



Chris Aguilar-Garcia

Independent Scholar, USA

Chris Aguilar-Garcia worships in the name of Madonna, Prince, and the Holy Spirit (Wendy and Lisa). He fell into fandom upon purchasing Prince's "1999" in 1982 and realised a lifelong dream when hired as a video editor at Paisley Park in 2001. Currently completing a BA at Antioch University-Los Angeles in Liberal Studies and Queer Studies, Chris is a Queer, male-bodied person who also worked as a film producer assistant, Program Manager at an LGBTQ scholarship organization, and currently in a public library. He counts sharing a spin class with Her Madgesty as a religious experience and life high point.

New Power, Sexuality and Emancipation: The revolutionary queerness of Prince through a Foucauldian lens.

From arriving on the 1980's music scene in bikini briefs, eyeliner and high heels, singing songs about incest and masturbation, to a fight for emancipation from recording industry contracts, Prince consistently held the power dynamics of sexuality and domination as key to liberation from the binds of what French philosopher and social theorist Michel Foucault termed 'government of individualization'.

Prince demonstrated his full-throttled approach to creating art not only as objects in the form of music, motion pictures, and videos, but as a mindful daily practice of living art and resistance. Prince's vibrant life force enlivened Foucault's belief that, "we should not have to refer the creative activity of somebody to the kind of relation he has to himself, but should relate the kind of relation one has to oneself to a creative activity."

For Prince, power also derived from his refusal to conform -- demanding to produce his debut album, creating side projects as additional creative outlets, changing his name to a symbol, and creating a pioneering web-distribution platform. His uncompromised vision revealed a rebel spirit with a lifelong commitment to resistance. "Where there is power, there is resistance," Foucault explains, "a plurality of resistances... spread over time and space... And it is doubtless the strategic codification of these points of resistance that make a revolution possible."

Through rooting his body of work in sexuality and its pleasures as a means to his own emancipation -- thereby offering his fans a roadmap to discover their own liberation -- the life of Prince provides a clear, direct link to the ethical lives Foucault envisioned. Negative connotations of the expression of sexuality exemplify biopower in action. By consistently resisting this power through a frank and explicit expression of sexuality, Prince realized his life as a revolutionary work of art. "

1958-2016



Zaheer Ali

New York University, USA

Zaheer Ali is a historian and scholar of 20th century United States and African-American history. He has presented his scholarship on Prince at the EMP Pop Conference (2012) and at Yale University's "Black Star Rising & the Purple Reign" David Bowie - Prince Conference (2017). He is currently Oral Historian at Brooklyn Historical Society and an adjunct lecturer at New York University, where this spring he is teaching a course titled, "Prince: Sign of the Times," an examination of Prince's life and legacy in American history and culture.

Slave 2 the System: Prince's labour activism and the black radical tradition

The second presentation recasts Prince's 1993 conflict with Warner Brothers Records as that of a labour struggle that signalled important shifts in his articulation of his politics in art and life. His decision to write the word 'slave' on his face drew widespread attention and derision from critics who felt that his invocation of slavery was not appropriate coming from a multimillionaire popstar.

This paper seeks to complicate that view by framing Prince's protest as a form of labour activism, and considers his protest in context of the long tradition of Black radicalism that invoked slavery to identify and critique racialized capitalism in the United States.

1958-2016



Tom Attah

University of Salford, UK

Tom Attah is BMus Popular Music Course Leader at Leeds College of Art. His research focuses on the effects of technology on blues music and blues culture. Tom's teaching and blues advocacy includes workshops, seminars, lectures and recitals delivered internationally.

As a guitarist and singer, Tom performs solo, with acoustic duos and as leader of an electric band. Tom's solo acoustic work includes his own original Blues compositions and has led to performances at international music festivals, including major stages at the Glastonbury Festival of Contemporary Performing Arts. Tom's media appearances include performances and documentaries for BBC Radio. Tom's journalistic writing regularly features in specialist music publications, and his original research papers and book reviews are published in internationally peer-reviewed journals.

To Make Purple, You Need Blue: Prince as an embodiment of the postmodern Blues aesthetic

As part of his ground-breaking work as a stylistic provocateur during the 1980s and 1990s, blues music and blues culture provided a fundamental element of Prince's composition, production and live performance practice. This paper examines the extent to which Prince employed the blues aesthetic to leverage contrasting notions of black masculinity in addition to opening a space for transgression, catharsis, and the creation of community as part of his on-stage presentation.

This paper constructs a continuum of blues music performance including Muddy Waters, B.B. King and Jimi Hendrix, positioning Prince as a performer in full command of the historical qualities that characterised African-American music-making with specific reference to the stylistic gestures particular to blues music and blues culture.

Through comparative analysis of live bootlegs with the live recordings of B.B. King and Jimi Hendrix, Prince emerges as the embodiment of the postmodern blues aesthetic in popular music. This paper specifically speaks to Prince as musician; Prince as songwriter; Prince and racial representations with specific reference to sexuality and masculinity; Prince, feminism and gender relations with specific reference to the artist's presence as an actor in a specific performance style.

1958-2016



Simon Barber

Birmingham City University UK

Dr Simon Barber researches, writes and lectures about popular music, the music industries, digital culture and jazz. As a Research Fellow in the Birmingham Centre for Media and Cultural Research at Birmingham City University, Simon is particularly interested in songwriting and the relationships between creative workers and industry. He has published in *The European Journal of Cultural Studies*, *The Radio Journal*, *The Journal on the Art of Record Production* and the *Jazz Research Journal* among others. He has also produced and co-presented over 95 episodes of the popular *Sodajerker* podcast, which features interviews with some of the most successful songwriters in the world.

Paisley Park Is In Your Heart: Contextualising Prince at Celebration 2017

This paper reflects on the ways in which the creative and commercial dimensions of Prince's career are represented and given new meaning through the creation of a museum tour at his private estate and production complex, Paisley Park. Since October 6, 2016, fans have visited suburban Chanhassen, Minneapolis, to explore the creative and personal spaces occupied by Prince and to engage with a range of artefacts and other ephemera associated with his life and career.

This research draws on my experience of attending Celebration 2017, a four-day event at Paisley Park designed to celebrate Prince's legacy on the first anniversary of his death. I use ideas of fandom, heritage, memory and media representation to contextualise the ways in which the artistry and industry of Prince is embodied in the repurposing of his home base for the public.

1958-2016

Conference Speakers and Abstracts



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Dereca Blackmon

Stanford University, USA

Dereca Blackmon is a lecturer in the Centre for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity at Stanford University as well as Associate Dean and Director of its Diversity and First-Generation Office. She is a nationally respected diversity and inclusion lecturer, facilitator and consultant with 25 years' experience creating "uncommon conversations" about race, class, gender, sexuality and socioeconomic status. Her work on liberatory education is the subject of two books: *Learning to Liberate* - by Dr. Vajra Watson and *Black Youth Rising* by Dr. Shawn Ginwright.

Beyond Definition: The liberation theology of Prince

This presentation will explore Prince's expansive ideas of freedom and his challenges to archetypes of Blackness, particularly his genre-busting in the categories of Black music, spirituality and masculinity. As a lyricist, musician, and style icon, Prince's art dismantled conventional notions of race, gender, religion and sexual freedom, intentionally blurring categories that attempted to contain and classify his self-expression. Prince's refusal to be identified by musical genre, social identity or even name will be examined in the context of art as a tool for liberatory self-determination.

1958-2016



Scarlett Brown

King's College London, UK

Scarlett Brown recently completed a PhD at King's College London. Her thesis examined the discursive effects of the 'women on boards' agenda: how the concept of the 'ideal' is socially constructed and gendered; how networking practices are influenced by gender; and how gender structures the way that those seeking board roles make sense of success and failure. Prior to this she completed an MSc in Sociology at the LSE and a BSc Sociology at the University of Bristol, focusing her research on young women's perception of the relationship between feminism, gender and sexuality.

If I Was Your Girlfriend: Becoming a woman while listening to Prince

This paper explores how gender and sexuality are depicted in Prince's lyrics, and their discursive implications. Moving beyond attempts to see lyrics as representing inner 'truth' of him as an individual, this paper draws on an auto-ethnographic approach and discourse analysis of Prince's lyrics, and examines how these lyrics are consumed. In doing so it explores the – at times, problematic - contradiction in Prince's portrayal of women: they are simultaneously presented as being highly sexual(ised) objects, while also frequently adopting humanised, depictions of women as active and assertive sexual agents.

The paper also examines how Prince's representation of (his own) masculinity, while also being hyper-sexualised and heterosexual adopts discourses of vulnerability, passivity and submissiveness. His lyrics also centralise female sexuality and frequently prioritise mutual pleasure. It highlights therefore how Prince's use of gendered and sexualised discourse, unusually, challenges hetero-patriarchal representations of gender and sexuality while remaining distinctly and persistently heterosexual. By reflecting on my own consumption and rediscovery of Prince's music at a young age, as a teenager and again as a young woman, I argue that Prince's music provided a profoundly feminist model for making sense of my own sexuality.

I also discuss – through reference to conversations with my Father – how our shared analysis of Prince and his lyrics along these lines also provided an unlikely framework for the relationship between a parent and child; a safe space within which to discuss sexuality, and a feminist model of gender and sexuality for a father to pass on to his daughter. This paper contributes both to an understanding of Prince as a, perhaps unlikely, feminist icon for a young woman, while seeking to contribute to our understanding of the discursive effects of lyrics on the individual, and as a potential framework for an approach to making sense of our own gender and sexuality.

1958-2016



Susan Campion

Independent Scholar, USA

Susan is an entrepreneur, educator, and cultural producer focusing on improving business and entrepreneurship, and the intersection of artists, businesses, and communities. Susan is adjunct faculty at the University of St. Thomas, where she has taught in the MBA, undergraduate, and executive education programs. She is also adjunct faculty at the University of Minnesota, where she co-created the “Creative Entrepreneurship and Resource Development” course in the Professional Arts and Culture Leadership graduate programme.

Susan is also the co-founder and CEO of Giant Steps, which links path-forgers from the entrepreneurial and artistic communities in Minnesota and around the world. She and her team have created a community for exchanging ideas and experiences; fostering “unlikely” collaborations; and constructively blurring the boundaries between business and art.

Since its start in 2010, Giant Steps has succeeded in linking 1200 participants, and 250 speakers living in 13 countries. In 2016, Giant Steps examined the impact of Prince on artists and entrepreneurs.

It Ain't About No Downtown, Nowhere-Bound, Narrow-Minded Drag: Prince's impact on the creative eco-system of Minneapolis

Prince and Minneapolis are forever linked. Ask anyone outside of Minnesota about Minneapolis and likely, the first thing they will say is “Prince!”. This session will look at the web of influence, opportunities, and inspiration Prince created in Minneapolis. It will highlight a unique example of how one artist can facilitate and transform the creative eco-system of a city and what other artists can learn from it.

By looking beyond his immense catalog and the stirring performances Prince leaves behind, I'll demonstrate the depth of his local legacy and his unabashed commitment to creativity in his hometown. I will examine Prince's impact as a creative entrepreneur and as a catalyst for other creative entrepreneurs, as a philanthropist, as a cultural influencer, and as an inspiration and mentor for individual creatives in Minneapolis. Specifically, I will be looking at primary source interviews and discussions with people who worked for Prince, collaborated with him, or were influenced by him.

I will also use local and national media and interviews with Prince, as well as mapping the network of Minneapolis artists and organizations resulting from and influenced by the ripple effects of Prince. By understanding the unique relationship between Prince and Minneapolis, we can better understand additional layers of his impact globally and the potential of all artists to influence their environments.

I'll look at not just the number and types of local businesses and artists affected by Prince's work in Minneapolis; but I'll also examine the lessons for other artists and creative entrepreneurs from the intangibles that were essential to Prince's story and success: authenticity and resilience, networks and collaboration, generosity and self-preservation, innovation and self-motivation. These intangibles are inextricably linked to Prince's life in Minneapolis. And Minneapolis both supported and benefited from the success of her son, Prince.

1958-2016



Alex Case

University of Massachusetts, USA

Alex U. Case, Associate Professor, Sound Recording Technology, University of Massachusetts, focuses his research on aesthetics, perception, signal processing, electro-acoustics and room acoustics for the creation and enjoyment of sound recordings.

He has authored two books for Focal Press, and four courses at Lynda.com, codifying effective signal processing practice in sound recording. A Fellow of both the Acoustical Society of America, and the Audio Engineering Society – of which he is currently President – Case has presented 100+ papers and tutorials. His blog, Recordingology.com: The Study of Recording, offers guidance and audio references illustrating all aspects of recording and mixing.

Prince Shifting: Transformations of character through performance with vocal pitch shifting

The artist with a vast vocal range did not allow himself to be limited by his own physical reach, from lowest to highest notes. By leveraging the pitch processing technologies available to him in the studio, Prince stretched his voice into new domains. Where other artists have used pitch shifting to fix sour notes or to mask poor singing ability, Prince augmented his vocal prowess.

He transformed his delivery, and variously morphed himself into machines, children, women, and inventive characterizations of men. Pitch-shifted harmonies allowed him to fit ever more elaborate vocal arrangements into richly complex multitrack creations. Where others saw novelty – robots and chipmunks – he saw possibility, creating and featuring compelling new characters. Through pitch shifting, he could inhabit intriguing personas and take his songwriting to new places. Set in historical context, we compare his pitch shifting to that of other artists. The unique approach of Prince is demonstrated, and celebrated.

1958-2016

Conference Speakers and Abstracts



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Natalie Clifford

Independent Scholar, USA

Natalie Clifford earned her bachelor's degree from University of Minnesota – Twin Cities in gender, women, and sexuality studies, minoring in comparative U.S. race and ethnicity, African-American and African studies, and global studies.

Since graduating in 2012, she has served as a youth worker and educator in various fields such as college access, mentoring, and theatre. Ms. Clifford currently works as a sexual violence prevention education coordinator at the Rape Crisis Center of Central New Mexico in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA. Her main responsibility in this role is to facilitate workshops on LGBTQ+ identities, masculinity, consent, healthy relationships, rape culture, and teen dating violence with middle and high school aged youth.

Ms. Clifford is passionate about critical education as a means through which to challenge injustice and social norms. She is also an outspoken advocate for immigrant and racial justice. Prince has provided inspiration for Ms. Clifford in guiding young people to develop strong understandings of themselves beyond society's limited expectations. Prince's legacy of social justice also motivates Ms. Clifford in her daily work.

Re-Imagining Masculinity: Prince's impact on millennial attitudes regarding gender expression

In my work critically discussing masculinity with young men, I have witnessed the effects of Prince's boundary-breaking, non-conforming gender expression. Prince's refusal to limit himself to traditional, constructed understandings of masculinity has left an enormous impact upon current and future generations regarding what has become more socially acceptable.

The social construction of masculinity trains men from a young age to enact violence upon other men who display gender non-conformity, vulnerability, or qualities traditionally associated with the identity of "woman." In defiance of the social constructions of gender and race, Prince chose to not only embrace femininity in his own gender expression, but also simultaneously express his sexual attraction to women. Prince brought these seemingly contradictory traits together in his confident androgyny. He ignored the normalization of the gender binary in regards to gender expression and performance.

In my paper, I will examine the ways in which attitudes held by young people reflect Prince's legacy as an artist who challenged norms around gender expression and masculinity. Surveys conducted in recent years indicate that the majority of millennials believe that gender falls on a spectrum, and is not binary (Jorge Rivas, "Half of Young People Believe Gender Isn't Limited to Male and Female," Fusion, February 5, 2015, accessed January 14, 2017, <http://fusion.net/story/42216/half-of-young-people-believe-gender-isnt-limited-to-male-and-female/>).

Therefore, I will argue that over the course of his career, Prince's risk-taking in his gender expression created space for youth to find freedom in exploring expressions of gender non-conformity, and ultimately re-inventing possibilities within masculinity. I will utilize both qualitative and quantitative analysis while investigating this topic. Specifically, I will analyze Prince's gender expression and performance throughout his career as an artist, in addition to concrete data regarding millennial opinions on gender expression. This exploration of Prince's legacy on cultural understandings of gender expression and masculinity is valuable to professionals in the fields of education and youth work, and academics within gender, women, and sexuality studies.



Sam Coley

Birmingham City University, UK

Sam Coley is Associate Professor of Radio at Birmingham City University, where he teaches radio documentary production. He is an award winning freelance radio documentary producer and has been a Grand Jury member of the New York Radio Festival for the past five years. Coley has written about his documentary work and investigations in fandom in *Radio and Society* (2012) and *The Music Documentary: Acid Rock To Electropop* (2013). He is currently completing a practice-based PhD in music documentary production, which interrogates his work as a producer of David Bowie related documentaries for commercial radio.

