

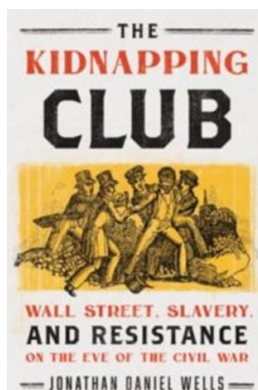
# LibertyCon 2021 — Presentations



## The New York Kidnapping Club: Wall Street, Slavery and Resistance on the Eve of the Civil War

February 27 @ 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

\$10



*The Kidnapping Club* is a powerful and resonant account of the ties between slavery and capitalism, corrupt roots of policing in America, and the unflagging strength of Black activism.

Dr. Wells' gripping narrative tells the story of the powerful men who kept the illegal slave trade alive and well in New York City long after slavery had been outlawed in the North. The Kidnapping Club was a network of judges, lawyers, police officers and bankers who sanctioned the kidnapping of free Black men, women and children in New York City who were then sold into markets in the southern states, South America, and the Caribbean for vast sums of wealth.

*Jonathan Daniel Wells, PhD, is a prize-winning historian whose most recent book, *The Kidnapping Club*, tells of the intersections among Wall Street, slavery, and resistance to the illicit slave trade in New York City just before the Civil War. Dr. Wells is professor of history in the Departments of Afro-American and African Studies, History, and Director, Residential College at the University of Michigan.*

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## Dr. Dorothy L. Brown and the Politics of Adoption and Abortion, 1950 to 1968

March 20 @ 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

\$10



In 1956, Dr. Dorothy L. Brown became the first single woman in Tennessee to legally adopt a child. This accomplishment was one of many firsts that Dr. Brown achieved in her storied life. Once a ward of the Troy, Orphan Asylum in Troy, NY, Brown was a leader in medicine and politics who authored a failed abortion law during her time as the first African-American Representative in the Tennessee General Assembly. This presentation explores the context in which Dr. Brown lived and worked, that ways that her early life and work informed her involvement in adoption and abortion reform efforts in the decades before *Roe v. Wade*, and the relevance of her work for us today.

*Dr. Kori A. Graves, PhD, is an Associate Professor of History at the State University of New York at Albany. A graduate of the Program in Gender and Women's History at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Dr. Graves' research evaluates the significance of political and popular representations of gender, race, nation, and family. Her book, *A War Born Family: African American Adoption in the Wake of the Korean War* tells the story of the first African Americans who adopted Korean children, and the ways their efforts revealed the contested nature of adoptive family formation across racial and national lines in the Cold War era. Dr. Graves is also a dedicated instructor. She has won awards for teaching excellence for her courses that explore gender and women's history, the history of marriage and family, and histories of the body, beauty and identity politics in the U.S.*

## Staten Island's Freedom Struggles and the Underground Railroad

April 24 @ 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

\$10



Staten Island, one of New York City's five boroughs, has a rich history that includes free and freedom seeker African Americans. In her research, Ms. Paige has uncovered significant documentation that has brought this history to light. Weaving historical information with stories collected from first person accounts told by people who came to Staten Island from other places, we will learn about what they were willing to do to stay, how they accomplished their desires, and how this information is related with us today.

**Debbie-Ann Paige, MA**, Adjunct Lecturer, City University of NY College of Staten Island, and Genealogist and founder of PAIGE ONE ASSIST, is a public historian specializing in local African American history, a co-president of the newly chartered Richard B. Dickenson Staten Island Chapter of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society (AAHGS) and professional genealogist. She has worked on numerous local history projects including: *In Pursuit of Freedom* with the Brooklyn Historical Society; *From Farm to City* with the Staten Island Museum; the designation of the Louis Napoleon House as a site to freedom with the National Park Service Underground Railroad Network on behalf of the Sandy Ground Historical Society, and the recent City Council street renaming of the corner of Fairview Avenue and Knox Place as "Samuel A. Browne Way" in the Castleton Hill section of Staten Island. Debbie-Ann has appeared as a historical interpreter on the Emmy winning show "Secrets of New York," and is working closely with Frederick Douglass Memorial Park to transcribe their historical records. She facilitates public history forums throughout Staten Island focused on the historical perspectives of race relations and lectures as an adjunct at the College of Staten Island.

