Apryl Williams

Assistant Professor at the University of Michigan

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🐦 @aprylw

Academic Positions

2020 – Present	**Assistant Professor**, *University of Michigan*, Ann Arbor, MI. Department of Communication & Media, Digital Studies Institute
2020 – Present	**Faculty Associate**, *Harvard University*, Cambridge, MA. Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society
2021 – 2022	**Faculty Fellow**, *University of Notre Dame*, Notre Dame, IN. Technology Ethics Center
2019 – 2020	**Faculty Fellow**, *Harvard University*, Cambridge, MA. Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society
2017 – 2020	**Assistant Professor**, *Susquehanna University*, Selinsgrove, PA. Department of Sociology & Anthropology

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Education

2017	**Ph.D.**, *Texas A&M University*, College Station, TX. Department of Sociology, Focus in Race, Gender, and Culture
2012	**B.A.**, *Texas A&M University*, College Station, TX. American Studies, Concentration in Society and Social Policy

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Awards and Grants

2024	Michigan Humanities Collaboratory Proposal Development Grant, Co-PIs: Germaine Halegoua, Ellie Abrons, Mathew Bui, Tung-Hui Hu ($58,308)
2023	National Center for Institutional Diversity's Anti-Racism Research & Community Impact Faculty Fellowship ($20,000)
2022	Award for Inclusion Research, Google, Co-PI: Jenny Davis ($60,000)
2022	Public Sociology Award, Communication Information Technology and Media Sociology (CITAMS) Section of the American Sociological Association
2021	National Center for Institutional Diversity's Anti-Racism and Precedents for Change Grant for "Algorithmic Reparation", ($25,000) Co-PI, Jenny Davis
2020	Advance Inclusion, Diversity & Access Grant for "The Effects of Security Privatization on Communities of Color", Mississippi State University ($9,500) Co-PI, Ben Tkach
2019	Natalie Allon Research Award, Sociologists for Women in Society ($2,400)
2016	Ruth Schaffer "Best Graduate Student Paper" Award, Texas A&M University ($1,000)

2015 USAID Global Development Lab & Buffet Foundation Research Grant ($2,500)

Books

2024 **Williams, Apryl**. *Not My Type: Automating Sexual Racism in Online Dating*, Stanford University Press.

2019 Robinson, Laura, John Baldwin, Heloisa Pait, Jeremy Schulz, **Apryl Williams**, Jenny Davis, and Gabe Ignatow (Eds.), *Theorizing the Digital: Social Theory & Digital Culture.* Emerald Studies in Media and Communications.

2018 **Williams, Apryl**, Ruth Tsuria, and Laura Robinson (Eds.), *Media and Power in International Contexts: Perspectives on Agency and Identity.* Emerald Studies in Media and Communications.

2017 Robinson, Laura, Jeremy Schulz, **Apryl Williams**, Pedro Aguiar, John Baldwin, Antonio C. La Pastina, Monica Martinez, Sonia Virgnia Moreiro, Heloisa Pait, and Joseph Straubhaar (Eds.), *Brazil: Media from the Country of the Future.* Emerald Studies in Media and Communications.

2016 Robinson, Laura, Jeremy Schulz, Shelia R. Cotton, Timothy M. Hale, **Apryl Williams**, and Joy Hightower (Eds.), *New Media Cultures.* Emerald Studies in Media and Communications.

2015 Robinson, Laura, Shelia R. Cotton, Jeremy Schulz, Timothy M. Hale and **Apryl Williams** (Eds.), *Digital Distinctions & Inequalities.* Emerald Studies in Media and Communications.

