

KEISHA N. BLAIN

Brown University
Full Professor of Africana Studies & History

EDUCATION

Ph.D., History—Princeton University, 2014

- Areas of study: United States History (since 1865), African American History (since 1619), Women's and Gender Studies, and the modern African Diaspora

M.A., History—Princeton University, 2011

- *Graduate Certificates in African American Studies; and Gender and Sexuality Studies

B.A., History and Africana Studies—Binghamton University, 2008

- **Magna Cum Laude*; Phi Beta Kappa; Phi Alpha Theta; Highest Honors in History

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Brown University, Departments of History & Africana Studies

- Full Professor, 2022-present
 - Affiliated Faculty, American Studies
 - Affiliated Faculty, Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Studies

The University of Pittsburgh, Department of History

- Associate Professor, 2019-2022
- Assistant Professor, 2017-2019

The University of Iowa, Department of History

- Assistant Professor, 2015-2017

The Pennsylvania State University, 2014-2015

- Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Africana Research Center

PUBLICATIONS

****BOOKS IN PROGRESS***

- *Black Thinkers: The Global Impact of Black Intellectual Thought* (under contract, W.W. Norton)

****SOLO-AUTHORED BOOKS***

- ***Without Fear: Black Women and the Making of Human Rights*** (New York: W.W. Norton, September 16, 2025)
- ***Until I am Free: Fannie Lou Hamer's Enduring Message to America*** (Boston: Beacon Press, 2021)
 - **Nominated for a 2022 NAACP Image Award—Outstanding Literary Work** (*Biography/Autobiography*)
 - **Selected as a Finalist for the 2021 National Book Critics Circle Award** (*Biography*)
 - **Selected as a Finalist for the 2022 Hooks National Book Prize**
 - **Selected as 'One of the Best History Books of 2021'** by *Smithsonian Magazine*
 - **Selected as one of "11 New Books We Recommend This Week"** (November 11, 2021) by *The New York Times*
 - **Featured in more than a dozen major outlets, including MSNBC, *The Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Review*, and *The Guardian***
- ***Set the World on Fire: Black Nationalist Women and the Global Struggle for Freedom*** (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018)
 - **Winner of the 2019 Darlene Clark Hine Award**, *given annually by the Organization of American Historians to recognize the best book on African American women's and gender history*
 - **Winner of the 2018 First Book Award** from the Berkshire Conference on Women Historians, *given annually by the Berks to recognize the best book that deals substantially with women, gender, and sexuality*
 - **Selected as 'One of the Best History Books of 2018'** by *Smithsonian Magazine*
 - **Selected as 'One of the Best Books of 2018 for Any Kind of Reader'** by *BuzzFeed News*
 - **Finalist for the 2018 Hooks National Book Award**, *given annually by the Hooks Institute to the author of the best book that deals with the history of civil rights*
 - **Finalist for the 2020 Karen Offen-Ida Bloom Prize for Transnational Women's and Gender History**, *given by the International Federation for Research in Women's History*
 - **Featured in more than a dozen major outlets, including PBS, *The Washington Post*, *The Root*, and *VIBE Magazine***

****EDITED VOLUMES***

- ***Wake Up America: Black Women on the Future of Democracy*** (W.W. Norton, 2024)
- Co-editor with Ibram X. Kendi, ***Four Hundred Souls: A Community History of African America, 1619-2019*** (Random House/One World Press, 2021)
 - Selected as a Finalist for the **2022 Andrew Carnegie Medals for Excellence in Nonfiction**
 - Debuted at #1 on the ***New York Times*** Best Seller List
- Co-editor with Tiffany Gill, ***To Turn the Whole World Over: Black Women and Internationalism*** (University of Illinois Press, 2019)
- Co-editor with Christopher Cameron and Ashley D. Farmer, ***New Perspectives on the Black Intellectual Tradition*** (Northwestern University Press, 2018)
- Co-editor with Chad Williams and Kidada Williams, ***Charleston Syllabus: Readings on Race, Racism, and Racial Violence*** (University of Georgia Press, 2016)

BOOK CHAPTERS AND ARTICLES IN REFEREED JOURNALS (**Selected*)

