

Vincent Munoz:

I think what we need to do is explain how our principles of free speech, free inquiry will help serve the cause of justice.

Betty Friedan:

The First Amendment, the constitutional freedom of speech and freedom of conscience, that is the bulwark of our democracy.

Bettina Aptheker:

There was a passion in what was being said, affirming what people considered a sacred constitutional right, freedom of speech and freedom of association.

Michelle Deutchman:

From the UC National Center for Free Speech and Civic Engagement. This is Speech Matters, a podcast about expression, engagement, and democratic learning in higher education. I'm Michelle Deutchman, the center's executive director and your host. It's February, which means it's Black History Month, created to focus attention on the contributions by African Americans to the United States. Officially recognized in 1976 by President Gerald Ford, every American president since then has designated this month as Black History Month and endorsed a specific theme. This year's theme is Black Resistance. In an article discussing Black History Month last year, The Washington Post remarked that quote, "It's not just Black History Month that's endangered, it's Black history itself," close quote. One year on, the teaching of Black history has become increasingly politicized as the past month has seen continued attacks on a proposed Advanced Placement African American studies course and diversity, equity and inclusion education more generally.

Today's guests are both thought leaders tackling issues of race, history, democracy, and how they impact the rising generation of young leaders. Ellis Cose is the founder of the Renewing American Democracy Project and an author of more than a dozen books. With his latest being "Race and Reckoning: From Founding Fathers to Today's Disruptors." He's also a journalist who shared The New York Daily News editorial page, was a columnist for Newsweek Magazine and served as the inaugural writer in residence for the ACLU. Dr. Teri Platt is an associate professor of public administration and the director of the Isabella T. Jenkins Honors Program at Clark Atlanta University. Dr. Platt actively supports student voter and civic engagement through partnerships and collaboration with the Andrew Goodman Foundation, ALL IN Democracy Challenge, and as a member of the advisory board for the Students Learn, Students Vote Coalition. Before we talk with Ellis and Teri, however, let's turn to class notes, a look at what's making headlines.

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis continues to appear above the fold. In response to the leaked framework of the College Board's new AP course on African American studies, DeSantis threatened to ban the teaching of the class. Although the College Board argues otherwise, DeSantis' critiques and that if other conservatives may have played a role in changes to the course material when it was officially released on February 1st. Critical race theory was removed from the course and Black Lives Matter and other contemporary topics were made optional. Just days after his condemnation of the new AP class, DeSantis stood behind a podium flanked by a large banner reading Higher Education Reform, and introduced a sweeping proposal to revamp the state's higher education system. If passed, the legislation would eliminate what DeSantis calls ideological conformity, would mandate courses in Western civilization and lessen tenure protections.

In a new survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression learned that one-third of the 1,140 people surveyed were unable to name even one of the five freedoms protected by the First Amendment. And another one-third could only name one, typically Freedom of Speech. Only 3% of those surveyed could name all five, which by the way are, Religion, Speech, Press, Assembly, and the Right to Petition. Sadly, these findings are similar to those found in the Annenberg Constitution Day Civic Survey last summer. These results point to the continuing need for organizations like the UC National Center who are advancing a mission of democratic learning for all members of the higher education community.

Now back to today's guests. Teri and Ellis, I am very excited to welcome both of you to Speech Matters. It's always special for me to be able to feature former fellows. Ellis was part of the inaugural class of fellows way back in 2018- 2019. His project focused on Free Speech in a Post-Truth World. Teri was a member of last year's class and her work evaluated Free Speech and Civic Engagement on Historically Black Colleges and Universities during the summer of 2020 and during the general election. Thank you both for joining us.

Ellis Cose:

Well, it's my pleasure.

Teri Platt:

Thank you for having us.

Michelle Deutchman:

Both of your work centers around young people and democracy. I'm hoping that we can start by having each of you share a little bit about this work. Ellis, your renewing American Democracy Project, and Teri, your ongoing research and engagement with students at HBCUs. Tell us, what are these projects about and what led you to them? Teri, why don't you kick it off?

