



Call for Papers: Working Class Studies Association 2017

Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana

May 31 - June 3, 2017

Our conference theme, **“Class Struggle: Race, Gender, and Revolution,”** seeks to take stock of the legacy, present, and future possibilities of the idea of “class struggle.” We invite proposals for individual papers, panels, plenary sessions, or cultural events that will investigate the myriad ways in which the working classes can fight for emancipation. In particular, the program committee seeks proposals that offer creative interrogations of the very concepts of “working class” and “class struggle” in today’s moment of global capitalism and the consequent disarticulation of traditional notions of the working class. What does working class mean in an era of deindustrialization, precarious work, and predatory capital mobility? What new sites of working-class struggle can come to the fore with the weakening of trade unions and the erosion of the shop-floor and public space as places of working-class organization and contestation?

We also invite proposals that examine the intersections of multiple struggles for justice linked to the idea of “class.” Papers on class and gender, and class and race, are especially welcome. Finally, given the current revival of democratic socialism as part of the American political discourse and the one hundredth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, we ask how revisiting the concept and history of “revolution” might serve as a relevant term for working class movements. Imaginatively considering the parameters of what constitutes revolution, in what ways did revolutions of the past—including the 1917 variant—liberate the working class? How have revolutionary moments been advanced and limited by divisions of race or gender? What are the possibilities for revolutionary transformations of class relations in the future? And what new formations are emerging from the unmoored politics of the working classes in our globalized economy?

Organizers are particularly interested in presentations that deal with issues affecting workers in the Midwest and Rust Belt regions of the United States. Ideally, we would like to have a stream of panels running throughout the conference on this theme. We encourage participants to organize other streams based on their expertise.

We invite a wide array of proposals, but are especially interested in proposals that touch on the following questions:

- Gender, race and revolutionary moments
- Role of organic intellectuals in working class struggle: the academy as a site of working class struggle
- Role of humor and satirical action in struggle; Cultures of class struggle: art, music, poetry, film, theater
- War, imperialism, and the working class.
- Divisions and solidarities within the working class, past and present
- New definitions of the “working class” under postindustrial neoliberalism
- New physical/geographic sites of class struggle beyond the workplace
- New arenas of class struggle: environmental justice, LGBTQ rights, immigrant rights, fair trade
- Transnational working class struggles
- Struggles on the shop floor, past and present

The WCSA encourages proposals in varied formats, including roundtables, debates, working groups, workshops, teaching sessions, and performances. We prefer fully formed sessions, although we also encourage people who would like to moderate or comment to submit a cv and a statement of areas of interest and expertise. Whenever possible, session proposals should involve participants from multiple disciplines, roles, and backgrounds; ones that link scholars across fields and connecting academic research with activism and/or the arts. The organizers are planning an on-line publication of select papers from the conference. If you wish to be considered for publication, you will need to submit a paper of at least 7000 words to the organizers before April 15, 2017.

Guidelines for Proposals

Sessions will be 90 minutes, and we will ask presenters to limit their remarks to 15 minutes each so that there is ample time for Q&A and discussion. Panel and roundtable chairs will be asked to adhere to strict time limits to facilitate discussions. Proposals may be for one of three forms:

- Individual presentation, paper, or talk.
- Panel session or workshop, featuring multiple presenters, proposing jointly.
- Performance, reading, or screening of creative work.

Proposals should include:

- Proposed title and a brief (150-word) description
- Suggested topic category (see list above)
- Brief biographical statement and contact information, including mailing and e-mail addresses.
- Technology needs, if any.

Proposals for papers, presentations, and sessions are welcome until **February 1, 2017**. Notification of acceptance will be made by March 1. Submit proposals electronically to <https://scholarworks.iu.edu/conferences/index.php/wcsa/WCSA17/schedConf/cfp>. Inquiries and special requests should be directed to Joseph Varga at wcsa2017@gmail.com.

All presenters at the 2017 Conference are required to become members of the Working Class Studies Association. The WCSA attempts to accommodate all income levels with adjusted rates for membership. For more information, please visit: <https://wcstudiesassociation.wordpress.com>.

The website <https://scholarworks.iu.edu/conferences/index.php/wcsa/WCSA17/schedConf/cfp> will be available with full information on registration, travel, lodging, and the program as it develops. The site will also include information about how to apply for low-income travel grants and reduced registration fees.