Adore: Online Prince Fandom and 'Purple Tears'

In August 2013 Prince posted his first tweet with the words "hi im prince" accompanied by a picture of himself from the Eighties. According to Gibsone (2013), he had finally embraced the digital era. Yet Prince's relationship with social media and online technologies has famously been a fractious one, gaining him a reputation for being an "artist not to f–k with" (Resnikoff, 2016).

This paper explores the relationship between Prince and online fan activity and considers how this community responded to his untimely death. Although Prince was known to take a combative stance against some of his own fan clubs, he could also be generous; retweeting content that caught his imagination and answering fans questions. In 2010 he met with the hosts of the Peach and Black fan podcast, thereby endorsing its legitimacy and revealing an appreciation for independent fan productions.

Following Prince's death, some Youtube vlogger fans chose to stop posting altogether, out of respect and grief – while others, seemingly emboldened by his passing, began to post hundreds of hours of concert footage, videos and personal Prince related vlogs. I draw on Jenkins' (1992) and Lewis' (1992) investigations into fandom as a cultural activity as well as my own practice-based research as a radio documentary producer.

In 2011 I made a documentary for Xfm to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the *Parade* album and used Prince chat-rooms and message boards as a means of gaining insight and feedback. In this paper, I return to these forums to consider their responses to Prince's death and assess his fans amateur productions as a means of processing grief.

1958-2016



Kamilah Cummings

DePaul University, USA

Kamilah Cummings is a professional lecturer of writing and communications at DePaul University School for New Learning in Chicago. She is a lifelong Prince fan whose comprehensive collection of his work includes officially and unofficially released material. She has attended more than 30 concerts including one of his final performances and had the unforgettable experience of meeting him.

She has researched Prince extensively and developed a course titled Prince: Introduction of a New Breed Leader. Her additional research interests include media/pop culture influence on identity, writing as a mindfulness practice, and linguistic diversity in academic writing. She has also developed a course about house music titled The House Chicago Built.

Prince: Introduction of a new breed leader

In his 1982 song "Sexuality," Prince declared "we need a new breed, leaders, stand up, organize." During his decades-long career, Prince emerged as one of those leaders. Therefore, this presentation will add the perspective of leadership to the ongoing discussion of Prince's important legacy.

Chopra posits that icons "don't mimic popular culture, they lead it" (22). Further, icons "speak with a rebel's voice" (22). Few people would dispute Prince's status as an icon or rebel. However, explorations of his iconic status rarely analyze it within a leadership framework.

A superficial glance at Prince's hits offers a glimpse of his unique talent, but one must delve deeper to understand his vision. Burdet argues "of the tools of leadership none is more important than language" (8). Through his music Prince professed an unwavering message of freedom, self-determination, individuality, love, and equality. One could argue that freedom and self-determination are chief among these tenets. From 1982's "Sexuality" to 2015's "Free Urself," these themes recur throughout his prodigious catalog. Psychoanalyst Thomas Szasz asserted "the law of the human kingdom is to "define or be defined." There is likely no better embodiment of this theory than Prince who defied pre-constructed notions of genre, race and gender to define his sound and image.

Leaders who are innovators and visionaries understand the human needs of renewal, expression, and upliftment (Chopra 36). As a leader, Prince embodied these attributes in word and deed. Various leadership principles posit that leaders are risk takers who transform their fields of expertise. We know that Prince transformed music with his trademark sound, but he also transformed the music industry with his historic battle to own his music. Lybarger and Flanagan argue effective leaders influence and empower others. Prince's influence is intergenerational, intercultural, and interdisciplinary.

In my interactive presentation, I will present interdisciplinary leadership models and principles through which I will analyze selected works and aspects of Prince's career to explore his role as a leader with a particular focus on his message of freedom and self-determination. Additionally, I will invite participants to engage in discussion and share their perspectives on the topic.

1958-2016



Ian Cummins and Martin King

University of Salford, UK

Dr. Martin King is Principal Lecturer in the Department of Social Work and Social Care at Manchester Metropolitan University. His main research interests are the work of Gordon Burn and David Peace, the Beatles, men and masculinities, cultural representations of law and order.

Dr. Ian Cummins: Ian Cummins is a Senior Lecturer in Social Work at Salford University. As well as the work of Gordon Burn, his research interests lie in the field of mental health, crime and their representation in popular culture.

In through the Outdoor: Gordon Burn and the death of the modern celebrity

The late Gordon Burn used a mixture of fact and fiction in his work to explore the nature of fame, celebrity and the representation of individuals caught up in events presented for public consumption via the mass media. In a series of non-fiction works and novels, Burn sought to dissect the ways, in which, the modern world of celebrity and the media interact and operate. . In particular, Burn explored the amoral world of fame, fans and tabloid journalism.

In his novel, Fullalove a cynical tabloid hack exploits the grief of those who are the victims of crime to boost the circulation of the paper. In Alma Cogan, the 1950s star is reinvented and she is living in reduced circumstances away from the media spotlight but still the object of a fan's morbid fascination.

Best and Edwards explores the contrasting lives and deaths of two early footballing celebrities and the contrasting nature of their posthumous fame. This paper will use media reporting of the death of Prince and contextual discourses in relation to celebrity death in 2016 to examine the ongoing relevance of Burn to any analysis of modern celebrity culture. It will argue that Burn's work, with its focus on the tawdry nature of fame, the nature of fandom and the media's posthumous construction of a star's legacy, a blend of fact and fiction, provides a crucial lens through which to read such events.

1958-2016



De Angela Duff

New York University, USA

De Angela L. Duff is a designer, photographer, web developer, DJ & podcaster. She is also the Co-Director of Integrated Digital Media & Industry Associate Professor at NYU Tandon in Brooklyn. She currently produces the Prince and Prince-related podcasts for *Grown Folks Music Inside The Album* podcasts. De Angela holds an MFA from MiCA, a BFA from Georgia State & a BS from Georgia Tech. Her research currently combines music, photography and technology.

Under the Cherry Moon: Prince, as his most authentic self

While *Under The Cherry Moon* (UTCM), Prince's second feature film, is often maligned by most, the film is actually the ultimate public document of Prince as his most authentic self. While *Purple Rain* presents one side of Prince, the aloof artifice he shared with the public, UTCM represents him as he truly was with his close friends and associates, hilariously funny.

Early on, you see glimpses of Prince's sense of humor through songs he penned for The Time (such as *Tricky* and *Movie Star*), but with the release of UTCM Prince's quick wit was unveiled and showcased at its finest. In fact, the comedic timing of the banter between Prince and Jerome Benton in this film rivals, not only that of Morris Day and Jerome in *Purple Rain*, but also Laurel & Hardy and other comedy duos. This film is also a testament to Prince's countercultural stance — always embrace doing the opposite of what is expected.

On the heels of the massive success of *Purple Rain*, most artists would have followed up with a sequel, but Prince did not. Overall, UTCM was a daring and artistic, buddy film, shot on location in France in black and white. The film broke social norms at the time by turning race (interracial relationships) and sexuality (bisexuality) on their heads. The themes of duality that Prince addressed throughout his entire musical catalog persist from start to finish in UTCM: life and death, good and bad, love and lust, & rich and poor. However, the most pervasive theme throughout UTCM is fun. In fact, Prince's final words in the film were, "We had fun. Didn't we?" In the context of Prince's recent passing, these words have never meant more than they do now.

1958-2016



LaToya Eaves

Middle Tennessee State University, USA

Lecturer in the Global Studies and Cultural Geography Program at Middle Tennessee State University. A native of Shelby, North Carolina, she earned her PhD in Geography through the Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies at Florida International University in Miami. Her small town and Southern upbringing informs her research, which centralizes black geographies and women of color feminism in order to engage ideologies of race, place-based politics, and the discursive formation of the US South. She is specifically interested in the interplay of these three ideas from the positionality of queer black women, focusing not solely on the sites of abjection but also the knowledge production of possibilities.

Art Official Age: A Requiem for Space

Commentators agree Prince was a master at exposing the limits of conventional understandings of race and sexuality, especially in the US. This panel session will insist that his music and imagery must be analyzed through their spatial expressions. Geographical themes, like the city, migration, segregation, travel, the body, the stage, the studio, the bedroom, and utopia run through Prince's oeuvre. More specifically, we will rehearse the reasons why Prince could only come from Minneapolis, a global city in an otherwise provincial white Midwestern state.

Speaking from a political context in the US wherein white supremacy and state oppression are rapidly becoming normalized with a force unseen since the 1950s, we will ask how Prince can be interpreted as a major artistic trendsetter who could imagine spaces of liberation against the bourgeois whiteness of neoliberalism and neoconservatism. The "queer" in our title signals that we will not brush over the ambivalences Prince showed when it comes to his rebellion – the misogyny in the Purple Rain movie is undeniable, for example – but frame these ambivalences as fundamental to the racial and sexual dimensions of US popular culture. The session will also touch on the role religion played in his strong calls for diversity and freedom.

The conceptual reference points of this session will be heterogeneous, combining popular music studies with black feminism, queer theory, social justice theory, urban studies, ethnography, Marxism, media studies, religious studies, and musicology. These fields converge on explaining blackness as a geographical process. Black geographies is a distinct subfield and has been gaining traction steadily in the US the last decade. It has a different emphasis than the British cultural studies work on race of the 1980s and 1990s which generally put race in scare quotes ("race", see for example Paul Gilroy's formative work).

In conversation with the civil rights tradition, the African American public sphere, feminists and LGBT activists, and most recently Black Lives Matter, black geographies seeks to affirm blackness as a site of possibility and resistance, whereas British antiracism has operated more under the aegis of liberal multiculturalism. Prince is fascinating in this respect because his art was often self-consciously aiming to reach a universal language even while playing tribute to the legacies of blackness, both musically and politically, including wearing an afro in the years before he died and dedicating a single, "Baltimore", to BLM's protest against police brutality. How to think through this tension between black and universal, identity and difference, tradition and revolution? Can Prince and the Minneapolis Sound help bridge the segregated neighborhoods and media of US cities? Will today's artists find inspiration in his work to resist Trump? And can Prince help Europeans negotiate similarly scary turns towards nationalism and moralism?

2016



Joy Ellison

Ohio State University, USA

Joy Michael Ellison is a PhD student in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Ohio State University. Their research is in the field of transgender history, focusing on the impact of transgender women of color resisting prisons and policing. They are also the author of "Purple Pen," a fictional story that engages Prince's legacy, published in Lunch Ticket Magazine. Ellison blogs about transgender movements at "If We Knew Trans History." Joy's writing is available at www.jmellison.net.

When Were You Mine? Prince's legacy in the context of transgender history

Prince's fame has long been credited to more than his musical prowess. Integral to his genius were his gender non-conforming performances and transgressive lyrics. However, his significance to transgender people has not been fully considered. In this paper, I examine Prince's shifting career within the context of transgender history and ask what it means to be a trans Prince fan.

Prince emerged into fame during the burgeoning LGBT liberation struggle. His prominence grew as transgender women of color, struggled to maintain influence within the feminist and LGBT movements that they instigated just a few years earlier. His performances from the 1970s and 1980s are tempting to claim as iconic of transgender liberation because of his use of trans symbols and feminine fashion, as well as his insistence that he wanted to be our mother, sister, and girlfriend.

I argue his later move toward greater heteronormativity can be only partially explained by his religious conversion. It also reflected broader cultural trends during the 2000s. Space for transgressive gender expression within popular music decreased while transgender political activism was silenced by violence and political repression. In our present era, as mainstream pop music has become largely heteronormative and musicians with explicitly transgender identities are marketed to more niche audiences, Prince's art continues to feel liberating for trans people. Exclaiming the shifts in Prince's career allows trans people to understand our own history and cultural impact, while also questioning what constitutes trans visibility and what political purpose visibility serves.

1958-2016



Roberto Fassone

Artist, Italy

Roberto Fassone (1986), Italian artist based in Florence, makes works that explore and question the processes and the strategies regulating the production of contemporary artworks. He has exhibited and performed his work at Carroll/Fletcher, London; Mart, Rovereto; ZHdK, Zurich; Nahmad Projects, London; MAMbo, Bologna and Museo La Ene, Buenos Aires among many others.

In the last years he held lectures regarding conceptual art and creativity in various universities and institutions (ZKM, Karlsruhe, Politecnico di Milano) and has been awarded with the second prize of AOYS (ArtOnYourScreen), held by ZKM and with the first prize of the Cross International Performance Award.

Nothing Compares 2 Prince

Nothing Compares 2 Prince is a lyrical mash-up, a lecture written by recombining extracts from lyrics of Prince's songs. While the monologue is recited, the audience can read on the screen behind the lecturer the title of the songs from which each sentence is used.

The talk is a reflection on the relationship of Prince with streaming services and web platforms. As a matter of fact his huge effort to block unauthorized use of his music on YouTube and other major sites resulted in a difficulty for the fans to mourn him on social networks. In this sense the lecture's goal is to describe the life of the American singer-songwriter without using his music, but by triggering it in the mind of the audience, through the use of his lyrics.

The talk remixes approximately the lyrics of more than 200 songs to talk about the view of the singer on life, politics, love and death.

Nothing Compares 2 Prince was born originally as a performance and has been awarded the first prize of the Cross International Performance Award. Nonetheless the international conference hosted by the University of Salford, UK seems represents an ideal place to develop a new iteration of the monologue.

At the following link you can watch an extract from the performance and attached the transcription of the entire talk.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aFOGE_Uc2eA

1958-2016



Andrea Foy

Author, USA

Andrea Foy is an award-winning internationally bestselling author with two books of her own and 11 co-authored works. *Prince And Me* is her first Memoir. A lifelong Prince fan, she wrote him in the early 80s, received a postcard and an invitation to his first fan club reinforcing his love for his fans from the beginning. She personally experienced many parties and shows with the legend and witnessed his happiness in interacting with his fans. She has a BA in Communications and MS in Management and Leadership.

Prince + Fans = A Rock and Roll Love Affair!

The purpose of this presentation is to identify relationships between Prince and Fandom. The goal is to show that Prince loved his fans and considered them family. This has been done by examining events such as 1). Prince Conventions, starting in the early 1990s to 2000 and again in 2015/16 2). Ownership and involvement in Glam Slam nightclubs as his playground 3).

Turning Paisley Park Studios into a party place from the early 1990s to 2016 and had plans for 2017. With the aid of Bodyguards Prince was able to walk, dance and even ride his bike through his audience or sit in a private booth elevated above fans so they could see each other. 4). His interest in Twitter the last few years as a way to communicate with his family. Upon examination of these events, it becomes clear that Prince had a unique desire to relate with his fans. He toured to be close with them. He held afterparties in each city for lucky fans, employees, and other celebrities to get closer to him until the week before he died.

The author of this work, a lifelong Prince fan, personally experienced many parties and shows with the legend and witnessed his happiness in interacting with his fans. In recent years as a follower in Twitter, she witnessed him grow more and more 'talkative' on the medium as his followership grew. Through showing first-hand examples of his generosity to fans all over the world, this research highlights the importance of Prince and Fandom. His desire for Paisley to become a Museum solidifies his love for his fans in eternity.

1958-2016



Helen Gascoyne

Lincoln College, UK

Helen Gascoyne is a lecturer in Lens Based Media and Media Production. She holds an MA in Media Culture and Communication and her research interests include British Cinema. Throughout her twenty-year career teaching in a variety of educational settings, Helen has regularly contributed to events such as the BFI Media Conference and publications including Media Magazine.

Prince as auteur, a reappraisal of Purple Rain (1984) Under the Cherry Moon (1986) Sign O' The Times (1987) Graffiti Bridge (1990)

This paper focuses on the films made by Prince as a cohesive and collective narrative and utilize the analytical framework of authorship and textual analysis to discern unifying characteristics. It will offer the perspective that Prince's films can be read collectively as an artistic expression of his personality, a single text that forms a strong representation of the artist behind this work. The overarching aim will be to provide a reappraisal of Prince's body of work in film using the prism of auteur theory.

Within auteur theory a single author, creator or auteur is responsible for an artistic work and that author's personal identity, thematic preoccupations and distinguishable control over the entire creative process govern the semiotics and interpretation of that work. By extension, when an artist adopts the role of auteur, the specific lyrical, narrative and visual content of each piece of work is subsumed into the greater identity of the artist. Within the canon of pop music and culture Prince stands out as an auteur, yet he also infuses his work autobiographical meaning that transcends simplistic interpretive potential. Arguably, however, while Prince is perceived as a storyteller and craftsman of extremely high ability he lacks the reflexive identity or autobiographical connection to his audience.

Prince described himself as a musicologist and named his twenty-eighth album after the academic study of music, therefore seems only fitting that these principles of auteur theory, borrowed from the field of film criticism, have been embraced by musicologists working within popular music and frequently applied to musical analysis. Therefore this paper will offer a re-examination of Prince's work in the context of a musicological study and conclude that his body of work in film is a significant contribution to the canon.

