

# Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences

REINVENTING AMERICAN  
DEMOCRACY FOR THE  
21ST CENTURY

THE INTERSECTION  
OF DEMOCRACY  
& RELIGION

A Nation  
in Crisis

SUMMER 2020

# REVISITING A PAST EVENT

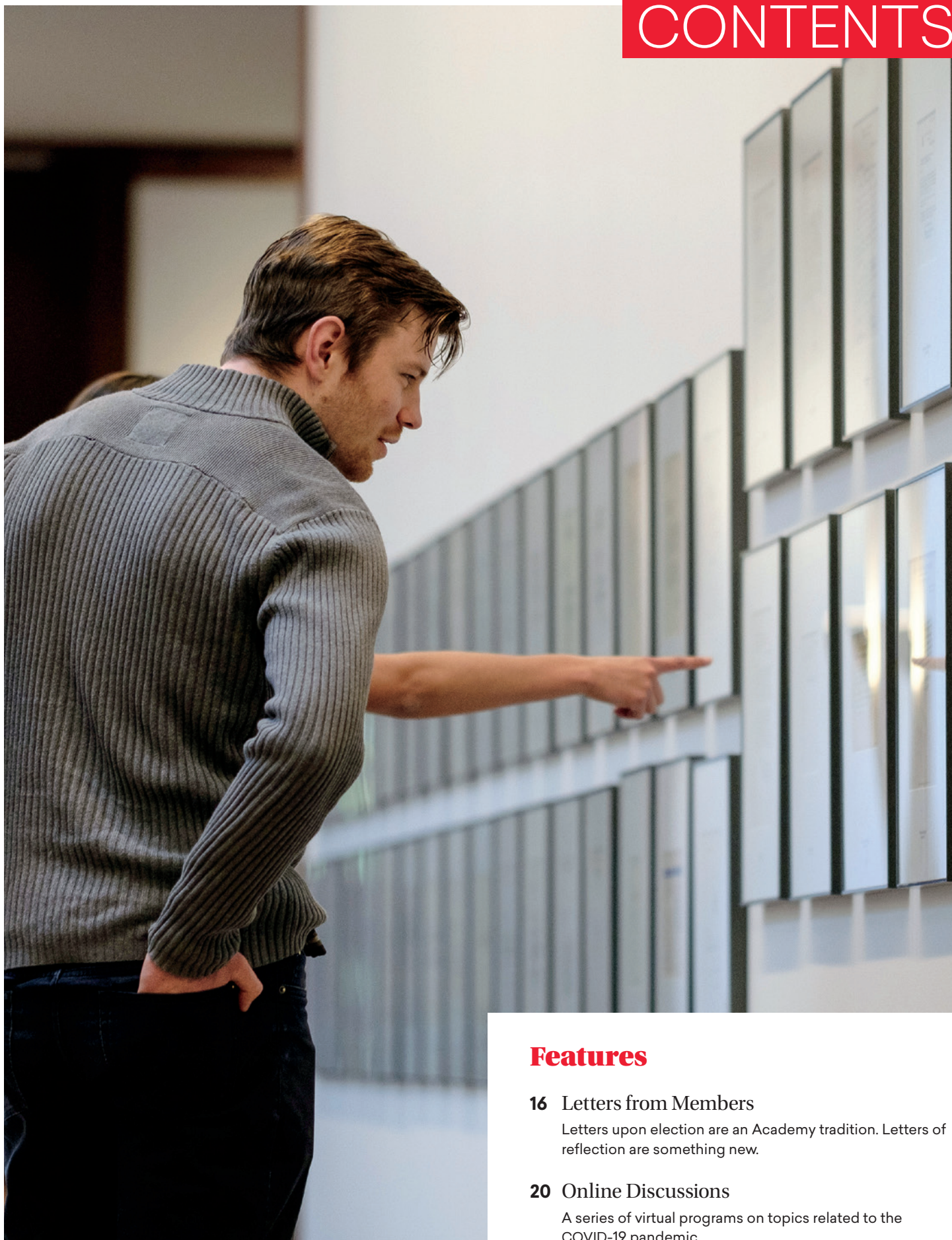


## Policy Perspectives on Police Use of Lethal Force

As America reckons with its relationship to police violence, we are reminded that progress can be slow. It has been more than five years since the deaths of Michael Brown and Eric Garner. On February 4, 2015, the Academy convened a discussion at the University of California, Berkeley, led by **Andrea Roth** (Assistant Professor of Law, University of California, Berkeley School of Law) and **Franklin Zimring** (William G. Simon Professor of Law, University of California, Berkeley School of Law) about the hundreds of people who are killed each year by police, the racial disparity among the victims, and the incomplete data that make analyzing the problem so difficult. The conversation also covered the effectiveness of various avenues for police reform.

To read the full transcript of this event (published in the Spring 2015 issue of the *Bulletin*) and hundreds of other Stated Meetings from the last twenty years, please visit [amacad.org/bulletin](http://amacad.org/bulletin). A video of this event and many others can be found at [youtube.com/americanacad](http://youtube.com/americanacad).

For more information about Academy events, please visit [www.amacad.org/events](http://www.amacad.org/events).



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**ON THE COVER:** Several hundred doctors, nurses, and medical professionals gathered on June 5, 2020, in St. Louis, Missouri, to protest against police brutality. Sparked by the police killing of George Floyd, demonstrations for racial justice continue to be held in cities throughout the country and world.

“As one of the country’s oldest learned societies, we have a unique obligation to face our history and build a better future. And as a nonpartisan, independent research organization, we are well positioned to find solutions to help move our country forward.”



## From the President

In my spring message, I discussed how the COVID-19 pandemic had affected the Academy, with the transition of our staff to remote work and the cancellation of Academy events and travel. I wrote with pride about the resilience of the Academy – both members and staff – in carrying on our work, which includes the launch of a new series of virtual events, detailed in the pages that follow.

Of course, in the intervening months our world has been transformed yet again. Heartbreaking incidents of police violence inspired millions of Americans to speak out for racial justice, and mass protests filled the streets of America’s cities. The pain and uncertainty of these times are evident in letters submitted by Academy members for our Archives. Messages received in May reflect the anxieties of life during the pandemic, while those received in June and July express outrage at the continuing legacy of racism and issue powerful calls to action. A selection of these letters is included in this issue of the *Bulletin*. I encourage all Academy members to consider sharing with us their thoughts, reflections, and experiences during this challenging yet galvanizing time in our history.

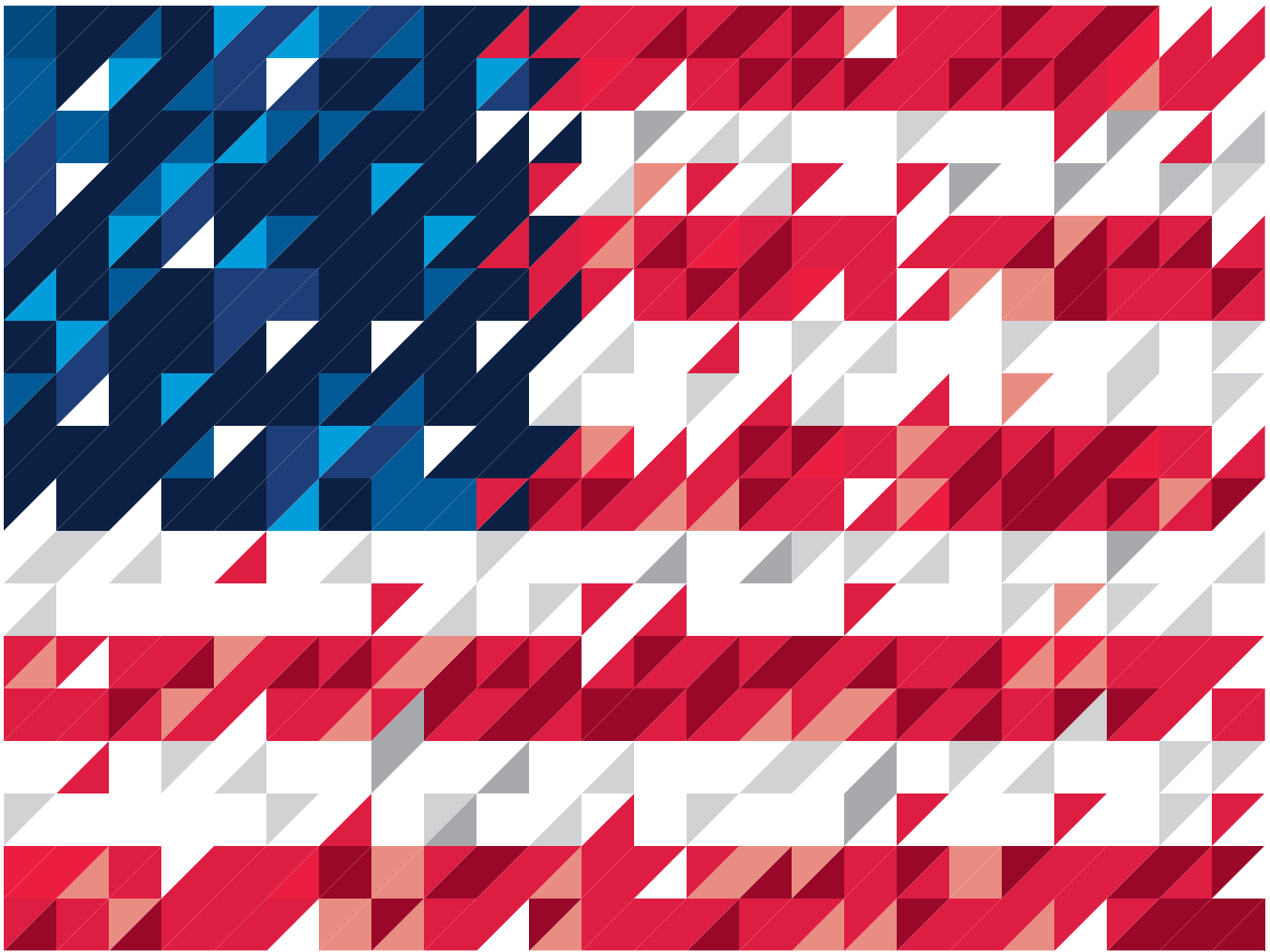
These messages not only help us create an important historical record for the Academy, but they also remind us of our purpose during this critical time. As one of the country’s oldest learned societies, we have a unique

obligation to face our history and build a better future. And as a nonpartisan, independent research organization, we are well positioned to find solutions to help move our country forward.

