

Southern Association for Women Historians



13th Triennial Conference

June 19-22, 2025 | Bethune-Cookman University
Daytona Beach, Florida



UNSPEAKABLE CHALLENGES

2025 SAWH Triennial Conference Schedule

June 19-22, 2025 | Bethune-Cookman University | Daytona Beach, FL

THURSDAY | JUNE 19

2-5:30 pm – Registration [Harrison-Rhodes Building]

Dinner on your own

6:30 pm – Special evening celebration kick-off
—Documentary Film & Dessert Hour

The event will feature a **director's cut documentary film screening** of the acclaimed **"Shaking It Up: The Life and Times of Liz Carpenter"**

Followed by **Q&A with members of the film's production team:** Producer/Director/Liz's Biographer and Daughter Christy Carpenter—and—Associate Producer/Film's Lead Advisor/ Distinguished Professor and Historian—Jessica Brannon-Wranosky, PhD, East Texas A&M University



Christy Carpenter



Jessica Brannon-Wranosky, PhD



FRIDAY | JUNE 20

8 am-4:30 pm – Registration

8:30-9:45 am Coffee, networking, conversation, breakfast

10-11:30 am Concurrent Sessions #1 [Harrison-Rhodes Building]

1a. Family and Freedom: Kinship and Community in Enslaved Women's Journeys to Liberation - #211

Chair: Kelly M. Kennington (Auburn University)

- Morgan Bettin-Coleman (Rice University), "Bargaining with Blood: Rachel Findley, Mixed-Race Identity, and the Legal Contestation of Enslavement in Early Republic-Era Virginia"
- Nikki Locklear (Duke University), "'Her Freedom as I Have Promised Her': Native Women, Enslaved Families, and the Shape of Freedom in Eighteenth Century Colonial South Carolina"
- Annabelle Spencer (George Mason University), "Motherhood On the Run: Enslaved and Enslaving Women Defining Womanhood in Antebellum Virginia"
- Kristin Miller (University of Florida), "'A Stranger in a Strange Country': Creating Family in East Florida and Scotland"

1b. Southern Youth and Education - #301

Chair: Emily Bingham (Bellarmine University)

- Melissa Story (UNC Wilmington), UNCW(hite): "The Kenan Family, White Supremacy, and the University of North Carolina Wilmington"
- Jane McPherson (University of Georgia), "For the Sake of Right and Justice: Judia Jackson Harris, Skillful Navigator of Jim Crow Georgia"
- Anne Gessler (University of Houston-Clear Lake), "Defining the Gumbel Girls: 'Forever' Children or Dangerous Delinquents? Disability and Girlhood in Interwar New Orleans"

1c. Workshop: The Sit 'N' Write Collective": Strategies for Publishing and Flourishing in the Academy - #108

- Natanya Duncan (Queens College – CUNY)
- Michelle R. Scott (University of Maryland, Baltimore County)
- Felicia Jamison (University of Louisville)

1d. The Many Meanings of Community and Neighborhood in Southern Appalachia, 1900-1954 - #305

Chair & Commenter: Melissa Estes Blair (Auburn University)

- Deborah L. Blackwell (Texas A&M International), "Interrogating the Benevolence Worker as 'Secular Missionary' in Appalachian Kentucky, 1890-1920"
- Melanie Beals Goan (University of Kentucky), "To Professionalize the Many-Sided Task of Neighborliness: The Frontier Nursing Service and Social Work in Appalachia"
- Allen Fletcher (University of Kentucky), "Integrating the Mountains: Black Appalachian Women and Educational Activism before Brown"

11:45-12:45 Lunch

1-2:30 pm Concurrent Sessions #2 [Harrison-Rhodes Building]

2a. Southern Women In Court - #211

Chair & Commentator: Jennifer Rae Bridges (Tarrant Co. College)

- Dee Gillespie (University North Georgia), "The Murder of Arthur Hawkins: White Southern Womanhood on Trial in Georgia, 1913-1914"
- Lesley Chapel (Wayne State University), "He Was in the Habit of Beating Her: Domestic Violence, Murder, and the Reconfiguration of the Household in Postbellum South Carolina"

2b. Black Women Addressing Unspeakable Challenges during Jim Crow - #301

Chair & Commentator: Cynthia Patterson (University of South Florida)

