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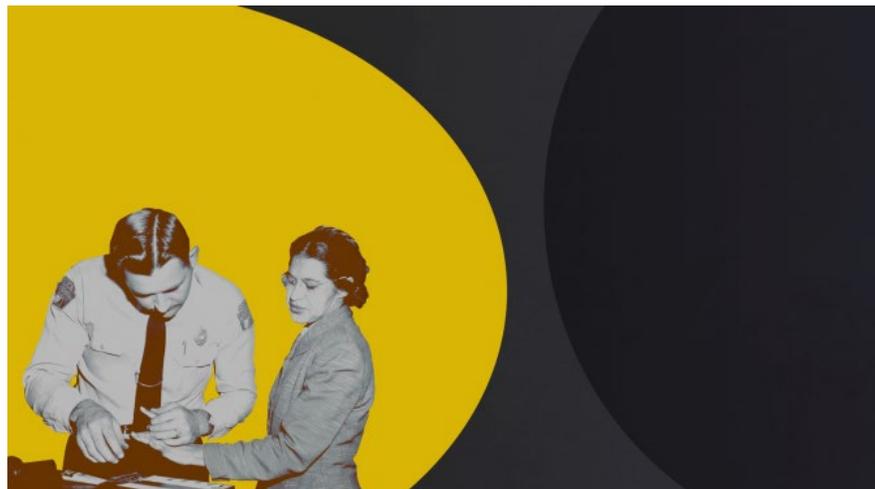
'Racism in America' webinar to examine protest movements

By [Linda B. Glaser](#) | February 9, 2021

Worldwide protests against police brutality, an armed attack on the Capitol, protests in Europe and the U.S. against COVID restrictions— 2020 and 2021 stand out as years when those on the left and the right turned to both peaceful and armed protests to change the directions governments were headed. Structural racism and racial inequality were at the heart of much of these protests.

In its next webinar, the College of Arts and Sciences' (A&S) yearlong webinar series, "[Racism in America](#)," will examine how protest movements and civil disobedience have sought to both end and uphold white supremacy and racial discrimination. The Feb. 24, 7 p.m. event, in partnership with the Cornell Law School, is free and open to the public; [registration is required](#).

Moderated by [Katrease "Kat" Stafford](#), national investigative writer at The Associated Press, the webinar will feature five Cornell faculty experts who will address the history and present of the civil disobedience and protest movements that have brought us to this fraught moment in the U.S. The discussion will explore how different communities, groups, and movements have defined protest and engaged in it, seeking to sway public opinion.



In a Feb. 24 webinar, faculty from the College of Arts and Sciences will examine how protest movements and civil disobedience have sought to both end and uphold white supremacy and racial discrimination.

The panelists will explore how and why protest and civil disobedience are necessary and the ways protest has worked to effect real, sustainable change.

“When we initially planned a panel on the topic of protest, it was during a period when international, national and local Black Lives Matter protests were ubiquitous and we thought to contextualize their significance. In the months since, with increasingly frequent protests against public health restrictions and of course armed insurrectionists seizing the capital while displaying symbols and wearing clothing proclaiming racial hatred and antisemitism, this panel has taken on even more significance” said organizer [Noliwe Rooks](#), the W.E.B. Du Bois Professor in Africana studies and director of the American Studies Program in A&S.

Stafford’s reporting focuses on race and inequity. She investigates how structural racism has fueled inequity in America through the lens of politics, government health, environmental justice and more. Previously an investigative journalist at the Detroit Free Press, her work uncovering equity and environmental issues led to congressional inquiries, city legislation proposals and a federal audit. Stafford was part of a two-person reporting team that won Michigan's Associated Press Media Editors 2019 First Amendment Award, for the Free Press' 'Make Your Date' investigative project. She was named a 2019 Ida B. Wells Investigative Fellow and is a board member of the Investigative Reporters and Editors, the industry's leading nonprofit organization focused on investigative journalism.

The panelists for the Nov. 19 webinar will be:

- [Margaret Washington](#), Marie Underhill Noll Professor of American History (A&S), whose research focuses on African American culture, religion and thought; gender; and the American south. She is the author of the award-winning book “‘A Peculiar People’: Slave Religion and Community-culture among the Gullahs” and the biography “Sojourner Truth’s America.” She has been featured in several PBS documentaries, including “‘Tell Them We Are Rising’: The Story of Black Colleges and Universities” and “God in America”;
- [Aziz Rana](#), Richard and Lois Cole Professor of Law in the Cornell Law School, whose research and teaching centers on American constitutional law and political development, with a particular focus on how shifting notions of race, citizenship, and empire have shaped legal and political identity since the founding. His book, *The Two Faces of American Freedom*, situates the American experience within the global history of colonialism, examining the intertwined relationship in American constitutional practice between internal accounts of freedom and external projects of power and expansion;

- **Ella Diaz**, associate professor of Latina/o studies and English (A&S), is the author of *Flying Under the Radar* with the Royal Chicano Air Force: *Mapping a Chicano/a Art History* (2017), which explores the art, poetry, performance, and political activism of a vanguard Chicano/a art collective founded in Sacramento, California, during the U.S. civil rights era. For this work, Diaz won the 2019 Book Award for the National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies Association (NACCS). Diaz's second book, published in 2020, is a primer on Chicano artist José Montoya and volume 12 of the UCLA and Chicano Studies Research Center's *A Ver* series. Diaz has published in several anthologies as well as articles in *English Language Notes (ELN)*, *ASAP/ Journal*, *Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano Studies*, and *Chicana-Latina Studies Journal*;
- **Russell Rickford**, associate professor of history (A&S), specializes in African-American political culture after World War II, the Black Radical Tradition, and transnational social movements. His most recent book, *We Are an African People: Independent Education, Black Power, and the Radical Imagination*, received the 2016 Hooks Institute National Book Award and the 2017 OAH Liberty Legacy Foundation Award. He is currently working on a book about Guyana and African American radical politics in the 1970s; and
- **Christine Balance**, associate professor of performing & media arts and director of the Asian American Studies Program (A&S), has research interests that include transnational Asian American and critical Filipino/Filipino American studies, as well as performance and popular music. She is the author of *Tropical Renditions: Making Musical Scenes in Filipino America*, which examines how the performance and reception of post-World War II Filipino/Filipino American popular music compose Filipino identities, publics, and politics. Her current book project, "Making Sense of Martial Law," analyzes the sensational politics of the Marcos dictatorship and its cultural afterlives. Her courses include *Fictions of Dictatorship and Race*, *Performance*, and *Sound Studies*.

The spring semester will feature two additional Racism in America webinars: "Health Care Inequities" and "Race and the Economy."

Co-hosted by the American Studies Program, the "Racism in America" series is supported by Alumni Affairs and Development; Diversity Alumni Programs; and powered by eCornell. Other colleges will be partnering on the other webinars in the spring semester.