The Purdue African American Studies & Research Center’s
30th Symposium on
African American Culture & Philosophy

Exploring the “Humanity” in the Digital Humanities:
Africana/Black Studies’ Perspectives on the Digital Humanities

December 1-3, 2016
Purdue University
West Lafayette, Indiana 47907
Welcome Symposium Participants!

It is a pleasure to welcome you all to Purdue University and the African American Studies and Research Center’s 30th Symposium on African American Culture and Philosophy. I trust this time will be a great opportunity to share insights, opinions, and reflections. We will be exploring the “humanity” in the digital humanities, and looking at Africana/black studies’ perspectives on the digital humanities. Our focus on understanding the human experience is an important distinguishing feature for the College.

You will have the chance to participate in a number of panel discussions lead by friends and faculty from our own Purdue University and other esteemed institutions. We have hands-on workshops and exhibits to delve into these topics, as well as keynote presentations to round out our symposium.

Sincerely,

David A. Reingold
Justin S. Morrill Dean of College of Liberal Arts
Dear Symposium Participants,

I am pleased to welcome you to the 30th Symposium on African American Culture and Philosophy. This year’s theme, “Exploring the ‘Humanity’ in the Digital Humanities,” builds on the 2014 symposium’s exploration of Afro-futurity. Purdue’s African American Studies and Research Center recognizes the importance of looking forward to analyze the changing, but persistent impact of race. This year’s symposium grapples with Africana or Black Studies’ perspectives on the Digital Humanities.

With Purdue University’s strengths in the STEM disciplines, this is an ideal location to explore the intersection of the humanities and STEM fields found within the Digital Humanities. Over the next few days, we will explore such topics as digital inequality, black humanity and social media, Diaspora Techno-Culture, Decolonizing the Digital, Mapping black lives, and digital networks. Purdue University faculty and graduate students look forward to engaging scholars from across the country in conversations about the intersections of humanity, race, and the digital.

We hope that you find the symposium conversations generative and that academic collaborations are sparked. The symposium includes several full days of activities, but hopefully you will have an opportunity to stop by the Robert L. Ringel Gallery on the first floor of Stewart Center to see “Robert Pruitt: Escape Velocity.” Pruitt’s exhibit includes drawings and sculptures reflecting the complexity of black identity. His portraits are layered with science fiction, hip hop, comic books, and black political and social struggles.

Sincerely,

Venetria K. Patton
Head, School of Interdisciplinary Studies
Provost Fellow for Diversity and Inclusion
Professor of African American Studies and English
Affiliated faculty in American Studies and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
Symposium Locations

View a more detailed map on GoogleMaps at tinyurl.com/AASRCmap

The **Black Cultural Center (BCC)** is located at 1100 Third St. (West Lafayette, IN 47907). It’s a 15-minute walk from PMU.

The **Purdue Memorial Union (PMU)** is located in the same building as the Union Club Hotel. PMU houses several restaurants and a Starbucks on the basement level, as well as a basement level internal walkway to Stewart Center, if you’d like to avoid walking in the cold.

**Stewart Center (STEW)** is located to the immediate west of PMU. It’s a 20-foot walk between the outside of PMU and STEW, but you can also use the basement level internal walkway to move between the buildings without going outside. Stewart Center contains a convenience store on its first floor.
Schedule at a Glance

**Thursday, December 1, 2016**
9:30-11:30am Pre-symposium Workshops (concurrent, STEW 206 and STEW 278)

Lunch

2-4pm Pre-symposium Workshops (concurrent, STEW 206 and STEW 278)

5:00 pm Keynote Presentation
6:30 pm Refreshments

**Friday, December 2nd, 2016**
8:30 am Continental Breakfast (204 STEW)
9:30—10:15 am Morning Plenary (278 STEW)
10:30– 11:45am Panels #1 and #2 concurrent (STEW 206 and STEW 278)

12:00—2:00 pm Luncheon Plenary (West Faculty Lounge, PMU 2nd Floor)

2:15—3:45 pm Panels #3 and #4 concurrent (STEW 206 and STEW 278)
4:00—5:30 pm Panels #5 and #6 concurrent (STEW 206 and STEW 278)
5:45 - 7:15 pm Roundtable (West Faculty Lounge, PMU 2nd Floor)

Reception

**Saturday, December 3rd, 2016**
8:30 am Continental Breakfast (204 STEW)
9-12pm Workshop (STEW 204)
Thursday, December 1, 2016

9:30-11:30am, 2-4pm Concurrent Pre-symposium Workshops

These workshops are slated for a select group of Purdue graduate students and SSCR fellows. Both workshops are held at 9:30-11:30am and at 2-4pm, so you can attend both in any order.

