Knowledge may be power, but so are the practices and technologies by which knowledge is created, systematized, preserved, disseminated, overwritten, forgotten, recovered, and reimagined. Analog processes convey a sense of craft and authenticity, suggesting a more direct relationship between maker, artifact, and beholder, but they may also be perceived as quaint and fetishized, rarified precisely because of labor intensive exclusivity. By contrast, digital processes can simultaneously appear efficient and overwhelming, progressive and impersonal, radically accessible and avariciously monetized.

Rather than choosing between backward glancing nostalgia and futuristic innovation, let us instead heed the ongoing conversation between analog and digital technologies, the stakes of which are not only cultural and aesthetic, but deeply ethical and inherently political. We might begin with the question, what is the relationship between making and knowledge? How does the organization of knowledge and creativity define meaning? What are the capacities of old and new technologies to recover lost stories and tell new ones? How do we interrogate the ways that systems of knowledge create inequitable systems of access and agency?

This semester, we will contemplate our complicated relationships to both the analog and the digital. We will also consider the often uncanny and surprising overlaps in between. We hope you can join us as we explore the pleasure, power, and potential of these “Analog & Digital Conversations.”
Descendants

AN EXHIBITION BY LOU JONES

Photographs preserve discrete moments in time, but they also encapsulate complexities of art and technology as well as social practice and lived experience.

When descendants of the original sitters gathered this past fall for the opening of Worcester Art Museum’s *Rediscovering an American Community of Color: The Photographs of William Bullard*, Lou Jones was there to record the extraordinary gathering. The resulting photographs commemorate the reunion not only of families, but of analog and digital technologies, evolving photographic aesthetics, and a historic Worcester community. In this new series of African American portraiture, Jones places his subjects in conversation with the historical photographs that link them together across space and time, memory and experience.

The exhibition will be on display in the Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons from February 1 through May 20. Please contact the Higgins School for hours and availability.
Reaper

POEMS ON TECHNOLOGY AND HUMANITY

How do we seek to connect with one another in a time of distant drone warfare and overwhelming incarceration rates?

In this reading of her most recent collection of poems, Reaper, writer Jill McDonough will engage with the digital and the analog, in a world where “NPR has a story about robots asking please/don’t pull that plug. People pull the plug but first/they cry.” Her work captures people trying to do the right thing at the wrong time—in conversations following car accidents on Boston streets or between drone operators after they see “a small human body” suddenly appear on their screens. Whether communicating with trolls on Facebook or the young students she tutors in what she calls “kidjail,” McDonough approaches the problems and potential of technology with humanity and humor, possibility and grace.

A book signing will follow immediately after the reading. Copies of Reaper will be available for purchase at the event.
Are there any aspects of analog and digital existence that are entirely separate, and do we even have a choice in how we depend upon and engage with various technologies? Is anything gained when we revert to analog ways of being, communicating, creating, and enjoying? What technologies could you bear to give up? What must you have? What would you be happy to see go? We ask ourselves these questions, but is our relationship with technology exclusively about possession? Must the imagined contest between analog and digital processes always be a calculation of benefit and loss?

Join Hugh Manon (Screen Studies; Media, Culture and the Arts) and Meredith Neuman (English) as they ask us to consider the continuities in making and knowing, experiencing and exploring across the analog and digital divide.
Is Technology Good for Voting?

Americans have a love/hate relationship with technology when it comes to elections.

As with so many aspects of modern life, the act of voting now depends on computer technologies to do everything, from tracking voter registrations to verifying the accuracy of ballot counts. Yet news cycles are full of stories accusing these same systems of undermining elections with hanging chads, paperless computerized voting machines, and the threat of hacking.

Charles Stewart III is the Kenan Sahin Distinguished Professor of Political Science at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the founding director of the MIT Election Data and Science Lab. In this talk, he will explore why America—alone among the world’s democracies—relies so heavily on voting technologies and how this dependence has been largely beneficial. But are there compelling new reasons for skepticism in light of the 2016 presidential election?
Shaping Critical Narratives in Photography in the African American Community

Images of the black subject—artistic, documentary, and anthropological—are forever fixed in the popular imagination through photography.

From the medium’s beginning, race and gender have determined the reception of photographic portraits, politically and aesthetically. Coupling the aspirations of their subjects with their own, some American photographers of the 19th and 20th centuries evoked an emotional message that went beyond self-representation and toward the re-characterization of African American experience. William Bullard and other photographers—both black and white—responded to social issues of their time, creating images that commented on politics, culture, family, and history from internal and external points of view.

