RE-WORKING CLASS:
A NEW AGENDA FOR CANADIAN LABOUR AND WORKING-CLASS HISTORY

October 13-14, 2018
St. Thomas More College,
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LABOUR/LE TRAVAIL

Canadian Committee on Labour History
Comité Canadien sur L’histoire du Travail

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Re-Working Class Agenda

This two-day symposium aims to reassess the study and teaching of the history of the Canadian working class in order to chart a positive path for future study and activism. Re-Working Class will reflect on the past, present and future of working-class history and the working-class experience, assessing old debates and raising new ones, charting new directions for the field, and exploring how we might reinvigorate the study and teaching of labour.

Since the first issue of *Labour/Le Travail* in 1976, working-class history has evolved as a vibrant field of study, although the questions that animate the field have changed over time. Trends in historical study have veered away from examinations of class, labour mobilization and unions, yet we believe that analyzing work and class relations, in conjunction with other axis of power such as ‘race,’ gender, colonialism and sexuality, remains central to our understanding of history, as well as current debates about economic inequality, capitalism and the lives of working people. Within and outside the university, there are some encouraging signs of revitalized debates within working-class history, political economy, public history, the labour movement and the left.
Schedule

Saturday, 13 October

Opening Session, 8:30 – 10:30

Fanning the Flames of Discontent: Tools and Techniques for Teaching Labour History

Mark Leier, “Solidarity on Occasion: Free Speech Fights and Contemporary Social Movements”

Andrea Samoil, “Scripted Celebration: Issues in Commemorating Modern Labour History”

John-Henry Harter, “Rewinding Labour History: Teaching the Present to Learn the Past”

Dale M McCarney “Labour History and International Students: the potential to disrupt neoliberal logics”

Facilitator: Alvin Finkel

10:45-12:15, Concurrent Sessions

(a) Making Working Class History Accessible: Oral Histories and Technology in the Preservation of Labour History

Don Wren, Local “Technology and the Preservation of Local Union History”

Alberta Labour History Institute and the Preservation of Oral Histories:

Alvin Finkel, Eric Strikewenda, Donna Coombs-Montrose, (ALHI)

Facilitator: Andrea Samoil
10:45-12:15, Concurrent Sessions Cont.

(b) Panel Discussion: Reassessing the Left, Political Policing, Ethnicity and Internment History

Rhonda Hinther, Kassandra Luciuk, and Jim Mochoruk

**Facilitator: Mikhail Borge**

12:15-1:30, Lunch

1:30-3:00 Women’s Labour, Women’s Lives

Sarah Jessup, “From Harassment and Bullying to Deadly Violence: The Murder of Lori Dupont and Understanding of Workplace Safety”


Kiera Mitchell “Crafting a Studio: Beth Hone, Labour and Artistic Practice in the Prairies West”

**Facilitator Joan Sangster**

3:15-4:45, Concurrent Sessions

(a) Transnational Ideas, Intellectuals, Ideologies

Kirk Niergarth, “Workers See the World: Worker Delegates in the Soviet Union, 1930-37”


**Facilitator: Jim Naylor**
3:15-4:45, Concurrent Sessions Cont.

(b) 19th Century Labour: Race, Racism and Working-class Militancy
Joseph Burton, “Revolutionary reformism: The IWW and Working-Class Empowerment
Matthew Greaves, “Between Agency and (Emerging) Structure: Racialized Social Relations and Work Refusals in Vancouver Island Coal Mining, 1849-1853”

Facilitator: Sarah Nickel

6:30, Dinner

Sunday, 14 October

9:00-10:30, Concurrent Sessions

(a) Militant Labour and Its Allies
Mason Godden, “Flashpoints for Public and Union Mobilization in Ontario during the 1970s: The Role of Working women in Strike Support Campaigns”
Meghan Longstaffe “ Re-Framing Labour as Activism: Indigenous Women’s Community Work in Downtown Eastside Vancouver, 1960s-1980s”

Facilitator: Kirk Niergarth
9:00-10:30, Concurrent Sessions Cont.

