

Using History to Make Slavery History, (CFP Deadline: October 15)

Posted on August 12, 2014 by Rosemary Feurer

This antislavery conference, building on its predecessor sponsored by Historians Against Slavery in 2013, is designed to facilitate dialogue, scholarship, and action in our efforts to end contemporary slavery. This conference seeks to bring together survivors and other activists from as varied backgrounds as possible, educators at both K-12 and college levels, government officials, and scholars to illuminate vital themes that can inform today's movement. The conference organizers are determined to "integrate" panels and workshops, so that scholars and activists constantly share the stage. We will consider workshops, roundtables, and less traditional academic formats for presentations, as well as traditional academic-style panels. We hope the conference will offer numerous practical examples of how history might be used to inform modern abolition efforts.

This conference is timed to commemorate and explore the contemporary significance of the sesquicentennial of the ratification of the 13th Amendment in the United States. Specifically, we are interested in papers and panels exploring what the persistence of slavery means for how we remember and commemorate moments of emancipation like the 13th Amendment. But we are also very interested in broadening the temporal and spatial scope to include more than the national stories of emancipation in the Anglo-American world in the nineteenth century. For instance, panels and papers illuminating contemporary lessons from other forms of slavery beyond the Atlantic world, and from abolition efforts after the late nineteenth century, would be especially welcome. While hoping to engage such global issues, we also hope to explore the local aspects of slavery and abolition in the past and present.

The conference organizers also hope to foster in-depth and critical attention to vital definitional and comparative questions. Those themes could include, but are not limited to:

- Which historical parallels best fit contemporary forms of slavery and abolitionist efforts, and which do not? Why?
- What are the benefits and drawbacks of applying the term "slavery" to contemporary

forms of bondage and human trafficking?

- What can historians and activists learn from each other about how to best leverage the energies and resources of faith groups and governments?

The deadline for proposals is **October 15, 2014**. Please send proposals to the program chairs:

Matthew Mason

Associate Professor of History, Brigham Young University

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Nikki Taylor

Chair and Professor of History, Texas Southern University

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Rosemary Feurer is Professor of History at Northern Illinois University. She is the author of *Radical Unionism in the Midwest, 1900-1950*, among other books and essays. She is working on *The Illinois Mine Wars, 1860-1940* and a new biography of Mary Harris "Mother" Jones.