

MILESTONES

THE SONJA HAYNES STONE CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN BLACK CULTURE AND HISTORY



“INITIATIONS” EXHIBITION OPENING

February 20th - May 12th, Robert and Sallie Brown Gallery and Museum

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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK



Dear Stone Center Family, The New Year gives us the chance to refresh, to start anew. It's a timely moment to reflect on our past and to do so while brimming

with the optimism of possibility. As I look ahead, I'm inspired by the possibilities that lie before us, and our collective potential to do more. I appreciate your support of our engagement efforts from last year—in Atlanta, and Charlotte. Be on the lookout for me this year in D.C., New York, and right here in the Chapel-Hill, Raleigh and Durham areas. In addition to reaching out to all of you who have supported the Stone Center, my team and I have been seeking grant opportunities and exploring corporate sponsorships. I hope you saw our End-of-Year ask, as we have been shoring up our annual giving initiatives, which will include GiveUNC this March. We also plan to educate

our communities about the importance of planned giving.

Lastly, the impact of your recurring gifts—no matter how big or small—are essential to our guaranteed income. I hope that you will consider making the Stone Center your giving priority with a recurring gift in 2024. In case you can't tell, big things are on the horizon for the Stone Center! This is a new moment, a new era, and a new Movement for the Stone Center. I can't wait to share more about what that means, and how you can be a part of it in this year of possibility.

Yours,
Dr. Rhon



COLONIAL RECKONING -- RACE AND REVOLUTION IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY CUBA

Writers Discussion Series with Louis Pérez on **Feb. 8th at 3:30pm**

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NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR & AWARD-WINNING HISTORIAN KEISHA BLAIN



McNeil African American History Month Lecture on Feb. 22nd at 7pm

Dr. Keisha N. Blain is one of the most innovative and influential young historians of her generation. Her research and writing examine the dynamics of race, gender and politics in both national and global perspectives. She completed a Ph.D. in History from Princeton University in 2014. She is a Professor of Africana Studies and History at Brown University, a columnist for MSNBC, and former president of the African American Intellectual History Society (AAIHS). She is the 2022 recipient of the Guggenheim Fellowship and a 2022 Andrew Carnegie Fellow.

Dr. Blain is the author of *Set the World on Fire: Black Nationalist Women and the Global Struggle for Freedom* (2018), winner of the First Book Award from the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians and winner of the Darlene Clark

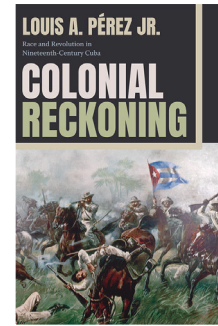
Hine Award from the Organization of American Historians. Dr. Blain's most recent book *Until I Am Free: Fannie Lou Hamer's Enduring Message to America* (2021) was nominated for an NAACP Image Award and selected as a finalist for the 2022 National Book Critics Circle Award in Biography.

Dr. Blain is also the co-editor of *To Turn the Whole World Over: Black Women and Internationalism* (2019); *New Perspectives on the Black Intellectual Tradition* (2018); and *Charleston Syllabus: Readings on Race, Racism and Racial Violence* (2016). Her latest collection is the #1 New York Times Best Seller *Four Hundred Souls: A Community History of African America, 1619-2019*, edited with Ibram X. Kendi (2021). *Four Hundred Souls* was selected as a finalist for the 2022 Carnegie Medal of Excellence in Nonfiction.

Dr. Blain's writing has been featured in *The Atlantic*, *The Washington Post*, *The Guardian*, *The Nation*, *Foreign Affairs* and more. She frequently offers commentary on international, national, and local media outlets, such as BBC, PBS, MSNBC, CNN, NPR and Al Jazeera. She is the recipient of more than a dozen prestigious awards and fellowships, including a W.E.B. Du Bois Fellowship at Harvard University and fellowships from New America, the Institute for Advanced Study, the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, the American Association of University Women (AAUW) and the Ford Foundation. In 2018, she was appointed to the Organization of American Historians' Distinguished Lectureship Program. She is a widely sought-after speaker on United States history, African American history, African Diaspora Studies and Women's and Gender Studies.

