

Black Creators of Visual Legacy and Digital Media (Working Title)

An edited collection to be published by McFarland & Company, Inc.

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Historically, Black audiences have had a challenging relationship with all forms of media. While they have been heavy consumers of its content, media have not represented genuine Black experiences. Stereotypical representations, tokenism in casting, and Black stories created and controlled by non-Black people have resulted in inaccurate, one-dimensional, and unrelatable content for Black audiences. While legacy media—like television and film—have seen improvements over time in ownership, production, and representation, digital media have made substantial changes for Black representation at a faster rate. In recent years, Nielsen has reported a growing interest in streaming services, social media, and podcasting within the Black community because of the access to more relatable content featuring and created by Black people (Nielsen, 2022; Nielsen, 2024).

McFarland & Company, Inc. has published several books about films and television and recently released books about digital media, such as *The Age of Netflix* (2017). More recently, the company has solicited a new collection that explores how Black creators have impacted the media landscape from the 2000s to now, particularly regarding diversity and representation and the use of digital media. The current project answers this call with **an interdisciplinary collection of research and creative works from established and emerging academic scholars. Chapters in the collection will explore Black creators* from 2000 to the present, including their work and its impact. We invite scholars from a variety of research disciplines and methodologies to examine the work of Black creators and how they have used legacy (traditional) and digital media to provide counter-discourse to existing narratives, to offer more "authentic" or "relatable" representations of Black communities, and to create opportunities for themselves and others.** We recognize that digital media is not free of discrimination, unequal opportunity, cultural appropriation, and other challenges. Thus, the project also welcomes critical pieces that explore industry challenges, social issues, and power dynamics in relation to a Black creator's career, work, or impact.

*Black creators** are defined in the current project as Black persons who are content creators (ex, podcasters, bloggers, social media influencers), directors, producers, writers, or showrunners. Possible creators include Kenya Barris, Quinta Brunson, Joe Budden, Ryan

Coogler, Nia DaCosta, Lee Daniel, Ava DuVernay, Ezra Edelman, Antione Fuqua, Donald Glover, Misha Green, Katori Hall, Karen Hunter, Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson, Sam Jay, Barry Jenkins, Regina King, Spike Lee, Kasi Lemmons, Tracy Oliver, Will Packer, Jordan Peele, Tyler Perry, Issa Rae, Shonda Rhimes, John Ridley, Victor James Santiago, Jr. (N.O.R.E.), Mona Scott, Shannon Sharpe, John Singleton, and Lena Waithe.

Interested parties are invited to submit an abstract (up to 300 words) and author bio (50 words) as one document to bmcproject24@gmail.com by **January 6, 2025**. Selected writers will be notified in March. **Completed papers (APA, 15-20 pages, not including references) are due June 2, 2025**. Authors are responsible for acquiring any necessary permissions, including media releases and IRB approval.

Nielsen. (2022, February). *How Black audiences are engaging with audio more than ever*.

<https://www.nielsen.com/insights/2022/how-black-audiences-are-engaging-with-audio-more-than-ever/>.

Nielsen. (2024, February). *Nielsen report shows growing demand for investment in more diverse media content to engage Black America*. <https://www.nielsen.com/news-center/2024/nielsen-report-shows-growing-demand-for-investment-in-more-diverse-media-content-to-engage-black-america/>