



EMORY  
UNIVERSITY

Department of  
African American Studies

# AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES SPRING 2025 NEWSLETTER

EDMUND PETTUS BRIDGE

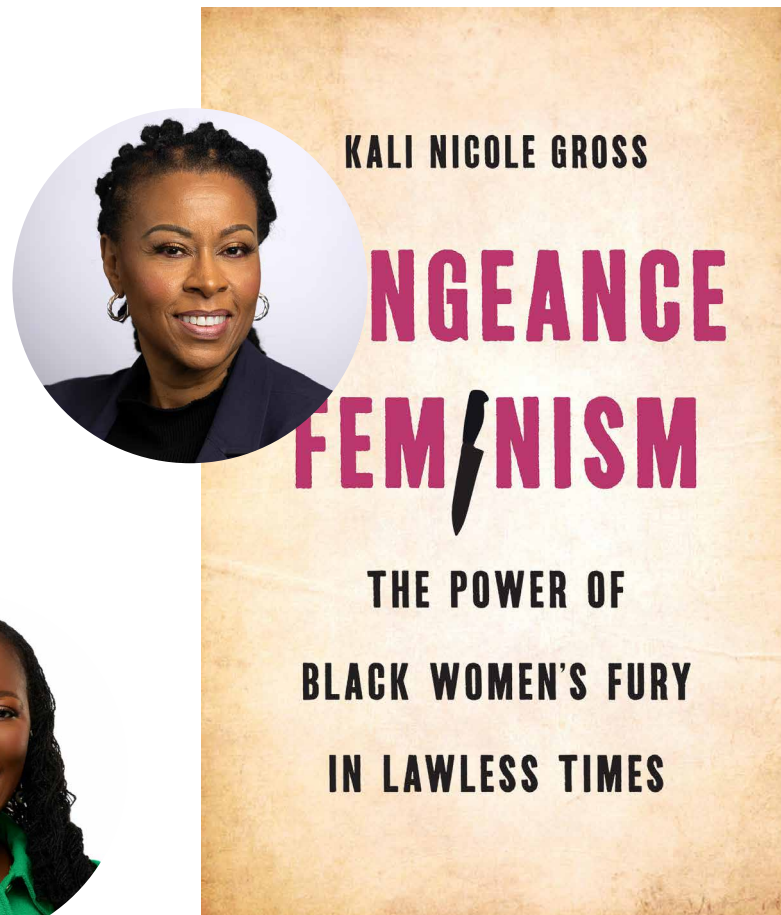




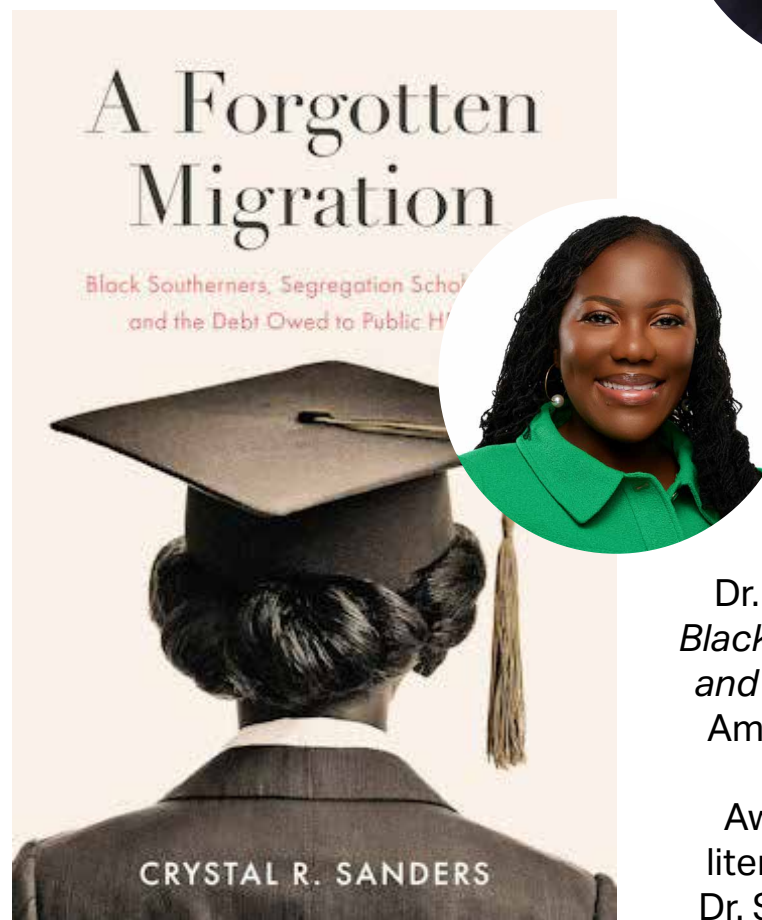
# FACULTY AWARDS

Outstanding research is one of the hallmarks of AAS. In Spring 2025, award-winning works by four of our faculty, are further indication of the depth of that research and scholarly commitment.

