Media & Civil Rights History Symposium

March 8-9, 2019
WELCOME TO THE SYMPOSIUM

2019 Media & Civil Rights History Symposium
School of Journalism and Mass Communications
University of South Carolina

and presentation of the

2019 Ronald T. and Gayla D. Farrar Award in Media & Civil Rights History

Kenneth Campbell
Chair

While you’re here on campus, we invite you to visit the Hollings Special Collections Library for “Justice for All: South Carolina and the American Civil Rights Movement”.

“Justice for All” uses oral history recordings, film clips, photographs, postcards, diaries and manuscripts to highlight largely overlooked chapters in the history of the movement.

Open to Conference/Symposium Participants:
• All day Friday, March 7
• By special invitation Saturday, March 8 (8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.)
WELCOME
TO THE SYMPOSIUM

Tom Reichert
Dean, College of Information and Communications

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the School of Journalism and Mass Communications at the University of South Carolina. We are excited to once again open our doors for the biennial Media & Civil Rights History Symposium. For those of you who aren’t familiar with Columbia – or Soda City, as we like to call it – we hope you get a taste of the Southern hospitality that we’re known for while you’re here in Gamecock country.

This year’s keynote speaker is Al Letson, host of the Center for Investigative Reporting’s “Reveal” and NPR’s “State of the Re:Union” podcast. He’s a dynamic, award-winning journalist and spoken-word poet who’s breaking new ground in digital storytelling. You can catch him Friday at 12:15 p.m. in the Russell House ballroom and again at 6:30 p.m. at a community-wide presentation at Richland Library’s main branch.

As always, a highlight of the symposium is recognizing scholarship. We’re pleased to share that Gwyneth Mellinger of James Madison University has won the Farrar Award in Media & Civil Rights History for her paper, “An Idea Before Its Time: Charles S. Johnson, Negro Columnist,” published in the Journal of Civil and Human Rights (2018). Mellinger’s paper documents an effort to integrate an African American columnist into the opinion pages of white-owned daily papers in the 1940s. Previous Farrar Award winners include R. Joseph Parrott (2017, Yale University), Mark J. Walmsley (2015, University of Leeds), Carol Stabile (2013, Oregon University), Will Hustwit (2012, University of Mississippi), and Gordon Mantler (2011, Duke University).

While you’re here, we hope you take some time to look around the school. We turn 96 years old this year, but you wouldn’t know it to look at our cutting-edge labs, production studios and Social Media Insights Lab. And if it seems like things are busier than expected around the building, that’s because they are – we’re also hosting colleagues from across the country for the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Southeast Colloquium.

On behalf of everyone here at the SJMC, I want to thank you for joining us for this special event that brings together scholars from a spectrum of disciplines to examine the intersection of civil rights and public communication.

Go Gamecocks!

Tom Reichert, Ph.D.
Dean and Professor
College of Information and Communications
University of South Carolina
Thursday, March 7

2:30 – 5:30 p.m. Google News Training I
Pre-Registration Required
Additional spots might still be available

6 – 8 p.m.
Opening Reception, AEJMC Southeast Colloquium
This event is open to MCRHS attendees who arrived early and registered for both events.

Friday, March 8

8:45 – 11:45 a.m.
Google News Training II
Pre-Registration Required
Additional spots might still be available

12:15 – 1:45 p.m.
Keynote Luncheon & Awards Ceremony

Welcoming Remarks
Laura Smith, Chair, 2019 AEJMC Southeast Colloquium

Top Faculty & Student Paper Award Winners: AEJMC Southeast Colloquium

Introduction of Keynote Speaker
Kenneth Campbell, Chair, 2019 Media & Civil Rights History Symposium

Keynote Address
Al Letson, Reveal, Center for Investigative Journalism
& State of the Re:Union, NPR
Winner, 2018 Knight Award (All Work, No Pay)
Finalist, 2018 ONA General Excellence in Online Journalism

Closing Remarks
Laura Smith, Chair, 2019 AEJMC Southeast Colloquium

1:45 – 5:15 p.m.
Justice for All Exhibit

At any point following our Keynote luncheon, feel free to stop at the Ernest F. Hollings Special Collections Library to see USC’s Justice for All Exhibit. Featuring hundreds of items from the University’s special collections, the exhibit tells the story of the state’s fundamental role in the national Civil Rights Movement. You will find the exhibit open until 5:15 p.m. Friday and again from 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. on Saturday. Please enter through the front doors of the Thomas Cooper Library, across from the SJMC (or to the west of the Russell House student union).
Keynote Speaker: Al Letson

Soul-stirring, interdisciplinary work has garnered Al Letson national recognition and devoted fans. In 2008 Letson created, hosted, and executive produced State of the Re:Union (SOTRU). Every episode of SOTRU examined America through the lens of community. The program aired on more than 300 NPR stations, receiving critical acclaim, and numerous awards, including a Peabody Award (2014), and three consecutive National Edward R. Murrow Awards (2012, 2013, 2014).

