



COLLEGE *of* CHARLESTON

AFRICAN AMERICAN
STUDIES PROGRAM

Spring 2017 Newsletter

From the Director



Simon Lewis,
Professor of English and Co-
Associate Dean of the
School of LCWA,
Interim Director of the
African American Studies
program.

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I am very pleased to announce that our search for a new Director of African American Studies at the College of Charleston has been successful. As of Fall 2017, the program will be directed by Dr. Kameelah Martin, who will be joining the College at the rank of full professor. Dr Martin has an MA in Afro-American Studies from UCLA, and a PhD in English, with an emphasis on African American Literature and Folklore from Florida State University. She will be coming to us from Savannah State University.

While we were interviewing the candidates for the Director position, two trials were going on at the Four Corners of the Law in downtown Charleston that revealed the urgency of the work we do in African American Studies. In the first trial, the state of South Carolina prosecuted former North Charleston police officer Michael Slager for the murder of Walter Scott—an unarmed motorist who fled from and tussled with officer Slager before being shot five times in the back. The trial lasted four weeks and ended in a mistrial as jurors could not agree on a conviction for murder, or on the lesser charge of manslaughter. The state may re-try the case, and Slager still faces trial on federal charges of denying civil rights. AAST faculty followed the trial and the reporting of the trial with avidity and trepidation, and were spurred, with our colleagues in Southern Studies, to write a letter to the editor of the *Post and Courier*. You may read a copy of that letter at <http://www.postandcourier.com/opinion/letters-to-editor/letters-looking-back-at-racial-injustice/article/ae4b918e-aa85-11e6-916a-e77d2a787060.html>.

In the second case, Dylann Roof was found guilty on 33 federal charges, including the murder of the nine parishioners he gunned down in Mother Emanuel Church in June, 2015. Roof's lack of remorse and his continued expression of racist sentiments made a stark contrast with the extraordinary grace and forbearance displayed by survivors and by families of the victims of his horrific attack. Roof's twisted version of history reminds us—as we stated in our letter to the *Post and Courier*--of the enormous amount of work we still need to do if we are to realize the ideals of the American republic with its commitment to liberty and justice for all.

Meet the Faculty



Dr. Kameelah Martin

Dr. Kameelah Martin will be joining us in Fall 2017 from Savannah State University where she has been teaching in the Department of English, Language, and Cultures since 2013. Dr. Martin's academic pedigree includes a BA in English (with a minor in Africana Studies) from Georgia Southern University, followed by an MA in Afro-American Studies from UCLA, and a PhD in English from Florida State University, where her dissertation won the 2006-7 J. Russell Reaver Award for Outstanding Dissertation in American Literature or Folklore. Dr. Martin's work on the performance of African spirituality by women of color in visual media and literature has already resulted in two published monographs (*Conjuring Moments in African American Literature: Women, Spirit Work, and Other Such Hoodoo* [Palgrave, 2013], and *Envisioning Black Feminist Voodoo Aesthetics: African Spirituality in American Cinema* [Lexington, 2016]) and multiple articles. With family roots that she has traced back to King street SC, Dr. Martin is

currently engaged in research that combines genealogy with more standard academic analyses of literary history and cultural studies.

We are delighted to welcome Dr. Kameelah Martin to the College of Charleston as our new permanent Director of African American Studies.

News of Students



Joshua Mack

Joshua Mack is a senior double majoring in African American Studies and Music with an emphasis in Performance and minoring in Geology. As an intern, he will be performing archival research on different churches at the Avery Research Center. He will be researching the origins of churches including Union Baptists Church and Zion-Olivet Presbyterian Church. This will involve researching and documenting cemeteries, church records, and public and private repositories, such as libraries and federal records. At the cemeteries, like Monrovia Street Cemetery in Charleston, he will be restoring and cleaning them up. Next he will find unmarked graves and identify who is buried there, as well as document and record the identified person in the Census. Hopefully, this research will support families and help communities to better understand, affirm and make and public more aware of the Gullah Geechee

history, culture, and traditions in the Charleston area. For more information on the Sacred Burial Ground Projects, see <http://gsociety.weebly.com/sacred-burial-ground-projects.html>

RACE and SOCIAL JUSTICE

A Deeper Black: Race in American

**Ta-Nehisi Coates
Journalist & Author**

Ta-Nehisi Coates is the author of *Between the World and Me*, a No.1 New York Times best-seller and winner of the 2015 National Book Award. Also in 2015, Coates received a MacArthur Genius Grant Fellowship. Coates wrote *Between the World and Me* in the form of a letter to his teenage son addressing what it means to be black in America. He is a national correspondent for the *Atlantic* and the journalist in residence at the School of Journalism at CUNY.

**March 21st at 6:30pm
TD Arena**

"But there's very little critique about why our police operate the way they operate in the first place because that critique ultimately comes back to Americans themselves."

