

Kevin Dawson

Assistant Professor of History
School of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts
University of California, Merced
5200 North Lake Rd. • Merced, CA 95343
209-756-4512 • kdawson4@ucmerced.edu
<http://faculty.ucmerced.edu/kdawson4>

Education:

University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC

Ph.D. History, 2005.

Dissertation: "Enslaved Watermen in the Atlantic World, 1444-1888."

California State University, Fullerton, Fullerton, CA

M.A., History, 2000.

Thesis: "The Confederate Slave: A Forgotten Southern Asset."

California State University, Fullerton, Fullerton, CA

B.A., History, 1997.

Academic Appointments:

- University of Nevada, Las Vegas (August 2007-Present).
- Fairfield University, Fairfield, CT (August 2005-August 2007)

Publications:

- Refereed Articles:
 - "Enslaved Ship Pilots in the Age of Revolutions: Challenging Perceptions of Race and Slavery Between the Boundaries of Maritime and Terrestrial Bondage" *The Journal of Social History*, Vol. 47, 1 forthcoming (Fall, 2013).
 - "Enslaved Swimmers and Divers in the Atlantic World," in *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 92, No. 4 (March, 2006), pp. 1327-1355.
 - Received the 2005 Louis Pelzer Memorial Award from the Organization of American Historians.
- Refereed Essays:
 - "The Cultural Geography of Enslaved Ship Pilots," in Matt Childs, James Sidbury, and Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, eds., *Black Urban Atlantic in the Age of the Slave Trade* (University of Pennsylvania Press: April, 2013).
 - "Enslaved Watermen in Atlantic Seaports," Jeffrey Fortin, ed., *Atlantic Lives* (Brill Press: forthcoming, 2013).
 - "Slave Culture," Robert Paquette and Mark M. Smith, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Slavery in the Americas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
 - "Swimming, Surfing, and Underwater Diving in Early Modern Atlantic Africa and the African Diaspora," Carina Ray and Jeremy Rich, eds., *Navigating African Maritime History* (Published by the Research in Maritime History book series, Memorial University of Newfoundland Press, 2009), 81-116.
- Conference Proceedings:
 - "Enslaved Underwater Divers in the Atlantic World," in Glenn S. Gordonier, ed. *Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Power in Maritime America: Papers from the Conference held at Mystic Seaport, September 2006* (Mystic: 2008), 61-76.
- Book Reviews:
 - Review: Andrew Sluyter, *Black Ranching Frontiers: African Cattle Herders of the Atlantic World, 1500-1900* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012) in *Journal of American History*, Vol. 100, No. 3 (Dec., 2013).

- Robin Blackburn, *The American Crucible: Slavery, Emancipation and Human Rights* (New York: 2011) in *Journal of World History*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (2012).
- Claudio Saunt, *Black, White, and Indian: Race and the Unmaking of an American Family* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), in *The North Carolina Historical Review*, Vol. LXXXIII, No. 4 (Oct., 2006), 481-482.
- Judith A. Carney, *Black Rice: The African Origins of Rice Cultivation in the Americas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), in *The Journal of African American History*, Vol. 90, No. 4 (Fall, 2005), 422-424.
- Encyclopedia Entries:
 - “Sport and Slavery,” in Edward E. Baptist, ed., *Encyclopedia of Slavery in the Americas* (New York: Facts on File, 2009).
 - “Primus Slave Conspiracy,” in *South Carolina Encyclopedia* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2006). 755.
- Popular Publications:
 - “African Swimmers Made History,” *Swimmer Magazine*, January/February 2010, 50.

Publications in Progress:

- Monographs:
 - *Enslaved Watermen in the Atlantic World, 1444-1880*—Several distinguished university presses are interested in publishing this manuscript.
 - *The Confederate Slave: A Forgotten Southern Asset*, originally my M.A. thesis (2000), California State University, Fullerton—University of South Carolina Press is interested in publishing this manuscript.
- Refereed Articles:
 - “Water as a Cultural Space: Swimming, Surfing and Underwater Diving in Early Modern Atlantic Africa.”
 - “A Culture of Cleanliness: Concepts of Cleanliness, the Self, and Society in Atlantic Africa and the African Diaspora.”

