

## SETH EDWARD ROCKMAN

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### EMPLOYMENT

2025– George L. Littlefield Professor of American History, Brown University  
2025– Professor, Department of History, Brown University  
2009–2025 Associate Professor, Department of History, Brown University  
2004–2009 Assistant Professor, Department of History, Brown University  
2002–2003 Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of History, Brown University  
1999–2004 Assistant Professor, Department of History, Occidental College

### EDUCATION

Ph.D., History, University of California at Davis, 1999  
United States History (major field) and Cross-Cultural Women's History (minor field)  
Dissertation: "Working for Wages in Early Republic Baltimore: Unskilled Labor and the Blurring of Slavery and Freedom," Alan Taylor (director), Karen Halttunen, Clarence Walker

B.A., Columbia College, Columbia University, New York, NY, 1993  
History, *magna cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa  
Edwin Robbins Summer Research Fellowship and Chanler Prize, Department of History

### PRIZES AND HONORS

For *Plantation Goods: A Material History of American Slavery*

Pulitzer Prize in History, Finalist  
Philip Taft Labor History Book Award  
Mark Lynton History Prize, Columbia Journalism School, Finalist  
Hagley Prize, Business History Conference, Finalist  
Susanne M. Glasscock Book Prize, Finalist

School of Professional Studies Distinguished Faculty Award, Brown University, 2025

William G. McLaughlin Award for Excellence in Teaching, Brown University, 2015

American Antiquarian Society, Elected Member, 2011

Organization of American Historians Distinguished Lecturer, 2011–2026

For *Scraping By: Wage Labor, Slavery, and Survival in Early Baltimore*

Merle Curti Prize in Social History, Organization of American Historians  
Philip Taft Labor History Book Award  
H.L. Mitchell Prize, Southern Historical Association

PRIZES AND HONORS, CONT.

Joseph L. Arnold Prize, Baltimore City Historical Society, for the best unpublished essay on Baltimore's history, 2006, for "Work, Wages, and Welfare at Baltimore's School of Industry"

**BOOKS**

*Plantation Goods: A Material History of American Slavery*  
University of Chicago Press, 2024

Book Talks

Politics & Prose Bookstore, Washington DC (with Michael Ralph); Stavros Niarchos Foundation Library, NYPL (with Stephanie McCurry); Commonwealth Club of California (with Alan Taylor); Library Company of Philadelphia; Parsons School of Design; Harvard Business School; Georgetown University; American Antiquarian Society; John Carter Brown Library (with Sven Beckert and Keisha Blain); Red Emma's Bookstore, Baltimore (with Tony Perry); Books on the Square, Providence (with Sharon Murphy); Newport Historical Society; Rhode Island Historical Society; South County (RI) History Center; Stanford University; University of California–Davis; Clio's Books, Oakland (with Dylan Penningroth); University of Toronto; Museum of Worcester; Portland State University; Willamette University (Annual Frost Endowed Lecture); Duke University; University of South Carolina; Rhode Island College; Morgan State University; Linden Place Museum (RI); University of Delaware (Annual Harrington Lecture); Historic Stonington (CT); Smith's Castle Historical Site (RI); Symposium Books (Providence)

Public-facing Reviews

*LA Review of Books*; *TLS: Times Literary Supplement*; *The Paper* (Shanghai, China)

Podcasts

*Sew What?*; *Drafting the Past*; *Who Makes Sense*; *Unsung History*; *The Photo Detective*; *Ben Franklin's World*

*Scraping By: Wage Labor, Slavery, and Survival in Early Baltimore*  
Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009

Book Talks

Homewood Museum, Baltimore

Radio

"Midday with Dan Rodricks," WYPR, Baltimore

Conferences

Library Company of Philadelphia 2009 PEAES symposium

**EDITED VOLUMES**

*Slavery's Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development* (with Sven Beckert)  
University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016

*Welfare Reform in the Early Republic: A Brief History with Documents*  
Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 2003; reprinted Waveland Press, 2014

**OTHER VOLUMES**

*Der alte und der neue Materialismus in der Geschichte der Sklaverei*  
De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2022

**BOOK IN PROGRESS**

*Penguin History of the United States, volume II, 1763–1848*, under advance contract

**GUEST EDITING: JOURNAL SPECIAL ISSUES AND SECTIONS**

“Joining Forces: Labor History and the History of Science” (with Lissa Roberts and Alexandra Hui). *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History* 21:1 (March 2024).

“Focus Section: Let’s Get to Work: Bringing Labor History and the History of Science Together” (with Alexandra Hui and Lissa Roberts). *Isis* 114 (December 2023).

“Science and/as Work” (with Lissa Roberts and Alexandra Hui). *History of Science* 61 (December 2023).

“Forum: Paper Technologies of Capitalism.” *Technology & Culture* 58 (April 2017).

**ARTICLES**

“Historiographies of Science and Labor: From Past Perspectives to Future Possibilities,” (with Lissa Roberts and Alexandra Hui), *History of Science* 61 (December 2023): 448–474.

“Launching a Labor History of Science,” (with Alexandra Hui and Lissa Roberts), *Isis* 114 (December 2023): 817–826.

“Negro Cloth: Mastering the Market for Slave Clothing in Antebellum America.” In Christine Desan and Sven Beckert, eds., *American Capitalism: New Histories* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018), 170–194.

“The Paper Technologies of Capitalism.” *Technology & Culture* 58 (April 2017): 487–505.

“What Makes the History of Capitalism Newsworthy?” *Journal of the Early Republic* 34 (Fall 2014): 439–466.

“An Artist of Baltimore.” In Joy Peterson Heyrman, ed., *New Eyes on America: The Genius of Richard Caton Woodville* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 25–36.

