



UNIVERSITY of
SOUTH FLORIDA

College of Arts & Sciences

Humanities Institute



SPRING
2021
NEWSLETTER

Director's Statement

We made it through 2020. The last year was brutal for so many different reasons and, though 2021 certainly has its share of challenges on the horizon, it felt wonderful to close the book on 2020.

USF, like the rest of the country, is facing some very difficult decisions about our future path. Campus leadership is addressing major budget shortfalls, while determining the strategic vision that will guide the university for years to come. I encourage everyone to actively participate in the decision-making process. In the face of such anxiety about the fragile nature of our democracy, our inability to have civil disagreements with each other, racial injustice, and economic injustice, the humanities *must* be prioritized. To graduate students with the skill sets to address these complex issues, we have to invest in philosophy, literature, history, and cultural studies; these are the spaces where students learn to listen, empathize, and construct arguments.

The Humanities Institute has built this semester's programs with these ideas in mind. At the end of January, HI will host our 2nd Undergraduate Humanities Conference where 50 students will present original scholarly or creative projects. Next, will be a series of events focused on the enduring legacy of the massacre of African American communities from Tulsa, Oklahoma to Ocoee, Florida. The semester concludes with a special evening with renowned Afrofuturist author, Nnedi Okorafor.

Although we're looking forward to the day when we can safely gather again in person, it has been wonderful to see how HI's reach has spread thanks to the digital platforms we've adopted. Last semester we welcomed guests from across the country and saw some of our largest audiences ever.

We hope your year is off to a good start. Thank you, as always, for your support of the USF Humanities Institute, and we look forward to a semester of inspiring and thought-provoking events.

Liz Kicak, M.F.A.
Director



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Undergraduate Humanities Research Conference Enters 2nd Year

At the end of January, 50 students from 14 different schools and departments will present at the 2nd Annual Undergraduate Humanities Conference. Each has interrogated a fundamentally humanistic question about how we engage with the world, and the broad range of topics (from medicine to poetry) illustrate how our beliefs, values, and traditions impact every facet of our lives. The stories we hear, the places we live, the media we consume, all inform how we see and interact with the world. It is a joy to see these students' innate understanding of these connections and how their scholarship asks new and meaningful questions.

As USF continues to strive towards member-

ship in the AAU, the Humanities Institute is proud to support undergraduate research (a principle AAU value). As part of the USF College of Arts and Sciences, the Humanities Institute plays a unique role in advancing research and education in the humanities at all levels, and we are pleased that this has become an annual event with such enthusiastic participation. The conference is made possible through the Clara Cooper Endowment for the Humanities.

All sessions will be livestreamed, and audience members will have the opportunity to participate in live Q&As. Please visit our website: www.humanities-institute.usf.edu to view the complete program and get the livestream link.

Daily Schedule



2ND ANNUAL
UNDERGRADUATE
HUMANITIES CONFERENCE

JAN. 28-29, 2021

Link to livestream:
www.humanities-institute.usf.edu

Jan. 28

9am: Poster Session I

10am: Poster Session II

11:30am: Selective Reflection: Invisibility in Scholarship

1:30pm: What the Eye Beholds: Visual Rhetoric

3pm: Personal Poetics: Original Creative Projects

4:15pm: "Othering" the Family Tree: Transgenerational Impacts

Jan. 29

9am: Misbehaving: Challenging the Conventions of "Womanhood"

11am: The Humanities & Healthcare

1pm: Exploring Social Issues Through Film

2pm: Grow & Thrive: Research Benefiting Children and Young Adults

3:15pm: Text & Medium: Digital Designs

4:15pm: Imprisoned: Cultural and Historical Perspectives

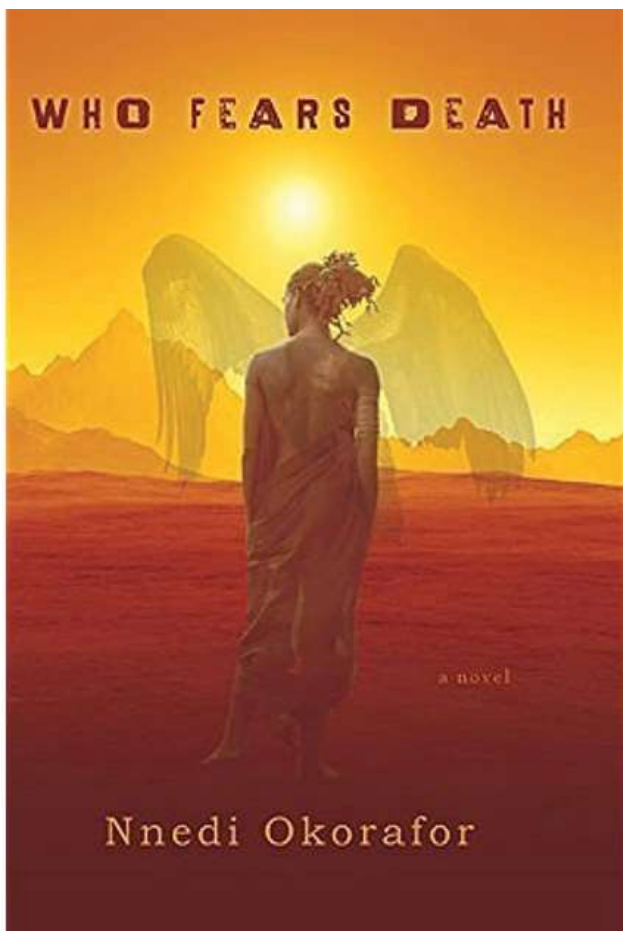
Nigerian-American Author, Nnedi Okorafor