- Foreword to ***Sisters Across the Seas: Black Women and Radical Politics in the United States and South Africa in the Twentieth Century***, eds., Dawne Y. Curry and Holly Yvette McGee (University of Wisconsin Press, forthcoming).
- “From Associate to Full Professor,” in ***Conditionally Accepted: Navigating Higher Education from the Margins***, eds. Bertin M. Louis, Jr. and Eric Anthony Grollman (University of Texas Press 2023)
- “‘A Certain Bond Between the Colored Peoples’: Black Internationalism and Visions of Afro-Asian Solidarity during the Early Twentieth Century” in ***The Black Intellectual Tradition in the United States***, eds. Derrick Alridge, Cornelius Bynum and James B. Stewart (University of Illinois Press, 2021)
- “‘The Dark Skin[ned] People of the Eastern World’: Mittie Maude Lena Gordon’s Vision of Afro-Asian Solidarity,” in ***Toward an Intellectual History of Women’s International Thought***, eds. Patricia Owens and Katharina Rietzler (Cambridge University Press, 2020)
- “‘The Language of Freedom’: Garveyite Women, Diasporic Politics, and Pan-African Discourses of the 1940s” in ***Global Garveyism: Diasporic Aspirations and Utopian Dreams***, eds. Adam Ewing and Ronald Stephens (University Press of Florida, 2019)

- “‘We will overcome whatever [it] is the system has become today’: Black Women’s Organizing Against Police Violence in New York City in the 1980s,” *Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture and Society*, Vol. 20, Issue 1 (Fall 2018): 110-121
- “‘To Keep Alive the Teaching of Garvey and the Work of the UNIA’: Audley Moore, Black Women’s Activism, and Nationalist Politics during the Twentieth Century,” *Palimpsest: A Journal on Women, Gender, and the Black International*, Vol. 7, Issue 2 (Fall 2018): 83-107
- “‘Confraternity Among All Dark Races’: Mittie Maude Lena Gordon and the Practice of Black (Inter)nationalism in Chicago, 1932-1942” in *Palimpsest: A Journal on Women, Gender, and the Black International*, Vol. 5, Issue 2 (Fall 2016): 151-181
- “‘We Want to Set the World on Fire’: Black Nationalist Women and Diasporic Politics in the *New Negro World*, 1940-1944” in *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (Fall 2015): 194-212
- “‘[F]or the Rights of Dark People in Every Part of the World’: Pearl Sherrod, Black Internationalist Feminism, and Afro-Asian Politics in the 1930s” in *Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture and Society*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (June 2015): 90-112

SPECIAL JOURNAL ISSUES

- Guest editor with Quito Swan, “Reconceptualizing the History of Black Internationalism” in *The Journal of African American History*, Vol. 106, No. 4 (Fall 2021)
- Guest editor with Ula Y. Taylor and Asia Leeds, “Women, Gender Politics, and Pan-Africanism” in *Women, Gender, and Families of Color*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (Fall 2016)

PUBLIC WRITINGS (**Selected*)

**MSNBC Columnist (2021-2024):*

<https://www.msnbc.com/author/keisha-n-blain-ncpn1262124>

- “[‘Black historians know there is no such thing as objective history,’”](#) *The New Republic*, September 9, 2022.
- “[‘Remembering past harms is a key first step for achieving social justice,’”](#) *The Washington Post*, June 9, 2022.
- “[‘They Called Her Black Jet’](#) (On Joetha Collier), *The Atlantic*, April 28, 2022.
- “[‘Justice and the Meaning of the Tubman \\$20,’”](#) *Ms. Magazine*, March 8, 2022.
- “[‘To Fight Attacks on ‘Critical Race Theory,’ Look to Black History,’”](#) *The Nation*, February 18, 2022.
- “[‘Fannie Lou Hamer: The Civil Rights Icon Who Embraced Youth Power,’”](#) *Teen Vogue*, November 23, 2021

