

# LAWCHA

The Labor and Working-Class History Association



NEWSLETTER  
2023-24

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Cover photo: Members of the Santiago Iglesias Society of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 3, march in the Labor Day Parade, 1962. Eddie Gonzalez Collection, Center for Puerto Rican Studies.

## Letter from the Editor

Dear LAWCHA members,

The cover for this year's bulletin is drawn from my research on the labor and left politics of Puerto Rican and Latino communities in New York City. The Santiago Iglesias Society of the IBEW Local 3 was one of various Latino (and mostly Puerto Rican) labor committees established in New York City in the 1950s and 1960s. The photo is from a pamphlet celebrating the union's diversity and inclusiveness. From the Eddie Gonzalez Collection of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies. My research on these histories will appear in two volumes that study the Latino and Puerto Rican working class of New York between the 1910s and the 1970s.

I thank last year's editor, Greta de Jong, for explaining the basics while producing the newsletter for 2022 and LAWCHA President Cindy Hahamovitch for helping me recruit many of the contributions presented here. Besides the usual LAWCHA official reports and other sections inherited from past practices, I added a few new sections.

I hope you will enjoy the newsletter.

Aldo Lauria Santiago  
Professor, Rutgers University



LAWCHA President Cindy Hahamovitch.  
Photo by Jason Thrasher.

## President's Perspective

Cindy Hahamovitch  
University of Georgia

THIS IS AN EXCITING TIME for anyone interested in labor, let alone the president of a labor history organization. We've seen a surge in university organizing, victorious strikes, new sorts of workers organizing, and even—wait for it—a few labor history faculty hires. LAWCHA has also been busy. Here's a summary of our many activities.

Our biggest enterprise was our 2023 conference, which we held at Rutgers on the heels of a historic multi-union strike. Thanks to Jessie Wilkerson and Manu Karuka (program co-chairs), Naomi Williams (local arrangements czar), Liesl Orenic (LAWCHA treasurer and font of past conference knowledge), and the staff and students at Rutgers, we had a fantastic time. The conference, whose theme was “Class in Everyday Life: Theory and Praxis,” began with a day-long Graduate Worker Organizing Workshop, which had over fifty attendees. Over the next two days, attendees chose among fifty-nine sessions and plenaries on a wide range of topics from forced labor to care work. The general meeting was so well attended that we ran out of seats. We'll announce the location of the next conference at the 2024 OAH but, for now, hold the dates between June 13–16, 2025.

Our other major enterprise was the launching of an endowment campaign. This was the brainchild of Julie Greene and Kimberly Phillips-Boehm, both of whom donated very generously to kick off the new fund. With those large contributions,

the help of \$50,000 in matching funds from an anonymous donor, and contributions from many of you, we have raised nearly \$200,000 in roughly six months. Reaching our ultimate goal of \$750,000 will take a lot more work, however. I encourage all of you to donate but also to encourage labor-friendly organizations from your union to foundations to contribute as well. *See the article on p. 8 for more on why this fund matters.*

In between our biennial conferences, the Program Committee, chaired by LAWCHA's vice-president Joe McCartin, organizes in-person and virtual events. The most labor intensive of these activities this year was Labor Spring, which involved coordinated events over a two-week period at 70 campuses in 30 states. *See Joe's discussion of this massive undertaking on p. 11 of this newsletter.* The committee also co-sponsored three sessions at the Southern Historical Association conference (with “God, Goofy and Golf: Race, Labor, and Leisure in the 20th Century American South” winning the best title prize); and eleven sessions at the AHA in San Francisco. In between biennial conferences, LAWCHA meets at the Organization of American Historians' (OAH) conference, which is another Program Committee undertaking. At the upcoming 2024 OAH meeting in New Orleans LAWCHA has organized five sessions including a reception, the general meeting, and a talk by yours truly, your outgoing president; plus we have co-sponsored ten other labor-related OAH sessions.

## — President's Perspective —

Two new initiatives are in their second year. The Graduate Student Affairs committee, chaired by Sergio Gonzales, held its second annual (virtual) dissertation prospectus workshop and is now receiving submissions for the Alice Kessler-Harris Dissertation Prospectus Award. Thanks to Claire Goldstene, Aimee Loiselle, and all the members of the Committee on Contingent Faculty, Community College Faculty, and Independent Scholars, we're also accepting submissions for the second annual LAWCHA/Labor Research Grant for contingent, independent, and community college scholars. *Speaking of awards, see p. 23 in this newsletter to find the 2023 winners of the Gutman, Montgomery, Taft, and Kessler-Harris prizes. Congratulations to them all!*

In addition to doing what we do, we have made a few changes. LAWCHA has a new committee, the Working Group for an Earlier Labor History, which, as the name suggests, will work on bringing Early Americanists and Nineteenth Century historians who do relevant scholarship back into LAWCHA. The group is chaired by Erik Loomis (who does modern history but made the mistake of noting aloud the dearth of early field scholars at the conference; silly man). *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History* has a new editorial staff, headed by Julie Greene, Jessie Wilkerson, and Shenette Garrett-Scott. *See the interview on p. 19 for more on the changes afoot. We will also have a new website soon!*

Finally, I'd like to extend my thanks to our busy Executive Committee members, Liesl Orenic (Treasurer), Erik Gellman (Secretary), Joe McCartin (VP), as well as our Executive Assistant Mac Marquis. A very special thanks should go to Will Jones, who has now served as VP, President, and then Immediate Past President/Nominations Chair. He does not get a plot of land and a rifle at the end of his six-year indenture, but he does get our hearty thanks.



LAWCHA 2023 Conference attendees at Rutgers University. Photo by David Marquis.

## LABOR

The official journal for LAWCHA

A subscription to *LABOR: Studies in Working-Class History* is available through membership in LAWCHA.

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# THE LABOR HISTORY RESOURCE PROJECT: Extending Labor History's Online Community

Joseph A. McCartin  
Georgetown University

LAST MAY AT THE LAWCHA CONFERENCE AT RUTGERS, an exciting new LAWCHA-linked online resource was formally rolled out. The Labor History Resource Project ([LHRP.georgetown.edu](http://LHRP.georgetown.edu)) is the brainchild of our distinguished LAWCHA president emerita, Alice Kessler-Harris.

The LHRP's purpose is to provide a home for a wide range of online labor history resources and archives as well as a platform for new online labor history projects. It will be a hub that connects people to other LAWCHA online work, such as Labor Online, to archives, and to new projects, such as *When Teachers Mobilize*, an ongoing effort to document recent teacher activism through oral histories and visual materials. The project is endorsed by LAWCHA and advised by more than two dozen labor history scholars who are currently led by a steering that includes Alice Kessler-Harris, Thavolia Glymph (Duke), Peter Kaufman (MIT), Thai Jones (Columbia) Mireya Loza (Georgetown), and me. The site is a work-in-progress but it is up and running and actively seeking resources, ideas, and input from LAWCHA members.