Teri Platt:

Well, okay, thank you. So my project evaluated the pandemic's impact on free speech, activism and civic engagement on HBCU campuses, HBCUs being Historically Black Colleges and Universities. We wanted to explore what civic engagement and free speech looked like during a time of social and racial unrest given all the activities that were happening politically and socially in 2020 leading up to the election. So my work was looking at mobilization strategies, some of the techniques that students were using in order to elevate their voices at a time of tension and contention.

I think it's important to do this because student voices often are diminished in times of strife. Often, we elevate the voices of more established organizations, more established individuals, but this was a movement that resonated specifically with students at HBCUs. So I wanted to find a way to study its impact or to evaluate how are students taking advantage or utilizing this moment in order to engage more effectively in the democratic process? This ties in a lot with my research interests, my personal interests in civic engagement at HBCUs, but specifically, at trying to support the articulation of voice among diverse student populations on college campuses.

Michelle Deutchman:

I'm just going to do a quick follow up then and ask you, Teri, what has your experience been hearing from students? What did you hear then? Are you hearing different things now? What are you seeing? Can you tell us a little bit about what things are like vis-a-vis engagement in the last couple of years?

Teri Platt:

That's a really good question. So many of the students who were active in 2020 have now graduated, but they were very active then and they are active now as graduate students and as young professionals. So there was a carryover effect in terms of learning strategies for mobilization, for contacting and networking at a time when they were in classes, we were 100% remote for many of the college campuses; so utilizing social networks and engagement strategies that rely more on technology. So there was a building of skills in that way. But what I've also found, they raised up a group of younger students, freshmen who are now seniors who are now taking up the baton, but in some very interesting ways now that were back on ground and dealing with some of these interesting pieces of legislation that are impacting their engagement. So the activism has continued, the venue has modified a little bit given the student populations and the realities of society, but I'm finding that their commitment to engagement has remained consistent.

Michelle Deutchman:

That's a very generous word, Teri, interesting, legislation. So we'll obviously come back to that. But before we do that, Ellis, I'd love for you to talk about the origin of Renewing American Democracy and how that fits into your greater work as a author and commentator.

Ellis Cose:

Yeah. I've been writing about issues of social justice, race and also, the press for decades. I've done several books on all those subjects, and I'm also a former press critic for Time Magazine, so these are issues I've been steeped in for a long time. But actually, this project in a way grew out of my last three books which have come out in the last three years. Out of all those works, part of what I found myself thinking a lot about was the state of this American democracy. What I also found myself thinking a lot about was the very low level of discourse that has surrounded that discussions was the level of dishonesty that seems to be built into that discussions, was the polarization, which seems just to be at epic proportions at this point and thought it would be interesting to start an organization that would try to elevate the conversation but also bring young people and people of color into that conversation.

So I met with several people and three universities decided to partner with me on this. One is Long Island University, the University of Southern California and Madill at Northwestern. So we basically started an organization, and which I'm obviously the director of, and we've done a lot of things already. We had an essay contest. We've had community and university events. We had a democracy dialogue, which featured Sonia Sotomayor and we're planning on others. But right now, we've suspended a lot of those things because we're focusing on what I'm calling a Talk Back Tour, which is a lecture conversation tour universities across America, beginning actually, at the UC system, which we'll be conducting over the next several months. We will be, again, engaging students in this discussion of democracy and also, getting from them a sense of what they feel is at stake and what they feel their role is in it.

Michelle Deutchman:

I know you're just on the beginning of this tour, but I was going to ask you what I asked Teri, which is, what kinds of things are you hearing from students on campuses? Maybe is there anything particularly surprising or ... ?

Ellis Cose:

What I'm finding is that there is a lot of anger. There's a lot of anger at what young people see as a state of the democracy, at what state we are leaving it then for them at the older generation. There's a lot of curiosity as to what's happening now, and there is a lot of questioning about what they can do and how they can get involved, so I'm finding all of those things. I would say the big thing that I'm finding, though, is a lot of discontent and anger at what's happening nationally and locally when it comes to the political discourse.

