

Latrica E. Best, Ph.D.

Department of Pan-African Studies
University of Louisville
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CURRENT POSITION:

- 2016-present **Associate Professor**, Department of Pan-African Studies, Department of Sociology, University of Louisville
- 2016-present **Director of Graduate Studies**, Department of Pan-African Studies
- 2014-2016 **Vice Chair**, Department of Pan-African Studies, University of Louisville
- 2010-2016 **Assistant Professor**, Joint Appointment, Department of Pan-African Studies, Department of Sociology, University of Louisville

EDUCATION:

- 2008-2010 **National Institute on Aging Postdoctoral Fellow**, Andrus Gerontology Center, University of Southern California
- 2008 **Ph.D. in Sociology & Demography, minor in Gerontology**, The Pennsylvania State University
- 2004 **M.A. in Sociology and Demography**, The Pennsylvania State University
- 2001 **B.A. in Biology and Sociology**, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

RESEARCH & TEACHING INTERESTS

- Aging and the Life Course
- Medical Sociology
- Biodemography
- Global & Population Health
- Race/Ethnic & Gender Inequality
- Research & Quantitative Methods

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Best, Latrica E. (*in press*). The impact of personality change on health among older Americans: Findings from the Health and Retirement study. In Mary McGehee & Benjamin Bradshaw (Ed.), *Applied Demography and Public Health in the 21st Century*, pp. 51-68. Springer International.

- Byrd, W. Carson and **Latrica E. Best**. (2016). Between (racial) groups and a hard place: An exploration of social science approaches to race and genetics, 2000-2014. *Biodemography and Social Biology* 62, 281-299.
- Della, Lindsay, Margaret D'Silva, **Latrica E. Best**, Siobhan Smith, Quaniqua Carthan, and Theresa Rajack-Talley. (2016). Modeling message preferences: An adaptive conjoint analysis of persuasive messaging to increase fruit and vegetable consumption. *Journal of Communication in Healthcare*, 9, 164-177.
- D'Silva, Margaret, Siobhan Smith, Lindsay Della, Deborah Potter, Theresa Rajack-Talley, and **Latrica E. Best**. (2016). Reflexivity and positionality in researching African-American communities: Lessons from the field. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 1, 94-109.
- Rajack-Talley, Theresa, Siobhan Smith, **Latrica E. Best**, Lindsay Della, and Deborah Potter. (2016). Epistemological inclusiveness in researching the African-American community. *International Journal of Social Science Methodology*. Initial print online
- Potter, Deborah, Lisa Markowitz, Theresa Rajack-Talley, Siobhan Smith, Margaret D'Silva, Lindsay Della, **Latrica E. Best**, and Quaniqua Carthan. (2015). Lay knowledge about eating practices in two African-American communities. *Qualitative Health Research*, 1-14.
- Best, Latrica E.** and W. Carson Byrd. (2015). All marked-up in the genetic era: Genetic and biomarkers as 'floating signifiers' in race-related health research. In Brea L. Perry (Ed.), *Advances in medical sociology: Genetics and society* (pp. 45-69). Emerald Group Publishers.
- Rajack-Talley, Theresa and **Latrica E. Best**. (2015). The feminization of poverty and the Black family: Ideological and methodological contestations. In James Conyers, Jr. (Ed.) *Africana studies: A review of social science research*, 6th Edition, (pp. 87-102). Transaction Publishers.
- Vasunilashorn, Sarinnapha, **Latrica E. Best**, Jung Ki Kim, and Eileen M. Crimmins. (2014). "Predicting mortality from profiles of biological risk and performance measures of functioning." In J. Anson & M. Luy (Eds.), *Mortality in an International Perspective (European Studies of Population)*, pp. 119-135. Springer.
- Best, Latrica E.** and W. Carson Byrd. (2014). Methods beyond methods: A model for Africana graduate methods training. *Journal of Pan-African Studies*, 7, 61-73.
- Best, Latrica E.** and John Chenault* (2014). Rethinking bioethics: The implication of biological markers in health research in the African diaspora. *Journal of Pan-African Studies*, 7, 74-98.

