

LAWCHA

The Labor and Working-Class History Association

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

**REMEMBERING IRA
BERLIN**

**THE RED STATE TEACHER
STRIKES**

**ATTACK ON THE
UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
LABOR CENTER**

PRIZES AND AWARDS

**LABOR HISTORY
BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**NEWSLETTER
2018**

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President's Perspective

Julie Greene, University of Maryland

OUR 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Founded in 1998 at the North American Labor History Conference in Detroit, LAWCHA this year celebrates its 20th anniversary. For two decades LAWCHA has worked to bring labor scholars, students, and teachers together, connect them to labor studies organizations, unions, and other activist groups, encourage more teaching of labor history at all levels, and promote more awareness of working-class experiences among scholars and the public. Along the way it has articulated a highly capacious vision of the field of labor and working-class history, both thematically and methodologically. Meanwhile LAWCHA's journal *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History* continues to hold its position as one of the most important and creative historical journals. In short, LAWCHA has exerted an inestimable impact on the field of history and in the public sphere. Having been involved in the original discussions that created LAWCHA back in the 1990s, I am energized by LAWCHA's record and the ways it has surpassed the hopes and ambitions of those who worked to build the organization in its early days.

LAWCHA members continue to do great work as teachers, authors, activists, and public intellectuals, all proving more important now than ever, amidst the dark and maddening world of 2018. Through a wide range of efforts, our members are ensuring that working people's experiences and history are front and center in the lives of students, readers, and the general public. You will see in this issue of the annual newsletter the breadth of LAWCHA member activities—from fighting to save the University of Iowa Labor Center to reflections on the history and contemporary politics of teacher strikes. The issue also includes reflections from Kimberly Welch on the lessons her mentor Ira Berlin taught before passing away unexpectedly in June of this year. Ira, one of the greatest historians of slavery, always proudly emphasized that he was a labor historian first and foremost. His generous mentorship to so many

and his unflinching demand that scholarship connect with the political issues of the day remain inspirations to scholars, students, and teachers.

CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

At LAWCHA's annual meeting during the 2018 OAH in Sacramento, we thanked outgoing President Jim Gregory for his leadership and heard his stimulating luncheon address "Remapping the History of American Radicalism." We welcomed new board members Anne Balay, Robyn Muncy, Lisa A. Phillips, Priyanka Srivastava, and Jessie Wilkerson, as well as new VP William Jones and returning Treasurer Liesl Orenic and National Secretary Cecelia Bucki. We are grateful to all for their creativity and energy. LAWCHA's presence at the OAH—its main conference every other year—was powerful, with 22 sponsored sessions on topics ranging from "Crimmigration" to queer history, from labor and food politics to transnational anarchism. LAWCHA also hosted an evening session and reception focused on the Koch brothers' designs on campuses across the United States, spearheaded by Nancy MacLean and Matt Garcia. At the upcoming 2019 OAH in Philadelphia we invite everyone to attend Mae Ngai's luncheon address, "Chinese Diasporic Labor and the Global Politics of Race," as well as LAWCHA's sessions. Ideas for sessions at future conferences can always be sent to our program committee, currently chaired by William Jones.

Of course, our next big LAWCHA gathering will be our bi-annual conference at Duke University on May 30–June 1. We can already see it will live up to the record of robust historical and contemporary coverage established in previous conferences in Seattle, Washington D.C., NYC, etc. So, join us! Plenaries will include a terrific roundtable on gender and slavery across the Americas, and another on teacher strikes in historical and contemporary perspective. Robert Korstad is heading up the local arrangements—and I recall LAWCHA's previous conference he organized at

President's Perspective

Duke 10 years ago as one of my all-time favorites, so I am surely eager for this. Our program committee, led by Erik Gellman, Annelise Orleck, and Marc Rodriguez, is hard at work organizing an exciting schedule for the conference.

MEMBERS AND FINANCES

LAWCHA's membership and finances both remain strong. We currently have 550 members. Last year LAWCHA restructured its membership levels to insure lower membership fees for students, contingent and independent scholars and the unemployed, and at the same time we added a "Contributing Member" category at a higher fee for those who can afford it. I'm happy to say we have 44 Contributing Members, ensuring that our budget will be strong and we'll be able to continue providing travel grants to our conferences for graduate students and contingent and independent scholars. In one structural change, the University of Maryland History Department is currently supporting LAWCHA by providing a Graduate Assistant to help manage our many projects. We're very grateful for PhD candidate Kyle Pruitt's labor coordinating LAWCHA business and correspondence.