Peer Reviewed Articles

*indicates student coauthor

2024 Banks, Jasmine*, Mel Monier*, Miranda Reynaga* & **Apryl Williams**. "From the Auction Block to the Tinder Swipe: Black Women's Experiences with Fetishization on Dating Apps" *New Media & Society*

2023 Chwe, Hanyu* **Apryl Williams** & Ronald Robertson. "Hey Beautiful": Race and Gender on Tinder." *Proceedings of the 56th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*

2022 Davis, Jenny, **Apryl Williams** & Michael Yang*. "Algorithmic Reparation." *Big Data & Society*

2021 **Williams, Apryl**, Gabe Miller & Guadalupe Marquez Velarde. "COVID Compatibility and Risk Negotiation in Online Dating During the COVID-19 Pandemic." *American Behavioral Scientist*

2021 Walker, Laurie, **Apryl Williams**, Jason Trichie, Lola Rainey, Madison Evans, Rebecca Calabrese & Nicole Martin. "#StayMadAbby: Reframing Affirmative Action Discourse and White Entitlement on Black Twitter." *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*

2021 Aldana Marquez, Beatriz, **Apryl Williams**, Nancy Videla & Selene Ornelas-Marquez. "The Discourse of Deservedness: Racialized Framing During Rumored ICE Raids." *Ethnicities*.

2021 **Williams, Apryl** & Ben Tkach. "Access and Dissemination of Information and Emerging Media Convergence in the Democratic Republic of Congo." *Information, Communication & Society*

2020 **Williams, Apryl**. "Black Memes Matter: #LivingWhileBlack with Becky and Karen." *Social Media & Society*

2020 Miller Gabe, Guadalupe Marquez, **Apryl Williams**, & Verna Keith. "Black Social Media Use and Discrimination: Sites of Oppression and Expression." *Sociology of Race & Ethnicity*

2019 **Williams, Apryl**, Zaida Bryant* & Christopher Carvell*. "Uncompensated Emotional Labor, Racial Battle Fatigue, and (In)Civility in Digital Spaces." *Sociology Compass*

2017 Tkach, Ben & **Apryl Williams**. "Mobile (In)security? Exploring the Realities of Mobile Phone Use in Conflict Areas." *Information, Communication & Society*

2017 **Williams, Apryl** & Vanessa Gonlin. "I Got All My Sisters with Me (on Black Twitter) Second Screening of How to Get Away with Murder as a Discourse on Black Womanhood." *Information, Communication & Society*

2017 **Williams, Apryl**. "Fat People of Color: Creating Counter-narratives Online." *Social Sciences*

2015 **Williams, Apryl** & Beatriz Aldana Marquez. "The Lonely Selfie King: Selfies and the Conspicuous Prosumption of Gender and Race." *International Journal of Communication*

Edited Special Issues

2024 Davis, Jenny & **Apryl Williams**. Special Issue Guest Editors: Reparative Approaches to Algorithmic Justice in *Big Data & Society*

2023 Jeremy Schulz, Laura Robinson, Maria Laura Ruiu, and **Apryl Williams**. Special Issue Guest Editors: "Organizational and Institutional Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic" in *American Behavioral Scientist*

2021 Robinson, Laura et al. including **Apryl Williams**. Special Issue Guest Editors: "Cascading Crises: Society in the Age of COVID-19" in *American Behavioral Scientist*

2017 Daniels, Jessie, **Apryl Williams** & Shantel Buggs. Special Issue Guest Editors: Communication Information Technologies and Media Sociology Section (ASA) in *Information, Communication & Society*

2015 Robinson, Laura & **Apryl Williams**. Special Issue Guest Editors: Communication Information Technologies and Media Sociology Section (ASA) in *Information, Communication & Society*

Book Chapters

2018 Mueller, Jennifer C., **Apryl Williams**, & Danielle Dirks. "Racism in Popular Culture" in *The Handbook of the Sociology of Racial and Ethnic Relations.* Pinar Batur & Joe Feagin (Eds.).

2016 **Williams, Apryl**. "On Thursdays We Watch Scandal | Reflections of IRL Community Ties on Black Twitter" in *Digital Sociologies.* Jessie Daniels, Karen Gregory & Tressie McMillan Cottom (Eds.).

2016 **Williams, Apryl**. "You've been catfished | An Analysis of Postemotionalism in 'Reality' Television and Audience Response on Twitter" in *Emerald Studies in Media and Communications.* Laura Robinson et al. (Eds.).

