

# VINCENT BROWN

Curriculum Vitae, July 2009

The Department of History

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## PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

### Harvard University

Professor of History and of African and African American Studies (July 2009-present)

Dunwalke Associate Professor of American History (July 2007-June 2009)

Assistant Professor of History (July 2003-June 2007)

Charles Warren Center Postdoctoral Fellow (July 2002-June 2003)

## EDUCATION

### Duke University

PhD: History, 2002

Degree Certificate: African and African-American Studies, 2002

Dissertation: "Slavery and the Spirits of the Dead: Mortuary Politics in Jamaica, 1740-1834"

### University of California, San Diego

BA: History, 1990

Minor: Theater Performance

## TEACHING/RESEARCH INTERESTS

Atlantic Slavery; British Atlantic World; Caribbean History; Early American History; American Revolutions in Atlantic Perspective; Diaspora Studies; Racial Politics; Death and Memorial in World History; History and the Audiovisual Media

## PUBLICATIONS

*The Reaper's Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery* (Cambridge, M.A.: Harvard University Press, 2008). Awarded the 2009 James A. Rawley Prize, the 2009 Merle Curti Award, and the 2008-09 Louis Gottschalk Prize.

"Social Death and Political Life in Some Recent Histories of Slavery," *American Historical Review* (in press).

"Eating the Dead: Consumption and Regeneration in the History of Sugar," *Food and Foodways: History and Culture of Human Nourishment*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (April 2008): 117-126.

"Spiritual Terror and Sacred Authority: Supernatural Power in Jamaican Slave Society," revised and reprinted in Stephanie Camp and Edward E. Baptist, eds., *New Studies in the History of American Slavery* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2006), pp. 179-210.

"Cosmic Authority and Stories of Self in the Diary of a Virginia Patriarch," Review essay on *Landon Carter's Uneasy Kingdom: Revolution and Rebellion on a Virginia Plantation* by

- Rhys Isaac (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), in *Reviews in American History* (December 2005): 493-500.
- Review of *Brothers and Strangers: Black Zion, Black Slavery, 1914-1940*, by Ibrahim Sundiata (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), in *Labor History*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (August 2005): 416-17.
- “Spiritual Terror and Sacred Authority in Jamaican Slave Society,” *Slavery and Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (April 2003): 24-53.
- “Blackness in Diaspora,” Review essay on *The Black Experience in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: An Autobiography and Meditation*, by Peter Abrahams (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000) and *Crossing Boundaries: Comparative History of Black People in Diaspora*, edited by Darlene Clark Hine and Jacqueline McLeod (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), in *Plantation Society in the Americas*, Vol. VI, Nos. 2 & 3 (Fall 1999 [actually published in 2003]): 305-12.
- Review of *On Location: Cinema and Film in the Anglophone Caribbean*, by Keith Q. Warner (Oxford: Macmillan Oxford, 2000), in *New West Indian Guide*, Vol. 76, Nos. 3 & 4 (2002): 331-33.

## AUDIOVISUAL PRODUCTIONS

- Herskovits at the Heart of Blackness*  
(Vital Pictures, 2009; to be broadcast on the PBS series Independent Lens in 2009)  
DVD, 57 minutes  
Producer, Director of Research  
Awarded Best Documentary, 2009 Hollywood Black Film Festival; Jury Selection, 2009 Boston International Film Festival; Jury Selection, 2009 Jacksonville Film Festival; Jury Selection, 2009 San Francisco Jewish Film Festival; Competition Finalist, 2009 Run & Shoot Filmworks Martha’s Vineyard African-American Film Festival.
- The History of the African-American People*  
(In Development at Inkwell Foundation; Executive Producer Henry Louis Gates, Jr.)  
2008-09, Consultant
- African-American Lives I-II*  
(Executive Producer Henry Louis Gates, Jr.; Producer Graham Judd)  
2005, 2007, Consultant
- History Detectives, Season III*  
(Lion Television, Series Producer Chris Bryson)  
2005, Script Consultant  
“Black Star Line,” “Slave Banjo,” “United Empire Loyalists,” and “1667 Land Grant”
- History Detectives, Season II*  
(Lion Television, Series Producer Graham Judd)  
2004, Script Consultant  
“Paul Cuffee Muster Roll,” “Body in the Basement,” and “Koranic Workbook”
- Take These Chains*

1998, BetaSP Video, 20 minutes  
Producer, Director, Cinematographer/Videographer, and Editor

*The Suicide Club*, directed by Raul Ruiz  
1996, DVD, 40 minutes  
Ensemble Writer, Director, and Videographer

*Securities*  
1995, 16mm film, 15 minutes  
Producer, Writer, Director, Cinematographer, and Editor

