

Reframing Resistance to AI

April 23, 2025 | 9:30 - 5:30 EDT | An Online Symposium

Zoom Registration: <https://go.wm.edu/lCxjcs>

While some may be surprised by the recent attacks on the sciences and higher education, for those working in the humanities, this is nothing new and perhaps a logical next step. These attacks have highlighted long standing tensions amongst disciplines that should be reconsidered in order to foster greater solidarity. Resistance is an inherently defensive stance and our current moment requires something more. Curiosity is one thing that binds us all together and something that cannot be replicated by machines. Machine *learning* and artificial *intelligence* are also framings that devalue what are in fact complex human processes, processes which are not replicable. Learning is not simply a matter of inputs and outputs, but a highly individualized process dependent on relationality and making connections. The Equality Lab presents a day-long series of online talks and discussions with thinkers from around the world considering the challenges and opportunities that AI offers.

Program (all times EDT)

Responsible AI Gina Neff (University of Cambridge)	9:30 - 10: 30
AI and the Institution (and Idea) of a University Rita Raley (UC Santa Barbara) & Matt Kirschenbaum (University of Maryland)	10:40 - 11:40
Lunch	11:40 - 1:00
AI Literacy: Global Perspectives Maha Bali (The American University in Cairo) & Anna Nacher (Jagiellonian University)	1:00 - 2:00
Provocations from the Humanities for Generative AI Research Jessica Marie Johnson (Johns Hopkins), Lauren Klein (Emory), Melanie Walsh (University of Washington), & Meredith Martin (Princeton)	2:10 - 3:10

Refusing Generative AI in Writing Studies Jennifer Sano-Franchini (West Virginia University), Maggie Fernandes (University of Arkansas), Megan McIntyre (University of Arkansas)	3:20 - 4:20
Critical AI: a Roundtable Discussion Audrey Watters (Hack Education), Jennifer Rhee (Virginia Commonwealth University), Lauren Goodlad (Rutgers), & Tyrus Miller (UC Irvine)	4:30 - 5:30

Speaker Bios

Gina Neff is Professor of Responsible AI at Queen Mary University of London and the Executive Director of the Minderoo Centre for Technology & Democracy at the University of Cambridge. Her work focuses on the effects of the rapid expansion of our digital information environment on workers and workplaces and in our everyday lives. Her books include *Self Tracking* (MIT Press Essential Knowledge, 2016), *Venture Labor: Work and the Burden of Risk in Innovative Industries* (MIT Press, 2012), and the collaboratively authored *Human-Centered Data Science: An Introduction* (MIT Press, 2022). She advises international organizations including UNESCO, the OECD and the Women's Forum for the Economy and Society. She has chaired the International Scientific Committee of the UK's Trusted Autonomous Systems programme, served as an associate director of the ESRC Digital Good Network and has been a member of the Strategic Advisory Network for the UK's Economic and Social Research Council.

Rita Raley is Professor of English at UC Santa Barbara. Her recent work engaging AI/machine learning from a humanities perspective has been published in *PMLA*; *Digital Humanities Quarterly*; *American Literature*; *Poetics Today*; *Understanding Flusser*; *Understanding Modernism*; *Public*; and *symplokē*. She has an essay on generative AI in the forthcoming volume, *Informatics of Domination*, and is currently working on a project on GPT-2. She is the author of *Tactical Media* (University of Minnesota, 2009), co-editor of the *Electronic Literature Collection*, Volume 2 (2011), and co-editor of the Electronic Mediations book series from the University of Minnesota Press.

Matthew Kirschenbaum is Distinguished University Professor of English at the University of Maryland. His books include *Mechanisms: New Media and the Forensic Imagination* (MIT Press, 2007), *Track Changes: A Literary*

History of Word Processing (MIT Press, 2016) and *Bitstreams: The Future of Digital Literary Heritage* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2021). He works in topics across media history and media theory with a particular focus on writing technologies.

Raley and Kirschenbaum recently published "AI May Ruin the University as We Know It" in the *Chronicle for Higher Education*. They also published "AI and the University as Service" in PMLA.

Maha Bali is a professor of practice at the Center for Learning and Teaching at The American University in Cairo. She co-founded virtually connecting, a grassroots movement that challenges academic gatekeeping at conferences. Bali is also a co-facilitator of Equity Unbound; an equity-focused, open, connected intercultural learning curriculum, which has also branched into academic community activities. Such activities are *Continuity with Care*, *Socially Just Academia*, a collaboration with OneHE: *Community-building Resources* and *MYFest*, an innovative three-month professional learning journey. Her influential online essay "What I Mean When I Say Critical AI Literacy" appeared in 2023.