1958-2016



Patrick Glen

University of Salford, UK

Patrick Glen is a lecturer at the University of Salford. His first book (Youth and Permissive Social Change in British Music Papers, 1967-1983) will be released as part of the Palgrave Studies in the History of Subcultures and Popular Music series in 2018.

He has a PhD in History from the University of Sheffield and has worked at University College London and the University of East London. He writes for *Loud & Quiet* and is a founder member of *Partisan Collective* – a D.I.Y. arts, politics and culture space. His band (Unpaid Intern) have a niche audience of undiscerning listeners.

Wholesome Society? Looking for Fans and their Sexuality in the Press' reporting of Prince

In 1983 Warner Records circulated a press release concerning Prince, who they represented. A statement from it was reported in the music press: 'behind the frequently shocking lyrics is a deep belief that by removing the taboos and allowing youth to express its sexuality in all its forms we will achieve a more wholesome society.' It was a remarkable statement – at first salacious but then immediately apologetic; pre-empting that Prince 'shocking lyrics' could offend members of the public – but not unprecedented in discussions of popular musicians.

The press release played on the well-established trope that musicians had an effect on youth and social change, especially young people's sexual identities and sexual behaviours. It located Prince within a canon of artistes that included The Rolling Stones, Jimi Hendrix and David Bowie – ones who shared a putatively intimate and instructive, but, perhaps of more importance to Warner Records, lucrative, relationship with fans. By positioning Prince as such, Warner Records and the press restated a form of commercially safe, nostalgic radicalism, one that can be argued arrested certain types of music-inspired social change.

This paper uncovers the press's understanding of a relationship between Prince fandom and behaviours affected – particularly sexual identities and sexuality. It considers how and when fans were included in reporting and the description of the physical spaces that they inhabited. This provides a snapshot that reveals broader ideas about youth, gender and sexuality in the press and popular culture at the time. It also shows how the press adapted historical antecedents. Reporting on Prince illustrates how reporting in the 1980s and 1990s distorted the memories of the 1960s and 1970s popular music and press that both implied greater license to represent sex and sexuality than was commonplace at the time and justified discussion of sexuality at the time.

1958-2016



Steve Griffin

Secondary Teacher, USA

Steve is a secondary English teacher, having taught in an urban, multicultural school for 11 years in Michigan. For nine years, he took a different teaching path as a children's and then family pastor in a large, multiracial church.

Steve then returned to his passion of public school teaching and for the last three years, he has taught in a large, racially diverse high school just outside of Atlanta, Georgia. Griffin earned a B.A. in English Education and a M.Ed. in Educational Leadership from Western Michigan University.

This summer, Steve will complete his Specialist degree in Secondary English Education from Kennesaw State University. Steve's interests are the music of Prince, other music, film and literature and their connections to the lives of people and students. As a lifelong, diehard fan of Prince, he was honoured to be at his very last concert, the 10:00 o'clock show, in Atlanta, Georgia on April 14, 2016.

Prince, the transcendent poet

The casual fan of Prince's music may perceive his songwriting and lyricism as principally romantic, erotic, and 'party-centric.' Yet a closer examination reveals that Prince's writing far exceeded traditional perceptions of Rock or R & B songs. Indeed, Prince eschewed the music industry standard practice of using "hired guns" of professional songwriting and production teams to create "hits". Instead, he insisted on expressing his poetic muse by writing his own unique and vivid songs, many of which can be regarded as poetry in their own right.

Using literary lenses including new criticism, feminist, and critical race theory, this paper will explicate how Prince--the poet, the songwriter-- used his lyricism to transcend traditional songwriting parameters on a wide range of subject matters: gender ("If I Was Your Girlfriend"), the afterlife ("Let's Go Crazy"), idiosyncrasy ("Starfish and Coffee"), gun control ("Annie Christian"), racism ("Dear Mr. Man"), greed ("Money Don't Matter 2 Night"), sex ("Insatiable"), religion ("The Cross"), Black Lives Matter ("Baltimore"), grief ("Another Lonely Christmas"), and celebrity ("The Morning Papers"). Likewise, the paper will interpret significant literary motifs such as water, God, betrayal, utopia, and interracialism that spanned the more than 30 years of his career.

Further, the paper will examine the varied personas or speakers represented in Prince's poetry including that of brother in "Sister, female/alter ego Camille in "If I Was Your Girlfriend", a child in "Papa", messiah in "I Would Die 4 U", and social critic in "Art Official Cage". Finally, this paper will consider several of Prince's albums as distinct, thematic collections of poetry not unlike that of Whitman and Frost by exploring the collective themes in LoveSexy and The Gold Experience, and the narrative, epic-like form of his rock opera O+>, The Love Symbol Album.

1958-2016



Felicia Holman

Independent Scholar, USA

Lifelong Chicagoan Felicia Holman is co-founder of the Art Leaders of Color Network and Honey Pot Performance ('HPP'). Felicia is also Artist Services Manager at Links Hall. Felicia creates and presents original interdisciplinary performance which engages audience and inspires community. HPP credits include The Ladies Ring Shout (2011), Price Point (2013), Juke Cry Hand Clap (2014), and Ma(s)king Her (2016). Felicia is also an admitted Facebook junkie and is honoured to join new improvisational performance collective, The Instigation Orchestra & The Djasporas---musicians & dancers from Chicago & New Orleans. Felicia sums up her dynamic antrepreneurial life in 3 words—'Creator, Connector, Conduit'.

Purple Majesty

In what began as a trio of 5-minute multimedia performances in tribute to late music icon Prince Rogers Nelson (1958-2016), Chicago-based artist/presenter/Gemini & Prince superfan Felicia Holman shares her expansive love & knowledge of Prince in her feature-length 'Purple Majesty' solo performance-lecture.

As both an intimate homage to Prince's intrepid cultural impact and an entry point for broader conversation on the value of arts education(s), 'Purple Majesty' engages audiences with multimedia & embodied storytelling. Felicia explains "As my longest and most ardent celebrity crush/muse, I was shellshocked by confirmation of Prince's sudden death last April. Prince infused his musical messages with a sense of love / freedom & creativity that I cherish as simultaneously culturally universal AND culturally specific. As the first anniversary quickly approaches, millions around the world are still reeling from the sudden death of such a beautiful/creative/vibrant/influential artist.

An artist whose work and life thoroughly traversed the human experience. An artist around whom critical curricula is being built. An artist whom many of us 'True Funk Soldiers' quite literally grew up with, in many ways. Breaking barriers and records, Prince modeled how a 5'2" Black man from 'The Land of 10,000 Lakes' could be big & bad enough to tear down all kinds of walls (especially those made of sugar)."

Representational concepts unpacked during 'Purple Majesty' include:

- Prince's Alpha Maleness & Preference for Female Collaborators
- Prince's Artistic Will-To-Power
- Prince's Entrepreneurial & Philanthropic Thought Leadership
- Prince's Black Midwestern Roots & Work Ethic
- Prince's Online Presence & Relationship w/Fans ('Friends')
- Prince as Master Teacher & Master Autodidact

1958-2016



Carmen Hoover

Olympic College, USA

Carmen Hoover attended the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis from 1980-1983 (political science and women's studies). She and her best friend (who went to high school with Prince) became early and conscientious Prince fans.

Hoover was employed at First Avenue (1982-1986), and subsequently worked security for the filming of Purple Rain, which led to an opportunity to attend numerous shows during the Purple Rain tour. Later, she completed her BA in political science and MFA in writing at the University of Montana. Since 1995, Hoover has been tenured as English and humanities faculty at Olympic College in western Washington State.

On their Knee's: A Meditation on Sexuality, Power and Feminism in Prince and the Revolution's Stage Show

Four related events/images stand out in my mind, especially in relation to the role of women in the Prince orbit. In 1980, I was a serious Prince fan living in Minneapolis. Leading up to the events I would like to explore, I had seen Prince perform many times, and encountered him on several occasions.

Also, I worked at First Avenue from 1982-1986. The events: 1—the legendary 8/3/83 show was Wendy's first public performance with the Revolution (I was standing almost directly in front of Wendy for the duration of the show). This show was a walkthrough for much of the choreography in Purple Rain, both movie and tour. This was this first time I saw Wendy get on her knees in front of Prince during the guitar solo in "Computer Blue"—a disappointment and contrast with the idea of empowering a woman guitar player.

This posture is my main interest. 2—the film featured the same move, so I'd like to take a look at that (I worked security for the film), and 3—on tour, Wendy performed this choreography night after night (I was present at around a dozen shows during the tour). Then in 2016, at the Revolution reunion, 4—a reversal: my understanding is that this was a surprise to Wendy as well. There was an extra guitar player who was brought in from San Francisco to round out the sound. Suddenly, during that same spot during "Computer Blue," he slid on his knees into position in front of Wendy as she played the role of Prince. As he performed this faux oral sex choreography in front of Wendy's guitar, I felt a sense of resolution. I'd like to explore (and visually present) these four moments and discuss the cracks between them.

1958-2016





Jane Jones

Writer, UK

Jane Clare Jones is a writer and philosopher specializing in feminist metaphysics, ethics and sexual politics. She holds a PhD (Stony Brook) and MPhil (Goldsmiths) in Continental Philosophy and an MA in Social and Political Science (Cantab) and has just completed her doctoral thesis on sovereigntist conceptions of the self and their association with appropriative sexual violence. Her popular writings on politics, philosophy and culture have appeared in *The Guardian* (<https://www.theguardian.com/profile/jane-clare-jones>) and *The New Statesman* (<http://www.newstatesman.com/writers/320134>) and she has also published specifically on Prince (<http://www.popmatters.com/feature/water-baby-a-eulogy-for-our-departed-prince/>).

Electric Man!: On the Ecstasy of Prince Rogers Melson

In a recent *New Yorker* reflection, Maggie Nelson recalls responding to Prince by wanting to become a “diminutive, profuse, electric ribbon of horniness and divine grace.” Following this observation, this paper will explore Prince’s virtuosity – and his legendary communicative power as a performer – in terms of his ‘ecstatic genius,’ unfolding how this illuminates the interlacing of the sexual/spiritual poles of his artistry, and his enactment of an experience of flow traditionally marked as feminine. In so doing I wish also to trouble a certain postmodern derogation of the authenticity of ecstatic communitas in rock. The phenomenology of musical transcendence-as-jouissance cannot be so easily effaced by invocations of manufactured iconography and musical virtuosity explodes the opposition between ‘the performed’ and ‘the authentic.’ To ‘perform’ musical virtuosity is, rather, to be a virtuoso musical performer.

My analysis will focus on three elements of Prince’s live performance. Firstly, we will examine how the oscillating propulsion of the groove collapses the opposition between linear song and repetitive rhythm. Against readings which posit the non-teleological ecstasy of groove-based music as pre-Oedipal regression, I will build on suggestions that the syntax of polyrhythmic funk is both circular and teleological and thus enacts a vibrating and vital sinusoidal flow. We will then turn to oscillating propulsion in Prince’s famous, orgasmic guitar solos, noting their consonance with both melismatic ecstatic Gospel and a specifically feminine sexual pleasure – the circular and climatic flow of jouissance. Prince’s twin artistic preoccupations can thus be read as grounded in a phenomenology of spiritual/sexual ecstasy historically associated with the (often female) mystical traditions. Notably however, Prince’s work also enacts the flesh/ spirit conflict of patriarchal monotheism, the tension between his mystical and patriarchal impulses being a central conflict of his life and work.

Lastly, we will consider Prince’s embodied ecstasy in performance. While frequently posited as a postmodern chameleon, Prince’s comportment while playing was remarkably consistent throughout his career.

This interests me not only as an enactment of the allegedly unknowable excess beyond phallic economy but for what it tells us about the authenticity of performativity, and the drive to surrender our (imaginary) sovereign selves to the productive flow of being-in-process for – as Prince knew better than anyone – the utter joy of it.

1958-2016



Joanne Knowles

Liverpool John Moores University, UK

Joanne Knowles is a senior lecturer in Media, Culture, Communication at Liverpool John Moores University. She has research interests in gender, popular narrative and popular culture and has published on chick-lit, Nick Hornby, and female-focused TV drama, and historical drama/documentary on television. Her current research project focuses on popular girls' magazines. She is also proud to note that her first ever individual academic guest lecture (with modest fee) was delivered on 1980s British pop culture to a group of visiting US students in 1998.

Man of Mystery and 'Baaad Boy!' Prince, the Representation of Male Popstars and the Discourse of Girls' Magazines of the 1980's and 1990's

'Man of mystery' and 'Baaad boy!' Prince, the representation of male pop stars, and the discourse of girls' magazines of the 1980s and 1990s

Matt Thomas points out that the lack of academic attention to Prince is curious given that 'his public persona lies at the interstices of both male and female and black and white' (2010: 124). This paper would use a selection of 1980s and 1990s magazines from the Femorabilia archives of twentieth-century girls' and women's magazines, held at Liverpool John Moores University, to explore the way such a hybrid and complex figure was represented in mainstream popular British magazines for girls.

For magazines like Jackie or Just Seventeen, which were not specifically music magazines as Smash Hits or Number One, music was commercially and thematically important to them. Angela McRobbie's seminal work on Jackie (1978; 1991) observes that during the 1980s the magazine moves away from its focus on romance and that 'fantasy around pop boys saturates it' (1991: 154). However, even after this shift, Jackie faces considerable difficulty in the way it represents male pop stars whose public personae do not fit the clean-cut, desexualised yet clearly heterosexual template of what McRobbie refers to as 'pop teenybopper' performers, yet which cannot be dismissed as 'boring' music for older people (as much rock/heavy metal routinely was).

Just Seventeen takes a slightly more adventurous approach, yet still struggles with representing Prince to its readers, characterising Prince as a 'man of mystery' and as a 'baaad boy!' in terms that suggest they are cautious about being seen to endorse the explicit sexuality of Prince's act, yet know they need to feature a star who is described, in a frequently-made comparison, as 'the nearest thing Michael Jackson has got to competition'.

The paper will analyse the way Prince is represented for a British teenage readership, within these magazines' evolving parameters, and against the backdrop of readers who were increasingly debating the validity of alternative masculinities and sexualities, and of their own sexual desires, in the adjacent features and letters pages.

1958-2016



Jaap Kooijman

University of Amsterdam

Jaap Kooijman is Associate Professor in Media Studies and American Studies at the University of Amsterdam. His articles on American pop culture have been published in journals such as *The Velvet Light Trap*, *The Journal of American Culture*, *Post Script*, *Journal of International Education*, *GLQ*, *Celebrity Studies*, and *[in] Transition: Journal of Videographic Film & Moving Image Studies*, as well as in essay collections published by NYU Press, UP of Mississippi, Routledge, Ashgate, Amsterdam UP, Edinburgh UP, Wallflower Press, and UP of Kentucky. Kooijman is the author of *Fabricating the Absolute Fake: America in Contemporary Pop Culture* (revised and extended edition, 2013), editor of the *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, and co-founding editor of *NECSUS: European Journal of Media Studies*.

Royal Rivalry and the 1980's Crossover Debate: Prince, Michael Jackson and the Politics of Genre

"Who Rules the Music Kingdom? Prince or Michael?" reads the cover of black American teenage music magazine *Right On!*, published in September 1984. Throughout the early 1980s, Prince and Michael Jackson often were pitted against each other, similar to the media-induced rivalry between The Beatles and The Rolling Stones in the 1960s.

This rivalry was prompted not by the differences but by the similarities between the two African-American pop stars. Although, unlike Prince, Jackson had been a child star since 1969, both were born in 1958, both made pop music inspired by soul and disco, both broke through MTV's initial white-only color line, and both challenged conventional representations of black masculinity. While often celebrated for crossing the racial and gendered genre boundaries of the entertainment industry, both Prince and Jackson were also criticized for this. In his 1988 book *The Death of Rhythm & Blues*, Nelson George writes: "The two greatest black stars of the decade, Michael Jackson and Prince, ran fast and far from both blackness and conventional images of male sexuality (and their videos got on MTV)" (Nelson 1988: 174).

In a 1987 interview, Cornel West recognized Jackson and Prince as "crossover artists" whose "music is less rooted in black musical traditions and much more open to white rock and so forth" (West 1999: 287). In this presentation, I will take the alleged rivalry between Prince and Michael Jackson as starting point to examine the 1980s crossover debate and in particular the role of genre. For the sake of clarity, I am not "accusing" Prince or Michael Jackson of abandoning "black music" for commercial success, nor "defending" them against such claims. Instead, I argue that the rivalry reinforces the distinction between the pop (Jackson) versus the rock (Prince) aesthetic, which suggests two distinctive crossovers into mainstream (often seen as "white") culture and emphasizes difference over similarities.

1958-2016



Julie Lobalzo Wright

University of Warwick, UK

Julie Lobalzo Wright is a Teaching Fellow in Film Studies at the University of Warwick. Her main research concerns music stars in British and American cinema and has published on David Bowie's film stardom and Ice Cube's position in contemporary Hollywood, in addition to more widely on popular music and film and stardom. She recently co-edited, with Lucy Bolton, *Lasting Screen Stars: Images that Fade and Personas that Endure* (Palgrave) and has her own monograph, *Crossover Stardom: Popular Male Music Stars in American Cinema* (Bloomsbury), forthcoming.