Michelle Deutchman:

Thanks. I have to say for myself that I often feel overwhelmed by the number of very serious and structural threats to democracy that have existed, that continue to exist. I'm wondering, Teri, if you see that when you work with students and how you channel that energy and instead of to feeling maybe more hopeless or paralyzed into action, if you have any thoughts on that?

Teri Platt:

I do. So it's really interesting that these points that Ellis made about students being very concerned about the state of democracy and trying to find different ways and different opportunities to get involved, but also, to shape it. What we've found with many of the students is that there are so many structural challenges through legislation, through policy that impact the quality of their engagement in terms of casting a ballot. Also, many of our campuses are concerned about their relationship of the campus to elected officials, elected bodies, given the articulation of concern by the students. Whether they're protesting, marching, their strategies for holding elected officials accountable for their decisions and their participation in some of these policies that have either disenfranchised them or limited their access to the ballot, some of what we've seen here in Georgia and with many of the campuses that I've worked with through a fellowship that I have with ALL IN Democracy Challenge is that many of the campuses are dealing with the challenges of getting early voting on their campus.

They may have had them historically, but it has become a real battle just to get early voting locations on college campuses. In Georgia, that was an issue. No Fulton County or Atlanta metro area college campus was originally approved. Even though we have historically had early voting on our campuses, we didn't have them, but when we did get it, we got it for one day per campus with shortened hours and so versus other locations. The students are very concerned about what this means for their inclusion. What does this communicate to them about their role and their place within the democracy? So they have been organizing and strategizing, not just about registering people to vote, but how do we impact these policies or push for change in these policies? Given that the state legislature meets in Georgia in January through March, how do we mobilize in ways that are not just responding to the system but are impacting the system?

This is where we're starting to see a lot more energy among the students during the midterm season or the non-general election years among the students. So I think this is a really interesting time about how they're thinking about democratic engagement and how they're choosing to raise their voices on the campus in terms of pushing campus officials to support their goals of having early voting locations on campus, to get voter identification requirements changed. Many of the states have, as like Georgia has, where if students attend a private institution, your identification is not sufficient for voting as a voter ID. This is being rolled out and has been proposed in other state legislatures that have a significant minority-serving institution population or HBCU student population. It has a real impact on students' ability to go to the polls with legitimate ID and cast a ballot. So there are several challenges, if you want me to tell you more, I can, because after the 2020 election, we saw a rollout of a number of new policies

that disenfranchised voters but had a specific impact on students but then also, are just plain voter suppression.

Michelle Deutchman:

Well, before we turn to Ellis, who I know also has thoughts on legislation, especially legislation that deals with what is allowed to be taught in terms of especially history, I wanted to follow up about some of the suppression you were talking about. One of the things that struck me, Teri, when we talked earlier was when you talked about the campus that you work at being in more than one precinct and that even those students live in community together and go to school together, they actually don't vote together. You had said someone did that with a pen and not a ruler. I wanted to know if you could talk a little bit about that specifically, especially with the backdrop of Black History Month and the things that we're supposed to be thinking about, what does it mean that we're still talking about gerrymandering based on race?

Teri Platt:

Yes, this is a clear case of gerrymandering. To draw specifically around locations in order to ensure that certain populations are separated from each other. Even though they attend classes together, they live eat in the cafeteria together, it's which side of the street do you live on or is your residential hall located that makes the difference in whether you vote 50 yards from our main campus or whether you have to walk two miles to the next voting location and the next precinct. The students that are on the further side from campus that need to walk two miles, they are passing two other voting locations to get to their polling site in order to cast a ballot, which leads to confusion among the students of, "Have I reached the correct location because I've never been in this neighborhood before, I've never gone to this location before? Am I doing the right thing or should I just not participate? This is so far." So it raises questions about intentionality. Are you specifically seeking to minimize the articulation of voice by the students through the casting of their ballot?