In June, the Academy did just that, releasing *Our Common Purpose: Reinventing American Democracy for the 21st Century*, the final report of the Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship. Over the course of two years, the bipartisan Commission conducted listening sessions with hundreds of Americans in communities across the country, developing a set of thirty-one recommendations to strengthen America’s institutions and civic culture. The online release event on June 11 drew an audience of more than one thousand viewers and was covered by PBS NewsHour, NPR’s All Things Considered, and *The Washington Post*, among others. We are now quickly turning our attention to implementation, working with Academy members, community leaders, and partner organizations to turn the Commission’s recommendations into action.

I encourage you to read more about the Commission’s report in this issue of the *Bulletin* and consider the role you might play in building a democracy that is more representative, responsive, and just.

*David W. Oxtoby*



# Reinventing American Democracy for the 21st Century

**O**n June 11, 2020, the Academy's Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship celebrated the release of its final report: *Our Common Purpose: Reinventing American Democracy for the 21st Century*. Nearly 1,200 people viewed the launch event, which featured Commission Chairs **Danielle Allen** (Harvard University), **Stephen Heintz** (Rockefeller Brothers Fund), and **Eric Liu** (Citizen University); Academy President **David Oxtoby**; as well as Commission members **Judy Woodruff** (PBS NewsHour) and **David Brooks** (*The New York Times*).

*Our Common Purpose* proposes thirty-one recommendations, grouped by six strategic imperatives, to help the nation emerge as a more resilient constitutional democracy by 2026, its 250th anniversary (see page 5 for more information about the strategic imperatives and recommendations). At the launch event, Danielle Allen, Stephen Heintz, and Eric Liu discussed how the Commission selected its final recommendations, the process of reaching unanimous consensus from a diverse bipartisan commission, and next steps to implement the recommendations (see page 7 about the

Champions advancing the Commission's work). The release of *Our Common Purpose* was covered on PBS and All Things Considered, in *The Washington Post*, and in various local and regional outlets.

The report makes the case that a healthy democracy depends on a virtuous circle in which responsive political institutions foster a healthy civic culture of participation and responsibility, while a healthy civic culture – a combination of values, norms, and narratives – keeps our political institutions responsive and inclusive. The recommendations entail bold, actionable solutions to



Academy President David W. Oxtoby with Commission Cochairs Stephen Heintz, Danielle Allen, and Eric Liu.

make our republic more responsive and resilient, strengthen our nation's common purpose, and restore trust in one another and our institutions. The report is rooted in the concerns, hopes, and experiences shared by hundreds of Americans during listening sessions held around the country, and the voices of these Americans are included throughout the report.

The Commission was established in 2018 with the goal of exploring how best to respond to the vulnerabilities in our political and civic life, vulnerabilities that have become especially apparent in recent months amid the COVID-19 pandemic and protests for racial justice. The Commission is made up of a diverse, bipartisan cohort of scholars, business leaders, media members, elected officials, and philanthropists who agreed unanimously on a set of solutions to reinvent American democracy.

To read the report and to learn more about the Commission on

## Six Strategies

*Our Common Purpose* proposes six strategic imperatives to reinvent American democracy:

1. Achieve Equality of Voice and Representation
2. Empower Voters
3. Ensure the Responsiveness of Government Institutions
4. Dramatically Expand Civic Bridging Opportunities
5. Build Civic Information Architecture that Supports Common Purpose
6. Inspire a Culture of Commitment to American Constitutional Democracy and One Another

## Proposed Recommendations

A selection of the report's 31 recommendations:

- 1.1 Enlarge the House of Representatives
- 1.8 Institute 18-Year Term Limits for Supreme Court Justices
- 2.2 Move Election Day to Veterans Day
- 3.4 Increase Participatory Governance
- 4.1 Establish a National Trust for Civic Infrastructure
- 5.3 Develop a Public-Interest Mandate for Social Media
- 6.1 Create a Universal Expectation of National Service
- 6.5 Invest in Civic Education for All Ages

the Practice of Democratic Citizenship, visit [www.amacad.org/ourcommonpurpose](http://www.amacad.org/ourcommonpurpose).

**FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF OUR COMMON PURPOSE:**

“Founded nearly 250 years ago, the United States of America is the world’s oldest constitutional democracy. Its infancy, under the Articles of Confederation, was turbulent. Its early prospects, at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, were very much uncertain. At the Convention, Benjamin Franklin – catalyst of the Revolution, leading citizen of the republic, enslaver turned abolitionist – wondered as he observed the conflicts, compromises, and contradictions of the process: was the young nation’s sun rising or setting? With



**77%** of Americans say there should be **limits** on the **amount of money** individuals and organizations **can spend on campaigns**.

Source: Pew Research Center, “The Public, the Political System, and American Democracy,” April 26, 2018, <http://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/04/26140617/4-26-2018-Democracy-release.pdf>.

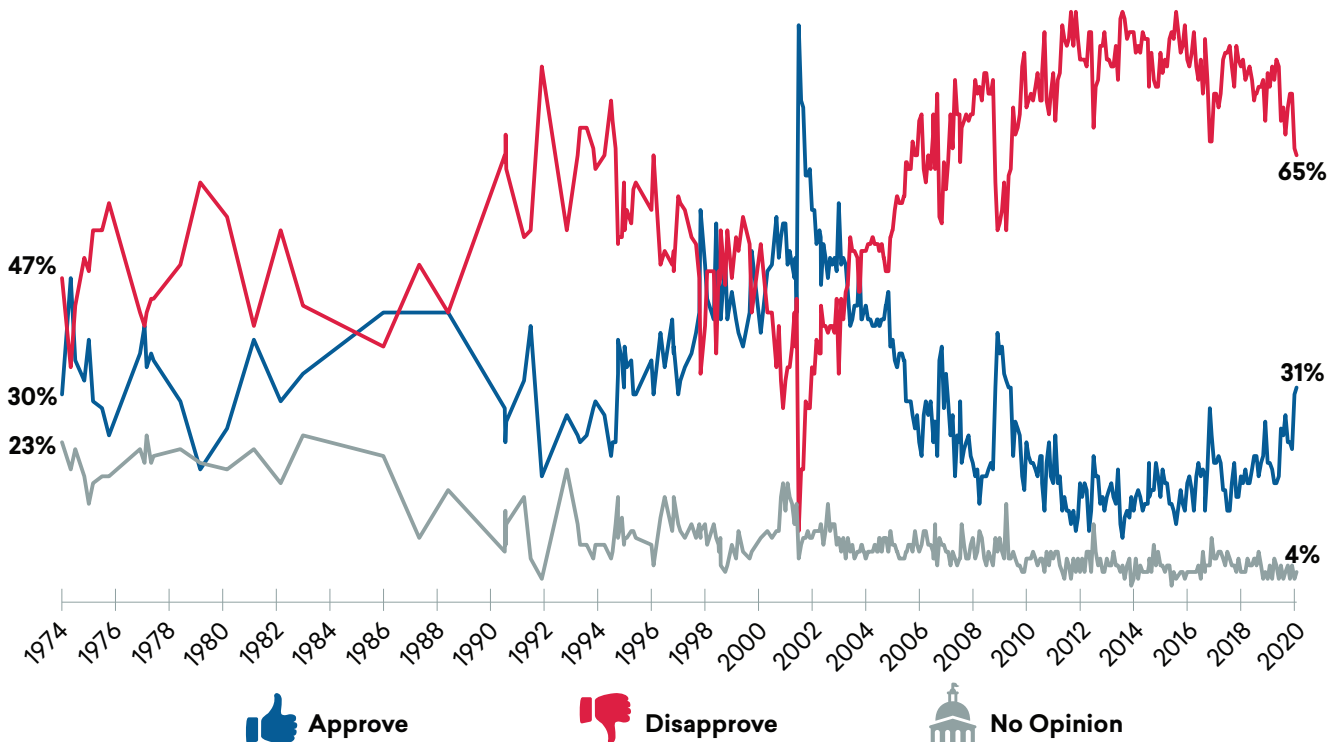
the signing of the Constitution, he concluded, the sun was rising.

Today, the question of rise or fall is more pertinent than ever. In this age of globalization, centralized power, economic inequality, deep demographic shifts, political polarization, pandemics and climate change, and radical disruption in the media and information

environments, we face these converging trends in a constitutional democracy that feels to many increasingly unresponsive, nonadaptive, and even antiquated.

Consider the data. The public’s approval rate for Congress – our national legislature and the first branch of government established in the Constitution, charged with

**American Approval of Congress, 1974–2020**



Source: Gallup, “Congress and the Public,” <https://news.gallup.com/poll/1600/congress-public.aspx>.





