



16th Annual African, African American, and Diaspora Studies (AAAD) Interdisciplinary Conference 2026 Schedule of Events

All times are in EST (UTC-5)

Wednesday, February 11th

8:00-8:15am. AAAD Conference Opening
8:15-9:45am. Panel Session 1
10:00-11:30am. Panel Session 2
11:30am-12:30pm: Break for Lunch
12:30-2:00pm. Panel Session 3
2:30-4:00pm. Panel Session 4
4:30-6:00pm. Furious Flower Plenary: Bettina Judd
Reception

Thursday, February 12th

8:00-9:30am. Panel Session 5
10:00-11:30pm. Plenary Workshop
11:30am-12:30pm: Break for Lunch
12:30-2:00pm. Panel Session 6
2:30-4:00pm. Panel Session 7
4:30pm-6:00pm. AAAD Keynote
Reception

Friday, February 13th

8:00-9:30am. Panel Session 8
9:45-11:15am Plenary Session: Africana Studies Workshop
11:30am-12:30pm: Break for Lunch
12:00pm-3:00pm. Douglass Day, a National Transcribe-a-Thon
3:15-5:15pm. Undergraduate Research Showcase

Schedule of Panels

Wednesday, February 11th

Conference Opening. 8:00-8:15am

Modality: In Person Only

Taylor 306

Panel Session 1. 8:15-9:45am **DESMOND'S SESSION**

1a. Gendered Harm, Health, and Healing

Modality: In Person (Hybrid Audience)

Taylor 402

Moderator: TBD

Kimberly L. Hutson, Norfolk State University, USA

“Hush Harbors to Healing Circles: Black Sacred Space and Domestic Violence Response”

Daisy Foncha, Destini Moore, and Morgan Williams, James Madison University, USA

“The Weight of Strength: Exploring Hyper-sexualization, Generational Trauma, and Maternal Mental Health Among Black Women”

Julia Silva Clark, Missouri Historical Society, USA

“The Perils of Paradise: The Hypersexualization of Afro-Brazilian Women in Modern Dating”

1b. Antebellum Resistance

Modality: In Person (Hybrid Audience)

Taylor 405

Moderator: TBD

Maverick Huneycutt, University of South Carolina, USA

“‘Praying to be Set Free:’ Sonic Concealment as Enslaved Resistance”

Jaimee A. Swift, James Madison University, USA

“Feminist Marronage: Fieldnotes on Abscondence”

Anna Henderson, Northern Illinois University, USA

“Autonomy and Resistance of the Aged Enslaved on the Ohio River Valley Frontier”

Judah-Micah Lamar, Muskingum University, USA

“Resilience, Resistance, and Recovery: Elleanor Eldridge and the Quest for Home in Antebellum Rhode Island”

1c. Memory and Political Life

Modality: Virtual Only

Moderator: TBD

Rhonda D. Jones, *University of North Carolina-Greensboro, USA*

“Sanctuary in the Archive: Lynching Memorialization and the Work of Survival”

Desmond Coleman, *Pennsylvania State University, USA*

“Slave Descent Identity Politics as a Site of Survival and Spontaneity”

Erika Koss, *University of Nairobi, Kenya*

“‘Why Are You Interfering with European Theater?’: Sites of Sanctuary and Danger in Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o and Mĩcere Gĩthae Mũgo’s *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* (1976)”

Destiny Wiley-Yancy, *Vanderbilt University, USA*

“Cradle of the Race”: Black Women in Early South African Nationalist History, and the Transnational Politics of Racial Respectability”

Panel Session 2. 10:00-11:30am PAIGE'S SESSION

2a. Christiansburg Institute Film Screening

Modality: In Person Only

Taylor 405

Moderator: Michael Hemphill, *Independent, USA*

2b. Exposure: Sanctuary at the Limits

Modality: In Person (Hybrid Audience)

Taylor 402

Moderator: TBD

Niraj Raju, *University of Virginia, USA*

“‘Endless Night’-Blanchotian Nocturnal Phenomenology, Urban Interstitiality, and Chronic Homelessness in Baltimore City”

