

**Tyina L. Steptoe, PhD**  
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## **Education**

- Ph.D. 2008, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of History
- M.A. 2002, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Afro-American Studies
- B.S. 1999, The University of Texas at Austin, Department of Radio-Television-Film
- B.A. 1999, The University of Texas at Austin, Department of History
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## **Postdoctoral Employment**

- Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Arizona, 2017-  
Faculty affiliate in Gender and Women's Studies, the LGBTQ+ Institute, and the Graduate  
Interdisciplinary Program in Applied Intercultural Arts Research
- Assistant Professor, Department of History, University of Arizona, 2014-2017
- Assistant Professor, Department of American Ethnic Studies, University of Washington, 2008-14
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## **Publications**

### Books

- Jim Crow: Voices from a Century of Struggle, 1876-1976* (Library of America/Penguin  
Random House, 2025).
- Houston Bound: Culture and Color in a Jim Crow City* (University of California Press, 2016).
- Awarded the W. Turrentine Jackson Book Prize, the Julia Ideson Award, and the  
Kenneth Jackson Award for Best Book – North American.

### Articles and Book Chapters

- “It’s Brisket, Mija’: A Culinary Journey in Three Acts,” in *Culinary Mestizaje: Racial Mixing  
and Foodways Across the United States*, edited by Rudy Guevarra, Jr. and Felipe  
Hinojosa, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2025).
- “Beyoncé’s Sonic Borderlands: Music and the Racial Geography of the Western South,” in *The  
Lemonade Reader: Beyoncé, Black Feminism and Spirituality*, edited by Kinitra D.  
Brooks and Kameelah L. Martin (New York: Routledge, 2019).

“Big Mama Thornton, Little Richard, and the Queer Roots of Rock ‘n’ Roll,” *American Quarterly* 70.1 (March 2018): 55-77.

“Mexican Americans and the Power of Culture in Houston,” *Modern American History* 2 (2018): 65–69.

"The Great Migrations and Black Urban Life in the United States, 1914-1970," *The Oxford Research Encyclopedia of American History*, Oxford University Press (2018).

“‘Jody’s Got Your Girl and Gone’: Gender, Folklore, and the Black Working Class,” *Journal of African American History* 99, no. 3 (Summer 2014): 251-274.

- Awarded honorable mention for the Letitia Woods Article Prize and the Elli Köngäs-Maranda Professional Prize.

“Jazz, Migration, and Community in Interwar Houston,” *Journal of the West* 53, no. 3 (2014): 42-50.

#### Short Articles, Online Publications, and Blog Posts

“How Little Richard Fought to Be the Architect of Rock ‘n’ Roll,” PBS.org, June 2, 2023.

“‘What’s Going On’ at 50” *The Conversation*, May 17, 2021; reprinted in the May 21, 2021, edition of *The Denver Post*.

“Hip-hop is the Soundtrack to Black Lives Matter Protests,” *The Conversation*, June 25, 2020.

“Soul Salsa,” *The American Historian* 19 (February 2019).

“Ella Baker Makes a Plea for Black Lives (Aug. 6, 1964),” *Time*, July 9, 2018.

“Sandra Bland, Black Women, and Texas Law Enforcement,” *Black Perspectives* July 13, 2018.

“The Flood Blues,” *Process: A Blog for American History*, September 15, 2017.

“Prince’s Afromestizaje,” *All Music Books Blog*, May 30, 2016.

“Beyoncé, Creoles, and Modern Blackness,” University of California Press Blog, February 29, 2016. Re-posted on *All Music Books Blog*, March 25, 2016.

“Cover Story: *Houston Bound*,” *Campaign for the American Reader*, February 9, 2016.

“‘Creole’ in Houston: Not Black, Not White, Different Than ‘Mixed,’” *Houston Chronicle*, December 20, 2015. Also posted as “When Louisiana Creoles Arrived in Texas, Were They Black or White?” *What It Means to Be American*, The Smithsonian and Zócalo Public Square, December 15, 2015.

“Inez Calegon and Houston’s Frenchtown Neighborhood,” University of California Press Blog, October 11, 2015.

“Louisiana Houston,” *Oxford African American Studies Center*, ed. Bernadette Pruitt (Oxford University Press, 2014).

“An Ode to Country Music,” *The Oxford American*, no. 54 (2006): 26-7. Reprinted in *The Presence of Others: Voices and Images That Call for Response*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, (NY: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2008).