After the removal of two Confederate statues from the Cheapside town square in Lexington, KY, in 2018, the Blue Grass Community Foundation, the Knight Foundation, and Take Back Cheapside organized (Re)Imagining Cheapside Public Storytelling walks to shed light on the full history of the community and promote discussion.

articulating the will of the people – hit a historic low of 9 percent in 2013. Now rates hover around a still-meager 25 percent. Income and wealth inequality levels have exceeded those on the eve of the Great Depression. Social mobility has stagnated. Inequities continue to track lines of race, gender, and ethnicity, revealing deep structural unfairness in our society. A surge in white nationalism, anti-Semitism, and anti-immigrant vitriol has flooded our politics with sentiments corrosive to the ethic of a democratic society, while people of color continue to confront barriers to opportunity and participation. At all levels of our system, voter turnout remains low in comparison to other advanced democracies. Trust in institutions has collapsed while an on-line culture of gleeful, nihilistic cynicism thrives. Fewer than one-third

of Millennials consider it essential to live in a democracy. Partisan rancor has not reached the intensity of Civil War–era America – but it is nonetheless very high. When Americans are asked what unites us across our differences, the increasingly common answer is *nothing*.

Yet this is not the whole story. It is not even the decisive chapter. As we have traveled the United States in recent months and listened to Americans from many walks of life, we have heard disappointment and frustration, but even more, we heard a yearning to believe again in the American story, to feel connected to one another. We heard stories of surging participation and innovation, of communities working to build new connections across long-standing divides, and of individual citizens suddenly awakening to the potential of their democratic

## Champions Advancing Our Common Purpose

The release of the report is not the end of the Commission's work. To reinvent American democracy by 2026, more than two dozen organizations and individuals have volunteered to serve as Champions to advance one or more of the Commission's recommendations. These organizations will be launching new initiatives, building grassroots support, or increasing collaboration to support significant progress at the local, state, or national level.

Some of the organizations committed to serving as Champions include:

- American Promise
- CAA Foundation
- Center for Rural Strategies
- CivXNow
- Congressional Management Foundation
- Davenport Institute for Public Engagement at Pepperdine's School of Public Policy
- FairVote
- Federation of State Humanities Councils
- Service Year Alliance
- Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation

responsibilities. Even as we survey the impact of COVID-19, we see incredible individual and collective efforts to sustain civic resilience. That is why we have come to believe a reinvention of our constitutional democracy remains entirely within reach – and urgently needed. After

all, a superlative benefit of constitutional democracy, as articulated in both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, is that it is adaptable to new circumstances and unanticipated challenges. This report, *Our Common Purpose: Reinventing American Democracy for the 21st Century*, lays out a case for renewed civic faith. It offers a set of recommendations for building a fresh collective commitment to democratic citizenship, to American constitutional democracy, and to one another. Our theory of action is the idea that improvement of our civic culture and of our institutions must go hand in hand. Each is necessary; neither on its own is sufficient.”



An electronic version of *Our Common Purpose* is available at [www.amacad.org/OurCommonPurpose](http://www.amacad.org/OurCommonPurpose).

Civic infrastructure, like the Summit Lake Loop Trail in Akron, OH, builds connections between neighborhoods and residents and creates more resilient communities.

## From Listening Sessions

“Some folks feel the voices that count the most are those that have the power. And when I am my most negative, I feel the same way. . . . [But] democracy is about all voices counting. . . . How do we get those people to believe that we can make that change?”

– Ellsworth, Maine

“Truth and trust. And there’s so much wrong with that right now in our so-called democratic society. . . . The basis of a democratic society is you have to be able to believe the people who are leading you. You have to believe that you have the opportunity to elect people who are the people you need speaking for you. And you have to trust them, and they have to trust you. And I think that’s really broken in our world right now.”

– Lexington, Kentucky

“You get discouraged. You’re like, they didn’t do anything the last time. So, sometimes I do feel like your voice isn’t heard or it doesn’t—your vote don’t count or matter.”

– Jackson, Mississippi

“[It is easy to say that those] people who like to engage, like to be involved in local politics or federal politics or the state level, they’re the ones that will take care of it . . . we don’t have to worry about it because there are others that enjoy this . . . but what is our responsibility living in a democracy? I think it’s a great question and I don’t know that I’ve ever been asked that question ever.”

– Bangor, Maine





## New Issue of *Dædalus* Explores the Intersection of Democracy & Religion

**O**n June 15, 2020, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled by a 6-to-3 majority that “An employer who fires an individual merely for being gay or transgender defies the law.” This ruling is a historic victory for gay and transgender rights, extending employment protections to millions of LGBT+ workers, and will force many employers to revisit and change discriminatory policies and practices. But what this means for faith-based employers, including religious schools and religious health care providers, will be decided in future cases. Are

faith-based employers legally entitled to religious exemptions to the law? Should they be?

Written in the months leading up to this ruling, the Summer 2020 issue of *Dædalus* on “Religion & Democracy” touches on many of these questions and tensions. How far should religious liberty extend in democratic societies? What role should religion play in the conduct of citizens? Much of the world is experiencing the conflict inherent in these questions: between people whose views permit basing political actions and lawmaking on religious

convictions and people whose democratic values oppose this. Democratic societies are in principle open to the free exercise of religion and, in constitution, they are characteristically pluralistic in both culture and religion. Yet while religions are highly variable in their stance toward government, many of the world’s most populous religions, including Christianity and Islam, are commonly taken to embody standards of conduct, such as certain prohibitions, that cannot be endorsed by democratic governments committed to preserving

liberty for the religious and the nonreligious alike.

The most prominent problems are institutional: the relations that do or should exist between “church” and state. But ethics and political theory also extend to standards appropriate to the conduct of individual citizens, and how they

should understand the role of religious convictions – especially their own – in civic affairs.

“Religion & Democracy,” guest edited by Robert Audi, features thirteen essays – by political theorists, moral philosophers, and legal scholars – that take on the challenge of outlining standards that

balance respect for both religion and democracy, and provide for their mutual flourishing. This balancing task is difficult and multifarious, but the difficulty of the task is reduced by an examination of the points of tension between certain religious values and certain democratic values as well as an exploration of alternative frameworks for resolving conflicts between church and state. The essays in this issue of *Daedalus* – most of them based on contributions to a seminar

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sponsored by the Australian Catholic University in March 2019 – address both institutional questions concerning religion and democracy and the ethics of citizenship as bearing on how individuals, religious or not, may best regard their role in the political system in which they live.

&

“Religion & Democracy” is available online at [www.amacad.org/daedalus/religion-democracy](http://www.amacad.org/daedalus/religion-democracy). For questions and more information, please contact [daedalus@amacad.org](mailto:daedalus@amacad.org).

**Page 9:** Eleanor Roosevelt, chair of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, holding a copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (in English). Lake Success, New York, November 1949. Photo courtesy of the FDR Presidential Library and Museum.

**Pages 10–11:** Howard Chandler Christy's painting of the signing of the United States Constitution was commissioned in 1939 as part of the congressional observance of the Constitution's sesquicentennial. Completed in 1940, the 20-by-30-foot framed oil-on-canvas scene is among the best known images in the United States Capitol.

## “Religion & Democracy” Summer 2020 issue of *Dædalus*

### **Religion & Democracy: Interactions, Tensions, Possibilities**

Robert Audi (University of Notre Dame)

### **Democracy & Religion: Some Variations & Hard Questions**

Kent Greenawalt (Columbia University)

### **Democracy, Religion & Public Reason**

Samuel Freeman (University of Pennsylvania)

### **Liberalism & Deferential Treatment**

Paul Weithman (University of Notre Dame)

### **The Ironies of the New Religious Liberty Litigation**

Cathleen Kaveny (Boston College)

### **The Perils of Politicized Religion**

David E. Campbell (University of Notre Dame)

### **Are Organizations' Religious Exemptions Democratically Defensible?**

Stephanie Collins (Australian Catholic University)

### **Secular Reasons for Confessional Religious Education in Public Schools**

Winfried Löffler (University of Innsbruck, Austria)

### **Conscience, Truth & Action**

Lorenzo Zucca (King's College London)

### **Do Human Rights Have a Secular, Individualistic & Anti-Islamic Bias?**

T. Jeremy Gunn (International University of Rabat, Morocco)

### **Judaism, Pluralism & Public Reason**

Jonathan A. Jacobs (City University of New York)

### **Religion & Transitional Justice**

Colleen Murphy (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)

### **Patriotism & Moral Theology**

John E. Hare (Yale Divinity School)





## A New Profile of Humanities Departments

Since 2013, when the American Academy's Humanities Commission issued *The Heart of the Matter* report, there has been considerable media discussion about declining humanities majors, an anemic academic job market, and general perceptions of a field in crisis. A new study by the Humanities Indicators, completed on the eve of the COVID-19 crisis, provides a fresh look at these questions.

