The Center for Information, Technology, and Public Life presents:

MEDIA AND JANUARY 6TH

Friday, April 12th

10am to 7pm

Join Zoom Webinar

Freedom Forum, Carroll Hall

CITAP
Center for Information, Technology, and Public Life

Schedule

10:00AM-11:30AM
PANEL: UNDERSTANDING JANUARY 6TH
FREEDOM FORUM CONFERENCE CENTER
ZOOM

11:30AM-1:00PM
LUNCH BREAK
FREEDOM FORUM CONFERENCE CENTER

1:00PM-2:30PM
PANEL: RESEARCHING THREATS TO DEMOCRACY
FREEDOM FORUM CONFERENCE CENTER
ZOOM

2:30PM-3:00PM
COFFEE BREAK
FREEDOM FORUM CONFERENCE CENTER

3:00PM-4:30PM
PANEL: DEFENDING DEMOCRACY
FREEDOM FORUM CONFERENCE CENTER
ZOOM

4:30PM-5:30PM
COFFEE BREAK
FREEDOM FORUM CONFERENCE CENTER

5:30PM-7:00PM
MEDIA, JANUARY 6TH, AND AMERICAN HISTORY
FREEDOM FORUM CONFERENCE CENTER
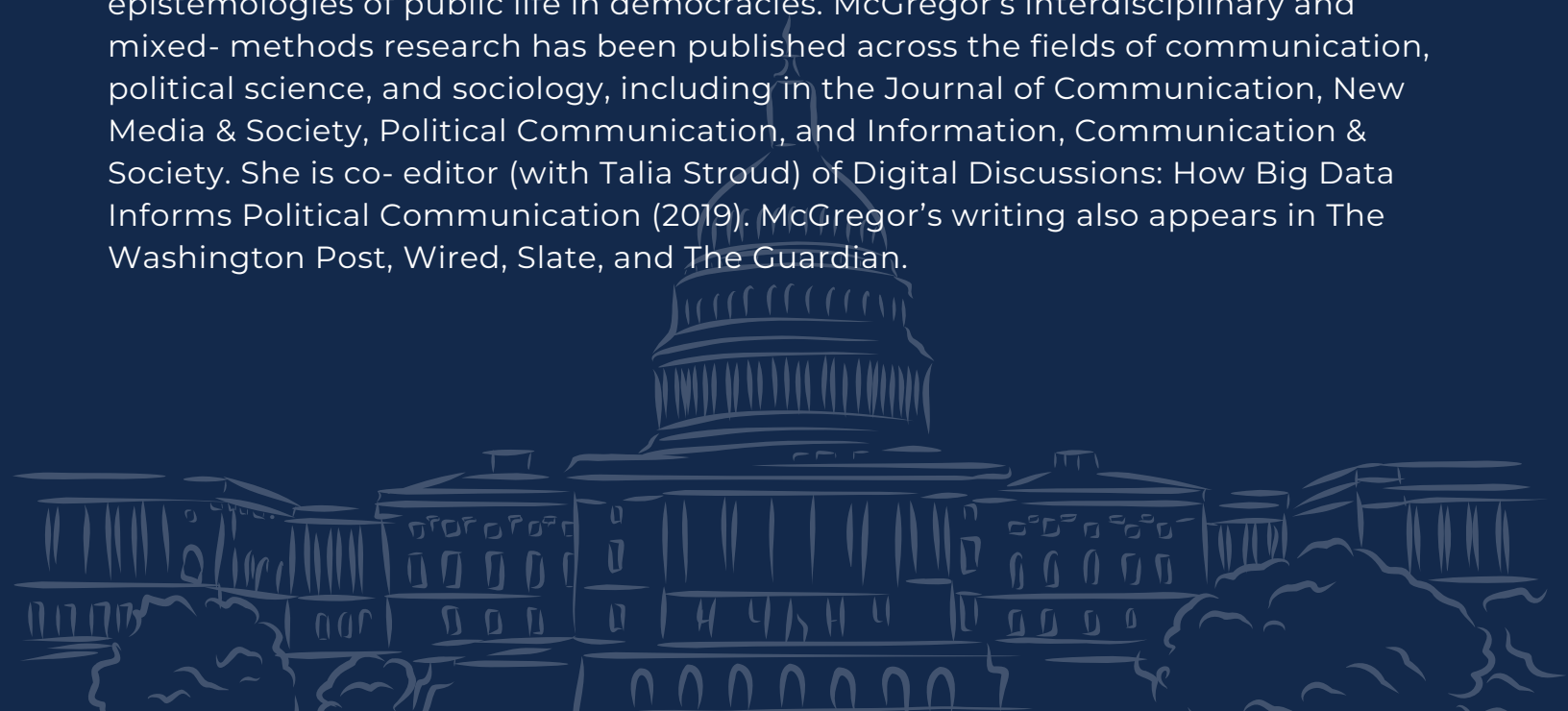ZOOM

