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### **UW-River Falls Peterson Lecture explores tie between workers and the economy**

October 16, 2018 – Historian William P. Jones, professor of history at the University of Minnesota, will share his insights into the relevance of the 1968 Memphis sanitation workers’ strike within the context of today’s issues of economic inequality and workers’ rights during a lecture at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls on Tuesday, Oct. 30. The lecture will begin at 4:30 p.m. in the Kinnickinnic Theater in the University Center and will be preceded by a reception at 4 p.m.

Jones’ lecture, “The Spirit of Memphis: Public Employees and the Dignity of Labor,” is free and open to the public.

Drawing on his research into public employment in the 20th century United States, Jones explains why the work of garbage collectors and other public employees has been devalued and how those workers have mobilized to assert the dignity of their labor. This history is particularly relevant amidst the increasing concern over rising economic inequality, debates over the rights of workers, and the growing significance of service work in the 21st century.

The Edward N. Peterson Lecture Series honors the memory of Professor Edward N. Peterson, who taught at UWRF from 1954 to 2005. It addresses issues that were the focus of Peterson’s academic life and are still relevant today: war and peace, abuses and limits of power, the struggle for democracy in the twentieth century.

Additional information about this lecture series and this event is available at <http://bit.ly/PetersonLecture>. For more information, call the UWRF History Department at 715-425-3164.

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**Photo:** Photo courtesy of Smithsonian Magazine. National Guard troops lined Beale Street during a protest on March 29, 1968. “I was in every march, all of ’em, with that sign: I AM A MAN,” recalls former sanitation worker Ozell Ueal. (Bettmman Collection / Getty Images)

Read more: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/revisiting-sanitation-workers-strike-180967512/#1LFcFj75130WoOeZ.99>