



BECAUSE OF ANITA

**TRUTH, JUSTICE, RACE,
GENDER, AND POWER
30 YEARS LATER**

Saturday, October 16, 2021
Bing Theatre
University of Southern California

USC Visions & Voices

METEOR



PROGRAM

OPENING REMARKS

Willow Bay

DEAN, USC ANNENBERG SCHOOL FOR COMMUNICATION AND JOURNALISM

Daria Yudacufski

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, USC VISIONS AND VOICES: THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES INITIATIVE

SESSION 1: WHAT HAPPENED?

Re-Examining Anita Hill's Testimony

Revisiting the fateful October 1991 weekend when Hill testified before the Supreme Court Judiciary Committee that her boss, Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas, had sexually harassed her.

Jill Abramson

SENIOR LECTURER, HARVARD UNIVERSITY; CO-AUTHOR, *STRANGE JUSTICE: THE SELLING OF CLARENCE THOMAS*

Freida Lee Mock

DIRECTOR, WRITER, AND PRODUCER, *ANITA: SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER*, AND *RUTH: JUSTICE GINSBURG IN HER WORDS*

MODERATORS:

Cindi Leive

CO-HOST, *BECAUSE OF ANITA*; CO-FOUNDER, THE METEOR

Dr. Salamishah Tillet

CO-HOST, *BECAUSE OF ANITA*; CONTRIBUTING CRITIC-AT-LARGE, *NEW YORK TIMES*

“Not That Bad”

From Hill's testimony to today, how our culture diminishes survivors' experiences—and what that costs us.

Roxane Gay

BESTSELLING AUTHOR; EDITOR, *NOT THAT BAD: DISPATCHES FROM RAPE CULTURE*

Miki Turner

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE, USC ANNENBERG SCHOOL FOR COMMUNICATION AND JOURNALISM

SESSION 2: WHERE ARE WE NOW?

What the Law Owes Survivors

Hill's testimony gave way to a dramatic uptick in people filing sexual harassment complaints. How do legal options fit into our path to eradicating abuse at work now?

Fatima Goss Graves

PRESIDENT AND CEO, NATIONAL WOMEN'S LAW CENTER

Senator Connie M. Leyva

MEMBER OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE

MODERATOR:

Jessica Yellin

PEABODY, GRACIE, AND EMMY AWARD-WINNING POLITICAL JOURNALIST

Hotels, Restaurants, and Farms: Report from the Harassment Frontlines

Stories from women who experienced harassment—before and after Hill gave us the language to describe it—and are fighting to make these fields safer.

Thomasina Gross

FORMER EVENTS SERVER, CHATEAU MARMONT; ACTOR

Mily Treviño-Sauceda

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CO-FOUNDER, ALIANZA NACIONAL DE CAMPESINAS, INC.

MODERATOR:

Gabrielle Horton

AUDIO STORYTELLER; ADJUNCT FACULTY AT USC ANNENBERG SCHOOL FOR COMMUNICATION AND JOURNALISM

Has Hollywood Changed?

Two entertainment leaders who are pushing for accountability take stock and discuss how reporting and data are tools to create progress.

Kim Masters

EDITOR-AT-LARGE, *THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER*; HOST, KCRW'S *THE BUSINESS*

Nina Shaw

CO-FOUNDER AND BOARD MEMBER, THE HOLLYWOOD COMMISSION

MODERATOR:

Cindi Leive

CO-HOST, *BECAUSE OF ANITA*; CO-FOUNDER, THE METEOR

In Defense of Ourselves: Demanding Justice for Black Girls and Women

Thirty years after a group of Black feminists showed their solidarity with Hill with "African American Women in Defense of Ourselves," an ad in the *New York Times*, what support do Black women and girls critically need from the anti-violence movement?

Tony Porter

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, A CALL TO MEN

Dr. Salamishah Tillet

CO-HOST, *BECAUSE OF ANITA*; CONTRIBUTING CRITIC-AT-LARGE, *NEW YORK TIMES*

Scheherazade Tillet

CO-FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, A LONG WALK HOME

SESSION 3: WHAT'S NEXT?