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## Documenting Racially Restrictive Covenants in Washington DC: A Primer

May 22 @ 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

\$10



Mara Cherkasky first wrote about racially restrictive covenants in the mid-1990s and has been systematically documenting and mapping them in Washington DC since 2014. Reviewing more than 100,000 property records and thus far finding racially restrictive covenants on more than 20,000 DC properties, Ms. Cherkasky will explain what racially restrictive covenants are, their formulation in public policy, and their relationship to the development of housing segregation in the District of Columbia. Additionally, she will describe the process by which she and her collaborators developed a methodology for researching and documenting racial covenants.

**Mara Cherkasky** is a DC-based historian and writer, and the co-founder in 2014 of both the historical research firm Prologue DC, LLC, and the digital public history project Mapping Segregation in Washington DC ([www.mappingsegregationdc.org](http://www.mappingsegregationdc.org)). Mara has also produced exhibit panels, books and articles for print and online publications, multi-media presentations, and historic site signage for clients such as the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia, Cultural Tourism DC, and the Union Station Redevelopment Corporation. A meticulous researcher, she has assisted the Smithsonian Anacostia Community Museum, WETA-TV, the DC Historic Preservation Office, the Historical Society of Washington, D.C., and many others with projects. She is also an experienced oral history interviewer and walking tour guide.

Current/recent projects include mapping the ca. 1912 destruction of the African American community on Meridian Hill; developing a 100-site DC African American Civil Rights Tour; and creating a Heritage Trail (signs with text, maps, and images) for the Northeast DC neighborhood of Eckington.

Mara holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a Master's degree in American Studies from the George Washington University.

## African Americans Fighting White Supremacy in the Wake of the Tulsa Massacre

June 26 @ 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

\$10



100 years ago, in the wake of the Tulsa Race Massacre, wealthy African Americans from Oklahoma joined Little Liberia, an economic opportunity to improve the lives of African Americans in the U.S. through economic advancement in Mexico. They also created a sister organization, the International Community Welfare League, that sought to combat White supremacy, which they identified as a main culprit for racial inequality in the U.S and in the hemisphere. This presentation will discuss the Tulsa Massacre, Little Liberia, the League, and consider the role of multiracial organizing with African Americans at the center as a means to combat White Supremacy.

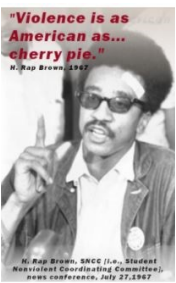
*Laura Hooton, PhD, is Assistant Professor of American History at The United States Military Academy at West Point. She is interested in race, ethnicity, and identity in North America, especially combining African American history and Black studies with borderlands history. She also studies migration and immigration, especially from the perspective of comparative race and ethnicity and social movements. Dr. Hooton leads the Black History at West Point project. She also published a module on comparative immigration in the Southwest for West Point. Currently Dr. Hooton is working on two books. Her first monograph tells the history of Little Liberia, a social movement that began in 1918 as an African American agricultural community in Baja California started by Black Los Angelenos. The movement, in its ten-year history, grew into a movement for political, social and economic change in the United States and Mexico, including the creation of a sister organization to combat White Supremacy in North America in the wake of the Tulsa Race Massacre. She is co-authoring the revised edition of Almost All Aliens, a large-scale telling of comparative United States immigration, race, and ethnicity history.*

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## Racist Violence is as American as Cherry Pie

July 24 @ 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

\$10



SNCC chair H. Rap Brown was excoriated after a July 1967 press conference where he told reporters: "I say violence is necessary. Violence is a part of America's culture. It is as American as cherry pie. Americans taught the black people to be violent. We will use that violence to rid ourselves of oppression if necessary. We will be free, by any means necessary." Following the attack by Trump supporters on the U.S. Capitol, Joe Biden issued a statement that "The scenes of chaos at the Capitol do not reflect a true America, do not represent who we are." While some Republicans in Congress accused the Democrats and Black Lives Matter movement of normalizing violence and rioting, other elected officials from both political parties, including Donald Trump, echoed Biden's remarks. Unfortunately, H. Rap Brown was right. Violence, especially racist violence directed at African Americans is as "American as cherry pie."

