

# Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences

THE SUPREME COURT'S  
TRANSFORMATIONAL YEAR  
Featuring Linda Greenhouse

RECKONING WITH  
ORGANIZATIONAL  
HISTORY  
Featuring  
Claudia Rankine,  
Ben Vinson,  
John J. DeGioia,  
Susan Goldberg,  
and Brent Leggs

## Elevating the Arts in American Life

Featuring John A. Lithgow,  
Deborah F. Rutter,  
Natasha D. Trethewey,  
and Stephen Colbert

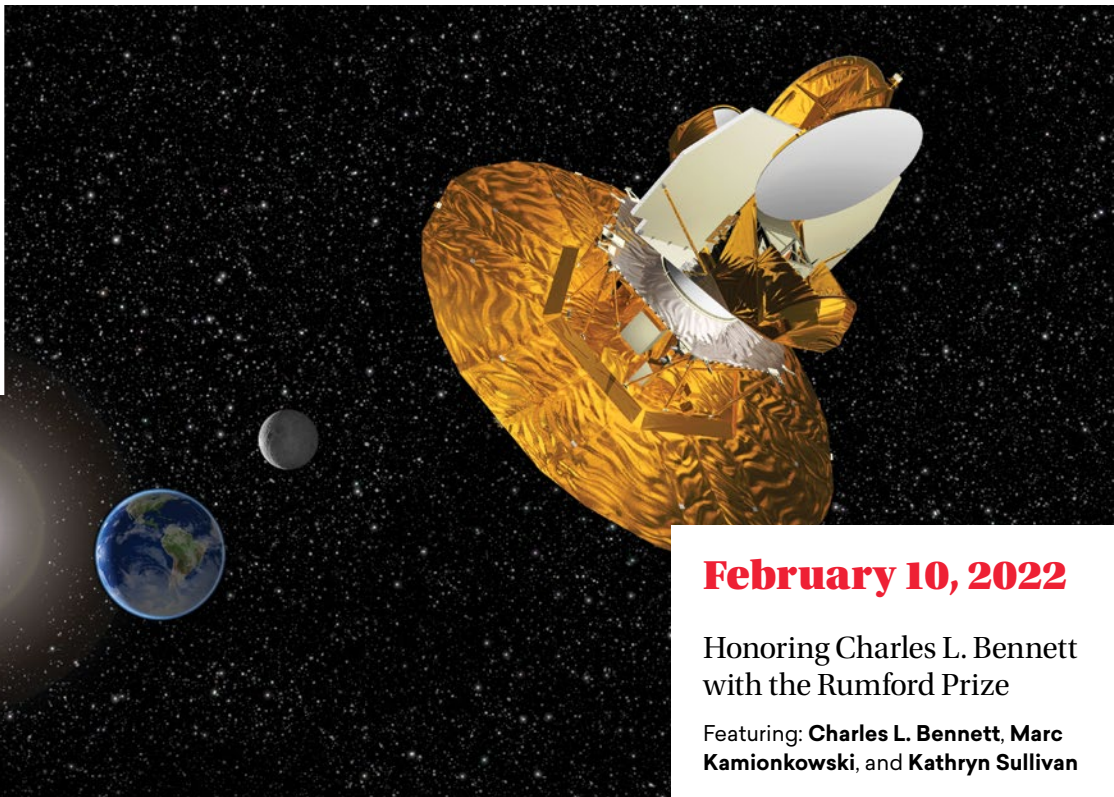


WINTER 2022



SELECT

# UPCOMING EVENTS



WMAP leaving Earth/  
Moon Orbit for L2.

**February 10, 2022**

Honoring Charles L. Bennett  
with the Rumford Prize

Featuring: **Charles L. Bennett, Marc  
Kamionkowski, and Kathryn Sullivan**



**February 28, 2022**

Night at the Museums

Featuring: **Scott Edwards, Jon Erlandson,  
Douglas Soltis, Pamela Soltis, and  
Victoria Sork**

A collection of fossils in the Florida  
Fossil Hall, Florida Museum of  
Natural History, Powell Hall.

For a full and up-to-date listing of upcoming events, please visit [amacad.org/events](http://amacad.org/events).  
Click on Past Events to find and view recordings of programs you missed.





The top half of the statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee is lifted away after the statue was cut in half and removed from Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia, on September 8, 2021.

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Linda Greenhouse

**ON THE COVER:** Valerie June performs in Nashville on September 17, 2014. June is one of many contributing artists to the Academy's Commission on the Arts' Mixtape, a multimedia gallery of poems, stories, songs, videos, and visual art. Visit [amacad.org/mixtape](http://amacad.org/mixtape).





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“ Building a more just society has become a unifying theme for much of the Academy’s work, and we are addressing issues of justice and equality as they relate to our past, present, and future.



## From the President

I hope this message finds you well as we open a new year in the life of the Academy. As you are aware, during the past two years, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected every aspect of Academy activities, changing not just how we conduct our work but also the ends we seek to achieve.

Existing projects, such as Rethinking the Humanitarian Health Response to Violent Conflict, have adjusted their focus to address intersections with pandemic response. An exploratory meeting on Resiliency in Supply Chains addressed the social and ethical dimensions of supply chains and developed recommendations for government, industry, and the nonprofit sector. And the Commission on the Arts examined the nature of the artistic workforce and the devastating effect of the pandemic on the lives and work of creative artists.

And yet there is another crisis that defines our time and shapes the Academy’s work: the persistent threats to justice and equality in American society. As you will see in the pages that follow, building a more just society has become a unifying theme for much of the Academy’s work, and we are addressing issues of justice and equality as they relate to our past, present, and future.

The Academy recently explored the legacy of the past through a virtual event on “Reckoning with Organizational History,” which convened leaders from a diverse group of institutions to discuss the process of historical reckoning, best practices that organizations can use, and how this work can create opportunities for a better future. In December, the Academy examined

the present moment in American justice through a virtual event with Linda Greenhouse on “The Supreme Court’s Transformational Year.” And in January, the Academy released a new issue of *Daedalus*, “Reimagining Justice: The Challenges of Violence & Punitive Excess,” which envisions a more just future, no longer defined by mass incarceration but rather by stronger, safer, and more equitable communities.

Given the themes of justice and equality discussed in this issue of the *Bulletin*, it is also appropriate that we pause to honor the life of Frances Rosenbluth, who passed away on November 20, 2021. Frances served as the Damon Wells Professor of Political Science at Yale University and distinguished herself as one of the Academy’s most active and engaged members, providing leadership in governance, the membership process, and the New Haven Program Committee. Frances worked to ensure that the Academy used its intellectual resources and convening power to address issues related to women and equality. Along with Academy member Nan Keohane, Frances cochaired two major Academy conferences that resulted in a landmark issue of *Daedalus* on “Women & Equality” in Winter 2020. A remembrance of Frances, written by Nan, is included in this *Bulletin* issue.

I hope you will join us in honoring Frances’s legacy of service and considering what we can do both as individuals and as an Academy to build a more just and equitable world.

*David W. Oxtoby*





## New *Dædalus* Issue Reimagines Justice

America is the most punitive nation in the world: we incarcerate the largest number of individuals and at the highest rate. American criminal justice policies of such punitive excess and unequal protection under the law have been shaped by and sustain racial inequality and exclusion and add to the harsh conditions of American poverty.

The Winter 2022 issue of *Dædalus* on “Reimagining Justice: The Challenges of Violence & Punitive Excess,” guest edited by Bruce Western, is the result of two Square One Project roundtable meetings convened to discuss violence, criminalization, punitive excess, the courts,

and the question of justice in America. This collection’s authors – from academia, advocacy, and the justice system – ask how police, courts, and prisons in the United States can be transformed to eliminate mass incarceration and produce a new kind of community safety that strengthens social bonds and reckons with a history of racial injustice.

American history is marked by collective and political violence, and Kellie Carter Jackson, in her contribution to this volume, looks to such violent events to track social change and identify turning points in history. She argues that the historic meaning of violence has depended on who is being victimized:

violence committed by White men, for example, is often seen as necessary or even heroic, while upstart violence committed by oppressed people is seen as threatening the social order, thus demanding state repression. Paul Butler, in his essay, takes on the challenge of reckoning with violence committed by the state through policing and incarceration. He looks at the role of anti-Blackness in state violence and considers what harm reduction programs might look like.

Of course, it is impossible to fully consider the question of violence in America without considering the significant role of guns. David Hureau, in his essay, argues that guns and



gun policy are central to understanding racial inequalities in neighborhood violence. He shows that guns in low-income neighborhoods are not a measure of criminality, but are mechanisms of lethality in contexts of poverty and racial exclusion where safety is elusive and where police are unreliable defenders of the well-being of Black youth. Daniel Webster also challenges the usual criminal justice perspective toward gun violence, instead taking a data-driven public health approach to review gun policy initiatives that have significantly reduced gun violence in cities across America, including rigorous licensing, community and youth outreach, and reducing concentrated poverty and urban blight.

The trauma of violence echoes through the lives of those who experience it and can be passed from one generation to the next. Micere Keels considers how growing up with a chronic lack of safety changes brain chemistry, behavior, and subjective experience. She argues that the response to violence should go beyond punishment of the offender to attend also to the harms of victimization. Beth Richie similarly shifts the focus toward those victimized – in this case, African American women who have experienced violence – instead of focusing on the young male perpetrators that often dominate criminal justice policy discussions. She outlines a conceptual matrix for understanding violent victimization, which forms the basis of a justice policy that acknowledges the nature of violence as both racialized and gendered. Barbara Jones, in her contribution, draws from personal experience both as a community dispute resolution specialist and as a survivor of homicide that took the life of her child. She describes a restorative justice process that offers a pathway to healing for victims, rather than a sole focus on punishment for those who have harmed others.

The Winter 2022 issue of *Dædalus* on “Reimagining Justice: The Challenges of Violence & Punitive Excess” features the following essays:

**Violence, Criminalization & Punitive Excess**

Bruce Western (Academy Member; Columbia University) & Sukyi McMahon (Square One Project)

**The Story of Violence in America**

Kellie Carter Jackson (Wellesley College)

**The Problem of State Violence**

Paul Butler (Georgetown University)

**Public Health Approaches to Reducing Community Gun Violence**

Daniel W. Webster (Johns Hopkins University)

**Seeing Guns to See Urban Violence:  
Racial Inequality & Neighborhood Context**

David M. Hureau (University at Albany–SUNY)

**Developmental & Ecological Perspective on the  
Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma & Violence**

Micere Keels (University of Chicago)

**The Effects of Violence on Communities:  
The Violence Matrix as a Tool for Advancing More Just Policies**

Beth E. Richie (University of Illinois at Chicago)

**Faces of the Aftermath of Visible & Invisible Violence & Loss:  
Radical Resiliency of Justice & Healing**

Barbara L. Jones (Wayne State University)

**The Foundational Lawlessness of the Law Itself:  
Racial Criminalization & the Punitive Roots of Punishment in America**

Khalil Gibran Muhammad (Harvard University)

**Criminal Law & Migration Control: Recent History & Future Possibilities**

Jennifer M. Chacón (University of California, Berkeley)

**Due Process & the Theater of Racial Degradation:  
The Evolving Notion of Pretrial Punishment in the Criminal Courts**

Nicole Gonzalez Van Cleve (Brown University; Harvard University)

**Recognition, Repair & the Reconstruction of “Square One”**

Geoff K. Ward (Washington University in St. Louis)

**Knowing What We Want: A Decent Society,  
A Civilized System of Justice & A Condition of Dignity**

Jonathan Simon (University of California, Berkeley)



American violence often happens in a context of racial exclusion and deep economic disadvantage. Police, courts, and prisons are charged with the work of responding to interpersonal violence, but they too are part of a landscape that includes centuries of White supremacy and a harsh kind of poverty that is largely unknown in other developed economies. Khalil Gibran Muhammad, in his essay, considers the history of criminalization in America, describing the process by which conduct becomes classified by authorities as criminal and thus deserving of punishment, and showing how defining “criminals” has been closely connected to projects of maintaining White supremacy. Jennifer Chacón’s contribution follows a similar thread to consider how immigration and immigrants have been rendered as suspect and threatening and deserving of punishment. And Nicole Gonzalez Van Cleve, in her essay, describes what she calls “racial degradation ceremonies,” in which court discretion,

used by mostly White courtroom professionals, is often dehumanizing both for defendants navigating the court process and for family and friends. She confronts the resistance to cultural change in the courts and suggests how accountability and oversight might be developed.

In his essay, Geoff Ward asks us to take account of the history of criminalization and punitive excess and the ways these are deployed by the state, and to grapple with the daunting undertaking of reimagining and reorganizing justice in order to reconstruct society. And in the issue’s final essay, Jonathan Simon offers a three-part values-based framework for reshaping society, nominating human dignity as a central value that can guide criminal justice reform, so we do not miss the present opportunity for reckoning and repair.

Taken together, this collection demands that we imagine a different kind of public safety that relies not on police and prisons, but on a rich community life that has eliminated racism, poverty, and their

myriad accompanying social problems. Many of the solutions will lie well beyond the boundaries of the criminal justice system and public policy. Yet much of the work is already being done in communities around the country. These efforts share, as the essays in this issue suggest, a common commitment to the values of healing, reconciliation, and human dignity.



“Reimagining Justice: The Challenges of Violence & Punitive Excess” is available on the Academy’s website at [www.amacad.org/daedalus](http://www.amacad.org/daedalus). *Dædalus* is an open access publication.

Page 4: “House Keys Not Handcuffs!” read the placards on a vehicle joining a car caravan demonstration on Martin Luther King Jr. Day in Los Angeles, California, on January 18, 2021, demanding an end to police brutality, attacks on immigrants, attacks against women’s rights, attacks against LGBT individuals, and an end to the privatization of detention centers and mass incarceration.

## Fall 2021 Issue of *Dædalus*: “Water Security in Africa in the Age of Global Climate Change”

Africa is at the center of the global water predicament and climatic upheaval: The continent contains the greatest number of least-developed countries, the most woeful sanitation infrastructure, and the highest share of people in highly weather-dependent rural employment. Due to global warming, crop yields are expected to decline sharply, and sea-level rises along the African littoral are already higher than average.

The Fall 2021 issue of *Dædalus* features authors from Africa and the Global North who explore policy debates and conflicts over water use as well as the efforts to mitigate these tensions. The essays focus on four dimensions of the water crises facing the African continent: 1) the increasing

scarcity, privatization, and commodification of water in urban centers; 2) the impact of large dams on the countryside; 3) the health and sociopolitical consequences of water shortages; and 4) water governance and the politics of water at the local, national, and transnational levels. The contributors share the concern that without commitments to creating more equitable access to water, the effects of water insecurity will continue to be devastating.

The issue, guest edited by Allen Isaacman, Muchaparara Musemwa, and Harry Verhoeven, is available online at [www.amacad.org/daedalus/water-security-africa-global-climate-change](http://www.amacad.org/daedalus/water-security-africa-global-climate-change).





# Academy Commission Elevates the Arts in Schools, in the Workforce, and Online

By **Jessica Taylor**, *Louis W. Cabot Fellow in Humanities Policy at the Academy*, and **Susy Bielak**, *artist, writer, curator, and educator*

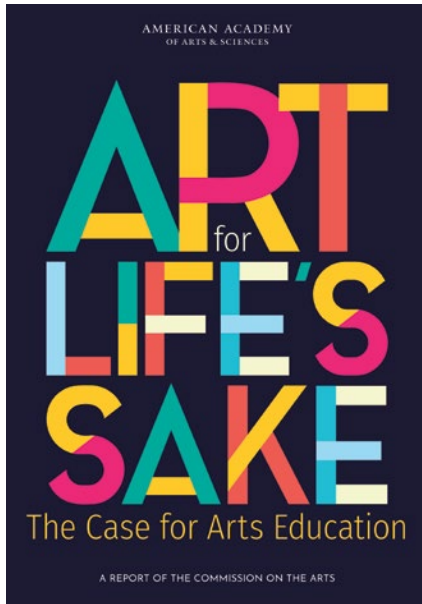
Over the past three years, the American Academy's Commission on the Arts has developed a rich and diverse array of materials to elevate and promote arts education, the creative workforce, and the arts generally. Given where the Commission started in 2018, its final results were not entirely expected, as Commission Cochair **John Lithgow** (actor, writer) notes elsewhere in this issue of the *Bulletin*. What started out as a celebration of the arts was fundamentally reoriented by the existential challenges

posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, with K–12 education shifted to the home and many of the institutions employing creative workers shut down. Drawing on the expertise of artists, scholars, activists, and leaders of a variety of artistic institutions, the Commission developed two reports and a collection of artistic expressions, all accessible on the Academy's website.

In *Art for Life's Sake: The Case for Arts Education*, the Commission offers a clarion call to parents, teachers, advocates, and governments at

the national, state, and local levels to recognize the value of arts education and put in place changes that will assure access to every student. The Commission gathered personal narratives from students, parents, teachers, and other Americans about their experiences with arts education and paired them alongside other research into its benefits. The Commission found ample evidence for the attributes, values, and skills that come from arts education, including social and emotional development, improvements in





school engagement, as well as vital civic and social participation. While 88 percent of Americans agree that arts education is an essential component of a well-rounded education, a range of indicators documents a persistent decline in access, particularly for families that cannot finance arts education on their own. The impact of the pandemic will likely widen these gaps.

To reverse these trends, the Commission recommends changes in six key areas: 1) make the arts an important part of every child's education; 2) elevate the role of the arts through data, research, and accountability; 3) ensure arts education funding is adequate and equitable; 4) improve recruitment, development, and support for arts educators; 5) foster collaboration within the arts education landscape; and 6) restore federal leadership in the arts. Each recommendation offers detailed policy proposals to ensure a solid arts education for every child.

Reflecting on the existential challenges posed to the creative workforce over the past two years, the Commission released *Art Is Work: Policies to Support Creative Workers*.



The report begins by acknowledging a contradiction in public attitudes: While Americans tend to value the arts, they often fail to recognize the work that goes into producing art and the people doing that work. A national study for the Commission found that only 22 percent of Americans believe artists contribute a lot to the general good (though 64 percent think they contribute at least a little).

To counter that perception and build a better future for the arts, the Commission offers a series of recommendations to support the work of artists in American society.

The report presents a multifaceted case for the arts, noting the economic advantages (the arts and culture sector contributes more to the GDP than construction, travel and tourism, or agriculture), the civic benefits (a growing number of communities turn to artists to develop vibrant and equitable cities and towns), as well as the value to individuals (most Americans consume art in a variety of forms, even if they might not recognize it as such). According to Commission Cochair Deborah Rutter (President of the John F. Kennedy Center for the

Performing Arts), “What the pandemic did was pull back the curtain on how artists live and work, which is with little structural support and next to no agency in our society. What creative people do matters; it has value and should be recognized accordingly.”

The report describes in detail how the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions on public gatherings impacted the creative sector and exposed the precarious nature of work for artists. Artists need help now, but they also need a better system that will allow them to weather future crises and enable greater innovation and inclusion.

In the Commission's work, listening sessions, and conversations, four key principles arose repeatedly as priorities: 1) include artists in federal policy and policy-making; 2) recognize how creative work happens and deploy appropriate policies (such as workplace protections and financial supports for independent workers); 3) create a more equitable environment in the arts by opening more pathways into the sector and recognizing a plurality of artistic forms; and 4) build systems that recognize that the arts tend to be rooted in their local communities but benefit from national systems of support. *Art Is Work* concludes that “the proposals and recommendations presented in the report are not modest, nor should they be. The challenges for the arts and creative workforce are great and so must be the solutions.”

In addition to the two reports and in keeping with its original goal of celebrating the arts in all their richness and diversity, the Commission published an artistic *Mixtape* – an online multimedia gallery designed to meet the public where, and whenever, they want to encounter art – accessible on the



Academy's website (at [www.amacad.org/mixtape](http://www.amacad.org/mixtape)). *Mixtape* celebrates members of the Commission and members of the Academy and features poems, stories, songs, videos, and visual art. Each component includes a prompt, inviting the online visitor to reflect, take action, or imagine while also encouraging exploration of the full array of art experiences.

The reports and the online gallery add to the rich body of the Commission's work, which also includes a crowdsourced poem, "Remix: For My People," curated by Commission Cochair Natasha Trethewey (Board of Trustees Professor of English at Northwestern University and the 19th Poet Laureate of the United States) and produced in collaboration with PBS;

"Branches from the Same Tree," an event in 2019 convened in partnership with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine about integrating the humanities and the arts with the sciences, engineering, and medicine in higher education; a series of webinars on rural arts development, artists at work, and the impact of the pandemic on artists; and a virtual event in October 2021 on "Elevating the Arts in American Life," featured in this *Bulletin* issue.

The work of the Commission will continue. In early 2022, project staff and Commission members will brief members of Congress on the recommendations in the reports, distribute copies in print and online to stakeholders, and share the findings with the public.

&

To request copies of the reports, or if you have questions about the Commission or suggestions for future work in this area, please contact Robert Townsend, Director of Humanities, Arts, and Culture programs at the Academy (at [rtownsend@amacad.org](mailto:rtownsend@amacad.org)).

The Commission on the Arts is supported by the Barr Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Getty Foundation, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Kresge Foundation, and Roger and Victoria<sup>†</sup> Sant. To learn more about the Commission on the Arts, please visit the Academy's website at [www.amacad.org/project/commission-arts](http://www.amacad.org/project/commission-arts).

<sup>†</sup> Deceased



Some of the artistic selections available in Mixtape. Explore poems, stories, songs, dance, and visual art at [www.amacad.org/mixtape](http://www.amacad.org/mixtape).





# Scientific Collaboration with Emerging Science Partners

By **Rebecca Tiernan**, *Program Associate for Science, Engineering, and Technology at the Academy*

**O**n November 24, 2021, South African scientists alerted the international community of their discovery of a new variant of SARS-CoV-2 that had more than thirty mutations, raising questions about the efficacy of the vaccines that had been deployed.<sup>1</sup> Within twenty-four hours, global markets crashed and several countries closed their borders again to travelers from South Africa.<sup>2</sup> The international community's frantic and nationalistic response left the South African researchers feeling punished instead of applauded for alerting the world of the emergence of Omicron.<sup>3</sup> Shortly thereafter, scientists determined that Omicron was present in the Netherlands

at least ten days before it was identified in South Africa and in individuals with no known travel history or connections to South Africa or to other countries on the African continent where the variant was found.<sup>4</sup>

The international scientific community condemned the decision to close the borders, citing the failure historically of border restrictions to contain contagious viruses.<sup>5</sup> During the COVID-19 pandemic, the border restrictions predominantly hurt the regions suffering the most because high-income countries hoarded life-saving vaccines, preventing access to low- and middle-income countries.<sup>6</sup> As one sobering statistic reveals, despite vaccines being available since December 2020, just

under 10 percent of Africans were fully vaccinated as of mid-January 2022.<sup>7</sup>

South Africa's talented scientists and excellent research facilities, together with a long commitment to scientific research and capacity building, led to the discovery of Omicron. The scientists' commitment to transparency, openness, and collaboration with other researchers from around the world is allowing the international community to quickly track the spread of the variant and conduct important studies of its pathology and manifestation. This series of events has further underscored that global challenges, like pandemics, cannot be addressed by one nation alone;





scientific capacity is essential in all corners of the globe to deal with COVID-19 today and the threats of tomorrow.

A new Academy report, *Global Connections: Emerging Science Partners*, issued by the Challenges for International Scientific Partnerships (CISP) initiative, describes the importance of strengthening collaborations between the United States and emerging science partner (ESP) countries. It provides a series of recommendations for both strengthening these partnerships and making them more equitable. The CISP project has also released two other reports: *America and the International Future of Science*, on the importance of international scientific collaboration at all scales, and *Bold Ambition: International Large-Scale Science*, on best practices

for building large-scale scientific collaborations in the future.

In the development of the *Global Connections* report, Shirley Malcom (American Association for the Advancement of Science) and Olufunmilayo Olopade (University of Chicago), the chairs of the Emerging Science Partners Working Group, and Arthur Bienenstock (Stanford University) and Peter Michelson (Stanford University), the chairs of the CISP initiative, led an ambitious series of international soundings and workshops with scientists from around the world, including in the regions of Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, and sub-Saharan Africa. Over the course of these discussions, scientists and policy-makers from ESPs shared

their priority areas for scientific inquiry and the challenges they have faced in developing and establishing scientific capacity, generally, and in collaborations with the United States, specifically. These insights informed the final imperatives and the mechanisms presented in the report and highlighted important venues for fostering collaboration between the United States and ESPs.

With this broad range of perspectives and ideas in hand, the Emerging Science Partners Working Group synthesized its findings, eventually coalescing around three major recommendations:

1. The United States should actively foster and build collaborations with ESPs, including by welcoming ESP researchers, particularly

## SCIENTIFIC COLLABORATION WITH EMERGING SCIENCE PARTNERS

those seeking graduate education, to U.S. universities and research institutes.

- Through its research and education collaborations with ESPs, the United States will and needs to contribute to building global research capacity and the global STEM workforce.
- Collaborations with ESPs should reflect the values of transparency and equity.

The Working Group and CISP initiative identified four key imperatives for U.S. collaboration with ESPs:

- 1. Scientific Advancement and Addressing Global Challenges**, which includes mobilizing a global capacity to address challenges such as pandemics and

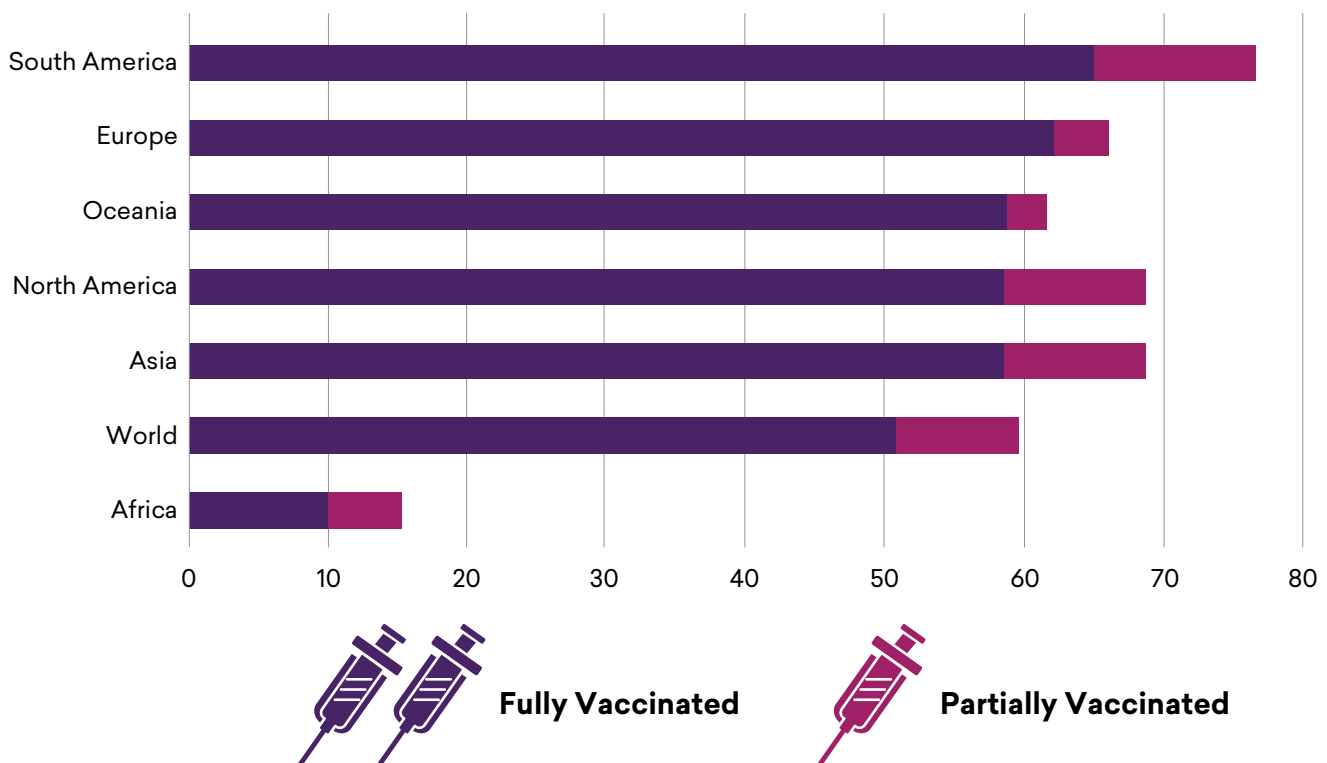
climate change, as well as enabling the discovery of fundamental knowledge of our universe through the expansion of monitoring capabilities provided by the astrophysical sciences.