Performance: *The Scarlet C*

By playwright Lynn Nottage in honor of Anita Hill

DIRECTOR:

Anita Dashiell-Sparks

PROFESSOR OF THEATRE PRACTICE IN ACTING, ASSOCIATE DEAN OF EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION, AND CO-HEAD OF UNDERGRADUATE ACTING, USC SCHOOL OF DRAMATIC ARTS

PERFORMERS:

Dara Adedara

BA STUDENT, USC SCHOOL OF DRAMATIC ARTS

Kennedy Hill

BFA STUDENT, USC SCHOOL OF DRAMATIC ARTS

Nicole Royster

MFA STUDENT, USC SCHOOL OF DRAMATIC ARTS

Anita Hill on Believing

Anita Hill shares her own personal reflections on the hearing and its aftermath—and takes you inside her 30-year journey to end gender violence.

FEATURING:

Anita Hill

UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR OF SOCIAL POLICY, LAW, AND WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES AT BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY, AND AUTHOR, *BELIEVING: OUR THIRTY-YEAR JOURNEY TO END GENDER VIOLENCE*

Beverly Guy-Sheftall

ANNA JULIA COOPER PROFESSOR OF WOMEN'S STUDIES, SPELMAN COLLEGE

RECEPTION TO FOLLOW

SPEAKER BIOS

Jill Abramson is a Senior Lecturer at Harvard University and journalist who spent the last 17 years in the most senior editorial positions at the *New York Times*, where she was the first woman to serve as Washington Bureau Chief, Managing Editor, and Executive Editor. After covering the Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings for *The Wall Street Journal*, she spent three years reporting and writing the bestselling book, *Strange Justice: The Selling of Clarence Thomas*, with Jane Mayer.

Willow Bay is a broadcast journalist, media pioneer, digital communication leader, and Dean of the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern California. With a relentless commitment to students, Bay has increased scholarship opportunities, launched the state-of-the-art Annenberg Media Center, accelerated curricular innovations, and vastly expanded the school's partnerships with key media and technology organizations. Prior to joining USC, Bay was co-anchor of CNN's *Moneyline*, a reporter and anchor for ABC News' *Good Morning America/Sunday*, a correspondent for *World*

News Weekend, and a senior editor and strategic adviser at The Huffington Post.

Roxane Gay is the author of the books *Ayiti*, *An Untamed State*, the *New York Times* bestselling *Bad Feminist*, the nationally bestselling *Difficult Women*, and the *New York Times* bestselling *Hunger*; editor of *Not That Bad: Dispatches from Rape Culture*; and contributing opinion writer for the *Times*. She is also the author of *World of Wakanda* for Marvel and is at work on television and film projects

Fatima Goss Graves is president and CEO of the National Women's Law Center, president of the National Women's Law Center Action Fund, and a co-founder of the TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund. With a distinguished track record working across a broad set of issues central to the lives of women and girls, with a particular focus on outcomes for women and girls of color, Goss Graves is widely sought after in the complex public policy arena at state and federal levels, and regularly testifies before Congress and federal agencies.

Thomasina Gross is an actor, performer, and proud member of entertainment unions SAG-AFTRA and AEA. Like many in the entertainment industry, she has also worked in hospitality—as an events server, events captain, and bartender—for more than 15 years. Gross worked at Chateau Marmont as an events server for two and a half years before being laid off at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. In January 2021, she filed a lawsuit against Chateau Marmont alleging that she had been passed over for promotion on the basis of race and that her managers failed to respond appropriately to her complaints about sexual harassment by guests. The Chateau has since forced her lawsuit out of court and into private arbitration, where her case is now going forward.

Beverly Guy-Sheftall is the founding director of the Women’s Research and Resource Center (since 1981) and Anna Julia Cooper Professor of Women’s Studies at Spelman College. She is also an adjunct professor at Emory University’s Institute for Women’s Studies where she teaches graduate courses in their doctoral program. She is the former President of the National Women’s Studies Association (NWSA).

Professor Anita Hill is the University Professor of Social Policy, Law, and Women’s and Gender Studies at Brandeis University. After the 1991 Senate confirmation hearings for U.S. Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas, Hill became a leading figure in the fight for women’s rights and against gender-based violence. She has written for the *New York Times* and *Newsweek*, and her latest book is *Believing: Our Thirty-Year Journey to End Gender Violence*.