Integrating the Digital Humanities with the Social Sciences (STEW 206)

Kim Gallon, Purdue University
Angel David Nieves, Hamilton College

This workshop will provide a general introduction to the digital humanities and its relationship to the social sciences in an effort to help participants learn about the possibilities embedded in its frameworks and technologies. Workshop participants will also learn to think and speak critically about select fields such as digital social studies, spatial humanities and studies, and digital pedagogy to develop an understanding of the theoretical and methodological approaches employed within these rapidly evolving fields and how they might apply to their own work. The workshop assumes no prior knowledge of the digital studies landscape or specific technical skills. Students are asked to bring a laptop.

Doing a Digital Humanities Dissertation (STEW 278)

Amanda Visconti, Purdue University

Respect for digital humanities dissertations is growing, with graduate scholarship now more than ever recognized as demonstrating a student’s readiness to receive a doctoral degree. Why might you want to pursue a wholly or partially digital dissertation? What’s involved, and how do you address hurdles like getting permission to do digital work, shaping the scope of your digital project, and designing for accurate evaluation of your efforts? Purdue Libraries professor Amanda Visconti will present on her successful 2015 wholly digital literature dissertation. This dissertation (Dr.AmandaVisconti.com) consisted of designing, coding, and inserting the InfiniteUlysses.com participatory digital edition of James Joyce’s Ulysses, plus an analytical debriefing written during the last month before the defense, and frequent blogging about both her research’s content and process. Participants will have the opportunity to talk through what audience they want their dissertation to reach, what questions they’re pursuing, what impact they want their work to make, and what methods and forms (digital or not) these answers suggest for their dissertations. This session should interest anyone working in or curious about the digital humanities, considering or doing a digital dissertation, or wishing to think about non-digital, non-traditional ways of dissertating in the humanities.
5:00 pm Keynote Presentation (Black Cultural Center, MP1)

The Sankofa Principle: From the Drum to the Digital by Dr. Abdul Alkalimat


6:30 pm Refreshments (Black Cultural Center)
Friday, December 2, 2016
8:30 am Continental Breakfast (204 STEW)

9:30—10:15 am Morning Plenary (278 STEW)
*Black Studies in the Age of Big Data*
Kenton Rambsy
University of Texas-Arlington

10:30–11:45 am Panels 1 & 2
1. *Transformative Black Digital Humanistic Ideologies* (278 STEW)
   Chair: Mindy Tan
   *Thinking Tactical Contradiction in the Digital Humanities*
   Matt Applegate, Molloy College
   *The Intertextuality of Du Bois’s Idea of Humanity: A Collation Analysis*
   Robert W. Williams, Bennett College
   *Sapelo Square: Bringing Religion to Black Digital Humanities*
   Su’ad Abdul Khabeer, Purdue University

2. *Locating Black Humanity in Blogging and Social Media Infrastructure* (206 STEW)
   Chair: Leonard Harris
   *New Aged Democratic Scholarship, or an Exclusive Re-inscribing Structure?: An Examination of Academic Sport Studies Blogging*
   Andrew McGregor, Purdue University
   *Geosocial Culture and Flow: Ferguson, Black Twitter and African Diaspora Techno-Culture*
   Reynaldo Anderson, Harris-Stowe University
   Toniesha Taylor, Prairie View A&M University
   *Crowdsourcing Love: Labor, Resistance, and Genre Fiction*
   Maria Velazquez, Bucknell University, the Griot Institute

12-2pm Luncheon Plenary (West Faculty Lounge, PMU 2nd Floor)
*Decolonizing the Digital*
Marissa Parham
Amherst College
2:15-3:45pm Panels 3 & 4
3. Mapping Black Lives and Stories: Black Spatial Humanities Frameworks (278 STEW)
   Chair: Joseph Dorsey
   Mapping Black Resorts: Recovering African American Leisure Experiences Through Africana Studies Digital Scholarship
   Ronald J. Stephens, Purdue University
   The Chicago Defender’s Standing Dealers List Map
   Kim Gallon, Purdue University
   The Spatiality of Capital and the Optimization of Space to the Law of Value within Cuban Slavery, 1820-1886
   Reynaldo Ortiz-Minaya, City University of New York, Brooklyn College

