



HISTORICAL SOCIETY of WASHINGTON, D.C.

"These Streets: Comparing the Uprisings of 1968 and Today" An Online Conversation with Kyla Sommers and Tony Gittens

Presented by the Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

Thursday, August 20 at 7:30 pm

Register for the free event at <https://bit.ly/2FbtvXH>

This June people took to the streets of Washington to protest police brutality against Black Americans in the wake of the murder of George Floyd by an officer of the law. Comparisons to the uprisings of 1968 were unavoidable. Washingtonians' response to the assassination of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was similarly a response to racism, inequality, and uncertainty in American life.

But how similar are these events? What has changed, locally and nationally, since 1968? What has not? Are there lessons we can learn from the uprisings of more than 50 years ago to achieve real and lasting change in the future?

Historian Kyla Sommers and activist and arts leader Tony Gittens will consider the parallels between the uprisings of 1968 and the protests sparked by the murder of George Floyd and so many others at the hands of police.

These Streets is the latest installment in our [Context for Today](#) series of online conversations with thoughtful and thought-provoking historians.

Kyla Sommers is the digital engagement editor at American Oversight. Previously, Sommers was editor-in-chief of the History News Network, a website dedicated to historically contextualizing breaking news. She earned a Ph.D. in American history from George Washington University after writing her dissertation, "'I Believe in the City': The Black Freedom Struggle and the 1968 Civil Disturbances in Washington, D.C." She received the 2016 Curt C. and Else Silberman Foundation Fellowship from the Historical Society of Washington, D.C.

Tony Gittens, founder and director of the Washington, DC International Film Festival, was a student at Howard University in 1968 and witnessed the uprising and its aftermath. He served three mayors as executive director of the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities from September 1996 to July 2008. Among the recognitions he has received for his contributions to the arts are Knight in the Order of Arts and Letters, French Ministry of Culture and Communications; the Mayor's Award for Excellence in Service to the Arts; and Public Humanist of the Year from HumanitiesDC. Gittens serves on the boards of the National Cherry Blossom Festival, the Capital Fringe Festival, the Washington Literacy Center, and the Kennedy Center Community Advisory Committee.

[Register here](#) to receive your link to the Zoom event. The recommended donation with registration is \$20, but we welcome donations of any amount to defray expenses. You may also register for free if your budget is a little tight right now.

The Historical Society of Washington, D.C. is a 501(c)3 non-profit educational organization that makes local history available to the public to promote a sense of identity, place, and pride in Washington and to preserve this heritage for future generations. Visit us at www.dchistory.org and follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram @dchistory.

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