Under the Cherry Moon: Sexuality, Race and Hollywood in 'A Film By Prince'

Prince's legacy as a film star is defined by his first film, *Purple Rain* (Albert Magnoli, 1984), a critical and commercial success re-released into theatres after his sudden death in 2016. It remains, not only, his most successful film, but also, a positive example of popular music stars appearing in narrative films built on their established music persona.

Purple Rain allowed the star, almost, full control of the follow-up, *Under the Cherry Moon* (1986)- he was both star and director. This film, however, was an unqualified disaster with tepid box office returns and largely negative reviews. A lone critic in support of the film was J. Hoberman, writing for *The Village Voice*: 'There hasn't been a Hollywood comedy with an attitude like *Under the Cherry Moon's* since *I'm No Angel*, and the bluenoses are already rising to the bait. The flaming creature who calls himself Prince may be the wittiest heterosexual clown since Mae West; black as well as campy, he's even more threatening'.

Underlining Hoberman's review is the suggestion that there was an audacity to Prince making, not only a film that was markedly different from *Purple Rain*, but one that fully displayed the singer's androgyny, queer sexuality and race. As some have noted, *Purple Rain* associated the star with 'more rigidly conventional aspects of heterosexuality' (Taylor, 2004: 166), but *Under the Cherry Moon* explored the boundary stretching that defined Prince's persona, while concurrently, acting as a space for the star to play with Hollywood conventions, especially as a black star evoking genres, performers and styles generally associated with white performers.

This paper will examine *Under the Cherry Moon* as a parodic text for Prince that openly references classical Hollywood (evident even in Hoberman's review), especially the screwball comedy of the 1930s/1940s, while also evoking historically black performers that were often marginalised in Hollywood and underscored by a campiness that belies any serious reading of the film.

The film acts as a fantasy that strings together many influences, from America and Europe, but it also openly engages with sexuality and race in unique ways (especially as compared to Prince's music stardom). Thus, while it may not be a particular highlight, *Under the Cherry Moon* is an interesting moment in a career, defined by the artist's desire for ultimate control over his work, becoming a film that may say more about Prince's persona than the more successful *Purple Rain*.

1958-2016



Kavita Maya

University of London, UK

Kavita Maya is a PhD candidate at SOAS, University of London, in the final stages of completing her thesis on the politics of race and gender in the British 'Goddess movement', which draws on feminist, anti-racist and decolonial theory. Her research interests lie in interdisciplinary critical theory, especially religion, gender and (post) coloniality.

Sex and Race in the Art of Prince: A British Asian Perspective

This paper discusses the relationship between politics and spirituality in Prince's artistic and cultural legacy, drawing insights from his music and social commentary as well as the public response to his unexpected death. Questions of narrative authority weave together all of these domains: what did Prince mean when he described his work as 'spiritually political'? How and why did he emphasise authorial control over his name, personal image and art? Who speaks for Prince's socio-cultural legacy in the aftermath of his death, and why does this matter?

I argue that the significance of these questions surfaces most visibly in the tributes to Prince's life and work from the social margins, especially in the multiple voices of queer and feminist people of colour. These plural representations articulate a shared investment in an icon who aspired to bridge oppressive historical categories of race, gender and genre, even while the conditions of his life and creative output were entangled with the power structures of racism, (hetero)sexism and capitalism.

My argument analyses how politics and spirituality are themselves categories which are produced by and entwined with historical social narratives, contextualising Prince's own negotiation with these categories as a response to coloniality and the commodification of race. In considering the collective mourning and celebration of his life, especially from feminists and queers of colour, I read the 'spiritually political' legacy of his work as a representation of a collective emancipatory vision that sustains the ongoing struggle against social oppression and marginalisation.

1958-2016



Kimberley Moffitt

University of Maryland, USA

Dr. Kimberly R. Moffitt is associate professor in Departments of American Studies and the Language, Literacy and Culture Ph.D. program at University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC). Her research focuses on mediated representations of marginalized groups and the politicized nature of Black hair and the body. She is co-editor of three volumes and has published works in academic journals and several edited volumes. Her current research projects explore the black body and white femininity in Disney's *The Princess and the Frog* and the representations of Black males on Disney television programming. She has a forthcoming edited volume on the television series, *Scandal*.

Transgressions in Purple: The Prince protest Mixtape Project Volume 1

For many, April 21, 2016 represents the day the world lost one of the most prolific artist who was endemic of the term "change agent," Prince Rogers Nelson. A musician, a singer, a songwriter, a performer, Prince was a quadruple talent; one not to be taken lightly by his contemporaries; one who equally was unapologetic vocally in matters of politics, race, gender, and class.

Like Marvin Gaye who posed the musical rhetorical question *What's Going On* in 1971, Prince metaphorically operated in a variety of capacities touching the moral and spiritual consciousness of the nation, if not the world. He was pop music's BBC with *Sign O the Times* in the 1980s. By the middle of George W. Bush's presidential term, Prince became a musical pundit penning a provocative letter to the nation's political structure with *Dear Mr. Man* in 2004. In 2015, he became activist/musical healer probing for answers about police brutality while invoking Einstein ("peace is more than the absence of war") with his concert and song *Baltimore*, inspired by the death of Freddie Gray.

Utilizing critical race theory, a textual analysis of lyrics, as well as news articles reporting on these songs, will enable us to explore the transgressive meanings of some of the artist's music. We will note the trajectory (political, social, and racial) of Prince's work stemming from the 1980s to present, while also highlighting the major events his music responded to. In the end, we will have created a rhetorical "album" of sorts deemed, "The Prince Protest Mixtape Project Volume 1."

1958-2016



Ed Montano

RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia

Ed Montano is Senior Lecturer in Music Industry at RMIT University, and writes for the Australian dance music website www.inthemix.com.au. His research focuses on commercial club culture and the electronic dance music industry in Australia, and has been published in journals such as *Popular Music*, *Dancecult*, and *Journal on the Art of Record Production*, and various edited collections. Ed is part of the editorial team of *Dancecult* and is on the executive committee of IASPM.

Do I believe in God - Electronic Dance Music Aesthetics and Remix Culture in the Work of Prince

Dance music remixes of pop and rock songs are now common currency. In the 1980s and early 1990s such re-working of material was less prevalent. Through exploring dance music rhythms and technologies, Prince arguably did more than any other artist in the 1980s in pushing the concept of the remix, and more broadly electronic dance music (EDM), to the forefront of commercial rock and pop culture. There are many connections to be made between Prince's official remixes and the development of EDM over the past 30 years (through techno, house and all of EDM's various other subgenres).

One can argue Prince helped to break down previously existing boundaries between rock and EDM, leading to rock bands exploring more electronically-driven territory and EDM acts taking to the stage like rock performers. Focusing on a selection of Prince-related remixes (officially released 12-inch remixes, DJ remixes and bootlegs), this paper will explore how Prince's EDM-related material transformed the sound, and subsequently transcended the aesthetic boundaries, of rock music.

Drawing on over a decade of ethnographic research into DJ culture and EDM, my discussion will consider the ways in which this material can be interpreted as dance music, and how this material allowed rock music to move beyond its guitar-and-drums ethos. Referencing EDM literature and the developing field of the art of record production, I will outline how Prince's engagements with EDM are viewed and assessed within the discourse and mythology that surrounds the artist. I seek to interrogate to what extent Prince can be said to have incorporated overt EDM aesthetics into his music, all the way through to some of the EDM-driven songs on 2015's *Hit n Run Phase One*.

1958-2016



Monique Morris

St Mary's College, USA

Monique W. Morris, Ed.D. is an author, educator, and social justice scholar with 25 years of experience in the areas of social and economic justice, juvenile justice, and education. She is the author of *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools* (The New Press, 2016) and *Black Stats: African Americans by the Numbers in the Twenty-First Century* (The New Press, 2014) and other books, book chapters, articles and public lectures that explore intersections between race, gender and justice--and occasionally, Prince's political activism.

Dr. Morris is the Founder and President of the National Black Women's Justice Institute (NBWJI), an organization that conducts research, provides technical assistance, engages in public education, and promotes civic and policy engagement to reduce racial and gender disparities in the justice system affecting Black women, girls and their families. Dr. Morris is also an adjunct associate professor for Saint Mary's College of California and has taught at the University of San Francisco and California State University, Sacramento.

"Walking in Crooked Shoes: Prince and the Complication of Mastery"

This presentation will discuss Prince's ongoing interrogation of "mastery"-- using the construct as a tool to uplift social justice and hold structures of oppression (e.g. the establishment American music industry) accountable for their exploitation of Black labor. Through narrative inquiry, specifically a content-analysis of Prince's recorded interviews with African American journalists and in-depth interviews with organizers who worked directly with Prince to regain ownership of his master recordings and to invest in various Black freedom movements and enterprises, this presentation will discuss Prince's imprint on the contemporary Black American freedom movement.

1958-2016



John Narayan

University of Warwick, UK

John Narayan is a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow in the Department of Sociology at the University of Warwick. His current research focuses on the global politics of Black Power. His first book *John Dewey: The Global Public and its Problems* (2016) was published with Manchester University Press. And he is co-editor of *European Cosmopolitanism: Colonial Histories and Post-Colonial Societies* with Routledge.

Prince and the Racial Revolution; Walking the lines between the Post-Racial and Blackness

Prince's commitment to eradicating the boundaries and limitations of race can be found in his earliest works, whether this is the post-racial world of *Uptown* or *Controversy's* declaration of wishing that there 'was no black and white...' This embracement of post-racial thinking fits with the characterisation of Prince as an artist who sought to transgress boundaries such as race, gender and sexuality.

In this paper I do not necessarily want to challenge this viewpoint, but rather suggest that Prince's body of work also contains a politics of blackness. Whilst this politics of blackness simmers under Prince's artistic zenith of the 1980s it becomes more visible in the 1990s with Prince's declaration that 'I'm the wrong colour and play guitar.' Examining songs such as 'Family Name' and 'Dear Mr Man' this paper will show how Prince's politics of blackness places issues such as slavery, civil rights, and urban poverty, to the front and centre, managing to even draw Cornel West into collaboration. This paper will contend that this turn to a politics of blackness should not be seen as repudiation of Prince's embracement of the post-racial but rather as form of politics that could possibly lead towards a world where race disappears.

This not only places Prince's artistic work into the politics of liberation associated with radical black politics but also challenges the idea that Prince's latter work should be read as being straight-forwardly conservative vis-à-vis the transgressive nature of his earlier work.

1958-2016



Dalena Ngo

Independent Scholar, USA

Educated at St. Olaf College in Minnesota, Dalena Ngo studied English, Biology, and American Studies, focusing on the intersection between of science and literature in American culture. Her main area of study is on various cultural expressions of masculinity as both biological and cultural constructs and at Columbia University, she has examined the social implications of HIV/AIDs in African-American men. Her research has also taken her to the Bahamas where she has investigated the life histories of local organisms like pearl oysters and sea cucumbers. Her current research is on graphic novels and how they reconfigure scientific phenomena.

Between Binaries and breaking Barriers: A Space fo Self Expression

Prince has defied categorizations and conventions since the inception of his career, while helping to engineer the Minneapolis Sound, making iconic fashion statements, and undermining traditional gender norms. As he changed his name to a symbol that combined the masculine and feminine together, challenging the rigid stereotypes of black masculinity and homosexuality, his musical stylings shifted further to compliment this evolution.

Fostering this change was a deep appreciation for his hometown which happened to be a driving force in helping him combine the emerging strands of R&B, funk rock, and synth pop together into the revolutionary Minneapolis Sound. Centering on the locality of Minneapolis as a microcosm of progressive urbanization in the Midwest region, I investigate how Prince used Minneapolis Sound as a pushback against the new hip-hop music emanating from the West Coast and how this connects to his gender-subverting sensibilities that enabled this rebellion against the black masculinity of the 1980s.

To do this, Prince constructed a new masculinity that was a reaction against what cultural critic Mark Anthony Neal termed as the Strong Black Man. However, contrary to Neal's model of the New Black Man, Prince embodied a whole different kind of black man that utilized music and mentality in a way that was much more specific to Midwestern ideas of masculinity. Prince's fluidity between gender norms, in which his masculinity was defined particularly by his femininity, illustrated a simultaneous fluidity in his musical endeavors.

Using Minneapolis music history, gender studies, and theories of black cultural production, this paper examines the social conditions that enabled Prince to formulate a space of resistance, both physical and metaphysical, to break musical barriers and gender binaries and how these worked together in his performance as a visionary artist.

1958-2016



Ali Nobil Ahmad

Zentrum Moderner Orient, Germany

Ali Nobil Ahmad is a British academic and journalist with interests in film, migration and diasporic culture. He is currently a Fellow at the Zentrum Moderner Orient in Berlin where he has been based since 2014. He has previously been Madeleine Haas Visiting Professor at Brandeis University in Boston, recipient of Guardian's Scott Trust Bursary for journalism and held academic appointments in Pakistan, where he has taught, researched and worked as a journalist since 2009. He received his PhD, an oral history of Pakistanis in Europe, from the European University Institute in Florence. His work has been published by leading academic journals and newspapers; his monograph, 'Masculinity, Sexuality and Illegal Migration' (2011) was published by Routledge in paperback last year.

Sex and Race in the Art of Prince: A British Asian Perspective

Among the many individuals, communities and constellations of music fans moved to write about Prince's death last year, authors of colour time and again identified the significance of his life and corpus as having contributed profoundly to their sexual self-discovery, personal formation, and, for want of a better word, identity (e.g. Ross 2016).

If Prince's extraordinary contribution to rock, pop, R&B and other musical cultures was widely acknowledged within the mainstream, the manner of its appreciation among prominent African American critics and cultural connoisseurs like filmmaker Spike Lee was invariably inflected by a keen understanding of his iconic importance as a political figure in the personal lives of black people. In obituaries, reflections and reminiscences on the crushing impact of his death, Prince's influence in black lives manifested itself in intimate ways, the excavation of which reveals much about the psychic violence of race, as well as the agency with which this violence is overcome within individual life-trajectories.

How can we reconcile Prince's universal, widespread popular appeal on the one hand, with his particular significance for racially and sexually marginalized minorities? This paper explores the way in which Prince's ethic of radical humanity has inspired ethnically diverse music enthusiasts, whilst fostering particular forms of strength and care of Self among vulnerable constituencies in a world of racial and sexual hierarchies. Taking methodological inspiration from a range of academic disciplines including cultural studies and anthropology, the paper explores the significance of his music, poetry, story-telling, fashion, film, live performances and interviews, arguing that his life itself was a work of art.

It does so from a particular perspective, referencing commentary and artistic production of his British Asian fans, drawn, like many others, to his embrace of liminality (e.g. Kureshi 1995; Balsubramanyam 2016; Hornak 2016), and drawing upon my own experiences as a Prince bootlegger over a quarter of a century ago (at an age before I was old enough to understand why piracy appalled him). Located within a particular time and place, my account seeks also to shed light on a wider lost universe of analogue subculture in 1980s London. Themes and issues as diverse as religious belief, spirituality, technology and intellectual property are touched upon in a wide-ranging discussion that, in the best traditions of the artist himself, transgress boundaries of discipline and subject matter.

1958-2016



Pier Penic

Smithsonian National Museum

Pier Penic has created numerous writing programs and workshops for four National Smithsonian Museums and The National Park Service. She is also the founder and director of Culture at Home, an academic and support group for African American homeschooling families. Pier Penic has recently become a part of the Black Literary Awareness for Cultural Knowledge homeschooling network to combine efforts in increasing Black awareness, cultural expression, and self pride in homeschooling communities.

Presently, she works with The Smithsonian National Museum of African Art as an art educator, consultant and writing specialist. She created and facilitated the critically acclaimed program The Power of the Written Word: A Summer Writing Institute for Teens for the new Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture and has consistently worked with the museum on their programs and workshops. In 2013, the museum selected her to interview Clarence P. Jones, the lawyer for Dr. Martin Luther King and writer of the famous "I Have a Dream Speech". She lives in the Washington DC area

Pier Penic received her B.A. in English Literature from Pine Manor College in 1988. She did her graduate studies in Literature (British, African-American, Russian, Folk and Irish) at The American University in Washington D.C. 1992 and taught College Writing and Freshman Comp I at The American University. She has been featured in the International Who's Who of Professionals 2001 for her writing. Her opinion commentaries have appeared in the periodicals, "The Christian Science Monitor," "Fungasa," "East of the River" and "Raising Black and Biracial Children."

Dialogue with Disco-Iconography and Prince's Erotic City

The present is always in dialogue with the past. Prince's relationship with the melodic nature of the era of Disco transcends song, dance, fashion, attitude and memorabilia. His music is and continues to be a direct correlation and attack and response on the rhetorical illusion of the end of a movement.

