

# FORGOTTEN VISIONARY: A DIGITAL LIBRARY ON HERMAN HUDSON AND THE BLACK STUDIES MOVEMENT AT INDIANA UNIVERSITY BLOOMINGTON

Dhakhir Abdullah  
PhD Candidate in African American and African Diaspora Studies  
MLS student in the Luddy School of Informatics, Computing, and Engineering  
Indiana University

## INTRODUCTION

This preliminary project serves as a springboard effort in seeking to foreground, through a digital library, the history that chronicles Herman C. Hudson's role as Vice Chancellor of Afro-American Affairs, specifically, from the years 1970-1975, where he helped to create a unique and academically sound Black Studies department through administrative savvy and institution building. In this way it moves in much the same direction as this author's dissertation and seeks to build upon it; yet the two research undertakings dovetail in that where the dissertation tells the story through discursive means, the digital library hopes to come to fruition in the form of a visual representation of that same history. On this background, but at present, this project seeks to provide a visual narrative of the ways in which Hudson became the first Vice Chancellor for Afro-American Affairs in 1970 while simultaneously becoming the founding chair of the then Afro-American Studies department.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How does localizing these archival materials into the digital world help complement the historical analysis presented in my dissertation?  
What are the benefits of telling this story through the digital medium?

## CONTEXT/REASON FOR THE STUDY

It is the author's hope to preserve this important history through the digital sphere as an open educational resource which will make this history more accessible to those within and beyond the university walls. In providing this visual journey, the author places primary sources from different repositories in conversation with each other. For example, materials utilized were discovered at the Indiana University Archives, the Lilly Library, the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center Archives and more in an effort to provide a more robust story of the aforesaid happenings. The impetus of preserving the materials at the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center and shining a light on what is housed there was also an animated force in crafting this digital environ. Veritably a living archive itself, the Neal-Marshall has for years housed primary documents around the Center, however, the vast amount was in a private storage area. Nonetheless, about a year or so ago, the Center decided to build its own archive and that is still an ongoing mission at present. However, the present director has allowed me to utilize the sources housed in their proto-archive to support my dissertation as well as this digital library project.