UNDERSTANDING JANUARY 6TH
10:00AM-11:30AM

Panel description

How should social scientists, media scholars, policymakers, journalists, and the public understand what happened on January 6th, 2021? Researchers on this panel, all contributors to the Media and January 6th volume, discuss their work demonstrating that what happened on January 6th was an attempted coup grounded in the political interests of the outgoing President, his supporters, and members of the Republican Party – as well as the political coalition it represents. They analyze how media, communication, and rhetoric were central to laying the groundwork for January 6th as well as how the events on the day unfolded.

Moderator

Shannon C. McGregor is an assistant professor in the Hussman School of Journalism and Media at the University of North Carolina and a Principal Investigator with UNC's Center for Information, Technology, and Public Life. She is an award- winning and internationally recognized communication scholar whose research addresses the role of social media in political processes. In particular, she examines how social media shapes political communication, journalism, public opinion, and epistemologies of public life in democracies. McGregor's interdisciplinary and mixed- methods research has been published across the fields of communication, political science, and sociology, including in the Journal of Communication, New Media & Society, Political Communication, and Information, Communication & Society. She is co- editor (with Talia Stroud) of Digital Discussions: How Big Data Informs Political Communication (2019). McGregor's writing also appears in The Washington Post, Wired, Slate, and The Guardian.
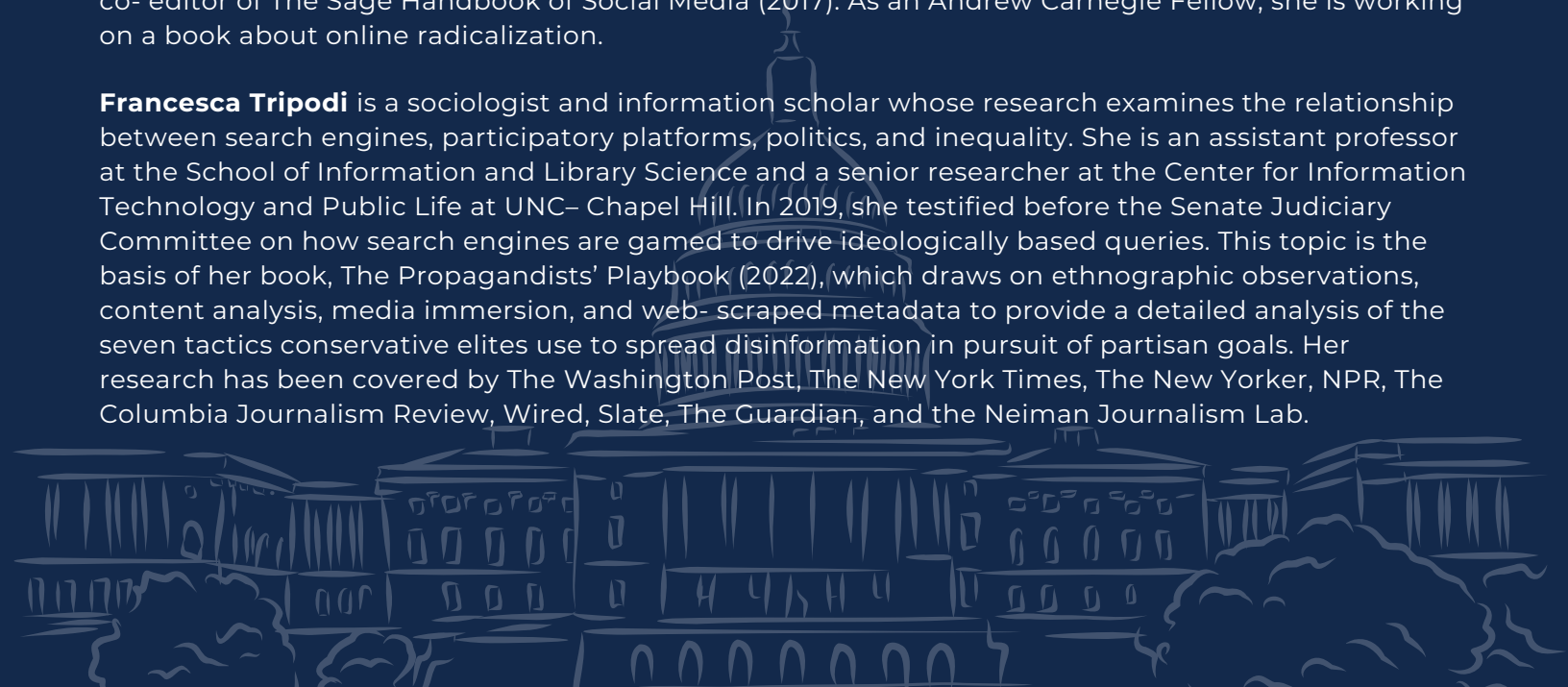
Panelists

