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Sponsors:

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LAWCHA is an organization of scholars, teachers, students, labor educators, and activists who seek to promote public and scholarly awareness of labor and working-class history through research, writing, and organizing.

*The University of Memphis is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action University.
It is committed to education of a non-racially identifiable body.*

2017

Midwest Labor and Working-Class History Colloquium

“Labor Mobilizations and Movements: From the Local to the Global”

The University of Memphis

Friday, June 2, 2017

UC 350, Fountain View

Free and open to the public

#MLWCH2017

9:00

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Dr. Aram Goudsouzian; Chair, Department of History, University of Memphis

9:15-10:30

West African Workers and Activism

Moderator: Dr. Shadrack W. Nasong'o- Rhodes College

“Workers Into Artisans: French Colonial Education and the Informalization of West African Labor”

- Elizabeth Fretwell; University of Chicago

“The Proliferation of Labour Movements in Nigera: Patterns and Evolution”

- Dr. Chibuzor Chile Nwobueze; Rivers State University
- James Okolie-Osemene; Ibadan University

“Photographing Labor in West Africa”

- Keith Bratton; www.keithbrattonphotography.com and Christian Brothers University

10:30-11:45 ROUNDTABLE

On the Front Lines: Public History and Activism in Memphis

Moderator- Anthony Siracusa- Vanderbilt University

- Dr. Noelle Trent; Director of Interpretation, Collections, and Education, National Civil Rights Museum
- Rebecca Price; CEO, Chick History
- Phuong Nguyen; Memphis Advocates for Radical Childcare
- Jayanni Webster; United Campus Workers

Lunch 11:45-12:45

12:45-2:00

Rethinking Resistance and Violence

Moderator: Dr. Michele Coffey- University of Memphis

“Forced Labor in Longleaf Woodlands: The Convict Lease System and the Southern Naval Stores Industry”

- Fraser Livingston; Mississippi State University

“Turning Stars into Activists: Performance Labor and Resistance in the Circus”

- Andrea Ringer; University of Memphis

2:00-3:15

Gendered Spaces in Labor and Working-Class History

Moderator: Dr. Katie Fredlund- University of Memphis

“The ‘Modern Girl’ and the ‘Working Woman’: Overlapping Categories of Identification in China’s Proletarian Women’s Movement, 1925-27”

- Dr. John Knight; The Ohio State University

“(Out)Side the Movement: Ernestine Eppenger, the Non-Conforming Black Radical Feminist”

- Rebekkah Mulholland; University of Memphis

“Sewing-up Discontent: Performing Virginity in Marriage in Neoliberal Tunisia”

- Heather Jendoubi; University of Memphis

3:15-4:45 PLENARY ROUNDTABLE

Laboring in the Classroom: The Intersection of Teaching and Activism

Moderator: Dr. Susan Eva O’Donovan- University of Memphis

- Dr. John McKerley; University of Iowa
- Dr. Gordon Andrews; Grand Valley State University
- Dr. David Anderson; Louisiana Tech University

Dr. David M. Anderson (Ph.D., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2003) is an associate professor and William Y. Thompson Endowed Professor in the Department of History at Louisiana Tech University. His areas of specialization are twentieth-century U.S. labor history, business history, and popular culture, with an emphasis on the American South. His two current projects focus on modern southern labor history. The first (an article “The New Southern Gothic: Southern Workers in Foreign-Owned Factories,” co-written with Andrew C. McKeivitt), examines workers and the expansion of foreign-owned factories in the South since the 1980s, and the second, a book project, traces the rise and fall of the East Texas-based Lone Star Steel company from the 1940s to the present. His publications include *The Hank Williams Reader* (co-editor, Oxford University Press, 2014), and the articles, “‘Things Are Different Down Here’: The 1955 Perfect Circle Strike, Conservative Civic Identity, and the Roots of the New Right in the 1950s Industrial Heartland,” *International Labor and Working-Class History* 74 (Fall 2008), 101–23 and “Levittown Is Burning!: The 1979 Levittown (Pa.) Gas Line Riot and the Decline of the Blue-Collar American Dream,” *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 2 (Fall 2005), 47-66.

Dr. Gordon Andrews taught high school for 20+ years and is currently an Associate Professor of History at Grand Valley State University where he teaches American History/History Education. He is the author of *Undoing Plessy: Charles Hamilton Houston, Race, Labor, and the Law, 1985-1950* and co-author of *Collaboration and the Future of Education: Preserving the Right to Teach and Think Historically*. He is currently conducting research on UAW Local 600.

Keith Bratton is currently an adjunct history instructor in the Rosa Deal School of Arts at Christian Brothers University. Assigned courses include United States History, World Civilizations, and Introduction to African History. Mr. Bratton is also a freelance photographer and a secondary school history teacher in Memphis.