Desiree Cooper, *Independent, USA*

“What Counts as Sanctuary”

Paige Chapman, *Pennsylvania State University, USA*

“Self-Care in the Wake: Care for Ungendered Flesh Against Foucauldian Care of the Self”

Sherie Mungo, *Old Dominion University, USA*

“Black Pages, Black Places: Reading Teresa Redd’s *Revelations* as Rhetorical Sanctuary”

2c. Call, Language and Voice

Modality: Virtual Only

Moderator: TBD

Theresia Kado August, *Makerere Institute of Social Research, Uganda*

"What's in a Name: Metaphors of HIV/AIDS in Selected Bongo Flewa Songs"

Eva Bohler, *California State University, Long Beach, USA*

"Nevertheless, Live! Jeffers' *The Love Songs of W.E.B Du Bois* and Brooks' 'The Second Sermon on the Warpland': The Call to Black Women"

Radhia Meddahi, *University of Hassiba Ben Bouali Chlef, Algeria*

"The Sanctuary of Language: Artistic Expression and Survival in Assia Djebar's *Fantasia: An Algerian Cavalcade*"

Break for Lunch: 11:30am-12:30pm

Panel Session 3. 12:30-2:00pm CHARIE'S SESSION

3a. African Female Graduate Students in Conversation: Feminist Worldmaking, Survival, and Scholarly Practice

Modality: In Person (Hybrid Audience)

Taylor 402

Moderator: Wendy Kinyeki, *James Madison University, USA*

Oghenetega Ologbo, *James Madison University, USA*

Aminat Oyelude, *James Madison University, USA*

Hairat Alatishe, *James Madison University, USA*

Mwesah Mpundu Kapesa, *James Madison University, USA*

Kessy Mugabo Kayiganwa, *James Madison University, USA*

Tolulope Ijeluola, *James Madison University, USA*

3b. Justice and the Sacred Space

Modality: In Person (Hybrid Audience)

Taylor 405

Moderator: TBD

Charié Payne, *Pennsylvania State University, USA*

"Making Way: Creolization Womanist God-Talk, and the Path to Justice"

Cassandra Aigbogun, *University of Georgia, USA*

"Fugitive Sanctuaries: Black Feminist Worldmaking in *Blood Scion* and *The Gilded Ones*"

Susan Olubukola Badeji, *Redeemer's University, Ede, Nigeria*

"Mothers of 'Sacred Spaces': Women in Ero Festival of Owo Kingdom, Southwest, Nigeria"

Anna Helena van Urk, *University of Cambridge, UK*

"'A Poetic Idiom Comprehensible to a Somali': Dante, Exile, and Concrete Utopia in Nuruddin Farah's *Links*"

3c. Formative Sites: Teaching, Media, and the Making of Cultural Authority

Modality: Virtual Only

Moderator: TBD

Alexandrea N. Rich, *Jarvis Christian University, USA*

"Office Hours as Sacred Space: Cultivating Sanctuary, Voice, and Advocacy for Students with Diverse Needs"

James McRavion, *North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, USA*

"Teaching World Religion and Society"

Leonard L. Richards Jr, *James Madison University, USA*, and **Khalil Siddiq**, *Independent*

"Clout, Clicks, and Cultural Confusion: Examining Pseudohistorical Narratives and the Denial of African Identity on TikTok"

Marvin Chambers, *James Madison University, USA*

"Sanctuary Beyond Chaos: The Onyx Spirit and African Diaspora Leadership in an Age of Division and Control"

Panel Session 4: 2:30-4:00pm MY SESSION

4a. Rupture and World Making

Modality: In Person (Hybrid Audience)

Taylor 302

Moderator: TBD

Kris F. Sealey, *Pennsylvania State University, USA*

"A Caribbean Poetics of Memory-Making"

Nikema Bell, *James Madison University, USA*

"Sanctuary in the Eye: Ecology, Survival, and Spontaneity in Olive Senior's Caribbean Poetics"

