

New Electronic Journals and Early Pan-Africanist Dreams: An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Resources in Pan-African Studies

by

Marsha R. Robinson, Ph.D.
profmrobinson@gmail.com

Marsha R. Robinson is a graduate of the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, the Central Connecticut State University and The Ohio State University where she earned her doctorate in Women's History with a global focus. She is the author of *Matriarchy, Patriarchy and Imperial Security in Africa: Explaining Riots in Europe and Violence in Africa* (Lexington Books, 2012), and a commissioning editor with Cambridge Scholars Publishing (UK) wherein she has edited *Purgatory between Kentucky and Canada: African Americans in Ohio* (2013); *Lesser Civil Wars: Civilians Defining War and the Memory of War* (2012); and, *Women Who Belong: Claiming a Female's Right-Filled Place* (2013).

In this qualitative review essay, I celebrate e-journals as one more Pan Africanist rung in the ladder toward Rev. Alexander Crummel's (1819-1898) lofty vision of human civilization and as one more step away from corruption and unnecessary international, civil and community warfare. The democratic proliferation of knowledge evidenced by the multiplicity of such journals and the global location of the scholars who are producing this knowledge show that much progress is being made to decrease the waste of intellectual capital within the African diaspora, to reverse the "brain drain," and to correct the under-education of too many persons about Africa-descended people on the continent and in the diaspora.

This essay suggests the variety of e-journals that are available for Pan Africanist scholars and students. More journals were excluded from this essay than were included. The present author's goal is to show continuity between modern technology and contemporary research in global scholarly communities and three intellectual ancestors from the nineteenth century because history matters if we are to understand our present world.

“E-journal” is a popular term that refers to journals that are produced for electronic distribution via the internet. Some are electronic versions of journals that are published on paper. Some electronic journals are produced exclusively for electronic distribution. Major publishing houses such as Brill and Sage Publications, in addition to university presses, have adopted this alternative publication method. The format seems to be a natural evolution from the electronic databases on which many of us rely. A significant development has been the decision to create open-access electronic journals. Publishers do not charge a fee for access to the content of open-access journals. In some parts of the world with low bandwidth or slower data transfer rates, internet access is relatively expensive. The cost of down-loading an article in such areas is prohibitive enough but it is relatively surmountable compared to the cost of traditional subscriptions to academic journals. This open-access option benefits humanity by increasing the number of people around the world who can acquire, apply and refine the knowledge that is shared in these journals. In other words, open access and other e-journals are a leap forward toward the democratization of global knowledge production.

There is a need to be concerned about the continued production of these journals. Because some journals are still available in print and by subscription, some publishers delay the internet version until several years after the release to subscribers of the printed version. This delay between the subscribers’ version and the open-access distribution is sometimes referred to as a “moving wall.” Another concern is the entrepreneurial aspect of publishing. Many journals begin but they do not all survive the second or fifth year. Others succumb to funding issues or low readership. In these situations, one must be concerned about archiving e-journals. The humanitarian benefits of sharing knowledge through e-journals far outweigh these concerns.

In fact, this democratization and globalization of knowledge, especially within the African diaspora, is a beautiful manifestation of the dreams of early Pan Africanists. This became ever clearer to me as I searched for e-journals about Africa-descended people on the continent and in diaspora. In researching this essay, I searched for scholarly e-journals of the new millennium. Some published their first edition in 2012. Others adopted the electronic format in 1999 or later. Some were located through keyword searches. Others were gathered from databases such as African Journals Online (www.ajol.info) and the Directory of Open Access Journals (www.doaj.org). I searched for journals about Black Studies, African Studies, Africana Studies, and African Diaspora Studies. Once I assembled my initial list of journals, I then searched for those that debuted in or on the cusp of the twenty-first century. In order to arrive at a qualitative description of the journal, I examined the tables of content, the mission statement, statements from the editors, and the first article of the first edition. I noted accessibility issues such as open access or moving walls. I paid attention to the geographic location of the journal’s home. I was not always able to determine if each journal continues to be produced nor did I find all of the points of comparison that I established for each journal.

My purpose for this annotated bibliography, as a historian, is to present the e-journal format as a new millennium manifestation of nineteenth century visions of three of the earliest Pan Africanists: Rev. Alexander Crummell, Dr. Martin Delany, and Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois. I do so in three sections. First, I review nineteenth-century proto-Pan-African goals of “lofty civilization” and “vitalizing qualities in the changeless hopes of humanity.” Second, I present some e-journals as modern vehicles to deliver and distribute the information from the humanities that is necessary to achieve these two nineteenth century goals. Finally, I present some journals that focus more on the social science aspect of this vision.

