Stanford

Lerone A. Martin

Martin Luther King, Jr. Centennial Professor, Professor of Religious Studies and of African and African American Studies

CONTACT INFORMATION

- **Administrative Support**

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Bio

BIO

Lerone A. Martin is the Martin Luther King, Jr., Centennial Professor in Religious Studies, African & African American Studies, and The Nina C. Crocker Faculty Scholar. He also serves as the Director of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute and Senior Editor of the Institute's Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project.

Martin is an award-winning author. His latest book, "Young King: The Making of Martin Luther King, Jr." chronicles the overlooked adolescence and calling of Martin Luther King, Jr. It will be published by HarperCollins in May 2026.

Martin is also the author of "The Gospel of J. Edgar Hoover: How the FBI Aided and Abetted the Rise of White Christian Nationalism." The book, published in February 2023 by Princeton University Press, has garnered praise from numerous publications including: The Nation, Foreign Affairs, The Guardian, Religion News Service, Publisher’s Weekly, and History Today.

In 2014 he published, "Preaching on Wax: The Phonograph and the Making of Modern African American Religion." The book received the 2015 first book award by the American Society of Church History, an affiliated organization of the American History Association (AHA).

In support of his research, Martin has received a number of nationally recognized fellowships, including the National Endowment for the Humanities, The American Council of Learned Societies, The Institute for Citizens and Scholars (formerly The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation), The Teagle Foundation, Templeton Religion Trust, the Louisville Institute for the Study of American Religion, and the Forum for Theological Exploration.

Most recently, Martin became Co-Director of $1 million grant from the Henry Luce Foundation to fund “The Crossroads Project,” a four-year, multi-institution project to advance public understanding of the history, politics, and cultures of African American religions.

He has also been recognized for his teaching, receiving institutional teaching awards as well as fellowships from the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion.

His commentary and writing have been featured on The NBC Today Show, The History Channel, PBS, CSPAN, CNN, and NPR, as well as in Time Magazine, The New York Times, The Boston Globe, and the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. He also served as an advisor on the critically acclaimed PBS documentary series The History of Gospel Music & Preaching.

Lerone is currently working on a graphic novel version of "Young King," also to be published by HarperCollins.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Professor, Religious Studies
- Professor, African and African American Studies

ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

- Director, Martin Luther King Jr. Research and Education Institute, (2022- present)
- Senior Editor, The Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project, Martin Luther King Jr. Research and Education Institute, (2022- present)

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Co-Principal Investigator, “The Crossroads Project on Black Religion, Henry Luce Foundation (2021-2025)
- Principal Investigator, Citizenship and Freedom, The Teagle Foundation (2020)
- Co-Principal Investigator, “Harnessing Religious Values to Increase Public Virtue.", Templeton Religion Trust (2019-2021)
- Faculty Fellowship, National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) (2018-2019)
- Faculty Fellowship, The American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) (2016-2017)
- Mellon Emerging Faculty Leaders Award, The Institute for Citizens and Scholars, formerly The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation (2016-2017)
- Frank S. and Elizabeth D. Brewer Prize for outstanding scholarship by a first-time author, The American Society of Church History, affiliate of the American Historical Association (AHA). (2015)

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM AFFILIATIONS

- American Studies

Teaching

COURSES

2026-27

- Culture Wars: US Religion and Politics Since 1920: AMSTUD 130, POLISCI 130T, RELIGST 130 (Aut)
- Life Worth Living: RELIGST 142 (Win)
- Print on Purpose: AFRICAAM 235, DESIGN 236P (Aut)
- Religion and the Civil Rights Movement: Race, Faith, and Kinship: AFRICAAM 266C (Spr)
- Women of the Movement: AFRICAAM 208, HISTORY 268 (Win)

2025-26

- Between Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, JR.: Race, Religion, and the Politics of Freedom: AFRICAAM 221, AMSTUD 141X, CSRE 141R, HISTORY 151M, POLISCI 126, RELIGST 141 (Aut)
- Foundations of African American Studies I: From Reconstruction to the Present: AFRICAAM 104, AMSTUD 104A (Win)

- Religion and the Civil Rights Movement: Race, Faith, and Kinship: AFRICAAM 266C, RELIGST 266A (Spr)
- Women of the Movement: AFRICAAM 208, HISTORY 268, RELIGST 208, RELIGST 308 (Win)

2024-25

- Between Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, JR.: Race, Religion, and the Politics of Freedom: RELIGST 141 (Spr)
- Introduction to African-American Studies II: New Approaches to the Field: AFRICAAM 228, AMSTUD 228 (Spr)

2023-24

- Between Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, JR.: Race, Religion, and the Politics of Freedom: RELIGST 141 (Spr)
- Why College? Your Education and the Good Life: COLLEGE 101 (Aut)
- Women of the Movement: AFRICAAM 208, AMSTUD 208, FEMGEN 208, FEMGEN 308, HISTORY 268, HISTORY 368, RELIGST 208, RELIGST 308 (Spr)

STANFORD ADVISEES

Doctoral Dissertation Reader (AC)

Nicole Carroll, Johanna Mueller

Postdoctoral Faculty Sponsor

Jorden Sharick

Doctoral Dissertation Advisor (AC)

Christopher Gurley, Samantha McLoughlin, Abbas Muntaqim, RJ Vasquez

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

- **Congregation Over Denomination: Analyzing Psychological Reactions to a Church Ruling on Same Sex Marriage** *JOURNAL FOR THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF RELIGION*
  Wilkins, C. L., Lisnek, J. A., Saadatian, K., Martin, L. A.
  2024
- **Harnessing religious teachings to reduce sexual prejudice** *JOURNAL OF MORAL EDUCATION*
  Wilkins, C. L., Martin, L. A.
  2022
- **Is LGBT Progress Seen as an Attack on Christians?: Examining Christian/Sexual Orientation Zero-Sum Beliefs** *JOURNAL OF PERSONALITY AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY*
  Wilkins, C. L., Wellman, J. D., Toosi, N. R., Miller, C. A., Lisnek, J. A., Martin, L. A.
  2022; 122 (1): 73-101
- **Bureau Clergyman: How the FBI Colluded with an African American Televangelist to Destroy Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** *RELIGION AND AMERICAN CULTURE-A JOURNAL OF INTERPRETATION*
  Martin, L.
  2018; 28 (1): 1-51
- **American Religion and the Rise of Internal Security A Prologue** *FBI AND RELIGION: FAITH AND NATIONAL SECURITY BEFORE AND AFTER 9/11*
  Lum, K., Martin, L. A.
  edited by Johnson, S. A., Weitzman, S.
  2017: 17–31