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COLONIAL RECKONING -- RACE AND REVOLUTION IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY CUBA



Writers
Discussion
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Louis Pérez
on **Feb. 8th at
3:30pm**

In *Colonial Reckoning* Louis A. Pérez Jr. examines Cuba's wars for

independence in the second half of the nineteenth century, focusing specifically on those Cubans who remained loyal to Spain. Drawing on newspaper articles, personal letters, military battle reports, government commissions, consular reports, literature, and other materials, Pérez shows how everyday black, white, and creole Cubans defended the Spanish empire as paramilitary guerrillas alongside white elites. These loyalist Cubans helped the Spanish fight a separatist insurgency composed of a similarly diverse population of Cubans. Pérez demonstrates that these wars were so deadly and drawn out precisely because Cubans fought on both sides, each holding myriad competing visions of sovereignty and contested meanings of nation. Complicating mythical and historiographical narratives that Cuban national liberation was a struggle waged between Cubans of color and white elites beholden to Spain, Pérez shows that the fight consisted of a great number of factions with unique and evolving motivations. In so doing, he interrogates anew the multifaceted social dimensions and multiple political aspects of the complex drama of Cuban national formation.

Louis A. Pérez Jr. is J. Carlyle Sitterson Professor of History at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the author of numerous books, most recently, *Rice in the Time of Sugar: The Political Economy of Food in Cuba*.



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February 20th - May 12th, Robert and Sallie Brown Gallery and Museum

“INITIATIONS” EXHIBITION OPENING

The Sonja Haynes Stone Center proudly welcomes *Initiations* to the Robert and Sallie Brown Gallery as its featured exhibition for the Spring of 2024.

Initiations presents a gathering of six artists who engage with multiple photographic formats: video, film, music, writing, printmaking, and space-making. Placed and arranged between light and shadows, each work invites a choreographic engagement through varied gestures: walking, pausing, listening, looking, and turning around. Visitors and artworks orbit around one another. The entanglement of multimedia and interdisciplinary artworks creates a cosmos of voices and visualities, a texture that eludes purity in a confluence of aesthetic ideas from artists of our time.

Paula Damasceno, a visual artist, curator and educator born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and based in Greensboro, NC, is the curator of the exhibition who convened a constellation of local, national and international artists to gather around the theme *Initiations*.

“There is a thing passing in the sky: some thick clouds surround it: the uninitiated sees nothing” -- A proverb from Mende people found in bell hooks *Art on My Mind* citing *Radiance from the Waters - Ideals of Feminine Beauty in Mende Art* by Sylvia Ardyn Boone.



Diaspora Lecture on April 16th at 6pm

AUTHOR & UC SAN DIEGO PROFESSOR DANIEL WIDENER



Daniel Widener (African American/Konkwo Maidu) teaches history at UC San Diego, where he is also interim director of the program in Global South Studies. He is the author of *Black Arts West: culture and struggle in postwar Los Angeles* (2010) and *Third Worlds Within: multiethnic internationalism in the 20th Century* (2024). Since 2022, he has served as the director of the UC San Diego Institute of Arts and Humanities (IAH).



▼ Pictured below: Homecoming Fall 2023





▲ Pictured above: Denise Mantey

INTERVIEW WITH DENISE MANTEY ON ARCHIVING STONE CENTER MATERIALS

By Kaitlyn S. Harmon, Gregg Moore and Alexandra Odum

The Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Black Culture and History is in the process of sorting through its archival materials. Second-year graduate student Denise Mantey has accepted the mission of reading and documenting all the center's archives. Through UNC's Field Experience Program, Mantey is expected to gain 135 hours of professional experience in this area as credit for her master's degree. She said that this project aims to "lead to a practice where we're constantly looking back at our records," and allow the center to "tell its own story; its own history." She speaks on how reading old stories has made her appreciate the center more and understand why it functions in the

way it does today, something she claims the whole of UNC can benefit from upon the project's completion. Mantey hopes to contribute to "a collection that is uniquely the Stone Center's," which will further contribute to an expansion of records all over campus that university members currently know nothing about.

Prior to her studies at the University of North Carolina, Mantey earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Anthropology at Barnard College of Columbia University in New York. In her time as an undergraduate student, she worked with the Apollo Theater in New York as an Archives Intern via the Robert F. Smith Internship Program. She was also President of the Barnard Organization of Soul & Solidarity (B.O.S.S.), a Black student organization on campus. It was through these experiences that Mantey's love for archival work was founded. At the Apollo she worked to review and update the Apollo's archival collections, cataloging past and current video and photo sets, and used these skills to plan B.O.S.S. events, including their 50th anniversary. B.O.S.S. combined her love for archival work with her passion for working with Black communities, which sparked her interest in working for the Stone Center at UNC.