“Slavery and Capitalism.” In “Forum on the Future of Civil War Era Studies,” *Journal of the Civil War Era* 2 (March 2012): online supplement.

ARTICLES, CONT.

“Jacksonian America.” In Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr, eds., *American History Now* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011), 54-76.

“Slavery and Abolition along the Blackstone.” In *A Landscape of Industry: An Industrial History of the Blackstone Valley. A Project of the Worcester Historical Museum and the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor* (University Press of New England, 2009), 110-131.

“Work in the Cities of Colonial British North America: A Review Essay.” *Journal of Urban History* 33 (September 2007): 1021-1032.

“Work, Wages, and Welfare at Baltimore’s School of Industry.” *Maryland Historical Magazine* 102 (Spring 2007): 575-611. [Winner of the 2005 Joseph Arnold Prize in Baltimore History]

“The Unfree Origins of American Capitalism.” In Cathy Matson, ed., *The Economy of Early America: Historical Perspectives and New Directions* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 335-361.

“Class and the History of Working People in the Early Republic.” *Journal of the Early Republic* 25 (Winter 2005): 527-535.

“The Contours of Class in the Early Republic City.” *Labor: Studies in Working Class History of the Americas* 1 (Winter 2004): 91-107.

“Saving Morris Hull: Capital Punishment and the Court of Public Opinion in Early Republic Baltimore.” In Jessica Elfenbein et al., eds., *From Mobtown to Charm City: New Perspectives on Baltimore's Past* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 2002), 64-91.

“Women’s Labor, Gender Ideology, and Working-Class Households in Early Republic Baltimore.” *Explorations in Early American Culture* [supplemental issue of *Pennsylvania History*] 66 (1999): 174-200.

**OTHER PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH OUTPUTS**

“Point/Counterpoint” with Susan O’Donovan on *Plantation Goods: A Material History of American Slavery*, in *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History* 22 (December 2025).

[Written Testimony](#) to the US House of Representatives Committee on Financial Services Hearing entitled “An Enduring Legacy: The Role of Financial Institutions in the Horrors of Slavery and the Need for Atonement, Part Two,” December 7, 2022.

[“The Dialectics of Racism and Repair.”](#) Essay in *Brown University Slavery & Justice Report*, updated edition, 2021.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS, CONT.

[“History of Capitalism” bibliography](#), with History 2980 graduate seminar students, Brown Digital Repository, May 2021.

[“Why Republican efforts to ban the 1619 Project from classrooms are so misguided.”](#) essay for *Washington Post* “Answer Sheet by Valerie Strauss,” April 7, 2021.

[“NEPC Review: Capitalism in the 1619 Project.”](#) National Education Policy Center, University of Colorado, Boulder, March 2021.

[“SHEAR meets STEM” bibliography](#), with Adam Nelson, Ann Johnson, Nina Lerman, and Caitlin Rosenthal, 2014.

“The North, 1815-1860.” Global Lyceum US History to 1877 on-line textbook, 2013.

“How Slavery Led to Modern Capitalism.” With Sven Beckert. *Bloomberg News* “Echoes” Blog, January 24, 2012.

“And the War Came.” *Teaching the Civil War in the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Susan O’Donovan, (National History Day/History Channel, 2011), 8-17.

“Partners in Iniquity.” With Sven Beckert. *New York Times* “Disunion” Blog, April 2, 2011. Reprinted in *Disunion: Modern Historians Revisit and Reconsider the Civil War from Lincoln’s Election to the Emancipation Proclamation* (New York: Black Dog and Leventhal, 2013).

“Poverty, Past and Present: The High Cost of Being Poor in America.” *Common-place: The Interactive Journal of Early American Life* 10:4 (July 2010).

“Baltimore’s History of ‘Illegal’ Workers.” *Baltimore Sun* op-ed, April 5, 2007.

“Liberty is Land and Slaves,” *OAH Magazine of History* 19 (May 2005): 8-11. Special issue on the Market Revolution, edited by John Larson.

“Class: Overview.” 750-word essay for *Encyclopedia of the New American Nation*, edited by Paul Finkelman et al., (Charles Scribner’s Sons, 2005), I, 277-279.

“Baltimore: Mobtown U.S.A.” *Common-place: The Interactive Journal of Early American Life* 3:4 (July 2003).

“Economic Justice— in the Streets.” *History News Service* op-ed, February 7, 2002.

**BOOK REVIEWS**

*Coffee Nation: How One Commodity Transformed the Early United States*, by Michelle Craig McDonald. *Winterthur Portfolio*, forthcoming.

*Reckoning with Slavery: Gender, Capitalism, and Kinship in the Early Black Atlantic*, by Jennifer L. Morgan. *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History* 20 (May 2023): 159–160.

*The Kidnapping Club: Wall Street, Slavery, and Resistance on the Eve of the Civil War*, by Jonathan Daniel Wells. *Western Historical Quarterly* 53 (Spring 2022): 101.

*The Archaeology of American Capitalism*, by Christopher N. Matthews. *Winterthur Portfolio* 47 (Spring 2013): 103-104.

*The Baltimore Bank Riot: Political Upheaval in Antebellum Maryland* by Robert Shalhope. *Business History Review* 85 (Fall 2011): 653-655.

*Down and Out in Early America* edited by Billy G. Smith. *Social History* 31 (Nov. 2006): 515-16.

*Manufacturing Revolution: The Intellectual Origins of Early American Industry* by Lawrence Peskin, and *Forging America: Ironworkers, Adventurers, and the Industrious Revolution* by John Bezís-Selfa. *William and Mary Quarterly* 62 (April 2005): 349-354.

*Patriots, Settlers, and the Origins of American Social Policy* by Laura Jenson. *Journal of American History* 91 (December 2004): 1002.

