F.85/1914, "Report on Reservist Training, 1914." SLPA.

numbers that reported for training. Only 54 did so, unlike 68 in 1914.[134] This rather bleak picture was not the norm throughout though, as reports for 1927–28 showed. By this time, the reserve force had reached its authorized establishment of 100. Ninety-seven of these men reported for training at camp Karima (the rest were either exempt or incapable of training), and after a few days preliminary training, when two companies of the Battalion were expanded to three, the reserve force was proving its efficiency though many of the men had left the colors for some six years.[135] Expectations that the reservists would become a force of still greater value in the future when, under new conditions of enlistment, it was hoped that men would be compulsorily transferred to it after completing their service in the colors were underscored by the necessary financial provision for an increased reserve force from 100 to 200 in 1928.[136] It was clear, however, that the desire "to bring the Battalion up to war establishment" dictated the increase in the reserve force.[137]

Notwithstanding the attraction to the reserve, the difficulty of coordinating recruitment into the force persisted, and the haphazard manner in which recruits reported for training seriously impeded the ordinary training of the Battalion.[138] It would appear that the main impediments to reservist training were the tendency of the men to forget "a great deal of their musketry," though "one finds that they pick it up again extremely quickly—but that it was very hard to teach them anything new, or to alter anything they have learnt before."[139] This latter impediment should be seen within the context of the *ad hoc* provision for training and advancement for native recruits. It was also characteristic of the structural weaknesses inherent in the colonial establishment. Thus, well below establishment by 1936/37, the strength of the reserve was declining, this again due to the demands made by the Court Messenger Force. Of a total battalion strength of 358 in 1936/37 were recruits. This number was largely due to the reluctance of ex-soldiers to re-engage, the latter pre-

[134] C.S.O. F.F.54/1914.

[135] C.S.O. N.25/1939, Inspector-General, W.A.F.F. to Secretary of State, 10/3/38. Open Policy Files on the Navy and R.W.A.F.F. SLPA.

[136] C.S.O. N.25/1939, Inspector-General, W.A.F.F. to Secretary of State, 10/3/38.

[137] C.S.O. N. 25/1939, Inspector-General, W.A.F.F. (Butler) to Secretary of State, 26/3/27. Open Policy Files on the Navy and R.W.A.F.F. SLPA.

[138] C.S.O. N. 25/1939, Inspector-General, W.A.F.F. (Butler) to Secretary of State, 26/3/27.

[139] C.S.O. N.25/1939, SL. Bn. W.A.F.F. "Report on Reservist Training, 1926." Open Policy Files on the Navy and R.W.A.F.F. SLPA.

ferring to try for the Court Messenger Force, which was pensionable.[140] These problems continued until 1939, when the number of reservists required on mobilization was 137, and when legislation was about to be passed permitting an establishment of 60 court messengers, with the reservists included in this number. Based on this reckoning, 74 men were required from other sources. The latter had proved so unreliable in responding to their summonses to join, that in order to ensure the immediate arrival of 77 such men on mobilization, it was estimated that 180 of this type of men should be enlisted, bringing the total strength of the reserve to 240. Though the proposal was endorsed by the colonial authorities, the problems continued. It was doubtful, in practice, to provide such a large number from a battalion whose peacetime strength stood at 409, and though the strength of the reserve was to be 240, only 137 reserve kits were found in the Battalion store.[141]

If reports of reservist training continued to be unsatisfactory, the toll of a weakened structural model on the Battalion's efficiency hardly abated. This is consistently illustrated in many reports sent to the Secretary of State by the Inspector-General. The report for 1936/37 is particularly instructive. Writing on the Battalion's performance in Togoland and the Cameroons, Brigadier-General F. J. Moberly argued that it was commendable but not exceptional.[142] At a time when World War II became imminent, the Battalion was lagging behind in "standards" and "efficiency" and above all in "organization."[143] These considerations led the Inspector-General to consider it unfit for war.[144] The lapses in organizational efficiency could partly be attributed to the fact that the energies of the men were largely absorbed in rebuilding the barracks at Wilberforce, a task that occupied virtually the whole of the collective training period.[145] Besides these largely incidental drawbacks, the range of equipment borne by the African soldier equally took its toll on efficiency. Apart from being cumbersome, it was excessive and exerted a

[140] C.S.O. N.37/1937, "Statistical Returns for the Period, 1 March 1936–28 February 1937." SLPA.
[141] C.S.O. N. 4/1939, Inspector-General's Report, 1938–1939, I.G. Form 7. SLPA.
[142] See F. J. Moberly, *History of the Great War: Military Operations Togoland and the Cameroons 1914-1916* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1931).
[143] C.S.O. N.37/1937, Inspector-General's Report on the SL. Bn. R.W.A.F.F., 1936/37, Freetown 5 April 1937, Form B/153, 10. CSO Confidential on Armed Forces of West Africa General 1929-1942. SLPA.
[144] C.S.O. N.37/1937, Inspector-General's Report on the SL. Bn. R.W.A.F.F., 1936/37, Form B/153, 10.
[145] For details, see C.S.O. N.4/1931.

serious handicap on the efficiency of the troops while under active service conditions.[146] The service load forty-eight pounds, including a filled pack, filled water bottles, and seventy rounds of small arms ammunition (SAA). The same was equally true for the enlisted carrier who, in addition to his service load, carried equipment weighing as much as forty pounds.[147] Of even graver concern was the lack of anti-gas equipment, training stores, and respirators. The possibility of the Battalion encountering gas during war dictated the need for such an equipment, as well as some modification in the existing dress, which the Inspector-General recommended was to be "inconspicuous," "serviceable," and "inexpensive."[148] The discriminatory practice of denying recruits boots also came up for consideration. The hazards of the terrain and the numbers of men rendered ineffective through foot injuries had necessitated issuing boots to African troops in East Africa during World War I, and the possibility that gas may be encountered in the future rendered the replacement of the chupplie still more necessary.[149] Perhaps of greater importance was the condition of the arms and ammunition. Despite the provision for periodical replacement, many of the rifles were worn out. The same was true of the bayonets, many of which required "browning," polishing, burnishing, or cleaning, and which were loose when fixed to the rifles.[150] Such debilitating conditions derived from the considerable delays experienced in fulfilling indents for weapons and small arms ammunition in the UK. These delays generated administrative complications, hindered the building of small arms and ammunition to the scales laid down by the Overseas Defence Committee, and adversely affected the efficiency of the Battalion. Thus, in concluding his report for 1936/37, the Inspector-General averred that "the organization of

[146] C.S.O. N.37/1937, Inspector-General's Report on the SL. Bn. R.W.A.F.F., 1936/37, Form B/153, 10.
[147] C.S.O. N.37/1937, Inspector-General's Report on the SL. Bn. R.W.A.F.F., 1936/37, Form B/153, 7.
[148] C.S.O. N.37/1937, Inspector-General's Report on the SL. Bn. R.W.A.F.F., 1936/37, Form B/153, 4.
[149] C.S.O. N.37/1937, Inspector-General's Report on the SL. Bn. R.W.A.F.F., 1936/37, Form B/153, 8. When the RWAFF was constituted, African recruits were not given boots as Africans were regarded as primitive. The "chupplie" was an Indian-style leather sandal given to soldiers of the WAFF when the battalions were initially established to prevent what became known as "cut feet" during long marches on during parades.
[150] C.S.O. N.37/1937, Inspector-General's Report on the SL. Bn. R.W.A.F.F., 1936/37, Form B/153. "Browning" was the term used for polishing, cleaning or burnishing soldiers' bayonets.

the Battalion is unsound and in consequence, the training has suffered [...] the training is low and the Battalion is not fit for war."[151]

CONCLUSION

The conclusions to be drawn from this examination are fairly clear. British prescribed "virtues" for the indigenous recruit constituted the basis of a structural weakness that was to permeate the independence era and sowed the seeds for future structural disintegration in the Sierra Leone Army. In many ways, the lack of any provision for training and advancement for native recruits delayed the development of a professional army and ensured that few recruits could justifiably lay claim to a full adaptation to British military norms and traditions. Consequently, the heterogeneous nature of the Battalion prevented the birth of a national army, which in any case was hardly contemplated by the colonial authorities. British aversion to sophisticated recruits ensured a dearth of sufficiently qualified men for commissioning when the need for such men arose. In sum, the structural model bequeathed to the successor state compounded the problems of adjustment, and this was exacerbated by the failure of her new leaders to shape and mold this legacy to suit the needs of independent Sierra Leone. The case for an imperfect colonial model is perhaps put more bluntly by one observer who opined that:

> In short the composition of colonial defence forces in accordance with the criteria used in the colonial period and the professional ethos and preferences of expatriates seconded from an imperial army left a difficult legacy to a number of new states. The new political leaders still have in most cases to solve the problem of finding the appropriate way in which to identify the army with the state.[152]

[151] C.S.O. N.37/1937, Inspector-General's Report on the SL. Bn. R.W.A.F.F., 1936/37, Form B/153, 12.
[152] Gutteridge, "Military and Police Forces," 308.

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The Problem of the Color Line: Freedom and Black Progress in the Late Nineteenth Century South

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The community-building strategies African Americans initiated to secure land and achieve intra-racial autonomy in the absence of federal programs and lost opportunities during the late nineteenth century represent an important dimension to understanding racial uplift during the era of Jim Crow. Reconstruction-era federal land policies did fail, and opportunities to advance the material well-being of former enslaved women and men were lost. How then can scholars reconceptualize the story of African American freedom? Local analyses that consider temporal and spatial distinctions provide the clearest window through which scholars can understand the achievements and aspirations of African Americans. Moreover, local histories of Black communities provide greater insights into the ways in which formerly enslaved women and men endeavored to achieve economic and social freedom in spite of not receiving their promised "forty acres and a mule."

IN 1901, W. E. B. DU BOIS wrote an essay on the Freedmen's Bureau, which appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*. As the most prominent African American intellectual, Du Bois provided a cogent assessment of the bureau to explicate "the occasion of its rise, the character of its work, and its final success and failure to grapple with the vast problem of race and the social condition."[1] The former bond men and women the Freedmen's Bureau endeavored to aid were striving to transform their position and status in American society. They

[1] W. E. B. DuBois, "The Freedmen's Bureau," *Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 87, March 1901, http://www.theatlantic.com/past/docs/issues/01mar/dubois.htm.

were, in essence, seeking to "lift the veil" that had separated them from the full fruits of American democracy.[2]

Du Bois's early scholarship on race at the dawn of the twentieth century has provided important insights into the objective reality of African Americans in the South. Du Bois problematized the whole question of identity by uncovering the relationship and interpenetration of race and class as explanatory variables in the African American condition. Du Bois's assertion in the *Souls of Black Folk* that the problem of the twentieth century was the problem of the color line, underscored the formidable obstacles African Americans faced as the afterlives of slavery and virulent race hatred circumscribed their economic development during what historian Rayford Logan termed the "nadir."[3] In southern communities such as Albany and Burroughs, Georgia, African Americans endeavored to own land—which they equated with economic independence—but faced obstacles consistent with the intensification of economic and social oppression of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

As a resident of Georgia during the first decade of the twentieth century and editor of Atlanta University Studies Publications, Du Bois traveled extensively throughout the state to assess the historical and contemporary problems of African Americans. More than any other scholar and activist, Du Bois had a lasting impact on the thought of African Americans. His survey of Dougherty County, Georgia (Albany, Georgia), published in the *Souls of Black Folk*, and his study of Black land ownership in coastal Georgia for the U.S. Labor Department in 1906, allow a comparison of the experiences of African Americans in the post-Civil War South and Reconstruction's legacy for both regions.

With a population of one million, Georgia had the highest concentration of African Americans in the country at the turn of the twentieth century.[4] For Du Bois, one needed to only travel to Dougherty County to understand the race question in America. It was here that 80 percent of the Black population worked the same land they had once worked as slaves, where 66 percent of the Black population remained illiterate, and where slavery continued under

[2] W. E. B. DuBois, "Strivings of the Negro People," *Atlantic Monthly,* 1897, http://www.theatlantic.com/past/docs/unbound/flashbks/black/dubstriv.htm.
[3] Rayford Logan, *The Negro in American Life and Thought: The Nadir, 1877-1901* (New York: Dial Press, 1954).
[4] *U.S. Population Census, 1900.*

a new form of capitalism.[5] In 1890, the Black population of Dougherty County consisted of 10,000 with a comparative White population of 2,000. [6] The poverty Du Bois witnessed in Dougherty County pervaded much of the state in both rural and urban areas. The birth of the Progressive Movement during the 1890s, which sought to ameliorate conditions in America's cities, did very little to address the conditions of the rural poor and remained a movement which benefitted "whites only."[7] As separated "lesser citizens," the status of African Americans in Georgia evolved into an immutable condition, which received sanction in Booker T. Washington's "Atlanta Compromise" speech in 1895. Washington's speech, which articulated a philosophy of separation and accommodation to segregation as the best strategy for Black advancement, reinforced Black economic subordination and "implicitly abandoned all political and social rights."[8]

At the end of the Civil War, there was the expectation that African Americans in Dougherty County would secure a better life than they had lived as enslaved men and women. This was in fact an aspiration of freed men and women throughout the nation. However, throughout the African American experience, there has been what Du Bois refers to as a conundrum of Black identity. African Americans viewed themselves through the eyes of others and lacked another source upon which to base their identity. This resulted in a veil between the Black man's world, where identity is constructed for him, and the White world, where there are more opportunities and possibilities.

Both W.E.B. Du Bois and Carter G. Woodson were pioneers in studying the African American experience. Their monographs on African American history and culture radiate beyond the study of African American history. Like Du Bois, Woodson provided the framework for the integration of African American history into American history. In his study, *The Rural Negro*, a 300-page study published in 1930, Woodson examines the social and economic development of African Americans in both the Upper and Lower South . His study is particularly revealing in that it situates the formation of all-Black towns in the context of Black nationalism and African American empower-

[5] Manning Marable, *How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America: Problems in Race, Political Economy, and Society* (Cambridge, MA.: South End Press, 2000), 2–7.
[6] W.E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Penguin Group, 1982), 164.
[7] Arthur S. Link and Richard L. McCormick, *Progressivism* (Arlington Heights, IL: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 1983).
[8] Ralph McGill, "Interview with W. E. B. Du Bois," *Atlantic Monthly*, November 1965, http://www.theatlantic.com/past/docs/unbound/flashbks/black/mcgillbh.htm.

ment. There were as many as 200 self-sufficient intra-racial Black American towns during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. As Eric Foner aptly concludes, the autonomy offered by land ownership, which provided the foundation for these communities, was "defensive rather than the springboard for sustained economic advancement."[9] The most prominent Black American town influenced by Booker T. Washington was Mound Bayou in the Mississippi Delta.[10] Mound Bayou existed as an *imperium in imperio*—a sovereignty within a sovereignty, which embraced the principles of economic advancement, racial solidarity, and self-help. Land ownership shielded African Americans from the worst aspects of economic exploitation; however, the prospects for sustained economic development were limited without access to capital and credit, circumstances that impacted both Dougherty County and Burroughs, Georgia.

The approaches used by historians to examine the economic plight of African Americans in the postwar South fall into four categories: economic politics, market analysis, racial exploitation, and, more recently, property ownership. In the context of market analysis, Stephen DeCanio's *Agriculture in the Postbellum South* and Robert Higgs's *Competition and Coercion* contend that despite violence and intimidation from native white southerners, African Americans made strident economic gains. "Their initial per capita income rose by 2.7 percent and their housing, diet, living standards, and material wealth rose significantly. Moreover, their real property ownership also increased."[11]

Comparatively, Roger L. Ransom and Richard Sutch developed a more cautious model of analysis. In their study, *One Kind of Freedom*, Ransom and Sutch argue that the gains made by African Americans should be measured against the reality that they were "under constant attack by a dominant white society determined to preserve racial inequalities." They argue further that "the economic institutions established in the postwar South effectively operated to keep former slaves as a landless agricultural labor force."[12]

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[9] Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), 109.

[10] August Meier, "Booker T. Washington and the Town of Mound Bayou," *Phylon* 15, no. 4 (1954): 397–401.

[11] Eric Anderson and Alfred Moss, Jr., *The Facts of Reconstruction: Essays in Honor of John Hope Franklin* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1991), 172.

[12] Roger L. Ransom and Richard Sutch, *One Kind of Freedom: Emancipation and Its Legacy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 198.

The theme of racial exploitation is a topic expanded upon by scholars Johnathan Wiener and Jay R. Mandle. Labor historian William Cohen also views the post-emancipation era as exploitative in that it created a new kind of slavery through the sharecropping system, the institutionalization of the crop-lien system, convict-leasing, and the monopoly held by planters. While there is some truth to the interpretations of each of these scholars, they do not represent the full spectrum of the lived experiences of African Americans in the post-emancipation period.[13]

Loren Schweninger has argued that understanding Black economic reconstruction requires a systematic analysis of Black property ownership in the South before, during, and after the Civil War. In his seminal study *Black Property Owners in the South, 1790-1915* (1997), Schweninger demonstrates through state-by-state analysis the divergence in the African American experience and the diversity of regional growth and development in the Lower South.[14] He cogently demonstrates that even in the hostile climate of the late nineteenth century, former slaves were able to achieve property-owning status.[15]

The development of African American towns in the South represented a significant counterpoint in the story of African American freedom at the dawn of the twentieth century. The existence of African American towns in the South depended on the extent to which African Americans could acquire land, exert control over their economic resources, and live free from land seizures by white southerners. It was not easy. In 1923, the majority Black town of Rosewood, Florida, was destroyed by white mobs after a white woman falsely accused a Black man of assaulting her. In 1994, the Florida legislature passed a bill providing $150,000 in reparations to the Rosewood victims for loss of property. The Rosewood bill was the nation's first compensation bill for African Americans who suffered racial injustice.[16]

The all-Black town of Burroughs, Georgia remained autonomous for several decades into the twentieth century. This insulated community in Lowcountry Georgia is one of several African American towns enumerated in both Woodson's study and in Du Bois's landmark study on Black landownership

[13] Anderson and Moss, *The Facts of Reconstruction*, 172.
[14] *Black Property Owners in the South, 1790-1915* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press), 1997.
[15] Loren Schweninger, *Black Property Owners in the South, 1775-1910* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991).
[16] R. Thomas Dye, "Rosewood, Florida: The Destruction of an African American Community," *Historian* (March 1996): 605–22.

in coastal Georgia. Burroughs, Georgia, has its origins in the failed federal land policies of the Reconstruction period in which the idea that the national government would provide former slaves with "forty acres and a mule" became embedded in the historical memory of African Americans. The failure of the national government to provide economic retribution in the form of land forced African Americans in this community to devise alternative strategies to secure land. During the 1870s and 1880s, they concentrated their efforts on purchasing land from William Burroughs, owner of Wild Horn plantation in Chatham County, Georgia. By 1890, twenty-five former slaves had purchased 206 acres of land, providing the foundation for the Burroughs settlement, which in 1897 matured into Georgia's first incorporated African American town.[17]

The post-Reconstruction period can be viewed as a significant period for the growth of self-determination strategies in Lowcountry communities. This period witnessed the expansion of various nationalistic conceptual frameworks both within the diaspora and on the African continent. Within the United States, the Lowcountry serves as a regional prism for describing and evaluating the social and economic development of the town of Burroughs. Local histories of Black communities provide greater insights into the ways in which formerly enslaved men and women achieved economic and social freedom through a Black nationalist framework, in spite of not receiving their promised forty acres. The concept of Black nationalism is a trans-Atlantic phenomenon. It developed in response to the slave trade and slavery and is predicated on the idea of racial unity. Black nationalism overrides differences among people of African descent through political unification and is undergirded by the belief that people of African descent have a collective destiny comparable to that of a nation.[18]

The formation of Burroughs represented the apogee of African American resistance to political, economic, and social injustice. The town's Charter of Incorporation, issued in 1897, advanced the principles of self-help, moral uplift, and racial solidarity through its governing body.[19] The residents of Burroughs accumulated the resources to purchase land and other forms

[17] Karen Cook Bell, *Claiming Freedom: Race, Kinship, and Land in Nineteenth Century Georgia* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2017), 79.
[18] Wilson Moses, *The Golden Age of Black Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 20.
[19] Cook Bell, *Claiming Freedom*, 85.

of property in numerous ways. In some cases, pre-Civil War opportunities to accumulate cash and property had existed which placed freed men and women in a better position to acquire land. Both the struggle and acquisition of land knit families and communities together. Families pooled resources and passed acquired land from one individual to another and from one generation to the next. Mutual aid and protective associations promoted landownership both rhetorically and by encouraging their members to purchase land with their savings. When church congregations succeeded in purchasing land, the buildings and grounds served as visible reminders of the fruits of frugality and as centers for the perpetuation of a sense of community and other attendant values.[20]

African American leaders, many of whom were ex-slaves, played a pivotal role in post-war politics and grassroots resistance and activism. Race leaders such as Henry McNeal Turner and Martin Delany provided the underpinnings for discourse on the doctrines of racial uplift, emigrationism, and separatism during the post-Reconstruction period. The doctrine of racial uplift operated as a singular force within post-Reconstruction Lowcountry communities. Indeed, since the early nineteenth century, African Americans had demonstrated a consistent pattern of organizing to improve their status. Lowcountry leaders such as Aaron A. Bradley, Solomon Farley, William Golding, Henry McNeal Turner, Martin Delany, and J. C. Legree, were transformational leaders within their communities by leading campaigns for economic and social justice.[21]

Black institutions were central to campaigns for economic and social justice and community cohesiveness. A prominent feature of Lowcountry communities was the presence of three pivotal institutions: the family, the church, and mutual associations. These institutions served as reinforcements for the individual and the community as a whole. To a large extent, the self-defined thought and behavior displayed by former slaves emanated from the roles they assumed within these institutions. Through these institutions a network of kinship relationships developed. Kinship communities were not simply bound together by blood relations. Instead, community institutions

[20] Cook Bell, 85.

[21] Eric Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers: A Directory of Black Officeholders during Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), 88; Joseph P. Reidy, "Aaron A. Bradley: Voice of Black Labor in Lowcountry Georgia," in *Southern Black Leaders of the Reconstruction Era*, ed. Howard Rabinowitz, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 281–86.

structured relationship patterns which encompassed the entire community. For instance, churches functioned as extended kinship groups by providing support in times of crisis and emotional closeness.[12]

Land ownership was the symbol of group interactions and represented status to all those related to it. Landowners held a higher status than tenants or sharecroppers because they had gained a small foothold in the earth, which provided a measure of independence. In the Burroughs community, located in the Ogeechee district of Chatham County, twenty-four men and women had obtained this measure of independence between 1870 and 1888. Seven made their living as farmers, seven as farm laborers, and one as a hostler. Their ages ranged from twenty-six to seventy-two at the time of their land purchase.[22]

African American families in the Lowcountry adhered to a nuclear model. The desire for a stable family and their aspirations for land and other economic opportunities were interrelated. In Burroughs, 87 percent of the landowners maintained nuclear households in 1880.[23] For farmers, the family functioned as an economic unit. However, this varied with respect to the age of the children and the particular needs of the family. The wives of three out of the seven farmers remained at home as opposed to working in the fields. For instance, Fortune Watson, who produced 10,208 pounds of rice in 1879, recognized the importance of having his wife Tilla devote her time and energy to raising their four children who had not reached working age. In most farming families, however, every family member physically able engaged in some type of work. Invariably, families utilized the savings of all family members to invest in land.[24] In a few cases, however, rice farmers also hired laborers to assist in performing arduous field work, paying between $2.00 and $9.00 per week for the time hired. Their economic activities revolved around the Atlantic and Gulf Railroad which provided the means by which they transported locally grown vegetables and rice to Savannah.[25]

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[22] Charles P. Loomis and J. Allan Beegle, *Rural Social Systems: A Textbook in Rural Sociology and Anthropology* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1950), 293; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Population Return, Chatham County, 6th Militia District, 1880, Record Group 29, National Archives and Records Administration (hereinafter cited as NARA), Washington, D.C.

[23] U.S. Bureau of the Census, Manuscript Population Returns, Chatham County, 6th Militia District, 1880, RG 29, NARA, Washington, D.C.

[24] Monroe Work, "The Negroes of Warsaw Georgia," *World's Work* 37 (1908): 36.

[25] "Burroughs Seeks Historic Status," *Georgia Gazette*, February 11, 1981, p. 1, col. 3.

Successful farming, whether commercial or subsistence, required access to property other than land. Livestock such as chickens, cows, draft animals, and pigs provided farmers with the instruments to provide for their families, and additional income came from marketing produce such as eggs, corn, sweet potatoes, and in a few instances cotton. In cases where women worked on family farms, they performed tasks such as planting, harvesting, and marketing produce. Family farming encouraged solidarity, individual initiative, and responsibility.[26]

Land owners placed a high value on providing land for their children. For instance, William Ferguson paid $130 for six acres of land (lot number 9) from January Stoney in 1876 "to hold in trust for Andrew Bryan," Ferguson's eight-year-old stepson, and Matilda Ferguson, his eleven-year-old daughter.[27] Stoney, who paid $266 for seven acres, or lot number 9 of Wild Horn in 1874, may have migrated out of the area and purchased land in another area of Chatham County as James Grant did in 1882.[28] Grant, who paid $373 for eighteen acres (lot number 1) at Wild Horn in 1874, sold his holdings to Adam Young for $300. Grant remained in the Ogeechee district, but migrated closer to Savannah.[29] Affinal relations played a part in land transfers between David Roulabit and Elze Green. Roulabit, one of the original 1865 "forty acres and a mule" land grant recipients, purchased three lots (numbers 6, 7, and 8) of the Miller-Demere tract on November 1, 1888. On December 1, 1888, he sold five acres to Elze Green for $60.11.[30]

For single or widowed women during the first generation of freedom, the ability to save and invest in land depended largely upon their income (or

[26] Loomis and Beegle, *Rural Social Systems*, 293.

[27] Records of the Chatham County Superior Court (hereinafter cited as RCCSC), Deed Books 4S 318, January Stoney to Matilda Ferguson et al.; 5E 366.

[28] RCCSC, James Grant to Adam Young, 5H 474-475, Hobby and Dell to James Grant. According to the latter deed, the land was located in the Ogeechee Ward, four and one-half miles from Savannah.

[29] RCCSC, James Grant to Adam Young, 5H 474-475, Hobby and Dell to James Grant.

[30] RCCSC, Deed Book 6L 350, David Roulabit; Deed Book 6M 18, David Roulabit to Elze Green. General William Sherman issued Special Field Order No. 15 on January 16, 1865, which reserved the Sea Islands and abandoned inland rice fields in coastal South Carolina, Georgia, and northern Florida for the ownership and occupancy of formerly enslaved Black Americans. Under Sherman's order, Black men and women, who were heads of their household, received from five to forty acres of "abandoned land." President Andrew Johnson reversed the order in May 1865. See Karen Bell, "The Ogeechee Troubles: Federal Land Restoration and the 'Lived Realities' of Temporary Proprietors," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 85, no. 3, (2001): 375-397.

in some cases the family's income) and their level of consumption. Women, like men, maintained deep-seated aspirations to invest in land. Land was a tangible manifestation of their independence as well as an asset that might strengthen kinship and family ties. However, single and widowed African American women, particularly in rural areas, found it difficult to purchase land because of relatively low wages and their familial responsibilities, which required expending nearly all of their time in the home. Yet, despite these obstacles, 117 African American women in Chatham County, Georgia, many of whom were former slaves, were landowners in 1876.[31]

The establishment of an identity as a self-sufficient agriculturalist woman and the concomitant reaffirmation as property owner provided women with a new ideological orientation. Caroline Ealy purchased twenty and three-quarter acres on January 10, 1873, paying $415. Ealy's estate consisted of "lot number three" which bordered Chevis road on the east.[32] Apart from Plenty Ancrum, Caroline Ealy held the largest tract in the Burroughs settlement. Other women who purchased land secured modest acreage. Hannah Green and Sarah Davis owned seven and five acres, respectively. Both Green and Davis held fiduciary deeds in which an authorized agent acted on their behalf. Mingo Broughton served as trustee for Green, who paid $140 for her property, which ran parallel with Chevis road and which bordered the lands of Norris Weston on the north. Likewise, Robin Davis and Prince Wright acted on behalf of Sarah Davis, who paid $200 for five acres "lying near Chevis road."[33] In other instances, women purchased land for their children.

[31] Chatham County Tax Digest, 1876. For a cogent discussion of the role of Black women in community development see Tera W. Hunter, *To Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labor After the Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Sharon Harley and Rosalyn Terborg Penn, eds., *The Afro-American Woman Struggles and Images* (New York: Black Classic Press, 1978); Rosalyn Terborg Penn, *African American Women in the Struggle For the Vote* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998); Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent*: *The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family From Slavery to the Present* (New York: Vintage Books, 1985).

[32] RCCSC, Deed Books 4O 401-02, Caroline Ealy.

[33] Brown's property was "bounded on the west by Chevis Road...and on the south by lot number twenty one, sold to Robin Davis and Prince Wright, trustees for Sarah Davis." RCCSC, Deed Book 4Z 454-55, Hannah Green; 5M 104-05, Sarah Davis; Farris W. Cadle, *Georgia Land Surveying History and Law* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991), 356; RCCSC, Deed Book 5M 68-89, Kate Brown and Children.

Illustrative of this is Nancy Singleton who on behalf of her children paid $100 for five acres of land in the Burroughs community.[34]

An important factor in examining property ownership among rural African Americans is their "level of living."[35] The first generation of freed men and women in rural districts lived for the most part as did other groups in agricultural areas during the late nineteenth century. In Low- country Georgia, they raised their own poultry and vegetables, fished, hunted, produced a cash crop of rice or cotton and engaged in some form of commerce. However, they still faced obstacles to economic advancement. Their small holdings precluded expanding their level of output. They were also vulnerable to fluctuations in national and international markets and faced natural disasters such as floods and hurricanes. Like their poor white counterparts, they were economically marginalized.[36]

Although rural African Americans were economically marginalized, they continued to profit from a community network that provided social and religious reinforcement. In Burroughs the "church became the center for everything" and played a major role in holding the community together.[37] Three churches provided spiritual and social uplift: Mount Olive Baptist, New Ogeechee Baptist, and St. Bartholomew's Episcopal churches. At these institutions parishioners learned the price of rice and heard about upcoming elections. Moreover, weddings, funerals, summer revivals, church suppers, and bazaars provided much of the community social life and youth groups, women's missionary societies, and meetings of deacons and elders gave African Americans the opportunity of self-government denied them in the larger society. Residences and farmlands were clustered around these institutions

[34] RCCSC, Deed Book 6U 329, Nancy Singleton 's Children. See Ira Berlin and Leslie Rowland, eds., *Families and Freedom: A Documentary History of African American Kinship in the Civil War Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[35] Schuler distinguishes between level of living and standard of living. Level of living refers to the "the content of goods and services utilized by a particular population...with regard to space, time, and income." Edgar A. Schuler, "Some Regional Variations in Levels and Standards of Living," *Rural Sociology* 9 (June 1944): 139.

[36] Eric Foner, *Nothing But Freedom: Emancipation and its Legacy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1983), 108-10; Thomas F. Armstrong, "From Task Labor to Free Labor: The Transition Along Georgia's Rice Coast 1820-1880," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 64 (Winter 1980): 443; Sherwin H. Cooper, "The Rural Settlement of the Lower Savannah River Basin," unpub. Ph.D. diss. University of Michigan, 132; Jacqueline Jones, *The Dispossessed: America's Underclass from the Civil War to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 1992).