Scott L. Althaus is Merriam Professor of Political Science, Professor of Communication, and Director of the Cline Center for Advanced Social Research at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. He also has faculty appointments with the School of Information Sciences and the National Center for Supercomputing Applications. His work with the Cline Center applies text analytics methods and Artificial Intelligence algorithms to extract insights from millions of news stories in ways that produce new forms of knowledge that advance societal well-being around the world. His own research interests explore the communication processes that support political accountability in democratic societies and that empower political discontent in non-democratic societies. His current projects include using data mining methods to help journalists cover terrorist attacks in responsible ways and a book manuscript to be published by Cambridge University Press about the dynamics of popular support for war in the United States.

Danielle K. Brown is the 1855 Professor of Community and Urban Journalism and an associate professor at Michigan State University. She is an award- winning political communication researcher investigating the intersection of digital media, underserved and historically excluded communities, and social justice efforts. Her research focuses primarily on injustices in media and their effect on society in three core areas: race and racism, protest and social movements, and health inequalities. Brown has authored dozens of peer- reviewed articles that appear in communication, journalism, and political science journals, and her work also appears in popular media outlets like Salon, Yahoo News, and The Conversation. Brown serves as associate editor for the International Journal of Press/ Politics. Prior to joining the academy, she was a photojournalist, writer, and later a nonprofit public relations professional. Brown received her doctoral degree in journalism from the University of Texas at Austin in 2017. She received a bachelor's and master's degree in journalism and public Relations from Baylor University.

Alice E. Marwick is an associate professor in the Department of Communication and a principal researcher at the Center for Information, Technology and Public Life at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She researches the social, political, and cultural implications of social media technologies and is currently interested in disinformation and identity. Marwick is the author of The Private Is Political: Networked Privacy on Social Media (2023), Media Manipulation and Disinformation Online (2017), and Status Update: Celebrity, Publicity and Branding in the Social Media Age (2013), and co- editor of The Sage Handbook of Social Media (2017). As an Andrew Carnegie Fellow, she is working on a book about online radicalization.

Francesca Tripodi is a sociologist and information scholar whose research examines the relationship between search engines, participatory platforms, politics, and inequality. She is an assistant professor at the School of Information and Library Science and a senior researcher at the Center for Information Technology and Public Life at UNC– Chapel Hill. In 2019, she testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee on how search engines are gamed to drive ideologically based queries. This topic is the basis of her book, The Propagandists' Playbook (2022), which draws on ethnographic observations, content analysis, media immersion, and web- scraped metadata to provide a detailed analysis of the seven tactics conservative elites use to spread disinformation in pursuit of partisan goals. Her research has been covered by The Washington Post, The New York Times, The New Yorker, NPR, The Columbia Journalism Review, Wired, Slate, The Guardian, and the Neiman Journalism Lab.

RESEARCHING THREATS TO DEMOCRACY
1:00PM-2:30PM

Panel description

Scholars on this panel, all contributors to the volume, demonstrate the urgency with which our research must change if we are to play a part in ensuring the health of our democracy. These scholars argue for research on how deep networks of domestic extremists – and the money, political institutions, and media environments that allow them to thrive – provide fertile soil for antidemocratic crises. And, they argue that we must understand partisan media as political organizations, the power of media representations about January 6th and its key actors, and the importance of consequences for those who violate democratic norms.

