



The Lemon Project:

A Journey of Reconciliation



The Time is
NOW

*The Lives of Black Men
Past, Present, and Future*

**MARCH
25-26
2022**



12TH ANNUAL LEMON PROJECT SPRING SYMPOSIUM

This event will take place both in person at the School of Education and virtually over Zoom.



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David Brown, History
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Leah F. Glenn, Theater, Speech, & Dance
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Francis Tanglao-Aguas, Asian & Pacific Islander; American Studies; Theater
Sarah Thomas, Lemon Project Associate Director
Caroline Watson, Lemon Project Graduate Assistant

AGENDA

FRIDAY, MARCH 25 All events will be held at Eastern Time (ET)

- 8:00**
9:00 A.M. **Check-in**
Concourse
- 8:50**
9:00 A.M. **Welcome**
Dr. Jody Allen
Matoaka Woods
- 9:00**
10:30 A.M. **Plenary Session**
“The Time is Now: The Lives of Black Men Past, Present, and Future”
Matoaka Woods
- 10:30 A.M.** **Remarks**
Provost Peggy Agouris
Matoaka Woods
- 10:35**
11:45 A.M. **Breakout Rooms**
Matoaka Woods, Dogwood, and Holly
- 12:00**
1:00 P.M. **Future of Ethnic Studies Panel**
Co-sponsored by the Asian Centennial
Dogwood
- 12:00**
1:30 P.M. **Lunch**
Matoaka Woods & Holly
- 1:30**
2:45 P.M.
(2 CONCURRENT PANELS) **Panel 1**
African American History—
Oral History, Genealogy, & Performance
Holly
- 3:00**
4:15 P.M.
(2 CONCURRENT PANELS) **Panel 3**
Black Male Well-Being
Holly
- 4:15**
6:00 P.M. **Break**
- 6:00**
7:00 P.M. **Keynote Speaker**
Dr. Tommy Curry
Introduction by Dr. Jajuan Johnson
Matoaka Woods
- Panel 2**
Identity, Transformation,
Reclamation
Dogwood
- Panel 4**
Justice, Belonging, Autonomy
Dogwood

SATURDAY, MARCH 26

8:00
8:45 A.M.

Check-in
Concourse

8:45
9:00 A.M.

Welcome
Justin Reid '09
Matoaka Woods

9:00
10:15 A.M.

Keynote Speaker
Kiese Laymon
Introduction by Dr. Jody Allen
Matoaka Woods

10:30
11:45 A.M.
(2 CONCURRENT PANELS)

Panel 5
Black Men Navigating &
Shattering Stereotypes
Holly

11:45 A.M.
12:15 P.M.

Breakout Rooms and Lunch
Matoaka Woods, Dogwood, and Holly

12:30
1:45 P.M.
(2 CONCURRENT PANELS)

Panel 7
Roundtable with
Highland's Council of Descendant Advisors
Holly

2:00
3:15 P.M.
(2 CONCURRENT PANELS)

Panel 10
Interrogating the Narrative of
"the Fear of Black Men" as a Defense for the
Unjust Killing of Black Males in America
Dogwood

4:15
6:00 P.M.

Closing Remarks
Matoaka Woods **Correction: Closing Remarks are from 3:15-3:30 p.m.**
There is a break from 4:15-7:00 p.m.

6:00
7:00 P.M.

Symposium Talent Showcase **Correction: Symposium Talent Showcase begins at 7:00 p.m.**
Reveley Garden (Lodge 1, Rain Location)



Panel 6
African American History—
Freedom, Ingenuity, Legacy
Dogwood

Panel 9
(In)Valuable: Black Boys at the
Williamsburg Bray School, 1762
Dogwood

Panel 11
Black Male Supervisors
Navigating Racial Battle Fatigue
in the Workplace
Holly

LEMON PROJECT SYMPOSIUM

2022 PANEL DESCRIPTIONS

Plenary Session — The Time is Now: The Lives of Black Men Past, Present, and Future

Moderator: Dr. Jamel K. Donnor, William & Mary School of Education
Dr. Daniel Black, Clark Atlanta University and Morehouse College
Dr. O'Shan D. Gadsden, Norfolk State University
Dr. T. Hasan Johnson, California State University

The opening plenary will kick off the two-day multi-disciplinary conversations about Black males past, present, and future.

