Whether this work is worthwhile or not is an open question. Another consequence of the vast scope of Beller's investigation and the constraint of putting it all into a single volume is that certain aspects of the analysis and argument appear ungrounded and vague. At times—and this is also a function of his very difficult style—it is unclear whether Beller refers to a concrete material reality, a theoretical construct, a metaphor, or perhaps all three at once. In many ways, these two weaknesses are a result of Beller's obvious passion and excitement for the project, as words and ideas fall over themselves in the urgency of their expression. But the work would have benefited from more space and more clarity of expression.

The kernel of Beller's project is that "the history of the commodification of life [is] a process of encrypting the world's myriad qualities and quantities" (6) and that "what we today call digitization began more than seven centuries ago with commodification" (17). This work will be of interest to anyone working in the area of digital services, education, information management, and technology from a critical perspective. There are plenty of compelling ideas in here, not the least of which is the offering of a program to "secure victory—in the form of a definitive step out of and away from racial capitalism—for the progressive movements of our times" through the "decolonization of information, and therefore of computation, and therefore of money" (7).

This book can be recommended for anyone interested in the critical theory of information, with the caveat that it will require a disproportionate amount of work to intellectually come to grips with Beller's extensive engagement with his material and to excavate what is significant or useful. More specific to librarians is Beller's contention that the business-as-usual of racial capitalism and the world computer are insufficient for survival and revolution. Librarianship's focus on technological solutions, and even the progressive politics of much of Digital Humanities, must directly confront the mechanisms of technological oppression Beller describes. "The politics, expressivities, pedagogies, practices of relation, and media of value creation and distribution adequate to the task of redesigning the entanglements of culture and economy remain to be collectively realized" (254), Beller writes, and this might stand as a mission statement for academic libraries committed to real social transformation. As challenging as this book is, library workers can draw valuable lessons about the relations between racial capitalism, technology, and information work, lessons concerning both the immensity of the challenges we face and the importance of addressing them.—*Sam Popowich, University of Alberta*

The Digital Black Atlantic. Roopika Risam and Kelly Baker Josephs, eds. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minneapolis Press, 2021. 272p. $124.32 (ISBN 978-1517910808).

Along with increased attention and investment in the digital humanities during the past two decades, there also seems to be increased attention to Black print, digital, and material culture. Editors Roopika Risam and Kelly Baker Josephs—active in the scholarly digital humanities conversation for some time—set out to assemble a collection of essays based on Paul Gilroy's framework of *The Black Atlantic,* which theorizes that the intellectual legacy and life of Black peoples is not marginalized but transnational. *The Digital Black Atlantic* is a welcome addition to the University of Minnesota press *Debates in the Digital Humanities* annual series. This is the sixth volume in the series and serves as a departure from predominantly white discussions and practices in the digital humanities. In the 2016 collection, the notion of a Black digital humanities was advanced in Kim Gallon's chapter, "Making a Case for the Black Digital Humanities," and is frequently cited by the contributors of this volume.
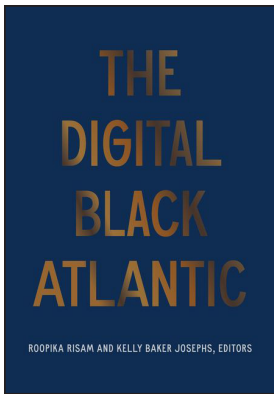
Risam and Baker Josephs define the digital Black Atlantic as "the body of interdisciplinary scholarship that examines connections between African diasporic communities and technology" (ix). The introduction is organized into four sections, with the final section offering a summary of 19 essays included in this volume. The book concludes with acknowledgments and contributor biographies. Black Atlantic motifs are used as the four-part organization of the book: Memory, Crossings, Relations, and Becomings. Chapter topics map across the digital Black diaspora and include discussions on familiar digital humanities tools and pedagogical terrain from textual analysis, linked data, and open educational resources (OER), to the more experimental, 3D, and virtual reality–enabled software built atop a game engine platform ("Digital Queer Witnessing") and the recreation of a music notation from a seventeenth century travel diary with Jamaican musicians ("Musical Passage"). Contributed essays are interdisciplinary and include explorations of the digital Black Atlantic through the disciplines of African diasporic studies, library and information science, archival science, Queer studies, communication, game studies, history, and literature, to name a few (xvi). Contributors refer to each other's work throughout in a call and response musical mode.

