

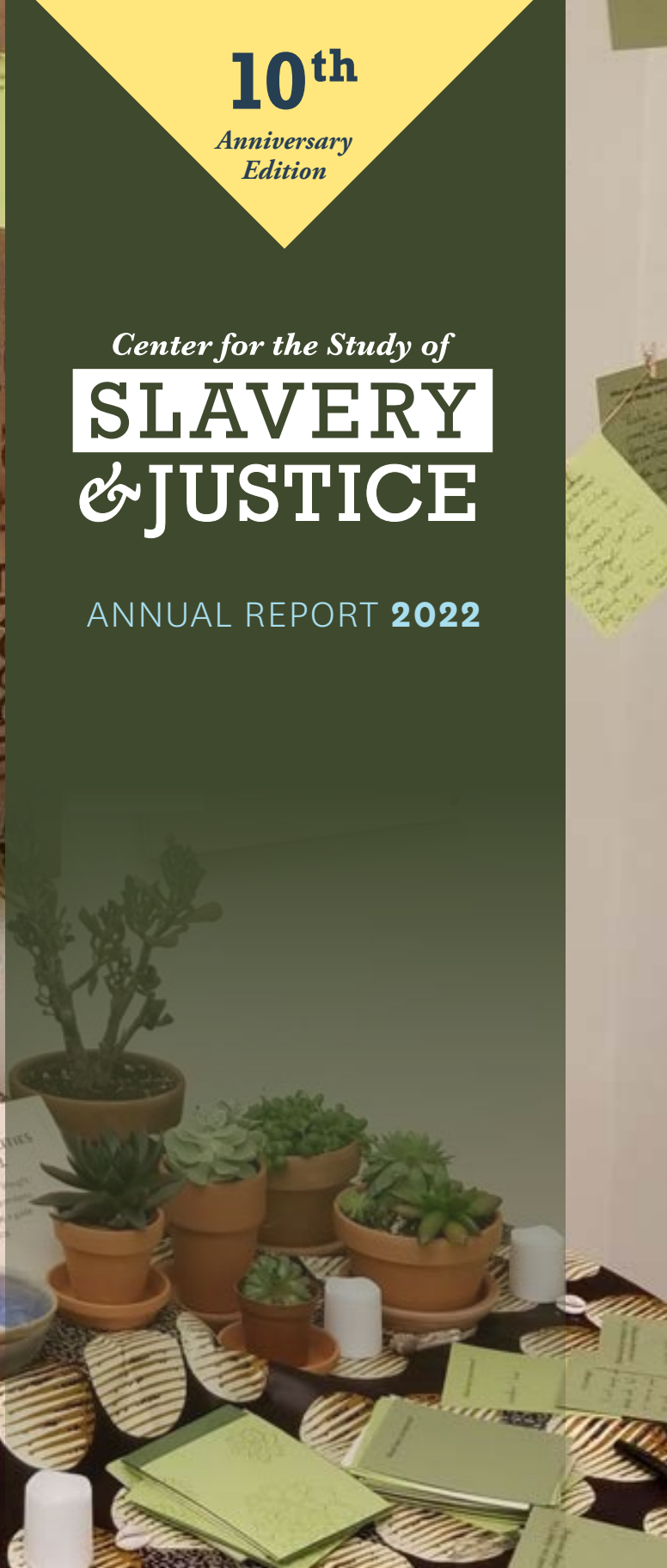
10<sup>th</sup>

Anniversary  
Edition

Center for the Study of

# SLAVERY & JUSTICE

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



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Cover Image:  
Legacy: Altar of Possibilities / Altered Possibilities, 2021

Dara Bayer

Interactive installation with mirror, succulents, candles, string lights, and response cards

Dimensions variable

Mirror text reads: “What have you learned?”

PHOTO COURTESY OF KIKU LANGFORD MCDONALD

## Director’s Note

Anniversaries are reflective moments. For us at the CSSJ, we reflect on two things during this moment of our 10th anniversary. The first is how we have grown as a Center: the tremendous moral and financial support given to us by many donors that made this growth possible; the support of the university leadership; and the ways in which graduate and undergraduate students have made the Center their intellectual home. For all this support, we give immense thanks and appreciation.