The panelists bring various perspectives with backgrounds in Black Male Studies, psychology, and Africana Studies. The speakers will present facts challenging enduring stereotypes that dehumanize Black men and boys, offer insight on present inequities, and discuss ways Black men are transforming themselves and their communities. Lastly, they will provide visions that improve the lives of Black males based on their areas of expertise.

Future of Ethnic Studies Panel

The Asian Centennial and the Lemon Project join together for a panel discussion on Ethnic Studies in Virginia. During this year of celebrating the accomplishments of the first Asian students at William & Mary, we also look forward to a more inclusive future.

Our panelists are Monika Gosin, Krystyn Moon (from University of Mary Washington), Laura Guerrero, Steve Prince, and Chinua Thelwell.

Panel 1: African American History— Oral History, Genealogy, and Performance

Moderator: Dre Taylor, Special Collections Research Center, William & Mary

Diane Brown Townes, (*she, her, hers*) *Descendant Community Lecturer/Educator, Dr. Eugene Dickerson's Call to Action*

This presentation will explore a letter written by Dr. Eugene Dickerson to Dr. W. E. B. Dubois on April 28, 1924. It will allow symposium participants to draw a comparison to the early 20th. Century "Lost Cause Progressive Movement," a historical interpretation that minimizes the horrors of slavery and upholds white supremacy. To today's normalization of violence through the white evangelical "progressive" movement. Dr. Eugene Dickerson was my father's cousin. He was born on August 1, 1877. As I take this opportunity to learn more about his work as a Delegate to the Virginia State Republican Convention at Roanoke in 1920. As a community healer, how was Dr. Dickerson able to overcome the economic envy that was often exemplified by acts of white mob violence during his time? As I research ways to repair and redress the impact of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, I have frequently been asked this question of late: What Do African Americans Want?

Carol Miller and Burnell K. Irby, *Community Members, The Continuing Saga of Cecil Alonzo Smith*

This is a story of migration. We will introduce Cecil Alonzo Smith. Cecil was born in York County, raised in James City County and attended school in Williamsburg. After completing his education in Virginia Cecil's desire to write and perform would take him to New York.

We will share some of the experiences that helped inspire his journey from a small area in Virginia known as Grove to Brooklyn. After his move to New York, Cecil established a community theater group called "The Alonzo Players". He called upon his childhood memories from Grove to help create what he described as "the world's first live continuing saga in soap", "Beulah Johnson". As a child Cecil experienced the trauma of having his family home and the entire community into which he had been born taken. His early years were spent seeing, and enduring, the struggles of the community as it began to rebuild in a new location. Cecil did see his community reborn. The sadness of the loss would lessen and the joy would return giving birth to the stories he would later tell. Cecil took Grove with him and in his own way told their stories with humor and imagination. Along with his writing credits, "The Alonzo Players" are Cecil's most enduring legacy. Cecil saw the world through many lenses...a Black man of the segregated south, a gay man in the 1960s to the 1990s, and a man with a desire to create and perform. This presentation is to celebrate the life of a son of Williamsburg, Cecil Alonzo.

Latika Johnson Lee, *Community Historian, Case Study: Robert H. Gaines, A Genealogical Gem*

Utilizing the case study of Robert H. Gaines, this presentation will illustrate research methods and resources to complement oral history interviews and family records which document the perseverance and resilience of this behind-the-scenes butler and his service to Josephus Daniels, former Secretary of the United States Navy in 1919. Raised in southeast Georgia just after the Civil War, Gaines migrated North to escape oppression and seek better social, educational, and economic opportunities. Despite prejudiced "Jim Crow" laws and racial discrimination, he progressed to be a model citizen representing his race, where he served foreign dignitaries and heads of state for more than three decades. The session will trace the dramatic changes that swept American society during this time from reconstruction to World War I and beyond, and how those changes affected this man's life and family.

Derrick Jones, *Negro League historian and collector, African American men and Democracy*

In this presentation, I seek to unpack the ways that Democracy looked like and felt like for four noteworthy individuals associated directly and or indirectly with Negro Baseball Organization. It is my goal to highlight the notion that each pair of individual's brushes with democracy were significantly different. I will use very rational reasoning from explicit examples from research to illustrate the differences. However, examples of mutual respect were developed and established amongst these individuals. These African Americans actually served as saviors for our American democracy. And as an African American in America, played an instrumental role in getting along with white people. Those relationships may have helped nudged American's democracy just a wee bit. They were exemplary examples of how to behave when

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social equality was not in their favor. This is an attempt to stem a distinctive vision for present and future generations to learn from.