4. Intersectional Agency and Activism Within Black Visual Technologies (206 STEW)
   Chair: Keturah Nix
   Resisting the Matrix: Black Female Agency in Issa Rae’s “Awkward Black Girl”
   Hadiya Layla Jones, Princeton University
   To Be Young, Gifted, and Black: A Look at the Visionary Activism Created by Black Female Musicians
   Amanda Eke, University of California Davis
   Nollywood Film as a Site of Diaspora Women’s Resistance
   Elizabeth Johnson, Governors State University
   Donald Culverson, Governors State University
   West Side Stories Digital Humanities Project: Public Education and Racial Integration in Phoenix
   Anthony Pratcher II, University of Pennsylvania

4-5:30pm Panels 5 & 6
5. Recovering Transnational Black Humanity in the Digital (278 STEW)
   Chair: Dawn Stinchcomb
   Digital Network Analysis of Monastic Communities in Medieval Egypt: The Case of the Monastery of St. Michael
   Andrea Myers Achi, New York University
   Synchronizing Human Nature: Digital Video Technology and Psychiatric Care for Migrant Communities in France
   Felix Rietmann, Princeton University
   Designing a Human Rights & Social Justice DH Platform: Historical Recovery, Reconstruction & Reconciliation in the Black Digital Humanities
   Angel David Nieves, Hamilton College

6. Moving from the Margin to the Center: Undergraduate Students’ Perspective on the Black Digital Humanities (206 STEW)
   Chair: Kim Gallon
5:45-7:15pm Roundtable: Meanings of Digitalization and Africana Studies (West Faculty Lounge, PMU 2nd Floor)
   Chair: Ronald J. Stephens, Purdue University
   Discussants:
   Marissa Parham, Amherst College
   Abdul Alkalimat, University of Illinois-Urbana Champagne
   Kenton Rambsy, University of Texas-Arlington

7:15pm Reception
Saturday, December 3
8:30am Continental Breakfast (Stew 204)

9am-12pm Workshop (Pre-Registration Required Because of Room Size Limit)
Documenting the Now: The Ethical Collection, Use, and Preservation of Social Media Activism
(STEW 204)
Bergis Jules Bergis, University of California at Riverside
Ed Summers, University of Maryland

Documenting the Now responds to the public's use of social media for chronicling historically significant events as well as demand from scholars, students, and archivists, among others, seeking a user-friendly means of collecting and preserving this type of digital content. DocNow has a strong commitment to prioritizing ethical practices when working with social media content, especially in terms of collection and long-term preservation. This commitment extends to Twitter's notion of honoring user intent and the rights of content creators. The project is a collaborative effort among the University of Maryland, University of California at Riverside, and Washington University in St. Louis. More than just a tool, DocNow is building a community around the difficult questions of ethically and respectfully creating a historical record of protests, including through a Slack (chat forum) where everyone is invited to participate in conversations around archival ethics and design, and a live streamed advisory board meeting. This workshop is taught by DocNow’s community lead Bergis Jules (UC Riverside archivist) and technical lead Ed Summers (MITH Lead Developer). The session will begin with an overview of the ethical, archival, and technical questions of research and preservation work with social media, followed by a demonstration of the in-development DocNow tool, then hands-on group work around ethical social media activism analysis and archiving (zero technical experience needed).
Sun-Hwa Kim is a native of North Carolina. Her current research takes a look at the Black female musician that engages in political activism through their work. Her project is both a visual and written piece that takes a look at these spaces through the mediums of Afrofuturism as well as Social and Digital media. She has done field work in both Davis and Berkeley California, and plans to continue in New Orleans Louisiana in the upcoming year. In addition, Amanda’s background spans music as well as she is producer and manager of musical artists in Los Angeles CA, and overseas in Britain. She has lectured at both University of California Davis as well as University of California Berkeley and is currently pursuing her doctoral degree in musicology.

