

# Emily Alyssa Owens

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## *Curriculum Vitae*

### EDUCATION

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- Ph.D. Harvard University, African American Studies, 2015.
- A.M. Harvard University, African and African American Studies, 2013.
- A.B. Harvard College, *cum laude*, Studies of Women, Gender and Sexuality, and African American Studies, 2009.

### EMPLOYMENT

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- 2020- David and Michelle Ebersman Assistant Professor of History, Brown University.  
Faculty Fellow, Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice  
Affiliated faculty, Africana Studies
- 2016-2020 Assistant Professor of History, Brown University.  
Faculty Fellow, Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice  
Affiliated faculty, Africana Studies
- 2015-2016 Visiting Scholar, American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

### PUBLICATIONS

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#### ***Book***

*Consent in the Presence of Force: Sexual Violence and Black Women's Survival in Antebellum New Orleans*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, January 2023.

#### ***Other writing***

"Consent," in *Keywords in Gender and Sexuality Studies*, co-edited by Kyla Tompkins, Tavia N'yongo, and Amber Musser. New York: New York University Press, 2022.

"Teaching Slavery After the Slavery and Justice Report" in *Brown University's Slavery and Justice Report, with Commentary on Context and Impact*, 2nd. edition, edited by Anthony Bagues, Cass Cliatt, and Allison Levy. Providence, Rhode Island: Brown University, 2021.

"Ransom, a Subtle Intervention," in special issue "Confinement, Interiority, Black Feminist

Study: A Forum on Davis' 'Reflections' at 50," *The Black Scholar: Journal of Black Studies and Research* (Spring 2021).

"Black Struggle Won't Bring Interracial Catharsis--and it Shouldn't," *Literary Hub: The Best of the Literary Internet*, June 30, 2020.

"Reproducing Racial Fictions: Critical Meditation on (a) Lesbian Pregnancy," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 44.4 (Summer 2019): 859-882.

"Keyword: Consent," in special issue "Sexual Politics, Sexual Panics," *differences* 30.1 (Summer 2019): 148-156.

\*this special issue was the winner of Council of Editors of Learned Journals prize for Best Special Issue of 2019.

"Promises: Sexual Labor in the Space Between Slavery and Freedom in Antebellum Louisiana," *Louisiana History* 58.2 (Spring 2017): 179-216.

\*this article won the Hugh F. Rankin Prize for the Best Graduate Student Essay in Louisiana History, Louisiana Historical Association.

"Intimacy," in *Gender: Love*, edited by Jennifer C. Nash, Macmillan Interdisciplinary Handbooks. Farmington Hills, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2017.

Co-editor, with Jennifer C. Nash. "Institutional Feelings: Practicing Women's Studies in the Corporate University," Special Issue of *Feminist Formations* 27.3 (Winter 2015).

*Against the Closet: Black Political Longing and the Erotics of Race* by Aliyyah I. Abdur-Rahman, *Palimpsest: A Journal on Women, Gender and the Black International*, 2.2 (2013).

## **GRANTS and AWARDS**

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| 2021 | Institute for Citizens and Scholars Career Enhancement Fellowship.   |
| 2021 | Cogut Institute for the Humanities, Faculty Fellowship.  |
| 2020 | Collaborative Humanities Course Award (with Juliet Hooker, Professor of Political Science), Cogut Center for the Humanities, Brown University. |
| 2015 | Hugh F. Rankin Prize for the Best Graduate Student Essay in Louisiana History, Louisiana Historical Association.                               |
| 2014 | Program in African American History Dissertation Fellowship, The Library Company of Philadelphia.  |
| 2013 | Charles Warren Center Term-Time Dissertation Research Grant, Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History, Harvard University.        |

- 2013 Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Travel and Research Grant, Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation.
- 2013 Certificate of Distinction in Teaching, Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, Harvard University.
- 2012 Harvard Summer School Language Fellowship, Harvard University.
- 2010 Graduate Seed Grant for Pre-Dissertation Research, Center for American Political Studies, Harvard University.
- 2009 Andrew Ramroop Prize for Excellence in African and African American Studies, Department of African and African American Studies, Harvard University.
- 2007-2015 Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Organization.