Panel 2: Identity, Transformation, Reclamation

Moderator: Dr. Jajuan Johnson, William & Mary

Benji de la Piedra, (*he, him*) *Director of Herbert Denton Biography Project; Adjunct Professor of Oral History, University of District of Columbia; University of Arkansas at Little Rock, If Black Lives Matter, Then So Must Negro Memories*

The dedication to Ralph Ellison's novel *Juneteenth* reads, "To that Vanished Tribe Into Which I Was Born: The American Negroes." This dedication induced an epiphany on my frame of reference as a student and scholar of African American experience. Not long before, I had made my first trip to Little Rock, Arkansas, conducting oral histories with Black elders about the childhood of Herbert Denton Jr, the Washington Post's first Black city editor. This fieldwork allowed me to recognize the ironic overtones of Ellison's dedication: while "Negro" had "vanished" from contemporary discourse, the cultural heritage and value-system encapsulated in that name had not. I had just spent the summer getting to know it. So I was not surprised several years later when I realized that Denton was the last Post reporter to continue using the word "Negro" in his copy. Like Ellison and also Albert Murray, Denton was not ashamed of identifying as a Negro. All three of these Afro-American intellectuals shared an anxiety about the potential death of living Negro memory, which deserves our attention. With their help, I will reflect on the longstanding Black American tradition of embodying "Negro" as an affirmative cultural identity, and the potential for cultural loss and historical amnesia that is implied in the term's wholesale rejection.

Eric S. King, (*he/him*) *Community Member, The Archetypal Drama of Transformation in the Lives of Black Gay Men*

This paper is a preliminary use of The Theory of the Archetypal Drama of Transformation, to interpret three novels by E. Lynn Harris: *Invisible Life*, *Just as I am*, and *Abide with Me* and to explore what these works teach us about a core drama of four ultimate or overarching ways of life that shape the structure, dynamics, values and stories within which some Black Gay/Queer men live their lives. First is emanation (living in a cultural container in which beliefs, values, norms and practices are considered sacred, endowed with mystery and therefore unquestionable). Second is incoherence (a way of life experienced as continually shattering and fragmented and offering no hope for solutions); there is also deformation (an exit from the core drama of life in which the completion for fragments --- and the attachment to a single fragment--- leads to destructive death), and transformation, a way of life in which one is free to question and act again in order to achieve fundamentally new and better relationships).

Dr. Kyle R. Fox (*he/him*), *Faculty, The College of Coastal Georgia, Reaping the Harvest: Black Quare Embodiment in the Rural South*

For centuries, enslaved African Americans were the labor force behind the economic engine that is U.S. Agribusiness. From the rice and indigo

plantations of the Carolinas to the tobacco plantations of Virginia, and the cotton and sugarcane plantations of the deep south, Black bodies toiled and labored under the grueling system of American chattel slavery. Post-emancipation and into the turn of the twentieth century, many Blacks continued to work the land, some as landowners, but most as tenant farmers and sharecroppers. During the early twentieth century, the growth rate of Black owned farms outpaced that of their white counterparts. In 1920, there were approximately 926,000 black farmers. This growth was not sustainable. Contemporarily, there are roughly 33,000 Black farmers accounting for 1.4% of the aging U.S. farmer population. Despite this statistic, there is a generation of young Black gay male farmers emerging. Whereas most research focuses on the decline of the Black farmer, this case study explores the experiences of this unexamined group. Employing Performance and Quare theory, this research fills a void in multiple disciplines in an effort to cultivate a more representative image of the contemporary Black farmer

David Nnanna C. Ikpo, *Lawyer, Storyteller, & Graduate Student, University of Pretoria, Decolonising queer legal advocacy through indigenous storytelling*

In this presentation, I intend to share how I have employed indigenous storytelling as a Nigerian gay lawyer, novelist and researcher in my work on promoting queer inclusive international human rights law and advancing queer inclusive attitudes in family and across Nigerian universities. I will be addressing two particular instances of my debut novel *Fimisile Forever* (shortlisted for the LAMBDA prize for Best Gay Fiction) and my doctoral thesis titled, 'A place for indigenous storytelling in Nigerian queer rights advocacy'. In 2014, Nigeria was a frightening place for queer persons because of the recently passed homophobic law, the Nigerian Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act (SSMPA) 2014. The SSMPA was iconic because for me as a young gay man in Nigeria because it came with a multiplicity of stories. It was in the dawn of this excitement that I began to write my debut novel *Fimisile Forever*. I was angry, afraid and deeply in need of a queer sensitive local hero that could give me answers, speak to my parents, my community on my behalf. My presentation will be guided by the theme of the lives of black gay men and also media representation of Black men.