The new report (available at <https://bit.ly/HDS3Intro>) is based on a survey of 1,419 departments in

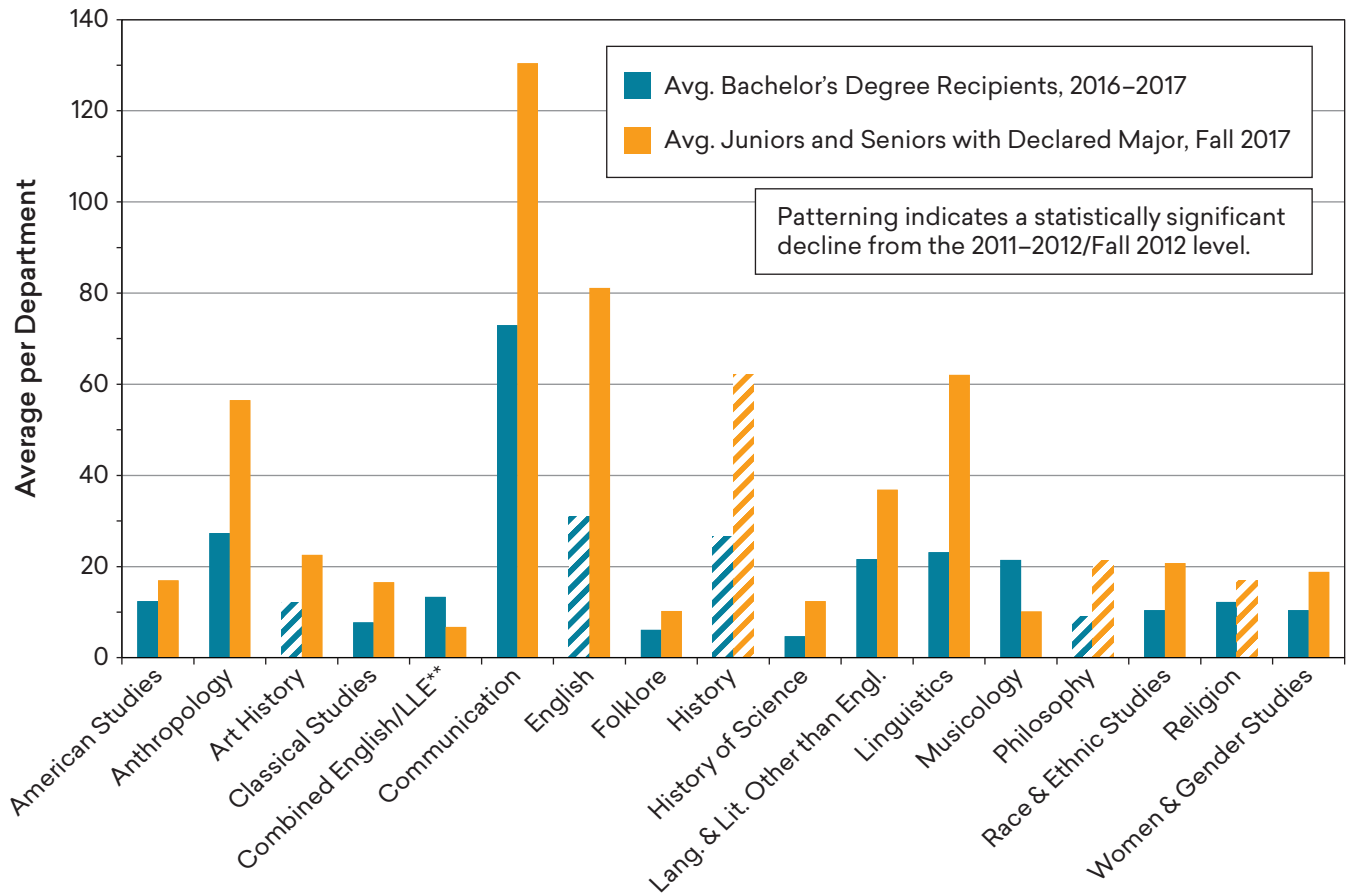
ten humanities disciplines (art history, classical studies, English, folklore, history, history of science, languages and literatures other than English, musicology, philosophy, and religion) and six adjacent disciplines (American studies, anthropology, communication, linguistics, race/ethnic studies, and women/gender studies). As the third survey in a series that started just before the Great Recession in 2007, the study not only offers benchmark data on the numbers of faculty and students, it also explores

other characteristics of humanities departments as well as statistically significant changes.

### STUDENTS

As a measure of the scale of the humanities enterprise at four-year colleges and universities, the study estimates that approximately six million students were enrolled in undergraduate humanities courses in the fall of 2017. (Students enrolled in more than one humanities course were counted in each course.)

**Figure 1: Estimated Average Number of Bachelor's Degrees Granted and Declared Majors per Humanities Department, by Discipline**



Source: Humanities Department Survey 3 (Spring 2019).

\*\*A combined department is one that grants degrees in English and in languages and literatures other than English (LLE).

But the trend among majors offers a more troubling sign for the field. The survey (and related data from the U.S. Department of Education) reveals that from 2012 to 2017, there were statistically significant declines in the number of undergraduate degree recipients in many of the large humanities disciplines (see Figure 1). This led to an overall decline in the average number of degree recipients across the humanities. Moreover, in three disciplines (history, philosophy, and religious studies) a decrease in the average numbers of undergraduate majors signaled further declines to come in those departments.

Despite the troubling evidence among majors and undergraduate

degrees, there was no statistically significant change from 2012 to 2017 in the average number of students completing minors in any of the disciplines. In recent years, a growing number of humanities departments have been introducing new minor fields as a way to expand their interdisciplinary or topical appeal (with concentrations ranging from medical humanities to Viking studies). The recent trend indicates that these efforts have had greater success than those used to attract new majors in most of the disciplines.

At the graduate level, the survey results suggest more continuity than change. Despite recent difficulties in the academic job market, the survey found very little difference in

the average number of students pursuing advanced degrees. The only two exceptions were in English and languages and literatures other than English. (The survey does not parse doctoral students from those pursuing master's degrees.)

One of the most cited reasons for the decline in humanities majors is the perception that there are fewer job opportunities for students in the field (even though an earlier Humanities Indicators report largely belies that perception by showing the success of most humanities majors in the workforce; that report is available at <http://bit.ly/HIWorkforce2018>). The study finds that one potential challenge may be the career services programs at

## A NEW PROFILE OF HUMANITIES DEPARTMENTS

many colleges and universities. Approximately a third of humanities departments rated the quality of these career services programs at their institutions as “fair,” and another 10 percent regarded the programs as “poor” or “very poor.” (Curiously, another 4 percent of the departments thought their institution lacked any career services program for their students.)

At the same time, most humanities departments were not particularly active in assisting or promoting career development among the students in their departments. Less than a quarter of the departments

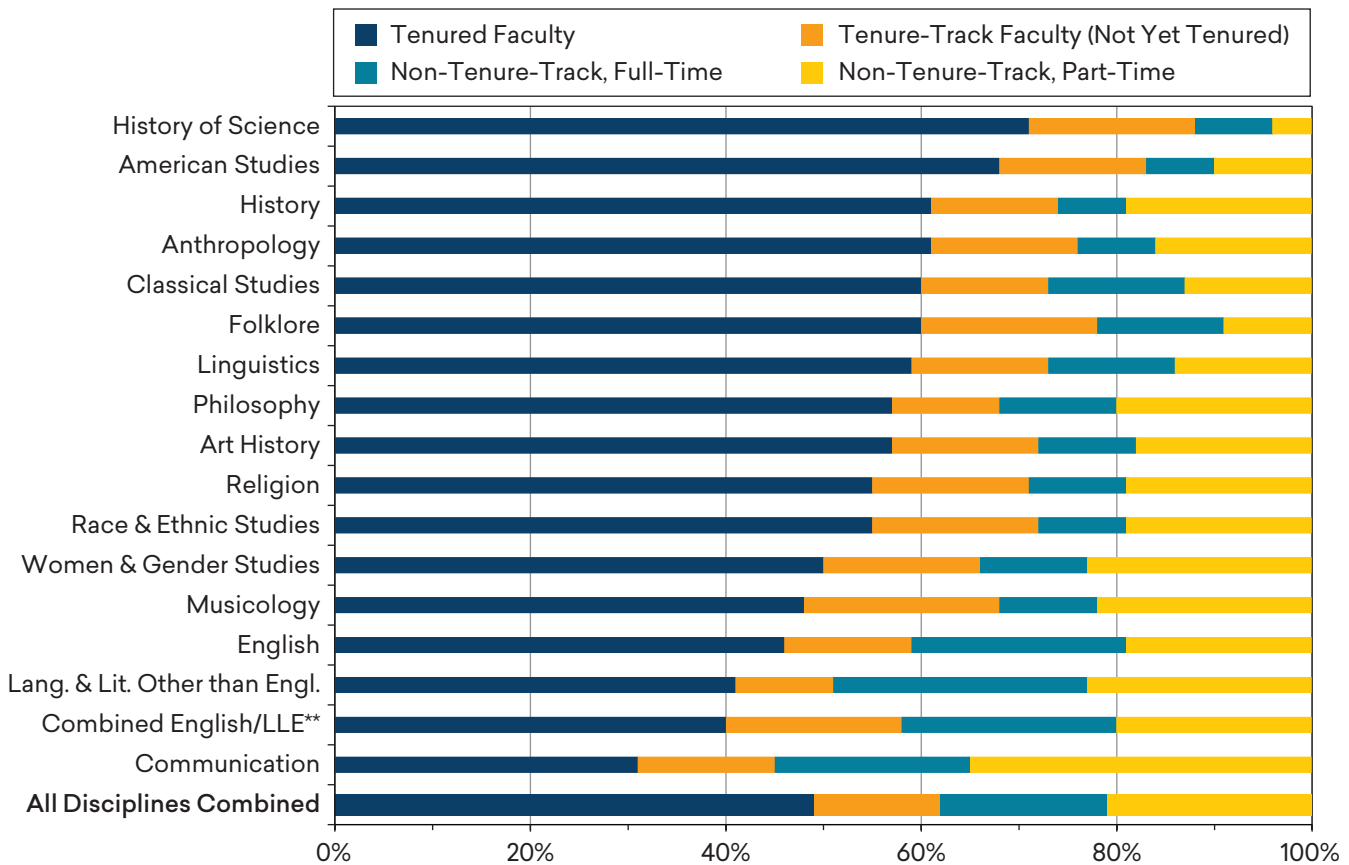
offered any sort of professional program (such as a teacher credentialing, public history, or journalism program); and while most departments indicated they offered career orientation opportunities (such as lectures by alumni or internships), relatively few required their students to participate in them. For example, only 2 percent of the departments required an internship in an employment setting. One notable exception is communication departments, which were more likely to offer some form of professional credential and also had the most positive view of the

career services programs at their institutions.

