

Chair's Note

As we celebrate Black History Month the Clara Luper Department of African and African American studies would like to impress upon us all the rich legacy of resilience and human affirmation that Black History brings into focus. It has done this in the face of the marginalization, and erasure. Black History represents, on one level, a transgressive appearance upon the scene by people once consigned to the dustbin of human experience. The fact of that prior consignment must never be overlooked for it continues even today to shape attempts at their inclusion. Aspects of popular culture, as well as the tenor of recent political ventures to expunge aspects of the Black experience form spaces of learning testify to the fact that we continue to live in the wake of that founding epistemological violence that marked western modernity's coming into objective consciousness. Despite this founding violence and its various re-articulations over time people of African descent continue to make their appearance as actors and agents of history on their own terms. Black Studies, as a vehicle for Black History, represents their own critical reflection upon the process of being actors in this way, with the floodlights of history's grand stage cast upon them.



Consider how far striking it is that the arc of their undertakings in the aftermath of western modernity has been toward the expansion of freedom, prosperity, and human rights to the benefit of a larger portion of the human family. Weigh this against the defining projects of the modern era that have sought by contrast to limit access to these things to the few (New World slavery, colonialism, Jim Crow, Apartheid...). Black History does the service of providing an important instance of the bitter medicine that alleviates the malediction of determined bad faith (self-evasion and self-deception) in the face of social projects that diminish human value. It provides the intermittent jolt back to reality necessary for the continued transformation of society toward a more just and a more human ideal.



"Retrieve what is at risk of being left behind."

Retirement Announcement



DODGE FAMILY COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
**CLARA LUPER DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN
AND AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDIES**
The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA

Greetings Everyone,

It is with regret that we announce Professor Jeanette Davidson's departure from the University of Oklahoma at the end of the Spring semester 2023. Professor Davidson will retire from OU after 26 years of service and demonstrated commitment to the field of Social Work and the advancement of African and African American studies at the university. Professor Davidson served as the Chair of African and African American Studies (AFAM) at OU from 2002 to 2017, a total of 15 years. During her time in that capacity, she singlehandedly designed the curriculum for the unit and laid the foundation upon which it could develop from a program to department status. While at OU, Professor Davidson advanced professionally to become one of the few Black women who currently hold the rank of full professor. She also has gained national recognition for her service to the discipline of Black Studies. Professor Davidson's devotion to student development and community building is reflected in the rich legacy she is leaving behind. Hundreds of graduates from the university have passed through the Department as majors and minors, or have been impacted in some way or the other by the structures and institutional arrangements that came from her stellar vision. The deficit that her absence will represent goes without saying.

However, this moment is bittersweet, as we are also excited to note that Professor Davidson's exodus from OU represents for her a new beginning. She will be the new Director of the Center for Societal Impact (CSI) and Professor of Instruction at the University of Texas at Austin beginning fall 2023. The AFAM Department wishes her the best as she undertakes this new challenge. We anticipate remarkable outcomes that are in line with all she has managed to accomplish here at OU.

Greg A. Graham
Associate Professor & Chair
Clara Luper Dept. of African and African American Studies
University of Oklahoma
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316 Cate Center Drive, Room 315
Norman, OK 73072

African Aesthetics will be offered in Summer 2023 as Study Abroad Option

In summer 2023, Dr. Eaton will offer “AFAM 3133: Introduction to African Aesthetics” as part of the Northern Uganda study abroad program, sponsored by the College of International Studies. The course will emphasize intersections between African feminist practices, activism, and creative expression. Readings will focus on African visual art, storytelling, literature, music, and film across the continent, with special attention to western, southern, and eastern Africa. Students enrolled in the course and study abroad program will participate in a service-learning activity with the annual Women's Peace Conference for community leaders in Gulu, Uganda. For more information about the course and program costs, contact Dr. Eaton at (k.eaton1@ou.edu) or Education Abroad at OU https://www.ou.edu/cis/education_abroad. Tentative dates: June 7-June 28, 2023.