Nnedi Okorafor

Hugo, Nebula Award Winner
Marvel Comic Author

Tuesday, Mar. 30
7:00pm | Online



The Judy Genshaft Honors College and the Humanities Institute are proud to host internationally renowned author, Nnedi Okorafor on March 30.

Born in the United States to two Nigerian immigrant parents, Okorafor is known for weaving African culture and folklore into creative, evocative settings with memorable characters. She's considered by many to be the successor to Ursula LeGuin for her literary quality fantasy and sci-fi creations. She's a multi *New York Times* bestselling author, and her many literary awards include a Nebula and Hugo Award. She has a passionate YA following for her *Binti* series, and the *Akata Witch* books.

Okorafor is also a celebrated author of several comic book series. She writes for both *The Black Panther* and *Shuri*, both from Marvel Comics, and she authored a spinoff graphic novel, *Wakanda Forever*. Her other comics include *Antar: the Black Knight* (IDW/Mirage Films), and *LaGuardia*. Author George R.R. Martin and HBO are turning Nnedi's adult novel, *Who Fears Death*, into a TV series.

Students in several classes will be reading Okorafor's work this semester and the Humanities Institute has selected the first *Binti* novella for its spring book group.

Book Group

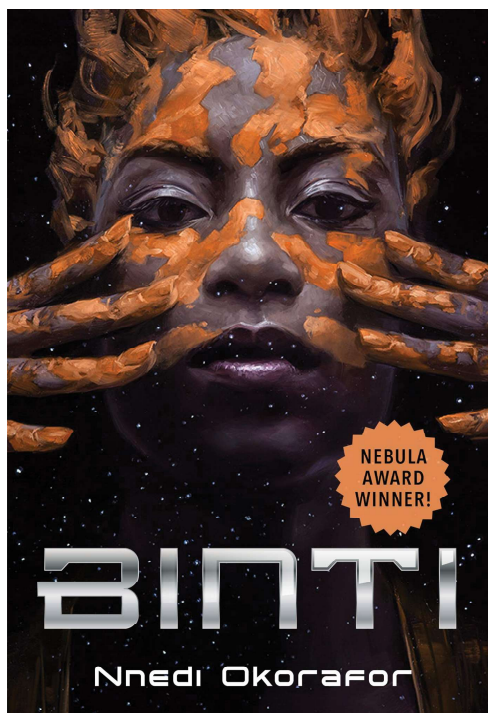
Join our online book group! This semester features two incredible books: *Bestiary*, by K-Ming Chang, and *Binti*, by Nnedi Okorafor. Please visit our website for free registration.



***Bestiary* by K-Ming Chang**
Thursday, Mar. 4
7pm | Online

Stonewall Suites Living Learning Community
Reading Selection

A fantastic multigenerational tale that uses memory and folklore to weave a story of migration, queer lineages, and girlhood. The novel begins when Mother tells Daughter the story of Hu Gu Po, a tiger spirit who lived in a woman's body and hungered to eat children. Soon afterward, Daughter awakes with a tiger tail. More mysterious events follow all while Daughter is falling for Ben, a neighborhood girl with strange powers of her own.



***Binti* by Nnedi Okorafor**
Tuesday, Mar. 23
7pm | Online

Her name is Binti, and she is the first of the Himba people ever to be offered a place at Oomza University, the finest institution of higher learning in the galaxy. But to accept the offer will mean giving up her place in her family to travel between the stars among strangers who do not share her ways or respect her customs.

The world she seeks to enter has long warred with the Meduse, an alien race that has become the stuff of nightmares. If Binti hopes to survive the legacy of a war not of her making, she will need both the gifts of her people and the wisdom enshrined within the University, itself, but first she has to make it there, alive.