For this issue of the newsletter, I asked Alice to explain why at this point in her long and illustrious career she's become so passionate about this project and the promise of broadening labor history's online presence. Below is an abbreviated interview:

## What led you to envision the LHRP?

The idea emerged from a long conversation with Peter Kaufman in which we wondered why, in the face of a dramatically changing working environment, a declining labor movement, and the increasing lack of political influence of working people, historical knowledge about work and workers seemed so diffuse and limited to so few, mostly academic people. We thought the LHRP might be a way to create knowledge as well as spread it. We didn't then imagine its form, or the scope of its ambition, though we knew it would have to be digital. Those emerged over the years, first when Thavolia Glymph came aboard, and in conversations with her and with Nancy McLean, and then at an exciting meeting at a University of Washington

LAWCHA conference with 18 or 20 labor historians who all came aboard as "advisors." But I think the real boost was joining up with you at Georgetown. Then LHRP had a home from which we could plan, sufficient resources to launch our web site, and your leadership, which has been crucial.

## What do you hope will come from it?

I hope that as the LHRP expands and grows, it will become both the site to which people turn to find information about labor history and the labor movement, and a site of innovation in the development of new knowledge about all sorts of work. In the end, I hope it serves to stimulate the imagination of its users by recording not only what labor has been and tried to be, but what it might yet become.

## How do you see it fitting into the arc of your career?

I've always wanted the US to develop a community of labor historians: an intellectual community that had academic legitimacy and political resonance. My early work on Jewish immigrant workers, then on women workers, came out of the conversations that Gutman and Montgomery developed; serving on the editorial board of the old *Labor History* journal, joining the editorial committee of the Working Class in American History series at Illinois, attending the annual meetings of the North American Labor History Conference at Wayne State—these were all, I think, part of a building process. Along the way, I helped to found a college degree program for workers under trade union aegis. When we founded LAWCHA in 1999—we hoped to extend a relatively small network into a much larger one. The LHRP feels like a continuation of those efforts—a way of moving beyond academia and out into the world—a way of creating community (and especially of drawing in the young) by sharing knowledge and information.

To get a sense of the community that Alice has been inspiring us to build around the LHRP, check out the website at [lhrp.georgetown.edu](http://lhrp.georgetown.edu) and share your ideas or questions with us at: [laborhistoryresource@gmail.com](mailto:laborhistoryresource@gmail.com).

# Report on **LAWCHA 2023 Conference** (May 18–20, 2023 — Rutgers University)



LAWCHA conference at Rutgers. Photo from David Marquis.

Cindy Hahamovitch  
University of Georgia

LAWCHA HELD ITS 2023 CONFERENCE on the campus of Rutgers University from May 18-20, on the heels of the historic strike that joined multiple unions together in coalition. The lead up to the conference was quite the nail-biter since LAWCHA had pledged not to break the strike. In the weeks before the conference, LAWCHA president Cindy Hahamovitch was frantically looking for other venues as well as funds to bankroll a last-minute move (thanks Jacob Remes, Margot Canady, Tera Hunter, Beth Lew-Williams for frantic fundraising at your institution). In the weeks leading up to the conference, the strike was suspended, not over. More nail-biting ensued but, ultimately, the strike organizers gave us the go ahead to hold the conference on the Rutgers campus as planned. Phew!

Once we knew we were sticking to the plan, Naomi Williams (Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations) and Rutgers staff put their plan into action. The sessions were spread over three buildings, lunches were provided, and lovely receptions sponsored by NYU's Gallatin School of Individualized Study and the UCLA Labor Center, and you'd never know we had been pulling our hair out just a week before. Everything went amazingly well, except for acoustics in the room reserved for plenaries, which made it hard for presenters who were online to hear the in-person presentations.

Manu Karuka (American Studies at Barnard) and Jessie Wilkerson (History-West Virginia University) and their committee members had put together an incredible program around the theme: "Class in Everyday Life: Theory and Praxis." The Program Committee received a total of 59 full panel/roundtable/workshop proposals. The biggest themes were organizing, class struggle beyond the workplace, social reproduction and care work, migration, and incarceration, though there were sessions on a wide range of topics. All LAWCHA conferences bring academics and organizers together, and often the academics are organizers, but this conference, more than most, committed to using conference space for organizing while also doing what academics do. Even before the opening night plenary, LAWCHA members were hard at work at the organization's first annual Graduate Student Organizing Workshop. Labor organizers from around the country gathered for a daylong set of workshops and panels, where they discussed campus labor issues, shared strategies, and began crafting a nationwide plan to support graduate students' unionization efforts. Funding and program support was provided by the Conference Committee and Rutgers AAUP-AFT. More than fifty graduate members attended the daylong event, which included an opening plenary on the history of graduate worker unions

by Zach Schwartz-Weinstein; a panel and discussion with campus organizers involved in active campaigns at Rutgers, the New School, Michigan, and the University of California, Davis; and a strategy session led by organizers representing campuses around the country. Attendees engaged in spirited discussion about the recent surge in university union organizing, shared organizing tactics, and established cross-campus networks through which they hope to develop a resilient graduate worker movement.

There were also sessions on building a Higher Education Labor Movement, which was sponsored by Scholars for a New Deal for Higher Education and featured members of AAUP-AFT at Rutgers, UAW 2865 at UCLA, UAW 4121 at the University of Washington, as well as Jill Penn, Edward Brudney, and Dylan Harris representing United Campus Workers locals in Georgia, Tennessee and Colorado respectively. A session called “Ending Adjunctification” recapped the events at Rutgers and the prospects and problems that came with different unions and different sorts of workers striking as a coalition. A highlight of the conference was the sessions in the School of Labor Relations meeting hall held under the banners of New Jersey union locals.

This may well have been LAWCHA’s most inclusive conference. The Graduate Student Affairs Committee, Teacher/Public Section Initiative Committee, and the Committee on Contingent Faculty, Community College Faculty, and Independent Scholars had worked hard to publicize the conference beyond LAWCHA’s membership list, and their work paid off. There were nearly as many students, K-12 educators, contingent faculty, and independent scholars as there were tenured and tenure-track faculty in attendance.

As in years past, the program co-chairs relied on the organizing talents of a handful of people who helped to coordinate some of the most exciting sessions and plenaries during the conference. Committee member Aimee Loiselle organized two sessions, for example, one a dynamic and timely plenary on organizing in higher education, and an-



Photo by David Marquis.

other on precarious academic labor in a transnational context. Kim Phillips-Fein organized a great session with labor journalists, featuring Steven Greenhouse (The New York Times), Luis Feliz Leon, (Labor Notes), Lauren Kaori Gulry (Washington Post), E. Tammy Kim (the New Yorker), and Josh Eidelson (Bloomberg News).