Dr. Kalenda Eaton and artist Shyanne Dickey discussed the Exoduster Movement, a mass migration of African Americans to Kansas in the late 1800s on February 14, 2023.

Beyond examining the history, repression and legacy of the Kansas Exodus, Eaton and Dickey delved into Dickey's artistic practice, which draws heavily from her family's history as Exodusters, and life in Jetmore, Kansas. This conversation was part of the programming for the Charles M. Russell Center's Black Artists of Oklahoma Project and in conjunction with the opening of Dickey's exhibition, Black Artists of Oklahoma, Series 3: Shyanne Dickey's Unveiling a Hidden History.

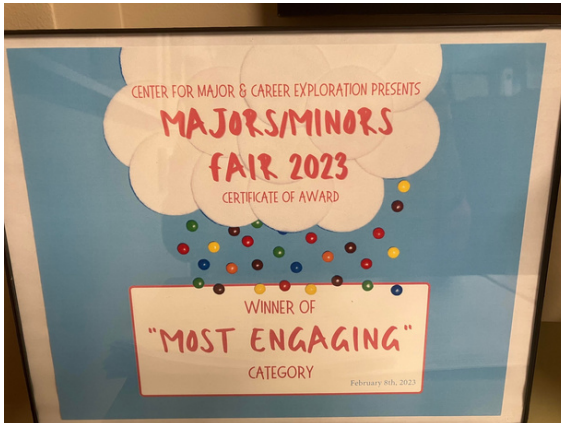
We are honored to display Dickey's work, shown above, in the AFAM department. You can stop by and see it in person through February 24th.

AFAM FEBRUARY EVENTS

We were excited to kick off the month of February by hosting and attending events across campus.

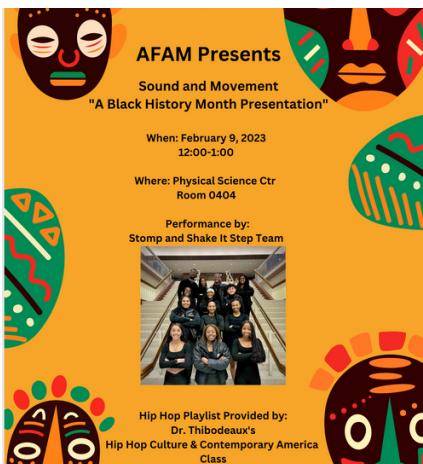
Majors/Minors Fair

We had a productive time meeting students from high schools and current OU Freshman to discuss how to become a major or minor. We even took home an award for the the "Most Engaging" table.

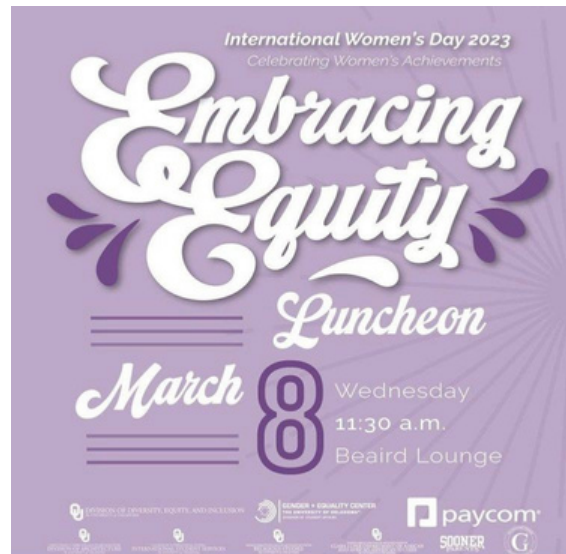
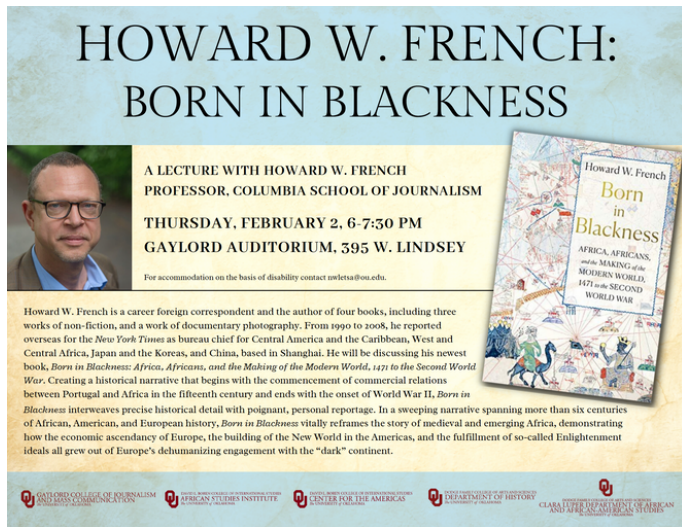