- Ta-Nehisi Coates

Conseula Francis Emerging Scholar Lecture

Vanessa Agard-Jones, "After the End of the World: A Black Feminist Analytic for the Anthropocene"

Monday, February 20 at 6:00 pm in Alumni Memorial Hall

The African American Studies Program has invited Vanessa Agard-Jones to deliver the 2016-17 Conseula Francis Emerging Scholar Lecture, named in honor of our late director for her unflagging support of junior faculty and emerging scholars. Agard-Jones is an assistant professor of Anthropology at Columbia University, and she will be speaking about her current book project, *Body Burdens: Toxic Endurance and Decolonial Desire*, which uses ethnographic research to explore pesticides, sexual politics, and postcoloniality in Martinique.

Spring 2017 Film Series

"When Bruce Lee Meets Bruce Leroy"

6:30 pm in Education Center Room 118

In concert with Professor Crabtree's course on Afro-Asian political and cultural (dis)connections, the African American Studies Program is screening four films and an animated television series to explore the cultural and political resonances between African Americans, Asians, and Asian Americans. The films are free and open to the public.

Monday, March 20: *Enter the Dragon*

Monday, March 27: *The Last Dragon*

Monday, April 3: *Black Dynamite*

Monday, April 10: *Yojimbo*

Monday, April 17: *Afro Samurai*

Spring 2017 Events

January

16th Martin Luther King Day

16th Film Screening & Discussion of 13th
Alumni Center @ 2pm

February

1st AAST Book Club Meeting
9 College Way, room 201 @ 6pm

20th Emerging Lecture Series: Vanessa
Agard-Jones Lecture *After the End of
the World: A Black Feminist Analytic for
the Anthropocene*
Alumni Hall @ 6pm

22nd AAST Book Club Meeting
9 College Way, room 201 @ 6pm

March

16th Dexter Thomas Lecture *Niggers and
Japs: The Logic of Japanese Hip-Hop
Nationalism*
TBD @ 6pm

20th Film Festival *Enter the Dragon*
ECTR 118 @ 6pm

21st Race & Social Justice Initiative:
Ta-Nehisi Coates lecture *A Deeper Black*
TD Arena @ 6:30pm

27th Film Festival: *The Last Dragon*
ECTR 118 @ 6pm

April

3rd Film Festival: *Black Dynamite*
ECTR 118 @ 6pm

10th Film Festival: *Yojimbo*
ECTR 118 @ 6pm

17th Film Festival: *Afro Samurai*
ECTR 118 @ 6pm

May

13th Commencement

AVERY RESEARCH CENTER

The Avery Research Center hosts a wide variety of lectures, brown bag discussions, art exhibits, and other programs exploring African American history and culture. A calendar of Avery's programs can be found at <http://avery.cofc.edu/programs/>.

For more information on these events or the African American Studies Program, Check out the website at <http://african-american-studies.cofc.edu/>.

Spring 2017 Course Offerings

Core:

AAST 200	Intro to African American Studies	MWF 9:00	Greene
AAST 200	Intro to African American Studies	MWF 10:00	Greene
AAST 200	Intro to African American Studies	TR 8:00	Bynum
AAST 200	Intro to African American Studies	TR 9:25	Bynum
AAST 381	African American Studies Internship		
AAST 401	Capstone African American Studies	MWF 11:00	Greene
ENGL 313	African American Literature	MW 3:25	Bynum
HIST 217	African American History since 1865	MWF 12:00	Powers

Electives:

(Majors must complete at least 4 additional courses from Elective offerings for the degree at least 3 or the 4 courses must be at the 300 level or above.)

AAST 290	ST: Juvenile Justice: Initiatives to Dismantle the School to Prison Pipeline	TR 10:50	Ofunniyin
AAST 300	ST: Mass Incarceration & Its Roots	TR 1:40	Crabtree
AAST 300	ST: Race, Gender and Environment	TR 12:15	Brian
AAST 340	Race, Violence, & Environment	TR 10:50	Crabtree
AFST 101	Intro to African Civilization	TR 12:15	Goettsches
AFST 202	ST: Diaspora Yoruba Culture & Lowcountry Connections	TR 1:40	Ofunniyin
CRLS 300	ST: Restorative Justice	Online	Parker
DANC 290	ST: The Harlem Renaissance: Dance During the Depression	MWF 10:00	LaSane
ENGL 364	From Hip Hop to Barack: 21st Century African American Literature	MW 2:00	Bynum
HPCP 375	Cultural Landscape Studio	W 1:00	Ward
GRMN 390	ST: The African Diaspora in German-Speaking Europe	MW 2:00	Nenno
RELS 115	Religion and Society	MWF 11:00	Cressler
SOCI 359	ST: Sociological Study of Immigration, Race, and Globalization	R 4:00	Rodriguez
SOCI 369	ST: African American Culture & Society	MW 2:00	Bakanic
THTR 316	African American Theatre	TR 12:15	Vandervort-Cobb

