



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

**6pm – 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



Dinner on your own

FRIDAY | JUNE 20

8 am-4:30 pm – Registration

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

10-11:30 am Concurrent Sessions #1

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

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

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
- Lisa Aft (UNC Greensboro), Improving the Mind, Beautifying the Spirit, and Developing Usefulness: The Benefits of Attending Salem Female Academy

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

- Natanya Duncan (Queens College – CUNY)
- Michelle R. Scott (University of Maryland, Baltimore County)
- Felicia Y. Thomas (Morgan State University)
- Tammy Sanders Henderson (University of Maryland Baltimore County)
- Felicia Jamison (University of Louisville)

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

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

2a. Southern Women In Court

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
- Candace Jackson Gray (Morgan State University), Jane Crow in Reconstruction Texas
- 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

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, 1896-1920.

2c. SAWH Professional Development committee workshop:

tbd

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

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), Hidden in Plain Sight: How Women are Archived Across Three Communities in the Urban South
- Chelsea McNutt (Cornell University), Local Organizing and its Challenges: Black Women Civil Rights

Efforts in Arkansas (1950-1958)

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

2:45-4:15 pm Concurrent Sessions #3

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

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

Chair: tbd

- 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 McHugh (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]

- 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)

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]

- TrUniversity Leverette Hall, (University of North Florida)
- ChaUniversity Johnsen Kelly (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]

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 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 BalloUniversity 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

8-10:00 am Breakfast Available

9 am - Campus Tour & Bethune House Tour

10-11:30 am Concurrent sessions #4

4a. Clarifying Our Vision With the Facts: Mary McLeod Bethune and the Preservation of African American History

Chair: Crystal DeGregory (Bethune-Cookman University)

- Ashley Robertson Preston (Howard University), Mary McLeod Bethune in the 21st Century: Modernizing the Legacy Through Digitization Practices
- Jada Wright-Greene (Manasota Branch, ASALH), Exploring Black Historic Houses and Legacy in Florida: The Mary McLeod Bethune Foundation
- Tara Y. White (UNC Wilmington), 'Shrines of Liberty for Our Unborn Generations': Mary McLeod Bethune and the Preservation of Black History

4b. Innovative Ideas for Teaching Women's History [roundtable]

Chair: Monique Earl-Lewis (Morehouse College)

- Mary Carroll Johansen (Holy Family University)
- Cécile YézoUniversity (Baylor University)
- Kelly Kennington (Auburn University)

4c. SAWH Professional Development committee workshop: TBD

4d. Gendered Representation, Resistance & the State

Chair: Joan Johnson (Northwestern University)

- Alyssa Allen (University of Alabama), The Cost of Failure: The CIA, Secrecy, and the Isolation of Four Alabama Widows
- CJ Werking (University of Kentucky), Sisters of Subversion: Border South Women Investigated by the United States Government During the American Civil War
- 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

5a. Women in Their Place (Local Stories)

Chair: Antoinette van Zelm (Middle Tennessee State University)

- 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

Chair & Commenter: Beverly Bond (University of Memphis)

- Aniya Gold (University of Memphis), Forging Kinship Geographies
- Maya Brooks (University of Georgia), More Than a Man: 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]

Chair: Barbara Fuller (Indiana River State College)

- Leah E. Hagedorn (Tidewater Community College)
- Jennifer Dixon-McKnight (Winthrop University)
- Melissa A. Esmacher (El Paso Community College)

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

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)
- Pamela Nicole Walker (University of Vermont)

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

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 Fourny (University of Texas Austin), "Showing 'evident marks of insanity': Enslaved Women, Infanticide, and Mental Illness"



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.

Dine Arounds

SAWH 2025 Official Graduate Student Party: [TBA]

SUNDAY | JUNE 22

8-10:00 am – Breakfast

10-11:30 am concurrent sessions #6

6a. Women and Lethal Violence

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. Women Seizing Christian Institutions

Chair: Robin Morris (Agnes Scott College)

- Benjamin Groth (Tulane University), Unspoken Sacraments: How Midwives Conducted Transgressive Baptisms in Spanish New Orleans
- Ellis Hall (Florida Atlantic University), Legacy of Fire: Alma Bridwell White, the KKK and Complexities of Religion, Race and Feminism

6c. Teaching History while Living History Outside the R1 [roundtable]

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

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

Moderator: Beverly Bond (University of Memphis)

- Alice-Catherine Carls, (University of Tennessee)
- 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)

6e. Body-Centered Approaches to Gender and Race

Chair: tbd

- 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
- Matthew Lewicki (Florida International University), American Dream, Immigrant World: How Immigrant Women in Ybor City, Florida, Found Strength and Power through Unification
- 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