AFAM Presents "Sound and Movement"

We hosted an event in conjunction with Dr. Jermaine Thibodeaux's Hip Hop Culture & Contemporary America class.



AFAM Co-Sponsored Events



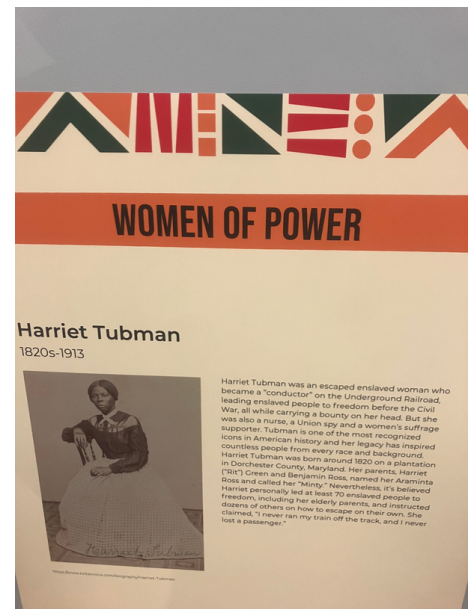
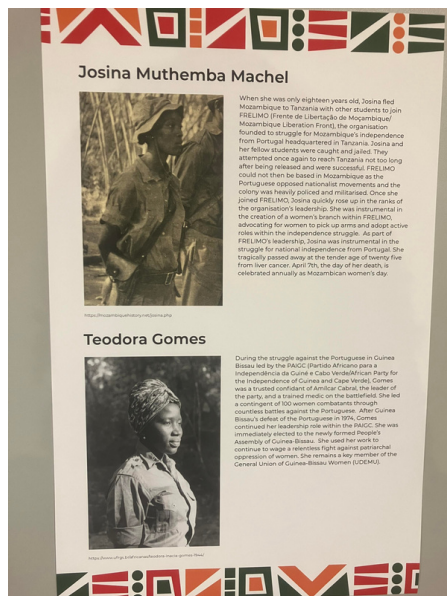
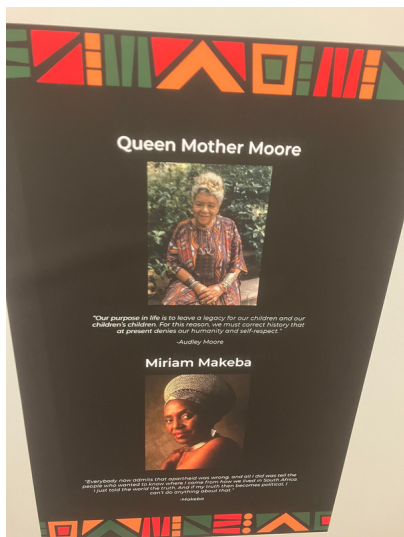
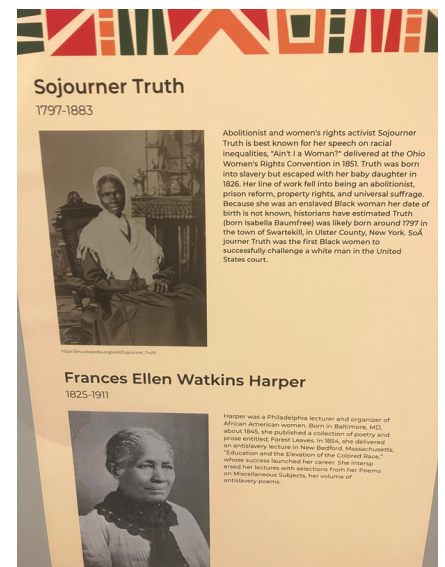
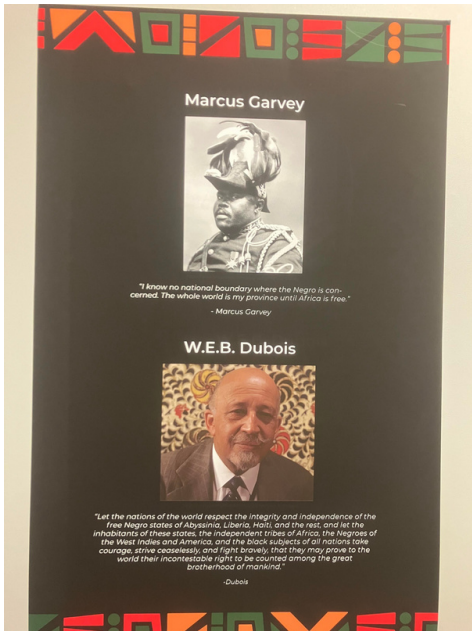
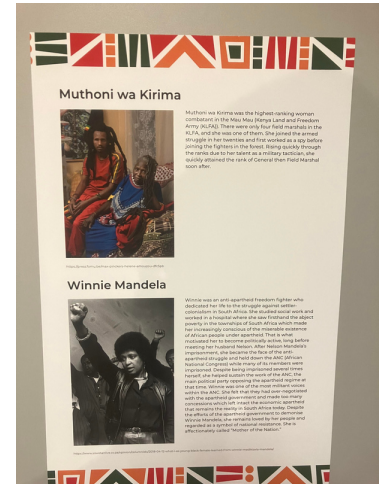
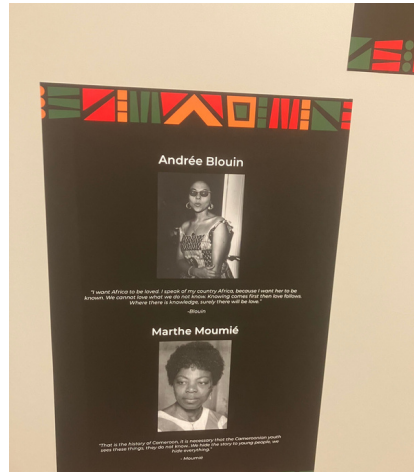
AFAM Community Event

