

**Eighteenth Annual  
North American Labor History Conference**



**MEMORY AND THE RETELLING  
OF WORKING CLASS LIVES**

**October 17-19, 1996  
McGregor Memorial Conference Center**



Wayne State University



Department of History  
Wayne State University  
3094 Faculty/Administration Building  
Detroit, Michigan 48202  
U.S.A.

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1996

Registration and Coffee Hour

9:30-11:00 a.m., Lobby

Coffee Hour sponsored by the Labor Studies Program

Viewings of videos related to labor history will be available  
throughout the day in Room A.

**Trouble Remembering: Problems of Memory and Autobiography in  
European Labour History**

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Room B/C

Chair: Daniel Weinbren, Middlesex University

*"Telling It Like It Wasn't?" Working-Class Autobiography and Historical  
Contextualization*

Malcolm Chase, University of Leeds

*Inventing a Past for Themselves: Problems of Memory and Historiography in Irish  
Labour History*

Emmet O'Connor, University of Ulster

*Nation and Class: National Discourse in the Autobiographies of German and  
British Labour Leaders*

Stefan Berger, University of Wales

Comment: Peter Linebaugh, University of Toledo

**New Chords in Racial Justice and Labor: African Americans, Historical  
Memory, and the Civil Rights and Labor Movements**

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Room F/G

Chair: Gerald Gill, Tufts University

*Battling Plantation Mentality: Black Women Workers, Historical Memory, and the Civil Rights Movement in Memphis*  
Laurie Green, University of Chicago

*Swan Songs and Jim Crow: History, Memory, and Chicago Musicians' Protective Union*  
Derek Vaillant, University of Chicago

*Restructuring Labor's Identity in the New World Order: A Case Study of Justice for Janitors' Local 82 in Washington, D.C.*  
Jane Williams, George Mason University

Comment: Robert Jefferson, Wayne State University

**Laboring for the State: Municipal Workers in America, 1880-1920**  
11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Room I

Chair: Marjorie Murphy, Swarthmore College

*"Breathing Fire": Firemen as Workers and Heroes, 1870-1920*  
Mark Tebeau, Carnegie Mellon University

*Municipal Reform, Municipal Workers: Progressivism and the Transformation of Work in Philadelphia and New York City, 1900-1918*  
Mark Wilkens, University of Pennsylvania

*"On the Beat": Working for the Police Department in Detroit, 1880-1918*  
Rebecca Reed, University of Michigan

Comment: Gerda Ray, University of Missouri at St. Louis  
Marjorie Murphy, Swarthmore College

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Books on labor history and related topics are on sale in Room E throughout the conference

**Luncheon**  
(On Your Own)

1:00-2:00 p.m.

There is an optional tour of the Diego Rivera murals at the Detroit Institute of Arts. Participants should gather at the door of the Institute.

**Coming of Age: Life Course and Class Identity in Britain and the United States**

2:30 - 4:30 p.m., Room B/C

Chair: Leslie Page Moch, Michigan State University

*"As Through a Telescope Reversed": Autobiographies of British Working-Class Childhoods, 1860-1914*  
Gretchen R. Galbraith, Grand Valley State University

*Working-Class Youth: Competing Perspectives on the Passage to Manhood in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century United States*  
Michelle Kilbourne, Emory University

*Radical Remembrances, Coming of Political Age: Examining the Construction of Militant Identities through Oral Life Histories*  
Mark Soderstrom, University of Minnesota

Comment: Kathleen Alaimo, St. Xavier University  
Leslie Page Moch, Michigan State University

**Struggles in Steel: The Politics of Race, History and Memory**

2:30 - 4:30 p.m., Room F/G

Introduction: John Hinshaw, Bates College

Panelists: Tony Buba, Independent Filmmaker  
Lisa Beth Frank, Carlow College  
Raymond Henderson, Independent Filmmaker