The editors and contributors direct readers to relevant introductory literature throughout the volume, but the book will be most useful for those with at least a rudimentary understanding of digital humanities. Chapters include discussions relevant to special collections librarians, archivists, and librarians; there is acknowledgment of and collaboration with memory professionals. But as is often the case with DH scholarship, there is a hint of boundary-policing. This raises the question: what work could be done without the keepers? This subtext can be dispiriting for marginalized librarians and archivists interested in DH work.

Still, the Black Atlantic juxtaposed with digital humanities, both vast and nebulous areas of inquiry, succeeds as long as readers are aware of its principal themes: the ship, chattel slavery, and music. Chapters include both global and local DH practices. For instance, Alexandrina Agloro describes a digital humanities project that creates a space that is part music recording studio and part community center; contributors used social media to fundraise globally from Cape Town, South Africa.

Contributors introduce experimental projects and well-developed explorations, projects, and collaborations that go beyond a retread. However, in many of the most important structural ways, Blackness cannot seem to function independently of whiteness. Recovery as the overarching theme of the book often means that many of the materials that create the foundation of Black Atlantic DH projects are held tightly by elite, well-resourced institutions that often win what limited grant funding is available. Some cultural heritage materials held by public, smaller and/or Caribbean institutions function as the local, and are still inextricably linked to and controlled by white dominant systems (Library of Congress, Google, Facebook, and other entities). It is the simple reality. That said, Black peoples have always "made a way out of no way," as some contributors do with their projects.

A few contributors, including Toniesha L. Taylor, acknowledge how technology has been used against Black people, but is often subverted in ingenious ways. Using Abdul Alkalimat's opening chapter on eBlack Studies and recovery (the Sankofa Principle) as a springboard, Amy E. Earhart contends that digital Black Atlantic scholarship could be all for naught if the

archival sources and/or rare literary texts are not accurately evaluated, described, and documented. Alkalimat, Earhart, and others have worked on Black bibliography in particular for many years, so this is a profound point: the lack of attention, care, and detail to Black cultural heritage materials has and continues to shape the scholarship to which researchers, students, and community members have access to and use, and can perpetuate inaccurate scholarship and history. Anne Donlon's close collaboration with librarians and archivists places her attention on finding aids. Donlon misses some of the nuances of this work: understaffing of special collections libraries and archives, contingent hiring of project archivists, labor practices that separate reference work from processing, and an institution's level of investment in technology are all elements that influence description and discovery, two topics that are currently and frequently discussed in the library and archives professions.

Finally, there are still many white academics involved in this recovery work, so I appreciate the notion from Dubois et al. of *digital repatriation*. Digital repatriation suggests a return of Black cultural heritage. And, with some exceptions—Alkalimat, Donaldson, Esprit, Nieves, Rice, Moore Pewu, Opeibi—the volume is thin on advocating for digital Black Atlantic research, projects, and initiatives to be led by people of the Black diaspora. That is, are we increasing access to the tools of history-making for our communities, or are we creating fancy academic tech projects for the already well-resourced? Therein lies the tension. Similar to the discussion in Şengün and Olson's chapter, white researchers and DH practitioners are often positioned to "play out their fantasies of domination" through Black DH. This may seem like a quibble, as many of the contributors to this volume are members of the Black diaspora. However, one contributor notes that it was more important to have Black voices recovered than to be concerned about potential biases of white students involved in a local oral history project. This suggests that Black peoples are legible to anyone, contrary to Moore Pewu's concept of *spatial fluency*, the idea "that all sites speak to something, someone, or some other site from the past, the present, or the site's intended future and that traces of this language become inscribed into the physical landscape and the ways inhabitants interact with the landscape" (111). This volume demonstrates that it matters who is involved in the work. To convince members of the Black diaspora that Black DH recovery is not niche but essential, Black peoples should be included in the work (Esprit). If this happens first, there is plenty of time to advance discussions on the selection of appropriate DH tools (Bhattacharyya).

Overall, this dense but short volume accomplishes what the editors and contributors set out to do: take readers on a complex interdisciplinary journey of the digital Black Atlantic, an ambitious endeavor that the editors acknowledge is risky (x). This collection of essays is valuable in terms of its contribution to the discussion in Black DH and introduces a fresh vocabulary through the digital Black Atlantic. That said, there are still leftover questions about sustainability, preservation, and working outside of proprietary systems, institution-dependent open source, or global tech and media companies. Additionally, how will these projects be managed past the scholars' active participation? Granted, some of the contributors share these exact concerns, but this reader was looking for something more—we are simply not there yet. The volume is more interesting in terms of what it highlights about the needs of the present: the training of and investment in Black practitioners in DH and the financial feasibility of digital preservation.—*Kellee E. Warren, University of Illinois Chicago*