*Making Houses, Crafting Capitalism: Builders in Philadelphia, 1790-1850* by Donna J. Rilling. *Technology and Culture* 43 (July 2002): 608-609.

*Captain Ahab Had a Wife: New England Women and the Whalefishery, 1720-1870* by Lisa Norling. *Biography* 24 (Fall 2001): 973-975.

*Afrotopia: The Roots of African American Popular History* by Wilson Jeremiah Moses. *American Studies* 42 (Spring 2001): 170-171.

*Laboratories of Virtue: Punishment, Revolution, and Authority in Philadelphia, 1760-1835* by Michael Meranze, and *Over the Threshold: Intimate Violence in Early America* by Christine Daniels and Michael Kennedy. *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 33 (June 2000): 601-602.

*Ploughshares into Swords: Race, Rebellion, and Identity in Gabriel's Virginia, 1730-1810* by James Sidbury. *H-SHEAR* [H-NET list for the Early Republic], February 1999.

*Slavery, Capitalism, and Politics in the Antebellum Republic: Volume I: Commerce and Compromise* by John Ashworth. *Maryland Historical Magazine* 91 (Winter 1996): 504.

**RESEARCH GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS**

International Research Center on Work and Human Lifecycle in Global History (re:work),  
Visiting Research Fellow, Humboldt University, 2022-23

Gordon Cain Conference Fellow, Science History Institute, 2021–22

Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies, Fellow, 2019

International Research Center on Work and Human Lifecycle in Global History (re:work),  
Visiting Research Fellow, Humboldt University, 2016-17

Berlin Prize, American Academy in Berlin, Fall 2016 (declined)

Faculty Fellow, Simmons Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice, Brown University, 2015

American Council of Learned Societies Charles A. Ryskamp Fellowship, 2009 (held 2010-11)

Gilder Lehrman Center for the Study of Slavery, Resistance, and Abolition, Postdoctoral  
Research Fellow, Yale University, October 2007

Institute for Southern Studies Visiting Fellow, University of South Carolina, Fall 2007

NEH Long-term Fellow, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass., Spring 2007

PEAES Year-Long Postdoctoral Fellow, Library Company of Philadelphia, 2001-2002

Gilder Lehrman Fellowship, New-York Historical Society, June 2001

University of California Reed-Smith Dissertation Year Fellowship, 1998-1999

University of California President's Pre-doctoral Fellowship, 1993-1997

**INVITED SEMINARS AND LECTURES**

“The Antebellum Origins of American Business Ethics.” William R. Rhodes ’57 Lecture on the Ethics of Capitalism, Watson Institute, Brown University, April 30, 2025.

“Field Hands and Factory Hands: Plantation Provisions and the Material History of U.S. Slavery.” Institute of History, University of Bern, Switzerland, April 29, 2023.

“Field Hands and Factory Hands: Understanding Coercion as a Distributed and Entangled Phenomenon.” Keynote Lecture, WORCK Training School, Warsaw, Poland, May 25, 2022.

“Plantation Goods and the Material History of American Slavery.” Carl Becker Lectures, Department of History, Cornell University, March 14–16, 2022.

“Slavery’s Old and New Materialisms.” re:work Lecture 2020, Humboldt University, Berlin, January 14, 2020.

“Commercial Credit and Property Rights in People: The National Economy of Slavery in Antebellum America.” Annual Guth Visiting Lecture in Legal History, Robson Hall, University of Manitoba, October 3, 2019.

“Empire of Wool: Slave Clothing in the Making of American Capitalism.” Keynote lecture, “Clothing the Enslaved in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World” conference, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, July 9, 2019.

“America’s Other Slave Market: Business and Politics in the Plantation Economy.” American Studies Forum, Tel Aviv University. June 4, 2018.

“Plantation Labor Outsourced: Rethinking New England Outwork and the National Economy of Slavery in Antebellum America.” Colloquium on Work, Labor, and Political Economy, UC-Santa Barbara. February 16, 2018.

“Mill Hands, Field Hands, and the Intertwined Worlds of Factory and Plantation in Antebellum America.” Europa-Universität Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder). June 27, 2017.

“Capitalism and the New Materialism.” Institute for Global European Studies, Universität Basel, May 17, 2017.

Keynote Address. “Free and Unfree Labor in Atlantic and Indian Ocean Port Cities, c.1700–1850.” University of Pittsburgh, May 6, 2016.

“Innovation, Alienation, and the Russet Brogan: Plantation Provisioning and New England’s Industrial Revolution.” Workshop in History, Culture, and Society, Harvard University, March 4, 2016.

“Innovation, Alienation, and the Russet Brogan: Plantation Provisioning and New England’s Industrial Revolution.” Princeton University Modern America Workshop, December 8, 2015.



INVITED SEMINARS AND LECTURES, CONT.

“Negro Cloth: Plantation Provisioning and New England’s Industrial Revolution.” Wesleyan University, December 1, 2015.

“Capitalism, Slavery, and the Antebellum Origins of American Business Ethics.” Dale E. Benson Lecture in Business and Economic History, Pacific Lutheran University, October 12, 2015.

“Innovation, Alienation, and the Russet Brogan: Plantation Provisioning and New England’s Industrial Revolution.” Keynote lecture, CUNY Graduate Center Early American Republic Seminar annual conference, May 1, 2015.

“Innovation, Alienation, and the Russet Brogan: Plantation Provisioning and New England’s Industrial Revolution.” Newberry Library History of Capitalism Seminar, March 27, 2015.

“Mill Hands, Field Hands, and the Intertwined Worlds of Factory and Plantation in Antebellum America.” Moses Greeley Parker Lecture, Lowell National Historical Park, May 4, 2014.

