



## The Sister Thea Bowman Social Justice Lecture

Tuesday, March 26, 2019 @ 6 p.m.

Slowinski Courtroom

Columbus School of Law, The Catholic University of America

Reception to follow



RSVP online at [lis.catholic.edu](http://lis.catholic.edu) or to [cua-lis@cua.edu](mailto:cua-lis@cua.edu)

### Inaugural Lecture with Dr. André Brock “Black Technical Objects: Policing, Black Men, and ‘Bad Data’”

**Abstract:** Predictive software driven by algorithms is becoming widespread as judicial and policing systems seek to make the carceral state more efficient. These algorithmic solutions often feature disparate impacts upon Black bodies, leading to increased sentences, increased scrutiny, and the codifications of cultural beliefs.

This presentation will trace how Western technoculture employs technology and policy to codify racism. Black men and women become “Black technical objects” subject to brutal policing based upon informational practices derived from Western labor history, Jim Crow vagrancy laws, “broken windows” policing, hip hop, and more. Those beliefs have become codified into predictive policing and sentencing algorithms, leading to the dystopic conclusion that anti-blackness cannot be erased by “ethical” computing practices.



**About the speaker:** [Dr. André Brock](#) is an associate professor of Black Digital Media at Georgia Tech. His forthcoming book titled *Distributed Blackness: African American Cybercultures* will be published with NYU Press in Fall 2019, offering an innovative approach to understanding Black everyday lives mediated by digital technologies. His scholarship examines racial representations in videogames, black women and weblogs, whiteness, blackness, and digital technoculture, as well as innovative and groundbreaking research on Black Twitter. His article “From the Blackhand Side: Twitter as a Cultural Conversation” challenged social science and communication research to confront the ways in which the field, in his words, preserved “a color-blind perspective on online endeavors by normalizing Whiteness and othering everyone else” and sparked a conversation that continues, as Twitter in particular continues to evolve as a communication platform.

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