* Denotes a graduate student

- Della, Lindsay, Siobhan Smith, **Latrica E. Best**, and Margaret D'Silva. (2014). What's hoppin' in hoptown? Examining fruit and vegetable consumption among Hopkinsville's African-American community. *Kentucky Journal of Communication*, 33, 5-24.
- Wray, Linda, Duane Alwin, Ryan McCammon, Tim Manning, and **Latrica E. Best**. (2006). Social status, risky health behaviors, and diabetes in middle-aged and older adults. *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences*, 61B, S290-S298.
- Best, Latrica E.**, Mark D. Hayward, and Mira M. Hidajat. (2005). Life course pathways to adult-onset diabetes. *Biodemography and Social Biology*, 52, 94-111.

MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION

- Best, Latrica E.** Race/ethnic differences in personality: Findings from the Health and Retirement Study.
- Best, Latrica E.** Aging in Ghana: The cultural and societal implications awaiting a country's newest demographic.
- Pugh, James Kent*, **Latrica E. Best**, and Allison S. Smith. Up in smoke: Assessing the impacts of coal-fired power plants on respiratory, cardiovascular, and lung cancer mortality using a power plant population risk measure.
- Best, Latrica E.** Gender differences in the growing burden of chronic disease among older Ghanaians.
- Best, Latrica E.** Fruit and vegetable consumption, social support and the health of black Kentuckians.
- Best, Latrica E.** and Margath Walker. New frontiers or old stories: The deployment of social darwinism in health disparities studies.

GRANTS UNDER REVIEW

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| 2016 | Co-Principal Investigator, "Genetic racial conceptualizations across the biomedical and social sciences, 1950-2015." National Science Foundation. Principal Investigator: W. Carson Byrd. \$944,031. |
| 2016 | Co-Principal Investigator, Research Project Initiation Grant, Office of Community Engagement, University of Louisville, "Age appropriate curriculum development in African American Studies for the Street Academy Project: Roosevelt Perry Elementary School." Co-Investigators: Theresa Rajack-Talley and Charles C. Davis, Jr. \$10,000. |

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

- 2016 Co-Principal Investigator, National Science Foundation, “Floating signifiers in academic innovation and publication: The use of race and ethnicity across multiple disciplines in the genomic era: 1900-2014.” Principal Investigator: W. Carson Byrd. \$403,240. (*submitted, not funded*)
- 2015-2016 Principal Investigator, Intramural Research and Creative Activities, University of Louisville, “Floating signifiers in academic innovation and publication: The use of race and ethnicity across multiple disciplines in the genomic era.” \$2,039. (*funded*)
- 2013-2014 Consultant, National Institute of Health (NIH), “ Exploring culture, community, communication, and fruit and vegetable intake in black Kentuckians.” Principal Investigator: Lindsay Della. \$397,939. (*funded*)
- 2013-2014 Investigator, Office of Community Engagement, Research/Project Initiation Grant, University of Louisville, “The multiracial family wellness project.” Principal Investigator: Kevin Chapman. \$4,050. (*funded*)
- 2014 Principal Investigator, Michigan Center for Urban African American Aging Research Center, “Personality & health over time among older African Americans.” \$40,000 (*submitted, not funded*)
- 2013-2014 Principal Investigator, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s New Connections Program, “Psychosocial factors, health, and older African Americans.” \$100,000 (*submitted, not funded*)
- 2008-2010 National Institute on Aging (NIA) Postdoctoral Fellow in Gerontology, Andrus Gerontology Center, The University of Southern California, (Eileen Crimmins, preceptor).
- 2007 National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Pre-Doctoral Interdisciplinary Training in Demography, The Pennsylvania State University, (Melissa Hardy, preceptor).
- 2003-2006 National Institute on Aging (NIA) Pre-Doctoral Fellow in Gerontology, The Pennsylvania State University (Mark Hayward, preceptor).

AWARDS

- 2014 “Faculty Favorite” nominee, College of Arts & Sciences, University of Louisville.

- 2009 Poster Session Winner, Vasunilashorn, Sarinnapha, **Latrica Best**, Jung Ki Kim, and Eileen M. Crimmins. “Predicting Mortality Using Latent Class Risk of Biological and Functioning Indicators.” Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of Population Association of America, Detroit, MI.
- 2006-2007 Finalist, Robert Wood Johnson Health and Society Scholar, University of Michigan
- 2004 1st Place Winner, Social and Behavioral Sciences Division, Graduate School Exhibition, The Pennsylvania State University.
- 2003-2004 Joan Huber and William Form Graduate Scholarship in Sociology, The Pennsylvania State University.