Comment: Bruce Nelson, Dartmouth College

**Working Class Cities and Urban Memory**

2:30 - 4:30 p.m., Room I

Chair: Thomas Klug, Marygrove College

*Mapping the Workers' City in Hamilton, Ontario*

Robert Kristofferson, York University

*The Neighborhood Remembered: Race, Class and the Politics of Place in Metropolitan Detroit, 1945-1975*

David M.P. Freund, University of Michigan

*That Was Then, This is Now: Myth, Memory and Ideology in the Regent Park Housing Project, 1947-1980*

Robert Sean Purdy, Queen's University

Comment: J. Nolan Reilly, University of Winnipeg

**Nat Weinberg Award  
Presentation and Reception**

5:00-6:00 p.m., Room 200 Reuther Library

Award Recipient:  
*To Be Announced*

**Plenary Session I**

**Black Workers and the Black Freedom Struggle: The Power of Remembering**

7:30 p.m., Room B/C

Welcome: Sondra O'Neale, Wayne State University

Chair: Mary Hollens, Lewis College of Business

*Black Workers Remember: Industrial Unionism and the Freedom Struggle in the Jim Crow South*

Michael Honey, University of Washington-Tacoma

*Strength of the Black Community: Black Workers Recall the Struggle for Equality in the Packinghouse Industry*

Rick Halpern, University College London

Roger Horowitz, Hagley Museum and Library

Comment: Tera Hunter, Carnegie Mellon University

Horace Huntley, Birmingham Civil Rights Institute

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1996**

**Registration and Coffee Hour**

**8:00 - 9:00 a.m., Lobby**

**Working-Class Memory and Class Identity**

9:00 - 11:00 a.m., Room B/C

Chair: Shelton Stromquist, University of Iowa

*Working-Class Memory in the Making of a Strike -- and A Play about the Strike*

Michael A. Gordon, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

*Economic Dislocation and the Politics of Identity*

Kathryn Marie Dudley, Yale University



*Born at Work: A Rank and File Story: Class Identity and Memory in Youngstown*  
Robert Bruno, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Comment: Shelton Stromquist, University of Iowa

### Memory and Representations in Folk and Labor Culture

9:00 - 11:00 a.m., Room F/G

Chair: Stanley Shapiro, Wayne State University

*Fifty Thousand Lumberjacks and the Rebel Girl: Gender and Wobbly Iconography*  
Ruth L. Fairbanks, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

*World War II Poster Art: The Visual Documentation of Labor Themes and the Identity of the American Production Worker*  
Fred Poyner, University of Nebraska at Lincoln

Comment: Angel Kwolek-Folland, University of Kansas

### Gender, Political Ideology, and the Narratives of Class Struggle

9:00 - 11:00 a.m., Room I

Chair: Stephen Cole, Emma Goldman Papers

*"It's My Party and I'll Cry if I Want To": The Recent Autobiographical Writings of Australian Women Communists*  
Ian Syson, Victoria University of Technology

*Re-Conceiving "Mother Bloor": Maternalism and Communist Political Discourse*  
Kathleen A. Brown, St. Edward's University

*A Popular Front in Practice: Mexican and U.S. Activists Address Discrimination in Wartime Los Angeles*  
Gigi Peterson, University of Washington

Comment: Kathleen Kennedy, Western Washington University  
Stephen Cole, Emma Goldman Papers

### First Person Narratives and Migrating Labor

9:00 - 11:00 a.m., Room J

Chair: Claudia Clark, Central Michigan University

*The Diary of James Cox, Itinerant Laborer*  
Miles Fairburn, Victoria University

*"A Little More Freedom in Toledo": Oral Histories of African American Migrants to Ohio and Indiana*  
Jack S. Blocker, Jr., Huron College

*Labor Migrants or Adventurers? German Immigrant Women's Use of Myths to Retell Their Lives as Maids in 1950s Canada*  
Alexander Freund, University of Bremen

Comment: Kimberley Phillips, College of William and Mary  
Salvatore Salerno, Macalester College

