

**RALPH J. BUNCHE
CENTER FOR
AFRICAN AMERICAN
STUDIES AT UCLA**

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**Special points
of interest:**

- Dr. Vanessa Díaz on celebrity media
- Professor Courtney S. Thomas on what shapes health risk and resilience among African Americans
- Impact of the LA Riots '92
- Faculty and Staff News

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Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies at UCLA



Bunche Center News

Interview with Ford Foundation Postdoc Fellow, Dr. Vanessa Díaz



The Bunche Center interviewed Dr. Vanessa Díaz, an interdisciplinary ethnographer, filmmaker, and journalist, to discuss her research on celebrity media and her dissertation-based

book manuscript, *Manufacturing Celebrity: How Women Reporters and Latino Paparazzi Build the Hollywood Industrial Complex*.

Can you describe your most interesting research project(s) and current findings?

The book analyzes the racial and gender politics of representation and division of labor involved in the production of celebrity

-focused media in the U.S. It draws on my ethnographic and archival research in Los Angeles to explore the work and lives of the celebrity journalists, paparazzi, and red carpet photographers who create the content for celebrity weekly magazines such as *People* and *Us Weekly*. In the book, I examine the ethnoracial, gender, and class stratification involved in the work of the predominantly white, female celebrity reporters and the predominantly male, Latino (immigrant and U.S.-born) paparazzi of Los Angeles, advancing conversations about the power of cultural producers to shape national culture and discourse.

To read the full interview, [click here](#).

Interview with Courtney S. Thomas, Assistant Professor of Community Health Sciences and Bunche Center Faculty Associate



The overall goal of my research is to identify the social, psychological, and biological factors that shape health risk and resilience among African Americans across the life

course. I focus primarily on understanding the ways that stress and coping contribute to disparities in both mental and physical health outcomes, and using this knowledge to improve health and well-being among this population.

My current research has really evolved over time, but was initially inspired by my life experiences. I am originally from New Orleans, Louisiana. As a young adult, I experienced Hurricane Katrina and all of the loss and devastation it brought to the city. Through that experience, I begin to recognize the impact of stress on individuals' health, but more so, I realized how much resilience—the ability to persevere and even thrive in the face of adversity—really can make a difference when individuals lack material resources.

To read the full interview, [click here](#).

Could the LA Riots happen again?

On Take Two 89.3 KPCC, a roundtable with guests, Darnell Hunt, director of UCLA's Bunche Center for African American Studies, Tim Watkins, president and CEO of the Watts Labor Community Action Committee, and Frank Stoltze, KPCC's public safety correspondent, investigated the signs that a riot was imminent in '92 and whether similar signs were present today. Discussed were the economy in '92 in South LA (with unemployment ~7.5%, the rate being much higher in areas associated with the uprising), policing then and now, and where the

riots would be and who would be involved if it were to happen again. To access the interview, [click here](#).



RON EISENBEG/MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES

No community can tolerate such loss, not in 1992 and not now

In a *Los Angeles Times* article, "No community can tolerate such loss, not in 1992 and not now," Brenda Stevenson, Professor and Nickoll Family Endowed Chair in History, discusses how race continues to divide us all, and structural deficits (for example, high rates of black incarceration, unemployment, poverty, and the largest share of deficient K-12 public schools in South Central Los Angeles) that were foundational to the civil unrest in '92 will be just as foundational the next time. To read the article, [click here](#).

"Blatant evidence of inequality before the law also looms large as fodder for discontent that ignites the fires of destruction."

- Brenda Stevenson
(image right)



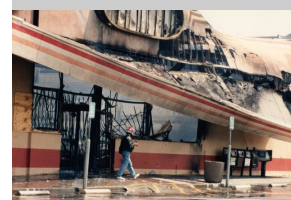
UCLA experts weigh in on impact of L.A. uprising 25 years later

UCLA experts spoke about the roots of the '92 riots, its impact and progress since '92, and how the LA riots were an instructive, historical moment.

Gaye Theresa Johnson, UCLA professor of Chicana and Chicano Studies and African American Studies and Bunche Affiliated Faculty member recalled, "It was for many a personally politicizing moment in which intersec-

tions between race, class and space took on new meaning and urgency. As black and brown students, we connected the conditions of police brutality, housing discrimination and poverty in South L.A. to the institutional racism that many of us witnessed and experienced firsthand."

To read the article, [click here](#).



ATOMIC HOT LINKS/FICKR

Dr. Scot Brown, Professor of African American Studies at UCLA, interview on Funk Chronicles

[Click here](#) to watch the recent televised interview of Dr. Scot Brown, Professor of African American Studies at UCLA with host Rhine McLin, the former mayor of Dayton, OH. Dr. Brown covers the subject of the sociology of funk music, African American community and Dayton, OH.

“Funk is so much more than a four letter word. It’s a genre, it’s a style of music, it’s a fusion of so many different histories of sound that come together. It’s part of the migration of sound.”

- Dr. Scot Brown



Scot Brown

Study: Racial Segregation is Costing the Country

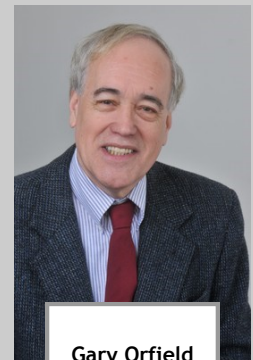
According to a new study by the Metropolitan Planning Council and the Urban Institute, racial and economic segregation costs the country billions of dollars annually.

“Our study documents the relationships between segregation and the incomes, educations, and safety of a metropolitan region’s residents. Our findings suggest that efforts to reduce economic and racial segregation could deliver benefits all across metropolitan areas. Given the high levels of segregation in Chicago, the region’s potential gains from reducing segregation are substantial,” said Greg Acs, Director of the Income and Benefits Policy Center of the

Urban Institute and co-author of the study.

Gary Orfield, UCLA Professor of Education, Co-Director of the Civil Rights Project and Bunche Affiliated Faculty member, stated, “This is an issue that’s going to determine what kind of a society we’re going to have and Chicago is a good case example that if you don’t do anything you’re going to have big problems, not just for Blacks and Latinos, but for everyone.”

To read the article, [click here](#).



Gary Orfield

Library & Media Center News

The Bunche Center’s Library and Media Center (LMC) has over 8,000 monograph, serial, archival and audio visual materials focusing on African, African American, and Caribbean history and culture.

The Librarian, Dalena Hunter dhunter@bunche.ucla.edu, coordinates the Images in Blackness Film Series, which features screenings and discussions by filmmakers and scholars

whose work explores how diversity affects the entertainment industry.

The library is currently seeking donations for its special collections. Materials relevant to Black Los Angeles history are especially welcome.

The Library and Media Center is located at 135 Haines Hall. For more information, [click here](#).



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