Book Reviews

2020 **Williams, Apryl**. "Passionate and Pious: Religious Media and Black Women's Sexuality" *Journal of Religion, Media, and Digital Culture*

2017 **Williams, Apryl**. "Race, gender, and deviance in Xbox live: Theoretical perspectives from the virtual margins" *New Media & Society*

2015 **Williams, Apryl**. "Media Sociology: A Reappraisal" *Information, Communication & Society*

Selected Academic Presentations

2023 Society for Social Studies of Science Annual Meeting. Apryl Williams. "Swipe Left on AI Curated Racial Marketplaces" Honolulu, HI.

2022 American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Apryl Williams. "Human Rights and Racialized Tech in Online Dating" Los Angeles, CA.

2021 International Communication Association Annual Conference. Apryl Williams. "Black Memes Matter: #LivingWhileBlack with Becky and Karen" Virtual Conference

2020 American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Williams, Apryl and Ben Tkach. "Emerging Media Convergence in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Precarious Access to Information in Developing Contexts" San Francisco, CA.

2019 American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Aldana Marquez, Beatriz, Apryl Williams, Nancy Plankey-Videla, and Selene Diaz. "Latinx Immigrant Divisions: The Radio and Digital Media during Rumored ICE Raids" New York, NY.

2018 National Women's Studies Association Annual Conference. Buggs, Shantel and Apryl Williams. "Navigating the Outsider-Within: Women and Femmes of Color and Microaggressions on the Academic Job Market" Atlanta, GA.

2018 American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Williams, Apryl. "Media, Power, and Conspicuous Charity in International Development" Philadelphia, PA.

2018 Media Sociology Preconference. Plankey-Videla, Nancy, Betty Aldana Marquez, Apryl Williams, and Selene Diaz. "Latinx Immigrant Strategies: The Use of Old and New Media in the Era of Trump" Philadelphia, PA.

2018   Association of Black Sociologists Annual Meeting. Williams, Apryl and Shantel Buggs. "Navigating the Academic Job Market: Exploring Experiences at the Intersection of Gender and Race" Philadelphia, PA.

2018   International Sociological Association World Congress of Sociology. Gabe Miller, Guadalupe Marquez-Velarde, Apryl Williams and Verna Keith. "Black Social Media Use and Discrimination: Sites of Oppression and Expression" Toronto, ON.

2016   National Communication Association Annual Convention. Williams, Apryl. "Calling for Intersectionality in Theory and Practice: An Interactive Discussion on Gender, Race, Religion and More" Philadelphia, PA.

2016   American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Williams, Apryl. "On Thursdays We Watch Scandal | Reflections of IRL Community Ties on Black Twitter" Seattle, WA.

2016   Media Sociology Preconference. Williams, Apryl & Vanessa Gonlin. "I Got All My Sisters with Me (on Black Twitter) Second Screening of How to Get Away With Murder as a Technocultural Discourse on Black Womanhood" Seattle, WA.

2016   USAID Global Development Lab Annual Convention. Williams, Apryl. "Digital Media as Resistance in the Democratic Republic of Congo" Boston, MA.

2015   Partnership for Progress on the Digital Divide. Williams, Apryl. "Access and Use of Mobile Phones in DRC" Phoenix, AZ.

2015   American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Williams, Apryl. "Fat People of Color: Creating counter-narratives online" Chicago, IL.

2015   Southwestern Social Science Association Annual Conference. Williams, Apryl & Beatriz Aldana Marquez. "The Lonely Selfie King: Gender Performance Through Conspicuous Selfie Prosumption" Denver, CO.

2014   American Sociological Association Annual Meeting. Williams, Apryl. "You've Been Catfished | An Analysis of Postemotionalism in 'Reality' Television and Audience Response on Twitter" San Francisco, CA.

2014   Southwestern Social Science Association Annual Conference. Williams, Apryl." #Selfies: Exploring Notions of Self and Ethnicity on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram" San Antonio, TX.