We had a great time bringing Black History to Washington Middle School with AfrobeatZ and student Shania Dean. Shania, shared her original poem that taught students of all the contributions made by African Americans that we use every day. Next, AfrobeatZ brought the energy with performances and a short lesson for students and teachers.



Black History Month Display

You can find our display curated by students Ebube Nwafor and Shania Dean in the library



The Washington Post

The Black Western Conversations series is sponsored by the Clara Luper Department of African & African American Studies and highlights diverse regional histories within the United States. Dr. Eaton is the series organizer.

HISTORY



MADE BY HISTORY

madebyhistory Retweeted

Felicia Angeja Viator @mama_neta · Feb 9

Essay 2 of the Black Western Conversations series for @madebyhistory @washingtonpost shows us what we've missed about the significance of the Pacific Ocean to the Black American experience. @AFAM_OU @OUArtsSciences @UofOklahoma



washingtonpost.com

Perspective | Black Americans have deep ties to the Pacific — but th...
Popular lore of the Pacific Ocean, like so much of Western history, ignores Black Americans.

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madebyhistory @madebyhistory · Feb 2

"It's not just about inserting Black stories into narratives of the past that have omitted them," writes @AnthonyWWood in the first essay in the Black Western Conversations series sponsored by @AFAM_OU @OUArtsSciences @UofOklahoma.



washingtonpost.com

Perspective | The fight for accurate Western history is about inclusio...
Distortions in Western history have long obscured the region's Black communities.