- ["Black Political Rights Can't Be Divorced From Economic Justice. Why Fannie Lou Hamer's Message and Fight Endure Today,"](#) *Time Magazine*, October 27, 2021
- ["The Long Brutality: Black Women and the struggle to end police violence,"](#) *The Baffler*, May 5, 2021
- ["The uprisings of 2020 showed change is on the horizon,"](#) *Penguin UK Features*, March 31, 2021
- ["We need to retell U.S. history with Black people at the center,"](#) *Fortune Magazine*, February 11, 2021
- ["Black Women are Leading the Movement to End Police Violence,"](#) *The Washington Post*, October 1, 2020
- ["The Struggle to End Racism is Global,"](#) *The American Historian Magazine*, September 21, 2020
- ["Fannie Lou Hamer's Dauntless Fight for Black Americans' Right to Vote,"](#) *Smithsonian Magazine*, August 20, 2020
- ["Civil Rights International: The Fight Against Racism Has Always Been Global,"](#) *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 99, no. 5, September/October 2020
- ["John Lewis' Fight for Equality Was Never Limited to Just the United States,"](#) *Time Magazine*, July 21, 2020
- ["Destroying Confederate Monuments Isn't 'Erasing' History. It's Learning From It,"](#) *The Washington Post*, June 19, 2020
- ["The Black Women Who Paved the Way for this Moment,"](#) *The Atlantic*, June 9, 2020
- ["A Short History of Black Women and Police Violence,"](#) *The Conversation*, June 12, 2020
- (With Tom Zoellner) ["Riots, Mobs, Chaos: The Establishment Always Frames Change As Dangerous,"](#) *The Guardian*, June 10, 2020
- ["Violence in Minneapolis is Rooted in the History of Racist Policing in America,"](#) *The Washington Post*, May 30, 2020
- ["These Overlooked Black Women Shaped Malcolm X's Life,"](#) *Time Magazine*, February 24, 2020
- ["God Is Not Going to Put It in Your Lap.' What Made Fannie Lou Hamer's Message on Civil Rights So Radical—And So Enduring,"](#) *Time Magazine*, October 4, 2019
- ["Tennessee Just Showed that White Supremacy is Alive and Well,"](#) *The Washington Post*, June 15, 2019
- ["I Lifted Up Mine Eyes to Ghana: W.E.B Du Bois and Pan-Africanism,"](#) *Jacobin*, August 27, 2018
- ["Ida B. Wells offered the solution to police violence more than 100 years ago,"](#) *The Washington Post*, July 11, 2017
- (with Ibram X. Kendi), ["How to Avoid a Post-Scholar America,"](#) *Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 19, 2017

- [“Why We Must Remember: Reflecting on the Charleston Massacre One Year Later,”](#) *Huffington Post*, June 17, 2016
- [“Black Women's Votes Matter,”](#) *Huffington Post*, November 12, 2015

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Brown University, 2022-present

- History of Black Travel (Graduate)
- The Intellectual History of Black Women (Undergraduate)
- Introduction to Africana Studies (Undergraduate)
- Readings in African American Women's History (Graduate)
- Junior Seminar in Africana Studies (Undergraduate)
- African American Women's History (Undergraduate)
- Black Transnational Feminism (Graduate)

University of Pittsburgh, 2017-2022

- Black Women's Intellectual History (Advanced Undergraduate)
- Civil Rights and Black Power (Undergraduate Honors)
- Women, Gender, and Black Internationalism (Graduate)
- Civil Rights and Black Power (Undergraduate)

Directed Readings

- United States History since 1865 (Graduate)
- Readings on the Modern African Diaspora (Graduate)
- Readings on African American History (Graduate)
- Black Women's History (Graduate)

The University of Iowa, 2015-2017

- Race and Politics in Twentieth-Century America (Undergraduate)
- Readings in Twentieth-Century Black Internationalism (Graduate)

The College of New Jersey (TCNJ), 2012-13

- African American Women's History (Undergraduate)
- African American History since 1865 (Undergraduate)
- Civil Rights and Black Power (Undergraduate)

INVITED TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS (**Selected*)

- 2025 Alan Dawley Memorial Lecture, “Black Women and the Struggle for Human Rights in US History,” The College of New Jersey, April 3, 2025.
- 2025 Levinson History Lecture, St. Andrew’s School (Middletown, DE), “‘Try to Do Something’: The Ongoing Fight for Equity and Inclusion,” January 24, 2025.
- Keynote Address, Annual Meeting of the Society for US Intellectual History (S-USIH), “Fannie Lou Hamer and the Power of Belief,” November 15, 2024.
- Invited Speaker, National Park Service (NPS), “Centering African American Women’s History”—Address to the Committee on Recognizing Women’s History, October 16, 2024 (Online).
- Keynote Address, US Department of State, 3rd annual Ebenezer Bassett Black History Month Lecture: From Resistance to Persistence and Impact: Celebrating Black Women in International Affairs, February 23, 2023.
- Keynote Address, “Give Us the Ballot: Equality for All People! The Struggle for Voting Rights, Then and Now,” 23rd Annual MLK Sunrise Celebration, American Library Association’s Midwinter Meeting, January 24, 2022
- Invited Speaker, “Advancing Racial Equity: Icons of the Voting Rights Movement,” Washington Foreign Press Center, United States Department of State, Biden-Harris Administration, December 1, 2021
- Keynote Address, “Try to Do Something”: The Ongoing Fight for Equity,” Healthcare Association of New York State, November 18, 2021
- Invited Speaker in Conversation with Nikki Giovanni, “The Dreams of Four Hundred Souls,” Executive Leadership Council, September 15, 2021
- Keynote Address, “Racism and National Security: Historical Perspectives,” Center for Naval Analyses (CNA), Inclusive National Security Series, September 19, 2021
- Invited Speaker in Conversation with Jelani Cobb, “Talking Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion,” KPMG, September 8, 2021
- Invited Speaker, “Resilience and Black History,” Chautauqua Institution, August 25, 2021
- Invited Speaker in Conversation with Lorgia García Peña, Danielle Kilgo Brown, Russell Jeung, and Jemar Tisby, “Bitter Fruit: The Poison of America’s Racism,” University of Pittsburgh Diversity Forum 2021, July 28, 2021
- Keynote Address, “History, Social Justice, and Juneteenth,” Risequity, June 23, 2021
- Keynote Address, “The History of Economic Inequities in the U.S.,” Credit Karma, June 18, 2021
- Invited Speaker in Conversation with Jeff Chang, Rosa Clemente, Tim Wise, and Ula Y. Taylor, “American Reckoning: A Conversation on Anti-Blackness in Post George Floyd America,” with University of California Center for Race and Gender, June 9, 2021