#### **INVITED TALKS and WORKSHOPS**

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- 2023 "'Justice for Breonna Taylor!': Meditations on Violence and Value," Conference on the History of Value in the Long 19th Century, Princeton University, *forthcoming* April 14-16, 2023.
- 2023 "How She Begot the Violence," Center for Feminist Research, University of Southern California, *forthcoming* March 30, 2023.
- 2023 Symposium on slavery, sexual violence and sexuality, Yale Research Initiative on the History of Sexualities, Yale University, *forthcoming* January 26-27, 2023.
- 2022 "Making Violence Ordinary in the Antebellum Atlantic," Mahindra Humanities Center, Harvard University, September 15, 2022.
- 2022 "Body Story," Black Feminist Theory Summer Institute, Duke University August 1-5, 2022.
- 2022 Faculty Plenary, Harvard Scholarship and Social Justice Conference, Harvard Center for Public Service and Engaged Scholarship, April 14, 2022.
- 2022 "Culture, or, How do we Belong to One Another," Feminism for the Future: Constructive Conversations on Lesbian and Trans Identities and Politics, Northeastern University, March 25, 2022.
- 2022 "Ordinary Violence," Legal History Workshop, Harvard Law School, February 16, 2022.

- 2021 "How She Begot the Violence: How Violence Against Black Women Became Ordinary," Center for the Humanities, Wesleyan University, October 18, 2021.
- 2020 "Black Women and the Vote," Marking the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Women's Suffrage, Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women, October 23, 2020.
- 2020 Keynote address, Society for the Study of the Carolina Lowcountry in the Atlantic World, May 21, 2020.  
*Cancelled due to COVID-19.*
- 2020 Pre-circulated paper presentation at University of Chicago US History Workshop, April 23, 2020.  
*Cancelled due to COVID-19.*
- 2020 Keynote address, University of Massachusetts History Graduate Students Association Conference, March 26, 2020.  
*Cancelled due to COVID-19.*
- 2019 "Violence," Political Concepts: Retouch, Cogut Institute for the Humanities, December 6-7, 2019.
- 2019 "Believe Black Women" History Department at Rhode Island College, Providence, RI, April 10, 2019.
- 2018 "Silence: Old and New Black Feminist Historical Methods," part of the "New Directions in Black Feminist Studies," University of Oregon, December 5-7, 2018. *Cancelled due to illness.*
- 2018 Panelist, Special panel convened by the ASA programming committee: Roundtable Discussion on Sarah Haley's *No Mercy Here: Gender, Punishment and the Making of Jim Crow Modernity*, American Studies Association, November 8-11, 2018. *Cancelled due to illness.*
- 2018 "Ordinary Violence," pre-circulated paper presented at the seminar "In/Civility," (seminar leaders Kyla Wazana Tompkins and Tavia Nyong'o) at the Annual Meeting of C19, Albuquerque, NM, March 22-24, 2018.
- 2017 "Domination as Sexual Culture in the Age of Jackson," paper presented at Andrew Jackson at 250: Revisiting Race, Politics and Culture in the Age of Jacksonian Democracy," Yale University, December 1-2, 2017.
- 2017 "Sex and (Un)freedom in Historical Perspective," keynote remarks presented at "Should it be Legal to Exchange Sex for Money?: A Public Health Perspective," Boston University School of Public Health, November 29, 2017.

- 2017 "As His Wife: The Strange Story of Ann Maria Barclay and her Shadow Freedom," Africana Studies Colloquium Series, Brown University, February 15, 2017.
- 2016 "No Shadow of Law: The Suspension of Rape and Consent for Enslaved Women in Antebellum Louisiana," pre-circulated paper presented as part of the "Sexuality in African American Communities and Cultures" series, presented by the Faculty-Graduate Seminar at the Department of African American Studies at Princeton University, November 15, 2016.
- 2016 "Affective Objects," pre-circulated paper presented at the "Philology/Sexology Workshop," at the University of Toronto, September 29-30, 2016.
- 2016 Lesbian Studies in Queer Times, Institute for Research on Women and Gender, University of Michigan, April 13-16, 2016.
- 2016 "On Desire: Archives, Affect, and Unruliness in the History of Enslaved Women's Sexuality," in "Black Sexualities Symposium," presented by the American Studies Department, George Washington University, April 5, 2016.
- 2015 "Radical Pedagogies in the 'Neoliberal' University," roundtable presentation, Barnard College Scholar & Feminist Conference, New York, NY, February 27-28, 2015.
- 2015 "Consent is Sexy: Affective Objects in Slavery's Past and Present," in "New Perspectives on African American Intellectual History," workshop of the African American Intellectual History Society, Mississippi State University, November 20-21, 2015.