Nineteenth Century Proto-Pan-Africanism

Rev. Crummel set the pattern of a Pan Africanist’s life by claiming his African and American heritage for he lived in the Americas, Eurasia, and Africa. He was a true cultural steward. After fifty years of ordained ministry in West Africa and the United States, he devoted his last years to establishing the American Negro Academy (March 1897) in Washington, DC. Rev. Crummel charged the first class and each succeeding generation of Africana scholars with a particular mission for the benefit of the human race. Thus,

What is the great difficulty with the black race, in this era, in this land? It is that both within their ranks, and external to themselves, by large schools of thought interested in them, material ideas in divers forms are made prominent, as the master-need of the race, and as the surest way to success. Men are constantly dogmatizing theories of sense and matter as the salvable hope of the race. Some of our leaders and teachers boldly declare, now, that property is the source of power; and then, that money is the thing which commands respect. At one time it is official position which is the masterful influence in the elevation of the race; at another, men are disposed to fall back upon blood and lineage, as the root (source) of power and progress.

Blind men! For they fail to see that neither property, nor money, nor station, nor office, nor lineage, are fixed factors, in so large a thing as the destiny of man; that they are not vitalizing qualities in the changeless hopes of humanity. The greatness of peoples springs from their ability to grasp the grand conceptions of being. It is the absorption of a people, of a nation, of a race, in large majestic and abiding things which lifts them up to the skies. These once apprehended, all the minor details of life follow in their proper places, and spread abroad in the details and the comfort of practicality. But until these gifts of a lofty civilization are secured, men are sure to remain low, debased and grovelling [*sic*].¹

I write this review on the one hundred fifteenth anniversary of Rev. Crummel’s address. The e-journals included in this essay therefore evince degrees of continuity with the founding ideals of the American Negro Academy and they do so because of the people who have gone before us and cleared the way for hundreds and thousands of researchers of Africana and Pan African studies who continue to labor and to teach “vitalizing qualities in the changeless hopes of humanity.”

Dr. Martin Delany (1812-1885), a West Virginia native, acquaintance of Rev. Crummel and adviser to President Abraham Lincoln, is another person who modeled the life of a Pan Africanist, namely that of living on several continents and consequently inhabiting an intellectual space that is greater than any one nation's boundaries or culture. An advocate of creating colonies of free African Americans away from American enslavement, he lived for a time in Canada and evaluated prospects for repatriation to the African continent. Delany was troubled by the ravages to some African polities because of the Atlantic slave trade and he expressed his views in his report on the Niger Valley and West Africa. Furthermore, Dr. Delany may be one of the earliest modern people to envision the African Union and to predict its challenges in economic development of its human, vegetable, animal and mineral capital. Hence, he posit that.

Africa is our fatherland and we its legitimate descendants....I have outgrown, long since, the boundaries of North America, and with them have also outgrown the boundaries of their claims. I, therefore, cannot consent to sacrifice the prospects of two hundred millions [his estimate of the population of the African continent], that a fraction of five millions may be benefitted, especially since the measures adopted for the many must necessarily benefit the few.

Africa, to become regenerated, must have a national character, and her position among the existing nations of the earth will depend mainly upon the high standard she may gain compared with them in all her relations, morally, religiously, socially, politically, and commercially.

I have determined to leave to my children the inheritance of a country, the possession of territorial domain, the blessings of a national education, and the indisputable right of self-government; that they may not succeed to the servility and degradation bequeathed to us by our fathers. If we have not been born to fortunes, we should impart the seeds which shall germinate and give birth to fortunes for them.²

In Delany's words, we have the germs of anti-colonialism, the rise of the African Union, and the idea of African Renaissance. We also have an idea that will likely be addressed more fully in Africana Studies departments that are developing doctoral programs in African Diaspora Studies, namely the right of return of those who were born in the diaspora, even those who are multi-generational diasporans.