(b) Conceptualizing the Working Class/Writing Working Class History

Dennis Pilon “Reconnaissance of Working Class Politics in Canada”

Charles Plante “A Sociological and Quantitative Summary of Recent and Developments Trends in Canada’s Working Class”

Mikhail Borge "Hot Power and Cold Politics - Challenges and Opportunities in Working Class History"

Facilitator: Charles Smith

10:45-12:30 History of the Present: Revitalizing Working-Class Resistance

Jim Selby, “Transforming Hearts of Stone: The Need for Revolutionary Vision in Working-class organizations”

Paul Gray and Jordan House, “Re Working Class in Canada’s Largest Workplace: the Toronto Airport Workers Council at Pearson International”

Facilitator: Dennis Pilon
Abstracts

Fanning the Flames of (Dis) Content: Tools and Techniques for Teaching Labour History

Labour historians reach out to many different audiences: union activists, ESL/EAL students, "traditional" university students from dissimilar disciplines, non-union activists, and others. Each of these audiences poses new questions about outcomes, methods, goals, tools, and techniques. Members of this panel will share their work in delivering labour history to different groups in different forms, from walking tours to classrooms to graphic novels to role-playing to lectures and seminars to present ideas and experiences to help us rethink how and what we teach.

Mark Leier “Solidarity on Occasion: Free Speech Fights and Contemporary Social Movements”

Labour history can give us insights into contemporary problems faced by activists and unionists. This presentation will outline how a historical event, the Vancouver, BC free speech fight of 1912, is combined with a role-playing exercise, “Four Roles of Social Activism,” to deliver a lesson in labour history and explore ways to overcome some of the causes of division in the contemporary labour movement.

Andrea Samoil “Scripted Celebration: Issues in Commemorating Modern Labour History”

In 2016 the Alberta Labour History Institute (ALHI) marked the 30th anniversary of a strike wave and general working class groundswell of activism in Alberta with several events around the
province. This presentation will discuss how the goals of teaching younger workers about 1986 and using that history to support a free discussion about modern solidarity efforts were complicated and possibly thwarted by the desire to celebrate the efforts of veteran activists and leaders. It will address the questions of could the ALHI organizers have done better? If so, how?

John-Henry Harter “Rewinding Labour History: Teaching the Present to Learn the Past”

This paper examines how using and teaching contemporary labour issues are an effective way to teach labour history. By turning the chronological, “march through time” narrative of much history this presentation will challenge certain notions of presentism in the teaching of history. It will also examine the pedagogical and methodological issues of using present day experiences as a way into the past. This presentation will address how I use my students’ and my own personal experiences to better understand labour history and as a means for reinvigorating the teaching of labour studies and labour history.

Dale M. McCartney “Labour History and International Students: The Potential to Disrupt Neoliberal Logics”

Popular media often frame international students as globetrotting elites who do not share the perspective of local students. But as an instructor at an international student college, I have seen that the students reflect the complexity of contemporary global capitalism. Institutions recruit international students with the same promises of job security and
potential class mobility that appeal to Canadian students. Yet when they arrive they, like most students, are indoctrinated into neoliberal ideologies. Labour history offers a powerful tool for challenging these ideologies. This presentation will discuss my experiences teaching history in a private, for-profit institution catering to international students, and will make an argument for the potential of labour history and critical pedagogy to disrupt the neoliberal frameworks that shape international student recruitment.

Making Working Class History Accessible: Oral Histories and Technology in the Preservation of Labour History

Don Wren “Technology and the Preservation of Local Union History”

Technology offers unprecedented opportunities for research, preservation and dissemination of labour history. This presentation describes a process and tools for documenting local union history using oral history, primary and secondary sources. The process is unique in that all materials, including audio, video and image files are assembled into a website through which a user may access materials in one place. This technique, based on the methodology of Project Jukebox from the University of Alaska Fairbanks, should be of interest to most working in the field of labour studies because of the opportunity to reach wider audiences. An example, a 22 day strike at SaskTel of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers will be discussed to show how this tool might be utilized.
Since 1999, the Alberta Labour History Institute (ALHI) has played a large role in collecting videographed oral histories of working people in Alberta and weaving them together with documentary and secondary sources in films, booklets, a book, annual calendars, and a website that features all of those elements. We have also sponsored workshops, conferences, film showings, and speakers to link our work with other efforts to capture working-class life and histories, both within Alberta and beyond. Though we are a group of volunteers without a formal connection to any labour organization, we have partnered with the Alberta Federation of Labour, the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees, and other labour organizations. Our work includes interviews that focus on gender, race, ethnicity, civil society organizations with working-class leadership outside of unions, precarious labour, and temporary foreign workers. Our presentation will focus on our efforts to expand our collection of interviews to create a comprehensive collection of working-class stories and to interpret those materials in various ways that respect both the participation of our interviewees and scholarly efforts to interpret various sources and deal with conflicts among them.
“Reassessing the Left, Political Policing, Ethnicity, and Internment History”