## **CONFERENCES**

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- 2023 "Rethorizing Rape and Reproduction: A Roundtable with the Authors of *The Work of Rape and Reproduction Reconceived*" Berkshire Conference of Women Historians, scheduled for June 28-29, 2023.
- 2022 "History on Fire: A 25th Anniversary Roundtable for *Scenes of Subjection*," Presidential Plenary Session of the American Studies Association, November 5, 2022.
- 2022 "Lesbian Studies and its Afterparties," roundtable presentation, American Studies Association, November 4, 2022.
- 2022 "Slavery, Freedom and Memory in New Orleans," Roundtable presentation, Society for the History of the Early American Republic, July 23, 2022.
- 2021 "On Sisterhood," with Camille Owens, as part of "The Queer Practice of Antiracist Collaboration," Roundtable presentation, American Studies

- Association, October 14, 2021.
- 2020 “The Queer Practice of Antiracist Collaboration,” Roundtable presentation, American Studies Association, November 2020.  
*Cancelled due to COVID-19.*
- 2020 “Black/Transnational Feminisms and the Question of Sexuality,” National Women’s Studies Association, November 2020.  
*Cancelled due to COVID-19.*
- 2020 Chair, “Black Legal Thought in the 19<sup>th</sup> century,” African American Intellectual History Society, University of Texas at Austin, March 6-7, 2020.  
*Cancelled due to COVID-19.*
- 2019 Organizer, R-E-S-P-E-C-T-A-B-I-L-I-T-Y: Black Women’s Studies Since *Righteous Discontent*, Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity and America, Brown University, forthcoming September 19-20, 2019.  
\*note: In this conference, I invited 14 of the leading scholars in the field of African American women’s history to Brown, where they reflected on the field and shared new research over a two-day symposium.
- 2019 Chair, “Captivity and Ransom in the Mediterranean,” Mediterranean Seminar, May 3, 2019.
- 2017 “Untimely Objects: Feminism and/in/eclipsed by the ASA,” roundtable, American Studies Association, Chicago IL, November 9-12, 2017.
- 2017 Chair, “Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice: Ongoing Projects,” National Humanities Council, Boston, MA, November 4-5, 2017.
- 2017 “Into Our Archive(s): Practicing African American Women’s History Across the Centuries” roundtable, Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, Gender and Sexualities, Hempstead, NY, June 2, 2017.
- 2017 “‘As His Wife’: Redefining Wifeliness in the Face of Unfreedom,” African American Intellectual History Society Annual Conference, Nashville, TN, March 24, 2017.
- 2015 Chair, “Institutional Feelings: Practicing Women’s Studies in the Corporate University,” National Women’s Studies Association Annual Conference, Milwaukee, WI.
- 2015 “Carmelite, Statu Liber: Sexual Labor in the Space Between Slavery and Freedom in Antebellum New Orleans,” American Society for Legal History Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., paper delivered in absentia.
- 2015 “The Thrill: The Affective Life of Racialized Sexual Commerce in Antebellum New Orleans,” Association for the Study of African American Life and History Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA.

