

## Virtual Community Conversation: "Our Forgotten History" (Free) Hosted by the Glastonbury Martin Luther King Community Initiative

- **Date:** 12/03/2020 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM
- **Location:** Zoom Video Conference

The GMLKCI invites you to a virtual Community Conversation on December 3, 2020, at 7:00 p.m., via Zoom. Tonight's topic is "Our Forgotten History," focusing on women, persons of color, and the unfairly maligned. For registration and Zoom info, scroll to the bottom of this event description.

**Dr. Edward Guimont**, a Glastonbury native, will be moderating this Community Conversation. Dr. Guimont received a Ph.D. in history from the University of Connecticut. He is presently an adjunct professor at several colleges in Southern New England.

Panelists include:

**Dr. Dexter Gabriel.** Dr. Gabriel earned a B.A. and an M.A. in history from Texas State University-San Marcos, and a Ph.D. in history from Stony Brook University-New York. Dr. Gabriel's research interests include the history of human bondage, resistance, and freedom in the Black Atlantic, as well as interdisciplinary approaches to slavery within popular culture and media. His current research explores British Emancipation in the Anglo-Caribbean and its impact on abolitionist strategies in nineteenth-century North America. Dr. Gabriel's work has been presented in panel discussions, lectures, and articles. He has been interviewed about his work by the Federal Reserve Bank of Virginia, the Voice of America, BBC America, among many others. He is jointly-appointed on the faculty of the Africana Studies Institute.

Dr. Gabriel will address the topic of American slavery, which in the past several years has been propelled into popular discussion. Whether it's in television series like *Underground* or the New York Time's 1619 Project or controversies over monuments (Confederate and otherwise), the issue of slavery has spilled out of the scholarly domain into the larger national narrative. It is in our conversations, our politics, and our arguments. This is hardly the first time this has happened, and will likely not be the last; we remain influenced by the "psychic hold of slavery." Dr. Dexter will touch on a few of these instances and events, examining how our memories, discourses, and utilizations of slavery, shape our cultural, social, and political landscape - and what it means that some 150 years after its end as an institution, we are, in many ways, still reckoning with its meanings and legacies.

**Dr. Manisha Sinha.** Dr. Sinha is the Draper Chair in American History at the University of Connecticut and the Mellon Distinguished Scholar in Residence at the American Antiquarian Society. She received a Ph.D. from Columbia University and taught at the University of Massachusetts for many years, during which she was awarded the Chancellor's Medal, the highest honor bestowed on a faculty member. She is the author of "The Counterrevolution of Slavery: Politics and Ideology in Antebellum South Carolina," which was named one of the ten best books on slavery in *Politico* in 2015 and featured in The New York Times 1619 Project recently. Dr. Sinha's second book, "The Slave's Cause: A History of Abolition," was long listed for the National Book Award for Non Fiction. A historian of the 19th century, her research interests include the transnational histories of slavery, abolition, and feminism and the history and legacy of the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Dr. Sinha will address African American women's activism in the abolition and suffrage movements. Her presentation will illustrate how black women employed an intersectional approach in fighting for their own freedom and for black rights more broadly. Such women pioneered the notion that women's rights were connected to all other forms of oppression. The history of black women's activism helps us understand their crucial role in American politics as the staunchest supporters of progressive policies.

**Dr. Julian Madison.** Dr. Madison received a BA and a MA in History from Cleveland State University, a Ph.D. in History from the University of Washington. Dr. Madison is an Associate Professor of History at Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU). His research interests include Race and Ethnicity, the Jazz Age, Civil Rights and Culture. Dr. Madison has taught U.S. History, Black History, U.S. Foreign Policy, U.S. History through Film, Urban and Suburban History, North American History, Sex, Race, and American Law, Civil Rights Movement and Sports in American History. He also served as a Faculty Adviser to the Black/Jewish Dialogue (Youngstown State University, YSU), The Jambar (Student Newspaper at YSU), and the Black Student Union at SCSU. In addition, Dr. Madison served as editor for the International Journal of History and Research.

Dr. Madison will discuss the life and legacy of Paul Robeson, a man who became so controversial that Americans willfully erased him from their collective memory and Rutgers, his alma mater, erased his name from its records until 1999 when Rutgers brought his memory back. Robeson, born in 1898, was the son of an escaped slave who became a pastor in Princeton, New Jersey. As a high school student, Robeson acted in Shakespearean plays, played on the school's football, baseball, basketball, and track teams, was the class valedictorian, and won a scholarship to Rutgers University. Robeson was one of the leading figures in the Harlem Renaissance. Despite the racial barriers he faced, Robeson became the world's wealthiest Black man and an influence around the world. Despite his fame, Robeson never shied away from political activism and civil rights.

**Diane Hoover.** Mrs. Hoover is a member of the Glastonbury Historical Society who grew up in Glastonbury and attended the local schools. Mrs. Hoover received a MA in History Education from Southern Connecticut State University. Mrs. Hoover taught History and Social Sciences in middle school for forty-one years; she was honored as Teacher of the Year in 1990. After retiring in 2015, Mrs. Hoover became the Education Director for the Historical Society of Glastonbury. In that role, Mrs. Hoover has continued to teach history and organizes annual tours and visits schools as historical characters as she shares lessons on Glastonbury history. Recently, Mrs. Hoover developed virtual lessons and videos to meet student and teacher needs during the pandemic.

Mrs. Hoover will discuss the lives and legacy of Abby and Julia Smith, perhaps the most undeservedly neglected figures in the history of 19th-century feminism. While fairly well known in Glastonbury, the Smith sisters are rarely mentioned in history classes elsewhere. In the 1870's, however, they were unlikely heroines on the national women's suffrage stage as spinster octogenarians giving speeches, attending state and national suffrage conventions, and writing a steady stream of letters to newspapers across the country. Mrs. Hoover will discuss the role of Hannah Hickok Smith, the mother of Abby and Julia Smith, in their commitment and involvement in the abolition and women's suffrage movements. Hannah Smith encouraged all five of her daughters to be educated, independent women with strong social consciences. As a member of the Historical Society, Mrs. Hoover has extensively researched these remarkable women and has discussed their lives and legacy, and has actually portrayed Julia Smith, in many forums. In 1974, The United States National Park Services designated Kimberly Mansion, the Smith sisters' family home on Main Street in Glastonbury as a national historic landmark.

Our goal is for our panelists to provide both a starting point and a resource for what we hope will be an inspiring, lively, informative, and thought-provoking conversation.

The Glastonbury MLK Community Initiative is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization, formed in 2001, to increase knowledge about, and understanding of, the philosophy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We believe bringing people together to inspire commitment to social justice and positive change and to discuss openly and honestly important issues relating to social justice will help build a more inclusive and tolerant community.

## Registration

This is a FREE event open to all. For additional information, please contact Leslie Ohta at 202-538-1161 or at [leslieohta@gmail.com](mailto:leslieohta@gmail.com) or Robyn Guimont at [robynware@yahoo.com](mailto:robynware@yahoo.com).

In addition, please let us know what you are taking away, or what action you plan to take, as a result of this evening's program. Also, please suggest other social justice topics you would like us to address in future MLK Community Conversations. Registration for this Community Conversation is required.

Registration for this Community Conversation is required. Please register at [Our Forgotten History](#). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the Zoom webinar. You will be able to pose questions or make observations to the panelists through the chat function of Zoom. When you click on the link we provided it will take you to a screen that does not make sense. Go to the top right and click on **Join a Meeting**. Add the meeting ID: **879 9521 8783**. At this screen you can complete your registration.