



The
Texas
Center
for
Working-Class
Studies
Conference

February 20, 2020
Collin College
Plano Campus, Plano, TX



Welcome to The Texas Center for Working-Class Studies Conference 2020

Today's Program at a Glance

8:00-8:30 a.m.—Registration/Coffee, Living Legends Conference Center

8:30-9:45 a.m.—Session 1 (see detailed session information)

10:00-11:15 a.m. — Keynote Address

Living Legends Conference Center, Room C

- **Welcome**, Dr. Abe Johnson, Vice President/Provost, Plano Campus, Collin College
- **Student Writing Contest Winners**, Dr. Lisa A. Kirby, Collin College
- **Keynote Introduction**, Professor Barbara Stern, Collin College
- **Keynote Address**, Barbara Jensen, “College, Culture, and Classism”

11:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m.—Luncheon Session

Living Legends Conference Center, Room C

- **Announcement of the Ruth A. Allen Pioneer in Texas Working-Class Studies Award**, Dr. Kyle Wilkison, Collin College

- **“The Working Life in Texas”**

Session Chair: Dr. Michael Phillips, Collin College

- **Lee Dougherty**, Fight for \$15; Paid Sick Leave Campaigns in Dallas
- **Arash Farast**, Workers Defense Project
- **Stephanie Kopnang**, Unite Here
- **Diane Olortegui**, Workers’ Defense Project
- **Tevita Uhatafe**, Transport Workers Union, Asian Pacific American Alliance
- **Steve Ruiz**, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
- **Pauline Mims**, United Auto Workers

1:00-2:15 p.m. — Session 2 (see detailed session information)

2:30-3:45 p.m. — Session 3 (see detailed session information)

Session I: 8:30 - 9:45 a.m.

1.1: Issues of Inequality, Conference Center A

Session Chair: Laura Hicks, Collin College

- **Paul Dean**, Ohio Wesleyan University, “Lifting While We Rise: First-Gen Graduates Giving Back”
- **Jillian Yarbrough**, West Texas A&M University, “Exclusionary and Biased Interview Questions”
- **Shannon Simmons**, Texas Woman’s University, “Financial Identity Dissonance in Adoption”

1.2: Roundtable: “The Struggle is Real: Student Hunger and Poverty in Our Classrooms,” Conference Center B

Session Chairs: Lari Ranta and Zack Shipley, Collin College

- **Students from the Learning Community Course**, “Hoping for Change,” Collin College

1.3: Culture and Class, Conference Center D

Session Chair: Cathleen Brooks, Collin College

- **Brittany Moore**, Collin College, “You’ve Got that ‘One Thing’: Socio-Economic Status as Entry and Exit in Western Boybands”
- **Samuel Tullock**, Collin College, “John Bunyan and Emerging Working-Class Consciousness”
- **Simon Lee**, Texas State University, “The Uses of Nostalgia: Contours of Memory in Working-Class Culture”

1.4: Panel: “Eugenics, Whiteness, and the Marginalization of African-American Workers,” Conference Center E

Session Chair, Rachel Gunter, Collin College

- **Katherine Walters**, Texas State Historical Association, “Saving White Supremacy: Women Primary Suffrage in Texas”
- **Michael Phillips**, Collin College, “A Serviceable Villain: Eugenics and the Fear of the ‘Underman’ in Texas Thought and Culture”
- **Keith Volanto**, Collin College, “‘Up in Arms’: Local Protests vs. the Placement of Black CCC Camps in Texas” (presented by Kyle Wilkison, Collin College)

Keynote



Barbara Jensen is a counseling and community psychologist and the author of *Reading Classes: On Culture and Classism in America*. In her 40 years of counseling work, she has focused on community mental health, psychiatric patients, women's issues, trauma victims, offenders, the problems unique to artistic people, and more.

She taught at Metropolitan State University for 20 years, while maintaining a private practice and

also worked with adolescents as a high school counselor for 25 years. This keynote will look at higher education through the lens of social class, working-class cultures and examine classism, the largely invisible "ism." Jensen will discuss her original theory of different social classes having fundamental cultural differences, focusing in particular on professional middle- and working-class cultural expectations and how they conflict. Jensen is grateful for and proud of her working-class background and implores others to not lose their working-class roots, based in cooperation and mutual aid.



"Jamila at Work" (2019)
oil on canvas

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Jamila Jagours on Instagram at
ms_j_draws

Awards

The Ruth A. Allen Pioneer in Texas Working-Class Studies Award

Dr. Zaragosa Vargas is Professor Emeritus in the Department of History at



the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where he taught, conducted research, and trained new historians for many years. Among his students is the award-winning labor historian Max Krochmal.

His research and teaching encompasses “working class history; work, race, gender, and class; the history of working women; transnational labor migration; comparative race relations; radical and social movements; and social and political history” (UNC). His numerous scholarly writings include the seminal masterpiece *Labor Rights Are Civil Rights: Mexican American Workers in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton University Press, 2007). Vargas is currently working on a history of Mexican Americans in the early Civil Rights movement, with an emphasis on labor rights. Vargas is the co-recipient of the 2020 Ruth A. Allen Pioneer in Working-Class Studies Award.