There were several sessions on transnational history that included scholars from overseas, made possible by a room dedicated to hybrid participation. There was a session on unfree agricultural labor in Mexico and the Philippines, for example, one on caste and labor in India, another on global labor migration, and a session on social reproduction and class struggle in the U.S. and Spain.

If anything was missing from the conference, it was sessions on pre-20th century history, but it was not for lack of trying. In the aftermath of the conference, LAWCHA drafted some important scholars of Early America, the Atlantic World, and the 19th century U.S. to think of ways to solve this problem (see the article on this elsewhere in this newsletter). When you’re organizing sessions for 2025, however, we’ll be counting on all of you to take the long view and to invite scholars of earlier periods who should be members of LAWCHA.

Most importantly, the conference was as warm and friendly as always. Cole Wicker, a graduate student and first-time LAWCHA attendee, said the conference “did not disappoint.” “I had the privilege of presenting on the Southern Carceral Landscapes panel, and I was grateful for all the engaged comments from the crowd. There was a sense that everyone in the room wanted to help us succeed and were interested in what we brought to the table.” Cole especially “enjoyed the sense of collegiality at LAWCHA, whether this meant collectively cheering for the Rutgers unions’ successes at the opening plenary or discussing the merits of Dolly Parton and celebrity activism over a beer downtown with new colleagues. There was a sense of openness and warm reciprocity throughout the entire weekend.”



Photo by David Marquis.

# LAWCHA Endowment and Membership Update

Liesl Miller Orenic  
Dominican University

FIRST, OUR MEMBERSHIP REPORT. LAWCHA Membership continues to hold steady and the number of members who commit to Contributing and Lifetime memberships is growing. This year we collected \$16,697.50 in dues.

**TOTAL Members:**

October 1, 2023	620
October 1, 2022	572
October 1, 2021	651

Please consider renewing your membership at the Contributing or Lifetime membership level if this fits your budget this year.

In 2023, we launched an ambitious campaign for a new LAWCHA Endowment Fund. Seeded with generous donations from past LAWCHA presidents, our goal is to raise \$750,000 over the next five years.

As higher education institutions face fiscal uncertainty, and the Humanities and Social Sciences especially are under attack, the LAWCHA Endowment Fund is building a strong and independent foundation, vital to LAWCHA's future as a community and as an organization. This Endowment will make possible greater equity in leadership and participation in our organization with funding for our administrative support, more research and travel grants for contingent and independent scholars and future initiatives we have yet to anticipate. As of December 1, 2023, we have raised \$192,293.41 for our Endowment!

One of the most interesting parts of this fund-raising work is hearing people's reasons for giving. I will share with you some of our most generous donations and the stories behind them.

We offer special thanks to former LAWCHA president Kimberley Phillips Boehm, for her generous gift of \$50,000. Kim explained how this donation is meaningful to her,

This gift comes from my inheritance from my grandmother. She passed in 2018 at the age of 102. She worked for the City of Los Angeles in accounting for 30 years and belonged to Los Angeles County of Labor, AFL-CIO. She was a migrant from Louisiana and came to L.A. in 1937. She worked for Boeing during World War II and when my grandfather returned from the war, they bought a home in what is now Compton. It was a union neighborhood and pushed for integra-

tion. When my grandmother died in 2018 we sold her home. Their union jobs paid for my father's college education in the 1950s. He got an education and then sent four kids to college in California. It's a success story of Black generational wealth.

LAWCHA past president Julie Greene also made a generous seed gift of \$25,000. Julie shared the story of her gift as well,

I believe strongly in the work that LAWCHA does to generate more and better knowledge of labor history. Keeping alive the long struggles of working people to achieve their rights, and supporting ongoing fights for equality is so important.

My husband Jim Maffie joins me in this desire to support LAWCHA's work. When his mother, a beloved figure to all of us, passed away a couple years ago, we inherited some stock from her, so we decided to honor my mother-in-law by donating the stock to LAWCHA—where it will do so much good.

And special thanks to our National Secretary, Erik Gellman, who connected us with challenge grant of \$50,000. The anonymous donor challenged LAWCHA to raise up to \$50,000 in donations under \$9,999 between May and September 2023. We did it, and the donor's match doubled our funds raised in the challenge.

## Our 2024 Challenge

While this has been a tremendous start, there is more fundraising to do to reach our goal of \$750,000. Our next challenge is here! Julie Greene has a new challenge for us. She will donate up to \$25,000 in matching funds for all donations between \$50 and \$2000 between January 1 and June 30, 2024.

LAWCHA Members, this is a fabulous opportunity to advance our goal. Please use this QR code to donate today!





# LAWCHA Program Committee Work and Labor Spring

Joseph A. McCartin  
Georgetown University

THE LAWCHA PROGRAM COMMITTEE WAS ACTIVE over the past year in three areas. The first was organizing and sponsorship of panels at conferences other than our own LAWCHA conference which was held at Rutgers in May. (Kudos to Jessie Wilkerson, Manu Karuka, and their conference program committee members, and Naomi Williams who led local arrangements, for putting on a fantastic conference—which is discussed elsewhere in this newsletter.) Second, the committee reviewed applications for travel grants to the Rutgers conference. And, finally, the committee helped organize *Labor Spring* events.

## CONFERENCE PANELS

The program committee worked to ensure that LAWCHA and labor history scholarship in general had a strong presence at a range of academic conferences other than our own. At the 2023 AHA we cosponsored 5 sessions. At the 2023 OAH we sponsored 3 sessions and endorsed 11 others. At the Southern Historical Association conference we cosponsored 3 sessions. At the 2024 AHA we are cosponsoring 10 panels. And, at the upcoming 2024 OAH in New Orleans we will be sponsoring 5 panels and endorsing 10 others (see the ad in this issue of the newsletter for details on those panels). We also reached out to other academic organizations, most notably the Disability History Association, with hopes of cross-fertilizing panels at each other's conferences.

## TRAVEL GRANTS

The Program Committee reviewed the applications and awarded for travel grants to the 2023 LAWCHA conference at

Rutgers. We were pleased to be able to award \$600 grants to 31 graduate students, independent scholars, and contingent faculty members: Harsha Anantharaman, Ira Anjali Anwar, Felipe Barradas Correia Castro Bastos, Faith Bennett, Joel Berger, Kathleen Brown, Tristan Call, Vianca Javate De La Cruz, Alexander M. Dunphy, Aaron Freedman, Mason Godden, David Helps, Ken Homan, Neil Johnson, Love Rurik Karlsson, Robin Klaus, Rachel Klein, Alyssa Kuchinski, Emily Morrell, Gavin Moulton, Jessica Muñiz, Olivia Paschal, Sarah Pollnow, Stephanie M. Riley, Hannes Rolf, CSR Shankar, Cristian Roberto Walk, Jiemin Tina Wei, Winfred Cole Wicker, Moeko Yamazaki, and Ben Zdencanovic.