[37] Interview with Mrs. Gertrude Green, March 17, 1993, Chatham County, GA.

which not only underscored their centrality, but were also an indication of the settlement's growth into a town with nuclear institutions. These institutions were less than one mile apart and were connected by Chevis road, the main artery of the community. Hence, for the Burroughs community, land and religion had complementary roles in that these two elements structured the community.[38]

Churches, moreover, served as institutional linkages between rural and urban African Americans. For instance, Mount Olive Baptist Church at Burroughs included in its membership Brother Richard H. Howard who was also a member of St. James Tabernacle AME church in Savannah. Additionally, the New Ogeechee Baptist church at Burroughs was the site of the Tenth Session of the Zion Baptist Association's teacher's convention which included representatives from Darien (McIntosh County) and Brunswick. Mutual associations also provided support and promoted solidarity. Illustrative of this is the Labor Union Protective Association (LUPA) and the Georgia Benevolent Fisherman's Association (GBFA), which promoted economic independence by directing various business enterprises.

In 1892, the LUPA opened a grocery store on the Ogeechee neck. The LUPA consisted of carpenters and other skilled African American tradesman who united as a result of exclusion from all-White unions. The LUPA also provided burial services to members who invested a percentage of their savings for such purposes. The LUPA was a vital link between rural and urban African Americans. Its board of directors included J. C. Legree, who later became the mayor of Burroughs, and Dr. S. Snelson, an African American surgeon and physician in Savannah. Similarly, the GBFA, chartered in 1894, encouraged business enterprises in the oyster industry by securing a lease of 2,000 acres of oyster ground in the county and at one time reported over $1000 in income.[39] In addition to mutual societies, African Americans in the Burroughs community held membership in secret societies, such as the Masons for men and the Order of the Eastern Star for women. These societies promoted solidarity and reinforced individual self-esteem. The Burroughs Union Club, adjacent to St. Bartholomew's, served as the meeting place for the societies.[40]

[38] Personal Scrapbook of Mrs. Gertrude Green, "Burroughs School"; Sydney Nathans, "Fortress Without Walls: A Black Community After Slavery," in Hall and Stack, *Holding on to the Land and the Lord* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 58-60; John Dittmer, *Black Georgia During the Progressive Era* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977), 51.

[39] Cook Bell, *Claiming Freedom*, 80.

[40] Cook Bell, *Claiming Freedom*, 80.

African Americans managed to accumulate 15 million acres of land by dint of their own initiative during the post-emancipation years.[41] However, the deteriorating status of African Americans caused by a climate of racial terror in Georgia and economic instability, led to their migration to northern cities during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Yet, even when the strains of growing families and a declining land base began to threaten the strategy of land acquisition, families adapted. Selected family members would continue to occupy and use family land, while other family members moved away. Through the device known as heirs' property, they maintained common interest in the land of their forebears. Over time, heirs' property would prove vulnerable to encroachment by outsiders desiring access to land. But in the early twentieth century, it epitomized a strategy for achieving a measure of independence on the land—one of the highest priorities of African American southerners from the dawn of freedom if not before.

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Introduction to Africana Studies: Towards a Freedom Course Design

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"We have been around for hundreds of thousands of years. We have been holding a reasoned conversation with our past and future selves for millennia. We can choose to continue that conversation. We can leave to the short-minded the brief conversation proposed by Europe and its partner in crime, Arabia. Let them try constantly to become whatever those who hate us want us to become. Our conversation will be about ways we've devised of moving into future time and space, knowing our past, planning our future. From the time I moved into that perspective, home began to mean something larger to me. Family began to mean something infinitely greater than it had meant before. Work took on meanings free of anguish, inspired with energy and reasoned hope. Friendship flowed into the center of my life where in the past blood threatened to coagulate, choking my best thoughts to death."

—Ayi Kwei Armah, "The Resolutionaries,[1]"

"Starting with present conditions and using the facts and the knowledge of the present situation of American Negroes, the Negro university expands toward the possession and the conquest of all knowledge. It seeks from a beginning of the history of the Negro in America and in Africa to interpret all history; from a beginning of social development among Negro slaves and freedmen in America and Negro tribes and kingdoms in Africa, to interpret and understand the social development of all mankind in all ages. It seeks to reach modern science of matter and life from the surroundings and habits and aptitudes of American Negroes and thus lead up to understanding of life and matter in the universe."

—W. E. B. Du Bois, "The Field and Function of the Negro College[2]"

[1] Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Resolutionaries*, (Popenguine, Senegal: Per Ankh Press, 2009), 481–82.
[2] W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Education of Black People*, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1973), 125.

Can an Introduction to Africana Studies class succeed in offering an effective survey of African life and experiences across recorded time and space? Can such a course realign with the stated objectives of the academic field and discipline of Black/Africana/Afro American Studies as articulated in the decidedly non-University grounded days of global social evolution that marked its institutional inception? Do accelerating disruptions of long-ensconced American university models of teaching and learning provide an opportunity to "jailbreak" Africana Studies from its increasingly specialized and stratified practice? Must Historically Black Colleges and Universities, having seemingly surrendered any but rhetorical gestures towards forms of Africana Studies envisioned by thinkers such as W. E. B. Du Bois, join their non-HBCU counterparts on the periphery of community-centered intellectual work? This short essay draws upon reflections from thirty-five years of my teaching Introduction to Africana Studies courses in various academic, K-12, and community-based formations, including work as an administrator building an Africana Studies departmental model anchored by scholars trained in the discipline who anchor their research practice in undergraduate teaching, the central focus of HBCUs.

INSTRUCTION IN BOTH PRE-K-12 and higher education continues to be transformed in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. These reflections on the author's experiences developing a virtual global and community-centered Introduction to Africana Studies course during the pandemic serves to suggest possibilities for decentering academia as both source and primary resource for Africana Studies, serving along the way to renew one of the original directives of Africana Studies, namely to force US (and global) society "to be aware that black people were no longer willing to accept their subordinate and subservient positions without challenging the system that continued to oppress them."[3] Accordingly, after offering the broad contours that led to the creation of a community-centered virtual Introduction to Africana Studies course, this essay will outline the course design, followed by a small coda to envision the road ahead. The shaping question informing this essay, and in

[3] Delores P. Aldridge and Carlene Young, "Historical Development and Introduction to the Academy" in Aldridge and Young, eds., *Out of the Revolution: The Development of Africana Studies* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003), 3.

many ways, the full arc of work associated with Africana Studies as intellectual work, can be captured by the question embodied in Sonia Sanchez's 1974 play entitled *Uh, Uh; But How Do It Free Us?*" [4]

WHAT IS AFRICANA STUDIES?

Although the study of African life begins with the first organized human societies on the African continent and the first efforts to recover African memory disrupted by centuries of capture, forced migration, and stolen labor that can be traced to as early as maroon formations of the 16th century, the struggle to define Africana Studies as an academic field of study emerged in the late 1960s as the US counterpart of African-focused academic work in Africa, the Caribbean, and elsewhere. In the six decades since, the field has been increasingly expanded—and confined—by an amorphous indefinability, shaped primarily by its object of study, namely anything even remotely associable with African people and/or "Blackness" as object.[5]

As a result, aspirations of Africana Studies to status as an academic discipline with its own structures, methods, terminology, intellectual thrust, and commitments of training and licensure has been almost completely marginalized in the US academy. The final step to this nigh-complete evasion has included the embrace of the field by the same "elite" institutions that attempted to suppress it, conflating "disciplinary," "interdisciplinary," and "multidisciplinary" formations cobbled from other academic units and disciplines under names ranging from Africana to Black, African Diaspora, and African American Studies, among other names.

Attaching the word "discipline" to any studies of Africana has moved beyond the evasion of Black/Africana Studies' struggle to establish a methods-based academic discipline at the college and university level. The development of an Advanced Placement African American Studies course by The College Board, while providing a well-resourced and wide-ranging course design, lessons, and assessments, follows the inter and multi-disciplinary design now ensconced at the post-secondary level.[6] Furthermore, a number of colleges

[4] Sonia Sanchez, *Uh, Uh; But How Do It Free Us?* (Alexandria, VA: Alexandria Street Press, 2002).
[5] See Greg Carr, 'What Black Studies is Not: Moving from Crisis to Liberation in Africana Intellectual Work," *Socialism and Democracy* 25, no. 1 (March, 2011): 178–91.
[6] See "AP African American Studies: Course and Exam Description," College Board, effective Fall 2024, https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/media/pdf/ap-african-american-studies-course-and-exam-description.pdf

and universities have chosen to accept this course for Advanced Placement credit, obviating the need for entering freshmen to take whatever Introduction to Africana Studies course has been designed by the faculty at each respective institution.

If, disciplinarily speaking, an Introduction to Africana course is not wed to a set of distinct methods, terminologies, or structural processes for undertaking the study of Africana, it is subject to a course design which follows the contours of the training of the person, collective, or department designing it. Since the foundations of the field articulate a commitment to contributing intellectual work supporting the liberation of Black people, the assumption is that any course would center information revealing how African people have practiced freedom across time and space and resisted various forms of unfreedom, including more recent phenomena such as enslavement, colonialism, and neo-colonialism.

As a field grounded in a commitment to developing an academic discipline, then, Africana Studies should be identified as an area of study devoted to African people; the formations they create to govern themselves; the social structures they have become a part of, been affected by, and in turn affected; their ways of knowing; their uses of science and technology; and how they create culture to both mark specific moments in time and space as well as to preserve individual and collective memory as they move through time and space. As has been noted above, the academic field of Africana Studies emerged as a result of Black student movements of the late 1960s. It is not widely acknowledged that these movements spread from HBCU campuses (where courses devoted to Africana subjects had been taught for decades) to Historically White Colleges and University (HWCU) campuses, spawning both the "Black University" (at HBCUs and independent Black institutions) and "Black Studies" movements. The Black University Movement sought to transform HBCUs into institutions grounded in and serving the history, cultures, and collective progress of Black communities. At HWCUs, the Black Studies Movement sought to create departments, programs, cultural centers, and other academic units devoted to the same objectives.

In order to sustain this intellectual thrust, Introduction to Africana Studies courses should be distinguishable methodologically from "Introduction to African American History," "African Studies," or "African Diaspora" courses, although there may periodically be parallel and sometimes similar narrative

progressions to examine Africana experiences over time and space. These distinctions pose a challenge to students and others who frequently find it difficult to conceive that self-sustaining, critical, reflective and, ultimately, disciplinary spaces exist for the examination of African life across long and broad arcs of time and space. Africana experiences in the US are a tiny fraction of that larger time and space, though they are a set of experiences that have nevertheless all too frequently formed central lenses through which Africana has been viewed.[7] Grounding an Introduction to Africana Studies course with a broad concept of Africana requires introducing a great deal of new information, building student knowledge bases incrementally, beginning with learning a method for interpreting evidence through an Africana Studies disciplinary lens. It has been the author's experience that such efforts can frequently be met with suspicion, pushback and even derision by other academic units as well as the general scholarly community. This resistance is not unlike the initial resistance to Black Studies in the academy, including at HBCUs. Ironically, this resistance was/is not unlike more recent attacks on Critical Race Theory, a body of academic concepts and research emerging initially out of Critical Legal Studies and designed to center non-white voices and experiences to deconstruct various forms of group oppression in society.[8]

As a direct academic descendant apprenticed by many of the founders of both the field of Africana Studies and the concept of disciplinary Africana Studies, the author's consistent commitment has been to contribute to the growth and development of methods, concepts, and techniques unique to the discipline. The motto of the National Council for Black Studies, the oldest and official professional academic association representing the field, is "Academic Ex-

[7] A recent mass media reinscription of this truncated approach to the study of African life and experiences emerged, for example, from the *New York Times*' "1619 Project." See, *inter alia*, "The 1619 Project," *The New York Times*, updated September 4, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/1619-america-slavery.html; Nikole Hannah-Jones, Caitlin Roper, Ilena Silverman and Jake Silverstein, eds., *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story*. (New York: One World, 2021); and Nikole Hannah-Jones, Renée Watson, and Nikkolas Smith, *The 1619 Project: Born on the Water* (New York: Kokila, 2021). For critical analyses of the 1619 Project in the context of the US Social Structure, see James Oakes, "What the 1619 Project Got Wrong," *Catalyst* 5, no. 3 (Fall, 2021): 9-47 and Leslie Harris, "I Helped Fact-Check the 1619 Project. The Times Ignored Me," *Politico*, posted March 6, 2020, https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/03/06/1619-project-new-york-times-mistake-122248.

[8] See, *inter alia*, Khiara Bridges, *Critical Race Theory: A Primer* (Eagan, MN: Foundations Press, 2019) and Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*, 4th ed. (New York: New York University Press, 2023).

cellence and Social Responsibility."[9] The founders of Africana Studies were committed to developing an academic discipline grounded in intellectual work that would contribute directly to Black freedom. The development of doctoral programs designed to train students who could take up academic appointments in Black/Afro American/African-American/Africana Studies Departments and carry on this work led to the creation in 1988 of the first PhD program in the discipline, at Temple University.

The author received his PhD in Temple's department in 1998, writing a dissertation on "African Philosophy of History in the Contemporary Era," a study of global Africana intellectual genealogies and their contribution to the emerging discipline of Africana Studies. My dissertation committee reflected a commingling of founding figures in the discipline (Marimba Ani and Jacob Carruthers), a major anthologists and theoretician in the discipline (Nathaniel Norment Jr.), an earlier graduate of Temple's program (Ella Forbes), and the most recognized scholar of classical African language and philosophy in the world (Theophile J. Obenga). John Henrik Clarke, another of my *jegnas* (teacher-mentor), called derisively by Henry Louis Gates Jr. "the great paterfamilias of the Afrocentric movement,"[10] had agreed to serve on the committee before health challenges prevented him from serving. Since that time, my work in the field and discipline has included curriculum framework and course design for K-12, college, university, and community valences. With the exception of the years spent teaching while acquiring my graduate degrees at The Ohio State University and Temple University, I have spent the entirety of my work in Black spaces, all experiences which have fed the Introduction to Africana Studies course design that will be discussed later in this essay.

AFRICANA STUDIES, BLACK SPACES AND COURSE DESIGN: INTRODUCTION TO AFRICANA STUDIES COURSE AS SPACE TO BE FREE

There are relatively few fully distinct Africana Studies departments at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Howard University's Department of Afro-American Studies is among the oldest, having been established in 1969 after the University was successful in separating from Sociology Pro-

[9] See "Dr. William M. King Interviewed: National Council for Black Studies Founding member," *Journal of Pan African Studies* 3, no. 1 (September, 2009), 28.

[10] Henry Louis Gates Jr., "Black Demagogues and Pseudo-Scholars," *The New York Times*, July 20, 1992), A 15.

fessor Nathan Hare, who would subsequently go on to San Francisco State University and become the founding chair of the country's first Black Studies Department.[11] As Hare and many others note, the challenge of Black Studies at HBCUs, then and now, stems from institutional tensions at the core of the latter. W. E. B. Du Bois addressed these tensions in a series of HBCU commencement speeches over the course of fifty years, many of which have been collected in a book published posthumously entitled *The Education of Black People* (1973).

In speech after speech, Du Bois chastened HBCUs to identify a mission specific to grounding education in long views of Africana aimed toward what he would identify as a "Broad Sympathy" for humankind in general. In his 1933 commencement address to his alma mater, Fisk University, Du Bois identified the heart of what he called "The Field and Function of the Negro College" as follows:

> "...a Negro university in the United States of America, begins with Negroes. It uses that variety of the English idiom which they understand; and above all, it is founded, or it should be founded on the knowledge of the history of the people in Africa, and in the United States, and their present condition. Without whitewashing or translating, wish into facts, it begins with that; and then it asks how shall these young men and women be trained to earn a living, and live a life under the circumstances in which they by themselves or with such changing of those circumstances as time and work and determination will permit."[12]

HBCU Boards of Trustees and administrators would undoubtedly lay claim to having met Du Bois's challenge, at least in part. That is generally untrue—notwithstanding numerous pockets of such implemented vision across the institutions by select faculty and units. One such unit, as would be expected, is Africana Studies in its relatively few and varied formations at HBCUs. At any rate, no HBCU Africana Studies unit is considered among the elite units after the embrace and atomization of the original mission of the field and discipline by HWCUs. As Africana Studies was absorbed and embraced by these institutions—ongoing right-wing racial resistance notwithstanding—

[11] See Nathan Hare, "Final Reflections on a 'Negro' College," *Negro Digest* XVII, no. 5 (March, 1968): 40–46 and 70–76.
[12] Du Bois, *The Education of Black People*, 123.

it has become both everything and nothing, a frequently celebrated Black accessory at the neoliberal university, attracting a curation of lauded, feted, and awarded scholars whose work traces Blackness in its varied forms with limited access for and very little material contact with or impact on the daily lives of African people.

JAILBREAKING THE BLACK UNIVERSITY IN A MOMENT OF ACCELERATED CRISIS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: AFRICANA STUDIES DURING THE PANDEMIC AND BEYOND

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated major trends in formal education globally. Suddenly, in the spring of 2020, online education moved from a rapidly developing trend in education to an unavoidable and ubiquitous reality. Those with the material resources to both shelter-in-quarantined-place and to avail and/or distract themselves of nonstop access to online entertainment and information found themselves in temporarily expanded virtual communities, driven by algorithms, desire, boredom, and desperation. On March 13, 2020, as Howard University faculty scrambled to set up some form of online instruction like every other educator in the United States, I stood in the encroaching darkness of the starkly silent campus and posted on Twitter a brief recorded message to my students that likely also captured the sentiments of my faculty colleagues at the country's HBCUs. The message was as follows:

> "It's quiet here at Howard. But never fear: Much of the instruction that we have been doing in-person is going to be moved online. Faculty is getting ready, not only here but all over the country, all over the world. The Black colleges aren't going to let you down. Stay tuned: I think we might be getting ready to jailbreak the Black university. We'll see. Stay tuned."

The tweet was sent out with the following message: "Nothing can replace the power of Black institutions. #Coronavirus is a challenge requiring our entire human family to cooperate. Du Bois always said that Africans had unique truths to share with the world. From sites we have built, #TheBlackUniversity might just emerge to do so."[13] Within the week, I made the decision to pair my now real-time remote instruction on the newly-introduced-to-most

[13] Greg Carr (@AfricanaCarr), "Nothing can replace the power of Black institutions," Twitter (X), March 13, 2020, 7:59 p.m., https://x.com/africanacarr/status/1238615709661437952?s=42&t=_NZfU-nTTXPdG5VaB17vZg.

Zoom platform with pre-recorded video class lectures for one of my three classes—my Introduction to Africana Studies course—for the last month and a half of classes. I posted the pre-recorded lectures on the YouTube channel of Sankofa Video and Books, a Black-owned, African-centered bookstore in Washington, DC, owned by legendary filmmakers Haile and Shirikiana Gerima.[14] While this was done initially to minimize the effect of potential interruptions in or problems with the university's Zoom and Blackboard systems, what emerged quickly was the fact that others beyond the classes and the university began watching and commenting on the videotaped lectures. The idea of "jailbreaking" the Black University, long a subject I had broached with comrades and colleagues outside of academia, had found a watershed moment to crystallize, just as the world turned to DJ D-Nice's Club Quarantine and other forms of virtual convening.

A few days after we began recording the lectures at Sankofa and posting the lectures on the Sankofa website, a casual conversation with another colleague and comrade, Hunter College journalism professor, award-winning and best-selling journalist, author, radio host and media celebrity, Karen Hunter, led her to suggest that we record a conversation we were having about the legendary ancestor, journalist Ida Bell Wells-Barnett. The previous November, just before COVID-19 shut down the world, I had accompanied my colleague and comrade Adjoa Botwe-Asamoah to Prof. Hunter's daily *Karen Hunter Show* New York studios at SiriusXM to discuss the curriculum framework I had developed with the assistance of a team of teacher-scholars for the School District of Philadelphia's mandatory African American History course.[15] The curriculum framework was published by the district in 2007 as "Lessons in Africana Studies."[16] Hunter posted this recorded Zoom session on May 4, 2020, attracting thousands of views.[17] We decided to continue these

[14] A sample of one of the recorded lectures can be found here: Greg Carr, "Dr. Carr – Intro to Afro American Studies FQ4-3," Sankofa Video and Books, posted March 25, 2020, 2:37:30 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KU6ZM7LzJp8.

[15] Karen Hunter, "Dr. Greg Carr Discusses His Curriculum," Karen Hunter Show, posted November 18, 2019, YouTube video, 17:54, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vIjpZao8RUs.

[16] A sample lesson can be found here: Greg Carr, "Intellectuals of the African Diaspora: Carter G. Woodson and the Origins of African-American History Month," part of African-American History Course: Lessons in Africana Studies, School District of Philadelphia Office of Curriculum and Instruction," https://static1.squarespace.com/static/51e1f764e4b0180cf3bcdc25/t/52e6f92de4b0abf2d1ba617f/1390868781275/Greg+Carr+Lesson+on+Carter+Woodson.pdf.

[17] A clip from that first recording can be found here: Karen Hunter and Greg Carr, "In Case You Missed It: Why Ida B. Wells Was a G! Ep. 1 (Clip)," Knarrative, posted August 16, 2021, YouTube video, 7:04, https://youtu.be/9P7H08mOoTs?si=Tqd9hvPEi9U1plTu.

regular recorded conversations, and Hunter continued to post them on her YouTube channel, naming them "In Class With Carr." The recorded Zoom sessions were released regularly each Saturday, quickly becoming a viewing staple for thousands in a quarantined virtual global audience during the height of a pandemic. Each weekly session drew a virtual audience of tens of thousands, with several sessions exceeding hundreds of thousands of views. The concept of "jailbreaking the Black University" had found its necessary element for success: partnership with a savvy, well-resourced, and committed expert in both terrestrial and digital media, someone well-experienced in business and scholarship, whose sense of communicating across wide valences of experience was perfect for the moment.

At the height of the pandemic, it seemed that the entire world was able to be online. Those driven by profit were committed to finding ways to make money from the unfolding disaster. Among entertainment offerings such as the "Versus" music battles, in the wake of the Reckoning Summer of 2020, MasterClass trotted out a predictably structured "African American History" course. This model, and the many others that bloomed, have largely receded from consistent public attention. "In Class," however, now in its well over two hundredth consecutive Saturday session, continues. The weekly Saturday sessions, now streamed live on both the Knarrative subscription learning platform and free on YouTube, provide the opportunity to communicate, dialogue, and exchange information and experiences with people beyond the academy, thereby recentering community and put academia on the periphery, in the best traditional arc of Black/Africana Studies.

Hunter launched the subscription learning platform, Knarrative (with the author as "Lead Seba,"Ancient Egyptian for "teacher") in April 2021, one year after the start of "In Class." This platform allowed for a leveraging of material resources to support the cultivation of a global discourse audience to take the concept of "jailbreaking the Black University" even closer to the stated commitment of the pioneers of Black Studies two generations before. Within a few months, a wide range of courses were being offered in Knarrative and its social media component, Knubia, by experts such as homeopathic physician and herbalist Sunyatta Amen (Maroons' Medicine Chest) and Africana Studies and Ancient Egyptian Language scholar Mario Beatty (Medu Netcher - Egyptian Hieroglyphs), among others.[18]

[18] Knarrative: https://www.knarrative.com/

The development of "In Class" and the Knarrative/Knubia learning platform allowed me to pour into the jailbroken global formations as much as I had learned over the decades from all of the other spaces I had been apprenticing and working in for years, including the Association for the Study of Classical African Civilizations (ASCAC), which had given us the model for the community-centered study group work which now attracted a growing global audience. In many ways, "In Class" was/is an extension of that work, the ASCAC Study Group model. Additionally, "In Class" has incorporated real-time on-site visits to the National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center in Wilberforce, Ohio, HBCUs such as Morehouse College, and Black museums such as Chicago's Du Sable Museumth, and the New York African American Burial Ground, among other sites. Two weekly "In Class" broadcasts have been made from Egypt, site of the resumed Kemet Study Abroad tours we have led in some form since 2008.

Shortly after the launch of Knarrative and Knubia, I began offering a weekly two-hour discussion session entitled "Office Hours." The first hour of the session is devoted to a topic, ranging from a common text the community will read and discuss to what emerged as the first iteration of Introduction to Africana Studies, offered now in the digital world, with a regular weekly real-time attendance and dialogue between "Knubians." As of this writing, the weekly "In Class" sessions, now taking place in a re-opened world, average just above 20,000 weekly views. The Monday night "Office Hours" convenings and conversations in Knubia average over 2,000 real-time viewings per week. Each "In Class" session has been archived and annotated in Knarrative, resulting when combined with "Office Hours" in close to a thousand hours of dialogue and thinking work, a wide-ranging archive unparalleled to my knowledge in the history of the field and discipline of Africana Studies. The weekly sessions are called "The Largest Africana Studies Class in the World."

Over the first year of Knubia, common texts read included Du Bois's *Souls of Black Folk* (1903) and *The Education of Black People* (1973), Martin Luther King Jr.'s *Where Do We Go From Here?* (1967), *The Parable* series (1993 and 1998) by Octavia Butler, and Martin Delany's *Blake, Or The Huts of America* (1859), among others. The idea of reading and discussing a common text came from my time as co-founder of Philadelphia Freedom Schools, where we first read Randall Robinson's *The Debt* in 2000 with over 150 high school students. Taking this common text idea to Howard when then College of Arts and Sciences Dean James Donaldson asked me to take responsibility for redesigning the

course, I selected texts such as Armah's *The Eloquence of the Scribes* (2006), Wole Soyinka's *Of Africa* (2012), Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Something Torn and New* (2009), Ta Nehisi Coates's *Between the World and Me* (2015), Claudia Rankine's *Citizen: An American Lyric* (2014), Daniel Black's,*The Coming* (2017) and Zora Neale Hurston's *Barracoon* (2018), among others, for over 1,000 Howard freshmen to read. Soyinka, Ngugi, Coates, Black, and Rankine visited campus for discussions. The Freshman Seminar course design, a window in which the Black University concept found its greatest to-scale attempt to convene, was unceremoniously terminated by a new dean and administration in 2021, a casualty of the same type of short-sightedness that Du Bois had noted and excoriated over half a century before.

But by then, the Black University concept had been jailbroken, its objectives and potential for global convening now re-attached to a large and growing community center that placed academia on the periphery, where it had always belonged for such work. Scholars such as Fred Moten and Stafano Harney have theorized about a type of work that anchors what they call "the undercommons"[19] and consigns academia and other similar institutional formations to the periphery, to be raided for resources. The work, however, that "In Class," Knarrative, Knubia, and other formations born out of dialogue begun there—like the Emma Johnson Dirigo-wari Library in Opobo, Rivers State, Nigeria is doing—is in the arc of Africana Studies as originally conceived.[20]

INTRODUCTION TO AFRICANA STUDIES: KEY QUESTIONS FOR THE KNUBIA COURSE 2.0 DESIGN

After engaging in a series of close readings of key texts with the Knubia formation, the author decided to finally attempt to offered a global Introduction to Afro American Studies course, looking to test the theory in a liberated global Black space free from the constraints and politics of the academy that Africana Studies can be grounded in long-view genealogies, translated, and reconnected in order to gain the momentum of memory. In discussing the work of building a global Introduction to Africana Studies course with

[19] See Fred Moten and Stefano Harney, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study* (New York: Autonomedia, 2013).

[20] ConnectOpobo, "Welcome to the Launching of Emma Johnson Dirigo-wari Library, OPOBO Kingdom," Facebook, August 6, 2022, https://www.facebook.com/connectopobo/videos/welcome-to-the-launching-of-emma-johnson-dirigo-wari-library-opobo-kingdom-conne/1218081068750672/.

the Knubia collective, three challenges were identified. They are listed and described below.

1) The challenge of developing the capacity to study Africana experiences with comparative specificity

At the heart of any overarching course of study in Africana lies two problematics: the problem of narrative and the problem of borders. How do we undertake the study of groups of people who have never lived together over long and unbroken arcs of time and space? And what might it mean to re-center African memories in what Jacob Carruthers might call an "unbroken genealogy of African deep thought," one created as a collectively cultivated and curated assembly of memory, texts and practices that transcend the imposed disruptions, amputations and/or erasures of African memory that attended the emergence of the modern world system?[21]

In his watershed text, *The Mask of Art*, Clyde R. Taylor identifies the violent power of Western "master narratives" to create and disguise the ideological presence of "whiteness" as a set of cultural commitments that order how societies view both themselves and an imagined European continuity and essence.[22] The goal of Africana Studies is not to create an African doppelgänger to substitute for a European master narrative; instead, a course design must include key moments in experiences of African people from the origin of the species to the present that offer as wide a range of these different experiences as is practicable in a survey course, considered in a conceptual framework that allows for comparing these experiences with the underlying goal of finding similarities and commonalities for the purpose of improving current African and human conditions.

All humans have our individual life experiences, as do the lives of societies. Which curated examples best allow us to develop our capacity to engage in individual and collective/communal self-reflection in order to inform individual behavior and collective action? In many ways, a syllabus (and the itinerary of curriculum into which individual classes fit) is a porous sequence, a compendium of examples, designed to give informational contour and also elicit contributive responses from all contributors to the co-learning experi-

[21] Greg Carr, "What Black Studies is Not: Moving from Crisis to Liberation in Africana Intellectual Work," *Socialism and Democracy* 25, no. 1 (March, 2011), 181.

[22] Clyde R. Taylor, *The Mask of Art: Breaking the Aesthetic Contract, Film and Literature* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998).

ence. Through this collective work, community is formed and, in the time and space of the course, a form of freedom is achieved. This shared convened experience in thinking, planning, and experiencing is what Ayi Kwei Armah might call "the way of companions [*shemsw*]."[23] The process for doing this type of discovery/recovery work in curriculum and instruction is something Armah has examined and outlined in fictional texts such as *Osiris Rising*, *KMT: The House of Life*, and *The Resolutionaries,* and in non-fiction texts such as *The Eloquence of the Scribes* and *Wat Nt Shemsw*.

In addressing the challenge of building capacity to study Africana with comparative specificity, questions of externally imposed borders return, time and again. National borders, state borders, borders of dates and times, stitched together to create narratives that reinforce external structural, political commitments against internal ones, ones whose recognition and full maturity spell more effective resistance to oppressive networks built on asymmetrically imposed de-being, de-humanizing formations and structures. Human-made borders that use distinctions to oppress must be dissolved and renegotiated at the expense of continued exploitation.

2) The challenge of developing the capacity to identify archetypes emerging from comparative specificity

An Africana Studies introductory course, like any other introductory course of study, will anchor in overarching themes. These are the narratives, the stories a subject matter grounds itself in to explain how it came to require a course and method of study and what its debts and obligations are to its intellectual genealogy, to those undertaking study in its area and to the future they seek to contribute to. In the case of Africana Studies, that contribution to the future, by way of mediated consideration of lessons learned over the full arc of African human experiences, must be as full as in ancient and medieval times. This is the central lesson of W.E.B. Du Bois's April 1960 speech before the Social Sciences Association, "Whither Now and Why." Du Bois notes that the utter elimination of color discrimination in the United States is a means to an end, namely removing barriers to the contribution of Africans in the US and beyond to contemporary society in as full a measure as in previous eras of human history.