This roundtable will speak to crucial new insights historians are offering up on the far left’s various encounters with political policing, criminalization, and incarceration from the First World War through the Cold War.

Kassandra Luciuk will discuss how most Ukrainian internees during WWI were proletarianized, if not also members of the organized Ukrainian left. While the internment of radicals following the First Red Scare was a blatant political action, the first phase of internment has long been assumed as an explicitly racial project. However, a rigorous interrogation of Ukrainian leftist newspapers, memoirs, and archival documents reveals that internment was a targeted and systematic scheme aimed at the left. This research enriches the depiction of Ukrainian internees and reinserts their socio-political outlooks into this story. Perhaps more significantly, this project hopes to intervene in the dominant narrative and depoliticized historiography produced by the redress campaign of the 1980s.

James Mochoruk: While much has been written about the impact of civilian internment on the individuals and ethnic communities who were singled out for incarceration, relatively little has been written about the effect that the Defence of Canada Regulations had upon the institutions which these people had helped to build. Taking the pro-Communist portion of the Ukrainian-Canadian community as its example and Winnipeg’s People’s
Co-operative as its particular case study, Mochoruk’s presentation will show how one left-wing institution was thrust into a profound crisis as a result of the use of the DofC Regulations. This case study will also demonstrate the state’s determination – at both the national and local level - to use the opportunity provided by the crisis of wartime to destroy the nation’s pro-Communist left.

Rhonda Hinther will speak about her research on family experiences of left internment, grounded in a book manuscript she is currently completing on the Walsh/Weir/Boyd family. Many of the activist men in the family were incarcerated without charge during WWII (though one remained on the lam, but able to ‘hide’ in plain sight, thanks to a case of mistaken identity). The women – sisters and wives – toiled, in various ways for the men’s release, while also carrying on with day-to-day life under considerable emotional, financial, political, personal, and social duress. Taking an intersectional approach, Hinther’s study points to the ways in which ethnic hall socialist communities intermingled and intermarried and how this in turn shaped family life and activist strategy during times of crisis.

Women’s Labour, Women’s Lives

Sarah Jessup “From Harassment and Bullying to Deadly Violence: The Murder of Lori Dupont and Understanding of Workplace Safety”

In 2005, Lori Dupont was murdered in her hospital workplace by co-worker and former romantic partner, Marc Daniel. Despite clear warning
signs—harassment, bullying, and threatening behaviour—the hospital labeled the murder a case of domestic violence and denied responsibility. In 2009, Bill 168 amended the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) to officially designate domestic violence a potential risk along with other forms of harassment and violence in the workplace. This case study traces how the murder of Lori Dupont marked a shift in understandings of workplace safety in Ontario. Drawing on newspaper articles, legislation, coroner reports, and scholarly this research demonstrates how responses to the murder by the family, activist groups, and the Ontario Nurses Association (ONA), shaped awareness of violence against women. The murder of Lori Dupont continues to call attention to the need to reconsider how harassment is addressed in health and safety legislation and workplace policies.