Panel 3: Black Male Well-Being

Dr. Janise Parker, William & Mary School of Education

Montrell Pryor, (*he, him, his*) *Instructor, University of Kentucky, Adjust your Crown: A Culturally Competent Trauma Informed Approach to Decreasing the Impact of Trauma among Black Boys and Men*

Black boys and men tend to experience trauma at significantly higher rates than those of other ethnicities and demographics. The impact of trauma is demonstrative of how Black boys and men show up in a world and society that does not honor and respect their existence. Through the impact of trauma, Black boys and men are expected to still perform, demonstrate unrealistic expectations of masculinity and strength in the middle of traumatizing events, disregard shame and guilt, move forward with the day-to-day operations of life, and a host of other

impractical societal and cultural expectations. This presentation introduces and discusses a new approach that other Black male therapists should consider implementing when working with Black boys and men who have experienced trauma, while simultaneously strengthening the therapeutic process. The presentation will also offer action steps that can be added within trauma informed care to help mitigate the impact of trauma. This presentation relates to the conference theme “The Time is Now: The Lives of Black Men Past, Present, and Future” by discussing the intersections of what it means to be Black, male, and their place in a world that has already pre-disregarded their contributions to a better world.

Dr. Jessica Martin (*she, her*) Faculty, William & Mary and Dr. Andrew Wood, (*he, his*) University of Cincinnati, *A Counseling Approach for African American Couples with Prostate Cancer*

Approximately three million individuals have prostate cancer (PCa) (American Cancer Society [ACS], 2020), a disease which mostly affects individuals over the age of 55 and is the most common cancer in the United States (SEER Cancer Stat Facts, 2019). However, PCa incidence and mortality rates have been declining over the past 20 years, with 98% of individuals diagnosed surviving for more than five years (SEER Cancer Stat Facts, 2019). While these numbers provide good news to those who have been diagnosed with PCa, health disparities continue to exist, with the incidence and mortality rates for African American men being disproportionately higher than any other race (Taksler et al., 2012). These numbers tell many stories, however, one story that is not immediately apparent is the mental health needs of African Americans who have been diagnosed with PCa. In this presentation, we will discuss diagnosis, etiology, prevalence, and impact of prostate cancer in the African American community, how counselors and community stakeholders can take a culturally informed approach to supporting the mental health needs of African American prostate cancer survivors, specifically speaking to the needs and unique experiences of those who are in relationships.

Terrence Joshua Lewis, (*he, him, his*) Presidential Research Fellow at Auburn University, *“The Bridge Builder”: Critical Reflections of a millennial Black Man Educator*

The Lemon Project lists three central outcomes associated with the upcoming symposium. While this proposal and potential workshop addresses all the listed outcomes, it directly aligns with theme three, “providing practical strategies and techniques to improve the existence of Black males...” Given the national discourse surrounding Black boys and Black men, I believe more first-hand information regarding the experiences on Black men and Black boys must be collected for systems to better respond to their specific needs based upon differing contexts and their lived experiences. Therefore, this workshop will discuss an autoethnography I conducted on myself regarding my employed pedagogy and experiences as a secondary social studies teacher. More specifically, I wanted to examine my teaching of Black boy students and the ways in which I either supported or resisted master narratives associated with societal and political structures. Findings from the study suggested my interactions with and teaching of Black boy students as intentional but lacking criticality regarding teaching them how to challenge societal and political structures they deemed oppressive. My reason for conducting this study was questioning the type of “Bridge” I was building for my students and determining whether I was building in which they needed.

Panel 4: Justice, Belonging, Autonomy

Moderator: John S. Hollemon III, M.A., Hampden-Sydney College

JaeKur Lockhart, (*he, him, his*) Student Success Coach, The University of Missouri - Columbia, *We Still Need the Village: Black Male Success Initiatives in Higher Education*

The African proverb, “It takes a village to raise a child,” perfectly encapsulates the structure needed to assist Black men achieve success at the collegiate level. A recent study done by the Southern Region Education Board (SREB) states that the graduation rate for Black males is 59% which represents the lowest rate among all college demographics in this country. However, when an institution provides resources and an infrastructure to support Black men, the results are truly amazing. This presentation will examine a Black Male Success Initiative called Brother 2 Brother that has seen an incredible 93% retention rate and 88% graduation rate among its participants. The presenters will discuss the many dimensions that make the program both popular and successful.