[23] *wat nt shemsw (The Way of the Companions): Myth, History, Philosophy, and Literature,* (Popenguine, Senegal: Per Ankh Press, 2018.

Africana Studies rests on the ever-rebuttable presumption that there are archetypes in human behavior and approaches to living and problem solving that emerge from the careful study of African people in various specific formations across time and space. The absence of uniformity among African people is not an impediment to this search, any more than the diversity of other clusters of human community have impeded the emergence of "European/Western," "Asian," or "Indigenous" cultural archetypes or world-senses. The Kenyan writer Ngugi wa Thiongo refers to this search for archetypes as engaging in the process of "re-membering"; Armah would characterize recovered clustered experiences as the search for both an "identity of themes" and "themes of identity."[24]

A natural locus for searching for archetypes in African human experiences is language. An Africana Studies introductory course anchored by a disciplinary framework requires grounding co-learners in terms derived from African languages. The assumption that African languages provide clues to what Obenga and his elder protégée, Senegalese scholar Cheikh Anta Diop, would call underlying "cultural unities" among African populations should be tested by substituting curated concepts from ancient and contemporary Africana language formations for familiar methodological terms. Instead of "study," for example, concepts such as *sedjem* (listen) and *mdw:* (speech) from Ancient Egyptian can be introduced, affording consideration of the archetypical place of apprenticeship and total community involvement in education among African people.

3) The challenge of balancing individual and small-group expression, contribution, and being with collective insight, revelation, and "better ways of being"

In an attempt to honor and respect all ways of being-in-the-world, much contemporary scholarship adhering to the afore-discussed amorphous uses of the label "Black Studies/Study" does not seek archetypical formations and cultural continuity or commonality as a grounding element of the subject. Respecting "my blackness and yours" as a stand-in for the difficult work of connecting genealogies of Africana ways of knowing and being over long

[24] See Ngugi wa Thiongo, *Something Torn and New: An African Renaissance* (New York: Civitas Books), 2009. See also, Ayi Kwei Armah, *The Eloquence of the Scribes: A Memoir on the Sources and Resources of African Literature,* (Popenguine, Senegal: Per Ankh), 2006.

arcs of time and space is lazy and irresponsible and not consistent with the grounding mission of Africana Studies.

Accordingly, an introductory course in Africana Studies seeks to balance individuality and small-group expression among African people and populations with a determination to identify, dialogue with, and elevate "best practices" of being-in-the-world as practiced and chronicled by African people across time and space. This work rejects "the archive" as the primary source for listening to the past; it seeks, instead, to (re)interpret traces of Africana texts and practices in the context of the aforementioned archetypes emerging from listening for comparative specificity as co-learners engage the full arc of Africana memory. The ongoing objective—to challenge, interrupt, and reshape harmful human behavior and to overturn and de-center the corrosive effects of contemporary African subjection to the modern world system—informs this ongoing search for better ways of being in the world.

ON THE SPINE OF THE INTRODUCTION TO AFRICANA STUDIES COURSE: FRAMING QUESTIONS AND CONCEPTUAL CATEGORIES

As has been mentioned above, the initial iteration of the Knubia Introduction to Africana Studies course followed the disciplinary framework of the course offered at Howard for the last quarter-century that has been informed by the author's ongoing dialogue with Black K-12, university, and community formations. For the 2.0 iteration of the Knubia course, the conceptual categories that order a disciplinary lens for Africana Studies were retained, but the six framing questions that provide a pathway for collective consideration of specific moments of African experiences in and across time and space have been re-written in order to better distribute time/space coordinates.

The six conceptual categories, which provide questions that order inquiry for each of the framing questions (save Framing Question One, which sets the methodology for the course), remain as follow:

Social Structure
Governance
Ways of Knowing
Science and Technology
Cultural Meaning-Making
Movement and Memory

The six framing questions have been realigned to better distribute collective study time across time and space. They are listed below:

1. How do we engage in Africana Study/ies?
2. What are key elements of African social structures and governance formations from earliest humanity to the emergence of widespread intercontinental human contact?
3. How did Africans develop and contribute to the emergence and development of contemporary regional and global extractive systems?
4. How did Africans preserve, adapt, and/or affirm their various governance formations and use their ways of knowing and cultural meaning-making to resist serial and overlapping forms of subjugation?
5. What are key similarities and differences in practices of resistance and self-determination among global Africans facing contemporary social structures of settler colonialism and empire?
6. What pivotal formations, ideologies and leaders did Africans create, engender, or connect with in efforts to repair themselves and reshape social structures in the contemporary era?

As of this writing, the Knubia Introduction to Africana Studies 2.0 course is just underway. Future articles will compare iterations of the course for insight as to effectiveness in achieving the objectives and goals outlined above.

CODA: A FREEDOM COURSE DESIGN: A TRUE INTRODUCTION TO AFRICANA STUDIES

From my onset at Howard, the goal was to do disciplinary Africana Studies. There we have assembled over the last fifteen years a core faculty trained in the field and the nascent discipline. Scholars in our department have published in and on the field. But the grounding community element, the center to the academy's periphery, has remained unrealized, until now. The Introduction to Afro American Studies I course I teach at Howard has been anchored by a disciplinary framework derived from three separate but related teaching and learning experiences: the work with Philadelphia Freedom Schools and the larger Freedom Schools Movement; the work leading the team that designed the curriculum framework for Philadelphia's mandatory

African American History course, resulting in the publication "Lessons in Africana Studies"; and now the truly jailbroken "In Class," Knarrative, and Knubia work.[25]

From the center in Knarrative and Knubia, however, I have offered one full iteration of Introduction to Africana Studies. That course, with input from and dialogue with thousands of Knubians over the span of half a year, has resulted in a second iteration launched in the Summer of 2024. While it resembles the Howard course in that it is anchored by a disciplinary framework consisting of six conceptual categories and six guiding framing questions, the Knarrative/Knubia course has been developed in truly global, Pan-African virtual dialogue and reflects lessons learned with community at the center and freedom and liberation work as the objective.

The Knubia course, freed from conceptual and administrative constraints of the university, including licensure, intellectual property, promotion and tenure, etc., centers the collective knowledge and expertise of the community. It is partially the latest iteration of community learning, inspired by Alain Locke, Anna Julia Cooper, and Doxey Wilkerson's adult education movements, the ASCAC study group model, the African-Centered education movement and many other moments. Committed to using an Africana Studies lens to provide information about key African experiences, it allows communities of *shmsw* (companions) to create common frames of reference. Such work allows students to build a sense of collective understanding along a common set of coordinates and knowledges to draw from. Beyond this, the overarching consideration aligns with the original goal of what was called in the 1960s "Black Studies": to use knowledge to build community and connectedness and a sense of obligation to improve the lives of African people and humanity in general.

[25] School District of Philadelphia, PA Office of Curriculum, *Lessons in Africana Studies* (Philadelphia: Songhai Press), 2006.

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Washing Away Brokenness: A Narrative Reflection on Emblems of Black Education

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Objects serve as symbols and emblems that hold stories of family history. This paper uses narrative to investigate the idea and power of emblems and symbols. It is a socio-historical exploration of a mid-twentieth-century washboard owned by the grandmother of a now 73-year-old Black male. Findings in this study unpack socialization stories and reimagine educational practices of a Black, multi-generational family in the rural American South in the 1950s–1960s by taking a socio-historical approach to understanding family structure, education, and labor. In this paper, the author argues how Black women, especially Black Grandmothers in the mid-twentieth century, challenged the understanding of labor and child-rearing and the impact on Black children's socialization and education.

> The classroom, with all its limitations, remains a location of possibility. In that field of possibility, we have the opportunity to labor for freedom, to demand of ourselves and our comrades, an openness of mind and heart that allows us to face reality even as we collectively imagine ways to move beyond boundaries, to transgress. This is education as the practice of freedom.
>
> —bell hooks[1]

I HAVE ALWAYS HAD A complicated relationship with education and the societal idea that education is only a transactional learning experience. Black feminist scholar bell hooks challenges that transactional notion in the conclusion of her text Teaching to Transgress when she points to the classroom as a space that has the potential to provide the opportunity to work towards

[1] bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 207.

freedom, but which thrives on the collective ways of envisioning and transgressing boundaries. For hooks, the essence of education is the practice of freedom, and my journey to understanding my father's practice of educational freedom started with what I perceived as a mundane, ordinary symbol that became more significant: a washboard—a rectangular wooden washboard with metal scrubbing rods, also known as a rubboard.

The central panel of the washboard has two thin side-frames of wood nailed to it and a wider piece of wood nailed to the top side that serves as a handle. The top left of the washboard is intact except for a small triangle-shaped piece of wood missing. Seven metal scrubbing rods are attached to the washboard by u-nails, and five metal rods are missing; a broken right leg is at the base of the board. A broken washboard. To the common eye, this washboard speaks to the narrative of cleaning in the early to mid-twentieth century, but it became the story of caring, a story of a Black grandmother and her Black grandson, a story of the perceived purpose and value of a Black boy in the American South and understanding community and value amidst a world of interlocking oppressions.[2] The broken washboard became my emblem of family, community, and education. Through the washboard, I explore how stories could bring various discourse practices together. This washboard guides my learning and meaning making[3] and aids in uncovering and understanding socialization and education as a practice of freedom for a Black male child living in a rural multi-generational family of the American South.

RECOVERING THE STORY

I have consistently sought to comprehend the intricacies of my family heritage, especially my father's upbringing. As the eldest of four boys, he was raised in the racially segregated Jim Crow American South of the 1950s and '60s, a context that intricately shapes his narratives and his sense of identity. Knowing my father grew up on a farm, I was interested in the labor aspect and his socialization as the oldest child raised with all boys. I was particularly curious about his family's role as a social institution that constructed

[2] Patricia Hill Collins, "Learning from the Outsider Within: The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought," *Social Problems* 33, no. 6 (1986): 14–32.

[3] Sergio Figueiredo, "From Orality to Electracy: Mystory," in *Immigrant Scholars in Rhetoric, Composition, and Communication: Memoirs of a First Generation*, ed. Letizia Guglielmo and Sergio C. Figueiredo (Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 2019), 159-185.

his understanding of race and family. While listening to his stories, I wrestle with the reality that my father's narratives of being raised by his grandparents in a multigenerational community are impacted by a time and place where the law upheld racial discrimination and segregation. When engaging my father about his childhood, he recalls various stories of his grandparents: his grandfather, James Columbus Kelly, a much older man of intellect who loved to read and tended to his fields, and his hard-working grandmother, Mary Kelly, whom he affectionately called "Ma Dea'."

My quest for the stories of my great-grandmother's relationship to labor and work emerged from learning more about the Keithville, Louisiana, "truck farm" where she raised my father. They grew vegetables and crops to barter and sell in the city market.[4] Knowing my great-grandmother owned a farm and raised four Black boys in the rural south in the 1950s drew me to the idea of Black woman labor, physical labor for monetary exchange outside the home, and emotional and physical labor that happened in the domestic interpersonal space.[5] My focus on her labor in domestic interpersonal spaces that serviced white people quickly shifted as I was uncovering the stories of interlocking systems of race, class, and gender. I wanted to reconceptualize my area of focus and uncover the results of what would become the everydayness for my father and his brothers as a response to systems of race, class, and gender and the impact these intersections would have on their education.[6]

The everydayness of my father's childhood is stored in my parents' garage, tucked away in a safe space. It is wooden with no descriptor of its maker, just sturdy wood that stood the test of time. This everyday item helped me understand my father's familial history outside the coloring lines of whiteness and white Eurocentric family structures. This washboard placed him in his Ma Dea's home—on a farm in the depths of Keithville, Louisiana. As the oldest of six grandchildren whom his grandparents raised, he took on the tasks needed to sustain the first social institution he knew: family. Family scholars have challenged the negative perception of Black child-rearing and family structures. Shirley Hill argues, "Black children are also taught responsibility

[4] "Truck farming," *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 6th ed., Encyclopedia.com, last modified January 8, 2024, https://www.encyclopedia.com/reference/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/truck-farming (accessed January 12, 2024).
[5] Hill Collins, "Learning from the Outsider Within," 20–21.
[6] Hill Collins, "Learning from the Outsider Within," 16.

in the home and are more integrated into household activities than are white children because they perform more domestic and childcare work."[7]

When I found the washboard, I was ready to hear the stories of my great-grandmother using that washboard to wash clothes for white people in the homes where she worked. I prepared myself to learn how she brought home other people's clothes as my father and his siblings tended to the fields and the farm and did outdoor activities; I created a narrative based on my perceived understanding of family structure and the traditional benchmark of Black women labor and Black boys' socialization. By creating these narratives, I subconsciously did two things: first, I created a gendered norm of the washboard and laundry experience based on Eurocentric notions and racialized labor movements, and second, I fed into the adultification of Black children, and I failed to see that my father had to learn domestic duties because of the lack of opportunities offered to poor Black families in the rural American South in the mid-twentieth century. My father's family lived a life of doing work for daily living. His family did not live the life of strict domestic patterns recorded by white families in the late nineteenth century; Monday was not the day the women and girls of the house did the washing.[8] There was no "washday" for my father, and Ma Dea' was not the only person washing.

THE STORY

My 73-year-old father closed his eyes as if being transported back to a childhood annoyance, but with a secret sense of joy, he explained each step of how to use the washboard. [9]

"We had to go to the store and get the lye soap, but it wasn't too harsh because we had to wash the diapers, and I knew the right amount to put in [the bucket] not to cause a diaper rash." I stopped him mid-sentence. "Wait... you washed the diapers? How old were you?"

[7] Shirley Hill, "Class, Race, and Gender Dimensions of Child Rearing in African American Families," *Journal of Black Studies* 31, no. 4 (2001): 494–508, https://doi.org/10.1177/002193470103100407.

[8] "Washday Monday: Domestic Life in a 19th Century Weaver's Cottage." *MyLearning*. https://www.mylearning.org/stories/domestic-life-in-a-19th-century-weavers-cottage/1117.

[9] This is a start of a series of conversation I had with my father over about a one-week period. We talk about his childhood often, but this conversation was recorded because we usually do not have a symbol or an item that guides our conversations.

"Four or five. Yeah, if I did not wash them, the baby would not have a clean diaper, and we didn't want that."

My father continued to recall his experience and the process of washing diapers using the washboard that he had stowed away for many years in his garage. As I listened, there was a clear dissonance between my experience as a pre-kindergarten four-year-old and my father's experience of upholding responsibility for the *everydayness* of life and domestic work to ensure the structure of family and life ran smoothly. I held on to a false notion; I thought my great-grandmother did all the domestic labor in the home. As I sat with this narrow thinking, I realized the impossibility of that, considering she had a farm to tend to, was a Black woman in the rural American South, and was raising four Black boys during segregation and Jim Crow. My great-grandmother worked outside of the home as a domestic worker. However, she had children at home, and being the oldest, my father became a babysitter and caregiver for his brothers when his grandmother was not present. Ma Dea's working outside the home was not a notion of inadequacy or negligence; she taught my father the norms and values of a dominant culture. His stepping in as a babysitter and caregiver allowed her to save the money needed for them not only to survive but later to relocate for his education.[10]

THE SACRIFICE

My father was raised in a time and place stained by the legacy of enslavement, racism, and classism. However, he was cared for by "an extended kin unit and taught values including strong families, cooperation, respect for the elderly, shared household work, practical skills, racial pride, and flexible role relations."[11] Andrea Hunter speaks to the environment and family structure my father belonged to; she examines Black kinship and the role of grandmothers in multigenerational familial structures. My father was raised in an environment grounded in intergenerational family connections and responsibilities based on the rural American Southern tradition of extended kinship, where community and family did not depend on the nuclear family identity but on a shared responsibility of need and community.[12] I learned my great-grandmother did not use the washboard for domestic labor in service to the white middle or

[10] Hill Collins, "Learning from the Outsider Within," 18.
[11] Hill, "Class, Race, and Gender," 497.
[12] Andrea G. Hunter, "Counting on Grandmothers: Black Mothers' and Fathers' Reliance on Grandmothers for Parenting Support," *Journal of Family Issues* 18, no. 3 (1997): 251–269.

upper-class families. However, her washboard was a tool that represented the emotional and social labor of Black women, the labor of upholding communities and raising children. The washboard symbolized kin availability and proximity.[13] The memory from the washboard created a clear understanding of the fluidity and flexibility of the roles and responsibilities of Black families. The broken washboard served as an "aha moment," or it functioned as *mystory*.[14] It created a moment not of "pedagogical mastery but of pedagogical serendipity"[15] where the discovery of the washboard connected my great-grandmother's labor to her transgression of gender, race, and class boundaries and made my father the bridge between a generation who was denied traditional education and a generation who never questioned their access to traditional education.

To understand the complexities of race, class, gender, and education, I had to understand my father's experiences. While sitting with him, he let me record his words; simultaneously, I could record his tone. I wanted to hear not only what his heart was saying but also the intentionality of the phrases he formed. The stories became more profound and complex.

My father was five-and-a-half when he left the farm in the "backwoods." He moved to the other side of the creek, the source of his "washboard" water. His grandmother, understanding the importance of education for her Black grandson, did not want him to endure the same obstacles his mother had had to endure to travel to school each day and to travel home each evening. Yes, it was just a creek, but the water in the small, unassuming creek between the farm and my father's school would sometimes rise too high at unforeseeable times for him to cross back home. What dangers would await a young Black boy in 1955 if he could not return home at night? Was it the water? Was it the foreshadowing of the looming fear of an arrest that almost happened because he tossed a bottle across the street at thirteen? Ma Dea' would rather not find out. She bought land from the church because her grandson was about to start kindergarten; she and her husband built the house. They repurposed supplies—nails and wood to build a house on Johns Gin Rd, the house where my father and his siblings could leave the front door to catch the bus to go to the non-integrated K-12 school. My father was six.

[13] Hunter, "Counting on Grandmothers," 251–269.
[14] Sergio Figueiredo, "From Orality to Electracy: Mystory," in *Immigrant Scholars in Rhetoric, Composition, and Communication: Memoirs of a First Generation*, ed. Letizia Guglielmo and Sergio C. Figueiredo, 159–185. (Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 2019), 163.
[15] Figueiredo, "From Orality to Electracy," 163.

Education for Black children in the South was severely impacted by decades of systemic neglect and racial segregation, resulting in significantly lower funding and resources compared to white schools. Despite some efforts to equalize spending in the 1940s and 1950s, Black children were often funneled into programs that prepared them for limited job opportunities rather than social advancement.[16] Ma Dea' was born less than a half-century removed from slavery and lived in the South, where 90 percent of the Black population lived. Racism left southern Black people disenfranchised; half the Black children left school before fifth grade, and the others that remained had poor public education, and the only education was in training for preordained roles such as domestic labor, farmhands, and blacksmiths[17].

As my father grew, the sacrifices his grandmother made for education became layered, and the importance of education for poor Black children had to turn from personal to public. The sacrifice became money, wages, and the public "No" to those who did not see the value in a poor Black boy completing his education. The emblem of the washboard remained central, but the idea of work and labor would change when his labor could benefit people outside of his home.

Mr. R.O. Bennet, a prominent Black man in the community, had land that produced cotton for crops. Mr. R.O. knew Mary Kelly and Columbus Kelly were poor and raising their grandsons. Mr. R.O. offered the Kellys to have their grandson to take a month off school to pick cotton; because he knew Ma Dea' (Mary Kelly) was monetarily poor, he was hoping for a "Yes." However, Ma Dea' understood that there needed to be a shift in how a grandmother and grandfather raising their Black male grandchildren needed to be perceived and defined; she asked R.O., "Didn't all of your children go to high school? Didn't they go to college? What makes you think I'm letting my children miss a month of school to work your fields, to pick your cotton? We don't need the money."

Some did not see value in Black boys without a father. Some thought that wreckage was their future and saw that not being in school did not seem like a loss for them. Some also did not value the Black woman raising these boys.

[16] Diane Ravitch, "A Different Kind of Education for Black Children," *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, no. 30 (2000): 98–106. https://doi.org/10.2307/2679111.
[17] Ravitch, "A Different Kind of Education," 98.

According to Patricia Hill Collins, Black women's self-valuation[18] stresses replacing externally derived images with authentic images of Black women. Ma Dea' had to dismember herself from the community narrative and the narrative of pursuing economic capital over her children's education. Ma Dea's work was spiritual labor; it was a labor that stretched deep. It was a labor of possibilities and potential outcomes.

I discovered the washboard as an emblem through memory work by tracing or mapping out the influence of my father's family. I wanted to expose a perceived or uncovered identity in this wooden material.[19] Through telling his stories, I stayed open to see what and whom I could uncover: there was pain and sadness, but never any defeat; there was mostly joy, peace, and triumph. I needed clarification on the attachment to the physical washboard. Yes, it had my father's memories as a four-year-old, but I was curious about its use after the relocation and upgrading to a washer and a "wringer."

"Yes." My father leaned back, "If we only had a few clothes to wash, we all still used the washboard. We could not use the electricity for that, and I still had to sanitize and wash Kay's diapers. She was with us for a while when she was not in the city with our mother." Kay is my father's first sister, the oldest girl, but the fifth child. "Yeah, I was about eight then."

THE RECOVERY

When my mother brought the washboard from its safe space in the garage, my father realized one of the legs had broken in transit from his sister-in-law's house to his. He stressed fixing the broken wooden leg. I was perplexed because I thought the washboard was no longer useful and metal rods were missing. After sitting and listening to his stories, I understood the desire to mend the broken piece. My father wanted to mend the idea that his family duties and the intentionality of his grandmother provided him with a place to be and belong. From the ages of four to eight, my father understood what it meant to help care for the children his grandmother saw as worthy enough and precious enough to not only take in but nurture, providing him with an early sense of purpose. My father helped me realize the necessity of restoring broken pieces. The washboard represented that he was not just Black, not just a boy; he was loved and could love, and the story was ever-evolving. I

[18] Hill Collins, "Learning from the Outsider Within," 19.
[19] Figueiredo, "From Orality to Electracy," 165.

listened to these stories and asked my father, "When you hear purpose, what comes to mind?"

He folded his arms, leaned back, and emphatically said, "Education."

What? Shouldn't the washboard represent purpose, sacrifice, labor, family, and economics? For my father, the washboard was a piece of his grandmother's legacy and the memory of sacrificing for the opportunity to learn.

EMBLEM

"What is your *emblem*? What is the thing that represents who you are or who you hope to become?" As an educator, I ask these questions to groups of students I mentor or teach. I have them take their phones and travel around their location to find emblems representing them. They take pictures and post them on the screen for the rest of the group to see, and we discuss. Like my students, I always have an emblem. My emblem was not the washboard but my backpack, where I hold books and store resources for knowledge.

Interestingly, my emblem is my father's purpose: education. As an educator, I can share in my great-grandmother's legacy and collectively work toward freedom in my classrooms. Like Ma Dea', I can envision new ways of teaching, knowing, and learning that thrives on the collective ways that center working with communities of color to dismantle injustice while drawing on the imagination, creativity, refusal, (re)membering, visionary thinking, healing, rebellious spirit, and boldness.[20]

Ma Dea' clearly understood her complex intersectional identities as a Black woman in the South raising Black boys. She was (re)claiming a value system of the possibilities of access to education and transgressing white supremacist narratives that did not allow her to control the images of herself and her family.[21] Ma Dea' chose to see the possibility of her grandson having the freedom to have the educational access she did not have. The washboard became a family emblem of imagining educational possibilities.

Please take a picture of your emblem, scan it, and upload it. Do what you need, but remember to tell the story.

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[20] Bettina L. Love, *We Want to Do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2019).

[21] Isiah Lavender III and Lisa Yaszek, eds., *Literary Afrofuturism in the Twenty-First Century. New Suns: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Speculative* (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 2020).

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Non-Aligned Women Unbound: Transgressing the Feminism/ Womanism Divide in Africana Studies

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> Current debates about whether black women's standpoint should be named "womanism" or "black feminism" reflects this basic challenge of accommodating diversity among black women.
>
> —Patricia Hill-Collins, "What's in a Name? Womanism, Black Feminism, and Beyond,[1]

> Because of the erroneous assumption that gender issues are an exclusive for the feminist, it must be noted that confronting a patriarchal system that oppresses women in general is a concern for all people, and thus addressing gender problems in our society does not necessarily translate into feminism.
>
> —Clenora Hudson-Weems, "Africana Womanism: An Historical, Global Perspective for Women of African Descent,"[2]

[1] Patricia Hill-Collins, "What's in a Name? Womanism, Black Feminism, and Beyond," Black Scholar 26, no. 1 (1996): 9.

[2] Clenora Hudson-Weems, "Africana Womanism: An Historical, Global Perspective for Women of African Descent," in Call and Response: The Riverside Anthology of the African American Literary Tradition, eds. Patricia Liggins-Hill et al. (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998), 1812.

INTRODUCTION | RACE, GENDER, AND RESISTANCE

Historically, a significant number of Black women have deliberately chosen not to classify themselves as feminists.[3] This longstanding resistance and rejection has been consistent over time, since the inception of feminism, and it continues today. However, the scholarship on women has not always done a sufficient job in meeting the challenge of accommodating, acknowledging, or representing the political differences that exist between various groups of Black women.[4]

The manifestation of resistance on the part of a large segment of Black women reflects a historically grounded preference to refrain from embracing feminist-based approaches for addressing gender issues within Africana contexts. This act of resistance reflects a deep-seated skepticism that the dominant gender paradigms either lack the political will or capacity to zealously fight for all women and their interests equally, despite politically correct or romanticized rhetoric to the contrary.[5] Routinely, the self-defined interests of Black women are often seen as shortchanged by feminism. Their interest in the abolition of white supremacy, for example, seems to be especially neglected by the political arrangement of feminist priorities. Moreover, Black women's skepticism has grown out of the historical pattern of traditional feminism, which has continually promoted the interests of elite and middle-class white women, centering representations of their experiences as the normative point of reference for Women's Studies narratives on gender.[6] In the end, this underlying skepticism and resistance toward claiming feminism—or being claimed by feminism—is an implicit rebuke of the Eurocentric bias embed-

[3] The concept of feminism circulates with many caveats and provisos within the academy. It is conventional wisdom that feminism is not a monolithic ideology. There are many factions of feminists and a diversity of schools of thoughts within the overarching category of feminism. Notwithstanding the proliferation of different versions and varieties of revisionist theories of feminism, in this paper, when I evoke the term, I am referring to both a composite feminist idea in common usage along with what Oyeronke Oyewumi refers to as "establishment feminism in all its guises." See Oyeronke Oyewumi, ed., *Gender Epistemologies in Africa: Gendering Traditions, Spaces, Social Institutions, and Identities* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 30.

[4] Mary-Christine Phillip, "Feminism in Black and White," *Black Issues in Higher Education* 10, no.1 (March 11,1993): 12–17.

[5] Eleanor Smith, "Historical Relationship between Black and White Women," *Western Journal of Black Studies* 4, no. 4 (Winter 1980): 251–55.

[6] Oyèrónké Oyéwùmí, ed., *African Women and Feminism: Reflecting on the Politics of Sisterhood* (New Jersey: African World Press, 2003).

ded within the dominant framework—a framework which ends up working for a certain group of women at the expense of Black women.

The existence of Black feminism per se, as a school of thought within the overall body of American feminist thought, has neither substantially altered this political dynamic nor transformed the reality of intra-gender inequality (i.e., unequal power relationships, despite gender, between and among women of different races).[7] This is evident in both the historical and lived experiences of Black women and their contentious relationship with traditional feminism. Consequently, Black feminism has not, by and large, succeeded in eliminating the deep reservations, alienation, or estrangement from "feminism" that different groups of Black women continually express and feel.[8] Moreover, the implicit dissent embedded in the refusal to align with the "feminist" label seems to manifest a tacit agreement with Hudson-Weems's admonition and sentiment, expressed in the epigraph above—the belief that advocates for women are under no obligation to show undue deference to feminist approaches as prerequisites for addressing gender problems and opposing the system of patriarchy.

Advocacy for women's rights does not inevitably translate to feminism, and we should not accept the premise that the fight on behalf of women compels submission to the political label of "feminist." Feminism represents a *particular* approach, or a specific set of approaches, to pursuing the achievement of women's rights; it is not the only possibility. The active resistance to the adoption of the feminist label and politics, as precondition for opposition to gender oppression, by a critical mass of Black women overtly demonstrates that women are not necessarily, because of gender, uniform in their political perspectives on gender.

This paper proposes and uses the term "Non-Aligned" as a collective name for a category of persons who have intentionally decided not to define themselves in feminist terms or to advocate for feminism for a variety of personal and political reasons, but who nonetheless have a contribution to make to the discourse on women and to the intellectual work of rethinking and re-

[7] Sheila Radford-Hill, *Further to Fly: Black Women and the Politics of Empowerment* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 14–15.

[8] See Vivian Gordon, *Black Women, Feminism, and Black Liberation, Which Way?* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1987); Clenora Hudson-Weems, *Africana Womanist Literary Theory* (New Jersey: African World Press, 2004); Delores P. Aldridge and Carlene Young, eds., *Out of the Revolution: The Development of Africana Studies* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2000).

framing gender within Africana Studies.[9] They are the heretofore invisible majority who are striving to approach the analysis and advocacy of gender from a non-feminist orientation. The term "Non-Aligned" is an emerging label for a long-standing response and historical sentiment of resistance that is in no way new among Black women. However, the prior lack of a collective name put Non-Aligned women at a distinct disadvantage relative to feminist-aligned women, in terms of their insights and representation or lack thereof within gender narratives. The voices of women who subscribe to the view that feminism is not a panacea for the problems of all women (including gender problems) are largely missing from the narratives on gender. This is intentionally so, and the field of Black Women's Studies within Africana Studies is tasked with the challenge of combatting this erasure along with developing the intellectual space for the insights of this group, so that it may become more visible and more meaningfully engaged within the discourses of Women's Studies and gender.[10]

Non-Aligned women advocate for and are engaged in the struggle to advance gender justice. The pivotal difference between them and others engaged in this struggle is the fact that Non-Aligned women remain unpersuaded that the most effective approach to pursuing equal rights for women or interrogating the role of gender in our history is with a feminist "women-versus-men" explanatory framework. Non-Aligned women refuse to concede gender to feminism. Moreover, they do not believe feminist women hold a monopoly on all of the progressive and legitimate insights into the social problems of gender and their political solutions. As a result, Non-Aligned women do not believe Africana Studies scholars are obligated to defer to feminism or to embrace its highly polarizing ways of knowing as a precondition to engaging gender as a category of analysis within Africana Studies.

CONTESTED TERRAIN: THE POLITICS OF NAMING

A misguided practice has developed of usually presuming that any Black woman analyzing gender or advocating for women's equality must necessarily use a feminist or womanist lens. This taken-for-granted assumption is trace-

[9] I have introduced and discussed the umbrella term "Non-Aligned" in a previous paper. See Valethia Watkins, "New Directions in Black Women's Studies," in *African American Studies Reader, Second Edition*, ed. Nathanial Norment Jr. (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2007).
[10] Delores P. Aldridge, "Africana Studies and Gender Relations in the Twenty First Century," *Western Journal of Black Studies* 27, no. 3 (2003): 186–193.

able to the unresolved feminism-versus-womanism debate and the truncated and flawed nature of that debate in stubbornly suggesting these are the only two options available. The current struggle between different groups of Black Women's Studies scholars is focused on promoting the relative merits of just (Black) "feminism" or "womanism" according to the preferences of the respective constituencies of each group.