### FACULTY

Another subject of interest in recent conversations about the humanities focuses on the trends in humanities faculty. Following a sharp decline in the number of tenure-line job openings during the Great Recession, writers in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *The New York Times*, and elsewhere have speculated about sharp declines in the number of tenure-track faculty and their replacement by adjuncts. Contrary to the

**Figure 2: Estimated Distribution of Humanities Faculty Members across Tenure Status, by Discipline, Fall 2017**



Source: Humanities Department Survey 3 (Spring 2019).

\*\*A combined department is one that grants degrees in English and in languages and literatures other than English (LLE).



perceptions raised in those reports, the survey showed very little change in the average number of faculty in each of the departments from 2012 to 2017. The only disciplines that had a significant change in faculty numbers were linguistics, which showed a statistically significant *increase*, and combined language departments, which experienced a statistically significant *decrease*.

Also contrary to expectations, the survey found no statistically significant changes in the tenure distribution of the faculty members in these departments (for the second time since the Great Recession). Approximately 62 percent of humanities faculty members at four-year institutions are employed in tenure-line positions (either on the tenure track or with tenure). The survey did find substantial differences in the mix of tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenured faculty between the disciplines, but the only discipline to report that a majority of their faculty were employed outside the tenure stream was communication. (Communication is also one of the only disciplines in the study to see substantial growth in the numbers of departments and to report no decline in advertised academic positions.) Across all the disciplines in the survey, approximately 77 percent of faculty members were employed full-time.

While there has been little evidence of significant changes in humanities faculty over the past decade, there is cause for concern in the future. In 2008, just as the previous financial crisis hit colleges and universities, the number of undergraduate majors and students had been rising in most humanities disciplines for more than a decade. That trend put pressure on colleges to maintain continuity in faculty levels and departmental support through the financially lean years that followed. Unfortunately, as many colleges and universities face

a fresh round of financially wrenching challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, most humanities disciplines find themselves in a much weaker position – following declines in students and majors that extend back eight to ten years.

## OTHER NOTABLE FINDINGS

As higher education starts to negotiate the challenges of the pandemic, one of the other striking findings from the survey is the small number of humanities departments that were already teaching courses online. As of 2017, less than one third of humanities departments were teaching even a single course online, which speaks to the challenges many departments (and their faculty members) faced in the rush to provide online instruction this past spring.

Another notable finding is the relatively small share of departments that has someone who specializes in digital humanities. Even though the field has generated substantial interest in the media, the survey shows that only a minority of humanities departments had a faculty member specializing in that work. As of 2017, only 27 percent of the departments represented in the survey (excluding anthropology) reported that they had a specialist in digital humanities. Given the type of work that these scholars produce, it is also notable that a substantially smaller share of departments (20 percent) had formal guidelines for evaluating digital publications for tenure and promotion.

Finally, given rising concerns about the relationship between the humanities and the public, the survey also explores what departments are doing to bridge that divide. Unfortunately, the results are mixed. In approximately half of the humanities departments, faculty members, staff, or students had been involved with state humanities councils or

community organizations. However, when asked about other forms of community outreach (and particularly into spaces that might help feed majors into their departments), the levels of engagement were lower. While 43 percent of departments had participated in community-service endeavors involving primary or secondary schools, less than a quarter of departments had worked with community colleges “to attract new majors into their programs.”

Given the mixed evidence of engagement beyond their colleges, it is perhaps unsurprising that only 11 percent of humanities departments considered the public humanities a significant factor in tenure and promotion decisions (and with so much variation between the responses, the finding is noted with a caution about the reliability of the results).

## LOOKING AHEAD

With the exception of the trend observed in undergraduate student majors, the past two surveys (the first comparing 2007 to 2012, and now comparing 2012 to 2017) have found more continuity than change in humanities departments – which was not what most in the field had predicted following the Great Recession. As the field and higher education as a whole prepare to work through the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on their budgets, their students, and their faculty, the Humanities Indicators is already preparing the next round of the survey to try to measure the effects.



The Humanities Indicators staff welcomes members' questions and thoughts as well as suggestions for new topics or concerns in the field that should be examined. Please contact Robert Townsend, co-director of the Humanities Indicators, at [rtownsend@amacad.org](mailto:rtownsend@amacad.org).



# Letters from Members

Since the Academy was established, newly elected members have written letters of acceptance, from George Washington in 1781 to the newest members elected in 2020.



## A LETTER UPON ELECTION

**E. Patrick Johnson**, elected to the Academy in 2020, is a scholar and performer whose work incorporates race, class, gender, and sexuality. When he sent this letter, he was the Carlos Montezuma Professor of African American Studies and Performance Studies in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences and School of Communication at Northwestern University. On August 1, 2020, he became the Dean of the School of Communication at Northwestern and was named an Annenberg University Professor.

APRIL 30, 2020

Dear Dr. Andrews and Dr. Oxtoby,

It is with the utmost joy and deep sense of humility that I accept membership into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Given the magnitude of this honor, words cannot express how moved I am to be asked to join such an esteemed group of scholars, artists, scientists, thought leaders, and policymakers.

I have dedicated my entire scholarly and artistic career to lifting up the voices of those who have not always had a platform from which to validate and affirm their lives. Prime among these marginalized voices are my maternal grandmother, Mary Lewis Adams, and my mother, Sarah M. Johnson, both of whom are now deceased, but whose stories live on through the words I've written about them and, hopefully, through the life I lead. While

neither of these women completed high school they were indeed the smartest people I have ever known not only because they “made a way out of no way,” to help their families survive, but also because they were philosophers at heart, imparting knowledge that came from their life experiences. Because of their mother wit I have been afforded so many opportunities that they would never have imagined for themselves – except through their hopes and dreams for me.

Through my contributions to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, I hope to live up to the standards set by these two brilliant women by always doing the work that transforms society for the greater good.

Sincerely,  
E. Patrick Johnson

## AND LETTERS UPON REFLECTION

**G**iven the Academy's founding in 1780, it would be reasonable to assume that its Archives would offer insights into how members experienced the War of 1812, the Civil War, World War I, the 1918 Influenza, and other major events that shaped life and death in America. However, the Academy's Archives offer few records of those defining moments and how they were lived and understood by Academy members at that time.

The year 2020 will be different.

In May, the Academy started asking members to share how they were experiencing the pandemic. It was an opportunity for individuals to pause and assess. For the Academy, it was an opportunity to provide the present and the future with some perspectives from all the different vantage points that members offer.

Early replies focused on the pandemic.

**ROBERT LANGER** (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) wrote that he was working harder than ever. His COVID-related projects included designing face masks, assessing experimental vaccines, and developing a painless device to draw blood for antibody tests. He concluded his reflection with "I very much hope that things get better. And I feel Science, of course, is critical to making that happen."

**SHERRY LANSING** (Sherry Lansing Foundation) shared a quotation that resonated with her, which she hoped would be true of the aftermath of the coronavirus: "The comeback is always stronger than the setback."

**CHERRY MURRAY** (University of Arizona) sent a multi-limerick poem, "COVID-19 Spring and Summer," that included the following stanza:

While leaders are boasting and rambling,  
world scientists together are scrambling  
to develop vaccines  
or find treatments that ease  
the suffering, so life is not gambling.

**PAULINE YU** (American Council of Learned Societies) wrote, "I grieve for my city of New York and the future of its beloved restaurants and cultural institutions. I weep at performances by quarantined musicians who, though isolated, play perfectly in concert because music means so much to them, and to us. I bemoan the longstanding divisions and inequities in this country that have inflicted disproportionate suffering on the disadvantaged and most vulnerable populations."

**T**hen came the murder of George Floyd, which galvanized protests for racial justice across the country. Subsequent reflections included thoughts about pervasive injustice and what it means to face and address racism in our country.

**CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR** (CNN) shared that out of the catastrophic coronavirus pandemic, she was "imagining and hoping for a total global reset. The deep losses of life and livelihoods will only be justified if we can emerge into a new era of civilization where we create justice, less inequality, care for our communities and our planet, a better, more human society. And from this twin pandemic of shocking, inhumane, institutional racism, I hope finally we can, in the words of the Atlanta Rapper and activist Killer Mike, 'Plot, Plan, Strategize, Organize, Mobilize' our way to fulfilling the Founding Fathers' sacred belief that all are born equal."

**PAULA GIDDINGS** (Smith College) conveyed personal experience, expertise, and uncertainty about what lies ahead. Her reflection is reprinted on the next pages.

**GLENN HUTCHINS** (North Island), reflecting on the inevitability of the protests, wrote: "Our lives will be forever marked – in ways both small and large, personal and social, familial and institutional – by what we did (and didn't do) during this time."

The suggestion of reflection itself gave pause to philosopher **SUSAN WOLF** (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill), who began her letter with the following: "For better or for worse, I rarely ask myself how, or even what, I am feeling, and I am dispositionally uncomfortable about making general statements about the social or cultural significance of just about anything. But it seems to me a good thing for people to reflect, to notice, to attend to the way this (as we are constantly told) unprecedented situation is affecting us, both individually and communally, and so I welcome the assignment of a task that I would otherwise not have taken on."

To document the present and to provide a resource for the future, the Academy invites and encourages all members to send their reflections, and any questions about this initiative, to [Reflections@amacad.org](mailto:Reflections@amacad.org). Emails, letters, drawings, and other forms of communication are welcome.



## REFLECTIONS

**Paula J. Giddings**, a Fellow of the American Academy since 2017 and a member of the Academy's Council, is Elizabeth A. Woodson 1922 Professor Emerita of Africana Studies at Smith College. She is the author of *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*; *In Search of Sisterhood: Delta Sigma Theta and the Challenge of the Black Sorority Movement*; and, most recently, the biography of anti-lynching activist Ida B. Wells, *Ida: A Sword Among Lions*, which won *The Los Angeles Times* Book Prize for Biography and was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle award.

