

ASWAD Board of Directors

Lynda R. Day

Statement of Interest

I have found my academic home. That's what I kept telling myself those four days in Seville.

2017 in Seville was my first ASWAD conference and as I marveled in the re-telling to colleagues and friends, at the ASWAD conference I found the academic space I have been seeking since I left Howard University many years ago. At Howard I was in the Honors program, majored in Comparative History, minored in French and took black literature in Spanish just for fun. And yes I went on to UW-Madison and got a Ph.D. in African History with a minor in African American Studies. But I took African literature classes and performed with a Ghanaian African Dance company just for fun. I am conversant with three European languages other than English, and four African languages. I have travelled to ten African countries, five Caribbean countries, four European countries, and more than fifteen American states. As an African American with a Ph.D. in African History, who has been immersed in a rich variety of Afrocentric cultural experiences, I am conversant with border crossings, and the world wide African diaspora is where I locate myself and my culture.

For thirty-five years I have been a member of the African Studies Association and for many years, a member of the Caribbean Studies Association. Since the 90's, I have been a part of the leadership of the Women's Caucus of the African Studies Association and feel very connected to my sisters there. But it was not until I attended the ASWAD conference in 2017 that I felt it all coming together. In various spaces where the focus has been Sierra Leone, or the Caribbean, or women, or Africans in America, I could fit in and enjoy the work, but it was not until I went to ASWAD that I found an entire association of like-minded scholars that shared all of my interdisciplinary, cultural, and international interests. I was never more comfortable than when I was part of the Black History tour of Seville, with professors and graduate students from all over the world, all conversing in English and Spanish, all ready to absorb the knowledge being presented to us. After all these years in academia, it was the first time I was surrounded by people of African descent, or those interested in black studies, who were all comfortably global in their outlook. Not just Africa, not just the Caribbean, not just America, not just women, but all of that and more.

Thus, I am thrilled to state my interest in the ASWAD Board of Directors and very much looking forward to contributing to the annual Board meetings, and excited to be able to play a part in the organization's growth and success. I will certainly be willing to serve on an organizational committee, and interested in chairing a committee once I have gained more knowledge and experience regarding the needs of the organization. Whether I am invited to join the Board or not, I will certainly be attending the bi-annual conferences going forward.

Thank you.