

LAWCHA

The Labor and Working-Class History Association



PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

LAWCHA 2019 CONFERENCE

TEACHING LABOR'S STORY

A LETTER FROM NORWAY

PRIZES AND AWARDS

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NEWSLETTER
2019-2020

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Moving Forward: From Durham to Chicago

Julie Greene
University of Maryland

Welcome to the 2019-2020 Labor and Working-Class History Association Newsletter! As I write, in October 2019, thirty-two thousand Chicago teachers and staff are on strike; and 48,000 UAW members are voting on a proposed settlement to their historic strike against General Motors. These workers join thousands of other teachers, hotel workers, airline workers, and others who have been effectively and militantly using the strike as a weapon to achieve social change. More workers were on strike in 2018 than any year since 1986, and, so far, it appears that 2019 will keep the momentum going. In addition--casting our eyes beyond the US--we see uprisings against austerity in Chile, Ecuador, Lebanon, Haiti, and Argentina.

This historic upsurge reminds me how crucial LAWCHA's work is. Researching, writing, and teaching the history of working men and women provides a critical perspective for understanding our times. Additionally, LAWCHA members have been doing their bit to support movements for social change through their teaching, labor and immigrant solidarity activism, and by organizing on their own campuses. Our Contingent and Independent Scholar Committees are working to ensure we support all LAWCHA members robustly, and our Global Affairs Committee is strengthening LAWCHA's outreach to labor scholars and activists around the world. Meanwhile LAWCHA's finances and membership (nearly 600 members) are both strong, and growing.

All of this was on display, powerfully, during LAWCHA's annual conference in May 2019, at Duke University. A blend of historical explorations and contemporary coverage, the conference was filled with rich and inspiring presentations and dialogue. Nearly 400 people came together for two and a half days of conversation. The Rev. William J. Barber II kicked off our conference with an address that had us out of our seats numerous times as he linked labor struggles today to moral movements across history. Rev. Barber stressed the important role historians have to play in the struggle to expand civil, labor, and immigrant

rights. Other powerful plenary sessions explored the struggle of contingent and independent scholars, the teacher strikes exploding across the US, and the history of enslaved women, gender, and sexuality. You'll see coverage of all these sessions and more in this newsletter. Program committee co-chairs Erik Gellman, Annelise Orleck, and Marc Rodriguez created a phenomenal event, with support from their committee members; Kyle Pruitt, LAWCHA Executive Assistant, provided enormous support; Robert Korstad, as our local host, worked overtime to ensure the conference ran smoothly. LAWCHA is grateful to all of them. I should also note that graduate students, independent scholars, and contingent faculty were all a strong presence at the conference. LAWCHA supported their attendance by awarding 14 travel grants to contingent faculty and independent scholars, and 16 travel grants to graduate students.

During the conference, LAWCHA's board met and discussed several pressing issues. We welcomed new board members Emma Amador, Greta de Jong, Eric Fure-Slocum, Sophia Lee, and Touré F. Reed. The Board meeting was dominated by discussion of the work of LAWCHA's Committee on Harassment, created by the Board at its 2018 meeting. Chaired by Robyn Muncy and assisted by Lane Windham, Colin Davis, Keona Ervin, and Mary Frederickson, this committee has researched the issue, developed a thoughtful and rigorous anti-harassment policy, and checked details with lawyers and diversity consultants. Board members discussed the policy and voted to adopt it. All attendees at LAWCHA bi-annual conferences will be asked to sign their agreement with this policy. One issue remains to be determined related to this policy: whether it will be possible to establish mechanisms for justly and fairly enforcing the policy by investigating reports of harassment and sanctioning violators. The Board sought more information about how other associations are managing enforcement before approving it. The Anti-Harassment Committee feels strongly that enforcement mechanisms are critical; the Board will revisit the issue at its next meeting.

Speaking of next meetings, we hope everyone will make plans to join LAWCHA at the 2020 Organization of American Historians convention in Washington

President's Perspective

D.C.! Our main gathering every other year is at the OAH. We will hold our Annual Membership Meeting on Friday April 3 at 6 pm, and I'm pleased to announce that AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka will offer a brief address on the challenges facing the labor movement today. There will also be a reception offering hors d'oeuvres and drinks. LAWCHA has organized six sessions for the conference including a "Presidential Address" by yours truly on "Rethinking the Boundaries of Class: Lessons from Transnational Labor History and the Neoliberal University," with commentaries from Joe William Trotter, Trevor Griffey, and Lara Putnam. Other sessions will examine such topics as anti-apartheid politics; race, gender, and nationality in the making of the working-class; and a roundtable on contingent labor and professional associations. In addition, LAWCHA is co-sponsoring 22 other sessions that will be of interest to our members.

I'm also delighted to provide advance notice of LAWCHA's next stand-alone conference. Vice President William Jones has been working energetically to set this up, with assistance from Emily Twarog.