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### **Honors and Awards**

Lorraine A. Williams Leadership Award, Association of Black Women Historians, 2025

Ted and Shirley Taubeneck Superior Teaching Award, Humanities Seminars Program, University of Arizona, 2021 and 2025

W. Turrentine Jackson Book Prize for *Houston Bound*, Western History Association, 2017

Julia Ideson Award for *Houston Bound*, Friends of the Texas Room (Houston Metropolitan Research Center of the Houston Public Library), 2017

Kenneth Jackson Award for Best Book (North American) for *Houston Bound*, Urban History Association, 2016

Honorable Mention, Letitia Woods Article Prize for “Jody’s Got Your Girl and Gone,” Association of Black Women Historians, 2015

Honorable Mention, Elli Kögäs-Maranda Professional Prize for “Jody’s Got Your Girl and Gone,” American Folklore Society, 2015

Comparative Ethnic Studies Essay Prize, American Studies Association, 2010

Royalty Research Fund Scholars Program Award, University of Washington, 2010-2011

Innovation in Teaching Award, College of Letters and Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Spring 2006

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### **Fellowships and Grants**

Research Professorship, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Research Institute, University of Arizona. Awarded Fall 2025

Faculty Small Grant, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Research Institute, University of Arizona, 2021

Summerlee Research Fellowship for the Study of Texas History, Clements Center for Southwest Studies, Southern Methodist University, 2012-2013

Career Enhancement Fellowship for Junior Faculty, Institute for Citizens & Scholars, 2011-2012

Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship, 2006-2007

Advanced Opportunity Fellowship, University of Wisconsin, 1999-2000; 2002-2003

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## **Teaching**

### Graduate

U.S. Urban History

Race and U.S. Popular Culture

American Ethnic History (co-convened)

The United States, 1945 to the Present (co-convened)

The Gilded Age and the Progressive Era (co-convened)

### Undergraduate

U.S. Society and Institutions, 1877 to the Present, University of Arizona

Music, Race, and American Cultural History, University of Arizona

The United States, 1918-1945 (online), University of Arizona

Historical Biography (senior capstone), University of Arizona

Music and Society (senior capstone), University of Arizona

The Jazz Age, University of Arizona and University of Washington

The South since the Civil War, University of Arizona and University of Washington

Introduction to African American History, University of Washington

Introduction to African American Studies, University of Washington

Music, Folklore, and Performance in African American Society, University of Washington

### Special courses

The Black West, Humanities Seminar Program, UA, Summer 2025

The Racial Justice Mixtape, Community Classroom, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, UA, 2022 (online)

Soul Music and the Civil Rights Movement, Humanities Seminar Program, UA, Summer 2020 (online)

The Santa Fe Trail: In Search of the Multiracial West, University of Wisconsin, Summer 2005

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## Service

### Professional

Series Editor, Race and Culture in the American West Series, University of Oklahoma Press, 2026-

Editorial Board, *Journal of Texas History*, 2024-

Series Co-editor, “Cultures of Resistance,” University of South Carolina Press, 2020-2025

Western History Association:

- Chair, W. Turrentine Jackson Book Prize Committee, 2025; committee member in 2024
- Co-Chair of the 2022 Program Committee (with Dr. Julian Lim); committee member in 2015 and 2018
- Chair, Sara Jackson Award Committee, 2017; committee member, 2015-2016
- Chair, Huntington-WHA Ridge Fellowship Committee, 2013; committee member, 2011-2012

Promotion and Tenure Case Reviewer, Texas State University, 2025

Program Committee, Pop Conference, 2024-25 (Los Angeles, CA) and 2010 (Seattle, WA)

Pop Conference advisory board, 2020-

Chair, Nominating Committee, Pacific Coast Branch, American Historical Association, 2019-2020; committee member in 2021

Peer Review: University of Texas Press, Texas Tech University Press, University of Pennsylvania Press, Duke University Press; University of California Press, University of Arizona Press; Oregon State University Press; Oxford University Press; Routledge Press; University of Nebraska Press; University of Oklahoma Press; *Journal of Texas History*, *Louisiana History*; *Oregon Historical Quarterly*; *Souls – A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture and Society*; *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*

### University

Promotion and Tenure Committee, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, University of Arizona, 2023-2025

Executive Committee, Graduate Interdisciplinary Program in Applied Intercultural Arts Research, University of Arizona, 2021-

Co-Chair, Beyond Juneteenth Committee, Office of University Initiatives, University of Arizona, 2022-2023

Strategic Priorities Faculty Initiative (SPFI) Review Committee, 2021-2023

Promotion and Tenure Committee for Dr. Maurice Magaña, Department of Mexican American Studies, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, University of Arizona, 2021

