LAWCHA
The Labor and Working-Class History Association

Herbert G. Gutman Prize for Outstanding Dissertation: Deadline December 2

Posted on September 4, 2019 by Julie Greene

The Labor and Working-Class History Association (LAWCHA) is pleased to announce its annual Herbert G. Gutman Prize for Outstanding Dissertation in U.S. Labor and Working-Class History, established in cooperation with the University of Illinois Press. LAWCHA encourages the study of working people, their lives, workplaces, communities, organizations, cultures, activism, and societal contexts. It aims to promote a diverse and cross-cultural understanding of labor and working-class history. And it encourages innovative, theoretically-informed and interdisciplinary approaches. Transnational and comparative studies rooted in U.S. history are welcomed, as are studies of capitalism in relation to the working-class experience.

The dissertation prize is named in honor of the late Herbert G. Gutman, a pioneering labor historian and a founder of the University of Illinois Press's Working Class in American History Series. LAWCHA hopes that the spirit of Gutman's inquiry into the many facets of labor and working-class history will live on through this prize.

The winner will receive a cash prize of $750 from LAWCHA along with up to $500 in travel expenses to attend the awards ceremony, and a contract to publish in the Working Class in American History Series. The prize award is contingent upon the author's acceptance of the contract with the University of Illinois Press.

According to the Working Class in American History editors, the series publishes "research that illuminates the broad dimensions of working people's influence in North America. We define working-class history capaciously and encourage submissions that explore waged, non-waged, and/or coerced labor, rural and urban settings, and the wide range of labor performed in non-industrial settings, from agriculture to domestic service and beyond. We welcome consideration of the diverse contexts of the lives of those who work, including legal, political, and ideological aspects, as well as parameters of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, religion, and immigration. As we seek to enhance understanding of pre-industrial

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and industrializing worlds, we also explore the new challenges that workers face amidst deindustrialization, globalized production, and an expanding service economy. We particularly seek projects that reflect the mobile, international, and diverse nature of capital and labor and apply a transnational or comparative outlook to the study of the working class. We find compelling work that considers the centrality of working people within the history of capitalism."

Eligible dissertations must be in English and defended in the academic year 2018–19 (September 1, 2018–October 31, 2019). Dissertations will be considered only in one year's competition.

Applicants are not required to be members of LAWCHA at the time of the submission. The winner will be announced at LAWCHA's membership meeting during the 2020 Organization of American Historians' conference in Washington D.C.

To apply send two electronic copies of the dissertation (one in pdf and one in Word.doc format) along with a letter from the dissertation advisor confirming the date of the defense (a letter of recommendation is not required). Submissions should also include a cover letter with full contact information: name, professional or home address, email, and telephone. Entries must be submitted by December 2, 2019 to: LAWCHA lawcha@duke.edu with the subject line Gutman Prize.

Author



- Julie Greene

  Julie Greene is a historian of United States, transnational, and global labor and immigration. Most recently, she is the author of Box 25: Archival Secrets, Caribbean Workers, and the Panama Canal (UNC Press, 2025), which explores a set of remarkable memoirs written by canal workers (and held in Box 25 at the Library of Congress). Greene has also authored The Canal Builders: Making America's Empire at the Panama Canal (2009), and Pure and Simple Politics:

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The American Federation of Labor and Political Activism, 1881-1917 (1998). She has co-edited two books with Eric Arnesen and Bruce Laurie, Labor Histories: Class, Politics, and the Diversity of the Working-Class Experience (1998); and with Eileen Boris, Joo Cheong Tham, and Heidi Gottfried, Global Labor Migration: New Directions (2022). Greene has also published numerous articles and book chapters.

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