Dr. Kali Gross's *Vengeance Feminism: The Power of Black Women's Fury in Lawless Times* won the 2025 Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) Book Prize, for the best new book in African American history and culture. *Vengeance Feminism* also earned the PEN Open Book Award.



Dr. Crystal Sanders's *A Forgotten Migration: Black Southerners, Segregation Scholarships, and the Debt Owed to Public HBCUs* wins the American Educational Research Association (AERA) SIG 168 Outstanding Publication Award, for "a substantial contribution to the literature or practice of graduate education." Dr. Sanders's *A Forgotten Migration* was also awarded the Pauli Murray Book Prize by the African American Intellectual History Society.



Dr. Pearl Dowe's book, *The Radical Imagination of Black Women: Ambition, Politics, and Power*, received two book prizes: the 2024 Best Book Award for Race, Ethnicity and Politics, sponsored by the American Political Science Association and the 2025 W.E.B. DuBois Best Book Award, sponsored by the National Conference of Black Political Scientists.



Dr. Dianne M. Stewart was awarded the 2025 Guggenheim Fellowship, joining 198 scholars in the 100th class of this prestigious fellowship. Marking its centennial anniversary, the Guggenheim facilitates the opportunity for fellows to pursue independent work at the highest level under "the freest possible conditions." Her project, based on work initially funded by a Fulbright, will "explore how 18th-century Kongolesse Catholicism inspired the formation of Afro-Protestant institutions among African descendants in the wider 18th- and 19th-century Atlantic world."



# C25 HONORS STUDENTS

By Dr. Michelle Gordon



Jada Brown's thesis (completed in **Anthropology**): "*Sunshine and Exclusion: The Legacy of Sundown Towns in a Tourist Paradise*" earned highest honors in Anthropology under Dr. Bayo Holsey's direction. Jada's thesis research proved intensely challenging due to the complexities of studying and defining "sundown towns" in both primary and secondary sources. With impressive perseverance, Jada created an interdisciplinary research approach that focused on southern Florida and the development of twentieth-century resort and luxury communities there.

Jada's committee: Dr. Bayo Holsey (thesis advisor), Dr. Michelle Gordon, Dr. Linette Park (WGSS).

Dawnya Green's thesis (completed in **African American Studies**): "*Legacies of Slavery Etched into Emory University's Campuses*" earned highest honors under my direction. This was an interdisciplinary project that engages histories of slavery, education, and religion to provide a different, richer, and more disturbing account of Emory's historical entwinements with slavery than institutional history has acknowledged. The thesis also considers contemporary efforts to memorialize and acknowledge the history of enslavement tied to Emory through artist Charmaine Minnefield's Praise House Project and the incomplete Twin Memorials Project. Shortly before completing the thesis, Dawnya learned that she is descended from a man once enslaved by an Emory faculty member.

Dawnya's committee: Dr. Michelle Gordon (thesis advisor), Dr. Dianne Stewart, Dr. Kiela Crabtree (Political Science).



The projects differ profoundly in their historical focus, methodologies, and frameworks, but they share in common critically creative uses of a range of primary sources and interdisciplinary approaches. Dawnya and Jada provided valuable suggestions and encouragement to each other in our honors cohort meetings, where we wrestled with their research challenges and writing questions. I learned so much while working with Dawnya and Jada on these projects and reading their theses!





## A FORGOTTEN MIGRATION

Black History Month was filled with African American Studies events celebrating the research of our esteemed faculty and PhD students; the first in our series of events was a conversation with Dr. Crystal Sanders about *A Forgotten Migration*.





Dr. Sanders explored the history of federal and state policy during Jim Crow that siphoned resources from HBCUs to fund African Americans, who were barred from earning their graduate degrees at state universities in the South and compelled to seek their post-baccalaureate degrees up North. After sharing the scope of her research and the debt owed to public HBCUs, Dr. Janeria Easley joined her in conversation examining cases of segregation scholarships profiled in the book and the impacts and implications of this practice today.