### Luncheon

11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., Room L/M

Introduction: Les Hough, Wayne State University

Speaker: Nat Weinberg Award Winner

### Popular Memory and Labor Militancy

12:30 - 2:30 p.m., Room B/C

Chair: Seth Wigderson, University of Maine-Augusta

*Workers' Memory as Legend and Myth: Reconstructing Labor Conflicts at Pullman*

Larry Peterson, City University of New York and *Comparative Politics*

*"The Old Idea": Worker Militancy, Working-Class Realism, and Popular Memory in Lawrence, Mass., 1912-1937*

Dexter Arnold, Immigrant City Archives

*Living History, Popular Memory, and the Pullman Strike Centennial*

Joel Woller, Carnegie Mellon University

Comment: David Zonderman, North Carolina State University at Raleigh  
Robert Macieski, University of New Hampshire at Manchester

### **Strategies of Selfhood in American Working-Class Politics: Three Cases**

12:30 - 2:30 p.m., Room F/G

Chair: Keith Gallagher, University of Michigan

*Making Sense of Anarchism: The Autobiographies of the Haymarket Eight*

Karen Sawislak, Stanford University

*Socialism, Storytelling, and Selfhood: From Factionalism to Folktales in the Autobiographies of Alexander Irvine*

Kathryn J. Oberdeck, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

*Revolution and Personal Crisis: Communist Politics and Changing Identity in the Life of William Z. Foster*

James R. Barrett, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Comment: Laura Lee Downs, University of Michigan  
Elizabeth Faue, Wayne State University

### **Labor Priests and the American Working Class, 1935-1960**

12:30 - 2:30 p.m., Room I

Chair: Leslie Woodcock Tentler, University of Michigan-Dearborn

*Father John Corridan and New York City Longshoremen: A Study of Reform and Defeat*

Colin J. Davis, University of Alabama at Birmingham

*Labor Priests and Gender during the CIO Era*

Steve Rosswurm, Lake Forest College

Comment: Kenneth Fones-Wolf, West Virginia University  
Leslie Woodcock Tentler, University of Michigan-Dearborn

### **Memory and Amnesia in Working Class History**

12:30 - 2:30 p.m., Room J

Chair: Katheryne Lindberg, Wayne State University

*Thomas Churchill's Centralia Dead March and the Repression of Working-Class Memory*

Julia Stein, labor poet

*Zora Neale Hurston, Agnes Smedley, and Cultural Memory: Against a Postmodern Apartheid*

Carole Anne Taylor, Bates College

*Whose Gastonia?: Gender and Literary Representation in a Depression Era Textile Strike*

Laura Hapke, Pace University

Comment: Paula Rabinowitz, University of Minnesota  
Katheryne Lindberg, Wayne State University

### **Remembering the Great Depression**

3:00-5:00 p.m., Room B/C

Chair: Bruce Cohen, Worcester State College

*Narratives of Juanita Jackson Mitchell: The Making of a Depression-Era Organic Intellectual in African American Baltimore*

Andor Skotnes, Russell Sage College

*Recollecting the Cotton Mill Wars: Fictions of the Southern Textile Strikes of 1929-30*

Robert W. Whalen, Queens College

*Communist Activism and the Formation of Class Consciousness in Pennsylvania Anthracite during the Great Depression*  
Walter T. Howard, Bloomsburg University

Comment: Janet Irons, Lock Haven University

**Building Working-Class Studies: Why is This Studies Different from All Others?**

3:00-5:00 p.m., Room J

Moderator: Janet Zandy, Rochester Institute of Technology

Panelists: John Russo, Youngstown State University  
Sherry Linkon, Youngstown State University  
Bill Mullen, Youngstown State University  
Linda Strom, Youngstown State University  
Carole Anne Taylor, Bates College  
Gary Tate, Texas Christian University