Both Delany and Crummel were cultural stewards in that they intentionally transmitted their knowledge to the next generation. One of the recipients of their Pan African vision was W. E. B. Du Bois (1868-1963). Du Bois also lived on three continents, although most of his writings were produced before he moved to Africa. Where Crummel studied at Cambridge, Du Bois studied at the University of Berlin. While a historian might present these two proto-Pan Africanists as equals or peers, Du Bois might dispute such a point. In fact, Du Bois's reaction to his first conversation with Crummel reminds professors to tread carefully when meeting graduate students at conferences. About Crummel, Du Bois wrote,

I saw Alexander Crummell first at a Wilberforce [University in Ohio] commencement season, amid its bustle and crush. Tall, frail, and black he stood, with simple dignity and an unmistakable air of good breeding. I talked with him apart, where the storming of the lusty young orators could not harm us. I spoke to him politely, then curiously, then eagerly, as I began to feel the fineness of his character,—his calm courtesy, the sweetness of his strength, and his fair blending of the hope and truth of life. Instinctively I bowed before this man, as one bows before the prophets of the world. Some seer he seemed, that came not from the crimson Past or the gray To-come, but from the pulsing Now,—that mocking world which seemed to me at once so light and dark, so splendid and sordid.³

A visionary, an unmistakable “seer”, is the impression that Du Bois had of the elder scholar and when invited to speak at the first meeting of Crummel’s American Negro Academy, Du Bois penned the framework of Afrocentric philosophy. In 1897, in his address entitled “The Conservation of Races,” he seems to have invented an indigenous definition of the Negro race, one shaped by his two years in Europe and by Delany’s discourse, as Du Bois also addressed the plight of 200,000,000 Africans, stating,

Manifestly some of the great races of today—particularly the Negro race—have not as yet given to civilization the full spiritual message which they are capable of giving. I will not say that the Negro race has as yet given no message to the world, for it is still a mooted question among scientists as to just how far Egyptian civilization was Negro in its origin; if it was not wholly Negro, it was certainly very closely allied. Be that as it may, however, the fact still remains that the full, complete Negro message of the whole Negro race has not as yet been given to the world: that the messages and ideal of the yellow race have not been completed, and that the striving of the mighty Slavs has but begun. The question is, then: How shall this message be delivered; how shall these various ideals be realized? The answer is plain: By the development of these race groups, not as individuals, but as races....For the development of Negro genius, of Negro literature and art, of Negro spirit, only Negroes bound and welded together, Negroes inspired by one vast ideal, can work out in its fullness the great message we have for humanity. We cannot reverse history; we are subject to the same natural laws as other races, and if the Negro is ever to be a factor in the world’s history—if among the gaily-colored banners that deck the broad ramparts of civilization is to hang one uncompromising black, then it must be placed there by black hands, fashioned by black heads and hallowed by the travail of 200,000,000 black hearts beating in one glad song of jubilee.⁴

In this passage, Du Bois gives us the ideas from which will develop: Kemetic studies; a holistic approach articulated by Linda James Myers as optimal psychology or optimal theory; and, perhaps even the tendency to focus on Africa south of the Sahara rather than continental Africa.⁵ However, one question that he raised in the context of segregated United States culture now applies to nation building in Africa and to the African diaspora in Europe, Asia, Pacifica and on both American continents, suggesting that,

No Negro who has given earnest thought to the situation of his people in America has failed, at some time in life, to find himself at these cross-roads; has failed to ask himself at some time: What, after all, am I? Am I an American or am I a Negro? Can I be both? Or is it my duty to cease to be a Negro as soon as possible and be an American? If I strive as a Negro, am I not perpetuating the very cleft that threatens and separates Black and White America? Is not my only possible practical aim the subduction of all that is Negro in me to the American? Does my black blood place upon me any more obligation to assert my nationality than German, or Irish or Italian blood would?⁶

In Pan African studies, identity may be one of the more subjective, discordant, polyvalent social constructions, for it at once inoculates, indemnifies and interpolates the individual into the Subject and into the Other. There is a point that perhaps all students encounter, regardless of the social constructs imposed upon them by the concentration of melanin in their skin, when they explore Pan African studies and the historical and contemporary social constructs that fragment our human family into factions based upon gender, class, ethnicity, race, religion, region, and numerous other divisions. In a Pan African studies classroom and in the literature, individuals explore their societal place more fully, and then choose to accept or to change their situation. However, if one accepts Du Bois's invitation to question one's identity and to do so through a Pan African framework, such an education does have a reward. One acquires, as Du Bois said of Crummel, "the fineness of his character,—his calm courtesy, the sweetness of his strength, and his fair blending of the hope and truth of life." These are human traits of "lofty civilization" and "vitalizing qualities in the changeless hopes of humanity" that Pan African scholars should attempt to give to the world.

"How Shall This Message Be Delivered?": Via E-journals

In "The Conservation of Races," W. E. B. Du Bois asked, "How shall this message be delivered; how shall these various ideals be realized?" Hence, in this qualitative review of e-journals as a platform of knowledge transmission, I argue that e-journals are a vehicle to realize the regeneration of African polities, and thus a twenty-first century answer to Du Bois's question. And as phrased by information science expert Dr. Stephen Mutula of the University of Botswana,

Universities the world over are responsible for research, knowledge generation, scholarship and innovation. They also serve as conduits for the transfer, adaptation, and dissemination of knowledge generated across the world. Universities are expected to guarantee the most efficient utilization of research results and their possible application to economic life.