Donica’s paper for this conference offers a preliminary exploration of two major strikes at BC Sugar’s Vancouver refinery: one in 1917, and one in 1973. BC Sugar — better known as Rogers Sugar — was western Canada’s largest sugar company throughout the 20th century. This paper will consider the following questions: What were BC Sugar’s workers’ main grievances? And, what roles did women play in the BC Sugar strikes?
Kiera Mitchell “Crafting a Studio: Beth Hone, Labour and Artistic Practice in the Prairies West”

This paper takes explores a community-specific example of an artist and her studio, applying it to the larger question of what histories get integrated into regional, provincial and national knowledge and, therefore, identity. It is centred on the figure of Beth Hone (b.1918-d.2011), a ceramics artist from Regina, Saskatchewan and the Hone-James Studio which she co-ran in Regina from 1968 to 1973. This paper will address the difficulties of both working and creating as a female artist, including establishing a successful studio in the mid-twentieth century in Saskatchewan. While art is often viewed as a solely creative or cerebral process, the reality includes physical exertion, financial cost and business acumen. An examination of the labour required to successfully establish oneself as an artist will be combined with a consideration of the intersection between gender and labour to pinpoint the specific challenges posed to women navigating a traditionally masculinist profession in terms of establishing legitimacy, securing government funding and providing community-based educational opportunities.

Transnational Ideas, Intellectuals, Ideologies

Kirk Niergarth “Workers see the ‘New World’: Worker Delegates in the Soviet Union, 1930-1937”

In a country in which Soviet publications were seized by customs and Soviet films were banned, J.F. White observed, there was only one sure way for Canadian workers to learn about the Soviet Union in the 1930s: to travel there and see it for
themselves. White, editor of Canadian Forum, accompanied five elected union delegates on a tour of the USSR in the fall of 1932 organized by the Friends of the Soviet Union [FSU]. Comparing the responses of worker delegates from this and subsequent 1930s tours provides insights into Soviet ‘techniques of hospitality’ and the aspects of Soviet society that workers were most anxious to discuss upon their return to Canada.


In the late 1940s, Hal Banks, a high-ranking official in the U.S. based Seafarers International Union (SIU) with a criminal record and a history of violence, was sent to organize Canadian sailors on the Great Lakes. He received initial support from the Canadian government and elements in the Canadian labor movement. Reports soon reached the Department of Labour alleging widespread corruption in Banks’s SIU and of violence and economic coercion being used to squelch dissent within his organization. By 1961 elements in the Canadian labor movement turned against Banks and forced the government to mount a public investigation, known as the Norris Commission. Similarly, in the U.S., Congressional hearings had made the president of the Teamsters Union, Jimmy Hoffa, into the most notorious symbol of labor racketeering. If government investigations made both men notorious, the two labor leaders also shared similar fates. Both men fell from power at about the same time. Studies on labor racketeering
in the United States routinely describe it as a problem distinctive to the U.S. Yet existing do not consider the case of Banks and the Canadian SIU. This paper will focus on how a comparison between the careers of Hoffa and Banks highlighting the similarities and the differences between the history of labor and union corruption in the United States and in Canada. This new line of inquiry sheds light on the sources of endemic corruption in particular unions in the U.S., as well as the reasons for why similar scandals in Canada have been rare.

Militant Labour and Its Allies

Mason Gooden, “Flashpoints for Public and Union Mobilization in Ontario during the 1970s: The Role of Working women in Strike Support Campaigns”

This presentation will examine how working women in Ontario mobilized both within and outside of the union to gain support for strike efforts in the 1970s. I will argue that given their social and economic positions in relation to capital, working women were uniquely poised in their ability to mobilize the broader community. To do this, I will look at the strike at Puretex, one in a series of thematically similar strikes, and explain the social and economic conditions that made the community able to strike, and how working women in particular demonstrated great leadership in organizing such mobilizations. In doing so, I aim to demonstrate that the 1970s in Canada were in fact a militant period for labour, particularly for working women who found themselves and their community caught up in strikes.
Sean Antaya, “The New Tendency”

This presentation will examine the Windsor branch of The New Tendency -- an autonomist Marxist organization which was active from 1973-1975 – as an example of the new revolutionary left organizations which emerged during the 1970s. For a few short years, The New Tendency was the hub of far-left activity in Windsor and operated as part of a global network of varied autonomist Marxist organizations based in industrial cities in Canada, Italy, Britain, and the United States. In particular, The New Tendency organized rank-and-file groups in Windsor’s automotive factories and developed the city’s women’s liberation and gay liberation movements. I analyze the New Tendency’s various initiatives in the community and the workplace, while also highlighting the contradictions inherent to the group’s theoretical perspectives. I conclude that, while the New Tendency’s organizing work which focused on workers’ self-activity marked a creative departure from the Old Left, the New Tendency experiment was held back by inner-group sectarianism and an extreme aversion to any organizational forms which could be perceived as “vanguardist.”