Strategic Plan Committee, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, University of Arizona, 2019-2021

Faculty Search Committee (ethnomusicology), Graduate Interdisciplinary Program in Applied Intercultural Arts Research and Fred Fox School of Music, 2019

Faculty Advisor, Men and Women of Purpose, UA Athletic Program, 2016-2018

Budget Committee, Women Investigating Race, Ethnicity, and Difference (WIRED), University of Washington, 2011-2012

Program Committee, "Voting Rights and the Road to Freedom," University of Wisconsin, Fall 2002

Planning Committee and staff, "Journey to Selma," University of Wisconsin, Summer 2002; Spring 2003

Search Committee, Dean of Advising, College of Letters and Science Student Academic Services, University of Wisconsin, 2002

### Departmental

Chair, Search Committee for Visiting Assistant Professor of U.S. History, Spring 2025

Public History Collaborative Committee, Department of History, 2024-

Graduate Committee, Department of History, 2018-2020; 2023-2024

Hiring Committee for Dr. Carlos Parra, Spring 2024

Annual Peer Review Committee, Department of History: 2017, 2018, and 2023

Strategic Priorities Faculty Initiative Hiring Committee, Department of History, University of Arizona, Spring 2021

Brown Bag Seminar Committee, Department of History, 2018-2020

Panelist, "Re-Orientation for Freshmen History Majors," September 16-18, 2019

Promotion and Tenure Committee for Dr. Katie Hemphill, Department of History, 2019

Strategic Priorities Faculty Initiative Search Committee, Department of History, 2018-2019

Faculty Hiring Committee, Department of History, 2017

Curriculum Committee, Department of History, 2015-2017

Curriculum Committee, Department of American Ethnic Studies, University of Washington, 2009-2011

### Public & Community Outreach

Host and Producer, *Soul Stories*, 91.3-FM KXCI Community Radio, Tucson, AZ, 2019-

Faculty Presenter on *Wattstax*, Humanities Seminars Movie Monday, June 16, 2025

Panelist, *We Want the Funk* screening, Arizona Public Media, Tucson, June 3, 2025

Panelist, *The Great Migration: A People on the Move* screening, Arizona Public Media, Tucson, February 25, 2025

Featured Guest, speaking on race and protest music, "Areva Martin in Real Time," KBLA Talk 1580, September 12, 2024

Featured Guest, "[Juneteenth 1865-2024: A Legacy of Song](#)," KHOU-11, originally aired June 2024

Featured Guest, "[How Zydeco Music Blossomed in Houston](#)," news segment on KHOU-II, originally aired February 28, 2024

Academic Adviser, [Little Richard: King and Queen of Rock 'n' Roll](#), American Masters Series, Public Broadcasting Service, originally aired June 2023

Featured Guest, "[Ma Rainey's Mic Drop](#)," *History This Week* podcast, June 12, 2023

Featured Guest, "[Juneteenth: 1865-2021](#)," KHOU-11 News Special, June 2021

Featured Guest, "[Sam Lightnin' Hopkins](#)" *Great Day Houston*," KHOU-11, February 25, 2021

Special programming produced for 91.3-FM KXCI Tucson community radio:

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Special, January 19, 2026
- "The Revolutionary King," MLK Day Special, *Your Morning Brew*, January 20, 2025
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Special, *Locals Only*, January 15, 2024

- “The Sounds of Black Texas,” *Your Morning Brew*, June 19, 2023
- “Juneteenth,” *The Blues Review*, June 19, 2021
- “Music of the Black West,” *Afternoon Music Mix*, February 26, 2021
- “Clash Call and Response,” *Your Morning Brew*, February 5, 2021
- “Juneteenth and Freedom Struggles in the Americas,” *The Home Stretch*, June 19, 2021
- “*What’s Going On* Fiftieth Anniversary Special,” *The Home Stretch*, April 21, 2021

Featured Guest, [Beyond the Album Cover](#), podcast interview with Jarrell Mason, April 24, 2021

Featured Guest, [“The History And Current State Of Music In The Black Lives Matter Protests.”](#) *8 O’Clock Buzz*, 89.9-FM WORT, July 17, 2020

Interview with Amaris Encinas and Elvia Verdugo, “The Past Century of Race, Riot and Protest in the United States: A Brief Timeline,” *The Daily Wildcat*, July 7, 2020

Guest social media correspondent, Arizona Historical Society, June 19, 2020

Interview with Kyle Mittan, “Black Lives Matter and Pandemic Bring Juneteenth Into Focus,” [University of Arizona News](#), June 17, 2020

Featured Guest, [“Houston Bound: How Migration Changed Notions of Race in the Bayou City,”](#) *Houston Matters*, Houston Public Media, September 21, 2017.

