

APRIL 2020

African Heritage Studies Association Newsletter



The mission of AHSA is to reconstruct, represent, and promote African history and cultural study along African centered and intergenerational lines while effecting the political, social, and economic union among communities of African people the world over.

The Ancestors Speak – Keep Going!

“We Remember...” OR “Lest We Forget”

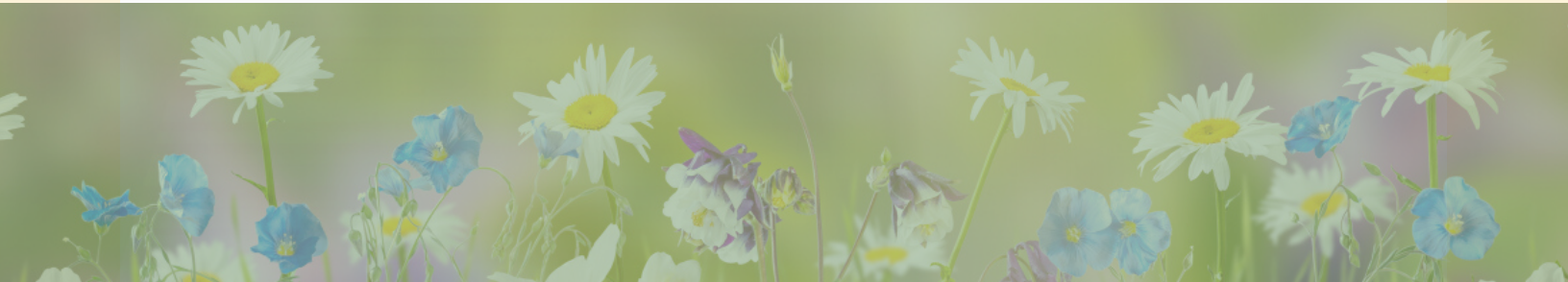
-African Dispora Ancestral Institute (ADACI)

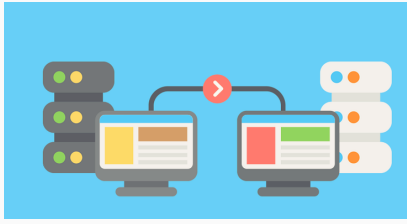
As we all deal with the challenges of COVID-19, we are reminded that over 400 years ago, our Ancestors' lives were abruptly disrupted, torn apart, dreams shattered, loved ones taken, as they were kidnapped, trafficked and shipped to be enslaved in the Americas. We are reminded that many resisted, while others endured more months at the bottom of slave ships as cargo taken to parts that would be unknown to them. We are reminded that everything we have our African Ancestors gave us – memory, knowledge, courage, strength, determination, and more. Most importantly our Ancestors bequeathed us a spirit that refuses to be defeated. We are also reminded that everything we have today – more knowledge, more science, more technology is because of them and their resiliency.

They showed us how to be strong, be safe, be smart, be reasonable, be caring, be careful, and be loving to ourselves, our families, and our communities. We are them—lest we forget. Let us now use what they have given to help us face these trying times. They faced COVID-19 in other ways, and they survived. We can too, by being careful, caring, sharing, maintaining distances, and following good common rules of safety, cleanliness and order. We can use this time to reaffirm our relationships with our Ancestors and with each other. We can read and become more knowledgeable about our Ancestors and their survival skills. We can use this time to become more committed to each other and our communities. We will never forget who we are—
We Remember!

With Love and Respect

**We wish you good health, upliftment, prosperity, joy and peace for all eternity
The AHSA Family**





We Moved!

We've moved!

Africanheritagestudiesassociation.org is now ahsa50.org
please visit our updated website!

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE!

Join today at
**15% discount until
December 31st, 2020**

- Membership-\$85.00; Student \$35.00; Retiree \$60.00
- Lifetime Membership-can pay \$100.00 deposit and have until December 31st 2020 (calendar year) to pay reduced balance of \$1,000
- GOAL: 300 Memberships by December 31st 2020

Upcoming Conference and Themes

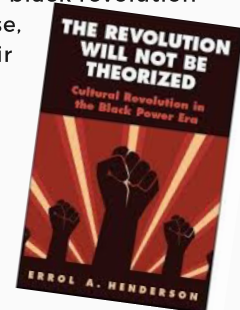
John Henrik Clarke, James Turner, Shelby F. Lewis, Marimba Ani and Others

- July 23-August 3, 2021-Accra, Ghana- "The Future of AHSA and the Youth in the African Liberation Movement"
- October 2022-Atlanta, Georgia- "Afro-Futurism: The Integration of Technology and Scholarship"
- August 2023-Egypt- "Returning to the Source"