LAWCHA INITIATIVES

LAWCHA's committees are pursuing several initiatives. The Contingent Faculty and Independent Scholars Committees are active on several fronts. Led by Claire Goldstene and Tula Connell, respectively, they created a member survey so we could ensure LAWCHA is meeting the needs of all scholars and teachers as best it can. We expect a report soon on the survey's findings. At its last board meeting LAWCHA created a new Communications Committee, chaired by Jacob Remes, to ensure thoughtful strategizing and coordination of all LAWCHA's considerable social media functions. LaborOnline continues to rise in importance as a venue for all labor topics, historical and contemporary, and we're grateful to Rosemary Feurer and her team for their constant efforts towards that end. Be sure to read and share—and write for—LaborOnline. Another active commit-

tee is Global Affairs, led by Priyanka Srivastava and Shelton Stromquist—they are working to build LAWCHA's global membership and presence. Finally, the Teaching Labor's Story project led by Nikki Mandell seeks to create annotated resources so high school through university instructors can incorporate labor history as an integral part of the American story. We encourage all members to help develop resources for this project.

As the above suggests, LAWCHA counts upon its members and officers to engage in a very wide range of efforts. Among others, we're delighted that Victor Silverman has signed on as editor of this newsletter, succeeding Rosemary Feurer who oversaw it with great efficiency for many years. There is always more to do in the world of LAWCHA and we welcome suggestions and participation from all members. Come to Durham next spring! In the meantime, join the LAWCHA conversations at LaborOnline and on Twitter, or write us with any suggestions at lawcha@duke.edu.

* * *

LABORONLINE

November 2018. LaborOnline features commentary on a host of issues, contemporary and historical, as well as "instant" dialogue and debate among readers and authors about the contents of LAWCHA's print journal, *Labor*.

Louise Toupin on her newly translated book, *Wages for Housework*
by Jacob Remes

Labor and the Digital Landscape: An Update
by Richard Wells

Dawson Barrett on His New Book, *The Defiant*
by Joseph Walzer and Dawson Barrett

The Rightward Shift in Brazil, and Prospects for the Left: An Interview With Labor Historian Sean Purdy
by Sean Purdy and Brian Kelly

Elizabeth Todd-Breland on her new book, *A Political Education*
by Jacob Remes

The AHA and the Chicago Hotel Strike
by Julie Greene

LAWCHA.org/LaborOnline



In Memory of Ira Berlin

1941-2018

Photo by John T. Consoli

Kim Welch
Vanderbilt University

On June 5, 2018, my teacher and friend, Ira Berlin, died of complications of multiple myeloma. He was 77. The loss of this tremendous scholar and dear man—to so many of us personally and to the historical profession generally—is profound. Rather than write a more traditional obituary, I want to offer some lessons I learned from Ira as a mentor—and to share a few memories along the way.

“Think big.” Ira offered this directive often: in the classroom, in the marginalia of a manuscript, in a book review. When attending a lecture or workshop, he frequently asked the big, global question. Ira certainly asked himself such things, and we see it in his work. His scholarship taught us that slavery was not a sideshow; rather it resides at the center of our history and culture. It was a dynamic, changeable institution that varied across time and space. People of African descent

played an essential role in destroying this institution and worked to create a world where freedom might have a fullness of meaning. By thinking big, Ira transformed how we view the place and nature of slavery in the United States. And he offered so many of us the scaffolding for constructing this vision.

“History is an argument.” Each semester, Ira began his undergraduate survey course on U.S. history by writing this seemingly straightforward statement on the chalkboard. As his teaching assistant, I would watch as students glanced around as if readying for a fight. And perhaps they were; he usually followed up by saying “history is a full-contact sport.” He sought to demonstrate that there is not one narrative, one set of agreed upon facts. Instead, he wanted students to understand that history involves interpretation, perspective, bias, and silence. His larger message to his students was inclusive: you are all historians too; your interpretations matter. This is not merely the work of the powerful, of those with the loudest voices, of those who left behind the most docu-

In Memory: Ira Berlin

ments. Instead, history has many makers. “History is not about the past,” Ira wrote in *The Long Emancipation*; “it is about arguments we have about the past . . . It is about us.”