Featured Guest, [“Houston: A Segregated Disaster,”](#) *The Dig* podcast, September 12, 2017

Featured Guest, speaking on *Houston Bound*, [KAZI Book Review with Hopeton Hay](#), KAZI 88.7 FM (Austin, TX), December 28, 2015

Planning committee and co-host, AP US History (APUSH) Quiz Bowl, Tucson, AZ, 2018-2019

Host, Jazz According to SOUL – Juneteenth fundraiser, Tucson, AZ, May 26, 2019

Academic Adviser, “Who Do You Think You Are?” Forest Productions, TLC, 2015-2017

Guest instructor, Prisoner Education Network/University Beyond Bars, 2009-2011

Co-host, *In Our Backyard*, 89.9-FM WORT Madison Community Radio, 2001-2008

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## **Presentations (since 2016)**

### Academic Conferences

“Sex, Race, and Rock ’n’ Roll in the West,” American Studies Association, San Juan, Puerto Rico, November 22, 2025.

Chair, African Americans in Twentieth-Century Texas, Alliance for Texas History, May 17, 2025.

Panelist, Presidential Plenary: "The Black West," Western History Association, Kansas City, MO, October 24, 2024.

Chair/Commenter, "Houston as the Western South," Western History Association, Kansas City, MO, October 25, 2024.

Roundtable, "Teaching the Black West," Western History Association, Los Angeles, CA, October 28, 2023.

Panelist, Presidential Plenary: "Queer Western History in the Age of Pandemic and Protest," Western History Association, San Antonio, TX, October 13, 2022.

"That's Brisket, Mija': A Food Journey in Three Acts," Western History Association, San Antonio, TX, October 13, 2022.

Co-chair, "The Politics of Exclusion and the Protocols of Resistance: Understanding the Political Landscape of 21st-Century Texas," Western History Association, San Antonio, TX, October 15, 2022.

"A Keynote Roundtable on Borders and Borderlands: Considering Texas History in a New Context," Texas State Historical Association, Austin, TX, February 28, 2020.

"Brown Eyed Handsome Man: Race, Sex, and Rock 'n' Roll," Western History Association, Las Vegas, NV, October 19, 2019.

"The Drag Blues," Association for the Study of African American Life and History, Charleston, SC, October 5, 2019.

Moderator, "A Place to Call My Own: Urban Migration and Black Metropolitan History," Association for the Study of African American Life and History, Charleston, SC, October 3, 2019.

"I Seen a Man Die: Mourning and Masculinity in the City of Syrup," Pop Music Conference, Seattle, WA, April 13, 2019.

"Hip Hop's Queer Masculinities," Pop Music Conference, Seattle, WA, April 27, 2018.

Panelist, "Historians in the Twittersphere: Crafting Social Media Identities and History Publics," Organization of American Historians, Sacramento, CA, April 13, 2018.

Chair and respondent, "Wall of Muted Sound: Sonic Histories of Silences and Speaking Out," American Studies Association, Chicago, IL, November 11, 2017.

“Accordion City: Ethnic Mexicans, Creoles of Color, and Musical Hybridity in Houston,” Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Society, Northridge, CA, August 4, 2017.

“Sex, Race, and Early Rock ‘n’ Roll,” Pop Conference, Seattle, WA, April 21, 2017.

“From Sara Travers to Sandra Bland: Black Women, Law Enforcement, and the Legacy of the Houston Riot,” Organization of American Historians, New Orleans, LA, April 6, 2017.

“Mexi-Cajun Blues: Accordions and Multilingual Voices in the Western South,” Pop Conference, Seattle, WA, April 2016.

### Invited Talks

“Big Mama Thornton, Little Richard, and the Queer Roots of Rock ‘n’ Roll,” The Capital District Humanist Society, June 1, 2025.

Keynote, “The Western Roots of Rock and Roll,” Arizona History Convention, April 4, 2025.

“Finding Black Voices in the Archive,” Sterling Stuckey Lecture Series, University of California-Riverside, March 4, 2025.

“The Sound of Migration: Black Music and Western Movement,” Georgia Tech University, Atlanta, GA, February 12, 2024.

[Keynote](#), “The Ethno-Racial Landscape of Jim Crow Houston,” Space and Place in Southern Jewish History, Houston, TX, October 21, 2023.

