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ASALH announces the publication of the latest issue in the second century of The Journal of African American History.

Special Issue

"New Orleans at 300:

The African American Experience, 1718-2018"

Guest Editors Molly Niall Mitchell and Connie Zeanah Atkinson

In 2018 the city of New Orleans celebrated its Tricentennial anniversary and conferences, exhibitions, lectures, and other programs were held throughout the year. The Journal of African American History (JAAH) joins in these commemorations with a Special Issue devoted to African American history with Molly M. Mitchell and Connie Z. Atkinson, co-directors of the Midlo Center for New Orleans History at the University of New Orleans serving as guest editors.

"Victor Eugene Macarty: From Art to Activism in Reconstruction Era New Orleans” by William I. Horne documents the career of musician and Republican politician Victor-Eugene Macarty shedding light on the struggles of free people of color to secure civil rights for African Americans in the Reconstruction era and its aftermath in New Orleans. Macarty’s life “illuminates the outer limits of equality following emancipation” and the persistence of New Orleans’s Afro-Creole activists in pursuing blacks’ equal rights, even in the face of unfettered white supremacy in the late nineteenth century.

"Long before Ruby’s Walk: New Orleans Schools, Race, and Moving beyond Backlash” by William C. Stern traces the fate of the Bayou Road School, an institution that became the focal point of struggles over equal access to schooling for African American children for generations. In New Orleans, long before Ruby Bridges’s famous walk into William Frantz Elementary in November 1960, Stern demonstrates that “race and education fueled and inflamed the politics of white supremacy” and African American families and community leaders fought to secure the best possible conditions under which their children could receive public education.
The Bayou Road School eventually became Joseph F. Clark High School and in “Our School is Our Glory’: Reflections on the Early Years of Joseph F. Clark High School, 1949-1965,” Raphael Cassimere Jr. provides a personal perspective on those who attended and taught at Clark in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Now emeritus professor in history at the University of New Orleans, Cassimere explains how influential educators at Clark instilled in their students a commitment to academic excellence and social justice that inspired many of them—among them A.P. Tureaud Jr., Oretha Castle Haley, Johnny Jackson, Jr.—in local civil rights protests in the 1960s.

Kevin McQueeney’s “Flint Goodridge Hospital and Black Healthcare in Twentieth Century New Orleans” tells the story of this private health facility operated by African Americans between 1894 and 1985. Despite the numerous obstacles hospital administrators faced in the Jim Crow city, Flint Goodridge provided medical services to black New Orleanians through its clinics, public health campaigns, and other programs until the era of desegregation when black and white physicians could send their African American patients to any medical center in the city.

In “Neutral Ground or Battleground? Hidden History, Tourism, and Spatial (In)Justice in the New Orleans French Quarter,” Lynnell L. Thomas addresses the silencing of African American history by the local tourist industry. She compares two very different campaigns to present and interpret New Orleans history, with a special focus on the notable career of Leon Waters who for decades has pressed for more accurate and just interpretations of the city’s French Quarter through his Hidden History Tours. In Thomas’s view, the French Quarter “has never been a neutral ground in New Orleans, but it continues to be an important site to wage the battle over public memory and spatial (in)justice.”

The Special Issue includes a forum on John W. Blassingame’s Black New Orleans, 1860-1880, first published in 1973. The contributors—Lawrence H. Powell, Jessica Johnson, Erin Greenwald, and Leslie Harris—were participants in a panel at the Organization of American Historians meeting in New Orleans in April 2017. The essays expand upon their original comments and place Blassingame’s groundbreaking study within the context of scholarship on African Americans in New Orleans before and after the 1970s. The special issue also includes an essay review by Clyde C. Robinson on two recently published works on African Americans and the history of Jazz, and ten extended reviews of books on African Americans in New Orleans documenting the history of the domestic slave trade; the impact of the yellow fever epidemics; black political life; the practitioners of Voodoo; and the history of the Mardi Indians and the social, aid, and pleasure clubs.

In the Special Report on “The Prison-to-College Pipeline Program: An Ethical, Education-Based Response to Mass Incarceration in Mississippi,” Patrick Alexander and Otis W. Pickett describe the project launched in 2015 to offer college-level courses to those confined to the state’s prisons. This innovative program demonstrates how institutions of higher education have reached
out to provide educational opportunities to Mississippi’s prison population and serves as a model for what could be implemented in Louisiana.

The JAAH Fall 2018 issue also includes reviews of six recently published books on African American life and history.

The JAAH Fall 2018 issue is available digitally through the University of Chicago Press (www.journals.uchicago.edu/jaah); please check and make sure your library subscribes to the journal. Hard copies are available through University of Chicago Press.

For more information, go to the JAAH website: www.jaah.org.