LAWCHA's 2021 conference will be held May 20-22, 2021 at the University of Illinois, Chicago, and will be a collaboration with the United Association for Labor Educators. Our opening plenary and the first day of our conference will be held jointly with UALE, helping LAWCHA pursue its mission of supporting and collaborating with labor educators. This is sure to be another exciting opportunity to connect our work as historians with the contemporary struggles surrounding us.

LAWCHA's blog, LaborOnline, is always a great resource for writing and conversations about the past and present of working people's struggles. The editor of LaborOnline, Rosemary Feurer, recently sent out a call for submissions. If you've got a story to tell or news to share, drop her a line!

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*.

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LAWCHA 2019 ANNUAL MEETING

Touré F. Reed
Illinois State University

LAWCHA's annual meeting in 2019 was held at Duke University in historic Durham, NC – birthplace of the Moral Mondays Movement. This year's conference theme was *Workers on the Move, Workers' Movements*. The conference featured eighty panels that addressed worker mobility and labor and working-class politics. Specific topics included: the civic and professional value of public history, the challenges confronting independent scholars, the barriers confronting women and racial minorities in the workplace and in the union movement, the relationship between race and capitalism, the implication of globalism for workers' rights, the struggles of immigrant workers, depictions of class in popular culture, and labor activists' influence over the Civil Rights Movement and other political movements that have catalyzed societal change.

The conference's opening plenary address was delivered by Pastor, social justice advocate, and Moral Mondays founder Reverend Dr. William J. Barber, II. Reverend Barber's keynote, "The Poor People's Campaign and the Future of American Workers," centered on his ongoing involvement in a diverse coalition determined to recast Martin Luther King, Jr's Poor People's Campaign for the 21st century. Barber declared that the United States is in dire need of a moral awakening, a moral analysis, and "a moral disruption." Highlighting the relationship between deepening racial and economic inequality and voter suppression, Barber's stirring address stressed the crucial importance of broad-based grassroots political coalitions to counter the Right's attack on civil rights, workers' rights, the public sector, and environmental protections. Academics, according to Barber, have a special

role to play in this project, as he called on historians to see themselves as scholar-citizens. Barber, thus, urged students of economic and social inequality to look beyond an audience of their professional peers, and instead to see their charge as the education of the citizenry in a democratic society in the throes of despair.

During the conference we took time to recognize several of our colleagues for their outstanding work. University of Illinois, Chicago Distinguished Professor of History Leon Fink and Professor of History and Director of UIC's Institute for the Humanities Susan Levine were honored with a round table discussion titled "Labor History as Collaborative Intellectual Work," which pivoted off of their scholarship and careers.

Ana Raquel Minian was awarded The David Montgomery Award for the best book on a topic in American labor and working-class history for *Undocumented Lives: The Untold Story of Mexican Migration* (Harvard University Press, 2018). Philip Taft Labor History Book awards were also presented to Peter Cole for *Dockworker Power: Race and Activism in Durban and the San Francisco Bay Area* (University of Illinois Press) and to Joshua Freeman for *Behemoth: A History of the Factory and the Making of the Modern World* (W.W. Norton). Alina R. Méndez, was honored with the Herbert Gutman Prize for, "Cheap for Whom? Migration, Farm Labor, and Social Reproduction in the Imperial Valley-Mexicali Borderlands, 1942-1969" (University of California at San Diego Dissertation directed by David G. Gutierrez and Natalia Molina).

After receiving formal recognition by LAWCHA for his Distinguished Service to Labor and Working-Class History, University of Illinois, Urbana-Cham-

Rev Barber with LAWCHA President Greene. Photo by Robert Korstad



Will Jones managing the Annual Membership Meeting. Photo by Tom Klug.

paign Professor Emeritus James Barrett delivered a moving closing address on the state of the field that echoed Reverend Barber’s calls for citizen-scholars. Noting that labor historians have long maintained ties with unions, activists, and civic organizations, Barrett reminded us that public history has always been a major facet of LAWCHA’s work. He went on to express his enthusiasm about the flood of younger labor historians who use social media platforms to connect with a broad, heterogeneous audience, which will no doubt ensure LAWCHA’s vitality and continued relevance.

While in Durham, conference attendees also had opportunities to explore the Iowa Labor History Oral Project (ILHOP) traveling exhibit as well as local art

and history. We are grateful to our hosts, Duke University and the Sanford School of Public Policy. Of course, none of the diverse and informative panels would have been possible without the thoughtful planning of our program committee (co-chaired by Erik Gellman, Annelise Orleck, and Marc Rodriguez), staff and the wonderful panel participants and facilitators.

We hope that you are able to join us at the OAH in Washington DC, April 2-5, 2020 and in Chicago in May 2021.



