

Department of English Biennial Conference

Cultural Representations of African American War Experience

February 22-23, 2024

Bryant Conference Center, University of Alabama

Thursday, Feb. 22, 2024

8:00 AM—8:30 AM Participants arrive at Bryant Conference Center, Smith Room

8:30 AM—9:00 AM Welcome and Orientation

9:00 AM—10:15 AM **Session I: Lesser-Known Texts** (Smith Room)

Chair: Julia Wall, University of Alabama

“All which battles the reader can obtain a more perfect account of in history, than I can give”: The African American Revolutionary War Experience and Print Culture of the 19th Century”

Anna Diamantouli, American College of Greece

"Black Writers Answer the Call: The WWII Writings of Waring Cuney, Lucia M. Pitts, William Gardner Smith, and Alston Anderson."

Verner D. Mitchell, University of Memphis, and Cynthia Davis, San Jacinto College

10:15 AM—10:30 AM Break

10:30 AM—11:45 AM **Session 2: Photography and Cultural Imagery** (Smith Room)

Chair: Lesley Gordon, University of Alabama

“The African American Civil War Drummer Boy in Photography and Literature”

Sarah Chinn, Hunter College-CUNY

“Pornographies of Death: African American Experience and Photographic Representations of War”

Maggie Hazard, School of the Art Institute of Chicago

11:45 AM—1:00 PM Lunch (Smith Room)

- 1:00 PM—2:15 PM **Session 3: Poetry and Elegy** (Smith Room)
Chair: Nikhil Bilwakesh, University of Alabama
- “Crowning Glory: Poetic Form, Cultural Memory, and the Black Civil War Soldier”
Coleman Hutchison, University of Texas at Austin
- “George Moses Horton’s Lincoln Elegies and the Tension of Voice and Vision in *Naked Genius*”
Robert Arbour, Spring Hill College
- 2:15 PM-2:30 PM Break
- 2:30 PM—3:45 PM **Session 4: War and Agency** (Smith Room)
Chair: Cassander Smith, University of Alabama
- “The University of Alabama’s General Strike of 1865”
Hilary N. Green, Davidson College
- “‘Men of Color to Arms!’: African American Soldiers, the Civil War, and *Douglass’ Monthly*”
Benjamin Fagan, Auburn University
- 3:45 PM—4:00 PM Break
- 4:00 PM—5:00 PM **Keynote Presentation** with welcome by Dean Joe Messina, University of Alabama College of Arts and Science, and Introduction by Bailee Hughes, University of Alabama (Lackey Room)
- “Vietnam: Race, Memory, History”
Jennifer James, The George Washington University
- 5:00 PM—7:00 PM Reception at the Bryant Conference Center (Balcony)
- 7:00 PM— Participants have dinner on their own
- Friday, Feb. 23, 2024**
- 9:00 AM—10:15 AM **Session 5: Music and Video Games** (Smith Room)
Chair: Candice Fairchild, University of Alabama

“‘The most serious work I have ever undertaken’: Nobel Sissle, James Reese Europe, and the Biography of Racial Reclamation”
Andrew Walgren, University of Georgia

“Playing the Black Experience in No Man’s Land: African American Soldiers in World War I Video Games”
John M. Lewis, Texas A&M University

10:15 AM—10:30 AM Break

10:30 AM—Noon **Session 6: Combating White Supremacy** (Smith Room)
Chair: Trudier Harris, University of Alabama

“‘The Introduction of American Liberty’: Edward Johnson, Charles Chesnutt, and Transnational White Supremacy”
R.J. Boutelle, University of Cincinnati

“A Historian Unstuck in Time: Military History, Satire, and John A. Williams’s *Captain Blackman*”
Steven Trout, University of Alabama

Noon—1:00 PM Wrap up and lunch (Smith Room)

1:30 PM Departure for Mobile (Optional field trip for preregistered participants)

7:00 PM Dinner in downtown Mobile after checking into the Hampton Inn

Saturday, Feb. 24, 2024

8:00 AM Departure for Blakeley State Park on Mobile Bay

9:00 AM Presentation by Park Director Mike Bunn in the Nature Center

10:30 AM—12:30 PM Guided tour of the USCT Heritage trail

12:30 PM—1:30 PM Catered lunch in Nature Center

1:30 PM Depart for Tuscaloosa

6:00 PM Arrival in Tuscaloosa