BBP Tech Think Tank | March 31, 2017

For this first exploration of the Black Bibliography Project's technical possibilities, we invited a group of scholars and digital humanities specialists for an informal, open-ended discussion of the technical challenges of our project. We met at Rutgers University in New Brunswick NJ.

Obviously, each of the following topics shaded into another; for instance, we needed to think hard about what data we want to present to the public as we consider how we gather and organize it. But these rubrics guided the group's discussion:

- 1. Data Gathering: How might we take advantage of existing data on black print, using linked and open data searches? How should we structure such searches? What obstacles exist to collecting data in this way (privatization, standardization), and are there ways to get around these obstacles?
- **2. Organizing Bibliographic Data:** Can we build a tool for the collection of high-level bibliographical data (signature collations, publication information, information about format and circulation)—information of a level of granularity not currently supported by reference management software? Would it be possible to adapt an already-existing tool, such as Zotero or Archivists' Tool-kit? What are the obstacles to integrating data scraped from databases and that collected by trained researchers?
- **3. Digital Presentation of Bibliographic Data:** How should we structure bibliographic information so as to make it useful both to expert and to amateur users? What kinds of search capacities will users want? How can we take advantage of the digital medium to make reliable bibliographic information easy to access and productive for a new generation of scholars?