Academic Awards, Grants, and Fellowships:

- University of Nevada, Las Vegas 2013 Faculty Opportunity Award. Las Vegas, NV (May 2013).
- Two-Month John Haskell Kemble Fellow—Huntington Library. San Marino, CA (2008-2009).
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas College of Liberal Arts Summer Stipend Award (2008).
- Faculty Summer Research Stipend—Fairfield University (2006).
- Organization of American Historians 2005 Louis Pelzer Memorial Award for “Enslaved Swimmers and Divers in the Atlantic World,” in *The Journal of American History* (March 2006), pp. 1327-1355.
- Ford Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship for Minorities (2004-2005).
- Paul Cuffe Memorial Fellowship—Frank C. Munson Institute of American Maritime Studies at Mystic Seaport: Museum of America and the Sea. Mystic, CT (2004).
- One-Month Fletcher Jones Foundation Fellow—Huntington Library. San Marino, CA (2004-2005)
- Third Place Graduate Student Day Award—University of South Carolina (2004).
 - Presentation titled “A Culture of Cleanliness: Slaves’ Impact on Western Hygienic Practices.”
- Fellowship in Southern Studies—Institute for Southern Studies, University of South Carolina (2003).
- Four-Year Graduate School Fellow Appointment—University of South Carolina (2001).
- Four-Year Department of History Fellowship—University of South Carolina (2001).

Invited Talks:

- “African-Fusion: Enslaved Women’s Saltwater Foodways and the Creation of Cultural Identities,” *National Genealogical Society 2013 Family History Conference*, Las Vegas, NV (May, 9, 2013).
- “African-Fusion: Enslaved Women’s Saltwater Foodways and the Creation of Cultural Identities,” *Traditions and Transformations: An Interdisciplinary Food Studies Conference*, California State University, Fullerton (April 20, 2013).
- “Swimming, Surfing, and Underwater Diving in Atlantic Africa,” *International Aquatic History Symposium & Film Festival, International Swimming Hall of Fame*. Ft. Lauderdale, FL (May 2-5, 2012).
- “Enslaved Swimmers and Divers in the Atlantic World,” *International Aquatic History Symposium & Film Festival, International Swimming Hall of Fame*. Ft. Lauderdale, FL (May 2-5, 2012).
- “Enslaved Ship Pilots on the Green Waters of the Anglo Americas: Maritime Slavery and Marine Geography in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries,” *2012 Symposium of the Alexandrian Society: “Atlantic Migration During Slavery, Part 2.”* Richmond, VA (April 25, 2012).
- “African Fusion: Slaves’ Impact on Western Foodways Beyond the Boundaries of Slavery,” *Culinary Historians of Boston, Schlesinger Library*. Cambridge, MA (Dec. 12, 2006).
- “Enslaved Swimmers and Divers in the Atlantic World,” AMISTAD America, Inc. *Black History Month Sunday Lecture Series*. Mystic, CT (Feb. 26, 2006).
- “West African Maritime Traditions in America” *Black Hands, Blue Seas: The Maritime Heritage of African Americans Exhibit* Educators Day, Mystic Seaport: The Museum of America and the Sea. Mystic, CT (Nov. 5, 2005).

Presentations:

- “Water as a Cultural and Political Space: Swimming, Surfing, and Underwater Diving in Atlantic Africa,” *Sea Stories: Maritime Landscapes, Cultures and Histories Conference*, School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry, University of Sydney. Sydney, Australia (June 12-14, 2013).
- “Water as a Cultural and Political Space: Swimming, Surfing, and Underwater Diving in Early Modern Atlantic Africa,” *African Studies Association Annual Meeting*. Philadelphia, PA (Nov. 29-Dec. 1, 2012).
- “Enslaved Ship Pilots: Navigating the Green Waters of Race and Slavery,” *American Historical Association Annual Conference*. Boston, MA (January 6, 2011).
- “Navigating Race: African Pilots in the Early Modern Atlantic World,” *American Historical Association Annual Conference*. San Diego, CA (January 8, 2010).
- “African-Fusion: Slave Women’s Influence on Western Saltwater Foodways,” *Southern Association of Women Historians*. Columbia, SC (June 4, 2008).
- “A Culture of Cleanliness: The Bathing Practices of Early Modern People of African and European Descent and the Concepts of Race and Civilization,” *Huntington Library Readers Brown Bag Lunch Series*. San Marino, CA (October 28, 2008).
- “Black Swimmers in the Early Modern Period,” *Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association, 2007 Annual Meeting*. Pasadena, CA (August 2-5, 2007).
- “A Culture of Cleanliness: Hygiene in the African Diaspora and Sensory Perceptions of Westerners,” *Southern Historical Association Annual Meeting*. Richmond, VA (Oct. 31-Nov. 3, 2007).
- “Enslaved Swimmers and Divers in the Atlantic World,” *Gender, Race, Ethnicity and Power in Maritime America Conference, Mystic Seaport: Museum of America and the Sea*. Mystic, CT (Oct. 26-29, 2006).
- “Enslaved Swimmers and Divers in the Atlantic World,” *Fairfield University Faculty Research Symposium*. Fairfield, CT (March 20, 2006).
- “A Culture of Cleanliness: West African Slaves’ Hygiene and their Impact on Western Cleanliness,” *Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting*. San Jose, CA (Mar. 31-Apr. 3, 2005).
- “Enslaved Swimmers and Divers in the Atlantic World,” *Southern Historical Association Annual Meeting*. Memphis, TN (Nov. 3-6, 2004).