Anna Nacher is Associate Professor at the Jagiellonian University. Her research interests include digital culture, cultural theory, media art, sound studies, environmental art, and e-literature. She was part of the ERC-funded research group on Machine Vision in Everyday life and published *The Aesthetics of Post-Digital Imaging: Between Camera Traps and Virtual Reality* in 2023.

Lauren Klein is Winship Distinguished Research Professor and Associate Professor in the departments of Quantitative Theory & Methods and English at Emory University. She also serves as director of the Emory Digital Humanities Lab and PI of the Mellon-funded Atlanta Interdisciplinary AI Network. She is the co-author of *Data Feminism* (MIT Press, 2020) and author of *An Archive of Taste Race and Eating in the Early United States* (University of Minnesota, 2020). She edits the Debates in the Digital Humanities series with Matt Gold. Klein's research brings together computational and critical methods in order to explore questions of gender, race, and justice.

Jessica Marie Johnson is an Associate Professor in the Department of History at the Johns Hopkins University and an internationally renowned digital humanist. Johnson is a historian of Atlantic slavery and the Atlantic

African diaspora. She is the author of *Wicked Flesh: Black Women, Intimacy, and Freedom in the Atlantic World* (University of Pennsylvania Press, August 2020). Her 2018 essay “Markup Bodies: Black [Life] Studies and Slavery [Death] Studies at the Digital Crossroads” appeared in *Social Text*.

Melanie Walsh is an Assistant Professor in the Information School at the University of Washington. Her research interests include data science, digital humanities, cultural analytics, contemporary literature, and library and information science. She investigates how data and computational methods shape contemporary culture — such as the publishing industry and public libraries — and how they can be used to understand culture in turn.

Meredith Martin is Faculty Director of the Center for Digital Humanities at Princeton which started under her leadership in 2014. With several collaborators, she has been building and directing, since 2007, the Princeton Prosody Archive, which contains writing on poetics, prosody, rhetoric, grammar, speech, and literary history published between 1570-1923. *Poetry's Data: Digital Humanities and the History of Prosody* (Princeton UP, 2025), her forthcoming book, argues that poetry can teach us how to think critically about data, and that critical data studies can teach us something about how we read poems.

Jennifer Sano-Franchini is the Gaziano Family Legacy Professor and Associate Professor of English at West Virginia University. She researches the linkages between culture, meaning-making, power, and technology. She has published on a range of topics including the affective politics of Facebook's user interface design, Asian American sonic rhetorics, and emotional labor on the academic job search.

Megan McIntyre is an Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and Composition and Director of the Program in Rhetoric and Composition at the University of Arkansas. Her research interests include digital rhetoric and writing, antiracist pedagogy and writing program administration, and postpedagogy.

Maggie Fernandes is Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and Composition at the University of Arkansas. She is a digital/cultural rhetorician and experienced writing teacher whose pedagogical approaches are informed by an active research agenda which employs cultural rhetorics and

interdisciplinary approaches to study user experience design, assessment, and institutional oppression.

Audrey Watters is an education writer and author of the popular Hack Education blog, the Second Breakfast newsletter, and a number of books, including *Teaching Machines: The History of Personalized Learning* (MIT Press, 2023), which traces the origins of "personalized learning" back to the early twentieth century, and *The Monsters of Education Technology*

Lauren M. E. Goodlad is Distinguished Professor of English and Comparative Literature, editor of *Critical AI* and chair of the Critical AI @ Rutgers as well as a faculty affiliate of the Center for Cultural Analysis (CCA), the Rutgers British Studies Center, and the Rutgers Center for Cognitive Science. As a specialist in Victorian and nineteenth-century literature and culture, Goodlad has research and teaching interests in genre studies; critical, feminist, postcolonial, and political theory; television and seriality studies; literature in relation to liberalism, globalization, and financialization; and critical AI studies.

Jennifer Rhee is Associate Professor of English and founder and co-director of the AI Futures Lab at Virginia Commonwealth University. She is the author of *The Robotic Imaginary: The Human and the Price of Dehumanized Labor* (University of Minnesota Press) and co-editor of *Informatics of Domination* (Duke University Press) and *The Palgrave Handbook of Twentieth- and Twenty-First Century Literature and Science*. She also co-edited (with Rita Raley) "Critical AI: A Field in Formation," a special issue of *American Literature* (2024). She is currently completing a book project titled, *Countering Counters: Narratives against AI*.

Tyrus Miller is Dean of the School of Humanities at the University of California at Irvine. He brings to the position more than twenty years as an interdisciplinary scholar in the humanities; extensive administrative experience in a variety of roles from undergraduate liberal education to graduate education to institutional management; and a rich engagement with humanities research as a scholar and strategic university leader. Prior to his coming to UC Irvine, he served as Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies and as Co-Provost of Cowell College at UC Santa Cruz, and as the Director of the UC Education Abroad Program's Study Center in Budapest, Hungary.