Disco came to be defined as "Trans Music" and its journey through the 70's became Prince's most influential moment in his journey as a direct reflection of the sounds and visual concepts of the "funky" sound of soul and dance music. Disco's repetitiveness and its evolving cornucopia, it's freedom, it's flying translations, it's diversity and changing culture define Prince's legacy as a continuum of Disco's influence. Like Disco, Prince's creations are more than just music. Like Prince, Disco is a culture, a movement, a societal and literary construct and a symbol of political correctness. Disco transcended into 80's through the energy and flamboyancy of Prince's songs.

This call and response through the exploration and careful analysis of several Disco songs that speak to Prince's style, technique, complications, originality, daring virtues, wit and ambitions are the most popular selections of that era. They include, "More, More, More," by Andrea True Connection, "Get Down Tonight" by KC and the Sunshine Band, "Love to Love You Baby" by Donna Summer, "Disco Lady" by Johnnie Taylor and "Push, Push in the Bush" by Musique. Prince's selections include "Head", "Erotic City," "Dirty Mind," "Darling Nikki" and several others. The exploration of Disco as a popular culture, a 60's antithesis, a culture within a language, theater and political imagery will parallel with responses of the songs of Prince as a cultural enigma, a playground of free movement, a melodic dichotomy and a nostalgic take on the melodious golden age of the 70's.

1853-2016



Twila Perry

Rutgers University, USA

Twila L. Perry is a Professor of Law and the Judge Alexander P. Waugh Sr. Scholar at Rutgers University School of Law in Newark, New Jersey, U.S.A. Professor Perry is the author of numerous law journal articles which address the intersection of law with issues of race, gender, culture and class in the contexts of family life and urban communities. She has presented on these issues at conferences across the United States and internationally. Two of her current writing projects address the intersection of race, culture and law in popular music (focusing on Prince) and in opera.

Prince: Choices & Strategies in the Representation of Race

Prince has often been described in the media as an artist who transcended barriers of race, gender and music genre. However, race has received much less attention than the other two areas. Although discussions of Prince in the media have often de-emphasized his racial identity as an African-American, an examination of Prince's life and career demonstrates that at different stages and in different media contexts-- interviews, performances and recordings, Prince selectively and strategically emphasized or de-emphasized the issue of race. He did this employing methods I describe as verbal, visual and symbolic.

In the early 1980's, Prince was often described in the American media as being biracial. I explore the reasons why Prince's racial identity became the subject of confusion, his own strategic contribution to the matter, and the ways in which the issue reflected the American preoccupation with the complexities and significance of race. During the 1990's, Prince became involved in a well-known and bitter contract dispute with his record company. The controversy resulted in Prince engaging in symbolic and visual actions which can also be considered representations of race--he changed his name to an unpronounceable symbol and he performed with the word "slave" scrawled across his face.

In these and other contexts, Prince's choices about representing race have reflected issues of continuing relevance in the lives of many African-Americans. Racial identity, the political significance of naming and the relevance of slavery are subjects of active academic debate in the American legal scholarship movement known as critical race theory as it analyzes, among other issues, the intersection of race with issues of hierarchy and cultural and economic power.

1958-2016



Dawn Pichon Barron

Northwest Indian College, USA

Dawn Pichón Barron is a mixed-blood (mestiza) writer, educator, and social activist living at the south end of the Salish Sea. She earned her MFA at Queens University of Charlotte, NC and works as an administrator and faculty at the Northwest Indian College's Nisqually Reservation Campus. Work has been published, or is forthcoming by Oregon Quarterly, *Of a Monstrous Child* (Lost Horse Press, 2011), *Yellow Medicine Review*, *Pittsburgh Poetry Review* among others. Currently, she curates the Gray Skies Reading Series and wishes for more days of clear skies and sunshine. Visit her at www.dawnpichonbarron.com.

Prince: A Mentor in Breaking Boundaries

People, especially young teenagers, need outsiders, rebels, and revolutionaries to give hope that one can determine their own worth, use their own sexuality, and control their own power. Prince—the musician, artist, human being—did this, across social, economic, cultural, religious, and color boundaries.

At 13 years of age, the enigmatic quality, yet transparent vibrancy and love of life of Prince showed me that “White, Black, Puerto Rican, everybody just a freaking,” (“Uptown”) and I could be myself without guilt because Prince gave me a permission of sorts, while also giving me lasting lessons in breaking down boundaries designed to enslave. Through his lyrics, movies, personal interviews, biographies, and social commentaries, Prince’s legacy to move beyond what the powers and society told him he could be and do, cemented a boundary inside me—one that I carry to this day, some 30 years after my initial introduction and teen obsession—I decide what and who I am.

Using lyrics and quotes, I will discuss the invisible mentorship Prince provided for those searching for identity, and the right to self-define. This is the lesson in studying Prince; not only his staying power in an industry full of 1-trick ponies and 1-hit wonders, but of his dedication to being true to who he was. As an English/Humanities and Cultural Sovereignty Faculty, I have been able to utilize the mythology and symbolism of Prince to discuss breaking boundaries and redefining boundaries around identity. Identity politics is all the rage, and by studying Prince’s life, we can gain insights into how this one person created himself over and over, by his own rules.

1958-2016



Annie Potts

University of Canterbury, New Zealand

Associate Professor Annie Potts has a doctorate in Critical Psychology and is Head of Cultural Studies and Co-Director of the New Zealand Centre for Human-Animal Studies at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch. Among other publications, she is the author of *The Science/Fiction of Sex: Feminist Deconstruction and the Vocabularies of Heterosex* (Routledge, 2003), *A New Zealand Book of Beasts: Animals in our Culture, History and Everyday Life* (AUP, 2013), and, most recently, "The Intersectional Influences of Prince" (*Animal Studies Journal*, 2016).

"Flying Aboard the Seduction 747": Prince, Deleuze and the 'Body with Humour

Prince played with different forms of humour (irony, camp, parody, idiosyncratic) in a variety of ways and across contexts throughout his career. Prince also used his wide vocal range (particularly his falsetto) – as well as disco and funk sounds – to appeal to listeners' and viewers' sense of (transgressive) humor, quirkiness and playfulness.

Humour appears in casual asides ("well, maybe not the ride", "Adore", 1999), rap within songs ("Incense and Candles", 3121), acting and dance routines ("Kiss", Parade), and sometimes via self-deprecating or self-aggrandizing lyrics in songs ("Satisfied", 3121). While humour is used to subvert conventional constructions of sexuality and gender in Prince's repertoire, it also emerges in his music with respect to the sacred and profane, racial difference, and assumptions about 'high' and 'low' culture.

In this presentation I will draw on Bourdieu's theory of taste, Babuscio's understandings of queer sensibility and camp, and Deleuzian theory on bodies and subversion in my examination of the productive affective potential of humour in selected songs and performances. In Deleuzian terms, 'bodies' refer to the connections made between – in this instance – the musician, his music (including lyrics and vocal range and use of instruments), sartorial sense, performance, the band, the instruments, technology and the audience. 'Bodies' are understood more in terms of what they do, rather than 'who they are'.

With recourse to four songs – "Jack You Off" (Controversy, 1981), "International Lover" (1999, 1982), "My Name is Prince and I am Funky" (Love Symbol, 1992) and "Satisfied" (3121, 2006) – I will explore how the 'Body with Humour' produced through Prince's wit – including his use of self-parody – has the potential to disrupt both the affective dimension of his music and our assumptions about humour itself.

1958-2016

Conference Speakers and Abstracts



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

Simon Price

Writer, UK; Lecturer, BIMM Brighton

Prince and Performance Style

Prince was the defining live performer of his generation: an effortlessly gifted musician who could play every instrument better even than the specialists in his own band, while spinning around in high heels, and also a consummate entertainer who always remembered to connect with his audience. This presentation will look at the manner in which every aspect of Prince's persona - from sexuality to religion - played out onstage, and recall, from an eye-witness perspective, a number of key moments in Prince's career as a concert artist, from theatres to arenas, from festival headline shows to sweaty secret club gig

1958-2016



Harold Pride

Lecturer, USA

Harold Pride is a community based lecturer, pop music scholar and arts enthusiast. In 2013, he presented “Sonic Visuals: Exploring Posing Beauty’s Musical Connection Through The Eyes” at Spelman College and will return in April 2017 to present “Like Books & Black Lives: The Evolution of Prince’s Politics.” In October 2016, he participated in a panel surrounding Prince’s social activism, “Black Albums Matter”, at California State University in Los Angeles. Attending close to 40 Prince concerts over the span of his career, he was also featured in a promotional commercial for Prince’s “The Rainbow Children” album, filmed at Paisley Park.

Take This Beat: 1987 & The Brilliant Band With No Name

By 1986, Prince had retained a creative capital in the recording industry that afforded free and widely sponsored pursuit of his ideas. In the years following the massive success of *Purple Rain*, more attention than ever was given to his endeavours which by then included a feature film follow-up, a new wave of protégés, an expanded band, a then under construction recording complex outside of Minneapolis and a record label to boot.

Now exhibiting with his most popular band – *The Revolution* – what ultimately became the modus operandi throughout the entirety of his performing career, successfully turning what was once a group of young, inexperienced, industry outsiders into his funkier, most highly disciplined unit to date. Having already established his lack of desire in duplicating the “once in a lifetime” success of *Purple Rain* just two years earlier, this version of Prince as both band member and leader displayed an expanded confidence and appetite for experimental influence from musicians outside of his core unit.

“Take This Beat” will explore the progression of Prince’s outside collaborations that led to the formation of his first post-*Revolution* band – the explosive, massively talented and unnamed group at the centre of his only concert film, *Sign O’ The Times*. For two criminally brief years, this band supported him on two celebrated and (arguably) most revered tours of his entire career, *Sign O’ The Times* and *Lovesexy* respectively. The centre of this presentation will be based on my conversation with long-time collaborator and band member (’85-’94), Levi Seacer Jr.

“DMSR” by writer Per Nilsen is a definitive documentation of the seminal first decade of Prince’s career; a holy grail of sorts that expands on an original text from 1990 by the same author. The book ends with the close of 1987 following his halting the release of *The Black Album*, abandoning promotional efforts for the *Sign O’ The Times* album and its proposed American tour. “Take This Beat” will not only cover the projects involving would be members that lead to their official formation but also the *Lovesexy* tour which was not covered in “DMSR.”

While some would consider the unenviable task of forming a band to follow his most popular one a challenge; Prince expressed enthusiasm regarding the new members’ capacity, marking their ability for fluidity and skilled spontaneity his previous line-ups may have lacked. True to form, Prince showed no intention of “replacing” *Revolution* members at all, this time culling members from the final incarnation of the *Revolution* with a rhythm section provided by Bay area alums and Escovedo finds, Levi Seacer Jr, Miko Weaver with Sheila E herself on drum duties.

Unfortunately, not enough scholarship has been lent to this highly productive time and band whose after-shows were as exhaustively innovative as the well-rehearsed ones before them. A likely reason the band isn’t referenced nearly enough by pop culture critics is that they simply had no name. Later affectionately referred to as *The Lovesexy Band*, Prince would immortalize this unit in his self-directed concert film, still absent a moniker like *The Revolution* and *The New Power Generation*.

1958-2016



Jennifer Pyke

Wake Forest University, USA

Jenny Pyke is an assistant teaching professor at Wake Forest University. She has published essays on cartography in twentieth-century Scottish novels and on relationships between nineteenth- and twenty-first century taxidermy, and (forthcoming) on the use of Victorian allusions by women in rock and punk. She is completing a book manuscript, "That Involuntary, Palpitating Life": Victorian Stillness.

Take me with you: Prince and the Musical Space of Female Sexual Desire

"Popular music has always been about sex, but what made Prince different was that he conjured the kind of sex you'd want to have." —Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett.

This paper looks at the way music journalist's commemorated sexuality itself in remembering Prince after his death, from personal awakenings to cultural reverberations. While first-person intimacy and emotion are not unusual in articles honouring popular musicians after their death— music, of course, is a mode of affect and memory, and writers are understandably going to be transported to a first listening or another spot of time— still, the stunned sense of loss in the face of Prince's early and unexpected death led to a number of extremely open and personal essays from journalists who remembered Prince as threshold to adulthood and to sexual understanding and sexual permission.

These journalists further argued that Prince created this new access in ways no one else was able to, in part because of his own rejection of constraints and categories, but also because of the genius of the music itself. The music he created carried sexuality to a new space, not abandoning the erotic or the raunchy, but allowing all modes of sexuality to be reimagined and claimed in new ways, and not dictated by gender.

Specifically, this paper discuss' Prince's representation of female sexual desire, and the different ways journalists understand Prince's ability to present female sexual desire outside of a commodified, male (pop, rock, or hip hop) gaze. In many of his songs, Ann Powers has said, Prince "clearly aimed to give musical space to women's sexual desire—something many male musicians have sought to simulate but few have studied with real curiosity and sympathy." Kris Ex goes farther to say that in his presentation of female desire, "Prince introduced the ideas of sexual feminism and femininity to me, to a generation of men, to culture. For so many of us, our proximity to Prince and how much we retained of his ideas determined whether or not we would grow up to be feminists, players, and/or womanizers in a very basic way."

This paper will think about what "musical space," as opposed to visual media, offers as a medium for imagining female desire, bringing in the way music writers have talked about Prince's music genius, as well as the themes of utopian escapism in his lyrics—the freedom offered by the consistent idea and plea "take me with you," both in running from the social script of one's life and in allowing oneself to escape to a place of imagined, unapologetic desire.

1958-2016



Kimberly Ransom

University of Michigan, USA

Kimberly C. Ransom is a doctoral student in Educational Foundations and Policy at the School of Education, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Her research interests are the social construction of black childhood, the history of African American education, education reform, and school-family-community engagement. Kimberly draws upon qualitative research methods with interests in ethnography, oral history, arts-based research, and critical methodologies. Currently, Kimberly is researching the oral histories of former-children who attended Rosenwald Schools in Pickens County, Alabama, USA (1930-1965). Her Prince-work includes an auto-ethnographic examination of Prince and her childhoods using archival data, as well as writings and sketches from her childhood journal (1985-1986) which explores and emulates the artistry of Prince. Prior to doctoral studies, Kimberly was the founding director of the University of Chicago Collegiate Scholars Program. She has received several awards and fellowships for her creativity and leadership including the New York University Women of Colour Policy Fellowship, the University of Chicago Diversity Leadership Award, and the Chicago Community Trust Fellowship.

A Conceptual Falsetto: Reimagining Black Childhood through One Girl's Exploration of the Artistry of Prince

As a Black child, the depths of Prince's poetry and the heights of his falsetto represented our coming of age during the 1960s-1980s. Prince and I share a unique generation as first benefactors of African American's Great Migration North, descendants of US slavery and the first generation not to live under Jim Crow Law.

Although free, black childhoods in our generation carry both the historical and contemporary weight of being raced black in America. Delgado (1995) asserts blacks are in a societal position of "beyond love," ... "excluded both from the economy and from networks of love" (47). I maintain this exclusion from societal love includes the vilification of black childhood (Bernstein 2011; King 2005). Dumas & Nelson (2016) agree, calling for a (re)imagining of black childhood out of the shadows of enmity.

Unleashing feelings "tabooed" for black children (Davis and Dollard 1940), Prince sought to (re)imagine black childhood by liberating himself through a baptism of his emotive stories doused with falsettos—aching, screeching, yearning and loving. "Many feminist writers advocate starting research from one's own experience...explaining their personal connection to the project, or using personal knowledge to help them in the research process" (Ellis 2004:48).

I argue to begin the work of (re)imagining black childhood, black researchers must begin with the "love ethic" (Hooks 1994) embedded in their own childhood stories. With this auto-ethnographic research, I aim to begin the process of (re)imagining black childhood through examining the love ethic documented in my childhood journal examining and emulating the lyrics of Prince (1986-1987). I use a layered account (Boylorn 2008; Ronai 1995) to examine my childhood experience and define what I term a conceptual falsetto- a childhood act – a metaphorical high note – that, like Prince, defies the tenor of beyond love with an exploration and embracing of a love ethic.

1958-2016



Casci Ritchie

Independent Scholar, UK

Casci Ritchie has been a dedicated fan of His Royal Badness since she first heard Peach blast from her Dad's Ford Mondeo speakers as a young child. Ever since, she's proudly sported a raspberry beret. Having gained an MA in Fashion Bodywear, Casci has also recently completed a MLitt in Dress & Textile Histories at the University of Glasgow. Her research project examined the impact of Glasgow's 'Cinema City' and its influence on the fashion and style of Glaswegian women during the 1940s. She has continued to develop her passion for twentieth-century fashion from creation to consumption with a particular interest in Hollywood costume and consumer culture.