- “A Culture of Cleanliness: Slaves’ Impact on Western Hygienic Practices,” *University of North Carolina, Greensburg Atlantic World Conference*. Greensburg, NC (Sep. 17-18, 2004).
- “A Culture of Cleanliness: Slaves’ Impact on Western Hygienic Practices,” *Graduate Student Day, University of South Carolina*. Columbia, SC (Apr. 7, 2004).
 - Received “Third Place Graduate Student Day Award.”
- “Surfing in West Africa During the Slave-Trading Period: The Failure to Establish and Diffuse a Surf Culture,” January 8-11, 2004, *Hawaii International Conference on Arts & Humanities*. Honolulu, HI.
- “Enslaved Swimmers in the Atlantic World,” *Fifteenth Annual Graduate History Forum*. University of North Carolina at Charlotte (Mar. 29, 2003).
- “Enslaved Swimmers in the Atlantic World,” *Annual Meeting of the South Carolina Historical Association*. Columbia, South Carolina (Mar. 1, 2003).
- “The Impact of Slavery on the Confederate War Effort,” *Southwestern Social Science Association Meeting*. New Orleans, Louisiana (Mar. 29, 1997).

Conference Panel Chair and Commentator:

- Commentator: “Race and Slavery in the Caribbean Basin and the U.S.: Kimberly Hanger Memorial Panel” *Latin American and Caribbean section of the Southern Historical Association Annual Meeting*, Mobile, AL (November 1-4, 2012).
- Chair: “Memory, Slavery, and Tourism,” *American Historical Association Annual Meeting*. Boston, MA (January 7, 2010).
- Chair and Commentator: “Colonial Cities,” *Urban Historian Association 5th Biennial Conference*, Las Vegas, NV (October 21, 2010).

Courses Taught:

- Assistant Prof: HI 451: Cultural History of the Atlantic World (Fall 2010, Spring 2012).
- Assistant Prof: HI 433B/633B: African American History to 1877 (Fall 2012, Spring 2010, Spring 2009, Fall 2006, Fall 2005).
- Assistant Prof: HI 101: U.S. History to 1877 (Spring 2010, Fall 2009, Summer 2011, Fall 2011).
- Assistant Prof: HI 498: Comparative Slavery (Fall 2009, Fall 2007).
- Assistant Prof: HI 110: Slavery and Freedom in America, 1619-1865 (Spring 2009, Spring 2008, Fall, 2010).
- Assistant Prof: HI 731: Research Seminar on the African Diaspora (Fall 2008).
- Assistant Prof: HI 730: Colloquium in Cultural History of the African Diaspora (Fall 2008).
- Assistant Prof: HI 498/698: West Africa & the Making of the Atlantic World, 1444-1880 (Fall 2007, Spring 2007, Spring 2006).
- Assistant Prof: HI 730: Cultural History of the African Diaspora (Spring 2008).
- Assistant Prof: Social and Cultural History of the African Diaspora, 1444-1888 (Spring 2007).
- Assistant Prof: Africans in the Americas, 1444-1888 (Fall 2006).
- Assistant Prof: Capstone Research Seminar: Cultural History of the African Diaspora (Spring 2007)
- Assistant Prof: Capstone Research Seminar: The American Civil War and Reconstruction (Spring 2006).
- Assistant Prof: Capstone Research Seminar: Themes in Atlantic History (Fall 2010).
- Assistant Prof: Africans in the Americas, 1444-1888 (Fall 2005).

Educator Workshops:

- Clark County School District Profession Development Education Social Studies Content Workshop, Las Vegas, NV January 19, 2012. Developed a one-day workshop to instruct fourth through twelfth-grade teachers on how to incorporate the Atlantic slave trade into their curriculums.
- American Institute for History Education Moorestown, NJ Winter 2010. Developed a one-day workshop to instruct fourth through twelfth-grade teachers on how to incorporate the following themes into their curriculums:
 - Salutory Neglect.
 - Causes of the American Revolution: Seven Years' War to 1776.
- American Institute for History Education Rio Grand, OH Fall Institute. Developed a one-day workshop to instruct fifth through twelfth-grade teachers on how to incorporate the following themes into their curriculums:
 - Colonizing a Continent: Colonization Theories and Propaganda.
 - The Settlement Virginia: Jamestown to 1700.
 - The Atlantic Slave Trade.
 - The Atlantic Slave Trade and Social and Economic Development of America.
- American Institute for History Education Kern County, CA Summer 2009 Institute. Developed a one-day workshop to instruct fifth through twelfth-grade teachers on how to incorporate the following themes into their curriculums:
 - The Atlantic Slave Trade.
 - The Atlantic Slave Trade and Social and Economic Development of America.
 - The Seven Years War: Colonial Expansion in the Old Northwest and the Native American Response.
 - The Coming of the American Revolution.
- Resident Scholar for the *Black Hands, Blue Seas: The Maritime Heritage of African Americans*, Educator Institute, July 9-13, 2007. Developed a one-week workshop to instruct secondary teachers on how to incorporate African Americans' social, cultural, and economic contributions to the United States into their curriculums. Themes included:
 - Comparison of early modern African and Western living conditions.
 - The Atlantic Slave Trade and broader consequences on Africa and Americas.
 - Slaves' ability to transmit African knowledge and belief systems, which they used to provide their lives with structure, meaning, and purpose, while enhancing slavery's economic success.
 - Slaves' African-influenced saltwater foodways. Explain how bondwomen shaped slaveholders' diets and used nineteenth-century cookbooks to consider influences on Northern middle class diet.
 - The African American maritime experiences.
- Resident Scholar, *Black Hands, Blue Seas: The Maritime Heritage of African Americans*, Educator Institute, July 10-14, 2006. Developed a one-week workshop to instruct secondary teachers on how to incorporate African Americans' social, cultural, and economic contributions to the United States into their curriculums. Themes included:
 - Slaves' ability to transmit African knowledge and belief systems, which they used to provide their lives with structure, meaning, and purpose, while enhancing slavery's economic success.
 - Slaves' African-influenced saltwater foodways. Explain how bondwomen shaped slaveholders' diets and used nineteenth-century cookbook recipes for gumbo, jambalaya, and pepper pot to consider how slaves influenced the Northern middle class diet.
 - African Americans' wartime experiences.
 - African Americans' maritime experiences.
 - African Americans' seamen in the struggle for equality and civil rights.
- *Black Hands, Blue Seas: The Maritime Heritage of African Americans Exhibit* Educators Day, November 5, 2005, Mystic Seaport: The Museum of America and the Sea.
 - Provided secondary teachers with a historical overview of *Black Hands, Blue Seas* exhibit.
 - Discussed the inclusion of African transmissions and retentions in secondary curriculum.

Museum Exhibit Consultation:

- Historical Consultant for the *How We Roll* exhibit (which considered surfing, skateboarding, and roller skating in the African American community) at the California African American History Museum, Los Angeles, CA (July 28, 2010-February 28, 2011. <http://www.caamuseum.org/past44.htm>
 - Provided historical interpretation and documents related to surfing in early modern Atlantic Africa.
- Historical Consultant for *Black Splash: The Amazing History of Swimming in Black and White* exhibit, International Swimming Hall of Fame. Ft. Lauderdale, FL (February 2008-December 2008).
- Historical Consultant for the *Black Hands, Blue Seas: The Maritime Heritage of African Americans* exhibit, Independence Seaport Museum. Philadelphia, PA (June 6, 2008- Apr. 12, 2009).
 - Loaned two seventeenth-century prints of African fishermen and a seventeenth-century map of West Africa to the *Black Hands, Blue Seas: The Maritime Heritage of African Americans* exhibit, Independence Seaport Museum. Philadelphia, PA (June 6, 2008- Apr. 12, 2009).
- Historical Consultant for the *Black Hands, Blue Seas: The Maritime Heritage of African Americans* exhibit, Mystic Seaport: The Museum of America and the Sea. Mystic, CT (July 2005-March 2007).
 - Determined themes that included in the exhibit and how it should be organized.
 - Determined how artifacts should be interpreted and presented to the public.
 - Wrote historical narratives for panels describing how African Americans' maritime heritage shaped their work, culture, and struggle for freedom and civil rights.
 - Wrote labels providing a historical overview of artifacts and displays.
 - Loaned two seventeenth-century prints of African fishermen and a seventeenth-century map of West Africa to the *Black Hands, Blue Seas: The Maritime Heritage of African Americans* exhibit, Mystic Seaport. Mystic, CT. (July 2005-March 2007).

Documentary and TV Interviews:

- “Cimmaronaje En Panama” January 7, 2012.
- Interviewed for “Parting the Waters” (working title). This documentary considers how historical factors, like segregation and paucity of inner city pools, have contributed to the disproportionately high drowning death rate among African Americans and seeks to promote swimming in the black community.
- Interviewed for Black History Month for “NewsONE at 9 with Jeff Gillan” on Las Vegas ONE, Cox Cable Channel 19. (Interviewed on February 25, 2009; aired February 26, 2009).