Cecilia Márquez, Yalidy Matos, and Perla Guerrero at the Nuevo South Panel



Cindy Hamhovitch, Yami Rodriguez, and Sarah McNamara at the Nuevo South Panel



A rapt audience at the panel “Rethinking 1919 After 100 Years”. Photo by Tom Klug.



Rev Barber Speaking at Opening Plenary. Photo by Tom Klug.

Contingent Faculty, Independent Scholars, and LAWCHA

Tula Connell, Chair-Independent Scholars Committee
 Claire Goldstene, Chair-Contingent Faculty Committee
 Keri Leigh Merritt, Independent Scholar and Writer
 Naomi R. Williams, Rutgers University

The well-attended and highly participatory session on contingent faculty and independent scholars offered an opportunity to make more visible the experiences of these scholars, to learn about work the committees have done around issues impacting independent and contingent faculty, and to continue the conversations about what LAWCHA can do and how we can protect all workers in higher education.

Particularly from the mid-20th century onward, universities have served as important sites for the elaboration

of ideas essential to progressive politics, perhaps most influentially, around multiculturalism. The corporatization of the university, epitomized by the growing ranks of contingent faculty, undermines the mission of universities: the non-monetary public good of educating an engaged citizenry likely to ask critical questions about existing power arrangements. As universities continue to devalue faculty, and as higher education jobs become more precarious, we need a path toward greater solidarity and where all faculty have dignity at work.

The contingent faculty committee has been active since 2015. Organized in 2017, the independent scholars’ committee members detailed obstacles including limited or no access to libraries or online databases, no access to IRB review, lack of travel fund for conferences, and a sense that journals discriminate against scholars without academic affiliations

Contingent Faculty, Independent Scholars, and LAWCHA

when accepting articles. Both committees have been working with the LAWCHA executive board to address these issues, and to date, LAWCHA has taken several steps, including travel support grants to LAWCHA conferences, a new dues structure, and conducting a membership survey in 2018.

Survey results show that independent scholars and contingent faculty lack access to scholarly resources and funding to conduct research and attend conferences, creating major barriers to their engagement with the profession.

The survey also asked contingent faculty and independent scholars how LAWCHA could assist them:

- 34% say access to online databases
- 27.8% cite grants for research/travel to conferences other than LAWCHA
- 18.6% say access to libraries
- 9.3% say letters of introduction
- 65% of contingent faculty members say they

lack access to administrative support

“LAWCHA’s organizational support for social justice and working-class issues makes it especially pertinent for the association to address inequities experienced by independent labor historians,” Connell said.

At the plenary, Keri Leigh Merritt made it clear that being an independent scholar does not mean being economically self-sufficient. It is simply not a viable option for many people struggling with a tanking job market. Merritt provocatively ended by suggesting that if we want real change within the academy, we need to organize a strike among non-tenured scholars to refuse all unpaid labor.

Claire Goldstene situated adjunct faculty issues in a larger political and economic context. The rise of contingency means that a vision of an alternative future in our contemporary moment is unlikely to emerge from the university setting because precarious employment inhibits intellectual freedom. The onerous working conditions under which adjunct and other non-permanent faculty labor seem to suggest

Oakland Teacher Strike. Photo by Victor Silverman.



that teaching is considered unimportant and inconsequential; it's the opposite: teaching is being made so difficult precisely because it is so important. The matter is urgent.

Contingent faculty are usually geographically segregated. They often don't have offices and, if they do, they are physically segregated from full-time faculty. In many instances contingent faculty are fired with little-or-no notice to other members of the department, a kind of "being disappeared."

Further, contingent faculty are isolated intellectually when not considered full members of departments in regard to teaching and/or scholarship, despite doing the majority of teaching. They are left out of curriculum decisions and other aspects of faculty governance. The financial precariousness of most postsecondary faculty cannot be separated from what happens inside the classroom: instructors may avoid controversial material (fear of student evaluations); may reduce the rigor of courses; and/or construct syllabi and select reading material with administrators, not students in mind.

Naomi R. Williams detailed the ways that tenured and tenure-track faculty can do more to support contingent faculty in their departments and at their institutions more broadly:

- Get to know contingent faculty in your departments

- Be aware of working conditions
- Make department resources available to them
- Provide access to and information on professional development opportunities
- Create invitations (without expectations) to attend faculty meetings
- Inclusive department cultures
- Walk picket lines; organize; support organizing efforts
- Provide avenues for them to present research
- Change department and institution by-laws
- Add contingent faculty issues to bargaining items during contract negotiations

We hope these conversations will be ongoing. We encourage LAWCHA members to join the contingent faculty and independent scholars committees to help LAWCHA continue to fulfill its mission.

The Year of the Teacher Strike

Sarah McNamara, Texas A&M University

LAWCHA's 2019 closing plenary, "The Year of the Teacher Strike," ended the conference with an essential message: "when we organize, we win." This session's panelists united teacher-activists with scholar-activists who collectively examined the problems with public education that drove educators to the picket lines.