# The Limbo of Forgotten Things: Faculty Seminar

Dr. Michelle Gordon



Our faculty seminar was led by Dr. Michelle Gordon who shared her research among the faculty. Colleagues engaged with her work on the literary and personal history of playwright Theodore Ward.





# BLACK HISTORY MONTH COLLOQUIUM

LIZETTE LONDON, BRENDA UMUTONIWASE, DR. BETTINA JUDD, DR. ALYASAH SEWELL



The scholarship in our department was further spotlighted during Black History Month at the African American Studies colloquium, where PhD students Lizette “Liz” London and Brenda Umutoniwase presented research alongside Drs. Bettina Judd and Alyasah Sewell.

*‘dismemberment’ of A  
as a severance of the  
subject’s memory from  
collective body*

*Somet*





Hortense Spillers  
Saidiya Hartman  
Denise Ferreira da Silva  
Sylvia Wynter  
Rizvana Bradley  
Kevin Quashie

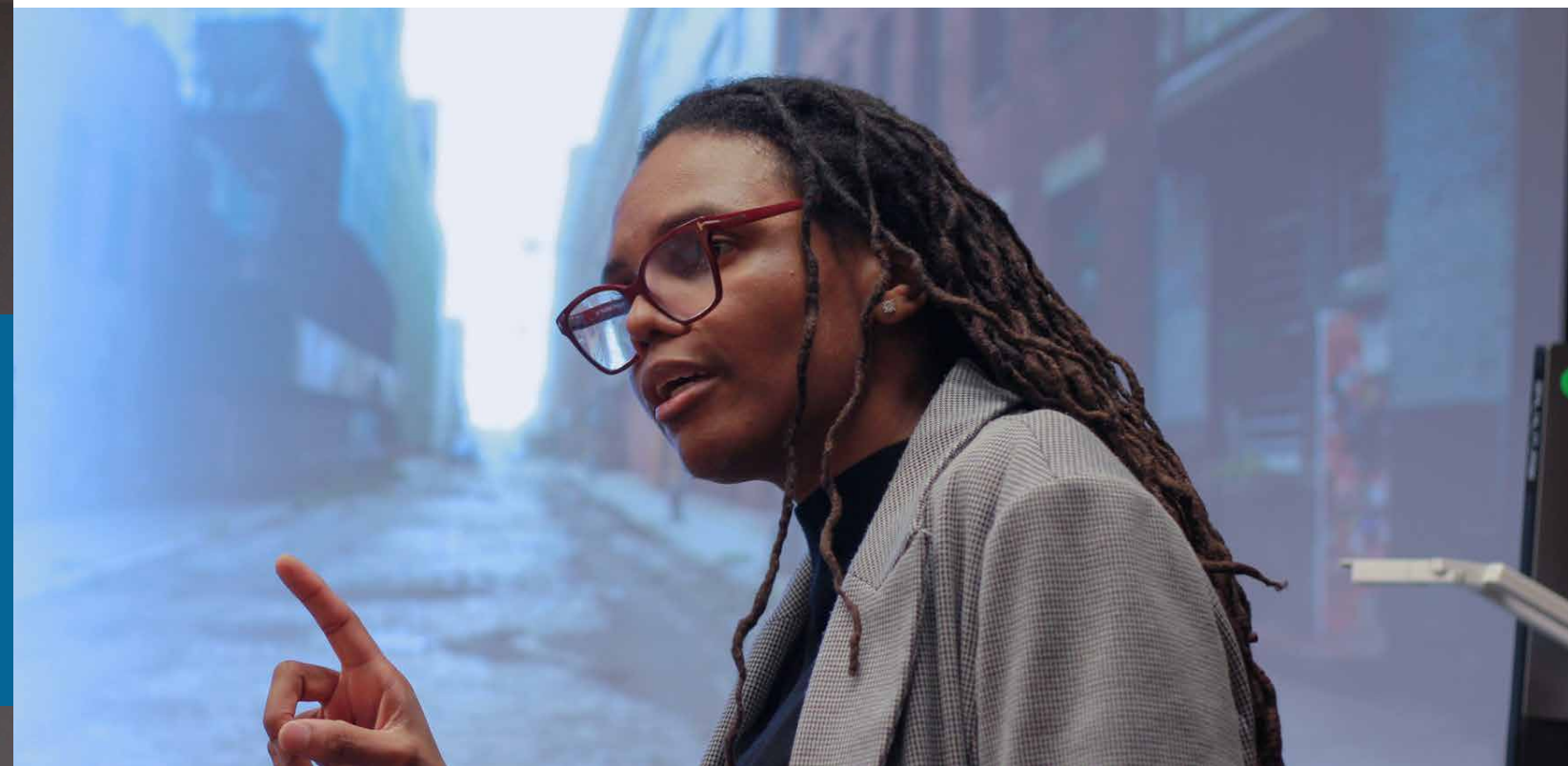
Jasmine Nicole Cobb  
Kimberly Wallace-Sanders  
Kimberly Juanita Brown  
Christina Sharpe  
Deborah Willis