“Northern Manufactures, Southern Slavery, and the Antebellum Origins of American Business Ethics.” Goodfellow Memorial Lecture, Washington College, Chestertown, Md. April 8, 2014.

“Negro Cloth: Mastering the Market for Slave Clothing in Antebellum America.” Boston Area Early American Seminar, Massachusetts Historical Society, March 4, 2014.

“Negro Cloth: Mastering the Market for Slave Clothing in Antebellum America.” New School for Social Research, May 6, 2013.

“The Politics of Plantation Provisioning in the New American Nation.” Milton Klein Lecture, Department of History, University of Tennessee, April 10, 2013.

“Negro Cloth, Planters Hoes, and the Geographies of Plantation Provisioning in Antebellum America.” Eisenberg Institute for Historical Studies, University of Michigan, December 7, 2012.

“Northern Manufactures, Southern Slavery, and the Antebellum Origins of American Business Ethics.” Preyer Lecture, Queens University of Charlotte (NC), October 14, 2012.

“The Paper Technologies of Capitalism.” Opening Lecture for “Mind Your Business: Records of Early American Commerce” exhibition, John Carter Brown Library, September 13, 2012.

“Negro Cloth: Mastering the Market for Slave Clothing in Antebellum America.” 19<sup>th</sup>-Century U.S. History Workshop, Georgetown University, January 23, 2012.

“Plantation Provisions, Northern Complicity, and the Material Culture of Slavery.” Center for the Comparative Study of Race and Ethnicity, Connecticut College, November 30, 2011.

“‘Implements Correspondingly Peculiar’: Slavery, Plantation Goods, and the Politics of Design in Antebellum America.” Seminar in American Material Culture, Bard Graduate Center, October 19, 2011.

INVITED SEMINARS AND LECTURES, CONT.

“Northern Manufactures, Southern Slavery, and the Antebellum Origins of American Business Ethics.” USC-Huntington American Origins Seminar, March 26, 2011.

“Plantation Provisioning and the Antebellum Origins of American Business Ethics.” Tucker Lecture, Department of History, Occidental College, October 5, 2010.

“The Business Ethics of Plantation Provisioning in Antebellum America.” Race and Inequality Seminar, Department of Economics, Brown University, November 17, 2009.

“The Business Ethics of Plantation Provisioning in Antebellum America.” Johns Hopkins University Department of History Seminar, November 2, 2009.

“Northern Manufactures, Southern Slavery, and the Business Ethics of Plantation Provisioning in Antebellum America.” Department of History, Clark University, October 14, 2009.

“Shirts for Slaves: The Business Ethics of Plantation Provisioning in Antebellum America.” Case Western Reserve University, April 17, 2009.

“Freedom and Slavery, Ancient and Modern” (with Professor Kurt Raaflaub). The Thelma Tournay Slater Classics Lecture. Mt. Union College, Alliance, Ohio, April 16, 2009.

“‘Political, Religious, & Moral questions are Commodities that we do not deal in as a Co.’: Northerners and the Trade in Plantation Goods.” University of Georgia Early American History Seminar, Athens, December 7, 2007.

“Plantation Goods: The Textiles and Farm Implements that Cemented the Slaveholding Republic.” Triangle Early American History Seminar, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, November 16, 2007.

“The ‘Southern Trade’: The Northern Business of Manufacturing Shoes, Shirts, and Hoes for Slaves.” Gilder Lehrman Center Seminar, Yale University, October 22, 2007.

“Self-Made and Slave-Made: Northern Manufactures, Southern Consumers, and the Trade in Plantation Goods.” University of Connecticut and American Antiquarian Society Seminar, April 3, 2007.

“Pauper Agency, Elite Benevolence, and Capitalist Discipline: The Political Economy of Social Welfare in the Early Republic United States.” Harvard Workshop on the Political Economy of Modern Capitalism, December 11, 2006.

“Pauper Agency, Elite Benevolence, and Capitalist Discipline: Narrating the History of Public Welfare in the Early Republic United States.” Brandeis University Department of History, November 16, 2006.

INVITED SEMINARS AND LECTURES, CONT.

“‘Wanted—A Woman white or black’: Domestic Service and the Racial Order of the Early Republic City.” Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America, Brown University, November 2005.

“Poverty and Slavery in the Early Republic United States.” John Carter Brown Library, Providence RI, December 11, 2002.

“Toward a History of Wage Labor in the Early Republic.” Washington DC-area Early American Seminar, University of Maryland, College Park, April 18, 2002.

“‘Obliged to Hire Out’: Working Women and Household Survival in Early National Baltimore.” Maryland Historical Society, Women’s History Month Gallery Talk, March 10, 2002.

“Unsteady Labor in Uncertain Times: Urban Workers at the Forefront of Early Republic Capitalism.” Library Company of Philadelphia/McNeil Center for Early American Studies Seminar, November 30, 2001.

“Saving Morris Hull: Capital Punishment and the Court of Public Opinion in Early Republic Baltimore.” Huntington Library Seminar in Early American History, December 2, 2000.

“Welfare Reform in Revolutionary America: An Historical Perspective on the Contemporary Debate.” UC-Davis Summer Faculty Speaker Series, September 14, 1998.

“Working for Wages in Early Republic Baltimore.” Bay Area Seminar for Early American History, March 15, 1998.

“The Women Who Were There: Baltimore’s Working Women, 1790-1830.” McNeil [Philadelphia] Center for Early American Studies, February 20, 1998.

CONFERENCE TALKS

“Makers, Markets, and Mobilizations: The Labor History of Early America.” PEAES at 25 conference, Library Company of Philadelphia, February 2025.

“New Departures and Enduring Questions in Atlantic Slavery Studies: A State-of-the-Field Review of New Scholarship.” American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Jan. 2025.