- 2015 “The Thrill: The Affective Life of Racialized Sexual Commerce in Antebellum New Orleans,” on the panel “New Work from the Queering Slavery Working Group,” Society for the History of the Early American Republic Annual Meeting, Raleigh, SC.
- 2015 “‘No Shadow of Law’: Enslaved Women and the Suspension of Rape and Consent in Antebellum Louisiana,” *Consent in Early America*, Oxford University, Oxford, UK.
- 2015 “Impossible Promises: Ephemeral Objects in New Orleans’ Antebellum Sex Trade,” American Historical Association Annual Meeting, New York, NY.
- 2014 “The Thrill: Spectacular Risks and the Affective Life of Racialized Sexual Commerce in Antebellum New Orleans,” American Studies Association Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, CA.
- 2013 “Fantasies of Consent: Black Women’s Sexual Labor in the Long 19<sup>th</sup> Century,” Black Sexual Economies Conference, Washington University School of Law, St. Louis, MO.
- 2009 “On Butches and Bulldaggers: Reading *The L Word’s* ‘Tasha,’” Nathan I. Huggins Symposium, Harvard University, Cambridge MA.
- 2009 “Breaking the Habit: Intersectionality, Black Lesbian Subjectivity, and the Problem of Dual Identity Theorizing,” National Women’s Studies Association, Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA.

### **CAMPUS/COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS**

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- 2021 Overview of research, Annual Meeting of the Brown Corporation, October 22, 2021.
- 2021 "State of Minnesota v. Chauvin," "Teach-in On the Chauvin Trial," April 22, 2021.
- 2020 “Race and Slavery,” as part of “*Race &* in America: A Campus Conversation Series,” September 9, 2020.
- 2018 #MeToo// What’s Next in Healing and Activism with Tarana Burke,” presented by the Brown University Sexual Harrassment and Assault Resources Office, the Brown University Title IX Office, and the RISD Title IX Office, February 14, 2017.
- 2017 “Reflections on Charlottesville,” at “Charlottesville: Perspectives on the Origins and Implications of White Nationalism in the U.S.,” part of the “Reaffirming University Values: Dialogue and Discourse” series, September 6, 2017.

- 2017 “The History and Present of the Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice: Building Capacity,” Tougaloo Modern Slavery Conference, Tougaloo, MS, March 7-8, 2017.
- 2016 “Let Us Be Brave,” at the History Department’s Post-Election Teach-In, November 17, 2016.
- 2016 “Sex, Violence, and the Ordinary,” in “What I’m Thinking About Now” series, presented by the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America at Brown University, October 18, 2016.

## **TEACHING**

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- History of American Feminism, First-year Seminar (HIST 055B), Summer 2021.
- Loss, Political Activism and Public Feelings: Between Fact and Affect (Cogut Collaborative Humanities Course, co-taught with Juliet Hooker), (HIST 1971F), Fall 2020.
- American Slavery, lecture course (History 1515), Spring 2018, Spring 2020.
- Lesbian Memoir, capstone seminar (HIST 1972G), Spring 2020.
- The Intellectual History of Black Women, lecture course (HIST 1571), Fall 2019, Summer 2021.
- Narratives of Slavery, First-year Seminar (History 0557C), Fall 2017, Fall 2019.
- Consent: Race, Sex and the Law, capstone seminar (HIST1972F), Spring 2017, Spring 2018.
- Slavery, Race and Racism, First-year Seminar (History 0557B), Fall 2016.

## **ADVISING**

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### *Dissertation Committees*

- Kristen Maye, “Black Studies Toward a Poetics of Black Critique,” Africana Studies.
- Maggie Goddard, “Objective Pleasure: Embodied Aesthetics at the Site of the Pelvis,” American Studies, PhD granted 2022.
- Eleanor (Nell) Lake, “Mother, Nurse, Housewife, Maid: The Enduring Moral Politics of ‘Women’s Work’ in America,” American Studies, PhD granted 2022.
- Heather Sanford, “Palatable Slavery: Food, Race, and Freedom in the Colonial British Atlantic,” History Department; PhD granted 2020.
- Virginia Thomas, “Dark Trees: Family Photo Albums, Lynching Violence, and Racial Reproduction in the US South, American Studies; PhD granted 2019.



### *Comprehensive Oral Examinations*

Imen Boussayoud, "Race and Slavery," History, 2022.  
Phoebe Labat, "Gender and Slavery," History, 2022.  
Alexandria Miller, Black Women's Intellectual History," Africana Studies, 2022.  
Sarah Christensen, "Histories of Gender and Sexuality," History, 2020.  
Melaine Ferdinand-King, "Black Feminisms," Africana Studies, 2020.  
Stephanie Wong, "Theories of Race, Gender and Sexuality," History, 2020.  
Mike Simpson, "US History," History, 2020.  
Kristen Maye, "Black Feminist Theory," Africana Studies, 2018.  
Eleanor (Nell) Lake, "Gender and Work," American Studies, 2018.  
Sherri Cummings, "African American History," History 2017.