- Lauren K. Thompson (McKendree University), "The Right to Play: The Phyllis Wheatley YWCA and Black Girlhood in St. Louis, 1945-1970"
- Elizabeth Gonzalez (Independent Historian), "Sylvia Mason Maples and Woman's Mutual Improvement Club of Knoxville: Local Organizing on the National Stage"
- Wanda Little Fenimore (University of South Carolina-Sumter), "Respectability and Resistance: The Public-Spirited Women of the Phillis Wheatley Literary and Social Club"
- Elizabeth A. Novara (University of Maryland), "A Combined Moral Handmaid in Influence and Aid: Black Women Unite for Suffrage in Baltimore, 1904-1920"

2c. SAWH Professional Development Committee Workshop: Worklife Balance - #108

Moderator: Karen Kossie-Chernyshev (Texas Southern University)

- Anne Marshall (Mississippi State University), "The Challenges of Balancing Professional and Personal Life at Mid-life and Mid-career"
- Tomiko Meeks (Texas Southern University), "Rest is Revolutionary: Work-Life Wisdom from a New Black Woman Ph.D."
- Hilary Green (Davidson College), "Self-Care as an Act of Resiliency and Not Selfishness"
- Melissa Blair (Auburn University), "Department Chair & Unpaid Uber Driver: Balancing Administration, Kids, and a Little Bit of Research"

2d. To Tell Our Own Story: Amplifying the Voices of Women in the American South - #305

Chair: La Shonda Mims (University of Birmingham)

Commentator: La Shonda Mims (University of Birmingham)

- Tre'Anna D. Stewart (Tennessee State Museum), "Through My Mother's Eyes: History, Memory, and Trauma in Narratives of the 'Strong Black Woman'"
- Laura E. Headlee (Middle Tennessee State University), "How Women are Archiving Three Communities in the Urban South"
- Chelsea D. McNutt (Cornell University), "Challenges and Triumphs: Black Women's Civil Rights Organizing"

Efforts in Arkansas, 1935-1948"

- Zoey Hanson (UNC Greensboro), "Appalachia Matriarchy: Women and Resistance in the Blue Ridge Parkway"

2:45-4:15 pm Concurrent Sessions #3 [Harrison-Rhodes Building]

3a. Conservative Women's Contributions to Education in the 20th Century South - #301

Chair: Candace Cunningham

- Sarah H. Case (UC Santa Barbara), "Women of the Right and Education in 1930s Atlanta"
- Sarah Curry (Queen's University Belfast), "School Board Warriors: The Minute Women's Monopoly on Houston's Education System"
- Abigail Shimer (UNC Greensboro), "Kitchen Table Classroom: Southern Women's Activism in the Homeschool Movement"

3b. Women in Media and Business - #305

Chair: Robin Morris (Agnes Scott College)

- Sarah Godwin (Auburn University), "Using Her Words: Marriage and Courting in Twentieth Century Women's Advice Columns"
- Amy Brock (Auburn University), "Food for Thought Only: Seventeen's Role in Shaping Teenage Girls' Body Image in the 1990s"
- Angela Van Til (University of Central Florida), "The Rossetter Sisters and the Unspoken Challenges of Women in Business in the early 20th Century"
- Tanner Corley (University of Alabama), "Regulating Beauty: The Licensing of Beauticians in Alabama and the Nation"

3c. Doing Digital LGBTQ+ Public History through "Out and About in Old Town: Uncovering LGBTQ+ History in Alexandria, Virginia" [roundtable] - #108

- Hannah LeComte (George Mason University)
- Alexandra Miller (George Mason University)
- Savannah Scott (George Mason University)
- Ashleigh Williams (George Mason University)

3d. Women and Resistance (pre-Emancipation) - #311

Chair: Natanya Duncan (Queens College of New York)

- Kirsten Woods (Florida International University), "Black Joy, Pleasure, and the 'Rival Geography' of Southern Taverns in the Early Republic"
- Alex Fambles (Tulane University), "Yellow Martha's Compass: Navigating Enslavement, Freedom, and Survival in the 19th-Century U.S-Mexico Borderlands"
- Mark Mallory (Texas A&M University), "Unspeakable Narratives: Racial Illegibility and Compounding

Erasures in Black Seminole Women's History"

- Laura Sandy (University of Liverpool), "Stolen Lives: Slave Stealing and the Law"

3e. Resilience, Race, and Scholarship in the Classroom [roundtable] - #211

- Tru Leverette Hall, (University of North Florida)
- Felicia Bevel (University of North Florida)
- Justin I. Rogers (University of North Florida)
- Jillian E. McClure (University of North Florida)

3f. Funding Historical Research [workshop] - #000

A workshop to explore best practices in grant writing and learn creative and interdisciplinary ways of narrating successful proposals.

