Reginold Royston

| @raroyston

FACULTY

2017 to current   **University of Wisconsin, Madison**
Department of African Cultural Studies
and The Information School at UW Madison
Assistant Professor, jointly appointed

2016 to 2017   *Anna Julia Cooper Postdoctoral Fellow*

2015-2016   **University of Pittsburgh**, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Department of Africana Studies*, Visiting Assistant Professor*

2014-2015   **Williams College**, Williamstown, Massachusetts
Global Studies, Africana Studies, Anthropology and Sociology
Mellon C3 Postdoctoral Fellow

EDUCATION

Ph.D.   University of California, Berkeley — 2014
African Diaspora Studies
Designated Emphasis (D.E.) in New Media Studies

Master's   University of California, Berkeley — 2009
African American Studies

Bachelor's   Howard University — 1998
Anthropology, *magna cum laude*
Philosophy, *magna cum laude*

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Reassembling Ghana: Diaspora, Innovation and the African Mediascape • *2010 to present*
I research the ways Ghanaian tech users in the homeland and diaspora deploy critical media practices to reconstruct the global imaginary of Ghana. Exploring Africa's digital *mediascape*, my work examines the work of civil society activists using technology and Ghana's digital diaspora. This work consists of participant observation and interviews with tech entrepreneurs, bloggers, social media producers, market traders, and diasporic media producers in California, Chicago, Amsterdam and Ghana. I argue that rather than being simply positively enabled by Internet access, Ghanaian tech users struggle to maintain global connections because of West-facing structure of the Network Society. This research is the foundation of my book in progress. (Social Science Research Council; Andrew W. Mellon Foundation).

Aural Circuits of the Black Diaspora • *2015 to present* I am examining kinesthetic and technological forms produced through African diasporic music techniques and collaborations. At the core of this work is an ethnography of African emigre and African-American music producers and dancers, looking at tacit knowledge production and performance identities in Chicago, IL. My research focuses on informal technology pedagogy and hacking practices among artists who use pirated software packages developed in Europe and Japan for elite studio engineers. Working in the dance music genres of AfroBeats, Hip Life, and House/Footwork music, my work deploys perspectives on Sound Studies, Folklore, Performance Studies, New Media and Africana Studies.

Internet Citizenship • *2011-2014* PI: Greg Niemeyer (Berkeley Center for New Media) One of UC Berkeley's first digital humanities courses, I co-developed this large-scale online education platform, using video-chat discussion, video lecture, and social gaming to assert liveness in digital spaces. Students developed community-art projects with strong IT components to advance key ideas in New Media. Research presented at Digital Media Learning conferences 2012. (MacArthur Foundation, HASTAC)

Atomic Junction • *2010, 2013* UC Berkeley, PI: Abena Osseo-Asare (History of Science) Served as a research assistant/producer for this documentary film on the Ghanaian Atomic Energy Commission, the companion to Osseo-Asare's 2019 book. Advised research staff on the tools and thematics of video-based ethnography. Edited early releases of the film.

West African Immigrants and Technology Use • *2008-2009* (UC Berkeley) PI: Jenna Burrell (School of Information) Served as research assistant for this survey of mobile technology and social media use among migrants in the San Francisco Bay Area, examining migration narratives through oral history.

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

Royston, R.A. (2020) "Configuring Ghana's Diaspora: Deterritorialization, Disjuncture and the Digital." *African Diaspora, a Journal of Transnational Africa.* [Revised and Resubmitted]

Royston, R.A. and Strong, K. (April 2019) "Reterritorializing Twitter: African Moments 2010-2015." eds. Abigail De Kosnik and Keith Feldman, *#Identity: Twitter and the Politics of Representation*, University of Michigan Press.

Royston, R.A. (March 2017) "At Home, Online: Affective-Exchange in Ghanaian Internet Video." (chapter) eds. Leigh Raiford and Raphael-Hernandez, H. *Migrating the Black Body: Visual Culture and Diaspora*, University of Washington Press.

Royston, R.A. (Spring 2016) "Muslims and New Media in West Africa," Review of *Muslims and New Media in West Africa: Pathways to God*, by Dorothea Schulz. *Journal of West African History*.

Royston, R.A. (ND) "Podcasts and New Orality in the African Mediascape" *New Media & Society* [Submitted Fall 2019]

Royston, R.A. "Pan Africanism or Afri-Capitalism? Africa's Hacker-Developer Ethos." *Africa* or *African Studies Review* (targets) [in progress]

Royston, R.A. (in progress) "Digital Embodiment and the Techne of Social Media Dance: Azonto & Footwork," *Public Culture* or *Callaloo* [in progress]

NEW MEDIA PROJECTS

Royston, R.A. & Faisal Abdul'Allah (2017- present) Black Arts + Data Futures Workshop. Borghesi-Mellon Interdisciplinary Humanities Workshop, Center for Humanities, University of Wisconsin, Madison. This arts and lectures series attempts to chart new lines of inquiry and academic partnerships across UW-Madison departments and programs focusing on the history and future of technology in Africa and its diasporas.