- 2. Strengthening Global S&T Capacity and the Global STEM Workforce**, which demands capacity building efforts both in the United States and internationally in order to tap into the next generation of scientific talent and leadership that will address the challenges ahead. This work must include efforts to strengthen the STEM workforce by training more graduate students in science from ESPs and engaging women and marginalized groups in STEM. U.S. science capacity building efforts have been successful, for

example, in bolstering the global STEM workforce in China, India, and South Korea.

- 3. Global Understanding, Science, and Diplomacy**, which highlights the key role that science collaboration can play in fostering understanding of cultural differences, raising awareness of varied scientific priorities, and opening the door to conversations for developing shared values of merit, equity, transparency, and openness.
- 4. Maintaining U.S. Leadership**, which is essential for ensuring that the United States, as its global share of R&D diminishes, can continue to have an important position in informing scientific norms, attracting international talent, and producing high-quality science.

Percentage of the Population with COVID-19 Vaccinations, by Region



**Source:** Data pulled on January 12, 2022. Data collated by Our World in Data, <https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations>. Edouard Mathieu, Hannah Ritchie, Esteban Ortiz-Ospina, et al., “A Global Database of COVID-19 Vaccinations,” *Nature Human Behaviour* 5 (2021).





A technician working on COVID-19 research in a laboratory at the African Health Research Institute in Durban, South Africa, December 15, 2021.

There are rich, thriving scientific venues in which collaborations between the United States and ESPs already occur, including partnerships between scientific agencies, university-to-university collaborations, science academies and scientific society networks, philanthropic and company-supported scientific endeavors, and mission-driven global scientific networks, which bring scientists together from around the world to address pressing questions with global implications. In and between these spaces, there are many opportunities for the United States both to deepen and broaden its engagement with ESPs. To do so, the United States must commit to embedding equity, transparency, and justice in its scientific collaborations through establishing shared goals and values, upholding commitments to high-quality science, agreeing on scientific priorities, and setting mutually beneficial outcomes for all collaborators.

Recognizing the impacts of colonialism, racism, and sexism will be essential for scientists and policymakers engaging with ESPs, many of which continue to be affected economically and politically by colonial

histories. The United States' own fraught experiences of racism and unethical scientific experimentation on vulnerable groups continues to impact its ability to engage a diverse STEM workforce domestically. Renewed calls for racial justice in the United States following the murder of George Floyd, combined with the disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 on Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic communities, present a unique opportunity for rethinking how STEM fields can be more accessible and how international collaborations with ESPs can be restructured with principles of equity, inclusion, and justice embedded at the forefront.

*Global Connections* offers a series of mechanisms to the key audiences responsible for supporting the U.S. scientific enterprise that can aid both in strengthening U.S. support for collaborations with ESPs and in embedding principles of equity into these partnerships. As societies globalize and ESPs look to expand scientific capacity as a means of development, the United States must prioritize deepening its engagement with ESPs if it is to remain a leader in science, technology, and innovation for generations to come.

## ENDNOTES

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7. Our World in Data, "Coronavirus (COVID-19) Vaccinations," <https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations>.



The Challenges for International Scientific Partnerships Initiative is supported with funding from the Alfred P. Sloan, William and Flora Hewlett, and Gordon and Betty Moore Foundations. For more on the project, visit the Academy's website at [www.amacad.org/project/CISP](http://www.amacad.org/project/CISP).



By **Robert B. Townsend**,  
*Director of Humanities, Arts, and  
Culture Programs at the Academy;  
Codirector of the Humanities Indicators*

## What Becomes of Graduates after College? A New Humanities Indicators Report Offers Clues

College graduates – regardless of their major – earn considerably more than those without college degrees, and they are highly likely to be satisfied with their jobs and their lives. These are among the key take-aways from a new report, *State of the Humanities 2021: Workforce & Beyond*, from the Academy’s Humanities Indicators project. The report gathered and analyzed data on a

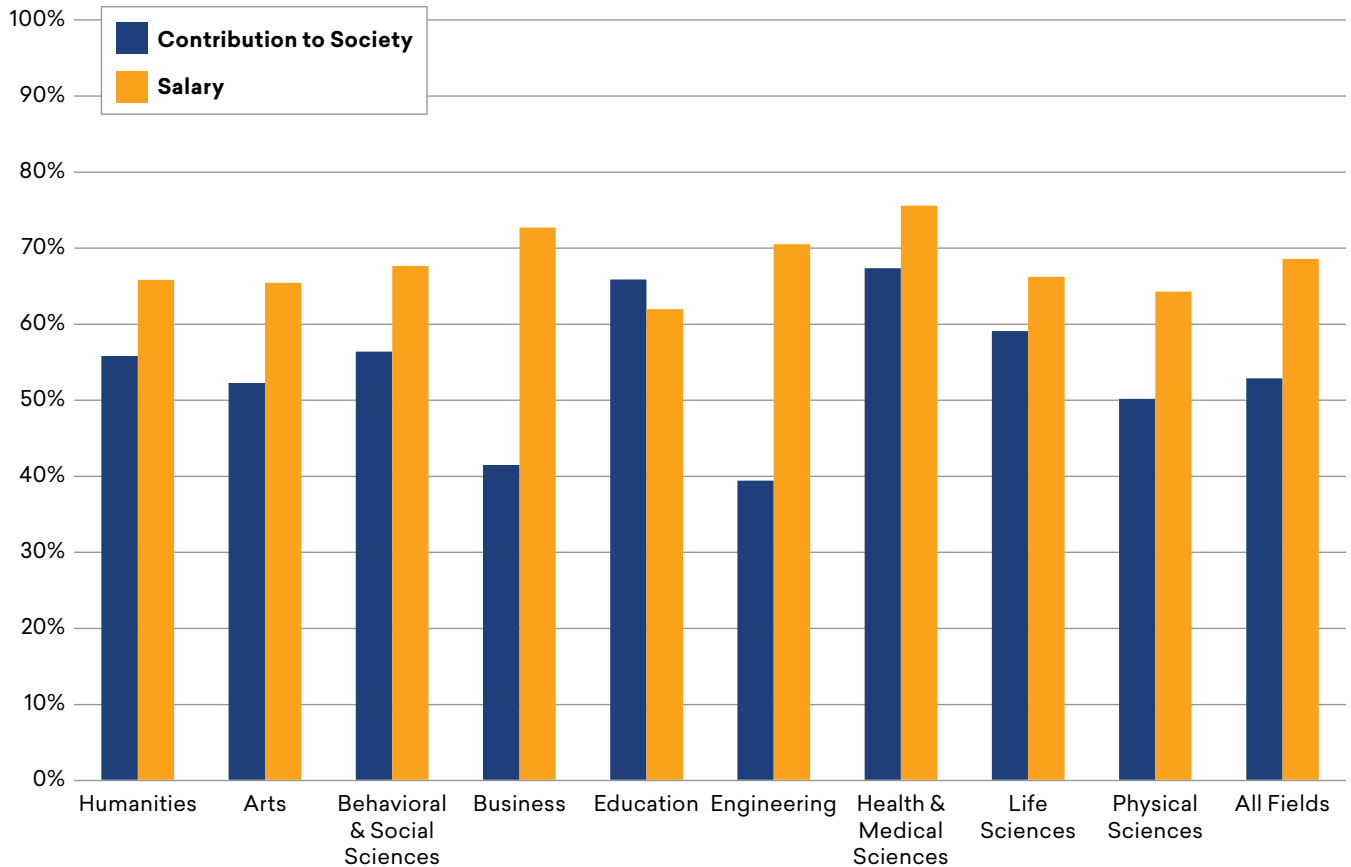
variety of outcome measures, including perceived well-being, earnings, and financial and occupational satisfaction.

According to a national survey from Gallup (analyzed for the report), approximately 91 percent of college graduates were satisfied with their lives in 2019, and a similar share was satisfied with their jobs. Curiously, the percentages were comparable for graduates with

bachelor’s degrees from every major, regardless of differences in some of the more tangible measures, such as earnings. Graduates with education degrees, for instance, had the lowest median annual earnings (just \$46,000 per year), but tended to report the highest levels of satisfaction on things such as intellectual challenge and job security. Perhaps most strikingly, most education graduates felt they had



**Figure 1.** Share of College Graduates Who Consider Aspects of Work “Very Important,” by Field of Bachelor’s Degree, 2019



**Source:** National Science Foundation, 2019 National Survey of College Graduates. Data analyzed and presented by the American Academy’s Humanities Indicators.

enough money in 2019, a sentiment frequently expressed by graduates in several higher-earning fields.

At a time when conversations about the value of college degrees are often framed by the earnings of college graduates, the disparity between earnings and the less tangible measures, such as job and life satisfaction, offers an interesting puzzle. Graduates from the arts, humanities, and social sciences often have lower earnings compared to degree holders in other fields, but the *Workforce & Beyond* report finds that they have similarly high levels of job and life satisfaction. Though the data cannot explain the seeming disparity between the objective and subjective measures, they offer a starting point for a more nuanced discussion about the relationship among fields

of undergraduate study, employment, and quality of life.

The data used in the report were gathered prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, but past experience tracking this sort of data for the humanities – particularly through the Great Recession – gives little reason to expect a significant shift in values over the medium term.

### ATTITUDES ABOUT JOBS AND CAREERS

The report teases out both some of the values that graduates bring to their careers as well as their satisfaction with those and other aspects of their jobs. For instance, business and engineering majors were the least likely to indicate that contributing to society was a vital aspect of

their work, with only around 40 percent citing that as “very important,” compared to 53 percent among all graduates in 2019 (see Figure 1). The contrast with graduates from education and the health and medical sciences was particularly striking, as more than 65 percent of the graduates from those fields cited a contribution to society as an important part of their work.

Reflecting on their careers, more than two-thirds of college graduates believe that their job provided the “opportunity to do what I do best every day” and that they were “deeply interested in the work” that they do. Once again, graduates from education and the health and medical sciences were among the most likely to be satisfied on each measure (along with

## WHAT BECOMES OF GRADUATES AFTER COLLEGE?

graduates from the natural sciences). And satisfaction with a variety of tangible and intangible aspects of their work – ranging from their earnings to their contributions to society – were similar across every field (though education graduates were the least likely to be satisfied with their salaries: just 69 percent were satisfied compared to 78 percent of all college graduates and 85 percent of engineering graduates). Nevertheless, while college graduates were generally positive about various aspects of their work, substantially smaller shares of college graduates from every field believed they had the “ideal job” for them (about 57 percent among all college graduates).

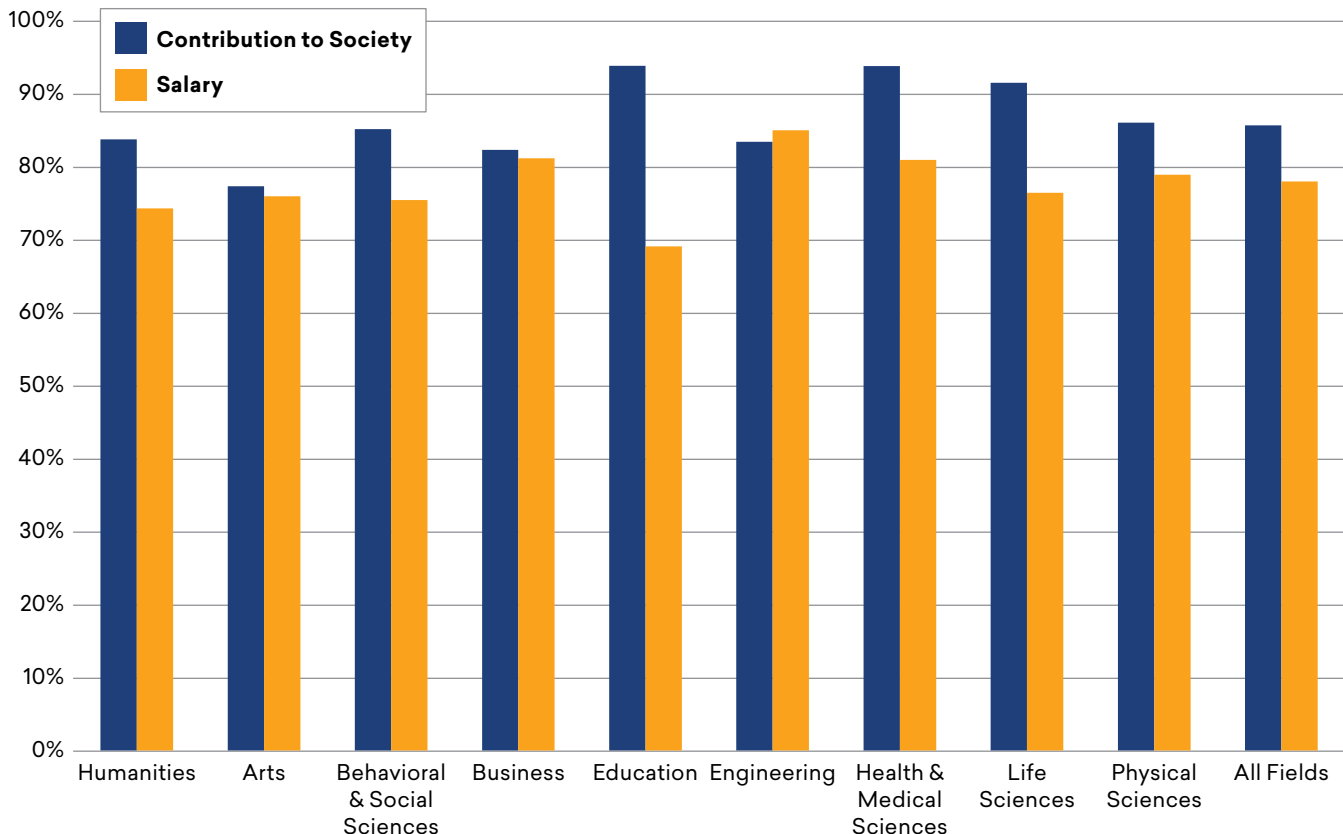
While the report finds that graduates from the arts, humanities, and behavioral and social sciences are similar to college graduates in general on most attitudinal measures, some findings signal potential challenges for these fields. For instance, less than 28 percent of graduates in the arts, humanities, and the behavioral and social sciences (without advanced degrees) thought their job was closely related to their degree. This share was substantially smaller than that for graduates with education and health and medical degrees (all above 56 percent). Approximately 40 percent of the graduates from the humanities and the behavioral and social sciences fields also indicated that they would

not choose the same major again (though they might have chosen another major within the field), and a similar share reported they did not believe that their undergraduate institution prepared them for life. These findings were comparable for college graduates generally, but they were substantially larger than the share among graduates from some STEM fields.

### ON EARNINGS AND OCCUPATIONS

Regardless of one’s field, earning a college degree substantially increases the likelihood that one will find employment and have increased earnings over a lifetime. As of 2018,

**Figure 2.** Satisfaction of College Graduates with Monetary Aspects of Their Job, by Field of Bachelor’s Degree, 2019



**Source:** National Science Foundation, 2019 National Survey of College Graduates. Data analyzed and presented by the American Academy’s Humanities Indicators.



less than 3 percent of college graduates were unemployed. Graduates from education and the health and medical sciences had the lowest unemployment (barely 2 percent among those with only a bachelor's degree). But even among graduates from the arts, humanities, and the behavioral and social sciences, their unemployment rates were below 4 percent. The unemployment rate, however, among workers who completed high school but did not attend college was substantially higher, especially for younger Americans.

Workers with only a bachelor's degree had median earnings of \$63,000 in 2018, but the earnings ranged as high as \$88,000 for those with engineering degrees to a low of \$46,000 for education majors. But even the latter was significantly higher than for workers without

a college education (\$38,000). And earning an advanced degree brings a substantial earnings boost for college graduates from every field, with the median rising by around 33 percent for most fields and increasing by 80 percent for graduates from the life sciences.

Unfortunately, earning a college degree does not diminish the likelihood that women will earn less than their male counterparts. Among those who hold only a bachelor's degree, women earned 26 percent less, while the earnings difference among those with advanced degrees was even larger (29 percent). The narrowest gender gap was found among graduates from the health and medical sciences for those with only a bachelor's degree (less than 9 percent). Among those who had gone on to earn an

advanced degree, the narrowest gender gap in earnings was for those in the arts (though still a bit more than 11 percent).

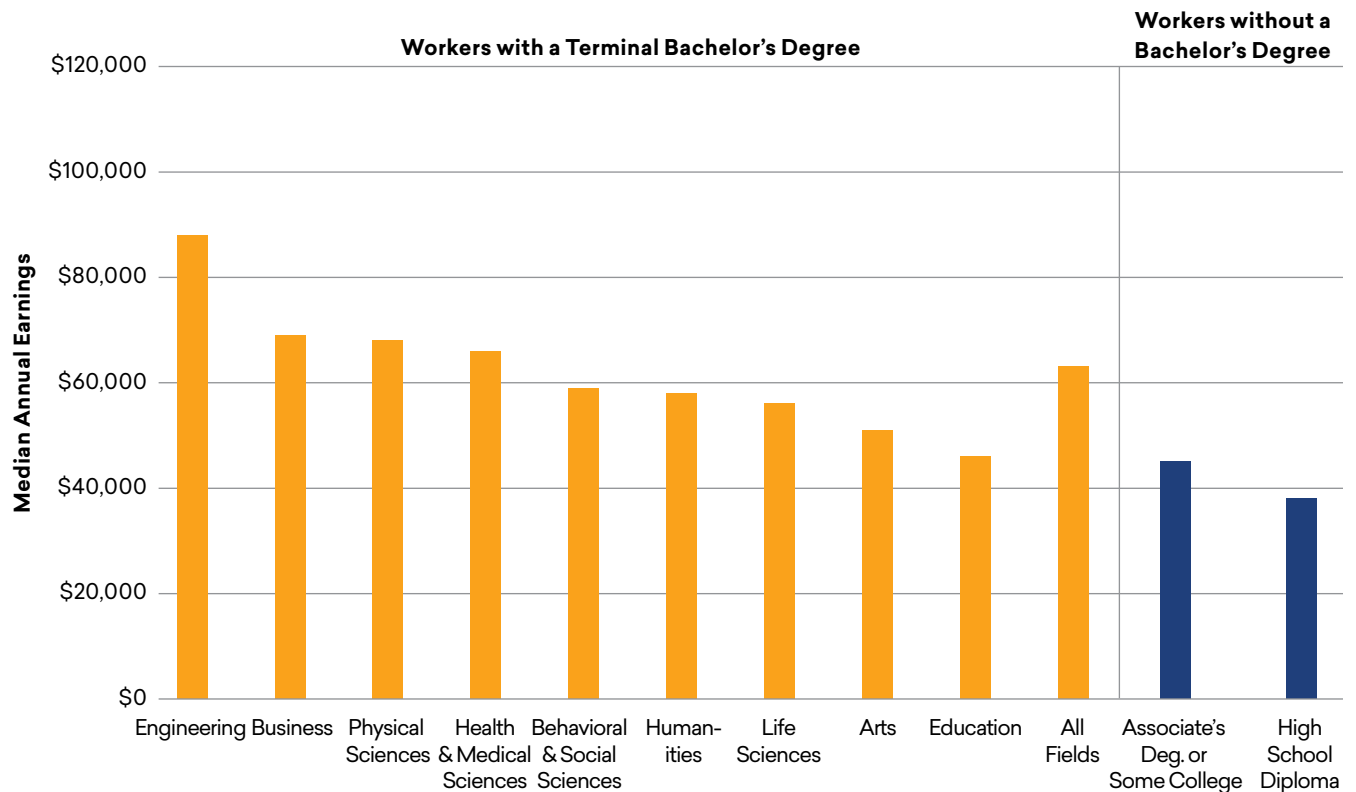
In the spring, the Humanities Indicators will release a report that explores the attitudes and job outcomes of master's and doctoral degree recipients.



Copies of the *Workforce & Beyond* report are available upon request; an online version is accessible at [www.amacad.org/humanities-indicators](http://www.amacad.org/humanities-indicators).

For questions about the *Workforce & Beyond* report or other aspects of the Humanities Indicators, please contact Robert Townsend, codirector of the Humanities Indicators, at [rtownsend@amacad.org](mailto:rtownsend@amacad.org).

**Figure 3. Earnings Comparison: Workers with a Terminal Bachelor's Degree (by Field of Degree) versus Those without a Four-Year Degree, 2018**



**Note:** Earnings estimates are for graduates who worked 35 or more hours per week for 50 or more weeks in the 12 months preceding the date on which they responded to the American Community Survey. Earnings estimates for workers without college degrees are for people age 24 and older. **Source:** 2018 American Community Survey PUMS.



# Voices of the Future and a Youth Agenda for American Democracy

By **Jonathan D. Cohen**, Joan and Irwin Jacobs Program Officer for American Institutions, Society, and the Public Good at the Academy, and **Abhishek Raman**, Program Officer for American Institutions, Society, and the Public Good at the Academy

**Y**oung Americans believe that our democracy is in trouble. Amid years of chaos in Washington, D.C., the fallout from the 2020 election, and stalled progress on legislation ranging from climate change to voting rights, it is unsurprising that Americans between the ages of eighteen and twenty-nine are worried about

the state of American democracy. Ahead of the White House's December 2021 Summit for Democracy and as part of its ongoing efforts to advance the recommendations in *Our Common Purpose: Reinventing American Democracy for the 21st Century*, the Academy organized two initiatives last fall aimed at young people: a national polling project and a

summit of young leaders, who were brought together for their expertise, vision, and commitment to making progress on critical issues in their communities.

## VOICES OF THE FUTURE

The Academy sought to understand better how members of the



eighteen-to-twenty-nine-year-old cohort perceive American democracy and how they respond to different proposals to strengthen American democracy for the twenty-first century. A nationally representative deliberative poll, co-organized by the Academy, found that 40 percent of young people in the United States do not think American democracy works well. Sixty-nine percent believe government policies “represent the voices of the wealthy and powerful,” and 54 percent agree that “people like me don’t have any say about what the government does.”

These results are drawn from *Voices of the Future*, a nationally representative deliberative poll led by students from Marquette University, Slippery Rock University, Stanford University, and Yale University with guidance from the Academy and the Center for Deliberative Democracy and the Haas Center for Public Service at Stanford University.

*Voices of the Future* captured responses on issues concerning American democracy via an initial survey of 1,046 Americans ages eighteen to twenty-nine from October 15 – November 4, 2021, a deliberative event on November 6, 2021, and a follow-up survey.

From the results of the poll, there is widespread agreement about the importance of core democratic values among this age cohort. Some of the findings include:

- 75 percent of respondents – including 81 percent of young Democrats and 73 percent of young Republicans – felt that overcoming current divisions in American society is important.
- 82 percent support respecting people’s rights and freedoms, 70 percent believe in ensuring freedom of speech, and 80 percent support guaranteeing that everyone who wants to vote can do so.

- 73 percent of young Democrats and 51 percent of young Republicans agree that social media companies should be regulated, especially on issues related to individual data privacy.

As part of the polling process, the participants engaged in group deliberations on several topics related to democracy, such as social media, civic responsibility, and representation. They also discussed specific recommendations in the *Our Common Purpose* report, including national service, ranked choice voting, voting rights, and campaign finance reform. Through this process, young adults’ understanding of American democracy and their support for measures to strengthen it increased across some measures. For example, their support for the creation of a publicly funded or nonprofit social media platform increased. And support for using a Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) system in presidential elections in which voters rank candidates by preference saw a significant uptick from 49 to 62 percent.

Going forward, the Academy’s *Our Common Purpose* implementation team will use the quantitative survey data and the qualitative information from the deliberative event to illuminate the priorities and perspectives of younger Americans to inform its work to protect and strengthen American constitutional democracy.

### SUMMIT: YOUTH AGENDA FOR AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

With the deliberative polling data as a guide, the Academy hosted the Youth Agenda for American Democracy summit in partnership with Washington University in St. Louis on November 12, 2021. The goal of the convening was to help participants in the international White House Summit for

Democracy understand how young leaders perceive the challenges facing the political system they have inherited, and what they see as the clearest path to reinvent American democracy for the twenty-first century.

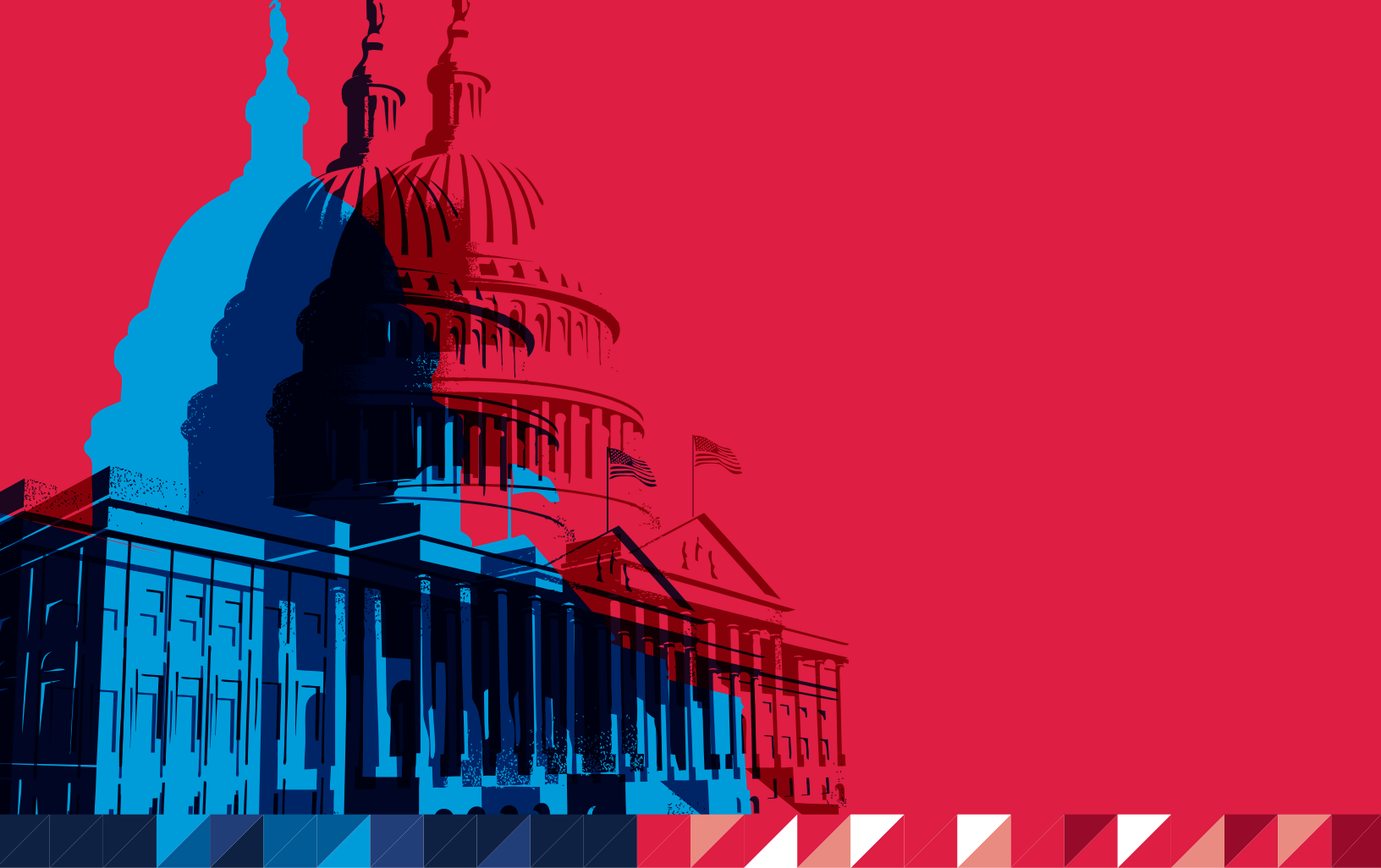
Fifty leaders, between the ages of eighteen and twenty-nine, representing twenty-four states and a broad cross-section of expertise and experiences, joined Justin Levitt, White House Senior Policy Advisor for Democracy and Voting Rights, at the summit. The participants were selected from more than 130 nominees and were chosen for their demonstrated leadership experience, outstanding records of civic engagement, and commitment to cross-partisan dialogue. These young leaders work on a variety of issues – climate change, racial justice, and immigration, among other topics – but they share an understanding that progress on the great challenges of our time requires a healthy political system and a functioning representative democracy.

The summit participants highlighted numerous ways in which the current state of American democracy impedes on their work. Three of their concerns include:

- Unresponsive institutions and indifferent officials have led to a widespread sense of disengagement and disempowerment among their peers.
- The current system of self-government does not provide equal voice and representation to all Americans.
- Social media exacerbates the challenges facing our constitutional democracy.

The participants at the summit did more than criticize the current state of American democracy.