Before the Rain: How Prince Got the Look

Prince's truly unique rule breaking style has long since been overlooked by dress historians. The impact of Prince's fashion can be seen in runway's and high streets alike. Today he is instantly recognised by an unpronounceable symbol and the colour purple which immediately conveys images of ruffled collars, studded trench coats and an abundance of paisley print.

So how did a shy musical prodigy from Minneapolis, dressed in bell bottoms and natural afro become the Cuban heeled icon who, at one time, wore nothing but a high rise thong?

The 1980 release *Dirty Mind* was Prince's third album that launched a more provocative Prince and introduced the world to his band, soon to be named "The Revolution". Blurring race, gender and sexuality Prince strutted onstage in stockings, intimidating and arousing crowds alike performing a fusion of funk, new wave, punk, R&B and rock. The fashion choices of Prince and the band during this influential time foreshadowed what we now view as the epitome of Prince's style made iconic in the 1984 film *Purple Rain*.

The proposed paper will explore Prince's style through this dynamic time — focusing on press photographs, album art, concert footage, interviews and contemporary response to his fashion. The author will pinpoint pivotal moments in this journey and creatively explore the origins, development and impact of his style. An object study will be focused on the trench-coat and the evolution of this garment from the *Dirty Mind's* young provocateur throughout his career to his untimely death in 2016.

1958-2016



William Robinson

North Carolina Central University, USA

Dr. W. Russell Robinson is assistant professor in the Department of Mass Communication North Carolina Central University. His research interests focus on social media and social movements, representations of Black masculinity in popular culture and Hip Hop cultural studies. He has published research on the use of Instagram and the Black Lives Matter movement. Dr. Robinson has appeared on Al Jazeera English, The Stream, Diverse Issues in Higher Education, the Wall Street Journal, and Ebony Magazine. His most current publication project will be an edited volume about Black masculinity in the 21st century.

TBC - "The Prince Protest Mixtape Project Volume 1."

For many, April 21, 2016 represents the day the world lost one of the most prolific artist who was endemic of the term "change agent," Prince Rogers Nelson. A musician, a singer, a songwriter, a performer, Prince was a quadruple talent; one not to be taken lightly by his contemporaries; one who equally was unapologetic vocally in matters of politics, race, gender, and class. Like Marvin Gaye who posed the musical rhetorical question *What's Going On* in 1971, Prince metaphorically operated in a variety of capacities touching the moral and spiritual consciousness of the nation, if not the world.

He was pop music's BBC with *Sign O' the Times* in the 1980s. By the middle of George W. Bush's presidential term, Prince became a musical pundit penning a provocative letter to the nation's political structure with *Dear Mr. Man* in 2004. In 2015, he became activist/musical healer probing for answers about police brutality while invoking Einstein ("peace is more than the absence of war") with his concert and song *Baltimore*, inspired by the death of Freddie Gray.

Utilizing critical race theory, a textual analysis of lyrics, as well as news articles reporting on these songs, will enable us to explore the transgressive meanings of some of the artist's music. We will note the trajectory (political, social, and racial) of Prince's work stemming from the 1980s to present, while also highlighting the major events his music responded to. In the end, we will have created a rhetorical "album" of sorts deemed, "The Prince Protest Mixtape Project Volume 1."

1958-2016



Arun Saldanha

University of Minnesota, USA

Associate Professor in Geography, Environment, and Society, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. Author of *Psychedelic White: Goa Trance and the Viscosity of Race* (University of Minnesota Press, 2007) and *Space After Deleuze* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2017). Co-editor of *Geographies of Race and Food: Fields Bodies Markets* (Ashgate, 2013), *Sexual Difference Between Psychoanalysis and Vitalism* (Routledge, 2013), and *Deleuze and Race* (Edinburgh University Press, 2013). Organizing a Prince symposium at the U of M in April 2018.

The Dream We All Dream Of: Non-Human Blackness in Prince's "U Got The Look"

Commentators agree Prince was a master at exposing the limits of conventional understandings of race and sexuality, especially in the US. This panel session will insist that his music and imagery must be analysed through their spatial expressions. Geographical themes, like the city, migration, segregation, travel, the body, the stage, the studio, the bedroom, and utopia run through Prince's oeuvre. More specifically, we will rehearse the reasons why Prince could only come from Minneapolis, a global city in an otherwise provincial white Midwestern state.

Speaking from a political context in the US wherein white supremacy and state oppression are rapidly becoming normalized with a force unseen since the 1950s, we will ask how Prince can be interpreted as a major artistic trendsetter who could imagine spaces of liberation against the bourgeois whiteness of neoliberalism and neo-conservatism.

The "queer" in our title signals that we will not brush over the ambivalences Prince showed when it comes to his rebellion – the misogyny in the *Purple Rain* movie is undeniable, for example – but frame these ambivalences as fundamental to the racial and sexual dimensions of US popular culture. The session will also touch on the role religion played in his strong calls for diversity and freedom.

The conceptual reference points of this session will be heterogeneous, combining popular music studies with black feminism, queer theory, social justice theory, urban studies, ethnography, Marxism, media studies, religious studies, and musicology. These fields converge on explaining blackness as a geographical process. Black geographies is a distinct subfield and has been gaining traction steadily in the US the last decade. It has a different emphasis than the British cultural studies work on race of the 1980s and 1990s which generally put race in scare quotes ("race", see for example Paul Gilroy's formative work).

In conversation with the civil rights tradition, the African American public sphere, feminists and LGBT activists, and most recently Black Lives Matter, black geographies seeks to affirm blackness as a site of possibility and resistance, whereas British antiracism has operated more under the aegis of liberal multiculturalism. Prince is fascinating in this respect because his art was often self-consciously aiming to reach a universal language even while playing tribute to the legacies of blackness, both musically and politically, including wearing an afro in the years before he died and dedicating a single, *Baltimore*, to BLM's protest against police brutality. How to think through this tension between black and universal, identity and difference, tradition and revolution? Can Prince and the Minneapolis Sound help bridge the segregated neighbourhoods and media of US cities? Will today's artists find inspiration in his work to resist Trump? And can Prince help Europeans negotiate similarly scary turns towards nationalism and moralism?

1958-2016



Carla Schriever

University of Oldenburg, Germany

Carla Schriever works as a lecturer in musicology, media studies and philosophy at the University of Oldenburg. She recently attained a doctorate from the Humboldt University in Berlin. In the last years her research focussed on the habitus of Prince fans. She wrote on Prince fans for example in the journal *Clothing Cultures* on hidden desires and fetishisation within the fan community.

The unutterable desire for Prince - Male fan adoration and concealing techniques

Nowadays the self-entitled group “Purple Army”, the hard-core fan base around the pop-phenomenon Prince consists mainly of white, heterosexual males, aged 40-60, who assemble in annual manner to witness ad-hoc concerts by the artist. Without the analogue or digital interaction, attending these Hit and Run shows and after shows become a mere impossibility. This network of fans operates on an inner-circle level built on knowledge capital and long termed fandom.

The dimension of the public and the private aspects of fandom correlate in this group. The fans in this circle want to be publically understood as fans of good music, as musicians, as music-scholars worshipping an in their perspective “underrated” artist. They want to be read as objective listeners not as fans. The image of the “objective-fan” however transports the notion of concealing private aspects of the fandom. Aspects, which tingle the thin line between the normative and the anti-normative in the relationship between a male heterosexual fan and his male fan object.

A relation like this is very uncommon for scholarly perspectives on popular music fandom, especially when it holds gender questioning potential as well as the notion of an unutterable desire, which became appeared in the motives for concert going, collecting and the fight for the front row. This also includes aspects of fetishism, religious-like worshipping practices and spiritual idioms.

In the study that I conducted I figured out some of the hidden motives: Heterosexual, heteronormative family fathers talked about the desire for the sound of Prince’s heels clicking on the floor, of feeling his aura of needing him as close as possible. Moments which come to life only for the duration of the concert (the safe space) and need to be destroyed shortly after, by methods of reconstructing their male identities.

1958-2016



Andrew Scott

Humber College, Canada

Dr. Andrew Scott joined Humber's esteemed music faculty in 2005 has been the programmes head academic advisor since 2010, while teaching music history and overseeing the music business area. During the 2014-2015 academic year, he was the acting director of the Bachelor of Music program. Andrew has taught at the University of Guelph, where he also directed the school's jazz ensemble, and at the University of Western Ontario. He has published widely in scholarly journals and has presented academic research papers at conferences across North America. At Humber, Andrew created "ArtsAble", an interdisciplinary extra-curricular program teaching entrepreneurial and arts-sector leadership skills; implemented the Bachelor of Music program's inaugural listening party; designed four degree-breadth courses; and sat on a number of college-wide committees. He has worked with the Registrar's Office to develop pathways into the Bachelor of Music program, and mentored new faculty through the Teaching Excellence Project. An advocate for interdisciplinary applied research, Andrew received a 2013 Humber SIRC (Staff Initiated Research Fund) supporting his research project, "Assessing the Business, Technology and Media competency needs for tomorrow's music business professionals today." Andrew is the co-founder, along with Steve Bellamy, Dr. Paul Griffin and Heather Lowry, of "Nexus: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Music, Business and Media Arts". Andrew holds a doctorate in musicology from York University and a master of music degree from the New England Conservatory of Music. In June 2013, he graduated from the Harvard Summer Institute on College Admissions.

"While His Guitar Gently Wept:" Locating Meaning in a Prince Performance

On March 15, 2004 at New York's Waldorf-Astoria hotel, the late musician and polymath Prince, unexpectedly took the stage for that year's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame awards show with an all-star band that included Tom Petty, Steve Winwood, Jeff Lynne, Steve Ferrone and Dhani Harrison for a performance of *While My Guitar Gently Weeps*, a tribute to George Harrison, the then recently passed former Beatle who was being honoured for his solo contributions to rock history. For the first three minutes and twenty seconds, the group delivers an appropriate, if uninspired, cover version of what is arguably Harrison's best-known composition, complete with Lynne guitarist Marc Mann playing a largely "note-for-note" sonically accurate recreation of Eric Clapton's original solo.

As the song heads towards completion, Prince, who up until this point had largely held back both musically and performatively, steps forward and, using the accepted semiotic gestures of rock guitar God-ery, begins a musical statement nearly four minutes in length that traverses genre, style, decade, performance practice and the binaries of the codified and the improvisatory. Although Prince had made throwing divisive binaries into flux (music, style, race, and gender) a career-long practice, this particular performance is memorable, I argue, for his re-contextualization of Harrison's song as a blues trope and his assertion of performance-based agency on this sacrosanct piece of music.

The result was electrifying. The band, particularly Tom Petty, look flummoxed and for the more than 35 million people who have now viewed it on the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame's official YouTube channel, the performance, which culminates with Prince throwing his Fender Telecaster into the air, has become both part of his lore as musical iconoclast and further evidence of Prince's authenticity as more than simply a typical "pop" star.

In this paper, I offer a musicological unpacking and deep reading of Prince's performance that uses musical transcription and analysis, primary interviews with members of Prince's band and the lens of signifying to locate extra-musical meaning while problematizing the role that iconic recordings/performances play in the history of rock.

2016



Rashad Shabazz

Arizona State University, USA

Rashad Shabazz is Associate Professor and Faculty Head in Justice and Social Inquiry at the School of Social Transformation, Arizona State University. His work brings together human geography, Black cultural studies, gender studies, and critical prison studies. His most recent work, *Spatializing Blackness: Architectures of Confinement* (University of Illinois Press, 2015) examines how carceral power within the geographies of Black Chicagoans shaped urban planning, housing policy, policing practices, gang formation, high incarceration rates, masculinity, and health. Rashad is currently working on two projects: the first examines how Black people use public spaces to negotiate and perform race, gender, and sexual identity as well as to express political or cultural identity. The second project uncovers the role Black musicians in Minneapolis played in giving rise to “the Minneapolis sound”.

Black Music in Minneapolis: Prince and the Geography of the Minneapolis Sound

Commentators agree Prince was a master at exposing the limits of conventional understandings of race and sexuality, especially in the US. This panel session will insist that his music and imagery must be analysed through their spatial expressions. Geographical themes, like the city, migration, segregation, travel, the body, the stage, the studio, the bedroom, and utopia run through Prince’s oeuvre. More specifically, we will rehearse the reasons why Prince could only come from Minneapolis, a global city in an otherwise provincial white Midwestern state.

Speaking from a political context in the US wherein white supremacy and state oppression are rapidly becoming normalized with a force unseen since the 1950s, we will ask how Prince can be interpreted as a major artistic trendsetter who could imagine spaces of liberation against the bourgeois whiteness of neoliberalism and neo-conservatism.

The “queer” in our title signals that we will not brush over the ambivalences Prince showed when it comes to his rebellion – the misogyny in the *Purple Rain* movie is undeniable, for example – but frame these ambivalences as fundamental to the racial and sexual dimensions of US popular culture. The session will also touch on the role religion played in his strong calls for diversity and freedom.

The conceptual reference points of this session will be heterogeneous, combining popular music studies with black feminism, queer theory, social justice theory, urban studies, ethnography, Marxism, media studies, religious studies, and musicology. These fields converge on explaining blackness as a geographical process. Black geographies is a distinct subfield and has been gaining traction steadily in the US the last decade. It has a different emphasis than the British cultural studies work on race of the 1980s and 1990s which generally put race in scare quotes (“race”, see for example Paul Gilroy’s formative work).

In conversation with the civil rights tradition, the African American public sphere, feminists and LGBT activists, and most recently Black Lives Matter, black geographies seeks to affirm blackness as a site of possibility and resistance, whereas British antiracism has operated more under the aegis of liberal multiculturalism. Prince is fascinating in this respect because his art was often self-consciously aiming to reach a universal language even while playing tribute to the legacies of blackness, both musically and politically, including wearing an afro in the years before he died and dedicating a single, *Baltimore*, to BLM’s protest against police brutality. How to think through this tension between black and universal, identity and difference, tradition and revolution? Can Prince and the Minneapolis Sound help bridge the segregated neighbourhoods and media of US cities? Will today’s artists find inspiration in his work to resist Trump? And can Prince help Europeans negotiate similarly scary turns towards nationalism and moralism?

2016



Hasit Shah

Harvard University, USA

Hasit Shah is a journalist, writer and audio producer, currently based at the Harvard University South Asia Institute. He was a producer with BBC News for more than a decade - based in his hometown London, in Brussels and in New Delhi - where he covered major breaking stories across the world. He is a former Nieman-Berkman Fellow in Journalism Innovation at Harvard. He is the author of "Poor Lonely Computer: Prince's Misunderstood Relationship with the Internet", a lengthy, in-depth piece published by NPR Music in March 2016.

Prince's misunderstood relationship with the Internet

This talk will be an updated version of my March 2016 article "Poor Lonely Computer: Prince's Misunderstood Relationship with the Internet", published by the NPR Music website.

"The Internet's completely over," said Prince, in 2010. "I don't see why I should give my new music to iTunes or anyone else." Even now, there are many Prince songs and albums that are completely unavailable on any of the major digital platforms. His lawyers issued daily takedown notices to anyone who uploaded a Prince song or video without permission. He tried to sue websites run by devoted fans. His record company took legal action against a woman who posted a video of her child dancing, with *Let's Go Crazy* playing very faintly in the background. With regard to the Internet and digital platforms, Prince's behaviour was seen for many years as anachronistic.

But he was in fact a pioneer. A decade ago, just before he started threatening to sue everyone in sight, Prince was considered a genuine Internet hero, winning the Webby Lifetime Achievement award back in 2006. The liner notes for 1997's *Crystal Ball*, specifically cited by the Webby Awards, were uniquely presented as a web page.

Way back in 2001 he launched a website, the NPG Music Club, a subscription-based service. It was his attempt to use new technology to bypass established music industry conventions. Prince wanted to retain control of his music and artistic vision, maintain a separation between live performance and recordings, and achieve a business model that rewards artists for their work and talent. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, an era of largely open platforms — before iTunes, Spotify, social media — what he wanted to achieve might have seemed possible.

I argue, ultimately, that his later issues with the Internet were more the result of his disappointment with the changing nature of the medium rather than an inherent antipathy towards it.

1958-2016



Maciej Smółka

Jagiellonian University, Poland

Maciej Smółka – a doctoral student in Cultural Studies at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, specializing in Popular Music Studies. B.A. in Cultural Studies, M.A in American Studies at JU. Former President of the Students' Society for American Studies at the Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora, JU. Active participant in numerous Polish and international academic conferences, author of peer-reviewed papers and popular science articles. Visiting researcher at Dickinson College in Carlisle, PA in 2015. Composer, critic, fan and researcher of popular music, specializing in history of blues, rock, contemporary artists, and local music scenes.