BlackTechne.Tumblr.com (2016) Using the image blogging platform, coordinated the online discussion and production capacities for African Americans and the Mass Media (University of Pittsburgh). Posts included news items, podcasts and course-related discussions.

Royston, R.A. (2015) "Africana Apps: Building Tools for Nigeria's National Elections," [mobile app prototypes] accessible at raroyston.com.

Royston, R.A., Scott, J., Niemeyer, G. (2015) "Juneteenth: Diffusion and Resonance in the Emancipation of American Slaves," [multimedia lecture] accessible at raroyston.com.

Niemeyer, G., Royston, R.A., and Ferro-Murray, A. (2012-2015) "Internet Citizenship," [online course] screen shots accessible at raroyston.com.

Osseo-Asare, A., Royston, R.A., et al (2014) "Atomic Junction: Nuclear Science in an African Suburb," [short video documentary], accessible at raroyston.com.

CONFERENCE PAPERS AND INVITED TALKS

February 2020. "Viral Dance in Africa and its Diasporas." [invited talk] Eye on Africa speaker series. Michigan State University, East Lansing.

November 2019. "Black Digital Praxis and Ecologies of Exchange." American Anthropological Association, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

October 2019. "Digital Embodiment and Extraction in African Viral Dance Videos" [invited presenter] AI, Recommendations, and the Curation of Culture workshop, CIFAR, Paris, France

July & Sept. 2019. "Soulcraft in Ghanaian Azonto and Chicago Footwork" Interrogating Digital Blackness Symposium, Stanford University, CA and University of Virginia, Charlottesville. [invited presenter]

March 2019. "African Digital Aesthetics and Aurality in Online Media" – [invited presenter]
Global Africa, Migration, Literature and the Arts Symposium, Rutgers University, New Jersey

November 2018. "The Voice of the Diaspora: How Podcasts Craft Africa's Tech Futures." International Association of Communications-Africa Division, University of Ghana, Accra; and African Studies Association annual conference, Atlanta, GA

October 2018. "Oral Culture and African Digital Media" [invited talk]
Howard University School of Communications, Washington, D.C.

June 2018. "Digital Embodiment and the Techne of Social Media Dance: Azonto & Footwork,"
Caribbean Philosophy Association, University of Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar, Senegal.

April 2018. "New Orality and the African Mediascape" Great Lakes Sound Studies Association, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Nov 2017. "Juke/Footwork: Chicago's Tactical Music of Self-Possession," American Studies Association annual conference, Visual Cultures Symposium, Chicago, Illinois

Sept 2017. "The Emerging Digital Aesthetics of African Tech Innovation," invited.,
Strategic Narratives of Technology in Africa conference, Madeira Interactive Tech Institute, Portugal

Feb 2017. "Approaches to African Digital Diaspora Studies," Africa at Noon, African Studies Program, University of Wisconsin, Madison

with Strong, K.S. April 2016. "Re-Territorializing Twitter: African Moments 2010-2015." Society of Cultural Anthropology Biennial Conference, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY; and April 2016. "Digital Blackness" conference, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ

organizer., Reid-Vasquez, M., Sherry-Torres, T. April 2016. "Race in the Caribbean: An Exploration of Brown x Black Lives," symposium and research workshop Center for Latin America Studies, University of Pittsburgh, PA

March 2016. "Azonto Bodies: Digital Embodiment in Ghanaian Pop Music Video," Contemporary African Music Symposium, Center for African Studies, University of Pittsburgh, PA

Feb. 2015. "Parsing Big Data Ethnoscapes: Ghana, Twitter and the World Cup." Technology, Knowledge and Society annual conference, Berkeley, California.

Sept. 2014. "Afropolitan Looks: Digital Presence in Ghana's Video Cyberculture." Migrating the Black Body, Migration and Blackness in the 21st Century, Volkswagen Foundation, Hannover, Germany.

Dec. 2014. "Diaspora as Network: Deterritorialization Reconsidered." American Anthropological Association annual meeting, Washington, D.C.

Nov. 2014. "The New Media of Violence: Techne, Menace and Peace." Panel coordinator and discussant, African Studies Association annual conference, Indianapolis.

Nov. 2013. "Examining Networks of the Afropolitan in the Ghanaian Diaspora" *Future Publics and Current Engagements*: American Anthropological Association, Annual Conference. Chicago.

