

# MIDWESTERN HISTORY ASSOCIATION

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*MHA Newsletter – May 2016*

Greetings Friends of Midwestern History --

The big news from the world of Midwestern history is our conference on June 1st in Grand Rapids, Michigan, which will be held in conjunction with the Hauenstein Center at Grand Valley State University. We have an amazing lineup of speakers, so check out the full schedule at this link: <http://hauensteincenter.org/finding-the-lost-region-ii-second-midwestern-history-conference/> Please share news of this conference with your friends and colleagues.

In other news:

Book Prize: The books nominated for this year's Jon Gjerde Prize for the Best Work of Midwestern History have been announced and are set forth below. The books which have been shortlisted for the prize will be announced in June. The final prize winner will be announced this fall at the MHA annual meeting, which will be held in conjunction with the Western History Association in St. Paul in October. Many thanks to Annette Atkins for chairing the prize committee this year.

Popular History Prize: Works of popular history focused on the American Midwest are eligible to receive the MHA's annual Hamlin Garland Prize. The nominees for this year's prize, which will be awarded for the best work of popular history published in the calendar year 2014, are listed below. The

call-for-nominations for the best work of popular history published in the calendar year 2015 will be circulated in coming weeks so please watch for that. Many thanks to Kristin Mapel Bloomberg for chairing the prize committee this year.

American Historical Association: At the January 2017 meeting of the American Historical Association, we are pleased to announce, there will be a panel discussion entitled “The Future of Midwestern History.” The full details are set forth below. Please be advised that we have also submitted the MHA’s application to become an official affiliate of the AHA (thanks to Eric Zimmer for all of his hard work on this application).

Organization American Historians: Because of the MHA’s affiliate status with the Organization of American Historians we are allowed to place two Midwestern history panels on the annual OAH conference schedule each year. The two Midwest panels that will appear on the April 2017 OAH schedule are copied below.

New Magazine: A new magazine has been launched which focuses on the culture and history of the Midwest, especially the Southern regions of the Midwest around Missouri and Kansas. The magazine is entitled *The New Territory* and is looking for submissions. For more information, go here: <http://newterritorymag.com/>

African-American Midwest: May 20<sup>th</sup> brings an MHA-sponsored conference at St. Louis University focusing on this history of African-Americans in the Midwest. See details below.

Midwest Archives: H-Midwest is collecting descriptions of archives and collections related to the Midwest to promote research on the region. See the official announcement below and please help the effort.

Midwest Theses and Dissertations: Graduate students and their advisors are encouraged to let H-Midwest know about theses and dissertations related to the Midwest which are currently in progress. See announcement below for more details.

Ohio River/Slavery Conference: The Ohio River National Freedom Corridor, in partnership with Maysville Community & Technical College, will host the 2016 Regional Underground Railroad Conference in Maysville, Kentucky on September 29-October 2, 2016. The Ohio River corridor has a rich legacy of history in the struggle for freedom, including abolitionists, and Underground Railroad activities. However, the historical legacy of the struggle for freedom in the Ohio Valley persisted well beyond the years after the end of slavery, and it continues to persist in our modern day communities, though much of it continues to go unrecognized. For more information about the conference to submit a proposal, see the additional information below.

MidweSTS: A new network of scholars entitled MidweSTS from 13 institutions (Cornell University, The Illinois Institute of Technology, Northwestern University, Purdue University, the University of Illinois – Chicago, the University of Illinois – Urbana-Champaign, Indiana University – Bloomington, the University of Michigan – Ann Arbor, the University of Missouri – Columbia, the University of Toronto, the University of Wisconsin – Madison, and York University) will be hosting The MidweSTS 2016 Graduate Student Workshop in the fall of 2016. The goal is to bring together scholars across disciplines and institutions whose work connects with critical computing, STS, digital studies, and media studies on September 16-17, 2016 at the University of Illinois, Chicago.