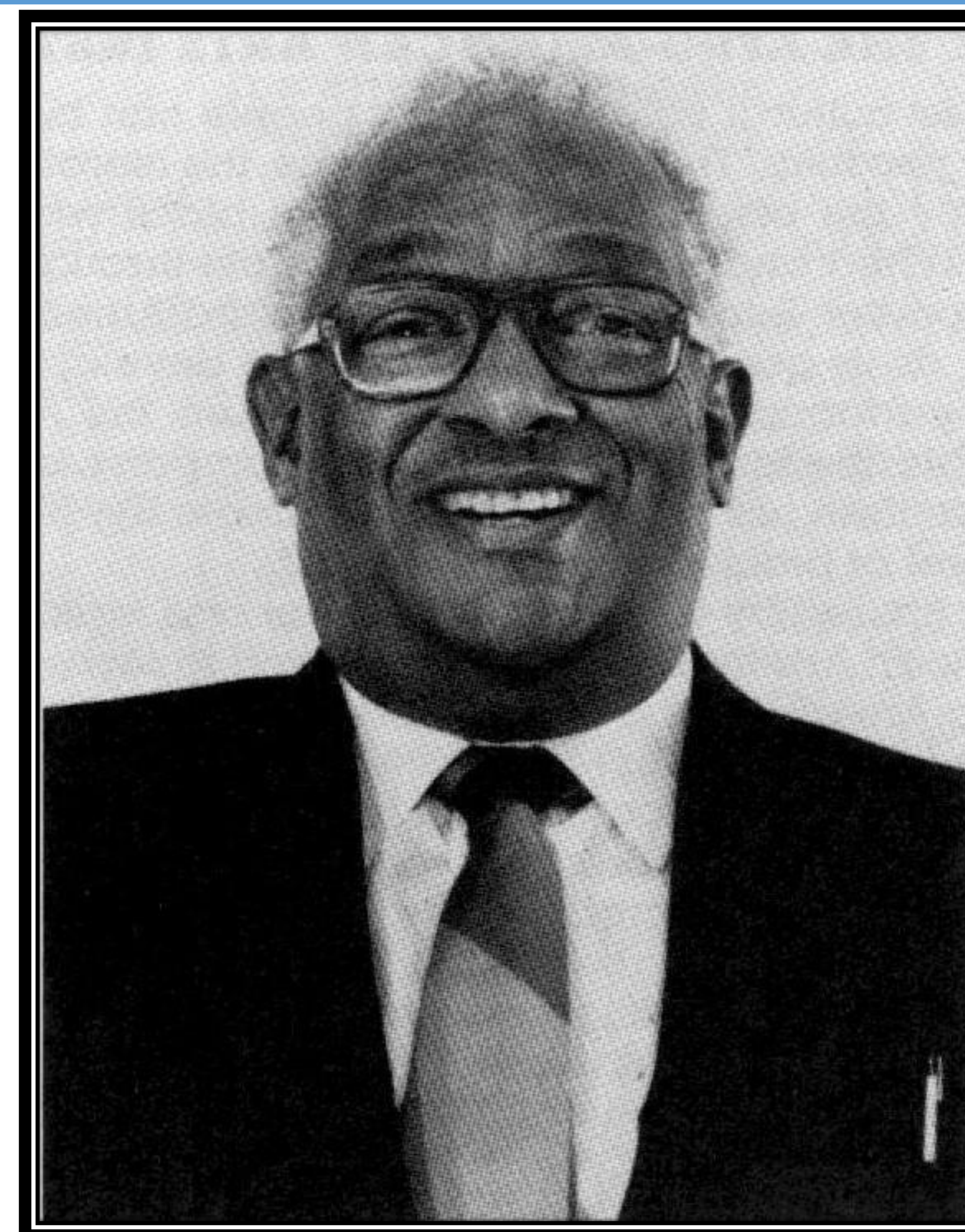
## METHODS

To construct this digital repository the creator utilized Collection Builder as a platform to showcase this collection of primary sources. Collection Builder is a set of flexible, static web templates for creating digital collections and exhibit websites. These templates are driven by metadata and powered by modern static web technology. Propelled by a minimalist computing philosophical ethos, Collection Builder was manufactured with the intent to make complicated technological barriers to building websites and such much easier for beginners and IT professionals alike. Where susceptibility to link rot is endemic to some other website building platforms including Omeka, Collection Builder allows users to utilize permalinks to help resist this detriment by leveraging web static technologies.



## RESULTS

How does placing this in archival materials into the digital world help complement the historical analysis presented in my dissertation? First, it provides a visual narrative of what is argued in my dissertation thereby further substantiating and highlighting the legacy of the students who took part in the Black Studies Movement at Indiana University. Not only that however, it ensures that not only is Hudson's story told but also it provides visual representations of that story. Nonetheless, what are the benefits of telling this story through digital means? It allows the author to preserve this important history through the digital sphere as an open educational resource which will make this history more accessible to those within and beyond the university walls. Furthermore, relaying this visual narrative through the optic medium may make the history more accessible to those who struggle with reading text or are visually challenged. Moreover, Though not attempting to undercut the archive qua archive as a brick-and-mortar institution, it must be acknowledged that analogue materials cannot weather being handled into perpetuity which is why the digital revolution as it relates to data repositories is a great boon for librarians, scholars, researchers, and the public. Having said that, I am not advocating digital repositories only; we should continue to build digital and analogue exhibition cooperatives.



## CONCLUSION

This preliminary project serves as a springboard effort in seeking to foreground, through a digital library, the history that chronicles Herman C. Hudson's role as Vice Chancellor of Afro-American Affairs, specifically, from the years 1970-1975, where he helped to create a unique and academically sound Black Studies department through administrative savvy and institution building. On this background, but at present, this project seeks to provide a visual narrative of the ways in which Hudson became the first Vice Chancellor for Afro-American Affairs in 1970 while simultaneously becoming the founding chair of the then Afro-American Studies department. It is my intent to continue to build this project into a larger repository of primary resources in the future. At present it hosts 38 digital primary sources from the IU Archives, the Lilly Library, and the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center. Moreover, I have conducted a number of interviews with Hudson's contemporaries, colleagues, friends, and coworkers. These recorded interviews will greatly substantiate the library while effectively complemented the sources already uploaded

### References

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