Errol A. Henderson, The Revolution Will Not be Theorized

"Studies the revolutionary theory of the Black Power Movement in the 1960s through '70s, placing it within the broader social theory of black revolution in the United States since the nineteenth century. The study of the impact of Black Power Movement (BPM) activists and organizations in the 1960s through '70s has largely been confined to their role as proponents of social change; but they were also theorists of the change they sought. In *The Revolution Will Not Be Theorized* Errol A. Henderson explains this theoretical contribution and places it within a broader social theory of black revolution in the United States dating back to nineteenth-century black intellectuals. These include black nationalists, feminists, and anti-imperialists; activists and artists of the Harlem Renaissance; and early Cold War-era black revolutionists. The book first elaborates W. E. B. Du Bois's thesis of the "General Strike" during the Civil War, Alain Locke's thesis relating black culture to

political and economic change, Harold Cruse's work on black cultural revolution, and Malcolm X's advocacy of black cultural and political revolution in the United States. Henderson then critically examines BPM revolutionists' theorizing regarding cultural and political revolution and the relationship between them in order to realize their revolutionary objectives. Focused more on importing theory from third world contexts that were dramatically different from the United States, BPM revolutionists largely ignored the theoretical template for black revolution most salient to their case, which undermined their ability to theorize a successful black revolution in the United States."



CALL FOR PAPERS

African Heritage Studies Association (AHSA) National Conference October 17th Virtual Conference- THEME: "Paying Homage to the Scholarship of our Elders and Ancestors"

As an African created and led organization, the African Heritage Studies Association (AHSA) continues to be a sacred institution dedicated to the sovereign liberation of the global Black world from all forms of oppression. Last year in 2019, AHSA held its historic celebration of 50 years of achievements while reflecting on its future and the status of the global African world. We resolved that in terms of our Pan-African centered scholar-activist mandate we would gather in 2020 to deepen our understanding of past African-centered paradigms and works guiding our institution and the field of Africana Studies, and convey this to understanding to our global African youth. As we continue to answer the call of our African Renaissance, the foundational teachings of our elders should guide our next decade of global organizing, teaching, and research on various aspects of the Africana history, culture, politics and social life. Therefore, special focus at our 2020 gathering will be on the works of esteemed elders and **jegnoch** in the field of Africana Studies: **John Henrik Clarke, James Turner, Marimba Ani and Shelby Lewis**. The goal is to ascertain the needed future work and unfinished business of our liberatory struggles by AHSA members, similar organizations and especially our emerging youth and future African centered warrior-scholars whose growth and development are of central concern. While a proliferation of

organizations that assert a commitment to decolonizing African minds and achieving a united sovereign body of African peoples has occurred, the need to document the wisdom of core elders of Africana Studies and offer their insights in a focused manner to our youth is a critical agenda for AHSA's 2020 conference.

Call For Papers Guidelines:

AHSA will hold a one-day virtual conference that will focus on the on the works of the **jegnoch** mentioned above- ancestor Nana John Henrik Clarke, and living elders James Turner, Marimba Ani and Shelby Lewis. AHSA invites abstract proposals for panels, round-tables, workshops, or other sharing formats that critique, analyze, and assess our selected African centered elders' work and ways they have offered solutions to our liberation as giants of African-centered epistemology and builders of Africana Studies- our parent discipline- intended to be used as a weapon for ideological clarity, lived experience knowledge, and collective action. Proposals can reflect on the contributions to Africana Studies from multiple lens and disciplines: history, culture, ecology/ environment, politics, psychology, economics, k.w.k. as reflected in the words of our elders of focus. **Proposals must include the session title and a 250-word abstract summarizing the theme of the panel, and include the name and paper titles for each panelist (including the chair and commentator).**

Send abstracts here: africanstudiesheritage@gmail.com with Subject line: ATTN Dr. Afia S. Zakiya AHSA 2020 NY

DEADLINES:

- Abstracts of a maximum of 250 words submitted by June 5, 2020.
- Full Papers must be submitted by July 3, 2020.
- Notification of acceptance will be sent by August 7, 2019

For more information, and to register for the 2020 conference visit AHSA'S NEW HOME PAGE :

<https://www.ahsa50.org>

The Water Affordability Crisis and Being Black and Poor in America: No Money, No Water, Who Cares?

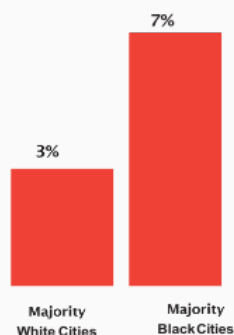
Afia S. Zakiya

America's water and wastewater infrastructure, is old, rapidly declining and needs **urgent** repair to provide safe, affordable water and protect public health. The American Society of Civil Engineers' 2017 infrastructure report card graded water and wastewater systems at D and D+ respectively. We have discussed in a previous newsletter the risks involved to public health from these decrepit pipes, with Flint Michigan being the case in point.

