



MACK JONES TRIBUTE 2021

It was somewhat by accident that I found myself entering the doctoral program at Atlanta University. I had departed the University of Wisconsin with my master's degree seeking an academic environment that was more sympathetic to my interest in the decolonization of Africa. It wasn't until I arrived on campus that I realized I was attending an HBCU. Professor Mack Jones was the first person I met on campus, who sat me down and reviewed my class schedule. He told me that my African politics courses from UW would be transferred into my doctoral program, but that I would need to take the American Government class. I found this incredulous! I told him that I had taken any number of American Government classes during my time as a college student, so why weren't they going to be transferred? He calmly looked me in the eye and explained that I have never taken an American Government class like the one I would have at AU. Damn, was he right! That class altered everything I knew about my own government, my own culture, from the days that I first became interested in politics in my segregated white suburb of Oklahoma City. Forty years later, I am still working (at NCCU) to earn the respect of Mack Jones and the rest of my professors at AU whose commitment to training agents of change remains academically exhilarating. Mack Jones et al opened my eyes to a vision of another, more humane, world. And I have enjoyed sharing this vision with the thousands of students that have traveled through my classrooms over the past four decades.

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