



THE LEAGUE  
OF WOMEN VOTERS of the CINCINNATI AREA

# THE VOTER

103 Wm. H. Taft Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45219  
513-281-VOTE (8683) Fax: 513-281-8714  
info@lwvcincinnati.org lwvcincinnati.org



## March 2015

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## AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

### Don't Miss March Unit Meetings

*By Elizabeth Brown and Rina Saperstein*

Think History Channel, current headline news and controversial talk shows for this month's Unit meetings.

This year is the 150th anniversary of the adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution intended to abolish slavery. In March, League Units will look at historical events following adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment and discuss their impact on current events involving shootings by police and the mass incarceration of black men.

Study pages are included in this *Voter* (see page 8), but the best preparation for the Unit discussion is to watch the 90-minute documentary "Slavery by Another Name," which can be viewed for free from any computer through the PBS website at: [www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/watch/](http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/watch/). The documentary is based on a Pulitzer Prize-winning book of the same name. It describes a piece of American history that is rarely talked about,

but which sheds light on current patterns of wealth, poverty and upward mobility.

A Discussion Leaders' Briefing will be held on Wednesday, March 4 at 7 p.m. at Mt. Auburn Presbyterian Church (103 Wm. H. Taft Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45219). The briefing will be held in the Geier Room, as other organizations are sending representatives to learn about the program and possibly introduce it to their groups. The briefing will be repeated Saturday morning, March 7 at 10 a.m. for those unable to attend Wednesday evening.

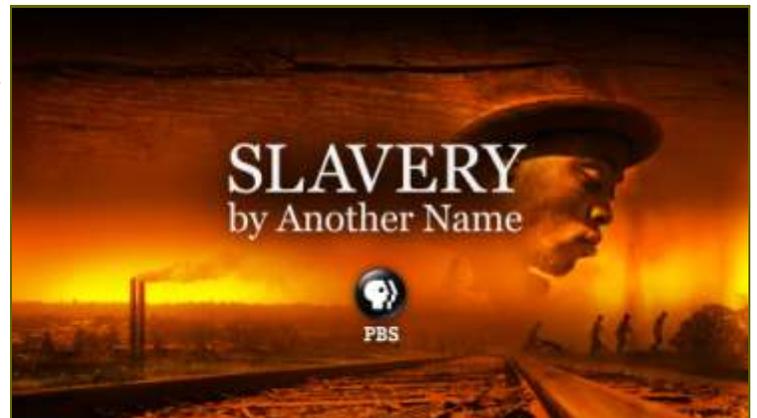
If you plan to attend either Discussion Leaders' Briefing, please let us know by contacting the office at 513-281-8683 or [info@lwvcincinnati.org](mailto:info@lwvcincinnati.org).

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization which encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Membership is open to all women and men over 17 (or 18 and older). For information, call 513-281-VOTE (8683), or write to the LWVCA office at 103 Wm H Taft Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45219, or email [info@lwvcincinnati.org](mailto:info@lwvcincinnati.org).

### LWV DIVERSITY POLICY

The League of Women Voters recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision making.

The LWVCA affirms its commitment to actively seek diversity in its membership, leadership and programs.



## THANK YOU FOR MAKING THE 95th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION A SUCCESS

*By Melissa Currence, Event Chair*

Our sincere gratitude to everyone who attended, participated and donated in our 95th Anniversary Celebration on Feb. 14. Each and every one of you helped to make this event a resounding success!

I would also like to thank the countless hours of work put in by volunteers of LWVCA's Development Committee to make the 95th Anniversary Celebration possible.

*Continued on page 2*



LWVCA Education Fund is a member of Community Shares

# CO-PRESIDENTS' LETTER



What a great way to celebrate Valentine's Day along with the birthday of our League! For all who attended our **95th Anniversary Celebration** at The Phoenix, thank you for coming. To Melissa Currence who orchestrated the event, a big **THANK YOU** for all of your work. It was upbeat, fun and the food was great.

Please keep the evening of Monday, April 20 open so that you can attend the forum that Burt Roehr and her Education Committee have planned concerning **accountability in charter schools**. Several organizations are co-sponsoring the event and lending support to this project.

The League will be a co-sponsor of AIR Inc's project to educate the public concerning **redistricting** in Ohio, a topic that needs to be readdressed once again. Please look for more information in future months concerning a public forum.