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

- 2013 University of Michigan’s Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) Summer Program in Quantitative Methods of Social Research short course, “Analyzing Developmental Trajectories”, at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.
- 2013 Participant, University of Michigan’s Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) Summer Program in Quantitative Methods of Social Research short course, “Applied Multilevel Models for Longitudinal Data”, at the University of Colorado-Boulder.
- 2013 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Coaching Clinic, Boston, MA.
- 2012 Participant, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation New Connections Symposium, Princeton, NJ.
- 2010 Summer Institute on Research Methodology, College of Health & Human Sciences, Oregon State University.
- 2009 Cells to Society (C2S) Summer Biomarker Institute, Northwestern University.
- 2009 Travel Award, The Michigan Center for Urban African American Aging Research (MCUAAAR) Summer Training Workshop on African-American Aging Research, Institute of Gerontology, Wayne State University.
- 2009 Mini-Medical School for Social Scientists and Demography, Economics, and Epidemiology of Aging, RAND Summer Institute, Santa Monica, CA.
- 2006 Workshop in Biodemography, Stanford University.

- 2005 Frontiers of Demographic Research on Mortality and Longevity, Joint Summer School of the IUSSP and Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, Rostock, Germany.
- 2004 Event History Analysis, The Summer Institute in Survey Research Techniques, Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS/TALKS

- 2016 Keynote Address, Spring Visitation Day for Prospective Students, School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies, University of Louisville.
- 2015 **Best, Latrica E.** “The impact of personality on African-American health and well being.” Paper presented in the special symposium, *Social and Psychological Factors that Promote Health and Wellbeing in Aging African Americans*, Gerontological Society of America, Orlando, FL.
- 2015 **Best, Latrica E.** “The growing burden of chronic disease among older Ghanaians.” Talk presented at the Department of Sociology Spring Colloquium, University of Louisville.
- 2013 Della, Lindsay, Siobhan Smith, Theresa Rajack-Talley, Margaret D’Silva, Deborah Potter, **Latrica E. Best**, Quaniqua Carthan, Keneka Cheatham, Lisa Markowitz, Latonia Craig. “Engaging the community while exploring the food culture of African Americans in West Louisville and Hopkinsville.” Presented at the 2nd Annual Celebration of Faculty Excellence, University of Louisville.
- 2012 **Best, Latrica E.** “Black Love: A conversation about relationships and sexuality in the African-American community.” Panel discussion, Pan-African Graduate Student Association & Center for Race and Inequality in the African American Community, University of Louisville.
- 2012 **Best, Latrica E.** “Health disparities in the African Diaspora.” Talk presented at African-American Network Resource Group Speaker Series, Humana Corporation, Louisville, KY.
- 2011 **Best, Latrica E.** “Connecting with our sisters: Ghana, West Africa” Talk presented to Olmstead South Academy For Girls, sponsored by The Links, Louisville, KY.
- 2011 Vasunilashorn, Sarinnapha, **Latrica E. Best**, Jung Ki Kim, and Eileen M. Crimmins. “Predicting mortality using latent class risk of biological and functioning indicators.” Paper presented at The European Workshop on Health, Mortality and Morbidity: The State of the Art, Vienna, Austria.

- 2011 **Best, Latrica E.** “Women and aging.” Talk presented at The Saturday Academy, College of Arts & Sciences, University of Louisville.
- 2010 **Best, Latrica E.** “Securing postdoctoral fellowships” Talk presented to The Gerontology Graduate Student Association, University of Southern California.
- 2009 Weir, David, **Laticra E. Best**, Eileen M. Crimmins. “Racial and ethnic differences in undiagnosed and poorly managed diabetes and hypertension: Combining population surveys with biomarker data (HRS 2006).” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America. National Harbor, MD.
- 2006 **Best, Latrica E.** “Research findings on obesity and overweight.” Presented at Gerontology Center Fall Series Colloquium Panel Discussion, The Pennsylvania State University.
- 2006 **Best, Latrica E.**, Mark D. Hayward, and Mira M. Hidajat. “Life course pathways to adult-onset diabetes.” Paper presented at the Gerontology Center Fall Series Colloquium, The Pennsylvania State University.