JUNE 25, 2020

One of the scenes I have written about that left an indelible image in my mind was the April 19, 1892, Land Run to settle the Cheyenne and Arapaho lands. I pictured the thousands of homesteaders lining up in what would later become Oklahoma to wait for the huge bonfire that signaled the official opening of the land at 12 noon.

I remember thinking that if all had been equal – that is, if men and women of all races, ethnicities, economic standing, age, sexual orientation, and religion had had the same opportunity to lay claim to each parcel – the result would have been a settlement of tremendous diversity. A settlement, like they say, that looks like America. Problem solved. No handwringing. No moral guilt. No special favor. No unearned disadvantage. But, of course, this is not what happened in Oklahoma or anywhere else.

Then I thought not only about the lost opportunity and promises unfulfilled but the tremendous effort it took, in its inexorable way, to secure the final outcome: Native Americans set upon tearful trails; dark necks slipped through rough nooses; Jews, Catholics, new immigrants, women, and Queers disdained. You get my drift.

Lessons have been learned. Gated communities, comfortable suburbs, leafy villages, tony city blocks – all took a tremendous effort to create. The same is true for inner cities.

One of my best friends lives on the edges of one in a medium-sized city. We have three-, four-, sometimes five-hour conversations that are kept percolating by the alchemy of similarities and differences between us. We both attended Howard

University in the sixties, are writers (who wrote ill-conceived poems in our Black nationalist phase), and are interested in just about everything.

However, in temperament, he is all doom and dystopia with a light peaking from underneath; I am the light that sees the swamp just below.

We have been talking of COVID, of course, and the shock of our becoming an unfamiliar category: elderly with an underlying condition. (When did *that* happen?) In a way, the realization has made us pay even more attention to what has been happening since the murder of George Floyd.

I say, yes, we have seen protests before, but look at the scale of this one!

I say, diversity is “in,” not one iota of resistance.

I say, there is finally a broad consensus about police violence.

I say, statues are coming down.

I say, low-wage workers, many of them women of color, have become visible.

I say, Trump is toast.

He says, but what will really change?

The question makes my mind leave my own leafy village and travel to where he lives.

And despite all of the brilliance in the air right now, all of the lofty language, all of the favorable polls, I see no sign that the inner city and/or outer Black suburbs will change.

These places were hard to make, took a lot of effort. Take a city like Ferguson, Missouri, just outside of St. Louis, where the police killing of

Michael Brown, an unarmed teenager, became the inflection point for the Black Lives Matter movement. It may surprise many that Ferguson was 1 percent Black in 1970, 14 percent Black in 1980, 25 percent Black in 1990, and 67 percent Black in 2010. Between 2000 and 2010–2012, Ferguson’s poor population doubled: one in four lived below the federal poverty line. While Ferguson was becoming a Black enclave, St. Louis was becoming increasingly white: from 36 percent in 2000 to 44 percent in 2010.

According to Richard Rothstein, who writes so insightfully about this subject, the demographic changes in Ferguson cannot be adequately explained by the singular Black presence followed by falling property values and white flight. This would be crime and prejudice enough. But what Rothstein delineates is worse. It is a full-fledged federal, state, and city conspiracy:

... zoning rules that classify white neighborhoods as residential and black neighborhoods as commercial or industrial; segregated public housing projects that replaced integrated low-income areas; federal subsidies for suburban development that are conditioned on African American exclusion; federal and local requirements for, and enhancement of, property deeds and neighborhood agreements that prohibited resale of white-owned property... to African Americans; tax favoritism for private institutions that practiced segregation; municipal boundary lines designed to separate black neighborhoods from white ones and to deny necessary services to the former; real estate, insurance, and banking regulators who tolerated and sometimes required racial segregation and urban renewal plans whose purpose was to shift black populations from central cities like St. Louis to inner-ring suburbs like Ferguson.

The late historian Stephanie Camp posited that “at heart of the process of enslavement was a geographical impulse to locate bondpeople in a plantation space.” Camp goes on to quote historian Winthrop Jordan, who found that it was confinement more than any other single quality that differentiated slavery from servitude. “Slaveholders,” Camp continues, “strove to create controlling landscapes that would determine the uses to which people put their bodies.” As other historians have noted, the root of many modern-day police forces were slave patrols – created first to confine, and then to punish with public display.

Efforts to escape these landscapes, slave and free, were also perilous. As part of Ida B. Wells’s anti-lynching campaign, she suggested that Black Memphians leave a city that could not protect them. Twenty percent eventually left Memphis; many went to Oklahoma to await the bonfire that signaled the April 19 opening of the land. They were in search of a place without racism. The search was unsustainable.

These landscapes will change or we will all be sucked into their sinkholes again and again. They are the legacy of America’s original sin; the ultimate race relation. The next George Floyd, the next Breonna Taylor, is already in the site of some centuries’ old barrel. Despite the everyday resilience called up by the confined, the corruption, the violence, the hardness, the bad health, the no-opportunity, the bad education will continue to take its toll.

There will be some reform and reward in this moment: new laws, higher-paying jobs, more funds for organizations, corporate promotions, book advances, endowed chairs, and media projects – most of which will be given to deserving recipients. But without a fundamental reckoning for the inner cities, all of that merely becomes the measure of “progress” required to maintain the status quo.

Where my friend and I differ is that I believe since these landscapes are socially – and consciously – constructed, the strictures can be undone, even though the swamp, strewn with long-held and deep-pocketed interests, is a formidable one.

He thinks that the tentacles are too deep to dislodge, that we don’t have the will to be rattled to the core, that the moment to create a clean starting line has passed – though he hopes it hasn’t.

We’ll see.

– Paula J. Giddings

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## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Stephanie Camp, “The Pleasures of Resistance: Enslaved Women and Body Politics in the Plantation South, 1830–1861,” *The Journal of Southern History* 68 (3) (August 2002).

Richard Rothstein, “The Making of Ferguson: Public Policies at the Root of the Troubles,” Report of the Economic Policy Institute, October 15, 2014.



A selection of letters from members is on the Academy’s website at [www.amacad.org/archives/galleries](http://www.amacad.org/archives/galleries).



Our Work Members News AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS & SCIENCES Events Get Involved About

## Events

The Academy continues to closely monitor the developments surrounding COVID-19. Currently, we are not hosting any in-person events. Please see below for a list of upcoming virtual events.

[Upcoming Events](#) Past Events

July 2020

JUL 4, 2020

Technology and Empathy After COVID-19

FEATURING: David W. Ostby and Sherry Turkle





# Online. Discussions

Throughout the period of social distancing, the Academy has worked to stay connected with members and continue the tradition of convening experts from across disciplines and professions to discuss important issues. As much of the world moved temporarily online, the Academy has leveraged video conferencing technology to hold a series of member events.

**T**he virtual programs have covered a breadth of topics all directly related to or informed by the COVID-19 crisis, such as science skepticism, anti-immigrant sentiment, epidemiology and virology, gender disparities, and the arts. These programs have harnessed the convening power of the Academy, offering members the opportunity to explore topics with an immediacy that the pandemic demands.

Each program included time for participation from the audience and, although nothing can replace the camaraderie of gathering in-person, the virtual events have captured much of the spirit and depth of a traditional Academy gathering. Members have the option to make themselves visible to each other and have used the Zoom platform to ask probing questions, share observations, alert colleagues to relevant publications, and send well-wishes. “These online discussions have been a great opportunity to participate in the dynamic conversations that characterize being a member of this Academy, even when we cannot be together in person,” noted Academy President David Oxtoby.

The virtual gatherings have even proven to be preferable to in-person events in one respect – by eliminating geographic barriers, Academy members from across the world are able to participate in the same discussions at the same time. As one survey respondent from the Midwest summarized, “I have regretted missing real time access to so many American Academy presentations because of geographic remoteness. The Zoom environment offered a welcome remedy to that.”

The conversations are recorded and available on the Academy’s website and YouTube page.

IN APRIL AND MAY, THE ACADEMY HOSTED FIVE ONLINE DISCUSSIONS



Naomi Oreskes



Marcelo Suárez-Orozco

## How to Talk to Coronavirus Skeptics

April 9, 2020

For the Academy’s inaugural virtual event, science historian Naomi Oreskes (Harvard University) led a discussion on the root cause of science skepticism and what experts should do to communicate effectively with the public during crises. Professor Oreskes’s opening remarks drew parallels between the mistrust of authority during COVID-19 and climate denialism, the anti-vaccination movements, rejection of evolution, and other instances of the public’s skepticism of science. She explained that when people reject science it is not because the data are unconvincing, but rather that the “perceived implications” of the science are threatening or unpleasant. Professor Oreskes cautioned that in order to communicate effectively, the science community must empathetically and directly address the fears that lead to denialism rather than attempting to convince skeptics with “more science.” Following her remarks, Academy President David Oxtoby moderated a lively discussion that included observations from Richard Meserve, chair of the Academy’s Public Face of Science project, on how group affiliation and tribalism contribute to skepticism.

## Immigration’s “Malaise” in the Age of COVID-19

April 21, 2020

Marcelo Suárez-Orozco (University of Massachusetts Boston; formerly, University of California, Los Angeles) led a conversation on how currents of nativism and xenophobia are historically weaponized against immigrants in frightful times. With his work on the Academy’s Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship and a recent Pontifical Academy statement on protecting the vulnerable as a backdrop, Professor Suárez-Orozco discussed the centrality of immigrants – forced and voluntary – to our culture. His remarks explored the current discourse surrounding migration, placing today’s anti-immigrant sentiment in a historical context in which contamination, pollution, and contagion have repeatedly been used as a metaphor in anti-immigration rhetoric. He also discussed the moral and institutional obligation to find oneself “in another” during the COVID-19 crisis. Professor Suárez-Orozco elaborated on the role institutions – particularly universities – can play in protecting the most vulnerable. He called on his colleagues across academia to work to “lower the temperature” on the damaging incendiary rhetoric surrounding immigration and “convert the dread of the unfamiliar other into a sense of solidarity, fraternity, and . . . a desire for cultural difference.”