**Statehouse Day** is March 31, and you may register online at the LWVO website. Not only may you participate in the workshops and hear the speakers, you may ask to visit with your elected officials. LWVO will make appointments for anyone interested in doing so. Please call the LWVCA office at 513-281-8683 if you are interested in going

and if you would like to join others in forming a carpool to Columbus.

For those who have not yet expressed an interest in helping with our **LWVO Convention** May 15 to 17, please call the office or Nancy Dawley to volunteer. You may volunteer for a limited or more involved time commitment before or during the convention. If you have never been to a League convention, you will find it stimulating and a way to meet members from all over the state.

**In League,**  
*Helen and Don Rhoad*  
**2013-15 Co-Presidents**

## PHOTOS OF THE 95TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

On Feb. 14, League members, friends and supporters gathered at the Phoenix downtown for a Valentine's Day fundraiser.



Top left photo, from left: Mary Kercherval Short, Becky Algenio, Helen Rhoad; Left photo, from left: Pauline Strayhorne, Eloise Gabbert, Katherine Durack, Mary Anne Berry and Dee Shaffer; Above photo: Melissa Currence and Ursula Bess

# 95TH ANNIVERSARY SUCCESS, *Continued*

*Continued from page 1*

Thanks to Becky Algenio, Kit Berger, Jena' Bradley, Christen Browne, Marjorie Davies, Nancy Dawley, Imani Driskell, Mary Kay Gardner, Becky Haltermon, Felicity Hill, Sara Johnson, Pinky Kocoshis, Carolyn Meyers-Hughes, Sandra Maddux Mowell, Ernie Mowell, Marlene Muse, April Piatt, Dee Shaffer, Don Rhoad, Helen Rhoad, Burton Roehr, Margaret Standriff and Mary Van Ausdall.

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The Phoenix - The President's Room

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National Issues Forums  
Ohio Citizen Action  
Planned Parenthood Southwest Ohio Region  
Woman's City Club of Greater Cincinnati

**Special thanks** to The Phoenix and League of Women Voters of Greater Dayton.

Right photo, from left: Nancy Dawley, Nancy Forbriger, Liliana Bramasco Kimmet, Joel Kimmet;  
Bottom photo, from left: Lori Beiler, Michele Carey, Julia Mace



# Making Democracy Work®: THE

We thank the following donors to the League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area and/or the Every effort is made to keep this list accurate. Please contact LWVCA's Office Manager Becky

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## In Honor Of

Pam Hinterscher & Kristin McClure -  
In honor of Burton Roehr's birthday

Barbara Goldberg -  
In honor of Nevaeh and Nia Bloom

Marjorie Davies -  
In honor of Melissa Currence

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

By Felicity Hill, Membership Director

The LWVCA Membership Committee would like to welcome our new members that have joined the League since Jan. 1, 2015.

We appreciate each new member as he or she brings a fresh

perspective and interesting ideas. Thank you for your membership!

**Amy Katzman**  
**Katherine Durack**  
**Fran Harmon**

And a thank you to all our members - Our LEAG\_E Needs U!



## FEBRUARY BOARD BRIEFS

By Burt Roehr, Secretary

At its February 4 meeting, your LWVCA Board of Directors took the following actions:

- LWVCA is permitted six delegates to the LWVO Convention, May 15 to 17 in Cincinnati. If you want to be considered for this, please contact the office at [info@lwvcincinnati.org](mailto:info@lwvcincinnati.org) or 513-281-8683.
- LWVCA is joining a coalition called Faith and Community Alliance that focuses on social issues in Cincinnati. Burton Roehr will be our representative.

- The Annual Meeting will be held May 20 in the Social Hall at the church.
- Work on the 2015 Primary Election is underway. Get in touch with Sandra Mowell to volunteer time to this effort.
- The Board voted to participate in the Gay Pride Festival on June 27. We'll have a booth and will march in the Parade. This is another volunteer opportunity for members.
- The Board voted to renew our membership in an environmental coalition called "Green Umbrella."

# LWVCA DONOR HONOR ROLL

LWVCA Education Fund for their contributions since June 1 (through press time, Feb. 17, 2015). Haltermon at 513-281-8683 or becky@lwvcincinnati.org to notify us of any errors or omissions.