Midwest Jewish Studies Association: The twenty-eighth annual conference of the Midwest Jewish Studies Association will be held September 11-12, 2016 at Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri. The conference welcomes proposals in all areas of Jewish Studies. Please direct all inquiries to: Dr. Mara Cohen Ioannides ([maraiannides@missouristate.edu](mailto:maraiannides@missouristate.edu)).

Detroit, Workers, and Global Cities: Please note that the 38th Annual North American Labor History Conference will focus on “Workers and Global Cities: Detroit and Beyond” and will be held on October 20-22, 2016 at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan.

Conference on Illinois History: This fall will be bring the 18th Annual Conference on Illinois History, which will be held on October 6-7, 2016 at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

2016 and 2017 Meetings: The annual meeting of the MHA in 2016 will be held in conjunction with the Western History Association conference in October in St. Paul. The new officers will be elected/installed at the St. Paul meeting. The 2017 annual MHA meeting will take the form of a joint meeting of the MHA and the Agricultural History Society and take place in June in Grand Rapids, Michigan at Grand Valley State University’s Hauenstein Center. This meeting will take place as part of a joint history conference sponsored by the Hauenstein Center, the AHS, and the MHA.

To Donate: If you feel that you could share some of your resources and help the MHA to grow, please send a check to Professor Robert Morrissey, Treasurer—Midwestern History Association, Department of History, University of Illinois-Urbana, 309 Gregory Hall, 810 S. Wright Street, M/C 466, Urbana, IL 61801. The MHA has had some expenses of late so if you are able to contribute that is most welcome.

That’s enough for this month!

Sincerely, Jon Lauck

**Nominations for 2016 MHA Gjerde Prize for Best Book on Midwestern History:**

Chel Anderson and Adelheid Fischer, *North Shore: A Natural History of Minnesota's Superior Coast* (University of Minnesota Press)

Terry A. Barnhart, *American Antiquities: Revisiting the Origins of American Archaeology* (University of Nebraska Press)

Heather B. Barrow, *Henry Ford's Plan for the American Suburb: Dearborn and Detroit* (University of Northern Illinois Press)

Charles G. Beemer, *"My Greatest Quarrel with Fortune": Major General Lew Wallace in the West, 1861 – 1862* (The Kent State University Press)

Megan Birk, *Fostering on the Farm: Child Placement in the Rural Midwest* (University of Illinois Press)

Crystal Bradshaw, *Eliza: A Generational Journey* (Crystal Bradshaw)

Gretchen Buggeln, *The Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar America* (University of Minnesota Press)

David Chardavoyne and Paul Moreno, *Michigan Supreme Court Historical Reference Guide*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Michigan State University Press)

Cynthia Clampitt, *Midwest Maize How Corn Shaped the U.S. Heartland* (University of Illinois Press)

Sara DeLuca, *The Crops Look Good: News from a Midwestern Farm Family* (Minnesota Historical Society Press)

Jill Doerfler, *Those Who Belong: Identity, Family, Blood, and Citizenship among the White Earth Anishinaabeg* (Michigan State University Press)

Rita Kiki Edozie and Curtis Stokes, eds., *Malcolm X's Michigan Worldview: An Exemplar for Contemporary Black Studies*(Michigan State University Press)

Carl J. Ekberg and Sharon K. Person, *St. Louis Rising: The French Regime of Louis St. Ange de Bellerive* (University of Illinois Press)

Eric R. Faust, ed., *Conspicuous Gallantry: The Civil War and Reconstruction Letters of James W. King, 11<sup>th</sup> Michigan Volunteer Infantry* (The Kent State University Press)

William D. Green, *Degrees of Freedom: The Origins of Civil Rights in Minnesota, 1865 – 1912* (University of Minnesota Press)

Alan Guebert with Mary Grace Foxwell, *The Land of Milk and Uncle Honey: Memories from the Farm of My Youth* (University of Illinois Press)

William Heath, *William Wells and the Struggle for the Old Northwest* (University of Oklahoma Press)

Holly M. Karibo, *Sin City North: Sex, Drugs, and Citizenship in the Detroit-Windsor Borderland* (University of North Carolina Press)

David M. Krueger, *Myths of the Runestone: Viking Martyrs and the Birthplace of America* (University of Minnesota Press)