Elizabeth Fretwell is a PhD candidate at the University of Chicago. She is currently writing a dissertation entitled "Tailoring Benin: Gender, Material Culture, and Artisan Production in Urban West Africa," which explores how artisan tailoring and tailored clothing mediated economic, social, and political change for ordinary Beninois in the second half of the twentieth century.

Heather Jendoubi is a graduate assistant in the Department of Sociology at the University of Memphis, Tennessee. Her research interests are international comparison of historical and current cultural ideas surrounding the social constructions of virginity, chastity, and power in gender relations and social inequality. She has conducted research in pre- and post-revolutionary Tunisia. She has published in *Jadaliyya*. Her current research surrounds performances of virginity in the face of neoliberal economic policies and the rising age of marriage in Tunisia. She is also an activist with Memphis Feminist Collective and Memphis Voices for Palestine.

Dr. John Knight is a recent doctorate in history from the Ohio State University with a focus on modern China. His dissertation explores Chinese popular and intellectual perceptions of the Soviet Union and the international socialist movement from the 1920s until the 1950s. Next year, he will be Visiting Assistant Professor in East Asian History at the Rhode Island School of Design.

Fraser Livingston is a PhD student at Mississippi State University. His work examines the environmental history of the southern coastal plain, specifically the interactions between humans and nature in the longleaf-grassland ecoregion—a massive sixty to ninety million-acre territory that stretched from Virginia to Texas. He is concerned with changes to the region in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, and the ways in which science, nature, and Jim Crow shaped the creation of the modern South.

Phuong Nguyen is a community organizer and co-founder of Memphis Advocates for Radical Childcare (M.A.R.CH.). Originally from Montreal, Québec, she was born to refugee parents from Vietnam and immigrated to Memphis in 2014. Impassioned by movement work grounded in feminist & anti-racist praxis, she has spent 10 years involved in prison justice, gender advocacy & human rights activism. Her previous paid work includes

facilitating youth development/empowerment programs. Currently, she is a UofM Coordinator of Institutional Equity.

Dr. John W. Mckerley is the oral historian for the Iowa Labor History Oral Project (ILHOP) at the University of Iowa Labor Center. ILHOP is a forty-year-old collaboration between the Iowa labor movement, UI Labor Center, and the State Historical Society of Iowa to document the history of Iowa workers and their unions. With approximately 1,250 interviews and counting, it constitutes one of the largest and longest-running, labor-focused oral history projects in the world. John's most recent publication is *Civic Labors: Scholar Activism and Working-Class Studies* (University of Illinois, 2016).

Rebekkah Mulholland is a doctoral candidate in history at the University of Memphis. Her fields of study include 19th and 20th century African American History; Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; LGBT and Transgender History; Radical Black Womanism and Feminism. Prior to enrolling at UofM, she obtained Masters' degrees in Humanities and Public History from Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. In February 2017, she published her first book, *Wright State University* through Arcadia Publishing.

Dr. Chibuzor Chile Nwobueze is a lecturer in the department of history and diplomatic studies, Rivers State University of Education, Nigeria. His research is focused on issues of human development and conflict transformation particularly in situations of complex conflict and intractable youth violence. He is involved in peacebuilding training programmes, and with the development of peace and conflict studies curricula.

James Okolie-Osemene holds Master of Arts degree in Peace and Conflict Studies from University of Ibadan, Nigeria. He is a doctoral candidate in the Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies, University of Ibadan. He is widely published in local and international peer reviewed scholarly journals and contributed chapters to several books. He is Associate Member of the Society for Peace Studies and Practice.

Andrea Ringer (Colloquium Organizer) is a Ph.D. candidate at The University of Memphis. She received her undergraduate degree at Texas A&M University and her master's in public history at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Her dissertation, “Circus World: Transnational Labor and Performance,” asks questions about the circus as a workplace and the history of their transnational migrant laborers.

Rebecca Price is the President/CEO of Chick History, a nonprofit dedicated to rebuilding history through educational programming, community outreach, and women's history. She will be speaking on Chick History's project March to the 19th, and how they are using multiple community partners and co-authorization to create a plan to digitize local and family history that documents the ways African-American women were politically active in the years prior to the passage of the 19th Amendment.

Dr. Noelle N. Trent is the Director of Interpretation, Collections & Education at the National Civil Rights Museum. She earned a Master's in Public History and a Ph.D. in United States history from Howard University in Washington, D.C. Dr. Trent is an accomplished public historian and has worked with several noted organizations and projects including: the National Archives and Records Administration, the national Park Service, and the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African American History and Culture where she contributed to the exhibition *Defending Freedom: the Era of Segregation, 1876-1968*. She was recently featured in “Breaking Free: An Underground Special” for the WGN America drama *Underground*.

Jayanni Webster is a native Memphian and graduate of the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. From 2013-2016 she served as the communications and community organizer for the local Fight for \$15 campaign and prior to that the volunteer coordinator for SisterReach, a women of color-led reproductive justice organization. Currently, she is a union organizer for United Campus Worker Local 3865, Tennessee's public higher education union for all faculty and staff.