Gabrielle Horton is a former Democratic political staffer turned podcast showrunner, story editor, and Adjunct Faculty at USC Annenberg School for Journalism and Communication. She is also the co-creator, executive producer, and host of the *NATAL* docuseries podcast about having a baby while Black, which was named to Spotify’s 2020 Podcast Hall of Fame and Indiewire’s Best Podcast Episodes of 2020.

Cindi Leive is a journalist, media leader, advocate for women, and the co-founder of The Meteor, a collective of journalists, artists, media leaders, and filmmakers committed to building a platform for modern feminist work. She is also the former editor-in-chief of both *Glamour* and *Self*; a cultural critic who speaks frequently about women, media, and the arts; and the co-producer of several *New York Times* bestsellers, including the 2018 book *Together We Rise* about the making of the Women’s March.

Reelected to represent the 20th State Senate District in 2018, **Senator Connie M. Leyva** is serving her second term in the California State Senate. Senator Leyva—the former Chair of the California Legislative Women’s Caucus—has authored important legislation signed into law, including banning secret settlements (NDAs) in sexual harassment, assault and discrimination cases (SB 820), eliminating use of political funds to fight assault and harassment claims (SB 71) and criminalizing sextortion (SB 500).

Kim Masters is editor-at-large of *The Hollywood Reporter* and host of KCRW’s *The Business*. A former correspondent for NPR, she has also served as a contributing editor at *Vanity Fair*, *TIME*, and *Esquire*, and was a staff reporter for *The Washington Post*. She is the author of *The Keys to the Kingdom: The Rise of Michael Eisner and the Fall of Everybody Else*, and co-author (with Nancy Griffin) of *Hit & Run: How Jon Peters and Peter Guber Took Sony for a Ride in Hollywood*. Masters was named Print Journalist of the Year by the Los Angeles Press Club in 2012 and a Distinguished Journalist by the Los Angeles chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists in 2017.

Freida Lee Mock is an Academy Award-winning filmmaker, partner in Sanders and Mock Productions, and co-founder of the American Film Foundation, which produces films on the arts, sciences, and humanities. She is the producer, director, and writer of *Anita: Speaking Truth to Power*, and producer, director, and co-writer of *Ruth: Justice Ginsburg in Her Words*.

Tony Porter is an author, educator, and activist working to advance gender and racial justice. As the CEO of A Call To Men, Porter is internationally recognized for his efforts to prevent violence against women and girls while promoting healthy, respectful manhood. He is the author of *Breaking Out of the “Man Box”* and visionary behind *NFL Dads: Dedicated to Daughters*, and an adviser to the NFL, NBA, NHL, U.S. State Department, and hundreds of companies, organizations, and government agencies.

Nina Shaw is a founding partner in the entertainment law firm of Del Shaw Moonves Tanaka Finkelstein & Lezcano, among the founding organizers of TIME’S UP, and co-founder of The Hollywood Commission, an organization created to bring Hollywood executives, independent experts, and advisors together to tackle the culture of abuse and power disparity in the entertainment industry.

Dr. Salamishah Tillet is the Henry Rutgers Professor of African American Studies and Creative Writing and the Director of Express Newark, a center for socially engaged art and design, at Rutgers University-Newark. She is a contributing critic-at-large for the *New York Times*, and the author of *Sites of Slavery: Citizenship and Racial Democracy in the Post-Civil Rights Imagination* and the recent book, *In Search of The Color Purple: The Story of An American Masterpiece*. She is currently working on a book on the civil rights icon, Nina Simone, for which she received the Whiting Foundation Creative Non-Fiction grant in 2020, and the cultural history of the ‘Me Too’ movement for which she was awarded the Andrew Carnegie Fellowship in 2021. In 2003, she and Scheherazade Tillet founded A Long Walk Home, an organization that uses art to empower people to end violence against girls and women.