Their work encompassed art on the continent, literary connections, the concept of "the block," and meditations on grief through poetry. This event was open to AAS affiliates as panelists had the opportunity to engage with questions on their research.

Jacqueline Stewart  
Anna Everett  
Beretta E. Smith-Schomade  
Kara Keeling  
Jacqueline Bobo

Alice Walker  
Alexis De Veaux  
Omi Osun Joni L Jones  
Sharon Bridgforth  
Bettina Judd  
Toni Morrison  
Lorraine D'Grady

Adv.  
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Be,





# UNDERGRADUATE OPEN HOUSE



This was an opportunity to connect with current and prospective students, letting them know what African American Studies encompasses and how the department and scholarship within AAS courses can enrich them academically and in other areas of their lives. We shared resources, announced upcoming events, and provided information for students to stay connected.





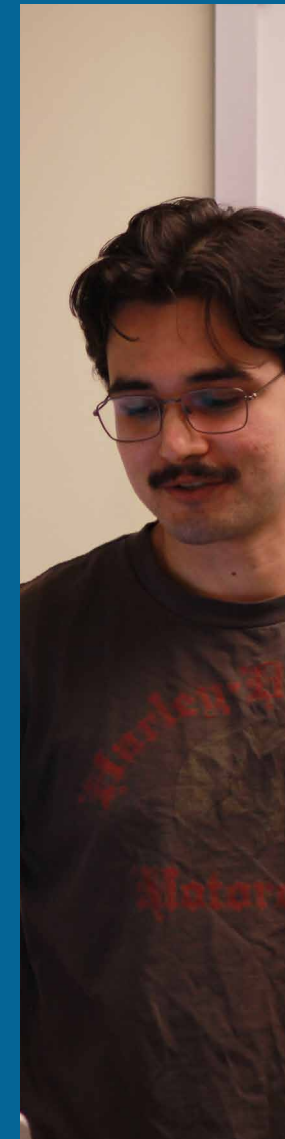
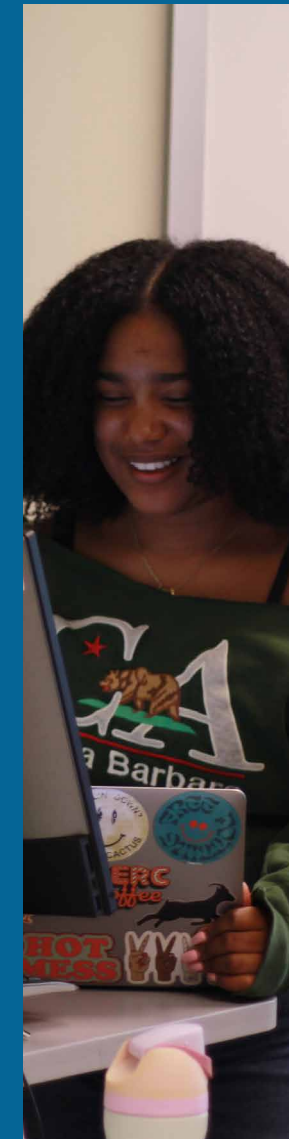
# MMUF

As the semester saw students return to a busy campus and busy workloads, the importance of balance and time management skills was the starting point for the MMUF sessions.





By March's end, senior undergraduate fellows were presenting mock-presentations ahead of the MMUF Spring Research Conference on April 11th. Fellows shared their research, with peers who engaged with feedback and questions.





# GRADUATE TOWN HALL

We were grateful to have Dr. Carol Henderson join us for our graduate town hall and engage student and faculty questions. The town hall was a space for conversation and for our AAS graduate community to check in with one another.