Despite the increased demands on universities, they remain constrained by declining state funding, increasing enrolments, limited physical facilities, etc. New technologies now offer lifelines for African universities to re-engineer and reposition themselves in order to meet these ever increasing societal demands effectively.⁷

Globalization intensifies Pan African scholarship. Martin Delany lived in a world that was larger than any single nation's boundaries, as did Alexander Crummel and W. E. B. Du Bois. They lamented the loss of human dignity and the waste of intellectual capital in the nineteenth century. However, in the twenty-first century, the internet has negated the potential social death that once accompanied migration to the diaspora and it is now the vehicle for e-journals that enhance a global community of scholars and practitioners who collectively raise all of us to those higher levels of civilization once dreamed about by Rev. Alexander Crummel. And as a consequence, ultimately, all disciplinary roads of Pan Africanist inquiry should lead to an improved quality of life for Africa-descended people, and the human family; a road in part paved by the following e-journals that reinforce the Pan African community.

Pan-African Community: Afroeuropa to JPAS

Afroeuropa: Journal of Afro-European Studies

When scholars care to make a difference, they can become change-agents. Such a group gathered in 2004 to organize a 2005 international conference that was supported by a grant from the Ministerio de Educación de España in Spain. In Afro-European studies, Vegacervera, León, may take on the significance of the Niagara conference in African-American history. From that initial meeting, the virtual community of Afroeuropa@s: Culturas e Identidades Negras en Europa (www.afroeuropa.unileon.es) was born, and the method of sharing scholarly and artistic works is *Afroeuropa: Journal of Afro-European Studies*. Hence, *Afroeuropa* should be followed by Pan Africanists who focus on African-American history because it is a vehicle that will help us lead students to a worldview described by Dr. Delany when he wrote, "I have outgrown, long since, the boundaries of North America, and with them have also outgrown the boundaries of their claims." And in the same vein, the road to Africa-centered scholarship and its diaspora in Europe is more multidimensional and gives a stronger refutation to white supremacy in Europe

Contributors to *Afroeuropa* work "against the voices claiming for a white Christian and Greco-Roman Europe" and they "vindicate the ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic plurality of Europe in the past, the present and the future."⁸ Thus, this journal raises questions about the definition of diaspora and of the age of the African diaspora. Journal editor Maria Sofía López Rodríguez wrote in the first issue, "The presence of individuals and groups of African origin in Europe may be traced back to the very origins of Western Civilization, but has been repeatedly denied or ignored in the continental imagination."⁹ To reinforce this as an issue of the European sub-continent, *Afroeuropa* began as an English language journal and has increased the number of articles published so that the 2010 articles are balanced between English, Spanish and French.

This journal also shows the importance of being able to deliver the message of Pan African studies in numerous languages. I am struck by the empowerment shown in the term “AfroEuropean.” When the editors use an English variant, “Black European Studies,” several things happen. One, individuals are categorized by skin color and not by cultural performance or affinity. Two, geography shifts to Africa south of the Sahara instead of continental Africa as expressed by African Union member states. Three, “AfroEuropean” is not hyphenated and European is not capitalized. This construction addresses W. E. B. Du Bois’s questions of “What, after all, am I? Am I an American or am I a Negro? Can I be both?...Is not my only possible practical aim the subduction of all that is Negro in me to the American?” While it may seem that this construction subordinates the European subcontinent to a subset of the African diaspora, it may also disenfranchise Africa descended people as “Africans in Europe” and accidentally reinforce a white Christian Europe while it simultaneously renders Greco-Roman culture as African and Eurasian.

Cadernos de Estudos Africanos

This e-journal is published by the Center for African Studies at the University Institute of Lisbon as an open access journal since 2001 and the articles are in Portuguese, Spanish, French and English. Most of the articles address Africa south of the Sahara. This journal has made a deliberate effort to keep its editorial board balanced between anthropologists, social scientists and those with doctorates in Interdisciplinary African Studies. Also, as of this writing, in the upper right corner of the home page, there are tabs for those who prefer to navigate the site using English, French, or Spanish. Issue no. 24 (2012) is dedicated to the living conditions and socio-cultural dynamics between Africa-born and Africa-descended persons in Portugal. This diaspora issue is one that Dr. Delany addressed, and it is a topic of intra-continental and intercontinental diaspora.