Moderator

Rebekah Tromble is director of the Institute for Data, Democracy & Politics and an associate professor in the School of Media & Public Affairs at George Washington University. Her research examines digital political behavior, with a particular focus on the darker sides of online communication, including right- wing extremism, hate speech, and harassment and has been published in journals such as the American Political Science Review, New Media & Society, and Political Communication. Tromble is currently leading a multimillion dollar interdisciplinary, cross- sector project to develop a rapid- response system in support of journalists, scientists, public health officials, and other experts facing campaigns of online harassment. Tromble regularly serves as advisor to policymakers, regulators, and civil society, particularly on topics
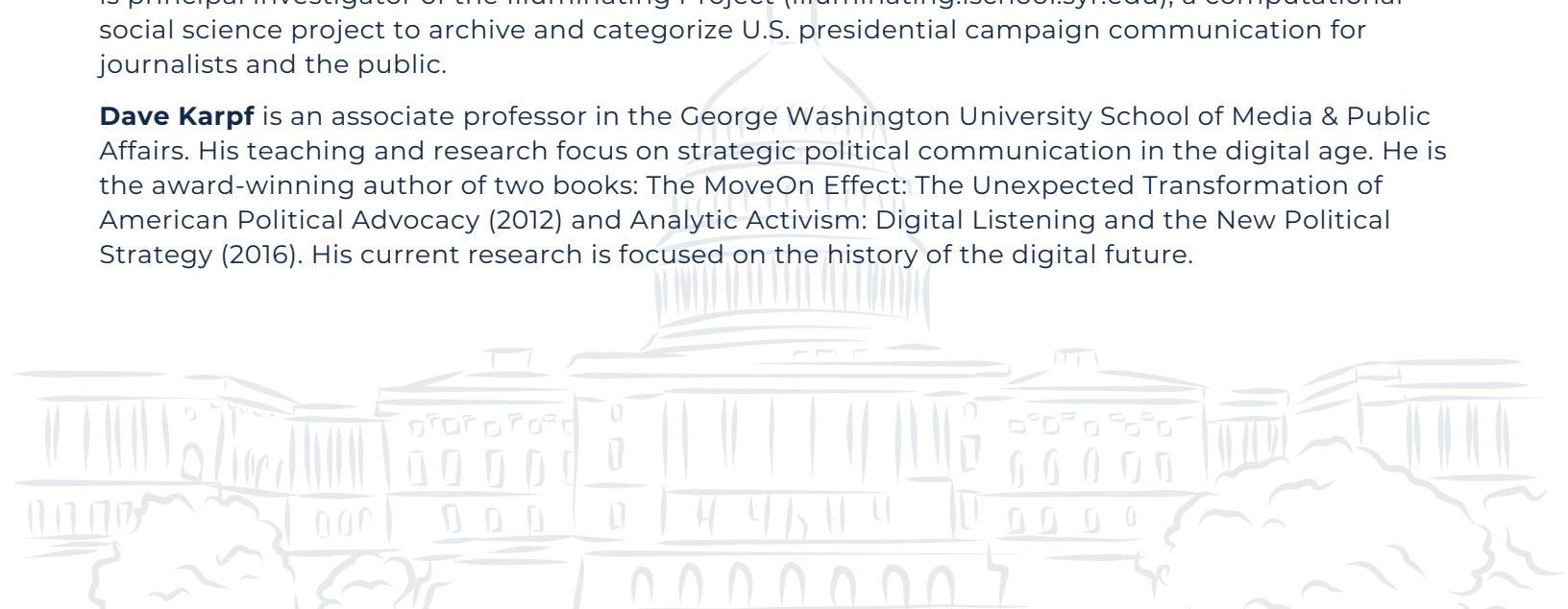
Panelists

Yunkang Yang is an assistant professor of communication at the Department of Communication and Journalism at Texas A&M University. He is also a research affiliate at the Institute for Data, Democracy & Politics at George Washington University. His most recent publication on U.S. right-wing media is "Interactive Propaganda: How Fox News and Donald Trump Co-produced False Narratives about the Covid-19 Crisis" (with Lance Bennett) in Political Communication in the Time of Coronavirus (2022). In 2022, Yang provided his research and expert opinions to the U.S. House Select Committee on the January 6th Attack as statements of record. His work on U.S. right-wing media, social media, and disinformation has been quoted by various media outlets, including The New Yorker, The Hill, NPR, CTV, and AFP.

