Transcript for Video 2 (Pettiway Distillation of Kim Gallon's 7 Tenets of Recovery) of "On Counterdesign, Globalizing History, and the Black Digital Humanities: An Interview with Keon Pettiway." From *Doing Digital Visual Studies: One Image, Multiple Methodologies*. https://www.ccdigitalpress.org/book/ddvs/chapters/pettiway2.html

Keon Pettiway:

In general, for Kim Gallon, she talks about the technology of recovery as a particular approach or the work that could be and should be done in Black Digital Humanities. For her, recovery, as she states, "recovery rests at the heart of Black Studies as a scholarly tradition that seeks to restore the humanity of Black people that has been lost but also stolen through systematic global racialization." And I think those two words are so critical. "Lost" and "stolen" bring to fore that recovery isn't necessarily about simply going to recover that which we forgot about, but it's also recovering that which has been systematically, legally, extra-legally, has been stolen. She does put forth seven different, we can say tenants, if you will, of what she calls a technology of recovery for Black DH.

The first thing is that recovering lost historical and literary texts is a foundational task, and I think that's so important because it means that whatever we're studying, whatever that we are trying to attempt, that at the core, this is all about the foundation of recovering something, and we could think about texts, of course, construed in a number of different ways, but the foundational task is to recover that which has been lost and stolen.

And in so doing, her second tenet is that this is all about restoring humanity, right? It's not only merely about recovering those lost historical texts and literary texts for the sake of, but it's also for the purpose of restoring humanity to Black people that has *also* been lost and stolen. What she says, however, is that the way that you restore that humanity is through a collective recuperation, and, in that way, recovering lost texts and restoring humanity is not a single team or a single scholar endeavor. It is supposed to be something that is collectively done with the communities who were impacted by that which we are studying and our own privilege of what we're studying.

Her third tenet is that while we're recovering, while we are restoring humanity, let's not forget about the fact that we have to probe and disrupt any of these notions that would have us accept humanities as this kind of fixed category. In order to restore humanity, we also have to think about in our own studies and, more broadly, in a public sphere, of more broadly, how is it that we have accepted this kind of notion of humanity as fixed?

Her fourth tenet, to that point, is that when we're foregrounding the digital, we have to foreground the digital as a way that it's a mutual host for racism. We can't accept these kinds of traditional fixed notions of the digital as exempt right from these issues of race and racism. We start, and we foreground, the digital as a mutual host, and, at the same time, say that because

it is a mutual host for racism, it might also allow us to foster some alternative constructions of humanity.

And by doing so, this is her fifth tenet, we can promote a system of change by revealing how these methods, our conceptual frameworks--we can actually promote a system of change by revealing how these things actually come to bear when we study humanity. So, in the case of researching Digital Visual research, conducting Digital Visual research, we can bring to the fore that the tools that we're using actually might be hosts for racism, and we have to put that forth. The technology that we're using might actually be, you know, we might actually be complicit. But at the same time, that means that we can actually reveal how there are different methods to, perhaps, bring something different to bear, and I'll give an example of that later in a second here about Virtual MLK.

Her sixth tenant for Black Digital Humanities is that when we do all this work--from tenant one through tenant five--we have to provide a forum. It's not only leaving these tasks to simply recovering and leaving them in an archive or doing Black Digital Humanities in such a way that only serves the academy. We have to bring those five things to bear, and what, she says in tenet six, is a forum for thinking through the ways that Black humanity emerges, it submerges, it resurfaces in different assemblages. I think that's so important because it means that the work for rhetorical historians is not only being able to create that form or provide that forum when we go to conferences or when we're delivering lectures. We could think about a forum being more writ large. It could be something that is instantiated maybe perhaps as a citizen forum where we invite not only those who have been involved in our projects, those who are interested in our projects, but we also bring the community to the forum to talk about not only our project, but the ways in which scholars are doing this work, how does it trouble or challenge or bring forth a different view of Black humanity.

And that leads to the seventh and last tenet from Kim Gallon's technology of recovery. There are a myriad of folk who can do tenets one through six, but she makes a distinct statement and says that Black Digital Humanities also encompasses projects that are being led by or that heavily involved Black scholars. The reason why she said so is that Black scholars can help us expand and understand digital humanities and power, particularly when it relates to recovering lost and stolen humanity, particularly among Black folk globally. So that's generally the kind of seven tenets of Kim Gallon's technology of recovery.