Michael Lansing, *Insurgent Democracy: The Nonpartisan League in North American Politics* (University of Chicago Press)

Rosalyn R. Lapier and David R. M. Beck, *City Indian: Native American Activism in Chicago, 1893 – 1934* (University of Nebraska Press)

Odd S. Lovoll, *Across the Deep Blue Sea: The Saga of Early Norwegian Immigrants* (Minnesota Historical Society Press)

Jeffrey Manuel, *Taconite Dreams: The Struggle to Sustain Mining on Minnesota's Iron Range, 1915 – 2000* (University of Minnesota Press)

David W. Mills, *Cold War in a Cold Land: Fighting Communism on the Northern Plains* (University of Oklahoma Press)

Douglas A. Noverr, *Michigan State University: The Rise of a Research University and the New Millennium, 1970 – 2005* (Michigan State University Press)

Jodie O'Donnell, ed., *Campus Beautiful: Shaping the Aesthetic Identity of Iowa State University* (University Museums, Iowa State University)

Scott M. Peters, *Making Waves: Michigan's Boat Building Industry, 1865 – 2000* (University of Michigan Press)

Joel Stone, *Floating Palaces of the Great Lakes: A History of Passenger Steamships on the Inland Seas* (University of Michigan Press)

Anton Treuer, *Warrior Nation: A History of the Red Lake Ojibwe* (Minnesota Historical Society Press)

Jason Weems, *Barnstorming the Prairies: How Aerial Vision Shaped the Midwest* (University of Minnesota Press)



Michael Witwer, *Empire of Imagination: Gary Gygax and the Birth of Dungeons & Dragons* (Bloomsbury USA)

## **Garland Popular History Prize**

**This year's Hamlin Garland Prize for Popular Midwestern History Writing honors a work of popular history about the Midwest published in the calendar year (2014) and the nominees are set forth below.**

Balay, Anne Steel, *Closets: Voices of Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Steelworkers* (Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 2014)

Edmonds, Michael, "'Bold (Not to Say Crazy)': Collecting Civil Rights Manuscripts During the 1960s" *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 97.4 (Summer 2014):2-15

Fenn, Elizabeth A., *Encounters at the Heart of the World: A History of the Mandan People* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2014)

Miller, John E., *Small-Town Dreams: Stories of Midwestern Boys Who Shaped America* (Lawrence: UP of Kansas, 2014)

Murphy, Lucy Eldersveld, *Great Lakes Creoles: A French-Indian Community on the Northern Borderlands, Prairie DuChien, 1750-1860* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2014)

Prigge, Matthew, "Seven Nights of Terror: the 1935 Bombing Spree of 'Idzy' Rutkowski" *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 97.3 (Spring 2014): 36-49

Remus, Emily A., "Tippling Ladies and the Making of Consumer Culture: Gender and Public Space in Fin-de-Siecle Chicago" *The Journal of American History* 101.3 (Dec. 2014): 751-777

Sherow, James E and John R. Charlton, *Railroad Empire Across the Heartland: Rephotographing Alexander Gardner's Westward Journey* (Albuquerque: U New Mexico P, 2014)

### **AHA Panel on Midwestern History in January 2017**

Panel Discussion:  
**The Future of Midwestern History**  
American Historical Association  
January 2017  
Denver, Colorado

Panelists:

Jenny Barker-Devine, Illinois College  
Stephen Warren, University of Iowa  
Robert Morrissey, University of Illinois  
Andrew Seal, Yale University  
Paul Stone, University of Minnesota

Chair:

Jon Lauck, University of South Dakota

Jenny Barker-Devine is an associate professor of History at Illinois College, a private liberal-arts college in Jacksonville, Illinois. She is the author of *On Behalf of the Family Farm: Iowa Farm Women's Activism Since 1945*. Her current project, *American Athena: Cultivating Victorian Womanhood on the Midwestern Frontier*, focuses on women and education in the midwest during the nineteenth century, as well as the process of research and digital humanities. Though her blog, [americanathena.com](http://americanathena.com), she invites the public to participate in her research process.