Kristin Beller and Jessica Salfia started the panel by sharing their experiences as educators organizing to combat attacks on education led by their states' right-wing legislatures. Beller explained that educators in North Carolina spurred to action when politicians targeted public education and over-turned desegregation policies. NC teachers became a key constituency of the Moral Mondays Movement as they

marched for fair salaries and an adequate education budget alongside the expansion of Medicaid, the repeal of discriminatory LGBTQ laws, and the maintenance of the common good.

Like their colleagues in North Carolina, teachers in West Virginia experienced draconian budget cuts that made doing their jobs and living their lives impossible. Salfia explained that teachers went on strike in 2018 and 2019 in response to the systematic defunding of public education in the state. Salfia noted that one of the biggest obstacles to organization is the legislative push for charter schools. "People don't know what they don't know," Salfia said, and explaining the dangers of funneling funds from an education budget for all to a school-choice budget for few is a hurdle to be overcome.

The last two presenters, Jon Shelton and Camika Royal, provided historical context and scholarly anal-

The Year of the Teacher Strike

ysis. As Shelton surveyed teacher strikes across the country he detailed that educators have been punished by a system that champions “human capital.” According to Shelton, national support of the public education system is the best example that illustrates the country’s support of social democracy, and “organized teachers [across the United States] are on the front lines of social democratic rejection of neoliberalism.”

Professor Royal closed the plenary by sharing her scholarly work on black teacher strikes in Philadel-

phia during the 1960s-1970s. A native of Philly, Royal explained that she witnessed politicians use white fragility as a weapon to incite fear about busing and school integration in an effort to undermine public education. Interviews she conducted with Black educators illuminate their decision to strike, or not, and unpack the meaning these teachers gave to their actions. Dr. Royal’s work provides perspective that illustrates the use of race-baiting and fear-mongering that undergird today’s assaults on education.

The Do’s and Don’ts of Staying at a Hotel or Why the Green Program is BS

Emily LaBarbera Twarog
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

I interviewed a long-time worker at Chicago’s partial Palmer House hotel for a project I am working on. When I asked her how long she has worked as a housekeeper at the Palmer House, she promptly admonished me, “Let’s clarify that. I’m a room attendant...” Laughing, she pointed out “we don’t actually maintain the kids or the cooking and we don’t enjoy the husband, either.”

Hotels are fascinating places – there is so much that goes unseen, that is misunderstood by hotel guests. I should know, I spent five years working in one while I was in graduate school. At the recent LAWCHA conference at Duke University, I was honored to participate in an excellent panel called “A People’s History of Emergent Movements – And Our Roles in Them,” assembled by Dawson Barrett. I spoke about last year’s Chicago hotel strike that brought thousands of hotel workers out onto the streets as 26 hotels attempted to run their multi-billion dollar businesses without their labor. Suddenly, those workers were no longer invisible.

During the Q&A, a conference attendee asked me why the Chicago hotel workers opposed the various hotels’ “green program.” Shouldn’t we care about the environment? Aren’t hotels doing something good

for their earth by asking us to hang up our towels and not have our sheets changed? This is another one of those invisible moments. Hotel “green programs” are smoke and mirrors. Who doesn’t want to save the earth one towel at a time? Yet, what is the cost to the hotel worker? When you opt to “go green,” you actually add more work to the hotel room attendant. She is now expected to clean additional rooms because you opted to not change your sheets and we hung up our towels. While we may have hung up our towels, she still needs to make our bed, wipe down the bathroom, clean our piddle off the toilet seat, and tidying up our mess. The reality is...the “green program” is really an effort to get more work out of room attendants. It is not really about global warming.

So the next time you stay at a hotel, think about how we as labor historians can put our discipline into action:

- Tip your housekeeper every day, do not wait until the end of your stay;
- Hang your towels but don’t opt into the “green program;”
- Say, “hello” and “thank you” to the woman with the giant cart of sheets and towels in the hallway;
- Be sure to tell management what an amazing job the staff does;
- And, for goodness sake, do not cross a picket line!

Teaching Labor's Story

A Mission and a Workshop

Randi Storch
SUNY, Cortland

The Trump years and rise of white nationalism in the United States and Europe has given new urgency to the work of the Labor and Working-Class History Association and its efforts to engage the public with labor and working-class perspectives. One of the exciting projects LAWCHA supports as a part of its outreach is the Teaching Labor's Story (TLS) project.

This June about thirty-five people gathered in a classroom on Duke University's campus to participate in a workshop session designed to welcome new writers to the TLS project and get started on developing new entries for the project. TLS is a peer-reviewed, web-published repository of curated primary sources supported by custom-written teaching guides. The project, launched in 2015 by Nikki Mandell and LAWCHA's Teaching Resources committee, grew from LAWCHA's interest in developing accessible materials about labor history for teachers and wider public. TLS authors select primary sources to reveal historically significant perspectives on essential historical questions. Scholars edit sources longer than 1000 words for classroom use. Each source project also includes a brief contextualizing essay that explains historical significance, glossary terms, discussion points, document questions, questions relating to the historical period and to labor history more generally. A list of additional sources completes the entry. In four-to-five pages, a TLS annotated source provides teachers a guide to a primary source and a curated opportunity to bring workers' voices and perspectives to their students.