Feb. 2013. "Important Questions for Civic Apps Developers," Social Apps Lab, U.C. Center for Information Technology Research in the Interest of Society, Berkeley.

with Ferro-Murray, A. March 2012. "Whose Achievement? A Model for Open Source, Peer-Led Online Classrooms" Digital Media and Learning Conference, San Francisco.

BLOGS & GENERAL MEDIA PUBLICATIONS
Curator/Editor
blacktechne.tumblr.com — A blog on technology and media culture in the African Diaspora.
twitter.com/raroyston — Academic medium for teaching, research, live blogging on New Media.

Royston, R.A. (Nov. 2011) "Tablets, Africa's Next Leap-Frog Technology." [blog post]. Berkeley Center for New Media, access at http://bcnm.berkeley.edu/index.php/tablets-africas-next-leap-frog-technology

Royston, R.A. (Nov. 2011) "Cyberculture and Access in Ghana." [blog post]. Berkeley Center for New Media, at http://bcnm.berkeley.edu/index.php/in-accra-ghana-investigating-cyberculture-and-access/

R.A. Royston (June 23, 2008) "Digging Deeper on the Brown-Black Divide with Iván Román, National Association of Hispanic Journalists, Executive Director," Maynard Institute for Journalism Education, accessed at http://mije.org/reggieroyston/ivan_roman

Royston, R.A. (Spring 2008) "Interview: Charles Henry *Long Overdue: The Politics of Racial Reparations*," *Diaspora: Newsletter of the Department of African American Studies*, University of California, Berkeley, accessed at http://africam.berkeley.edu

Royston, R.A. (Dec. 2007) "Into the Afrosphere: Black Bloggers and the Case of the Jena 6." Technical report based on (Jan. 22, 2008) "Black Blogosphere Proves Potent Force in Story of Race in the New South," Maynard Institute for Journalism Education, http://mije.org/reggieroyston/blackbologsphere

TEACHING

Fall 2018   **Oral Culture & Africa in the Digital Era**, *University of Wisconsin, Madison,*
Dept. of African Cultural Studies — This advanced seminar interrogates the ways in
which Africa and its diaspora's traditions of oral culture are impacted by new media. How
are new digital media impacting the historical importance of oral discourse in Africa?
The theory of "technological determinism" dictates that scientific thinking and
technology must emerge from cultures that already have appropriated writing and literacy
as their central mode of communication. However, 21st century digital innovation
continues to lean toward increasing forms of informal and oral practices.

Current   **Code & Power: An Intersectional Analysis of the Internet**
since F2017 *University of Wisconsin, Madison - iSchool —* In this course, students learn Web
development, database design, and coding while analyzing and critiquing economic,
social and cultural structural inequality on the Internet and in tech industries. The course
guides students in understanding their own attitudes and beliefs about themselves, others
and computing, and empowers them to recognize and counter common and damaging
attitudes and beliefs. As part of learning about the computing industries and exploring
their self-identity in relation to computing, students design, develop, and discuss
interactive websites that employ web scripting.

Spring 2018 **Sound & Afro-Modernity: Digitizing the Body and Soul of the Nation**
University of Wisconsin, Madison, Dept. of African Cultural Studies — This course
examines sound and technology as tools of cultural invention and identity in
contemporary African life. How do music and its mediums construct national belonging
in Africa and the diaspora? What are the embodied senses of these? Posthumanism, new
media and globalization are examined against competing theories of modernity through
the writings of Achille Mbembe, Yvonne Daniels, Alexander Weheliye and others. We
also examine digital production and media distribution techniques for sound cultures
including, pop music, podcasts, radio, and online mediums such as Spotify and YouTube.

Fall 2017   **Africa + the Internet: An Introduction to Digital Life on the Continent**
UW, Madison – Department of African Cultural Studies
This course examines globalization and IT from the perspective of the developing world,
looking at the role of New Media in expressive culture and digital practices in Ghana,
Kenya, South Africa, Nigeria, Guinea and other key locales in Africa. Project-based,
blended, online/offline.

Spr. 2016   **Black Media Studies** – *University of Pittsburgh* Course uses the historic issues of
representation of African Americans in U.S. media cultures since the 1950s. Moves on
to focus on contemporary digital content from Africa and its diasporas. Emphasis on
cultural forms, styles of online writing, political hashtags, popular culture and artists as
they interact with mass media and global networks.

Fall 2014   **Digital Diaspora: Race, New Media and Black Cultural Production Online**
Williams College - We examine black aesthetics in technology use (voice, mobile
devices, Twitter), development of black virtual communities (Instagram, Black

blogosphere), and digital crises and racial panics (Trayvon Martin, #BlackLivesMatter), primarily since the dawn of the Internet Age in the 1990s.