This debate is not a mere fight over a preferred label. The stakes are higher. This political struggle is a fierce battle for the hearts and minds of Black women and the unfettered right to speak on behalf of and in the name of Black women as a collective group. It is also an attempt to secure control over the interpretation and authoritative naming of the intellectual tradition of Black women.[11] In the end, this feminism versus womanism academic debate—as it is presently constituted—fails to reflect, accommodate, or do justice to the political diversity among Black women. In other words, this battle over naming rights does not adequately take into consideration the compelling number of Black women who are not inclined to subscribe to either feminist or womanist approaches to making sense of gender issues.

It is clear that different groups of Black women have competing priorities and political commitments. There needs to be clarity on the need for scholars to come to terms with the fact that there exist other Black women stakeholders beyond womanists and feminists with a vested interest in advocating for gender equality. Moreover, it challenges the pervasive tendency of some gender advocates of unilaterally imposing "feminism" as the default name for the collective intellectual and activist traditions of Black women, even though this framework is not universally accepted by most Black women. The fact that compelling numbers of Black women have chosen not to identify as feminists demonstrates the current efforts to reduce the options of Black women to a binary "choice": either (Black) "feminism," or "womanism," which narrowly defines womanism as synonymous with feminism is an artificial limitation on the parameters of the process for naming the Black Women's intellectual tradition. This practice, in fact, is a manifestation of "compulsory feminism." Compulsory feminism is the proposed name for the calculated efforts to make feminism the default norm. This concept renders visible an unacknowledged movement to position feminism, as a strategy of analysis, as seemingly the only authentic and legitimate explanatory lens which must

[11] Valethia Watkins. "Contested Memories: A Critical Analysis of the Black Feminist Revisionist History Project," *Africology: The Journal of Pan African Studies* 9, no. 4 (July 2016): 271–288.

be used to guide, frame, and determine how research on women ought to be done.[12] The range of choices must be expanded in the discourses on Black women in order to do justice in accommodating the political diversity and differences between Black women.

Some Black women prefer to identify as womanists. Although, certain subsets of womanists view womanism as essentially feminism by another name. This viewpoint contends that (Black) feminism and the normative version of womanism—Alice Walker's version—are two sides of the same coin. Alice Walker seemed to endorse this position when she popularized the term "womanist" and asserted that a womanist is a "black feminist or feminist of color [...] womanist is to feminist as purple is to lavender."[13] If one accepts this view (the idea that feminism and womanism represent a distinction without a real difference), then womanism and feminism become inseparable. The term "womanism" emerged during a period when feminism was widely viewed as containing too much political baggage to enjoy wide appeal among Black women. This baggage included a pattern of betrayal and subordination of their interests and a history of racism and discrimination against Black women. Most Black women expressed their discontent with feminism in several ways including, but not limited to, defiantly rejecting association with it. Considering this pattern and practice, many grassroots Black women initially were much more receptive to the concept of womanism in comparison to feminism, precisely because they were encouraged to think womanism was distinct from feminism. They were conflating "Africana womanism," a more specialized version, with the more generalized and unmarked "womanism" promoted by Alice Walker.[14]

Black feminists generally have reacted negatively to the earlier predisposition exhibited by Black women of demonstrating a preference for womanism over (Black) feminism. One noteworthy critic of the practice was bell hooks, a pioneering Black advocate of feminism. She fundamentally questioned the attempt to build a wall of separation between womanism and feminism on the grounds that those who engage in this practice have fundamentally misinterpreted the relationship between the two terms whenever they evoke

[12] Valethia Watkins, "Africana Gender Studies: Toward Theorizing Gender Without Feminism," in *Africana Theory, Policy and Leadership,* Vol.7., ed., James L. Conyers Jr. (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2016): 67–69.

[13] Alice Walker, "Womanist," in *The Womanist Reader*, ed. Layli Phillips (New York: Routledge, 2006), 19.

[14] Watkins, "Africana Gender Studies," 73–75.

feminism in a negative way in comparison to womanism. In her estimation, those Black women who want womanism without feminism are disregarding the motives of Alice Walker in developing her concept of womanism. Indeed, hooks finds this trend both perplexing and blatantly out of step with Walker's ascribed meaning of the word. hooks writes:

> I hear black women academics laying claim to the term "womanist" while rejecting "feminist." I do not think Alice Walker intended this term to deflect from a feminist commitment, yet this is often how it is evoked. Walker defines womanist as a black feminist or feminist of color. When I hear black women using the term womanist, it is in opposition to the term feminist; it is viewed as constituting something separate from feminist politics shaped by white women. [...] If it is a term for black feminist, then why do those who embrace it reject the other?[15]

This observation by bell hooks suggests that Alice Walker's concept of womanism functions as a rhetorical strategy to disarm and counteract the intransigent resistance of Black women toward feminism. Walker's womanism is often deployed in a way to gain their conversion or submission to feminism. Her womanism is designed to discourage or stop the ongoing rejection of feminism. The co-opting of womanism by reducing it to a mere extension of feminism is a highly effective way for Black feminism to neutralize womanism as a rival or competing political framework. It muddies the water.

Again, there are different kinds of womanism and diverse groups of womanists in circulation.[16] Womanists do not agree among themselves on one all-inclusive and universal definition of this term. They do not all feel bound by Alice Walker's definition. Africana womanism represents the most prominent example of a competing version of womanism. Africana womanism does not define itself as synonymous with feminism. Clenora Hudson-Weems, the

[15] bell hooks, *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black* (Boston: South End Press, 1989), 181–82.

[16] See Layli Phillips, ed., *The Womanist Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Dawn-Elissa T.I. Fischer, "Hip-Hop within a Womanist Lens," *Western Journal of Black Studies* 36, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 86–96; Dorothy Randall Tsuruta, "The Womanish Roots of Womanism: A Culturally-Derived and African-Centered Ideal (Concept)," *Western Journal of Black Studies* 36, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 3–10; Clenora Hudson-Weems, "Africana Womanism: An Overview" in *Out of the Revolution: The Development of Africana Studies*, eds., Delores P. Aldridge and Carlene Young (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2000), 205–217.

leading proponent of Africana womanism, has played an instrumental role in promoting Africana womanism.[17] The distinction between Walker's womanism and Hudson-Weems' Africana womanism pivots around how they think about the relationship between womanism and feminism. Clenora Hudson-Weems emphatically asserts Africana womanism is

> "Neither an outgrowth nor an addendum to feminism, *Africana Womanism* is not Black feminism, African feminism, or Walker's womanism that some Africana women have come to embrace. [...] It critically addresses the dynamics of the conflict between the mainstream feminist, the Black feminist, the African feminist and the Africana womanist. The conclusion is that *Africana Womanism* and its agenda are unique and separate from both White feminism and Black feminism..."[18]

Often the existence of Africana womanism is rendered invisible in Black feminist scholarship. Consequently, Hudson-Weems and other Africana womanists would likely assert that any naming debate over Black women's political identification which excludes Africana Womanism should be deemed illegitimate or incomplete.[19] Africana Studies scholar Vivian Gordon offered a cogent defense of Black Women Studies scholars who do not identify as feminists. Gordon contends, "Clearly overt resistance to the term feminism by so many African American women is not their misunderstanding of the definition of the term in common usage. Rather, it is an important statement of identity and politics."[20] The profound political meaning behind this bold political act—resisting the label of feminist—is often overlooked, either intentionally or unintentionally, because it is an Achilles heel for many feminists.

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[17] Clenora Hudson-Weems, *Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves* (Troy, MI: Bedford Publishers, 1993).

[18] Clenora Hudson-Weems, *Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves*, 5th ed. (New York: Routledge), 15.

[19] See Tiamoyo Karenga and Chimbuko Tembo, "Kawaida Womanism: African Ways of Being Woman in the World," *Western Journal of Black Studies* 36, no.1 (Spring 2012): 33–47; Nah Dove, "African Womanism: An Afrocentric Theory," *Journal of Black Studies* 23, no.5 (May 1998): 515–39.

[20] Vivian Verdell Gordon, "Black Women, Feminism and Black Studies," in *Out of the Revolution: The Development of Africana Studies*, eds., Delores P. Aldridge and Carlene Young (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2000), 168.

ACHIEVING VISIBILITY: NON-ALIGNED WOMEN | HOW AND WHY WE ENTER

"Non-Aligned" is an umbrella term which represents those persons who want to openly declare their strong support of gender equality without deference to feminism. The term "Non-Aligned" allows them to gain visibility and to secure their proper place as co-equals in the discourses on women's interests and history. The term "Non-Aligned" offers another option for political self-definition and collective affiliation as well as networking for those groups of Black women (and men) who share in common an opposition to the system of patriarchy in all its guises. They are advocates of women's rights, and they want to pursue this objective, but are disinterested in aligning themselves with the dominant gender paradigm.

Non-Aligned offers a platform to gain visibility in the discourse on women, while simultaneously remaining independent. No single gender theory holds universal meaning for all women, nor can it simultaneously represent all women's interests equally, because all female persons do not, inherently as women, have the same interests. Feminism prioritizes the interests of some women at the expense of other women. The romanticized view that feminism can be all things to all women does not serve Black women well.

It is not unusual to find unfair representations of the motives for Non-Aligned women's resistance to feminism in the scholarship on Black women, in the rare instances they are mentioned. Legal scholar Dorothy E. Roberts, in her exploration of the connection between racism and patriarchy, wrote about the ways in which these two things, in her words, "tempt both black women and white women to be 'disloyal' to feminism."[21] Roberts boldly contends, "Black women may be guilty of another kind of disloyalty, however. Some of us remain silent about sexism in our own communities, or decline to align with white feminists because of the response of black men."[22] It is problematic to equate Black women's refusal to coalesce around feminism with being submissive to Black men or giving into an alleged fear of the disapproval of Black men. This troublesome line of argument is based on the faulty premise that Black women are somehow incapable of making an independent assessment of feminism. Unexpectedly, this is a male-centered or sexist disregard

[21] Dorothy E. Roberts, "Racism and Patriarchy in the Meaning of Motherhood," *Journal of Gender & the Law* 1, no. 1 (1993): 30.
[22] Roberts, "Racism and Patriarchy," 35.

of the political acumen of Non-Aligned women made by some Black feminists. If feminism is not flawless, then its manifest and latent shortcomings are reasonable grounds for many Black women to disassociate from it. The negative assumptions of a lack commitment to women's rights if one does not subscribe to (Black) feminism callously disregards the legitimate and principled disagreements of Non-Aligned women with feminism.

The second problem with this statement is the notion that Black women should expect to face allegations of being soft on sexism or implicitly deemed gender traitors (i.e. "disloyal to feminism") if they choose not to use a feminist way of making sense of the world. In other words, advocates of feminism will recognize resistance to sexism only if it's packaged as feminist resistance.[23] Non-Aligned women do not accept that the struggle against gender inequality is contingent upon being or becoming a feminist. They are justified in seeing no contradiction in this because feminism does not hold a monopoly over fighting for women or caring about gender matters. The concept of intersectional feminism does not cure the monopolistic thinking and subversive dynamics that compulsory feminism seeks to impose on Non-Aligned women.

The Non-Aligned women have expressed deep skepticism of both the willingness and capacity of feminism to defend the interests of Black women and, by extension, Black people. The tradition of Black women lodging objections to the privileging of whiteness within feminism has correctly led many to surmise that the problem of feminism for Black women is not merely a problem of exclusion; in turn, *inclusion*—simply incorporating Black women's experiences into the pre-existing paradigm constructed by and for women of the dominant group—is also a problem. Historian Elsa Barkley Brown insightfully points out that feminist theorizing about gender sans Black women has far-reaching consequences for the efficacy of this paradigm that extends way beyond the lack of the physical presence of most Black women in the second-wave women's movement. Barkley Brown astutely contends, "for the exclusion has meant that the concepts, perspectives, methods, and pedagogies of women's history and women's studies have been developed without consideration of the experiences of black women."[24] This methodology of theorizing

[23] Nikol G. Alexander-Floyd and Evelyn M. Simien, "Revisiting 'What's in a Name?' Exploring the Contours of Africana Womanist Thought," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* 27, no. 1 (2006): 83–4.

[24] Elsa Barkley Brown, "Womanist Consciousness: Maggie Lena Walker and the Independent Order of Saint Luke," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 14 (Spring 1989): 268.

guaranteed that white womanhood would become the paradigmatic womanhood in the universalized narratives on gender. Their social experiences would become the normative standard by which all other groups of women would be judged and measured against to determine how much they conform or deviate from the standards of a Eurocentric-based womanhood.

This fact has conceptually incarcerated feminism. Infusing Black women into this pre-existing paradigm does not deconstruct the embedded practice of inherently centering white womanhood as the point of reference. The social construction of their experiences remains the default gender tradition or set of gender norms at the center of most western feminism's scholarship on gender, regardless of the race of the group of feminists applying this explanatory framework. This is one of the most compelling reasons why feminism does not hold the same probative value for Black women. It reveals that feminism's essentialist and totalizing claims of a universal meaning of gender for all women is, in fact, ahistorical and inaccurate.[25]

Non-Aligned women are important stakeholders in the contestation over the politics of naming within Black Women's Studies. It is important to note that subscribing to the belief "that men and women should have the same rights" does not automatically make a person a feminist any more than affirming a belief in God (for the sake of argument) necessarily makes a person a Catholic. To the contrary, it is a faulty premise to automatically assume a declaration of holding a belief in God can only mean the belief in one specific faith tradition. The quintessential fact is members of many different faith traditions believe in God. Hence, a belief in God alone cannot serve as the litmus test for defining who is or is not a Catholic. By analogy the same holds true for the belief in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes. Subscribing to this belief by itself cannot serve as the litmus test for defining who is or is not a feminist, because this belief is *not unique* to feminists. This belief is not the intellectual property of feminism. Certain ideas collectively belong to our common humanity and cannot appropriately be claimed as the exclusive property on one political group.

[25] Oyèrónké Oyéwùmí, *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

CONCLUSION

Non-Alignment is a call for mutual recognition: just as the right to choose feminism exists, the equally important corresponding right not to claim feminism exists. The exercise of this equally important prerogative should be accepted without subjecting Non-Aligned women to ad hominem attacks or heavy-handed efforts at subordination—or resorting to impeaching the motives and character of politically nonconforming Black women.

The rejection of feminism as a one-size-fits-all solution is *not* a rejection of the call to action to oppose the system of sexism. As political scientist Chioma Mary Oruh succinctly puts it, "[r]ejection of feminism is not equivalent to being an apologist for gender-based oppression."[26] Unfortunately, too many advocates of compulsory feminism have demonstrated an unwillingness to co-exist on an equal basis with Non-Aligned women scholars. This must change. Africana Studies as a disciplinary formation must take the lead in creating the conditions for culturally-grounded, nonsexist, and Non-Aligned scholars to emerge from the shadow of feminism.[27] The collective term "Non-Aligned" puts a group of overlooked Black women in the conversation on the future of gender and the history of Black women in a manner which challenges the premediated marginalization of non-feminist identified Black women. The politics surrounding the naming of the intellectual and activist traditions of Black women is ultimately a question of power and interests. It is worth remembering that those who control the writing of the history of Black women ultimately control the interpretation and writing of the historical narratives of Black people as a collective group. This is why appreciating the political ramifications of naming is not a mere question of semantics. It is foundational to the future of disciplinary Africana Studies.

[26] Chioma Mary Oruh, "Imperialism, Rape, and the Congo Predicament" (Ph.D. Diss., Howard University, 2015), 206.

[27] For a foundational and concrete model of an Africana Studies approach and interpretative framework, see Greg Carr and Dana A. Williams, "Toward the Theoretical Practice of Conceptual Liberation: Using an Africana Studies Approach to Reading African American Literary Texts," in *Contemporary African American Literature: The Living Canon*, eds. Lovalerie King and Shirley Moody-Turner (Indiana University Press, 2013), 302–27.

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‘Rock & Come in’: The Healing Power of Black Girlhood Communion

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> “I know why myself was chosen to write the story you dictate. I have been there too.”
>
> —*Louisiana*, Erna Brodber

> The ghetto is a space of encounter. The sons and daughters of the rich come in search of meaning, vitality, and pleasure. The reformers and the sociologists come in search of the truly disadvantaged, failing to see her and her friends as thinkers or planners, or to notice the beautiful experiments crafted by poor Black girls.
>
> —*Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval*, Saidiya Hartman

ACROSS THE CARIBBEAN, “rock and come in” is a saying that doubles as an invitation or invocation, instructing one to essentially find their rhythm and join in on the excitement, especially in the context of dance, music, and festivity. In this essay, I reflect on finding my ethnographic rhythm through community building and the joys of Black girlhood communion, while conducting research with and on Black girls in Kingston, Jamaica. I recount particular engagements as moments of “invitation.” I particularly recount engagements with Erna Brodber, sociologist, cultural historian, community worker, and writer; with Miss Bee,[1] an elder and community worker, who invited me to develop and implement a program for teenage girls, who had been recently labeled a “problem population” in her particular community; and with the girls themselves, as we move through the summer program. These moments of invitation serve as turning points, as I unpack the complexities of identity and positionality as a daughter of the land[2] turned ethnographer. These identities and the positionalities that accompany them

[1] This is a pseudonym.
[2] This was a title/nickname given to me by one of my interlocutors.

raise a myriad of questions about what it means to engage Black girlhoods from what Violet Eudine Barriteau refers to as the "ground level vantage point."[3] Nonetheless, I find my rhythm in Black girlhood communion, as I facilitate Tallawah, a summer program I conducted with ten girls over a six-week period at a recreation center in Miss Bee's community, towards the end of my data collection period.

I think through positionality, riffing off Brodber's themes of themes of (re) turn, research, the local/global, and transnationality as engaged in *Louisiana* (1997).[4] As a trained sociologist, I also reckon with Hartman's discussion of surveillance, voice, representation, and Black girl subjectivity at the hands of researchers–sociologists in particular–who fail to engage Black girls as agentic "thinkers or planners" in the urban socio.[5] Here, I think through and confront the discontinuities and incompatibilities between my background and personal politics and the voyeuristic legacies of academic research. As such, this essay highlights the joys of ethnographic witnessing, transnationalism, resistance, and the liberatory power of intergenerational Black girlhood communion, in the wake of adultifying public narratives about Black Girls, and their experiences of abbreviated adolescence.

In more ways than one, Ruth Nicole Brown opened the way for conversations on Black Girlhood Communion, conceptualizing Black girlhood as a lived experience, political engagement, and as a cause and a site for celebration.[6] I use the word *communion* intentionally, not only to draw on bell hooks' discourse on sisterhood, community, and resistance, but also because I often employ the "Sweet Communion" chapter of *Sisters of the Yam*[7] as close reading to open dialogue on self, recovery, and community-building when working with girls in community contexts. In this particular chapter, hooks asks "Where is the healing place?" She answers, "Community is *a*[8] heal-

[3] Violet Eudine Barriteau. "Confronting Power and Politics: A Feminist Theorizing of Gender in Commonwealth Caribbean Societies." *Meridians: Feminism, Race, transnationalism* 3, no. 2 (2003): 57–92.

[4] Brodber, *Louisiana* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi), 1997.

[5] Sadiya Hartman, *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2019).

[6] Ruth Nicole Brown, *Hear our truths: The creative potential of Black Girlhood* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2017).

[7] bell hooks, *Sisters of the Yam: Black Women and Self-Recovery* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2005)

[8] Here, hooks does not insinuate that there is only one healing place, but rather makes a case for community as one place of healing. See hooks, *Sisters of the Yam.*

ing place," and asserts that community is crucial to wellness. Community is where we find affirmation—where we "find ways to get what we need to ease the pain, to make the hurt go away."[9] Brown urges us towards a bridge between community work and academic analysis, that highlights Black girls as theorists in their own rite, as "thinkers," "planners," and crafters of their own lifeworlds and "beautiful experiments,"[10] a style of intellectual finesse Hartman points out is missing among the majority of "sociologists" who are often critiqued as entering into the "ghetto" as voyeurs.[11]

As a trained sociologist, I was disciplined through the gaze she spoke of, which made me hyper-aware and very critical as I developed my research methods and methodology. Even as a daughter of the land, it was not lost on me that I was doing research in arguably one of the most touristically exploited contexts in the world. At the meso level, I knew that the contexts I worked in were largely politically, economically, and sometimes academically exploited. For me, this was not a deterrent for the work, it was rather the impetus for employing a critical approach to ethnography that privileged the voices on the ground, and an analysis that attended to the dynamics and workings of power. While I carried out this work as a sociologist and an ethnographer, the critical bent of this project was informed by Black, Caribbean, and Transnational Feminist traditions of advocacy, resistance, and community building. These traditions inform and are informed by the Black Radical Tradition, Black social movements, protest, and self-determination practices across the Black world, across space and time—and beyond the ivory tower. As a community-worker turned ethnographer, and in keeping with these traditions, I have carried out my work with my heart open, even when that has meant that it would be bruised.

The ethnographic reflections I share here emerge from my study of Black girls' transition to adulthood in Kingston, Jamaica. Drawing on three years of ethnography, surveys, interviews, and community engagement, data collection for this project has been both a labor of love and a labor I loathed. I loved this work because of its seeds. It was what brought me to graduate school in the first place. For over a decade I had developed curricula, programs, and outreach projects for and with girls in urban spaces. As a researcher, I loved the moments I shared in communion with my interlocutors,

[9] hooks, *Sisters of the Yam*, 164.
[10] Brown, *Hear Our Truths*; Hartman, *Wayward Lives*.
[11] Hartman, *Wayward Lives* (Kindle Edition), 152.

the laughs, the dancing, the singing, the hand games, the hair and makeup tutorials, the TikTok videos we choreographed, the painting and writing we collectively assembled, and the subtle ways we challenged and grew with each other. I loathed this work because of the soil—the structural, institutional, patriarchal, colonial and violent contexts on the ground, that the girls I write for and about have to struggle to overcome. It is also because I know about the trail of tragedies, the turmoil Black girls have to confront in the quest for freedom: the freedom to access agency, to access the space between joy and justice, and the freedom to access self. Certainly, in many moments I have felt alone in the field, yet I was always grounded in the deep knowing that I am but a part of a long genealogy of Black women—former Black girls—thinkers, organizers, troublemakers, loud, bold, beautiful, and committed. This work has been an outgrowth of my life's work, influenced, shaped, molded, and refined by generations of Black women and girls who came before me, Black women and girls with whom I commune(d), and Black women and girls who will continue the work after I have done my part.

"ROCK": DR. BRODBER'S INVITATION

The majority of my ethnographic record was rife with stories and news headlines concerning violence. I was often disenchanted with my early analyses because I did not want to collapse the girls' voices into what their government, public narratives, or news media portrayed and continues to portray about them. I was more concerned with what they had to say about themselves and how they communed with one another during this stage. I scoured the internet for days; I wanted to contact Dr. Erna Brodber. From my searches it seemed she had retired. But as a fellow sociologist, interested in gender, childhoods, and social processes, I looked for her because as far I was concerned, she laid a significant part of the groundwork for what I looked to study.

I found an email for Dr. Daryl Dace, reached out, and asked how I could reach Dr. Brodber. She shared Dr. Brodber's email and two phone numbers the next morning. I immediately saved her number and sent a WhatsApp message, patiently waiting for a response. When she responded, we scheduled a time to talk by phone, and some months following our initial discussion, and after my arrival to Jamaica, I traveled to St. Mary. Although I have family from St. Mary, I had never been to High Gate, and more specifically, Woodside. She had invited me to Blackspace, a gathering and celebration she

hosted annually in her native village, Woodside. I stayed and reasoned for a while with the group, but not long before making my way back to Kingston before dark. I planned to attend again in 2021, but I was under the weather.

In my conversations with Dr. Brodber, I shared with her that I was in a conflicted space as an ethnographer, community worker, and daughter of the land. I asked questions about how her sociological training served her, or didn't. I asked about what she thought about Jamaican society since the publication of *Abandonment of Children in Jamaica* (1974) and *Yards in the City of Kingston* (1975).[12] I had requested her writings through my library's interlibrary loan service, and I was shocked that much of what had been troubling me in my ethnographic record seemed to also have been the case when Dr. Brodber studied mother-child relationships, social welfare, stigmatization, and social problems in the island's capital. At the time, I was also reading her novel, *Louisiana* (1997), where young Ella, an anthropologist, was completing her dissertation and struggling to find her footing in a context where she had ancestral roots, but those roots conflicted with her training. I was having a similar experience when a colleague told me to read *Louisiana*, and that is how I found my way to Dr. Brodber— writer, community organizer, sociologist.

She directed me to her book *The World is A High Hill*,[13] explaining that she wrote it drawing from the experiences and oral histories of Jamaican women across the island, including in her village in rural St. Mary. She wrote in an experimental form, merging some stories, quartering others, and weaving intricate and complex lived experiences that the average Jamaican woman could relate to. Although it was not based squarely in Kingston, the experiences included the same encounters that filled my ethnographic record, such as sexual violence, silencing and shame, political strongholds, life in the inner-city, and power struggles including sexism, colorism, classism, and religious social control, gender-based violence and neo-colonialism. She even used her literary finesse to critique the "hoity-toity,"[14] high society folks in hilarious and cunning ways. I understood what she was doing there. What I gleaned from her instruction was that there are many stories to be told. Dr.

[12] Erna Brodber, *Abandonment of Children in Jamaica* (St. Augustine, Trinidad: Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of the West Indies, 1974). Erna Brodber, *Yards in the City of Kingston* (Kingston, Jamaica: Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of the West Indies, 1975).

[13] Erna Brodber, *The World is a High Hill: Stories about Jamaican Women* (Kingston: Ian Randle, 2012).

[14] Brodber, *High Hill.*

Brodber emphasized that though the details look different, there are particular experiences that women, and by extension girls, in Jamaica share. Some are violent, some exciting, some confusing—but they are nonetheless, individually and collectively formed by iteration after iteration of the same waves of culture, violence, exploitation, and social life. In spite of these realities, girls fashion and participate in beautiful lifeworlds.

It felt like our conversations had helped me to understand that my current project was merely a beginning, and that I should not feel the urge to tell the story of every Jamaican girl, nor to collapse the story of every Jamaican girl. Rather, I came away from our conversations knowing that I must tell the stories in my ethnographic record as they are, knowing that they were and are connected to other stories of Jamaican girlhood across space and time. Although I was distraught by the ways in which my ethnographic record became rife with violence, exploitation, inequality, discrimination and harm, I found that there is utility and function in witnessing and archiving those stories. While those things are part of the story, the girls' fundamental humanity, their individual identities, and their voices were part of a larger historical, cultural, and social context. Those contexts shape and mirror the contemporary Jamaican socio, and the experiences of the girls that exist within it. I learned from the stories in *The World is A High Hill*, that even through these experiences girls learn resilience, they receive and transmit intergenerational lessons, skills, and values, and they learn how "fi turn dem hand mek fashion."[15]

For Brodber, the communal was more important than the individual; she emphasized connections, relationships, and the collective. Oddly enough, these engagements brought me back to why I believed sociological methods and analyses (particularly ethnography) to be the most fitting methods for the questions I proposed. This was also part of my methodological choice to conduct focus groups rather than individual interviews with the girls who participated in my study. I was less interested in documenting individual cases, and more interested and invested in how girls negotiate the transition to adulthood in the city —, individually, yes, but also collectively. Seeing them in community brought out the sociological contours and dimensions of my analyses, as they often disagreed, agreed, questioned each other, adlibbed, clarified, and gave additional examples in real-time. This helped me

[15] This phrase basically means that your hands have the power to transform what you have—no matter how much, or how little—into what you want.

to draw out dominant themes both within and across focus groups. In the following pages, I discuss my experiences after "rocking" to find my rhythm, and as they invite me into their lifeworlds to share stories, drama, preferences, concerns, aspirations for adulthood, political positionalities, economic strategies, social relationships, romantic interests and vignettes, and to interview me, too. After rocking and reckoning with the difficulties of the nature of my work, I found my rhythm.

"COME IN": MISS BEE'S INVITATION

I met Miss Bee at a sensitization workshop training led by a well-known reproductive justice grassroots organization. On invitation by one of the leaders, I attended some of the trainings and was asked to develop and facilitate a workshop on toxic masculinities and also to add to the panel of legal, grassroots, health and academic experts on sexual violence against girls and women in the region. Although I gained a lot of insight during these sessions, grappling with the grueling and often graphic depictions of violence was heavy. And the firsthand accounts meshed seamlessly with my growing ethnographic record. Coupled with that experience, I was additionally scarred by the seemingly deliberate disregard I experienced by one of the leaders along the lines of interrupting recruitment for my study and, to my surprise, insisting that I ride back on the two-and-a-half-hour bus ride to Kingston with the group of all-male participants. This was even after after knowing that one of them had made a rape joke about me. Not that I would have complied with her travel arrangements in the first place, nonetheless, I was grateful that one of her employees interrupted that suggestion after watching our interactions, and offered me a ride back to the city in her personal vehicle.

During the trainings I heard accounts from women and men about the ways in which sexual violence had shaped their lives. I recall, at this time, witnessing one of the most powerful confrontations of toxic masculinity I've ever experienced. There was a forty-something-year-old man in the group who burst into tears during one of the sessions. He shared among the other men that his girlfriend was harmed by a family member some years ago, and she recently shared it with him. He now understood what he saw before as random and annoying interruptions of their intimacy, and the bouts of anger he had to negotiate with her whenever she had interactions with particular family members. The other men hugged him as he cried. This moment went

against all of the narratives of Jamaican masculinity that dominated public discourse and scholarship. The facilitators commended them on that moment, and encouraged the men to practice these forms of transparency and care even beyond this workshop, and beyond their friend groups. I particularly highlighted how during my workshop, the men defined what it meant to be a Jamaican man. One of the groups wrote "yaad man nuh bawly bawly," or in other words, real men don't cry. And I applauded them for confronting that belief, which was rooted in toxic masculinity. We discussed how moments like these contributed to a better tomorrow for Jamaican women and girls. And I insisted that women and girls are also valuable, and should be treated as such even when they are not connected to men in ways that are readily noticeable.

At a co-ed training, Miss Bee was the first contact to approach me about participating in my study during the aforementioned training. She was visibly tired, but she had heard my earlier announcement during my introduction, where I briefly introduced myself, my project, and informed the group that I was interested in speaking further with those who represented constituencies in Kingston and St. Andrew, at their will. She was a graceful older woman, with a self-assured energy. She told me that I reminded her of her daughter with my ambitions towards youth organizing, and she shared her contact information with me as well as her daughter's. Following the training she invited me to visit the community center in her neighborhood, which she felt was underutilized, especially for the girls in the same age range of those in my study. She went on to explain that the older women in the community couldn't be bothered with their attitudes, and that the girls themselves were disinterested in community programs. While younger girls participated and spent time at the center often, teenage girls were typically occupied, presumably with things community members did not approve of. Since I had introduced myself as a community worker, I think Miss Bee wanted to challenge me—not only because I introduced myself as an experienced community worker, but also to inspire reciprocity, and to find a way to meaningfully connect with the girls who have been labeled as a problem population in their community.

