

Call for Papers: Examining Black Citizenship from Reconstruction to Black Lives Matter

[The Center for Constitutional Law at Akron](#)

Virtual Symposium (online)

Friday, Feb. 5, 2021, 9am to 5pm

This year celebrates 150 years of the Fifteenth Amendment, 100 years of the Nineteenth Amendment, 55 years of the Voting Rights Act, and just over 55 years of Title VII. Each of these laws brought some systemic change to the participation of Black citizens in the polity. This symposium will explore the ways in which the reconstructed Constitution intended or neglected to establish political and civil citizenship rights regardless of race. Drawing on current social movements like Black Lives Matter, MeToo, SayHerName, and Defund the Police, this academic discussion reflects on the role of law in creating, sustaining, and resolving the identified problems.

Topics for presentation in the broad umbrella of this symposium might include: how social movements transform or engage the law, how academics translate social movements, a reconstructed history of the 15th or 19th Amendment, the Jim Crow and Jane Crow eras and their continuing effects, current battles for voting rights regarding felons, polling restrictions, and other limitations with disparate impact, intersectional dimensions of justice including Black feminism, the causes and consequences of Black Lives Matter, vestiges of slavery, reparations for slavery, policing reform, mass incarceration, judicial remedies for citizenship violations, and/or the gendered differences of black citizenship rights.

The Virtual Symposium is sponsored by the Center for Constitutional Law at Akron. The Center is one of four national centers established by Congress on the bicentennial for the purpose of promoting scholarship and education on matters of constitutional law. The Center includes five affiliated faculty fellows, student fellows, an online journal, *ConLawNOW*, a JD certificate program in constitutional law, a social justice project, and a Masters of Law in social justice.

Papers presented will be published in a symposium edition of [ConLawNOW](#). *ConLawNOW* is an online, open-access journal that is also indexed in Westlaw, Lexis, and Hein. It is designed to publish shorter works of 10-20 pages within a short editorial timeframe to get scholarship into the public discourse more quickly. Recent authors published in *ConLawNOW* include Larry Solum, Paula Monopoli, Ernie Young, Harold Koh, Helen Norton, Judge Jeffrey Sutton, Ruthann Robson, and Julie Suk.

Those interested in presenting a paper should submit a proposal detailing the intended presentation to Professor Tracy Thomas, Director of the Center for Constitutional Law, at thomast@uakron.edu by **December 1**. Draft papers should then be submitted by January 20, 2021 for circulation among the other participants for the symposium. Final papers will be due by March 1, 2021, and expected to publish by early April.