*Continued on page 23: See “Voices of the Future and a Youth Agenda.”*



# New Academy Report Makes the Case for Enlarging the House of Representatives

By **Jonathan D. Cohen**, Joan and Irwin Jacobs Program Officer for American Institutions, Society, and the Public Good at the Academy, and **Jessica Lieberman**, Program Officer for American Institutions, Society, and the Public Good at the Academy

The framers of the U.S. Constitution intended the House of Representatives to be “the People’s House.” More so than any other branch of the federal government, congresspeople are meant to have a close connection with the public they serve. For decades, the House grew as the nation grew, which allowed congressional districts to remain relatively small. Then, in 1929, Congress capped the size of the House at 435 seats. Since then, districts have massively expanded, and the number

of constituents represented by each congressperson has exploded from roughly 35,000 in 1790 to over 760,000 today.

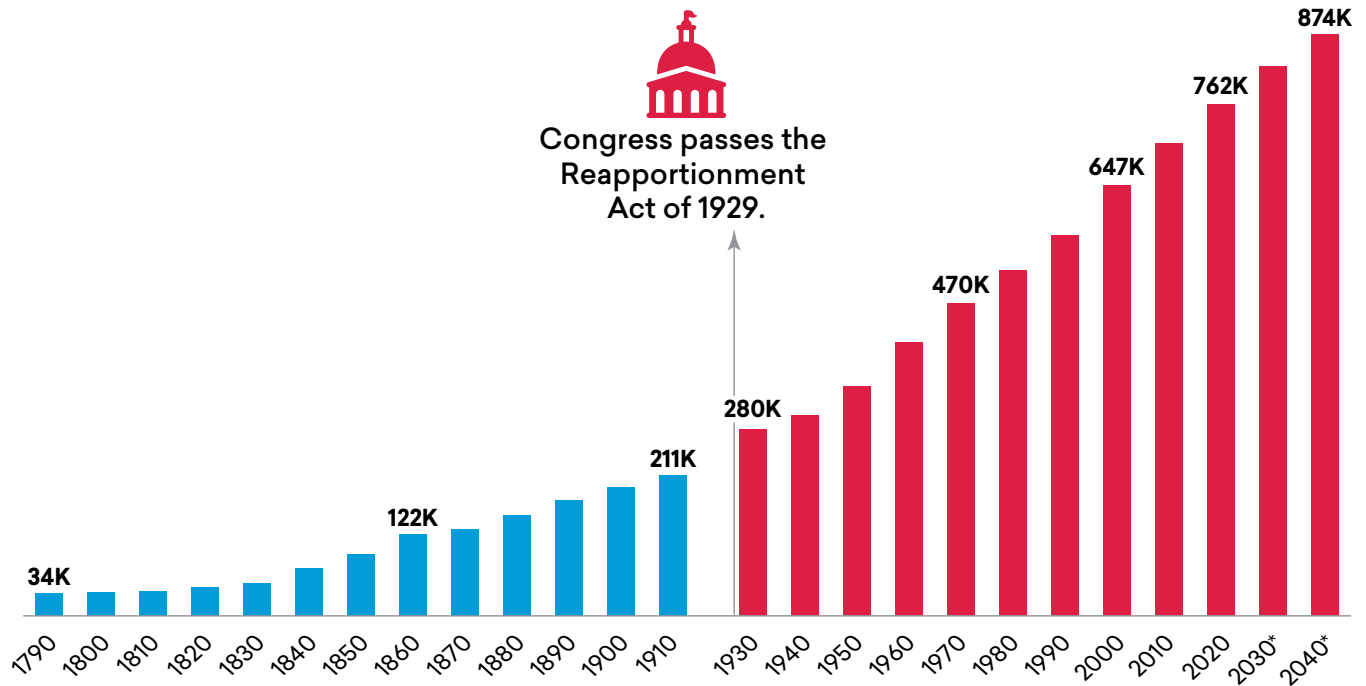
In its landmark 2020 report, *Our Common Purpose: Reinventing American Democracy for the 21st Century*, the Academy’s cross-partisan Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship identified expanding the House of Representatives as an important reform to revitalize American democracy. Doing so, the Commission concluded, “will tighten the link between representatives

and their constituencies and make the House more representative of the nation.” The Commission, however, left several key details open, including the precise number of seats that should be added.

Last year, the Academy convened a working group to pick up where *Our Common Purpose* left off. That work led to the December 2021 release of *The Case for Enlarging the House of Representatives*, a report authored by working group members Lee Drutman of New America; Yuval Levin and Noman J. Ornstein of



## Average House District Size, 1790–2040



Note: Dates with an asterisk are projected.

the American Enterprise Institute, both of whom also served on the Democratic Citizenship Commission; and Jonathan D. Cohen, the Joan and Irwin Jacobs Program Officer for American Institutions, Society, and the Public Good at the Academy.

### WHY IT MATTERS THAT CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS ARE TOO LARGE

The growth of congressional districts over the last ninety years has had serious and harmful consequences. The most pressing is that Americans feel disconnected from their congressional representatives. According to Gallup, as of November 2021, congressional job approval hovered at around 20 percent. It is difficult for voters to make their voice heard when they are just one of 760,000 constituents. Research shows that voters from smaller districts were more likely to feel their congressperson did a good job keeping in touch with the district and

they were more likely to approve of their representative. Retirees, veterans, small business owners, and others often require regular assistance from congressional offices, which are already overwhelmed by legislative responsibilities. Expanding the House of Representatives will bring the makeup of this body in line with the founders' vision by making it more responsive to voters.

District size also impacts who runs for Congress. It is more expensive, on average, to run for office in a large district than a smaller one, which favors incumbents and other well-financed candidates. Adding more seats would create opportunities for a new class of candidates, which may better reflect the nation's full demographic and ideological diversity.

Additionally, enlarging the House would reduce the overrepresentation of small states in presidential elections. Because every state is guaranteed at least three Electoral College votes, residents of smaller states wield disproportionate power



in choosing the president. Enlarging the House would reduce the chance that the winner of the popular vote does not also win the election, thereby helping to restore trust in the Electoral College.

Restoring the framers' vision will not be easy, but it is feasible. A constitutional amendment is not required – a mere vote of Congress is all that is needed to create a more representative federal government.

## HOW MANY SEATS SHOULD BE ADDED?

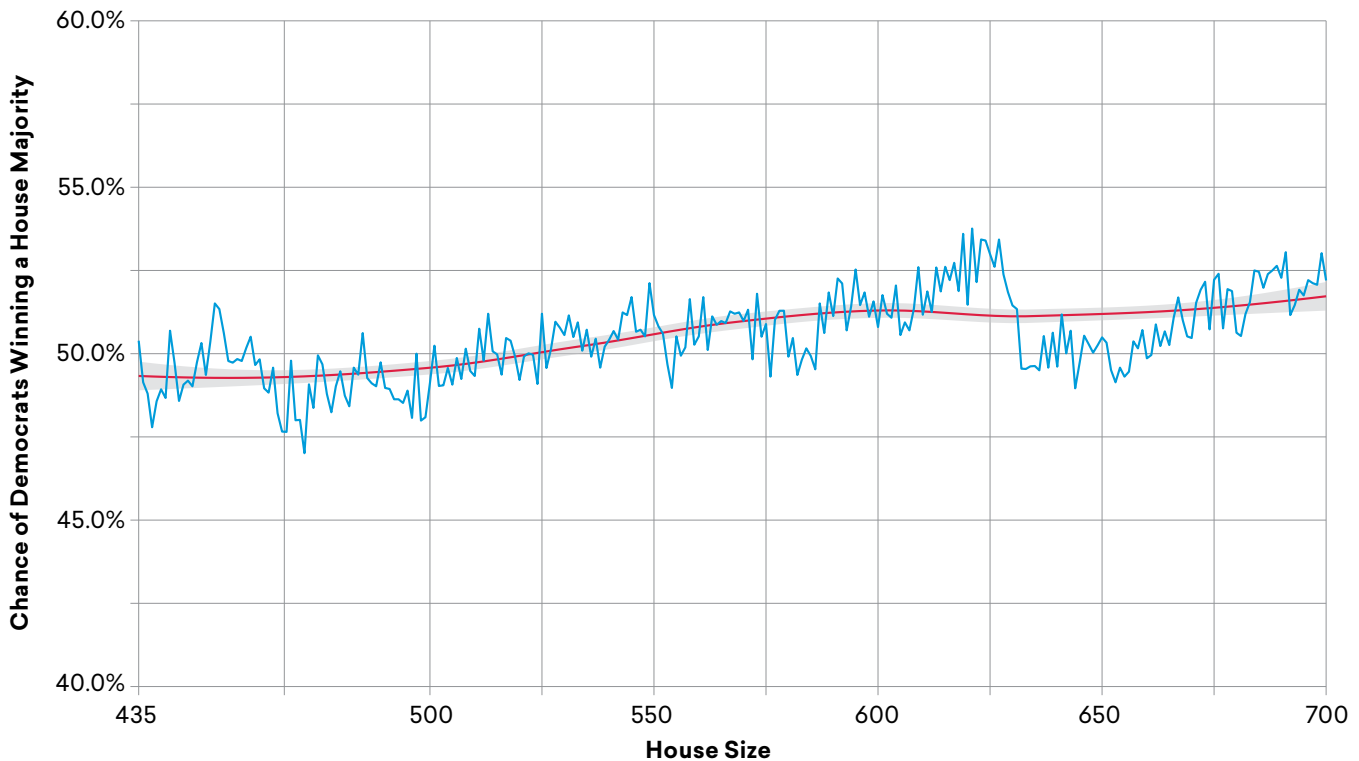
*Our Common Purpose* preliminarily suggests the addition of at least fifty seats but notes that a “precise number should be established through vigorous discussion and debate.” *The Case for Enlarging the House of Representatives* proposes adding 150 seats, followed by regular expansion. This new proposal is rooted in the principle that Americans should not regularly lose representation in Congress. Since 1931, 149 seats have been shifted between states, as

states regularly lose seats during the decennial reapportionment, even when their population is increasing. Because adding 149 seats would result in a House with an even number of seats (making tie-breaking difficult), the report recommends adding one additional seat, for a total of 585. Going forward, Congress should increase by the number of seats necessary to ensure that states only rarely lose seats, as used to be the norm. The report also describes several other proposals that would entail continuous expansion and would achieve similar benefits.

In today’s polarized political atmosphere, a crucial question, of course, is whether expanding the House would advantage one political party. The authors ran more than 2.6 million simulations of the 2020 election (ten thousand simulations at each of 265 different possible House sizes), and at no size did either party gain more than a 3 percent advantage in their odds of controlling the chamber. The results of presidential elections, too, would be unchanged. The outcome of the last twelve presidential elections would be the same at most feasible House

## House Expansion and Partisan Balance

Increasing the size of the House has a tiny but variable effect on partisan balance



The blue line indicates the projected partisan control of the House. When the blue line is above 50 percent at the House size noted in the x-axis, the model predicts that Democrats have a greater than 50 percent chance of controlling the House. When the blue line is below 50 percent, the model predicts Republican control. The red line is a trend line, offering a picture of the overall average. Source: Author calculations of projected district allocation based on 2020 census data using the Huntington-Hill method; simulations of balance of power based on actual 2020 House election results.



sizes, the only exception being the nearly-too-close-to-call 2000 election. These findings are crucial, as they increase the likelihood that the reform to expand the House will receive bipartisan support.

### A COMMITMENT TO RESTORE THE FRAMERS' VISION

James Madison wrote in *The Federalist*, No. 55 that “The number of which the House of Representatives is to consist, forms another and a very interesting point of view. . . . Scarce any article, indeed, in the whole Constitution seems to be rendered more worthy of attention.”

Our nation has overlooked this important issue for far too long, and this is one reason why the Academy has committed to make significant progress toward this proposal and the thirty other reforms recommended in *Our Common Purpose* by 2026, the 250th anniversary of the country’s birth.

The *Case for Enlarging the House of Representatives* is generating robust discussion. In December 2021, report authors Yuval Levin and Lee Drutman published an op-ed in *The Washington Post*, and the Academy cohosted a launch event with the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) that aired on C-SPAN and featured Drutman and Levin as well as Kevin

Kosar (AEI), Ruth Bloch Rubin (University of Chicago), and Jonah Goldberg (*The Dispatch*). In early 2022, staff in the Academy’s American Institutions, Society, and the Public Good program area will continue to promote the report, a major step in the Academy’s efforts to bolster American democracy and advance the recommendations in *Our Common Purpose*.



To read the report, please visit the Academy’s website at [www.amacad.org/ourcommonpurpose/enlarging-the-house](http://www.amacad.org/ourcommonpurpose/enlarging-the-house).

## VOICES OF THE FUTURE AND A YOUTH AGENDA

*Continued from page 19.*

They articulated their own affirmative agenda for strengthening our constitutional system by identifying several achievable solutions:

- Better connect people to their government officials and to each other;
- Expand access to voting so that everyone who wants to vote can do so;
- Ensure every American has a baseline understanding of civics;
- Reduce the influence of money in politics;
- Bring new people into the democratic process;
- Combat mis- or disinformation and information bubbles; and
- Promote media literacy.

These priorities are already informing democracy efforts in Washington. The White House is currently engaged in a Year of Action

on democracy reform, and the agenda articulated by the participants in the Academy’s Youth Summit helped inform the commitments made by the United States toward global democratic renewal during the White House Summit for Democracy.

Two participants from the Youth Summit, Andrew Brennan and Bobbi Taylor, were invited to represent the United States at the Global Youth Townhall portion of the White House Summit. For Brennan and Taylor, a takeaway from the global townhall was that young people have a particular responsibility to secure the future of democracy not only in their own countries but around the world. Recalling his experience at the townhall, Brennan reflected that “with information accessible at their fingertips, young people do not need to wait until they are elected officials to hold their leaders accountable and ensure



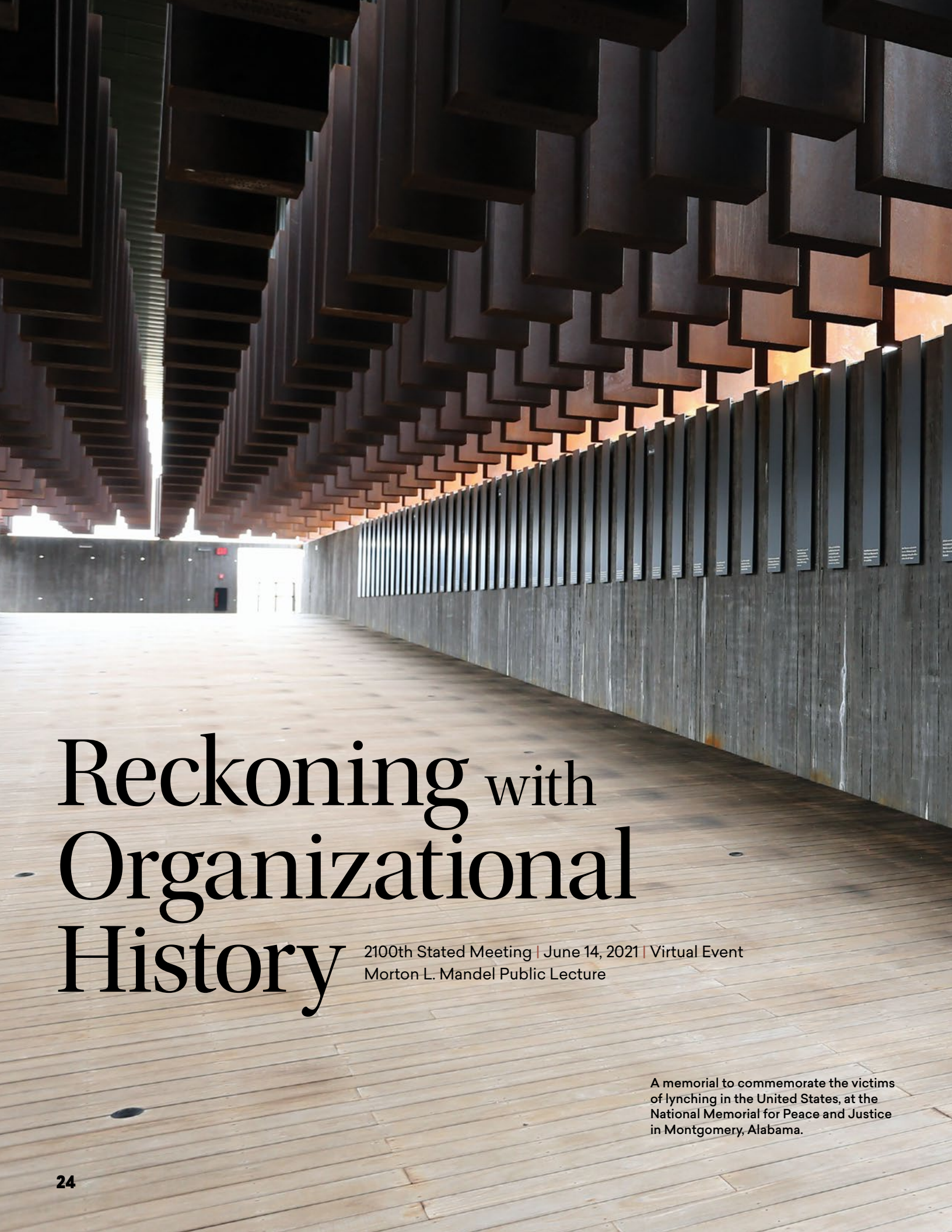
Andrew Brennan and Bobbi Taylor

that democratic principles are preserved for future generations.”

Young Americans are worried about the state of their democracy, but they are eager to get involved to help fix it. The Academy is committed to continuing to engage this community of emerging leaders and to building a national network of young Americans eager for democratic renewal.



To learn more about the Academy’s efforts to advance the recommendations in *Our Common Purpose*, please visit [www.amacad.org/ourcommonpurpose](http://www.amacad.org/ourcommonpurpose).



# Reckoning with Organizational History

2100th Stated Meeting | June 14, 2021 | Virtual Event  
Morton L. Mandel Public Lecture

A memorial to commemorate the victims of lynching in the United States, at the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama.



FOR THE HANGED AND BEATEN.  
FOR THE SHOT, DROWNED, AND BURNED.  
FOR THE TORTURED, TORMENTED, AND TERRORIZED.  
FOR THOSE ABANDONED BY THE RULE OF LAW.

WE WILL REMEMBER.

WITH HOPE BECAUSE HOPELESSNESS IS THE ENEMY OF JUSTICE.  
WITH COURAGE BECAUSE PEACE REQUIRES BRAVERY.  
WITH PERSISTENCE BECAUSE JUSTICE IS A CONSTANT STRUGGLE.  
WITH FAITH BECAUSE WE SHALL OVERCOME.

Over the last few years, organizations across the United States – corporations, universities, and nonprofits like the American Academy of Arts and Sciences – have begun to reflect on their ties to slavery, Native genocide, and other troubling elements of American history. The Academy’s virtual event on “Reckoning with Organizational History” explored why historical self-examination matters and what can be gained from these studies. The panelists reflected on the reckoning process of their own institutions and highlighted what other organizations can use in their own work of historical reckoning. The discussion also focused on a recommendation in *Our Common Purpose*, the final report of the Academy’s Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship. The recommendation, “Telling Our Nation’s Story,” calls on Americans to develop new shared narratives that acknowledge both the glory and shameful moments of the nation’s history and encourages individuals and organizations to engage in direct, open-ended, and honest conversations about our country’s past faults and failures. An edited version of the presentations and discussion follows.





## Claudia Rankine

Claudia Rankine is a poet, playwright, essayist, and Professor of Creative Writing at New York University. She was elected to the American Academy in 2020.




In preparation for today’s introductory remarks on “organizational and historical self-examination,” I reread Craig Steven Wilder’s *Ebony & Ivy: Race, Slavery, and the Troubled History of America’s Universities*. It’s a disheartening read but a necessary one because Wilder’s work understands better than most that the history of enslaved people and the genocide of Native Americans are intrinsically tied to the formation of our universities, and by extension our culture, our institutions, and the relationality we negotiate every day in our institutions. He isn’t the only historian doing this work but his lens on the formation of the universities many of us are employed by makes him particularly relevant to this panel. Many of us have been

more committed to the culture of prestige and sustainability these institutions bestow on us than to the truth of what they foster and who we are by extension.

I will focus on Wilder’s book about the formations of universities as a template for thinking about museums, newspapers, scholarly associations, our government, etc. Many of these various institutions, led by members of the American Academy, are also rethinking their history.

Wilder painstakingly explains how the long arm of white supremacy was hard at work before the United States was a stated thing. Before there was a United States, there was the evil inhumanity of the United States. I intentionally use the word





The history of enslaved people and the genocide of Native Americans are intrinsically tied to the formation of our universities, and by extension our culture, our institutions, and the relationality we negotiate every day in our institutions. ”

*evil* because so much was done in the name of God and religion. A quote from *Ebony & Ivy*, penned by Governor John Winthrop, describes the fate of Native Americans: “The greatest part of them are swept away by the small poxe, which still continues among them. God has thereby cleared our title to this place.” As you know, infected blankets were distributed by white settlers to Indigenous people in order to bring about their death. And a quote from Reverend Richard Mather, father to Increase Mather, an early president of Harvard, describes the same moment: “The government of God is now beginning to be set up where it never was before.”

Wilder’s book is divided into two parts: “Slavery and the Rise of the American College” and “Race and the Rise of the American College.” It’s important that Wilder separated the development and impact of slavery from the development and impact of race. Race or the supremacy of whiteness served to justify the subhuman behavior of whites. In order to reframe the bestiality of the behavior of whites toward Blacks and Native Americans, the language of superiority and justification had to be put in place. White superiority had to be made to be scientific and predestine. One of the most incisive lines in Wilder’s book reads: “Race did not come *from* science and theology; it came *to* science and theology.”

What the book does brilliantly is stitch together histories of individuals, who are amassing wealth through slavery, the shipping of enslaved people, plantations, and more, and then using those funds to found our most prestigious universities. The earliest colleges – Harvard (1636), William & Mary (1693), and Yale (1701) – graduated plantation and merchant elites whose ties to slavery were evident. But, according to Wilder, “although half of the graduates became ministers, that fact had little impact upon the pattern of alumni slaveholding. Northeastern parishes routinely gave black people to ministers, and divines bought and sold human beings, distributed slaves in their wills, advertised for runaways, and sold people at auction.” Consequently, whatever the graduates were learning, or

not learning, justified support of the genocide of Native Americans and the enslavement of Blacks no matter their ultimate profession.

Again, to quote Wilder: “Throughout the Mid-Atlantic and New England, higher education had its greatest period of expansion as the African slave trade peaked.” Why I feel it’s necessary to begin in the 1600s is because that timeline makes transparent the systemic nature of anti-blackness in this country and its generative relationship to the institutions that remain standing today. These same institutions continue to instill messages of white superiority to this day. That is the culture our educated elites have been nurtured within.

We have been the inheritors of this history, and the question before us remains what are we going to do with this inheritance because we remain in relation to it? We have been indoctrinated into it and our children continue to be indoctrinated into it. They have been taught to see their own identities as consistent with the legacies of our universities and then with the institutions they become professionals within without being informed what that legacy really represents. While universities are at the heart of this discussion, they are not alone in having to reckon with their history.

Theorist Sara Ahmed, in her essay “A Phenomenology of Whiteness,” puts it this way: “If the conditions in which we live are inherited from the past, they are ‘passed down’ not only in blood or in genes, but also through the work or labour of generations. If history is made ‘out of’ what is passed down, then history is made out of what is given not only in the sense of that which is ‘always already’ there before our arrival, but in the active sense of the gift: as a gift, history is what we receive upon arrival. Such an inheritance can be re-thought in terms of orientations. . . . Whiteness is an orientation that puts certain things within reach.”

Ahmed goes on to say, “If whiteness is inherited, then it is also reproduced. Whiteness gets reproduced by being seen as a form of positive residence: as if it were a property of persons, cultures

and places. Whiteness becomes, you could even say, ‘like itself,’ as a form of family resemblance.”<sup>1</sup>

If we understand the resemblance to exist, it’s easy to externalize the problem – the name on a building or a monument to a slaveholder. Change the name, remove the monument. Great. Hire one or two Black and Brown people. Perform land acknowledgment. Allow for individual success while simultaneously and indiscriminately othering the population-at-large. Again, I ask, how profoundly do these actions change the culture of orientation of all the institutions we are all associated with? True reckoning understands that alongside symbolic and equitable changes, we must also address our social commitments. What we need to come to terms with is the fact that the roots of our institutions are communicated in our relations – what passes between us, one to another.

How are we going to change the socialization that communicates in subtle ways that white people are superior to people of color and therefore they remain the preferred candidate even when the job goes to an “other”? How are we to change the socialization even as white people’s insurrections go uninvestigated? How are we to change the socialization even when their murders go unprosecuted? (Chauvin being the rare exception because a teenager stood and got 8 minutes and 46 seconds on video. Please don’t bring him up, until his case becomes precedent.) Indeed, how are we to change the socialization when in 2021 the tenure of a woman of color gets denied, despite departmental support and a Pulitzer Prize?

Are we really prepared not to perform in the ways we have been asked to perform for centuries? We need to take on the weight of this question. We can see what’s out there but how about the inside job? Aren’t our institutions made up as much by our socialization as they are by stated written policies?

The culture of our institutions is deeply troubled. That can’t be addressed unless we address ourselves. By “we” I mean everyone: those of us convinced by racist rhetoric of the superiority of our white skin, though this sentence would rarely be uttered or even thought consciously, as well as those of us whose goal has been to be inside institutions where we then support the inherited

beliefs that have kept the culture the same for over four centuries. Resistance to change is sometimes named sustainability or tradition.

Given that we are gathered virtually to speak about how to redress the continued genocide of nonwhite people in forms addressed both by policy within institutions and by words and phrases like “comorbidity,” and “police killings,” and “mortality rates,” there is no quick fix for our present reality – and yet, some of us are already “done.” “I’m done with diversity stuff” is a sentence I heard recently.

“How are we going to change the socialization that allows for bad and incomplete revisionist work to pass for responsible work? All of this objection to critical race theory, for example, is really and simply an objection to history.

We are up against four hundred plus years of evil before the United States was a thing: smallpox blankets, lynchings, redlining, segregationist police, voter suppression laws, degrading images, diminishing languages, and on and on. Am I making you uncomfortable? Does that mean I shouldn’t be hired? Does that mean I won’t fit in? Does that mean I’m a problem because I can’t get over what stays present? Does that mean that the culture of the listeners here today on the Zoom event is exactly what I’m suggesting? An inside job?

One question that kept nagging me after reading *Ebony & Ivy* was what did all the historians who read the same documents and letters that Wilder used in his account of our history have to believe not to have written this book two centuries ago? Fifty years ago? Thirty years ago? How are we going to change the socialization that allows for bad and incomplete revisionist work to pass for responsible work? All of this objection to critical race theory, for example, is really and simply an objection to history. Hasn’t that really been the inside job?

Maybe our esteemed panelists have answers for us.

1. Sara Ahmed, “A Phenomenology of Whiteness,” *Feminist Theory* 8 (2) (August 2007).



## David W. Oxtoby

David W. Oxtoby is President of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was elected to the American Academy in 2012.

**T**hank you, Claudia. Your powerful opening underscores why this work is so important, and it is a terrific starting point for our conversation. I will briefly introduce our panelists, who will discuss how their own institutions are approaching the work of reckoning with organizational history.

Jack DeGioia is president of Georgetown University, which he has led since 2001. He is a professor of philosophy and has served in leadership roles of organizations that include the American Council of Education, Carnegie Corporation, and the National Association of Independent Schools. In 2016, Georgetown issued a historical study of the university's involvement with slavery. Jack has received national attention for Georgetown's approach to institutional reckoning and atonement in the wake of that report. He was elected to the American Academy in 2010 and recently served on the Academy's Commission on the Future of Undergraduate Education.

Susan Goldberg is editor-in-chief of *National Geographic* and editorial director of National Geographic Partners. In this role, Susan leads the journalism across all platforms, including digital journalism, magazines, podcasts, maps, newsletters, and social media. Under her leadership, *National*

*Geographic* has been recognized for its excellence, including with nine national magazine awards. In a 2018 issue devoted to the subject of race, Susan took the opportunity to interrogate *National Geographic's* own tradition of racism in its 130 years of coverage. The most recent issue of *National Geographic* is entitled "Reckoning with the Past" and continues that conversation by examining race in the United States.

Brent Leggs is executive director of the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund and senior vice president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The Action Fund is a social movement for justice, equity, and reconciliation that promotes the role of cultural preservation in telling the nation's full history while empowering activists and civic leaders to advocate on behalf of African American historic places. Brent is a national leader in the U.S. preservation movement and was recognized in 2018 with the Robert G. Stanton National Preservation Award for elevating the significance of Black culture in American history.