“You have a voice.” As I wrote and revised my recent book, I struggled, as so many of us do, with figuring out what was significant about my work. What is my contribution? Am I thinking big enough? Will others agree? Will they even read it? Ira offered suggestions, of course. But most importantly, in his gentle way he encouraged me to find my own voice, helped me realize what I am capable of, and reminded me that I have something of value to say. “Write the book you want to write,” he suggested, “and the rest be damned.”

“Help build the best world you can.” In the days following his passing, I read countless tributes to Ira. When sharing their thoughts and memories, the people in my social media feeds and elsewhere spoke about the singular mark Ira made on the field of slavery and African American history, certainly. But far more often they spoke of his generosity and kindness: “Ira found me work when I was out of funding and subsequently went out on a limb to call scholars he knew to find me future

work;” “I had only met him once, but he called his editor and told her about my book manuscript. It changed the course of my career;” “Ira asked me the big question that now guides everything I write, and he approached my work with such excitement;” “When I was pregnant, Ira fought the university to make sure I could keep my health insurance;” “He spent hours reading my work, pouring over every story, every word, pushing me to think harder, clearer;” “He was the most important scholar to my own work and teaching, but more importantly he was a kind, generous person who took time out to listen to and encourage bright eyed graduate students he had just met;” “He exemplified the highest standards our profession could aspire to. He demanded the best of us.”

Ira was a community builder, a giant in the field who never made others feel small. This should not be a rarity in our world. It is up to us to honor this legacy.

* * *

Photo by John T. Consoli





Photo by Gage Skidmore

Red State Strikes and the Roots of Teacher Militancy

Jon Shelton
University of Wisconsin, Green Bay

On February 22, 2018, teachers in West Virginia walked out in a historic action that would inspire teacher strikes and other activism in red states across the country. Beginning with protests by educators in Mingo and Logan counties—the center of the infamous “Coal Wars” of the early 1920s—the strike spread statewide as teachers sought pay raises and relief from rising healthcare premiums. State officials argued that they could not afford what teachers asked for, though as observers pointed out, the state faced fiscal constraints only because taxes on coal companies and other corporations had been slashed over the past decade. Many teachers invoked the state’s militant labor history as they protested at the capitol. Though teachers settled for vague promises on healthcare, the nine-day walkout convinced the Republican legislature to fund a 5% raise.

A few weeks later, teachers in Kentucky also shut down schools to protest major changes in the provision of pensions for public employees. In Oklahoma, another state in which extractive industry interests sought to reduce spending on public services like education, teachers followed the lead of those in West Virginia. In the case of

Oklahoma, oil and gas interests had gotten the legislature to reduce taxes to the lowest of any major fossil fuel producing state in the country. Teachers in the Sooner State walked out seeking pay increases and more stable funding by increasing taxes on industry. The situation in Oklahoma was bad. For instance, almost 20 percent of the state’s schools districts had moved to four-day school weeks to save money. The Republican state legislature—which required a three-quarters majority to pass any tax increase—did so even before the strike began, providing the average teacher a raise of about \$6000 and \$1250 for support staff. Though the state-wide walkout, which began on April 4, did not win the long-term funding Oklahoma strike leaders sought, the raises, passed in the legislature over opposition from billionaire oilman Harold Hamm, still represented a victory. In May, Arizona teachers walked out, securing a 20% raise from a Republican Governor and legislature. Teachers also demonstrated in support of pay increases in Colorado and North Carolina.

These strikes were among the most important victories for workers in the US in recent history, a clear victory for communities decimated by years

Red State Teacher Strikes

of Republican-led austerity. Further, the cross-district teacher strikes this past spring seemed especially shocking because, in spite of the right's decades-long characterization of teacher unions as inimical to the interests of the nation's children, there has actually been labor peace among teachers and school districts going back 30 years now. The strike wave surprised many observers, particularly since they took place in conservative, "right to work" states where public employee strikes are illegal. Yet this new era of teacher unionism builds on a long history of teacher militancy.

In my recent book, *Teacher Strike! Public Education and the Making of a New American Political Order* (University of Illinois Press, 2017) I examine the extensive teacher strikes of the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. These strikes, most by teachers affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), sought recognition from school boards and collective bargaining agreements. There were a lot of strikes in those years—around 300 total in the 1960s and over 100 in 1967 alone—but most

were short, rarely lasting over a week. In contrast to the teacher strikes in February, March, April, and May 2018, the earlier wave of teacher strikes were almost exclusively based in individual school districts.

