



## **Vail Symposium tackles tough topic of policing, police reform in America on March 11**

March 7, 2021

Following massive nationwide protests in the wake of several widely publicized deaths in police custody such as George Floyd's, robust debates about what the future of policing ought to look like have emerged. On Thursday at 6 p.m., Vail Symposium welcomes a panel of experts, including Vail Police Chief Dwight Henninger, to virtually discuss the police reform in America.

"Following the protests of 2020, police reform measures are being considered in legislatures across the country," said Vail Symposium programming director Claire Noble. "A legitimate concern is whether these measures are driven by data or politics. Everyone wants to live in a safe community, but what are the best ways to foster that environment? This program aims to strip away the politics and focus on the facts."

The idea of police reform means different things to different people. In the past year, radical suggestions such as abolishing police forces or defunding the police sowed misunderstandings and drew widespread rebuke. However, vague suggestions such as "reimagining" policing can mean literally anything — or nothing. At the same time, cities across the country are seeing trend-defying spikes in violent crime, in particular homicides. While these numbers remain far below the stratospheric numbers of the late 1980s and early 1990s, it is still a trend in the wrong direction. Are misguided police reform efforts to blame?

Similarly, are America's police forces victims of unfunded scope creep? The past 50 years have seen an erosion of the social safety net, growing income inequality and de-institutionalization of the mentally ill. As a result, police officers are tasked with responding to an ever-growing list of social problems such as addiction, mental illness and lack of housing. Are we asking law enforcement to do too much?

When tax dollars, careers and lives are at stake, getting police reform right is critical. The Vail Symposium has invited two experts on policing in America. Their command of the facts is unimpeachable. Raphael Mangual, of the Manhattan Institute, and Vikrant Reddy, of the Koch Institute, bring an empirical, rational approach to this issue. They will be joined by Henninger. Moderating the panel discussion will be Colorado Public Radio justice reporter Allison Sherry.

This panel program is an opportunity to hear not only from two nationally recognized experts but also local law enforcement about issues that impact us as a community and a country.

To register for the free online program happening Thursday, visit [vailsymposium.org](https://vailsymposium.org).

**About the speakers**

Henninger is chief of police in Vail where he has served since 2002. He leads a 65-person organization that serves more than 2 million domestic and international visitors.

Mangual is a senior fellow and deputy director of legal policy at the Manhattan Institute and a contributing editor of City Journal. He has authored and co-authored a number of Manhattan Institute reports and op-eds on issues ranging from urban crime and jail violence to broader matters of criminal and civil justice reform. His work has been featured and mentioned in a wide array of publications, including the Wall Street Journal, The Atlantic and New York Post. Mangual has also made a number of national and local television and radio appearances on outlets such as Fox News, C-SPAN, and Bloomberg Radio. In 2020, he was appointed to serve a four-year term as a member of the New York State Advisory Committee of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

Reddy is a senior fellow at the Charles Koch Institute, specializing in the area of criminal justice reform. Reddy previously served as a senior policy analyst at the Texas Public Policy Foundation, where he managed the launch of its national Right on Crime initiative in 2010. He has worked as a research assistant at the Cato Institute, as a judicial clerk to the Hon. Gina M. Benavides in Texas, and as an attorney in private practice. He is a member of the State Bar of Texas, and he serves on the Executive Committee of the Criminal Law Practice Group of the Federalist Society. He is also an appointee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Texas State Advisory Committee.

Sherry joined Colorado Public Radio in 2017 to bring focus to CPR News' coverage of local, state and federal government. She now covers criminal justice. Rather than a daily crime beat, Sherry focuses on problems in the criminal justice system and trying to tell stories from the ground — the jailhouse, the police car, the courtroom — about what is happening in Colorado from places most people don't go.