## LABOR SPRING 2023 AND 2024

The most ambitious new undertaking supported by the program committee in 2023 was *Labor Spring*, a national teach-in on labor history and present labor struggles. LAWCHA members and allies helped organize more than 80 events on or adjacent to campuses in more than 30 states across the country, educating the public and fueling youth interest in the reviving labor movement. For a summary of last spring's events and a call for participation in planning events on your campuses in 2024 check out: [laborspring.org](https://laborspring.org). Students are playing a larger role in organizing events for Labor Spring '24 and are building a student-to-student organizing network. Please share their contact with any of your students who might wish to join them: [laborspringstudent@gmail.com](mailto:laborspringstudent@gmail.com).

## Call for Member Biographies

You may have noticed brief bios of members on LAWCHA's website. If you are a member, go to [lawcha.org/membership/](https://lawcha.org/membership/) to create yours (you can include your email address or leave it off). This listing helps LAWCHA members connect with each other, but it also helps journalists, unions, lawyers seeking expert witnesses, documentary filmmakers, and others find experts to interview or to invite to speak. If you're not a member, you know what to do.

# Rutgers Strike

Alan Maas  
AAUP-AFT

ON APRIL 10, 2023, three unions representing some 10,000 educators, researchers, clinicians, and counselors at Rutgers University began the first-ever academic strike in Rutgers' 257-year history. It came on the crest of a higher ed strike wave that has raised expectations and aspirations around the country.

The strike at Rutgers was the culmination of years of organizing and engagement across the multiple ranks of academia, from poorly paid and vulnerable graduate workers and adjunct faculty to relatively more privileged tenured faculty. The suspension of the strike with an agreement on economic terms at the end of one week wasn't the end of this organizing. It took another two weeks of negotiations to finalize a Tentative Agreement—which was ultimately ratified by a combined 93 percent “yes” vote of our memberships.

We didn't achieve everything we set out to win. And what we did win didn't come without a lot of hard work, sometimes sharp conflicts among our members—and, to be forthright, mistakes being made. But the victories enshrined in the contracts will transform the lives of especially our lowest-paid colleagues, improve Rutgers University for our students and the whole community, and set an example for higher ed labor.

The backdrop to last spring's strike was the Rutgers administration's use of “Shock Doctrine” tactics (to use the phrase of our former colleague, Naomi Klein) at the onset of the pandemic to further its agenda of austerity. More than 1,000 university staff were laid off, around a fifth of adjunct faculty lost their regular classes, and negotiated raises were canceled. A coalition of 19 unions came together to resist these attacks, and after months of negotiations, we won a no-layoff pledge, additional support for grad workers, and the restoration of raises—in exchange for our proposed “work-sharing” program that accepted temporary furloughs. The union coalition succeeded in heading off the worst of the damage the administration was inflicting.

These common efforts across unions set the example for the three educators' unions that went on strike: Rutgers

AAUP-AFT, representing full-time faculty, graduate workers, postdocs, and counselors; the Rutgers Adjunct Faculty Union, representing adjunct lecturers; and AAUP-BHSNJ, representing biomedical faculty in Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences facilities and hospitals.

Developing trust across unions and ranks was critical given previous frictions between adjuncts, grad workers, and full-time faculty. Leaders of Rutgers AAUP-AFT made the case that tenured faculty needed to prove our commitment to our more vulnerable colleagues by using the privileges of greater security and higher pay to fight for those who didn't have them. The adjunct and biomedical unions initiated organizing campaigns to try to win a common #OneFaculty contract. This aspiration was only partially met, but the biomedical faculty of AAUP-BHSNJ now

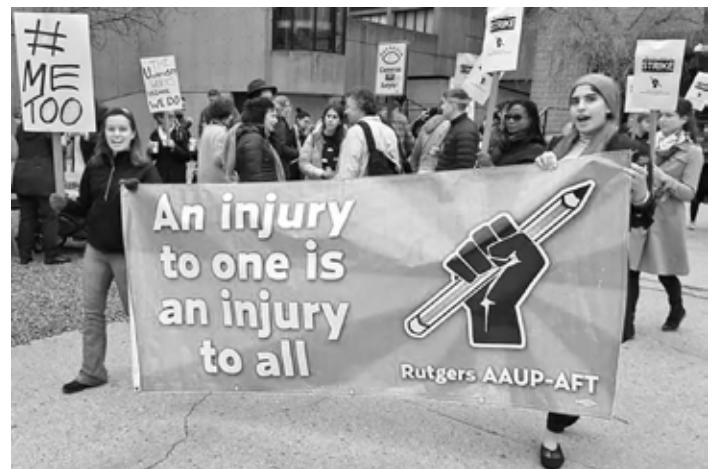


Photo from AAUP Communications Office.

work under the same contract as full-time faculty and grad workers. Crucially, we created a single bargaining table, forcing management to accept that our unions were unified and would not be weakened by legally defined divisions between bargaining units.

Higher ed strikes from California to Chicago to New York City inspired our escalating actions in the Fall 2022 semester, culminating in the largest-ever union demonstration at Rutgers, with some 800 people on the three main campuses

mobilizing to confront the Rutgers Board of Governors at their December meeting. Week by week, we prepared: hundreds of people went through member-led Strike School trainings designed to give them the tools they would need to mobilize their colleagues and coworkers.

At the start of the Spring semester in 2023, we asked members to pledge to vote yes on a strike authorization—some 2,500 people did so. Another successful mobilization to protest the Board of Governors meeting in Newark at the end of February—so successful that the Governors were scared online, canceling their in-person event—served to launch a strike authorization vote by Rutgers AAUP-AFT and the Rutgers Adjunct Faculty Union. Some 94 percent of members cast a “yes” ballot, with over 80 percent of union members voting. AAUP-BHSNJ followed suit weeks later, with a similar lopsided vote in favor of taking action.

The Rutgers administration seemed to not take this seriously; they continued to drag their feet in negotiations. Sadly, Rutgers’ recently appointed President Jonathan Holloway, a historian of the Black freedom struggle, failed to change direction from his Republican-appointed predecessor. Holloway even threatened to seek an injunction against the Rutgers unions if they went on strike. In response, more than 1,700 scholars of labor, social justice, and the Black Freedom Struggle signed an open letter—initiated by Rutgers Associate Professor of History Donna Murch—calling on Holloway to take back his threat. Initial signers included such luminaries as Barbara Ransby, Robin D.G. Kelley, Stephen Thrasher, and Keeanga Yamahtta-Taylor.