This paper will examine the feminist unions and labour organizations that working women established in Western Canada in the 1970s and 1980s, an important region and period of feminist and labour activism. Between 1970 and 1990,
women in British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan established several feminist unions and labour organizations, including the Service, Office, and Retail Workers’ Union of Canada; Edmonton Working Women, and Saskatchewan Working Women. These organizations represented a range of political perspectives and used different tools and strategies to achieve their aims, from workshops and hotlines to petitions and picket lines. Nevertheless, they had a common goal of eliminating sex-based disadvantages and a shared belief that women needed to use their power as workers to address the inequality they faced as women. Together, they made significant contributions to struggles to reduce gender inequality at work, in the labour movement, and in Canadian society. By examining these feminist unions and labour organizations alongside one another this paper will provide a regional analysis of feminist labour activism in Canada and a gendered analysis of Canadian labour organizing in the 1970s and 1980s.

Meghan Longstaffe “Re-Framing Labour as Activism: Indigenous Women’s Community Work in Downtown Eastside Vancouver, 1960s-1980s”

Katherine Ferry (Adams), a ’Nak’ waxda’ xw elder, marveled at her own tenacity as she recalled her community work in East Vancouver in the later decades of the twentieth century: “I often think about the work that I did, today. How did I ever do it? How did I ever do it?” Between the 1960s and 1980s, Ferry and her contemporary, Cree woman Margaret White, worked tirelessly to effect
change in the lives of Indigenous people in Downtown Eastside Vancouver. In this paper, I use pre-existing (archival) oral history interviews, documentary records, and newspaper reports to examine their responses to challenges experienced by Indigenous people living in this impoverished neighbourhood. My examination of Ferry and White’s grassroots community service builds upon growing scholarship in Indigenous women’s history to think through and reframe labour as social activism. Through their extensive – and unpaid – labour in the Downtown Eastside, Ferry and White created safer spaces for Indigenous women and families in the city; in so doing, they mitigated some of the impacts of settler colonialism in the lives of these individuals. Attention to the community-engaged labour of these women necessarily broadens historical understanding of postwar social movements.

19th Century Labour: Race, Racism and Working-class Militancy

Joseph Burton, “Revolutionary reformism: The IWW and Working-Class Empowerment

This paper will investigate the concept of reform as a strategic objective in the history of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW or “Wobblies”). For many historians, the IWW’s revolutionary unionism, or the integration of practical labour organization and revolutionary goals, constituted an incompatible synthesis which doomed it to failure. However, a careful examination of the Wobblies’ broader analysis of society and their strategies for workplace organization reveals a
much closer integration of reformism and revolution. As crucial interventions during the 1990s and 2000s have demonstrated, the IWW emerged as a response to the diminution of workers’ power at the point of production and other measures designed to increase labour productivity. By empowering workers to raise wages or address grievances themselves, the Wobblies’ method of reform was developed to facilitate, not forestall, revolution. This revolutionary reformism, I conclude, can help to inform contemporary labour struggles, where workers are more alienated from the work process than ever before.

Matthew Greaves, “Between Agency and (Emerging) Structure: Racialized Social Relations and Work Refusals in Vancouver Island Coal Mining, 1849-1853”

In January 1849, Vancouver Island was granted by charter to the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), including monopoly rights over the island's coalfield. The social and economic forces that followed HBC's transition to capitalist resource settlement at the north end would, however, invest the first colonial mining community, Fort Rupert, with a series of contradictions. This paper identifies and interprets these contradictions, as well as subsequent strikes and refusals by miners around the settlement, through a historical-materialist critique of resource colonialism and capitalist transition. The coal industry developed unevenly on Vancouver Island in its first years, marked by vestigial mercantilism, racialized distinctions between HBC's indentured European workers and
local Kwagu’ł miners, and a handful managerial incompetencies. Yet refusals to an emergent mining capital by both Kwagu’ł and European miners also reflected the liminal economic moment. Each group, though in different ways, found power in the company's inability to overcome durable mores and adequately organize capitalist extraction and trade. In tracing Fort Rupert's coal mining history, 1849 – 1853, this paper therefore attempts to tease out complex structural distinctions in the resistance of colonial and Indigenous workers, which in turn means to suggest the importance of Marxian analytic categories.

