Glenda Lewis, PhD

April 1, 1967 – March 29, 2021

Obituary

But Jesus called them unto him, and said, suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. (Luke 18:16)

On April 1, 1967, in Galveston, TX Glenda Lewis was born to Ida Mae Lewis and Bernie Earl Polk.

Glenda was raised in Clovis, New Mexico by Delma and Earnest Wiley. She attended La Casita Elementary in Clovis and she eventually graduated from Clovis High School. She moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico where she attended the University of New Mexico and received several degrees including a master’s and PhD degrees. Glenda studied Critical Race Theory, Education, and American Studies at the University of New Mexico.

To cherish her memory she leaves her mother, Ida Mae Lewis Martin, her father, Bennie Earl Polk, three sisters: Alma Jenkins, Rhonda Ball, Felicia Martin, one brother: Cornelius Martin, all of Houston, Texas. Four nieces, five nephews, and two great nieces, and one great nephew. Cousins Jimmie Milton and Sheri L. McCoy. She also leaves to mourn her a host of other relatives, her UNM family, friends, and colleagues, and many great friends that she cherished.

Preceding her in death are her mom and dad, Delma and Earnest Wiley, sister Tyechia Martin, brother Adam Martin, aunt Pearl Mae Lewis, Aunt Judy Ann Haynes, uncle Otha Roy Lewis, uncle JV Lewis and beloved friend Miranda Cully.
Abstract

**Title:** A Participatory Action Research Study on the Racialized Experiences and Perceptions on Race by Students of Color in Higher Education (*excerpt from Dr. Glenda Lewis’ dissertation*)

Race has played a major role in shaping current and past educational experiences offered students of color in the U.S. There has never been an equal playing field. This participatory action research study will investigate how race and racism impact students of color in higher education. The goal of this study is to provide an in-depth analysis of graduate and undergraduate students of color (Black, Native American, Chicana (o), and Asian) as academics from their own perspectives. This study aims to answer the following questions: What are the racialized experiences and perceptions on race students of color navigate in higher education? How do students of color racialized experiences and perceptions on race in higher education influence their identities? How do students of color cope with emotions that emerge from their racialized experiences and perceptions on race in higher education?

It is my intention with this research, to use the developed themes to construct a Racial Justice Awareness Resolution that can be ultimately presented to school administrators and later in a public forum. All stakeholders in higher education must center race and structural racism in the dialogue if past errors are to be corrected (Bonilla-Silva, 2010; Leonardo, 2009). As a participatory process this research aims to do this. We students of color must collectively and collaboratively break the silence. Social justice requires a re-envisioning and a re-investment in our educational outcomes. If higher education is that space where ideas can be questioned, challenged, and changed, then we must begin putting these needed changes into action.
Tributes

Glenda,

What can I say? You were an amazing, smart, humorous, and intelligent sister. I remember your last visit back in November 2009. It was great surprise for us all. Even though we didn't share a childhood together, fact is, you are my sister. The day you called me and the conversations we had I will keep and cherish. Everything happened so fast. Even in your sickness and pain you never lost that humor. You’ve accomplished many things Glenda and we are so very proud to have a sister like you. Even though we were many miles apart, we will keep your love in our hearts. Mom is taking it one day at a time. We as family will get through this storm. We love you and will miss you dearly. I can hear you now…. sounds suspicious to me. Love You Glenda.

Your sister Rhonda and family

G,

We are so thankful that we were able to be there for you through your journey to battle cancer. Although we’ve been friends for 30 years, I have more memories from the last several months than our entire friendship. I know you are resting in God’s arms and are definitely “LURKING” in heaven. We will make sure to bring your red chair inside. Rest easy, G.

Lori and Alea

My beloved cousin,

You were always fun, intelligent, mischievous, happy and stayed away from things that “sounds suspicious”. I hear your laugh, I miss you, I love you, God bless.

Sheila Smith

Dr. Glenda Lewis is lovingly remembered as a vibrant Black woman whose star shined bright at the intersections of life. Daughter, wife, cousin, friend, womanist, deejay, educator, and doctor. Glenda was a leader of the pack. G led everybody who had two cents and was willing to listen. Dr. Lewis, thank you for being a shining star who demonstrated to all how beautiful life can truly be. Love is revolutionary and you led by example. Yes, we had big fun! We love and miss you dear friend.

Peace and blessings to all,

Damond Berg BA UNM 1993
Sometimes in life, you never know how much a person was a part of a journey until they are gone. When the LGBTQ Resource Center heard the news of Glenda moving through to the other side, we were devastated alongside the rest of the UNM community. Glenda was always a source of light to be around. She could always be counted on for a big smile, a big hug, and a picture. Going through pictures to pay tribute to Glenda, it was apparent that she was always at our events. I loved seeing the joy on her face for our waffle breakfasts. It was a look that said, “I’m home, I’m with my family”. As GPSA President, she fiercely advocated for funding for the Center. She will remain a part of the Resource Center’s legacy and we will always hold a space for her on our alter. She has moved into being an ancestor, and that light she shown now illuminates us all. Rest in Power, Glenda

Your friends at the LGBTQ Resource Center

Tributes from the UNM Division for Equity and Inclusion and link to video:
http://diverse.unm.edu/news/tributes.html
The Dr. Glenda Lewis Critical Race Scholars Award

As an affirmation of its commitment to support racial equity and inclusion in graduate education at UNM, Graduate Studies has established the Dr. Glenda Lewis Critical Race Scholars Award. Named in member of Glenda Lewis, a recognized graduate student leader, critical race theorist, and doctoral candidate in Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies, the program provides five awards for eligible graduate students conducting research on topics related to critical race scholarship. Recipients are named Glenda Lewis Critical Race Scholars and receive an aware of $2000 to support and facilitate their research through cohort collaboration.