- Allison Upshaw (Stillman College)
- Thaddeus Steele (Stillman College)

5:30 pm – Reception/Dinner

7:30 pm Plenary Lecture

Noliwe Rooks (Brown University), "Mary McLeod Bethune's Vision and Politics Today."



Noliwe Rooks, PhD, is the L. Herbert Ballo University Professor of Africana Studies, and the chair of Africana Studies at Brown University. In her plenary, she will talk from her NAACP Image Award-nominated book, *A Passionate Mind in Relentless Pursuit: The Vision of Mary McLeod Bethune* (2024). Rooks is the author of several other books, including *Integrated: How American Schools Failed Black Children* (2025).

MARY MCLEOD BETHUNE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

SATURDAY | JUNE 21

8 am-Noon – Registration

8:30-9:45 am Coffee, networking, conversation, breakfast

9 am - Campus Tour & Bethune House Tour

10-11:30 am Concurrent sessions #4 [Harrison-Rhodes Building]

4a. Innovative Ideas for Teaching Women's History [roundtable] - #301

Chair: Mary Carroll Johansen (Holy Family University)

- Monique Earl-Lewis (Morehouse College)
- Cécile YézoUniversity (Baylor University)
- Kelly Kennington (Auburn University)

4b. SAWH Professional Development Committee Workshop: Practicing History Amidst the History Wars - #211

Moderator: Karen Kossie-Chernyshev (Texas Southern University)

- Stephanie Cole (University of Texas at Arlington), "Finding a Way in the History Wars"
- Hilary Green (Davidson College), "I Don't Do Woke History: Teaching the Complex Racial Past of Davidson College"
- Kirsten E. Wood (Florida International University), "The Core and the Classroom: Teaching History in Florida's Higher Education Landscape"
- Tseleg Yusef (Bethune-Cookman University), "Why We Should Not Wear the Mask: Practicing History with Integrity in Divisive Times"

4c. Gendered Representation, Resistance & the State - #305

Chair: Joan Johnson (Northwestern University)

- Alyssa Allen (University of Alabama), "The Cost of Failure: The CIA, Secrecy, and the Isolation of Four Alabama Widows"
- Cassandra Jane Werking (University of Kentucky), "Sisters of Subversion and Disloyal Daughters: Confederate Women in Kentucky During the Civil War and their Paths to Canada"
- Aubrey Underwood (Clark Atlanta University), "A World Free from Radiation: Coretta Scott King and Claire Collins Harvey, Nuclear Motherhood, and the Anti-Nuclear Movement, 1956-1964"
- Danalee Jahgoo (University of West Indies), "The Invisible Women: Addressing Gender Imbalance in Statues and Building Names in Trinidad and Tobago"

12:30-1:30 pm – Campus Tour & Bethune House Tour

2-3:30 pm concurrent sessions #5 [Harrison-Rhodes Building]

5a. Women in Their Place (Local Stories) - #301

Chair: Antoinette van Zelm (Middle Tennessee State University Center for Historic Preservation)

- Ashley Steenson (University of Alabama), "Lillian Hellman's New Orleans"
- Sarah Silkey (Lycoming College), "The Lost Cause and Women's Place in Alabama"
- Jerra Runnels (University of Southern Mississippi), "Black Women in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, During WWII:

The Influences of Mary McLeod Bethune and War Work for Double Victory”

5b. Navigating Power: Black Women and Religion in the Southern Landscape - #211

Chair & Commenter: Beverly Bond (University of Memphis)

- Aniya Gold (University of Memphis), “Forging Kinship Geographies”
- Maya Brooks (University of Georgia), “The (Not So) Secret Lives of Black Political Wives”
- Savannah Jackson-Cornell (University of Memphis), “Enslaved Women and Religious Authority: How the SPG Missionaries Influenced the Growth of Slavery in Colonial Virginia”