Well, that's all I can see it as. You can't make an excuse for it, that's what it is. But I think it's really interesting because this is Atlanta, Atlanta, Georgia where we have such a significant African American population. We have significant representation in many of our elected bodies from city council to the mayor. But when we think about drawing these boundaries and our Secretary of State's office, they have not necessarily reflected the demographics of the city of Atlanta. They have not necessarily represented the desires of some of the residents and particularly, the student populations within the metropolitan area. So there's still this push between the desire of the masses and what we see entrenched in policy. So even though there may be a desire by elected officials to support students, it boils down to you need to go and make the policy change so that we can redraw these boundaries so that they provide us with a cohesive student population that's voting at one location.

This is something we've been working on for several years, and we haven't really gained as much traction or movement with it. The students have been working really hard this semester to understand what will it take? What type of support do they need in order to get that shift or to get that change? So it's a real issue, and it's not just for our campus. We've seen this reality for North Carolina A&T University, and so their campus was split. We see this reality for many other HBCUs where our campus populations, if they turn out and vote in numbers, can have a significant impact on local elections. Often, our campuses are the difference. The number of students on our campus who reside in residential facilities who would vote in the precinct to have an impact on local elections are the difference between whether a candidate wins or loses. So this is real in terms of trying to discourage

students from participating in the process because of possibly the impact they could have on voting outcomes.

Michelle Deutchman:

Thank you so much for elucidating that. I think it's important, especially for the listeners who maybe live in bluer states where this isn't as much of an issue to really understand a very specific example of how this works and what the impact is. So I'm now going to turn to Ellis. Ellis, you had already mentioned you've had this decades-long career exploring and dissecting the role of race in American democracy. One of the most concerning parts of recent state lawmaking has been the attempt to censor and control who teaches and how we teach history, especially racial history in schools both K-12 and at the university level. I imagine that you have a lot of thoughts about this. I would love to hear you share some of these, including what you see as the impact of these kinds of laws on the ability and desire of young people to be active participants in democracy.

Ellis Cose:

Yeah, I think it's important to understand, Michelle, as I'm sure you do that a lot of what Teri was talking about and a lot of the issues we're dealing with are happening against the backdrop of a so-called war on wokeness; a war on current conversations around gender and bisexuality, et cetera, and also, a war on the lack of a better way of describing it, the racial transition occurring in America. UCLA keeps a list of legislations that have been introduced specifically dealing with anti what's called critical race theory. I guess that as of date there have been well over 500 measures introduced supposedly the combat critical race theory when most people don't even teach critical race theory, especially outside of law school. So this is clearly not aimed at critical race theory, which is something that the people passing this legislation don't understand and have no idea how to explain.

It's really designed to suppress discussion of the racial history of this country. It's really designed to enforce ignorance on young people, and it's couched in a discussion about protecting them from a political agenda or protecting them from being harmed somehow by having to learn the truth about America, which if you think about it, is really in itself a pretty disturbing thing. That was a pretty disturbing thing. A federal judge in Florida issued an injunction against the so-called Stop Woke Act in Florida, and he denounced it quite clearly as an attempt, as he put it, to muzzle professors in the name of freedom. This is dishonesty at its worst, and it's something that is part of a larger agenda having to do with a great fear of the changing demographics of this country. The same fear that led to the rise of Trumpism in the Republican Party, and the same fear that fuels the political aspirations of any number of candidates and most notably of the governor of Florida, who was decided to make a career of opposing the teaching of Black history and other things that are related to telling the truth.

Secondly, I think it's important to understand that even though the way this is being discussed is new, this is not new. I just wrote a piece for the Los Angeles Times, and one of the things that I point out is that Carter Woodson, who was the father of what was then called Negro History Week and now called Black History Month was fighting as early as the 1930s against ... Well, the whole purpose, first of all, of Black History Week was to serve as an anecdote against the teaching of history, which in most of the books at the time, Reconstruction was an awful thing because incapable people of color, incapable Negroes went to legislators and ruined them. The KKK was a hero in this story. That was a standard text in that time. He wrote an article in the 1930s complaining about the effort in certain Southern states to repress the teaching to Blacks of the Constitution because if they taught about the Constitution, some of these African Americans might get the idea they actually had rights, and that was the last thing that they wanted to teach.

