Despite emerging social movements and growing media attention, police violence against unarmed individuals continues to be a dire issue in our communities; scores of people are unjustly beaten, maimed, and killed each day. If the Fourth Amendment is supposed to prevent police officers from using excessive force and also hold them accountable when they do, why does this problem persist? The research presented in this talk blends sociological and doctrinal examinations with critical theory to understand the relationship between Constitutional commitments and police departments’ use of force policies. This draws attention to not only how the Fourth Amendment fails to do the work that we think it should, but also produces the problem of excessive force by police officers.

Professor Obasogie's paper with co-author Zachary Newman (American Journal of Law & Medicine, 43 (2017): 279-295) is available on our website and in hard copy at the Center.