Jesse Bulluck, (*he, him, his*) Ph.D. Student, Texas Tech University, *Transformative Educational Experiences: Empowering Young Black Men to Excel in the Classroom and Beyond*

Over the last two decades, schools have used a zero-tolerance approach in disciplining students. This approach relies heavily on deterring unwanted negative student behavior in schools, but the harsher punishments have resulted in an increase in the criminalization of student behavior. For decades, mostly young Black males have received the majority of the punishments from schools (Camera, 2020). The disproportionate number of Black youths receiving the punitive punishments is both alarming and is something that needs an immediate change. Research highlights a direct link between school disciplinary issues, due to the zero-tolerance policies, and future contacts with the juvenile justice and the criminal justice systems (Monahan, Vanderhei, Bechtold, & Cauffman, 2014; Cuellar & Markowitz, 2015). This research study is important because it considers the lived experiences of young Black men, looking at how they have been disciplined and treated within school settings. With schools now moving away from punitive disciplinary practices, it is imperative that the conversation include strategies to ensure a significant reduction in the number of suspensions, expulsions, and arrests of young Black males from schools. This research will highlight ways that the current practices can be changed to create a better school environment for young Black males.

Brandon Alston, (*he, him, his*) Ph.D. Candidate, Northwestern University, *“The Camera is My Weapon:” How Black Men Use Cellphones to Negotiate Safety and Status Amid Police Surveillance*

Although black men are disproportionately represented in cellphone-generated videos depicting police violence, existing research has neglected to document how black men use cellphones to mitigate risk during police encounters and the impact cellphone recording has within black communities. This article intervenes to examine how the threat of police violence shapes black men’s use of cellphones during police stops and the social dynamics that emerge as a result of cellphone recording. Drawing on ten months of fieldwork and 70 in-depth interviews with black men in the living on the South Side of Chicago, this article finds that vulnerability to police violence shapes men’s appropriation of cellphones to negotiate their safety and

status as men. Armed with their cellphones as an instrumental tool against police violence, men use their cellphones to protect against institutional and interpersonal acts of harm, a strategy I refer to as “protective monitoring.” In monitoring police for safety, men also use cellphones as a symbolic resource to project a multidimensional expression of manhood tied to community protection, service, and resistance. By deploying their cellphones during police interventions, men mitigate some of the consequences of criminalization, appeal to the dominant gender expectations, and reinforce social ties.

Don Brien Gatewood, *Cofounder and Executive Director of The Initiative Baltimore, Black Men in Local, State and National Politics*

The Initiative: Baltimore (TIB) is committed to advancing the Baltimore community by helping create the next generation of community leaders through youth education and mentorship. We were founded in response to the culmination of issues affecting Baltimore starting after the protests after the death of Freddie Gray while he was in police custody and the continuing uptick in violence in the city since then. We do not want to see a generation of young men lost to violence, lack of job opportunities and other barriers. Our vision for Baltimore is a community where all citizens are educated about the political system, encouraged to develop community-driven solutions and vote; to that end, our mission focuses on inspiring young men to lead their communities through civic engagement, community development, volunteerism and community leadership. Our vision is more relevant than ever in channeling the frustrations of being a young black male in today’s society into positive action. Our mission is to inspire young black men to lead their communities through civic engagement, community development, volunteerism, and community leadership.

Panel 5. Black Men Navigating and Shattering Stereotypes

Moderator: Dr. Sharrieff R. De’Johnette, The Heights Community Project

Robert Monson Jr., *(he, him) Professional Student, United Theological Seminary, Black Male Softness In A World Bent On Cruelty*

Dr. Yolanda Pierce wrote a book entitled *In My Grandmother’s House: Black Women, Faith, and the Stories We Inherit*. In it, she writes about the survival tactics that Black women pass on to young Black girls in order to survive. Although some of the tactics might be harsh, or legalistic at times, they have been deemed necessary. In similar fashion, many Black men have transmitted their own survival messages to the next generation of Black boys that they must be tough, quick-witted, and able to thrive in a world bent by cruelty. Softness and sensitivity are not known to be celebrated openly in many predominantly Black communities that have men at the center. While leaning upon the wisdom of generations gone by, this presentation will bridge the gap and highlight softness as both an ethic and an anchor for Black men as we seek to heal our communities. How can we move from simply surviving to thriving? How can we be more than what the media portrays of us daily? This presentation will re-frame the word “soft” and give practical examples of how we as Black men can reclaim our softness. Soft is not weak.