Scheherazade Tillet is a photographer, art therapist, and community organizer. As a curator and social documentary photographer, Scheherazade use site-specific work to explore the themes of gendered vulnerability, racial invisibility, pleasure, and play. In 2003, she and

Dr. Salamishah Tillet co-founded A Long Walk Home, a Chicago-based national nonprofit that uses art to empower young people and end violence against girls and women.

Mily Treviño-Sauceda is considered the founder of the farmworker women’s movement in the U.S. Born in Bellingham, WA, to a migrant farmworker family, she worked in agricultural fields starting at age eight and became a union worker organizer in the 1970s. In the ’80s and ’90s, she co-founded “Mujeres Mexicanas” and Líderes Campesinas, which is the first state-based farmworker women’s unique grassroots organization advocating on behalf of campesinas. In 2011, she co-founded Alianza Nacional de Campesinas, the first national grassroots-based farmworker women’s organization.

Miki Turner is an award-winning journalist and Associate Professor of Professional Practice at the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. At USC, she shares her vast experience with future journalists and is committed to making the school a more diverse and inclusive environment as the founder of the Annenberg Cross-Cultural Student Association and director of a

university-wide Minority Serving Institution Graduate School Recruitment effort.

Jessica Yellin is a fellow at the USC Annenberg Center on Communication Leadership and Policy and as a Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the Pacific Council on International Policy. The Peabody, Gracie, and Emmy Award-winning former Chief White House correspondent has covered Capitol Hill, domestic politics, state and national elections, the culture wars, and issues facing women in the workplace. Her work has been published in the *New York Times*, *The Daily Beast*, *Details*, *Entertainment Weekly*, and *The Los Angeles Times*.

Daria Yudacufski is the executive director of USC Visions and Voices: The Arts and Humanities Initiative. She has worked in higher education at the intersections of the arts, social justice, and cross-cultural education for 27 years. She also served as the co-publisher and co-editor of *make/shift*, an independent, feminist magazine that was published from 2007 to 2017 and is the co-editor of the anthology *Feminisms in Motion: Voices for Justice, Liberation, and Transformation*.

PERFORMANCE BIOS

Dara Adedara is a junior at USC majoring in Theatre with an Acting Emphasis. Adedara has been involved in theatre productions since 6th grade and has been a performer in her church for as long as she can remember. Coming into college, she has been able to explore her love for theatre and that has led to a career in film acting, as well. Adedara aspires to be a professional actress and to tell stories, specifically of blackness, that have not been told recently.

Anita Dashiell-Sparks is a Professor of Theatre Practice in Acting; Associate Dean of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion; and Co-Head of Undergraduate Acting for the USC School of Dramatic Arts. Dashiell-Sparks has taught acting, movement, and critical studies at USC for nearly two decades. As a trailblazing actor based in both New York and Los Angeles, she has performed on Broadway

and appeared in numerous off-Broadway and regional theatre productions. She has also been a prolific director and received competitive grants for her theatre and arts therapy work.

Kennedy Hill is a junior earning her BFA in Acting at USC. Alongside acting, she also paints, sings, writes, and directs. This summer she worked with her friends to start their own production company, Fifth Floor Studios, and this year you can see her on the SDA main stage as God in Brandon Jacob Jenkins’ *Everybody*.

Nicole Royster is an actress, singer, director, and MFA Acting student at the USC School of Dramatic Arts who graduated from CSULB in Theatre Arts and Performance.

USC Visions & Voices

METEOR

USC Annenberg

USC School of Cinematic Arts

USC School of Dramatic Arts

USC Gould

Special thanks to the *Because of Anita* podcast sponsor  and to 

THEMEGUIDE

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- Anita Hill is a lawyer, legal scholar, professor, and author who profoundly shifted the U.S. discourse around workplace sexual harassment. Her new book, *Believing: Our Thirty-Year Journey to End Gender Violence*, has just been published.
- In October 1991, Hill changed Americans' understanding of sexual harassment at work—and inspired movements to end it—when she testified in nationally televised hearings that her former boss, then-Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas, had sexually harassed her.
- In 2018, Christine Blasey Ford testified that Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh sexually assaulted her, drawing comparisons to Hill's testimony and underscoring how critical these issues remain today.
- This Visions and Voices event, recognizing the 30th anniversary of Hill's landmark testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, will be hosted by Cindi Leive and Salamishah Tillet, co-hosts of the new podcast *Because of Anita*.