**Biography, Autobiography, and Memory in Twentieth Century Labor History**

3:00-5:00 p.m., Room I

Chair: Nelson Lichtenstein, University of Virginia

*Labor Biography, Ideology, and Oral History: Confirming Personality Traits through Verbal Analysis -- Lee Pressman as a Test Case*  
Gilbert Gall, Pennsylvania State University

*Solidarity and Fragmentation: John Brophy and the Decline of the United Mine Workers of America in Central Pennsylvania during the 1920's*  
Elizabeth Cocke, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

*"A Different Kind of Organizer": Rose Pesotta, the Labor Memoir, and Working-Class Memory*

Robert Bussel, Penn State Great Valley

Comment: Nelson Lichtenstein, University of Virginia

**Labor History in Print: Journal Editors' Forum**

3:00 - 5:00 p.m., Room F/G

Moderator: Elizabeth Faue, Wayne State University

Panelists: Malcolm Chase, *Labour History Review*/University of Leeds  
Stuart Kaufman, *Labor's Heritage*/University of Maryland •  
College Park  
Gregory Kealey, *Labour-Le Travail*/Memorial University of  
Newfoundland  
Dan Leab, *Labor History*/Seton Hall University  
Terry Irving, *Labor History*/University of Sydney  
Louise Tilly, *International Labor and Working Class History*/  
New School for Social Research

**Reception**  
(Cash Bar)

5:00 - 6:00 p.m., Lobby

**Dinner**

6:00 - 7:30 p.m., Room L/M



**Plenary Session II**

7:30 p.m., Room B/C

Introduction: Christopher Johnson, Wayne State University

*Kinship and Places of Memory*

David Sabean, University of California - Los Angeles

**Post-Plenary Gathering: Labor and Social Conscience**  
**Bernard J. Firestone Memorial Tribute: Labor Poets 96**  
Sponsored by the College of Urban, Labor, and Metropolitan Affairs

Alvin's Twilight Bar  
5756 Cass Avenue  
9:00 p.m. until . . .  
Free Admission

Featuring: Philip Levine, Jim Daniels, Larry Smith, Lolita Hernandez, Julia Stein,  
and others.

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The cover photograph is of two UAW retirees conversing at the 5th Annual Retired Workers' Picnic. Courtesy of the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1996**

**Breakfast**

7:30 a.m., Room L/M

*Will the Real Mary Lovett Stand Up?*

Come and have breakfast with Eileen Yeo (University of Sussex),  
to discuss issues of Gender and Autobiography in  
19th Century Labour Movements

**Registration and Coffee Hour**

8:00 - 9:00 a.m., Lobby

**Memory as Social Action: Nation, Class and Gender in Social  
Transformations across Latin America and Africa -- Historical and  
Anthropological Approaches**

9:00 - 11:00 a.m., Room B/C

Chair: Jose Cuelló, Wayne State University

*On Remembering Sandino: Critical Reflections on the IES Testimonies in  
Nicaragua, 1926-1984*

Michael Schroeder, University of Michigan - Flint

*Path to the Racetrack: Handicapping Memories of Work among Elderly Workers  
and Pensioners in Harare, Zimbabwe*

Timothy Scarnecchia, University of North Carolina - Charlotte

*Nitrate and Nostalgia: State Violence and Historical Recuperation in Northern  
Chile, 1890-1994*

Lessie Jo Frazier, University of South Carolina



*Workers' and Peasants' Consciousness in the Belgian Congo, 1890-1960*  
Osumaka Likaka, Wayne State University

Comment: Rosario Montoya del Solar, University of Michigan

**Gender at Work: A Regional Perspective**  
9:00 - 11:00 a.m., Room I

Chair: Nancy Gabin, Purdue University

*Race and Class Issues in Conceptualizing Women's Work in the Great Depression*  
Lois Rita Helmbold, San Jose State University

*Women and Work: A Regional Perspective of Wage Earning Women at the Wilson Brothers Garment Industry, South Bend, Indiana*  
Sushmita Hodges, Indiana University - South Bend