Mantey expressed much gratitude and appreciation for her role in this project. One of her biggest takeaways is the importance of being passionate about the collection you're working with, and with that, the importance of Black archivists working with Black collections. This feeling began during her time as an intern at the Apollo Theater but continues to guide her as she pursues her master's degree. This is a "unique experience," she said, that has allowed her to feel more confident in her work, and to really connect with the work she is doing.

Working with a collection that she is knowledgeable and passionate about allows her to notice things other archivists would not notice and brings a sense of enthusiasm for the work which becomes reflected in the result. She feels “personally tied to these materials” in a unique way.

One of the items that she has found that has left a significant impact is an excerpt on the funeral of Dr. Sonja Haynes Stone, from whom the Stone Center received its name. Reading this, as well as seeing how many copies of it were made, made her feel one of the things she says makes her most excited about working with archives: she feels as though she is in that moment in time, experiencing the story herself. “It’s reminiscent of going through your grandma’s attic,” she said. The personal stories she encounters create a sense of community and connection for her as she goes through the archives, which further fuels her passion for and enjoyment of the work.

According to Mantey, the biggest challenge in this project was simply finding a place to begin. There is an overwhelming number of archives without an existing framework, but, as she went on to explain, once she pushed past that and began the inventory process it has been eye-opening and enjoyable for her to do. What surprised her most in looking through these archives was how far back the archives went. Processing what she is doing allows her to see how these stories date back to the creation of the Black Cultural Center, the fight for a free-standing structure. Which allowed Mantey to learn more about the Stone Center’s history than she previously knew existed. It “excites her,” she said, to uncover all the wonderful stories she is finding.

When explaining her top priorities while embarking on this project, Mantey discussed the importance



▼ Pictured below: Gregg Moore

of documentation, “I want this work to be sustainable and be able to continue on.” She is excited to be creating a foundation for other archivists to work on, but expressed that that cannot be achieved if her work in this moment is not properly documented. It is important to her that this is not just a task that she completes to fulfill her degree requirements, but rather an ongoing project that will continue being collaborated on until all of the archives have been read. This project will take more time, resources, and willing and dedicated people to complete it. But, as Mantey emphasized, the UNC community will benefit from these records. “I’m really excited that people will get the opportunity to see this,” and “to see the ways that people will interact with these records.” This is more than just a graduate assignment; it is the beginning of an important new step for the Stone Center: one where its history is known and appreciated by all.

Denise Mantey is a second-year graduate student in the School of Information and Library Sciences at UNC-Chapel Hill.





COMMUNIVERSITY CORNER

Community scholars and volunteers have been busy! In Fall '23, scholars participated in hands-on activities with more than 15 UNC student groups, local businesses, and nearby higher education institutions.

In addition to mindfulness and homework support, scholars completed art projects and STEM experiments each program session. For example, they learned about color theory with ArtHeels and painted customized cotton bags. Each Wednesday, our upper-grades scholars cooked with Dame's Chicken & Waffles on Franklin Street, learning about ingredient measurements, food science, and the importance of food to culture. Scholars also participated in hands-on STEM activities and field trips every Thursday, thanks to partnerships with North Carolina State University, Morehead Planetarium & Science Center, UNC Science Days, and N.C. Agricultural & Technical State University.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

The University United Methodist Church is a critical partner for the Stone Center. Our cornerstone community outreach program, Community, is hosted there during the academic school year for our K-12 scholars. The Church provides a positive, safe learning environment where our scholars, students, and volunteers can explore and connect with each other. We are also deeply grateful for the in-kind support we receive through this partnership including activity supplies, snacks, books, and other resources.