The length of strikes grew in the late 1960s and 70s, as teacher unions were embroiled in two interrelated conflicts: urban school systems' failures to provide equal education to African American and Puerto Rican students, and, later, fiscal crises. The numerous strikes during this era garnered a lot of attention. In the 1975-76 school year, for example, there were over 200 teacher strikes in the US, including an illegal, week-long strike by teachers in New York City protesting education cuts as the Big Apple almost went bankrupt. Even more profound was the length of some strikes: all told, teachers in New York City in 1968 were out for two months, while in Newark, teachers were on strike for a month in 1970 and three months in 1971. In 1972-73, teachers in Philadelphia were on strike for nearly three months. In 1979, St. Louis teachers were on strike for six weeks. And in 1981,



Photo by People's World

Red State Teacher Strikes



on the heels of Reagan’s firing of striking PATCO workers, educators in Philadelphia undertook the last long teacher strike in American history, a seven week affair in which teachers fought concessions.

After 1981, however, strikes by teachers became less frequent. By the mid-2000s, there were typically only a dozen or so every year and few made national headlines. It is not a surprise, then, that as teacher militancy waned, salaries stagnated. A recent study published by Sylvia Allegretto and Lawrence Michel through the Economic Policy Institute points out that average teacher pay has declined since the 1990s—by about \$27/week in inflation-adjusted dollars.

We might think of 2012 as initiating a new era of teacher consciousness, where teachers began to use their collective power to bargain for the communities in which they work. That year, Chicago teachers went on strike, winning a major victory for social movement unionism. The Caucus of Rank and File (CORE) educators won election to lead the Chicago Teachers Union in 2010, and spent the next two years organizing teachers and the community against the neoliberal austerity brought on by Mayors Richard Daley and Rahm Emmanuel. Other teachers, in Seattle, St. Paul, and, most recently, Los Angeles, where the school district features egregiously large class sizes and teacher salaries that fail to provide a decent standard of living in one of the most expensive cities

in the country, have also moved to connect their working conditions with student learning conditions.

In historical perspective, the red state teacher strikes last spring and rising teacher militancy don’t seem so surprising. As a widely-circulated piece in the *New York Times* recently pointed out, teachers are falling out of the “middle-class,” while most college educated workers have seen their average salaries at least return to where they were before the Great Recession. Increasing the pressure on teachers, education is now viewed as the primary means for Americans to overcome poverty. Armies of education experts—funded by billionaires on both the right and left of the political spectrum—push for charter schools, vouchers, and tying teachers’ performance to their students’ performance on standardized tests. Democrats—such as President Obama, whose “Race to the Top” initiative connected federal funding to disciplining teachers—are almost as culpable as Republicans in this regard.

So teachers in the last several decades have been put in a difficult position that has led to this activism: politicians tell us all how important it is that teachers care for their students and how important good teachers are, all because of how important education is in accessing economic op-



Red State Teacher Strikes

portunity. Indeed, as globalization, capital flight, and pressure from the right against unions in the private sector has diminished the possibilities for good jobs without a high school degree, or even a postsecondary education, politicians right and left point to the acquisition of “human capital” in the global labor marketplace as the means for young people to access economic security. Connecting education so tightly to opportunity, however, gives teachers enormous public support, particularly in states where parents understand their kids’ futures as detrimentally impacted by declining investment in teacher salaries. During the Oklahoma teacher strike, for instance, Ashleigh Hardwick, a worker in a local florist shop and a parent of an elementary school student remarked, “[the strike] has been a hassle, that’s for sure. But if it’s going to better my child’s future...I think I can handle missing a few days of work.”

As we saw in West Virginia, Oklahoma, and Arizona, teachers are starting to understand this reality, as the stage was set for an uprising among a teaching force that has been at best neglected, and at worst, insulted, for far too long. Though we haven’t yet seen any teacher strikes in this school year on the scale we saw last spring, Los Angeles’s 30,000 teachers have authorized a strike vote and as of this writing are holding firm on their demands to force the city to invest more in public education, lower class sizes, and better salaries. We could soon very well see teachers shut down the nation’s second largest school district. In the 2018 election cycle, teachers also ran for office in unprecedented numbers, particularly in Arizona, where, although the state Supreme Court threw out a ballot initiative to raise taxes on the wealthy, teacher candidates almost turned the Arizona state senate from red to blue. Indeed, the uprising may just be getting started.