Bob Morrissey specializes in the history of early America and the Atlantic world, American frontier and borderlands history, ethnohistory, and environmental history. His first book tells the story of French colonists and Native peoples of the Mississippi Valley and Great Lakes in the 17th and 18th centuries. The book is entitled, *Empire by Collaboration: Indians, Colonists, and Governments in the Colonial Illinois Country*, and it appears in the Early American Studies Series from University of Pennsylvania Press. His next project is entitled "The Illinois and the Edge Effect: People and Animals in the Tallgrass Prairie Borderlands." It is a study of the relationship between people and non-human nature in one of North America's most distinctive ecological and social frontiers from 1200 to 1850. It will be supported by fellowships by the Illinois Center for Advanced Study and from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Stephen Warren is an Associate Professor of History and American Studies at the University of Iowa. He teaches courses on both Midwestern and American Indian history. His first book, *The Shawnees and Their Neighbors, 1795-1870* (The University of Illinois Press, 2005), explored the impact of the Indian Removal Act in both Ohio and Indian Territory. His second book, *The Worlds the Shawnees Made: Migration and Violence in Early America* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2014), stitches together archaeology, history, and ethnography to show how Shawnees made a life for themselves at the crossroads of empires and competing tribes, from the pre-contact period to the Seven Years' War. He is currently editing a third book, *A Search for Eastern Shawnee History*, which grows out of a federally-funded grant sponsored by the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma.

Andrew Seal is a Ph.D. candidate in American Studies at Yale University and has taught at Yale University, Weber State University, and Lesley University. His dissertation, "The Almost-Century of the Common Man: Democracy and Heroism in U.S. Thought and Politics, 1890-1960," argues that, rather than a perpetual part of U.S. identity and self-mythology, the idea of "the common man" has a particular history, even a biography. Rather than a re-statement of rugged individualism, "the common man" was one answer to a crisis of the individual in the Progressive Era and positioned itself in direct opposition to the "Great Man" of history, politics, and culture. Looking at the development of this idea through World War II and into the Cold War, and touching upon Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis, Sinclair Lewis's novels, the Middletown studies, and Wendell Willkie's "One World" tour, my project argues for a closer and more complex look at this iconic idea. Andrew has published reviews and articles in *n+1*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education Review*, and *The Middle West Review*, and has presented at the OAH, SHAFR, and the ASA. He blogs weekly at the award-winning U.S. Intellectual History Blog.

Paul C. Stone is a member of the Humphrey School of Public Affairs and the Department of History faculties at the University of Minnesota. He teaches courses on the North American West, the Civil War and the history of Minnesota, along with courses and tutorials in political philosophy. Coming from a Central Texas farming and ranching family, he has had a long interest in the center of the United States. He has worked as a journalist for Congressional Quarterly and as an aide in the U.S. House of Representatives, as well as a filmmaker and

cowboy. Stone graduated from Harvard University in 1974 with a concentration in English. He holds a doctorate in History from Yale University in 1995 where he studied with Professors Howard Lamar and Jon Butler. He has also taught at the Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington. At present he is working on a study of Hubert Humphrey's years as Vice President of the United States.

Jon K. Lauck received his Ph.D. in economic history from the University of Iowa and his law degree from the University of Minnesota. Lauck is the author of *American Agriculture and the Problem of Monopoly: The Political Economy of Grain Belt Farming, 1953-1980* (University of Nebraska Press, 2000), *Daschle v. Thune: Anatomy of a High Plains Senate Race* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), and *Prairie Republic: The Political Culture of Dakota Territory, 1879-1889* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2010) and co-author and co-editor of *The Plains Political Tradition: Essays on South Dakota Political Culture* (South Dakota State Historical Society Press, 2011) and *The Plains Political Tradition* vol. 2 (South Dakota State Historical Society Press, 2014). Lauck's newest book is *The Lost Region: Toward a Revival of Midwestern History* (University of Iowa Press, 2013). Lauck has worked for several years as a full-time professor, a part-time professor, and a lawyer and is currently serving as an adjunct professor of history and political science at the University of South Dakota, as the Associate Editor and Book Review Editor of *Middle West Review*, as the series editor of *Studies in Midwestern History*, and as president of the Midwestern History Association.