STONE CENTER STAFF DIRECTORY

LeRhonda Manigault-Bryant
Director
919-962-9001
rhon@unc.edu

Sheriff Drammeh
Senior Program Manager
919-843-2669
sheriff7@email.unc.edu

Brittany Yarborough
Executive Assistant
919-843-02668
blyarb@unc.edu

Javier Jaimes-Ayala
Facilities Manager
919-962-7025
jaimes@email.unc.edu

Malenia Swinton
Community and Undergraduate Programs Consultant
919-962-9001
malenias@unc.edu

Shannon Bell
Development Officer
919-962-9001
shannonbell@unc.edu

Rodney Whitmore
Building Security Officer
919-962-9001
rwhitmor@email.unc.edu

Stone Center Library Staff

Gregg Moore
Stone Center Library Manager
919-843-5804
moorejg@email.unc.edu

Alexandra Odom
Graduate Assistant
919-843-5804
alexodom@live.unc.edu

Stone Center Faculty Leaders

Kumi Silva
Faculty Director, Moore Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program (MURAP)
kumi@email.unc.edu

Anna S. Agbe-Davies
Faculty Co-Director, Student Learning to Advance Truth and Equity (SLATE)
agbe-davies@unc.edu

Renée Alexander Craft
Faculty Co-Director, Student Learning to Advance Truth and Equity (SLATE)
renee.alexander.craft@unc.edu

FUNDING AND FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Undergraduate International Studies Fellowship (UISF)

UISF recipients are awarded up to \$2,500 toward academic research or study in an international setting. Although the fellowship seeks to encourage students to study in Africa or in an African diaspora country, there are no restrictions on the intended country of study, though ideally, students are prioritizing research on communities within or topics relevant to communities of the African diaspora. Students who plan to study abroad in the summer or fall of 2024, who are in good academic standing, and who are enrolled full-time are eligible to apply for the fellowship.

The application deadline for the Summer or Fall of 2024 UISF is March 28, 2024 at 5pm. Submit your application by email to: stonecenter@unc.edu, or you may hand-deliver to the Stone Center, Room 215, The Stone Center. For information, call (919) 962-9001.

Sean Douglas Leadership Fellowship (SDLF)

The Sean Douglas initiative is an opportunity to support undergraduate students in their efforts to gain professional development experience through internships with the Stone Center’s director.

Led by Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and the Douglas family, this effort memorializes Sean Douglas, a U.S. Army veteran, aviator, and community leader. Through this initiative, fellows are to be awarded semester-long paid fellowships and work directly with our director to develop meaningful leadership experiences on campus and in the surrounding communities. For more information or to apply, visit the [Stone Center Website](#).

NEW STAFF



Nyah Johnson is a current sophomore from Youngsville, North Carolina, which is roughly 30 minutes outside Raleigh. She is a student at the UNC Hussman School, majoring in advertising and public relations with a minor in sustainable studies. Along with her studies, Nyah is a member of Black Ink, a publication dedicated to amplifying the stories of UNC’s Black community, and the Carolina Association of Black Journalists (CABJ). She is excited to work with the Sonja Haynes Stone Center as the Spring 2024 Sean Douglass Fellow!



We are delighted to introduce the newest member to the Sonja Haynes Stone Center for Research in Black Culture and History. **Brittany Yarborough** is an esteemed professional with over ten years of experience in interpersonal relations, medical technology testing and studies, and project management support. Brittany is a North Carolina native deeply rooted in her family culture and lineage in Brooklyn, New York. During her years of professional development, Brittany has collaborated with cohorts from LabCorp, The Washington Post, and Intuitive. These professional relationships have afforded many opportunities, which have bridged the gap between culture bias, productivity, and business efficiencies. Brittany has cultivated work processes actively implemented in business communities, and her unique, punctilious nature has elevated them. Brittany is excited to join the light that shines the purposeful mission of the Sonja Haynes Stone Center forward!

The Moore Undergraduate Apprenticeship Program (MURAP)

The Moore Undergraduate Apprenticeship Program (MURAP) at UNC-Chapel Hill is currently accepting applications for Summer 2024. MURAP is a paid summer fellowship designed

to foster the entrance of talented undergraduate students from diverse backgrounds within the humanities, social sciences, and fine arts into PhD programs and faculty positions in U.S. colleges and universities. In 2024, we hope to welcome 20 scholars to campus between May 19-July 2, 2024.

Application deadline: February 15. Please contact Dr. Kumi Silva, faculty director, MURAP, with questions.





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 stonecenter@unc.edu

**SUSTAINABILITY.
PERPETUITY.
SUPPORT.**



The Stone Center
