



VOTING RIGHTS *for the* INCARCERATED & IMMIGRANTS

Questions of civic participation are emblematic of larger issues surrounding who should be included in our society and who belongs.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Women &
STEM: It's Not
Just a Matter
of Numbers

New Endowed
Chairs in
Disability
Studies &
Religious
Diversity Join
Haas Institute

Faculty
Spotlight:
Malo Hutson

Interview with
acclaimed
author Rabih
Alameddine

Race in
Literature
in 2015:
Perspective
on books by
Ta-Nehisi
Coates and
Harper Lee

The Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society at the University of California, Berkeley brings together researchers, community stakeholders, policymakers, and communicators to identify and challenge the barriers to an inclusive, just, and sustainable society and create transformative change. The Haas Institute serves as a national hub of a vibrant network of researchers and community partners. The Haas Institute takes a leadership role in translating, communicating, and facilitating research, policy, and strategic engagement. The Haas Institute advances research and policy related to marginalized people while essentially touching all who benefit from a truly diverse, fair, and inclusive society.

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THE ELECTION OF PRESIDENT OBAMA as the nation's first African American president was heralded by many as the beginning of a new post-racial era in American life. Yet, in this final year of the Obama presidency, any pretense of a post-racial era must surely be discarded.

That is not to say that race matters more than it did before the election of Barack Obama, but rather that America has a less sanguine understanding of race than before. Many more Americans became aware of the presence of discrimination in American life as the shocking veil of police brutality was exposed and the protest movement spearheaded by the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter took root and began to shape discourse all the way up to those who would be our next president.

More Americans of all races acknowledge that race shapes life chances in ways that are not only unlawful, but inconsistent with our values and ideals. Even the Supreme Court, in upholding a part of the **Fair Housing Act** this past year (in an opinion citing a brief we filed on behalf of the plaintiffs), acknowledged the continuing role of race in this way and the persistence of segregation in our metropolitan regions.

Some called 2015 the year of identity. As a nation, we not only developed a deeper understanding of race, but also the complexity of gender, sex, citizenship, religion, and more. If 2015 was the year of identity, 2016 may well be the year of identities.

We must now seek to understand not just the fluidity of identity categories and the role those categories play in our lives, but their interplay as manifested in our structures, culture, and society.

The Haas Institute is perhaps uniquely situated to help us understand the intersectionalities that define group and individual life chances. One of our major focus areas, **Othering and Belonging**, provides a broadly inclusive framework for understanding how marginality manifests across the full range of human differences. Our affiliated faculty cluster members, researchers, initiatives, and projects explore these intersectionalities in critical ways.

Our forthcoming **Inclusiveness Index** report examines and measures nation states and US States by inclusivity along a range of dimensions, including gender, race, religion, and more. We are also exploring these intersections in terms of their potential for real-world engagement. One of our newest publications, **"We Too Belong,"** examines the inter-relationship of incarcerated populations and immigration populations, and promising practices at the state and local levels to promote inclusivity.

Even as we work to challenge and transform structures that would marginalize immigrants, communities of color, religious minorities, people with disabilities, and many more, we must also remember that **our work cannot be subjected to only the rhythms of the presidential election**, however loud they might be. We must not only look beyond the election for deep social change, but we must also look locally and globally for opportunities to advance inclusive practices and to build networks for transformative change.

The end of the Obama era does not mean the end of hope, but rather a more realistic, and hopefully, stronger foundation from which to advance our work. ■



john a. powell,
Director of the Haas
Institute for a Fair and
Inclusive Society and
Professor of Law, African
American, and Ethnic
Studies at UC Berkeley

THE WORK OF OUR SEVEN FACULTY RESEARCH clusters is dramatically expanding our very notion what diversity means. This has been a two-fold, overlapping process. First, each cluster is deeply engaging questions of stratification and difference in specific areas such as health, religion, and the economy. Second, cross-cluster events and activities are emphasizing social cleavages, processes of group marginalization, and the nature of differential power and privilege across social domains.