After developing a six-week curriculum, centering identity politics, beauty and body image, business and entrepreneurship, art, community-building, and "Black Girlhood Communion," I titled the proposal "Tallawah," a common colloquialism in Jamaican culture and society, which the *Dictionary of Jamaican English* defines as "sturdy, strong, not to be underestimated; tough,

stubborn." The most common phrasing of tallawah is the saying "wi likkle but we tallawah," meaning we are little but mighty. I also chose this title because the word itself denotes some of the same characteristics girls must develop as they grow into young women in Jamaican society. It also denotes, to some degree, Miss Bee's descriptions of the girls in her community who seemed largely uninterested in community programs and recreational affairs. I shared the proposal with Miss Bee by email, along with the flier I created for her to share with the community.

When I walked into the community center for the first day of the program, I did not know what to expect. I was just coming to the close of my data collection, wrapping up over two years of research and engagement, and Miss Bee presented an opportunity for me to wrap up my project in a way that was not only familiar to me, but also that was near and dear to my heart. This was meaningful, since a mentor of mine had been encouraging me to develop an "exit ritual" in the weeks prior. Miss Bee warned that the group would be small, and that she couldn't make any promises about attendance and participation. She was clear that she would come to open the center and to close it, but that she would not be involved in any other parts of programming or implementation.

About ten minutes before the scheduled start time, a woman walked in with two girls, who I presumed would participate in the program. She was the same height as the girls, but she was clearly the adult among them. She looked me directly in my eyes and said "This is my niece," introducing the girl that was standing to her left, and who was looking away, seemingly annoyed. The other girl was much younger; she watched me keenly, anticipating my response. The aunt continued to instruct me, and the other volunteers I brought in, that we should hide our phones, the Bluetooth speaker box, any anything else we found valuable, because "she is a thief, and I am telling you in front of her face." That was quite the introduction. I didn't take it lightly, but I also didn't think it made sense to do recreational programming with these girls if we had to police them. That wouldn't be any fun for any of us. By the end of the six-week program, I had countless selfies of and with the girls in my camera roll. They made funny faces and threw up peace signs, and most of the time, we had a blast doing Tik-Tok videos together, playing hand games, learning and developing new choreography, and practicing our dance moves to the latest dancehall tunes. In these moments, all of the pain I had witnessed and experienced in the field didn't disappear, but I began to

realize, witness, and participate in Black Girl joy, and it affirmed for me that the joy I was witnessing was a part of the road to justice.

Over the next few weeks, we would host makeup tutorials, wig installation and styling tutorials (both of which the girls requested in my conversations with them before and during the program), dance competitions, and heartfelt group discussions about life aspirations and dreams for the future. We affirmed these visions with group vision boards and brainstormed individually and collectively about ways we sought to improve the community. I also brought in a good friend who had a wig-making business to speak about how she was self- taught and how she has grown her business over the years, keeping up with current industry trends. The girls were especially excited for this tutorial and the makeup workshops. They brought in their own wigs—and some of them brought in multiple! We taught them different curling techniques and invited them up one-by-one to practice on us. The makeup tutorials ran similarly.

I developed this program drawing on some of the methodologies and modalities I used to create programs elsewhere, through my organization, SELaH, but this program was decidedly different, and I left space in the program curriculum to account for these nuances and differences as the program went on. I began SELaH in 2010 (Sistas Elevating Learning and Healing). Since that time, we have maintained three core programmatic thrusts: community building, increasing literacy, and promoting the arts. With the support of local communities, over the past decade, SELaH has been able to serve, engage, and support hundreds of girls and women in the Philadelphia area; in the vicinity of Washington, DC; in Detroit and Ypsilanti, Michigan; in Kumasi, Ghana; and in Kingston, Jamaica. The work includes academic recess programming, the development of educational curricula for adjudicated teen girls, and local and international community drives for schools, women's homes, and girls in need, among other volunteer efforts. Some of our large-scale projects include the Black Girls Lit(eracy) Project and Youths fi Learn.

TALLAWAH: THE GIRLS' INVITATION

I developed Tallawah primarily along the lines of community building. We explored themes such as social media, identity, friendship and community, body image and self-esteem, entrepreneurship, hair and cosmetics, and the fine arts (especially dance). Over the course of the program, we utilized

peer mentorship techniques, close reading, reflection exercises, mindfulness practices, group and individual presentations, workshops with local entrepreneurs, and guided group discussions. There was also a culminating workshop where girls individually identified and developed an intervention to an issue they would like to improve in their community through an exercise using modified photovoice methodology. According to Wang and Burris, photovoice is a participatory methodology through which "people can identify, represent and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique," where picture-taking is used to glean insights and to "deconstruct problems by posing meaningful questions in a community to find actionable solutions."[16] In the end, I realized that the girls' favorite part of our workshops was always the end, when we played community-oriented circle games and hand games, like "Pon Di Riddim'. Kyra Gaunt would say we connected through "kinetic orality."[17] Even the oldest girls in the group could seemingly play these games for hours. We had gone over time during every session because we always saved the hand games for last. After noticing the trend, as Miss Bee came to close up, she would always end up pulling up a seat and laughing at our theatrical antics. According to Gaunt, "the kinetic orality developed between girls can be considered a social training ground upon which girls create a background of relatedness to one another; performances of race, ethnicity, and gender are embodied through music and dance"[18]; these performances, which often include call and response, build community.

CONCLUSION: BLACK GIRLHOOD COMMUNION AS A HEALING PLACE

I found myself between a rock and a hard place as I made my way about the field. As a sociologist myself, I struggled with the discontinuities and incompatibilities between my own background and personal politics and the voyeuristic legacies of my academic training. In some moments, I felt like more of a community worker than a scholar. In those moments, I drew strength from the wisdom, writings, and communion with Caribbean women scholars, activists, and organizers, like Miss Bee and Dr. Brodber, whose

[16] Caroline Wang and Mary Ann Burris, "Photovoice: Concept, Methodology, and Use for Participatory Needs Assessment," *Health Education and Behavior* 24, no. 3 (June 1997): 369–87. https://doi.org/10.1177/109019819702400309.

[17] Kyra Danielle Gaunt, *The Games Black Girls Play: Learning the Ropes from Double-Dutch to Hip-Hop* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 3.

[18] Gaunt, 3.

work and praxis inspired me. Tallawah was my exit ritual. It helped me to understand the healing power of Black girlhood communion as intergenerational, transcendent, and necessary. Although the bulk of my scholarship stemming from this project has mainly consisted of me contending with the realities of everyday life in the capital city for the girls I study, I also look forward to documenting the sites and moments of reprieve from the surrounding violence.

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Teaching the Sakhu: African Psychology as Liberational Theory and Praxis

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> "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house."
>
> —Audre Lorde[1]

SINCE EUROPEAN CONTACT, people of African descent throughout the diaspora have been subjugated by an alien people. As a primary tool of European imperialism, Western psychology—including theory, research, and practice—has perhaps done more to oppress Black people than any other discipline.[2] Throughout enslavement and colonialism, Western psychology has played a pivotal role in depicting African people as wretched, uncivilized, and subaltern beings, while disguising itself as a discipline of promoting the welfare of others.[3] Even today, in an era of presumably increased cultural and racial competence in the mental health profession, Black people continue to experience increased mental health symptoms due to racism related stress and trauma.[4] In fact, Western psychology has been the major purveyor and perpetrator of Black psychic subjugation and "Mentacide."[5] And still Western psychology remains, globally, the mandated curriculum for training African/Black psychology students to work with people of African descent and

[1] Audre Lorde, *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House.* (United Kingdom: Penguin, 2018). 1

[2] Wade Nobles, *Skh: From Black Psychology to the Science of Being*, (New York: Universal Write Publications, 2023), 13-22.

[3] Robert Guthrie, *Even the Rat was White: A Historical View of Psychology*, (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1998), 3-108.

[4] Joy DeGruy, *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America's Legacy of Enduring Injury and Healing*, (Joy DeGruy Publications, 2005), 124-153.

[5] Bobby E. Wright, *The Psychopathic Racial Personality and Other Essays.* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1984). 17.

their communities. To this point, Bulhan commented, "It is strange but true that the human psyche, even in a remote African village, is today defined, studied, and mystified according to techniques and styles of Europe and its diaspora."[6] To date, the universal application of Western psychology continues to have a lasting and far reaching impact on shaping the psyche of humanity.

Within colleges and universities throughout the African diaspora, aspiring Black psychologists and/or professional counselors are forced to adhere to a curriculum that is based on Western psychology and includes mandates consistent with colonizing accreditation bodies. For example, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) says "accreditation is both a process and a status and denotes a commitment to program excellence." [7]As a private organization, CACREP has been able to establish and require subjective knowledge and skills—which routinely changes every seven years—in the counseling field that are revered as the "gold standard" in academia. The political power to define, determine, and implement for "others" is abhorrent to African liberation and survival and cannot be overlooked, as accreditation is often linked to state licensure, certification, and ultimately employment for professional counselors. Thus, we must examine the content that is prescribed in such programs and consider if it aligns with our cultural values as African-descent people.

Within Western psychology, canonized theorists such as Freud, Rogers, and Ellis do not reflect an African identity and, in the authors' view, have perpetuated thinking opposed to an African way of life.[8] Generally, Western psychology is based on individualistic notions, whereas African psychology is based on communal understandings.[9] Whereas Western psychology posits individual problems and person-level solutions, African psychology takes a more systemic approach and considers how one's context can prevent or

[6] Hussein Abdilahi Bulhan, *Frantz Fanon and the Psychology of Oppression*, (New York: Plenum Press, 1985), 64.

[7] Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, "2024 Standards," *CACREP.org*. https://www.cacrep.org/for-programs/2024-cacrep-standards/#:~:text=-CACREP%20accreditation%20is%20both%20a,promote%20a%20unified%20counseling%20profession.

[8] Amy Demorest. *Psychology's Grand Theorists: How Personal Experiences Shaped Professional Ideas.* (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2005).

[9] Clemmont. E Vontress. "Traditional healing in Africa: Implications for cross-cultural counseling." *Journal of Counseling & Development*, (1991). 242-249.

promote healing.[10] Within African psychology, there are canonized theorists, such as Fanon, Wilson, Nobles, and Cress Welsing, whose work is absent, underrepresented, or misrepresented within most counselor training programs. For African-descent students preparing to work with African-descent communities, we must offer them theoretical perspectives and techniques consistent with their identities as people of African descent. To do this work extends beyond one required course to fulfill the Social and Cultural Diversity component; it necessitates decolonization of what has been the accepted, canonized, stagnant curriculum to create what can be an expansive, representative, responsive curriculum.[11] Decolonizing the curriculum requires we interrogate what is taught and from which perspective. Decolonizing is a process of subtracting what is politically subordinating, spiritually disruptive, psychologically debilitating, and culturally dangerous, harmful, and incomplete, then adding what is culturally, spiritually, and psychologically beneficial. This means that more scholars representative of an African perspective of helping are necessary to inform our understanding of counseling Black populations.[12] The curriculum cannot acknowledge the historical roots of the profession without including the contributions of Black scholars and the traditional ways of knowing they espoused and practiced.[13] Decolonizing is a return to the traditions of our ancestors and healing practices that extend beyond Western conventions of counseling—for example, the imbalance of power between professional and client.[14] Decolonization helps close the distance between what is taught in the coursework and what counseling candidates encounter during their field experiences.

The purpose of this article is manifold. Firstly, the authors advocate the "reclamation, reascension, and revitalization" of African psychology.[15] This article will discuss African psychology as a tool of Black liberation, healing,

[10] Fay Z. Belgrave and Kevin W. Allison. *African American Psychology: From Africa to America* (4th ed.), (SAGE Publications, 2018). 4-28.
[11] Rachael Goodman, Joseph Williams, Rita Chi-Ying Chung, Regine Talleyrand, Adrienne Douglass, George McMahon, and Fred Bemak. "Decolonizing Traditional Pedagogies and Practices in Counseling and Psychology Education: A Move Towards Social Justice and Action." In R. D. Goodman, P. C. Gorski (eds.), *Decolonizing "Multicultural" Counseling through Social Justice*, (Springer, 2015).
[12] Belgrave and Allison, 4-28.
[13] Vontress, 248.
[14] Ibid., 248.
[15] Wade Nobles, *African Psychology: Toward its Reclamation, Reascension, and Revitalization*, (Oakland: Black Family Institute Publications, 1986), 63-90.

and sovereignty. Secondly, we argue the necessity and importance of educating Black/African counseling students at HBCUs and other global African institutions to effectively and competently prepare mental health professionals to do the work. From W. E. B. Du Bois to Frantz Fanon, we will examine such teachings of African psychology theory and praxis as a form of Black psychological warfare and resistance. Thirdly, the authors will discuss the ancient Kemetic origins and cultural significance of African psychology. We will also highlight major moments and movements in the reclamation and reemergence of African psychology in the US American, Caribbean, and Continental African contexts.

WHAT IS AFRICAN/BLACK PSYCHOLOGY?

Although African psychology is often defined, there is probably no one standard or commonly accepted definition among scholars. In the literature, terms that are frequently used synonymously with African psychology are "Black psychology," "African-centered psychology," and "Africentric psychology." There is also the Western politicized and superficial distinction between the disciplines of psychology and counseling, which the authors do not subscribe to. For this reason, throughout the article, *psychology* and *counseling* will be used interchangeably to provide a comprehensive and inclusive discussion related to African psychology.

The variations in definitions of African psychology are usually attributed to the region. Perhaps the most popular definition among Black scholars in the Americas (i.e., United States and Caribbean) is provided by the African Psychology Institute (API):

> Black/African Centered psychology is a dynamic manifestation of unifying African principles, values and traditions. It is the self-conscious "centering" of psychological analyses and applications in African realities, cultures, and epistemologies. Black/African centered psychology, as a system of thought and action, examines the processes that allow for the illumination and liberation of the Spirit. Relying on the principles of harmony within the universe as a natural order of existence, Black/African centered psychology recognizes: the Spirit that permeates everything that is; the notion that everything in the universe is interconnected; the value that the collective is the most salient element of existence; and the idea that communal self-knowledge is the

> key to mental health. Black/African Centered psychology is ultimately concerned with understanding the systems of meaning of human beingness, the features of human functioning, and the restoration of normal/natural order to human development. As such, it is used to resolve personal and social problems and to promote optimal functioning.[16]

In continental Africa, Nwoye defined African psychology simply as "the systemic and informed study of the complexities of human mental life, culture and experience in the pre- and post-colonial African world."[17] Ratele and others further noted "terminologically African psychology means the same thing as, for example, psychology *in, by, from*, or *of* Africa or Africans."[18] Given these perspectives, a Pan-African psychology would entail the psychological study of African people worldwide, from an African perspective, and for the purpose of African liberation, healing, and sovereignty.

KEMETIC (EGYPTIAN) ORIGINS OF PSYCHOLOGY

African psychologists generally agree that the origins of African psychology are based in Kemet (Egypt) circa 3400–3200 BCE.[19] The Kemetic origins have been well-established and—given the length of time that Nile-based kingdoms ruled—are inexhaustible. In his study of psychology in ancient Kemet, Dr. Na'am Akbar noted that the term used to designate the "soul" was *Sakhu*, which was the etymological origin of the Greek word *psyche*.[20] As the root word of psychology, *Psyche* was usually identified as a Greek goddess who was associated with the soul. The Greeks derived *psyche* from the Kemetic term *Psu-Khe (Sakhu* without the article "p").[21] In essence, the soul was the fundamental source for understanding human thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. The focus of healing entailed the understanding and illumination of the soul, known

[16] Association of Black Psychologists, *Meeting of the African Psychology Institute*, (Laguna Beach, 1995).

[17] Augustine Nwoye, *African Psychology: The Emergence of a Tradition*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022), 49.

[18] Kapona Ratele, Josephine Cornell, Sipho Dlamini, Rebecca Helman, Nick Malherbe, and Neziswa Titi. "Some Basic Questions About (a) Decolonizing Africa(n)-centred Psychology Considered." *South African Journal of Psychology*. (2018). 2

[19] Edward Bruce Bynum, *Our African Unconscious: The Black Origins of Mysticism and Psychology* (S.l.: Inner Traditions, 2021). 11.

Daudi A. Azibo, African Psychology in Historical Perspective and Related Commentary. (Africa Research and Publications,1996). 1.

[20] Na'im Akbar, *Light from Ancient Africa*, (Tallahassee: Mind Productions & Associates, 1994). 2.

[21] Gerald Massey, *A Book of the Beginnings*, (Secaucus: University Books, 1974), vol.1

as Sakhu, study of the illumination of the human spirit.[22] Unfortunately, as we have observed within Western psychology, there is an ontological opposition and failure to understanding the soul and spiritualism as reality. This major modification, distortion, and reduction in Western imperial psychology contributed heavily to the mis-conceptualization of the African mind, spirit, and condition. In his masterful book, *Seeking the Sakhu: Foundational Writings for an African Psychology*, Dr. Wade Nobles sought to further explain *Sakhu* in more practical terms.[23] In consulting with one of the foremost Egyptologists in the world, Dr. Theophile Obenga, in his interpretation of a *Sakhu* scene on a private tomb at Sakkarah from the ninth or tenth Dynasty, Nobles suggested that "seeking the *Sakhu*" is more accurately translated as "doing the ritual of *Sakhu*." Obenga concluded that Kemites would likely use *Sakhu* in the context of "performing the *Sakhu*."[24] However in this context, we offer Obenga's work to describe teaching the *Sakhu* with teaching as a sacred act of instruction: "To teach (seba) is to open the door (seba) to the mind of the pupil (seba) in order to bring in light, as from a star (seba)."[25] Hence, the title of this article, "Teaching the *Sakhu*," is the authors' attempt to emphasize the pedagogical importance of African psychology as a liberational tool.

The ancient Kemites were known to study and practice various healing techniques, such as hypnosis, dream interpretation, meditation, yoga, and the use of entheogens and other plants.[26] Bynum and others noted that long before canonized Western theorists, the Kemites had developed systems of understanding the dynamic unconscious,[27] spirit-energy, and the dimensions of the soul (i.e., Ka, Ba, Khaba, Akhu, Seb, Putah, and Atmu).[28] The concepts of Ka, Ba, Khaba, Akhu, Seb, Putah, and Atmu played a vital role in shaping ancient Kemetic faith and practices. These concepts provided a framework for understanding the nature of the human soul, its journey through the afterlife, and its eternal existence among the gods. Through elaborate rituals, offerings, and prayers, the ancient Kemites sought to ensure the well-being

[22] Akbar, 2.
[23] Wade Nobles, *Seeking the Sakhu: Foundational Writings for an African Psychology,* (Chicago: Third World Press, 2006). xxvi.
[24] Ibid., xxvi
[25] Theophile Obenga, "Egypt: Ancient History of African Philosophy." In *Companion to African Philosophy,* Kwasi Wiredu (ed.) (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004). 34.
[26] Edward Bynum, *Our African Unconscious: The Black Origins of Mysticism and Psychology*, (Rochester: Inner Traditions, 2021).
[27] Ibid., 103.
[28] Akbar, 9-12.

and immortality of the deceased, honoring their ancestors, and maintaining a connection between the earthly realm and the divine sphere. While a comprehensive explanation exceeds the scope here, the following table provides a concise and rudimentary overview of the dimensions of the soul.

TABLE 1. Kemetic Dimensions of the Soul

Dimensions of Soul	Explanation
Ka	the life force
Ba	the soul or personality
Khaba	human senses
Akhu	the intellect
Seb	regenerative spirit or reproduction
Putah	mental maturity or wisdom
Atmu	divine and eternal

Interestingly, one area that has been underexplored in African Psychology is the ethnobotany in ancient Kemet and the modern Nilotic populations that remain in usage for multiple purposes and that are instrumental in the liberatory aspects of African psychology. Specifically, the usage of entheogens as spiritual technology has been conspicuously missing from African psychology discussions of ancient and modern African societies.[29]

AFRICAN PSYCHOLOGY IN THE UNITED STATES

Wade Nobles, co-founder of the Association of Black Psychologists, contended that contemporary African psychology in the United States was largely informed by earlier Black social and political movements of the 1800s.[30] The writings of such scholar-activists as Edward Wilmot Blyden, W. E. B. DuBois, and Frantz Fanon provided the philosophical foundation for understanding the Black experience, particularly racial identity, Blackness, and African consciousness that influenced the reclamation of African psychology.[31] Blyden was among the first Pan-African Nationalists; he centered Africa as the subject, standard, and beginning of all interpretations related to Afri-

[29] Mark A. Bolden, et al. "Psychology of the Divine Warrior" Mbongi July 2023. This panel provided a tribute to Ahati Kilindi Iyi, an ancestor whose martial arts individually and institutionally along with their mycology expertise provide templates for the warrior's role in African society and African psychology as well as the use of psychoactive mushrooms and entheogens in African psychology.

[30] Nobles, 5.

[31] Ibid., 5-10.

can people.[32] He was also known to have proposed one of the earliest models of African personalities which emphasized a distinct African worldview and culture. As a pioneer intellectual, DuBois' work surrounding the "double consciousness" not only foreshadowed the Negritude Movement in general, but also theories and models of Nigrescence in African psychology.[33] Later, in his classic work, *Black Skin White Masks*, Fanon brilliantly conceptualized the colonized Black psyche in a white hegemonic world, which heavily informed the Négritude movement as well.[34] Nobles maintained that Fanon's ideas "should be seen as the mother's milk that nurtured Black psychology's break with White psychological thinking."[35] Throughout Fanon's writings, his theories of oppression, colonialism, and revolutionary resistance laid the foundation for much of the work on Black psychology today.

Prior to the 1960s, African American mental health professionals were virtually unknown throughout the world.[36] In the 1940s, although notions of African psychology were brewing, the 1960s and 1970s witnessed the most significant developments. In the 1960s, during the midst of the Black Power Movement in the United States, African American psychologists sought to challenge the prevailing Eurocentric ideology and practice of mental health that labeled Blacks as psychologically inferior.[37] In the aftermath of the assassinations of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Senator Robert Kennedy in 1968, the civil rights movement reached its apex. The nation grew more fermented and fragmented, resulting in the creation of Black caucuses.[38] For African American psychologists in particular, the need to organize was imminent which led to the formation of the Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi). The quest to revitalize an Afrocentric theoretical perspective in psychology soon gained momentum from its latent status.

In 1968, the ABPsi was founded as a national organization by a group of Black psychologists during a meeting at the American Psychological Association (APA) convention in San Francisco, CA.[39] Over the past fifty years, the ABPsi

[32] Ibid., 6.
[33] Ibid., 7.
[34] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, (New York: Grove Press, 1967).
[35] Nobles, 10.
[36] Robert Williams, *History of the Association of Black Psychologists: Profiles of Outstanding Black Psychologists*, (Bloomington: Author House, 2008), 1.
[37] See Vontress, 1970. 713
[38] Williams, 1-4.
[39] Ibid., 1-4.

has led the campaign to "revitalize, reclaim, and restore" traditional African ideologies, precepts, and practices in psychology. In 1970, Dr. Joseph White is thought to have introduced the term "Black Psychology" in *EBONY* magazine for the first time in his seminal work, *Toward a Black Psychology.*[40] Then, in 1972, Nobles' publication, *African Philosophy: Foundations for Black Psychology*, laid the groundwork for others in the articulation of African psychology.[41] Also, in 1972, and subsequently in 1980, 1991, and 2004, Dr. Reginald Jones edited a series of textbooks entitled *Black Psychology* that highlighted major contributions in Afrocentric theory, research, and clinical practice.[42] Over the next several decades, other Black notable scholars (e.g., Akbar, Hilliard, Kambon, etc.) added to the extant literature to formally establish the reemergence of a discipline and practice of African psychology in the United States.[43]

AFRICAN PSYCHOLOGY IN THE CARIBBEAN

Within and without African psychology, there are emerging recognitions for the inclusions of African people's psychology beyond the United States. This is a critical development due to the reality that only five percent of Africans during the transatlantic enslavement era were brought to the United States.[44] Thus, we are missing ninety-five percent of the diasporic reality if only Africans in the United States are centered in the African Psychology discussion. There are between 100–200 million Africans in Latin America and the Caribbean. Moreover, from an African nationalist and Pan-African liberation perspective, the movements and concerns of African peoples anywhere are a concern for African people everywhere.

Forerunners of the Caribbean African Psychology liberation movements, whose formal work and training sprouted from psychology, include Albert Hamilton Maloney, who served as Acting Chaplain and Minister of Education for the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Trained as a pharmacolo-

[40] Joseph White. "Toward a Black Psychology." *Black Psychology* ed. Reginal Jones (Berkeley: Cobb & Henry Publishers, 2004). 13.
[41] Wade Nobles, "African Philosophy: Foundations of Black Psychology. "*Black Psychology* ed. Reginal Jones (Berkeley: Cobb & Henry Publishers, 1991), 47-64.
[42] Reginald Jones, *Black Psychology* ed. Reginal Jones (Berkeley: Cobb & Henry Publishers, 1972, 1978, 1980, 1991, 2004).
[43] Wade Nobles, *Skh: From Black Psychology to the Science of Being* (New York: Universal Writing Publications, 2023), 28-31.
[44] Equal Justice Initiative, "The Transatlantic Slave Trade" See also Eltis, David, and David Richardson. *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010).

gist, Dr. Maloney wrote for the UNIA newspaper, *The Negro World*, articulated the psychological differences in white and Black churches, and strategized a plan for unified Caribbean sovereignty.[45] The Honorable Marcus Mosiah Garvey, champion of sovereignty for Africans at home and abroad, used psychological principles in his work to address the emancipation from mental slavery.[46] Garveyites, Rastas, and UNIA members comprised over 900 chapters across the diaspora and at home in Africa. They and their acolytes have provided templates and frameworks for the mental liberation of African peoples, forming the roots of the African nationalist movements that filtered into Black power.[47]

Post the ascension of Garvey, Carlos Cooks, a Dominican-born, immediate disciple of Garvey, founded the African National Pioneer Movement (ANPM) that vindicated African nationalism and provided psychological analyses towards decolonizing the mind of African people. In the ANPM newsletter, *Street Speaker*, he devoted a special section to the Tragic Consequence of White Psychology as a three-part series issued over consecutive publications.[48] Additionally, R. W. Williams published an essay entitled "Psychosynthesis," which articulated the psychological process of converting Africans to Negroes.[49] Among other things, Cooks and Caribbean-born African liberation workers, including Elombe Brath and his brother Kwame Braithwaite, were responsible for the Black is Beautiful Grandassa movement in Harlem, New York City, in the late 1960s. The Black is Beautiful movement was a psychological liberation tool to decolonize the white standards of beauty and re-Africanize the standards of beauty for African peoples.[50]

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[45] Arnold Hamilton Maloney. 1949. *After England--We.* .1888 Arnold Hamilton Maloney, and Clarence McDonald Maloney. Pathways to Democracy. (Boston: Meador Publishing Company, 1945).

[46] Amos Wilson. *The Falsification of Afrikan Consciousness : Eurocentric History, Psychiatry, and the Politics of White Supremacy*. 1st ed. (New York: Afrikan World InfoSystems, 1993). Black Psychologists who have been explicit about the UNIA and/or Garvey include Dr. Bobby E. Wright who revived the Chicago Chapter of the UNIA/ACL, Dr. Kobi Kambon writes on the UNIA in Chapter 6 of African/Black Psychology, and Dr. Amos Wilson. More exploration of the Psychology of Garvey and the UNIA is needed. Author, Garveyite/UNIA/ACL member, Mwariama Kamau stands out in this work.

[47] Frederick Hickling and Ezra E. H. Griffith. 1994. "Clinical Perspectives on the Rastafari Movement." Psychiatric Services 45 (1): 49–53. https://doi.org/10.1176/ps.45.1.49.

[48] Carlos Cooks. Edited by Carlos Cooks. *The Street Speaker Magazine*, 1956.

[49] R.W. Williams. "Review of Psychosynthesis: The Conversion of Black Men into Negroes." Edited by Carlos Cooks. The Street Speaker. Accessed October 8, 2016.

[50] Pedro Rivera. "Carlos A. Cooks: Dominican Garveyite in Harlem," In *The Afro-Latin@ Reader: History and Culture in the United States* edited by Miriam Jiménez Román and Juan Flores, 215-218. New York, USA: Duke University Press, 2010. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822391319-030

African psychiatry has provided methods for the engagement of traditional perspectives.[51] Notable psychiatrists in the development of a continental African, African Caribbean, and African Diasporan psychology include ancestors from Tigani El-Mahi, Chester Pierce, Frederick Hickling, Louis Price Mars, and Thomas Adeoye Lambo,[52] to the recent Atong Ayuel Longar Akol. Akol serves as the Director for Mental Health in the South Sudan Ministry of Health (notable due to South Sudan's formation as the newest country in Africa in 2011), where she is one of three psychiatrists in the country. El-Mahi is credited with being the father of African Psychiatry and was present in the first Pan-African psychiatrist meeting in Lagos along with Lambo.[53] Lambo's work on the Aro village experiment opened the doors to the hospital and incorporated the community in the healing process. Lambo and El Mahi along with Basheer expressed the influence of culture and environment on mental illness in Africa, stressed urbanization and poverty as challenges to wellness, issued caution with the use of psychotropic medication, and incorporated traditional healers in practice. Indeed, El Mahi spoke multiple African and non-African languages and read and translated *Mdw Ntr* into Arabic.[54]

Mars is considered the father of psychiatry in Haiti, coined the term *ethnopsychiatry*, and outlined the positive nexus of Vodun and mental health for Haitian practitioners.[55] Auguste et al. note that Mars' work precedes Fanon's

[51] D L Mkize, "Towards an Afrocentric Approach to Psychiatry," *South African Journal of Psychiatry* 9, no. 1 (2003): 4, https://doi.org/10.4102/sajpsychiatry.v9i1.128.

[52] Auguste et al, note the contradictions of Mars and his relationship to Duvalier and the United States. Evan Auguste et al., "La Lutte Continue: Louis Mars and the Genesis of Ethnopsychiatry.," *American Psychologist* 78, no. 4 (May 2023): 469–83, https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0001097. Much can be said about the contradictions of Lambo whose invitation for police to quell a student protest resulted in the killing of the student, Kunle Adepeju, by police when Lambo was vice chancellor in 1971.

[53] Ahmed Hassan, "Tigani El-Mahi the Sudanese Who Volunteered as Chief Psychiatrist in the Egyptian Medical Corps," Nasser Youth Movement, accessed January 14, 2024, April 21, 2022, https://nasseryouthmovement.net/tigani-el-mahi.

It should be noted that the phrase pan African is not a reference to the unity of African people across the world. This pan African references the colonial imposition of Africa's states and their psychiatrists whether Black African or settler colonial white or European white. See also Our Reporter, "Remembering Kunle Adepeju," Tribune Online, accessed January 29, 2024, January 31, 2021, https://tribuneonlineng.com/remembering-kunle-adepeju/

[54] Taha A Baasher, "First Tigani El Mahi Memorial Lecture," *Sudanese journal of Paediatrics*, 2013, https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4949970/.