**Conceptualizing the Working Class/Writing Working Class History**

**Dennis Pilon “A Reconnaissance of Working Class History in Canada”**

A general theme of political science research on Canadian politics is that class has not been a defining feature of the country’s political contestation or political culture. The absence of nationally competitive left, labour or socialist party until the 1930s, and the inability of such parties to displace either of the two dominant governing parties, has been taken as conclusive proof that class issues are of minor importance to Canadians, and then only to a distinct minority of voters. While labour historians and sociologists have challenged such view with research demonstrating countless episodes of class conflict, their work has been largely ignored by Canadian political scientists. This paper intends contextualize the lack of attention to working class
politics from Canadian political science, specifically why it has been dismissed or ignored, and set a course for a revived approach to understanding the classed nature of Canadian politics. The approach will be two-fold: to uncover the ontological and methodological biases at work in conventional political science that help make class invisible and to sketch out how a reconnaissance of working class politics in Canada will uncover an historical polity rooted in class oppression and demonstrate the many ways it has been designed to reproduce it.

Charles Plante “A Sociological and Quantitative Summary of Recent and Developments Trends in Canada’s Working Class”

There is a long history of quantitative study of the working class in Canadian sociology. However, in recent years, despite a resurgence in mainstream interest in income inequality and mobility, this tradition has largely died out. In this paper, I identify leading historical sociological approaches to understanding and operationalizing the working class concept in our country. I then apply them using forty years of Statistics Canada labour and income data (1976-2015) to update the historical record. Working with these results I am able to provide preliminary answers to a number of interesting questions, including: Is the working class growing or shrinking in Canada as a whole and among the various provinces? Are they seeing their prospects improve in terms of education, income, and health? Is the face of Canada’s working class changing? That is, is the Canadian working class less male, of European descent,
Central Canadian, middle-aged, and married than it has been in the past? Which groups continue to remain largely excluded? Finally, how does how we conceptualize and operationalize Canada’s working class affect our answers to these questions?

**History of the Present: Revitalizing Working-Class Resistance**

Jim Selby, “Transforming Hearts of Stone: The Need for Revolutionary Vision in Working-class organizations”

The labour movement has been unable to effectively respond to the neoliberal employer offensive. Social democratic political parties, which have largely jettisoned official ties to labour and moved toward the political centre, have been unable to preserve, let alone advance the working class economic and social and gains of the past. Since labour historians represent an academic current that has sought to engage society through action as well as progressive scholarship, the present malaise/quiescence of working class organizations has blunted the sharp edge of labour history. This paper argues that it is the absence of an effective organized radical voice and convincing revolutionary vision within the labour movement, other working class organizations, and the formal political sphere that is the underlying problem that needs to be addressed in order to revitalize the labour movement, working class politics, and that section of labour history that sees value in praxis. I argue a deeply radical transformation of unions, working class organization, and workers’ conception of the democratic process is needed to
move beyond the sterile ‘business union’ model and the failed social democratic experiment. I suggest an immediate preliminary step in this direction from the perspective of a labour activist.

**Paul Gray and Jordan House, “Re Working Class in Canada’s Largest Workplace: the Toronto Airport Workers Council at Pearson International”**

Gray and House will discuss recent worker organizing efforts at Pearson Airport that attempt to go beyond the sectionalism of most of the unions in Canada’s largest workplace (just under 50,000 workers and 12 different unions). They will speak about the Toronto Airport Workers' Council, an airport based council that is open to any airport worker, irrespective of job or union, and which is led by stewards and rank and file workers in the creation of common, airport-wide demands. They will also speak about groups doing popular education and organizer training with the TAWC.