The Haas Institute is seeing the successful fruition of a lengthy hiring process that has occupied the attention of most of the research clusters. A number of key faculty appointments will add to the breadth of scholarship in the clusters, provide leadership in defining new initiatives, and considerably ramp up research cluster activity.

This past fall, **Jovan Scott Lewis** was hired as a faculty member in the Economic Disparities cluster. An anthropologist by training, Lewis is an ethnographer who has studied the effects of poverty on individuals and groups in both Jamaica and Tulsa, Oklahoma. The motivation behind his research is to understand how people experience, adapt, and challenge the forms of economic impoverishment they encounter.

In the Spring 2016 semester, **Karen Nakamura**, a cultural and visual anthropologist, assumed the Haas Endowed Chair of Disability Studies. The scope of Nakamura's work is truly breathtaking. She has written on disability movements in Japan—including the politics of identity, deafness, and sign language—and her next research project will examine the role of robotics and prosthetics in the lives of disabled and elderly people in Japan and the United States.

In Fall 2016, **Karen Barkey** will become the Haas Chair of Religious Diversity. A sociologist, Barkey has written two books on the Ottoman Empire that highlight questions of state control and social movements in the context of empires. Her current research focuses on the sharing of “sacred sites” between two or more religious groups. An institution builder, Barkey has been the Director of the Institute for Religion, Culture, and Public Life at Columbia University, an institute that not only supports academic projects, but also serves as an umbrella for centers and programs that reach out to a broader public.

With these key appointments, the research clusters will pivot from a focus on hiring to more fully developing their research agendas and activity. Clusters will initiate new research projects, disseminate existing research to broader audiences, and expand the policy implications of their work.

The goal is to redefine and redraw, if not entirely erase, the boundaries between academic research, policy analysis, and engaged practice.

To find out more about our affiliated faculty—who are organized into the seven thematic clusters of: Disability Studies; Diversity and Democracy; Diversity and Health Disparities; Economic Disparities; LGBTQ Citizenship; Race, Educational Policy, and Diversity; and, Religious Diversity—you can search our new database on our newly updated website at haasinstitute.berkeley.edu/expertdatabase. From there, you can learn about each faculty member's latest research, presentations, media clippings, and upcoming events. It is our hope that individuals will use this database as a resource to engage with Haas Institute scholars and to deepen and extend their own work in creating a more inclusive, just, and sustainable society. ■



▲
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Photo by Rasheed Shabazz, shabazzimages.com

MEDIA ROOM



Jeff Malet, maletphoto.com

Considering race within a broader and holistic admissions policy is the only effective and efficient way for UT Austin to promote equal educational opportunity for all students, argues a new amicus brief co-authored by Haas Institute.

LEGAL ADVOCACY

Social Scientists File Supreme Court Brief in *Fisher v. Texas* Case Advocating for Race-Conscious Admissions

ON NOV. 2, 2015, the Haas Institute submitted an *amicus brief* signed by more than 30 prominent social scientists for the US Supreme Court case *Fisher v. University of Texas*. The brief argues that University of Texas admission policy should be allowed to consider race in order to promote equal educational opportunity for all students.

The admissions policy at the University of Texas at Austin must continue to consider race, or the “educational experience of all students on campus will be diminished,” the brief authors wrote. The brief was filed as the Supreme Court once again considers *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin*, a complaint against the university by

former applicant Abigail Fisher, who is claiming that she was rejected from the institution because she is white. The Court is considering the case a second time after the 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals again ruled in favor of UT Austin’s holistic admissions policy.

“In this brief, we carefully analyze and demonstrate through social science how racial bias operates in the 21st century,” said **Dr. Linda R. Tropp**, Professor of Social Psychology in the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and one of the amici. “We also emphasize the measurable benefit of diversity in education, the workplace, and in our social institutions.”