

New York State Convention of Universalists
192nd Annual Meeting -- Fellowship and Workshops
October 19-20, 2018

“Driving While Black”

African Americans on the Road in the Era of Jim Crow

Keynote Speaker:

Dr. Gretchen S. Sorin



Gretchen Sullivan Sorin is Director and Distinguished Service Professor at the Cooperstown Graduate Program, a training program for museum curators, educators, and directors that is part of SUNY Oneonta.

Dr. Sorin holds a B.A. from Rutgers University, an M.A. from the Cooperstown Graduate Program and a Ph.D. from the University at Albany in American History. Dr. Sorin has worked for more than 30 years with over 250 museums as an exhibition curator and educator, planner and consultant. She has served as a guest curator for many exhibitions including, *In the Spirit of Martin: The Living Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* for the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service; *Through the Eyes of Others: African Americans and Identity in American Art*; and the acclaimed traveling exhibition, *Bridges and Boundaries: African Americans and American Jews* for the Jewish Museum in New York.

Dr. Sorin's books include *Touring Historic Harlem, Four Walks in Northern Manhattan* with architectural historian Andrew Dolkart, *In the Spirit of Martin: The Living Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*, and *Through the Eyes of Others: African Americans and Identity in American Art*.

She is co-writer and senior historian working with Steeplechase Films and filmmaker Ric Burns on a documentary “*Driving While Black: African Americans on the Road in the Era of Jim Crow*,” which will be shown on PBS.

First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse
109 Waring Road, Syracuse, NY 13224

All Unitarian Universalists are warmly invited to attend
Registration information will be posted at nyscu.org



Annual Meeting/Conference Fee: \$25 pre-register, \$30 at the door

Directions: firstuusy.org/directions/ Set GPS for 109 Waring Road, Syracuse

Housing: Homewood Suites, 6006 Fair Lakes Road, East Syracuse, NY; 315-433-1009, x604 – hot breakfast, business center, fitness center, pool

Rate is \$119/\$129 night if reserved by October 1, 2018. Use NYS or NYSCU for group rate.

Home hospitality is available for \$40/night. Email firstuusy.org or call 315-436-6308

Things to do in Syracuse: www.visitsyracuse.com

NYSCU Conference and Annual Meeting,

**Friday Evening Entertainment: 7:00 to 8:30,
at the First UU Society of Syracuse**

Come together for fellowship

Saturday Schedule at First UU Syracuse:

- 8:00 Continental breakfast & registration
- 9:00 Opening worship –
Rev. Jennifer Hamlin-Navias
- 9:15 10:00 Keynote
- 10:00 10:30 Keynote Dialogue
- 10:30 video greeting from UUA President,
Rev. Susan Frederick-Gray
- 10:35 break
- 10:50 Business Meeting
- 11:45 Lunch (carnivore, vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free choices provided)
- 12:45 First workshop session
- 1:45 Break
- 2:00 Second workshop session
- 3:00 Closing worship
- 3:15 Meeting adjourns

Opening Worship:

Keynote: “DRIVING WHILE BLACK”

African Americans on the Road in the Era of Jim Crow – Dr. Gretchen S. Sorin

Dr. Sorin is co-writer and senior historian of *Driving While Black: African Americans on the Road in the Era of Jim Crow*. *Driving While Black*, a documentary directed by Ric Burns, is slated for broadcast by PBS during 2019-2020. It explores the role of the automobile in the lives of African Americans in the early 20th century. The film chronicles a crucial and transformative period in American racial, cultural and social history. Based on over a decade of research by Dr. Sorin, the film draws on a rich archive of material – photographs, advertisements, road signs, maps, letters and legal records – along with oral histories and on-camera insights. The film will be structured by the emergence and eventual obsolescence of a genre of literature aimed at facilitating black automobile travel; including *The Negro Motorist Green Book*, “the bible of black travel during Jim Crow,” published by Harlem-based businessman Victor H. Green, and his wife, Alma.

WORKSHOPS – Session I:

Dr. Sorin will lead participants in a reading and discussion of “**James Baldwin: A Letter to My Nephew.**”

Born in 1921 and raised in Harlem, James Baldwin became one of America’s most influential writers. Encountering persistent racism in the States, he left for France in 1948, but he came back as work and other commitments demanded. His searing look at race relations in the United States, *The Fire Next Time*, was published in 1963, becoming an immediate sensation. The book begins with the letter Baldwin wrote to his young nephew James on the 100th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. (*Excerpted from “Letters of a Nation”*)

Margaret Maguire Davis will co-facilitate. Margaret is a member of the UU Society of Oneonta, and Treasurer of NYSCU.

Gatherings on Social Justice, Creating Welcoming Worship, Environmental issues et al.

Open space for small-group discussion of common concerns and local actions

WORKSHOPS – Session II:

“**HUUB Update**” – “The Community Listening Project is our initiative to get to know our neighbors better, build coalitions, support local campaigns, and develop our programs in response to what we learn. HUUB Fellows, young people from the community, receive stipends for developing projects to uncover Orange’s assets. They contribute to a Community Asset Inventory, and introduce people of the city to First UU and our guiding principles.”

Representatives from The HUUB, First UU Church of Essex County, Orange, NJ.

“Teaching Critical Humility”

Privilege has led to oppressive systems and behaviors that impact the ability to do “radical hospitality” and community building at Ferry Beach, and elsewhere. We are part of a culture that, more often than not, values whiteness, maleness, straightness, money and able-bodied-ness above all else. As a result, these values are so ingrained in our consciousness that we fail to recognize them and, therefore, we don’t do the work of unlearning them. – *Cathy Stackpole, Executive Director, Ferry Beach Park Association*