*An Examination of Gender Roles in the 1936 Sit-Down Strike and C.I.O. Organizing Activity at the Bendix Corporation in South Bend, Indiana*  
Jean Troutman-Poole, Indiana University-South Bend

Comment: Laurie Mercier, Washington State University  
Nancy Gabin, Purdue University

**Making Working Class Memories Public History: Michigan Experiences**  
9:00 - 11:00 a.m., Room J

Chair: John Revitte, Michigan State University

Panelists: Ron Alpern, Detroit Labor History Tour Project  
Elise Bryant, University of Michigan  
Neil O. Leighton, University of Michigan - Flint  
Bernie Ricke, UAW Local 600  
Michael Smith, Wayne State University

Comment: Joyce Kornbluh, University of Michigan

**Luncheon**

11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., Room L/M

Introduction: Melvin Small, Wayne State University

*My Life as a COOPS Child*  
Amy Swerdlow, Sarah Lawrence College

**Music and Memories of Black Working People**

12:30-2:30 p.m., Room B/C

Chair: Michael Leslie, UAW Local #735

*Hidden and Not-So-Hidden Transcripts: The Blues, Historical Memory, and the Mississippi Delta, 1920-1960*  
Steve Meyer, University of Wisconsin-Parkside

*Blues and Black Urban Memory in South Africa*  
Johann S. Buis, University of Georgia

*Recording Memories, Making History: Motown and Detroit's Great March to Freedom*  
Suzanne E. Smith, George Mason University

Comment: Richard Candida Smith, University of Michigan

**Tricks of the Mind: Alternate Working Class Rationalities?**

12:30-2:30 p.m., Room I

Chair: Larry Smith, Bowling Green State University

*Classed Utterances of the Supernatural Kind: White Women Mediums from the Working Classes in the Spiritualist Movement*  
Tammy Stone, Michigan State University

*"What's on the Worker's Mind": The Discovery of Working-Class Psychology and the Continuity of Scientific Progressivism*  
Mark Pittenger, University of Colorado at Boulder

Comment: Paula Baker, University of Pittsburgh  
Karen J. Miller, Oakland University

**African-American Working Lives and Reason: Recollecting Race, Class and Resistance, from Detroit to the Delta**  
12:30-2:30 p.m., Room J

Chair: Peter Rachleff, Macalester College

*Continuity and Discontinuity in Capitalist Production and Labor Struggles in the Deep South: the 1960s and 1990s*  
Michael Flug, Chicago Public Library

*Organizing the Mississippi Delta Catfish Industry: An Autobiographical Work-in-Progress*  
Sara White, Local 1259 UFCW

*Recollecting the Topography of Production Relations and Revolt in Charles Denby's Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal*  
Lou Turner, North Central College, *News & Letters*

*Typing to Tell Their Side of the Story Too: Revolutionary Consciousness and Anxiety in Detroit Auto, 1956-76*  
Cornelius C. Thomas, Rhodes University

Comment: The Audience

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Program Committee: Elizabeth Faue, Chair, John Bukowczyk, Les Hough, Robert Jefferson, Christopher Johnson, Philip Mason, Stanley Shapiro, Michael Hartman, Michael Murphy

**Detroit Remembers: Recent Scholarship on the Detroit Working Class**  
3:00 - 5:00 p.m., Room B/C

Chair: Peter Rachleff, Macalester College

Panelists: Kevin Boyle, University of Massachusetts  
Nelson Lichtenstein, University of Virginia  
Judith Stepan-Norris, University of California - Los Angeles  
Maurice Zeitlin, University of California - Los Angeles  
Thomas Sugrue, University of Pennsylvania  
Heather Thompson, University of Michigan

Respondent: Martin Glaberman, Wayne State University

**The Uses of Working Class Memory in Teaching and Research**  
3:00 - 5:00 p.m., Room I

Chair: Gregory Sumner, University of Detroit-Mercy

*On the Process of Liberating Working-Class Memory -- Photos and Text*  
Janet Zandy, Rochester Institute of Technology