## SELECTED AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS

Walter Channing Cabot Fellowship, Harvard University (2009)  
Best Documentary for *Herskovits at the Heart of Blackness*, Hollywood Black Film Festival (2009)  
Merle Curti Award for *The Reaper's Garden*, Organization of American Historians (2009)  
James A. Rawley Prize for *The Reaper's Garden*, Organization of American Historians (2009)  
Louis Gottschalk Prize for *The Reaper's Garden*, American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies (2008-09)  
David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies Research Grant, "The Coromantee Wars," Harvard University (2008-09)  
Harvard Academy Junior Faculty Development Grant, "The Coromantee Wars," Harvard University (2008-09)  
William F. Milton Fund of Harvard University Grant, "Melville Herskovits and the African Diaspora" (2008)  
Dunwalke Associate Professorship in American History, Harvard University (2007)  
Nominated for the Joseph R. Levenson Memorial Teaching Prize, Harvard College (2007)  
Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study Lillian Gollay Knafel Postdoctoral Fellowship, "Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery," Harvard University (2005-06)  
Program in Agrarian Studies Postdoctoral Fellowship, "Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery," Yale University (Declined, 2005-06)  
Menschel Teaching Excellence Fellowship, Harvard University (August 2004)  
Film Study Center Grant, "Melville J. Herskovits and the Making of the African Diaspora," Harvard University (Spring 2004)  
Charles Warren Center Postdoctoral Fellowship, "Melville J. Herskovits and the Making of the African Diaspora," Harvard University (2002-03)  
McNeil Center for Early American Studies Dissertation Fellowship, "Slavery and the Spirits of the Dead," University of Pennsylvania (2001-02)  
John Hope Franklin Distinguished Teacher Fellowship, Duke University (Spring 2000)  
Duke Program in Film and Video Mani Kaul Award for Outstanding Filmmaking (1995)

## INVITED LECTURES

"Herskovits at the Heart of Blackness: Screening and Discussion," Madras Institute of Development Studies, Chennai, India, 15 April 2009.

"The Reaper's Garden: Social Death and Political Life in the History of Slavery," presented to the Empire and Colonies Workshop, the Human Rights Workshop, and the Latin American

- History Workshop, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL, 12 February 2008; presented as the 2009 Black Atlantic History Lecture, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, 2 February 2008.
- “Social Death and Political Life in the History of Atlantic Slavery,” presented to the Caribbean Studies Seminar, University of Warwick, Coventry, United Kingdom, 21 October 2008.
- “The Afterlives of an African Rebellion,” presented to the Department of History, Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA, 7 October 2008.
- “Monuments to the Dead in the Politics of Jamaican Emancipation,” presented at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, Pomona, NJ, 4 April 2008.
- “The Reaper’s Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery,” presented to the Atlantic seminar, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA, 26 March 2008.
- “The Afterlives of an African Rebellion,” presented to the Departments of History and of African and African American Studies, Duke University, Durham, NC, 21 March 2008.
- “Gardens of Remembrance and the Politics of Jamaican Slavery,” presented to the symposium on 200 Years after the British Abolition of the Slave Trade: New Scholarly Directions, John Hope Franklin Humanities Institute, Duke University, Durham, NC, 21 September 2007.
- “The Reaper’s Garden: Last Rites and First Principles in Jamaican Slave Society,” presented to the Department of History, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, 18 September 2007.
- “The Reaper’s Garden: a Discussion of Themes,” presented to the McNeil Center for Early American Studies Atlantic seminar, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, 18 September 2007.
- “The Reaper’s Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery,” presented to the Department of History, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN, 16 April 2007.
- “Herskovits: A Jew at the Heart of Blackness,” presented to the Department of History, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN, 16 April 2007.
- “The Reaper’s Garden: Last Rites and First Principles in Jamaican Slave Society,” presented to the Early Modern Studies Institute, University of Southern California-Huntington Library, Los Angeles, CA, 9 December 2006.
- “The Afterlives of an African Rebellion: Transcultural Martyrdom in the World of Anglo-Atlantic Slavery,” presented to the Department of History, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON, Canada, 15 September 2005.
- “In the Wake of the *Zong*: Graveyards, Greed, and the Soul of the British Empire,” presented to the Atlantic History Workshop: The Age of Revolution in the Atlantic World, 1770-1830, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, 13 May 2005.
- “Uprising from the Dead: The Afterlives of an African Rebel,” presented to the Department of History, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, 20 January 2005; presented to the Department of History, New York University, New York, NY, 9 December 2004.