“Listening to Race and Gender in 1950s Texas Music,” Texas Edges Lecture Series, University of North Texas, Denton, TX, February 22, 2023.

“Five Myths About Juneteenth,” U.S. Consulate General in Nogales, Sonora, June 17, 2022.

“Soul Music and Social Justice,” Racial Justice Task Force of M'kor Hayim Congregation, Tucson, AZ, May 15, 2022.

“Black Music and Black Protest,” University of Arizona football program, February 23, 2022.

“Beyoncé and *Lemonade*,” Department of English, Michigan State University, September 23, 2021.

[“Segregated Houston: Black Life Beyond the Hedges”](#) (with Dr. Frank Guridy), Rice University, April 14, 2021.

“Black Neighborhoods in Houston,” KHOU-11 Lecture Series, Houston, Texas, March 3, 2021.

“LGBTQ Fifties: The Early Years of R&B,” KXCI Tucson Community Radio/ LGBT Institute at the University of Arizona, February 27, 2021.

“Expanding the Archive: Hidden Histories of Race in Houston,” Center for Texas Studies, Texas Christian University, February 6, 2021.

“Juneteenth to Black Lives Matter: Politics and Culture in Houston’s Third Ward,” Arnold Ventures, June 30, 2020.

“Cornrows and Cowboy Hats: Beyoncé’s Polycultural World,” South by Southwest, Austin, TX, March 14, 2020. (Canceled due to COVID-19.)

“Brown-eyed Handsome Men: Sex, Race, and Rock ’n’ Roll in the West,” and “Hidden Histories of Race in the Jim Crow Era,” Wellesley College, February 19-20, 2020.

“Chuck Berry, Freddy Fender, and the Sex Scandals That Rocked Pop Music,” Fred Fox School of Music, University of Arizona, January 31, 2020.

“Using Music to Teach Civil Rights History,” Gilder Lehrman Civil Rights Seminar, Memphis, TN, July 10, 2019.

“Decolonizing the Archive,” Rhodes Institute for Regional Studies, Memphis, TN, July 9, 2019.

Keynote speaker, Claremont McKenna College’s Mellon Mays Program, Claremont, CA, May 1, 2019.

“Polycultural Music and Race in Jim Crow Houston,” Africana Studies Program Black History Month Lecture, University of Arizona, February 20, 2019.

[“From Little Richard to Beyoncé: Cultural Blending in Music.”](#) SBS Downtown Lecture Series, Tucson, AZ, October 11, 2018.

“History in the Key of Life: Listening to Houston’s Polycultural Pasts,” Calaboose African American Museum, San Marcos, Texas, February 22, 2018.

Book talk, *Houston Bound: Culture and Color in a Jim Crow City*, Center for the Study of the Southwest, Texas State University, February 22, 2018.

Keynote, “From Lightnin’ to *Lemonade*: Redefining Culture in America’s Most Diverse City,” Houston Eats! University of Houston, February 2, 2018.

Panelist, “Strange Fruit and Lemonade: Music, Race, Gender, Class, Place,” Texas State University, October 26, 2017.

“Migration and the Making of a Multiethnic City,” School of Sociology Brown Bag, September 1, 2017.

“100 Black Men, 100 Stories: Texas Stories Book Forum, Houston, TX, July 25, 2017.

“Communities of Color in Houston,” Lone Star Book Festival, Kingwood, TX, April 9, 2016.

Public lecture on *Houston Bound*, Gregory School for African American History, Houston, TX, March 19, 2016.

#### Public/Community Presentations

Speaker, “Sounds of History: Música from Tucson and Beyond,” Public History Collaborative, April 19, 2026.

“Soul Stories: Music and Community through History,” AIAR Speaker Series, November 15, 2024.

Speaker, “Sounds of History: An Evening of Jazz,” Public History Collaborative, University of Arizona, February 10, 2024.

“History at UA,” Tucson High School, Tucson, AZ, September 12, 2019.

Moderator, “Kindred, Black Culture, and Picturing Social Change,” Tucson Festival of Books, March 11, 2018.

“White Supremacy, Monuments, and Memory,” University of Arizona, August 30, 2017.

Panelist, “A Conversation on Segregated Spaces,” Tucson Festival of Books, March 11, 2017.

“History of the Ku Klux Klan and White Nationalism in the U.S.A.,” Inauguration Day Teach-in and March, Tucson, AZ, January 20, 2017.

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#### **Professional Associations**

American Historical Association

Alliance for Texas History

American Studies Association

Association for the Study of African American Life and History

Western History Association