## **OAH Midwest Panels -- New Orleans, April 2017**


Panel Title: Midwestern River History: Circulating Ideas for Regional Economic Development

Panel Type: Paper Session (chair, 4 papers, comments from chair and audience)

Chair: Dr. Jon Lauck  
5200 South Sweetbriar Circle  
University of South Dakota

### Session Abstract:

The abundance of water and rivers is a distinctive characteristic of the American Midwest. Managing this resource and harnessing it for economic development has presented challenges for communities across the region, from the early nineteenth century to the late twentieth. While much of the historiography on water tends to focus on the American West, irrigation, and landscapes that lack enough water, this panel shifts the focus eastward where water management was attempted to facilitate transportation, improve water quality, and address the problem of too much water. By doing so, the panel will help establish the ways in which water management schemes developed and circulated across the Midwest, and contribute to a broader national history of water.



The panel will proceed in chronologic order. Kelly Wenig's paper will look at the Canal Era in Indianapolis during the mid-1800s and the ironic benefits of failed canal schemes. Matt Corpolongo will examine the Chicago River reversal in 1900 and explain how the daunting task of reversing a river was necessary to create a cleaner city and secure commercial interests. Joe Otto's paper will explore the interplay between different water management authorities along the Skunk River in Iowa from 1930 to 1980, and look at how conservation practices changed over time to address competing priorities. Maria Howe's paper will look at another watershed in Iowa and examine the unintended environmental, economic, and legal consequences of a federal pilot watershed project along the Little Sioux River near the Nebraska border.

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#### Participant Information:

Kelly S. Wenig  
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Des Moines, IA 50309  
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Affiliation: Iowa State University

#### Prospectus:

“Meeting the Market: Canals, Railroads, and the Upside of the Panic of 1837 in Marion County, Indiana”

This paper examines the quest for infrastructure improvements in Marion County, Indiana during the Canal Era, the subsequent turmoil caused by the Panic of 1837, and the rise of Indianapolis as the “Rail City” by 1870. In particular, this paper examines how Hoosiers joined the mainstream circulation of the Atlantic World economy and how they were affected by unforeseen consequences of their actions. Settled in 1819, and emerging as the state capital in 1825, Indianapolis was populated by people who had no qualms about internal improvements. They were quick to implement local road improvements nearly unanimously and were major supporters of canal construction during the 1830s. The Panic of 1837, however, halted canal construction in central Indiana as the state became insolvent in 1841. The central Indiana economy, devastated by the continued lack of transportation networks remained secluded until 1847, when the first railroad reached the city and opened up its markets to effective long-distance trade circulation. The construction of railroads in Marion County was astoundingly quick, with at least eight railroads completed by 1855. For Hoosiers, the failure of one mode of transportation allowed Indianapolis to quickly adopt the newer, increasingly dominant form of transportation without any political, social or economic conflict between interested investors. Much like the Chicago Fire, which allowed the city to restructure itself during the 1870s, the failure of the Canal Era in Indianapolis set the stage for explosive growth during the second half of the nineteenth century and is an example of how market circulation is achieved.

#### Biography:

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Kelly Wenig is a Doctoral Candidate at Iowa State University. His dissertation is an examination of the social and economic effects of infrastructure improvement in Marion County, Indiana, home of Indianapolis. It compares the transition to capitalism in the Early West and also engages the New History of Capitalism. He has degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay and the University of Cincinnati. He is the Social Media Director for the Midwestern History Association.

