

Keeanga- Yamahтта Taylor

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Occupation Assistant professor at Princeton University

Academic background

Education [Northwestern University](#)^[1]

Academic work

Discipline [African American Studies](#)

Institutions [Princeton University](#)

Keeanga-Yamahтта Taylor is an [African American](#) academic and writer. She is assistant professor of [African-American Studies](#) at [Princeton University](#), and the author of *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*.^[1] For this book, she received the 2016 Cultural Freedom Award for an Especially Notable Book from the [Lannan Foundation](#).^[2] She is the author of several books and articles that discuss her work in activism for black lives. Taylor is an activist for black lives and focuses her work in this area.

Education/Academia

Keeanga-Yamahтта Taylor earned her PHD in [African American Studies](#) from [Northwestern University](#). Her dissertation is titled *Race for Profit: Black Housing and the Urban Crisis in the 1970's*. She previously worked at the [University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana](#) Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Department of African American Studies from 2013 to 2014.^[3] Taylor is currently an Associate Professor at [Princeton University](#) in the African American Studies Department. She teaches two classes in the 2018 semester. Her current courses are "Rats, Riots, and Revolution: Housing in the Metropolitan United States" as part of the [Sociology](#) and African American Studies programs and examines the effects of housing developments and practices that led to underdevelopment in cities and its effects on the Black community. Taylor also teaches "Public Policy in the U.S. Racial State" which looks at how

"public policy is debated, adopted, and implemented" through the lens of racial discrimination^[4]. Her work has appeared in [The Guardian](#),^[5] and [Jacobin](#).^[6]

Teaching Experience

Fall 2008- Teaching Assistant, Topics in African American Studies: Race, Crime, and Punishment

Spring 2009- Teaching Assistant, Topics in Transnational Black Culture

Winter 2009- Teaching Assistant, Introduction to African American History: 1865-1955

Fall 2009- Teaching Assistant, The Politics of Black Popular Culture

Winter 2010- Teaching Assistant, Black Religion and Social Movements

Spring 2010- Instructor, The Black Power Movement

Grants and Scholarships Awarded

2012-2013 Northwestern University, Conference Travel Grant

2011-2012 Northwestern University, Conference Travel Grant

2012 Gerald Ford Presidential Library, Travel Grant

2011-2012 Northwestern University, Department of African American Studies Conference Travel Grant

2011 Northwestern University, Graduate Research Grant

2012-2011 Weinberg College of Arts and Science Fellowship, Northwestern University

2008 Honorable Mention, Ford Pre-Doctoral Fellowship

2007 Dr. J. Brommel Doctoral Scholarship, Northeastern Illinois University

Activism

2016

- In Pursuit of Cultural Freedom Event on January 20, 2016- In Santa Fe Taylor talked with Donna Murch. Taylor talked about her book "From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation". Murch and Taylor discussed why Taylor wrote the book, to understand why the BlackLivesMatter movement came about at this time and what led to the movement.^[7]

2017

- [Day Without a Women](#) on March 8, 2017- Taylor co-authored a call to mobilize a women's strike, which culminated in the Day Without a Woman actions.^{[8][9][10]}
- Hampshire College Commencement Speech on May 20, 2017- Taylor gave a commencement speech at [Hampshire College](#), in which she referred to President [Donald Trump](#) as a "racist, sexist, megalomaniac." [Fox News](#) aired a clip from the speech, after which she received numerous intimidating e-mails, including death threats. Taylor canceled scheduled talks in [Seattle](#) and [San Diego](#) as a result.^{[11][12][13]} In Taylor's

speech she calls out the politics that are against minorities and ask for everyone to fight against these political aims and to help minorities. Taylor experienced "racist, misogynistic, and homophobic threats" because of her speech. Hampshire College's Jonathan Lash, President, and Gaye Hill, Chair of the Board, put out a statement on June 1, 2017 in support of Taylor and her speech saying that it aligned with the mission of Hampshire College.^[14]

- Socialism 2017 Conference on July 6, 2017 - Taylor gave the speech she had previously scheduled for Seattle at the Socialism 2017 conference in [Chicago](#).^[15]
- The Anti-Inauguration on January 20, 2017- The Anti-Inauguration was organized by Jacobin, Haymarket Books, and Verso at the Lincoln Theater in Washington DC. It took place the day that Donald Trump was inaugurated. The event was an organized protest of the inauguration of Donald Trump and the goal was to discuss how resistance at this time should be structured and what types of programs people should be working towards. The speakers included Naomi Klein, Anand Gopal, Jeremy Scahill, Owen Jones, and Keeanga- Yamahtta Taylor.^[16]
- Women's Marches- Keeanga- Yamahtta Taylor said that these marches are the first step in the fight against Trump. Taylor resist the critiques of the women's march and says that one can not just critique the marches without taking action to improve the marches to help them grow and become inclusive. She stated that there must be mass movements that include everyone in order to fight Trump and racism has to be the main point in these movements.^[17] Taylor said that the point of the March 8 women's strike was to make International Women's Day political and to discuss sexism, misogyny, and the women's labor force. She described Feminism for the 99 percent as a fight against the idea that women are only a part of the male centered society. She noted the importance of fighting basic issues that affect mostly women.^[18]