The second matter which we reflect upon is how, over the past ten years, American society has become more divided. There is now the visible strength of those who wish to nostalgically return to a past. While there are currents of light that attempt to grapple with all the complexities of American history—Indigenous dispossession, genocide, and racial slavery—in our ten years, there has emerged publicly the battle for the meaning of America and what America might become. These divisions are not new; the visible appeals and actions of authoritarian politics based on anti-Black racism have a long American history. However, what is new is how in the post-civil rights moment, the authoritarian current has come to the fore. As well, we should note how this current is now part of an international current. Perhaps this is one reason why the 2020 worldwide protests and demonstrations in support of George Floyd were both activities of solidarity as well as a preoccupation with how local anti-Black racism continues to shape many societies.

All of this points us in the direction of grappling with history and its meanings in our present. Grappling with how the historical formation of a society continues to not just linger but actively shape and, in some instances, determine the ways in which a society is structured. The historical forces present at the inauguration of a society, unless confronted and dealt with, are not submerged currents. Rather, they remain on the



surface exploding at specific moments. So, when we confront racial slavery, we also grapple with the ways it has created a racial order of anti-Black racism. As an order, anti-Black racism has economic, social, and political valences but it also works to create “structures of feeling” in which violence and death continue to stalk contemporary Black life.

For us at the Center, racial slavery as a legal regime is over; it is no longer part of the law of the land. But the racial order that the system of racial slavery generated, its ideologues and practices, are alive—sometimes adapted, but alive. Thus, to confront anti-Black racism today is to challenge the conventional histories we have all learned. This challenge will remain at the core of the CSSJ’s work. Over the last decade, the CSSJ has used different modalities to grapple with the American history of racial slavery. Our research and the work we have done in the public humanities have marked us as a distinctive center. Our public engagement work focused on high school students has opened the doors for young people to think about

American history in different ways. Our work with the Global Curatorial Project has positioned the Center and our museum partners to make a difference in how the global stories of racial slavery and colonialism can be told. We foreground the enslaved both in the proposed international traveling exhibition *In Slavery's Wake* and in the *Unfinished Conversations* oral history project which collects and shares the voices and memories of the formerly enslaved and their descendants. Indeed this is a marked feature of all our projects—foregrounding the voices and human experiences of the enslaved.

Now, we are ten years old. We have conducted an external review and the Center will have an exciting future which we will report over time to you all. In the meantime, my warmest thanks and appreciation to all the friends and supporters of our work. We simply would not have been here without this support. To the staff of the Center, Shana Weinberg (who was there at the Center's inception), Kiku Langford McDonald, Africa Smith, Desiree Obimpe, and Nada Samih-Rotondo, I extend the Center's deepest thanks. To our external board and our academic board, your support of the Center's work has been pivotal. To Maiyah Rivers, deepest thanks for your work in public engagement and starting the Center's various high school programs. To Catherine Van Amburgh, much appreciation for all the work you did which contributed to the growth of the Center. And finally, to Dr. Simmons who made sure that there was a center in 2012, we say thanks.

We have survived the early birth pangs and consolidated a Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice at Brown. The foundations laid are sustainable. We now build towards a future.

#### **ANTHONY BOGUES**

*Director*



## Reflections from the President's Advisory Council

I joined the Advisory Board for the Center, now called the President's Advisory Council on the Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice, in 2017. The possibility came as a surprise to me one evening at dinner with two California CSSJ board members who still serve with me. They asked if it would be of interest to me. The official invitation came from someone I could not refuse, former President Ruth Simmons, who was then chair of the Advisory Board.

As we celebrate the first 10 years of the Center, the story of President Simmons's role in pioneering the important work of examining Brown's historic ties to slavery and commissioning the [Slavery and Justice Report](#) that led to the founding of the Center is well-known. And anyone who has had the luck to know President Simmons understands that when she asks one to do something, one agrees.