The Sound of Purple: Prince and the Development of Minneapolis Sound

Prince's 1980 LP *Dirty Mind* is often considered as his breakthrough achievement, which started his career as promising artist from Minnesota. But he recorded only an album – he started a movement by releasing distinctive music, inspiring and influencing others. *Dirty Mind* is now recognized as one of the first LPs presenting a perfect example of specific mixture of funk, synth-pop and new wave, which is now considered not only Prince's signature sound, but also Minneapolis'. Its local music scene saw this sensation and started following the ideas behind it, eventually creating a subgenre synonymous with the city itself. The connection between the music and the city being so strong, it became its sound – Minneapolis Sound.

The purpose of this paper is to study the Minneapolis Sound as a result of a distinct local music scene's activities. The research concentrates on Prince's role in the development of this phenomenon, on his influence and input as the main mentor of a group of musicians who continued his endeavours started on *Dirty Mind*. Moreover, a possibility of other constitutive factors responsible for creating Minneapolis Sound will be analysed, while considering Prince as a key element in the process of development and popularization of this subgenre.

The study shows how Prince was not only able to shape and lead Minneapolis Sound, but also served as the mentor for a group of his adherents. It also highlights the issue of a specific "city sound" and its relation to the social, artistic and urban environment. By mentioning other, analogic musical occurrences such as Seattle Sound, Nashville Sound, or San Francisco Sound, the research provokes questions about factors needed to constitute specific sounds, a relation between both, and an influence of local music scenes on artistic character of urban regions.

1958-2016



Chambers Stevens

Acting Coach, USA

Chambers Stevens has a BFA in Regional Theatre Performance from Webster University in St. Louis. Originally from Middle Tennessee, for the last twenty-six years, he has been one of the leading acting coaches in Los Angeles. Stevens is the author of ten books for actors known as the 'Hollywood 101 Series'. In 2014 he was awarded 'Best Acting Coach in Los Angeles' by Backstage Magazine. Chambers is an avid Prince collector. He owns every album, remix and single Prince released in his lifetime. As well as hundreds of demos and unreleased songs.

Creative Dramatics and the beginning actor. How three months of creative play freed Prince and the Revolution to make the greatest Rock and Roll movie of all time.

In the summer of 1983 William Blinn, Emmy award winning writer of *Roots* and *Fame*, hired acting coach Don Amendolia to train Prince, his band The Revolution and The Time for their new film, *Purple Rain*.

Amendolia had a limited amount of film experience. He had appeared in a single episode of *Cheers* and the soap opera *Ryan's Hope*. Though he lacked experience Amendolia had a working knowledge of what every beginning acting teacher has done since the late sixties. Creative Dramatics.

Creative Dramatics was inspired by Viola Spolin's landmark book *Improvisation for the Theatre* and play therapy theorist Neva Body. Using basic imagination tools (mirror exercise, energy ball passing) creative dramatics frees the actor to take risks they normally wouldn't imagine themselves doing.

As an acting coach in Los Angeles for the last 26 years I have seen this technique take many inexperienced actors and turn them quickly into season pros. Improvisation which is really a form of play, unleashes the artist to express themselves with a passion and confidence other acting techniques (Strasberg's *The Method*, Meisner) doesn't begin to accomplish.

For three months Prince and the cast put themselves through this revolutionary acting technique. My paper will show how these improvisations helped make *Purple Rain* a success. And also how Prince used these technique to create *Under the Cherry Moon* and his dance opus *Glam Slam Ulysses*.

1958-2016



Zack Stiegler

Indiana University of Pennsylvania, USA

Zack Stiegler is associate professor of Communications Media at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, USA, where he teaches courses in media theory, media law, radio production, and popular music studies. His research has appeared in the *Journal of Popular Music Studies*, *Journal of Radio and Audio Media*, *Sociology Study*, *Javnost: The Public*, and a number of edited volumes, including *Michael Jackson: Grasping the Spectacle* (2012, Ashgate). His own edited volume, *Regulating the Web*, was published in 2013 by Lexington Books. He also currently serves as editor of the *Journal of Communications Media Studies*.

"Microchip in your Neck": Prince's "war"

In 1998, Prince unceremoniously issued the 26-minute track "The War" via his website and a limited edition cassette. Credited to the New Power Generation, "The War" is a lengthy, abstract exegesis on a wide array of topics, though its central lyrical theme describes a crumbling, resource-deficient dystopia in the not-too-distant future. Here, citizens are given opportunity to escape to an underground metropolis paradise if they allow the government to implant a microchip in their neck. Alternately, those who trust God reject the microchip and the metropolis, instead staying above ground to await God's fate.

This presentation considers "The War" within two larger frameworks. The first of these situates the piece within Prince's oeuvre. In that context, "The War" is a compelling reflection of Prince's personal and artistic transition in the late 1990s. The song is notable among his catalogue for lyrics that are both explicitly political and overtly evangelical. Although much of Prince's earlier music had been spiritually charged, religion became increasingly central to his life and work as he began to study the Jehovah's Witness faith. Recently freed from his contract with Warner Bros. Records, Prince's stylistic choices in "The War" also evince his newfound artistic freedom; the song's challenging lyrics, substantial length, and unconventional style shun the typical constraints of the commercial music industry.

Secondly, I consider the racial dimensions of "The War" through the lens of Afrofuturism. Propelled by a looped chant of "1-2, the evolution will be colorized" (a modification of Gil Scott-Heron's "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised"), "The War" cautions against the distractions of mass media and instant gratification, serving as a call to action for social-political resistance via religious faith. That is, in "The War," Prince incorporates both the utopic and dystopic strains of afro-futurism to stage his broader social critique.

1958-2016



Leah Stone and Shannan Wilson

Journalist, USA; Virginia Union University

Leah D. Stone, M.B.A, is a dynamic Brand Marketing professional with a focus on emerging marketing mediums. A native of Cincinnati, Ohio, Leah attended The Ohio State University where she graduated with a dual degree in Marketing and International Business and obtained an M.B.A. from the prestigious Jesuit Regis University, graduating with highest honours. She began her marketing career with Procter & Gamble in Account Management and is currently in Brand Management with Kao USA Inc. focusing on digital marketing strategy and consumer products. Leah has a strong passion for writing and is a frequent contributor to Atlanta Tribune The Magazine.

Shannan Wilson is an award-winning professor, researcher, and scholar. She received her BA in Communication from University of Cincinnati in 2003; Masters of Arts in English and African American Literature from North Carolina A&T State University in 2010; and a certificate in Women's Educational Leadership from Harvard University in 2015. She is completing her doctorate degree in Higher Education and Innovation at Wilmington University. Currently, Shannan teaches Composition and Rhetoric at Virginia Union University in Richmond, Virginia.

We Can't Hate You, Because We Love You: An Examination of Prince, Misogyny and Queerness

Leah D. Stone, journalist and emerging mediums marketing specialist, seeks to examine the contradictory relationship between Prince's admiration of women through his musical lyrics, and often misogynistic treatment of them in his personal relationships. Long considered the premier rock and roll Lothario, Prince was linked to a bevy of high profile women throughout his illustrious career and despite these relationships often ending in turmoil, he continued to be one of the most sought after artists of his time. Stone explores the possibility that Prince was stricken with a deep rooted "Madonna-whore complex" that harkened back to his youth, yet the artistry and grace with which Prince exemplified his female counterparts in his music often took centre stage. In addition, Stone scrutinizes the theory that talent and celebrity overpower values and morals when dealing with fandom.

Professor Shannan Wilson further analyses the complexity of Prince and his gender bending queer persona, explaining its profound effect on the often hypocritical black American community. Moreover, Wilson highlights some of today's black musicians who are categorized as queer and heavily influenced by Prince, but seem to receive heavy criticism and are not experiencing the same level of acceptance from music lovers as evident with the late icon.

Together, Stone and Wilson's work will explore the dichotomy between the broader world's fascination with Prince "the man and the myth" and mainstream socially accepted values and norms. Furthermore, the duo works to unveil his strong impact on bridging the gap between gender and queer relations. Finally, these topics will converge to address the media representation of Prince relative to gender and queer relations and its evolution throughout his career.

1958-2016



Erica Thompson

Independent Scholar, USA

Erica Thompson is an assistant editor at Columbus Alive, a weekly entertainment magazine serving central Ohio in the U.S. She has written extensively about music throughout her career. Her articles and reviews have appeared in Billboard magazine and on Billboard.com. She also wrote for Sister 2 Sister magazine before the publication folded in 2014. She has interviewed numerous high-profile artists such as Dionne Warwick, Larry Graham, Anthony Hamilton, Chilli, Monica and MC Lyte. A native of Cincinnati, Ohio, Thompson has a master's degree in journalism from Ohio University's acclaimed E.W. Scripps School of Journalism, where she completed her thesis on Prince.

Willing to do the Work: The Spiritual Mission of Prince, 1958 - 1988

Championed by critics during the Reagan era for challenging censorship and social and political conventions with his frank, sexually charged lyrics and performances, Prince is largely known for the erotic image he projected at the height of his fame in the 1980s. Understandably, people are not sure what to make of the religious fervour he exhibited after converting to the Jehovah's Witness faith in 2003.

Although many would find it hard to believe, Prince always explored spirituality in his life and music. Furthermore, his sexuality played a significant role in his spiritual development. A crucial portion of his spiritual journey took place from his childhood years, where his religious roots were established, to 1988, when he had a spiritual rebirth and changed the direction of his music and life. This paper highlights the complex relationship between sexuality and spirituality during that time period through a story in three parts: Early Doctrine (spirituality embraces sexuality, 1958-1984), Struggle (spirituality opposes sexuality, 1984-1988) and Awakening (spirituality remedies sexuality, 1988).

To tell the story, the author conducted interviews with Prince's family, friends, colleagues and acquaintances, as well as media professionals who interviewed and wrote about him. The author also studied Prince's media coverage, comments to the media, lyrics, performances, audience, previous biographies; and the spiritual journeys of other musicians. The goal of the work is to communicate that Prince always expressed a belief in God, and while he may have used religious themes for shock value, and conveyed a sex-as-spirituality message in his early music, he eventually adopted a spiritual mission to make others aware of God's existence.

1958-2016



Joni Todd

Independent Scholar, USA

Joni Todd holds a Master of Arts in Modern Art: Critical Theory from Columbia University and a Bachelor of Arts in the History of Art from Drake University. She has worked exclusively in museums and arts-related not-for-profits, including Public Art Fund, the Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago), the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Smithsonian Institution.

After being what she considers a “casual listener” for many years, Joni became an ardent fan and collector of Prince’s music after repeatedly attending monthly Prince dance parties. She is now only a few hard-to-find albums away from completing her Prince vinyl collection!

I’ll Paint a Beard on the Mona Lisa Even Though It’s My Favourite Jaw: The revolutionary Prince and Marcel Duchamp

“I’ll paint a beard on the Mona Lisa even though it’s my favourite jaw.”

1 This lyric, written by Prince, references a work by artist, Marcel Duchamp. In it, Duchamp drew a moustache and goatee on a postcard of Leonardo da Vinci’s infamous painting and retitled it L.H.O.O.Q., a sexual pun based on the French pronunciation of the letters. With a stroke of his pencil, Duchamp challenged “a generation’s revolt against tradition.”

2 Prince also challenged tradition. When an 18-year-old Prince signed a six-figure record deal with Warner Bros. in the 1970s, he demanded absolute control over his first album. In addition to writing all the songs and playing every instrument on the record, Prince insisted on producing it; thus cementing himself in music history as the youngest artist to be granted such artistic control up to that point.

Using critical theory and art history, this paper will illustrate how Duchamp and Prince revolutionized and redefined their respective fields of visual arts and music by challenging universally accepted conventions. For example, refusing to be confined by the specific labels of painter and musician, both men referred to themselves more generally as artists. For Duchamp this meant that anything he made – or chose – became art. Similarly, Prince’s creative output surpassed music; changes in fashion, hairstyles, guitars, bands, and, in some cases, films accompanied new eras.

Furthermore, their oeuvres are replete with (overt and latent) references to sex, sexuality, and notions of gender. I will also examine Duchamp’s *Botte-en-Valise* and Prince’s *Musicology* and *20Ten* albums; Prince’s legendary live performances; and the mediums of compact discs and digital files in the context of Walter Benjamin’s seminal essay, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction.” Their constant questioning of the status quo ensured both Prince and Duchamp achieved lasting cultural impact and influence.

1958-2016



Karen Turman

Winona State University, USA

Dr. Karen Turman grew up in Minneapolis, where residents are required to be devout Prince fans. She earned her PhD in French Literature with an emphasis in Applied Linguistics at UC Santa Barbara in 2013 after defending her dissertation entitled, "The Marginality Behind the Marginality: Gypsies and Jazz Dancers in Bohemian Paris." She is happy to have found a position back in Minnesota as Assistant Professor of French at Winona State University. Her research interests include 19th-century Bohemian Paris, the representation of the Roma in literature and art, early jazz studies, and teaching cultural competence to learners of the French language. Her extra-curricular interests include visiting Paisley Park and convincing people to listen to Prince.

New Baudelairian Generation: Prince and 19th - Century Dandyism

A fierce fashion-forward rock-star aesthetic with no reprieve, Prince Rogers Nelson's ever-evolving and never-subservient style was studied throughout his forty years in the limelight with bejewelled canes, asymmetrical tailored suits, 18th-century inspired ruffles, and brocade-covered high heels. The Artist's appearance resembled that of a 20th-century Dandy, but the definition of the Dandy figure includes much more than merely parading around in a unique and flamboyant wardrobe.

The quintessential Baudelairian Dandy of 19th-century Paris aspired to the total sublimation of his existence, never wavering in his artistic and moral subconscious through a constantly deliberate alignment of space, style, artistic production, and spirituality. Charles Baudelaire, the symbolist poet who paved the way for modern poetry and art criticism, exemplified the Second Empire Parisian Dandy: a misunderstood artist suffocating in ennui as the Vieux Paris dissolved around him leaving an industrialized landscape for the urban poor and a burgeoning capitalistic playground for the ruling bourgeois class. Mediocrity was the enemy and Baudelaire avoided it at all costs through art, poetry, escapism, and the shocking mystification of vulgarity.

In this paper, I examine Prince's *vie d'artiste*, or artistic lifestyle, through the lens of the 19th-century Parisian Dandy aesthetic, using both Charles Baudelaire's definition of the Dandy in his text on modernity, *The Painter of Modern Life*, and examples of Baudelaire as a Dandy himself. I argue that the synthesis of Prince's fashion, music, enigmatic demeanour, and spirituality forms the essence of his identity and in turn constitutes an acute echo of Baudelaire as legendary and controversial poet and art critic. Through this study, I hope to reveal a new perspective on the profound and everlasting impact Prince has left in his pursuit of originality and truth through his artistic identity.

1958-2016



Michael Ugrich

University of South Dakota, USA

Michael Ugrich, a Minnesota native, is an active musician currently working toward completion of dual M.M. Music History and M.M. Instrumental Conducting degrees from the University of South Dakota. He graduated with a B.A. in Classical Guitar Performance from the University of Wisconsin-Superior in 2012. While enrolled, he was the recipient of the 2010 Matinee Musical Scholarship, winner of the 2010 UWS Orchestra and UWS Symphonic Band Concerto Competitions and recipient of the 2012 UWS Certificate in Outstanding Jazz Performance. As a graduate assistant at USD, Michael currently lectures the Rock 'N Roll History section.

For You: A Study of the Neglected Guitar Style of Prince

There is the consensus that Prince was not to be taken seriously as a guitarist during his lifetime amongst the general audience and the guitar community. Reasons for this are mainly due to Prince being perceived as a gimmick of sorts: the intricate outfits, the crazy hairstyles, and his unorthodox personality. It is easy for some people to look past guitar skills when an individual is capable of producing sensory overload.

This project will focus on the perception of Prince as a guitar player within the guitar community and the general public in the wake of his death. Prince hit his peak in the 1980s; a time period when rock guitar playing was also hitting its peak. Established players like Eddie Van Halen, Randy Rhodes, and Eric Clapton were continuing to innovate, while a new school of guitar wizards were beginning to make their impact on guitar influenced music. There is unanimity among guitar players that certain guitarists can say more with one note than other guitarists can say with a thousand. Prince's power came from his ability to say more in his guitar solos than others.

Certain selections within Prince's compositional output will be analysed to not only illustrate and legitimize his guitar skill, but also to illuminate his skill as a composer. Selections include: "*Purple Rain*," "*Computer Blue*," "*Let's Go Crazy*," "*Controversy*," as well as a number of live performances. Take for example the opening guitar lick from his number one hit, "*When Doves Cry*," from the 1984 album, *Purple Rain*. The first measure opens with a flourish of solo guitar notes, followed by a sustained note that holds over the drum entrance and then gives way to another frenzy of repeated notes. That opening bar is symbolic of the tone of the piece in that it represents the frustration of the lyrical content. Not only is it symbolic, it is also incredibly difficult to play, as are most of his guitar solos.