SELECT PRESENTATIONS

- 2016 Pugh, James Kent*, **Laticra E. Best**, and Allison S. Smith. “Up in smoke: Assessing the impacts of coal-fired power plants on respiratory, cardiovascular, and lung cancer mortality using a power plant risk population risk measure.” Poster presented at the Population Association of America meeting, Washington, D.C. (April 2016)
- 2015 Della, Lindsay J, **Laticra E. Best**, Siobhan Smith, Quanyia Carthan, Margaret D’Silva, Theresa Rajack-Talley, Deborah Potter, and Lisa Markowitz. “Tailoring interventions for increasing fruit and vegetable consumption among urban and rural African American audiences: Applying market decision-analysis to the intervention design processes.” Paper presented at the American Public Health Association meetings, Chicago, IL. (November 2015)
- 2015 **Best, Latrica E.** “Assessing the prevalence and impact of multiple chronic illnesses by gender among Older Ghanaians”. Paper presented at the Gerontological Society of America annual meeting, Orlando, FL. (November 2015)
- 2015 Byrd, W. Carson and **Laticra E. Best**. “Between (racial) groups and a hard place: An exploration of social science approaches to race and genetics, 2000 2014”. Paper to be presented at the 6th Annual Integrating Genetics and the Social Sciences conference, Institute of Behavioral science, University of Colorado,

Boulder, CO (October 2015).

- 2015 **Best, Latrica E.** “The impact of personality change on health among older Americans: Findings from the Health and Retirement Study.” Paper presented at the Population Association of America, San Diego, CA.
- 2014 **Best, Latrica E.** “The growing burden of chronic disease among older Ghanaians.” Paper to be presented at the Gerontological Society of America, Washington, D.C.
- 2014 **Best, Latrica E.** “The Health of parental caregivers in Ghana.” Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America. Boston, MA.
- 2014 Della, Lindsay J., Siobhan E. Smith, Margaret U. D’Silva, **Latrica E. Best**, Quaniqua N. Carthan, Theresa Rajack-Talley, Deborah Potter, Lisa B. Markowitz. “A cross-disciplinary approach to message design for public health campaigns encouraging increased fruit and vegetable consumption.” Paper presented at the Hawaii International Conference on Social Sciences.
- 2012 **Best, Latrica E.** “Aging in Ghana: The cultural and societal implications awaiting a country’s newest demographic.” 1st Africa Region Conference on Gerontology and Geriatrics. (“Ageing Africa: Beyond Madrid +10”). International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics. Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2012 **Best, Latrica E.** and Margath Walker. “New frontiers or old stories: The deployment of social darwinism in health disparities studies.” Biennial Meeting of Race, Ethnicity, & Place Conference. San Juan, Puerto Rico. (*accepted, but declined participation*)
- 2012 **Best, Latrica E.** “Personality and other psychosocial indicators in population based studies: The example of race differences in personality.” Informal Roundtable. Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association. Denver, CO.
- 2010 **Best, Latrica E.** and Lindsey Baker. “Undiagnosed and poorly treated diabetes and hypertension among older caregivers.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America. New Orleans, LA.
- 2009 **Best, Latrica E.** “The impact of personality on depressive symptoms profiles in middle-aged and older adults.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America. Atlanta, GA.
- 2009 Vasunilashorn, Sarinnapha, **Latrica E. Best**, Yasuhiko Saito, and Eileen M. Crimmins. “Gender differences in biological markers in the U.S., Taiwan, and Japan.” Paper presented at the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population Meeting, Marrakech, Morocco.

- 2009 **Best, Latrica E.** “The impact of psychosocial factors in explaining race disparities in health outcomes among older Americans.” Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America. Detroit, MI.
- 2009 Vasunilashorn, Sarinnapha, **Latrica Best**, Jung Ki Kim, and Eileen M. Crimmins. “Predicting mortality using latent class risk of biological and functioning indicators.” Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America. Detroit, MI.
- 2008 **Best, Latrica** and Melissa A. Hardy. “Establishing patterns of depressive symptoms among women in midlife.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America. National Harbor, MD.
- 2007 Menon, Niveditha and **Latrica E. Best**. "Politics of the aging body: Sexuality and health in aging populations." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America. New York, NY.
- 2005 **Best, Latrica E.**, Mark D. Hayward, and Mira M. Hidajat. “Childhood influences on diabetes among older Americans.” Paper presented at the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population Meeting. Tours, France.
- 2004 Hidajat, Mira M., **Latrica E. Best**, and Mark D. Hayward. “The effects of residence on health transitions for the oldest-old in China.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America. Washington, DC.
- 2004 **Best, Latrica E.** “Racial differences in the prevalence of diabetes.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association. San Francisco, CA.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