"Thirty years later, I'm here to say that even though Clarence Thomas was confirmed, I do believe that what I did was effective because it opened the conversation publicly in a way that had never been done before."—Anita Hill

ABOUT ANITA HILL

Anita Hill is University Professor of Social Policy, Law, and Women's and Gender Studies at Brandeis University. She became a leading figure in the struggle to end gender-based violence after she testified in the 1991 Senate confirmation hearings for then-Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas, her former boss, attesting that he had sexually harassed her.

Hill earned a law degree from Yale University in 1980, and by 1981 she was working at the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights as a legal adviser to then-Assistant Secretary Clarence Thomas. When Thomas became chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in 1982, Hill worked with him there. In 1983, she left legal work and turned to teaching, first at Oral Roberts University, and then at the law college of the University of Oklahoma, where in 1989 she became the school's first tenured African American professor. When President George H. W. Bush nominated Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court in 1991, Anita Hill spoke publicly about the harassment from Thomas that she had endured on the job, testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee (chaired by then-Senator Joe Biden) in hearings that were televised nationally.

For many Americans, the hearings and the media frenzy around them marked the first time they heard or seriously considered the phrase "sexual harassment"—though plenty of Americans had experienced what we now commonly understand that term to mean. The public's response to the hearings was highly polarized—some dismissed or doubted Anita Hill's account, disparaging and even threatening her, while many others wore "I Believe Anita Hill" buttons and condemned the all-white, all-male Senate committee's treatment of her. Thomas was ultimately confirmed by a narrow vote, but a national dialogue about sexual harassment had been sparked that led to concrete advances in women's rights. The number of women elected to the U.S. Congress doubled in 1992, which was popularly dubbed "The Year of the Woman."

Hill became a professor at Brandeis University in 1999. She is a highly influential speaker on sexual harassment and gender-based violence, and

"Hill's testimony served as a kind of fulcrum, marking an enormous and uneasy turn in America's recognition of gender inequity and injustice. It was the catalyst for a generation of American women—who had caught a glimpse in excruciatingly real time of how underrepresented they were in government and professional life—to move into electoral politics in unprecedented numbers."

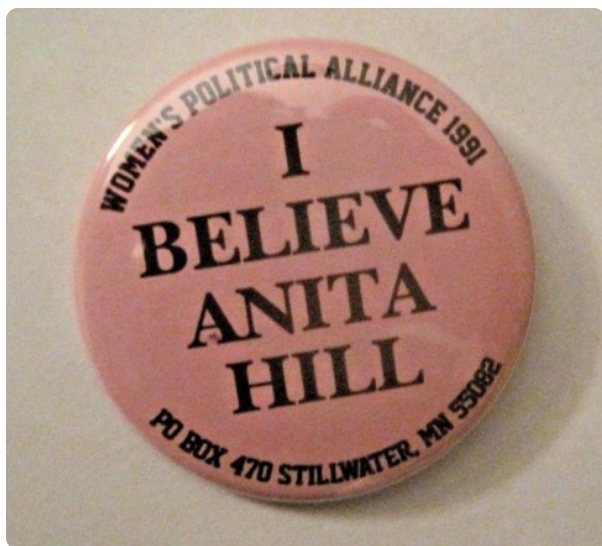
—Rebecca Traister, in *New York* magazine, September 2021



Professor Anita Hill testifies before Congress, during Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings for the Supreme Court. October 11, 1991

“Where is the process that we need to be in place that will fully vet judges and Supreme Court justice nominees? ... We have a process right now ... that really is nonexistent ... I’m not even sure we can call it a process. Neither Christine Blasey Ford nor I knew where to go with our complaint. A process, an effective process, would have clear guidelines about where an individual should go if they have information about a nominee. That didn’t exist in 1991, and it doesn’t exist now, as far as I know.”

—Anita Hill to NPR, 9/28/21



During and after the 1991 hearing, pins declaring “I believe Anita Hill” were worn by students, activists, and advocates for women’s rights across the country.



the author of *Speaking Truth to Power, Reimagining Equality: Stories of Gender, Race, and Finding Home*, and the new book *Believing: Our Thirty-Year Journey to End Gender Violence*.