### *Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship*

Ella Altidor, History, class of 2022.5  
Aisha Zamor, Africana Studies and English, class of 2019

### *Undergraduate Advising*

Thesis advisor, Ella Altidor, History, class of 2022.5

Thesis advisor, Lyle Cherneff, Gender and Sexuality Studies, class of 2021; recipient of the Ruth J. Simmons Prize in Gender and Women's Studies and Joan Wallach Scott Prize in Gender and Sexuality Studies.

Thesis advisor (second reader), Clare Boyle, Comparative Literature, class of 2020.5

Thesis Advisor to Isabella Kres-Nash, History Department, class of 2018.

Thesis Advisor to Amani Hayes-Messinger, American Studies and Ethnic Studies, class of 2018.5

Undergraduate Teaching and Research Award, with Ellen Cola '20, "Historicizing Bondwomen's Sexuality and the Violence of Slavery," 2017.

## **SERVICE**

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### *Professional Service*

Program Committee, Society for Historians of the Early American Republic (SHEAR), 2020-2021.

### *Search Committees*

Search Committee, Modern Britain/Britain and the World from 1750, 2022.  
Search Committee, Beatrice and Julio Mario Santo Domingo  
Director and Librarian, John Carter Brown Library and Professor of History, Brown University

*Department and University Service, ongoing*

Committee on Academic Standing, 2020-2021; 2022-present.

Planning and Priorities Committee (History Executive Committee), History Department, 2019-2021; 2022-present.

Founder and convenor, Brown Gender History Workshop, 2018-present.

Board of Advisors, Database of Indigenous Slavery in the Americas, 2017-present.

Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program Advisory Board, Brown University, 2016-present.

TEAM advising, participant and facilitator, 2017-2020.

First-year Advisor, 2017-2018.

John Carter Brown Library Academic Advisory Committee, 2016-2020.

Black Feminist Theory Working Group, Pembroke Center for Research on Women and Gender, Brown University, 2016-2018.

*University service, episodic*

Facilitator, Virtual Book Talk with Evette Dionne, Sarah Doyle Women's Center, October 30, 2020.

Faculty Speaker, Feminist Killjoy Series, Sarah Doyle Women's Center, March 8, 2018.

Panelist, Workshop on Trigger and Content Warnings, Theatre Arts and Performance Studies, December 11, 2017.

Facilitator, Inclusive Teaching Workshop, History Department, December 11, 2017.

Faculty speaker, President's Leadership Council, November 17, 2017.

Faculty speaker, Graduate Programs Preview Day (HUG graduate student recruitment event), Monday, October 30, 2017.

Panelist, John Carter Brown Library Family Weekend Program, October 14, 2017.

Panelist, Faculty of Color Panel, Third World Transition Program (TWTP), August 30, 2017.

## **PUBLIC HISTORY**

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Interview with Annette Gordon-Reed, as part of EX LIBRIS series at the Providence Athanaeum, September 25, 2020.

Interview for *The Dig* podcast, as part of “Slavery’s Hinterlands” symposium, May 3-4 2019.

Consultant, U.S. History curriculum, The Choices Program, Brown University School of Professional Studies, 2017-2018.

Guest blogger, *African American Intellectual History Society* Blog, 2016-2018.

Regular contributor, *African American Intellectual History Society* Blog, 2014-2016.

Facilitator, “ICA Reads: *Citizen: An American Lyric* by Claudia Rankine,” Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA, 2016.

Research Consultant to Patricia McGregor, director, “The House that Will Not Stand,” Yale Repertory Theatre, New Haven, CT, 2015-2016.

Research Consultant to Andrea Cheng, author and illustrator, *Etched in Clay: The Life of Dave, Enslaved Potter and Poet* (New York: Lee and Low Books, 2012), 2011.