[55] Louis P. Mars, "The Story of Zombi in Haiti," *Man* 45 (1945): 38, https://doi.org/10.2307/2792947. See an excellent treatise on Mars in the work of Auguste, Evan, et al. "La Lutte Continue: Louis Mars." American Psychologist 78, no. 4 (2023): 469–83. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0001097.

work, yet he remains obscure in the history of African, Caribbean, and Western psychology and psychiatry. Pierce, most well-known as the founder of the concept of microaggressions in the United States, but lesser known for his pivotal role in imaging Black and Brown children on TV for *Sesame Street*, coordinated a meeting of African diaspora psychiatrists in 2002.[56]

At this African diaspora meeting, the Black psychiatrists identified the epidemiology of mental illness in the countries from which they came and the psychological strategies of combating the effects of colonization, capitalism, and enslavement. In his conference paper, Hickling, a Jamaican Psychiatrist, alluded to a prior Pan-African mental health meeting in 2000 and noted several facets of a blueprint for Africans to develop societies that could support the African Renaissance. Scholars in the Harvard conference hailed from the Americas, diverse regions of Africa, and Fiji. A powerful African diaspora meeting, indeed.

Frantz Fanon represents the height of Caribbean-born liberation psychiatrists, joined by many after him. For example, Frederick Hickling engaged in liberation struggles by barring the Western psychological practices of electroconvulsive shock in Bellevue Hospital when he took over and made changes akin to Fanon's work in Algeria at Hôpital Psychiatrique de Blida-Joinville.[57] In addition, Hickling championed cultural psychiatry over biological psychiatry to address the well-being and psychological and academic performance of poor children in Jamaica.[58] Providing the children with opportunities to reclaim the esteem of their cultural identities through song, arts, storytelling, and theater, the children raised up their self-esteem and claimed their cultural identity as black Jamaican children with power. Hickling also used psychohistoriography to train communities to see the political process of madness as a societal phenomenon necessitated by their oppression for centuries under British control.[59] Hickling championed the Rasta cause in Jamaica, opening and closing his speeches with the Garvey/UNIA motto:

[56] Frederick Hickling. "The African Renaissance and the Struggle for Mental Health in the African Diaspora." In Proceedings of The African Diaspora Conference, edited by Organ, Paul. The Africa Global Mental Health Institute, 2002. 122-133.] More conference proceedings are available at agmhi.org. These conferences are more consistent with the current notions of Pan-Africanism as opposed to the earlier colonial notions footnoted above.
[57] Anne Hickling-Hudson, 'The People's Psychiatrist': Chief Madman or Revolutionary Healer? Dr. Fred Hickling and the Development of Postcolonial Psychiatry in Jamaica. 2020. 150.
[58] Ibid, 150.
[59] Ibid., 150.

"One God, One Aim, One Destiny." Finally, Hickling developed a course for M.Sc. Clinical Psychology students at the University of the West Indies, Mona (UWI, Mona), entitled Introduction to Caribbean Psychology in 2002.[60] This course would set in motion the formation of an African Caribbean psychology.

Dr. Marcia Sutherland has been instrumental in developing African Caribbean psychology as a field that engages how African liberation is expressed in the Caribbean and Americas among Black populations. More relatedly, she has tasked African Caribbean Psychology with addressing the internalized colonialism of African Caribbeans akin to earlier calls for Black psychologists to "help end the colonial relationship between the black community and white America."[61] Sutherland also notes that Caribbean Psychology can embrace African psychological approaches to examine maroon societies to understand the manifestations of deep-structured African ideologies through their languages and retentions of indigenous African traditions. What may be added to Sutherland's inclusion of the maroon societies is Pogue's notion of the necessity of the maroon mentality for African liberation which extends Hilliard's call to awaken the maroon within us.[62]

AFRICAN PSYCHOLOGY IN CONTINENTAL AFRICA

According to Nsamenang, during the colonial era, European American psychology entered Africa in part due to the efforts of Christian missionaries, as well as through the contributions of visiting Western psychologists and some returning Africans who had received training in mainstream Western psychology from foreign universities.[63] To prepare African candidates for

[60] Frederick W. Hickling, ed. *Perspectives in Caribbean Psychology.* London, England: Jessica Kingsley. 2012.

[61] Marcia Elizabeth Sutherland. "Toward a Caribbean Psychology." *Journal of Black Studies* 42 (8): (2011) https://doi.org/10.1177/0021934711410547. 1179.

Joseph Hannibal. "How to End Colonial Domination in Black America:" Negro Digest 19, no. 3 (1970): 4–10, 66–69.

[62] Tiffany Pogue, "Maroon Mentality" Medium. September 28, 2020. Accessed September 20, 2023. https://tiffanydphd.medium.com/building-a-maroon-mentality d8ec14d2ed6f.

Marimba Ani. Let the Circle Be Unbroken: The Implications of African Spirituality in the Diaspora. (Baltimore: Afrikan World Books. 2024). 22.

Asa G. Hilliard, The Maroon within US: Selected Essays on African American Community Socialization (Baltimore, MD: Black Classic Press, 1995).

[63] Augustine Bame Nsamenang, Origins and Development of Scientific Afrique Noire, *International Journal of Psychology*, 42.

theology and the priesthood, Christian (Catholic) missionaries incorporated standard Western psychology into their philosophical training program. As African nations established political independence and subsequently post-colonial universities, the Western psychology curriculum remained as the primary philosophy and science in the study of the African psyche. For the most part, as African universities were established throughout the 1960s and 70s, they operated much like satellite campuses and clones of their European "mother Universities."[64]

However, most recently, there has been an intensified effort to recapture the resurgence of an African psychology in continental Africa, much like in the United States and the Caribbean. As a postcolonial discipline, African psychology essentially emerged in response to colonialism's dehumanizing, disrespectful, and primitive depiction of Africa and African people.[65] Nwoye observed that the following responses to Western psychology profoundly impacted the development of African psychology in Africa: (a) serve as a protest psychology; (b) acknowledge and question Western psychological theories and practices for African contexts; (c) act as a rehabilitative psychology that opposes Western psychological research that dehumanizes and misrepresents Africans and their culture; (d) acknowledge that African scholars were copying the work of European and American theorists and practitioners who disregarded Africa's interests; (e) contest the reductionistic and atomistic model of human life put forth by Western psychology; (f) Western psychology's alienation of traditional and ancestral African knowledge systems; and (g) failure of Western psychology to address urban and rural populations in Africa.[66] The combination of these factors, rather than any single one, resulted in a cogent need to establish a psychology tailored to postcolonial Africa.

To this end, three significant events in particular helped to propel the re-emergence and advent of African psychology in Africa, namely, the Thirtieth International Congress of Psychologists meeting in Cape Town, South Africa, in 2012, the reconvening at the ABPsi meeting in New Orleans, LA, USA, in 2013, and then again at the First International Congress of the Forum of African Psychology in Limpopo, South Africa, in 2014.[67] These meetings were

[64] Augustine Nwoye, *African Psychology: The Emergence of a Tradition*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022), 3-34.
[65] Ibid., 42-44.
[66] Ibid., 36-41.
[67] Wade Nobles, "From Black Psychology to Djaer: Implications for the Further Development of a Pan African Psychology. *Journal of Black Psychology.* (2015). 399-414.

well attended by Black psychologists worldwide for the purpose of forming an African psychology in Africa and, ultimately, a Pan-African Black Psychology, globally. To date, African psychology continues to expand throughout continental Africa as scholars seek to decolonize and escape the hegemonic control of Western imperial psychology. Particularly, in South Africa at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, African psychology is now taught throughout the psychology curriculum at the undergraduate, honors, and graduate degree levels.[68]

THE ROLE OF HBCUs AND OTHER AFRICAN INSTITUTIONS

Historically Black Colleges and Universities in the United States

In the 1940s, Dr. Herman George Canady was the first to advocate for the inclusion of an African/Black psychology curriculum at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).[69] According to Kambon, Black psychology was virtually absent from the university curricula prior to the 1960s and '70s.[70] In fact, Black psychology would find its home in the Black Studies Department more often than in psychology departments. However, with the advent of ABPsi, there was an increased interest and focus by Black faculty to develop more African/Black psychology courses, programs, and activities at HBCUs in psychology departments.[71] One such example in the early 1970s was the Minority Mental Health Program (MMHP) at Washington University in St. Louis led by Dr. Robert Williams. Although separate from the Psychology Department, this program grew to one of the most successful in training graduate students in African/Black psychology of its time.[72] Another pioneer example included the Community Clinical Psychology (CCP) Project and Dr. Louis A. Ramey's African-Centered Psychology Training Program.[73] Much like the MMHP, Ramey developed the CCP Project to increase the number of Black students in the field of psychology while exposing them to an African/Black psychology curriculum.[74] As earlier examples, MMHP and

[68] Nwoye, 3.
[69] Kobi K. K. Kambon, "Africentric Pedagogy in Psychology: The FAMU Model" in *African Psychology in Historical Perspective & Related Commentary*, ed. Daudi Ajani ya Azibo, (Trenton: Third World Press, 1996), 248.
[70] Ibid., 248.
[71] Ibid, 248.
[72] Kobi K. K. Kambon, *African/ Black Psychology in the American Context: An African-Centered Approach*, (Tallahassee: Nubian Nations Publications, 1998), 480-481.
[73] Ibid, 481 - 483.
[74] Ibid., 481.

CCP established the foundation for other HBCU African-centered psychology/counseling programs to follow, namely those in Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University and Bowie State University.

Nationally known as the highest ranked public HBCU, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) is a leader in academia, especially for the African psychology education offered to students pursuing undergraduate psychology or a master's degree in community psychology.[75] As the founding chair of FAMU's Psychology Department in 1954, Dr. Joseph Awkard offered the first Black/African psychology course, titled Black Psychology Perspectives. In 1980, Dr. Kobi K. K. Kambon joined the department and took over as the new chairperson, which strengthened the department's Africanity and visibility in the field. Kambon elevated the department to national prominence in the 1980s and '90s through his own work and the hiring of other faculty with an African-centered research focus. As the chief architect of the FAMU model, Kambon increased the number of African/Black psychology courses, infused African/Black psychology content throughout the curriculum, established an annual colloquium series that featured notable Black psychology scholars, and developed an annual weeklong program of Black psychology symposia, seminars, and workshops.[76] Dr. Kambon's legacy is noteworthy; many of his former students are now leaders in the field of African psychology today.

Inspired by Dr. Kambon and the FAMU model, Dr. Otis Williams III founded the African Psychology Student Association (APSA) in 2010 within the Department of Counseling and Psychological Studies at Bowie State University (BSU).[77] In 2018, Dr. Mark Bolden joined the department, followed by Dr. Marja Humphrey in 2019. As APSA co-advisors, these three faculty members have helped to expand the Association's activities at the national level. The mission of APSA is to prepare students in addressing issues germane to people of African descent/in the Black community. APSA events are focused on increasing the awareness, understanding, and skills of graduate-level counseling students for working with African-descent clients and families. APSA holds an annual conference to accomplish its goals and includes the local, regional, and national community of reputable Black scholars. Recent

[75] See https://cssah.famu.edu/departments-and-centers/psychology/index.php
[76] Kambon, 250.
[77] See https://bowiestate.edu/academics/colleges/college-of-education/departments/counseling/student-organizations.php

conference themes have been Trauma and Healing with Black Women and Girls (2024); Black Athletes, Mental Health & Wellness (2023); The Sexual Victimization and Hypersexualization of Black Bodies (2022); African Holistic Health & Wellness for Women & Girls (2021); and The Psychology of Enslavement, Liberation, and Maroonage for Africans in the Americas (2019). This work, which began through APSA, has been formalized in the curriculum with newly required course for master's level counselors-in-training related to Theories & Applications in African-Centered Counseling and an advanced version of the course of the same title that is mandatory for doctoral students. The courses provide a comprehensive study of African-centered counseling theories and praxes including topics such as identity, education, ethics, spirituality, family, social justice, traditional healing and healers, entheogens and power plants, and biology from an African-centered perspective.

African Psychology Institute

As an effort to develop and implement an African psychology national curriculum, the African Psychology Institute (API) is the primary training and instructional sector of ABPsi.[78] The API was developed to prepare mental health professionals with the cultural competence required to effectively meet the psychological needs of persons of African descent. As a pioneer institution, API became the first to organize an African psychology think tank of its magnitude in the United States.[79] In 1982, the API published *The African Psychology Institute Training Module Handbook*, which focused on three general components: (1) basic concepts of African psychology, (2) personality order and disorder from an African-centered perspective, and (3) family and community life from an African-centered perspective.[80] Later, in 1999, API co-chairs Rowe and Kambon led the task of developing a curriculum in African psychology. The curriculum was developed to introduce participants to the latest concepts, methodologies, and interventions that emanated from African precepts, processes, and principles.[81] Today, API has partnered with ABPsi's Licensing, Certification, and Proficiency Program (LCPP) to offer credentialing for those who desire to serve people of African descent.

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[78] Daryl Rowe and Mawiyah Kambon, A Curriculum in African Psychology, *Psych Discourse*, 7-9.
[79] Kambon, *African/ Black Psychology in the American Context: An African-Centered Approach*, 480-482.
[80] Ibid., 482.
[81] Rowe and Kambon, 3.

Caribbean Universities

Caribbean universities are seeing a rise in programs offering training in psychology. Ward and Hickling document the status of academic training in the Caribbean, noting that most programs in psychology opened at the end of the 20th century. More established programs exist in Martinique, Guadeloupe, Cuba, and Haiti. Cuba, Haiti, and Martinique stand out from their potential to focus their psychological traditions on the respective lenses: Cuban revolution, socialism, African traditional religions, their successful response to persistent aggression and the economic embargo from the US (Cuba); the Haitian revolution and Vodun (Haiti); and the Fanonian traditions of Martinique.[82] Recommendations to the challenges in psychology training include shared internships; Caribbean psychology theory building; distance-learning; developing and promoting a Caribbean identity, and licensing at the master's level; and development through Caribbean regional auspices such as using and moving beyond the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) regulatory countries to include Caribbean countries not included under CARICOM--among other capacity building efforts.[83] Relevant to this current paper, we suggest that African Caribbean Psychology be included in the theory building, accreditation efforts, curricula development, clinical practice, supervision, and licensing. The opportunity to share the findings of African Caribbean Psychology in the Caribbean has received a boost by the founding of the Caribbean Alliance of National Psychological Associations in 2013.

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[82] E. Auguste and A. Rasmussen, "Vodou's Role in Haitian Mental Health," *Global Mental Health* 6 (2019): E25. doi:10.1017/gmh.2019.23.

[83] See the following articles for nuanced discussions on building up Caribbean Psychology. Rita Dudley-Grant. "Capacity, Collaboration, Credentials: Challenges to Psychology in the Caribbean." Revista Interamericana de Psicología/Interamerican Journal of Psychology 47, no. 2 (2013): 260. Redalyc, https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=28430082010; Ward and Hickling, "Psychology in the English-Speaking Caribbean." *The Psychologist* 17, no. 8 (August 2004): 442–44.

Dennis John Edwards. 2014. "Psychology Bridge Building in the Caribbean: A Proposal". *Revista Interamericana De Psicología/Interamerican Journal of Psychology* 47 (2). 272-275 https://doi.org/10.30849/rip/ijp.v47i2.221.

Donna-Maria Bradshaw Maynard, "Capacity Building in Mental Health: Preparing Caribbean Psychologists for the Future," *The Journal of Mental Health Training, Education and Practice* 18, no. 3 (January 6, 2023): 200-202, https://doi.org/10.1108/jmhtep-08-2022-0067.

Omowale Amuleru-Marshall. "Capacity Development of Psychology in the Caribbean: Lessons from near and Far." *Revista Interamericana de Psicología/Interamerican Journal of Psychology* 47, no. 2 (2013): 246. Redalyc, https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=28430082009

African Universities and Institutions

While teaching the *Sakhu* may be categorized in the classroom context, the initial systems of education in Kemet are described as mystery systems.[84] While those so-called mystery systems remain present in East African societies and throughout Africa, there are universities recently opened by revolutionaries like Drs. Theophile Obenga and Hussein Bulhan. Dr. Bulhan founded the Frantz Fanon University in Somaliland, and Dr. Obenga is instrumental in opening the first public university built by the Congolese people without funding and aid by non-Congolese people, the Université de Denis Sassou Nguesso.[85] Dr. Obenga envisions the university as a Pan-African space for the students of Africa to engage in mental liberation.[86] The ancestor *Sesh* (an ancient Kemetic term for "scribe"), Cheikh Anta Diop's namesake university in Senegal remains a fertile ground for the engagement of psychological and traditional healing traditions in Senegal and boasts a rich history of student protest.[87] In Angola, the Universidade Agostinho Neto holds potential for African psychology if they engage the liberatory efforts of the namesake MPLA co-founder. These four universities are critical because they represent the anti-colonial and anti-imperial possibilities of African universities in namesake and/or in practice.

In Nigeria, the University of Ibadan Institute of African Studies remains a vibrant producer of deep knowledge and the strength of the cultural and historic memory for African peoples around the world since the 1960s when Lambo taught there. The symposia during this period were well documented.[88] During the same era, the University of Nigeria, Nsukka founded the Institute for African Studies, directed by William Leo Hansberry, famed African American historian from Howard University who hired as his deputy director, Edward Wilmot Blyden III, grandson of Edward Wilmot Blyden the vindicationist.[89]

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[84] Mario Beatty. "Expanding the Meaning of the Word 'sStA'," in ANKH: Revue D'Egyptologie et des Civilisations Africaines. Nos. 10/11 (2001/2002), 49.
[85] Université Denis Sassou N'Guesso. 2024. "Accueil - Université Denis Sassou-N'Guesso." Université Denis Sassou-N'Guesso. April 15, 2024. https://www.udsn.cg/.
[86] Oba T Shaka, "A Conversation with Dr. Theophile Obenga," YouTube, April 22, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PfRlxtz73gk
[87] Gueye, "May 1968 in Senegal."
[88] Robert G Armstrong, ed., Papers Presented at a Special Seminar on the Traditional Background to Medical Practice in Nigeria, April 20-23, 1966, vol. 25 (Ibadan, Oyo, Nigeria: University of Ibadan, 1971).
[89] Afigbo, 89–92.

Mzansi/Azania (colonially known as South Africa) has the potential to revolutionize African psychology at the University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN), the University of Limpopo, and Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University.[90] Baloyi notes that the concept of African psychology does not have an epistemological translation in the Bantu African languages and offers the concept of *swa moya* (life-discerning power of the soul) as its own conceptual paradigm in the curriculum of liberation psychology for Africans. Akin to the *Sakhu*, *moya* does not translate into "spirit" or "psyche"; rather it reflects the embodiment of the spirit, and its disembodiment requires relational harmony with the *swikwenbu/ badimo* (ancestors) for wellness and health. To that end, Baloyi describes the *swa moya* curriculum taught at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University that prepares its graduates to address the historic harm caused by settler colonialism and apartheid in South Africa with its psychological terrorism by restoring the indigenous African philosophies, values, and therapeutic systems of the African communities from a localized African perspective as a liberation imperative for the curriculum in psychology. Javange suggests that African psychology is necessary for the liberation of Zimbabwean minds and should be taught at the undergraduate level, potentially a project led by ABPsi.[91]

RECOMMENDATIONS

Calls for decolonizing the mental health curricula are decades old. While we see decolonizing the curriculum as a major task, there are larger challenges present in the task of creating a Pan-African Liberation Psychology curriculum. One of these challenges exists in the source materials for professors to develop decolonized, Black psychology course syllabi. Towards that end, Dr. Reginald L. Jones, a founder of the Association of Black Psychologists, and his colleagues issued a call for courses on Black/African Psychology. Given the number of syllabi they received, the editors recognized that they had enough syllabi for two volumes of the sourcebook on teaching Black Psychology.[92] A second problem arises at the institutional level. Courses are not

[90] Lesiba Baloyi. "From Teaching Psychology in Conqueror South Africa to Teaching African Swa Moya in the Psychology Curriculum: Critical Reflections and Experiences in a Masters Clinical Psychology Programme," *South African Journal of Psychology* 51, no. 3 (2020): 458–460, https://doi.org/10.1177/0081246320954308.

[91] Gwatirera Javangwe, "How to Africanize Psychology in Zimbabwean Universities," *Journal of Black Psychology* 39 no. 3. (Spring 2013): 337 https://doi.org/10.1177/0095798413480681.

[92] Jones, 1978.

designed autonomously by individual scholars. Courses are constructed to fit the expectations of training as set by the accrediting agency. Thus, when the call for decolonizing the curriculum is clear, there is an accompanying call to decolonize the accreditation process.

To decolonize the accreditation process requires a reevaluation of the relationships and power dynamics between Western psychology and people of African descent. The authors recommend that the authority to accredit, license, and certify should rest internally with African-centered professional organizations (e.g., Association of Black Psychologists), rather than the existing Eurocentric power structure. The best example of this proposal is ABPsi's Licensure, Certification, and Proficiency Program (LCPP).[93] This innovative approach was developed in 2007 and has since gained national recognition. However, the LCPP has yet to be recognized by state and national accreditation bodies and licensure and certification boards as a required credential to lawfully practice. LCPP is designed to license and certify mental health professionals to work with people of African descent in any of four divisions: (1) teaching, (2) research, (3) assessment, and (4) clinical services.[94] Applicants are also expected to complete 500 hours of combined coursework and experiential knowledge. We propose adding accreditation to the list of services offered, whereby LCPP develops an accrediting component to oversee standards in African psychology curriculum at learning institutions.

SUMMARY

Audre Lorde famously expressed that utilizing the tools of the oppressor will not lead to dismantling the oppressive system.[95] In the journey towards healing, liberation, and sovereignty for diasporic African communities, it is imperative to recognize Western psychology as one such tool of the oppressor. As such, African peoples must reclaim and reshape African psychology into a framework for liberation both in theory and praxis. Across the United States, the Caribbean, and Africa itself, African psychology has resurfaced as a response to the psychological warfare imposed by Western (European) ideologies. To introduce and implement a curriculum rooted in African psy-

[93] See https://abpsi.org/lcpp/

[94] Olisayaa Tolokun. *Afrikana Psychology Credentialing and Curriculum Development: An Educational Guide for Rising Sakhu Shetis.* 2021

[95] Audre Lorde. *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House.* (United Kingdom: Penguin, 2018). 98.

chology, the authors suggest leveraging HBCUs and other African-centered institutions as liberatory spaces for organizing this transformative agenda. These environments should serve as hubs for African-centered pedagogy, fostering deliberate, uninhibited engagement with the concept of "Teaching the *Sakhu*." Moreover, as the curriculum undergoes decolonization, it is vital to incorporate accreditation processes. This entails enabling people of African descent to accredit their own educational institutions, with the explicit aim of training African students to serve African communities. Only through these steps can the aspiration of "Teaching the *Sakhu*" be realized.

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Liberation Theory and Praxis

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This research abstract provides a comprehensive exploration of the question: "How have Black people approached and engaged with Liberation Theory and praxis to secure self-determination both historically and contemporarily?" Drawing on a peer-centric approach and insights from significant initiatives such as the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and State Opioid Response (SOR), this study examines the crucial role of increasing Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) peer support professionals within marginalized communities. Liberation Theory, encompassing the empowerment of oppressed communities through critical analysis and transformative action, forms the backdrop for our investigation. Partnering with the esteemed organization Jordan Peer Recovery (JPR), our exploration delves into the intersections of peer recovery, cultural responsiveness, and trauma-informed care. Noteworthy HRSA-funded programs, including the Opioid Workforce Innovation Fund, SOR, and Baltimore Population Health Workforce Collaborative, have made substantial strides in training nearly 1,000 peers actively engaged in combating the opioid epidemic across Maryland, Washington, DC, and Virginia. Furthermore, we analyze the endeavors of Jordan Peer Recovery and the team with the principles of Liberation Theory and praxis. Initiatives like Maryland's inaugural registered apprenticeship program for peer support specialists, the creation of Forensic Peer Specialists to reform juvenile justice systems, and recognition by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in the top ten percent of recovery innovation in the United States, epitomize the application of liberation approaches in addressing multifaceted challenges encountered by Black communities.

By examining how BIPOC peer support professionals integrate Liberation Theory and praxis, this research underscores insights into transformative potential and self-determination. Jordan Peer Recovery's extensive publications, collaborations with prestigious institutions, and cross-border assistance emphasize the positive outcomes of these approaches. Through the analysis of case studies and insights from HRSA and SOR programs, readers gain an understanding of how Liberation Theory and praxis contribute to securing self-determination for Black individuals. Peer support can be more culturally sensitive, by reducing stigmas and providing a more comfortable and relatable environment that facilitates self-determination. This can be especially important in communities that have historically been marginalized or that have less access to healthcare resources that are culturally responsive. In conclusion, this research offers a thorough analysis of how Black individuals have engaged with Liberation Theory and praxis to secure self-determination. By examining the interplay between these concepts and BIPOC peer support initiatives, this study underscores the transformative potential of these approaches in addressing complex challenges faced by Black communities.

INTRODUCTION

This article seeks to explore the critical question "How have Black people historically and contemporarily used Liberation Theory and praxis for self-determination?" At the heart of this investigation is Liberation Theory. According to Lillian Comas-Díaz and Edil Torres Rivera, researchers like Martín-Baró Ignacio define "Liberation Theory (*Liberation Psychology*) as the use of psychological approaches to understand and address oppression among individuals and groups."[1] Liberation Psychology is not just a theory. It is a vital vehicle that can be used in conjunction with peer support to strengthen communities and mitigate environmental stressors experienced by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).[2] Peer support has been found to be effective in improving the well-being of clients.[3] Trust and respect are key as-

[1] Lillian Comas- Díaz and Edil Torres Rivera, *Liberation Psychology: Theory, Method, Practice, and Social Justice*, (District of Columbia: American Psychology Association, 2020), 41.
[2] Comas-Díaz and Torres Rivera, *Liberation Psychology*, 287.
[3] Bernd Puschner et al., "Using Peer Support in Developing Empowering Mental Health Services (UPSIDES): Background, Rationale and Methodology," *Annals of Global Health* 85, no. 1 (April 2019): 2, https://doi.org/10.5334/aogh.2435.

pects of peer support that are associated with retention and success.[4] The case studies presented in this article are grounded in the thought that Liberation Theory and peer support can positively impact the well-being and quality of life of Black people and all people of color.

Hector Adames, Nayeli Chavez-Dueñas, and Maryam Jernigan highlighted the importance of these approaches in securing self-determination for Black individuals within marginalized contexts.[5] This article will additionally highlight innovative training practices and resources utilized to combat injustice and oppression experienced by BIPOC. Through a comprehensive and strategic exploration process, this article aims to illustrate the vast aspects of deploying Liberation Theory and peer support to assist BIPOC individuals and communities with healing, recovery, and empowerment. Ultimately, this article will emphasize the significance of Liberation Theory and peer support as vital instruments in the enduring quest to combat and mitigate inequality, injustice, and oppression experienced by BIPOC.

Liberation Theory: An Overview

Comas-Díaz and Rivera note that Liberation Theory (also referred to as Liberation Psychology) utilizes procedures to recognize and mitigate oppression and marginalization experienced by individuals, groups, and communities.[6] The researchers emphasize that Liberation Theory is grounded in action and aims to address different forms of oppression, e.g., cultural, historical, systemic, and sociopolitical forms encountered by various populations of people.[7] Researchers like Bryant-Davis and Moore-Lobba focus on the utilization of Liberation Theory to transform people, systems, institutions, and governments to address oppression and create greater, just, and beloved communities for Black people.[8] Rivera highlights the concepts of Liberation

[4] Rebeccah Sokol and Edwin Fisher, "Peer Support for the Hardly Reached: A Systematic Review," *American Journal of Public Health* 106, (June 2016): e4, https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2016.303180.

[5] Hector Adames, Nayeli Chavez-Dueñas, and Maryam Jernigan, "Dr Janet E Helms: Envisioning and Creating a More Humane Psychological Science, Theory, and Practice," *American Psychologist* 78, no. 4 (2023): 401-12.

[6] Comas-Díaz and Torres Rivera, *Liberation Psychology*, 291.

[7] Comas-Díaz and Torres Rivera, 291.

[8] Thema Bryant-Davis and Shavonne Moore-Lobba, "Black Minds Matter: Applying Liberation Psychology to Black Americans," in *Liberation Psychology: Theory, Method, Practice, and Social Justice*, ed. Lillian Comas-Díaz and Edil Torres Rivera (District of Columbia: American Psychology Association, 2020), 201.

Theory, which includes reorientation of psychology, recovering history memory, de-ideologizing everyday experience, denaturalization, problematization, virtues of the people, conscientization, power dynamics, and praxis.[9]

Reorientation of psychology is grounded in the belief that Western psychology cannot sufficiently address severe and oppressive problems experienced by people of color.[10] Reorientation of psychology is utilized to address systemic problems by investigating their sociopolitical causes.[11] For *recovering historical memory*, "the most critical aspect of this concept is that the investigation of societal structures and the recovery of historical memory needs to be conducted by those who are oppressed in partnership with social scientists and practitioners."[12] *De-ideologizing everyday experiences* reflects on the fact that marginalized and oppressed populations can organize their reality through an inquiry process involving the imposed reality and the answers generated or not generated through the de-ideologizing process.[13] The concept *denaturalization* focuses on the examination of normalizing notions, beliefs, and assumptions.[14] In reference to *problematization*, the concept examines the impact of people developing a deeper understanding of issues experienced by marginalized and oppressed populations.[15]

Virtues of the people highlights the need for social scientists to concentrate on the strengths of oppressed populations.[16] Oppressed populations generate methods that can fuel the production of liberation.[17] The concept *conscientization* involves the repeated process of activating consciousness.[18] In regards to *power dynamics*, the concept highlights the importance of power, wellness, liberation, and oppression having political and psychological parts.[19] Lastly, *praxis* emphasizes the importance of the relationship between theory and ac-

[9] Edil Torres Rivera, "Concepts of Liberation Psychology," in *Liberation Psychology: Theory, Method, Practice, and Social Justice*, ed. Lillian Comas-Díaz and Edil Torres Rivera (District of Columbia: American Psychology Association, 2020), 44.
[10] Rivera Torres, "Concepts of Liberation Psychology," 44.
[11] Rivera Torres, 44.
[12] Rivera Torres, 45.
[13] Rivera Torres, 45.
[14] Rivera Torres, 45.
[15] Rivera Torres, 46.
[16] Rivera Torres, 46.
[17] Rivera Torres, 46.
[18] Rivera Torres, 46.
[19] Rivera Torres, 47.

tion.[20] Overall, Liberation Theory is an effective approach utilized to address the needs of marginalized and oppressed populations through critical analysis and action. Liberation Theory assists in uplifting and strengthening BIPOC.

Peer Support in Marginalized Communities: A Liberation Approach

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) provides a helpful discussion outlining how peer support consists of a variety of activities and interactions between people who have similar experiences.[21] Researchers like Jordan and Hackett highlight the importance of utilizing peer support with marginalized communities.[22] Infusing culturally responsive services that address cultural beliefs, environmental stressors, discrimination of individuals, groups, and communities are important aspects of peer support.[23] Peer support can assist in liberating and healing Black people and communities in the face of injustice and inequality.[24] This current article emphasizes the importance of utilizing both Liberation Theory and peer support to provide healing and empowerment to marginalized and oppressed populations. Both Liberation Theory and peer support can counteract injustice and provide people with a deeper level of mindfulness and sociopolitical perspectives. Marginalized populations can utilize Liberation Theory and peer support to reinforce collectivism and generate community building to solve problems.