## Gloria Walker Level

|                                  |                             |   |                              |                              |
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|                                  | Elizabeth Horowitz          |   |                              |                              |

## KNOW HAMILTON COUNTY - ONLINE!

By Becky Haltermon, LWVCA Office Manager

The LWVCA's County Government Committee has updated *Know Hamilton*

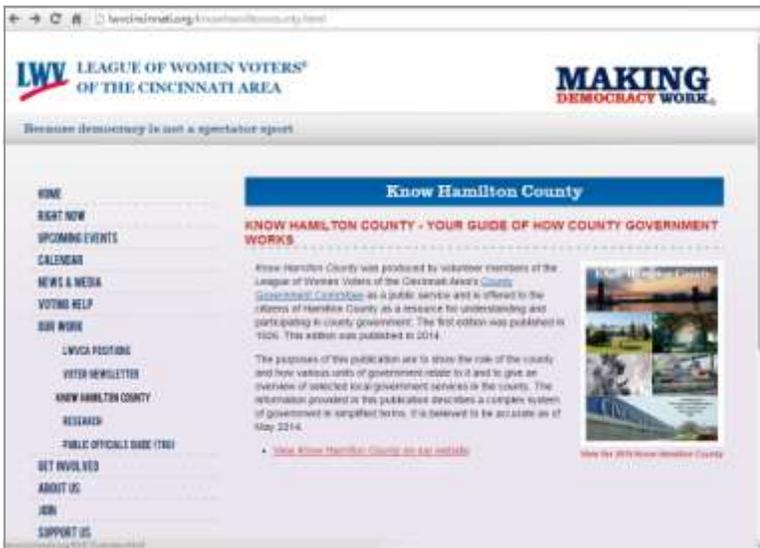
County, a guide that describes in simplified terms the complex systems of governance that affect Hamilton County, Ohio. Just visit [lwvcincinnati.org/knowhamiltoncounty.html](http://lwvcincinnati.org/knowhamiltoncounty.html) for an easy-to-navigate website that will be constantly updated.

*Know Hamilton County* shows the role of Hamilton County and how various units of government relate to it.

The guide also gives an overview of selected local government services in the county.

It is offered to the citizens of Hamilton County as a resource for understanding and participating in county government.

The League has been publishing *Know Hamilton County* since 1926, and for the first time ever, this guide is entirely online.



# LWVO CONVENTION IN CINCINNATI NEEDS YOU

By Nancy Dawley, Convention Committee Chair

From May 15 to 17, 2015, our League will host the Biennial LWV Ohio Convention here in Cincinnati. This is a great



LWVO Convention Welcome Table in 2011

opportunity to show off our city and our members to folks from all over the state.

### Delegates

Six LWVCA members may serve as our official delegates. Delegates will vote on behalf of LWVCA and represent our League during the various sessions. Please contact the office at 513-281-8683 or [info@lwvcincinnati.org](mailto:info@lwvcincinnati.org) to inquire about serving as a delegate or contact Helen or Don Rhoad if you have questions.

### Volunteers

Volunteers of all sorts will help

make the convention a success. Most shifts will be two hours in length. The registration fee will be waived for each day a member volunteers, though volunteers will have to pay for any meal events they attend. Volunteers are needed in these areas:

1. Registration table set up and tear down
2. Greeting
3. Registration
4. Plenary Session help
5. Photographs (not just snapshots)
6. Set-up checking

Please contact the office at 513-281-8683 or [info@lwvcincinnati.org](mailto:info@lwvcincinnati.org) to inquire about serving as a volunteer. Thanks for being a part of the convention!

## HOST A LEAGUE MEMBER IN MAY

By Eleonora Fusco, Convention Committee Member

Let's show how warm, welcoming and inclusive Cincinnati hospitality is! Let's open our spare bedrooms to League members to whom hotel costs would be an excessive financial strain during the LWV Ohio Convention in May.

If you have a spare bedroom, please consider providing lodging and coffee in the morning to a League member during the event. The hosted League member should cover all other expenses linked to the

convention. The Convention is going to be held Downtown Cincinnati - our fellow League members should be able to reach the event easily.

This opportunity will be offered ONLY to current League members. No children or pets will be allowed.