Dr. Lynnette Stewart, *(she, her) Assistant Professor, SUNY Empire State College, Black Manhood: Navigating Stereotypes*

This paper offers insight into the impact of sociocultural images of Black men on definitions and expressions of manhood from the perspective of Black men. Using a grounded theory analytical approach on semi-structured interview and focus group data, the results reveal a public performance of manhood purposely in opposition to popular constructions of Black masculinity. Interviewees paint a picture of masculine expression that contrasts and challenges stereotypical images of Black men as hypersexual, irresponsible, violent, flamboyant, uneducated, athlete, entertainer, and criminal. Participants negotiate stereotypes in the public and private spaces in dynamic and organic ways, at times rebelling against them, at times adopting them. This presentation explores each.

Alton Coston, III, *(he, him, his) Undergraduate Student, William & Mary, A Project of Self-Creation and Discovery through Black Autobiography: A Comparative Analysis between the Sociopolitical Development of Malcolm X and Myself*

My summer research was dense as I simply engaged with a wide array of Black literature that has been instrumental in shaping my sociopolitical thinking. First, I read *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* by Alex Haley to ground myself in the primary source of my research endeavors. While reading the book, I identified certain experiences of relatability that Malcolm and myself shared. Following that, I reviewed Kenneth Mostern’s *Autobiography and Black identity politics: racialization in twentieth-century America* to analyze the literary strategies that made Malcolm X’s autobiography effective in showcasing his intellectual growth while still holding a captivating story. Lastly, I began to draft my autobiography drawing on the techniques that Kenneth Mostern discussed in his literature review. Studying Malcolm’s autobiography has amplified qualities that I seek to hone in myself as a young man entering the political-legal realm — his recurring spurts of self-creation, the affirmative messages of unembellished self-respect and reliance, discipline, communal responsibility, solidarity, and uncompromising pursuit of truth and justice lit a furnace deep within my core. Ultimately, this is a project that analyzed my sociopolitical transformative experiences in comparison to Malcolm’s.

Linda Quarles Arencibia, *Community Member, Four Horsemen: Out of the Box and Into The Saddle*

Is the myth of Black men as a monolith with a shared, certain destiny of doom and failure sustainable? It is. But only to the extent that certain histories remain unknown. To facilitate a dialogue that opens obscure chapters of American history, *Four Horsemen Saddle* looks at Black Equestrian history and asks:

What have P.T. Barnum, a horse in the Arabian night, and an enslaved country doctor in common?

How did Teddy Roosevelt and British Royalty become clients and fans of a formerly enslaved man?

How has a black man of humble beginnings become an icon in the elite world of Foxhunting?

How does a young man with braided hair, beat the odds of survival for one who looks like him, and not only survive but thrive on the back of a horse in arenas unfamiliar to most Black males?

Four Horsemen engages the narratives of four Black Equestrians who impacted equestrian space, while living in a progressively

racist society. *Four Horsemen* examines common circumstances in the lives of these men and shared character traits that illumine the humanity of each. Their commonalities, paired with the unusual and diverse course taken by each challenges the tendency to bestow upon black men a collective, singular, and predetermined incapacity or defeat. What emerges instead are testimonies of determination which suggest a shared resiliency, perhaps born of common challenges.

Panel 6. African American History—Freedom, Ingenuity, Legacy

Moderator: Dr. Mariaelena DiBenigno, William & Mary's Highland

Adrienne Fikes, M.Ed, PCC, (*she, her*) *the Soul Power Coach™*, “*He Went To See A Man About A Horse*”: *Discovering my great-grandfather in the genealogical treasure trove of information in Virginia’s Central State Hospital records*

The story of when and why my great-grandfather left his wife and children is a story of Black men and mental health. The oral history says my grandmother was a young girl when her father went to see a man about a horse. He never came home. My family history research identified a succession of hardships and losses that my great-grandfather endured before disappearing. This presentation will share the deep joy of finding my great-grandfather through genealogy research, and discuss the ongoing effort to protect and preserve the 800,000 records encapsulating the 152-year-old history of the Virginia’s Central State Hospital archives. I will share the impact of this discovery on my great-grandfather’s descendants, and highlight the opportunity for families across Virginia to honor the dignity and humanity of their ancestors by accessing these files. The information contained in my great-grandfather’s patient file demonstrates the priceless details available in this unique record set, and the importance of the ongoing effort to protect and preserve what Archivist King Davis, Ph.D describes as “the most valuable set of records in the world as far as Black people in the mental health system.”