The panel will be moderated by Ben Vinson, provost and executive vice president of Case Western Reserve University, where his Think Big strategic planning initiative has received national attention for its approach to inclusivity. In addition to his role as an educational leader, Ben is an accomplished historian and currently serves as chairman of the National Humanities Center and vice president of the American Historical Association's research division. He is also a member of the Academy's Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship.

The memorial square in the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama, features more than eight hundred corten steel monuments, one for each county in the United States where a racial terror lynching took place.



## Ben Vinson

Ben Vinson is Provost and Executive Vice President of Case Western Reserve University.

“ *Our Common Purpose* advances the idea that reform in our political institutions is simply not enough to fix our democracy. We need to repair both our political culture and our civil society.

As David mentioned, I am a member of the Academy’s Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship. The Commission’s final report, *Our Common Purpose*, advances the idea that reform in our political institutions is simply not enough to fix our democracy. We need to repair both our political culture and our civil society. The Commission found that an acute problem now facing our political culture is a disagreement over how to talk about the past. *Our Common Purpose* calls for a new and inclusive set of historical narratives that are truly honest accountings of the past, which will help us to build a better democracy and a better future. Given the recent debates over teaching history and particularly around African American history and the role of slavery in the founding of our republic, I would argue that this work has never been more urgent.

And there could be no better time to spotlight organizations and individuals who have done the difficult and necessary work of digging into the past and reckoning with the legacies of some of the most shameful elements in American history.

Claudia has challenged us to tackle the troubled narrative of our institutions, to overcome sustainability and tradition to get to a better place. Our panel today includes practitioners who see this and know the work. I am going to begin with just a few questions of my own for each of our panelists and then we will turn to audience questions for the latter half of the discussion. My first question is for Jack DeGioia. Jack, what was the process for a 230-year-old university to engage with its historical reckoning? And how did it change your idea about the responsibility of institutions of higher education?





## John J. DeGioia

John J. DeGioia is President of Georgetown University. He was elected to the American Academy in 2010.

It is an honor to be here and truly a great honor to follow Claudia and to join my fellow panelists in this discussion with you. As you have indicated, over the past six years, Georgetown has been on a very important journey as a university. I hope that by sharing our story, I can connect you to your own stories and to our common, shared American story. Let me provide a brief overview of our Georgetown story. We were founded in 1789 as the nation's first Catholic institution of higher learning in what was then the state of Maryland. Maryland was a slave state, and there were slaves on the Georgetown campus. In 1814, the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits, was responsible for Georgetown. And the regional Order of the Jesuits was responsible for a number of plantations in southern Maryland that funded the activities of the society and their works, including places like Georgetown. In

what is now a well-known historical moment, in 1838, 272 enslaved children, women, and men were sold from four plantations the Jesuits owned in southern Maryland to slaveowners in Louisiana. And as the most significant project for the Jesuits in Maryland, Georgetown benefited from the sale. Approximately \$17,000 from the sale was directed to Georgetown.

We knew this story. A distinguished member of our faculty brought this story to our attention in a paper he delivered forty years ago. And we have taught this story. In the mid-1990s, in a course in American studies, some of our faculty established one of our earliest digital humanities projects with a website entitled "The Jesuit Plantations Project," and they placed online many of the documents associated with the sale. And yet, there was something about this moment in American history that

led us to examine this part of our history anew. And so, we established in August 2015 the Working Group on Slavery, Memory, and Reconciliation. They began their work in September 2015. Throughout the year, the working group brought our community along with them in an engagement with this painful part of our history. And to follow up on Claudia's reference, it included engagement with Professor Wilder, who shared both with the working group and with our community the results of his scholarship. The group continued its work throughout the winter and presented its report in September 2016. We have been implementing recommendations from that report over these past five years.

to terms with what does it mean to be a university with this history, living at this point in time, recognizing the responsibilities we have as an institution to try to address this ongoing legacy: that we never ameliorated the fundamental dynamics and the fundamental consequences – the results that Claudia articulated so powerfully in her opening reflections. I have much more to share with you and I look forward to our discussion. I also look forward to hearing my fellow panelists offer their perspective.

**VINSON:** Thank you, Jack. As someone who has been watching what has been happening at Georgetown, it has been very illustrative for all

“Georgetown continues today on a path seeking reconciliation with a large and diverse descendant community, but we also are trying to come to terms with what does it mean to be a university with this history, living at this point in time, recognizing the responsibilities we have as an institution to try to address this ongoing legacy: that we never ameliorated the fundamental dynamics and the fundamental consequences.

I would like to emphasize one important point. While the group was doing its work, something unexpected happened: *The New York Times* presented the Georgetown story through the lives of contemporary descendants of the 272 enslaved children, women, and men sold in 1838. And we began an engagement with that descendant community. We took a number of steps, and I can go into more detail during our discussion, but our most important work was only beginning when we received the final report. We continue today on a path seeking reconciliation with a large and diverse descendant community, but we also are trying to come

of us in the higher education space. We are taking cues from your story, what you have done, the groundwork that you have laid, and how that has begun to impact and shape other institutions.

My next question is for Susan Goldberg. In 2018, *National Geographic* captured headlines with an acknowledgment of how for over a century, the magazine had perpetuated racial stereotypes of people of color abroad while ignoring those living in the United States. How did the magazine arrive at the process of grappling with its past? And how has that grappling changed your publishing decisions?



A close-up, profile view of Susan Goldberg, looking slightly to the left. She has short, wavy brown hair and is wearing a dark teal turtleneck sweater. The background is a plain, light grey color.

## Susan Goldberg

Susan Goldberg is Editor-in-Chief  
of *National Geographic*.

We couldn't just turn our reportorial gaze to other people and other institutions. We needed to look at how the journalism of *National Geographic* had perpetuated racial stereotypes for much of our history. We could not speak credibly about race without looking internally at our own organization. ”

In 2018, we decided to do a special issue about race because April 2018 was the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Martin Luther King Jr. It seemed like a good time to stop and take stock with where we were on race. We did stories around the world and in the United States. And as we were coming to discuss these stories, it dawned on me, first slowly and then in a big rush, that we couldn't just turn our reportorial gaze to other people and other institutions. We needed to look at how the journalism of *National Geographic* had perpetuated

racial stereotypes for much of our history. We could not speak credibly about race without looking internally at our own organization.

I asked John Edwin Mason, a wonderful historian from the University of Virginia, to help us on this quest. I felt strongly that we needed an outsider's eyes to help us get as close to the truth as humanly possible. John is a historian of the continent of Africa and a historian of photography. He was the perfect person to dive into our archives and tell us what he saw. He came back with a very

stark report. What he discovered is that up until the civil rights movement, when *National Geographic* looked at people of color overseas, we pictured them in very clichéd ways. We perpetuated this hierarchy of Black and Brown people at the bottom and white people at the top. We pictured people as primitives, as savages, as happy hunters, as fierce warriors – as every kind of otherizing cliché. And then in the United States, we didn't acknowledge that there were Black and Brown and all kinds of people in this country. They were not pictured unless they were seen in roles as laborers or as domestic workers.

I wrote a letter to our readers about these findings. And we didn't pull our punches. In fact, the letter ran under this headline: "For decades, our coverage was racist. To rise above our past, we must acknowledge it." I talked not only about the findings that John had made but, even more important, I put a stake in the ground to say, yes, we are very proud of aspects of *National Geographic's* past. We showed people the world. But sometimes, we didn't show them the world as it really was. From this day going forward, we are going to make sure to build on the improvements that we started to make in the 1970s. We are going to make sure that we are telling stories about diverse communities, stories that are inclusive, stories that are told through the lens and words of diverse writers and photographers. And we have been making good on that. Are we there yet? I would have to say no, we are not even close. This is an ongoing process. But we have made tremendous progress, and I really am proud when I look back over the last three years at all the stories that we have done, especially how many stories we've done just since 2020 alone. I am happy to get into the details in our discussion later.

**VINSON:** Susan, it is fascinating what you have done. I am mindful of that relationship between science and race, which Claudia spoke about, and how *National Geographic* chronicles that and these pivots. This is a historic pivot that your institution is making beyond bricks and mortar and into the mind. It is truly transformational. I can't be more inspired and I'm eager to hear more.

Let me now turn to Brent Leggs. Brent, could you explain what the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund is, why the National Trust saw the need for this fund, and how the fund has transformed the organization?



## Brent Leggs

Brent Leggs is Executive Director of the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund and Senior Vice President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

I want to start with a quote from Maya Angelou: "History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived; but if faced with courage, need not be lived again." Without a thorough reckoning with the complex and difficult history of our country, especially when it comes to race, we will not be able to overcome intolerance, injustice, and inequality.

That's why, in November 2017, in the aftermath of Charlottesville, the National Trust for Historic Preservation launched its African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund, a \$25 million campaign to reconstruct a national identity that reflects America's diversity. I am proud to lead this effort for the Trust, which preserves cultural landscapes and historic buildings that show the richness of African American life, history, and architecture. Through preservation practice, we aim to expose the world and our nation to the culture, contradictions, ideals, politics, art, and the hope of America. We tell overlooked stories embodied in these places: ones of African American resilience,



activism, and achievement that are fundamental to the nation itself. Preserving this tapestry of our shared culture, pride, and heritage is an act of racial justice and should be viewed as a civil right.

As we come to a cultural reckoning with America's racist past and see long-simmering racial and ethnic tensions return to a boil, this intensity pervades every aspect of our politics, society, and public spaces. The people of this nation, through their dissent, George Floyd protests, and collective affirmation of these concerns, have grown impatient with policy, including the work of historic preservation, that gives cover to ideas that oppose our democracy's goals. Telling America's overlooked stories is fundamental to building a true national identity and to fostering real healing, true equity, and a validation of all Americans and their history.

Historic sites that bring forward a diverse and inclusive national narrative are playing a crucial role in redefining our collective history and meaningfully expanding the preservation movement in equitable ways. We have an opportunity with this fund to broaden the American story to reflect our remarkably rich and diverse history. These cultural assets help us all walk toward a new era of justice.

Our work on equity and injustice is threefold. We have shifted our organizational priority and are developing an internal ethic for telling the full

preservation has been embalmed in a particular patriotic narrative of exclusion. Your work is an intervention, a pickaxe at the very stones that have been that embalming process. I would like to invite all the panelists to reflect about why this historical reckoning is so important today and what is to be gained through the historical self-reflection process. Why should organizations engage in this work?

**LEGG:** In my line of work in historic preservation, it is clear that our nation is rich in diverse history while being poor in the representation of that history and in funding its preservation, protection, and recognition. In order for the National Trust for Historic Preservation to be relevant to all Americans and to be able to create an inclusive American landscape that reflects all of American history, we must acknowledge and revere Black history as American history, which has shifted the soul and consciousness of our nation. As a nation, we have to confront again and respond to the cultural reckoning that has yet to happen. At the National Trust, we started our own reckoning when we established the Rosenwald Schools Initiative in 2003. It was our first regional diversity program that ignited a new organizational ethic for preserving America's diverse history.

**Without a thorough reckoning with the complex and difficult history of our country, especially when it comes to race, we will not be able to overcome intolerance, injustice, and inequality.** ”

American story. We are focusing on our organizational culture in which equity-driven outcomes inform our work. And we are making room for Black preservation professionals to lead within our organization and drive social innovation. This reimagining is the beginning of our important work to honor and share the full contributions of Black Americans to our nation.

**VINSON:** Brent, you complete the power of this panel with those remarks. An Argentine president once said that history is too important to be left in the hands of historians. This quote has manifested itself in so many ways over time. What you are doing with the Trust, and I'm sure the audience agrees, points to that. And what's more is that in our nation, there is such a way in which historic

**GOLDBERG:** As a journalism news organization, *National Geographic* has an opportunity to help people make sense of the complex events of today. We can write about them and talk about them and show people those events, but because we are *National Geographic*, we can dive back into that history and help people put these events into context. When we were covering the events around the George Floyd protests, both photographically and in our writing, we were also looking back at the history of violence against Black Americans and the history of lynching in the United States. I wish it were true that our conversations, our stories, could help heal. But what I do think we can do is help inform and give a factual basis upon which people can have reasonable conversations. Later this week is Juneteenth. A lot of people don't know

what Juneteenth is. What we can do across our platforms, reaching millions of people, is write stories about Juneteenth and get people interested in it so they understand the importance of this date.

**DEGIOIA:** To add to what both Brent and Susan have shared: I think this moment is defined by a convergence of some external events that cannot be left unaddressed. And, at the same time, we are living through an extraordinary period of scholarship and of artistic creation, the kind of work that Susan, Brent, and Claudia are all deeply engaged in. The resources that are available to us right now are truly exceptional. And we know what the work is. We know that this enduring legacy of racism, of slavery and subsequent segregation, is sustained by two elements. It is sustained by our own beliefs, our attitudes, our biases and prejudices, our ways of interpreting and making meaning of our stories. As Claudia shared earlier, we know that the very ideas of race and subsequently of racism are social constructs, the product of early American scholarship, developed and nurtured in order to justify the institution of slavery. And the second element consists of institutional structures that perpetuate inequity and inequality. It is very important that we recognize two different kinds of work: what we might call interior work, the work on ourselves, of understanding our own interiority, and the importance of that work is right in front of us. And then, the institutional work of addressing the structural issues, the structural racism, the structural injustice built into our systems. I think the convergence of these external events and the resources now available to us make it imperative that we embrace this moment.

**VINSON:** Jack, let me follow up on the last point you made. Yes, we have the resources now. This is an incredible moment. All the things that Susan and Brent have signaled, that Claudia has called us to do, it seems like there's a template. But how do we do this? How does an organization or other institutions or individuals learn from what you have been able to do? What are the best practices that will guide us? Do you have any words of caution?

**DEGIOIA:** I will say there is no formula. We can learn from one another. We can share with one another. But each of us and each of our institutions have some distinctive work to do. We come from

different entry points. We carry distinctive aspects of our history and development as individuals and as institutions. Scholars of organizational design differentiate between adaptive change and technical change. What you are seeing a deeper grasp of is what might be called adaptive change. The kind of change that Claudia is describing is best understood as adaptive change. And here we want to recognize that for us, engaging with our history was inextricably connected with engaging with the questions of racial justice in this moment. And that animated our community in ways that were without precedent. We had some exceptional scholars doing great work, but we are also seeking to unlock new possibilities: the possibilities for deeper self-understanding as well as deeper understanding of the structures and systems. And you cannot predict where it is going to go. There is no telling where the work will lead. As I shared earlier, we certainly didn't presume that descendants would be interested in working with Georgetown. That they were opened up all kinds of new possibilities for us.

**GOLDBERG:** When grappling with your past journalistic sins, it helps to look at your current work through a new lens. And to do that you need to surround yourself with people who can help you identify your blind spots and who are going to be brave enough to say you are really missing something there, don't publish that picture, this needs a lot more explanation, or this needs a lot more context. As editors, we need to be open to those conversations. Does it mean we're going to always get it right? No, we are not. But we need to listen. The other thing that we can do, which is very practical, is to keep track of things. They often say you measure what you value. So, we measure. What is our byline count? How many are women, how many are men, and how many are people of color? Who are our photographers? What kinds of stories are we choosing to tell? And, very important, who are we quoting as experts? Are they all white men? When we started counting, I was dismayed by our results.

**LEGG:** As organizations, we need to measure inequity and injustice. We cannot track progress if we don't quantify those numbers, and that is key to advancing equity-driven outcomes. What I have seen at the National Trust – and I have worked in



this space for fifteen years – is that the places that we preserved have mirrored our nation’s social values. In many ways, what we see on the American landscape are mansions and historic sites associated with a few privileged and notable white men. When we look across our portfolio of historic sites in the National Trust, we have twenty-eight amazing places. But only one of those places directly reflects the Black experience. We have a lot of work to do to expand the American story and to hold ourselves accountable for creating inclusivity in the American landscape.

**GOLDBERG:** If I could add one more point about this: The January 2021 issue of *National Geographic* looked at the year 2020 in pictures. And on the cover, we put a photograph of the Robert E. Lee statue on Monument Avenue in Richmond, which was covered with graffiti and Black Lives Matter sentiments and had George Floyd’s image projected onto it. This has become an important piece of public art and protest art.

## We are not going to solve this country’s problems by not talking about them, by pretending these injustices didn’t happen. ”

**VINSON:** I have recently been rereading Alan Taylor’s book, *American Revolutions*. When you think about the progress of our nation over time, one thing stands true: One person’s justice is another person’s injustice. As we think about the work of historical reckoning, how do we engage constructively with those who resist, with those who are skeptical, with those who are critical? The Academy’s Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship has put forth that we have a common purpose, that we are looking to get to the same endpoint. How do we deal with those natural pockets of resistance?

**DEGIOIA:** As we know, resistance comes from many sources. There are those who would question, can we be trusted to engage in this work with integrity and competency? There are those who will ask, do we really need to bring all this stuff up? And there are others who might say after we have been engaged in this work for a few years, can we now put this behind us and move on? Some might say, why is there so much process? Others

will say we don’t have enough process. Adaptive change is difficult, and it can’t be done quickly. So, in response to your question, I think all we can do is show up every day and bring the resources that are now available to us. We can draw from folks like Professor Taylor and Professor Rankine. We have resources available to us. We want to pull all of that in and be unrelenting in our efforts to say there is a richer, truer story that needs to be told.

**GOLDBERG:** Jack, that is exactly right. One of the things I didn’t fully realize after we published our *National Geographic* issue in April 2018 was that there was a terrific public reception for what we had done. But there were also more people than I had anticipated who objected to our diving into the archives and for telling our story. Perhaps I was slightly naïve then. When I look at it now, I view it as a conversation that you have to have because we are not going to solve this country’s problems by not talking about them, by pretending these injustices didn’t happen. Elizabeth Alexander, a wonderful historian and poet, wrote an essay for us on “Reckoning with the Past” for our June issue in which she says, “Without learning, without knowledge, without the voices and the experience and the insights gained from a determined excavation of our country’s past, we will never eradicate racism and racial violence. We must live like we understand what history teaches us.” And that is true for a media organization like *National Geographic*.

**LEGGs:** I think resistance is rooted in the miseducation of Americans. I don’t know that we fully comprehend, as a society, the impact of place or the power of place on our individual identity as well as on our collective identities. When I think back to Charlottesville and to the white men in polo shirts and khaki pants holding tiki torches, rallying around a Thomas Jefferson sculpture on the campus of the University of Virginia, chanting, “You will not replace us,” that is clearly rooted in a misunderstanding of American history. But if we do the internal work to shift the culture within our organizations, which is often manifested in the broader society, then hopefully we’ll begin to make progress over the next couple of decades.

**DEGIOIA:** I would add one thing to what Susan and Brent have suggested, and that is, we all represent institutions. Part of the question before us today is the role of institutions. Growing up, I remember waiting each month for my issue of *National Geographic* to arrive, hopeful that there would be a map

stuffed inside, because getting those maps was a great treasure. When Brent described some of the places that provide us with our sense of orientation, we need to recognize that our institutions are touchstones for all of us. The work that you're asking us to comment on is fundamentally disorienting and destabilizing. Our institutions need to appreciate the challenge of sustaining this work. But if we can bring in Claudia Rankine's work and Craig Steven Wilder's work, we have grounds for hope that we might be able to come out of all of this in a better place.

**VINSON:** I have been watching the chat and I have to note that I agree with the comments that say that those who pitch this as a zero-sum game are perpetuating an atmosphere of injustice and are making it harder for us to reconcile. So, let me now ask, what does success look like ten years from now, fifteen years from now? Can we heal as a nation? Can we get to where we are trying to go?

**DEGIOIA:** Honestly, Ben, I don't know yet what success is going to look like. I suppose the fact that we are so deeply engaged in this work may be a sign of success. We are living with a set of questions today that I believe are deeper and more profound than the questions we were living with before. More people are engaged in asking these deeper questions. We are developing new resources to engage these questions. We have built some new institutional structures. We have recruited new talent. We have new voices. We have new places. We know we are already the beneficiaries of an enriched framework and I just hope we can continue the work of deepening the richness of that framework.

**GOLDBERG:** Ben, I sometimes hear people ask if we are done yet. Are we there yet? I don't think we are ever done because our country, our culture, and our demographics are evolving as we speak. It is important as a media organization to be aware of those conversations, to reflect those conversations, and to create content in which people can see themselves. So, what does success look like? I'm not exactly sure what it looks like but one of the elements of success will be: Are we doing stories in which young boys and girls of color see themselves in the meteorologists who are being quoted about the tornado or current weather event? Are

we creating stories that are inclusive and that will attract the widest and broadest number of readers? And that, to me, means making sure that we have put a stake in the ground and that we are following through on our commitments to create the kind of content with the kind of storytellers who we need to have.

**LEGG:** As a preservationist, I think success means that we have centered blackness in American history and redefined our nation's traditional understanding of itself. This reimagining of American history would be very powerful. And if we do that through a lens of diversity, I think that is success. I also think if we build up a replicable process for other institutions to follow, that too would be success. I have been thinking about four goals that might inform what this process looks like. First, we have to tell the truth about our nation's four hundred plus years of history. Second, we have to begin to reconcile our racist past and develop a shared belief for this cultural reckoning. Third, we have to acknowledge that we need to repair and make amends. And fourth, collectively, we have to want to heal the harmful impacts of racism in all sectors of society.

“ It is critical that we begin to tell a fuller American story and that the collective experience of all Americans – LGBTQ, women, Asian Americans, Latino Americans, Native Americans, and African Americans – is evident on the American landscape.

**VINSON:** Thinking about the future of American democracy links back to the work of the Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship and our report, *Our Common Purpose*. The word *experiment* was used by one of our panelists. In some ways, our work is like an experiment: we continue to tinker with it.

The work of reconstructing our democracy at this moment has to deal obviously with the question of race. I would like to ask each of our panelists to talk about how jumpstarting the process



of renewing faith in American democracy, how thinking about the very fabric of who we are as a nation and as a democracy, and how moving across partisan divides can restore our civic faith.

**As institutions, we must self-evaluate and research our own failings in upholding the principles of our democracy, and we must fully understand the inherent biases and injustices perpetuated by our work.** ”

**LEGGs:** We are seeing truth in place at historic sites like James Madison’s Montpelier and at Georgetown University, where descendant community engagement is crucial to realizing the goals of democracy, in which there are new models for shared governance and authority. I believe the only way that we can express our democratic values is to create that shared sense of governance and authority. An equitable American democracy means that we have to redefine our civic identity, and that goes back to my earlier point: it is critical that we begin to tell a fuller American story and that the collective experience of all Americans – LGBTQ, women, Asian Americans, Latino Americans, Native Americans, and African Americans – is evident on the American landscape. As institutions, we must self-evaluate and research our own failings in upholding the principles of our democracy, and we must fully understand the inherent biases and injustices perpetuated by our work.

**DEGIOIA:** We know we have a truer story to tell. I would like to share a quick anecdote. In the fall of 2016, the National Museum of African American History and Culture had just opened. At the time, I was teaching a seminar on justice, and we were reading very early in the semester Edward Baptist’s *The Half Has Never Been Told*, which illuminates the connection between slavery and capitalism. The week after we read the book, we visited the museum as a class. We went on a Sunday, the week following the museum’s opening. One of my students came into seminar the following morning – we met on Monday mornings – and shared that she had taken time earlier that weekend to visit the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History. And she told us that she was having a difficult time reconciling those two experiences. I think that is

what Brent was referring to a moment ago in terms of the fuller story and a truer story. If we have faith in the power of truth, I think we have the resources that can enable us to strengthen this democracy.

**GOLDBERG:** This is where we find the real opportunity. As a journalist, you learn early on that you can frame your story to show people’s differences or their commonalities. As a writer or as a photographer, you are either showing how odd this group of people is or you are showing that we are all just people: we laugh at the same things and enjoy many of the same things even if we come from very different cultures and backgrounds. There is an approach to storytelling that can help remind us of our common humanity and our common bonds as Americans. I think it is imperative that we do not lose sight of that.

**VINSON:** I want to thank our panelists for indulging me in a few questions. The Zoom chat is really exploding, so I am going to turn things over to Darshan Goux from the Academy, who will manage the discussion session with questions from our audience.

## Q&A SESSION

### Darshan Goux

Darshan Goux is the Program Director for American Institutions, Society, and the Public Good at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

**T**hank you, Ben, and I want to thank all our panelists for a wonderful conversation. We are going to try to get to as many of the questions from our audience as we can. I also want to welcome back Claudia Rankine to the discussion. Our first audience question is: how can we reconcile and combine historical narratives that directly contradict one another?

**LEGGs:** The contradiction is that the Black experience has been defined stereotypically through the lens of slavery. The way that we flip the script on that narrative is that we also highlight Black excellence, Black contributions to science and business, and all the other overlooked and untold stories as a way to create a new perception of what it means to be Black and American.

**GOLDBERG:** Brent's comments remind me of a story we did a couple of years ago about Rwanda. It wasn't about the wildlife or the genocide of 1994. It was a story of how Rwanda is becoming a hub for technology, with many young people becoming computer scientists. As Brent said, we need to flip the script. We didn't go with the expected story. We looked for a story that would tell people something that they don't know about another group and by doing that we hopefully get to those real stories.

**DEGIOIA:** Contradictory stories place a different kind of demand on us. And we want to interrogate the contradiction. Are both stories true? If one is more dominant, why is it more dominant, and what's the origin story of that dominant narrative? What is animating these contradictions? Can we work our way toward a true understanding of where in this contradiction the truer story lies? We can strive for a best account in any given moment, but it is always provisional, always subject to the next scholar or artist who comes along.

**RANKINE:** Susan, I'm wondering if you have addressed the story of January 6 in the magazine. It seems to me that not addressing the insurrection is one of the deepest wounds of the last year. And it will be difficult psychically to walk back from that if we allow it to fade away. What is being done in terms of thinking about the legacy and activity of white supremacy in this country, and how is that being looked at alongside the oppressive, systemic racism that we all know needs to be examined?

**GOLDBERG:** Somewhat serendipitously, we had a photographer there on January 6, Louie Palu, who was doing a story funded by the National Geographic Society about American democracy. He was taking pictures during Donald Trump's speech. And as the crowd started moving toward the Capitol, he followed them. He got caught up in that hallway where all hell and craziness were breaking loose. He took pictures and a video, and we posted these stories and recorded what happened. I agree with you that while we don't cover politics, we have to cover that deeper story. Our new June issue is about reckoning with the past. It contains the essay by Elizabeth Alexander that I referred to earlier and photos that show the Black Capitol police officer confronting the

insurrectionists right inside the building. It is important to stay on these stories.

**RANKINE:** But if those images are not put in front of us, do we then allow for the benevolence of whiteness to become a continued narrative alongside the investigation of systemic racism?

“ What is being done in terms of thinking about the legacy and activity of white supremacy in this country, and how is that being looked at alongside the oppressive, systemic racism that we all know needs to be examined?

**GOLDBERG:** What we can do is to cover the ongoing and important stories that get to racial equity and equality. We are working on a story about segregated housing; and we have done stories about environmental racism and about the unequal impact of COVID-19 on Blacks compared to whites. Those are the kinds of stories that highlight the inequities and the discrimination.

**LEGGs:** It's important that these moments of racial violence are preserved and interpreted in a way that's going to foster truth-telling and healing. I think about the Capitol building. I think about Fort Monroe, where the 1619 Project started. I think about Vernon AME Church in Tulsa. It is important that our nation begins to understand the role and impact of white racial violence and the racial massacres in American history, like the Tulsa Race Massacre, which have contributed to the loss of capital, both cultural and financial, and the need to repair a century-long injustice. Without these historic places, without the photographs and stories and all the ways that we communicate inequity and injustice, we will continue to be in a vicious circle without healing.

**GOUX:** Thank you. The next question is how should institutions respond to laws being passed that call on censoring history as it relates to race and racism?



**GOLDBERG:** I would say, and this goes back to Brent's last point, that we need to make sure that history is seen, that credible, factual storytelling gets done on very public platforms. You mentioned Tulsa. We did a magazine story about Tulsa. We did a podcast about Tulsa. We have a television documentary about Tulsa. We have digital storytelling around Tulsa. All of this is a great example of what we can do to bring the truth into the light and put it out there in the most public way possible.

**DEGIOIA:** Our campuses provide forums for public engagement with the ideas that are defining any particular moment. As we are seeing now in terms of censoring history, it is that much more incumbent upon us to ensure that the distinctive roles that our universities play in our society are activated in these moments in ways that ensure that the kinds of voices that Claudia was describing in her opening reflections are protected and provided the framework to allow their engagement.