For example, researchers like Mohr and Afi conducted case studies to explore peacebuilding among three Muslim women from an Islamic feminist Liberation Psychology perspective.[25] The women in the study were found to utilize peacebuilding efforts that contributed to de-ideologizing reality and virtues of

[20] Rivera Torres, 47.

[21] Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, "Value of Peers," 2017 https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/brss_tacs/value-of-peers-2017.pdf.

[22] Masica Jordan and Joseph Hackett, "Culturally Responsive Peer Recovery," *Advances in Addiction and Recovery*, National Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors, 2019, https://www.naadac.org/assets/2416/aa&r_winter2019_culturally_responsive_peer_recovery-20220111102427777.pdf.

[23] Jordan and Hackett, "Culturally Responsive Peer Recovery."

[24] Shinjini Backshi, "Peer Support as a Tool for Community Care: Nothing About Us, Without Us," *Columbia Social Work Review* 19, no. 1 (2021): 33, https://journals.library.columbia.edu/index.php/cswr/article/view/7602.

[25] Sarah Huxtable Mohr and Halima Afi, "Islamic Feminist Liberation Psychology and Peacebuilding: Case Studies of Muslim Women in Community Organizing in Restorative Justice and Parenting," *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 29, no. 2 (2023): 163, https://doi.org/10.1037/pac0000651.

decreasing violence in the world and revitalizing human relationships.[26] In addition, researchers like Grabe examined structural and individual empowerment based on Liberation Psychology among 238 women in rural Nicaragua.[27] Grabe found that from a Liberation Psychological perspective, successful collaboration between community organizations and the women possibly influenced achieving social justice.[28] Researchers have found that the use of Liberation Psychology helps with enhancing organizational staff advocacy efforts with BIPOC populations like migrant asylum-seeking workers.[29] Liberation Psychology also assists organizational staff with restoring migrant asylum-seeking workers' self-image and self-esteem.[30]

Methodology

The following three research grants are highlighted as case studies in this article: The United States Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training (BHWET); the Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for the State Opioid Response – Opioid Response Network (SOR-ORN); and the U.S. Department of Labor National Health Emergency Dislocated Worker Demonstration Grants, the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) Maryland Department of Labor's Opioid Workforce Innovation Fund (OWIF). Through a four-year partnership with Jordan Peer Recovery, Institution X (the entity that was the focus of this study) has trained 270 peers to become Certified Peer Recovery Specialists and Registered Peer Supervisors in the state of Maryland with BHWET. BHWET administered surveys in 2017 to examine participants' thoughts about a fifty-hour peer recovery specialists (PRS) training, an eight-hour peer supervision training, and sixteen-hour training-of-trainer (TOT) sessions for peer recovery trainers. For SOR-ORN, Institution X in partnership with Jordan Peer Recovery provided an Opioid Response Network (ORN) clinical program to train and

[26] Huxtable Mohr and Afi, "Islamic Feminist,"163.
[27] Shelly Grabe, "An Empirical Examination of Women's Empowerment and Transformative Change in the Context of International Development," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 49, no. 2 (2012): 233, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-011-9453-y.
[28] Grabe, "An Empirical Examination," 243.
[29] Rebecca Lawthom et al., "Partnership Working as Liberation Psychology: Forced Labour Amongst UK Chinese Migrant Workers," *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community* 45, no. 1 (2017): 15, https://doi.org/10.1080/10852352.2016.1197730
[30] Lawthom et al., "Partnership," 15.

prepare graduate students in offering evidence-based interventions that reduce opioid overdoses, prevent opioid use disorders, and support recovery results and outcomes. A partnership with Institution X, Jordan Peer Recovery is in its second round of funding through Maryland Department of Health (currently in year three of four years of funding).

In the first two years, Jordan Peer Recovery trained 240 in the Registered Peer Supervisor's curriculum and will train 120 more by September 2024 through SOR-ORN. Jordan Peer Recovery is also training 350 participants in seven evidence-based curricula, including Narrative Therapy, Psychopharmacology, SBIRT, ASAM, CBT, Motivational Interviewing and Reinforcement-Based Treatment. The data collection process in 2023 for SOR-ORN involved both quantitative and qualitative methods that included surveys, interviews, observations, and focus groups. In addition, during the assessment phase of SOR-ORN, Individualized Career Services are offered by providing the Recovery Specialist Employability Score (RSES) assessment of the peer recovery workforce. In partnership with Institution X, Jordan Peer Recovery was awarded four rounds of OWIF funding between 2019 and 2021 to train over two hundred Maryland residents. The RSES assessment was additionally utilized for OWIF. RSES examines seven domains involving a peer's knowledge of essential skills, ability to think critically, and assessing one's own recovery strength to best determine career fit.[31]

Case Studies: BHWET, SOR-ORN, and OWIF

The BHWET, SOR-ORN, and OWIF grants are strategically aligned with Liberation Theory and peer support. For the BHWET grant, the participants consisted of Institution X graduate students in the master's level psychology programs, as well as Maryland residents interested in working in the field of peer recovery. BHWET utilized Liberation Theory and peer support in various ways. For example, BHWET infuses Liberation Theory and peer support by participating in ongoing culturally competent professional development. The BHWET grant additionally provided participants with an opportunity to use problematization to understand the needs of marginalized and oppressed populations.

[31] "RSES Assessment," Jordan Peer Recovery, last modified December 31, 2023, https://jordanpeerrecovery.com/rses-assessment/.

Through the SOR-ORN grant, Institution X and Jordan Peer Recovery created and administered the Opioid Response Network (ORN) clinical program. ORN trained and provided internships to students in order to expand the network of clinicians certified and licensed to use evidenced-based and best practice interventions that reduce opioid overdoses, prevent opioid use disorders, and support opioid use disorder recovery outcomes. The goals of the SOR-ORN grant run parallel with peer support examples provided by SAMHSA, which emphasize empowering clients to understand that they can recover and achieve their dreams.[32] SOR-ORN additionally illustrates the successful utilization of training peer recovery specialists to infuse power dynamics in treatment to liberate and improve the well-being of marginalized and oppressed populations. In addition, the SOR-ORN grant training focused on the strengths of marginalized and oppressed populations through people's virtues.

The goal of the OWIF grant is to address the health and economic impact of opioid use disorder. Institution X and Jordan Peer Recovery provided peer recovery specialists with training that included a Certified Peer Recovery Specialist Course, Jordan Peer Recovery Essential Skills, Training of Trainers, and Cultural and Linguistic Competence (CLC) Development. The utilization of various training methods by Institution X and Jordan Peer Recovery is connected to reorientation of psychology in Liberation Theory. The strategies used by Institution X in collaboration with Jordan Peer Recovery infuse the peer support methods of improving policies and practices to promote resilience and positive well-being. The training provided to participants supports innovation in recovery strategies and alleviation of substance use.

Analysis and Results of Peer Support Initiatives

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized for data analysis in the BHWET, OWIF, and SOR-ORN grants. For the BHWET grant, the researchers aimed to develop mutually beneficial relationships with community organizations and raised awareness of the value of peer recovery services for the targeted population amongst community organizations that serve marginalized and disadvantaged communities; to impact targeted populations with the increased awareness of the value of peer recovery services

[32] "Value of Peers," Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, accessed June 17, 2024, https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/brss_tacs/value-of-peers-2017.pdf

through project-based learning projects, which were service-learning activities aimed at benefiting marginalized and vulnerable communities, especially African American males with substance abuse disorders; and to increase field placement opportunities for peer recovery specialists into integrated health settings (hospitals, medical centers, etc.), which led to increased peer recovery services delivered to the targeted population. Institution X and Jordan Peer Recovery successfully utilized the BHWET grant to not only recognize but to combat oppression and injustice directly affecting the individual and collective consciousness, memories, and the lives of Black people. BHWET infused Liberation Theory to address stigma and discrimination experienced by Black individuals and communities.

The goal of the SOR-ORN project involved expanding the network of clinicians who were certified and licensed to provide evidenced-based and or best practice interventions that were proven to reduce opioid overdoses, prevent opioid use disorders, and support opioid use disorder recovery outcomes. Through SOR-ORN, the researchers provided a transformative experience to address oppressive aspects of service delivery in systems and institutions utilized by Black individuals and communities to prevent opioid use disorders and recovery. The resources and strategies delivered to the trainers can have a ripple effect on empowerment strategies Black people use to combat opioid use within their households, neighborhoods, and communities. The OWIF project focused on expanding the peer recovery workforce by supporting the training, credentialing, and job placement and/or coaching of participants. All participants sought to enter the peer recovery workforce to address the opioid crisis and its causes. In turn, participants infused Liberation Theory into practice to assist Black individuals and communities in reclaiming their identity and embracing a deeper understanding of purpose and meaning of life through recovery.

According to Bryant-Davis and Moore-Lobba, racism through the form of slavery, brutality, segregation, human rights violations, and limiting opportunities for progress and advancement all contribute to the experiences and ideological understanding of hope and recovery for Black individuals and communities.[33] OWIF equips participants with an ability to not only acknowledge oppression but to work to dismantle the oppression and injustice

[33] Bryant-Davis and Moore-Lobba, "Black Minds Matter," 190.

experienced by Black individuals and communities. OWIF training promotes empowerment and liberation.

Impact and Implications

As noted by Jordan and Hackett, by utilizing culturally responsive peer support services, the depths of treatment can be extended from the clinical settings to the ecological environments individuals reside in while they navigate the recovery process.[34] In addition, understanding cultural competency is a lifelong process.[35] Therefore, peer support workers benefit from participating in continuous professional development grounded in cultural competency to provide recovery support.[36] Institution X and Jordan Peer Recovery have provided innovative training strategies through the BHWET, OWIF, and SOR-ORN to assist BIPOC in mitigating opioid use disorders and succeed through the recovery process.

CONCLUSION

The case studies highlighted in this article illustrate the praxis application of Liberation Theory and peer support in real time. Institution X and Jordan Peer Recovery provided practitioners, students, and residents with the opportunity to utilize tools and resources acquired in training to deliver innovative culturally responsive services to BIPOC. The training assisted in increasing the depth of knowledge and skills acquired by peer recovery specialists and supervisors in areas involving empowerment, support, and self-determination. Peer recovery is a growing practice that highlights hope, understanding, and the reduction of stigma. These case studies showcase the importance of the intersections of peer recovery, cultural responsiveness, and trauma-informed care, especially for marginalized populations such as the BIPOC community.

[34] Jordan and Hackett, "Culturally Responsive Peer Recovery."
[35] Jordan and Hackett.
[36] Jordan and Hackett.

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"There's No One Here That Looks Like Me": Nationbuilding as a Response to African American Underrepresentation in the Sciences

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IT WAS MY (THOMPSON) first day on the job. As a recent graduate of a historically Black university and the product of a predominately African American middle-class community, I walked into the office, proud to have landed my first position as an entry-level engineer. My feelings were a mixture of excitement and fear of the unexpected. Something became unmistakably clear as I sat at an enormous mahogany conference table with other junior and senior-level engineers "There's no one here that looks like me!" Instantly uncomfortable and intellectually intimidated due to my own stereotypical perceptions of the white male intellect, my voice softened. That proud confidence began to dissipate as I introduced myself to a room full of middle-aged white men.

Thompson's experience is not an anomaly. Among the authors, we hold undergraduate and graduate degrees in engineering, biology, chemistry, science education, and mathematics education. In both pursuing those degrees and the careers that followed, we have repeatedly experienced Thompson's lament: "There's no one here that looks like me!" Martin mentions that when he was a student, he began to notice progressively fewer African Americans as he enrolled in more advanced mathematics courses as an undergraduate.[1]

[1] Danny B. Martin, *Mathematics Success and Failure among African-American Youth: The Roles of Sociohistorical Context, Community Forces, School Influence, and Individual Agency,* (Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2000).

African American presence was nearly nonexistent as a graduate student. He also points out that twenty years later, as a mathematics teacher of middle school, high school, community college, and university students, the pattern is unchanged. These personal experiences were the foundation for Martin's research efforts to better understand African American youths' mathematics achievement and persistence.[2] Despite advances in mathematics and science education research, promises of change found in education reforms, and numerous intervention efforts, disproportionate levels of participation for African Americans continue to exist.

Current literature on the underrepresentation of African Americans in mathematics and science has clearly articulated the problem,[3] provided explanations for the existence of the phenomenon,[4] and sought to identify factors that

[2] Jacqueline J. Leonard and Danny B. Martin, eds., *The Brilliance of Black Children in Mathematics: Beyond the* Numbers and Toward New Discourse, (Charlotte: Information Age Publishing, 2013); Danny B. Martin, "Beyond Missionaries or Cannibals: Who Should Teach Mathematics to African American Children," The High School Journal 91, no. 1 (2007): 6–28.

[3] Gail E. Thomas, "Participation and Degree Attainment of African-American and Latino Students in Graduate Education Relative to Other Racial and Ethnic Groups: An Update from the Office of Civil Rights Data," *Harvard Education Review* 62, no. 1 (1992): 45–65.

[4] Julius Davis, Christian Anderson, and Wilbur Parker, "Identifying and Supporting Black Male Students in Advanced Mathematics Courses Throughout the K-12 Pipeline," *Gifted Child Today* 42 (2019): 140–149. doi: https://doi.org/10.1177/1076217519842234; Bradford F. Lewis and Shelley Connell, "African American Students' Career Considerations and Reasons for Enrolling in Advanced Science Courses," *Negro Educational Review* 56 (2005): 221–231; Sue A. Maple and Frances K. Stage, "Influences on the Choice of Math/Science Major by Gender and Ethnicity," *American Educational Research Journal* 28 (1991): 37–60; Jomo W. Mutegi et al., "A Tale of Two Camps: A Mixed Methods Investigation into Racially Disparate Outcomes in a Nanotechnology Research Experience," *Science Education* 103 (2019): 1456–1477. doi: https://doi.org/10.1002/sce.21548; Melody L. Russell and Jared A. Russell, "Black American Undergraduate Women at a PWI: Switching Majors in STEM," *Negro Educational Review* 66, no. 1–4 (2015): 101–125, 127.

contribute to African American underrepresentation.[5] However, researchers largely fail to address (a) why change is necessary and (b) the implications of the continued underrepresentation for Black[6] people in pursuing increased representation. Researchers and educators need to ask themselves important questions regarding their efforts: Will increased African American representation in the sciences[7] influence the social conditions of African Americans, and if so, in what ways? What are the overall benefits of equitable representation in the sciences?

Continued underrepresentation of African Americans may be a direct result of educators, researchers, and parents failing to (a) identify a meaningful and relevant agenda for increased African American representation beyond the purpose of merely creating a diversified workforce, (b) examine cultural implications of limited contributions to the sciences, and (c) articulate the long-term benefits that African American participation in the sciences can have on the Black community. As a result, African American students may not see

[5] Bradford F. Lewis and Angelo Collins, "Interpretive Investigation of the Science-Related Career Decisions of Three African-American College Students," *Journal of Research in Science Teaching* 38 (2001): 599–621. doi: https://doi.org/10.1002/tea.1020; Ebony O. McGee, "Robust and Fragile Mathematical Identities: A Framework for Exploring Racialized Experiences and High Achievement Among Black College Students," *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education* 46 (2015): 599–625; Ebony O. McGee and Danny B. Martin, "From the Hood to Being Hooded: A Case Study of a Black Male PhD," *Journal of African American Males in Education* 2, no. 1 (2011): 46–65; Ebony O. McGee and Danny B. Martin, "You Would Not Believe What I Have to go Through to Prove my Intellectual Value!" Stereotype Management among Academically Successful Black Mathematics and Engineering Students," *American Educational Research Journal* 48, no. 6 (2011): 1347–1389; Lois Powell, "Factors Associated with the Underrepresentation of African Americans in Mathematics and Science," *Journal of Negro Education* 59 (1990): 292–298; LaTasha R. Thompson and Julius Davis, "The Meaning High-Achieving African-American Males in an Urban High School Ascribe to Mathematics," *The Urban Review* 45, no. 4 (2013): 490–517; LaTasha R. Thompson and Bradford Lewis, "Shooting for the Stars: A Case Study of the Mathematics Achievement and Career Attainment of an African American Male High School Student," *High School Journal* 88, no. 4 (2005): 6–18. doi: https://doi.org/10.1353/hsj.2005.0011.

[6] Operating from a Pan-Africanist perspective, we consider people of African descent to be one people regardless of where they are found on the planet. So, throughout this article, the term Black is used to include African Americans as well as Africans, West Indians, and others who classify themselves within the Black race. When a more specific group is mentioned (e.g., African Americans), it is to reflect other authors' characterization or to speak to a particular group of Black people.

[7] The "sciences" include the natural sciences (biology, chemistry, physics, etc.), mathematics, engineering, and technology.

how their performance and persistence can result in scientific contributions that can benefit themselves and their communities.

It is well documented that African Americans disproportionately tend to choose fields of study in the behavioral and social sciences over any other group of people.[8] The pursuit of these fields is rooted in a desire to improve social conditions in African American communities.[9] Operating under the premise that African Americans have a high interest in improving their social conditions[10] and a limited understanding of how the sciences impact their lives, this article challenges previous assumptions regarding underrepresentation and suggests an alternative approach for increasing African American participation in the sciences. In the remainder of this article, we will (a) present arguments of current mathematics educators on the importance of increased African American representation, and (b) advance a Nationbuilding agenda for increasing Black participation in the sciences.

Despite the overwhelming literature on the underrepresentation of African Americans in the sciences, the literature tends to deemphasize the benefits that increased representation can afford the science community, workforce, and our technological-based society. Gaston[11] is one of the few who pointedly suggests that science would benefit if more African Americans were to enter science-related careers. She argues equitable representation would maximize the probability that significant research problems pertaining to African Americans would not be neglected. He also postulates that science would benefit from an increase in what he calls the "cultural repertoire" of

[8] National Science Foundation, *Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities in Science and Engineering: 2002* (Arlington: NSF, 2003).

[9] Joy Gaston, "The Benefits of Black Participation in Science" in *Blacks, Science, and American Education*, eds. Willie Pearson, Jr. and H. Kenneth Bechtel, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1989), 123–136; Eleanor R. Hall and Phyllis Post-Kammer, "Black Mathematics and Science Majors: Why so Few?," *The Career Development Quarterly* 35 (1987): 206–219; Bradford F. Lewis, "A Critique of Literature on the Underrepresentation of African Americans in Science: Directions for Future Research," *Journal of Women and Minorities in Science and Engineering* 9 (2003): 361–373.

[10] Jomo W. Mutegi, "The Inadequacies of 'Science for All' and the Necessity and Nature of a Socially Transformative Curriculum Approach for African American Science Education," *Journal of Research in Science Teaching* 48 (2011): 301–316. doi: https://doi.org/10.1002/tea.20410; Jomo W. Mutegi, Jada A. Phelps-Moultrie, and Vanessa R. Pitts Bannister, "The Snare of Systemic Racism and Other Challenges Confronting Hip Hop Based Pedagogy," *Teachers College Record* 120, no. 11 (2018): 1–17; William F. Tate, "Returning to the Root: A Culturally Relevant Approach to Mathematics Pedagogy," *Theory into Practice* 34, no. 3 (1995): 166–173.

[11] Gaston, "The Benefits of Black Participation in Science," 123–136.

its racially diverse practitioners. Furthermore, the benefit that increased representation would have on African American people relates to the emphasis that can be placed on topics relevant to African Americans from an emic or "insider" perspective. Gaston acknowledges that African Americans are not the only researchers who can effectively pursue topics relevant to African Americans. However, it should be noted that insiders and outsiders have markedly different foci of interest and categories of analysis. Gaston states, "If Black Americans do not have the potential to increase the diversity in science as a consequence of their various experiences in American society, it is not clear where one might find more divergence from the predominately white male, generally middle-class oriented scientists who occupy most positions in the American scientific community."[12]

Experts in mathematics and science education committed to increasing the access and opportunities for African American students in the sciences rarely, if ever, speak directly to the long-term benefits of increased representation. Recognizing this, the first author approached three African American mathematics educators (Interviewee A, Interviewee B, and Interviewee C) who have dedicated their scholarship to addressing the underrepresentation of African Americans in the sciences. These published educators have conducted numerous educational research studies and work regularly with intervention and enrichment-based programs intended to increase African American students' performance and participation in the sciences. They each agreed to participate in a telephone-recorded, semi-structured interview to explain *"why they do what they do"* and their views on what increased representation can afford science-related fields and the Black community. The educators were asked two open-ended questions:

1. In your opinion, why should educators be concerned about the underrepresentation of African Americans in mathematics and science?

2. What are some benefits of having African Americans pursue mathematics and science careers?

THE VOICES OF EDUCATORS IN THE SCIENCES

Through the voices of educators in the sciences, it was suggested that African American representation in mathematics and science is needed for the

[12] Gaston, "The Benefits of Black Participation in Science," 136.

following reasons: (a) to establish an African American presence that will dispel myths surrounding the intellectual capabilities of African Americans; (b) to increase the level of African American contribution to the technological advancements of this country; and (c) to create a level of critical thinking among African Americans as a means towards social change.

Americans believe that only some people are capable of performing in the sciences. Anderson[13] suggests that scientists are commonly characterized as highly intelligent, smart, and gifted. Historically, as Interviewee B describes, mathematics has been and remains a field of privilege.

> Mathematics is a field that is privileged. Mathematics used to be very close to philosophy, and the more mathematically inclined or astute you were, it was believed you were closer to God. It was that much of a privileged field. Mathematics has not changed its privileged status. (B_48)

Scientists tend to originate disproportionately from specific groups in society. With white males comprising the majority of mathematicians and scientists,[14] it may appear that white males are more likely to embody the intellectual qualities associated with being a scientist. Interviewee C speaks to the ways thinking about *who can* do science and *who cannot* have been perpetuated by *who* is most visible. Interviewee C stated,

> It has been integrated into our thinking that "okay, if we don't see people in the field then there is this assumption that we (African Americans) can't be in the field or achieve in the field." Images are so powerful. If you continue to see only a certain sector of society achieving in certain areas, then even though it's not being said—what is being projected by the image is that only this sector of people in society can achieve in this certain area. That's not the case. So, the power of visibility speaks to the issue of telling another story, and the other story is that, yes, we (African Americans) can have some Lebron Jameses in mathematics and science fields. We can have the Neil DeGrasse Tysons and those who excel. (C_187)

[13] Sam E. Anderson, "Worldmath Curriculum: Fighting Eurocentrism in Mathematics," *The Journal of Negro Education* 59, no. 3, (1990): 348–359.

[14] National Science Board, *Science and Engineering Indicators 2000* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2000).

Interviewee C reinforces the vital role that visibility plays in thinking about intellectual capabilities with a discussion regarding the two young white men who founded Google. In a televised report, the founders were interviewed and discussed the company's history and best business practices. Interviewee C recalled snapshots of their managerial and technical staff, where there appeared to be a limited presence of African Americans among the team. Interviewee C explains,

> I think that visibility is powerful because it suggests messages or stories that we don't really want it to tell, like we're not capable of being a part of the google.com developers. We can be a part of that. We are capable of being a part of that. We have the aptitude to be a part of that, but that's not the story being presented because that's not the picture being projected. In terms of why it's important, we need to tell more of a balanced story in terms of that visibility notion. (C_204)

This issue of visibility, as a means of dispelling myths regarding the intellectual capabilities of African Americans, reaches beyond the workplace. Muhammad[15] suggests that because students rarely see African American role models involved in the study of mathematics, a false perception is formed that African Americans are not competent enough to become mathematically literate. Consequently, students begin to avoid advanced mathematics courses at the secondary level, thereby reducing the number of African Americans who progress along the scientific pipeline. However, they have the talent to do so. According to Gaston,

> Talent is distributed similarly across various population groups. If the most desirable level of talent derives from the top 10 percent of each population group, then it follows that the United States has not taken full advantage of much of that talent because millions of people, except white males, have been excluded.[16]

According to Interviewee C, as America continues to remain globally competitive, tapping into talent across underrepresented groups and pushing those interested in mathematics and science should be of concern.

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[15] Shahid Muhammad, *How to Teach Math to Black Students* (Chicago: African American Images, 2003).

[16] Gaston, "The Benefits of Black Participation in Science," 125.

> If we identify students who have a vein towards mathematical and science ability, then that needs to be maximized because it's going to take everybody to be inventive in our society to push for the next new technology and to push for the next level of whatever it happens to be... If you don't have students, particularly African American students, it's just going to decrease us as a whole society, as an American society... the more people we can have who are increasing and maximizing in that potential of those areas then, the more prosperous is our society. (C_94)

The traditional function of mathematics and science education was to identify bright young potential mathematicians and scientists and steer them into programs that prepare them for academic work at the college level.[17] In recent years, increased attention has been paid to pedagogical approaches, such as culturally relevant pedagogy or culturally responsive pedagogy, as a means to raise interest and increase opportunities for all students to participate in advanced mathematics and science studies.[18] Ladson-Billings defines *culturally relevant pedagogy* as a method of teaching that "empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes."[19] Interviewee A mentions that culturally relevant pedagogical strategies used in the mathematics classroom can provide the African American community with individuals who embody

[17] Michael J. Bossé, "The NCTM Standards in Light of the New Math Movement: A Warning," *Journal of Mathematical Behavior* 14, no. 2 (1995): 171–201; Michael J. Bossé, "Reforming the NCTM Standards in Light of Historical Perspective: Premature Changes," *Journal of Mathematical Behavior* 17, no. 3 (1999): 317–327; Jeremy Kilpatrick, "Confronting Reform," *American Mathematical Monthly* 104 (1997): 955–962.

[18] Brian Greer et al. eds., *Culturally Responsive Mathematics Education*, (New York: Routledge, 2009); Janice Hale, "Culturally Appropriate Pedagogy," in *Race and Education: The Roles of History and Society in Educating African American Students*, eds. William H. Watkins, James H. Lewis and Victoria Chou (Needham Heights: Allyn and Bacon, 2001), 173–189; Gloria Ladson-Billings, "Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy," *American Educational Research Journal* 32 (1995): 465–491; Gloria Ladson-Billings, "The Power of Pedagogy: Does Teaching Matter?" in *Race and Education: The Roles of History and Society in Educating African American Students*, eds. William H. Watkins, James H. Lewis and Victoria Chou (Needham Heights: Allyn and Bacon, 2001), 73–88; Danny B. Martin and Ebony O. McGee, "Mathematics Literacy for Liberation: Reframing Mathematics Education for African American Children," in *Culturally Responsive Mathematics Education*, eds. Brian Greer et al. (New York: Routledge, 2009), 207–238.

[19] Gloria Ladson-Billings, *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1994), 18.

the necessary knowledge and skills for social empowerment. For example, Interviewee A stated,

> A lot of people who do work on culturally relevant pedagogy have students immersed in mathematics by looking at social justice issues or issues in their own environment. So, when you start looking at okay, "How many votes does my community have?" and "Why are there more liquor stores in this community than someplace else?" and they use mathematics to think about or a way to speak to those that can change that, i.e., politicians. (W_78) Mathematics is more than just the computation, as you know, it also deals with a way of problem solving, handling situations, thinking about and analyzing situations and then finding a way to systematically solve a problem. It's a way of thinking; it's a language. Long-term effects on this are that we have those that make decisions by problem-solving that are in positions of power. If there are none that are of the African American community, then who decides about where we are as far as power? It's not us. (A_55)

Comments these mathematics educators share exhibit an all-too-commonly shared vision among African Americans in this country. As Carruthers pointedly stated, "The idea that many Blacks, especially those with advanced schooling, have held on since the end of the Civil War is that Blacks must prove that they can take their place in this world on an equal basis with Whites...efforts are continually intended to demonstrate to Whites that they have the ability to make significant contributions to world civilization."[20] The data from these interviews reveal that even today, African American scholars continue to embrace the ideology that African Americans should advance energy and resources toward reversing racial stereotypes regarding intellect and ability. Efforts directed towards social acceptance and national contribution have been a distraction and diversion from improving the conditions of Black people in this country. The statement made by Interviewee A embraces a broad conceptual purpose for advancing African Americans in the sciences: social empowerment.

[20] Jacob Carruthers, "Black Intellectuals and the Crisis in Black Education," in *Too Much Schooling, Too Little Education*, ed. Mwalimu. J. Shujaa (New Jersey: Africa World Press, Inc., 1993).

Recognizing that African Americans have a strong interest in social change and are more likely to pursue careers that will serve their communities and change the conditions of Black people, this paper proposes an alternative approach to increasing African American representation in the sciences. We recommend the adoption of a liberatory agenda for advancing African Americans towards the sciences as a means to build and improve the status of Black people globally. For the context of this paper, we will refer to this effort as Nationbuilding.

BUILDING A NATION WITHIN A NATION

African American representation in the sciences is needed as a weapon toward revolutionary change in the current world order. Black people around the world are being affected at alarming rates by HIV/AIDS, cancer, diabetes, and other life-threatening health conditions. Across the globe, Black people are living in poverty and suffering from hunger. In America, the state of the African American community is similar to global trends. African American elementary and secondary students were attending the highest poverty schools as compared to white students.[21] As a demographic, African American males consistently have the highest rate of unemployment.[22] HIV/AIDS rates for African American females were 19 times higher than the rates for white females; they also exceeded the rates of all genders and races/ethnicities other than African American males.[23] African American male students are disproportionately represented in special education classes at the K–12 level.[24] The debilitated state of the Black race illustrates a need to utilize collective resources and energies in addressing the oppressive structures that perpetuate educational, economic, and health-related disparities

[21] National Center of Educational Statistics, *The Condition of Education* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 2004).

[22] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Report on the American Workforce* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor, 2001).

[23] Center for Disease Control, *Diagnosis of HIV/AIDS* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2003).

[24] Beth Harry and Janette K. Klingner, "Why are so Many Minority Students in Special Education?" (New York: Teachers College Press, 2014); National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE), and ILIAD Project, *Addressing Over-representation of African American Students in Special Education: The Prereferral Intervention Process* (Arlington, VA: Council for Exceptional Children, 2002).

among the Black race.[25] Nationbuilding can serve as a method to uproot these oppressive structures.

Nationbuilding, in this context, is defined as the *conscious and focused application of knowledge, skills, and abilities to the task of liberation.* It involves the development of behaviors, values, institutions, and physical structures that elucidate Black history and culture and ensure the future identity, existence, and independence of Black people.[26] The sole purpose for having increased numbers of African Americans in mathematics and science should be (1) for the liberation of Black people globally and (2) to dismantle the system of racism, which continues to create economic and social disparities among Black people around the world. The global liberation of Black people refers to freedom from oppression, racism, and poverty around the world. Black people are subjugated to the confines of oppressive structures instituted under Western imperialistic and capitalistic ideology. An example is exhibited in America's public school system, where Blacks comprise the majority of students who attend schools that are unsafe, under-funded, under-resourced, and ill-designed for learning.[27]

Teaching and learning that situates mathematics and science content in a context that embarks upon social empowerment and liberation is the primary component of a liberatory curriculum in the sciences at all educational levels.[28] The theoretical framework that undergirds these liberatory pedagogical practices is critical race pedagogy.[29] Lynn developed the concept of critical race pedagogy as an analytic framework that conjoins critical race theory (CRT) in education[30] and Afrocentricity.[31] Davis has used CRT in mathemat-

[25] Sekou Afrika, "An African-Centered Nation-Building Perspective of STEM Education for Black Youth," in *African-Centered Education: Theory and Practice* eds. Kmt Shockley and Kofi Lomotey (Myers Education Press, 2020).