Ready to sign up? Please send the following information to Becky Haltermon by calling 513-281-8683 or emailing [Becky@lwvcincinnati.org](mailto:Becky@lwvcincinnati.org), and we will match you with League members that would best fit your home.

Please tell us:

- Your name
- Your address
- Your phone number
- How many guests you would accommodate
- Whether your house is close to the bus line to Downtown OR whether you could host only guests with own transportation
- Whether you have pets, as people might have allergies

## ELECTED OFFICIALS GUIDE AND MAY PRIMARY INFO

by Sandra Mowell, Voter Service Vice President

*They Represent Us* (TRU) 2015 – LWVCA's Public Official Directory – is hot off the presses! A team of Voter Service volunteers have reviewed and updated this year's directory with all the changes from our 2014 election.

Many thanks to Janet Steiner, Pam Warman, Nancy Forbriger, Rose Kearney, Margaret Standriff, Alva Reid, Mary Ellen Addison, Lucia Hudson and Alice Schneider for their work on this project. Thanks also to our office manager, Becky Haltermon, and all of our office volunteers for managing

all of the community orders we receive.

Orders for over 4,500 copies are in the process of being filled to many local organizations and individuals. LWVCA members will receive their TRU copy with our 2015 LWVCA Membership Directory.

Be sure to keep your copy handy for all of

your communication needs when contacting the elected officials who represent us!

Vote411.org will be up and running again in mid-March with information on our local candidates running in the May 5 primary. Be sure to visit our voting help page at [www.lwvcincinnati.org/votinghelp.html](http://www.lwvcincinnati.org/votinghelp.html) if you need help navigating the system.

Inquiries have gone out to the candidates soliciting their participation in our electronic

voter guide for the primary. Their information will be "live" sometime in mid to late March, at least before early voting starts on April 7. There is no printed guide for the primary.

Should you need help with access to the electronic guide information please call the office during regular hours for assistance.

Don't forget the deadline to register to vote or to change your name or address on your current voter registration is April 6. Be sure to remind family and friends to update or register by the deadline to ensure the smoothest voting process possible for everyone!



## Events

### MAKE YOUR WAY TO STATEHOUSE DAY

*Tuesday, March 31, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.*

*By Don and Helen Rhoad, Co-Presidents*

On March 31, LWV Ohio will host the Ohio Statehouse Day in Columbus. This is a chance to hear Erin O'Brien, Ph.D. present "Turning Empty into Half Full: Why States Adopt Restrictive Voter Access Policies and the Promising State-level Reforms that Increase Turnout."

Dr. Erin O'Brien is Chair and Associate Professor of Political Science at University of Massachusetts as well as co-director of the Boston Chapter of the Scholar Strategy Network. Her research and teaching interests focus on voting access policymaking in the United States, the politics of poverty and social welfare

policy and gender in political participation and representation. She is also a regular commentator on American politics and public policy for outlets including NPR, Christian Science Monitor, Real Clear Politics, New England Cable News (NECN), The Boston Globe, Boston Herald and SIRIUS Radio's POTUS channel.

Attendees can participate in workshops and learn about current LWVO projects. All attendees will have the option



of requesting a meeting with their legislator through the LWVO office and can be teamed up for the meeting with a member of the Lobby Corps, if desired.

Call the LWVCA office at 513-281-8683 if you want to attend, or contact Helen or Don Rhoad if you have questions about Ohio Statehouse Day.

*Erin O'Brien, Ph.D.*

### BEYOND CIVILITY: RELIGIOUS LIBERTY/WOMEN'S RIGHTS

*Tuesday, March 31, 5:30 p.m.*

Join Christopher Finney, attorney for COAST, and Jennifer Branch, attorney for Planned Parenthood, as each argues the other side's position on issues of religious liberty and women's rights implicated in the *Hobby Lobby* and *Wheaton College* decisions.

This is part of Beyond Civility's Back-to-Back Series that features "reverse debates" that challenge high-profile advocates on opposite sides of major policy issues to demonstrate their understanding of their opponent's perspective. This format promotes civil, informative



Finney



Branch

discussion of hotly contested issues by trading facts and clear explanations for the spin and obfuscation often found in policy discussions.

This event will take place at St. John's Unitarian Universalist Church (320 Resor Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45220) with a reception at 5:30 p.m. and program at 6:30 p.m.

