Call for Papers: Virginia Humanities Conference (April 7-8, 2017)

The 2017 Virginia Humanities Conference at Shenandoah University invites proposals for papers, panel sessions, and performances that investigate any aspect of *unbearableness* within the humanities. This conference seeks to explore the concept of the unbearable—that which cannot be endured or tolerated—with scholars, activists, and students from a wide variety of disciplines and institutions. VHC 2017 will examine how and what kinds of knowledge the humanities produce that existing structures cannot bear; how and why approaches to this unbearableness that are grounded in the humanities are met with resistance; and, finally, how we in the humanities value, make use of, and respond to contemporary, and sometimes unbearable, issues.

Possible interdisciplinary themes include but are not limited to the following:

Unbearable People: How do humanities studies challenge conversations about what it means to be human?
- The unbearable in mass media, social media, and/or popular culture
- Celebrity and fan culture
- Refugees, migrants, and the undocumented
- Cyborgs, werewolves, zombies, superheroes, and/or the transhuman

Unbearable Ambiguity: How does ambiguity serve as a structuring mechanism of social life?
- Ambiguous identities (racial, linguistic, gender, etc.)
- In-between spaces
- Living with ambiguity
- Teaching the ambiguous

Unbearable Futures: How do humanities studies trouble the assumption of a happy future?
- Social activism and/or social movements
- Eco-cultural studies
- Future role of the humanities and the arts
- Future of the academy and/or free speech on college campuses

Please submit 250-word abstracts to vhc@su.edu. Individual, panel, and roundtable proposals are welcome. Undergraduate students are invited to present their research via interactive poster sessions or individual papers with the support of a faculty member. Deadline for submission is February 15, 2017. Conference will be held April 7-8, 2017, on Shenandoah University's main campus in Winchester, VA.