There's been particularly targeting of an incident from the 1850s, 1856. A young woman, Margaret Garner, literally killed her daughter in order to keep her from being re-enslaved. Yes, she had escaped from Kentucky, had gone to Ohio, the Future Slave Act, which was passed in 1850 basically forced the Northern states to return people who had escaped enslavement. She was one of those people and decided quite literally to kill her daughter rather than see her back enslaved. Toni Morrison was so touched by this story that she wrote *Beloved*, which was based on, or inspired at least, by that. So now you have people became part of a gubernatorial race, but you have people trying to ban that book and other books which supposedly traumatize young white people by telling them the truth. So you have a whole movement aimed at creating ignorance. What does that mean for American society? It means something possibly devastating.

The Rand Corporation had an analysis, so where it talked about how it's going to reduce the capacity of young people to do critical thinking. Professors and teachers who are afraid to teach the truth are stifled from informing their young people, their students of what they need to know. This is an absolute crisis, and the problem is that it's being driven from the highest levels of a political party. It's being used as a political weapon in the same way that the South in the time after Reconstruction used nonsense and similar and basically lies to rewrite the Civil War, to rewrite the age of Reconstruction and to make legitimate the suppression of entire groups of people. So this is not something that's just that it's just a problem in a few areas and not something that's new.

It's something, though, that has gotten worse because the nation, or at least some parts of the nation are traumatized by this transition. But at the same time, you have another part of the nation that's energized by it. So we're at a very, very interesting time because you have some people who really think it's excited to create an actual multicultural, multiracial democracy and think that can only mean good things; when you have some people here who think it's the most horrible thing that can happen and are trying to figure out some way to take us back to the 1920s or 1950s or the 1856, whatever. So I think that in terms of the context of how this is happening, we risk ruining an entire population of young people who are being miseducated in the name of protecting the most frail among them.

Michelle Deutchman:

Thank you. I really appreciate your putting that in context, and I might have to borrow your phrasing of a movement aimed at enforcing ignorance. I think that is really very powerful, especially when I think of it in light of the work that the center aims to do, which is actually education, and just going back to the fact that so many people don't know the basic facts about the history of this country and even about the First Amendment and how it works. There was a study that came out that talked about how the majority of the population can't even name one of the Rights in the First Amendment, and it's just so much work to do.

I think both of you point to the fact that the stakes could really not be higher, that this is not a new issue, but the iteration and the impact it can have are very devastating. So I feel like we can't have this conversation without talking about the 2024 election that's bearing down on us. We're recording the day after the State of the Union, and I'm curious, and Teri, you can kick us off. Most of our listeners are folks in higher education or higher education associations. What can not just students but faculty and administrators be doing between now and the election vis-a-vis democratic learning and engagement on campuses? I know that's a broad question, so I'll let you take it where you want.

Teri Platt:

Okay. I think there are so many things that administrators and faculty can do to support students ranging from talking about the value of democratic inclusion and strategies for participation. Many of

the students here go register to vote, but where? How? Many of these students are not familiar, especially freshmen, this will maybe their first election that where they're able to actually cast a ballot for a president. So where do you participate? How? How do they participate in the primary process? Not just keeping this information in social science courses, but expanding it so that students can broadly across the campus, regardless of their discipline, can understand this information; whether it's a module that's included in a course at the very beginning where the students just have an opportunity to be exposed through it, even if it's not embedded in the curriculum of the course, or to have a town hall meetings and discussions where the campus presidents or leadership are saying, "We support student civic engagement and voter participation."