The strike began on Monday, April 10, with hundreds of people on a dozen picket lines across New Jersey. Education and research came to a halt on every Rutgers campus. The picket lines and demonstrations—with wide participation from undergraduate students—turned into joyous celebrations of all the people who make Rutgers work. Our strike even had its own labor song: “Hey Holloway,” sung to the tune of the 1960s song “Hey Baby.”

The strike took place under one circumstance that no one foresaw: New Jersey governor Phil Murphy appealed to the Rutgers unions to delay the strike, and when that didn’t work, he called on unions and the administration to negotiate in the state capital of Trenton, with his staff members attending.

The move to Trenton proved to be double-edged. On the one hand, the Rutgers administration faced pressures from the governor to make concessions they never had before. The biggest victories of the new contracts—major salary increases



**RUTGERS**  
**AAUP-AFT**

American Association of University Professors  
American Federation of Teachers • AFL-CIO

for adjunct faculty and graduate workers, an almost unique process for graduate fellows to win reclassification as workers covered under the contract, the first-time guarantee that unbudgeted salary increases would be funded by the central administration—took shape in Trenton. On the other hand, communication between members on the picket lines and union leaders negotiating in Trenton was a tremendous challenge. There was insufficient time for deliberations among elected union leaders like those that had taken place before the strike.

The five days of the strike ended with a “framework” for a deal negotiated in Trenton, but not a finalized Tentative Agreement. These were the most contentious days of the contract campaign, with members in sharp disagreement over whether the strike had been suspended too soon. At times, the unity that had been essential to our fight broke down into fraught and sometimes abusive conflict.

Still, the organizing continued despite the return to the classroom, and some of the most important advances—paid parental leave for biomedical faculty and extended funding for grad workers whose research was delayed by the pandemic—were won in these weeks when a final TA was completed. When the ratification vote took place in early May, an overwhelming majority of members said “yes” to the new contracts.

Rutgers unions won a lot of what we set out to fight for (we won’t go into the details here), but we have much to learn before we fight for a new contract. And naturally, the Rutgers administration is trying to undermine our contract victories, setting up the battles we need to fight in the coming months and years. But as we fight them, we will do so with the experience of the first-ever strike under our belts—and contracts that move us closer to the Rutgers we all deserve. Our victories were the result of strong rank-and-file organizing and solidarity across job titles and bargaining units.

[amaass@rutgersaaup.org](mailto:amaass@rutgersaaup.org)

# Waging War on Staff:

## INDUSTRIAL ACTION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM AND 150 OTHER INSTITUTIONS (UK)



Photo Credit: Andreas Bieler

Andreas Bieler  
University of Nottingham

WHEN THE END OF THE MARKING AND ASSESSMENT BOYCOTT (MAB) was announced on 6 September 2023, it was finally clear that the University and College Union (UCU) had lost the struggle of the Four Fights over Pay, Workload, Pay Gaps and Casualisation. Despite 15 days of strike action across the academic year 2022/2023 as well as the MAB lasting from 20 April to 6 September, employers represented by the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) had not budged. Despite widespread disruption to graduations in the summer with many students either not graduating or graduating with ‘derived’, i.e. ‘guestimated’ marks, employers

refused steadfast to negotiate especially over pay. A derisory below-inflation proposal was presented as the best possible offer the sector could afford. Having lost large amounts of salary during the struggle, staff had to return to work and mark scripts, for which they had already had pay deducted due to the MAB.

What were the reasons for the defeat? Many union members blame the national UCU leadership for the defeat. Two key mistakes can be identified in my view. First, the strategy of calling strike action for several blocs of days was bound to fail. We knew from similar action in 2021/2022 that employers were no longer concerned about the impact of strikes on students, as long as they could claim that all learning objectives had been met and students could graduate as normal ([Vicky Blake, 13 August 2023](#)). Second, the ballot on industrial action to follow up on the previous mandate was called too late. When it was clear that there would be a gap in mandate from 1 October until at least mid-November, members voted against the continuation of the MAB in early September.

Nevertheless, it would be too easy simply to blame national leadership. We as staff at universities also have to look at ourselves. Quite a few members of staff participated in all strikes and the MAB. However, many also did not. There has been a clear lack of solidarity amongst colleagues. As Lorna Finlayson pointed out, ‘the uncomfortable truth is that aca-



Photo credit: Andreas Beisler.

demics have been complicit, and often instrumental, in bringing about the present predicament' ([Finlayson, 21 September 2023](#)).

Nevertheless, as I see it, the main reason for the defeat was management intransigence. Instead of looking for a negotiated way out of the dispute, senior University leaders up and down the country took the dispute as a test of strength with the ultimate goal to weaken if not destroy UCU. Not only did they not care about the loss of teaching for students, even the marking of student work was no longer considered to be important. Management sacrificed students' learning and well-being on the altar of their zealous war against their own staff.

Management would be mistaken, however, if they revelled in their victory and thought they could simply return to normality. For a start, staff morale across the sector is at rock bottom, confidence in management at an all-time low. For a sector, in which everything from teaching and research to administration relies heavily on co-operation and the goodwill of staff, this is potentially catastrophic. Moreover, the reputation of the sector is damaged, perhaps beyond repair. Fewer overseas students will come to the UK aggravating the financial problems of the sector further.

Finally, the fundamental, structural problems of the sector have not been resolved. Pay since 2008 has been eroded through below-inflation agreements by 25 per cent. Gender and ethnic pay gaps remain large, workloads enormous and casualisation is widespread across the sector. It is only a matter of time, until staff unrest spills over into new periods of industrial action. Management may glow in their victory for now, but the next strike wave is just over the horizon.

# A New Generation of Labor Activists

Ruth Milkman  
City University of New York

SINCE 2021, unions have won hundreds of NLRB elections at iconic private-sector companies like Amazon, Starbucks and Apple. In 2023, high-profile strikes by long-unionized workers in the UAW and SAG-AFTRA succeeded beyond all expectations; the Teamsters union secured major improvements for UPS workers that same year by merely threatening to strike.

A surprisingly durable tight labor market has enabled much of this recent militancy, along with a labor-friendly President and his exceptional NLRB appointees. Another factor is soaring public approval of unions, reaching levels not seen since the 1960s, building on the pandemic's spotlight on "essential workers" and increasing concern about skyrocketing inequality.

And crucially, a new political generation has made unions "cool" again. The labor organizing of the 2020s is led mostly by college-educated Millennials and Gen Zers, proficient in social media, schooled in an intersectional worldview, and confronting an ever more precarious labor market. Some of the new union organizers and activists are veterans of Occupy Wall Street, the Bernie Sanders campaigns, and/or Black Lives Matter, others are more recently radicalized. They are part of a generation more pro-union than any in recent memory.

