This talk interprets U.S. racial power movements in light of Hannah Arendt’s understanding of judgment. Arendt’s notion that judgment appeals to a common sense of the world guides this exploration of how specific black, Asian, and Amerindian activists decided upon their affiliations, conflicts, and demands. Professor Lee will use the 1969-1971 Occupation of Alcatraz Island to exemplify the ways that the power of judgment participated in the constitution of 1960s-1970s racial power movement publics. What he contributes to historical sociological accounts of these new social movements is a political theoretical appreciation of the role of human faculties or “powers” in creating public spaces and popular sensibilities.


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