*Alan Singer, PhD, is a professor of Teaching, Learning and Technology and the director of social studies education programs at Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York. Dr. Singer is a former New York City high school social studies teacher and editor of Social Science Docket, a joint publication of the New York and New Jersey Councils for the Social Studies. He is the author of Teaching Global History (Routledge, 2011), New York and Slavery: Time to Teach the Truth (SUNY Press, Excelsior Editions, 2008), Education Flashpoints, Fighting for America's Schools (Routledge 2014), Social Studies for Secondary Schools (Routledge, 4th edition, 20015), New York's Grand Emancipation Jubilee (SUNY Press, 2018) and editor of a 268-page secondary school curriculum guide, New York and Slavery: Complicity and Resistance. In 2011, the Long Island Conference for the Social Studies awarded Dr. Singer the Mark Rothman Teacher Mentoring Award for his commitment to students and continued excellence in education. He received his Masters and Doctoral degrees from Rutgers University.*



# Food Justice: Hunger, Child Poverty, and Farming while Black

August 21 @ 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

\$10



“Food (In)Justice” is a broad topic with deep roots in United States history. This presentation will focus on three aspects of food justice: hunger (food insecurity), child poverty, and farming. Through a lens of racial injustice and inequality, some of the key issues will be analyzed and an examination of possible responses will be considered. Some references will use examples from the presenter’s experience in Schenectady and upstate New York, but much of the focus will be on policy issues underlying the root causes of food injustice.

Food, an essential element of life for every human being. Food justice, a right to healthy, life-giving food for every human being. And yet, food has been used as a mechanism of oppression, exclusion, and control. That this right to healthy, life-giving food was not being realized by people around the world, especially Black and Brown people, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948.

And yet, in 2019 we learn from research conducted by Feeding America, that, “Nationally, the rate of food insecurity for African-American households is more than double that of white households, while one in five Latinos are food insecure — compared with one in ten whites and one in eight Americans overall.” (Feeding America. “Hunger hits African American communities harder.” *Feeding America*, (n.d.). Retrieved March 26, 2019, from <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/african-american>)

**Rev. Phillip N. Grigsby** recently retired as Executive Director/Urban Agent of the Schenectady Inner City Ministry (SICM) after serving for 33 years. SICM is a coalition of 50 congregations that “seek to relate the resources of the congregations to the human needs of the city.” SICM currently runs the county’s largest supplemental food program, summer lunch for youth, community agriculture, wellness initiatives, and provides leadership in community collaborations and partnerships. He launched a capital campaign prior to retirement to develop a Resource Center, Teaching Kitchen, and improvements to the food pantry.

SICM is a faith-based expression of the social justice concerns of members, and now an interfaith organization. SICM initiated a number of community programs now independent of SICM: Project SAFE and Safe House (runaway and homeless youth), the Community Land Trust of Schenectady (affordable housing), Bethesda House (helping the homeless), Nutrition Outreach and Education (Food Stamp access), and others. SICM provided assistance to the Capital Region Theological Center (CRTC), supported through the Lilly Endowment. SICM initiated community programs that led to other community initiatives: JOGS etc, an employment program, the Damien Center for HIV/AIDS, Safe Parks and Edible Playgrounds funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Spiritually Sound and Physically Fit, Committee for Social Justice (Police issues) and others.

He is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and grew up near Buffalo in Hamburg, NY. He is a graduate of Oberlin College (BA in economics, high honors, Phi Beta Kappa) and Yale University Divinity School, with studies at the New School (NY) for Social Research. While in New Haven he was Adjunct faculty at Yale University Divinity School in Practical Theology. He received a Lilly Endowment grant for study of the ministry of Fr. Henri Nouwen, whom Phil knew while in New Haven. This sabbatical led to participation in a book commemorating Fr. Nouwen’s life in a conference.

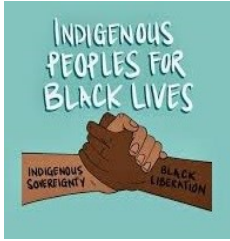
He and his wife Jan served in the Peace Corps in Sierra Leone, West Africa. Prior to coming to Schenectady, he directed ecumenical ministry programs in Norwalk and New Haven, CT and Charlotte, NC. In Charlotte he was the regional staff person for Church World Service/CROP, developing the methodology that led the Charlotte CROP Walk into the nation’s largest. He has served as pastor of two congregations, was Moderator of Emmanuel Friedens Church and President of the Hudson Mohawk Association.

He and Jan live in Schenectady. Jan retired as a Senior Lecturer at Union College in sociology; two grown children with one near and one San Francisco.