Many other Flint's nightmares stare us in the face. Black people must pay attention to the politics of water and the growing crisis of water affordability across the nation, accent on our communities in the

South where most Black folks still live. Since the 1980s federal funds to fix the bad water systems in states and municipalities has been insignificant. Now water/wastewater utilities seek money to operate and fix infrastructure almost entirely from user fees. Yes, utilities must cover the cost of daily operation and maintenance costs to comply with federal and state public health and environmental standards, but prices are becoming too much for some families to bear. Add to this increasing climate and natural disasters and costs. These factors have caused prices of US water/wastewater services to rise from 2000 to 2017 by 136 percent, with average annual increases of over 5 percent and inflation rising 44 percent, both have outpaced increases to Black median household incomes, which went up just 35 percent over this time period (www.bipartisanpolicy.org). For low-income families we also have to watch sewer costs. In 2017, wastewater represented 58% of the total average utility bill for households (Mack & Wrase, 2017).

Average Water Bill Burden for Low-Income Households (2012-2016, ACS)

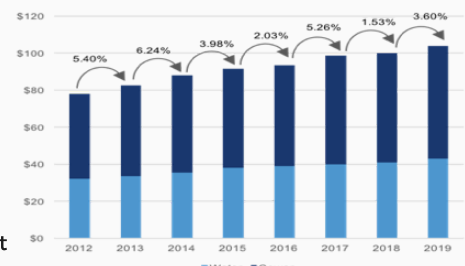


Percent Rise in Water & Wastewater Bills for 50 U.S. Cities Food and Water Watch and the NAACP's Thurgood Marshall Institute (TMI/LDF) highlight the intersection of class, location, race and water affordability. TMI/LDF's research found that in addition to historic racist service provision of water and sanitation, as water prices have increased, the hardest-hit states with people struggling to pay utility bills are those with greater concentrations of lower-income residents. Are we surprised? Soon, almost 37 percent of people in Mississippi may not be able to afford water. Louisiana and Alabama are the second and third most at-risk states (Mack & Wrase, 2017).

Furthermore, the average majority Black city had a water bill burden more than twice that of the average

majority white city. In majority Black cities, low-income households paid on average more than 7 percent of their income on water while majority white city, low-income households paid 3 percent of their income on water. **Water service was cut off to an estimated 1.4 million people in more than 500,000 US households behind on their water bills**

in 2016. These cut-offs are found mostly among poor people and cities with large nonwhite populations.



Nonpayment of bills can lead to:

- service disconnections/shut-offs
- liens, foreclosure and eviction for unpaid water/sanitation bills added to property taxes
- loss of children due to "child neglect" if water shut off-
- legal consequences such as arrest, fines
- and felony charges if reconnected without utility permission and arrests being on one's new permanent criminal record

(www.naacpldf.org/wp-content/uploads/Water_Report_Executive-Summary_5_21_19_FINAL-V2.pdf).

The Water Affordability Crisis and Being Black and Poor in America: No Money, No Water, Who Cares?

Afia S. Zakiya

While some relief exists, it's not enough nor the solution. Cities like Philadelphia, Baltimore and others have created customer assistance programs (CAPs) to help vulnerable people but not all utilities offer CAPs, and they have legal limitations to structure fees that can help low-income customers <https://waterfm.com/water-customer-assistance-programs-affordability/>. AHSA will continue to monitor this issue, and determine ways our community is impacted by water and utility policies that show race and class dynamics which criminalize Black people, break up families, and create homelessness due to inability to pay bills. The politics of water and

water policy based in the ideological war over privatization of water, struggle for community participation in governance of utilities and the ideology of urbanization continue to shape our lives and define how we as sovereign seeking people will live in relation to each other, nature, and our built environment. We must have an indigenous Afrikan political ecophilosophy in Africana Studies that informs our collective response to and worldview of these issues.

Reparations Awareness Day February 26, 2020

Honorable Alderwoman Robin Rue Simmons
5th Ward, Evanston, Illinois

The Reparations Initiative in Evanston, Illinois requires the first 10 million of the marijuana tax to



go towards reparative measures for those African descendants in Evanston. This sales tax was targeted as it is a pure state tax without any other obligations. Additionally, the racially biased arrests for marijuana affects 71% of Blacks in Illinois; yet, Blacks and whites consume equal amounts. This legislation passed with an 8 to 1 vote. The journey began with the establishment of the Equity and Empowerment Commission to look at Reparations to end structural racism and achieve racial equity; however, they were lacking a strategy to move ahead. A series of community meetings that included

elders who had memory of Red-lining and historical instances and change determining to determine of racism were held prior to the legislation being proposed. They are now trying to determining redress measures by bringing in experts to address housing; redlining; financial wellness; and health as it relates to trauma. "Damages are layered so there should be the layers of redress." The criteria to receive reparations is to be a Black Evanston Resident at the prescribed cut-off date "regardless of where you came from." Alderwoman Simmons has received hate mail and push back to the point where police protection for herself and family was required, but has presently calmed down. Since this is a state tax, Evanston will only receive 3% of the total collected. As it will take several years to get to ten million, Evanston has created a tax deductible Reparations Fund, contributions can be made to: Cityofevanston.org/reparations