Joy Omeiza, *University of California, Merced*

"Broken Sanctuaries: Rethinking Refugeehood through Niger Delta Poetry"

Leon Bomela, *University of Cape Town, South Africa*

"Sanctuary of the Nation: Inaugural Presidential Addresses in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as Sites of Political Worldbuilding"

4b. Damned Whiteness: Book Panel

Modality: In Person (Hybrid)

Taylor 400

Moderator: Jennifer L. Aycock, *James Madison University, USA*

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Gaurav Pathania, *Eastern Mennonite University, USA*

Jalia Joseph, *James Madison University, USA*

David F. Evan, *Eastern Mennonite University, USA*

4c. Governance and Political Futures, Part I

Modality: In Person (Hybrid Audience)

Taylor 402

Moderator: TBD

Stephen M. Magu, *Norfolk State University, USA*

“Digital Democracy, A New African Spring: Post-Ethnic Gen Z Protests and Changes in Governance”

Christiana ‘Kris’ Ekanem, *James Madison University, USA*

“Beyond the Last Two Decades: Reimagining the African Union as a Sanctuary of Sustainable Governance”

Patrick Michael Ogeto, *Laikipia University, Kenya & University of Cape Town, South Africa*

“Sanctuary Betrayed: Reclaiming African Human Remains from Western Museums as Sites of Spiritual and Historical Survival”

Courage Mlambo, *Walter Sisulu University, South Africa*

“China in Zimbabwe’s Extractive Sector: Community Displacement and the Human Rights Vacuum”

Furious Flower Poetry Center Featured Speaker: 4:30-6:00pm

Bettina Judd, *Emory University*

Modality: In Person (Hybrid Audience)

Taylor 405

Reception to follow, Hall of Presidents

Thursday, February 12th

Panel Session 5: 8:15-9:45am

5a. Wellness in Place: Inequality and Healing Practices

Modality: In Person (Hybrid Audience)

Taylor 404

Moderator: TBD

Modjadji Choshi, *James Madison University*

“Health Equity and the Color of Health: Life’s Essential 8, Self-Care, and Knowing Your Numbers”

Crystal Thompson, *North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, USA* and **Valerie McConnell**, *NuAri Health, USA*

“Advancing Black Women’s Knowledge of Nontraditional Wellness Practices”

Sherilynn Cherry, *North American Drama Therapy Association, USA*

“Where We Stand: Understanding Drama Therapy and Its Benefits in the Black Therapy Space”

5b. Adaptation and Social Transformation

Modality: In Person (Hybrid Audience)

Moderator: TBD

Taylor 402

Teona Natoya Eriogou, *James Madison University, USA*

“Sanctuary in Displacement: Intelligence, Adaptation, and the Sites of Becoming”

Joy Howard, *Appalachian State University, USA*

“Critical Community Mapping for Social Change”

Daniel Chukwuemeka, *Northumbria University, Newcastle, UK*

“Reading *The Bad Immigrant*: Race as Economic Construct in Afrodiasporic America”

Dawit Thomas, *University of Limpopo, South Africa*

“The Psychological Experiences of Ethiopian Immigrants in the Republic of South Africa: Towards a Culturally Relevant Psychological Coping Model”

5c. Religion and Survival

Modality: In Person (Hybrid Audience)

Moderator: TBD

Taylor 404

Agbo Friday Ojonugwa, *Veritas University Bwari Abuja, Nigeria*

“Sacred Blood, Secular Law: Navigating the Intersection of Religious Freedom and Medical Consent in Jehovah’s Witness Blood Transfusion Cases”

Qasim Adeyemi Aliu, *Nigeria Maritime University, Nigeria*

“Religious Consumerism and Struggle for Survival: Rhetorical Strategies of Islamic Miracle Clerics in Yorubaland”

Fizza Fatima, *University of Virginia, USA*

“Openings in Exile: Prayer as Portal and the Fugitive Spatiality of Sanctuary”

5d. Development and its Discontents: Forms and Practices

Modality: Virtual Only

Moderator: TBD

Chidimma Chinyere Mezi, *Shanahan University, Onitsha, Nigeria*

“What Drives Development?”