Participant Information:

Matt Corpolongo  
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Norman, OK 73072  
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Affiliation: University of Oklahoma

Prospectus:


This paper examines the Chicago River reversal in 1900. The Chicago Sanitary District, an Illinois state agency, determined that only a complete re-engineering of the river could contend with the high levels of industrial pollution flowing through the river into Lake Michigan, the city's primary source of drinking water. Throughout the 19th century, as many industries and businesses arrived in Chicago, including tanneries, brick foundries, and meatpacking plants, city leaders found themselves in a peculiar predicament. Chicago's infrastructure failed to accommodate the increasing pollution created by both an influx of new residents and their employers. However, the capital flowing to the city forged a path toward Chicago's emergence as one of the most important urban centers in an ever-expanding American empire, which benefited both city officials and state politicians. In response to horrid living conditions, polluted water, and wealth disparity, Chicago residents forced city and state leaders to address the issue of water contamination. This paper illustrates how the newly built Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, which reversed the Chicago River, created a cleaner city and secured commercial interests while establishing an entirely new river system.

Biography:

Matt Corpolongo is a Ph.D. student at the University of Oklahoma. In May of 2015, he earned his M.A. in history from the University of Oklahoma under the advisement of Dr. Kathleen Brosnan. His thesis, "A River in Reverse: An Environmental History of the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, 1890-1900," discussed issues of urban-environmental history, while integrating engineering and legal sources with history of science. Prior to his time at the University of Oklahoma, he earned a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Central Oklahoma. He is currently an officer of the University of Oklahoma's chapter of Phi Alpha Theta.

Participant Information:

Joseph Otto  
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Affiliation: University of Oklahoma

Prospectus:

This paper looks at interactions between different layers of government regarding water conservation in a small watershed in the upper Mississippi River Valley: the Skunk River Basin in Iowa. Between 1930 and 1980 water management there developed around pre-existing local government structures called drainage districts. After 1940, water conservation became a founding principle of Soil Conservation Districts (SCDs). Annual reports from SCDs reveal changes in conservation practices. Longstanding practices of local drainage for agriculture became combined with much more inclusive, national issues like soil erosion and flood control. Between 1940 and 1980 SCDs in the Skunk River Valley used state and federal subsidies to enlarge public infrastructures meant for that purpose. Although initially created to serve a variety of public needs, SCD managers administered policy based on the economic needs of county farmers. Approaches varied based on funding, weather patterns, and location within the watershed, but all SCDs worked to build infrastructures more capable of discharging water out of the valley and into the Mississippi River. This paper finds that by prioritizing water management for crop production, SCDs in the Skunk Valley often neglected and sometimes obstructed efforts to build more effective flood control infrastructures.

Biography:

Joseph Otto is a doctoral candidate at the University of Oklahoma. His dissertation is a study of water management in the agricultural Midwest. Before attending Oklahoma, Joseph earned degrees from Appalachian State University, East Carolina University, and Iowa State University.

He is an avid canoe paddler and has a long-term goal of promoting public outdoor recreation in agricultural states lacking large public land areas. He is a former officer of the Midwestern History Association.

Participant Information:

Maria E. Howe

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Affiliation: Iowa State University

Prospectus:

This paper examines the history of the Little Sioux Watershed Project (LSWP) in western Iowa, a federal “pilot project” authorized by the U.S. Congress under the 1936 Flood Control Act. What changes did the creation and operation of the project bring for the landscape of the watershed, the community, and the law? How did the LSWP change farming patterns and did the project help or hurt the ecological and economic health of the region? Who supported the LSWP, who benefitted from it, and who paid for it? Further, how did the implementation of the project challenge property rights? This paper finds that in the end, the history of the LSWP is a history of unintended consequences. The project successfully drained the valley to make the

cultivation of more profitable crops possible, but the flora and fauna of the wet prairie were all largely displaced, and the valley was drained so well that irrigation became necessary. Further, economic success was not universal. Despite the project, many farmers faced bankruptcy and decline, especially during the farm crisis of the 1980s. And the project, designed to support private landowners, ironically necessitated restrictions on private property rights and the due process protections of the Constitution. Ultimately, this paper will offer connections between federal water projects and the development of Midwestern agriculture, and shed light on the many environmental, social, and legal consequences of moving water from one place to another.