The TLS workshop provided an opportunity to explain the project and begin to develop possible primary source projects. Developing an entry for the project is an easy way to contribute to the larger effort of making labor's story more accessible to a wider public. One graduate student who attended the session was particularly enthusiastic about the possibility of writing a peer-reviewed entry and promised to spread

the word to her colleagues. We hope you will too.

If you have had labor history training and would like to submit an entry to the project, please contact us at lawcha.tls@gmail.com. We will ensure that your source is appropriate and provide you with a template and detailed instructions. We hope to hear from you soon.

LABOR_{ONLINE}

January 2020. 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*.

The Alabama Communists in Days of Yore
Paul Buhle

Marla Miller on her new book, *Entangled Lives*
Jacob Remes

Jake Altman on Socialism before Sanders
Stephanie Riley and Jake Altman

Jimmy Hoffa: Symbol of a Bygone Era
Chris Wright

The Red Scare and Radical Unionism
Ahmed White

Research on Graduate Assistants & Right to
Unionize Challenges NLRB proposed rule
William Herbert and Joseph van der Naald

Sleeping Giant: When Public Workers Awake
Leon Fink

Class Prejudice and the Democrats' Blue Wave?
Jack Metzgar

LAWCHA.org/LaborOnline

Labor Histories of Disaster

Jacob Remes
New York University

Disasters are often imagined as “time out of time,” events sparked by God or nature or accident that exist outside of history. Scholars of disaster, however, increasingly insist that disasters are inscribed in history, shaped both by contingent social processes that precede them and shaping what comes after. Once we see disasters as events with histories and within history, we can start to ask questions about how workers shape and are shaped by disaster. I had the pleasure of organizing a panel—uncreatively called “Labor Histories of Disaster”—that considered the role of work and workers in disaster in 19th and 21st century North America.

The three papers—Christienna Fryar on a cholera epidemic in Jamaica in 1850, Caroline Grego on South Carolina after the Sea Island Hurricane of 1893, and J. Carlee Purdum on everyday emergency work in con-

temporary Georgia—showed disasters as moments in which people negotiated and contested emancipation and the line between free and unfree labor. Fryar and Grego’s papers were both about negotiating the terms of post-emancipation labor. How could white planters use disaster to extract the maximum labor from the Black people they had recently enslaved? How could free Black people, for whom slavery was a recent memory, resist this exploitation and instead remain able to grow their own crops on their own land? In Purdum’s paper, the question was inverted. She ended her paper quoting a formerly incarcerated emergency worker she called “Lucas.” Lucas dearly wanted to do the work as a free man that he had performed, unpaid, while a convict laborer. But the same system that had happily put him in danger and extracted his labor while he was unfree was unwilling to employ him for wages when he was free. In the 19th century papers, the question was about the terms of emancipated labor; in the 21st century paper, the question was emancipation.

Labor Studies in Working-Class History

16.4: December, 2019. The official journal for the Labor and Working-Class History Association (LAWCHA). A subscription to *Labor* is available through membership in LAWCHA.

As a site for both historical research and commentary, *Labor* hopes to provide a scaffolding for understanding the roots of our current dilemmas. While still engaging social movements and institutions based on industrial work, *Labor* gives equal attention to other critical labor systems and social contexts, including agricultural work, slavery, unpaid and domestic labor, the informal sector, and the professions. We look not only to academic historians but also to other scholars, journalists, labor educators, poets, and writer-activists for submissions.

LAWCHA.org/Labor

LAWCHA and the Gender Policy Report
William P. Jones

The Work of Class in American History
Jeffrey Sklansky

Writing Working-Class History from the Bottom Up and
Beyond
Talitha L. LeFlouria

Red History, Blue Mood: Labor History and
Solidarity in an Age of Fragmentation
Jefferson Cowie

The Myth of Section 7(a): Worker Militancy, Progressive
Labor Legislation, and the Coal Miners
Michael Goldfield and Cody R. Melcher

“In Defense of Our Livelihoods”: Rethinking
Authoritarian Legality and Worker Resistance during
Argentina’s Proceso de Reorganización Nacional
Edward Brudney

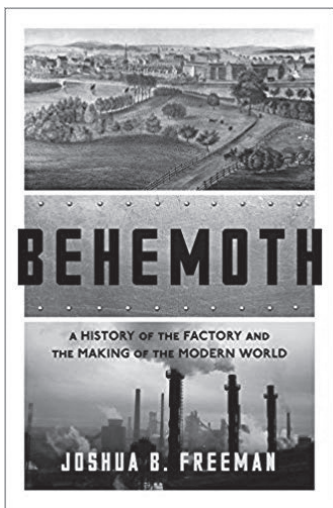
Prizes & Awards

Taft Prize

The Philip Taft Prize in Labor and Working-Class History has been an award for forty-one years now by the Cornell ILR School, with the last eleven being a joint effort of LAWCHA and the Cornell ILR School. The Taft Prize Committee this year consisted of Ileen DeVault (Chair, ILR – Cornell), Lawrence Glickman (Cornell), Matthew Basso (University of Utah, LAWCHA), LaShawn Harris (Michigan State University, LAWCHA) and Maria Montoya (NYU, LAWCHA).