Regina Lawrence is associate dean of the School of Journalism and Communication in Portland, research director of the Agora Journalism Center at the University of Oregon, and editor of the journal Political Communication. Her research focuses on press-state relations; journalistic norms, routines, and innovations; and the role of the media, gender, and social identity in political communication. She has been chair of the Political Communication section of the American Political Science Association and a fellow at the Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics, and Public Policy at Harvard University. Her studies have appeared in numerous journals, including Journalism, Perspectives on Politics, Political Communication, Journalism Practice, and Information, Communication & Society. Lawrence's books include When the Press Fails: Political Power and the News Media from Iraq to Katrina (2007, with W. Lance Bennett and Steven Livingston), winner of the 2016 Doris A. Graber Best Book Award from the Political Communication section of the American Political Science Association; Hillary Clinton's Race for the White House: Gender Politics and the Media on the Campaign Trail (2009, with Melody Rose); and The Politics of Force: Media and the Construction of Police Brutality (2000), which is being reissued in 2022.

Jennifer Stromer-Galley is a professor in the School of Information Studies and senior associate dean for academic and faculty affairs at Syracuse University. She is a former president of the Association of Internet Researchers and is an associate editor for the Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication. Her book Presidential Campaigning in the Internet Age received the 2015 Roderick P. Hart Top Book Award in the Political Communication Division of the National Communication Association. She has been studying social media since before it was called social media, studying online interaction and strategic communication in a variety of contexts, including political forums and online games. She has published more than 70 journal articles, proceedings, and book chapters and received over $15 million in federal and corporate grants to support her research endeavors. She is principal investigator of the Illuminating Project (illuminating.ischool.syr.edu), a computational social science project to archive and categorize U.S. presidential campaign communication for journalists and the public.

Dave Karpf is an associate professor in the George Washington University School of Media & Public Affairs. His teaching and research focus on strategic political communication in the digital age. He is the award-winning author of two books: The MoveOn Effect: The Unexpected Transformation of American Political Advocacy (2012) and Analytic Activism: Digital Listening and the New Political Strategy (2016). His current research is focused on the history of the digital future.
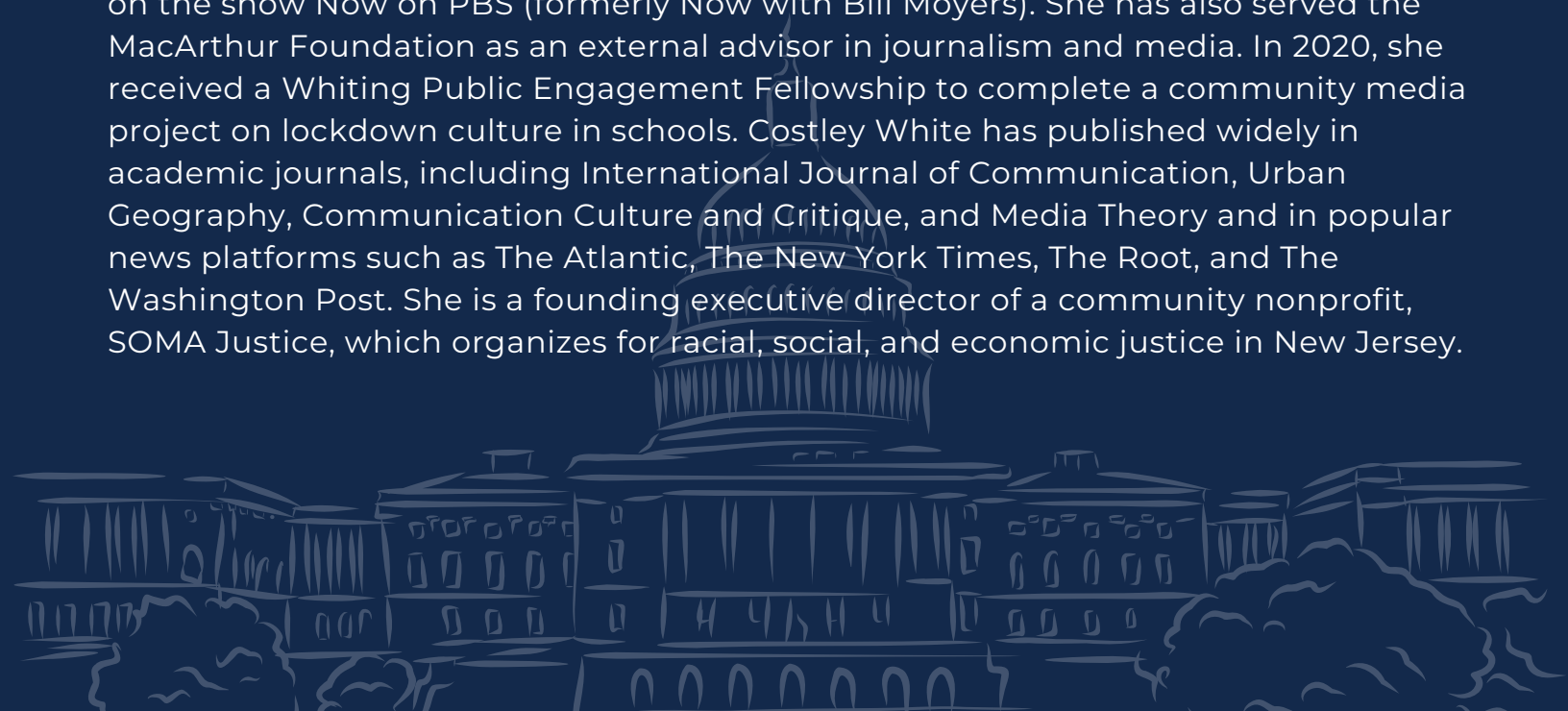
DEFENDING DEMOCRACY
3:00PM-4:30PM