The union wins at Amazon and Starbucks have attracted outsized media attention, further lifting the new labor movement's profile. Yet major challenges remain. Those two companies and others like them have vigorously resisted unionization, using both legal and illegal means, and have yet to negotiate any contracts. The recent spate of private-sector strikes (and strike threats) has fared better, thanks in part to bold new leadership in key unions, and to the help of young radicals. But the scale of those strikes is quite modest relative to the pre-1980 years.

Mostly outside the media spotlight, a surge of union organizing has also taken shape among skilled professionals like college and university adjuncts, graduate student workers, journalists, architects, nurses, interns and residents, doctors, museum workers, and non-profit staff. Unlike workers at Amazon or Starbucks, these highly trained employees cannot be easily replaced, enabling their union campaigns to gain real traction, in many cases yielding contracts with substantial pay and benefit improvements. Recent strikes among these types of workers, like those at Rutgers and the University of California, also have scored major wins.

Historically, labor upsurges have come in big waves, not incrementally. Perhaps these recent stirrings are the beginning of such a wave, although it's still too soon to know. So far, the scale of the new organizing remains too modest to move the needle on private-sector union density, which remains stuck at about 6 percent—lower than at any time since the early 1930s. A major obstacle is the decrepit state of U.S. labor law, and the tight labor market spawned by the pandemic may not last. On the other hand, the new generation of union activists appears to be in it for the long haul—a necessary if insufficient condition for lasting labor movement revival.



Interview with

Julie Greene, editor of *LABOR*

# ***Labor: Studies in Working-Class History***

## **Executive Editor Julie Greene**

Maia Silber  
Princeton University

**You received your PhD in 1990 from Yale University, where you studied under David Montgomery, one of the founders of the “New Labor History.” What brought you to the field?**

My roots were originally in British and European history. Labor history was very vibrant in Europe, and I did a master’s degree at the University of Cambridge where I studied with scholars like Gareth Stedman Jones and John Barber, but also Zara Steiner on foreign relations history. Just through happenstance I started studying Welsh miners and the Communist Party in the 1930s, and wrote a thesis on that topic. My focus on labor history is owed to that research, as well as to my interest in Marxist historiography and left politics. So, when I left my program at Cambridge I decided to stick with the workers but shift from British and European to U.S. labor history. Labor and working-class history felt central to the discipline. I appreciated David Montgomery’s effort to retell American history from the perspective of the workers, and I also appreciated the ways in which the field was linked to contemporary politics and social justice issues. Workers were just one way—but to me, a really important way, to do history from the bottom up. I liked working with David Montgomery and the other students he had recruited: Dana Frank, Eric Arnesen, Tera Hunter, Toni Gilpin, Karin Shapiro, Priscilla Murolo. It was a stimulating cohort of students all focused on labor.

**You were one of the founding co-chairs of the Labor and Working-Class History Association in 1998. What led you and your colleagues to establish the organization, and what were your goals?**

The beginning of LAWCHA was very exciting. Our conversations started in the mid 1990s, and at that time we [labor

historians] didn’t have any central organization. It felt like a balkanized field. It had pillars of support, but they were quite separate from each other. We had the North American Labor History Conference at Wayne State every year in Detroit, and we had the journal *Labor History* which was edited for many years by Dan Leab. We started talking about the need for an organization that would connect us all and generate dialogue and community. From the very beginning there was an instinct that we needed to redefine what labor and working-class history was—that it’s not only unions and industrial labor and white guys, but also a field that connects to all the different subfields of history. There was a consensus at that point that labor history was under strain and that we needed gender, sexuality, race, and ethnicity to be more central to the discipline. We also wanted an organization that would be politically engaged, connecting history to contemporary politics and advocating for labor rights as fundamental human rights. So, we started talking and the chore was figuring out what it should look like and to develop a constitution of all of that.

I’ve also been connected to the journal *Labor* from its beginning. I was working with Leon Fink on *Labor History*, which we took over when Dan Leab decided to step down in the late 90s. Leon became the editor of *Labor History* and I signed on as his reviews editor. Soon after that, the journal, which had been owned by the Tamiment Society, was sold to Taylor & Francis. Taylor & Francis then told Leon that they wanted six issues a year rather than four. He said we didn’t have the ability to do that and they said, don’t worry, just send us four issues and we’ll re-package them into six. Well, Leon said, we aren’t packing cotton. The end result was that we all walked and created *Labor*. That was 2003 or 2004, and in the end it was a good thing because it meant

that *Labor* became a new journal connected to LAWCHA instead of a journal owned by this corporation. I've been centrally involved with the journal for twenty years. I was reviews editor for seven years and after that, I've served on the editorial committee.

**How did the conversations about the field that you and your colleagues were having in those years shape your own research?**

One colleague described my first book [*Pure and Simple Politics: The American Federation of Labor and Political Activism, 1881-1917*] as an old-fashioned labor history because of its concern with Sam Gompers and the AFL, and electoral politics. But my goal with that book was to connect labor and political history. I enjoyed that project but as I finished it, and maybe also because I had earlier focused on European and British History, I started to feel constrained by US history. I wanted a bigger canvas and a more diverse group of workers to examine. I was coming out of grad school where Montgomery himself had pushed us to think carefully about African-American as well as global history. So, I was influenced by people who were rethinking who comprised the working class, what labor history was. After I finished the first book, a lightbulb went off that if I wanted to go global and transnational that this incredible construction project in Panama could be a really exciting thing to work on. [Greene's second book was *The Canal Builders: Making America's Empire at the Panama Canal*]. It wasn't returning to European or British history but it was trying to reach beyond domestic U.S. history.

**Reflecting back on the nearly two decades since you founded LAWCHA, where does the organization—and the field of labor history—sit in relation to your early goals?**

I think LAWCHA has been a huge force for labor historians. I believe profoundly in what it has done, and think that it has achieved a great deal. It has developed a community, and it has helped to broadcast a more capacious sense of what the field of labor and working-class history is. I think there's much more work to do, but it's begun the work of reaching out to African-American scholars, Latinx scholars, disability scholars, LGBTQ scholars, etc., about the ways in which their work is labor history. I remember many years ago, I spent a day with Leon Litwack, showing him around Boulder where I was teaching at the time and taking him to bookstores and I remember him saying his favorite lectures were always about labor, especially the lecture that he would give about the IWW. I had just been reading his terrific book *Trouble in Mind*, and I remember saying to him, your book is so much about labor, do you identify as a labor historian? He said, oh, no, I'm an African-American historian. I believe in a way that that was the challenge for LAWCHA,

to bring in someone like Leon Litwack, whose work is really fundamentally concerned with class and labor.