Admission is free, but reservations are required. Visit [www.beyondcivility.org/](http://www.beyondcivility.org/) reservations to reserve your spot!

### SAVE THE DATE: CHARTER SCHOOL FORUM

*Monday, April 20, 7 p.m.*

*By Burt Roehr, Education Committee Chair*

The LWVCA and other organizations are sponsoring a forum on charter schools in Ohio entitled: "Ohio's Charter Schools: Are They Accountable?" at the Clifton Recreation Center (320 McAlpin Ave., Cincinnati, 45220).

Speakers confirmed thus far include Mary Ronan from Cincinnati Public Schools, Aaron Churchill of the Fordham Institute and Steve Dyer from Innovation Ohio. Further planning is in progress.

Focus for the evening: Everything you ever wanted to know about charter schools in

Ohio, what works, and what the problems are.

Mark your calendars and plan to attend!!

## AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE

The country is again struggling with disparate viewpoints on race and the criminal justice system that at times have led to confrontations in the streets. In March, the Cincinnati area League of Women Voters is encouraging its members to learn more about the historic basis for these tensions.

Slavery in the United States can be traced back to the 16th century, when Spanish explorers brought African slaves with them to the New World. It lasted until the Emancipation Proclamation came into effect on Jan. 1, 1863. On that date, Texas was largely controlled by forces fighting for the Confederate States. On June 19, 1865, Union soldiers arrived to

For years, the Cincinnati League has participated in the local Juneteenth Festival. We've registered voters, given out literature and recruited members from the primarily African American families attending the festival in the park on a summer Saturday. This year, the Juneteenth Festival will be June 20 and 21 at Drake Park.

take control of Texas and enforce the emancipation of slaves in the state. In Galveston, Texas, the newly freed slaves held large public celebrations and laid the base for future Juneteenth activities. Today, Juneteenth is an opportunity for people to celebrate freedom and equal rights in the United States.

2015 is the 150th anniversary of the end of the Civil War, ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment and the celebration of

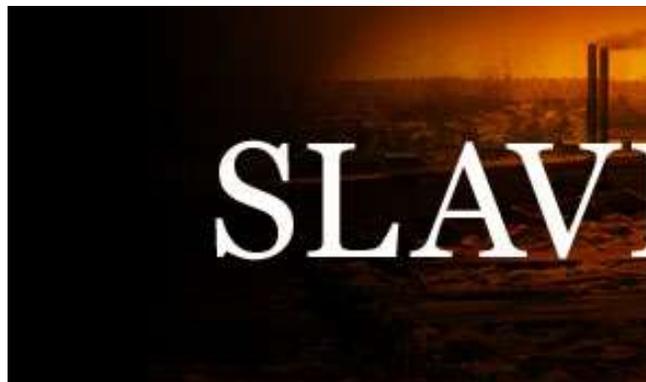
the first Juneteenth freedom day. The local Juneteenth Committee is asking its numerous partners to read and discuss the Thirteenth Amendment to the constitution and read the book or watch the documentary "Slavery By Another Name." The League is participating by encouraging its members to read the Pulitzer Prize-winning book or view the documentary online from the PBS website and join in the discussion at the March Unit meetings.

The book and documentary raise disturbing questions about our history and the ways slavery was continued in the United States long after the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment. The subtitle of the book is "The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II." This history sheds light on the stereotype of African Americans as criminals and current issues in the criminal justice system.

### **Thirteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution adopted in 1865**

*Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.*

*Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.*



Douglas Blackmon, a Wall Street Journal reporter, published the book "Slavery by Another Name" in 2008. The book began as an article Blackmon wrote for The Wall Street Journal detailing the use of black forced labor by U.S. Steel Corporation in Birmingham, Alabama. Seeing the strong response to the article, he began research for a more comprehensive look at the topic. The resulting book was well-received by critics and became a New York Times Best Seller. In 2009, it was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for General Non-Fiction and in 2011, was adapted into a documentary film for PBS.

The book and documentary tell about a time in our history that has been largely hidden. The Civil War had crippled the South's economy and, with the abolishment of slavery, much of Southern planters' wealth had disappeared. Accustomed to the unpaid labor of slaves, they were now faced with the need to pay their workers, but there was little cash available. In this environment, intricate systems of forced labor, which guaranteed cheap labor and ensured white control of that labor, flourished.

