The Liberal Arts Program presents

Liberal Arts Guest Speaker Series
“African Americans in the American West”

Professor Albert Broussard

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2-4 pm
LH 144

ABSTRACT INFO: World War II transformed the United States in a more profound way than perhaps any event in its history. The war and its professed aims also emboldened African Americans to fight more zealously for full equality at home and to challenge long-standing racial practices that had keep them separate and unequal. Yet black westerners are often forgotten in the long struggle for freedom that accelerated with World War II and concluded in the 1970s. I argue that the western states, particularly California, Oregon, and Washington, were the focal point of a mass migration of both blacks and whites during the war, and that black westerners waged a struggle for civil rights and racial equality as vigorously as their counterparts in the South. Working through national organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), black women’s clubs, the Black Panther Party, and a multitude of progressive interracial organizations, black westerners ultimately achieved a larger measure of progress than their southern counterparts. Finally, the civil rights movement in the west was largely an interracial movement, involving blacks, whites, Asians, and, occasionally Hispanics.

BIO: Albert S. Broussard is professor of History at Texas A&M University, where he has taught since 1985. Professor Broussard has published six books, *Expectations of Equality: A History of Black Westerners* (2012), *Black San Francisco: The Struggle for Racial Equality in the West, 1900-1954* (1993), *African American Odyssey: The Stewarts, 1853-1963* (1998), *American History: The Early Years to 1877, and The American Republic Since 1877*, and *The American Vision* (co-authored with James McPherson, Alan Brinkley, Joyce Appleby, and Donald Ritchie). He is past president of the Oral History Association and a former chair of the Nominating Committee of the Organization of American Historians. He has also served on the nominating committees of the Southern Historical Association, the Oral History Association and the Western History Association. Additionally, Professor Broussard served on the council of the American History Association, Pacific Coast Branch, and chair of the W. Turrentine Jackson Book Prize Committee for the Western History Association. He was the recipient of a distinguished teaching award from Texas A&M University in 1997 and presented the University Distinguished Faculty lecture in 2000. In the spring of 2005, Broussard was the Langston Hughes Professor of American Studies at the University of Kansas. Professor Broussard also serves two terms on the board of directors of Humanities Texas and as a consultant to the Texas Education Agency. He participates regularly in teacher training workshops sponsored by Humanities Texas and is a recognized expert on recent American and African American History. Broussard is currently writing a history of racial activism and civil rights in the American West from 1945 to the present.