* * *

LAWCHA Seeks

Manuscript Submission and Reviewers for *Labor*

A site for historical research and commentary, *Labor* provides an intellectual scaffolding for understanding the roots of continuing social dilemmas.

ADVICE TO AUTHORS

Labor welcomes essays on working-class history from all regions and eras. In your submission include the article’s title but not your name or institution; provide that information, as well as a telephone number, in the cover e-mail. Please confirm that the manuscript has not been submitted elsewhere and will not be before a decision on publication has been made. Typically, submissions should not exceed 10,000 words, including notes.

Labor reviews monographs, anthologies, films, TV shows, and permanent museum exhibits about working class history. We do not generally review new editions of books, document readers, memoirs, or temporary exhibits.

If you would like your book to be reviewed by *Labor*, please be sure we get it. Many presses neglect to send books out to journals for review. We recommend that you ask your press to send you the list of journals to which they’ve

sent your book. Feel free to check with us at laborreviews@gmail.com to make sure we’ve received it.

To volunteer to write a review, email laborreviews@gmail.com a note listing your fields of expertise and attaching a copy of your CV. We do not permit people to suggest the books they want to review and we do not publish reviews by graduate students. An exception is review essays. If you have or would like to write a review essay, please feel free to contact us. If you’re revising your dissertation for publication and your press wants to cut the historiographical section, consider sending a version of it to *Labor*.

Direct correspondence and submissions to:

Professor Leon Fink
Kalmanovitz Initiative
209 Maguire Hall
Georgetown University
37th and O Sts. NW
Washington, DC 20057

Phone: 202-687-2293
Fax: 202-687-8607
E-mail: labor@georgetown.edu



The Attack on the University of Iowa Labor Center: An Update

John McKerley
University of Iowa Labor Center

Last summer, the University of Iowa (UI) announced it would be closing its Labor Center, an almost seventy-year-old, highly regarded institution, and the only part of the state's university system focused on educating and conducting research regarding workers and their unions. The decision, announced without any public process or faculty consultation, followed several years of anti-worker attacks that have only heightened demand for the center's education and programming.

In 2015, a deeply politicized Iowa Board of Regents hired Bruce Harreld, a former executive, as the new UI president. The hiring process so violated institutional norms of shared governance

that the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) sanctioned the UI in 2016. That same year, Republicans, who already controlled the governor's office, took control of the state legislature. They wasted no time in enacting a series of anti-worker laws, including a Wisconsin-style bill gutting collective bargaining for public employees, another bill dramatically cutting compensation for workplace injuries, and back-to-back cuts to higher education.

Iowa workers and their allies fought back against these attacks. They gathered overwhelming affirmations of support for unionization during newly-mandated recertification elections for public employees—and they quickly added a Save Our Labor Center campaign to their efforts. The campaign began with an outpouring of calls and letters (including from LAWCHA and its mem-



bers) to UI administrators. These shows of support were followed by a press conference in Iowa City and editorials from newspapers throughout Iowa.

The campaign's next phase involved a series of public hearings in cities across the state. Over six hundred Iowans attended these hearings, which provided some one hundred and fifty community members with the opportunity to testify to the importance of the Center in their lives in ways that the UI had failed to do. As postal clerk Kimberly Karol told the hearing's panelists in Waterloo, Iowa, "For me, this education is about dignity and respect. I know a lot of employees who don't know how to speak up for themselves. Through the programs provided by The University of Iowa Labor Center, they find their voice." On September 13, dozens of Center supporters delivered over 5,000 petition signatures and a report on the hearings to the Iowa Board of Regents.

Now the campaign continues, with a particular emphasis on the UI campus and the ways in which the Center's planned closure continues the problems with shared governance that began during the Harreld hiring process. A dynamic committee of student supporters is engaged in securing resolutions from various student groups across campus opposing the closure. Likewise, many faculty members have expressed their concerns, including the UI Faculty Senate, which recently released a strong statement on the planned closure of the Labor Center and other UI units in the wake of the recent lifting of the AAUP sanctions.