After Reconstruction ended and the federal government pulled out, Southern states began to enforce a series of laws that unfairly penalized poor African Americans for crimes. "Pig laws" made the theft of a farm animal worth a dollar punishable by as much as five years in jail. Vagrancy statutes made it a crime not to have a job or be able to show proof of employment. While these laws did not specifically mention African Americans, they were rarely enforced for whites. The result was a huge increase in the number of blacks arrested and convicted and the rise of the labor system known as convict leasing.

### **Convict Leasing**

Initially, to save money on prison construction and later to actually generate revenue, Southern states and counties began leasing convicts to commercial enterprises. Within a few years, states realized they could lease out their convicts to local planters or industrialists who would pay minimal rates for the workers and be responsible for their housing and feeding, thereby eliminating costs and increasing revenue. Soon, markets for convict laborers developed, with entrepreneurs buying and selling convict labor leases. From county courthouses and jails, men were leased to local plantations, lumber camps, factories and railroads. The convict lease system became highly profitable for local governments. Revenues increased as more and more African Americans were arrested.

# CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

## SLAVERY by Another Name

To employers and industrialists, these men represented cheap, disposable labor. The costs to lease a laborer were minimal, and the cost of providing housing, food, clothing and medical treatment could be kept low. Replacement costs were cheap. If a laborer died, another could be purchased from the sheriff. But for victims and all Southern blacks, convict leasing was a horror. Prisoners were often transferred far from their homes and families. The paperwork and debt record of individual prisoners were often lost, and the men were unable to prove they had paid their debts or served their time. Working conditions at the convict leasing sites were often terrible: illness, lack of proper food, clothing or shelter as well as cruel punishments, torture and even death.

### Peonage

Another way that blacks were forced into labor was through a system known as “peonage.” Peonage, also called debt slavery or debt servitude, was a system where an employer compelled a worker to pay off a debt with work. In many cases, defendants were found guilty of real or fabricated crimes and were fined for both the crime and additional court fees. When the men were unable to pay, a local businessman would step forward to pay the fines. The convict would then sign a contract agreeing to work for him without pay until the debt was paid off.

In other cases, workers became indebted to planters (through sharecropping), merchants (through credit) or company stores (through living expenses). Workers were often unable to repay the debt and found themselves in a continuous work-without-pay cycle. Often stuck in remote company towns or isolated plantations, workers were prevented from escaping by chains, cells, guards, dogs and violence. If they did attempt to flee their workplace or the spurious debt, they risked a very high chance of being picked up, found guilty of abandoning their debts, fined court fees and eventually returned to the same employer — or worse, “leased” to a convict mine.

Several  
Federal efforts



to reform the systems of convict labor and peonage were launched in the 50 years between 1890 and 1940, but each stalled because of the strong economic and political interest in maintaining a source of cheap labor. The forced labor built many family fortunes in agriculture, the timber industry and the coal mines that supported the Birmingham steel mills. It was not until World War II that the system was finally ended. In 1941, at the outbreak of World War II and amid fears that racial inequalities would be used as anti-U.S. propaganda, President Roosevelt issued the enforcement mandate that federal attorneys should aggressively prosecute cases of involuntary servitude or slavery. During the 80 years after the Civil War and adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment, as many as 800,000 people were caught up in forced labor systems.

To encourage reconciliation, “Slavery by Another Name” highlights the stories of descendants of forced labor as well as those whose relatives benefitted from it – many of them had no previous knowledge of the scope or breadth of forced labor. A descendent of one particularly brutal business owner said her family always said their wealth came from the grandfather who was “a self-made man.” The descendent of white share croppers said his family was able to move into the middle class and he never before appreciated why the black share croppers couldn’t do the same. It is through these shared histories that we see the impact of uncovering the past and understanding its effect on current patterns of wealth, poverty and upward mobility.

View the 90 minute PBS  
documentary at  
[www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/watch/](http://www.pbs.org/tpt/slavery-by-another-name/watch/).