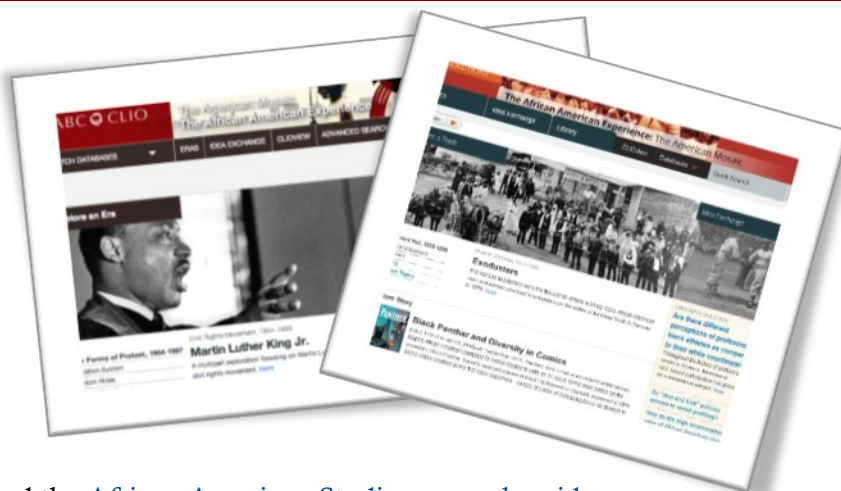
ATTENTION: SENIOR CITIZENS

South Carolina residents who are over 60 years old are eligible to enroll in regular College of Charleston courses on a space-available basis for a fee of \$25 for the semester. Permission of the instructor is required for African American Studies courses. Call 843.953.5620 for details.

Resources in AAST @ CofC

[The African American Experience](#)

is a database in The American Mosaic series of databases created by ABC-CLIO, an information services company. The database is a searchable, full-text, online encyclopedia of historical and current information, scholarly essays on contemporary issues, primary sources, and current and historical statistics. Students and faculty can access *The African American Experience* through the library's web site on the [Article Databases](#) page and the [African American Studies research guide](#).



The main content in *The African American Experience* is organized into 14 historical eras beginning with “Africa and the Atlantic, 500-1500” and continuing through “New Millennium, 2001-present.” Each era is further subdivided into shorter time periods and topics of historical significance. Each subdivision contains an overview of the period; encyclopedic articles highlighting the people and events that define the time period; primary source documents; media and visuals; and (sometimes) a glossary of terms. The articles include citations of books and articles for further reading relevant to the subjects covered. Users can browse the database by era or conduct keyword searches. There is a quick search feature and an advanced search interface. Users can print or email documents from the database, and each item comes with exportable citations in MLA, APA, and Chicago citation styles.

Another interesting portion of the database is the Idea Exchange feature. Here users can read essays authored by scholars on a wide range of important questions of today such as “How do African Americans, American Indians, and Latinos challenge racism differently?” and “What are the enduring factors that have led to a persistent overrepresentation of African Americans in crime and incarceration rates?” Each essay is thoughtfully composed and well-documented with footnotes and references and is followed by biographical information about the author.

Moreover, *The African American Experience* is also a source of statistical information. The CLIOView portion of the database allows users to find and compare state and national stats concerning a number of measures including African American population, employment, education, income, marriage, poverty, voting and voter registration, health insurance coverage, and military service. Users can choose to make bar graphs, line graphs, and pie charts based on the statistics found.

For more information about *The African American Experience* database, contact Steven Profit, reference librarian, at profits@cofc.edu.

With the International African American Museum coming to Charleston soon we are excited for the growth of African American Studies in the Charleston area as well as throughout South Carolina. The Museum will serve as a hub for regional heritage, sending visitors out across Charleston and South Carolina to access additional African American sites and experiences.

As we began the start of this new academic year the African American Studies program at the College of Charleston has offered its services as a clearing house for news of events relevant to African American Studies. We have currently created a calendar and listings-service drawing attention to African American-related events happening across the state. The calendar is on our website and will be providing information on events that we are aware of. To keep our calendar up to date with the latest events we invite you to submit events that you believe would be beneficial to this calendar. If you would also like to be added to our African American-related Events email list please contact Casey Smith at smithcn1@cofc.edu.

The **Event Calendar** can be found here:

<http://african-american-studies.cofc.edu/events/index.php>

Where Are You Now?

Let Us Know What You're Up To

For 20 years the African American Studies Program at the College of Charleston has educated students in African American history and culture. We would love to hear what those students are up to now. Let us know about the exciting professional and personal milestones you've reached since leaving the College. You can email Dr. Lewis with the details at lewiss@cofc.edu.



not just in february

African American Studies

College of Charleston
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