



November 20, 2020

Dear Members of the Working-Class Studies Association,

We have been living through some deeply troubled times, and I wish all of you good health and some respite from the anxiety we have been experiencing during this turbulent and unprecedented US presidential election.

I write to you today to give some news of where we are as an organization, what our plans are for the year, and how you can participate.

Conference Update

It was with deep regret and sadness that we had to cancel our 2020 conference, planned in Youngstown, Ohio. The good news is that we are planning to hold our 2021 conference in Youngstown, an attempt at a “do-over.” Those of you who had accepted papers and presentations for the 2020 conference should hear from the conference planners about how these will carryover to this year’s presentation. You may contact [Tim Francisco](#) for more information. As you might imagine, planning for this event is precarious, as we still do not know when we will have made successful inroads on the global pandemic, or how safe it will be to host an in-person event. We have a committee tasked with exploring virtual options, and we are committed to hosting a conference in 2021 *in some manner*. We are also exploring the idea of hosting more regular WCSA events (virtually), so that we can reconnect with friends and colleagues. If you are interested in participating in any of this planning, please contact [Joe Varga](#), (see more below, under Conference Committee).

Website Makeover and Member Communications

If you haven’t had the chance to look at our [website](#) recently, please do!

We have two new listservs in operation: the WCA Section listserv and the Class Cultures Caucus listserv. If you are interested in participating in either, you will need to join the section or the caucus. To join the WCA Section, contact [Barb Jensen](#) for further details (you will need to update your membership to include this option). To join the Class Cultures Caucus, contact [Jack Metzgar](#).

We are excited to announce that the [Journal of Working-Class Studies](#) will soon move to the Open Journal System. This move will put the journal on a platform that is designed for open access scholarly journals, and will make the journal both more accessible to more readers and more friendly to our contributors.

Special Election - Secretary

Thank you for voting! We were fortunate to have two excellent candidates for the position of Secretary; our official winner is **Nathan Bryant**. Congratulations!

Special Committee Assignments

I am very pleased to report the convening of two special committees this year:

Constitution Committee: We have convened a special committee to review our Bylaws and Constitution. The committee is formalizing the language and adding the mission statement of the WCA section to the Constitution. If you would like to help, **please contact** terry.easton@ung.edu, who is serving as Chair.

Activist Committee. We have also convened a special committee to create a platform via WCSA for connecting across activist movements: WCSA and BLM for example. Amplifying the voices of those underrepresented in working-class studies whilst also mapping our similarities and differences across and within a capitalist world system will produce a meaningful politics of solidarity. Working in tandem with the Outreach Committee (below), we plan to grow our membership and extend our network, globally. If you'd like to collaborate with us or have an idea for an activist event, **please reach out to** [Michelle Corbin](#) (chair), [Emma Penney](#) or [Jen Vernon](#). **VOLUNTEERS VERY WELCOME!**

Standing Committee Assignments

Outreach Committee: Chaired by the President, the Outreach Committee is responsible for making contacts with other organizations, recruitment of members, and for developing projects designed to promote activity in the field of working-class studies. This year, the OC will be liaising with the Activist Committee to expand our membership, both connecting with prior members and encouraging new membership amongst Black, Indigenous, Asian, Latinx and minority ethnic activists, artists and academics whose lives and work intersects with issues of class justice. This outreach project reflects our plans to extend our activism by providing a space for knowledge sharing and solidarity around class and its many intersections with race, gender and sexuality. If you are interested in participating, **please contact** [Allison Hurst](#).

Communications Committee. Chaired by the Secretary, the Communications Committee oversees communications with the members and others interested in the work of the Association; publication of a newsletter; development and publication of a journal; creation and maintenance of a web site. In addition

to the secretary, members also include the listserv moderator, the newsletter editor, any journal editor, the web master, and others selected by the Steering Committee. If you are interested in serving on this committee, **please contact [Nathan Bryant](#). We are in particular need of a WEBSITE COORDINATOR!**

Finance Committee. Chaired by the treasurer, the Finance Committee is responsible for preparing an annual budget for presentation to the Steering Committee, for preparing an annual report of the Association's financial state, for developing fund-raising proposals and other appeals. This year, the committee is composed of Marc Di Paolo (chair), Allison Hurst, and Joe Varga. If you are interested in serving on this committee, particularly to help fundraising, **please contact [Marc Di Paolo](#).**

Awards Committee. Chaired by the Immediate Past-President, the Committee on Awards has oversight of all WCSA awards. The Committee also proposes policies and procedures for establishing and promoting all awards; considers proposals to establish new awards and recommends actions to the Steering Committee; and nominates to the Steering Committee members to participate in subcommittees whose responsibility it shall be to choose among nominees for Association awards. If you are interested in participating in the awards process (as a judge), **please contact [Scott Henkel](#)** (chair).

Elections Committee. The Elections Committee is responsible for selecting two nominees for president-elect, secretary, treasurer, at-large members of the Steering Committee, and any other elected committee members; for devising appropriate methods for submitting a ballot containing the names of nominees to the membership for their vote; and for arranging for the counting and certification of such votes. This committee is not open to volunteers. This year, it is chaired by Bill Mello.

Conference Committee (and Virtual Options). Chaired by the president-elect, the Conference Committee is responsible for planning of the annual meeting and such other meetings as the Association decides to undertake. As you might imagine, planning for this year's conference is particularly complicated, and the committee has been tasked with exploring alternative modes of delivery. If you are interested in serving on this committee, **please contact [Joe Varga](#).** Volunteers are VERY WELCOME!

Other Announcements

I am pleased to bring news that **Ireland will host its first working-class studies conference** in Dublin in 2021. International scholars are encouraged to contribute as the Irish field develops. Irish diasporic history in the US intersects significantly with working-class history. The Irish conference seeks to learn from the field of working-class studies and the methods developed by scholars in this international field. Working-class concerns have remained largely out of sight in Irish academia, politics, media, and popular culture and Ireland's first working-class studies conference seeks to redress this absence. It aims to bring together methods from across the social-sciences and the humanities in order to form frameworks that can fully represent and respond to working-class culture. The organisers invite submissions by and about working-class people and particularly encourage presentations from working-class people of their creative work, community movements and political activism. The website with CfP can be accessed at www.workingclassstudies.com and abstracts can be submitted to irelandworkingclass@gmail.com

We are also taking steps to incorporate the WCSA as a non-profit (501(c)(3) organization, under US law). This move will assist us in our fundraising efforts, as it will allow members to receive tax credits for donations made to the organization. Stay tuned!

Wishing all of you a safe and happy end to the term and the conclusion of 2020!

Solidarity Forever,

Allison
President of WCSA