# AFRICAN AMERICANS AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM, *Continued*

## Criminal Justice and Race Today

So what does this history have to do with race relations in the United States today? There are still remnants of the convict leasing and peonage system in place today. However, our society also is dealing with general stereotypes of African Americans as criminals, the mass incarceration of African American men often for petty crimes and a population that does not trust law enforcement. These problems recently flared into angry confrontations in Ferguson, Missouri and throughout the country, with several highly publicized killings of black men by police officers.

In her book [The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness](#), legal scholar Michelle Alexander writes that many of the gains of the civil rights movement have been undermined by the mass incarceration of black Americans. She says that although Jim Crow laws are now off the books, millions of blacks arrested for minor crimes remain marginalized and disfranchised, trapped by a criminal justice system that has forever branded them as felons and denied them basic rights and opportunities that would allow them to become productive, law-abiding citizens. Because they are branded felons, they can be discriminated against and legally denied housing, employment, public benefits and the right to vote.

But aren't these black men dangerous criminals? According to Michelle Alexander:

“The uncomfortable truth, however, is that crime rates do not explain the sudden and dramatic mass incarceration of African Americans during the past 30 years. Crime rates have fluctuated over the last few decades -- they currently are at historical lows -- but imprisonment rates have consistently soared. Quintupled, in fact. And the vast majority of that increase is due to the War on Drugs. Drug offenses alone account for about two-thirds of the increase in the federal inmate population, and more than half of the increase in the state prison population.

The drug war has been brutal -- complete with SWAT teams, tanks, bazookas, grenade launchers, and sweeps of entire neighborhoods -- but those who live in white communities have little clue to the devastation wrought. This war has been waged almost exclusively in poor communities of color, even though studies consistently show that people of all colors use and sell illegal drugs at remarkably similar rates.

In fact, some studies indicate that white youth are significantly more likely to engage in illegal drug dealing than black youth....



Most people in state prison have no history of violence or even of significant selling activity. In fact, during the 1990s, the period of the most dramatic expansion of the drug war, nearly 80% of the increase in drug arrests was for marijuana possession, a drug generally considered less harmful than alcohol or tobacco and at least as prevalent in middle-class white communities as in the inner city.

In this way, a new racial undercaste has been created in an astonishingly short period of time -- a new Jim Crow system. Millions of people of color are now saddled with criminal records and legally denied the very rights that their parents and grandparents fought for and, in some cases, died for.” [www.huffingtonpost.com/michelle-alexander/the-new-jim-crow-how-the\\_b\\_490386.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michelle-alexander/the-new-jim-crow-how-the_b_490386.html)

Trust in law enforcement is seriously eroded by the history, the family stories, and the likelihood of arrest and incarceration for minor offenses. How can this cycle be broken?

## Discussion Questions

1. This film tackles a difficult part of American history with specific individual stories. *How do we reconcile difficult parts of our family history/national history? How does learning unpleasant truths about our family and national history affect our sense of identity and attitudes about current events?*
2. Nearly eighty years after the US ratified the Thirteenth Amendment, President Franklin Roosevelt issued the enforcement mandate that federal attorneys should aggressively prosecute any case of involuntary servitude or slavery. *Why do you think it took so long? What can citizens do to pressure government to act more quickly to change or enforce policy that may hurt economic interests?*
3. During the 80 years after the Civil War, as many as 800,000 people were caught up in forced labor systems. *How does this legacy affect our lives today? How does it affect our different attitudes about law enforcement and the justice system?*
4. In [The New Jim Crow](#), Michelle Alexander writes that “Rather than rely on race, we use our criminal justice system to label people of color ‘criminals’ and then engage in all the practices we supposedly left behind... Once you’re labeled a felon, the old forms of discrimination— employment discrimination, housing discrimination, denial of the right to vote, denial of educational opportunity, denial of food stamps and other public benefits, and exclusion from jury service—are suddenly legal.” *What is your initial response to Alexander’s theory that a system of mass incarceration exists in the U.S.?*
5. The Juneteenth Committee is hosting a series of community discussions ending with a community meeting in May: *Brainstorm some constructive suggestions for our community to address the impact of the stereotypes and beliefs about criminality and unfair criminal justice.*

***In Memoriam:***  
**CAROLYN BRIESE**

An honored member of both Woman's City Club and the LWVCA, Carolyn joined the League in 1960 and was a Life Member when she passed away in December.