The committee notes that this year was a particularly challenging. Choosing just one winner proved difficult because

of the vast array of excellent scholarship in the field. Of the 45 books nominated for the prize, many were excellent works of history; this serves as a testament to the continued importance of labor and working-class history in today's difficult world. Some of these books were impressive monographs on specific topics while others were sweeping overviews. Ultimately, the committee chose two books as the co-winners of this year's Taft Labor History Prize. Interestingly, both are transnational works of very different types. Both therefore encourage us to think about the dialectics of world events.



Behemoth: A History of the Factory and the Making of the Modern World
by Joshua B. Freeman, Queens College and The Graduate Center at CUNY
W. W. Norton & Company

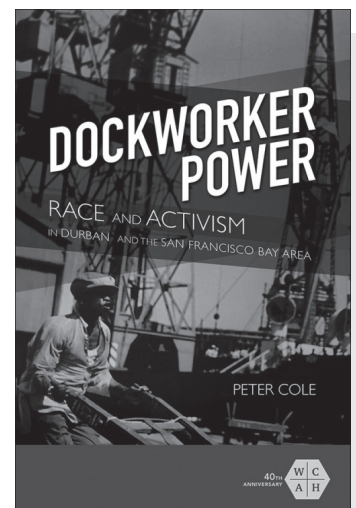
Behemoth: A History of the Factory and the Making of the Modern World provides us with an impressive synthetic survey of the large factory, in the U.S. and throughout the world. Joshua B. Freeman's magisterial work puts the massive transformation of the workforce into both historical and transnational context, making connections where appropriate without over-reaching. Be-

ginning with the dark satanic mills of England and moving through the auto factories of Detroit and Stalingrad to the stifling control of present-day FoxConn in China, this book reminds us of the ways in which histories across the world are both connected and yet distinct

Dockworker Power: Race and Activism in Durban and the San Francisco Bay Area
by Peter Cole, Western Illinois University
University of Illinois Press

Dockworker Power: Race and Activism in Durban and the San Francisco Bay Area offers a powerful story while detailing a lesser-known chapter in American labor history. Peter Cole supplies us with an innovative comparative study examining dockworkers in Durban, South Africa and San Francisco, California, illuminating their similar struggles as waterfront laborers and the different

ways they worked as union activists to improve labor conditions under the threat of containerization. Simultaneously, Cole points out how the two groups participated in transnational political and social movements, fighting against apartheid and American racism while also struggling for racial equality within their unions.



Herbert Gutman Dissertation Prize



Gutman Prize winner Alina Mendez with Nelson Lichtenstein. Photo by Julie Greene.

Alina Méndez

University of California-San Diego

Cheap for Whom?

Migration, Farm Labor, and Social Reproduction in the Imperial Valley-Mexicali Borderlands, 1942-1969

LAWCHA's Herbert Gutman Dissertation Prize Committee has chosen Alina Méndez's dissertation, "Cheap for Whom? Migration, Farm Labor, and Social Reproduction in the Imperial Valley-Mexicali Borderlands, 1942-1969" as the winner of the 2019 prize competition. The dissertation was completed at the University of California-San Diego under the direction of David G. Gutiérrez and Natalia Molina. The prize committee, which consisted of Nelson Lichtenstein (Chair), Peter Cole, and Yvette Jordan, chose this dissertation as the best among the eight fine dissertations that were submitted for consideration this year.

David Montgomery Book Award

Undocumented Lives: The Untold Story of Mexican Migration

by Ana Raquel Minian, Stanford University

Harvard University Press

Focusing on men who arrived in the US from Mexico between 1965 and 1985, Ana Raquel Minian provides an evocative and richly documented transnational account that traces Mexican/Mexican-American migrant workers' decisions to travel north to meet the economic needs of families left behind. Typically they retained strong ties to their home communities and families, to which they regularly returned. But *Undocumented Lives* provides as well a powerful view into how the decisions workers make about their lives are also shaped by sometimes arbitrary immigration policies. Immigration policies sometimes seduce them into leaving their homes, but sometimes abruptly close the doors. Creatively blending extensive oral histories with other sources, Minian insightfully illuminates the motivations, expectations, and

