



CASE STUDY

NACBS-Gale Digital Scholar Lab Fellowships

Gale Digital Scholar Lab Takes Research in British Library Newspapers to a New Level with Digital Humanities Approaches

In partnership with NACBS (North American Conference on British Studies), Gale invited five fellows to spend the 2023–24 academic year working in depth with our [British Library Newspapers](#) and [Digital Scholar Lab](#) to explore how a digital humanities approach could elevate their research.

Join us as the NACBS-Gale Fellows take a look back on their experience—and imagine what Gale can do for both your research and your students' learning!



ALEXANDREA KEITH, PH.D.

Candidate, Northwestern University, United States

Project: The NACBS-Gale Fellowship supported Keith's dissertation research, which focuses on Black women's diasporic cultural politics. Keith's dissertation compares the Negro Theatre Workshop (NTW) and the Kuumba Theatre Company, two of the first Black women-founded theater groups in Chicago and London, to complicate historical understandings of art as a form of political activism across the Anglophone African Diaspora during the 1960s and 1970s. Her main research questions are: What were the cultural politics of both organizations and how did gender affect their political commitments? By conducting a comparative study of Black women's theater activism, Keith is contributing to scholarship on Black women's global relationships with empire and colonialism.

ALEXANDREA KEITH'S REFLECTIONS ON THE FELLOWSHIP

Applying digital humanities in research:

Digital humanities methodologies allow me to think expansively about the sources available to construct the narrative of my dissertation. Because physical archives tend to privilege renowned white men with social capital, those with marginalized identities are often invisible. Even in the twentieth century, Black women appear comparatively less in physical archives.

The value of *Gale Primary Sources* content:

In my experience, I learned that Gale's resources could best answer larger research questions that focused more so on change over time. For example, by expanding my focus from exclusively searching for specific people, I also searched key terms like "decolonization in Trinidad," "plays," and "theatre." Broader and more generalized search terms often yielded more results for me. These kinds of searches allowed me to use quantitative analyses within the *Digital Scholar Lab*, including term frequency to see when and how often such terms appeared.

The value of digital scholarship tools:

The most valuable tool of Gale's resources was the ability to search through so many primary sources at once. It was a great help to be able to see where and when my search terms appeared within the archives. Then, I could download those searches and learn more about the context and historical actors. Additionally, the accessibility of the digital archives was incredibly helpful. I appreciated being able to search through the immense resources contained in the *Decolonization* and *British Library Newspapers* collections so easily from anywhere simply with internet access.

Impact on future work:

Gale influenced my research by providing new avenues for me to explore digital archives while strengthening my understanding and use of digital humanities methodologies. Because of the trainings in *Gale Digital Scholar Lab* as well as my access to the *Lab*, I am more versed in digital humanities and its vocabulary.



"I hope to introduce students to the power and accessibility of digital archives in future classes I teach."

—Alexandrea Keith, Ph.D. Candidate, Northwestern University, United States

ABOUT BRITISH LIBRARY NEWSPAPERS

Unparalleled in depth and scope, *British Library Newspapers* consists of collections from the British Library, which span 300 years of newspaper publishing in the United Kingdom and Ireland. The rise of newspapers in Britain was a phenomenon that characterized a new age. The newspaper was increasingly a medium for information required by the commercially minded societies of major cities and regional centers.

Taken as a whole, the huge production of newspapers in Britain provides an enormous resource for research in all topics relevant to British life, both urban and rural.

[Learn more](#)

ABOUT THE NACBS-GALE FELLOWSHIPS

Gale and NACBS offered five NACBS-Gale Non-Residential Fellowships to support research or teaching projects that rely on *Gale Primary Sources*, including those held in Gale's *British Library Newspapers* series and *Decolonization* collection, and use DH methodologies.

Each fellow received a stipend of \$2,500 to support the equivalent of one month's full-time work (160 hours). Awardees could dedicate four consecutive weeks to the fellowship project or spread their work out over a longer period. Applicants from all countries were eligible to apply for the fellowship. Eligible applicants were required to be members of NACBS and be either doctoral students or have Ph.D.s.

[Learn more](#)

How can Gale *Digital Scholar Lab* and *British Library Newspapers* expand and enliven your research?

Contact your Gale representative for more info.