Christy Hyman is the Director of the Great Plains United Methodist Archives Center at the Nebraska Wesleyan University. Currently in her second year of PhD study at the University of Nebraska Lincoln Ms. Hyman is a native of North Carolina. Her work wrestles with the societal and ideological tensions in defining freedom within the United States south during the nineteenth century. Specifically her work highlights African American efforts toward cultural and political assertion in the Great Dismal Swamp region and adjacent communities in North Carolina during the antebellum period. Building on the work of archaeologists, historians, and novelists her study maps the experiences of enslaved runaways and laborers who were exposed to the Great Dismal Swamp. By examining African Americans who navigated the “traumascapes” inherent in the institution of slavery within the eastern North Carolina areas adjacent to the swamp, this study sheds light on the common values, aspirations, culture and economic systems of a people relegated to the margins of society.
Bergis Jules is an archivist at the University of California, Riverside library, where he manages university archives, political papers, African American collections, and community archives projects. He has extensive experience working with community archives and African American collections including leading projects at the Black Metropolis Research Consortium at the University of Chicago, and developing and securing grant funding for the D.C. Africana Archives Project at George Washington University. Bergis is a coordinator for Inland Empire Memories, a community-owned consortium of cultural heritage organizations, with the goal of uncovering and sharing the diverse history of people in Inland Southern California. He is also a co-director on a 2016 IMLS-funded National Forum grant to host a series of public meetings across the country, which will explore strategies and tools for integrating community archives in the National Digital Platform. In addition to his community archives work, Bergis is interested in the potential of social media and web archives for contributing to more diverse library research collections by helping to counter existing silences in our historical records, through inclusion of more voices from traditionally marginalized communities. He is one of the principal investigators on the Andrew Mellon Foundation funded social media archiving project titled “Documenting the Now: Supporting Scholarly Use and Preservation of Social Media Content.” Bergis received an M.L.S. with a Specialization in Archives and Records Management and an M.A. in African American and African Diaspora Studies from Indiana University in 2009. He is currently a doctoral student in the History Department at the University of California, Riverside. Find him on Twitter @BergisJules.

Elizabeth Johnson is an Associate Professor of History and Social Sciences at Governors State University in University Park, IL. Dr. Johnson’s research and speaking interests are grounded in Black Feminist, Group Identity, and Critical Race theories and they include: hair aesthetics and body image; 19th Century U.S. history; and magazine, television, and film representation of ethnicity and gender.

Jeremiah Johnson is a Junior in Sociology from South Bend, Indiana. During his time at Purdue University he has been a multimedia voice for Black students through moderating and participating in panels, leading forums, in addition to establishing events concerning the Black experience in higher education. He is the founder of the Digital Black Hurricane the first digital platform of its kind at the University. Johnson is truly a dynamic individual using his intellect, imagery, influence, and burning passion to empower his fellow peers.

Hadiya Jones is currently a Sociology PhD student at Princeton University. She graduated from Spelman College in 2015 with a BA in English and Sociology. Ultimately, she desires to study how black, middle-class, millennials, who are socialized in predominantly white spaces, navigate their identities. Currently, she explores black women who develop their own web series as a lens to investigate this larger question. Broadly, she plans to focus on cultural sociology, new media, and the intersectionality of race, gender, and class.


Angel David Nieves is Associate Professor of Africana Studies and Co-Director, Digital Humanities Initiative at Hamilton College. His areas of expertise include race and the built environment, digital humanities, spatial humanities, heritage preservation, urban history, South Africa and Southern Africa, truth and reconciliation in post-conflict countries and diaspora studies.

Marisa Parham is Professor of English and Director of the Five College Digital Humanities Project. She earned her PhD, M. Phil., and M.A. from Columbia University, and B.A. from Washington University in 1996. Her current teaching and research projects focus on texts that problematize assumptions about time, space, and bodily materiality, particularly as such terms share a history of increasing complexity in texts produced by African
**Kenton Rambsy** is currently a professor of African American literature and digital humanities at the University of Texas at Arlington where his cutting-edge teaching includes a course titled the “The Life and Times of S. Carter” also known as #theJayZclass. This is a digital humanities course which positions the prolific rapper in a broader literary continuum of autobiographical and semi-autobiographical works.

Kenton attended Morehouse College and received his Bachelor’s degree in 2010, graduating Magna Cum-Laude and Phi Beta Kappa. He later received his Masters (2012) and PhD (2015) in English for the University of Kansas.

Kenton has developed unique expertise in a rapidly expanding social and academic landscape which is characterized by heavy reliance on a digital interaction. Kenton’s ongoing work ensures that data analytics, text-mining, and mapping software are not just short-term trends, but instead, long-term components in the academic arena. In the summer of 2016, Kenton served as the co-director of a digital humanities initiative at Howard University. This position, funded by a grant for the National Endowment for the Humanities, exposed professors at Howard University to tools related to digital humanities.

Kenton is currently working on the Black Book Interactive Project which is based at the University of Kansas and also funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. This project seeks to develop a digital practice for analyzing texts based on race and geography. This groundbreaking project also provides Kenton an opportunity to continue his mission of utilizing modern technology to reach new levels of understanding in textual analysis.