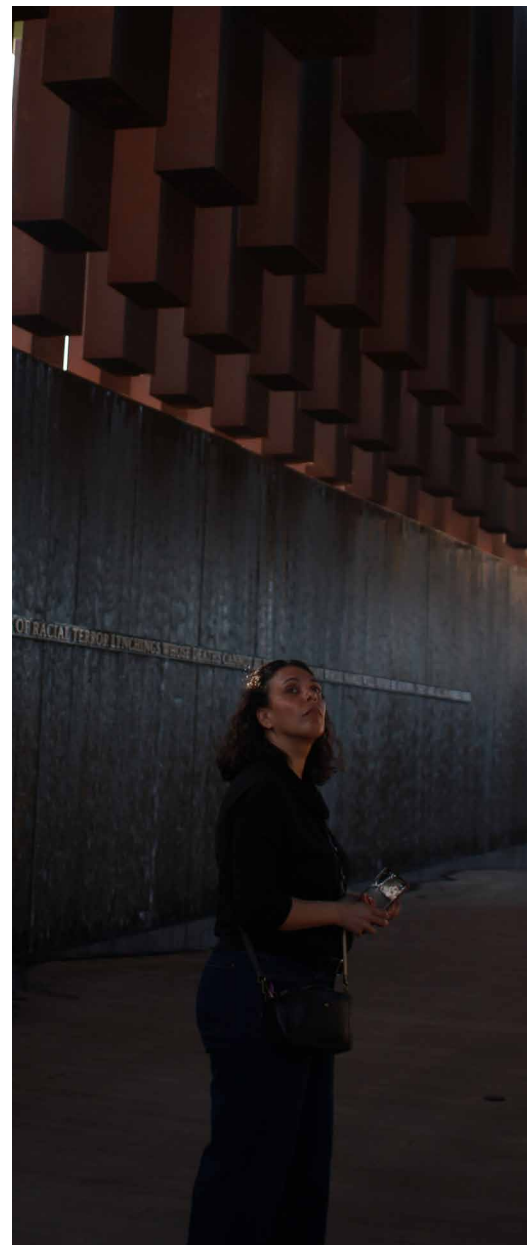
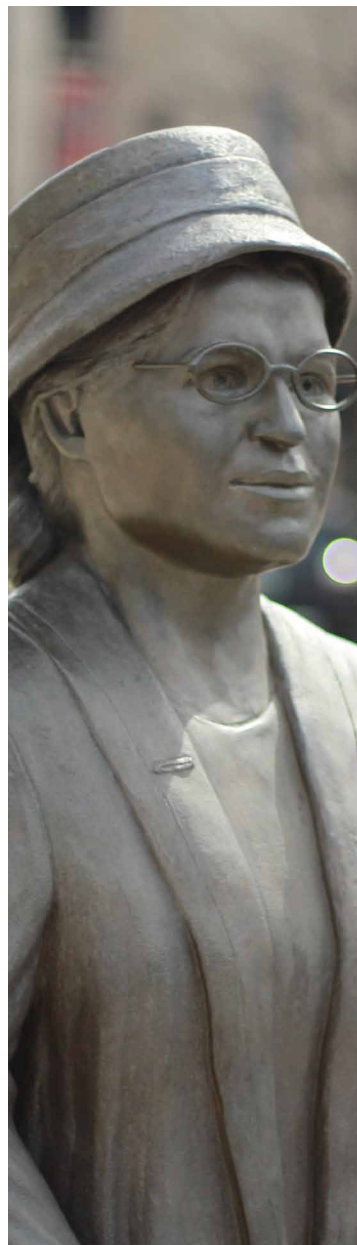
# SELMA 60TH ANNIVERSARY JUBILEE

Though Dr. Carol Anderson was unable to join the trip to Selma this year, her presence was missed and the group made a point of expressing that with a poster dedicated to her.





Emory students from the Imagining Democracy Lab and the Civil Rights Movement courses traveled to Alabama to commemorate the 60th anniversary of "Bloody Sunday." On March 7, 1965, roughly 500 peaceful non-violent protestors dressed in their church clothes, as many had attended worship services earlier that day, were brutally beaten by state law enforcement as they attempted to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma to protest the denial of voting rights. In this unique AAS immersive educational opportunity, participating students learned more about this important







history and visited a bevy of local museums and monuments such as the Legacy Museum and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice. Students also met with current civil rights leaders and public servants such as SPLC CEO Margaret Huang and



Congresswoman Nikema Williams. They also joined thousands of attendees as they crossed the bridge together in song, solidarity, and a commemoration of the fight for democracy and equal rights.