Eniola Afolayan, *University of Virginia, USA*

“Affecting the Future: On Civil Servants, Spiritual Work, and Money at the Osun-Osogbo Sacred Grove”

Eric K. Frimpong, *University of Almería, Spain*

“Literature as Sanctuary: Reclaiming Voice and Survival in Taiye Selasi’s ‘The Sex Lives of African Girls’”

Plenary Workshop: 10:00-11:30am

Jessica Marie Johnson, *Johns Hopkins University, USA*

Break for Lunch: 11:30-12:30

Panel Session 6: 12:30-2:00pm

6a. Rest as Sanctuary and Survival: A Workshop

Modality: In Person Only

Serenity Center

Moderator: Melissa Alemán, *James Madison University, USA*

DaNae Peterson, *James Madison University, USA*

Tiffany Hornsby, *James Madison University, USA*

Sonya Baker, *James Madison University, USA*

Melissa Alemán, *James Madison University, USA*

6b. Schooling as Spatial Practice

Modality: In Person (Hybrid Audience)

Moderator: TBD

Taylor 400

Brittani Staley and **Rosaura Dominguez-Rebollar**, *James Madison University, USA*

“40 Years of Belonging: How Center for Multicultural Student Services (CMSS) Student Lounges Foster Safety, Inclusion, and Community at JMU”

Melissa Marini Svigelj, *James Madison University, USA* and **Lucia Alvarado Cantero**, *Santa Clara University, USA*

“Schooling Sites as Sanctuary Spaces: Forcibly Displaced & Incarcerated Youth Talk Back”

Jairus Hallums, *Clark Atlanta University, USA*

“Sanctuary in the Aftermath: Black Women Educators and the Afterlives of Desegregation”

Oko-Otu C.N., *University of Buckingham*, and **Ejiro Ikoko**, *University of Leeds, UK*

“Spaces on the Move, Bus Stops, and Community Building among African Diasporic Populations”

6c. Mapping the Gaps in the Black Digital and Public Humanities

Modality: In Person (Hybrid Audience)

Moderator: Mollie Godfrey

Taylor 404

Rylee Dangerfield, Tanner Pratt, and Micah Turner, James Madison University, USA

“The Ma Rainey Legacy Project”

Katharine Benson and Anna Gitchell, James Madison University, USA

“Black Soldiers in WWII: Reimagining and Restoring History through Film”

Jana Liberato and Aiman Rahman, James Madison University, USA

“How Far Does the Dime Go? Visualizing the Financial Footprint of Black Digital and Public Humanities”

Angela Rona Estavillo and Riley M. Hollars, James Madison University, USA

“Restoring the Roots: Annie Turnbo Malone & the Poro Empire”

Panel Session 7: 2:30-4:00pm

7a. Black Women’s Sanctuaries: Sacred Places, Spaces as Sites of Self-Actualisation

Modality: In Person (Hybrid Audience)

Taylor 400

Moderator: Rachel D. Perez, University of Memphis, USA

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Taylor N. N. Quaye, University of Memphis, USA

Tebatso Tlou Duba, University of Memphis, USA

Natalyah Davis, University of Memphis, USA

7b. Built Memory and Living Struggle

Modality: In Person (Hybrid Audience)

Moderator: TBD

Taylor 404

William Tate, James Madison University, USA

“Mama Lowndes: Voting Rights Memorial in Lowndes County”

Ashagrie G. Abdi, Independent

“Designing a National Sanctuary: The Adwa Victory Memorial Museum as a Contested Site of Memory and Survival”

Mwesah Mpundu Kapesa, James Madison University, USA

“Linguistic Justice and Translation in World Heritage Sites: Mosi-oa-Tunya Reclaiming Language and Narrative at Victoria Falls”

Haseena Sahib, University of Virginia, USA

“The Tunisian Shrines that Preserved the Legacy of 'Ā'isha al-Mannūbīyya (d. 1267 CE)”

7c. Unveiling a Hidden Legacy: Black Alumni and the Sites of Belonging They Built at Madison College, 1966-1976