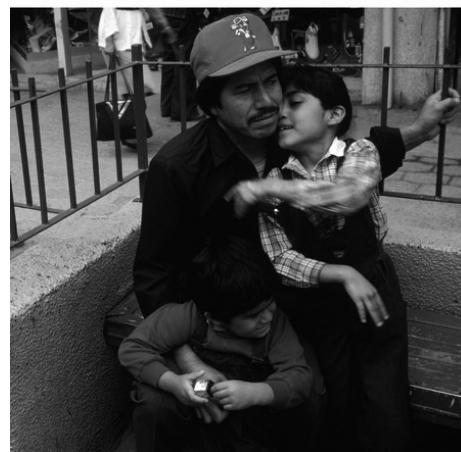
hopes of successive waves of migrants who came to the US as workers and who found themselves increasingly prevented from returning home by immigration policies that imposed harsh controls on southern US borders. The increasingly policed border regime transforms the migration of predominantly male workers. A history of male breadwinners becomes a story as well of women and entrapped families. The stunningly relevant argument that migrants from Mexico and Latin America were 'trapped' in the United States has broad implications for the contemporary immigrant crisis.

The Committee consisted of Daniel Walkowitz, Chair (New York University, Emeritus); Alice Kessler-Harris (Columbia, Emerita); and Lara Putnam (Pittsburgh) as the LAWCHA representative.

ANA RAQUEL MINIAN

UNDOCUMENTED LIVES

The Untold Story of Mexican Migration





LAWCHA Travel Award Winners. **Graduate Students:** Ronald Lambert, Federation Australia University, Gippsland, Jeff Stilley, University of Missouri, Michelle Martindale, Purdue, Kevan Aguilar, UC San Diego, Ashley Dorn, University of Iowa, Betsy Pingree, Boston College, Jasper Conner, College of William & Mary, Bryan Winston, Saint Louis University, Matthew Simmons, University of Florida, Anne Lessy, Yale, Spencer Austin, Stony Brook University, Jacqueline Brandon, Princeton, Jeffrey Schuhrke, University of Illinois-Chicago, Amy Zaroni, Rutgers, James Robinson, Northeastern. **Contingent Faculty, Independent Scholars, and Artists:** Jessica Bird, Temple, Marcelo Ramos, Universidade Federal Fluminense, Byron Rom-Jensen, Aarhus Universitet, Bryan Etheride, Bridgewater State, Mark Grueter, Simon Fraser, Chantal Norrgard, University of British Columbia, Sarah Myers, Saint Francis, Andrew Hoyt, Independent Scholar, Laurie Coyle, Independent Filmmaker, Leticia Zavala, Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), Jacqueline Castillo, FLOC, Mily Treviño-Sauceda, Alianza Nacional de Campesinas, Francesco Nespoli, Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia, William Cossen, The Gwinnett School of Mathematics, Science, and Technology, Joel Zapata, Southern Methodist.

James R. Barrett Receives LAWCHA's Distinguished Service Award

Cecelia Bucki
LAWCHA National Secretary

The Executive Committee of LAWCHA recognizes Jim Barrett as richly deserving award for his long service to LAWCHA and for his scholarship that has shaped our understanding of labor and working-class history. The son of a Chicago policeman, Jim grew up in an ethnically mixed working class world whose history he subsequently documented. In the 1970s, he studied comparative labor history at E.P. Thompson's Centre for the Study of Social History at Warwick University (England) and then at the University of Pittsburgh where he studied with David Montgomery and received his Ph.D. in 1981. After a few years teaching at North Carolina State University, he moved to the University of Illinois-Urbana in 1984 and retired in 2014 as Professor of History and African American Studies. His research interests and published work are varied: the study of race, ethnicity, and identity among working-class people; Americanization and white racism (often in collaboration with David Roediger); communism in the twentieth-century United States; and public-history work on Chicago. These interests are amply reflected in his publications, from his first book in 1981 (co-authored with Rob Ruck), *Steve Nelson, American Radical*, through his mono-

graphs, *Work and Community in "The Jungle," William Z. Foster and the Tragedy of American Radicalism*, and *The Irish Way*, to his 2017 anthology of his articles *From the Bottom Up and the Inside Out: Race, Ethnicity, and Identity in Working Class History*. Jim has worked extensively with teachers and assisted the publication of others' research through his editorial work for the University of Illinois Press series *The Working Class in American History*, and on the editorial boards of journals in the field of labor history and ethnic history.

A final note about Jim's contribution to labor and working-class history is his mentorship of some two dozen graduate students who are now the next generation of labor historians in colleges and universities throughout the US and abroad. His mentoring was summed up by his student Jason Kozlowski, who presented Jim with a compendium of Illinois graduate students' testimonials. Jason noted: "Jim provided an innovative model for public intellectualism for scholar-activists interested in affecting meaningful social change in the 21st century." Or as another student, Randi Storch, commented in one of those testimonials: "Jim taught his students the importance of community building, a lesson that sustains many in the sometimes alienating world of academia."