**GOUX:** For those members of our audience who are interested in taking on this work in their own communities, at their own smaller organizations, but they do not have the resources that your institutions have, what advice do you have for them as they try to embark on this journey?

**Our campuses provide forums for public engagement with the ideas that are defining any particular moment. As we are seeing now in terms of censoring history, it is that much more incumbent upon us to ensure that the distinctive roles that our universities play in our society are activated in these moments . ”**

**LEGGs:** Our preservation infrastructure includes the National Parks Service at the federal level working within the Department of the Interior. But the majority of the preservation work is done by nonprofits at the national, state, and local levels. Our charge is to help society manage change in ways that don't disconnect it from the legacies of its past. And so, we advise preservationists across the country to engage descendant communities in the work. We advise them to recruit diverse talent in mid-management and senior levels.

We advise them to be expansive in their programming and interpretation. We advise them to commit long term to this work of equity, diversity, and inclusion because the worst thing is to have this diversity work become a trend, as we've seen in the past. Having a perpetual commitment to the work is critical.

**GOLDBERG:** I would just add that I don't think you need to be a gigantic media organization to decide what stories you want to tell. In your college newspaper, you can decide what stories you think are the most important ones to cover for your community and where you can shine a spotlight and really do some good. Many of us became journalists because we wanted to change things for the better. So, shine a spotlight into the dark corners to illuminate what's wrong so it can be fixed. Shine a spotlight on the heroes of the world and where things are going well so it can be emulated. You don't need tons of money or a giant staff to do those things.

**RANKINE:** I would add that if we begin to look at anti-oppressive practices within our own organizations, that is a place to start. Begin with simple things like who has access to your organization? If we begin to self-interrogate within our own boards and within our own organizations, that is the first step toward doing this work.

**GOUX:** I am grateful to all of you for this wonderful conversation.

**OXTOBY:** I too would like to thank our speakers. Thank you, Ben Vinson, Jack DeGioia, Susan Goldberg, Brent Leggs, and Claudia Rankine for leading such a powerful and thought-provoking conversation. I hope that our audience feels better prepared to approach reckoning at their own institutions. I know that those of us at the American Academy are looking forward to continuing our own historic self-examination and I encourage us to follow each other's progress, to continue to share best practices, and to keep each other accountable as we undertake this work.

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© 2021 by Claudia Rankine, Ben Vinson, John J. DeGioia, Susan Goldberg, and Brent Leggs, respectively



To view or listen to the presentation, visit [www.amacad.org/events/reckoning-organizational-history](http://www.amacad.org/events/reckoning-organizational-history).

# NEW HORIZONS

## Elevating the Arts in American Life

2101st Stated Meeting | October 27, 2021 | Virtual Event

To celebrate the arts, artists, and the work of the Academy's Commission on the Arts, **Stephen Colbert**, host of "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert," talked with Commission Cochairs **John Lithgow**, **Deborah Rutter**, and **Natasha Trethewey**. The program included poetry, music, and a discussion of the recommendations developed by the Commission to elevate the arts, support artists, and promote arts education in America. The event also introduced Mixtape, an online collection of arts experiences that features members of the Commission and members of the Academy. An edited version of the presentations, conversation, and Q&A session follows.







## Natasha D. Trethewey

Natasha D. Trethewey is Board of Trustees Professor of English in the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences at Northwestern University. She served two terms as the 19th Poet Laureate of the United States (2012–2014). She was elected a Fellow of the American Academy in 2013, is a member of the Academy's Board of Directors, and is a cochair of the Academy's Commission on the Arts.

**T**hank you for joining us in this celebration of the Commission's work. As invocation, I am going to read a poem that speaks both to the necessity for and the resilience of the arts. It is a poem by an Academy member, the late Lucille Clifton, entitled "won't you celebrate with me."

won't you celebrate with me  
what i have shaped into  
a kind of life? i had no model.  
born in babylon  
both nonwhite and woman  
what did i see to be except myself?  
i made it up  
here on this bridge between  
starshine and clay,  
my one hand holding tight  
my other hand; come celebrate  
with me that everyday  
something has tried to kill me  
and has failed.

Lucille Clifton, "won't you celebrate with me," from *Collected Poems of Lucille Clifton*. Copyright © 1991 by Lucille Clifton. Reprinted with permission of BOA Editions Ltd., [www.boaeditions.org](http://www.boaeditions.org).





## David W. Oxtoby

David W. Oxtoby is President of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was elected a Fellow of the American Academy in 2012.

**T**hank you, Natasha, for that beautiful beginning. And thank you all for joining our program “New Horizons: Elevating the Arts in American Life,” a celebration of the work of the Academy’s Commission on the Arts. As president of the American Academy, it is my distinct pleasure to officially call to order the 2101st Stated Meeting of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Since our founding in 1780, the American Academy has worked to address the most critical issues facing the nation, regularly assembling for Stated Meetings to have important and timely conversations. In recent years, that work has included cross-disciplinary projects and commissions to address science communication, democratic citizenship, undergraduate education, and now the arts. Today is the day to honor the hard work of our Commission on the Arts and to share the results of their three years of effort to bring greater recognition and resources to the arts and to artists. As you will see and hear today, the Commission’s final reports and projects respond directly to unique challenges facing the arts in our current world. The incredible work of the Commission is reflective of the diverse perspectives and experiences of its members and especially of its three cochair, who are here today. You have already heard from one cochair, Natasha Trethewey, who opened the program with that powerful poem by Academy

member Lucille Clifton. Natasha is the Board of Trustees Professor of English at Northwestern University and a Pulitzer Prize–winning poet. She also served two terms as the nation’s Poet Laureate (from 2012–2014). She is the author and editor of many volumes of poetry, and while serving as Poet Laureate, she developed the PBS *NewsHour* series, “Where Poetry Lives.” Natasha was elected to the American Academy in 2013 and is a member of our Board of Directors. Our second cochair is Deborah Rutter, who has served as president of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts since 2014. The Kennedy Center is the world’s busiest performing arts center, presenting theater, contemporary dance, ballet, vocal music, chamber music, hip-hop, comedy, international arts, jazz, classical music, and opera. Her tenure has focused on supporting arts education and creating opportunities for encounters between artists and the public. Deborah was previously the president of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association. She was elected to the Academy in 2018 and is a member of our Board of Directors. And our third cochair is actor and author John Lithgow. John is a prolific artist and arts advocate, whose work spans many mediums. He has written children’s books, recorded albums, and performed on the stage, screen, and television. Through his genre-spanning career, John has been nominated for two Academy Awards and received two Tonys, six Emmys, and two Golden Globes. John was elected to the American Academy in 2010 and has served on our Board of Directors and on an earlier Academy Commission on the Humanities and Social Sciences. It is my pleasure to turn things over to John, who will elaborate on the work of the Commission and the crisis facing the arts today.

**Since our founding in 1780, the American Academy has worked to address the most critical issues facing the nation, regularly assembling for Stated Meetings to have important and timely conversations. In recent years, that work has included cross-disciplinary projects and commissions to address science communication, democratic citizenship, undergraduate education, and now the arts. ”**

## John A. Lithgow

John A. Lithgow is an actor and author. He has appeared in over twenty productions on Broadway, including *The Changing Room* and the musical adaptation of *Sweet Smell of Success*; he won Tony Awards for both. He was elected a Fellow of the American Academy in 2010 and has served as a member of the Academy's Board of Directors and as a member of the Academy's Commission on the Humanities and Social Sciences. He is currently a cochair of the Academy's Commission on the Arts.

In 1780, John Adams had his eye on the future and his mind on the arts. Adams, the cofounder of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, stated that he must “study politics and war so that [his grandchildren] could study painting, poetry, music, architecture, statuary, tapestry, and porcelain.” This florid proclamation from a founding father is hard evidence that from the very beginning, the arts have been at the heart of the great American experiment. In the estimation of John Adams, our highest aspirations as a nation even included porcelain.

Today marks the culmination of a three-year American Academy of Arts and Sciences' Commission on the Arts. It is the most recent among scores of Academy research projects over the years, but

despite the optimistic timeline of John Adams, it is the first devoted exclusively to the arts. Our forty-plus commissioners include the heads of arts institutions, foundations, and philanthropies but also artists of every stripe – surely the most colorful and diverse group the Academy has ever convened.

The Commission may have been a long time coming, but it could not have come at a more crucial time. Indeed, over the course of its three-year life, the urgency of its mission has shot up, and the reasons are obvious. When we first met three years ago, we set out to survey the state of the arts in America today, an assignment equal parts celebratory and exploratory. We were eager to highlight the exuberance and variety of creative life in all fifty states of the nation, but we aspired to far more



than cheery boosterism. We were equally intent on addressing issues of need, neglect, and inequality across the artistic landscape. Our commissioners brought extraordinary breadth and depth to these intractable problems. They have spent their careers grappling with them, but in joining forces, they attacked these challenges with a renewed sense of can-do optimism.

In 1780, John Adams had his eye on the future and his mind on the arts . . . from the very beginning, the arts have been at the heart of the great American experiment. ”

Our first in-person sessions were downright festive, but then halfway through our journey everything changed. The curtain descended on our festivities. COVID struck, the American economy tanked, and George Floyd was murdered in Minneapolis, triggering a nationwide outcry for racial justice. These three concurrent crises throttled every American community and exposed gaping fault lines in our social contract. For artists, the impact was catastrophic. A life in the arts can be hard at the best of times, but 2020 was a year of desperation and panic. For the most part, the arts rely on crowds of people gathered in a shared experience. For artists, a world without an audience is a garden without sunlight: it desiccates and dies.

But our Commission soldiered on with grim determination. We met in small groups on Zoom and took on a pressing, new question: What can we do to help shore up the livelihood of the American artist and bring the arts back to life? We took a hard look at all our pre-pandemic goals and reconfigured them to address the immediate firestorm. The two reports we produced reflect this midstream pivot. They focus on challenges that existed in the American arts community long before the COVID crisis struck, but the crisis itself has rendered these challenges existential. The titles of the two reports announce their urgent themes. The first is entitled *Art for Life's Sake: The Case for Arts Education*, and the second is *Art Is Work: Policies to Support Creative Workers*.

With this two-pronged approach, we have worked to address the deprivations endured by two vast American populations in a time of crisis: our young people who have lost a precious year of education and social development, and our arts

workers whose professional lives have been ravaged. These are dark themes to be sure, but in all our deliberations, we have been driven by the fervent belief in the power of art to energize, heal, educate, provoke, unify, and bring joy to human beings. In our view, art is not simply a luxury; it is essential to civil society and to the strength of the human spirit.

John Adams and the rest of our founding fathers agreed. History tells us that Thomas Jefferson in drafting the Declaration of Independence reworked John Locke's triad of life, liberty, and property. For property, Jefferson substituted the pursuit of happiness. That remains the most enduring phrase in that founding document. Jefferson, an architect and violinist as well as a statesman, surely had art on his mind when he penned it. For an artist, self-expression is the pursuit of happiness, but the rest of us pursue happiness too. Every time we listen to music, read a story, recite a poem, sit in an audience, or linger on a visual image, art exists in all our private and public spaces often when we barely notice that it is there.

We on the Arts Commission of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences declare that now more than ever the arts must not be neglected and must not be taken for granted. For our collective good, for the good of our nation, and for our right to the pursuit of happiness, the arts must be supported.

**OXTOBY:** Thank you, John. The American Academy is proud to realize the vision of our founders by addressing the arts head on with this commission. Under the leadership of John, Natasha, and Deborah, the Commission on the Arts has done incredible work, nimbly responding to the tumult of the last few years. The two reports produced by the Commission reflect the work of not just the cochairs, but over forty commissioners – artists, scholars, activists, and leaders of institutions and philanthropies – as well as Academy staff and participants from the wider arts world, who embraced our mission, joining in conversations, sharing their work, and spreading the word. Many of you are in the audience today, and I want to thank you for offering your time and talents to this vital work. We are also grateful for the support of the Barr Foundation, Ford Foundation, Getty Foundation, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Kresge Foundation, and Roger and Victoria Sant, as well as the partnership with the Public Broadcasting Service and the Kennedy Center. I would now like to turn to Deborah, who will introduce our next segment.

## Deborah F. Rutter

Deborah F. Rutter is President of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. She was elected a Fellow of the American Academy in 2018, is a member of the Academy's Board of Directors, and is a cochair of the Academy's Commission on the Arts.



**T**hank you, David. What a joy it is for all of us to be together, even in this virtual way. My two amazing, talented, fantastic co-chairs are both artists, and you have already had a little bit of that experience with them. What a beautiful way for us to start this conversation today. My contribution is secondhand: it is a short, but fun clip from the recent PBS broadcast of the fiftieth anniversary celebration concert at the Kennedy Center, perhaps the first of its scale to happen in our country, and certainly in our nation's capital. The clip features the amazing jazz vocalist Dianne Reeves and bassist Christian McBride, with a surprise collaborator, Ray Chen, together with the National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Thomas Wilkins. And stay tuned for some extra special surprises of tap and some swing dancing. Here is Duke Ellington's "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)."

[Event participants watch a clip of the Kennedy Center concert.]

**OXTOBY:** That was wonderful. Thank you, Deborah. The motivating force for our Commission's exploration of policy, law, economics, and education was always the power of the arts. The piece you shared is such a vivid illustration of that power. We are grateful to the Kennedy Center for providing the clip. And now let us turn to a conversation between our three cochairs and Stephen Colbert, arts advocate and host of "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert" on CBS.

**LITHGOW:** We three cochairs of the Arts Commission are honored and delighted that Stephen Colbert has agreed to join us to discuss our two reports and the life of the Commission. Stephen, welcome to our team, and thanks so much for having a conversation with us.





## Stephen Colbert

Stephen Colbert is the host of the Emmy and Peabody Award-winning show “The Late Show with Stephen Colbert.”

**J**ohn, I am very happy to be here, and it is so nice to see you again. Deborah and Natasha, very nice to meet you. My first question to all of you is about the Commission and its goals. The Commission has just released a report that makes the case for the value of arts in our education and the value of arts generally in our society. I am curious how you each first encountered art in your own education.

**LITHGOW:** I was a public school kid, and not just one public school. I grew up in a theater family. I went to eight different public schools, but in two key years of my life, perhaps key years in everybody's life, during the ninth and tenth grades, I was lucky enough to be in Akron, Ohio, when their school system believed deeply in the importance of the arts in education. Someone on their school board had the bright idea that students interested in the arts should begin their day with two full periods of art, whether it was music or studio art. At that point in my life, I wanted to be a painter or a printmaker; acting was the last thing I wanted to do. And as a result, I could not wait to get to school every day. That is the thing about enlivening the school experience for kids, making them much more eager to stay in and complete school. Sports has very much that effect, and the arts certainly had that effect on me. My two favorite teachers in public school were Mrs. Thomas in ninth grade and Miss Robinson in tenth grade. Of course, I did not become a painter; everybody knows that. I became an actor.

**COLBERT:** I have one of your drawings hanging proudly on my office wall, John.

**LITHGOW:** Well, every chance I get, I draw a picture of Stephen Colbert!

**COLBERT:** Natasha, how did you first encounter the arts in your education?

**TRETHEWEY:** My experience is actually very similar to John's. I started elementary school in Atlanta, in a place that gave us two periods of art first thing in the morning: art class and then music class. I love thinking that that is how we started the day when we were probably at our sharpest and most eager to be there. And it got us going for everything else we had to do for the rest of the day. By the time I was in third grade, we were writing and reading poetry, and that was a transformative experience for me because my teacher and my librarian at the school bound my first volume of poems and put them in the school library. I felt seen as a poet even then, and later, of course, I became one.

**COLBERT:** Deborah, where did you first encounter the arts as a child?

**RUTTER:** Well, I think we have a theme here, and I promise you we did not plan this. I come from a musical family, and I started playing piano as a very young child. But it was in the third grade in elementary school, when the teacher opened the cabinet and asked, "What instrument will you play?" that I can point to as a significant moment. It is the same story as John's and Natasha's. I chose the violin, and that choice has determined the rest of my life.

**COLBERT:** That moment? You can literally point to that moment?

**RUTTER:** Yes, I absolutely point to that moment all the time. I play the piano now for fun, but it is that moment, it is the exploration of the way you feel and the collaboration and the intense discipline of being a musician, that has driven every single important decision of my life.

**COLBERT:** What was the first piece of art of any kind that moved you when you think back to your childhood? I'll go first. My mother had a beautiful collection of art books when I was a child, the sort with rice paper in between the prints. From a very young age, without being pointed toward it, I was completely enraptured by *Starry Night* by van Gogh, and I would return to it over and over again. When I think of my earliest memory of being moved by a piece of art, it is that painting. Do you have a first memory like that?

**LITHGOW:** My mother saved drawings from when I was four or five years old. I always drew, and I always loved color and line. But when I was thirteen, I would say that aha moment for me was a visit to Washington, D.C., to stay a couple of days with an aunt and uncle; my uncle worked in government. Knowing my interest in art, they dropped me off at the National Gallery, where I spent two of my three days of my visit with my aunt and uncle. Thinking about it now, they were probably trying to get rid of me! I was simply drunk on the history of art. It was extraordinary, and I have been a museum fanatic ever since. Every time I visit a new city, which I do often because of my crazy career, the art museum is always the first place I go.

**COLBERT:** John, you could have a series of specials in which you recreate that experience in the National Gallery.



**LITHGOW:** Single malt whiskey would be an important prop for that series.

**COLBERT:** Natasha, was there a poem when you were a child that moved you?

**TRETHERWEY:** As you asked that question, I was thinking of two things. My father was a poet, and so from a very early age, I can remember listening to my father recite poetry – from the *Lyrical Ballads* by Wordsworth and the poems of Yeats and Robert Frost – and then also hearing him as

from that same period of performing “L’Arlésienne Suite” by Bizet, a beautiful work, that was arranged for a school orchestra. It is the physical experience as well as the aural experience that I recall so well. It goes to these experiences that you have at a very young age and how that really sets a course for you – and that is what arts education is all about. Whether you become an arts administrator like me or an artist like my two colleagues, that experience at a very young age is so transformative about how you think, how you feel, and what you do with the rest of your life.

The goals of the Commission were to look at the arts – look at the urgent needs, look at issues like access to the arts in education and the arts in the creative workforce. And then halfway through our work the pandemic hit, and the mission of the Commission changed radically. Our recommendations are all about helping the arts come back and helping artists regain their livelihood. ”

he worked on his own poems. But the other thing I was thinking about was my grandmother, who was a drapery seamstress. We don’t always think of crafts like that as art. But my grandmother was very invested in making beauty, and at one point, she grabbed bolts of fabric that she had that were printed with various scenes from nature, and she decided to make paintings. My grandmother was a working-class woman and would make the art in her home. She took big bolts of cloth, framed them with bric-a-brac and little decorations, and hung them on the walls of this long hallway, transforming it into an art gallery. One of my earliest poems is about the need to make art, and that memory of my grandmother stays with me.

**COLBERT:** Deborah, what about you? Beyond that moment with the violin or maybe even perhaps that is the moment, do you recall when the arts called to you in an interesting way?

**RUTTER:** I have two stories: one good and one bad, but therefore directional. The bad one was a school play. It was a Charlie Brown play because we were in elementary school, and I was cast as Lucy. No comment allowed, Mr. Lithgow! I couldn’t do it. I couldn’t remember the lines. I was terrified, and I will never do anything like that ever again. But what it made me realize is how much I loved playing in an orchestra. I have a very strong memory

**COLBERT:** That transformative feeling of being part of the orchestra – I had a similar experience when I was a child. I was in the choir singing Mozart’s “Mass,” and I had the feeling almost as if I was levitating as we all found the harmony and the rhythm. I realized it was a very special moment that could only be created with intention for those of us seeking the same creative moment.

The next question: what was the intention of the 2018 Commission?

**LITHGOW:** The goals of the Commission were to look at the arts – look at the urgent needs, look at issues like access to the arts in education and the arts in the creative workforce, which is the focus of the second of our two reports. And then halfway through our work the pandemic hit, and suddenly everything that was an urgent problem when we created the Commission and began examining, working, and researching became a catastrophic problem. The mission of the Commission changed radically. Our recommendations are all about helping the arts come back and helping artists regain their livelihood. It is difficult because, of course, we are dealing with public policy, and we are making recommendations at the federal and state levels. The arts are notoriously a political football if you look at the history of the NEA over the last forty years. The heyday was back when John F. Kennedy held concerts in the

East Room of the White House with famous artists, such as Pablo Casals. The arts have struggled terribly since then, and so the Commission is responding to that need.

**COLBERT:** Thank you, John. Deborah, how did we get to this point where the arts have become underfunded and undervalued? Is it merely budgetary, or is there some hostility to the arts?

**RUTTER:** I don't believe there is any hostility to the arts, Stephen. And I appreciate your asking the question in that way because, in fact, we know that most Americans understand and believe in the power of the arts and the arts experience. More than 80 percent of Americans say it is important and valuable to have the arts a part of our lives. The issue is about funding. To add to what John said, the NEA was founded in 1965 and it had an appropriation in its first year of \$2.8 million – small money in some ways. But if you think about that money and advance it with the value of the dollar, it would be many times greater than the \$167 million appropriation it has today. So, it is budgetary, and unlike much of the rest of the world, the NEA is not getting support of the same degree from across the leadership at the federal, state, and local levels. It is always struggling to keep going forward. It is about priority and the value given to the arts.

**COLBERT:** Natasha, I love poetry. I go to it for the same reason I go to the Scriptures: for centering, to give me a broader view of my own experience, and to open myself up to other people's experiences so I can understand the fullness of my humanity. From your point of view as both a poet and an educator, how does poetry make for a better citizen?

**TRETHERWEY:** If Scripture is the sacred word, then poetry is the living word. And because poetry involves the intimacy of a single voice speaking to us across the distances, it allows for us to hear each other in different ways than we might otherwise in a world full of sound bites and clichés. It asks that we be more observant, more empathetic. It asks us to understand things not only on a literal level but through the possibilities of figurative language and imagery that can make the mind leap to a new apprehension of things. When we hear each other differently, it can make better citizens of us. It can make us understand the world and see it through

the eyes of someone else. One of the things that poetry did for me and what I try to show to my students is that there are poems out there for all of us that either speak to us or for us, and that when we make our own, we join in a conversation that is ancient and ongoing. We add our voice to the song, and that is participating in citizenship.

“ Most Americans understand and believe in the power of the arts and the arts experience. More than 80 percent of Americans say it is important and valuable to have the arts a part of our lives.

**COLBERT:** Following that idea of citizenship, there is so much worry, and I think well founded today, that we are in danger of not having shared values as citizens of the United States and as citizens of the world. But especially in the United States, not having a common set of values would be a dangerous thing for us. John, I am wondering what role the arts in all their forms play in outlining or guiding us to those common values?

**LITHGOW:** I think the arts could play a major role, and to an extent they already play a role: there are certain arts phenomena that bring everybody together. When you have a colossally popular movie or a television show or a piece of music, there is a sense that this is a great American achievement that touches all of us, that we all share and are proud of. But there could be so much more of that. One interesting aspect of our Commission is the diversity of the Commission members, both geographically and in every other conceivable way. And beyond that, the Academy staff, a remarkable group, reached out across the country and assembled roundtables of people who had already created their many versions of what we were doing. Some knew each other because they had been brought together before, but many were unaware of one another. One of the recommendations in our creative workforce report is to create what we would call a policy exchange: the federal government would oversee a program that would put people in contact so that those involved in the



arts, for example, in Alaska, California, and New Jersey, where incidentally Evie Colbert is active in the state commission for the arts, could create a unified voice. The biggest problem we have in this country is the word *unification*: bringing us together. Everybody has a strong sense of how divided we are and what a terrifying crisis that is. The arts are the best way of addressing that.

**COLBERT:** Is there an issue dealing with politicians who are being asked to fund the arts, support the arts, or focus on the arts? Artists tend to be iconoclastic, and political systems are often based on status. Is there anything threatening about the arts to those in power?

**RUTTER:** In my experience, no. In fact, there is a great deal of respect, a fair bit of awe, and as much interest in the magic of what is created by an artist. I get to stand side-by-side with many of the elected officials of our country, and they say to me, “My goodness, is that John Lithgow, is that really him? Do you think he would sign my program? Could I have a picture with him? Isn’t it amazing what he does?” And the same for Natasha: “How is she able to be so facile with these words?” I don’t believe that you can broadly say that there is an issue of politics with the arts and with the artists themselves.

Because poetry involves the intimacy of a single voice speaking to us across the distances, it allows for us to hear each other in different ways than we might otherwise in a world full of sound bites and clichés. ”

**COLBERT:** I’m so glad to hear that because I have hosted the Kennedy Center Honors a few times, and one of the things that always struck me is that the evening is completely apolitical. You look out at a sea of people, and I know all their faces. I know all their political positions, but they are there in support of the arts. It gives me hope when I see that.

**LITHGOW:** We in the arts are in the empathy business, and I have a certain empathy for policy-makers and elected officials. They are, of course, overwhelmed; I mean just look at the politics of this week. These people are experts at these intractable

problems no matter what their political point of view, and they wrestle with them constantly. But they do not consider themselves experts on the arts at all. I don’t think they see it as part of their bailiwick in D.C. And so that is one of our great responsibilities: to persuade them. The arts should be just as much at the center of our lives as our economy or our foreign policy or our domestic policy. Not only are the arts essential and almost existential, but they are fun and a joyful subject. I mean artists very much want to go to Washington and be heard. We are just one of many organizations and groups that want desperately to be heard in D.C. and that want to change people’s minds for the better.

**COLBERT:** Natasha, creating a piece of art can be a taxing and challenging thing to choose to do for your life’s work, but it fills you with vitality. Unfortunately, the pandemic made it even harder for people who are trying to make a life in the arts, especially arts that are collective arts. Is there any advice you give to people who may have been ready to throw in the towel after eighteen months of this pandemic, who find the challenge of living an artist’s life too hard?

**TRETHEWEY:** That is a hard question because, of course, people need to make a living. In our report we talk about how hard it is for artists to make a living. But I also believe it is something you must do because you have to do it, because you are called to do it. Because if you didn’t do it, a little part of your soul might die. For me, a little part of my soul might die if I didn’t write poetry.

**COLBERT:** Is there any art you turned to during the pandemic for your soul’s ease?

**TRETHEWEY:** Well, I turned constantly to poetry. And recently I turned to the poetry of Muriel Rukeyser, who first became aware of what was happening in the world when she was about five years old. She remembers the false armistice, but she was also living in the middle of a pandemic, the first one we had a hundred years ago. And so to turn to her work and to see how she came out of that to write and to deal with the challenges that we face even now is something that helped me contend with this moment that we are in.

**LITHGOW:** May I interrupt to give a shout-out to the book Natasha published during the middle of the pandemic? She wrote a memoir called

*Memorial Drive*, which is one of the great books of last year and one of the most nakedly personal pieces of writing I have ever read. I didn't want the moment to pass without saying that.

**TRETHERWEY:** Thank you.

**COLBERT:** Deborah, tell me about Turnaround Arts at the Kennedy Center. What is the purpose of the program?

**RUTTER:** Turnaround Arts is a special program created by artists who want to help the lowest performing schools across the country integrate the arts into their curriculum and into the culture of the school. As the celebrity artists, they are the sponsor, the support mechanism, and the cheerleader for that effort. The program is now over a decade old, and we are in eighty schools across the country and in several different districts. Some of the districts have just truly exploded, and you can see remarkable turnaround in the success of the schools. We are not trying to produce more actors or more musicians, though we are probably creating more poets. More importantly, this program has helped with school attendance and graduation rates. It is a great program and an exemplar that an arts curriculum does serve all these other needs as well. It is not about having a student orchestra, but about embracing the arts and integrating the arts into the school day.

**LITHGOW:** I think it is worth saying that the very term "turnaround arts" came from the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, which was disbanded. One of the Commission's recommendations is to reconstitute that committee at the federal level, indeed within the executive branch of the federal government. If you create a conduit for it, remarkable things will happen.

**COLBERT:** On that hopeful note, the Commission describes its work as a call to action that embraces optimism. What gives you hope right now about the arts, especially considering this past year? John, I will start with you.

**LITHGOW:** One thing that gives me hope is the fact that art did not stop last year. Artists found ways to express themselves publicly and privately. They made great use of the Internet. The explosion of love

and enthusiasm was heartening. I am in New York, and I am seeing the New York theater come back to life. There is a hunger for theater now, and that gives me enormous optimism. Art is coming back.

**COLBERT:** Natasha, what gives you hope?

**TRETHERWEY:** Well, it is very similar to what John said. The idea that during the pandemic, people who didn't think of themselves as artists turned to art. They viewed and witnessed art on Zoom. And we had many more people on Zoom for a poetry reading than we might have ever had in person because Zoom can travel around the world. We had people tuning in, and we had people who might not think of themselves as artists turning to make art themselves and to make poems. We need to honor the impulse that we have to make something.