**Biographies**

**Sean Antaya** is completing his MA in Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies at Trent University and will be beginning a PHD in York University’s Political Science program in the fall of 2018. His research examines the labour movement and the New Left in Canada in the 1970s. Sean was formerly the Steward for CUPE 3908 at Trent University.

**Donica Belisle** is an Associate Professor of History at the University of Regina. She is the author of the book, *Retail Nation: Department Stores and the Making of Modern Canada* (UBC Press 2011), as
well as the forthcoming book, *Consuming Women: Citizenship and Identity in the Twentieth Century* (under review). She is currently researching the rise (and fall) of the Canadian sugar industry.

**Dr. Mikhail Bjorge** is a historian of economics and working-class collective action. He was previously a letter carrier, organizer, and shop steward for the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. Mikhail's dissertation, "The Workers' War: The Character of Class Struggle in World War II," recently completed at Queen's University, examines how the proletariat were able to advance their interests through direct action in opposition to the power of the state and capital. Mikhail's current projects involve modifying his dissertation into a monograph and researching radical and revolutionary theatre in interwar Canada.

**Joseph Burton** is a first year PhD student with the Department of History at Simon Fraser University, and has previously studied at the University of New Brunswick (BA in History) and the University of Cambridge (MPhil in Political Sociology). He is interested in the histories of anarchism and Marxism, national and transnational labour movements, and the role of the intellectual in radical social formations. His research examines the transmission of anarchist ideas and strategy during the 1940s and 1950s, by focusing on the life of IWW activist and historian Frederick Thompson. He is interested in the way Thompson learned from the organizational successes and failures of the IWW during the early twentieth century, and how he adapted Wobbly
pedagogy and revolutionary objectives to new material conditions and opportunities.

**Donna Coombs-Montrose** has a long history of union experience in Trinidad, where she was the first professional librarian employed by the Oilfields Workers Trade Union, and in Alberta, where she was a long-time executive member and activist in the Non-Academic Staff Association. A librarian and archivist by training, she has been involved in ALHI since its formation and is a member of our Board of Directors. Donna has an MSLS and her many community activities in Edmonton have included being president for many years of the Cariwest Festival, and an active participant in the Caribbean Women's Network, the Trinidad and Tobago Cultural Association, and the Living History Group.

**Alvin Finkel** is professor emeritus of History at Athasca University, president of ALHI since 2016, and an activist in the organization since 1999, former president of the Canadian Committee on Labour History (2008-14), former editor of *Prairie Forum* (1984-93), and former book review editor of *Labour/Le Travail* (2000-11). He is author, co-author, or co-editor of 13 books and about 50 scholarly book chapters and articles. He was the lead author and editor of *Working People in Alberta: A History*, an ALHI effort in conjunction with CCLH and published by Athabasca University Press in 2012. His latest book, to be published in May, 2018 is *Compassion: A Global History of Social Policy*. 

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Mason Godden holds an honours B.A. in History from Trent University, and is currently a first-year M.A. candidate in Trent’s Canadian and Indigenous studies program. His thesis work, which he will begin writing in 2018, will examine the relationship between working women, strikes, and community mobilizations in the 1960s and 1970s. In the summer of 2017, his first popular history publication was made available by the Horse Racing Hall of Fame, and examined the 250 years of horse-breeding and racing that evolved in Upper Canada before Confederation.

Paul Christopher Gray is an Associate Professor (LTA) with the Department of Labour Studies, Brock University. He recently published From the Streets to the State: Changing the World by Taking Power (SUNY Press).

Matthew Greaves is a Doctoral Candidate (ABD) in the School of Communication at Simon Fraser University and member of the Applied Communication and Technology (ACT) Lab. He's held Limited Term and Sessional Lecturer positions in SFU’s Communication and Labour Studies programs. His research is located at the intersection of Marxian theory and the philosophy of technology. His dissertation research explores technical change in Vancouver Island's coal mines before the First World War and the origins of industrial capitalism in what would become British Columbia. Matthew's work has appeared in Rethinking Marxism, The International Journal of Technology, Knowledge and Society, New Proposals, The Canadian Journal of Communication, and an
edited collection on the philosophy of Andrew Feenberg.