(all courses taught at University of Louisville unless otherwise noted)

Undergraduate Courses

- Health in the African-American Community
- Social Context of Aging
- Race & Ethnicity
- Research Methods
- Women and Global Health
- The Black Family
- Health and Inequality

Graduate Courses

- Quantitative Research Strategies/Statistics
- Life Span Developmental Sociology (*University of Southern California*)
- Women and Global Health
- The Black Family
- Health and Human Rights

INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSES

(all taught at the graduate level)

- Demography of Aging
- Demography of Health
- Race and Reproductive Justice
- Women and Maternal Health
- Global Health

- 2011 Participant, Delphi U, (seminar on teaching online courses), Delphi Center for Teaching & Learning, University of Louisville.
- 2012 Funded Participant, American Educational Research Association Grants Program's Faculty Institute for the Teaching of Statistics with Large-Scale Datasets, Stanford University.
- 2015 Participant, Month-long Faculty Reading Circle on Creating Self-Regulated Learners, Delphi Center for Teaching & Learning, University of Louisville.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE/COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

- 2015-2016 Review Panel, Ford Foundation Fellowship Program (Sociology), National Academies
- 2013-present Curriculum Committee, Department of Pan-African Studies, University of Louisville. (Chair, 2013-2014)
- 2013 Appointed team member for health issues, Vision Louisville. Mayor's Office, City of Louisville.
- 2012-present Graduate Studies Committee, Department of Pan-African Studies, University of Louisville, KY.
- 2011 Delegation Member, Partnership between University of Louisville's Pan-African Studies Department and the University for Development Studies, Tamale, Ghana.
- 2011-2012 Internal Review Committee, Center for Reducing Mental Health Disparities, University of Louisville, KY.
- 2011-2012 Chair, Distance Education Committee, Department of Pan-African Studies, University of Louisville, KY.

- 2011-2012 Committee Member, Curriculum Committee, Department of Pan-African Studies, University of Louisville, KY.
- 2011-2012 Committee Member (non-voting), Personnel Committee, Department of Sociology, University of Louisville, KY.
- 2009 Chair, Session on “Analyze This: Personality and Aging.” Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America. Atlanta, GA
- 2002-2006 Co-organizer, Graduate Student Methodology Workshop
Population Research Institute, The Pennsylvania State University.
University Park, PA.
- 2002-2003 Student Member, Undergraduate Teaching Committee
Department of Sociology
The Pennsylvania State University. University Park, PA.
- 2001-2003 Student Member, MOST Committee, Department of Sociology
The Pennsylvania State University. University Park, PA.
Subcommittees: Undergraduate Recruitment (2001-2003), Graduate
Mentoring (2001-2002), Graduate Student Recruitment (2002-2003)
- 2000-2001 Student Advisor Board Member, University of North Carolina Office for
Undergraduate Research, The University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.
- 1998-2000 Minority Student Advisor, The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC.

Ad Hoc Reviewer: Sage Publications

Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,
Sociological Spectrum
Applied Demography and Public Health book series

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

- General Linear Models
- Growth Modeling
- Latent Class Analysis
- Event History Analysis
- Demographic Techniques

Programming Experiences in SAS, STATA, and SPSS

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Sociological Association

(Sections: Population, Aging and the Life Course; Medical Sociology)

Association of Black Sociologists

Gerontological Society of America

(Abstract Reviewer, Annual Conference)
National Council for Black Studies
Population Association of America

GRADUATE STUDENT ADVISING

(* Denotes chair or co-chair of committee)

*James Kent Pugh, Sociology, PhD, (expected 2017)
*Warren King, Pan-African Studies, PhD, (expected 2018)
*Alexis Keen, Pan-African Studies, MA, 2016, PhD (expected 2020)
Josh Schuschke, Pan-African Studies, MA, 2015
* Shannon Spears, Pan-African Studies, MA, 2014
Shelby Pumphrey, Pan-African Studies, MA, 2014
* Casey Griffith, Sociology, MA, 2012
Sula Hood, Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences (School of Public Health), PhD, 2012
Tytianna Smith, Pan-African Studies, MA, 2012
* Tamara Spiller, Pan-African Studies, MA, 2011
Courtney Wheeler, Sociology, MA, 2011

Additional Mentoring: Aeisha Skinner, PhD Candidate, Gerontology, University of Kentucky