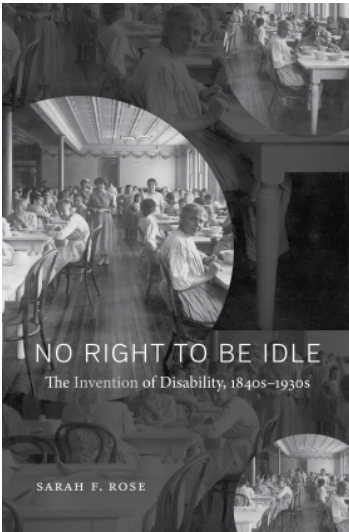
The Center still needs your support! Public pressure from campaign supporters has had an important impact on starting a dialogue about the Center's future, but we still have a long way to go before the Center is back on solid ground. You can keep up with the campaign's progress through its website, <https://saveourlaborcenter.com/>, submit letters of support, and follow the campaign on Facebook and Twitter. Together, we can reverse this latest attack in the ongoing war on workers and on higher education to build a stronger Labor Center and labor movement.

* * *



Prizes & Awards

Taft Prize



No Right to Be Idle: The Invention of Disability, 1840s-1930s

by Sarah F. Rose, University of Texas at Arlington
University of North Carolina Press

The Philip Taft Prize in Labor and Working-Class History committee is pleased to announce the winner of the 2018 prize for the best book in labor and working-class history published in 2017 is Sarah F. Rose's *No Right to Be Idle: The Invention of Disability, 1840s-1930s*, published by The University of North Carolina Press.

Combining the new field of disability studies with that of labor history, this book offers new and compelling insights in every

chapter. Lucidly written and meticulously researched, *No Right to Be Idle* makes carefully considered and nuanced arguments about the spectrum of productivity and the changes the transition to mechanized labor brought on the policy front in regard to disability, and, crucially, to the lives of workers we now call disabled. This pathbreaking book promises to be profoundly influential.

David Montgomery Award

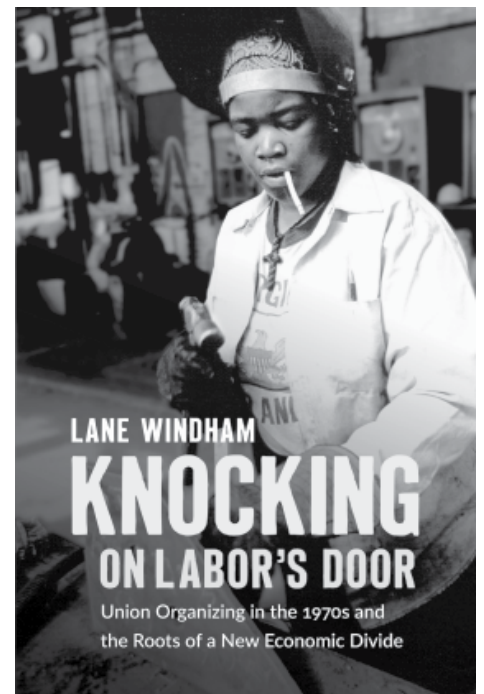
Knocking on Labor's Door: Union Organizing in the 1970s and the Roots of a New Economic Divide

by Lane Windham, Georgetown University's Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor
University of North Carolina Press

The power of unions in workers' lives and in the American political system has declined dramatically since the 1970s. In recent years, many have argued that the crisis took root when unions stopped reaching out to workers and workers turned away from unions. But here Lane Windham tells a different story. Highlighting the integral, often-overlooked contributions of women, people of color, young workers, and southerners, Windham reveals how in the 1970s workers combined old working-class tools—like unions and labor law—with legislative gains from the civil and women's rights movements to help shore up their prospects. Through close-up studies of workers'

campaigns in shipbuilding, textiles, retail, and service, Windham overturns widely held myths about labor's decline, showing instead how employers united to manipulate weak labor law and quash a new wave of worker organizing.

Recounting how employees attempted to unionize against overwhelming odds, *Knocking on Labor's Door* dramatically refashions the narrative of working-class struggle during a crucial decade and shakes up current debates about labor's future. Windham's story inspires both hope and indignation, and will become a must-read in labor, civil rights, and women's history.



Herbert G. Gutman Prize

Nick Juravich

The Work of Education: Community-Based Educators in Schools, Freedom Struggles, and the Labor Movement, 1953-1983

Columbia University, 2017

Advisor: Mai M. Ngai

Nick Juravich's dissertation shines a brilliant light on an occupational category and social movement – that of the million-plus paraprofessionals at work in urban schools – whose organizational fate and political trajectory did not neatly coincide with the dominant narratives that have framed either the history of urban education and the War on Poverty or the civil rights and public sector union stories that emerged out of the 1960s.