ABOUT THE HOSTS

Cindi Leive is a journalist, media leader, advocate for women, and the co-founder of [The Meteor](#), a collective of journalists, artists, media leaders, and filmmakers committed to building a platform for modern feminist work. She is also the former editor-in-chief of both *Glamour* and *Self*; a cultural critic who speaks frequently about women, media, and the arts; and the co-producer of several *New York Times* bestsellers, including the 2018 book *Together We Rise* about the making of the Women’s March.

Salamishah Tillet is the Henry Rutgers Professor of African American Studies and Creative Writing and the Director of Express Newark, a center for socially engaged art and design, at Rutgers University-Newark. She is a contributing critic-at-large for the *New York Times*, and the author of *Sites of Slavery: Citizenship and Racial Democracy in the Post-Civil Rights Imagination* and the recent book, *In Search of The Color Purple: The Story of An American Masterpiece*.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- ⦿ How did Anita Hill’s televised 1991 testimony before a Senate committee influence advocacy and movements for gender equality in the United States?
- ⦿ Why is belief, or believing, such an important part of Anita Hill’s story and movements to end gender-based violence?
- ⦿ If you were designing a process to more effectively vet judicial nominees, what are some things you would include in that process?
- ⦿ Why does Anita Hill describe issues of sexual harassment and gender-based violence as systemic? What can be done to change harmful systems?

IF YOU LIKED THIS EVENT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT:

- ⦿ *Because of Anita: A Podcast About the Testimony that Changed Everything*
wearethemeteor.com/because-of-anita-a-podcast-about-the-testimony-that-changed-everything
- ⦿ USC’s Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX
eetix.usc.edu
- ⦿ USC’s Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP)
sites.usc.edu/engage/relationship-sexual-violence-prevention-services-rsvp/
- ⦿ The USC Center for Feminist Research
dornsife.usc.edu/cfr
- ⦿ Society of Women in Law, a pre-law society at USC
instagram.com/uscswil/
- ⦿ Women’s Law Association at USC
instagram.com/uscgouldwla/
- ⦿ Sistah Circle
instagram.com/uscsistahcircle
housed in the USC Center for Black Culture and Student Affairs

DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

Kelsey Vukic of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about this event. Electronic resources are accessible through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at libraries.usc.edu but may require the user to log in using their USC credentials.

BOOKS

Liza Featherstone and Ruth O'Brien, *Telling Stories Out of Court: Narratives About Women and Workplace Discrimination* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 2018).

Roxane Gay, ed., *Not That Bad: Dispatches from Rape Culture* (New York: HarperCollins, 2018)

Leigh Gilmore, *Tainted Witness: Why We Doubt What Women Say About Their Lives* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2017).

Duchess Harris, *Black Feminist Politics from Kennedy to Trump* (Cham: Springer International Publishing AG, 2018).

Bridey Heing, *Critical Perspectives on Sexual Harassment and Gender Violence* (New York: Enslow Publishing, 2018).

Jane Mayer and Jill Abramson, *Strange Justice: The Selling of Clarence Thomas* (New York: Houghton & Mifflin, 1994)

DATABASES AND DIGITAL RESOURCES

[Gender: Identity and Social Change](#)

[GenderWatch](#)

[News, Policy & Politics Magazine Archive](#)

[Political Science Database](#)

JOURNALS

[Journal of Gender, Race & Justice](#)

[Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics](#)

[Politics & Gender](#)

STREAMING VIDEOS

Tony Brown, James Cannady, Sheryl J. Cannady, and Bob Morris, *Anita Hill and Clarence Thomas: The Other Side* (New York: Tony Brown Productions, 1993).

Tony Brown, James Cannady, Sheryl J. Cannady, and Bob Morris, *The Debate That Won't take Place* (New York: Tony Brown Productions, 1993).

Freida Lee Mock, *Anita: Speaking Truth to Power* (Santa Monica: American Film Foundation, 2013).

Seymour Wishman, Julian Schlossberg, and Gloria Steinem, *Sex & Justice* (New York: First Run Features, 1993).

