

Center for Africana Studies Speaker Series

Thursday, February 13, 2025 |
Lakireddy Grand Ballroom | 10:30 am

The Responsibility of Black Studies in the Face of Fascism and Genocide

Trump's election and the wave of attacks on virtually all critical race/gender scholarship has put many of us in the academy on the defensive. Beyond the U.S., we are witnessing the ongoing imprisonment of intellectuals (Turkey, the Gulf States, India, etc.) and outright genocide in Palestine and Sudan. Black Studies has a long history of being "under attack" precisely because it emerged as an offensive against fascism. I will look at the radical turn in Black scholarship during the 1930s, as an anticolonial Black power and Black feminist assault in the 1950s-70s, against "friendly fascism" of neoliberalism in the 80s - 90s, and the current authoritarian and reactionary turn. I will also argue that this insurgent, anti-fascist tendency in Black Studies must be understood at a global level. Recalling its insurgent history should remind us that Black Studies is potentially a transformative force to resist the neo-fascist turn, but it will require challenging our own established institutional ties.



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DR. ROBIN D.G. KELLEY

OAH Distinguished Lecturer

Distinguished Professor of History &
Gary B. Nash Endowed Chair in U.S.
History at UCLA.

Dr. Kelley specializes in the history of social movements in the U.S., the African Diaspora and Africa; Black intellectuals; music; visual culture; contemporary urban studies; historiography; poverty studies and ethnography; and organized labor among other topics