The guitar can be found in many different genres of music: rock, funk, jazz. Prince had the ability to crossover into different genres of music throughout his career. It is fundamental to get the unbiased opinions of Prince's guitar style from a diverse selection of guitar players ranging anywhere from classical to heavy metal. To that end, data compiled from a series of interviews ranging from amateur to professional attests to Prince's legitimacy as a guitar player and his legacy as a musician. Prince was a one of a kind individual with a one of a kind guitar style. He was capable of playing tight and complex rhythms like in "*Controversy*," emotionally charged solos, exemplified by "*Purple Rain*," and unleashing fury such as in "*Let's Go Crazy*." The purpose of this project is to legitimize Prince as an elite guitarist within not only the guitar community, but also in widespread audiences. This research will be published in a series of articles with co-author Dr. David Moskowitz for the "Journal of Popular World Music Studies."

1958-2016



Sam Ward

Independent Scholar, UK

Sam Ward is currently an independent scholar having graduated from an MA in American Studies and Film from the University of East Anglia in September 2016. Looking to study a PhD in the near future, his research interests are across a range of disciplines, looking at: cultural theory; representation, identity and power; postcolonial and transnational art; and pop-culture in late-capitalism.

Prince and the Erotic Explicit

Researching Prince's cultural significance as a postmodern pop star for my Master's thesis, it quickly became apparent that the only real method possible was to trace several of the near limitless lines in the flights of desire, to paraphrase Deleuze and Guattari. It was much like opening a Pandora's Box, each new line traced revealing multiple other lines and so on.

Taking two 'Tracks' from my thesis, my conference paper will look at Prince's use of the erotic explicit - contrasting his musical and performative eroticism against that of those who preceded him. For example, how does this differ from the eroticism of the early blues; a genre of music and mode of performance rich in subversive representations of black sexuality? It will also, following on from the aims of my thesis as a whole, begin to map out the future possibilities for studying Prince by unpacking some of the complex relationships between Prince's work (mostly Eighties) and sexual/gender politics in a postmodern context.

In the wake of his death much was written about Prince's transgressive power that, along with Bowie, demonstrated the revolutionary potential for postmodernism to redefine the contours of identity. Without denying the legitimacy of such a reading, I do however look more closely at the nuanced relationship between Prince, queer sexuality, and gender subversion, guarding against the dangers of hagiography by critically engaging with more problematic elements of Prince's art and career, assuring a more accurate critical discourse.

This paper is pitched not as a complete or comprehensive analysis of any single aspect of Prince, but instead as a beginning, tracing the lines and forms, as a painter does in pencil, before the painting is filled out in the years to come by the many different future studies of Prince that will no doubt emerge.

1958-2016



Sherry Wien

Monmouth University, USA

Dr. Sherry Wien is an Associate Professor of Communication at Monmouth University in West Long Branch, New Jersey. She teaches communication theory and presentational skills including eye contact. Prince was her teenage crush. The first thing she noticed about her future husband Gary was his eyes.

Stare: A content analysis of How Prince Directed and Avoided Gaze in his Songs and Movies

When I was a teenager in the 80s, the first thing I noticed about Prince was his eyes. I had posters of Prince staring at me from my bedroom walls. When Prince died, I pictured his face as I cried. I would miss those eyes. I stared at a photo of Prince staring back at me from my faculty office wall. I watched the music video of *"When Doves Cry"* where two big blue eyes shed a single purple tear. I listened to his songs and watched his movies as I mourned. I wondered, "What was so special about his eyes?" It wasn't the hazel brown colour with long black lashes. It was how he stared or how he avoided eye contact with people. His gaze was both alluring and disturbing.

Eye contact performs complex social functions, sometimes without the awareness from the sender or receiver of the gaze. Research from communication and psychology investigates the cognitive, affective, and physical power of eye contact. Instinctively, there are rules for direct gaze and gaze avoidance. Prince knew how to manipulate his eye contact to have an effect on his audience. Prince demanded that people see him and commanded them to look away.

How did Prince direct and avert his gaze in his songs and movies? This study is a content analysis that identifies the methods and purposes of Prince's eye contact. Song lyrics throughout his career will be investigated, such as *"U Got the Look"* and *"Stare."* Film clips such as his sunglasses scene in *Purple Rain*, his Bela Lugosi look in *Under the Cherry Moon*, and his voyeuristic stage performance in *Graffiti Bridge* will also be explored. You may never see Prince the same way again.

1958-2016



James Williams

Syracuse University, USA

James Gordon Williams is a critical musicologist, composer, and pianist. His research focuses on understanding how African-American musical texts reflect African American imagination and how those texts are used for activism. Williams has performed at music festivals in the United States, Malta, Switzerland, France, Italy and many other world renowned musical venues. Williams recently improvised a live music score for the world premiere of artist Cauleen Smith's "Crow Requiem" at the Everson Museum under the theme "Speculations: Science Fiction, Chronopolitics, & Social Change." Williams is Assistant Professor of Music in African American Studies at Syracuse University.

Black Muse 4 U: Liminality, Self- Determination and Racial Uplift in the Music of Prince

Rooted in the black music tradition, Prince put diverse musical forms and styles in conversation with each other. Celebrated for his musical intertextuality, Prince's cultural work, which extended from a worldview situated in the nexus of Afro-diasporic aesthetics (Hall 1998), is often ignored or misunderstood. The source of Prince's musical creativity must be viewed from a theoretical framework that sheds light on his motivation for intertwining activism and music. Because Prince constructed his own liminal space(s) to create music based on cosmopolitan goals while signifying shared black music codes, his music is connected to the living tradition of African American musicians who thrived musically through the power of self-determination while subverting traditional corporate music models.

The trickster has historically been a powerful mythological figure in the African American community. The trickster's ability to overthrow the powerful, whether that is defined as overthrowing a single individual or systemic racism, occurs through wit and intelligence. The trickster, who guards the crossroads, represents a space where identity is never fixed, creating the needed flexibility to survive in a society dominated by the hegemony of white supremacist values.

Using what Robert Farris Thompson calls the "lessons of the crossroads" (1983), Prince's politics of self-determination is connected to several of his socially conscious songs such as the recent "*Black Muse*," & "*Baltimore*." These activist compositions provide counter narratives that connect to what Cedric Robinson called the "Black Radical Tradition". Yet Prince's music also appeals to a broad spectrum of people who are welcome to join in the struggle against inequality.

As I analyse Prince's activist songs, I contend that Prince's musical and activist strategies represent his understanding of the power of the black imaginary and communitarianism to deal with quotidian despair. Therefore, the hermeneutic of the crossroads is more appropriate for understanding his work.

1958-2016



Suzanne Wint

St. Olaf College, USA

Suzanne Wint is Visiting Assistant Professor in Music at St. Olaf College (Northfield, MN), as well as Consortium for Faculty Diversity Fellow. She is also affiliated with the Race and Ethnic Studies and Africa and the Americas programs. During the interim term she taught the course American Popular Music through the Lens of Prince. Her research in Uganda explores postcolonial identities built around transnational institutions originally introduced through missionisation and colonisation.

"Tears Go Here" commemorating the Minneapolis Prince and the International Prince

On April 21, 2016, images of Minneapolis residents placing purple flowers and balloons on the fence at Paisley Park shot around the world, followed soon thereafter by pictures of international sites illuminated in purple to honour Prince Rogers Nelson. Fans drove from neighbouring states and flew in from abroad to dance away their grief and celebrate the musician's life for three nights outside First Avenue club in downtown Minneapolis.

Since Prince's untimely death, the Twin Cities have continued to host international visitors paying their respects in contemplative and joyful ways, at events that range from "Unite in Purple" Day at the Minnesota State Fair, to tribute concerts by his former associates. Just as Prince cultivated an image that crossed multiple boundaries – genre, race, and gender among them – these events cultivate coincident legacies of Prince, the international superstar, and Prince, our Minnesotan neighbour.

In order to understand the significance of public commemorations both to Prince's hometown and international fans, I use ethnographic methods to illuminate the intersections of literature on fan cultures and fandom, public mourning and memorials, celebrity culture and posthumous fame. I draw on interviews with fans, artists, and event organizers, as well as participant-observation on fan websites, and at visual art and fashion exhibits, dance parties, movie showings, philanthropic events, the Revolution reunion tributes, and the Official Prince Tribute. My ethnographic fieldwork will culminate in the four-day Celebration 2017 event at Paisley Park marking the first anniversary of Prince's death. I build on my previous work that considers public mourning as a performance of grief, a performance of fandom, and a performance of local belonging, bringing together theory and method to consider how commemoration shapes two non-competing afterimages of Prince.

1958-2016



Crystal Wise

University of Michigan

Crystal Wise is doctoral student in the literacy, language, and culture, educational studies program at the University of Michigan. Her research interests broadly consider issues of diversity and equity in literacy education. Additionally, her commitment to social justice intersects with her long-standing adoration and appreciation for the artistry of the American popular musician, Prince. She uses the theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics to analyse the messages of compassion, freedom, love, and justice within Prince's song lyrics.

It's all about what's in your mind: The Political Consciousness of Prince

Prince is arguably the most talented popular musician in recent history. While his music, artistry, and style defines the decade of the 1980s, his lyrics have done more than inspire dance, music, sex, and romance. As early as his 1980 *Dirty Mind* album, Prince expressed his consciousness of social and political ills in the world. In the song, Party Up, he promotes partying over fighting in war. Most recently, on his album, *HitnRun: Phase Two*, Prince pleads for peace on the track *Baltimore*, titled for the city where Freddie Gray, a 25 year-old African American died from injuries sustained while in police custody. For 35 years, Prince has consistently used his artistry to urge society towards solutions that realize freedom, love, joy, and peace for all.

This presentation will consider Prince's childhood, religion, and identity alongside an analysis of the "politics of Prince". Prince's unique childhood experiences growing up during the 1960s and 1970s in Minneapolis, Minnesota - a time when racial tensions gave way to protests in the summer of 1967 and intentional school desegregation, amidst the awakening thumps of funk music - offer lenses through which we can begin to understand the inspiration for Prince's deep commitment to these ideals.

The theory of systemic functional linguistics, which focuses on how social context influences language choices, will be used to analyse the lyrics of Prince's political songs from 1980 to 2015. The primary focus of this analysis will be to describe the evolution of Prince's political consciousness by examining those he identifies as actors and how he depicts their actions. Prince's influence on music is undeniable, however his legacy should also illustrate his passion for humanity and the power of art to elevate the consciousness of the audience as well the artist.

1958-2016



Leslie Wooden

New York University, USA

My name is Leslie Wooden, and I am a graduate student in the Humanities and Social Thought program at New York University. I have a background in studio art, art history, art and public policy, and gender studies. My focus areas are visual culture, arts politics, cultural theory, gender and queer theory, critical race theory, and trauma tourism. I recently completed a three-month Provost's Global Research Initiatives Fellowship in Berlin researching community-based art projects as communal therapeutic approaches to trauma, displacement, and social integration within vulnerable populations globally. I will conduct additional fieldwork in Tel Aviv this year.

Prince: The Mulatto Body as Examination of Race, Gender and Sexuality through Performance

'Prince' Rogers Nelson (1958 – 2016) was an American artist who consistently navigated between spaces of race, gender and sexuality. This paper will analyse his performance and identity as a mulatto. Prince's mixed-blood was a primary feature of his ambiguous identity as a crossover artist. The term mulatto will be used to reference literature of the Americas focused on representations of the mulatto figure dating from nineteenth century visual culture to the present. The mulatto/a image represented a view of social standing in society.

This ideology was supported by countless works in visual culture. Visual and written representations varied, yet the undertone of the images were usually described as a 'shared body' that exuded an embodiment of refinement and hyper-sexuality. Prince embraced his ambiguity and unconventional idea of masculinity through androgyny that was consumed through various artistic mediums. He applied the 'art of seduction' to his performances by persuading the audience through a display of elaborate behaviours and costumes. This constructed a gender fluid, universal icon.

Works in visual culture have historically been used to objectify and commodify the mulatto body through exoticism and eroticism. Prince performed and played into stereotypes, while concurrently criticizing the fixed gender binary through his practice of homoeroticism and male gaze. Prince's 'otherness' was political. He wore gender-bending clothing that challenged the 'ways of seeing' male performers, specifically blacks in visual culture. His fashion, form, and performance still displays an artist who cleverly worked 'in-between' heteronormativity. Prince was an 'object of desire' that was undeniable.

Considering Prince in the context of the mulatto woman – Prince embodied vulgarity and refinement, which explains his recycled images in contemporary visual culture and cult-like following. His identity was the driving force behind the cultural, social, and political messages that were communicated to the world.

1958-2016



James Zarucky

Independent Scholar, Australia

James Zarucky is a writer, critic and festival programmer from Melbourne, Australia. His research interests centre around the impact of advances in digital communication and technology on artists, particularly in the creation, distribution, and promotion of their works. He holds a Masters of Arts and Cultural Management as well as a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Screen and Cultural Studies and International Relations, both from the University of Melbourne. His minor thesis project centres around the film *Inland Empire* and its unique open ended gestation as a result of director David Lynch's embrace of digital filmmaking tools and techniques.

Strange Relationship: Prince's Love / Hate approach towards digital technology and the Internet

The renewed interest in Prince's artistic output following his death in 2016 was complicated by the fact that much of his back catalogue was only partially available online. This in part was a consequence of an exclusivity deal signed with the streaming service Tidal in 2015, not to mention that Prince had employed a strict approach in policing his copyrighted material on the Internet for a number of years. Given he also maintained a minimal presence on social media, it was easy for many commentators to cast him in the role of the stereotypically out of touch and paranoid middle aged pop star.

Much of this commentary in the aftermath of his passing overlooked that fact that the very same musician received a lifetime achievement prize from The Webby Awards in 2006, in recognition of the fact that he was the first major artist to release an entire album, 1997's *Crystal Ball*, exclusively on the Internet. This was in addition to his pioneering efforts in online music and video distribution, as well as communication with fans which took place between 1996 and 2006. This period saw Prince act as a public advocate for the Internet and the potential freedoms it held for artists, as it played a key role in his transition to an independent entity within the music industry once his major label record contract ended.

My paper would attempt to reconcile these two seemingly contradictory narratives by tracing his engagement with the Internet from 1996 up until his death. Drawing upon the work of Douglas Rushkoff and Bernard Gendron, it would be argued that Prince's eventual disenchantment and cautious approach towards online engagement is a direct result of his initial technological utopianism, which soured as he witnessed the existing economic and power structures of the music industry merely replicate themselves in the digital sphere.

1958-2016



Anjali Vats

Anjali Vats is Assistant Professor of Communication and African Diaspora Studies at Boston College and Assistant Professor of Law, by courtesy, at Boston College Law School. Professor Vats is currently working on a monograph entitled “Created Differences: Intellectual Properties and Racial Formation in the Making of Americans” which considers the relationships between race, citizenship and intellectual properties. She has published articles in the Quarterly Journal of Speech, Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies, and Southern Communication Journal. In 2016, Professor Vats was awarded an AAUW Postdoctoral Fellowship and an Exemplary Diversity Scholar Citation from the National Centre for Institutional Diversity at the University of Michigan. Prior to teaching, she clerked for the Honourable A. William Maupin of the Supreme Court of Nevada.

“Take My Name, I Don’t Need It” Prince, Naming and (Intellectual) Property Rights in Blackness

While it is easy to remember Prince for his zealous commitment to anti-piracy measures, reading him as an advocate for strong copyright, trademark, and even patent protection, doing so ignores his complicated relationship with intellectual property and his intentional and implicit critiques of the racialization of knowledge production in the US and beyond. Prince’s relationship to copyrights and trademarks intervenes in the disciplinary politics of intellectual properties, refusing the narrative of blacks as incapable of knowledge production and confronting the inequalities that fuel inequalities in information ownership and cultural appropriation.

Prince fought two related but distinct battles to this end, which spanned his entire 40-year career, one to protect his rights to creatorship, attribution, and branding and one against intellectual property infringement. While not without conceptual complications, both of these battles aided in reshaping narratives around blackness, making, and citizenship in ways which celebrate black creatorship and critique its devaluation. Until the end of his life, when he famously commented at the Grammy’s that “Albums still matter. Like books and black lives, albums still matter,” Prince created space for valuing of black creatorship and black personhood.

As Brittney Cooper observes, “Notably, no other artist, presenter or entertainer felt it important to affirm that Black Lives Matter, and only Prince used his opportunity while speaking to say it.” Within this context, I want to turn to Prince’s name change as a critique of traditional tropes of creatorship and race and his emphasis on anti-piracy measures as a means of valuing knowledge produced by people of colour. Prince’s decision to change his name to the Love Symbol refused the copyright and contract politics which had, over hundreds of years, reflected and condoned treating blacks as less than, particularly with respect to intellectual labour. The Love Symbol and prince’s black entrepreneurialism narratives do important discursive work in celebrating the black creator as emancipated knowledge creator capable of achieving the American Dream.

1958-2016