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NEW DATE

THE FOURTH MARTIN R. DELANY SYMPOSIUM

Organizing and Activism

April 18, 2026, Pittsburgh, PA

Call for Papers

Submission Deadline: January 19, 2026

The African American Program at the Senator John Heinz History Center invites proposals for presentation at its Fourth Annual Martin R. Delany Symposium to be held April 18, 2026, in Pittsburgh, Pa. The event will take place in the historic Heinz History Center with tours of its award-winning exhibitions and rooftop views of the city skyline and rivers.

During the inaugural Symposium in 2022, attendees learned about Delany *Before, During and Beyond the Civil War*. Keynote speakers Richard J.M. Blackett and Tunde Adeleke gave talks that framed panel discussions on Delany's life and work in abolitionism, emigration, literature, Civil War, politics, and public history. The Second Symposium, *Family, Country, and the World* featured Robert S. Levine and Tera Hunter with presentations that explored leadership, family, and Black identity. In 2024 the Symposium theme, *Women during the Era of Delany*, featured Pulitzer Prize winning historian, Dr. Edda L. Fields-Black's book talk about "Combee: Harriet Tubman, the Combahee River Raid and Black Freedom during the Civil War."

Born in Charles Town, Va. to a free mother, Pati, and enslaved father, Samuel, Delany would live under the yoke of racial oppression. Delany would accomplish much in the years before and after the Civil War. Pittsburgh was where his education in abolitionism, enterprise, medicine, and journalism would set him apart from other abolitionists, especially in Pittsburgh. Delany would become publisher of the first African American newspaper west of the Allegheny Mountains, *The Mystery*. In the 1850s he would enroll in Harvard Medical School and assume the leadership of the National Emigration Convention a decade before President Lincoln would commission him a Major of the 104th USCI in 1865 making him the highest ranking African American field officer in the US Army.

The Fourth Symposium welcomes paper proposals or panels that address the extent of organizing and advocating for freedom, justice, citizenship, equality, suffrage and the franchise during the era of Delany. A focus on African American and integrated organizations in relation to the antislavery and antiracist agenda of Delany during the mid-to late-nineteenth century. We would also welcome papers that explore the impact of Delany and/or the work of nineteenth-century groups on the 20th and 21st century organizing and activism. Papers can explore beyond Delany and discuss organizing and activism

during the Delany era and various topics that are relative to the era. The structure of the academic program will have two sessions. The first session will be the keynote address followed by a panel discussion. The second session will host a series of panels that will explore the Symposium theme.

Proposals:

All proposals should be submitted in electronic form, five hundred words or less, double spaced, either Calibri or Times New Roman font. A title should be clearly listed at the top of the page accompanied by name and contact information. Please include in the proposal whether your presentation needs audio/video technology (PowerPoint, film, video, sound, etc.). If the proposal is accepted, PowerPoint and completed papers should be submitted by April 4, 2026, so moderators can review before the Symposium. All PowerPoints must be limited to up to ten slides and friendly to Microsoft technology. All presentations will be in person at the Heinz History Center - no exceptions allowed. Please submit proposals by **January 19, 2026**, to the information below.

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