So while many of these things appear to be symbolic, they can be very instrumental in providing that nudge of support for faculty, for students, for student organizations to get more involved and to feel that they have the support of their institution to do more. The other thing I would encourage faculty and administrators to do is to have more of an open discussion, not just about the issues that are easy, that are comfortable, but some of the issues that the students are concerned about that may be a little sticky, that might be a little bit uncomfortable in terms of helping them to parse out truth from fiction, fact from fiction, understand how does this look in a policy from a policy perspective for our campus, for our demographic, versus looking at it just at the national level? Yes, there's a national impact or a national reality, but what does it look like in our state?

Because there are state specific concerns that show up in initiatives and referenda in a variety of other ways that students also need to be informed about as they cast ballots, as they are developing their political perspective or their own identities. So I think it's important for campuses to also do that kind of work. I would also encourage many faculty and to serve as advisors for student organizations. Students need faculty support as they are putting together programming, as they're reaching out to other organizations in order to know, is this a good agreement? Is this someone that I should bring to campus? How do we cut through institutional red tape in order to have high quality events that are supportive of the goal that we want to have, which may be nonpartisan student voter engagement on our campus? So I think it's important for faculty to commit to the students in a more intentional way by supporting their student organizations as advisors, and to also attend the student events as a part of the audience, as a way of support so that it's not just those in student life who are supporting these activities on the behalf of the students, but it's also the faculty and the administrators who are doing the work.

Additionally, provide financial support for the work. It does not happen without minimal cost, whether it's to buy the pizza or to do the photocopies, to pay a small honoraria to individuals who may come to speak to the campus, but to provide some financial support for the things that matter for the campus. Many campuses have in their campus mission something about having a global thinker, a critical thinker, a civically-engaged student body, it's what we say that we believe in. We invest in what we believe in. So invest some resources either in full-time, part-time personnel, but also, in programming so that it can be more than just volunteer work, but something that is embedded and institutionalized within the campus culture. That is how you get longevity and growth with this type of programming, and that really comes from administrators and faculty.

Michelle Deutchman:

Put your money where your mouth is, right?

Teri Platt:

Yes, ma'am.

Michelle Deutchman:

All right. Ellis, how about you? What are things that you would suggest?

Ellis Cose:

Well, first of all, let me just endorse everything that Teri just said. Secondly and thirdly, I'm not a campus administrator, so I'm not about to start giving campus administrators specific advice on what they can do. That's not my role. I'm also the front man for an organization that is non-partisan, so I'm not going to speak about specific candidates and what they are involved in. But I will say that you don't have to be a genius to realize that the 2024 election is going to be one of the most important elections this country has ever had, because I think there are warring visions at stake of what democracy means. I think we are now in an era of divided government. We know what that can mean. So I think it's essential that students and other young people are one, aware of this, and two, do what they can, which may not be much, but it can be critically important.

I talked earlier about the 520 some odd measures that are kicking around, not to put too fine a point on it, to repress critical thinking. Students and young people ought to find out whether some of these are emerging from their legislators and people whom they vote for or vote against. If they are as alarmed by this trend as I am, they ought to make their feelings known about it. There's a tendency, particularly among young people to say, "Well, why vote? What does it matter?" I think that we need a movement among young people to combat that, to make it clear that voting makes a huge difference, and that who's in charge makes a huge difference, and that if they really don't like what's happening now, then it's their responsibility to try to do something about it. I think I'll leave it at that.

Michelle Deutchman:

I hear from both of you that saying, all politics are local. This idea that you may not be able to affect what's happening at a national level, but take a look at what's happening at your local school board, what's happening at your university, in your precinct, in your city, in your state. I think that's really important to remember. It's hard to believe that we're getting towards the end of our conversation. I could talk with both of you for much longer. We've covered so many things and I just want to give each of you a chance to add anything that you'd like that you feel like you haven't had a chance to share with our listeners vis-a-vis these large topics of democracy and racism and history and engagement and the rising generation of leaders. Ellis, do you want to go ahead?