“ One thing that gives me hope is the fact that art did not stop last year. Artists found ways to express themselves publicly and privately.

**COLBERT:** Deborah?

**RUTTER:** I think art became more personal and more intimate. As we spent more time by ourselves or in small spaces with others, it gave us an opportunity to think about ourselves, our role, and the ways in which we value the quality of our lives. As a result, as Natasha said, there was more experimentation and exploration. The Kennedy Center, for example, had many people participating digitally who had never been connected to us before. It was an opportunity for people to explore, learn, and become engaged. As John said, people are coming back. There is an enthusiasm to engage, to see our favorite artists, to experience a live performance. It is miraculous, and we are really excited to welcome people back to the Kennedy Center. I think it is about resilience. As John and Natasha mentioned, art will always survive, but we must give access and opportunity to all people. We must give greater equity of support across the art forms and across the country. This is a moment for us to understand from a social justice perspective that



Art will always survive, but we must give access and opportunity to all people. We must give greater equity of support across the art forms and across the country. ”

artists of color, no matter their art form, need support. As Natasha said, an artist will always go back to doing their work because it is a part of who they are, but we must honor them for that and not take it for granted that they will do it because they need to do it just as much as they need to breathe. We need to understand that they deserve to be supported fully, and that is among the recommendations in the Commission’s report.

**LITHGOW:** We have a wonderful example of an artist who reimagined his work last year and managed to discover new things about it. And that artist is Stephen Colbert. You invited people into your home and made late-night television a completely different genre for that period of time. I have a friend who is a Peabody voter, and she said a major reason you were given a Peabody is because of how you responded to the pandemic last year. You are an artist, Stephen.

**COLBERT:** Well, that’s lovely for you say, John. Thank you, Deborah, Natasha, and my friend John for giving me an opportunity to talk with you today. And thank you for the work that you do to support the arts, shining a light on the value of the arts, not just for their creativity but for their connection that gives us access to ways that we can explore our shared humanity. It is about loving each other. So, thank you for the love you have given, and for the ability of other people to express their love. I hope to see you all soon.

## Q&A SESSION

### Allentza Michel

Allentza Michel was Program Officer for the Humanities, Arts, and Culture at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

I would like to thank our Commission cochairs for a very rich discussion with Stephen Colbert. We have many questions submitted by our audience; we will do our best to get through as many

as we can in our remaining time. Our first question is: “Can you say more about the vitally important role of the humanities and the arts in strengthening our democracy?” Let’s start with John.

**LITHGOW:** We have touched on some of this in our conversation so far. The wrangling that goes on over policy forestalls action. It is difficult for people who advocate for the arts to persuade anyone that the arts have a place on the agenda with policymakers. What we say constantly is give us some attention and we will persuade you. As Stephen Colbert mentioned when he talked about hosting the Kennedy Center Honors, politicians have much more in common than they think. They are public servants, and public service is a matter of working things out together. The essence of art in many cases is collaborative: a performer working with an audience, the transaction between a storyteller and a listener. They are all communal experiences that persuade us we are part of the human family. The great difficulty we have is retaining our identity as American brothers and sisters. It is a sad reality that the moments when our country has most completely come together have been moments of tragedy and crisis. The two world wars, 9/11, even the financial crisis of 2008 when everyone was suffering together: those are the moments when we feel American, when we feel bonded, when we feel we are in this together. Unfortunately, for whatever reason, we are not capable of feeling that right now. So much of our conversation in the Commission was about what the arts can do for young people and audiences who are brought together in a common experience. We know what a gorgeous art exhibition can do even when people view the artwork online. Those are the moments when you feel part of a community, and community is the operative word these days. We have to be a national community, and somehow, we have lost track of that. I think we can regain it through the things we love.

**MICHEL:** Thank you, John. Natasha, how can the arts uplift and support democracy?

**TRETHERWEY:** The arts have the potential to bring us together because they show us in our desire to

participate in them as an audience or as a maker not that we are different but how we are alike. I want to read something that Toni Morrison wrote about writers thinking, but it applies to the arts in general. “Certain kinds of trauma visited on people are so deep, so cruel, that unlike money, unlike vengeance, even unlike justice, or rights, or the goodwill of others, only writers [and I will add artists] can translate such trauma and turn sorrow into meaning, sharpening the moral imagination.” I think the arts sharpen our moral imagination so that we see each other in all our full humanity, and that can bring us together.

**MICHEL:** Thank you, Natasha. We have a few questions about the pandemic: “Can you elaborate on the impact the pandemic has had on the arts? And can you describe some of the traumas and how long we think it might take to recover?” Deborah, would you like to start?

**RUTTER:** This is an important question. At the Kennedy Center, early in 2020, we were feeling proud of ourselves. We were feeling strong institutionally; we were excited about the creative expression of our artists and the diversity and variety of our programming. We had just opened a new extension to our campus, The REACH, which was welcoming another aspect of engagement with the arts besides just being a spectator. It was inviting activity, engagement, participation, learning both from artists and with artists and audience members. And then on March 11, 2020, we shut down for what we thought would be a few weeks, perhaps a few months, and it turned into eighteen months. In a given year, we present or produce two thousand performances at the Kennedy Center. Over that same time period in 2020, we produced less than two dozen. We normally would have employed three thousand individuals with W-2s and another seven hundred with 1099s. So nearly four thousand individuals – artists and creative culture workers – were employed, but over a similar period of time in 2020, we had under five hundred, and that was because we continued to employ our two orchestras. Think about the thousands of people at the Kennedy Center who did not get paid. This story is personal for me. It was a devastating experience that shined a light on the fragility of the economic model that sustains the creative life of America. Because it is

not just people at the Kennedy Center – the dancers, actors, singers, spoken-word artists, and visual artists – who were not employed. It was all the people around them as well, and that is true across this country. People left the field altogether or had to make a living doing something else. It demonstrated the lack of a safety net for our arts organizations and for the artists themselves. Many who strive to be an actor or a successful dancer or an artist of any kind knew this all too well. The pandemic demonstrated that what gives our lives color, meaning, and connection was lost.

“ The arts have the potential to bring us together because they show us in our desire to participate in them as an audience or as a maker not that we are different but how we are alike. . . . The arts sharpen our moral imagination so that we see each other in all our full humanity.

Those who provide it are undersupported, and we as a country need to think hard about how we celebrate and support artists. The Kennedy Center opened up about five weeks ago, but we are 25 percent smaller than we were in the year before, and I think it will likely stay that way for a period of time. As I look at my colleagues in organizations both in the region here and around the country, I know that we are all doing less. I worry that it will take us a good, long period of time before we can come back to anything like what we were in 2019. And this is actually a time when we need to come together more, not less. The arts shine a light on who we are as individuals and who we are as a community. And we are craving that. We need support at the very highest level for this kind of a safety net for artists and for the arts broadly across the country.

**MICHEL:** Thank you, Deborah. Several attendees have asked, “What are some concrete things that we can do to bring more resources to the arts in our schools and in our communities? And how do we convince lawmakers to put greater value in the arts and in culture?”



**LITHGOW:** We have two wonderful reports from the Commission that people can take to their school superintendents, local arts commissions, state arts commissions, and even to their congresspeople to show the wonderful excitement of combining the arts with everything that students are studying in school. There are people in office who can change things.

**RUTTER:** As somebody who receives documents and reports not infrequently, I would like to encourage folks to look at the Commission's reports. There are strategic, key messages in these reports and good examples of the power of the arts on the development of young children. The arts build empathy, understanding, and creativity, which in turn creates a better workforce. I encourage everyone to take the time to look at these reports, either the hard copy or the online version, and deploy the information that is in them.

**LITHGOW:** And they are gorgeous to look at, by the way. We haven't compiled just a bunch of gray data; we have included the voices of very passionate people, who will tell you why the arts are important to them.

**The pandemic demonstrated that what gives our lives color, meaning, and connection was lost. Those who provide it are undersupported, and we as a country need to think hard about how we celebrate and support artists.** ”

**MICHEL:** Thank you, John and Deborah. We have time for one last question: "How have the panelists' lives been enriched by everyday arts such as folklife, blues, bluegrass music, gospels, powwows, mariachis, and the like? How can the celebration of these forms of art, what is normally considered folk art or folklife, help galvanize an appreciation of a diverse nation?"

**TRETHERWEY:** That is a terrific question. It is hard to say how my life hasn't been enriched by so many different forms of art. I think someone pointed out earlier in the program how art is around us even when we don't notice it is there. I want to go back to something I said earlier about my grandmother, who I mentioned was a drapery seamstress who had this need to make beauty both in

the craft of her work but also with how she decorated her home. She hung fabric and transformed a hallway that otherwise would have been dark. That memory still enriches me because I think it is from watching her that I learned something about precision, that I learned something about industry and the making of things. I think about the pedal she pumped on her sewing machine, the sound of jazz on her radio, and the precision with which she could make a stitch. I hope that I can make a line of poetry as precise and beautiful as her stitches.

**RUTTER:** One of the great things about the Kennedy Center is our daily programming called Millennium Stage, which transformed during the pandemic to Couch Concerts and Arts Across America. One of the unique things that I really did not expect when I came to the Kennedy Center was the close relationship with all the embassies in Washington, D.C. One of the ways we service that relationship is by hosting and presenting touring artists from around the world, who present their folk art and share their ethnic heritage. It makes Washington, D.C., an extraordinary place because of the access to all kinds of sounds, language, dance, and colors from around the world. And this enriches not just our lives, but it inspires the artists in the building to think about their creativity, their art making, and the collaboration that comes as a result of being with people from different cultures, seeing different art forms coming together, and creating something new. I come from the world of classical symphony orchestra, and I am beyond thrilled to see the way orchestras and ballet companies are embracing and welcoming the sounds and sights of other art forms. I was glad that John celebrated Stephen Colbert as an artist because I think comedy is an art that compares with any other form of spoken word; it is just another vehicle of communication. One of the ways in which we need to dispel rumors, myths, and legends is to say art is what we love and appreciate, and it is what makes our world richer.

**MICHEL:** Thank you, Deborah. Let me ask John for some final comments.

**LITHGOW:** First, let me speak very briefly about how I have been affected by the arts in my life. I am a performer, but I am also a great audience member. I am voracious and curious. I find every one of the arts absolutely exhilarating. I go out and I find what's hot; I find what's exciting. As I mentioned to Stephen Colbert, in every town that I visit I go to



the art museum. I have been in New York for about three weeks, my first time in eighteen months, and I have seen four plays and two operas, and I have performed twice on stage. I want kids, young people, and adults to have absolutely as much appetite and curiosity for the arts as I do and to put down their devices and go out and see live human beings execute art.

Today, we have shared with you a good deal about the Academy's Arts Commission, the first

of its kind in the Academy's long history. And through the good offices of Stephen Colbert, we have spoken about the two major policy reports that we released this month: one on the importance of the arts in education and the equality of access to the arts for all students, and the other on the health and livelihood of the American creative workforce. I would like now to introduce you to some of the Commission members and a few of the artists in the Academy's membership who





For an artist, self-expression is the pursuit of happiness, but the rest of us pursue happiness too. Every time we listen to music, read a story, recite a poem, sit in an audience, or linger on a visual image, art exists in all our private and public spaces. ”

have supported our work over the last three years. And what better way to showcase these major figures in the creative arts than to tap their own creativity in what we have titled Mixtape. It is an online gallery that showcases the energy and talent of many artists. We invited each of these creative people to produce a video, which portrays what they are working on at this very moment. The results have been delightful, inspiring, and sometimes astonishing. We have created a five-minute montage drawn from these lively creations to share today as part of the celebration of the Commission's work. The full Mixtape is available on the Academy's website. The brief clips of poetry, stories, songs, videos, and artwork create a portrait of the broad creative spectrum of this group. Contributors include John Legend and Yo-Yo Ma, Hawaiian hula master Vicky Holt Takamine, and Rahele Megosha, a high school senior who won the 2021 Poetry Out Loud National Competition. You will know some of these people from their notable achievements, but they may surprise you with how they have stepped out of their creative comfort zone. Our Commissioner Jeffrey Brown from *PBS NewsHour* recites his own poetry, and our Commissioner Francis Collins from the NIH sings and plays the guitar. I don't act but rather I scribble satiric portraits in ink. Now this took a lot of nerve on our part, but it is part and parcel of our larger enterprise. We have fearlessly put ourselves on display as part of our call to action. It is our grand ambition to awaken everyone to the importance of the arts, and we invite all of you to step out of your comfort zones to campaign for the arts.

[Event participants watch a five-minute montage of Mixtape.]

**OXTOBY:** I would like to thank all the Commissioners and Academy members who contributed to this exciting project. I hope you will explore the full Mixtape online and share it within your networks. As we near the end of our program, allow me to invite Natasha to close in the same way we began, with a poem.

**TRETHEWEY:** Thank you again for joining us. As benediction, I offer another poem by Lucille Clifton entitled "blessing the boats."

may the tide  
that is entering even now  
the lip of our understanding  
carry you out  
beyond the face of fear  
may you kiss  
the wind then turn from it  
certain that it will  
love your back may you  
open your eyes to water  
water waving forever  
and may you in your innocence  
sail through this to that

Lucille Clifton, "blessing the boats," from *Blessing the Boats: New and Selected Poems, 1988–2000*. Copyright © 2000 by Lucille Clifton. Reprinted with permission of BOA Editions, Ltd., [www.boaeditions.org](http://www.boaeditions.org).

**OXTOBY:** Thank you, Natasha, and thank you, John, Deborah, and Stephen. This has been a wonderful distillation of the work of the Arts Commission and an illustration of the power of the arts. The Commission's work was designed to live on long after our final meeting. I encourage you to visit the Academy's website for more resources, including the two reports, Mixtape, and recordings of previous events. Please share these resources with colleagues and friends. And continue to think about the way in which the arts and artistic workers can be centered in your own lives.

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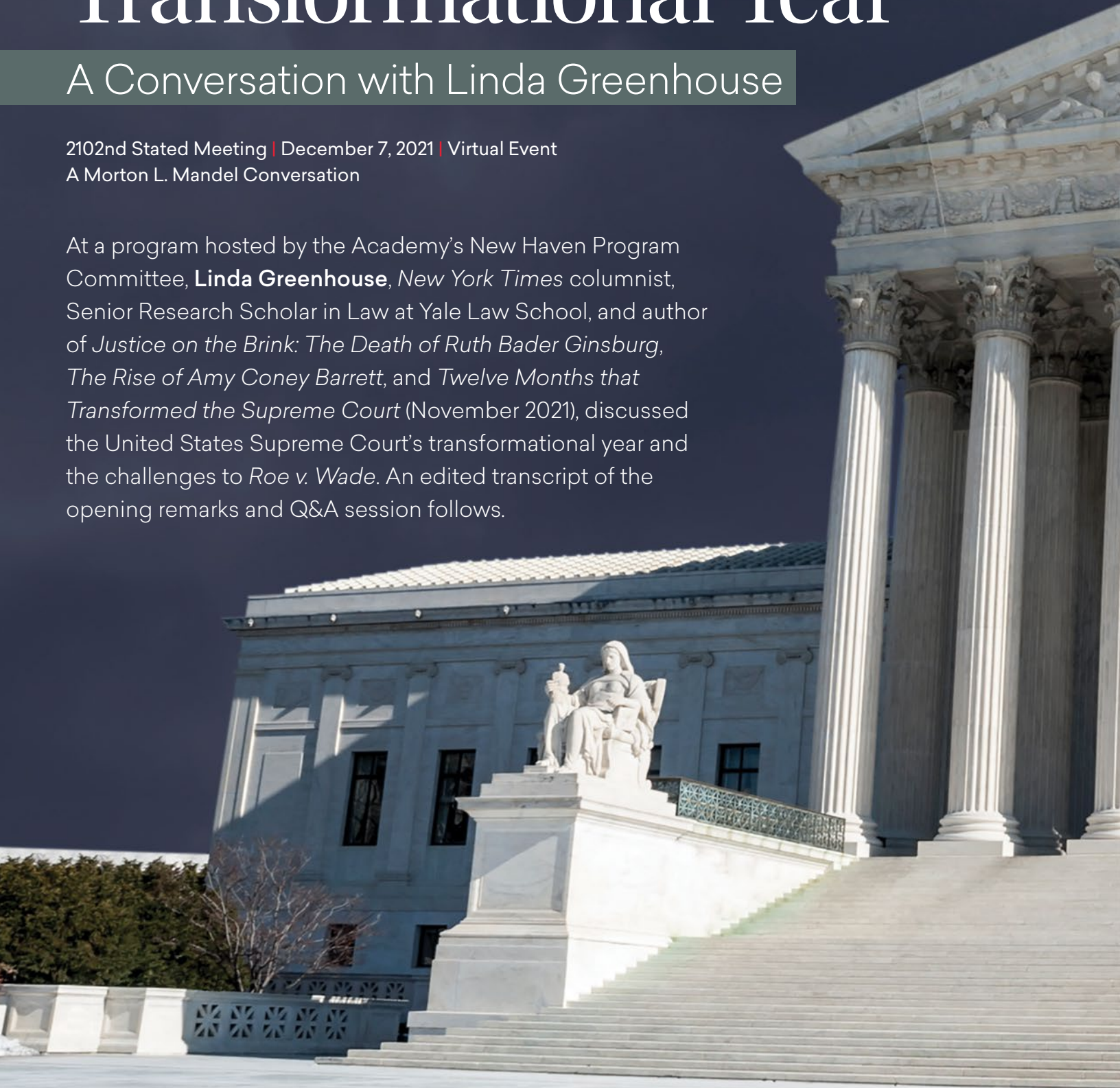
To view or listen to the presentation, visit [www.amacad.org/events/elevating-arts-America](http://www.amacad.org/events/elevating-arts-America).

# The Supreme Court's Transformational Year

## A Conversation with Linda Greenhouse

2102nd Stated Meeting | December 7, 2021 | Virtual Event  
A Morton L. Mandel Conversation

At a program hosted by the Academy's New Haven Program Committee, **Linda Greenhouse**, *New York Times* columnist, Senior Research Scholar in Law at Yale Law School, and author of *Justice on the Brink: The Death of Ruth Bader Ginsburg*, *The Rise of Amy Coney Barrett*, and *Twelve Months that Transformed the Supreme Court* (November 2021), discussed the United States Supreme Court's transformational year and the challenges to *Roe v. Wade*. An edited transcript of the opening remarks and Q&A session follows.









## David W. Oxtoby

David W. Oxtoby is President of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was elected to the American Academy in 2012.

Good afternoon and welcome. As President it is my distinct pleasure to call to order the 2102nd Stated Meeting of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. I am pleased to see so many Academy members who have joined us for this Morton L. Mandel Conversation, which is made possible by the generosity of the Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel Foundation. Mort Mandel's vision of a program for civic discourse and membership engagement allows us to gather from across the country and exchange ideas on essential topics. We are grateful for his generosity and for the opportunity to connect Academy members in this way.

I also want to take a moment to express gratitude to Academy member Frances McCall Rosenbluth, whom we sadly lost last month. As one of our most active and engaged members, Frances served the Academy in so many capacities, including as Chair of the New Haven Program Committee. Today's event was her idea. I hope that you will join me in remembering Frances for her friendship, leadership, and intellectual contributions to the Academy, our nation, and the world. We miss her greatly.

Today's conversation is in keeping with the Academy's work on American Institutions, Society, and the Public Good. As an institution, the Supreme Court is central to the challenging questions related to democratic citizenship, inequality, and civil justice, which recent Academy projects have addressed. At this consequential moment for the Court and for our democracy, I am especially grateful that we have an opportunity today to talk about the Supreme Court.

The Academy is proud to have several Supreme Court justices among its members, including Chief Justice Roberts, Justice Sotomayor, Justice Breyer, Justice Kagan, and retired Justices O'Connor and Souter. Historically the Academy rolls have included such influential justices as Ginsburg, Scalia, Rehnquist, Brennan, Warren, Marshall, and Jay, among many others. Today's program is an opportunity to gain an understanding of this essential



and often impenetrable institution and its members from an Academy member whose insights into the Supreme Court are unparalleled.

Our speaker is Linda Greenhouse, Knight Distinguished Journalist in Residence and Joseph Goldstein Lecturer in Law at Yale Law School and a Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist for *The New York Times*, where she has written about the Court for more than four decades. Linda was elected to the Academy in 1994. She has made multiple contributions to *Daedalus* and is a member of the Academy's Council, Committee on Studies and Publications, and the New Haven Program Committee. Linda is currently serving as President of the American Philosophical Society. Her most recent book, *Justice on the Brink, the Death of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the Rise of Amy Coney Barrett, and Twelve Months that Transformed the Supreme Court*, was released in November.





## Linda Greenhouse

Linda Greenhouse is Knight Distinguished Journalist in Residence and Joseph Goldstein Lecturer in Law at Yale Law School, a Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist for *The New York Times*, and President of the American Philosophical Society. She was elected to the Academy in 1994.

Let me begin by also mentioning Frances Rosenbluth. She would have been here with us today, and I miss her as we all do.

I will start with a few framing remarks, and then I look forward to a conversation and answering your questions. My husband said to me the other day, “Boy, the Supreme Court just seems to be lurching backward.” I agreed with him, but then I added, “That’s not quite an adequate way of framing what’s going on. The Court is not just lurching backward. It is doing something else.” And it finally came to me what is happening: the Supreme Court has been weaponized.

My newest book is a chronicle of the Supreme Court’s last term – a term with three Trump justices sitting on the Supreme Court, who were handpicked to deliver what they are about to deliver: namely, overturning *Roe v. Wade*. It is really an incredible moment. I cannot think of another

time in the Court’s history like this. I do not hold myself out as a historian, but if you think back, conservative presidents have wanted to project their philosophy onto the Supreme Court, knowing that justices they have a chance to name will far outlast their own administration and will be a major part of their legacy. We all understand that. The Supreme Court has always been an organ of our domestic politics.

In 1968, Richard Nixon ran against the Warren Court, against the criminal procedure achievements of the Warren Court. He used crime as a kind of dog whistle. He wanted to talk about race, but he knew he did not actually have to mention race. He got four Court appointments and made very good use of them. That’s okay; we get that is how it works. But it is different when a Republican presidential candidate announces, “I’m going to put justices on the Supreme Court who are going to overturn *Roe v. Wade*,” and then he does just that – think of it like a targeted guided missile.

So, how did this come about? Well, there’s a long history to it. The Republican Party, since Ronald Reagan in 1980, has pledged that its presidential candidates will pick judges and justices who would overturn *Roe v. Wade*. It has been the signal agenda item for the national Republican Party. Whether individual Republicans believed in it or not, it has been an instrumental choice to rally the base – and it is a small base. According to the polls, only 20 percent of the American public would like the Court to overturn *Roe*. That means that 80 percent of the American public doesn’t want that to happen.

We have on the Court today seven Catholic justices, and six of them are conservative Catholics. I include Neil Gorsuch even though he is currently an Episcopalian, but he was raised Catholic and in fact attended the same elite Jesuit boys’ school that Brett Kavanaugh did. This is not a coincidence, and I talk about that in my book. For years religion was not mentioned in polite society – though now it is mentioned a little more – because religion is the last taboo. We can talk about people’s sexuality, their gender identity, and their behavior in all kinds of contexts, but we can’t talk about religion. Well, we need to talk about religion. What is striking is that Catholic women in America have abortions at the same rate as non-Catholic women. So, it is not that the Catholic Church is a monolith. It certainly is not. It is not that being a Catholic puts you in any particular position. It certainly does not. It just so happens that these handpicked justices on the Supreme Court are all of a like mind on this subject.

Now this presents a crisis for the Court. My colleague at Yale, Cristina Rodríguez, just published a fascinating piece in the *Harvard Law Review*, which you can access online. I commend it to you. It is entitled “Regime Change,” and what she is talking about is that there is one regime in our domestic politics – the politics that led to the election by millions of votes of President Joe Biden, a politics that wants government to be in service of the people, a politics that recognizes the social changes that we have seen in our lifetime. And then there is another regime: the regime on the current Supreme Court. And they are at absolute odds to a degree that it is hard to find a historic analogy.

We hear a lot about legitimacy. It has almost become a buzzword: The Court better watch out or it is going to lose its legitimacy. But what does that mean? We really don't know what that means because we have never seen a situation like this. During this term, we are going to have cases on abortion and on the Second Amendment. The gun rights case was argued last month, and I think there is no doubt that more Americans are going to be enabled to walk around with concealed weapons as a result of the way the Court is going to decide the case from New York. And then we have religion. There is a case being argued tomorrow that will result, I'm quite certain, in the channeling of more public money to pay for tuition at parochial schools.

I will stop there, and I am happy to take this in any way you like. We can get into the weeds on any of these issues or keep it more general. I am very interested in the questions that are going to come from this very special audience.

**OXTOBY:** I will read our first question that was put into the chat: If the present Court overturns *Roe v. Wade*, would a future Supreme Court be able to reinstate it?

**GREENHOUSE:** A future Court could reinstate *Roe*, but the center of gravity on the conservative side of the Court right now is young, so I don't think that will change very quickly. It has taken fifty years to undo the right to abortion, and so I think it is going to take a while. As a practical matter, the only remedy lies in our domestic politics. A decision that erases *Roe v. Wade* can itself be erased by legislation. There is legislation pending in Congress now that would protect the right to abortion.

Obviously, the current Congress is not about to do that, so that tells us that people who want to get motivated on this issue had better start working at the grassroots level just like the other side has done for many generations.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** Overturning *Roe v. Wade* could be a disaster for millions of women in this country, and the impact will be divided geographically. I am wondering about the long-, short-, and medium-term political impact of overturning *Roe*. As you pointed out, *Roe v. Wade* has been a focal point for conservative rallying for decades. When they no longer have that as a rallying point, do they need to be careful about getting what they wished for? Could there be a substantial backlash? I imagine women living in relatively conservative areas of the country will be unhappy if *Roe* is overturned.

**GREENHOUSE:** I would not take to the bank the assumption that there will be an effective countermobilization. There are many obstacles, one of which is gerrymandering at the state level. We see that going on right now, right in front of our faces, as a result of the 2020 census and what the Republican Party is trying to do to lock up majorities in legislatures around the country. I can see mobilization on both sides. What do I mean by that? If *Roe v. Wade* is overturned, it means there is no constitutional right to an abortion. But it would not be a constitutional prohibition against abortion unless the Court should deem that the fetus is a person entitled to the protections of the Fourteenth Amendment, and that is a real movement on that side of the street. I don't think it is 100 percent likely, but there could well be a mobilizing tool on the other side. I think we are going to see a very multi-layered and complex political reaction if the Court does what we think it is going to do.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** My question is about the context in which the Supreme Court is operating. Of all our institutions, it is the one strongly grounded in precedent. You noted the unique constellation of justices who are currently serving on the Court, and you said there has not been a particular precedent for this constellation that we see before us now. Are there any other inklings that you can glean from the Supreme Court's history that might help us understand what may be coming even though we don't have a definite road map?



**GREENHOUSE:** One episode from American history that people often raise is the struggle between Franklin Roosevelt and the Supreme Court. But that was different, I think, in every way that counts. For instance, when Roosevelt comes into office, he inherits a Supreme Court that is grounded in the past, though the justices were not picked for that reason. They had gotten old, we had the depression, and FDR was elected with overwhelming political majorities. But the Court stands in his way and eventually he prevails by doing what I mentioned in my opening remarks: he tries to weaponize the Supreme Court to get the New Deal programs upheld instead of overturned. Those were programs that Congress, by very strong majorities, had given the president, reelected with very strong majorities, the power to enact. In other words, the Court was simply being asked to ratify what the people wanted. Today we have a Court that is going to exercise its power to do exactly what the people don't want. We may have people joining our program today who are better historians than I am, and I welcome their intervention, but I cannot think of a historical parallel for what is going on now.

**If *Roe v. Wade* is overturned, it means there is no constitutional right to an abortion. But it would not be a constitutional prohibition against abortion unless the Court should deem that the fetus is a person entitled to the protections of the Fourteenth Amendment.** ”

**OXTOBY:** Let me ask a question related to that. Last week, Justice Sotomayor expressed concern that the public reputation of the Court will not survive the “stench” of the decision on *Roe v. Wade*. What would you say is the public's perception of the Court, how concerned should we be about its legitimacy, and how concerned are the justices about that?

**GREENHOUSE:** The American public usually pays very little attention to the Court. The Court is remote, much of what it does is highly technical, and it doesn't affect anybody's daily life. Now, however, people are paying attention. I see Mary Beth Norton on the call, so I defer to her knowledge of the history here.