*Literature, Work, and Family: A New Approach to College Writing*  
Laura Hapke, Pace University

*Workers' Stories Into Labor Culture: The Experience of the Bread and Roses Conference on Workers' Culture*  
Paul C. Mishler, Empire State College

Comment: Dana Frank, University of California - Santa Cruz

**Class Narratives: Theory and Practice in Working Class History**  
3:00 - 5:00 p.m., Room J

Chair: Margo Anderson, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

*"Killing Informants": What to Do with the Results of the REO Oral History Project*  
Lisa Fine, Michigan State University

*Views of Self and Work: Interviews with Textile Workers in Three Michigan Villages*

Barbara S. Havira, Western Michigan University

*Neglected Memories of the Working Class: Oral Histories, Narratives, and Memoirs of the Peacetime Soldier*

Mark R. Grandstaff, Brigham Young University

*Working Class Feminism on the Shopfloor*

Deborah Fink, Independent Scholar

Comment: The Audience

## CALL FOR PAPERS

The 19th Annual North American Labor History Conference will be held on the theme, "Workers in the City," October 23-25, 1997, at Wayne State University in Detroit. Proposals for papers or panels should include short abstracts for each paper, c.v.s, and a cover letter; send e-mail addresses in addition to regular information where possible. For more information, contact Elizabeth Fauc, Department of History, 3094 Faculty/Administration Bldg., Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan 48202; phone 313/577-2525

## ACCOMMODATIONS AND TRANSPORTATION

Out-of-town participants for the North American Labor History Conference are encouraged to use the Hotel St. Regis, located in the New Center area just north of campus, during their stay.

If you register before October 1, 1996, you will be assured the special institutional discount rate of \$69 for a single room and \$79 for a double room. Just indicate that you will be attending the North American Labor History Conference at Wayne State to lock in your room rates.

Unfortunately, Wayne State University cannot guarantee the institutional rate for hotel reservations made after October 1, 1996. Standard rates at the Hotel St. Regis are \$99 for a single room and \$109 for a double room. Hotel registrations after October 1 are not secured and will depend upon room availability. For reservations, contact the Hotel St. Regis, 3071 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit, Michigan, 48202, U.S.A., 313/873-3000. The FAX number is 313/873-2574.

The Hotel St. Regis will offer limited shuttle service between the hotel and the campus for conference participants free of charge. This service will bring participants to campus prior to the beginning session each day and will return participants to the hotel after the last session each evening. A sign-up sheet will be located at the hotel desk for persons wishing to use the shuttle service.

We suggest that out-of-town participants consider using Commuter Transport as a shuttle between the airport and the hotel. In our survey of Detroit Transport services, it appears that Commuter provides the most convenient and economical shuttle between the airport and the Hotel St. Regis.

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Conference funding provided by the College of Liberal Arts, the College of Urban, Labor, and Metropolitan Affairs, the Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs, and the Department of History, Wayne State University. Special thanks to the staffs of the Reuther Library and the Department of History, Wayne State University.



North American Labor History Conference

REGISTRATION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

*Registrations received before October 1, 1996 will lock in substantial savings.*

Registration	\$35.00 (\$50.00 after Oct. 1)
Thursday Reception	Free to Registrants
Friday Luncheon	\$10.00
Friday Reception	Cash Bar
Friday Dinner	\$18.00
Saturday Breakfast	\$ 6.50
Saturday Luncheon	\$10.00

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (U.S.)

Request Vegetarian Meals (check here) \_\_\_\_\_

Please note: Due to the size of this year's conference, we anticipate filling our maximum capacity at each of the meals. Please register early if you wish to dine at the McGregor facility. No meal tickets will be available at the door. We will provide a dining guide in the participant packets for your use in selecting an alternate choice.

Please return form and check payable to Wayne State University to: NALHC, Department of History, 3094 Faculty/Administration Building, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan 48202, U.S.A.