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ENDARCH

Journal of Black Political Research

Editorial Remarks
Carmen Walker

Articles
War and Recovery in Africa:
Getting Beyond the Bitter Lessons
Hashim Gibrill

How do I know what I say I know?
Thinking about Slim’s Table and Qualitative Research Methods
Paul F. Manna

A Preliminary Discussion on Alternative Electoral Systems and Black Legislators:
A National Survey
Bob Holmes

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Their Status in Afro-American Social Theory
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Contents

vii Statement of Purpose

ix Editor's Remarks

1 War and Recovery in Africa: Getting Beyond the Bitter Lessons
Hashim Gibrill

Given the generally destructive, anti-developmental character of widespread conflict, this sanguineous side of Africa's reality demands close examination. In the range of critical political and economic concerns that the continent confronts, the achievement of long-term conflict resolution and substantive post-war recovery are prominent. This paper looks at the causes of war and at recovery efforts, and argues for a fundamentally regional approach to resolution and development.

19 How do I know what I say I know? Thinking about Slim's Table and Qualitative Research Design
Paul F. Manna

This paper explores some of the methodological issues raised by Mitchell Duneier's book, Slim's Table. While it has been widely reviewed since its publication in 1992, few critics have considered the book from this perspective. Specifically, this paper addresses four issues: the importance of methodological transparency, the role of triangulation, the possibility of integrating elements of experimental design in an ethnographic work, and the importance of assessing uncertainty when drawing conclusions.

31 A Preliminary Discussion on Alternative Electoral Systems and Black Legislators: A National Survey
Bob Holmes

This article focuses on the views and attitudes of African American State Legislators towards alternatives to the single member district system of election. Data are primarily from the responses of 106 questionnaires completed from the total of 575 mailed to Black State Senators and Representatives throughout the United States. The major findings were that more than 90 percent desire additional information on various forms of proportional representation, 80 percent believe such information would
be helpful in the next reapportionment period and 82 percent said there has been no serious discussion of the issue in their state. A comprehensive education and training program on alternative electoral systems needs to be conducted in southern states for legislators, civic and religious leaders to provide them with options in the 2001 reapportionment/redistricting political struggle.

49

Ideology and Politics:
Their Status in Afro-American Social Theory
Alex Willingham

This article was originally published in an earlier edition of Endarch. In an effort to revisit significant works that remain relevant to current debates and discussion, the ENDARCH Editorial Board selected Alex Willingham’s “Ideology and Politics.” This article reflects on the ideological underpinnings of Civil Rights and Post-Civil Rights and the ideological constraints that shape black political efforts.

Announcements and Call for Papers

Article Submission Guidelines

Subscription Information
Statement of Purpose

In decades characterized by the complete atrophy of all struggle from the sixties and the defection of most of the former participants, the principal question must be why? What has happened consistently to denature and distort incipiently progressive impulses that appear among black people?

Endarch, as its name would suggest, identifies with motion; not any haphazard or desultory movement, but movement that is conscious of its origins and destinations. As an embodiment of aggregate but mutually consistent perspectives, this journal seeks to reflect, analyze, and generate activity which will ultimately lead toward the expansion, clarification, and solidification of black political thought.

The conscious nature of movement is derived from a clear social and analytic methodology. An approach which views the world as a totality, but also diaphanously understands that the components comprising this world are not of equal importance. With this in mind, and given black people's historical grounding in oppression and exploitation, Endarch sees of paramount importance those phenomena and groups of phenomena which operate in a system of oppression and exploitation. Recognition of such phenomena must lead to a discernment of those vital elements, the crucial essences of which define and condition the world. Our purpose is to expose those essences and through this explication illuminate the totality from the vantage point of a specific oppressed people. Such is the task of a conscious and critical black political thought imbued with the task of defining the black experience in politics. It is toward this goal that we aim.
Editor's Remarks

The students and faculty, of the Atlanta University Department of Political Science, created a vehicle for assessing theoretical and practical aspects of black life throughout the Diaspora. Since its beginning, Endarch Journal has provided a critical space for the development of black political thought. It has provided the necessary opportunity for those voices to test existing assumptions while creating new realities.

What continues to be needed are social scientists who are willing to expand current analyses beyond prescribed frameworks and paradigms that have limited us to simply solving race, class, and/or gender puzzles of oppression. While our multiple perspectives have created popular and to some extent commercialized narratives, we must reflect on whether we are using our knowledge to initiate change in our communities or simply peddling our intellectual products for self satisfaction.

The Spring 2000 edition of Endarch contains articles that ultimately reflect on the nature of our politics and our strategies. Hashim Gibrill’s article on “War and Recovery” challenges some historically prevailing assumptions that attribute the causes of war and instability in Africa to Africa’s inability to govern itself. Gibrill examines the historical role of the African state and moves beyond discussions of war to show that recovery is intricately tied to development and grass roots participation. While numerous articles have publicized wars in Africa, Gibrill’s analysis points toward regional cooperative efforts that must require the commitment and responsibility of African intellectuals and scholars throughout the Diaspora, as well as the rest of the international community. Paul Manna reexamines Slim’s Table, a 1992 ethnographic work on black men, written by Mitchell Duneier. This article offers a good discussion on methodological issues relating to the use of qualitative research in social science. His analysis offers valuable reminders of why systematic empirical analyses are critical for presenting alternative assessments that seek to challenge quantitative analyses that have rendered us “statistically insignificant.” Bob Holmes presents us with some preliminary arguments and data on alternative electoral systems in the United States. Within the sphere of electoral politics, the legal and illegal dilution and marginalization of the black vote continues to be an historical fact. Holmes offers initial statistical findings that connect general knowledge to specific interests. Finally we chose to revisit an earlier Endarch article that we feel offers critical insight today as we work ourselves through various ideological and theoretical maps for opposition. Alex Willingham’s article on “Ideology and Politics” ultimately speaks to the foundation of black opposition and why we have not moved beyond managing, not changing, our position in the United States.
We hope that you enjoy the following articles. We hope that you are encouraged to submit your contribution to this journal. This professional journal is a graduate student led effort, so graduate students are especially encouraged to submit articles for consideration. We would like to thank the graduates of the Atlanta University Department of Political Science for creating this space and the Clark Atlanta University Department of Political Science for sustaining it. I would like to thank the following persons: Patrice Herrod and Marcie Bell-Evans for their typing and formatting assistance, Molly Landholm for copy-editing, Sharon Whipple Cissokho for helping us update our layout design, formatting, and assistance with the submission guidelines and Debernee Pugh for scanning and copying documents. I would also like to thank Elton Higuee for his support. This publication would not have been possible without the financial assistance of the University and the U.S. Department of Education.