“Rhode Island ‘Ready-Made’, Women’s Outwork Sewing, and the Nineteenth-Century Economy of Plantation Provisioning.” Business History Conference Annual Meeting, March 2024.

“Plantation Labor Outsourced: Situating New England Textiles in the National Economy of Slavery.” *Tales of North and South in Antebellum America: A Complicated Web*, University of Rhode Island, September 28, 2019.

CONFERENCE TALKS, CONT.

“Innovation, Alienation, and the Russet Brogan: Plantation Provisioning and New England’s Industrial Revolution.” *A New Materialism? Rethinking the History of Global Capitalism at the Nexus of Culture and Political Economy*, University of Michigan April 1, 2016.

“From Social History to Political Economy: The Changing Registers of Class and Capitalism in American History.” *Economic History’s Many Muses*, sponsored by the Program in Early American Economy and Society, Library Company of Philadelphia, October 24, 2014.

“Slaves and the Design Histories of Plantation Provisions.” Society for Historians of the Early American Republic Annual Meeting, 2012.

“How to Make an Indestructible Hoe, or The Desires and Dilemmas of Northern Manufacturers of Plantation Provisions.” Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, 2012.

“Negro Cloth: Mastering the Market for Slave Clothing in Antebellum America.” *New History of American Capitalism*, sponsored by the Program on the Study of Capitalism, Harvard University, November 18, 2011.

“Jacksonian America.” *American History Now* forum, sponsored by the Center for American Political Studies, Harvard University, November 4, 2011.

“Northern Mill Hands, Southern Field Hands, and the Business of Plantation Provisioning in Antebellum America.” *Slavery and its Legacy*, sponsored by Tougaloo College, February 2011.

“Scraping By and the State of Social History.” *Scraping By: Wage Labor, Slavery, and Survival in the Early Republic*, sponsored by the Program in Early American Economy and Society, Library Company of Philadelphia, October 30, 2009.

“The Star-Spangled Banner and the Hidden History of Wartime Coercion.” *Subjects of Coercion: Evocations and Experiences of War*, sponsored by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, October 2, 2008.

“Shovels for the South: Farm Implements, Entrepreneurs, and Slave Resistance in Antebellum America.” *Material Worlds*, sponsored by the Cogut Center for the Humanities, Brown University, April 19, 2008.

“Political, Religious, & Moral questions are Commodities that we do not deal in as a Co.’: Northerners and the Trade in Plantation Goods.” *Business Ethics, Law, and History: From the Atlantic Slave Trade to Wall Street*, sponsored by University of Chicago Law School, November 1-2, 2007.

“Urban Labor in Colonial British North America and the Early Modern Atlantic.” American Historical Association Annual Meeting, 2005.

CONFERENCE TALKS, CONT.

“Class: A Useful Category of Analysis for the Early Republic?” Society for Historians of the Early American Republic Annual Meeting, 2004.

“Wages of Slavery and Freedom: The Contours of Class in the Early Republic City.” *Class and Class Struggle in North America and the Atlantic World, 1500-1820*, sponsored by Montana State University, September 18, 2003.

“The Unfree Origins of American Capitalism.” *The Early American Economy: Past, Present, and Future*, sponsored by the Library Company of Philadelphia’s Program in Early American Economy and Society, April 2001.

“Saving Morris Hull: Capital Punishment and the Court of Public Opinion in Early Republic Baltimore.” *People and Places in Time: Baltimore’s Changing Landscape*, sponsored by University of Baltimore, September 1999.

“Unskilled Labor and the Blurring of Slavery and Freedom in Early Republic Baltimore.” Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, 1998.

“Admission Narratives at the Baltimore City Almshouse in the 1820s.” Society for Historians of the Early American Republic Annual Meeting, 1997.

“Welfare Reform in Baltimore, circa 1805.” *Making Diversity Work: 250 Years of Baltimore History*, sponsored by University of Baltimore and Coppin State College, November 1996.

“The School of Industry: Poverty and the Market Revolution.” Society for Historians of the Early American Republic Annual Meeting, 1996.

**CONVENER, COMMENTATOR, OR CHAIR FOR CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, AND WORKSHOPS**

Convener. *Slavery & Finance Research Cluster*, Simmons Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice, 2023–

Commentator. “New England’s South: Gun, Gins, and Spindles.” Society for Historians of the Early American Republic Annual Meeting, July 2025.

Chair. “Labor Movement Ideology and State Intervention in the Pre-Lochner Era.” Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, April 2025.

Convener. Emerging Scholars Book Proposal Workshop, Business History Conference Annual Meeting, March 2025.

Chair. “Forging Laboring Identities in the Atlantic World.” Business History Conference Annual Meeting, March 2025.

CONVENER, COMMENTATOR, &C.

Discussant. “Energy, Industry, Environment and the American Economy.” Charles Warren Center, Harvard University, February 2025.

Chair. “Labor, the African Diaspora, and American Freedom ‘From Below.’” American Historical Association Annual Meeting, January 2025.

Co-Convener (with Ellis Garey). “Labor and the Global South: Concepts, Theories, and Histories.” Brown University Department of History, December 2024.

Co-Convener (with Viola Müller). Graduate Student Workshop on Labor History. Society for Historians of the Early American Republic Annual Meeting, July 2024.

Commentator. “On Gradations of Freedom & Labor before the Civil War.” Society for Historians of the Early American Republic Annual Meeting, July 2024.

Chair. “The Founders’ Archive(s).” Archives of Revolution: A Conference about How We Make the Past, John Carter Brown Library and the McNeil Center for Early American Studies, June 2024.

Moderator. Daniel Eisenberg’s *Unstable Object II: A Critical Engagement*. John F. Kennedy Jr. Initiative for Documentary Film and Social Progress, Brown University, April 2024.