Ervin L. Jordan, (*he, him*) *Associate Professor and Research Archivist, University of Virginia, ‘A Wealthy Colored Citizen’: John Adams, Free & Black in Richmond, Virginia, 1840s-1870s*

This paper will evaluate free Black family patriarch John Adams (1825-1873), a self-employed building contractor and plasterer in antebellum Richmond, Virginia. Although considered among the state’s wealthiest African-Americans at the time of his death, he and his family have experienced historical obscurity with the exception of passing references in monographs and biographical sketches of his youngest son John Henry Adams (1848-1934), a Richmond city alderman and contractor in his own right. John Senior and other members of the family (mostly his sons) are represented by personal, financial and legal documents. The collection is historically significant inasmuch as comparatively few manuscript collections of nineteenth-century free Black Virginian families have survived. Additionally, this presentation will summarize the remarkable circumstances of the Adams papers’ 1990s rediscovery and rescue, acquisition and potential research value.

Rachael Finch, (*she/her*) *Senior Director of Preservation & Education, Heritage Foundation of Williamson County, TN, Enslaved to Enlisted Men: Rising Up to Rediscover Connections of United States Colored Troops to the Franklin Race Riot 1867 in Williamson County, Tennessee*

The close of the American Civil War in 1865 brought rapid restructuring

to the Tennessee heartland’s society and cultural landscapes. The black populations of the region’s towns and cities burgeoned as large numbers of freedmen eschewed rural areas in favor of new opportunities in urban centers, establishing a cultural presence for themselves, creating vibrant communities that challenged the nature of existing cultural landscapes and demanding civil rights. In 1867, racial tensions erupted into violence in Franklin, the seat of Williamson County, when members of the Colored League, an organization promoting civil rights for blacks, clashed with a group of armed local white men, many of whom were ex-Confederates. This presentation examines the 1867 Franklin Race Riot with special attention given to the development of African American communities in the years shortly before and after the incident. It seeks to determine why Franklin’s black communities sprung up where they did and what effects they had on the town’s existing cultural landscapes. Personal testimonies from several Black men will highlight the cultural realities but also their resilience in a racist society and highlight the recent placement of educational markers detailing these strong men and their story interpreted in a public space within today’s cultural landscape.

Jackson Elliott Cantrell, (*he, his, him*) *Undergraduate Student, Florida State University International Programs: Florence, Italy, Antebellum Talents: The Men of Fontainebleau Plantation*

When the state-of-the-art industrial park fired up its massive operations, manufacturers from across Louisiana and beyond admired and later copied the endeavor. Its new technology, unique design, and year-round productivity were enhanced by a supply chain system that reliably delivered products across the globe. The site operated as a transportation hub for building materials and sugar but also for luxury goods imported through the port of New Orleans. Fontainebleau Plantation, now a state park, contained a self-sustaining village and hospital. Its artisans offered client services in masonry, architecture, and garden design. A pastry chef and fresco painter rounded out their offerings. That this impressive operation was conducted entirely by enslaved individuals broke stereotypes in 1800s Louisiana. Today, a look back at the talents of both enslaved and free men of color challenges contemporary assumptions as well.

Panel 7. Roundtable with Highland’s Council of Descendant Advisors

Moderator: Dr. Sara Bon-Harper, William & Mary’s Highland George Monroe, Jr | Francis W. Scott, Jr | Jennifer Stacy | Rakeem Walker

This roundtable discussion will address the overall symposium theme about the opportunities, future lives, and chances for marginalized Black men. Our families, relatives and friends were born in Charlottesville, Virginia and lived in the rural areas of Albemarle County, Virginia. During Jim Crow, laws and restrictions kept African Americans as a race controlled. Many of our grand uncles, aunts, and cousins migrated to Washington DC, Maryland, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and other states to find sustainable occupations to support growing families. African Americans were relegated to menial jobs such as laundress, domestics, housekeepers, cooks, waiters, bell hops/bellboys, skycaps, janitors, porters, stewards, elevator operators, coal miners, teachers, servants and other laborious professions. Separate but equal was a euphemistic way of saying, “you as an African American were not the masters of your domain.” The roundtable offers perspectives from multiple generations of an extended family. Participants are also members of Highland’s Council of Descendant Advisors