Passionate about environmental issues, she was a civic humanitarian whose convictions informed her actions. Her son Craig contacted the LWVCA office to express how much Carolyn loved the League and it's clear that the League adored her in return for her warmth and wisdom.

Our deepest condolences to those who are suffering the loss of this remarkable woman.

***THE VOTER***  
**COLLATING SCHEDULE\***  
**2014-2015**

March 19  
April Voter  
**Anderson**

April 16  
Workbook I  
**Central Evening**

\*All dates are subject to change.  
Call Pinky Kocoshis when your Unit's time is coming up!

**MOVING?**

Please remember to contact the office with your new address and contact information! This will ensure you receive any League communications and helps keep our records up-to-date.

Please also let us know when you change email addresses! Send notices to [info@lwvcincinnati.org](mailto:info@lwvcincinnati.org) with "Address Change" in the subject line.

Thank you!



**Join the League of Women Voters**

*Because Democracy is not a spectator sport!*

All citizens, male and female, 18 years and older, are welcome. Take the opportunity now to support our work promoting democracy and civic engagement.

Dues include Cincinnati, Ohio and National membership, including newsletters from LWVCA and LWVO.

- Individual - \$60.00
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- Optional additional deductible contribution: \_\_\_\_\_

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Mail to LWVCA, 103 Wm. H. Taft, Cincinnati, OH 45219 or join online at [lwvcincinnati.org](http://lwvcincinnati.org)!

*The Voter* is the official monthly newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Cincinnati Area (LWVCA).

Editors:  
Mary VanAusdall  
Melissa Currence

Layout/Design:  
Becky Haltermon

*Please submit articles to:*  
[newsletter@lwvcincinnati.org](mailto:newsletter@lwvcincinnati.org)

**Next deadline: Friday, March 6**  
for the *Mid-March Update* and the  
*April Printed Voter*



**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
of the CINCINNATI AREA**

103 Wm. H. Taft Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45219  
513-281-8683 Fax: 513-281-8714  
info@lwvcincinnati.org www.lwvcincinnati.org

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## UPCOMING LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

All committee meetings are open to the public and are held at the League Office  
(103 Wm. H. Taft Rd, Cincinnati, OH 45219) **unless otherwise noted.** Bring a friend!

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Wednesday, March 4, 3:30 p.m.  | Education Committee Meeting  |
| Wednesday, March 4, 6:30 p.m.  | LWVCA Board Meeting  |
| Wednesday, March 4, 7 p.m.     | Criminal Justice and African Americans Discussion Leaders' Briefing, Geier Room ( <i>See cover</i> ) |
| Friday, March 6                | <i>Voter Deadlines - Mid-March Update and April Voter</i>  |
| Saturday, March 7, 10 a.m.     | Criminal Justice and African Americans Discussion Leaders' Briefing, Geier Room ( <i>See cover</i> ) |
| Monday, March 9, 7 p.m.        | Northeast Evening Unit Discussion, Madeira Public Library  |
| Tuesday, March 10, 8:30 a.m.   | Hamilton County Board of Election Regular Meeting  |
| Tuesday, March 10, 6:30 p.m.   | Anderson Unit Discussion, Anderson Center  |
| Tuesday, March 10, 7:30 p.m.   | Warren/Butler County Unit Discussion, Mason United Methodist Church                                  |
| Wednesday, March 11, 7:15 p.m. | Central Evening Unit Discussion  |
| Thursday, March 12, 6 p.m.     | Communication Committee Meeting  |
| Monday, March 16, 2 p.m.       | Membership Committee Meeting   |
| Wednesday, March 18, 12 p.m.   | Metro Day Unit Discussion  |
| Wednesday, March 18, 6:30 p.m. | Eastern Day Unit Discussion  |
| Thursday, March 19, 9:30 a.m.  | Mailing <i>April Voter</i> with Anderson Unit  |
| Tuesday, March 31, 8:30 a.m.   | LWV Ohio Statehouse Day, Vern Riffe Center, Columbus, OH ( <i>See page 7</i> )                       |
| Tuesday, March 31, 5:30 p.m.   | Religious Liberty/Women's Rights: The Hobby Lobby Decision ( <i>See page 7</i> )                     |

*All meeting dates/times subject to change. Please be sure to check the calendar at lwvcincinnati.org for the most up-to-date meeting and activity information.*