Discussant. Laura López-Sanders, *The Manufacturing of Job Displacement* book launch, Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, Brown University, April 2024.

Discussant. Tracy Barnett, “Armed Patrols: Northeastern Industry and its Links to Southern Violence,” Southern Historical Association Junior Scholars Workshop, September 2023.

Co-Convener (with Lissa Roberts and Alix Hui). “Let’s Get to Work: Bringing Labor History and the History of Science Together.” Gordon Cain Conference, Science History Institute, Philadelphia, June 2022.

Discussant. Anne Kerth, “A Slave Conspiracy in Antebellum Charleston,” University of North Carolina–Wilmington Sherman Lecture Roundtable, October 2021.

Discussant. Mary Hicks, “The Other Transatlantic Merchants: African Material Cultures in Motion,” Harvard Global History of Capitalism seminar, February 2021.

Discussant. Marcus Rediker, “Escaping Slavery by Sea in Antebellum America,” Newberry Seminar on Labor History, October 2020.

Co-Convener (with Ann Daly). Early American Money Symposium, Rhodes Center for International Economics and Finance, Watson Institute, Brown University, October 2020.

Discussant. “Race & Slavery.” Office of the Provost and Center for the Study of Race & Ethnicity in America Discussion Series, Brown University, September 2020.

CONVENER, COMMENTATOR, &C.

Discussant. “Women and Gender in the New History of Capitalism.” Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, Genders and Sexualities, Baltimore, May 2020. (cancelled due to Covid)

Discussant. “Economic Inequality in American History: Class, Power and Evasion.” Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, April 2020. (cancelled due to Covid)

Convener. *19<sup>th</sup> Century History Workshop*, Brown University, 2011-2020.

Discussant. Katharina Pistor, *The Code of Capital* book talk, Watson Institute, Brown University, November 14, 2019.

Discussant. Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “The Long Roots of Indian Capitalism” lecture, Watson Institute, Brown University, April 23, 2019.

Discussant. *Slavery, Capitalism, and the Making of the Modern World* panel, Watson Institute, Brown University, December 3, 2018.

Discussant. *Reworking Labor* working group, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, October 13, 2018.

Moderator. *Gender, Sexuality, and the New Labor History* panel, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University, October 18, 2017.

Discussant. *Beyond “Free” and “Unfree” Labor* symposium, University of Illinois at Chicago Center for the Humanities, April 29, 2016.

Chair. “Early American Labor History: New Directions.” Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, April 8, 2016.

Discussant. “Non-Human Histories: A Roundtable.” Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, April 8, 2016.

Commentator. *Human Trafficking in Early America* conference, McNeil Center for Early American Studies, University of Pennsylvania, April 2015.

Commentator. *Learning How: Training Bodies, Producing Knowledge* workshop, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin, February 2015.

Convener. “SHEAR Meets STEM” conference plenary. Society for Historians of the Early American Republic Annual Meeting, July 2014.

Discussant. “Dwelling in the Archives” conference plenary. Society of Civil War Historians Annual Meeting, June 2014.

CONVENER, COMMENTATOR, &C.

Commentator. "Cloaked Histories, Contested Objects: Clothing, Commerce, and Encounter in the Nineteenth Century." Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, 2014.

Chair. "Global Capitalism at the Nexus of Culture and Political Economy." Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, 2014.

Commentator. "Where is the History of Science in the History of Capitalism?" History of Science Society Annual Meeting, 2013.

Convener. *Paper Technologies of Capitalism* symposium, John Carter Brown Library, September 2012.

Co-Convener (with Sven Beckert). *Slavery's Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development* conference, Brown University and Harvard University, April 2011.

Discussant. "Jacksonian America." 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Graduate Seminar, Stanford University Department of History, February 2011.

Discussant. "State of the Field: History of Capitalism Roundtable." Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, 2010.

Commentator. *History of Capitalism in the United States* conference, Harvard University, November 2008.

Discussant. "Where is Labor History of the Early Republic: A Roundtable." Society for Historians of the Early American Republic Annual Meeting, 2008.

Commentator. Harvard Workshop on the Political Economy of Modern Capitalism, March 2007.

Commentator. *The Panic of 1837: Getting By and Going Under in a Decade of Crisis* conference, PEAES/Library Company of Philadelphia, October 2007.

Chair. "New Perspectives on Women's Labor and the Making of the Early Republic—A Roundtable." Society for Historians of the Early American Republic Annual Meeting, 2007.

Commentator. Draper Graduate Student Conference on Early American Studies at the University of Connecticut and Mystic Seaport, September 2006.

Commentator. Harvard Workshop on the Political Economy of Modern Capitalism, Nov. 2005.

Chair. "Contesting Universal Rights, Equality, and Racial Distinctions in the Upper South." Society for Historians of the Early American Republic Annual Meeting, 2002.

Discussant. "Roundtable on Biography and Baltimore in the Early Republic." Society for Historians of the Early American Republic Annual Meeting, 2001.



