



The Center for Research on Race and Ethnicity in Society (CRRES)

presents

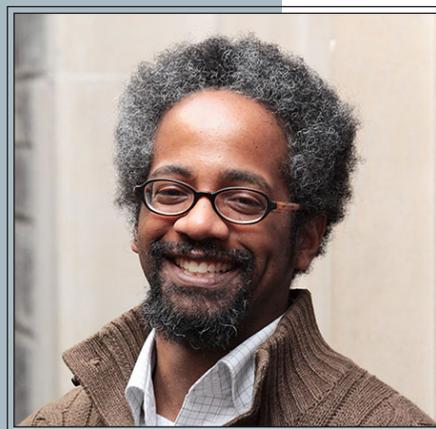
The Wages of Resistance: Considering the Subsistence of Social Movements

The often used phrase, “freedom isn’t free,” was more than a rallying cry for personal sacrifice during the black freedom movement. Money mattered. African Americans who faced economic reprisals because they attempted to register to vote, black activists who devoted their working lives to the cause of freedom, and organizations who attempted to manage several civil rights projects while supporting activists in the field and local blacks who were fired from their jobs, all acutely understood that resources were essential to movement building. While sociologists hammered out resource mobilization theories in the 1970s and 1980s, in this lecture I use a labor lens, outside of the formal economy, to think about subsistence as a function of movement politics. I will use SNCC’s Food for Freedom program to demonstrate how it facilitated the distribution of resources to local communities and made plain the connection between the vote and pocketbook politics. Moreover, the food and clothing distributions demonstrated that SNCC’s voter registrations drives, and its larger work, required a well-oiled fundraising machine to sustain its work.

Quincy Mills

Department of History
Vassar College

Friday, December 5, 2014
Schuessler Institute for Social Research,
Room 100
2:30-4:00pm



Quincy Mills is an associate professor of history at Vassar College. His first book, *Cutting Along the Color Line: Black Barbers and Barber Shops in America* (2013), chronicles the history of black barber shops as businesses and civic institutions, demonstrating their central role in civil rights struggles throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He is currently at work on his second monograph, tentatively titled *The Wages of Resistance: Financing the Black Freedom Movement*, which examines how civil rights and black power organizations negotiated fundraising imperatives with their political ideologies as functions of movement building.