### Biography:

Maria Howe is a doctoral candidate at Iowa State University. Her dissertation is a study of twentieth century federal water projects in the Missouri River basin. She is particularly interested in environmental and legal history, as well as the history of the Trans-Mississippi West. She is a licensed attorney with experience practicing water and environmental law. She earned her M.A. in history at Iowa State, her J.D. at the University of Denver, and her bachelor's degree from Regis University. She is the Communications Director for the Midwestern History Association and the President of the history department's graduate student association at Iowa State. She enjoys canoeing and rafting down rivers in the Midwest or out West, and is an avid supporter of live local music.

Panel 2:

## Circuits of Struggle: Local and Global Networks of Activists and Ideas in the Black Midwestern Protest Tradition

Scholarship on the Black Freedom Movement (BFM) has undergone significant development over the past four decades. Historian Steven Lawson has organized this scholarship into three consecutive waves. The first emerged in the movement's wake and focused primarily on national actors and top-down political struggles, culminating in a series of legislative and judicial victories. In contrast, the second wave shifted attention to the grassroots, placing primacy on local actors and indigenous African American organizations and institutions to movement mobilization. Finally, in the third wave scholars sought, in the words of Adam Fairclough, to *synthesize* these local and national perspectives, paying attention to the ways in which external structural realities such as the post-war political economy, anti-colonial struggles, and Cold War liberalism shaped the range of opportunities as well as strategies and tactics available to



grassroots activists. With each successive generation of scholarship, the complex circulation of ideas, tactics, and actors in Black freedom struggles becomes more apparent.

While we distance ourselves from “long-movement” scholarship, our panel proposes to use this third wave synthesis approach as a launching point to discuss the ways in which people and ideas *circulated* in the Black Midwestern protest tradition. Despite their geographical location in the so-called “isolated” heartland of the United States, Midwestern Black freedom fighters relied upon much broader political and intellectual networks to mount effective struggles to topple local structures of racial injustice and social inequity. These important circuits of struggle - including domestic labor and civil rights networks, as well as potent internationalist and anti-colonial movements overseas - cast their imprint on Midwestern movements, providing important human and ideological resources.

Individual panelists and their topics include:

**Alonzo Ward** focuses on the Black population in Illinois before the Great Migration, and their utilization of protest strategies to fight against statewide anti-Black legislation that prevented them from securing viable labor. Through a series of national and state conventions, Afro-Illinoisans developed a rich (and overlooked) heritage of protest through a variety of Black-led institutions in an effort to defend their civil rights and their right to work in the face of an increasingly hostile labor movement.

**Dave Bates** argues that African American migrants who settled in Chicago in the early 20th century had a complicated relationship to organized labor. Trapped between the paternalism of employers, the racially inclusive rhetoric (and racially divisive practices) of unions, and the influence of the local black community, black Chicagoans ultimately eschewed “Jim Crow unionism” for racially based organizing, particularly after the Race Riot of 1919.

Examining the experience of Black activists in Cleveland, **Stephanie Seawell** asserts that these individuals drew from domestic Black Freedom and international anti-colonial movements to circulate a localized, early vision of Black Power. This vision was particularly important in shaping a response to the increased policing of black youths’ access to public spaces and challenging the escalating of criminalization of black young people.

**Kerry Pimblott** demonstrates that Black Power activists in the isolated town of Cairo, Illinois engaged in a dynamic and transnational circulation of anti-colonial ideas designed to counter notions of Western materialism, individualism, and capitalism.

Centered on the Ferguson uprising, **Ashley Howard** argues that both individual and collective recognition of systemic oppression as well as a political vocabulary to articulate this knowledge, are necessary conditions to foment a twenty-first century revolt. The circulation of these ideas transcend national boundaries creating feelings of solidarity amongst international marginalized populations through the use of social media.