Afrikanistik Online

This e-journal is published by the Department of African Studies at the University of Cologne, Germany, and it presents articles, proceedings and book reviews written in German, English, French. Most articles since 2004 address linguistics but other topics such as theology and oral history are included.

Africa Spectrum

This journal is published by the German Institute of Global and Area Studies Institute of African Affairs and it began in 1966. It is included here because in 2009 it became an open access journal and it also added, with support from the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation since 2009, an emphasis on UN-AU issues. The emphasis of this journal has been in its scholarly coverage of political events (all articles are published in English)

Indilinga: African Journal of Indigenous Knowledge Systems

This robust journal began in 2002 and it is dedicated to preserving indigenous knowledge systems as part of the African Renaissance. A multidisciplinary project, the contributors use physical science and social science to analyze indigenous science. Pedagogy is another theme in the journal, and this is the kind of Pan African rejuvenation that Crummel wished.

Inkanyiso: the Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences

Published by Forum Press, this journal began in 2009 and is affiliated with the University of Zululand. Its primary function is “mainly to publish quality multidisciplinary research papers and short papers of general interest in the humanities and social sciences.” Most of the contributors are scholars in Africa and the topics range from politics and justice to healthcare and psychology to education and distance learning. Case studies are mostly about southern Africa, but they are not limited to that region.

African and Black Diaspora: an International Journal

This journal debuted in December 2007 and is published by the DePaul Center for Black Diaspora. Over the years, some issues of the journal concentrated on specific regions such as the Americas [vol. 2, no. 2 (2010)], the North Atlantic/North Sea [vol. 4, no. 1 & 2 (2011)], and South America [vol. 5, no. 1 & 2 (2012)]. One of the 2008 articles is “‘Colonizin’ in Reverse” by Kenneth Parker, and in 2010 there was a special issue on “Family Dynamics in Transnational African Migration to Europe” with articles about the experience in Portugal, Cape Verde, Ireland, Spain, and Yemen.

While the title of this journal seems to be redundant, especially from a U.S. perspective with its Jim Crow historical context, the first article in this journal shows that the issues of identity and nationality and race continue. Katharina Schramm, in one of the articles from the first edition, wrote of some factors that may have focused an early definition of the African diaspora on Blackness, namely the 1965 International Congress on African History that convened in Tanzania, Maulana Karenga’s creation of Kwanzaa in 1966 and the emphasis on Swahili in what became part of the Afrocentric movement, as well as the formation of the first Black Studies Department at San Francisco State University in 1968. She also notes that the area studies movement bifurcates the continent and assigns the Maghreb to the Middle East. Schramm’s arguments lead to questions not quickly answered, such as: Is there a definition of “African” that reflects the population of the entire continent without being reductionist and racist? Will such a definition still incorporate populations in diaspora? And can diaspora theory match the lived experience of people in the diaspora?¹⁰

Journal of Pan African Studies

The e-journal format and open access are indeed a method for delivering the message of Pan African studies to a wider audience, especially to those scholars who face decreased funding for resources in the present and prolonged economic recession. This present journal, *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, has been at the forefront of this effort from its original issue in 1987 to its reformation in 2006 in digital format. In 2006, the journal became a viable conduit that preserves and promotes a century-old discourse between the African continent and those in diaspora who identify as African, hence a space where Itibari M. Zulu and Daudi Ajani ya Azibo refreshed a focus on indigenous knowledge systems and respect for African approaches to studying the world. Thus the 2006 volume displayed the urgency on the continent for practical applications of Pan African knowledge. From 2006 through 2010, this urgent thread has taken the form of articles about economics, education and foreign policy by scholars and practitioners such as Thabo M. Mbeki, Eric Edi, Amadu Jacky Kaba, and Nana Adu-Pipim Boaduo. Since 2009, some issues have focused on themes such as Swahili studies (vol. 2, no. 8, 2009), Black Studies (vol. 2, no. 10, 2009), Nigeria (vol. 33, no. 3, 2009), African psychology (vol. 3, no. 8, 2010) and an issue on the creative arts dedicated to Jose Goncalves (vol. 4, no. 2, 2010). This mixture of theory, the arts and urgent pragmatism indeed fulfills the vision that Alexander Crummel had for rejuvenating civilization in the African diaspora as a corrective for the destructive forces of the slave trades.

“How Shall These Various Ideals Be Realized?”