## **PROFESSIONAL AND UNIVERSITY SERVICE**

### Organizational Committees:

LAWCHA Working Group for an Earlier Labor History, 2023–2025  
 Bennett Wall Book Award, Southern Historical Association, 2022 (chair)  
 SHEAR Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, 2021  
 SHEAR Ad-hoc Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair, 2019–2020  
 OAH Nominations Committee (elected), 2013–2016 (Chair, 2016)  
 SHEAR Program Committee Chair, Raleigh, 2015  
 SHEAR Program Committee, Philadelphia, 2014  
 OAH Distinguished Lectureship Subcommittee, Chair, 2013  
 SHEAR Advisory Council (elected), 2012–2015  
 Philip Taft Labor History Book Prize Jury, 2012–2015  
 OAH Merle Curti Prize Committee, 2012  
 SHEAR Program Committee, Baltimore, MD, 2012  
 Frederick Douglass Prize Committee Chair, 2011  
 SHEAR Program Committee, Providence, RI, 2004

### Editorial Boards:

*Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas*, 2012–  
*Rhode Island History*, 2012–  
*Journal of the Civil War Era*, 2010–2017

### Journal Referee:

*American Historical Review*, *Journal of the Early Republic*, *Journal of American History*,  
*Journal of Mississippi History*, *Early American Studies*, *Rhode Island History*, *Journal of the  
 Civil War Era*, *Pennsylvania Magazine of History & Biography*, *Radical History Review*,  
*Agricultural History*, *Journal of Urban History*, *Law & History Review*, *International Review  
 of Social History*, *American Jewish History*, *Textile History*

### Book Manuscript or Proposal Referee:

Penn Press, Harvard University Press, UNC Press, Columbia University Press, Johns  
 Hopkins University Press, University of Florida Press, Oxford University Press, University  
 of Chicago Press, Blackwell Publishing, Princeton University Press, University of Virginia  
 Press, Routledge

### Fellowship Selection Committee or Evaluator:

Winterthur Library (NEH), Israel Science Foundation, National Endowment for the  
 Humanities: Preservation and Access, University of Calgary Humanities Institute, National  
 Science Foundation, John Carter Brown Library, Radcliffe Institute

### Secondary School Teacher Development:

SHEAR/RIHS, July 2025; Tsongas Industrial History Center/Lowell National Historical  
 Park, June 2024; Rhode Island Historical Society: *NEH Summer Institute*, 2006, 2009, 2011;  
*Teaching American History*: Yale/GLC/ACES (2009, 2012), Deerfield Teachers Center  
 (2009), Boston University (2006), UCLA/NCHS (2002); Brown University Watson Institute,  
 June 2006

Department/University Service (*excluding review and promotion committees*):

Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of History, 2023–2026  
Brown 2026 Semi-quicentennial Steering Committee, 2023–  
Labor History Postdoctoral Fellowship Search Committee (chair), 2023–2024  
Presidential Task Force on Anti-Black Racism, 2020–2021  
Simmons Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice Faculty Advisory Board, 2012–  
Rhodes Center for International Finance and Economics, Faculty Advisory Board, 2019–  
John Carter Brown Library Academic Advisory Council, 2018–2021  
Faculty Executive Committee (University), 2012–2015 (elected term)  
Lippitt Professor of American History Search Committee, 2013–2014  
John Carter Brown Library Director Search Committee, 2012–13  
History of Capitalism in US Assistant Professor Search Committee (chair), 2012–13  
Provost's Ad-hoc Childcare Committee, 2012  
Associate Provost for Institutional Diversity Search Committee, 2011–12  
Faculty Executive Committee (University), 2011–12 (replacement term)  
Semester UTRA Selection Committee, 2009  
History Department Thursday Lecture Series Coordinator, 2009–10  
University Graduate Committee (replacement term), Spring 2009  
History/Africana Slavery & Justice Center Director Search Committee, 2008–11  
History Department Graduate Committee, 2008–2009  
Early American History Assistant Professor Search Committee, 2008–2009  
Jack Kent Cooke Fellowship Committee, 2008, 09  
Vasco da Gama Chair in Portuguese Empire Search Committee, 2005–2006  
Senior Thesis Examiner, Bates College, 2003  
Billington Distinguished Professor Search Committee, Occidental College, 2000–2001

## **TEACHING AND ADVISING**

### **Brown University Courses**

*History 150: History of Capitalism*  
*History 552: A Textile History of Atlantic Slavery*  
*History 970: Slavery and Historical Memory in the United States*  
*History 1501: The American Revolution*  
*History 1502: The Early Republic*  
*History 1503: Antebellum America and the Coming of the Civil War*  
*History 1770: American Cultural History, 1789-1865*  
*History 1840: Capitalism, Slavery, and the Economy of Early America*  
*History 1845: History of Capitalism, 1500-Present*  
*History 1970: Poverty and Social Welfare in the Western World, 1500-1900*  
*History 1970: The Problem of Class in Early American History*  
*History 1970: Early American Money*  
*History 2940: Graduate "Writing History" Workshop*  
*History 2960: Graduate Dissertation Prospectus Workshop*  
*History 2970: Graduate Readings in Early American History*  
*History 2971: Graduate Readings in Nineteenth-Century American History*  
*History 2971: Slavery's New Materialism*  
*History 2980: Graduate History of Capitalism, 1500-Present*  
*History 2981: Race, Slavery, Colonialism, and Capitalism*  
*Africana 183-184: Slavery & Justice Group Research Project*

IE-Brown Executive MBA Program, *The Shared Histories of Capitalism and Slavery*  
 2013, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

### **Previous Teaching Positions**

Occidental College, Assistant Professor of History, 3-2 course load, 1999-2004  
 UC-Davis, Instructor, *History 17a: United States History to 1865*, Summer 1998  
 University of Baltimore, Instructor, *History 317: Early American History*, Summer 1997  
 Coppin State College, Instructor, *History 203: United States History to 1877*, Summer 1997

### **Undergraduate Advising**

First-Year Advisor, 2004-05, 05-06, 08-09, 09-10, 11-12, 12-13, 14-15, 17-18, 18-19, 20-21, 23-24, 25-26

Sophomore Advisor, 2009-10, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2021-22, 2024-25

Senior Theses Advised: Zoe Beiser, Elizabeth Caldwell, Naya Chang, Caitlin DeAngelis, Jeremy Chase, David Golden, Jonathan Hiles, Peter Kentros, Jonas Kieffer, Martha Lackritz, Josh Loh, Jeffrey Martin, John Metz, Forrest Miller, Robbie Nelson, Hugh O'Connor, Lydia Pecker, Rebecca Qiu, Izzy Rattner, Ethan Ris, Richard Salame, Lily Shield