# Destined to Engage and Collaborate: Examining the Social/Political Dynamics of Native Americans and African Americans in the United States

September 25 @ 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

\$10



Through anecdotal historical and contemporary narratives, this seminar presents compelling evidence that Native Americans and African Americans have provided unique intertwining social, political and cultural contributions to the development of our United States society. This symbiotic relationship contributed to establishing collaborative agency between these similarly oppressed people in their efforts to gain equal rights and equal status in a world strongly opposed to such gains.

**Darryl Omar Freeman, Lecturer**, is a University Faculty Senator and Adjunct Lecturer in the Department of Ethnic Studies at California State University, Sacramento. He is an accomplished researcher, writer, speaker, and social/cultural critic. His scholastic work spans many different social and political arenas - from public policy reform and racial/cultural representation in the United States to community of color identity issues, critical ethnic coalition movement building, and social political issues of the African Diaspora. He is presently part of the leadership committee coordinating the "Ethnic Studies Now" effort to institute a requirement in the State of California that all high school students take an Introduction to Ethnic Studies course as a graduation requirement. There is presently a pilot program in five Sacramento Unified School District high schools.

As an engaged community activist Freeman has served as a Board Member, Center for African Peace and Conflict Resolution, Black Lives Matter moderator, co-organizer of the "Red Hand Day" Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, African American Graduation Celebration Steering Committee member, a Cooper-Woodson College Peer Mentor and has been a Loaves and Fishes Homeless Inc. service volunteer for over 20 years.

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## Building Community through Free Black Migration before the Civil War

October 23 @ 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

\$10



The scholarship on the Underground Railroad movement and the Great Migration is vast but little attention has been paid to the voluntary migratory patterns of free black Americans before the Civil War. Dr. Jennifer Thompson Burns will shine light on the importance of studying the antebellum migratory patterns of free Black Americans in the tri-city area of New York State and use this data to explain the benefits this migration had on black community development past and present.

**Jennifer Burns, PhD**, is a professor of history in the Africana Studies Department at The State University of New York at Albany. Her concentration is in American history and with the story of Black Citizens of Troy, New York and their work in abolition prior to the American Civil War. Professor Burns is a commentator on WAMC's Round Table Program, is a board member of Underground Railroad Education Center and The Hart Cluett Museum, and is active in curriculum development and community education. She has received her Masters and Doctoral and Doctoral degrees from the State University of New York at Albany. Dr. Burns has presented at numerous community events and conference, received numerous awards, and has contributed to Civil War Slave Database in Virginia (2011-2012), and Slavery By Another Name (2012).

## Native Lives Matter

November 27 @ 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm

\$10

Description of presentation content is coming.

**Dr. Lori V. Quigley** (Seneca Nation, wolf clan) is semi-retired after a career in education that ranges from achieving the rank of tenured full professor, to serving as an academic dean and provost. She earned her bachelor of arts in Journalism and Mass Communication from St. Bonaventure University, and a master of arts in Public Communication and Ph.D. in Language, Learning and Literacy from Fordham University.

Lori's academic leadership roles have involved articulating a vision for the future and building a culture of intellectual excitement to shape centers of excellence and distinction by establishing a diversified portfolio of programs. Lori established community partnerships, as well as demonstrated relationships with funders and major donors who committed to supporting several programs she initiated. In her work, Lori has focused a great deal of energy on the development and sustainability of programs that are socially just, culturally responsive, and aggressively seek to serve all students.

Lori's research interests include multigenerational trauma and culturally relevant pedagogy. Lori was awarded the prestigious State University of New York Chancellor's Award for Research and Scholarship; she received the Hackman Residency Award from the NYS Archives, enabling her to research the history and sociological impact of Native American residential boarding schools. She served as an advisor for the documentary *Unseen Tears: The Impact of Native American Residential Boarding Schools*, and has published journal articles on the history on the Thomas Indian School. Other accolades include being named "Woman in Leadership" by NYS Women, Inc., the Buffalo State President's Award for Excellence in Equity and Campus Diversity, and the Community Leader Award by the National Federation of Just Communities.

Committed to diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives and giving back to community, Lori received a U.S. Presidential appointment to the National Advisory Council on Indian Education and completed a two-term gubernatorial appointment on the NYS Minority Health Council. Currently, she serves on the boards of the National Indian Education Association (NIEA), the YWCA of WNY and the Seneca Gaming Corporation.

She grew up on the Allegany territory of the Seneca Nation of Indians; currently, she lives in Grand Island, NY, with her husband Don and their goldendoodle, Clancy.