**John-Henry Harter** is an historian and a Lecturer in Labour Studies at Simon Fraser University. His research focus is on Working Class history, Environmental History, and Popular Culture. He has published *New Social Movements, Class, and the Environment: A Case Study of Greenpeace Canada* and writes the pop culture column for *Canadian Dimension* Magazine.

**Rhonda L. Hinther** is an Associate Professor of History at Brandon University (BU) and an active public historian. She has published in *Manitoba History, Atlantis*, and *Labour/le travail*. Her article, “Raised in the Spirit of the Class Struggle: Children, Youth, and the Interwar Ukrainian Left in Canada” (*Labour/le travail*, 2007) won the Canadian Historical Association’s Neil Sutherland Prize. She is co-editor, with Jim Mochoruk, of *Re-imagining Ukrainian-Canadians: History, Politics, and Identity* (UTP, 2011) and a forthcoming edited collection on Canadian internment history. Her newest book is entitled *Perogies and Politics: Canada’s Ukrainian Left, 1891-1991* (UTP, 2018). Hinther has curated numerous museum exhibitions and has consulted on and appeared in several historical documentaries.

**Jordan House** is a PhD student in the Department of Politics at York University. His research interests include the political economy of punishment and labour movement renewal and strategy. His doctoral dissertation examines prisoner-worker organizing in Canada.
Sarah Jessup is a PhD student in the Canadian Studies program at Trent University. Her research examines the relationship between policy, gender, and workplace harassment and violence in Ontario work settings. In particular, her doctoral research focuses on workplace bullying within the broader scope of workplace aggression and considers the connection between bullying and other forms of hostility in the workplace, including physical violence, domestic violence, and sexual harassment.

Mark Leier is a professor in the History department at Simon Fraser University. He has taught labour history to university students, trade unionists, and activists. He is the author of Bakunin: The Creative Passion and Rebel Life: The Life and Times of Robert Gosden: Revolutionary, Mystic, and Labour Spy.

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alongside women’s creative resilience and labour in the face of these conditions.

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Jim Mochoruk earned his Ph.D. from the University of Manitoba in 1992 and has taught at the University of North Dakota since 1993. In his various publications he has explored the history of northern development in Canada and the social, ethnic, political, and labor history of western Canada. His book-length publications include, *The People’s Co-op: The Life and Times of a North End Institution* (Halifax: 2000); “Formidable Heritage:” Manitoba’s North and the Cost of Development, 1870 to 1930 (Winnipeg: 2004); and *Re-Imagining Ukrainian-Canadians: History, Politics and Identity* (Toronto: 2011), a collection of essays co-edited with Rhonda Hinther.

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Jim Selby has been a researcher in the labour movement for 36 years, first with the Alberta Federation of Labour and now as a Research Officer with the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE). He has taught labour history to trade unionists for much of that time and has written one desultory article for *Labour/Le Travail*.

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David Witwer received his MA and PhD in American history from Brown University. He has published two books, Corruption and Reform in the Teamsters Union (2003), and Shadow of the Racketeer: Scandal in Organized Labor (2009). The latter book received Labor History’s prize for The Best Book on Labor History in 2009. He has also published articles in the Journal of American History, Labor History, Journalism History, International Labor and Working-Class History, Social Science History, Labor: Studies in Working-Class History, and the Journal of Women’s History, among others. He has received a Visiting Fellowship from the Shelby Cullom Davis Center for Historical Studies at Princeton University and a Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities. He is a professor of History and American Studies at Penn State Harrisburg, where he also serves as the Director of Honors Programs. He is currently finishing a book on Cold War America’s encounter with labor racketeering.
Don Wren has been a union activist for over 30 years and currently works as a Human Rights Advocate for his local. He has degrees in Anthropology, Electronics, Canadian History, and Indigenous Studies. He has also completed certificates in Adult Education, Community Leadership, and Organizational Leadership. Don is a 2010 graduate of the Labour College of Canada. His papers and publications include: “The Doors to Aleut Orthodoxy” in Researching with Communities (Muddy Creek Press, 2010); “Slaves and Sinners: Metaphoric Representations of Pribilovian Aleuts”; “The Foundation of the House of Labour: Union Education and Freirean Pedagogy”; and “Successes in Aboriginal Education: Education in Russian America.”
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