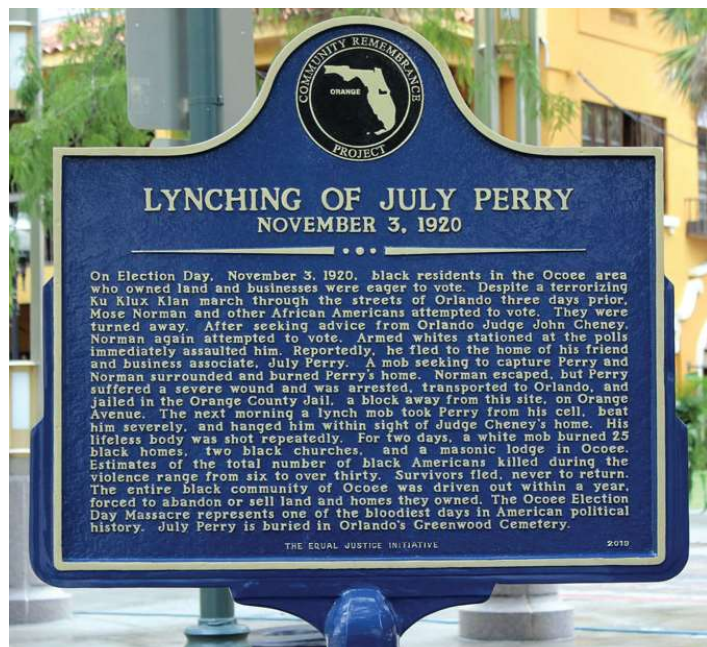
Spring 2021 5

Recovering Erased History

Beginning in February, the Humanities Institute will host a series of events exploring the idea of “erased history.” These are not simply events that history has forgotten but events that have been, and continue to be, actively repressed, ignored, or misrepresented. We will look at both local and national examples that share some common historical origins and see how those events continue to shape community relations and identities.

Feb. 16: “Ocoee Massacre” Film Screening

This documentary produced by Cox Media Group and WFTV, an ABC affiliate in Orlando, uses oral histories and archival records to tell the story of the massacre of the thriving black community in Ocoee, Florida. When African American citizens of the town insisted on their right to vote in the 1920 election, white supremacist groups stormed the town. Led by deputized members of the KKK, residents were burned alive in their homes, shot while trying to escape, or lynched. The violence resulted in the displacement of hundreds of black residents; their property was then seized and resold without their consent. This powerful film will be screened at 7pm, followed by a group discussion.



Feb. 23: Deliberately Forgetting the Destruction of Dreams: Looking Back on 100 Years of Documenting The Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921

Oklahoma State University Library Director, Lynn Wallace, oversees the university’s special collection of archival materials related to the Tulsa Massacre of 1921 and will discuss the ongoing work of bringing attention to this long suppressed, dark event in American history.

A growing and prosperous African-American community had their aspirations and dreams destroyed on the night of May 31st 1921 when a newspaper article and rumors incited one of the worst incidents of racial violence in this nation’s history. Deliberate efforts to suppress the truth of these events kept Tulsa, Oklahoma out of the history books for decades and members of the community either silenced or unaware. What happened that night? Why have so few heard about this history? What happened to the dreams destroyed? Where are the records and documents that record this history? 100 years later, what questions still go unanswered? This event will be held online and begins at 7pm.

Mar. 2: Remembering the Ocoee Election Day Massacre and Re-Learning US History

We return to Ocoee, Florida in March for a talk by University of Florida Historian, Paul Ortiz. The author of *Emancipation Betrayed*, Ortiz will discuss how the City of Ocoee and other civic organizations have worked to commemorate and remember the victims of this traumatic incident. He will also explore how the tragic events that transpired in Orange County intersect with the broader histories of the African American freedom struggle as well as today’s efforts at historical truth and reconciliation in the age of Black Lives Matter. Finally, he asks what is our role as educated individuals in making sure that future generations never forget the Ocoee Massacre? This event will be held online and begins at 7pm.

Spring 2021 Calendar

Times are in Eastern Standard Time (EST)

Jan. 28 - 29 • 9am • Undergraduate Humanities Conference
(see p.3 for daily conference schedule)

Feb. 23 • 7pm • *Deliberately Forgetting the Destruction of Dreams: Looking Back on 100 Years of Documenting The Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921*
Lynn Wallace

Feb. 16 • 7pm • *Ocoee Massacre Documentary Screening*

Mar. 2 • 7pm • *Remembering Ocoee and Re-Learning US History*
Paul Ortiz

Mar. 4 • 7pm • Book Group: *Bestiary*

Mar. 23 • 7pm • Book Group: *Binti*

Mar. 30 • 7pm • *An Evening With Nnedi Okorafor*

All Spring 2021 events will be held online. Events are free and open to the public, but participants need to register to receive the link. Registration is available for all events on our website: www.humanities-institute.usf.edu. For help with registering, please email Jade Von Werder: jvonwerder@usf.edu.

Help the Humanities Thrive

Your support matters! If you enjoy the USF Humanities Institute's events and programs, please support our work by making a gift online today: <https://giving.usf.edu/online/gift/f/420019/>

Would you like to learn more about making a lasting difference with a planned gift? Please contact Liz Kicak: ekicak@usf.edu or 813-974-3657.

The Humanities Institute Mission Statement

The Mission of the Humanities Institute at the University of South Florida is to generate critical dialogue about what connects us to each other and our world, facilitating those conversations through research, education, and community programs.



Humanities Institute

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