Jaime Sepulveda

## The Science and Epidemiology of COVID-19

April 30, 2020

**N**ancy Andrews (Duke University), chair of the Academy’s Board of Directors, moderated a session with renowned virologist Lawrence Corey (Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center) and global health leader Jaime Sepulveda (University of California, San Francisco). Dr. Sepulveda discussed the origins of the pandemic, the timeline of its spread, and the racial disparities in contraction and mortality that have become apparent in America. He also described some conditions that must be met before we can return to a version of normalcy: such as low transmission, on-demand testing, and organized contact tracing. Dr. Corey focused on the biology and physiology of the disease, potential therapies, and his work with Anthony Fauci and the National Institutes of Health on the rapid assessment of potential vaccines. Dr. Corey expressed some optimism that the genetic makeup of the disease would lend itself to the development of an effective vaccine. The discussion that followed was similarly illuminating, prompting one attendee to remark, “I learned more about this pandemic in that 60 minutes than I have in 6 weeks of news consumption.”



Debora Spar

## Gender, Work, and COVID-19

May 13, 2020

**F**rances McCall Rosenbluth (Yale University) and Debora Spar (Harvard Business School) led a conversation on how the massive social disruption of COVID-19 is impacting gender and work, drawing on their essays published in the Winter 2020 issue of *Dædalus* on “Women and Equality,” coedited by Rosenbluth and Nannerl Keohane (Princeton University). Professor Keohane began the program with an overview of the *Dædalus* issue. Professor Rosenbluth, coauthor of the essay “The Dilemma of Gender Equity: How Labor Market Regulation Divides Women by Class,” summarized the problems facing women in this crisis. She also polled the audience about the potential for lasting flexibility in the workplace that could contribute to equality. Professor Spar, author of “Good Fellows: Men’s Role and Reason in the Fight for Gender Equality,” echoed a similarly cautious optimism that this period could help remake the workplace for the better and shared some historical perspective on a pre-industrial time when gender roles were much blurrier. The ensuing discussion included probing questions on the state of the institution of marriage and an extended conversation on the way the COVID-19 crisis exacerbates existing economic inequalities among working women.



Clockwise from top left: Robert Lynch; Michael O'Bryan; David W. Oxtoby; and Tania Munz

## How the Arts are Surviving the COVID-19 Pandemic

May 27, 2020

Two members of the Academy's Commission on the Arts joined the Academy's Chief Program Officer Tania Munz in a conversation on the challenges and opportunities the COVID-19 crisis creates for arts organizations and arts practitioners. Robert Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts, shared initial survey data on the financial realities facing the arts as a whole and illustrated that the arts are a crucial sector of the U.S. economy. Mr. Lynch also provided thoughts on what the period of recovery and reinvention could look like post-crisis. Michael O'Bryan, director of learning at the Village of Arts and Humanities in North Philadelphia, discussed the role of the arts in closing empathy gaps and made a passionate case for why arts funding must be preserved despite municipal revenue crises. The panelists answered questions from the audience, including one from John Lithgow, cochair of the Commission on the Arts, about empathy, economics, and toxicity in American culture.



Please visit [www.amacad.org/events](http://www.amacad.org/events) to see a full list of available programming. If you have suggestions about future topics or speakers, please contact Laurie McDonough, Morton L. Mandel Director of Membership Engagement, at [lmcdonough@amacad.org](mailto:lmcdonough@amacad.org).

## Select Prizes and Awards to Members

**Elizabeth Alexander** (Andrew W. Mellon Foundation) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Paul Alivisatos** (University of California, Berkeley; Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory) was awarded the 2021 Priestley Medal, given by the American Chemical Society.

**Danielle Allen** (Harvard University) was awarded the 2020 John W. Kluge Prize for Achievement in the Study of Humanity.

**Marin Alsop** (Baltimore Symphony Orchestra) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Jeanne Altmann** (Princeton University) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Mahzarin Banaji** (Harvard University) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Alexander Beilinson** (University of Chicago) was awarded the 2020 Shaw Prize in Mathematical Sciences. He shares the award with **David Kazhdan** (Hebrew University of Jerusalem).

**Mina J. Bissell** (Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory) is the recipient of a 2020 Canada Gairdner International Award.

**Roger D. Blandford** (Stanford University) was awarded the 2020 Shaw Prize in Astronomy.

**Caroline Bruzelius** (Duke University) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Louise H. Bryson** (J. Paul Getty Trust) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Lonnie Bunch III** (National Museum of African American History and Culture, Smithsonian Institution) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Joyce Chaplin** (Harvard University) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Cathy J. Cohen** (University of Chicago) was named a 2020 Andrew Carnegie Fellow.

**Francis Collins** (National Institutes of Health) was awarded the 2020 Templeton Prize.

**Jennifer Doudna** (University of California, Berkeley) was named a 2020 Guggenheim Fellow.

**James R. Downing** (St. Jude Children's Research Hospital) is the recipient of the inaugural AACR-St. Baldrick's Foundation Award for Outstanding Achievement in Pediatric Cancer Research.

**Cynthia Dwork** (Harvard University) was awarded the 2020 Knuth Prize.

**Scott Vernon Edwards** (Harvard University) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Hal Foster** (Princeton University) received the Howard T. Behrman Award for Distinguished Achievement in the Humanities, given by Princeton University.

**Elaine Fuchs** (Rockefeller University) is the recipient of a 2020 Canada Gairdner International Award.

**Catherine Gallagher** (University of California, Berkeley) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**David Ginsburg** (University of Michigan) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Andrea Goldsmith** (Stanford University) was awarded the 2020 Marconi Prize.

**Robert Gooding-Williams** (Columbia University) was named a 2020 Guggenheim Fellow.

**Corey Goodman** (venBio) was awarded the 2020 Gruber Neuroscience Prize. He shares the prize with **Marc Tessier-Lavigne** (Stanford University) and Friedrich Bonhoeffer (Max Planck Institute for Developmental Biology).

**Alison Gopnik** (University of California, Berkeley) was named a 2020 Guggenheim Fellow.

**Greg Grandin** (Yale University) was awarded the 2020 Pulitzer Prize in General Non-fiction for *The End of the Myth: From the Frontier to the Border Wall in the Mind of America*.

**Jonathan Gruber** (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) was named a 2020 Guggenheim Fellow.

**Anna Grzymala-Busse** (Stanford University) was named a 2020 Guggenheim Fellow.

**Jacob S. Hacker** (Yale University) received the 2020 Robert M. Ball Award for Outstanding Achievements in Social Insurance.

**Carla Hayden** (Library of Congress) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Martha P. Haynes** (Cornell University) was awarded the 2020 Karl G. Jansky Lectureship by Associated Universities, Inc. and the National Radio Astronomy Observatory.

**Susan Hubbard** (Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory) was elected to the National Academy of Engineering.

**David Julius** (University of California, San Francisco) was awarded the 2020 Kavli Prize in Neuroscience. He shares the prize with **Ardem Patapoutian** (Scripps Research Institute).

**Carl H. June** (University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Peter J. Katzenstein** (Cornell University) was awarded the Johan Skytte Prize in Political Science.

**David Kazhdan** (Hebrew University of Jerusalem) was awarded the 2020 Shaw Prize in Mathematical Sciences. He shares the award with **Alexander Beilinson** (University of Chicago).

**Daphne Koller** (Stanford University; Insitro) is the recipient of the ACM-AAAI Allen Newell Award. She shares the prize with Lydia E. Kavradi (Rice University).

**Goodwin Liu** (California Supreme Court) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**E.W. “Bert” Meijer** (Eindhoven University of Technology) was honored as Commander in the Order of the Netherlands Lion by the King of the Netherlands.

**Danesh Moazed** (Harvard Medical School) received a UC Santa Cruz Distinguished Graduate Student Alumni Award.

**Ernest J. Moniz** (Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Energy Futures Initiative; Nuclear Threat Initiative) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**James M. Moran** (Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory; Harvard University) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Sidney Nagel** (University of Chicago) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Alondra Nelson** (Social Science Research Council; Institute for Advanced Study) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Sigrid Nunez** (New York, NY) was named a 2020 Guggenheim Fellow.

**Roeland Nusse** (Stanford University) is the recipient of a 2020 Canada Gairdner International Award.

**Teri Odom** (Northwestern University) was awarded the 2020 Centenary Prize from the Royal Society of Chemistry.

**Monica Olvera de la Cruz** (Northwestern University) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**David W. Oxtoby** (American Academy of Arts and Sciences) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Ardem Patapoutian** (Scripps Research Institute) was awarded the 2020 Kavli Prize in Neuroscience. He shares the prize with **David Julius** (University of California, San Francisco).

**Nathaniel Persily** (Stanford Law School) was named a 2020 Guggenheim Fellow.

**Jennifer Anne Richeson** (Yale University) was named a 2020 Andrew Carnegie Fellow.

**James C. Scott** (Yale University) is the recipient of the 2020 Albert O. Hirschman Prize, given by the Social Science Research Council. He was also elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Amita Sehgal** (University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine) was awarded the 2020 Switzer Prize.

**Sonia Sotomayor** (Supreme Court of the United States) was named the 2020 recipient of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medal in Law.