Community/Public Presentations and Service

November 2010 Boston- The Housing Crisis Then and Now, City Life/LA Vida Urban

January 2012 Chicago- King's Last Fight: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Memphis Garbage Strike of 1968, The Experimental Station

January 2012 Chicago- The Open Housing Movement in Chicago, Multi-Kulty

April 2012 Chicago- Trayvon Martin and the New Jim Crow, panelist, Grace Place Episcopal Church

April 2012 Chicago- Roundtable discussion on guns and violence in Chicago, Both Sides with Reverend Jesse Jackson television program

June 2012 Chicago- One Day Course on "Race in Twentieth Century America," co-taught with Reverend Jeremiah Wright, DuSable Museum, Thought Works Inc.

2011-2012- The Graduate School, Northwestern University, Diversity Pipeline Initiative Committee

2012-2013- Coordinator of Presidential Fellows Society Speaker Series

Articles

The Guardian (2012-2018)

2012

- Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor began writing for [The Guardian](#) in 2012^[19] and has contributed seven articles relating to her social activism work.
- In 2012 Taylor wrote "The NATO Summit Template for Policing the 'Other Chicago'" on May 18. Chicago Mayor, Emmanuel, decided to host [NATO](#) while simultaneously arresting 300 protesters of the "[Occupy Wall Street Movement](#)" in an attempt to make the city appear to be ready for "big business".^[20]

2016

- July 11, 2016 "After Dallas, Black Lives Matter is More Important Than Ever" - During the national protest surrounding the murders of [Alton Sterling](#) and [Philando Castile](#), Dallas police officers were killed and the Black Lives Matter movement was facing blame. Taylor equated the violence of the murder of the police to the greater violent nature of America as a whole. Facing national pressure from prominent politicians Taylor wrote that "the movement does not exist because of its most prominent personalities or spokespeople. It exist because of police brutality and misconduct".^[21]
- October 21, 2016 "Why Should We Trust You? Clinton's Big Problem with Young Black Americans"- Taylor critiqued the [Democratic Party](#) under [Barack Obama's](#) inability to curb police killings in 2016. During her piece Taylor wrote about the complicated nature of the Clinton's and their relationship with the Black community. Taylor spoke on young voter's disillusionment with [capitalism](#) as evidenced by the growing support for Bernie Sanders and his Socialistic principals. This disillusionment felt by young voters in Taylor's mind could lead to a low turnout for [Hillary Clinton](#) in the 2016 election.^[22]

2017

- February 6, 2017 "Women of America: We're Going on Strike. Join Us so Trump Will See Our Power"- Taylor wrote in response to the [Women's March](#) on January 21, 2016, which was in response to the sexist remarks made by President elect Donald Trump. Taylor suggested that a more unified feminist movement that places its issues in the global context of women's struggles for wages, Trans issues, and same sex peoples. Taylor would eventually call for a national Women's strike for March 8, 2017.^[23]
- March 8, 2017 "Strike for Women's Rights- Sexual, Racial and Economic Justice are at Stake"- Taylor critiqued the state of modern feminism and the privileged nature of those who organize the marches.^[24]

The Jacobin (2014-2017)

2014

- March 28, 2014 "Poverty and the 'Tailspin of Culture'" - Taylor responded to Paul Ryan's report regarding poverty and the current state of economic uncertainty in urban communities. She wrote that the blame for the poverty in Black communities has been largely placed on said communities.^[25]

- November 11, 2014 "Organizing Ferguson's"- In the wake of the not guilty verdict of Officer Darren Wilson, Taylor lamented the lack of discussion surrounding the forces that led to the murder of [Mike Brown](#). During the piece Taylor argued that cultural fear of young Black men leads to the unjust murders regardless of the race of the officer. Taylor suggested that civilian review, body cams, and the possible disarming of the police are necessary to curb police violence. ^[26]
- December 13, 2014 "No More Eric Garner's"- Taylor wrote in the wake of the response to the killing of [Eric Garner](#) and the response from President Obama that the systemic issues facing impoverished communities are once again being addressed in the national conversation. Taylor called for a complete rethinking of the role of the police in said communities. She felt that "when the police and other state-sanctioned vigilantes are killing African Americans at a rate of one ever twenty-eight hours, people won't accept toothless reforms meant to quell anger while doing absolutely nothing to punish, imprison, and disarm the real menace- the agents of the state who terrorize African-American communities with impunity." ^[27]