[26] Kwame A. Akoto, *Nationbuilding: Theory and Practice in Afrikan Centered Education* (Washington, DC: Pan Afrikan World Institute, 1992).

[27] Jonathon Kozol, *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991).

[28] Vanessa R. Pitts Bannister et al., "'Returning to the Root' of the Problem: Improving the Social Condition of African Americans through Science and Mathematics Education," *Catalyst: A Social Justice Forum* 7 (2017): 4–14.

[29] Marvin Lynn, "Toward a Critical Race Pedagogy," *Urban Education* 33, no. 5 (1999): 606–626; Marvin Lynn, "Inserting the 'Race' into Critical Pedagogy: An Analysis of 'Race-Based Epistemologies,'" *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 36, no. 2 (2004): 153–165.

[30] Adrienne D. Dixson and Celia K. Rousseau, "And We Still are Not Saved: Critical Race Theory in Education Ten Years Later," *Race Ethnicity and Education* 8, no. 1 (2005): 7–27.

[31] Molefi K. Asante, *Afrocentricity* (Trenton: Africa World Press, Inc., 2003).

ics education[32] and African frames to argue for liberation for Black people in and out of mathematics education.[33] Lynn refers to CRT and Afrocentricity as "epistemologies of transformation and liberation."[34] Significant questions raised under this framework are "What role does the educational system (instruction, curriculum, assessment, and funding) play in maintaining the system of racism and oppression of Black people, and can schools serve as mechanisms to end the system of racism and oppression?"

This article proposes the development and implementation of a liberatory curriculum in the sciences, at the Pre-K–12, undergraduate, and graduate levels, that is comprised of four essential features: (a) cultural identity, (b) understanding racism/white supremacy, (c) social understanding, and (d) social empowerment. Each feature is interrelated in that it situates the advancement of Black people at the core of teaching and learning. The presence of cultural identity within the curriculum allows Black students to see that mathematics and science originated in Africa and that their African ancestors built the world's first highly technological society.[35] It will allow them to study and learn about the contributions of the many Black mathematicians and scientists, such as Imhotep,[36] Benjamin Banneker, and many others throughout the Diaspora. More importantly, instruction in the sciences focuses on the beliefs and values held by Black students and aligns with their social reality. By so doing, Black students can use scientific knowledge as the foundation to build liberatory understandings of themselves. Pitts Bannister and colleagues[37] used Mutgei's five C's model[38] to demonstrate how mathe-

[32] Julius Davis and Christopher Jett, eds. *Critical Race Theory in Mathematics Education* (Routledge, 2019); Julius Davis, "Disrupting Research, Theory, and Pedagogy with Critical Race Theory in Mathematics Education for Black Populations," *Journal of Urban Mathematics Education* 15, no. 1 (2022): 9–30.

[33] Julius Davis, "A Liberatory Response to Antiblackness and Racism in the Mathematics Education Enterprise," *Canadian Journal of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education* 21, no. 4 (2021): 783–802; Julius Davis, "Redefining Black Students' Success and High Achievement in Mathematics Education: Toward a Liberatory Paradigm," *Journal of Urban Mathematics Education* 11, no. 1–2 (2018).

[34] Lynn, "Inserting the 'Race' into Critical Pedagogy," 153-165.

[35] Sekou Afrika, "African-Centered Nation-Building Perspective."

[36] Imhotep, Black Kemetic, was the first mathematician, scientist, engineer, and builder of the Step Pyramid of King Zoser at Saqqarah, Egypt, around 2550 BC.

[37] Vanessa R. Pitts Bannister et al., "'Returning to the Root' of the Problem."

[38] Jomo W. Mutegi, "'Life's First Need is for Us to be Realistic' and Other Reasons for Examining the Sociocultural Construction of Race in the Science Performance of African American Students," *Journal of Research in Science Teaching* 50, no. 1 (2013): 82–103.

matics and science can be used to address scientific problems impacting the global Black community.

Black students must understand that their ultimate objective is to fight against and dismantle the system of racism (white supremacy). The late (and well-respected) scholar Dr. Frances Cress Welsing taught that racism (white supremacy) affects all areas of people's activity: (a) economics, (b) education, (c) entertainment, (d) labor, (e) law, (f) politics, (g) religion, (h) sex, and (i) war.[39] Others have added health to the areas of people's activity.[40] Dr. Neely Fuller Jr. postulates: "If you do not understand white supremacy (racism)—what it is, and how it works—everything else that you understand will only confuse you."[41] It is imperative that Black students understand racism (white supremacy) to fight and dismantle it and address the social problems impacting Black communities globally.

The social understanding feature of a liberatory curriculum is best explained in a comment made by one of Jansen's South African students.[42] The student characterized the curriculum as Euro-centric, racist, elitist, and sexist.

> They (whites) decide what we are taught. Our history is written according to their ideas. Biology and Physics are taught in our schools but which we cannot apply to our everyday lives. We are not told that most diseases of the workers stem from the fact that they are undernourished and overworked. We are taught biology, but not in terms of the biology of liberation, where we can tackle the concept of "race" to prove that there is no such thing as "race."[43]

In this comment, the student speaks about using the sciences to understand surrounding realities and challenge existing ideologies. To be conscious is merely one aspect of circumventing the global inequities and disparities of Black people. Social empowerment serves as the last and final key to estab-

[39] Frances Cress Welsing, *The Isis Papers: The Keys to the Colors* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1995).
[40] Irritated Genie of Soufeese, *War on the Horizon: Black Resistance to the White Sex Assault* (Washington, DC: Irritated Genie of Soufeese, 2005).
[41] Neely Fuller Jr., *The United Independent Compensatory Code System Concept* (Washington, DC: Neely Fuller Jr., 1984).
[42] Jonathon Jansen, "In Search of Liberation Pedagogy in South Africa," *Journal of Education* 172, no. 2, (1990): 62–71.
[43] Jansen, "In Search of Liberation Pedagogy in South Africa," 64.

lishing change in the current world order, which gives Black students, as well as science-related professionals, a voice and a mechanism by which to break down existing oppressive and racist structures. A final element of social empowerment must be Nationbuilding whereby Black people work to build institutions to uplift and empower Black people collectively throughout the Diaspora to achieve sovereignty.

CONCLUSION

The underrepresentation discourse for increasing African American representation in the sciences lacks a clear rationale. Anderson contends that "the vast majority of mathematics curricula in colleges and high schools are 'turning off' generations of African Americans from pursuing careers in mathematics and science."[44] Furthermore, the few that persist become professionals with a lack of desire or knowledge as to how to use their mathematical and/or scientific skills towards the destruction of oppressive and racist structures and Nationbuilding.[45] Institutions of higher learning produce science-related graduates with a one-dimensional perspective of content knowledge in their respective fields. These graduates are prepared solely to accomplish the tasks of the field and to maintain white supremacy. With few exceptions,[46] educational researchers have not articulated a liberatory approach to curriculum in the sciences. This article extends the work of scholars like Afrika, Davis, Martin, McGee, and Mutegi by outlining an approach to teaching and learning to transform this reality.

In this article, it is suggested that continued underrepresentation is a direct result of a failure among the mathematics and science education community and the African American community to establish an agenda for equitable representation in the sciences. Additionally, those committed to the active recruitment and retention of African Americans in the sciences have adopted rationales for *"why they do what they do"* that do not address the

[44] Sam E. Anderson, "Worldmath Curriculum," *The Journal of Negro Education* 59, no. 3 (1990): 350.

[45] Sekou Afrika, "An African-Centered Nation-Building Perspective."

[46] Jamila Codrington, "Sharpening the Lens of Culturally Responsive Science Teaching: A Call for Liberatory Education for Oppressed Student Groups," *Cultural Studies of Science Education* 9 (2014): 1015–1024; Danny B. Martin and Ebony O. McGee, "Mathematics Literacy for Liberation: Reframing Mathematics Education for African American Children," in *Culturally Responsive Mathematics Education*, eds. Brian Greer et al. (New York: Routledge, 2009), 207–238; Jomo W. Mutegi, "The Inadequacies of 'Science for All.'"

self-preservation of the Black race and a fight for freedom of oppression and racism. Arguably, it may be that mathematics and science educators cannot situate content in a larger context due to their lack of training within their respective fields. Throughout our professional training and practice, this was definitely the case.

Our engagement in mathematics and science education research on equitable representation in the sciences has given rise to broader concerns. What can African Americans in mathematics and science do to reverse the debilitating state of the Black race? How can mathematics be taught so that African Americans can see its many uses in improving the conditions within their communities? And finally, how can science-related professionals use their mathematical and scientific ability to understand the world as a means towards building a nation free of oppression and racism? As John Henrik Clarke stated, "if it isn't about nation building, then it isn't about anything."[47]

What time is it? It's NATION TIME!
Black Pride Chant

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Book Reviews

Bynum, Tara. *Reading Pleasures: Everyday Black Living in Early America.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2023.

Reviewed by Karen Cook Bell

Tara Bynum's *Reading Pleasures* examines the ways in which a relatively elite group of Black people in Early America lived outside of the "white gaze." By examining the letters and narratives written by four literate Africans and African Americans, Bynum states as her argument that "we—as scholars, students, or as a general public—don't talk enough about what feels good to Black people when there is no white gaze" (p. 1). Bynum is a literary scholar, and *Reading Pleasures* is not a history text but a literary analysis of the writings of poet Phillis Wheatley, ministers James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw and John Marrant, and pamphleteer David Walker. Specifically, Bynum examines the "interiority" of their lives and what made them "feel good and write about it despite living while enslaved or nominally free " (p. 3). Poet Elizabeth Alexander defines "interiority" as "the "inner space" wherein lies those selves that go far, far beyond the limited expectations and definitions of what Black is, isn't or should be " (p. 2).

Reading Pleasures' four chapters challenge discursive ideas about Black people in Early America, self-making, and community. By focusing on quotidian and simple pleasures that made life easier, Bynum presents a counter-narrative to the depiction of Black people in Early America as one-dimensional beings. Wheatley, Gronniosaw, Marrant, and Walker's reading practices memorialize a racial identity even as it suffers its way into being. What these four writers have in common is their concern for and belief in a Christian faith. Their faith "brings them together intertextually by way of a friendship or collaboration, masonry, Protestantism, the popular itinerant minister the Reverend George Whitfield, or publishing—in mobile, Atlantic, Protestant

communities" (p. 6). Bynum makes contemporary applications of recent history to understand the everyday pleasures of Black life in Early America in a section titled "Reading #Black Lives Matter." She posits that behind the call for resistance and refusal in protests to the murders of many Black women and men is "the very possibility and pursuit of its pleasures" (p. 9). By using #BlackLivesMatter as a modality of reading, Bynum seeks to make meaning out the collective and affective experiences of Wheatley, Gronniosaw, Marrant, and Walker.

The writings Bynum examines are integral to the study of early Black life in America. Phillis Wheatley's correspondence with Obour Tanner, whom Bynum describes as a "sister-in-Christ and a sister-in-love," reveal an intimacy through a reading and exchange with a dear friend and the inner pleasures that the letters convey. In seeking to reveal the many interiorities of Wheatley, Bynum provides a portrait of Wheatley that has not been fully captured in other studies of Wheatley. Wheatley writes about joy and even tells jokes, and in so doing, reveals that the interior lives and erotic subjectivities of enslaved Black people do matter. According to Bynum, "Wheatley's letters and their resulting pleasures publicize the interiority that makes real what matters to her as a faithful believer, a writer, poet, a friend, and wife" (p. 50).

The reading lives of James Gronniosaw and John Marrant are especially didactic. Gronniosaw, a Methodist and former slave who eventually lived free in England, published his *Narrative of the Most Remarkable Particulars of James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, An African Prince* in 1774, the first text printed in England authored by an African man (p. 51). A decade after Gronniosaw's publication, John Marrant published his *Narrative of the Lord's Wonderful Dealings with John Marrant, A Black* in 1785. Both Gronniosaw and Marrant use the conversion narrative form to celebrate their faith and their call to ministry. Interestingly, Wheatley, Gronniosaw, and Marrant each received financial assistance from the Countess of Huntingdon to publish their respective works. Another thread that runs through the writings of these three writers is the enjoyment, happiness, and peace in living their faith in the midst of war, migration, and uncertainty. Marrant, in particular, was converted by Rev. George Whitfield in 1769 or 1770 in Charleston, South Carolina. His conversion transformed his sense of purpose and sent him into the forests outside of Charleston where he grew deeper in Christ and proselytized to those whom he encountered as well as to young children on nearby plantations (p. 87). After traveling to Nova Scotia, Boston (where he became chaplain to Prince

Hall's Freemasons), and England, Marrant made plans to carry on his work in Sierra Leone. However, he died in London at the age of thirty-six.

Forty years after Marrant's death, David Walker wrote his *Walker's Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World* (1829, 1830). Walker's pamphlet, according to Bynum, "implores his readers to understand why they matter and to whom they matter" (p. 102). *Walker's Appeal* demonstrates an "affective literacy" in that he compels the reader's interpretive sensibility and affective responsibility (p. 102). Bynum acknowledges the anger in *Walker's Appeal* but reads the *Appeal* to also discover the "joyful future" that Walker illuminates. Inviting the reader into his "interiority," Walker tells the good news and offers a hopeful truth: "For I believe it is the will of the Lord that our greatest happiness shall consist in working for the salvation of our whole body. When this is accomplished a burst of glory will shine upon you, which will indeed astonish you and the world" (p. 122).

The contribution of *Reading Pleasures* is in linking Black living in Early America to reading and its pleasures. Bynum's work looks beyond this period to provide revelation of Black life beyond the "white gaze" in the interiority of Black life. As Bynum articulates, reading with pleasure, joy, and Black living in mind allows us to see the ways in which Black living matters and has always mattered.

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Swanson Jacobs, John. *The United States Governed by Six Hundred Thousand Despots: A True Story of Slavery; A Rediscovered Narrative, with a Full Biography.* Edited by Jonathan D.S. Schroeder. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2024.

Reviewed by Sheneese Thompson

John Swanson Jacobs originally published his narrative and scathing critique of American hypocrisy on the issue of enslavement in 1855 through an Australian newspaper titled *The Empire*. The narrative was published there in two parts, but unlike that of his sister, Harriet Jacobs, John's narrative was lost to the annals of history after 1860. *The United States Governed by Six Hundred Thousand Despots* was rediscovered and published alongside a thorough biography and important correspondence by Jonathan D.S. Schroeder this year. Accordingly, the discourse that Jacobs contributes to regarding the deep necessity for the United States to reckon with the inhumanity of the institution of enslavement and the laws that protected it is mandatory reading. Jacobs's "true story" could not have come (again) at a more salient time as the United States finds itself at yet another crossroad this election year between ensuring liberty and justice for all or ushering in an era of legal and social repression that rivals the antebellum period in which *The United States Governed by Six Hundred Thousand Despots* was originally published.

Jacobs's narrative adheres to the conventions of slave narratives, including detailing the early trauma of losing his parents, being separated from loved ones, witnessing scenes of subjection on the plantation (see Saidiya Hartman), and spending little time discussing his life after freeing himself from the yoke of enslavement. The narrative differs in two very significant ways that are highlighted in Schroeder's thoughtful introduction, "A Global Slave Narrative." Firstly, Jacobs' narrative is not translated by a white abolitionist and therefore is not stripped of any language that might have been deemed offensive, and it is thusly not mediated by a need to maintain good favor with the white abolitionist community in New England. This is perhaps in part due to Jacobs's own commitment to global travel and a knowledge that his freedom could never be ensured on U.S. soil. Relevantly, Schroeder suggests that John and Harriet Jacobs's narratives be read together because of their thematic and historical intertextualities (p. xviii). In doing so, the differences in tone will be palpable give that *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861) was edited by Lydia Maria Child and that *The United States Governed by Six Hundred Thousand Despots: A True Story of Slavery* was "scarcely altered" in its

original publication in *The Empire* (p. xv). Secondly, the final three chapters of the narrative are dedicated analyses of the United States Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, as well as the North's complicity in passing laws that ensured that Black people remained chattel despite the rhetoric of freedom in the founding documents of the country. In this way, the narrative follows the intellectual genealogy established by *David Walker's Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World* (1829) by engaging directly with the laws as they are written, the duplicitous nature of their interpretation, and their inequitable application as it pertained to the humanity of Black people.

Schroeder's reproduction of Jacobs's narrative is accompanied by detailed notes that add significant historical context for the events in the narrative, which contributes to a fuller picture of not just John Swanson Jacobs's life, but that of his entire family. Schroeder's notes are expounded upon in *No Longer Yours: The Lives of John Swanson Jacobs*, a comprehensive biography that follows *The United States Governed by Six Hundred Thousand Despots.* The title of the biography is a tribute to the letter that Jacobs wrote, with the help of a literate friend, to his final master, Samuel Tredwell Sawyer, indicating that he had left and would never return (p. 49). The biography adds necessary clarification and bridges the many gaps left by Jacobs's narrative, which Schroeder himself describes as having "very little that is autobiographical in it" (p. xxi). Thus, the narrative and the biography taken together help the reader understand the life and times of John Swanson Jacobs's more comprehensively than most of his contemporaries, save Frederick Douglass, with whom he was closely associated as established by the correspondences in the appendices.

The United States Governed by Six Hundred Thousand Despots: A True Story of Slavery is a welcomed addition to the scholarship and historiography of the antebellum period of American History and contributes meaningfully to discourses on slavery and its afterlives. Schroeder's careful treatment of Jacobs's narrative and other writings amplifies the literary and intellectual practices of Black people during and after the conditions of their enslavement. Perhaps more notably, Jacobs's narrative contributes to scholarship of Black internationalism when most Black people in America did not have the luxury of personal agency that allowed for the kind of global citizenship that he was able to achieve. Finally, Schroeder's diligent archival work offers us a window into John Swanson Jacobs's radical conception of freedom, his tireless quest to secure it for himself, and his continued efforts to secure it for others.

Jones, Emile C. M. K. *Fambul Dem, Una Kush, O: An Introduction to Sierra Leone Krio and Its Writing Systems*. London: GLOM Publications, 2013. ISBN 98-0-9557894-9-6

Reviewed by Festus Cole

Of the corpus of literature on Sierra Leone's Krio and its history, none more so than Jones's effort sets out to intentionally provide a pedagogical instrument designed to "help Krio speakers and others to read and write" the language (p. 3). The author of *An Introduction to Krio and Its Writing Systems* does acknowledge the fact that the term "Krio" is usually traced to the word "creole" and its alternative derivation from the Nigerian language Yoruba, *akiriyo*, as postulated by the Krio historian, Akintola Wyse. Jones, however, prefers the designation, "creole-Krio," for the simple reason that, "There are too many creole languages and cultures" for Sierra Leone's Krio "to be an exception (p. 2-3)."

Born to prominent Christian Krio parents who resided in the heart of Freetown's popular east end at Magazine Cut, the late Emile Jones was deeply steeped in Krio cultural norms and traditions and was therefore strategically positioned to draw on the rich wellspring of Krio roots and background. This background notwithstanding, he forcefully asserted at the launching ceremony of the book that as a young boy he was deeply fascinated by the Yoruba language, from which Krio is partly derived (p. 3). Guided by a desire to help Krio speakers and others read and write the language, Jones seldom intrudes in the text, nor does he presume to *no* (English = "know") or speak Krio better than his Krio predecessors, the reputed custodians of the language. Yet, throughout the text, there is a marked authoritative flavor governing the complex and diverse examples that he deploys to illuminate the central focus in all eleven chapters of the work.

Jones's motivation to undertake this study derived from various sources: from younger Krio, born in Europe, who exhibited a desire to consolidate their proficiency in speaking the language; to meet the needs of the older generation of Krio speakers who could hardly read or write Krio; and by prompting from "a few nieces and nephews (p. 3)." Thus, the first chapter introduces the reader to the study of Krio, which he described as a tone language. Jones's target audience comprise Krio speakers who speak the language fluently but are "uncertain about reading and writing the language" (p. 3); members of the Sierra Leone diaspora who wish to develop their competency in speaking

Krio; and linguists, missionaries, Bible translators, historians, and overseas personnel of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Sierra Leone, who wish to use their knowledge of Krio to help expedite their official remits. Against this background, he suggests that "the best way to learn a language is of course, to live within the language community," though he acknowledges the fact that this is not always possible (p. 4). Jones argues that the now evolved and systematized Krio orthography—exemplified in the publication of the Krio English Dictionary in 1980, the Krio New Testament Bible in 1985, and in calendars, etc.—though gaining its place in the public consciousness, now needs wider exposure. He therefore seeks to highlight the nuanced nature of this orthography and its differences with the Latin alphabet used for writing English, and the divergent pronunciation of the same words in Krio. The study finds that the English "Q/q" which precedes a word is absent in Krio and is replaced by "ku" in Krio; so is the English "X/x" replaced by "ks" in Krio and some African languages such as Yoruba, Mende, and Themne, from which some Krio sounds derive.

Chapter 2 historicizes the genesis of Krio words and shows that Krio is a creole language that mainly originated in coastal areas of West Africa, borne of trade and colonial contacts and characterized by a base language derived from Western European languages, such as Portuguese, Spanish, French and English. Jones, however, argues that the main contributor to Krio is Yoruba, though he acknowledges the significant influences of Twi, Hausa, Igbo, and indigenous Sierra Leonean languages such as Mende and Themne. Jones further attributes the emergence of Krio to the descendants of freed slaves, whom he groups into the "Black Poor" who arrived in Sierra Leone in 1787; the "Nova Scotians" who arrived in Sierra Leone in 1789; the "Maroons," taken to the settlement in 1800; and the diverse groups of "Recaptives" that originated from tribes stretching from the Senegambia in the north to the Congo and Angola in West Central Africa. Included also are the much neglected West Indian veterans of the Napoleonic Wars, settled in the colony in 1815, and the "West Injie" group, who began settling in Sierra Leone from the 1880s up to World War I. In illuminating this historical context, the reader is privileged with a mini-dictionary of Krio words associated with the social and cultural norms of Krio society. These vocabulary items cover subjects such as Christianity, Islam, education, numbers and cardinals, law and order, the armed forces, animals, birds and insects, colors, technology, and medicine. If these lexical items originated from the diverse groups who settled in the colony, they are also a function of the varieties of Krio spoken

in Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Guinea, Equatorial Guinea, and the diaspora. These variations, Jones argues, are caused by differences in educational standards, age differences, differences in the speaker's natural habitat, and religious upbringing. Jones, therefore, uses these variations to account for what he describes as Freetown (*Fritạng*) and provincial (*ạplayn*) varieties of Krio—these distinctions highlighted mainly in terms of pronunciation, use of use of consonant clusters, word order or semantics, and use of foreign languages for effect.

While agreeing that of all Sierra Leonean languages, Krio is most strategically positioned to serve as the country's national language, Jones submits that perhaps the most important role to be considered of Krio is as the medium for a concerted drive towards nationwide literacy. This drive, he suggests, will require significant government assistance, an adequate financial outlay to fund the project, and support from literary organizations and religious groups, etc. The author further asserts that—notwithstanding the factor of linguistic borrowings, the impact of new words and idioms, interferences from other indigenous languages and the last civil war—Krio will "probably remain an English-based creole (p. 67)."

A short chapter titled "Greetings, Salutations and Everyday Speech Conversations in Krio" is designed to serve as a pedagogical tool, both to teach and speak the language, and to illustrate the diverse origins of Krio lexicon. This is cleverly insinuated in the first part of the book's title, "*Fambul dem, una Kushɛ, O*." While *fambul* ("family") and *dem* ("them") are derived from English, *una* is from the Nigerian language, "Igbo," signifying the English plural "you." *Kushɛ* denotes the shortened form of the Yoruba *ɛkushe*, meaning, "I/We greet you." Jones illustrates this teaching tool by providing several short dialogues in Krio encompassing everyday speech and conversation, which are signaled by several interrogative words in Krio, such as *aw* ("how"), *usay* ("where"), *us* ("which"), *ustem* ("when"), *wetin mek* ("why"), *wetin* ("what"), and *us kayn* ("what type of").

In Chapter 5, Jones debunks the oft-repeated view that, "*Krio nạ ge grama*" (Krio has no grammar), and argues that "grammar is the skeleton on which the other components—words, phrases, clauses—find their shape and structure (p. 79)." He illustrates this by proffering several examples to show that sentence structures in Krio sometimes follow those in English (the subject, object, verb pattern) as do the positioning of adjectives, adverbs, and prep-

ositions, the nuanced operations of Krio pronouns and verbs compared to English, and the way in which reported speech is conveyed in Krio. In pursuance of this pedagogical approach, Jones provides a useful vocabulary list to show that Krio words for the months of the year, days of the week, and expressions for telling the time are derived from English with some slight variations. In similar fashion is the Krio speaker and learner privileged with a range of vocabulary items illustrating bonds of kinship, relatives, and family history (in Chapter 7), food and nutrition, and recipes for some the most well-known Krio and Sierra Leonean dishes (in Chapter 8).

Of particular interest in this study is the chapter on Krio music, musicians, and musical instruments. Given the extensive socio-cultural roots of Krio society, the author draws on evidence to show that "spirituals" came to Sierra Leone with the Nova Scotians and "shouts" with the Maroons and other West Indians, while the love for classical music is attributed to the continued and pervasive influence of the British during the colonial period. While not pretending to provide an in-depth analysis of music in Sierra Leone over the past century, Jones nevertheless provides several lists of music styles, musical instruments, and some music personnel as they appear in the Krio language. These lists include sacred music, music provided by marching bands, dance styles, and instruments for dance music.

Throughout this study, Jones endeavors to show that Krio runs like a thread through every facet of life, experiences, and activities in Sierra Leone society. Krio vocabulary thus transcends the confines of Krio cultural norms to cover all aspects of life in which the wider Sierra Leonean society is involved. It is precisely this factor that makes the language a unifying element, hence the quest to make Krio the national language of Sierra Leone. So deftly illustrative of this quest is the chapter covering the wide gamut of games and sports as they have developed over the last one hundred years. These include board games, children's games, ball games, football (soccer), cricket, and athletics, most of which are derived from the British English system.

In its breadth and scope, *An Introduction to Sierra Leone Krio and its Writing Systems* is anchored on a wide range of observations and reflections, interviews, and extensive historical research. The author's self-professed interest in languages and writing is subsumed in part of a text drawn from the Book of Ecclesiastes, 12:12, which enjoins the reader thus: "... Of making many books, there is no end." These words defined Jones's opening remarks at the book's

launching ceremony in England in 2013. Indeed, the author's fascination with the Krio language sprang from his childhood experiences at Magazine Cut, a complex hub of different language speakers, including Mandingo, Themne, and Lebanese, and where all intertribal communication was conducted in Freetown's lingua franca, Krio. The author also admitted that "my educational opportunity helped me." While receiving his secondary school education in Freetown, Jones was exposed to the study of French and Latin, and thereafter to Greek and Hebrew while studying Theology at Trinity College, Bristol, in England. On his return to Freetown, he recalled Professor Clifford Fyle "teaching us the background to pidgin English." While in England also, a friend had presented him with a Bible written in one of the languages in Papua New Guinea, which also bore striking similarities with Krio. Jones further shared that on leaving school, he taught history at the Sierra Leone Grammar School in Freetown, where "the syllabus in form three was Sierra Leone History. This opened my eyes to the development of Krio history." Furthermore, the author' impetus to write came from his pastoral responsibilities, significantly aided and guided by the publication of the Krio New Testament Bible in 1985. Not least in this journey was his "discussion with others," which, he averred, "motivated me to write to help others learn" Krio. In this regard, the last chapter of the book is devoted to a brief examination of Krio proverbs, idioms, standardized expressions, and traditional short stories, all of which contain the collective wisdom of Krio society and are designed to convey a short statement of a general truth, a piece of advice, maxim, motto, or "short, almost allegorical sayings (p. 79)."

An Introduction to Sierra Leone and its Writing Systems will appeal to linguists, ethno-linguists, socio-cultural historians, cultural anthropologists, ethno-musicologists, and culinary experts, among others. The publication should also be a required text for training teachers of Krio in schools in Sierra Leone, where the Krio curriculum covers topics such as the historical background of the Krio people, the orthography of the language, syllable and word formation in Krio, the local calendar, greetings in Krio, and Word boundaries in Krio.

FREEDOM:
A JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN AFRICANA STUDIES

VOLUME II
Call for Papers
Abstracts Due: September 30, 2024

Freedom: A Journal of Research in Africana Studies is a digital peer-reviewed periodical published annually by the W.E.B. Du Bois Center for the Study of the Black Experience (CSBE) at Bowie State University. This journal specializes in interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research focusing on the lived experiences of the Black Diaspora.

Our editorial board invites you to submit 250- to 300-word abstracts for research articles, book reviews, poetry, and original multimedia-based submissions. Any performance-based submissions must not be publicly accessible or previously hosted on other platforms. Research articles should be limited to between 3,000 and 5,000 words, book reviews and short fiction should be limited to 1,500 words, and multimedia submissions should be no more than 10 minutes. All written submissions should follow the most recent *Chicago Manual of Style*. Submissions should be emailed as a word document or a link to the multimedia file to duboiscenter@bowiestate.edu. Please remove your name, institutional affiliation, and any other identifying information from your complete manuscript for review.

The deadline for abstract submissions is September 30, 2024. Authors will be notified that their abstract has been accepted by November 1, 2024. Complete manuscripts for accepted abstracts will be due January 17, 2025, and the issue will be published in May 2025. If you have questions about the journal or submitting to it, please email duboiscenter@bowiestate.edu, attention Dr. Sheneese Thompson, editor.

CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT

THEME: THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT AND THE AFRICAN AMERICAN QUEST FOR FREEDOM

Proposals are being accepted for a one-day interdisciplinary symposium at Bowie State University's Du Bois Center for the Study of the Black Experience (CSBE) in Bowie, Maryland, titled, "The Civil Rights Movement and the African American Quest for Freedom," planned for April 4, 2025. This symposium seeks to examine the efforts by African Americans to secure their rights as citizens of the United States.

Although the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery, except as a punishment for a crime, the record of the United States shows that the realities of freedom for African Americans has been elusive since the end of the Civil War. If the hope for Black equality came to be grounded on the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, the Civil Rights Acts of 1866 and 1875, and the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964, the evidence further shows that African American rights, privileges and immunities, due process and equal protection of the laws have been unremittingly abridged and curtailed up to the present. It is against this background that we must understand the evolution of those social, economic, and political forces and reform movements aimed at eradicating forced segregation, Jim Crowism, injustice, discrimination, and disenfranchisement.

In commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the Voting Rights Act and the 57th Anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the BSU W.E.B. Du Bois Center welcome proposals from early career and senior scholars, as well as graduate students, that speak to the social, economic, and political forces, and reform movements pioneered by African American leaders, communities, and groups since the end of slavery to the present era.

Please submit your proposals (max. 500 words) to duboiscenter@bowiestate.edu by November 15, 2024, with "Symposium" in the subject heading. Proposals should be accompanied by a two-page CV.