5c. All the Reasons are True: Community College Teaching and Learning (Plus: How to Get a Job at a Community College) [roundtable] - #108

Chair: Leah E. Hagedorn (Tidewater Community College)

- Melissa A. Esmacher (El Paso Community College)
- Barbara “Annie” Fuller (Indian River State College)
- Dawn Herd-Clark (Hillsborough Community College)

5d. Feeding Farmers: A Roundtable about Hunger, Relief, and Resistance in the Rural South - #305

Chair: Jennifer Jensen Wallach (University of North Texas)

- Angela Jill Cooley (University of Minnesota, Mankato)
- Anne Sarah Rubin (University of Maryland, Baltimore County)
- Rebecca Sharpless (Texas Christian University)

5e. Mothers of the South and Their Children: Maternal and Infant Health in the 19th and 20th Centuries - #311

Chair & Commentator: Felicity M. Turner (Georgia Southern University)

- Jessica Brabble (College of William & Mary), “‘The Most Perfect Physical Specimen’: Examining Black and Cherokee Better Baby Contests in the 20th-Century South”
- Diane Miller Sommerville (Binghamton University), “Madness and Motherhood: Postpartum Disorders and Maternal Health in the 19th-Century South”
- Signe Peterson Fourmy (University of Texas Austin), “‘Evident Marks of Insanity,’ or ‘A Very Shrewd and Sensible Negro’: Enslaved Motherhood, Mental Illness, and Infanticide”

4 pm – Afternoon Plenary:

“Protecting Fugitives and Outlaws: The Ethics of Documenting Reproductive Care Providers in the Post-Dobbs Era”



Wesley Hogan, PhD, faculty lead of the Reproductive Care Post-Roe Project at Duke University, will present the findings of team members Anika Vemulapalli, Alicia Yang, Sarah Hasan, and Anushri Saxena. The team began interviewing reproductive care physicians in the South in January 2023 and will share excerpts from their interviews, as well as summaries of their quantitative studies' findings.

6:30 pm – Dine Arouds: Sign Up at Registration Desk

8 pm – SAWH 2025 Official Graduate Student Party: Rooftop 140, Streamline Hotel, 140 South Atlantic Avenue

SUNDAY | JUNE 22

8:30-9:45 am Coffee, networking, conversation, breakfast

10-11:30 am concurrent sessions #6 [Harrison-Rhodes Building]

6a. Women and Lethal Violence - #301

Chair: Vivien Miller (University of Nottingham)

- Hannah Katherine Hicks (Penn State), "An Expert Infanticide': Mothers, Grandmothers, and Infanticide in the Post-Civil War U.S. South"
- Vivien Miller (University of Nottingham), "Child Borgias, Devilish Fiends and Rat Poison in the late 19th/early 20th century South"
- Alexia Jones Helsley (University of South Carolina Aiken), "'Vengeance is Mine:' a re-examination of the prosecution and execution of Sue Logue"
- John A. Kirk (University of Arkansas at Little Rock), "Gender, Race, and Capital Punishment: The Case of Mary Dinwiddie"

6b. Teaching History while Living History Outside the R1 [roundtable] - #211

- Ann L. Tucker (University of North Georgia)
- Laura June Davis (Columbus State University)
- Angela Esco Elder (Converse University)
- Ann Marie Martin (Catawba College)

6c. Constructing Their Own Citizenship against Unspeakable Challenges: The Work of Women Activists in Tennessee a Century Back - #108

Moderator: Beverly Bond (University of Memphis)

- Crystal deGregory, (Bethune-Cookman University)
- Mary Evins (Middle Tennessee State University)
- Renee LaFleur (University of Tennessee, Martin)
- Minoa Uffelman (Austin Peay State University)
- Antoinette van Zelm (Middle Tennessee State University Center for Historic Preservation)

6d. Body-Centered Approaches to Gender and Race - #311

Chair: LaShonda Mims (University of Birmingham)

- Sasha Wells (Florida International University), "Well Known About Town': The Motion of Enslaved Women in The Bahamas"
- Courtney Weis (Florida International University), "Bodily Resistance: Enslaved Women's Menstrual Experiences in the Antebellum South"
- Melina Haberl (Florida International University), "To Be Healthy is To Be Thin: Black Women's Weight Management Amid the Rising Health Consciousness of the 1960s"

BEACH DAY - with shuttle