When Alexander Crummel inaugurated the American Negro Academy, he predicted that once people had a better understanding of the “grand conceptions of being,” they would then apply their intellectual capital to humane utilization of property, money, station, office, and lineage for the creation of more advanced civilization. Slavery in the diaspora and colonialism on the continent are too often predicated upon extractive practices that consume and dispose of humans. The grand concept of the error of this economic rationale has been spreading to higher levels of global organizations. Perhaps some credit is owed to Rev. Crummel, Drs. Delany and Du Bois for the manifestation of their ideals a century after they were spoken in churches and classrooms, ideals which many Pan Africanists continue to share with our students and our benefactors. The following Pan African e-journals specialize in scientific facets of advancing our global civilization.

African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies

The African Criminology and Justice Association launched this journal in 2005, hosted by the University of Maryland-Eastern Shore. As of this writing, the 2012 edition had not been released on the website.

According to Prof. Biko Agozino, the editor-in-chief, “this journal is here to address the need to know more about why and how the dominant criminological techniques continue to affect people of African descent disproportionately in the internal colonies of the world today.” This is a diaspora concern and the initial volume included research about justice theory and studies conducted about populations in Nigeria and Mississippi (vol 1, no. 1) and Uganda and Finland (vol. 1, no. 2). Themes that have appeared in this journal include, but are not limited to, the African Holocaust, Atlantic and other slave trades, apartheid, post-colonial theory, judicial standards and unemployment/under-employment issues.

Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa

This journal was launched in 1999, and Valentine Udoh James, who researches development in Africa, introduced it as “a forum for the debates on all development efforts in Africa.” He saw this topic as a grand concept that pulls theoretical and practical input from a wide swath of experts. “The debates span the majority of academic disciplines. The interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary nature of development issues makes *JSDA* an excellent forum for the discussion of Africa’s development issues.”¹¹ An example of this Crummel-model of intellectual discourse is the inclusion in the first volume of an essay from Messay Kebede on “Development and the African Philosophical Debate” in which he presents ethnophilosophy as a means of turning the divide-and-conquer devastation of colonialism and neocolonialism into a discourse that can “modernize ethnicity rather than stifle it.” He argues, in modern Pan African mode, that “the restoration of the pride and creativity of Africans depend on the recognition, not of the strangeness, but of their universal virtues, which they share equally with the rest of humankind.”¹² Topics in this journal include micro-credit, soil and water management, African Union security and humans (adults and children) as valued resources.

Childhood in Africa: An Interdisciplinary Journal

This e-journal is published by the Institute for the African Child at Ohio University. A perusal of the childhoods of Crummel, Delany and Du Bois will reveal that these proto-Pan-Africanists benefitted from quality education in the early years of childhood. Childhood matters and in 2009 this journal ushered in a persistent Pan African dialogue that melds a grand concept underlying the Afrocentric ideas of indigenous education with pragmatic social science. Stephen Howard crafted this introduction to the journal in his “Editor’s Note” in the first edition. “Our concern here is that policy-oriented research and reporting is by its very nature adult-centric and top down. Getting to a point where we support child-centric bottom up investigations as a counter to this would be an exciting development...and we offer this journal as a place to discuss these emerging child-friendly methodologies.” Like other vibrant journals, this journal includes articles from a variety of Africa south of the Sahara nations, and it is hoped that the rest of the continent will be included in future issues.

Spectrum: A Journal on Black Men

This journal debuted in 2012 and, like *Childhood in Africa* and *Afroeuropa*, it is the product of a larger public-private community effort. In 1998, the Ohio Civil Rights Commission organized the Commission on Socially Disadvantaged Black Males and the organization renamed itself in 1992 as the Ohio Commission on African American Males (OCAAM) which is “an active incubator and initiator of innovative programs” that address “four primary areas of concern: Criminal Justice, Employment, Education and Health.” In 2008 OCAAM affiliated with the Ohio State University.¹³ The editors of the journal are Terrell Strayhorn and Judson L. Jeffries. Jeffries has been affiliated with the Community Extension Center of the Department of African American and African Studies at the Ohio State University for many years. *Spectrum* is an academic arm of the Department of African American and African Studies at the Ohio State University, and the initial issue suggests an effort to practice a definition of Black that is inclusive of multiple cultures and ethnicities.