Modality: In Person (Hybrid Audience)

Taylor 402

Moderator: Rebecca Barge and Monyette Martin, *James Madison University, USA*

Meg Mulrooney, *James Madison University, USA*

Janis Smith Wilson, *James Madison University, USA*

Deborah Tompkins Johnson, *James Madison University, USA*

AAAD Keynote Speaker: 4:30-6:00pm

Jessica Marie Johnson, *Johns Hopkins University, USA*

Modality: In Person (Hybrid Audience)

Union Ballroom

Meet-and-Mingle to follow, Union Ballroom

Friday, February 13th

Panel Session 8: 8:00-9:30am

8a. Movement Event: Learning to Ground Ourselves, Why?

Modality: In Person Only

Union Ballroom

Moderator: Bobby Lifka, *James Madison University, USA*

8b. (In)Violable Worlds: A Black Ecologies Workshop

Modality: In-Person (Hybrid Audience)

Taylor 303

Moderator: Joanna Evans, *University of Virginia, USA*

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Jovon M. Moses, *University of Virginia, USA*

Christian Keeve, *University of Kentucky and University of Virginia, USA*

Josh Brew, *University of Pittsburgh and University of Virginia, USA*

Kaché Claytor, *University of Virginia, USA*

8c. Intimacy and Distance

Modality: Virtual Only

Moderator: TBD

Gunner Law, *Sam Houston State University, USA*

“Queering Intimate Silence: James Baldwin’s *Giovanni’s Room* and the Radical Work of Quiet”

Ishany Nandy, *English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad, India*

“‘It is dangerous to call the Gods’: The Vignettes of Memory in *We Measure the Earth with our Bodies*”

Omotayo Jemiluyi, *University of Missouri, Columbia, USA*

“Between Africa and America: Transnational African Masculinities and the Nigerian Migrant Experience”

Gwooyim Gyat, *Royal Roads University, Canada*, and **Stephanie Sweetnam**, *Western University, Canada*

“Sanctuary in Motion: Gitxsan Homelands and Caribbean Diasporic Encounters with Ancestral Territory”

8d. Governance and Political Futures, Part II

Modality: Virtual Only

Moderator: TBD

Temitope Abigail Olorunnipa, *Bowen University, Iwo, Nigeria*

“Arts of Sanctuary: Pertinent Concerted Protection for Intangible Property Rights in Cultural Heritage in Africa using Nigeria as Case Study”

Amarachukwu Ezetulugo, *University of Abuja, Nigeria*

“A Legal Analysis of the Nature, Causes of Action, Remedies and Defences in Medical Negligence Litigation in Nigeria”

Dolapo Olutayo, *Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria*

“Refuge from Conflict: Negotiating Safety and Survival in African Displacement Camps Using Sudan and Nigeria as Case Studies”

Africana Studies Workshop, Plenary Session: 9:45-11:15am

Whitney Battle-Baptiste, *University of Massachusetts, Amherst, USA*

Modality: Virtual Only

Douglass Day National Transcribe-a-Thon: 12:00-3:00pm

Modality: In Person Only

Union Ballroom

Moderator: Courtney Murray Ross, *James Madison University, USA*

Undergraduate Research Showcase. 3:15-5:15pm ISAIAH AND MADDY

Modality: Hybrid

Union Ballroom

Samantha Reavis, *University of California, Los Angeles, USA*

“Fugitive Sanctuaries: Black Sonic Worldmaking and Spontaneity in Diasporic Los Angeles”

Messias de Lima Santos, *Universidade Federal da Bahia, Brazil*

“The University and the Limits of Refuge: Mental Health and the Racialization of Academic Space”

Isaiah Johnson, *Oberlin College, USA*

“Digital Sanctuaries: How Black Digital Spaces Contend with the Digital White Gaze”

Madison Everlith, *Pace University, USA*

“Reclaiming Care: Black Queer Feminist Approaches to Health, Autonomy, and Sanctuary”

Grace Puma, *James Madison University, USA*

“The Blues as Philosophy”