

# A&S Explorer

December 2019



Faculty are at the heart of this university. Their cutting-edge research and discovery make important contributions to their fields, and their new and innovative courses challenge our students in important ways. **In this month's letter, Dean Geer highlights our junior faculty, discusses their importance to the future of our College, and offers a glimpse at some of the inspiring work coming from our rising faculty stars.**

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## Faculty Spotlight



### At The Intersection Of Black Expressive Culture

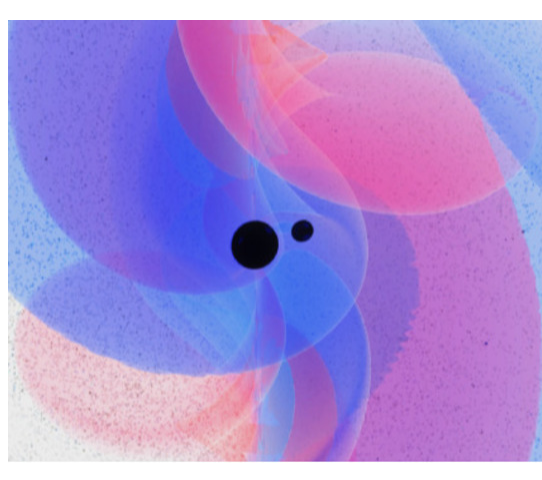
Black feminist scholars. Bessie Smith. James Baldwin. Beyoncé. All have been the subject of Emily Lordi's academic and public scholarly work.

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## Featured Stories



[Psychology alumna Sarena Martinez, BA'16, awarded prestigious 2020 Rhodes Scholarship](#)



[Astrophysicist postdoc plans to observe a black hole 'symphony' using gravitational wave astronomy](#)



[A&S faculty Amanda Little and Jon Meacham join Steven Pinker and Carl Zimmer on panel exploring why divisions persist in an age of abundant data](#)



[Leveraging Youth: Sociology research focuses on how to teach an old dog new tricks, and vice versa](#)

[MORE NEWS](#)

## In the Media

**Washington Post:** [Meet Miguel Wattson, the electric eel lighting his aquarium's Christmas tree and tweeting about it](#)

(Kenneth Catania, Stevenson Professor of Biological Sciences, featured in video)

**The Hechinger Report:** [Up to 3.6 million students should be labeled gifted, but aren't](#)

(Gilman Whiting, associate professor of African American and diaspora studies, cited)

**Nashville Post:** [Poll: Lee popular, voters want Forrest bust gone](#)

(The latest Vanderbilt poll is highlighted)

**Tennessean:** [Opinion: PreP would cap and drive down HIV rates in Tennessee, but not enough people know about the drug](#)

(Jeffrey Bennett, associate professor of communication studies, authored)

**The Conversation:** [Your big brain makes you human - count your neurons when you count your blessings](#)

(Suzana Herculano-Houzel, associate professor of psychology, authored)

**New York Times:** [Four problems with 2016 Trump polling that could play out again in 2020](#)

(Joshua Clinton, co-director of the Vanderbilt Poll and Abby and Jon Winkelreid Professor of Political Science, quoted)

## Snapshot: Kwanzaa



The Black Cultural Center hosted a celebration of the African American and Pan-African holiday Kwanzaa, which celebrates family, community, and culture. Guests were treated to live music, food, fellowship, and a presentation on the seven principles of Kwanzaa.

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