In their opening editorial in which they talk about Thomas Jefferson, Gunnar Myrdal and the American Creed, Strayhorn and Jeffries discuss that statistics collectively paint a portrait of the Black male in crisis and whose future would be dismal and disappointing without intervention. As not all Black men are unemployed high school dropouts, or convicted felons, there is a remarkable diversity among Black male populations and Black men continue to make far-reaching and lasting contributions both in the U.S. and abroad. They also point to U.S. Bureau of Census (2011) statistics that show 43.8 million Blacks in the United States, 14% of the national population, “yet, the net worth of Black families is a mere \$6,100 compared to \$67,000 for White families.” This *Spectrum* shows a weakness in Crummel’s focus on lofty civilization and points us to Delany’s pragmatism, namely that Pan African studies is an incomplete project if it does not, as stated above, apply their intellectual capital to humane utilization of property, money, station, office, and lineage for the creation of a more advanced civilization. *Spectrum* focuses on sustainable human development.¹⁴

African Nebula

This journal is produced by the College of Humanities and Culture, Osun State University, Nigeria and therefore an excellent source of information about cultures and history of Nigeria primarily, and Ghana and the Nile Valley in addition. The journal began in 2010 and addresses issues of economics, literature, sociology, history and related topics.

Fire!!! The Multimedia Journal of Black Studies

This e-journal is published by the Association for the Study of African American Life and History and it is an uncompromising revival of *Fire!!* The new journal debuted in 2012 and, according to its editors, it is intend to be a multidisciplinary and multimedia journal designed to promote what Abdul Alkalimat and Ronald Bailey call “eBlack: the digital transformation of Black Studies Pedagogy.”¹⁵

Conclusion

Nearly a century ago in Paris, France as the global economy was restructured at the Versailles Conference following World War I, New World diasporans like W. E. B. Du Bois joined continental leaders like Blaise Diagne to affect the political, economic and social future of Africa polities and, by extension, Africans in the diaspora. Their method of social networking took the form of the First Pan African Congress (1919), yet in the twenty-first century the Pan African community (Pan Africanist) increasingly do so in the form of e-journals as fora for scholarship that is often inspired by agendas and queries produced at face-to-face conferences. Hence, the e-journal movement has democratized the global information community and it increases the capacity of intellectual capital on the African continent and in the African diaspora. I contend that the e-journals presented in this essay represent a trend in Africana Studies that is concisely defined by Mario Azevedo in his introduction to *Africana Studies: a Survey of Africa and the African Diaspora* as,

Ours is not, as it were, just a textbook on slavery, on colonialism, on racism and discrimination, or on the suffering and hardships of peoples of African origin and descent, or simply on their contributionist record. *African Studies* goes beyond that, as it...focuses on both the individual and aggregate experiences of black people, not in a vacuum or in isolation, but within the context of the cultural crisscrossing between peoples of African descent and the rest of humankind, across time and space. Africana Studies is, therefore, a saga of both the pains and joys (and aspirations) of black people the world over and an exposé of the key to their future, not as a separate and monolithic group but as a dynamic, ever changing part of the world community, yet, with a uniqueness and a heritage worth preserving.¹⁶

And indeed, part of that heritage and uniqueness is the indigenous production of knowledge, whether it includes ancient Egyptian technology or modern biomedical and energy production policy. In agreement, William M. King wrote the following about the relationship between Black Studies, Afrocentricity and science and technology:

Ultimately concerned with the allocation of resources, the direction of research and development, the realization of desired goals whether they be in agriculture, commerce, the military, basic science, whatever, science and technology policymaking is guided by values and expectations that cannot be divorced from the policy process. And it is in the examination of those values and expectations that Black Studies can play a most important role. Simply subscribing to the shibboleths of the past regarding scientific work, arguing a position of value neutrality which we know not to be true, locks us into a technocratic mindset that more often than not exacerbates the problems of society, irrespective of the area in which they appear.¹⁷

Azevedo and King point to a common directive, namely the promotion of an enhanced quality of life for present and future generations through applying knowledge about the past in order to more fully comprehend contemporary situations. If there is a zeitgeist to millennial scholarship, e-journals suggest a decentralization of Pan African studies from its incubation in the West. Also, as the number of doctoral programs in Pan African Studies increases, perhaps faculty should recommend that their students acquire knowledge of a European or Asian lingua franca in addition to indigenous continental languages so that they can participate in the global conversations with all the facility and eloquence of Du Bois, one of the founding ancestors of Pan Africanism.

More to the point, the editors and contributors to the e-journals presented in this essay are the vanguard of hope for Dr. Martin Luther King's dream generation. Through electronic media, they continue to bring Rev. Alexander Crummel's nineteenth century vision for Africa-descended people into twenty-first century reality by working to enlighten the remaining socially "blind men" who "fail to see that neither property, nor money, nor station, nor office, nor lineage, are fixed factors, in so large a thing as the destiny of man; that they are not vitalizing qualities in the changeless hopes of humanity." Through Pan African studies, engaged scholars, individually and in virtual e-journal communities can now use the tools of their intellectual trade for a purpose that is a subtext to each of the journals reviewed, and namely remembering Crummel's suggestion that "the greatness of peoples springs from their ability to grasp the grand conceptions of being. It is the absorption of a people, of a nation, of a race, in large majestic and abiding things which lifts them up to the skies."