**Bruce Stillman** (Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory) was awarded the Dr. H.P. Heineken Prize for Biochemistry and Biophysics, given by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences.

**Andrew Strominger** (Harvard University) was named a 2020 Guggenheim Fellow.

**Masatoshi Takeichi** (RIKEN Center for Biosystems Dynamics Research) is the recipient of a 2020 Canada Gairdner International Award.

**Eva Tardos** (Cornell University) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Alan Taylor** (University of Virginia) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Marc Tessier-Lavigne** (Stanford University) was awarded the 2020 Gruber Neuroscience Prize. He shares the prize with Friedrich Bonhoeffer (Max Planck Institute for Developmental Biology) and **Corey Goodman** (venBio).

**Tatiana Toro** (University of Washington) was awarded the 2020 Blackwell-Tapia Prize, given by the Statistical and Applied Mathematical Sciences Institute.

**David Tracy** (University of Chicago Divinity School) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Ewine van Dishoeck** (Leiden Observatory, University of Leiden) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**Wang Gungwu** (National University of Singapore) was awarded the 2020 Tang Prize in Sinology.

**André Watts** (Indiana University) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

**David Wellbery** (University of Chicago) was elected to the American Philosophical Society.

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## New Appointments

**Marc Benioff** (Salesforce) was named to President Trump’s Great American Economic Revival Industry Group.

**Jeffrey Bezos** (Amazon) was named to President Trump’s Great American Economic Revival Industry Group.

**France Córdova** (formerly, National Science Foundation) was named Senior Science Advisor for the Science Philanthropy Alliance.

**Scott Cowen** (Tulane University) was appointed Interim President of Case Western Reserve University.

**Michael V. Drake** (Ohio State University) was named President of the University of California system.

**Drew Faust** (Harvard University) was elected a member of the MIT Corporation.

**Kenneth Frazier** (Merck & Company) was named to President Trump’s Great American Economic Revival Industry Group.

**Jacob Frenkel** (Group of Thirty) was appointed Chairman of the Board of Directors of BrainStorm Cell Therapeutics Inc.

**Andrea Goldsmith** (Stanford University) was appointed Dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Science at Princeton University.

**Marillyn Hewson** (Lockheed Martin Corporation) was named to President Trump’s Great American Economic Revival Industry Group.

**Abigail Johnson** (Fidelity Investments) was named to President Trump’s Great American Economic Revival Industry Group.

**E. Patrick Johnson** (Northwestern University) was named Dean of the School of Communication at Northwestern University.

**Carl June** (University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine) was appointed Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Board of Ziopharm Oncology, Inc.

We invite all Fellows and International Honorary Members to send notices about their recent and forthcoming publications, new appointments, exhibitions and performances, films and documentaries, and honors and prizes to [bulletin@amacad.org](mailto:bulletin@amacad.org).

**Pamela Karlan** (Stanford Law School) was named to the Oversight Board of Facebook.

**Robert Kraft** (The Kraft Group) was named to President Trump's Great American Economic Revival Industry Group.

**Renu Malhotra** (University of Arizona) was elected Chair of the Council of Institutions of the Universities Space Research Association.

**Mitchell McConnell** (Stanford Law School) was named Cochair of the Oversight Board of Facebook.

**Pedro Noguera** (University of California, Los Angeles) was named Dean of the Rossier School of Education at the University of Southern California.

**Indra Nooyi** (PreeTara LLC) was elected a member of the MIT Corporation.

**Gilbert S. Omenn** (University of Michigan) was named to the Board of Directors of Angion Biomedica Corp.

**Condoleezza Rice** (Hoover Institution, Stanford University) was named Director of the Hoover Institution. She was also named to President Trump's Great American Economic Revival Industry Group.

**Charles Robbins** (Cisco Systems) was named to President Trump's Great American Economic Revival Industry Group.

**Gene Robinson** (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) was appointed Interim Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

**Donna Shalala** (U.S. House of Representatives) was appointed to the Congressional Oversight Commission of the CARES Act.

**Jerry Speyer** (Tishman Speyer) was named to President Trump's Great American Economic Revival Industry Group.

**Darren Walker** (Ford Foundation) was appointed to the Board of Directors of Square, Inc.

**David R. Williams** (Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health) was elected to the Board of Trustees of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

**Teresa K. Woodruff** (Northwestern University) was named Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs of Michigan State University.

**Mark S. Wrighton** (Washington University in St. Louis) was elected a member of the MIT Corporation.

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## Select Publications

### POETRY

**Susan Howe** (Guilford, CT). *Concordance*. New Directions, May 2020

### FICTION

**Sigrid Nunez** (New York, NY). *What Are You Going Through*. Riverhead Books, September 2020

### NONFICTION

**Peter Brooks** (Yale University). *Balzac's Lives*. New York Review Books, September 2020

**Nancy F. Cott** (Harvard University). *Fighting Words: The Bold American Journalists Who Brought the World Home Between the Wars*. Basic Books, March 2020

**Victoria de Grazia** (Columbia University). *The Perfect Fascist: A Story of Love, Power, and Morality in Mussolini's Italy*. Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, August 2020

**Robert M. Gates** (College of William & Mary). *Exercise of Power: American Failures, Successes, and a New Path Forward in the Post-Cold War World*. Knopf, June 2020

**F.M. Kamm** (Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey). *Almost Over: Aging, Dying, Dead*. Oxford University Press, May 2020

**Charles Larmore** (Brown University). *What is Political Philosophy?* Princeton University Press, May 2020

**Jill Lepore** (Harvard University; *The New Yorker*). *If Then: How the Simulmatics Corporation Invented the Future*. Liveright, September 2020

**Daniel Mendelsohn** (New York Review of Books). *Three Rings: A Tale of Exile, Narrative, and Fate*. University of Virginia Press, August 2020

**Suzanne Mettler** (Cornell University) and Robert C. Lieberman (Johns Hopkins University). *Four Threats: The Recurring Crises of American Democracy*. St. Martin's Press, August 2020

**Eric A. Posner** (University of Chicago Law School). *The Demagogue's Playbook: The Battle for American Democracy from the Founders to Trump*. All Points Books, June 2020

**Robert D. Putnam** (Harvard University) and Shaylyn Romney (New York Times). *The Upswing: How America Came Together a Century Ago and How We Can Do It Again*. Simon & Schuster, October 2020

**Robert I. Rotberg** (World Peace Foundation; Harvard Kennedy School). *Anticorruption*. MIT Press, July 2020

**Michael J. Sandel** (Harvard University). *The Tyranny of Merit: What's Become of the Common Good?* Farrar, Straus and Giroux, September 2020

**Scott Russell Sanders** (Indiana University). *The Way of Imagination: Essays*. Counterpoint, August 2020

**David Simpson** (University of California, Davis). *States of Terror: History, Theory, Literature*. University of Chicago Press, March 2019

**Debora L. Spar** (Harvard Business School). *Work Mate Marry Love: How Machines Shape Our Human Destiny*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, August 2020

**Cass R. Sunstein** (Harvard Law School). *Too Much Information: Understanding What You Don't Want to Know*. MIT Press, September 2020

**Clifford M. Will** (University of Florida) and Nicolás Yunes (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign). *Is Einstein Still Right? Black Holes, Gravitational Waves, and the Quest to Verify Einstein's Greatest Creation*. Oxford University Press, October 2020

**Edward O. Wilson** (Harvard University). *Tales from the Ant World*. Liveright, August 2020



**O**n February 26, 1781, the Academy published in the *Independent Ledger* a call for communications: “in promoting the Cause of useful Knowledge, they request the Assistance of the Ingenious in every profession.” Many individuals responded, contributing to discussions within the Academy on such matters as manufacturing, agriculture, and medicine.

Reverend Samuel Haven (1727–1806) of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, was one such contributor. With his working knowledge of chemistry, he manufactured saltpeter during the Revolutionary War and experimented with dyeing techniques. In June 1789, he renewed an exchange with Academy Fellow Manasseh Cutler regarding his experiments that produced the “Federal Colours,” which Cutler later forwarded to the Academy. The sample swatches, likely originally blue in color, were boiled in both iron and copper kettles and set with four different fixatives: vinegar, soap, allum, and copperas [hydrated ferrous sulfate].

Portsm[outh] June 7 1789

“My Dear and Rev’d Sir,

I have made some further enquiry concerning the colouring corn I spake [sic] to you about. I wish I could have obtained some sooner – but it was out of my power – and even now tho’ I have sent you only seven kernels, they are half I could obtain, so high are they in demand. I have likewise sent you some small shreds as patterns of the Colours said corn will dye. I wish they had been larger, but they are the largest I could get – the kernels of sd corn, the leaves, & the stalk & cobb are all serviceable in dyeing [sic] – but the stalk is the best. The Colours may be altered by adding a greater quantity of what is to set the dye – I presume you will plant the few kernels I have sent you for [experiment] & in rich ground –

I think this discovery may be of public utility to us in the Infancy of our Manufacturies [sic] – should any others come to my knowledge, I shall do my self the honour to communicate them to you – and if you think this worth the attention of that Honorable Society of which you are an important member be so kind as to mention it in my Name & with high Esteem & respect, to that patriotic Society. . . .”

# Bulletin

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# ONLINE

A recent episode of VISION, an online series presented by the Knight Foundation – at [kf.org/vision](http://kf.org/vision) – featured ***Our Common Purpose: Reinventing American Democracy for the 21st Century***, the final report of the Academy’s Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship.



The episode on “Democracy, Citizenship, and Community,” hosted by **Sam Gill** (senior vice president and chief program officer at Knight and a member of the Commission), featured **Stephen Heintz** (Commission cochair) and **Antonia Hernández** (Commission member) sharing which recommendations were their favorites and how the bipartisan group reached consensus.

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