Invited Talks and Workshops

2024   Harvard University, *Book Talk* "Not My Type: Automating Sexual Racism in Online Dating"

2024   George Washington University's Healthy Sexualities Conference, *Keynote* "Expanding Safety in Online Dating Culture"

2024   The University of Amsterdam's Global Digital Intimacies Conference, *Keynote* "Identities and Dating in AI Culture"

2024   Denison University, *Book Talk* "Not My Type: Automating Sexual Racism in Online Dating"

2023   National Center for Women and Information Technology, *Workshop Facilitator* "Bias and Belonging: Moving Beyond Bias Mitigation to Create Truly Inclusive Cultures"

2023   Utah State University, *Invited Lecture* "Swipe Wrongs in Dating Culture and Dating Apps"

2022   Yale University Information Society Project, *Invited Lecture* "Platform Safety for All in Online Dating"

2022   United Nations Department of Global Communications, *Invited Panelist* "Fighting Hate Speech: Global Perspectives"

2021   Texas A&M University, *Invited Panelist* "Towards a Future of Race Scholarship"

2021   University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, *Invited Lecture* "Race + Sorting Algorithms? The Sexual Racism Problem in Online Dating"

2021   University of Florida, *Invited Lecture* "Automated Profile Curation and Sexual Racism in Online Dating Platforms"

2021   University of Kentucky, *Expert Panelist* "Tech and Social Justice Workshop"

2021   Duke University, *Invited Lecture* "What Karen Memes Teach Us About White Women and Racialized Surveillance"

2021   Vanderbilt University, *Invited Lecture* "What Karen Memes Teach Us About White Women and Racialized Surveillance"

2021   Harvard University's Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society, *Invited Lecture* "White Surveillance and Black Digital Publics"

2020   Mozilla Foundation, *Invited Lecture* "Race and Technology in the Computer Science Classroom"

2020   Harvard University's Kennedy School, *Invited Lecture* "A Critical Internet Studies Perspective on Platform Safety and Fetishization of the Exotic Other in Online Dating"

2019   Harvard University's T. H. Chan School of Public Health, *Invited Facilitator* "Down for the Count: Black in 2020"

2019   Seton Hall University, *Invited Panelist* "Social Media: Uses for Teaching, Research, and Work"

2019   American Sociological Association, *Invited Panelist* "Author Meets Critics Session, Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism (New York University Press, 2018) by Safiya Umoja Nobel"

2019   American Sociological Association, *Invited Panelist* "Social Justice and Social Media"

2018   ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing, *Workshop Participant* "Power Struggles in the Digital Economy"

2017   Princeton University's Center for Information and Technology Policy, *Invited Subject Expert* "Gender-Based Violence and Safety in IT Design Workshop"

2017   Johnson C. Smith University, *Workshop Facilitator* "Digital Research Methods & Race"

2016   Santa Clara University, *Invited Lecture* "Sociology Department Sponsored Campus Talk: Representations of Race in Reality Television"

Public Scholarship

2024 *Time Magazine* "When Love and the Algorithm Don't Mix" *Author*

2023 *The New York Times* "Victoria's Secret Karen Video: Lawsuits Show What Viewers Didn't See" *Subject Expert*

2022 *The Atlantic* "The New First Date" *Subject Expert*

2021 *BuzzFeed.News* "This Is Blackface: White Actors Are Playing Black Characters In Virtual Reality Diversity Training" *Subject Expert*

2021 *The Real Question Podcast* "Karens: Part 2" *Subject Expert*

2021 *Mic.com* "Are Your Dating Preferences Racist?" *Subject Expert*

2021 *Newsweek* "TikTok Left its Black Creators Behind. Now They're Going on Strike" *Subject Expert*

2020 *Vogue* "Power Dressing: Charting the Influence of Politics on Fashion" *Subject Expert*

2020 *The Guardian* "The year of Karen: How a meme changed the way Americans talked about racism" *Subject Expert*

2020 *Slate's Decoder Ring* "The Karen" *Subject Expert*

2020 *On the Media* "Who is Karen and Why Does She Keep Calling the Police on Black Men?" *Subject Expert*

2020 *Time Magazine* "How the Karen Meme Confronts the History of White Womanhood" *Subject Expert*