- Invited Speaker in Conversation with Representative Regina Goodwin, Karlos Hill, and Dreisen Heath, “The 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre: Looking Back, Looking Ahead,” The Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, Harvard University, May 19, 2021
- Invited Speaker in Conversation with Former U.S. Senator Russ Feingold, Tefere Gebre and Richard Arenberg, “Filibustering Progress: To Reform or Not to Reform the Filibuster,” American Constitution Society, May 13, 2021
- Invited Speaker, “Building a Movement: Black Women Organizing in the (Global) South,” Women and Public Policy Program, Harvard Kennedy School, April 15, 2021
- Keynote Address, “The Historical Context of Wealth, Economy, Social Justice, and Power,” The 2021 Think Tank on Equity and Inclusion, Greater Cincinnati Foundation, April 14, 2021
- Invited Speaker in Conversation with Darrick Hamilton, “Setting the Context through History and Economics,” W.K. Kellogg Foundation, March 17, 2021
- Invited Speaker in Conversation with Donna Brazile and Eugene Scott, “A Democracy, If We Can Keep It,” Howard University King Lecture Series, March 16, 2021
- Keynote Address, “Building a Movement: Black Women Organizing in the (Global) South,” Department of Africana Studies, University of Tennessee Chattanooga, March 15, 2021
- Invited Speaker with Khalil Gibran Muhammad, “Racial Justice in America: Reflections On The Past, Present And Future,” GBH Forum Network and JCC Greater Boston, March 2, 2021
- Keynote Address, “Black Women and the Struggle for Human Rights,” Occidental College, February 23, 2021
- Keynote Address, “‘What the Black Woman Thinks’: The Fiery Pen of Toni Morrison,” Toni Morrison Day, Monmouth University, February 18, 2021
- Keynote Address (Joint with Ibram X. Kendi), Opening Session: “On Four Hundred Souls,” American Library Association’s Midwinter Meeting, January 23, 2021

HONORS & AWARDS (**Selected*)

- 2025, Elected, Society of American Historians, Columbia University
- 2024, Dan David Prize, Dan David Foundation (*for outstanding early and midcareer scholars and practitioners in the historical disciplines*)
- 2023 Humanities Research Award, Office of the Vice President for Research, Brown University
- 2022 Fellow, John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation (United States History)
- 2022 Fellow, Andrew Carnegie Fellows Program, Carnegie Corporation of New York
- Class of 2022, National Fellow, New America
- 2021-2022 Fellowship, School of Social Science, Institute for Advanced Study

