

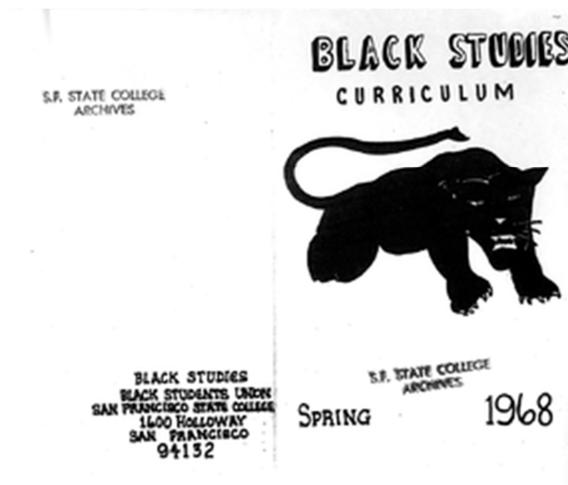
Leadership in Africology: Setting the Record Straight

by

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The above is the cover of a 1968 Black Studies curriculum pamphlet from San Francisco State University (then San Francisco State College) from the San Francisco State College Strike Collection (archives) at San Francisco State University (<https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/strike/bundles/187916>).

This special issue of *JPAS* is the response to a call for interviews, personal narratives, oral histories, multi-media presentations, and other medium in an effort to highlight some of the original and contemporary mission, goals, objectives, and outcomes of Africology in the U.S. Hence, the intent was to investigate the lived experiences of those who hold or have held a leadership position in the construction of Black Studies, and secondly, to provide a collection of largely self-reflective analysis and assessment about the history and sociology of 'Black Studies' that can be compared and contrasted, and hopefully be of assistance to a new generation of leaders in the discipline.

The response to this call is presented here. We have an editorial that questions the nomenclature 'Africana Studies', commentary on the cases of Dr. Jahi Issa, two articles and six interviews. The three articles include a history of the development of the Department of Black Studies at San Francisco State University by a past chair Oba T'Shaka. And finally, we have a reflective essay by Rita Kiki Edozie on the role of Africa in Black Studies at Michigan State University that uses their PhD program in African American and African Studies as a case study.

Hence, our six interviews juxtapose the articles. I had the pleasure of interviewing poet and activist Askia Muhammad Touré wherein he discusses his role in the beginning of the Department of Black Studies at San Francisco State University. Second I interviewed the Rev. Sakena Young-Scaggs and the Rev. Jonathon Scaggs concerning the political/social origins of African and African American Studies at Arizona State University. I also interviewed *JPAS* original and present editorial board member Emeritus Professor David Covin about his work at California State University at Sacramento, his previous post as the former co-chair of the Boulder, Colorado chapter of CORE, founder of the Black Student Union at Washington State University (WSU), and as one of the founders of the Black Studies program at WSU. Continuing in my role as interviewer, I held a discussion with H. Ike Okafor-Newsum (H.E. Newsum), the chair of the Department of African American and African Studies at The Ohio State University, soon to be the home of one of the newest doctoral programs in African American and African Studies.

Joining me in this issue to provide an introductory history of leadership within African American Studies (Africology) are Winsome Chunnu-Brayda and Travis D. Boyce. They interviewed Francine Childs, the first Black full professor at Ohio University and the first and only woman to chair their Department of African American Studies focused on her challenges relevant to gender and racial equality during the early stage of the Black Studies movement. In addition, we have an interview of Shirley Nash Weber, the chair and professor emeritus of the Africana Studies Department at San Diego State University conducted by Anta Anthony Merritt.

As you may notice, there is a California focus to this issue and that I directed five interviews. This was not my plan, but rather a coincidental situation based on the filtering of conversations and situations. It is my hope that in the future we can include more voices on this topic and that those who were reluctant can see the benefits in sharing their experiences with others as we work to enhance the excellence in the discipline of Africology in the U.S. and around the globe. And moreover, I sincerely thank those who have unselfishly contributed to this issue of *JPAS*.