Dr. Monica Perales received her Ph.D. in history from Stanford University in 2004 and has earned fellowships including the 2006-2007 Summerlee Fellowship at the Clements Center for Southwest Studies at Southern Methodist University and serves on the Board of the Labor and Working-Class History Association. Perales teaches Chicana/o labor and social history, immigration, American West, Borderlands and oral history.

Her research explores questions of race, gender, nation, labor, community, and identity on the border. Her first book, *Smelertown: Making and Remembering a Southwest Border Community* (University of North Carolina Press, 2010), was named the Jackson Award for Best Book from the Urban History Association. Her article, “Fighting to Stay in Smelertown,” was named best article by the Oral History Association in 2008. She is presently working on a manuscript project on Mexican-American women, labor, and foodways in the U.S. Southwest in the 20th century. Perales is the co-recipient of the 2020 Ruth A. Allen Pioneer in Working-Class Studies Award.

Session 2: 1:00 - 2:15 p.m.

2.1: *Student Writing Contest Winners, Conference Center A*

Session Chair: Lisa A. Kirby, Collin College

- **Christiana Aberle**, “A Privilege for Emily: The Role of Social Class in Faulkner’s Short Story”
- **Amani Salama**, “American Companies Should Not Move Jobs Overseas to Cut Costs”
- **Naravadee McNeely**, “Consequences for All: Big Fish Eats Small Fish”

2.2: *The Ruth A. Allen Pioneer in Texas Working-Class Studies Award, Conference Center B*

Session Chair: Marilyn D. Rhinehart, Johnson County Community College (Retired)

Roundtable: “The Work of Monica Perales and Zaragosa Vargas”

- **George N. Green**, University of Texas-Arlington (Retired)
- **James C. Maroney**, Lee College (Retired)
- **Michael R. Botson**, Houston Community College
- **Kyle Wilkison**, Collin College

2.3: *Texas Labor History, Conference Center D*

Session Chair, Melody M. Miyamoto Walters

- **Zachary Montz**, Sam Houston State University, “What Killed the Tyler Tire Plant?: A Story of Labor, Economic Change, and State Hostility”
- **Justin Jolly**, Texas Christian University, “A Tale of Two Unions: The United Packinghouse Workers of America and the International Aeronautic Machinists in Fort Worth, 1936-1946”
- **Michael Barera**, University of Texas at Arlington, “Introduction to the Texas Labor Archives”

2.4: *Student Socioeconomic Issues, Conference Center E*

Session Chair, Lupita Murillo Tinnen

- **Leslie Rios Cruz**, University of North Texas, “Beyond Books and Borders: An Analysis of the Higher Education Experience of DACA Students and the Children of Working-Class Immigrants”
- **Rosalinda Valenzuela and Linda Kapocsi**, Collin College, “Class? Millennials’ Perspectives towards Social Class: The Case of Collin College Students”
- **Lupita Murillo Tinnen**, Collin College, “Understanding Students Living in Poverty”

Session 3: 2:30 - 3:45 p.m.

3.1: Roundtable: “Graduate Student Labor: The Fight Begins Here/Now,” Conference Center A

Session Chair, Shannon Carter, Texas A&M University-Commerce

- Ashanka Kumari, Texas A&M-Commerce, Respondent
- Jacobi Hunter, Texas A&M-Commerce, “#GradLivesMatter”
- Melisa Ward, Texas A&M-Commerce, "Ain't Nobody Got Cash for That"
- Alexander Bourque, Texas A&M-Commerce, "Enough is Not Enough"

3.2: Contemporary Class Issues in Texas, Conference Center B

Session Chair, Larry Stern, Collin College

- Shibalee Majumdar, Collin College, “Working Class and Food Insecurity in the DFW Metroplex”
- Melissa Biegert, Austin Community College, “‘Pets over Kids?’ – The Impact of Economic Segregation on Working-Class Culture in Austin, Texas”
- Luis F.B. Plascencia, University of Texas at Arlington, “Yarderas/os in North Texas: Recruitment of Low-Wage H-2B Mexican Contract Workers”

3.3: Literature and Class, Conference Center D

Session Chair, Michael Schueth, Collin College

- Dulce de Castro, Collin College, “Harnessing the Cognitive and Pedagogical Benefits of Short Stories and Micro Fiction to Explore Working-Class Issues”
- Jules Sears, Collin College, “Class Difference in the College Classroom: Working-Class Memoirs about Higher Education”
- Lisa Reed, Texas A&M-Commerce, “Reading Classes: Finding Worker Roots in Penny Emigrant Propagandist Literature”

3.4: Workshop: “Phalanx Theory: The Group vs. the Individual,” Conference Center E

Session Chair, J.D. Isip, Collin College

This workshop will consider journalist and novelist John Steinbeck’s theories of socialism and communism from the 1930s in the context of current interest in class stratification, power, labor movements, and socialist ideologies.

Thank You!

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- **SAFAC**, Conference Funding



The Texas Center for Working-Class Studies is partnering with the North Texas Food Bank to collect beans (dried or canned). Please look for donation boxes around the conference.