In 2015 SOTRU ended production and Letson joined the Center for Investigative Reporting to help launch and host public radio's first hour-long investigative journalism show, Reveal. Reveal's first pilot, The VA's Opiate Overload, won a Peabody Award (2013). Since that time Reveal has gained a large audience and is heard on over 400 public radio stations and over 1 million downloads a month. In 2016 Letson launched his own podcast, showcasing a little bit of errthang. Errthang is just that, everything: storytelling, radio drama, pop culture reviews, and interviews. Letson is basically taking all the things that are floating in his head and turning it into a mixtape of delight for listeners.

A true renaissance man, Letson got his start on stage as a performance poet where he established himself as a heavyweight in the Poetry Slam community, being a featured on venues such as HBO's Def Poetry Jam, and CBS's 2004 Final Four PreGame. Drawing on his background as a performance poet, Letson seamlessly weaves spoken word into the fabric of his theatre work. Several of his plays were produced on stages across the country. His solo performance Summer in Sanctuary opened at the Abingdon Theatre company off-Broadway in the summer of 2012 and ran for nine months at the Marsh in San Francisco.

A self-described comic nerd, in 2017 Letson was picked by DC Comics to join the DC Comics Writer's Workshop. The workshop trains writers to work for DC Comics, writing iconic characters like Batman, Superman and Wonder Woman. While it may seem like his interests are varied, they are all aspects of who Al Letson is, a storyteller for the new millennium.
Refereed Papers and Research in Progress Session

Sights, Sounds, and the Struggle I

Moderating
Kathy Roberts Forde, Massachusetts-Amherst

Keep On Pushing: Curtis Mayfield on the Front Lines of Black Liberation Aesthetics
W. Maclane Hull, South Carolina

Rape, Reactionary Violence, and the Defense of Whiteness (Supremacy) in Civil Rights Exploitation Films
Jacqueline Marie Pinkowitz, Texas at Austin

Subservient or Subversive? The Contradictions of Civil Rights Heroism in Lee Daniels’ The Butler
Andrew Sargent, West Chester

Surviving R. Kelly: African American Women Frame an Accused Pedophile through Tweets (RIP)
Kim Smith, North Carolina A&T State

Refereed Research in Progress Session

Mediated Conflict

Moderating
Thomas J. Hrach, Memphis

The (Re)packaging of the Fraudulent Ethiopian Princess: A Narrative of Racial Stereotypes, Journalistic Objectivity, Pan-Africanism, and Book Publishing in Four Parts
Fred Carroll, Kennesaw State

Media Influences on the Speeches of Floyd B. McKissick, Sr.: National Civil Rights leader of CORE (Congress of Racial Equality), proponent of Black Power, Black Economic Development and Founder of Soul City, NC
S. Charmaine McKissick-Melton, North Carolina Central

Court Held at Midnight: The Lynching of Roscoe Parker
Claire Marie Rounkles, Ohio

From Selma 1965 to Charlottesville 2017: The Unintended Lessons of Media and the Civil Rights Movement
Aniko Bodroghkozy, Virginia
2019 SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, SESSION 2

3:45 – 5:00 p.m. Hollings Center, Room 135

Refereed Papers Session

Boundaries and Borders in Civil Rights

Moderating
Mike Smith, USA Today

Chiseled in Stone: The Presence of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the Rhetoric Surrounding the Planning for the Washington, DC King Memorial
Fredessa Denise Hamilton, North Carolina State

The Use and Misuse of Martin Luther King Jr.’s Legacy as Political Propaganda
Christopher D. Rounds, Allen

The Mason-Dixon Line in 1950s Journalism
Gwyneth Mellinger, James Madison

3:45 – 5:00 p.m. Hollings Center, Room 130

Refereed Papers and Research in Progress Session

Sights, Sounds, and the Struggle II

Moderating
Ernest L. Wiggins, South Carolina

Time for Action: World War II through the Eyes of an African American Cartoonist (RIP)
Robin Sundaramoorthy, Maryland

We Gon’ Be Alright; Political Discourse in Freedom Songs of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement
Gheni Nicole Platenburg, Montevallo (RIP)

Christopher Frear, South Carolina

The Rev: A Documentary in Progress (RIP)
Mark D. Harmon, Tennessee
2019 SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

Friday, March 8, 2019; 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Community Presentation by Al Letson
Richland County Public Library