Panelist Bios:

Alonzo Ward is an assistant professor at Illinois College specializing in African American, African, and Urban histories. [Alonzoward67@yahoo.com](mailto:Alonzoward67@yahoo.com)

Dave Bates is the project director for the Library of Congress's Teaching with Primary Sources at DePaul University. [Dbates2@depaul.edu](mailto:Dbates2@depaul.edu)

Stephanie Seawell is the executive director of the Illinois Labor History Society. [steaphseawell@gmail.com](mailto:steaphseawell@gmail.com)

Kerry Pimblott is an assistant professor in African and African American history at the University of Wyoming. [kpimblot@uwyo.edu](mailto:kpimblot@uwyo.edu)

Ashley Howard (chair) is an assistant professor of history and the director of African and African American studies at Loyola University New Orleans. [Ahoward2@loyno.edu](mailto:Ahoward2@loyno.edu)

St. Louis University Conference

## 'African Americans in the Nineteenth-Century West'

Event Details: **May 20, Pere Marquette Gallery, DuBourg Hall**

The Department of History at Saint Louis University will host a research symposium, "African Americans in the Nineteenth-Century West," Friday, May 20 and Saturday, May 21. The programs and panel discussions will include history scholars from across the country. The symposium also includes a workshop for St. Louis City teachers Monday, May 23.

Highlights of the symposium include:

### **Friday, May 20**

All Friday sessions are free and open to the public and the SLU community, however registration is required. Events include:

- "St. Louis Research Resources in African American History" roundtable discussion chaired by John Hoover of the Mercantile Library
- Keynote address by [\*\*Quintard Taylor, Jr.\*\*](#), professor of history at the University of Washington, noted scholar and editor of the Race and Culture in the American West series.

### **Saturday, May 21**

All Saturday sessions are open to the public and the SLU community; however, they include fees and registration. Topics include:

- The International West
- Western Political Activism
- New Ways of Building Western Community
- Slavery, War, and Reconstruction in the West

Friday and Saturday sessions will take place in Pere Marquette Gallery in DuBourg Hall. The teacher's workshop on Monday will be held in room 254 of Busch Student Center.

## H-Midwest

### Introducing the Profiling Midwest Collections Blog

by Andrea Truitt

After seeing the various notifications in your inbox this week and last, H-Midwest is excited to formally announce the [Profiling Midwest Collections blog](#)! As its name implies, it gathers together descriptions of archives and collections related to local-, state-, and regional histories in the Midwest. We currently have fifteen profiles from institutions including university museums, libraries, and archives; state libraries and offices; the Archdiocese of Cincinnati; and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, to name some.

For those who emailed the network and have contributed the text and images, we extend a big thank-you for your participation and your patience while we got things up and running!

For those of you who may want to contribute to the blog, we are always [soliciting brief descriptions](#) of institutions, research centers, or specific archival collections that address any aspect of Midwestern history, culture, and life, including manuscript collections, audio-visual materials, and collections relating to Midwestern art, film, material- and visual culture. If you would like us to include your institution on the blog, please send us the following information, emailed to [editorial-midwest@mail.h-net.msu.edu](mailto:editorial-midwest@mail.h-net.msu.edu).

1. Name of Institution
2. Location
3. URLs to Institution or collection-specific webpage(s)
4. Name of Collection(s)
5. Description of the institution and collection, highlighting any key materials
6. Relevant image(s); 0-3; please make sure that copyright is observed, and please let us know how we should credit the image

### Theses and Dissertations in Progress

by Chandler Lighty

The editors of H-Midwest seek to develop and maintain a list of theses and dissertations in progress about the Midwest. We would also welcome information on non-thesis applied projects being developed by graduate students in museum studies, public history, digital humanities, etc. We are interested in graduate research focused on the Midwest region as a whole, comparative studies, and research concentrating on Midwestern sub-regions (Great Lakes, Great Plains, et al), states, or localities.

We encourage graduate students to let us know of their projects currently in progress, and for scholars who have completed their degrees to please let us know that information as well. We also would welcome updates from thesis and dissertation committee members about Midwestern-focused graduate research in progress.

Please email updates with the following information formatted as such:

- Last name, First name
- Type: M.A. thesis, Ph.D. dissertation, or non-thesis applied projects
- University Affiliation
- Department
- Project title
- Advisor
- Anticipated completion date

Please send responses and queries to [editorial-midwest@mail.h-net.msu.edu](mailto:editorial-midwest@mail.h-net.msu.edu).