Based on an extensive series of oral interviews and hitherto unexplored archival sources, “The Work of Education” demonstrates how organizing campaigns led by and focused upon a largely black, brown, and female strata of New York City paraprofessionals transformed the social geography of the public schools and expanded the welfare state even during the era of

Gutman Prize Chair
Nelson Lichtenstein (left)
with 2018 prize winner
Nick Juravich (right).



austerity generated by the city's fiscal crisis in the mid 1970s. This community based paraprofessional movement thus proved crucial to the United Federation of Teachers as it sought to transcend the disastrous legacy of Ocean Hill-Brownsville, even as tensions persisted between two competing visions for that movement: an assimilationist project that focused on seamlessly incorporating paras into the teachers union; and a civil-rights oriented vision that saw their empowerment as a path to an even larger social and political transformation.

Dr. Juravich completed his thesis at Columbia University under the direction of Professor Mae M. Ngai.

Best Article Prize, 2017

Reena N. Goldthree
Princeton University

“A Greater Enterprise than the Panama Canal”: Migrant Labor and Military Recruitment in the World War I-Era Circum-Caribbean LABOR 13:3-4, Fall 2016

Tens of thousands of Barbadians, Jamaicans, and other British West Indians journeyed to Panama during the first two decades of the twentieth century, seeking work in the Canal Zone, on the plantations of the United Fruit Company, and in port cities on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. Following the outbreak of World War I and the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914, migrant workingmen pursued a new employment opportunity—wartime military service in the British armed forces—as the job market on the isthmus contracted sharply and wages stagnated. This article examines the enlistment of British islanders in Panama

Best Article Prize Winner Reena Goldthree
(left) with LAWCHA President Julie Greene.



as soldiers in the British West Indies Regiment during World War I. It responds to recent calls to

“bridge the gap between military history and labor history” by exposing the dynamic interplay between interimperial labor migration and military recruitment in the circum-Caribbean. Reena Goldthree's essay was voted the winner by Labor's editorial committee. They made note that it was an original, well argued, and well written contribution to the field.

OAH Travel Grants, 2018

The Labor and Working-Class History Association awards competitive travel grants of \$300 each to graduate students, contingent scholars, and independent scholars who are presenting at its LAWCHA conference (every other year), at the OAH (in off-years), and the North American Labor History Conference (NALHC).

OAH, 2018

- Aimee Loiselle, University of Connecticut
- Brandon Williams, University of California, Berkeley
- Eddie Bonilla, Michigan State University
- Ben Zdenchnovic, Yale University
- Joel Zapata, Southern Methodist University
- Daniel Elkin, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville
- Elizabeth Sine, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

NALHC, 2018

- Manuela Rienks, University of Munch (Germany)
- Andreas Meyris, George Washington University
- Olivia A. Kurajian, McGill University (Canada)
- Caroline Propersi-Grossman, Stony Brook University
- Stephanie (Dyar) Fairchild, University of California, San-Diego



NALHC travel grant winner. From left to right: LAWCHA National Secretary Cecelia Bucki, Caroline Propersi-Grossman, Olivia Kurajian, Stephanie Fairchild, Manuela Rienks, and Andreas Meyris, and former LAWCHA President Shelton Stromquist.



OAH travel grant prize winners. From left to right: LAWCHA Program Committee Chair Jana Lipman, Brandon Williams, Aimee Loiselle, Ben Zdenchnovic, and Eddie Bonilla, and LAWCHA President Julie Greene.

Workers on the Move, Workers' Movements

LAWCHA.org/annualmeeting/durham-north-carolina-2019 May 30 - June 1, 2019

LAWCHA 2018 Conference
Durham, NC



Labor History Bibliography, 2017

Compiled by Rosemary Feurer, Northern Illinois University

This list is categorized at laborhistorylinks.org/booklist.html. If we have neglected to list a book, please let us know.

- Aronowitz, Stanley, and Michael J. Roberts, eds. *Class: The Anthology*. Wiley-Blackwell. 2017.
- Barrett, James R. *History from the Bottom up and the inside out : Ethnicity, Race, and Identity in Working-Class History*. Duke University Press. 2017.
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