E-journals Cited

Afroeuropa: Journal of Afro-European Studies. www.journal.afroeuropa.eu/. (open access) ISSN: 1887-3456.

Cadernos de Estudos Africanos cea.revues.org/ (open access) ISSN: 1645-3794.

Afrikanistik Online. www.afrikanistik-online.de (open access) ISSN 1860-7462.

Africa Spectrum. www.hup.eub.umi-hamburg.de/giga/afsp (open access since 2009) ISSN (electronic) 1868-6869 (printed) 0002-0397.

Indilinga: African Journal of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. www.indilinga.org.za. (subscription) ISSN 1683-0296.

Inkanyiso: the Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences. www.inkanyiso.uzulu.ac.za (open access) ISSN 2077-2815.

African and Black Diaspora: an International Journal. www.tandfonline.com (mixed access) ISSN (electronic) 1752-864X (print) 1752-8631.

Journal of Pan African Studies. www.jpnafrican.com/ (open access) ISSN 1942-6569.

Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa. www.jsd-africa.com. (open access) ISSN 1520-5509.

Childhood in Africa: An Interdisciplinary Journal. www.afrchild.ohio.edu/CAJ (open access) ISSN 1948-6502.

Spectrum: A Journal on Black Men. www.muse.jhu.edu/journals/spectrum/ (open access) ISSN 2162-3244.

African Nebula. www.nobleworld.biz/africannebula.html. (open access) ISSN 1837-7963.

Fire!!! The Multimedia Journal of Black Studies. www.fire-jbs.org. (subscription) ISSN 2156-4078.

References

1. Alexander Crummell, "The Attitude of the American Mind toward the Negro Intellect," an address delivered on December 28, 1897 (Washington, DC: The American Negro Academy, 1898): 4-5. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/31268/31268-h/31268-h.htm> (Accessed 12/28/2012)
2. Martin Delany, *Official Report of the Niger Valley Exploring Party* (1861): 343-345. http://www.gutenberg.org/files/22118/22118-h/22118-h.htm#Page_338 (Accessed 12/28/2012)
3. W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*. (Boston: Bedford Books, 1997), 164.
4. Du Bois, *Souls*, 232-233.
5. Molefi Asante, *Afrocentricity*, (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1988); Linda James Myers, *Understanding an Afrocentric World View: Introduction to an Optimal Psychology* (Dubuque, Iowa : Kendall/Hunt Publishing. Co., 1993). Afrocentricity has its detractors. See Tunde Adeleke, *The Case against Afrocentrism* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2009); Stephen Howe, *Afrocentrism: Mythical Past and Imagined Homes* (New York: Verso, 1998).
6. Du Bois, *Souls*, 233-234.
7. Stephen Mutula, "Challenges of Doing Research in Sub-Saharan African Universities: Digital Scholarship Opportunities," *Inkanyiso* vol.1, no. 1 (2009): 1.
8. "Focus," www.journal.afroeuropa.eu/.
9. Maria Sofía López Rodríguez, "Editorial," originally printed in Spanish in *Afroeuropa* 1, no. 1 (2007) and again in English in vol. 1, no. 2 (2007).
10. Katharina Schramm, "Leaving Area Studies Behind: the Challenge of Diasporic Connections in the Field of African Studies," *African and Black Diaspora* 1, no. 1 (2008).
11. Valentine Udoh James, "Letter from the Editor," *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa* 1, no. 1 (1999).
12
12. Messay Kebede, "Development and the African Philosophical Debate," 1, no. 1 (1999): 46, 48, 57.

-
13. Ohio Commission on African Males: Inspiring Excellence, Strengthening Communities, Impacting Lives! www.odi.osu.edu/ocaam/.
14. Terrell L. Strayhorn and Judson L. Jeffries, "An Introduction Declaring...*Spectrum: a Journal on Black Men*," 1, no. 1 (2012): 1-4.
15. Abdul Alkalimat and Ronald Bailey, "From black to eBlack: the Digital Transformation of Black Studies Pedagogy" *Fire!!!* vol 1, no. 1 (2012): 9-24.
16. Mario Azevedo, "Introduction," in *Africana Studies: a Survey of Africa and the African Diaspora*, 3rd ed. (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2005), xvii.
17. William M. King, "The Importance of Black Studies for Science and Technology Policy" in ed. Nathaniel Norment, Jr. *The African American Studies Reader* 2nd ed. (Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2007), 777.