Deborah Willis, University Professor and Chair of Photography and Imaging at New York University, will mediate between the objectification and (re)presentation of the black body in the work of Bullard and other photographers who transformed the course of art history and fundamentally imaged the black in Western art.

Tuesday, March 20 @ 7pm
Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons

Co-sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities; the Office of the Provost; the Center for Gender, Race and Area Studies; and the Department of Visual and Performing Arts
In survival and in grief, with resilience and creativity, residents of Puerto Rico and other islands continue to live through the extreme, forced reversion from the digital world to analog life.

After catastrophic failures of basic infrastructure, wrenching decisions and practical strategies have introduced radical approaches to the far-reaching consequences of colonialism, the implications of climate change, and the effects of continuing political neglect. Although centered on the lived experience in the path of the hurricane, the lessons to be learned address widespread systemic precariousness and resource inequities across the nation.

Join us as panelists from across the Clark community share stories of unimaginable transformations in Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands, and other places forever altered by Hurricanes Irma and Maria. Professor María Acosta Cruz (Language, Literature and Culture), author of *Dream Nation: Puerto Rican Culture and the Fictions of Independence* (2014), will lead this interactive forum.

**Wednesday, March 28 @ 7pm**
Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons

*Co-sponsored by the Higgins School of Humanities; International Development, Community and Environment; the Department of Language, Literature and Culture; and the Office of Multicultural and First Generation Student Support*

**ABOUT THE PHOTO**
In this image by Puerto Rican artist and curator José López Serra, residents watch as line repairers from ConEdison work to reestablish power in Old San Juan. Years of austerity measures took a toll on PREPA, the public electric power corporation, as inventory stocks were sold off, and employees took early retirement in the years prior to Hurricane Maria.
Capturing and Eroding the Self

FROM SELF-PORTRAITURE TO THE SELFIE

The selfie is everywhere, but in some ways, it is nothing new.

Self-portraiture—for critical examination, personal expression, public display, and demonstration of craft—has a long history, but in its current digital form does it expand or shrink one’s perception of self? What is the purpose of a selfie, and is there still an art to making one? In this talk, John Garton (Visual and Performing Arts) will examine how the tradition pioneered in the Renaissance and other early modern epochs is being renovated today. Esteban Cardemil (Psychology) will offer commentary.

The Roots of Everything is a lecture series sponsored by Early Modernists Unite (EMU)—a faculty collaborative bringing together scholars of medieval and early modern Europe and America—in conjunction with the Higgins School of Humanities. The series highlights various aspects of modern existence originating in the early modern world by connecting past and present knowledge.
The opposition of digital progress and analog nostalgia is giving way to a new vision of hybridity...

Undividing Digital and Analog

THE PROMISE OF HYBRIDITY

In the last twenty-five years, we have displaced much of our culture, work, and recordkeeping into the digital domain.

While this turn has vastly enriched many lives, it has also amplified divides, accelerated inequalities, elevated the possibility of historical amnesia, and brought us new and onerous forms of labor. But it is not irreversible. Digital emergence is feeding a renaissance of physical media, a revival of the handmade, and an analog culture that consciously looks forward rather than to the past. The opposition of digital progress and analog nostalgia is giving way to a new vision of hybridity, suggests Rick Prelinger, founder of Prelinger Archives, a collection of 60,000 ephemeral films acquired by the Library of Congress in 2002. Centered on the archival record and the production of culture as models for social imagination, Prelinger will discuss how strategies that look beyond physical/virtual binaries can aspire to redistribute power and heal digital wounds.
DESCENDANTS

IS TECHNOLOGY GOOD FOR VOTING?

FROM SELF-PORTRAITURE TO THE SELFIE

REAPER

PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

UNDIVIDING DIGITAL AND ANALOG

THE WORLDS WE LIVE IN

AFTER MARIA

symposium at a glance
The Higgins School of Humanities affirms the centrality of the arts and humanities to our lives and the values of a liberal arts education. It supports teaching and research through its grant programs and sponsors public events and campus initiatives, enhancing the intellectual and cultural life of the Clark community.

Unless otherwise noted, all events will be held on the Clark University campus in the Higgins Lounge at Dana Commons, 36 Maywood Street, Worcester, MA 01610.

Admission is free and open to the public. All information is subject to change.

To support the Higgins School:
Visit alumni.clarku.edu/make-a-gift. Please select designation “Other” and direct your contribution to the Higgins School of Humanities.