Teaching

University of Michigan	Intersectional Perspectives on Tech and Internet Culture (Fall 2023, Spring 2023, Spring 2021)
University of Michigan	Critical Internet * University Writing Requirement (Fall 2023, Spring 2023)
University of Michigan	Gendered & Racialized Bodies + Technology (Fall 2022)
University of Michigan	Black Feminism & Media (Spring 2021, Fall 2020)
Susquehanna University	Qualitative Research Methods (Spring 2019, Spring 2018)
Susquehanna University	Black Feminism & Media (Fall 2018)
Susquehanna University	Senior Seminar: Public Sociology (Fall 2018)
Susquehanna University	Introduction to Sociology (Spring 2019, Fall 2018, Spring 2018, Fall 2017)
Susquehanna University	Intersectional Social Movements (Fall 2017)

Texas A&M University	Introduction to Race & Ethnicity (Summer 2017, Summer 2016)
Texas A&M University	Classical Social Theory (Spring 2017)
Texas A&M University	Introduction to Sociology (Fall 2016)
Texas A&M University	Contemporary Social Theory (Spring 2016, Spring 2015)

Students Supervised

Doctoral Advisor	"Trans masculinity, Pregnancy, Identity and Social Media," **Mel Monier**, Department of Communication & Media, University of Michigan, in progress
Doctoral Co-Advisor	"TheDarkestShade: Exploring Skin Tone Labor and the Role of Colorism in the Cultural Messaging Around Black Beauty Influencers ," **Ta'Les Love, PhD**, Department of Communication & Media, University of Michigan; advised with Sonya Dal Cin, completed in 2022
Master's Committee	"Sedimentation, Stratification, Signification: Revisiting Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's Assemblage Theory," **Alexis Herrera**, School of Information, University of Michigan, completed in 2023
Pre-Candidacy Project	"U.S. Arab/SWANA Diaspora's Technocultures of Consent: The Case of Online Dating Apps," **Nadia Karizat**, School of Information, University of Michigan, in progress
Doctoral Committee	"Exposure to Culturally Relevant Traumatic Media Content," **Kristen Leer**, Department of Communication & Media, University of Michigan, in progress
Doctoral Committee	"Laughter is the Best Poison: How Humor Mainstreams the Extreme," **Pratiksha Menon**, Department of Communication & Media, University of Michigan, in progress
Doctoral Committee	"Male Media Figures: Many Speak, but Who do Young Men Follow?," **Erick Aguinaldo**, Department of Psychology, University of Michigan, in progress

Service to the Profession

2022 – Present	**Editorial Board Member**, *Communication & Race*
2021– 2022	**Founder and Co-Organizer**, Algorithmic Reparation Workshop
2021 – Present	**Editorial Board Member**, *Social Media + Society*
2021 – 2023	**Council Member**, Section on Racial and Ethnic Minorities of the American Sociological Association
2018 – 2020	**Council Member**, Communication Information Technology and Media Sociology Section (CITAMS) of the American Sociological Association
2015 – Present	**Board Member and Organizing Committee**, Theorizing the Web

2018 **Organizer**, Media Sociology Pre-Conference Panel: Media, Power and Sexuality

2016 – 2017 **Graduate Student Representative**, Communication Information Technology and Media Sociology Section (CITAMS) of the American Sociological Association

2015 – 2018 **Series Associate Editor**, *Emerald Studies in Media and Communications*

University Service

2022 – 2024	**Committee Member**, Graduate Committee in the Digital Studies Institute at the University of Michigan
2020 – 2023	**Committee Member**, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee in the Department of Communication and Media at the University of Michigan
2020 –2021	**Committee Member**, IDEAS Summer Institute Planning Committee in the Digital Studies Institute at the University of Michigan
2020	**Organizing Committee Member**, Campus-Wide Anti-Discrimination Workshop at Susquehanna University

Affiliations

2022 – 2024	**Senior Fellow in Trustworthy AI**, Mozilla Foundation
2019 – Present	**Affiliated Scholar**, Center for Critical Race and Digital Studies at NYU
2015 – 2017	**Research Associate**, Center for Conflict and Development at Texas A&M University