AY 2011 to 2014 **Principles of Internet Citizenship**, *Instructor, course designer with Prof. Greg Niemeyer, MFA. University of California, Berkeley.* Served as lead instructor for undergraduate course exploring contemporary theories and practices of Internet culture. Initiated more than 40 community-based IT projects via the Social Apps Lab with students. Since 2012, this course has been completely online with asynchronous lectures, live video chat discussion, peer-badges, and an original learning management site designed for collaborative interactions.

HONORS AND AWARDS

Fall Research Competition, Office of Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education, 2019-2020
Educational Instruction Online Course Development Award, Division of Continuing Studies, UW L&S
Borghesi-Mellon Workshop Award, UW Center for Humanities Coordinator
Anna Julia Cooper Postdoctoral Fellowship, University of Wisconsin, Madison 2016-2017
Mellon Foundation C3 Postdoctoral Fellowship, Williams College, 2014-2015
University of California Dissertation Year Fellowship, 2013-2014
Digital Humanities Workshop, Dan Cohen, Berkeley dLab, George Mason University, 2013
MacArthur Foundation and HASTAC, Digital Media Learning Research Grant, 2012
University of California Office of the President – Online Instruction Pilot Project, 2011-2012
Veve Clark Research Travel Award, Graduate Division (UC Berkeley), 2011
Alice Baker Research Award, African Diaspora Studies Program (UC Berkeley), 2011
Dean's Normative Time Graduate Fellowship (UC Berkeley), 2011
University of California Multi-Campus Research Group on Africa Dissertation Seminar, 2011
FLAS-Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship (Dept. of Education) – Akan (Ghana), 2011
Social Science Research Council – "Virtual Worlds" Predissertation Fellowship, 2010
Graduate Research Fellowship, Berkeley Center for New Media, Summer 2010
Ford Foundation Pre-Dissertation Fellowship, Honorable Mention, 2010 & 2009
Mentored Research Fellowship, University of California-Berkeley, 2009-2010
Eugene Cota-Robles Graduate Student Fellowship, University of California, 2007-2011
California Newspaper Publishers Association, Best all-around design, 2006
Minnesota Society of Professional Journalists, Page One award, 2005

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Undergraduate Outreach, Department of African Cultural Studies, UW-Madison
Keynote, Information Technology Youth Academy graduation, UW Depart. of Information Technology
Professional Master's Development Committee, iSchool, University of Wisconsin, Madison
Ph.D. and Master's Administrative Committee, iSchool, University of Wisconsin, Madison
Faculty Senate designee, Department of African Cultural Studies, UW-Madison
Community Relations Committee, Department of African Cultural Studies, UW-Madison
Master's Advisor 2018, Devon Betts, African American Studies and Digital Studies
Thesis Advisor 2018, Jacob Witz, HEXU Public Humanities program, Digital Studies
Thesis Advisor 2017, Kevin Bannerman-Hutchful, Economics and Development Studies
Race and the Caribbean: BlackXLatin Lives, Univ. of Pittsburgh, symposium coordinator, March 2016
Research Advisor 2015, Arielle Steele, Film and American Studies, Class of '57 Summer Research Grant
Thesis Advisor 2015, Medina Fitzmaurice, Africana Studies, "International Adoption and Race."
 "Making Sense of #Ferguson Forum," panelist, Office of the President, Williams College, 2014
Dean's Council on Digital Humanities, College of Arts and Letters, UC Berkeley 2013-2014
Learning Mode College Readiness Hackathon, Berkeley Center for New Media, 2013 coordinator

AFFILIATIONS

School of Journalism and Mass Communications, University of Wisconsin, Madison
African American Studies, University of Wisconsin, Madison
Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, Affiliated Researcher
African Studies Association (USA), Ghana Studies Association
Caribbean Philosophy Association
American Studies Association, Visual Studies Caucus
American Anthropological Association, Society for Visual Anthropology
HASTAC – Humanities, Art, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory
The Africa Network scholarly conference
University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of African American Studies,
University of Wisconsin-Madison, School of Journalism and Mass Communication
The Berkeley Center for New Media
AFRON — African Robotics Network, Ken Goldberg
WorkHard PGH Community-based Tech Incubator
North Adams MakerSpace, North Adams, Massachusetts
Color of New Media Working Group, UC Berkeley, Abigail de Kosnik
eBlack Studies Initiative, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Abdul Alkalimat
ICT4Development Working Group, Jenna Burrell, School of Information, UC Berkeley
Fundação Internacional de Capoeira Angola, Madison, WI