**How has the rise of the history of capitalism affected labor history? Do you see it has having energized labor history? Is there a tension between the field's approaches?**

It's had a huge impact on labor history. There have been tensions, and sometimes the marketing of the field of history of capitalism was a bit awkward, in that it was sometimes pitted against labor. I've written about this in a piece I did in *Labor* ["Rethinking the Boundaries of Class: Labor History and Theories of Class and Capitalism"]. Sven Beckert wrote in [the edited collection] *American History Now* that the history of capitalism came from the sense that labor history was stultifying, so we needed this whole new paradigm. But when labor history is done well, it is the history of capitalism, and it always has been. At the same time, there can be a somewhat telescopic emphasis on workers and the history of capitalism has pushed labor historians to think about how their topic connects to broader economic systems, so it's been a very important development for the field.

**You succeeded Leon Fink as editor of *Labor* this past July. As you're thinking about these developments in the field and the challenges that remain for labor historians, how is that shaping the work you hope to do with the journal?**

The work that Leon has done in shepherding the journal for twenty years has been so huge. He's done so much to invigorate the field, mentoring younger scholars and bringing new people into the field. I wanted to continue what the journal has done, but also bring fresh ideas to the work. One was trying to make the journal a more collaborative space. Leon of course collaborated with many people, he had a great team—yet in many ways, he was the journal. I wanted to make changes to the editorial team's structure so I would have partners. I created a position of senior associate editor with Shennette Garrett-Scott and Jessica Wilkerson, and the three of us are full partners in every way. We meet regularly to talk about where the journal is going and to brainstorm our special issues, and I think that's really important. I have my specialization on transnational history, migration, and empire, while they bring a much deeper knowledge of gender and sexuality, African-American labor history, and capitalism. I'm also trying to hold more regular meetings with the eight-person editorial committee, and working to make sure that the committee itself reflects the full capaciousness of the field. We have scholars centrally involved who focus on Latinx history, African-American history, slavery, indigeneity, capitalism, and LGBTQ history. We're mindfully ensuring the journal reflects the most inclusive vision of the field.

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## Interview with Julie Greene

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We have a lot of ideas about new areas we'd like to explore. The first issue coming out with the new team is actually focused on science and labor. Who carried Darwin's suitcases and helped load things onto the H.M.S. Beagle? Who's doing the labor that makes scientific work possible? That issue is headed up by Seth Rockman, Lissa Roberts, and Alexandra Hui. We're excited about that one. There's also a special issue that Leon spearheaded on social democracy, and one guest edited by Lorenzo Costaguta on global-working class anti-imperialism. Down the road we're talking about organizing a conference to explore the relationship between labor history and capitalism. We also have been working to network among African-American history scholars and Latinx history scholars. We've been getting some excellent submissions focusing on Latinx workers, especially agricultural workers. That won't be a special issue but right now we have three or four articles on that topic. The field of labor history as a whole tends to focus on late 19th-century/20th-century focused, so we would like to have more early work and more work on other labor systems like slavery and indentured labor.

**In a recent article in *Labor*, you wrote about how the neo-liberalization of higher education has reshaped the conditions under which scholars teach and research. It has also inspired the resurgence of the labor movement on campuses themselves. How is *Labor* responding to these trends?**

That's an area where LAWCHA has been a leader, and I want the journal to connect more with those issues, too. We're making sure as we develop our editorial team that the voices of non-tenure track and contingent scholars are central and that they're represented on the editorial committee and

among the contributing editors. In short, we're trying to break down the barriers between tenure-track and non-tenure track scholars. Gabriel Winant is our associate editor for *Contemporary Affairs*, and he's working on some ideas to cover what's happening in higher education in that section of the journals. And as we're looking to do calls for papers, one area might be the crisis of higher education.

**We started this conversation by discussing your entrance to the field at the height of the "New Labor History," and the ways in which your cohort sought to further push the boundaries of the field. Is there a phrase or paradigm that captures the state of the field today: a "new New Labor History?" Or is the field too capacious to define in one way?**

I don't think there's one paradigm today. The field has become very broad, and at this historical moment a lot of new questions are being asked about how workers respond to capitalism, or about the roots of right-wing movements within the working class, or the experiences of workers within the more precarious and fissured workplace. But to me there are two dynamics within the field that are particularly exciting. One we've already talked about—the history of capitalism is reshaping our field in creative ways. And the transnational turn is also generating lots of new questions, and new ways of thinking about who is in the working class and how do workers—white, Black, Latino or Asian-American—connect to or not connect to what is happening in the world, what are the sources of solidarity or tension or privilege that come from global relationships.

### Members Publications

Jon Bekken, "A Newspaper for Workers' Rights in a Time of Turmoil," *Social Justice Activism and Diversity in U.S. Media History*, Routledge, 2023.

Janine Giordano Drake, *The Gospel of Church: How Mainline Protestants Vilified Christian Socialism and Fractured the Labor Movement*, Oxford University Press.

Harvey Schwartz, *Labor Under Siege: Big Bob McEllrath and the ILWU's Fight for Organized Labor in an Anti-Union Era*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2022.

Thomas D. Rogers, *Agriculture's Energy: The Trouble with Ethanol in Brazil's Green Revolution*, University of North Carolina Press, 2022.

Fernando Teixeira da Silva, Alexandre Fortes, Thomas D. Rogers, and Gillian McGillivray, eds., *The Entangled Labor Histories of Brazil and the United States*, Lexington Books, 2023.

Eric Fure-Slocum and Claire Goldstene, *Contingent Faculty And The Remaking Of Higher Education: A Labor History*. University of Illinois Press, 2024.

Leigh Campbell-Hale, *Remembering Ludlow but Forgetting the Columbine: The 1927–1928 Colorado Coal Strike*, University Press of Colorado, 2023.

Robert W. Cherny, *Harry Bridges: Labor Radical, Labor Legend*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2023.



# Join us in New Orleans for for LAWCHA at the OAH

April 11-14, 2024

**Friday, April 12, 1:30pm: LAWCHA Presidential Address**

*That Same Old Snake:  
One Very Modern Labor Historian's Search for Answers in the Distant Past*

Cindy Hahamovitch

B. Phinzy Spalding Distinguished Professor of Southern History, University of Georgia  
President, Labor and Working-Class History Association, 2022-2024

**Friday April 12, 3:30pm: LAWCHA Reception and Membership Meeting**

LAWCHA welcomes its members and anyone interested in joining or learning more about the organization to a reception followed by a membership meeting and awards ceremony.

**Saturday, April 13, 9am: LAWCHA Board Meeting**

There will be a capability for people who cannot attend in person to Zoom in.

