

ferent perspective. The question is: Do we have to spend so much time focusing on the presidents? No. We could examine presidential administrations as part of a larger history that includes a variety of aspects of American history and life. That's how we can do it.

We can also use technology. We need to move beyond the textbook as the main source of information for discussing history with our students. With technology we can access primary source documents from websites. Primary source documents allow students to see history in motion, instead of passively accepting textbook authors' and teachers' interpretations of history. Today, you can go to the FBI Reading Room of the FBI website and access FBI documents from many periods of American history in the 20th century. Given today's technology, students can access primary sources from their school library or from the comfort of their home.

Q: Did this limited narrative on King bother you when you taught high school history in South Carolina in the late 1980s?

DA: It did. But at that time, I did not have the theoretical framework or language to understand the problem the way I understand it today. So, it wasn't until I actually became immersed in courses in the history of education, historiography and historical methods, and critical pedagogy that I began to find a way to critique the problem of master narratives in history.

I'll give you an example. When the LA riots broke out in south central LA in 1992, there was a big commotion at the working-class high school in which I taught in South Carolina. Students in my history class wanted to talk about the issue, and administrators said we could. However, they also told us not to bring televisions into the classroom to watch the history unfold on CNN. They feared that a riot might start from students viewing the images of racial chaos on television. My students and I talked about the riots, but I remember not having the language or framework to describe the race and class issues that the riots evoked among my students and among people around the country.

A year later, I would study Du Bois in a course I took in the department of African-American Studies at Penn State. In Du Bois' writings, I found the framework and language I was looking for to help me better understand racial and class dynamics and that would have helped me better discuss the riots with my high school students. One of the most influential of Du Bois' works on my thinking was *The Souls of Black Folk*. Souls introduced me to the notion that the problem of the 20th century was the problem of the color line. Of course, the color line was still a problem as a result of the riots in 1992 and continues to be a problem today. Had I read *The Souls of Black Folk* in 1992, I would have been better able to help my students understand the dilemma of race and racism in the 20th century.

Q: In the past decade, you have worked on several historic multimedia projects, such as the documentary film about the first two African-Americans to attend UGA, Horace Ward and Hamilton Earl Holmes, that aired on Georgia PBS in 2004, and The Foot Soldier Project for Civil Rights Studies. Tell me how these projects began, what your role was in them and what they meant to you.

DA: The documentaries that we produced on Horace Ward and Hamilton Holmes originally emerged out of research done by professor Maurice Daniels, who is the dean of the School of Social Work. He

wrote a book, called *Horace T. Ward: Desegregation of the University of Georgia, Civil Rights Advocacy and Jurisprudence*. That book was the launching pad for The Foot Soldier Project for Civil Rights Studies (FSP). The purpose of the FSP is to uncover, collect and disseminate the stories of unsung, unknown and unrecognized participants in the American Civil Rights Movement.

Our research team has tried not to focus on the figures that we often hear about in history. We try to focus on individuals who were, as Dr. King called them, "foot soldiers" of the movement. The FSP tells the stories of individuals like Donald L. Hollowell, who was a lawyer not only for King but also for Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter, who were the first people to gain admittance into the University of Georgia. Hollowell and his wife rode the backroads of Georgia defending African-American people's legal rights against unjust laws of segregation. The work of the FSP played a pivotal role in putting Hollowell on UGA's radar. The university later honored Hollowell with an honorary doctorate. Currently, the FSP is completing a documentary on Hollowell, which we hope will be aired by the end of the year.

Q: How long have you and Dr. Daniels worked on The Foot Soldier Project?

DA: We've been working on this project since 2001. The idea came from Maurice's book about Horace Ward but also from my work as a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow studying the Civil Rights Movement at Harvard University in the summer of 2000. As a fellow, I had the opportunity to study with scholars of civil rights and democracy, such as Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, Cornel West, Leon Litwack, and Julian Bond, to name a few. This experience also provided an impetus for Professor Daniels and me to move forward with the FSP.

Q: What did this project mean to you?

DA: My three main areas of research are the history of African-American education, African-American intellectual history and civil rights studies. What I try to do in my work is to create a synergy between those three areas of research. One of my favorite sayings comes from a scholar named Robert Weaver. He said that "ideas have consequences." That has been a guiding theme in most of my work – to show the influence ideas have on people and how ideas can propel history. That was the impetus for me to study King. I wanted to know what ideas propelled King. I also wanted to know how we, as historians and people in the present, interpret and misinterpret King's ideas. I look at the ideas of people who were involved in the Civil Rights Movement. What they thought and felt about the movement? What larger ideas in society influenced their participation.

Q: Tell me about your research on hip hop.

DA: This is research that evolved out of my civil rights studies. I found a disconnect between members of the civil rights generation and those of the hip hop generation, and it pertains to our understanding of issues of democracy, equality and civil rights.

Instead of just engaging in debate and rhetoric about the tension between these two generations, I decided, as a historian of ideas, to study both of these movements and both of these generations to see