## **GRADUATE SUPERVISION**

### Dissertations Directed:

Isaac Mensah, “Speculative Bodies and Caffeinated Stockbrokers: Coffeehouses, Slave Trade, and the Making of Modern Stock Markets,” (in progress)

Taaja El-Shabazz, “The Many-Threaded Hydra: A History of the American Women’s Ready-to-Wear Industry, 1924–1941” (in progress, co-advised with Françoise Hamlin)

Georga-Kay Whyte, “Affective and Service Labor at American Universities, c. 1870–1970” (in progress, co-advised with Françoise Hamlin)

Sarah Pearlman Shapiro, “Women’s Communities of Care in Revolutionary New England” (2025)

Rebecca Marisseau, “The New Bedford Whale Fishery and the Production of the Early American State” (2023)

Ann Daly, “Minting America: The Politics, Technology, and Culture of Money in the Early United States” (2021)

Simeon Simeonov, “Empire of Consuls: Consulship, Sovereignty, and Empire in the Revolutionary Atlantic (1778–1848)” (2021)

Alicia Maggard, “One Nation, under Steam: Technopolitics, Steam Navigation, and the Rise of American Industrial Power” (2019)

Rachel Knecht, “Visionary Calculations: Inventing the Mathematical Economy in Nineteenth-Century America” (2018). Krooss Prize Finalist, Business History Conf.

Lindsay Schakenbach Regele, “Manufacturing Advantage: War, the State, and the Origins of American Industry, 1790-1840” (2015). Published as *Manufacturing Advantage: War, the State, and the Origins of American Industry, 1776-1848* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019)

Stephen Chambers, “The American State of Cuba: The Business of Cuba and the Monroe Doctrine” (2013). Published as *No God But Gain: The Untold Story of Cuban Slavery, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Making of the United States* (Verso, 2015)

Lyra Monteiro, “Racializing the Ancient World: Ancestry and Identity in the Early United States” (2012, co-directed with Sue Alcock, Joukowsky Institute).

James Kabala, “A Christian Nation? Religion and the State in the Early American Republic, 1787-1833” (2008). Published as *Church-State Relations in the Early American Republic, 1787-1846* (Pickering and Chatto, 2013)

## Doctoral Advisees in Coursework:

Nicholas Gandolfo-Lucia (incoming Fall 2024)

Isabel Cole (incoming Fall 2024)

Samuel Bisno (incoming Fall 2025)

## Dissertation Committees:

Ebru Erginbas, “Trans-Imperial Networks, Intermediaries, and Knowledge Transfer: The Transformation of Medicine in the Late Ottoman Empire and the Early Turkish Republic, 1840-1950” (in progress)

Jerrad Pacatte, “The Work of Freedom: African American Women and the Process of Emancipation in New England, 1740–1860” (Rutgers, Department of History, in progress)

Anil Askin, “The Order of Extraction: Capital, Debt, and Violence in Central Anatolia, 1720–1799” (2025)

Emily Pierson, “Living with the City of the Dead: Garden Cemeteries and Community Formation in Nineteenth-Century America” (2022)

Kathrinne Duffy, “The Phrenologists: Participatory Knowledge in Antebellum America” (Brown Department of American Studies, 2021)

Laura Michel, “Benevolent Republicans: Philanthropy and Identity in the Early United States” (Rutgers, Department of History, 2021)

Amy B. Huang, “Spectacular Secrecy: Privacy, Race, and Theatrical Disorientations” (Brown Department of Theatre Arts and Performance Studies, 2020)

Viola Müller, “Cities of Refuge: Slave Flight and Illegal Freedom in the American Urban South, 1800–1860” (Institute for History, Leiden University, 2020)

Daniel Platt, “Race, Risk, and Financial Capitalism in the United States, 1870-1940” (Brown Department of American Studies, 2018)

Tony Perry, “‘To Go to Nature’s Manufactory’: The Material Ecology of Slavery in Antebellum Maryland” (University of Maryland, Dept. of American Studies, 2018)

Nicholas Crawford, “Calamity’s Empire: Slavery, Scarcity, and the Political Economy of Provisioning in the British Caribbean, c. 1783-1834” (Harvard University, Department of History, 2016).

Zachary Dorner, “Manufacturing Pharmaceuticals, Credit, and Empire in the Eighteenth-Century British Atlantic” (2016).

Bryan Knapp, “‘The Biggest Business in the World’: The Nestlé Boycott and the Global Development of Infants, Nations, and Economies, 1968-1988” (2015).

DISSERTATION COMMITTEES, CONT.

Justene Hill, “‘Felonious Transactions’: Legal Culture and Business Practices of Slave Economies in South Carolina, 1787-1860” (Princeton University, Department of History, 2015).

Kathryn Boodry, “The Common Thread: Slavery, Cotton and Atlantic Finance from the Louisiana Purchase to Reconstruction” (Harvard University, Department of History, 2014)

William Brucher, “On the Edge of the Pacific Rim: Capitalism, Work, and Community on the Los Angeles Waterfront” (2012)

Caitlin Rosenthal, “From Memory to Mastery: Accounting for Control in America, 1750-1900” (Harvard University, History of American Civilization, 2012)

Douglas Burgess, “Gentlemen of Fortune: Pirates, Governors and the Crown in the Atlantic Colonies, 1688-1718” (2009)

Caroline Frank, “China as Object and Imaginary in the Making of American Nationalism” (Brown Department of American Studies, 2008).

MA Theses Directed:

Eric Doescher, “First Family of Fortune: The Rise of Nicholas Brown and Company, 1750–1770” (2006)