We saw that when the Court allowed the Texas vigilante law, SB 8, to go into effect on September 1 without a hearing, without any kind of review, the Gallup poll indication was that public respect for the Court had plummeted from a high of 50 percent, which is pretty good given that Congress is down around 12 percent, to 40 percent. So, the Court has the public's attention. Does the Court care about this? I think some of the justices do and some of them don't. I think the general perception, and I share it for what it's worth, is that Chief Justice Roberts is attentive to what people think about the Court. I think he is quite attentive to what history is going to say about the Court that has his name on the door – the Roberts Court.

I believe Amy Coney Barrett was one year old when *Roe* was decided. She was raised in a very conservative Catholic community, with the notion that abortion is an atrocity of historic dimension, and it is part of everybody's obligation, if they are in a position to do anything about it, to get rid of it. That is a different kind of thinking, and that agenda outweighs what might in an ordinary kind of case be the Court's concern about its “legitimacy.” Should we care? Yes, I think we should care, but we need to care in a clear-eyed way. I think many of us grew up in the shadow of the Warren Court, imbued with the notion that the Court at the end of the day is a force for good in the country. The Warren Court had basically harnessed the Constitution as an engine of social progress and social reform. But not, I might add, having anything to do with women. The Warren Court never once recognized discrimination on the basis of sex as being a constitutional harm. We will set that aside. But on race and on criminal defendants' rights, the Warren Court was an anomaly in the span of American history and there is a regression to the mean that does not capture the dimensions of what is occurring. We need to detach ourselves from the notion that the Court is a force for progress. It hasn't been, and it is not going to be right now.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** I would like to align myself with a comment Linda just made about the history of the Court. For years I taught constitutional history, though I haven't in a long time. And I always discovered that when the students at Cornell came into my class as worshippers of the Supreme Court, thinking the Court was a force for positive advances, I would always say, “Sorry, this is not what the history of the Court has been.”

Linda, I am a great admirer of your recent column about gaslighting in the Court because I

listened to that argument, and you were so right about what the various members of the Court said. But I also think that Justice Sotomayor was right on when she talked about “stench” because one of the most reviled Court decisions ever, and it was intended at the time to resolve a major problem, was *Dred Scott*. I have never heard anybody make that analogy and I wonder, Linda, what your response to that analogy would be.

**GREENHOUSE:** It is so interesting because on the anti-abortion side of the street *Roe v. Wade* has been commonly analogized to *Dred Scott*. One of the things that we heard from Brett Kavanaugh during the argument last week was that the courts overturn precedent, the courts overturn these terrible cases, *Brown v. Board* overturned *Plessy v. Ferguson*, so what is the problem with overturning precedent? That is the other side of the coin. One side has analogized *Roe* to *Dred Scott* and now they are saying that overturning *Roe* would be analogous to *Brown v. Board* overturning *Plessy v. Ferguson*. Please stop me from going down that road of thinking! *Dred Scott* brought us the Civil War. There are a lot of things going on in the country today, and some people think we may be tending toward a cultural civil war if not an out-and-out shooting one, and this would be part of that ammunition.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** If I could add one more comment: Taney was really trying to resolve what is a very contentious issue through a judicial decision. If *Roe* is overturned, then it does the opposite. It takes what has been a judicial decision back to the states. If the Court does what we think it is going to do, then Sotomayor is absolutely correct: in the long run, the decision is going to lead to a denigration of the Roberts Court in the same way the Taney Court has long been denigrated. Although the Taney Court had many interesting and good decisions, it is known by *Dred Scott*.

**GREENHOUSE:** One thing that occurs to me when people say that this will turn the issue back to the states the way the Court should have done in 1973 is that Justice Brett Kavanaugh has been busy saying that the Constitution is neutral, and so we should be neutral too. We need to remember that the vote in *Roe v. Wade* was seven to two, and not five to four as most people think. And the seven included three of Nixon’s appointees. It was not a political

issue. It had broad support in the public and, in fact, the NORC survey in the immediate aftermath revealed that support for legalized abortion actually went up in the country after *Roe*. There was not a spontaneous backlash, which is the mythology, but rather a carefully cultivated backlash with the goal of partisan realignment that eventually occurred. The Republican Party carefully nurtured a base that was opposed to *Roe*, but it took the better part of a decade for that to occur.

Let me mention one more thing and then we will get to more questions. The first justice who was named to the Court after the Court decided *Roe* was John Paul Stevens. He was President Gerald Ford’s only appointee to the Court. He succeeded William O. Douglas, who was a member of the majority in *Roe*. John Paul Stevens was a Republican appointee. He did not get a single question in his confirmation hearing about abortion. Why not? Because it wasn’t a political issue. The things that we assume today were true are actually the opposite. It is very counterintuitive, but worth keeping in mind as we go forward.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** Linda, could you say a little bit about what you think the effect of overturning *Roe* will be on related issues? *Roe* built on a series of contraception and other decisions about the right to privacy and the notion of the right to procreate. And since then, thinking about reproduction in the context of fundamental rights has included reproductive technologies and, to some extent, the right to die. We have seen this in the states in the last decade that have tried to pass so-called personhood amendments to make an embryo a Fourteenth Amendment person, and they always fail in the conservative states because of the unintended consequences of outlawing in vitro fertilization. There are just too many people who are grandparents now because their kids were able to use IVF. I wonder if you could speculate on how they are going to accommodate the overturning of *Roe* jurisprudentially in the face of all these other kinds of effective issues.

**GREENHOUSE:** That is an interesting and deep question. Amy Barrett raised that question during the argument when she said to the Mississippi solicitor general, who was arguing on behalf of the state law, “Well, if we buy your argument, what else is at stake?” He answered, “Nothing else” and



gave a crazy and ridiculous reason. He said, “It is because these other cases have a bright line that we can understand what they are about, like same sex marriage.” This is an outgrowth of the whole fundamental rights chain of cases that you mentioned. You are either married or you are not married, so the courts don’t have to get into the weeds on that. But obviously, that is not the answer; it makes no sense. We are dealing with fundamental rights in a subset of due process, and the Court is going to have a problem. They are going to try to do something tricky and technical and talk about rational basis review and deference to state legislatures, but there is no logical boundary, it seems to me, if they go down that road. And they are going to have a challenge in the writing. Let’s assume they conferenced on the case last Friday, as they do every week with the cases that they have heard during the week, and they took their straw vote, and somebody has been assigned to write the majority opinion. Who is going to write and what are they going to say? This could be very important going forward.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** My question is about unintended consequences. There could be economic consequences if *Roe v. Wade* is overturned. I’ll give a few examples. BMWs are manufactured in the United States in South Carolina. I assume South Carolina will be one of the states that would not support *Roe v. Wade*. I don’t know for a fact, but I suspect that most BMWs are sold in blue states. You could have an economic boycott of BMWs because of a reaction against states restricting a woman’s right to choose as a basic principle in this country. Another example: Austin, Texas, is a big technology center and Tesla is supposed to move its headquarters there. If I walk around MIT and ask young women if they would like to work in Texas, they may say, “Are you kidding? That state goes against my principles.” Is an economic consequence a possibility?

**GREENHOUSE:** I think there are some data on the extent to which Americans are sorting themselves into where they choose to live. You could certainly see a brain drain or even a refusal to add brains to some of these states. You raised the issue of boycott and that is interesting because for the states that attempted to pass anti-LGBT legislation in the past few years, corporate America rose up and said, “We’re not going to put up with this” and those states backed off. Why did corporate America rise up? Because they have gay people in

their workforce and gay people as their customers. Georgia, for example, has a huge movie and television film industry because they give some of the best tax credits in the country. For a brief time, there was a Hollywood boycott of Georgia. It didn’t last very long because the tax incentives were simply too appealing to the producers who finance these films or TV shows. I wrote a column during the past year that said, “Hey, corporate America, you were so effective in protecting LGBT interests. How about doing the same thing for women’s rights to reproductive freedom?” We have American Airlines based in Texas and Dell Computer based in Texas: silence has been their answer.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** Perhaps because *Roe v. Wade* was alive and well. The marketplace is very strong and if your employees and customers say, “I’m not going to fly American,” then that is a big problem.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** I would like to focus on two people: Kavanaugh and the Chief Justice. The Chief Justice is a scholar and a historian, and he has gone through *Dred Scott* in great detail, drafts one, two, three, four, and five, and how it got worse as Taney rewrote it. He also confronted Trump during Thanksgiving four years ago. And I think back to the Affordable Care Act and how he worked through that. Is the Chief Justice predisposed to the continuation of the Roberts Court in high esteem? Then I go to Kavanaugh and the exchange with Senator Collins at the time of his confirmation, in which he said that he was not of a mind to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. Do you see any opportunity that Kavanaugh and Roberts could get together with the other three and do a five to four that would be a very narrow treatment or salvation of *Roe v. Wade*?

**GREENHOUSE:** The Chief acting alone is powerless to stop what is happening even if he were inclined to because he has the five to his right, including Kavanaugh. Part of what I chronicle in my book is his loss of control, and that was initially manifest in the religion area, when the Court, with the new majority once Amy Barrett came on to replace Justice Ginsburg, flipped and chose religion over public health in striking down the capacity limits on indoor gatherings that included indoor gatherings for worship. Roberts was in dissent in those cases with the three justices to his left, and Kavanaugh was in the majority. Kavanaugh is a very thin reed. As you mentioned, in

his interactions with Susan Collins he didn't have the mind to overturn *Roe*. He didn't acknowledge any desire to overturn *Roe*, but I wouldn't purport to say I knew what was in his mind. And certainly, in his questions last week and his casual, "Oh, well, we've overturned this, and we've overturned that, so what's the problem with overturning precedent?" I did not hear any willingness from him to give the Chief Justice cover, assuming the Chief Justice wants cover. As a citizen, I would certainly be happy, but as an analyst of the Court I would be shocked if it came out five to four to retain the right to abortion.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** So, chances are slim to none?

**GREENHOUSE:** I would be happy to be surprised by the decision. One thing I'll mention about Kavanaugh, which I think is a real giveaway for him, is what happened a couple of terms ago with the last major abortion case that the Court had. It was a case called *June Medical*. Louisiana had a law that required doctors who perform abortions to have admitting privileges in local hospitals. It was an outrageous law on two grounds. One, the law was obviously intended to shut down the abortion infrastructure because Louisiana hospitals were simply not credentialing doctors. Two, a couple of years earlier the Court, in a case called *Whole Woman's Health*, had struck down the exact same law from Texas. The abortion clinics in Louisiana came to the Court with an emergency application: put the Fifth Circuit opinion on hold, grant a stay so that we have time to file our appeal. And the Court granted the stay by a vote of five to four because Justice Ginsburg was on the Court at that time. Kavanaugh dissented. He wrote a separate opinion explaining his vote, in which he said, "Well, you know, the doctors should just take a little more time and get those credentials." If he had read the District Court opinion that had struck down the Louisiana law, he would have known that some of these doctors have been trying to get privileges for five years. He just wanted to cover himself and look reasonable. So, when push comes to shove, I am not expecting anything from him at all.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** If they overturn *Roe*, the only places to get a legal abortion between the two coasts will be Colorado and Illinois. Is any member

of the Court thinking about the societal and economic impact of this? It is just extraordinary the impact that this is going to have.

**GREENHOUSE:** There were around 140 amicus briefs filed in the case, and several of them on the prochoice side make those points. So, the Court can't claim ignorance or surprise.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** Why did the Republican Party take it upon themselves to make antiabortion a major characteristic of their philosophy? Is there anything to be learned from that?

**GREENHOUSE:** My colleague Reva Siegel and I have done a lot of work on this, and we have written that what was going on in the second Nixon administration was an effort to do in the North what the Republican Party had successfully done in the South. What do I mean by that? The southern strategy was to use race to peel the traditionally Democratic white voters away from the Democratic Party and turn them into Republicans. The idea cooked up by people like Pat Buchanan and Kevin Phillips – you might recognize these names – was we can go after the historically Democratic voters among the urban ethnic white Catholic population, who are traditionally Democratic, and we can play the abortion card just like we played the race card and lure them over to the Republican Party. The book that Reva Siegel and I published, entitled *Before Roe v. Wade*, is a compilation of original source documents from what was going on in the pre-*Roe* era. The book describes an episode in which the Republican Party set up a table at the back of a Catholic church social hall so that people coming out of mass could change their registration. This was in California. Of course, the effort didn't happen overnight, but after about a decade they started making real inroads, and the evangelical religious right joined in that effort.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** Most of us do not want to wait until we have a different Court, which could take twenty or thirty years. What are your views either about the commission that Biden appointed, which I think has reported or is about to report, or something akin to a constitutional convention that would remove life tenure and make it impossible to have the kind of packing for thirty or forty years that we are now dealing with?



**GREENHOUSE:** I support getting rid of life tenure. It's an anomaly in the world. There is no other country that has endowed its constitutional court judges with life tenure. But that is a long game. Our Constitution is the hardest constitution in the world to amend. But even if that could be done, we have incumbents. On the Court packing issue, I have not seen that as a productive road to go down because one side can pack a few more in and then the next side will pack a few more in. I think the answer lies in our domestic politics; there are legislative solutions to most of these problems. But the problem is the legislative lockup in Congress right now. I am not an advocate of telling the American public what to do, but if I were, I would say pay attention to your local races.

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**OXTOPY:** Linda, just to follow up on one point: the American Academy's report, *Our Common Purpose*, from our Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship, recommends eighteen-year terms for Supreme Court justices and says that a constitutional amendment is not required for this change. Is this something that you would support?

**GREENHOUSE:** Personally, I would support this. And though I understand the argument that a constitutional amendment is not required, it is a contested notion and saying that it is not required does not mean it is not required. This change would be litigated, and the argument would be that a constitutional amendment is required. But I am all in favor of going for it and seeing if it works.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** Turning back to abortion, one of the things that hasn't been talked about much is that people sometimes make mistakes. I thought I was using all the proper birth control and I wasn't. Having a kid before I was married would have ruined my career. The second experience was more complicated because the amniocentesis showed I would have a seriously disabled

child. My college roommate had a seriously disabled brother, and she said her parents never paid attention to her. She urged me to get an abortion. People's personal stories are powerful, but they are seldom talked about. These examples show that people should have at least a right to choose.

**GREENHOUSE:** Thank you for telling those stories. About half the pregnancies in this country are unintended, and nearly half of those end in abortion, for all kinds of reasons. In terms of amniocentesis, some people have said, "Well, the Mississippi law bans abortion after fifteen weeks and fifteen weeks is enough time." That was the Chief Justice's comment during the argument. When I was pregnant at the age of thirty-eight, you needed to wait eighteen or twenty weeks before you could have amnio. In the early days of the abortion reform movement, there were these speak-outs where women would mass together and tell their stories, and they were quite effective and that has been echoed in briefs that have been filed. But it is one thing to tell a story. You need people to listen, and we don't seem to have a majority on the Supreme Court that is willing to listen to those stories.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** Linda, I would be interested to hear your thoughts about Justice Barrett's question about the easy availability of adoption. How does that issue fit into the question of whether to overrule *Roe*?

**GREENHOUSE:** Her question left me gasping for breath. The argument to which she was responding is that the availability of abortion as part of a woman's ability to control her reproductive life has enabled women to be full participants in the economy. And she said, "Well, not really. You can have the baby, but you don't have to be a parent." To the two lawyers who were arguing against the state, the clinic's lawyer and the federal government's lawyer, she said, there are these "safe haven laws," and you can leave your baby in a basket. There's adoption. Why don't people talk about adoption? said this mother of seven, two of whom are adopted.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** I didn't listen to the whole argument like you did, but did other members of the Court pick up on this? Do you expect to see this issue play a role in the Court's decision?

**GREENHOUSE:** I don't think they picked up on it in the argument. It really came from out of the

blue. Will it play a role in the decision? I think if Justice Barrett writes separately, she is going to say something about it. What is so strange about what she said is that she was attempting to disaggregate that which cannot be disaggregated. That is, once you have a baby, you are a parent whether you leave the baby in a basket or give the baby away to somebody else. You are a mother after you give birth and that will remain with you for the rest of your life. She has to know that. She gave birth to five children. When the argument was over, I had to leave my office and take a walk in the cold winter sunshine because my head was spinning.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** This question is more about damage control than anything else. One of the characteristics of *Roe v. Wade* is that it falls in what Charles Black once described as the unnamed rights, which have in some sense their source in a remarkably conservative opinion of Justice McReynolds in the 1920s. When *Roe* was decided, it excited some really aggravated criticism, not from the right but from constitutional scholars – John Hart Ely comes to mind as a fairly balanced and respected character. I’m wondering whether these characteristics of the opinion give any basis for thinking that maybe the Court could survive the “stench.”

**GREENHOUSE:** If I understand the thrust of your question, I am going to have to reject your premise. There has been a mini-industry in law schools since 1973 about what is wrong with *Roe v. Wade*. I’m here to say that the reason *Roe* is the pressure point in our culture is because of the politics surrounding it, which I described earlier, and because it is about women.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** I totally agree. I do not mean to be aligning myself with those critics. What I am asking is whether the whole of the Court’s work is going to be impugned by what happens or whether it can be contained in the strange characteristics of unnamed rights that are not in the Constitution directly but have been recognized by the Supreme Court in the past.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** The mention of the people in “leave it to the people” struck me as incredibly disingenuous since clearly the people mean

state legislatures, and we know where many state legislatures stand on this issue. There seems to be a cloak over the states’ rights argument so that it sounds all red, white, and blue – give it back to the people. Would you comment on that obfuscation if you agree with me?

“ The Constitution doesn’t mention abortion so the Constitution must be neutral. Well, the Constitution doesn’t mention marriage, the Constitution doesn’t mention travel, the Constitution doesn’t mention education: all these things in our constitutional history have been recognized as rights. So, the notion of neutrality fifty years after *Roe* is just bizarre.

**GREENHOUSE:** I do agree with you and, as I said earlier, we start with the notion that there are not any other fundamental rights that we just leave to the people. But even assuming that this were a right that we could leave to the people, the legislatures do not represent the people today because of gerrymandering. It a bizarre way to talk about something that has been recognized as a constitutional right for almost fifty years. It fits in with the other line of questioning during the argument last Wednesday, which was that of neutrality. The Constitution doesn’t mention abortion so the Constitution must be neutral. Well, the Constitution doesn’t mention marriage, the Constitution doesn’t mention travel, the Constitution doesn’t mention education: all these things in our constitutional history have been recognized as rights. So, the notion of neutrality fifty years after *Roe* is just bizarre.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** I want to go back to something that Linda said earlier. Most of us grew up thinking of the Court as a force for good, and that certainly was true in my case. Assuming that what we expect to happen does happen in some form or other, what should we be thinking of the Court now?



**GREENHOUSE:** I am sorry to say that the Court has been captured by a minority in this country. I used the word weaponized earlier. The Court has been captured and weaponized. The power that we have invested it with could not be accomplished through the working of democratic legislation. And that is a tricky and dangerous place to be in a country as on edge as our country currently is.

**OXTOBY:** Let me ask a question about a slightly different topic: affirmative action. Many of us are associated with colleges and universities. Do you have any expectations for this term or for this Court about where things may be headed for affirmative action?

**GREENHOUSE:** The case regarding Harvard's admissions policies is pending at the Court, pending because the Court hasn't granted it. When the petition was ready to be acted on, the Court, instead of granting it or denying it, kicked the can down the road and asked the Biden administration for its views. That is a strange thing to do. If the Court were to grant the case, the Biden administration would be perfectly free to inform the Court of its views. Earlier this year I imagine the Court was thinking we already have abortion, we already have the Second Amendment, maybe we don't need affirmative action right now. The Biden administration has not yet filed its response to that "invitation." They are expected to do so within the next few weeks.<sup>1</sup> So, the question would be: if the Court were inclined to grant the challenge to Harvard's admissions policies, would it be granted in time to be argued and decided this term? The cutoff for that would be by the end of January. If they grant a case after the end of January it gets carried over to the next term. Are they going to grant this particular case? There is another case pending, which is a request to hear on an accelerated basis the challenge to the University of North Carolina's admissions policy. So that is about a public university and not a private, but basically the constitutional and legal questions are the same. I doubt they will take the Harvard case because the case went to trial. It was a very extensive trial that lasted for weeks. And there is a very extensive record, and the facts are not good for the challengers to affirmative action. Is there a majority on

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1. The Biden administration filed its response on December 8, 2021. As expected, the administration urged the justices not to grant review in the Harvard case.

this Court that would like to get rid of affirmative action? Absolutely there is. And there are conservative foundations that are funding this litigation all around the country, so if they don't take one case or another case, they will have the raw material. It is just a matter of time. It was Justice Anthony Kennedy who kept affirmative action going in the last round in the University of Texas cases. He's gone, and so I think affirmative action is living on borrowed time.

**AUDIENCE MEMBER:** Linda, you speak of the Court as being weaponized. Do you think that if the January 6 insurrection had been more successful that the Court would have solidified a future authoritarian dictatorship?

**GREENHOUSE:** No, but I would not take a whole lot of comfort in that. There were quite a few cases that came to the Court both before and after the election, brought by Republicans challenging various aspects of the ways in which the pandemic deadlines were extended, mail-in ballots were made more available, and so on. And there were some justices who were quite tempted to take these cases in the name of a constitutional theory that had not previously been endorsed by a majority of the Court. State legislative supremacy in deciding how to conduct elections is still sitting out there. And that is a very freighted question because we see what is going on in some of these state legislatures with their voter suppression agendas. So even though we avoided anything that endorsed Trump's moves this time around, leaving Trump very angry with his three justices who didn't do what he put them there to do, we are not in the clear if things keep going as they are in state legislatures and in their voter suppression efforts. I haven't directly answered your question about January 6 because I do not have a concrete enough idea of what the Court would have been asked to do. So, I will just leave it as saying I wouldn't rest easy that the cases growing out of the efforts to undermine our democracy will come out the way we would like them to come out.

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To view or listen to the presentation, visit [www.amacad.org/events/supreme-court-linda-greenhouse](http://www.amacad.org/events/supreme-court-linda-greenhouse).

# NEW MEMBERS



## Celebrating the Newest Members of the American Academy

By **Patrick Meade**, *Membership Engagement Associate at the Academy*

**O**n Tuesday, September 28, 2021, members of the class of 2021 gathered virtually to celebrate their election and gain an introduction to Academy history, culture, and membership opportunities. In the tradition of the Academy, the program included stimulating discussions, interdisciplinary connections, and moments of artistic expression.

The program featured several current members, including Natasha Trethewey (Northwestern University), who recited her poem “Illumination” about scholars speaking across time and space. Other members offered reflections on their own involvement in Academy governance and projects. These testimonials emphasized the joy of connecting with colleagues from across disciplines and institutions as well as the power of the Academy to serve the common good. Ann

Fudge (Young and Rubicam Brands) spoke of the Academy’s commitment to social justice and encouraged the new members to explore the full portfolio of Academy initiatives to “see where [their] passion meets the work that we are doing.” For Fudge, membership in the Academy is a chance to “expand ourselves, share, and learn something we did not know,” echoing the opening line of Trethewey’s poem: “Always there is something more to know.”

The virtual celebration also offered new members the opportunity to meet one another in small groups, where old friends were reunited and new connections were formed. The program ended with a conversation on the future of the Academy led by President David Oxtoby, who invited suggestions from the new members, assuring them that “this is your institution.”





## Frances McCall Rosenbluth

**F**rances McCall Rosenbluth, one of the Academy's most dedicated members, died in New Haven on November 20, 2021, at age 63. Rosenbluth, the Damon Wells Professor of Political Science at Yale University, had been dealing admirably with glioblastoma for the past year.

Professor Rosenbluth's initial scholarly specialty was the politics of Japan; she was born in Japan and spoke the language fluently. Beginning with her first book in 1989 – *Financial Politics in Contemporary Japan* – she was recognized as an authority on the politics of Japan and its connections to the global political economy.

Her intellectual scope was wide-ranging and expanding. She was especially interested in gender issues, including economic and political obstacles to greater equality for women. Rosenbluth's book with Torben Iversen – *Women, Work and Politics: The Comparative Political Economy of Gender Inequality* (2010) – broke new ground in analyzing the gender wage gap, its causes and consequences.

Over the past few years, Rosenbluth directed her attention to another pressing topic in political science: the distinctive characteristics of democratic communities and challenges to their flourishing. With John Ferejohn, she coauthored *Forged Through Fire: War, Peace and the Democratic Bargain* (2017). Her most recent book, co-authored with Ian Shapiro, was entitled *Responsible Parties: Saving Democracy from Itself*.

Frances and I worked together as co-guest editors of the Winter 2020 issue of *Dædalus* on “Women and Equality.” In the Introduction to that volume, we wrote that “our interest is in the situation of *women* in the world today, and we are not concerned with how any individual has come to the understanding and presentation of self as female. We are more interested in what has come to be known as ‘intersectionality,’ the ways in which differences among human beings – including race, ethnicity, class, and sexual identification – both divide and unite women in all societies today.”

“Frances Rosenbluth’s contributions to so many organizations, including not only Yale and the American Academy but also other institutions she helped build and sustain, both in New Haven and around the world, have left a profoundly important legacy for good.”

Consistent with this social scientific orientation, we and our talented, deeply involved contributors wrote about political representation, women and work, economic equality, violence against women, and changing social norms. We explored strategies and pathways toward meaningful equality for women along multiple dimensions.

The origins of this venture give a good sense of Frances Rosenbluth’s distinctive combination of vision and pragmatic activism. Over a cup of coffee at the morning break during her first meeting as a member of the Academy’s Council, having listened to reports about all the varied activities of the Academy, she asked me: “Has the Academy ever done anything on the topic of women and gender?” As a committed feminist and seasoned member of the governing board, I was chagrined to realize that this question had never occurred to me.

With her typical energy and directness, Frances suggested that we pursue this topic. We learned that there had been no Academy project in this area since 1987. President David Oxtoby and Phyllis Bendell, editor of *Dædalus*, agreed with us that it was high time this lacuna was addressed, and they supported our efforts enthusiastically. We hosted two seminars, bringing scholars from around the world together at the House of the Academy, and agreed to collaborate on a volume for *Dædalus*. All of us who were involved in the venture were grateful for Frances’s scholarly insights, her generous support for each of us, and her steady leadership.

Frances Rosenbluth was a legendary teacher at Yale, and a fine mentor to younger faculty and students. She won several teaching prizes, and her courses were often over-subscribed. Her undergraduate lecture course on “Sex, Markets and Power” was particularly popular. Yet Rosenbluth’s support of her Ph.D. students was equally important, to them and to her as well. According to the January 8, 2022, issue of *Yale Daily News*, many of them said that “her warmth was the ultimate factor that convinced them to study at Yale.”

In addition to her devotion to teaching, Rosenbluth was an accomplished and influential contributor to the administration of her university. She chaired the

political science department and served as deputy provost for the social sciences and faculty development. She also directed several Yale programs, including the program in Ethics, Politics and Economics and, more recently, the Leitner Program in Effective Democratic Governance at the Jackson Institute for Public Affairs. She also served for several years on the board of Waseda University, commuting regularly to Tokyo for meetings.

Frances Rosenbluth’s participation in the affairs of the Academy was highly significant for the organization and for Frances personally as well. She was elected to the Academy in 2007 and had served since 2015 as a member of the Council. Frances was also active as a member of the Committee on Studies and Publications and the Political Science Membership Section Panel. Her leadership of the New Haven Program Committee was instrumental in making that group one of the most vibrant and active regional program committees of the Academy. Most recently, she was part of the Program Advisory Committee for the Academy’s project area on American Institutions, Society, and the Public Good. Those of us who were familiar with her contributions confidently expected her to take on the leadership of one of the Academy’s governing boards before too long.

Frances Rosenbluth leaves her longtime partner, Ian Shapiro, and three beloved sons. Her family was deeply important in her life – walking her dogs with her family near her home in Hamden, cooking and hiking, and enjoying warm conversations. She will be greatly missed by all of us who were fortunate enough to know her, and by the many individuals whose lives she touched in various ways. Her contributions to so many organizations, including not only Yale and the American Academy but also other institutions she helped build and sustain, both in New Haven and around the world, have left a profoundly important legacy for good.

*Nannerl O. Keohane*

Member of the Academy’s Board of Directors;  
President Emerita of Wellesley College and  
Duke University



## Select Prizes and Awards to Members

**Anita L. Allen** (University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School) was awarded the 2021 Philip L. Quinn Prize of the American Philosophical Association.

**C. David Allis** (Rockefeller University) was awarded the inaugural Elaine Redding Brinster Prize in Science or Medicine by the Institute for Regenerative Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania.

**Joshua Angrist** (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences.

**David Baltimore** (California Institute of Technology) is the recipient of the 2021 Lasker-Koshland Award for Special Achievement in Medical Science.