For all these reasons, LAWCHA presents James R. Barrett with the 2019 Award for Distinguished Service to Labor & Working-Class History.



Jim Barrett at the LAWCHA Conference. Photo: Julie Greene.

Letter from Norway

Michael Honey
University of Washington, Tacoma

I had the good fortune to be selected by University of Washington's Scandinavian Studies as a visiting faculty member at the UW's sister campus of University of Bergen, Norway, which is also Seattle's sister city. One of the first things I noticed is men strolling around with baby carriages or working with children on playgrounds throughout the day. It turns out that men as well as women are happy to dote on their children if they get paid for it and don't lose their careers because of it. Parents get a year and sometimes more paid maternity/paternity leave, divided between the two partners (but men must participate). One of the most important things Norway has done for its economy, the woman mayor of Bergen, Marte Mjos Person, told me, is to liberate women to work in or out of the household. Child care and elder care are widely available at affordable costs, high wages for men and women, and two-income parents provide a tax base that keeps government strong.

Capitalism and politics in Norway and Scandinavia are very different than in the U.S. When Martin Luther King gave his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech in Oslo in December 1964, he said "people everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education for their minds, and dignity, equality, and freedom for their spirits." He saw that actually happening in Norway. While there, I asked university faculty, staff, and students, community church and political leaders, and bus drivers, cab drivers, and anyone I could talk to, about how the "Nordic Model" of social democracy works.

Here, the majority of workers belong to unions, including ministers and doctors, with work place protections we used to associate with well-paid union jobs in the U.S.; everyone has tax-paid medical care and college; students get stipends or loans at low rates; child care and unemployment insurance is generous; women play a leading role in the economy and politics; and most people accept 35-40% in taxes in order to have a secure existence for all. This is the "democratic socialism" that Bernie Sanders and others speak of, but scholars define it as "social democracy." It is not state ownership of the means of production but an elaborate social and political system that creates a strong tax base, closely regulates corporations, and insures a degree of political and economic equality that remains almost unheard of in the U.S.

Alice Kessler-Harris and Maurizio Vaudagna recently published *Democracy and the Welfare State*, which probes the erosion of social democracy everywhere, including Norway. People on the left are fighting to maintain what they have achieved politically since the dire days of the 1930s, when they fought both depression and fas-

cism. Through unions and the Labor Party, they consolidated social democracy throughout the second half of the twentieth century. Though eroded by neoliberalism since the 1990s, my faculty mentors impressed upon me that social democracy has created a social and political culture that continues to hold sway in Norway. They also pointed out that many generations forged a consensus that people should take care of each other and cooperate to survive a harsh geography and climate. Scandinavia used to be very poor, with a stream of emigrants, like Joe Hill of Sweden, fleeing to become farmers and workers the U.S. But strong labor, farmer and socialist movements in the twentieth century convinced capitalists that they needed to cooperate or be expropriated. The tri-partite bargaining system the New Deal tried to create in the U.S. but has been stripped away remains strong in Norway, even with a conservative center-right political coalition in power for the last decade. Wealth remains a public asset. When explorers struck oil in 1969, a Labor Party government took ownership of off-shore oil fields on public lands. Although some of that has been turned over to private companies who work the oil fields, they pay at least 70% of their profits in taxes. By contrast, in the U.S. profits from an abundance of natural resources on government land and the seas go into private pockets. Billions of taxes go to military spending and business incentives while education, social and economic needs languish.

Norway is not paradise. Global warming and military interventions have spawned tidal waves of refugees and an anti-immigrant backlash here as in Europe. The country will have to move away from oil. Yet this stunningly beautiful country so far has escaped ecological devastation, transitioning to all-electric vehicles and non-polluting energy sources, has so far has rejected oil drilling in its most pristine waters, and is building an impressive waste recycling system. Most importantly, it spends very little on militarism; parties cooperate despite differences; and nearly half of the workers belong to unions.

King asked us to move "from a thing-oriented to a person-oriented society." In Norway, he saw that someone, somewhere, had done that. As we endure the Republican Party's scourge of red-baiting anti-socialism, we should learn about Norway and the other countries of Scandinavia. It ain't socialism, but rather a more democratic form of capitalism with a mixed economy, universal health care and worker rights. It has much to teach us.

Michael Honey is the Haley Professor of Humanities at the University of Washington Tacoma. His recent book is *To the Promised Land: Martin Luther King and the Fight for Economic Justice* (W.W. Norton).

Labor History Bibliography, 2018

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.

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YOU KNOW THEY PAID THEIR DUES SO SHOULD YOU



Women and baby delegates to the 1886 Knights of Labor Convention in Richmond, Virginia. Seated on left, Mary Anderson boot and shoemaker, on right Laura Craddick, bookbinder. Source: Library of Congress.

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