**Felix Rietmann** is PhD student in the Program in the History of Science and Fellow in the Interdisciplinary Program in the Humanities at Princeton University. His dissertation project investigates the functions and uses of moving images in the history of early childhood psychiatry. Before coming to Princeton, Felix studied Medicine at the Charité Berlin and History of Science, Medicine, and Technology at Imperial College London, graduating with an MD in 2008 and an MSc in 2010, respectively. In 2010, he also received a Doctor medicinae (equivalent to PhD in medicine) from the Charité Berlin. His dissertation was realized in cooperation with the MRC Clinical Sciences Centre in London and investigated mechanisms of drug resistance in a neuroendocrine cell line. Subsequently, he worked first in internal medicine and then in pediatrics in Berlin, Lausanne and Neuchâtel, Switzerland.

**Ed Summers** is Lead Developer at MITH. Ed has been working for two decades helping bridge the worlds of libraries and archives with the World Wide Web. During that time Ed has worked in academia, start-ups, corporations and the government. He is interested in the role of open source software, community development and open access to enable digital curation. Ed has a MS in Library and Information Science and a BA in English and American Literature from Rutgers University. He is also a PhD student in the UMD iSchool.

**Toniesha L. Taylor** is an Associate Professor of Communication in the Department Languages and Communication at Prairie View A & M University. Her research foci in African American, Religion, Intercultural, Gender and Digital Humanities. She has cultivated her interest throughout her doctoral work at Bowling Green State University where she completed her Ph.D. in Communication Studies with a focus on Rhetoric in 2009. Toniesha’s research, conference presentations, and publications speak to her diverse interest. Her recent research and conference presentations include discussions on womanist rhetoric as method and theory; practical social justice pedagogy for faculty and students; and digital humanities methods implications for activist recovery projects. Her recent publications include “Saving Sound, Sounding Black and Voicing America: John Lomax and the Creation of the “American Voice”” in *Sounding Out!: The Sound Studies Blog*, June 8, 2015, [http://soundstudiesblog.com/2015/06/08/john-lomax-and-the-creation-of-the-american-voice/](http://soundstudiesblog.com/2015/06/08/john-lomax-and-the-creation-of-the-american-voice/) and a co-authored essay with Amy E. Earhart titled “Pedagogies of Race: Digital Humanities in the Age of Ferguson” in *Debates in Digital Humanities, 2016*, ed. by Lauren Klein and Matthew Gold.

Dr. Taylor’s recent Digital Humanities projects include The Prairie View Women’s Oral History Project is designed to collect, preserve, curate and display the oral histories of women who have had a thirty (30) year or longer relationship to Prairie View A&M University.
Maria I. Velazquez is a Postdoctoral Fellow with the Africana Studies Program at Bucknell University. She received her doctorate from University of Maryland, College-Park. Her dissertation, "Reclaiming Black Beledi," focuses on belly dance and its use as embodied political rhetoric post-9/11, and is under review at the University of Illinois Press as part of the National Women’s Studies Association First Book Prize competition. Her recent publications include "Reblog If You Feel Me: Love, Blackness, and Digital Wellness" in Yoga, the Body, and Embodied Social Change, “The Occasional Ethnicities of Lavender Brown: Race as a Boundary Object in Harry Potter” in Critical Insights: Contemporary Speculative Fiction, and “’Come Fly With Us!’: Playing with Girlhood in he World of Pixie Hollow” in Cases on Digital Game-Based Learning. She received her MA in Gender/Cultural Studies from Simmons College.

Amanda Visconti is a digital humanities assistant professor and specialist librarian at Purdue University Libraries. Her 2015 literature dissertation, Dr.AmandaVisconti.com, produced the InfiniteUlysses.com participatory digital edition by combining literary studies and textual scholarship with digital methodologies (design, code, usertesting) and publication forms (digital edition, blog). She serves as an executive council member for the North American DH scholarly organization (Association for Computers and the Humanities), and as an editor and ombudsperson for The Programming Historian DH lesson platform. You can follow her @Literature_Geek, read her regular DH blogging at LiteratureGeek.com, or join her and others in the DH discussions open to all on the Digital Humanities Slack (tinyurl.com/DHslack).

Robert W. Williams teaches Political Science at Bennett College in Greensboro, NC. His research interests over time have included studies on environmental justice, the spatiality of politics, and the Internet and cyber-democracy. More recently, he has concentrated his research energies on the philosophical dimensions of W.E.B. Du Bois’s thought as well as on the intellectual context of his era. In addition, Dr. Williams created, and continues to
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**Symposium Co-organizers:**
Dr. Ronald J. Stephens, Dr. Kim Gallon, Dr. Su’ad Abdul Khabeer, Dr. Amanda Visconti

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