- 2020-2022 Fellowship, Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, Harvard University's Kennedy School
- 2021 Stafford Ellison Wright Black Alumni Scholar-in-Residence, Occidental College
- 2020 Global Lecture and Innovators Series Speaker, Liberal Studies, New York University
- 2019-2020 W.E.B. Du Bois Research Fellowship, Hutchins Center, Harvard University
- 2018-2021 Distinguished Lectureship Program, Organization of American Historians (OAH)
- 2018-2019 W.E.B. Du Bois Research Fellowship, Hutchins Center, Harvard University (*declined for maternity leave; reapplied the following year*)
- 2018-2019 Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellowship
- 2018-2019 John Hope Franklin Center Research Grant for African and African American History, Duke University
- 2017 Roy Rosenzweig Prize for Innovation in Digital History, American Historical Association (AHA)
- 2016-2017 American Association of University Women (AAUW) Postdoctoral Research Leave Fellowship
- 2016-2017 Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, Bill and Carol Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry, Emory University (*declined*)
- 2016-2018 Summer Institute on Tenure and Professional Advancement (SITPA) Fellowship, Duke University
- 2016 William Appleman Williams Junior Faculty Research Award, Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR)
- Honorable Mention, 2015 Lerner-Scott Prize, Organization of American Historians, *given annually for the best doctoral dissertation in U.S. women's history.*
- 2014 Huggins-Quarles Award, Organization of American Historians, *given annually to recognize distinguished research by a graduate student of color.*
- 2015 Global Scholars and Diversity Grant, Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR)
- 2015 MARBL Research Fellowship in African American History, Emory University
- 2015-2016 Race & Gender Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, Rutgers University, New Brunswick (*declined*)
- 2015-2016 UC Presidential Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, UC Berkeley (*declined*)
- 2015-2016 Chancellor's Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in African American Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (*declined*)
- 2014-15 Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, Frederick Douglass Institute (FDI), the University of Rochester (*declined*)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE (**Selected*)

- Committee of Scholars, Smithsonian American Women's History Museum, 2024-Present
- 2025 Lynton History Prize, Juror, 2024-Present
- Center for Engaged Scholarship Fellowship Reviewer, 2024-Present
- Term Member, Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), 2022-Present
- American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) Fellowship Reviewer, 2021-Present
- Editorial Advisory Board, "Black Women's History," University of North Carolina Press, 2023-Present
- The Pulitzer Prizes, Juror (Biography), 2022-2023
- Editorial Board, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 2021-2024
- Editorial Board, *Modern Intellectual History*, 2019-2022
- Editorial Board, *American Historical Review*, 2020-2023
- Editorial Board, *Journal of Women's History*, 2017-2021
- Editorial Board, *Journal of African American History*, 2018-2023
- Editorial Board, *Journal of Civil and Human Rights*, 2018-2021
- Advisory Board, *Washington Post's* 'Made by History', 2017-2020
- Advisory Council, The Albert LePage Center for History in the Public Interest, Villanova University, 2021-2024
- Advisory Board, Harriet Tubman Center for Freedom and Equity, Binghamton University, 2019-2023
- Co-Chair, Planning Committee, 2023 Annual Meeting in Los Angeles, Organization of American Historians (OAH), 2020-2023
- Awards Committee, Merle Curti US Intellectual History Book Award, Organization of American Historians (OAH), 2020-2021
- Awards Committee, Lawrence W. Levine US Cultural History Book Award, Organization of American Historians (OAH), 2019-2020
- Conference Planning Committee, American Historical Association (AHA), 2019-2020.
- Awards Committee, William Appleman Williams Junior Faculty Research Award, Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR), 2016-2019
- Awards Committee, John Higham Research Award, Organization of American Historians (OAH), 2016-2019 (Committee Chair, 2018-2019)
- Awards Committee, Letitia Woods Brown Article Prize, Association of Black Women Historians (ABWH), 2018-2019
- Conference Program Committee, Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR), 2015-2016
- Manuscript Reviewer for University of North Carolina Press; Harvard University Press; Yale University Press; Oxford University Press; University of Illinois Press;

Columbia University Press; Palgrave McMillian; University Press of Mississippi; University of Pennsylvania Press; *Journal of Women's History*, *Journal of Social History*, *Gender and History*, *Radical History Review*, *Journal of Civil and Human Rights*, *Modern American History*; *Women, Gender, and Families of Color*; *Journal of African American History*; *American Historical Review*, *Diplomatic History*.

Brown University

- Steering Committee, Brown 2026 (to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the nation's founding), Office of the President, 2023-Present
- Standing Committee on the Academic Code (SCAC), 2024-Present

University of Pittsburgh

- University Review Board, Office of the Provost and Office of the Chancellor, 2020-2022
- Committee on Anti-Black Racism and Transformative Pedagogy, Office of the Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor, 2020-2022
- Search Committee Member for Assistant Professor of Modern Chinese History, Department of History, 2020-2021
- Graduate Committee, Department of History, 2019-2020
- Search Committee Member for the Dietrich School Diversity Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Humanities, Department of History, 2017-2018

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- American Historical Association (AHA)
- Association of Black Women Historians (ABWH), *Life Member*
- African American Intellectual History Society (AAIHS), *Life Member*
- Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH)
- Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora (ASWAD)
- Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR)
- Organization of American Historians (OAH)