2015

- May 4, 2015 "Black Faces in High Places"- The role of Black leadership in electoral positions had not led to a decrease in murders of minorities by police. Taylor wrote, although many Black elected officials have risen to power, life has not changed for Black citizens. ^[28]
- October 26, 2015 "How We Get Free"- Taylor traced the story of Black oppression from the surrender of the Confederacy to Civil Rights Movement all the way to the current resistance movements. Taylor spoke on the irony of the first Black President, while also a new wave of Black resistance and protest is growing in the United States. ^[29]
- March 16, 2015 "What about Racism"- Taylor equated the oppression of Black Americans to the faults that are inherent in capitalism. She further expanded on this idea when looking at labor movements in the United States. Taylor wrote that any attempt to organize failed because of the inherent racism that is endemic of the United States. She suggested that the intertwining of capitalism with racism should lead the American people to support socialist principals. ^[30]

2016

- June 23, 2016 "The Cynical Sit-In"- Taylor wrote in response to a Congressional sit-in led by Congressman Lewis in response to gun violence. She argued that because there had been no sit-ins regarding issues such as cutting social programs, this equates to "political theater". Taylor stated that the lack of true action by the Democratic Party indicated their lack of caring regarding the issues of the Black communities. ^[31]

2017

- January 24, 2017 "Building of a Mass Movement"- Taylor wrote in response to the criticism surrounding the demographics of the Women's March. She argued that he March must be the beginning of a movement and not simply the culmination of the election of Trump. ^[32]

- January 28, 2017 "No Time for Despair"- Taylor stated that the argument should shift from what happened to what liberals should do next. For Taylor, the Democratic Party had been just as determined to movements as their Republican counterparts, although, she admitted on a smaller scale.^[33]
- August 14, 2017 "No More Charlottesville's"- Taylor wrote because of the Alt-Right rally held in Charlottesville and the response by the President of the United States. For Taylor the Republican Party had become embedded in the politics of racism and the [Alt-Right](#). According to Taylor Charlottesville is the manifestation of the interoperation between these groups.^[34]
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Books

"Race for Profit: The Political Economy of Black Urban Housing in the 1970's" 2013

Taylor's dissertation from 2013 when she was at Northwestern University. She discussed the actions after the 1960 urban rebellion by the government to provide affordable housing for African Americans. The goal of the dissertation was to see if the private housing industry could successfully find a solution to the 1960 urban rebellion. In addition, Taylor questioned the partnership of public and private sectors. She argued that these two sectors had different goals that work in opposition.^[35]

"Rats, Riots, and Revolution: Black Housing in the 1960's" 2015

Written from the research and prose by Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor and discusses "racism, redlining, and urban exploitations". Taylor explained how these aspects are used by politics to divide residents in lower class communities.^[36] Taylor made a connection between today's movements and the housing movements of the 1960's.^[37] Published January 27, 2015 by Consortium Book Sales and Distribution.^[38]

"The Anti-Inauguration: Building Resistance in Trump Era" 2016

Edited by Anand Gopal, Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, Naomi Klein, and Owen Jones. This book brought together a collection of speeches from the 2017 Anti-Inauguration Event in Washington DC. The speeches discuss the Donald Trump administration and their policies. It discusses a resistance to the Trump presidency through existing movements by having these movements work together.^[39] The book was published January 30, 2016 by Haymarket Books.^[40]

"From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation" 2016

"From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation" was published on February 23, 2016 by Independent Press [Haymarket Books](#). It won the 2016 Cultural Freedom Award for an Especially Notable Book.^{[41][42]} This book analyzed the political aspects of the [BlackLivesMatter](#) movement including the history of the connection between race and policing and how the movement is separated from black politics. The goal of Taylor's book was to discuss the history

and motivation for the BlackLivesMatter movement and to consider if the United States is post racial. The book also looked if the movement can be applied beyond [police brutality](#) to wider spectrum of activism.^[43]

"How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective" 2017

This book is comprised of writings from the founders of the [Combahee River Collective](#), which was a group from the 1960's and 70's of Black Feminist. The writings look at the Combahee River Collective's impact on today's [Black Feminism](#). Taylor edited the writings together in 2017 and the book was published November 20,2017 by Haymarket Books.^{[44][45]}

"Fifty Years Since MLK" 2018

The authors include Brandon Terry, Barbara Ransby, Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, and Bernard E. Harcourt. Published February 2, 2018 by MIT Press, this book discusses Martin Luther King Jr's activism and its impact on today's activism. The authors discussed MLK's work before his death and consider how history influences current activism.^{[46][47]}

Reception

Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor has had books reviewed in multiple publications with positive critical responses. Ken Olende, in the "Socialist Review", in regards to her book "#BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation" called her work "a valuable and very timely book."^[48] Taylor edited a collection of writings for "The Dartmouth", a school newspaper, in which Jordan McDonald said the "historical importance as a Black feminist organization is unquantifiable; with this in mind, the work conveys the group's accomplishments for new generations of activists."^[49]

Professional Affiliations

Urban History Association

[American Historical Association](#)

[American Sociological Association](#)^[50]

See also

- [Naomi Murakawa](#)
- [Anand Gopal](#)
- [Naomi Klein](#)
- [Owen Jones \(writer\)](#)
- [Barbara Ransby](#)
- [Bernard Harcourt](#)
- [Black Lives Matter](#)

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