**Jacqueline K. Barton** (California Institute of Technology) is the recipient of the Theodore William Richards Medal Award, given by the Northeastern Section of the American Chemical Society.

**Bonnie Bassler** (Princeton University) received the 2022 Microbiology Society Prize Medal.

**Marlene Belfort** (University of Albany) received the 2022 Mid-Career Leadership Award of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.

**Charles L. Bennett** (Johns Hopkins University) was awarded the American Academy's Rumford Prize.

**Pamela J. Björkman** (California Institute of Technology) is the recipient of the 2021 Pearl Meister Green-gard Prize, awarded by The Rockefeller University.

**Archie Brown** (University of Oxford) was awarded the Pushkin House Book Prize 2021 for *The Human Factor: Gorbachev, Reagan, and Thatcher, and the End of the Cold War*.

**Theodore L. Brown** (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) was awarded the 2021 Alumni Medal of the Illinois Institute of Technology.

**Anantha Chandrakasan** (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) was awarded the 2022 IEEE Mildred Dresselhaus Medal.

**Francis Collins** (National Institutes of Health) received the 2021 Special Recognition Award from the Association of American Medical Colleges.

**James Collins** (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) received the 2021 Walston Chubb Award for Innovation from Sigma Xi.

**Kathleen Collins** (University of California, Berkeley) received the 2022 Earl and Thressa Stadtman Distinguished Scientist Award, given by the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.

**George Crabtree** (University of Illinois-Chicago; Argonne National Laboratory) received the 2022 Energy Systems Award of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.

**Kimberlé W. Crenshaw** (Columbia Law School; UCLA School of Law) received the 2021 AALS Triennial Award for Lifetime Service to Legal Education and the Legal Profession from the Association of American Law Schools.

**Thibault Damour** (Institut des Hautes Études Scientifiques) was awarded a 2021 Balzan Prize.

**Peter B. Dervan** (California Institute of Technology) was awarded the 2022 Priestley Medal by the American Chemical Society.

**Nicholas Donofrio** (NMD Consulting) is a recipient of the 2022 International Peace Honors, given by the Peace-Tech Lab.

**Jennifer A. Doudna** (University of California, Berkeley) received the 2021 Award for Excellence in Molecular Diagnostics from the Association for Molecular Pathology.

**Anthony Fauci** (National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases) received the 2021 Special Recognition Award from the Association of American Medical Colleges.

**Saul Friedländer** (University of California, Los Angeles) was awarded a 2021 Balzan Prize.

**Elaine Fuchs** (Rockefeller University) received the 2022 Bert and Natalie Vallee Award in Biomedical Science, given by the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.

**Loren Ghiglione** (Northwestern University) is the recipient of the 2021 Carey McWilliams Award, given by the American Political Science Association.

**Alison Gopnik** (University of California, Berkeley) is the recipient of the 2021 Carl Sagan Prize for Science Popularization, awarded by Wonderfest.

**Jeffrey I. Gordon** (Washington University in St. Louis) was awarded a 2021 Balzan Prize.

**Annette Gordon-Reed** (Harvard University) is among the recipients of the 2021 Massachusetts Governor's Awards in the Humanities.

**Jack D. Griffith** (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) received the 2021 Progress Medal from the Photographic Society of America.

**Sharon Hammes-Schiffer** (Yale University) is the recipient of the 2021 Willard Gibbs Award of the American Chemical Society.

**Joseph Heitman** (Duke University) was elected a member of the National Academy of Sciences and the German National Academy of Sciences-Leopoldina. He also received the 2021 Distinguished Mycologist Award from the Mycological Society of America.

**John P. Holdren** (Harvard Kennedy School) received the Arthur M. Bueche Award from the National Academy of Engineering.

**Ali Hortaçsu** (University of Chicago) is the recipient of the Koç University Rahmi M. Koç Medal of Science.

**Peter Hotez** (Baylor College of Medicine) received the 2021 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation David E. Rogers Award, given by the Association of American Medical Colleges.

**Guido Imbens** (Stanford University) was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences.

**Robert Jaffe** (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) received the 2022 Joseph A. Burton Forum Award from the American Physical Society.

**Betsy Jolas** (Conservatoire de Paris) has been appointed Commandeur de la Légion d'Honneur by the President of France.

**William Jorgensen** (Yale University) was selected as a 2021 Citation Laureate by Clarivate.

**David Julius** (University of California, San Francisco) was awarded the Nobel Prize in Medicine.

**Marc Kamionkowski** (Johns Hopkins University) was awarded the 2021 Gruber Cosmology Prize. He shares the award with Uroš Seljak (University of California, Berkeley) and Matias Zaldarriaga (Institute for Advanced Study).

**Jay Keasling** (Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory; University of California, Berkeley) received the Distinguished Scientist Fellow Award from the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Science.

**Tony Kouzarides** (University of Cambridge) was awarded the Cyprus Academy of Sciences, Letters, and Arts Excellence Award in the Category of Positive Sciences.

**Gloria Ladson-Billings** (University of Wisconsin-Madison) was elected as a Corresponding Fellow of The British Academy.

**Charles Larmore** (Brown University) has been awarded the Gadamer Prize by the Hans-Georg Gadamer Society for Hermeneutic Philosophy.

**Cato T. Laurencin** (University of Connecticut) is the recipient of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers' 2021 Hoover Medal.

**Jianguo "Jack" Liu** (Michigan State University) received the World Sustainability Award, given by the MDPI Sustainability Foundation. He also received the Gunnerus Award in Sustainability Science by the Royal Norwegian Society of Sciences and Letters and the Norwegian University of Science and Technology.

**Yo-Yo Ma** (Sound Postings) was awarded the 2021 Praemium Imperiale for music.

**David W.C. Macmillan** (Princeton University) was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry.

**Nader Masmoudi** (New York University) is among the recipients of the King Faisal Prize for Science.

**Elizabeth M. McNally** (Northwestern University) was named the American Heart Association's 2021 Distinguished Scientist in Basic Cardiovascular Sciences.

**John R. McNeill** (Georgetown University) was elected to membership in the Academia Europaea.

**Ellen Mosley-Thompson** (Ohio State University) was awarded the Mendel Medal by Villanova University.

**Pete Nicholas** (Boston Scientific Corporation) received the University Medal from Duke University.

**Indra Nooyi** (PreeTara LLC) is the recipient of the 2022 International Distinguished Entrepreneur Award, given by the Asper School of Business at the University of Manitoba.

**Ardem S. Patapoutian** (Scripps Research Institute) was awarded the Nobel Prize in Medicine.

**Enrico Ramirez-Ruiz** (University of California, Santa Cruz) received the 2021 SACNAS Distinguished Mentor Award from the Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science.

**Sebastião Salgado** (Amazonas Images) was awarded the 2021 Praemium Imperiale for painting.

**Greg Sarris** (Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria; Sonoma State University) is the recipient of the inaugural Arts and Humanities Dean's Teaching Award of Sonoma State University.

**Frederick Schauer** (University of Virginia School of Law) received the Hart-Dworkin Award in Legal Philosophy from the Association of American Law Schools.

**Roberto Sierra** (Cornell University) received a 2021 Latin Grammy Award for best classical contemporary composition for "Sonata Para Guitarra."

**Ruth J. Simmons** (Prairie View A&M University) received the 2021 Rosa Parks Award, given by the American Association for Access, Equity, and Diversity.

**Jacqueline Stewart** (Academy Museum of Motion Pictures; University of Chicago) was awarded a 2021 MacArthur Fellowship.

**Geoffrey R. Stone** (University of Chicago) received the Norman Maclean Faculty Award, given by the University of Chicago.

**Samuel Stupp** (Northwestern University) received the 2022 American Chemical Society Ralph F. Hirschmann Award in Peptide Chemistry.

**Arthur Sze** (Institute of American Indian Arts) received the 2021 Shelley Memorial Award from the Poetry Society of America.

**Susan S. Taylor** (University of California, San Diego) received the 2022 Herbert Tabor Research Award, given by the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.

**Saul Teukolsky** (Cornell University) was awarded the International Centre for Theoretical Physics' 2021 ICTP Dirac Medal and Prize.

**Lonnie G. Thompson** (Ohio State University) was awarded the Mendel Medal by Villanova University.

**Jeremy W. Thorner** (University of California, Berkeley) is the recipient of the 2022 Centenary Award from the Biochemical Society of the United Kingdom.

**Colm Tóibín** (Dublin, Ireland) was awarded the David Cohen Prize for Literature.

**James Turrell** (Flagstaff, AZ) was awarded the 2021 Praemium Imperiale for sculpture.

**Moshe Vardi** (Rice University) is the recipient of the 2021 Norbert Wiener Award for Social and Professional Responsibility from IEEE's Society on the Social Implications of Technology.

**Mary Jane West-Eberhard** (Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute) was awarded the 2021 Linnean Medal by the Linnean Society.

**Mark Wise** (California Institute of Technology) was awarded the 2021 Julius Wess Prize of the KIT Center for Elementary Particle and Astroparticle Physics of Karlsruhe Institute of Technology.



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## New Appointments

### MEMBERS OF THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL OF ADVISORS ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (PCAST)

**Frances Arnold, Cochair** (California Institute of Technology)

**Eric Lander, Cochair** (White House Office of Science and Technology Policy)

**Maria T. Zuber, Cochair** (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)

**Ashton Carter** (Harvard University)

**William Dally** (NVIDIA)

**Susan Desmond-Hellmann** (formerly, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation)

**Inez Fung** (University of California, Berkeley)

**Andrea Goldsmith** (Princeton University)

**Laura H. Greene** (Florida State University)

**Paula Hammond** (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)

**Eric Horvitz** (Microsoft)

**Jonathan Levin** (Stanford University)

**Stephen Pacala** (Princeton University)

**Saul Perlmutter** (University of California, Berkeley)

**William Press** (University of Texas at Austin)

**Penny Pritzker** (PSP Capital Partners)

**Jennifer Richeson** (Yale University)

**Lisa T. Su** (Advanced Micro Devices)

**Kathryn D. Sullivan** (KD Sullivan Enterprises)

**Terence Tao** (University of California, Los Angeles)

### OTHER NEW APPOINTMENTS

**Rafi Ahmed** (Emory University School of Medicine) was appointed to the Scientific Advisory Board of Asyilia Therapeutics.

**Nancy C. Andrews** (Duke University) was named Executive Vice President and Chief Scientific Officer of Boston Children's Hospital.

**Catherine Bertini** (Syracuse University) was appointed to the Board of Directors of Central New York Community Foundation.

**Rebecca M. Blank** (University of Wisconsin-Madison) was named President of Northwestern University.

**Mariano-Florentino Cuéllar** (California Supreme Court) was named President of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

**Beverly Davidson** (University of Pennsylvania) was appointed Chair of the Scientific Advisory Board of Homology Medicines.

**Debra M. Elmegreen** (Vassar College) was elected President of the International Astronomical Union (IAU).

**Debra Fischer** (Yale University) was named Director of the National Science Foundation's Division of Astronomical Sciences.

**Paula Hammond** (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) was appointed to the Board of Directors of The Engine.

**Susan Hubbard** (Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory) was named Deputy for Science and Technology at the U.S. Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

**Carl June** (University of Pennsylvania) was appointed Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Board of Bioheng.

**Dan Jurafsky** (Stanford University) was appointed to the Scientific Advisory Board of Woebot Health.

**Daniel Kammen** (University of California, Berkeley) was appointed Senior Advisor for Energy, Climate, and Innovation for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

**Mark T. Keating** (Alnylam Pharmaceuticals) was appointed Chief Scientific Officer of Yarrow Biotechnology.

**Young-Kee Kim** (University of Chicago) was elected President of the American Physical Society.

**Kent Kresa** (Northrop Grumman Corporation) was appointed to the Board of Directors of The Music Center.

**Lewis L. Lanier** (University of California, San Francisco) was appointed to the Scientific Advisory Board of Invent Biologics.

**Diane Mathis** (Harvard Medical School) was appointed to the Scientific Advisory Board of Asyilia Therapeutics.

**Michael A. McRobbie** (Indiana University) was appointed to the Board of Directors of Strategic Education, Inc.

**David Nirenberg** (University of Chicago) was appointed Director of the Institute for Advanced Study.

**Indra Nooyi** (PreeTara LLC) was elected to the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery of Art.

**David W. Oxtoby** (American Academy of Arts and Sciences) was elected to the Board of Trustees of Smith College.

**Roderic Pettigrew** (Texas A&M University) was appointed the inaugural Dean of the Intercollegiate School of Engineering Medicine at Texas A&M University.

**Dianne Pinderhughes** (University of Notre Dame) was elected President of the International Political Science Association.

**Thomas Rando** (Stanford University) was named Director of the Eli and Edythe Broad Center of Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at UCLA.

**Claudia Rankine** (New York University) was elected to the Board of Trustees of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

**Jeffrey V. Ravetch** (Rockefeller University) was appointed to the Scientific Advisory Board of Asyilia Therapeutics.

**Peter Reich** (University of Minnesota) was named Director of the Institute for Global Change Biology at the School for Environment and Sustainability at the University of Michigan.

**Louise Richardson** (University of Oxford) was named President of Carnegie Corporation of New York.

**Charles Rotimi** (National Institutes of Health) was named Scientific Director of the National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI).

**David M. Rubenstein** (The Carlyle Group) was elected Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery of Art.

**Richard Scheller** (BridgeBio) was appointed to the Board of Directors of Aarvik Therapeutics.

**Stuart Schreiber** (Harvard University; Broad Institute) was appointed to the Scientific Advisory Board of Vividion Therapeutics.

**David Spergel** (Flatiron Institute) was named President of the Simons Foundation.

**James H. Stock** (Harvard University) was named Vice Provost for Climate and Sustainability at Harvard University.

**Christopher Walsh** (Stanford University) was appointed to the Scientific Advisory Board of Vividion Therapeutics.

## Select Publications

### POETRY

**Yusef Komunyakaa** (New York University). *Everyday Mojo Songs of Earth: New and Selected Poems, 2001–2021*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, June 2021

**Carl Phillips** (Washington University in St. Louis). *Then the War and Selected Poems, 2007–2020*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, February 2022

**Kevin Young** (National Museum of African American History and Culture, Smithsonian Institution). *Stones: Poems*. Knopf, September 2021

### FICTION

**Hillary Rodham Clinton** (Chappaqua, NY) and Louise Penny (Montreal, Canada). *State of Terror*. Simon & Schuster/St. Martin's Press, October 2021

**Louise Erdrich** (Minneapolis, MN). *The Sentence*. Harper, November 2021

**Gish Jen** (Cambridge, MA). *Thank You, Mr. Nixon*. Knopf, February 2022

**Alan Lightman** (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and Olga Pastuchiv (Richmond, ME). *Ada and the Galaxies*. MIT Kids Press, September 2021

**Richard Powers** (Great Smoky Mountains). *Bewilderment*. W.W. Norton, September 2021

**Sonia Sotomayor** (Supreme Court of the United States). *Just Help! How to Build a Better World*. Philomel Books, January 2022

**Wole Soyinka** (Abeokuta, Nigeria). *Chronicles from the Land of the Happiest People on Earth*. Pantheon, September 2021

**Colm Tóibín** (Dublin, Ireland). *The Magician*. Scribner, September 2021

### NONFICTION

**Elizabeth Alexander** (Andrew W. Mellon Foundation). *The Trayvon Generation*. Grand Central Publishing, April 2022

**Danielle Allen** (Harvard University), **Rebecca Henderson** (Harvard University), Yochai Benkler (Harvard University), Leah Downey (Harvard University), and Josh Simons (Harvard University), eds. *A Political Economy of Justice*. University of Chicago Press, April 2022

**Bruce Bueno de Mesquita** (New York University). *The Invention of Power: Popes, Kings, and the Birth of the West*. PublicAffairs, January 2022

**Mary Ann Caws** (The Graduate Center, City University of New York). *Mina Loy: Apology of Genius*. Reaktion Books, June 2022; and *Alice Paalen Rahon: Shape-shifter*. NYRB Poets, September 2021

**Teju Cole** (Harvard University). *Black Paper: Writing in a Dark Time*. University of Chicago Press, October 2021

**Antonio Damasio** (University of Southern California). *Feeling & Knowing: Making Minds Conscious*. Pantheon, October 2021

**David Damrosch** (Harvard University). *Around the World in 80 Books: A Literary Journey*. Penguin Press, November 2021

**Ronald J. Daniels** (Johns Hopkins University). *What Universities Owe Democracy*. Johns Hopkins University Press, October 2021

**E. J. Dionne Jr.** (Brookings Institution) and Miles Rapoport (Harvard Kennedy School). *100% Democracy: The Case for Universal Voting*. New Press, March 2022

**Johanna Drucker** (University of California, Los Angeles). *Inventing the Alphabet: The Origins of Letters from Antiquity to the Present*. University of Chicago Press, May 2022

**Anthony Fauci** (National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases). *Expect the Unexpected: Ten Lessons on Truth, Service, and the Way Forward*. National Geographic, November 2021

**Noah Feldman** (Harvard University). *The Broken Constitution: Lincoln, Slavery, and the Refounding of America*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, November 2021

**Sander L. Gilman** (Emory University) and Zhou Xun (University of Essex). *"I Know Who Caused COVID-19": Pandemics and Xenophobia*. Reaktion Books, October 2021

**Edward Glaeser** (Harvard University) and **David Cutler** (Harvard University). *Survival of the City: Living and Thriving in an Age of Isolation*. Penguin Press, September 2021

**Edward Glaeser** (Harvard University) and **James M. Poterba** (Massachusetts Institute of Technology; National Bureau of Economic Research), eds. *Economic Analysis and Infrastructure Investment*. University of Chicago Press, November 2021

**Claudia Goldin** (Harvard University). *Career & Family: Women's Century-Long Journey toward Equity*. Princeton University Press, October 2021

**Jane Goodall** (Jane Goodall Institute) and Douglas Abrams (Idea Architects). *Book of Hope: A Survival Guide for Trying Times*. Celadon Books, October 2021

**Temple Grandin** (Colorado State University) and Debra Moore (Rappahannock County, VA). *Navigating Autism: 9 Mindsets for Helping Kids on the Spectrum*. W.W. Norton, September 2021

**Linda Greenhouse** (Yale Law School). *Justice on the Brink: The Death of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the Rise of Amy Coney Barrett, and Twelve Months that Transformed the Supreme Court*. Random House, November 2021



**Sanjay Gupta** (Cable News Network; Emory University School of Medicine). *World War C: Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic and How to Prepare for the Next One*. Simon & Schuster, October 2021

**Nikole Hannah-Jones** (Harvard University). *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story*. One World, November 2021

**Joy Harjo** (Tulsa, OK). *Poet Warrior: A Memoir*. W.W. Norton, September 2021

**Donald L. Horowitz** (Duke University). *Constitutional Processes and Democratic Commitment*. Yale University Press, August 2021

**Martin Indyk** (Council on Foreign Relations). *Master of the Game: Henry Kissinger and the Art of Middle East Diplomacy*. Knopf, October 2021

**Eric Kandel** (Columbia University). *There Is Life After the Nobel Prize*. Columbia University Press, December 2021

**Michael Kazin** (Georgetown University). *What It Took to Win: A History of the Democratic Party*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, March 2022

**Randall Kennedy** (Harvard Law School). *Say It Loud: On Race, Law, History, and Culture*. Pantheon, September 2021

**Henry A. Kissinger** (Kissinger Associates), **Eric Schmidt** (Schmidt Futures), and Daniel Huttenlocher (MIT Schwarzman College of Computing). *The Age of AI: And Our Human Future*. Little Brown and Company, November 2021

**Julia Kristeva** (Université de Paris VII). *Dostoyevsky, or the Flood of Language*. Columbia University Press, December 2021

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).

**Mark Mazower** (Columbia University). *The Greek Revolution: 1821 and the Making of Modern Europe*. Penguin Press, November 2021

**Paul McCartney** (Sussex, England). *The Lyrics: 1956 to the Present*. Liveright, November 2021

**Deirdre Nansen McCloskey** (University of Illinois at Chicago). *Beyond Positivism, Behaviorism, and Neo-Institutionalism in Economics*. University of Chicago Press, June 2022

**Jerome McGann** (University of Virginia). *Culture and Language at Crossed Purposes: The Unsettled Records of American Settlement*. University of Chicago Press, May 2022

**Raymond T. Pierrehumbert** (University of Oxford). *Planetary Systems: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, February 2022

**Steven Pinker** (Harvard University). *Rationality: What It Is, Why It Seems Scarce, Why It Matters*. Viking Press, September 2021

**Richard Rose** (University of Strathclyde). *How Sick Is British Democracy? A Clinical Analysis*. Palgrave Macmillan, June 2021

**David M. Rubenstein** (The Carlyle Group). *The American Experiment: Dialogues on a Dream*. Simon & Schuster, September 2021

**Eric L. Santner** (University of Chicago). *Untying Things Together: Philosophy, Literature, and a Life in Theory*. University of Chicago Press, April 2022

**Amartya Sen** (Harvard University). *Home in the World: A Memoir*. Liveright, January 2022

**Anne-Marie Slaughter** (New America). *Renewal: From Crisis to Transformation in Our Lives, Work, and Politics*. Princeton University Press, September 2021

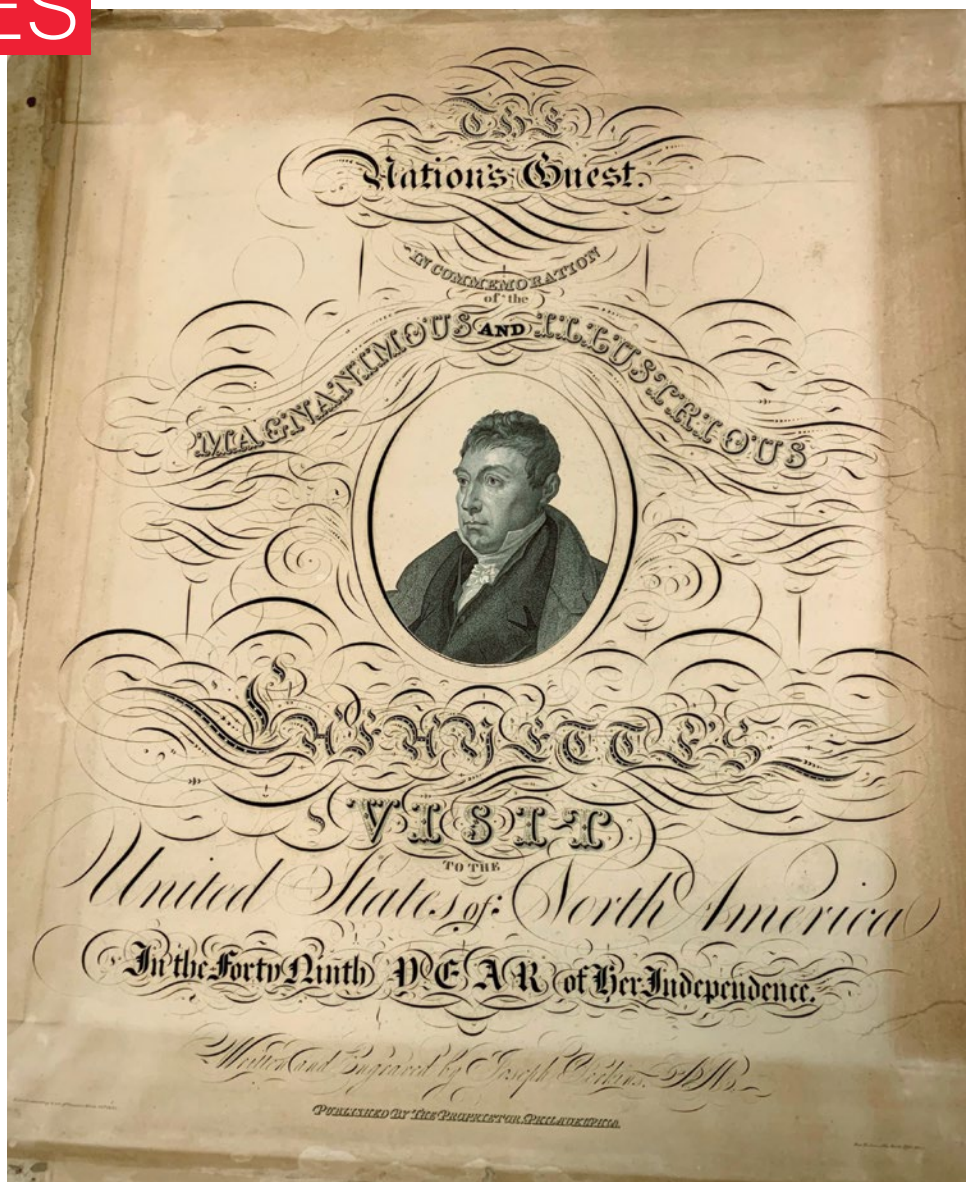
**Paul M. Sniderman** (Stanford University) and Elisabeth Ivarsson (University of Bergen). *The Struggle for Inclusion: Muslim Minorities and the Democratic Ethos*. University of Chicago Press, January 2022

**Thomas J. Sugrue** (New York University) and Caitlin Zaloom (New York University), eds. *The Long Year: A 2020 Reader*. Columbia University Press, January 2022

**Gordon S. Wood** (Brown University). *Power and Liberty: Constitutionalism in the American Revolution*. Oxford University Press, September 2021

**James Wright** (Dartmouth College). *War and American Life: Reflections on Those Who Serve and Sacrifice*. Brandeis University Press, May 2022

Engraved broadsheet,  
“Our Nation’s Guest,”  
by Joseph Perkins, 1825.



By **Maggie Boyd**, Associate  
Archivist at the Academy

**D**iscoveries are often amazing moments in archival work. In 2010, the Academy’s archivists sent several pieces of artwork, part of the Academy’s Special Collections, to an art restorer for treatment.

One of these items was a mezzotint of astronomer and Academy member Francis Baily (1774–1844; elected to the Academy in 1832) by Thomas Lupton (1791–1873), date unknown, donated to the Academy by Rev. R. Sheepshanks between 1847 and 1848. The mezzotint needed to be removed from its wooden frame so that it could be cleaned and flattened for continued preservation. During conservation, the art restorer discovered that a piece of paper used as backing was, in fact, a broadside. The document had been well preserved except for where it had pressed against the wooden frame and become discolored.

This discovery is made more noteworthy by the fact that the broadside commemorates the return to the United States of Gilbert du Motier, the Marquis de La Fayette (1757–1834; elected a Foreign Honorary Member of the Academy in 1785). From 1824 to 1825, La Fayette and his son Georges Washington made a grand tour of the young republic, visiting every state. An eager public purchased the commemorative items produced at the time, as La Fayette was one of the last living heroes of the Revolutionary War.

The broadside – titled “Our Nation’s Guest” and engraved in 1825 by Joseph Perkins (1788–1842) – features a portrait of the general and the script: “In commemoration of the magnanimous and illustrious Lafayette’s visit to the United States of North America in the forty-ninth year of her independence.”



# Bulletin

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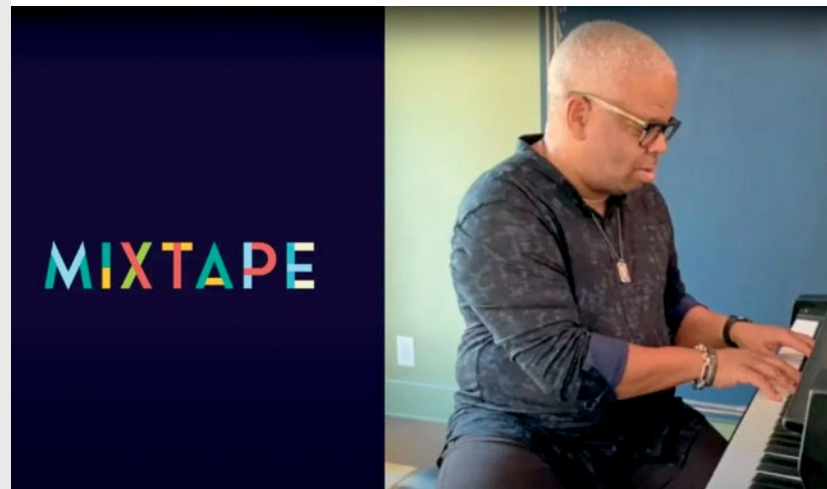
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# ONLINE

**Terence Blanchard**, a member of the Academy and of the Commission on the Arts, is a jazz trumpeter, bandleader, composer, and educator. His contribution to *Mixtape* – an online gallery of poems, stories, song, videos, and visual art – is an illustrated and illuminating video in which he shares the journey from his musical childhood to becoming the first Black composer presented on the Metropolitan Opera stage.

Online at [amacad.org/mixtape](http://amacad.org/mixtape).



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