Panel description

On this panel, scholars discuss how we can defend democracy and its institutions. Panelists argue that this means crafting new stories about demographic change in the United States, journalists confronting the ways they uphold unequal power systems, understanding the dangers of anti-democratic populism, and checking the media power of anti-democratic movements. Only by understanding January 6th and how it was a threat to America can we have a clear sense of how to protect our fragile democratic institutions.

Moderator

Khadijah Costley White is an associate professor in the Department of Journalism and Media Studies at Rutgers University–New Brunswick. She researches politics, social change, and identity in media. Her book, The Branding of Right-Wing Activism: The News Media and the Tea Party (2018) examines the rise of the Tea Party in online, print, broadcast, and cable news. She has been a White House intern on the Obama broadcast media team, a National Association of Black Journalists and United Nations fellow, and an assistant producer for an Emmy-nominated team on the show Now on PBS (formerly Now with Bill Moyers). She has also served the MacArthur Foundation as an external advisor in journalism and media. In 2020, she received a Whiting Public Engagement Fellowship to complete a community media project on lockdown culture in schools. Costley White has published widely in academic journals, including International Journal of Communication, Urban Geography, Communication Culture and Critique, and Media Theory and in popular news platforms such as The Atlantic, The New York Times, The Root, and The Washington Post. She is a founding executive director of a community nonprofit, SOMA Justice, which organizes for racial, social, and economic justice in New Jersey.

Panelists

Andrew Thompson is an assistant professor of political science at George Washington University and leads the Digital Democracy research cluster in the Institute for Data, Democracy, and Politics. He specializes in the role of racial threat in driving democratic backsliding and violent attitudes across the U.S. public. In his book, The Big Flip: Racial Demographic Change and the Future of American Democracy, and across a series of articles, he emphasizes the central role that Black Americans have to future ideas of democracy in the mass public. His work has appeared in Political Behavior and Political Science Research and Methods

Meredith Clark is an associate professor in the School of Journalism and the Department of Communication Studies at Northeastern University, where she also serves as an affiliate faculty member in Africana studies. She is the director of Northeastern's Center for Communication, Media Innovation & Social Change. Her first book, We Tried to Tell Y'all: Black Twitter and Digital Counternarratives, is forthcoming from Oxford University Press. Her current project is an explication of reparative journalism, a concept she introduced in a 2020 prediction for Nieman Lab.

Silvio Waisbord is Professor and former Director of the School of Media and Public Affairs at George Washington University. He is the author or editor of nineteen books, as well as articles on journalism and politics, communication studies, media policy, and communication for social change. His most recent books are Public Scholarship in Communication Studies (co-edited with T. J. Billard, University of Illinois Press, 2024), El Imperio de la Utopia (Peninsula/Planeta, 2020) and The Routledge Companion to Media, Disinformation and Populism (co-edited with H. Tumber, Routledge, 2020). He is the former Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Communication and the International Journal of Press/Politics. He is President-Elect and Fellow of the International Communication Association.