Organized by Bobby Donaldson, Director, Center for Civil Rights History and Research

SATURDAY, SESSION 1

9 – 10:15 a.m. Hollings Center, Room 130

Refereed Papers and Research in Progress Session

Freedom Frontlines in Newsrooms

Moderating
Christopher Frear, South Carolina

Tuscaloosa’s Missed Media Moment?: “ Bloody Tuesday” and a 1964 Press Coverage Comparison
George Daniels, Alabama

Competing Ideologies: A Historical Synopsis of the Experiences of Black Media Practitioners in White Newsrooms
Gheni Nicole Platenburg, Montevallo

From School Desegregation to School Integration: The Race Relations Reporter in the Aftermath of Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka
Melony Alicia Shemberger, Murray State

Freedom Flashing: Bob Dylan, Pete Seeger, and the Delta Folk Jubilee of 1963
R. J. Morgan, Mississippi (RIP)
2019 SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

9 – 10:15 a.m.                     Hollings Center, Room 135

Panel


Moderating and Panelist
    Sid Bedingfield, Minnesota

Panelists
    Kathy Roberts Forde, Massachusetts-Amherst
    Ethan Bakuli, Massachusetts-Amherst
    Natalie DiDomenico, Massachusetts-Amherst

SATURDAY, SESSION 2

10:30 – 11:45 a.m.                     Hollings Center, Room 130

Panel

A Conversation with Cleveland Sellers,
Civil rights activist; author of The River of No Return: The Autobiography of a Black Militant and
the Life and Death of SNCC (1973; reissued 2018); and subject of Outside Agitator: The Civil Rights
Struggle of Cleveland Sellers Jr. (Adam Parker, 2018)

Host: Bobby Donaldson, South Carolina,
Associate Professor of History and African American Studies; Director, Center for Civil Rights
History and Research

10:30 – 11:45 a.m.                     Hollings Center, Room 135

Refereed Papers and Research in Progress Session

Media Markers of Social Change

Moderating
    Denetra Walker, South Carolina

Don’t Patronize the Big Three: The 1960 Sit-Ins through the Eyes of Student Journalists in the N.
C. Triangle Region (RIP)
    Dante Mozie, South Carolina
2019 SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

Creating Collective Memory: Media Coverage of the Rise of African American Generals in the U.S. Army Signal Corps (RIP)
   Mel D. Slater, South Carolina

The Effect of Black Twitter on Civil Rights Activism (RIP)
   Bianca Denise Crawford, Claflin

Tribal Media Decolonized: The People’s Voice and Tribal Sovereignty
   Bryan Pollard, Arkansas

Noon – 1:30 p.m.                                       Hollings Center

Luncheon: Ronald T. and Gayla D. Farrar Award in Media & Civil Rights History

   Host: Kenneth Campbell, Chair, Ronald T. and Gayla D. Farrar Award

   Keynote Speaker: Gwyneth Mellinger, James Madison

2019 Farrar Award Winner


Finalists


   Qiana Whitted, University of South Carolina, Comics and Emmett Till, chapter in Picturing Childhood: Youth in Transnational Comics (2017)

Closing remarks: Laura Smith, South Carolina
   Chair, 2019 AEJMC Southeast Colloquium
Gwyneth Mellinger is director of the School of Media Arts & Design at James Madison University. Her research focuses on the democratic paradox, with a particular focus on racial inequity and Southern journalism history, and the journalist’s struggle against self-interest. Her book, Chasing Newsroom Diversity: From Jim Crow to Affirmative Action, received Kappa Tau Alpha’s 2013 Frank Luther Mott Book Award. Her peer-reviewed research has appeared in *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly, Journal of Communication Inquiry, American Journalism,* and *Journalism History.* She is co-editor of an edited volume of historical essays on twentieth-century journalism ethics, which is under contract with Lexington Books. She also is working on a book project on the civil rights era Southern press. Her doctorate in American Studies is from the University of Kansas.

2019 Farrar Award Winner


2019 Farrar Award Winner Finalists


**Qiana Whitted**, University of South Carolina, “Comics and Emmett Till,” a chapter in the edited collection *Picturing Childhood: Youth in Transnational Comics* (2017)
FREE EVENT:
AL LETSON

Friday, March 8, 2019;
6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Community Presentation @
Richland County Public Library
1431 Assembly St. Columbia, SC 29201

Al Letson is the host of Reveal’s Peabody Award-winning public radio program and podcast showcasing investigative stories.

Special Thanks To

Symposium Committee
Kenneth Campbell, Chair, South Carolina
Sid Bedingfield, Minnesota
Kathy Roberts Forde, Massachusetts-Amherst
Christopher Frear, South Carolina

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