Ellis Cose:

Sure. I'm always willing to talk about something. What I will say, Michelle, is that I think we need a re-engagement of young people. We need to also have a widespread understanding among all people that critical thinking is important, that seeing things clearly is important. We have a movement, as I said before, to enforce ignorance in this country. That movement is aided and abetted by certain parts of media, including social media, and it's become a badge of honor to be stupid in a certain way. I think that's absurd, but it's the reality in which we live. I think what young people need to understand is that part of the reality of being a responsible citizen, and part of the reality of having critical judgment is having time to contemplate things and issues that make you uncomfortable and to embrace that concept, to embrace the idea of letting reasonable ideas spread, even if they are ideas that you disagree with.

So what I'm asking for in short, is that we reject this ideology of stupidity, this ideology of ignorance, this ideology of closing our eyes to inconvenient facts or things that we don't like and embrace a real

dedication to truth and to honesty. I think we've gotten away from that in many parts of our society. As I said, I think it's become it's hard to avoid when you have high political officials routinely saying things that are ridiculous on their face and getting rewarded for that. But I think we need to find some way to reverse that, and I think that begins with young people.

Michelle Deutchman:

Thanks, Ellis. Teri, you have a final word?

Teri Platt:

Yes. My final words would be to not get frustrated by, I think, overt attempts to suppress, to disenfranchise, but to look for opportunities, not to just be on the defensive, but to take offensive measures, offensive moves, to move in ways that protect the things that we value. I think it's important to recognize that there is a struggle that is happening, but I also think from a student perspective and a campus perspective, there are things that we can do to harness the resources we have to support students as they are becoming involved citizens, as they're practicing their democratic values that we think help to undergird society, about voting, about volunteering, about caring about others, and communicating with others, things that should not be contested issues regardless of one's political foundation.

But I think as institutions, we have an obligation to our students to embed many of these values and these virtues that we see as being just foundational to being a good human being in our campus cultures, in our activities. But then I also think that there is a need for a sense of courage. I think that so often we can see ourselves being concerned about what would be the repercussions or what would happen to me personally? But recognizing that in working together, we can refine strategy in ways that diminish vulnerability, but then provide opportunities for magnified impact to support student voice, student articulation, and student engagement in voting. I think voting is one of the areas where I really care about, because one of the things that I've found is that voting speaks to a level of self-efficacy. "I can make a difference in the world around me.

Even though there are steps to engagement for toward voting, that I can overcome those barriers in order to join a larger collective in order to speak about what I value or what I think is important about the society around me." I think that's important for us to think about as we support students. So my thing is for administrators to support students in a general sense, but then more specifically through concrete actions at the institutional level. But for those who are in the general population who are not necessarily tied to an institution, encourage more people to get involved and to care about the foundations of democracy, to be a part of positive conversations about democratic inclusion, about voter engagement, and to look for those opportunities to do more good and to elevate the greater good.

Michelle Deutchman:

I have to say that I am both inspired by both of you and the work that you have done and will continue to do. I'm also very grateful to both of you for taking time out of all of the things that you do to be a guest and share with our listeners your insights and thoughts. You've left us with much to think about and also, many action items, which I appreciate. So I just want to thank you again.

Ellis Cose:

Well, thank you, Michelle. It's been a real pleasure spending time with you and also with you, Dr. Teri.

This transcript was exported on Feb 16, 2023 - view latest version [here](#).

Teri Platt:

Well, thank you. It's my pleasure to engaging a conversation with you. I always learn so much when I hear someone talk and share about history and contextualize it. Thank you, Michelle, for having us on the show.

Michelle Deutchman:

For those of you at a UC, there are many events being hosted to continue discussion of these topics. These include a UCLA School of Music event, Music and Justice being hosted Feb 26th to 28th, UC Law, SF Center for Race, Immigration, Citizenship and Equality, Colloquium on Race, Citizenship and Equality, March 2nd, featuring Berkeley Law Dean and Center Board co-chair, Erwin Chemerinsky. If you haven't already looked through the panels and topics for the center's upcoming Speech Matters Conference, Fighting for our Democratic Freedoms, I encourage you to register and learn more. Applications for our 2023-24 Class of Fellows are open until March 10th. Thanks for tuning in. Talk to you next time.