Paul E. Johnson is an associate professor in the Department of Communication at the University of Pittsburgh. His research focuses on the American right, in particular its fraught relationship to democracy. He interrogates both the political and cultural forms of this current. He is the author of I the People: The Rhetoric of Conservative Populism (2022), and his work has appeared in Critical Studies in Media Communication, Argumentation and Advocacy, and Women's Studies in Communication.

MEDIA, JANUARY 6TH, AND AMERICAN HISTORY
5:30PM-7:00PM

Panel description

In this closing conversation, scholars reflect on the place of January 6th in America's political and media history – and where we go from here. They connect January 6th to similar moments across American history, including violent assaults on the American democracy during the Reconstruction Era. And, they discuss the many changes in both politics and media technologies that have made contestations in our political discourse – and on our streets – unique to our own time. This panel will end with a discussion of where we go from here as a nation and society to restore public life, protect American democracy, and rebuild our media and political institutions.

Panelists

Daniel Kreiss is the Edgar Thomas Cato Distinguished Professor in the Hussman School of Journalism and Media at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a principal researcher of the UNC Center for Information, Technology, and Public Life. Kreiss is the co-author of the forthcoming Power in Ideas: A CaseBased Argument for Taking Ideas Seriously in Political Communication Research, first author of Recoding the Boys' Club: The Experiences and Future of Women in Political Technology (2020), and author of Prototype Politics: Technology-Intensive Campaigning and the Data of Democracy (2016) and Taking Our Country Back: The Crafting of Networked Politics from Howard Dean to Barack Obama (2012). Kreiss co-edits the Oxford University Press book series Journalism and Political Communication Unbound and is an associate editor of Political Communication. Kreiss is an affiliated fellow of the Information Society Project at Yale Law School and received a PhD in Communication from Stanford University.

Panelists

Tressie McMillan Cottom is an award-winning author, professor, and sociologist, whose work has earned national and international recognition for the urgency and depth of its incisive critical analysis of technology, higher education, class, race, and gender. Her most recent accolades include being named the 2023 winner of the Joseph B. and Toby Gittler Prize by Brandeis University for her "critical perspective and analysis of some of the greatest social challenges we face today." She is a principal investigator with CITAP, a New York Times columnist, and 2020 MacArthur Fellow. In 2023, McMillan Cottom ranked in the top 200 education scholars in the nation on Education Week's "2023 Edu-Scholar Public Influence Rankings," an annual list published by American Enterprise Institute director of education policy studies and Education Week blogger Frederick M. Hess. McMillan Cottom's most recent book, THICK: And Other Essays, is a critically acclaimed Amazon best-seller that situates Black women's intellectual tradition at its center. THICK won the Brooklyn Public Library's 2019 Literary Prize and was shortlisted for the 2019 National Book Award in nonfiction.

Dannagal Young is a professor of communication and political science at the University of Delaware, where she studies political and media psychology. She has published over 50 academic articles and book chapters on the content, psychology, and effects of political information, satire, and misinformation. Her book Irony and Outrage (2020) examines satire and outrage as the logical extensions of the respective psychological profiles of liberals and conservatives, and she has just published her latest book, Wrong: How Identity Fuels Misinformation and How to Fix It (2023). Young's 2020 TED Talk, explaining how our psychology shapes our politics and how media exploit these relationships, has been viewed over 1.9 million times. She publishes extensively in Vox, The Washington Post, and The Atlantic. She has appeared on CNN, PBS Newshour, ABC News, NPR, and various national and international podcasts. As of 2020, her research had been cited in over 70 popular press articles, news stories, and interviews in The Washington Post, USA Today, Politico, Christian Science Monitor, Variety, The New York Times, The Atlantic, PBS, Slate, and Vox. Young received the University of Delaware Excellence in Teaching Award in 2014, and her popular University of Delaware course "Propaganda and Persuasion" is available on Wondrium from The Great Courses.

"But this moment— and we do mean this moment, as threats to undermine democratic rights and processes continue in earnest— offers an opportunity for repair. Ignore it at democracy's peril."

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