Highland's Council of Descendant Advisors

Panel 9. (In)Valuable: Black Boys at the Williamsburg Bray School, 1762

Moderator: Dr. Jajuan Johnson, William & Mary
Dr. Maureen Elgersman Lee, William & Mary
Nicole Brown, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation/ William & Mary
Adam Canaday, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

On September 30, 1762, Rev. William Yates and Robert Carter Nicholas penned a letter to Rev. John Waring in London, providing an accounting of “the Negro Children now at the School under our Direction in this City.” Yates and Nicholas were trustees of the Williamsburg Bray School and Waring belonged to The Associates of Dr. Bray, the school’s founding organization and primary benefactor. Currently the school’s earliest known student list, the 1762 document is a window on the lives of the thirty students who were instructed in reading, writing, sewing, etiquette, and Anglican doctrines by their teacher, Ann Wager. While all but three of the students enrolled that September were enslaved, the ratio of boys to girls was essentially equal. Our panel will look specifically at the Black boys on this 1762 list and delve into their lives, unpacking their trajectory into manhood and the many meanings of value laden in that journey. The panelists will explore the following questions as they relate to the symposium at large:

1. What do we know about the boys who attended the Williamsburg Bray School in 1762?
2. What was the value proposition of their attendance for their owners and their families?
3. How might this proposition have come into conflict with the boys’ perceptions of themselves as they became men?

Panel 10. Interrogating the Narrative of “the Fear of Black Men” as a Defense for the Unjust Killing of Black Males in America

Moderator: Dr. Tommy Curry, University of Edinburgh
Michael Rene Taylor, Undergrad, Mary Baldwin University
Miron Clay- Gilmore, Graduate Student, University of Edinburg
Dr. Adebayo Oluwayomi, Howard University
Dr. Dalitso Ruwe, Queen’s University

This panel seeks to illuminate how contemporary narratives of Black males as criminals engenders sex- specific forms of violence against Black males.

To that end the first paper argues against contemporary forms of analysis that merely rely on race and discount sex when discussing incidents of police brutality as it relates to Black males. Furthermore, the second paper building on the first offers a compelling case for using Social Dominance Theory as a new theoretical model to understand how evolutionary mechanisms underpin the dynamic and lethal kinds of violence targeting Black males in the US. Following this intervention, the third paper, using Fanon’s notion of phobogenics as a theoretical framework, examines “the fear of Black men” as part of the psychology of oppression deployed by dominant males within the white community. The final paper situates eugenic caricatures of Black males in medical reports and writings by white vigilantes as narratives that justify the death of Black males. Considering these presentations, this panel calls for more nuanced studies that deconstruct narratives of Black males as criminals and justifies their death.

Panel 11. Black Male Supervisors Navigating Racial Battle Fatigue in the Workplace

Terrance J. Sanders, Ph.D. student, Chicago School of Professional Psychology
Dr. Irvin E. Moore Jr., Principal and CEO, L.I.V.E Professional Services

According to research conducted by Mauma (1999), Black men are less likely to be promoted into management positions because they do not have the same background, education, and opportunities as current management; White men. Similarly, the researcher reported White men and Black men are more likely to work in the same general field. However, Black men are more likely than White men to receive poor performance reviews from their bosses, limiting their mobility and opportunities. As such, Black men navigate organizational spaces where overt racial discrimination may be present and where covert instances in the family of micro-indignities abound. Racial Battle Fatigue is the exhaustive influences of these experiences on marginalized groups and their physical, psychosocial, and behavioral well-being. Research at the intersection of race and organizational studies has a limited investigation on the real and pervasive presence of RBF among Black male supervisors. This presentation will provide a preliminary conceptual framework for understanding RBF and its physical, psychosocial, and behavioral impacts on Black men and the ways Black men have been conditioned to cope based on historical influence. This discussion is timely, particularly in the symposium’s quest to center the realities of Black men. In order to fully capture the essence of the lived experience of Black men, we must delve into the varying dimensions of their lives. Black men hold space in organizations across the globe, yet their stories of navigating their trajectories of race and racism at work have often gone untold.

12TH ANNUAL LEMON PROJECT SPRING SYMPOSIUM

The Lemon Project:

A Journey of Reconciliation

The Time is

NOW

*The Lives of Black Men
Past, Present, and Future*



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