- “Melville J. Herskovits and the Visualization of the African Diaspora,” presented to the “Historians and the Visual” Seminar, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, 1 November 2004.
- “Obeah and Authority in Jamaican Slave Society,” sponsored by the Department of African and Afro-American Studies and the Program in Latin American Studies, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA, 24 February 2004.
- “Black Power in Atlantic Bondage: Spiritual Authority in Jamaica, c. 1760-1825,” presented to The Black Atlantic, 1500-1825 workshop of the Atlantic History Seminar, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 8 November 2003.
- “Spiritual Terror and Sacred Authority in an Atlantic Slave Society,” presented to the Oceans Connect conference, Duke University, Durham, NC, 2 March 2002.
- “Mortuary Politics in Jamaican Slave Society,” presented to the Department of African-American Studies, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, 26 February 2002; presented to the Department of History, Florida International University, Miami, FL, 19 February 2002; presented to the Department of History, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 5 February 2002; presented to the Department of History, Washington University, St. Louis, MO, 7 January 2002.

#### **SELECTED PRESENTATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

- “20 Questions with Drew Gilpin Faust,” The Humanities Center at Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 24 April 2008.
- Boston Museum “People of the Bay” Gallery, Interpretive Planning Group, Boston, 2 November 2007.
- “Ritual and Belief in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Barbados and Guyana,” Discussant, Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora Bi-annual meeting, Bridgetown, Barbados, 9 October 2007.
- “The Abolition of the Slave Trade and Slavery” Panel Discussion, The Harvard International and Global History Seminar, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 3 October 2007.
- “In the Wake of the *Zong*: ‘Improvudent Avarice’ and the Soul of the British Empire,” Paper presented to the “‘The bloody Writing is forever torn:’ Domestic and International Consequences of the First Governmental Efforts to Abolish the Atlantic Slave Trade” conference, Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 9 August 2007, Elmina, Ghana.
- “Eating the Dead: Gender and Regeneration in the History of Sugar,” Paper presented on the Sweetness, Gender, and Power: Rethinking Sidney Mintz’s Classic Work panel of the Women, Men, and Food: Putting Gender on the Table conference, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Cambridge, MA, 13 April 2007.
- “Age of Revolutions Exhibit” Board of Scholarly Advisors meeting, New York Historical Society, New York, NY, 23 March 2007.

- “The Reaper’s Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery,” Paper presented to Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Cambridge, MA, 10 May 2006.
- “Empathy for the Rebel: African Afterlives and Antislavery Sentiment,” Paper presented at the Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., 20 April 2006.
- “Ambivalent Allies in an Integrated World of Differences,” Commentary on Steven Hahn, “Maroons and the Emancipation Process in the United States,” Keynote Address to the nineteenth annual meeting of the Southern Intellectual History Circle, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Cambridge, MA, 24 February 2006.
- “The Audiovision of Melville J. Herskovits,” Paper presented to the Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora Conference, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 6 October 2005.
- “Interdisciplinary Theory and Method in the Study of Mortuary Politics,” History and Literature Faculty Seminar, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 25 November 2003.
- “The Ethics of Representing Violence: A Roundtable Dialogue,” Panelist, The American Studies Association conference, Hartford, CT, 19 October 2003.
- “Death and Inheritance in Jamaican Slave Society,” Paper presented to the “New Directions in the Study of the Atlantic: Slavery, Continuing Conversations” conference, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ, 16 May 2003.
- “Melville J. Herskovits and the Making of the African Diaspora,” Paper presented to the Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History Seminar, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 28 April 2003.
- “Moral Struggle and the Spirits of the Dead in Jamaica, 1740-1834,” Paper presented to the McNeil Center for Early American Studies Summer Seminar, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, 11 July 2002.
- “Specters in the Canes: Death, Religion, and Rebellion in Jamaican Slave Society,” Paper presented on the “Political Histories of Death in the Black Diaspora” panel, Organization of American Historians Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, 11-14 April 2002.
- “Spectacular Terror and Sacred Authority in Jamaican Slave Society,” Paper presented to the McNeil Center for Early American Studies Seminar, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, 22 February 2002.
- “Slave Resistance and the Spirits of the Dead in Jamaica,” Paper presented on the *Rethinking Resistance* panel, “Diaspora Paradigms” Comparative Black History conference, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, 21 September 2001.
- “The Spirits of Slave Resistance: Religion, the Dead, and Social Conflict in Jamaican Slave Society,” Paper presented at the “Slavery and Religion in the Modern Era” conference, Essaouira, Morocco, 17 June 2001.
- Participant, “Oceans Connect” Atlantic Studies working group, John Hope Franklin Center, Duke University, January 2000- April 2001.
- Conceived and Organized the “Globalization from Below” conference, Duke University, 6-8 February 1998.

Chair and Discussant for the *African Diasporas* panel at the “Globalization from Below” conference, Duke University, Durham, NC, 7 February 1998.

**MEMBERSHIPS IN PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES**

American Antiquarian Society, 2009- present

American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies, 2009-present

Latin American and Caribbean Section of the Southern Historical Association, 2009-present

Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora, 2005-present.

The American Historical Association, September 2000- present.

Institute of Historical Research, University of London, September 1998- June 1999.