## LAWCHA Panels at the OAH

### *LAWCHA-sponsored*

- Queering Work: LGBT Labor Histories
- Considering Contingent Faculty and the Remaking of Higher Education: A Labor History
- Disaster Capitalism and Working in New Orleans: Ethnographic Perspectives
- Books Through Bars: Stories from the Prison Books Movement: A New Book Roundtable
- Graphic Histories and the Working Class

### *LAWCHA-endorsed*

- What's Our Theory of the Labor Movement?
- Asian American Migration, Labor, and Civil Rights in Louisiana History
- Histories of Native Economic Life: Indigenous Labor, Economy, Politics and Mobility from the Late-Nineteenth to the Mid-Twentieth Century
- Liberalism Beyond Crisis: How Workers, Activists, and Politicians Challenged the Emergence of the 'Neoliberal Age' from the 1970s to the 1990s
- Nursing for the Common Good?: Health Activism, Social Justice, and the History of Nursing Work
- Proposition 187 at 30: Mexican-Origin Labor, Immigration, Social Reproduction, Structural Exclusion, Racial Capitalism, and the White Nation in Historical Perspective
- Race, Labor and Policing in the United States
- Race, Labor, and Politics in Contested American Work Spaces
- The Resurgence of Higher Education Labor Activism and the Future of History
- Trends in University Programs for Labor Education: Reflections on the Past, Present, and Future

*For locations of all events and panels, consult the OAH Program*

# Prizes & Awards

## LABOR: STUDIES IN WORKING-CLASS HISTORY 2023 Translation Prize

THIS JANUARY WE ISSUED A CALL for scholars working in Portuguese and Spanish to submit papers to *LABOR: Studies in Working-Class History* for consideration for our first ever Translation Prize. The aim of this contest was to provide the journal's readership with the opportunity to experience and engage with a sample of some of the best new work in labor history from Latin America.

We are excited to announce that we have issued the prize to **Felipe Azevedo e Souza** for his essay, "*Áridas veredas da coerção: políticas del trabalho para os flagelados de uma seco no ano da abolição, Brasil, 1888-1889.*" Focusing upon the convergence between the drought crisis of the Brazilian Northeast and the abolition of formal slavery in the late 1880s, Azevedo e Souza sheds new light on the ways in which unfree labor persisted in the wake of bondage, adding to important literatures about vagrancy legislation and conditional abolition contracts. We

look forward to sharing this essay with you in a future issue of the journal.

We would like to thank all of the authors who submitted papers and offer honorable mentions to Diana Irina Córdoba Ramirez, Nicolás Gómez Baeza, and Mariana Stoler, whose fine essays helped to make this a difficult decision. Finally, the editors of *LABOR* are exceedingly grateful to our committee of dedicated readers, Brodwyn Fischer, Paulo Fontes, Jeff Gould, and Ángela Vergara, for their considerable time and care in meticulously evaluating all of the essays that we received.



Felipe Azevedo e Souza, winner of the 2023 Translation Prize.

# LAWCHA Awards

## Alice Kessler-Harris Dissertation Prospectus Award

**“The Promise of Freedom Unfulfilled: Post-Emancipation Labor Conflict in Puerto Rico and Its Impact on the Late Nineteenth-Century Abolition (1873–1888)”**

by Daniel Morales-Armstrong, University of Pennsylvania

**A Day’s Work: Casual Employment in Modern America**

by Maia Silber, Princeton University

## David Montgomery Award (with the OAH)

**Menace to Empire: Anticolonial Solidarities and the Transpacific Origins of the US Security State** (University of California Press)

by Moon-Ho Jung, University of Washington

## Herbert G. Gutman Prize for Outstanding Dissertation

**“Moving Goods, Moving America: Labor, Technology, Policy, Development & the Struggle over North America’s Largest Port-Logistics Nexus**

by Jesse Halvorsen, University of California – Santa Barbara

## Philip Taft Labor History Award

**Strong Winds and Widow Makers: Workers, Nature, and Environmental Conflict in Pacific Northwest Timber Country**

by Steven Beda, University of Illinois Press

# Non-LAWCHA Awards

## Debra E. Bernhardt Labor Journalism Prize

**“Hollywood Is on Strike Against High-Tech Exploitation”**

by Alex Press

*Jacobin*, July 21, 2023.

## American Historical Association

### John Lewis Award for History and Social Justice

Joe William Trotter

Carnegie Mellon University

## H.L. Mitchell Prize

**We Are Not Slaves: State Violence, Coerced Labor, and Prisoners’ Rights in Postwar America**

by Robert Chase

University of North Carolina Press, 2021

# Labor History Bibliography: 2022–23

Compiled by Rosemary Feurer, Northern Illinois University

Associate Professor, Northern Illinois University, Department of History

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- Benton, James C. 2022. *Fraying Fabric: How Trade Policy and Industrial Decline Transformed America*. University of Illinois Press.
- Birk, Megan. 2022. *The Fundamental Institution: Poverty, Social Welfare, and Agriculture in American Poor Farms*. University of Illinois Press.
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- Hall, Greg. 2022. *Writing Labor's Emancipation: The Anarchist Life and Times of Jay Fox*. University of Washington Press.
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Compiled by Aldo Lauria Santiago, Rutgers University

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## Teaching Labor's Story Writing Awards

LAWCHA IS COMMITTED TO TEACHING LABOR HISTORY in the classroom, from K-12 to colleges and universities. As a result, LAWCHA's Teaching Resources Committee has been building a repository of primary sources with supporting teaching guides (textual, visual, audio). Resources in the Teaching Labor's Story repository are designed to be readily incorporated into existing curricula and thus allow experts and non-experts alike to infuse labor's story into the historical narrative.

The Teaching Labor's Story (TLS) initiative is designed to illuminate essential historical questions. Our plan is to commission a thematic essay on a topic and then link it to a cluster of explicated primary sources. To encourage submissions to the Teaching Labor's Story Project, the committee is now offering an annual Teaching Labor's Story Thematic Essay Award and smaller TLS Primary Source Awards.

The Teaching Resources Committee is thrilled to announce that Stacey Smith is the recipient of the inaugural Teaching Labor's Story Thematic Essay Award. Stacey is Associate Professor of History at Oregon State University and author of *Freedom's Frontier: California and the Struggle over Unfree Labor, Emancipation, and Reconstruction* (University of North Carolina Press, 2013). Her essay will highlight the centrality of labor to major developments in mid-19th century United States history.

The committee will soon make a second Thematic Essay Award, as well as ten related TLS Primary Source Awards. It encourages faculty to consider having graduate students create a cluster of primary source analyses as a graduate class project.

Interested in the TLS Writing Awards? Curious about authoring a TLS entry or discovering the value of TLS as a graduate writing project? Wishing for a tutorial to get you going?

**Contact:** Nikki Mandell, Teaching Resources Committee chair at [mandelln@uww.edu](mailto:mandelln@uww.edu)



Stacey Smith, winner of the Teaching Labor's Story Thematic Essay Award.

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