On February 22, 2017, UW Political Science Professor Megan Ming Francis participated in a panel discussion titled “Black Politics in Trump’s America” organized by the New America Foundation. Professor Francis was joined on the panel by Professor Keneshia Grant from Howard University and Jamelle Bouie, chief political correspondent for Slate magazine.

After each of the panelists made a brief introductory statement, the discussion was guided by questions from the moderator and the audience. The panel addressed a broad variety of issues and questions including how black America will respond to the election, how much the black community should engage with the presidency, and how African-Americans can increase their political influence.

Professor Francis addressed the state of protest in the Trump administration and argued that there is hope to be found in our history: “I am [...] a believer that our past history can light a way out of the present darkness,” she noted referencing her extensive research on black political activism during the late 19th and early 20th century. The biggest lesson from her book Civil Rights and the Making of the Modern American State for the current moment, she argued, is that “protest on the ground is so important to the movement of political institutions but [it] must be connected to electoral and political institutions to create change.”

Georgetown University Professor Ted Johnson, who is currently a New America fellow, organized and moderated the event. The event was broadcast on C-SPAN. You can watch the entire 90 minute discussion on the C-SPAN website. The New America Foundation “is a think tank and civic enterprise committed to renewing American politics, prosperity, and purpose in the Digital Age.”