In my case, I cannot think of a more fitting way to serve my University, my home state of Rhode Island, and my life's passion advocating and supporting the role that public schools play in a democratic society. I had the temerity to think that earlier volunteer roles I held as a Brown alumna actually qualified me in some way to join this advisory board. I had led the Associates Council of the Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women, and served as a founding member of Brown's Women's Leadership Council. I am a long-time member of Teach for America's Bay Area board and was founding chair of Generation Citizen; a not-for-profit incubated at Brown focused on civics education. My husband and I funded a piece of the CSSJ's work, a high school curriculum, [Racial Slavery in the Americas: Resistance, Freedom, and Legacies](#), produced with the Choices Program at Brown. But my lens into the work of the CSSJ was very narrow at that time.

In this report you will perhaps ask yourself how all of the many initiatives of the Center can possibly be happening at the same time. A research center with a public humanities mission may seem like a bridge too far, and yet, each distinct part feeds

and nourishes the other under the outstanding and tireless leadership of Anthony Bogues. Tony somehow manages to meet the demands of being a world-renowned scholar and a very popular professor at Brown. Each interaction I have with him teaches me to look at both history and social justice issues with a new lens.

I have been so enriched by my time on the Advisory Council. I feel privileged to serve alongside a diverse group of men and women united by the Center's mission and our love of Brown. Spencer Crew, who succeeded President Simmons as chair, provides impressive academic credentials and an esteemed resume having led some of our country's most important museums focused on African American history. The commitment of President Paxson to the Center's work has reinvigorated efforts toward raising endowment funding thereby ensuring the preeminence of the Center, and the board has played a central role recruiting and on-boarding new members as well as setting up a good governance model.

There are many ways to serve Brown as an alumna and to stay connected but few of them offer the opportunity to directly engage with the academic life of the institution. As a Brown-educated woman, I have lived my life deeply curious about and engaged with the problems facing our country and our world, particularly around issues of social justice. It is a great gift in these extraordinary times to play a small role in supporting the work of the Center and engaging with urgent and timely questions that need to be asked and answered.



**MARY VASCELLARO '74, P '07,**

*President's Advisory Council  
on the Center for the Study of  
Slavery & Justice Member*



## About the Center

The Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice is a scholarly research center with a public humanities mission. Recognizing that racial and chattel slavery were central to the historical formation of the Americas and the modern world, the CSSJ creates a space for the interdisciplinary study of the historical forms of slavery while also examining how these legacies shape our contemporary world.

For the 2021–2022 academic year, the Center’s work was organized around the following research clusters and projects:

### RESEARCH CLUSTERS

#### Human Trafficking

This project explores contemporary forms of human bondage and engages in public programming around this issue.

#### Race, Medicine, and Social Justice

This research cluster explores the history and persistence of structural racism in biomedicine as it intersects with economic and social conditions. The cluster focuses on reimagining the knowledge we produce about race and health from a social justice perspective.

#### Race, Slavery, Colonialism, and Capitalism

This research cluster is reshaping scholars’ understanding of the history and growth of capitalism and brings together the best scholars on this subject. This is a three-year project that is co-led by CSSJ and the International Institute of Social History (Amsterdam).

#### Historical Injustice and Democracy

The making of the modern world was in part constituted by the historical injustices of colonialism and racial slavery. This research cluster is a joint project between the Watson Institute of International and Public Affairs and the CSSJ.

#### Mass Incarceration and Punishment in America

This research cluster seeks to examine punishment and the U.S. carceral state through an interdisciplinary lens. The cluster operates from the frame that race and anti-Black racism are cornerstones to understanding the vast leviathan of punishment in America.

#### Stolen Relations: Recovering Stories of Indigenous Enslavement in the Americas

This community-based project, housed at Brown University, is a collaborative effort to build a database of enslaved Indigenous people throughout time all across the Americas in order to promote greater understanding of the historical circumstances and ongoing trauma of settler colonialism.

#### Reimagining New England Histories

This project is organized by the CSSJ in partnership with Williams College and Mystic Seaport Museum. Funded by the Mellon Foundation, the project aims to tell a different and more complete historical and contemporary understanding of the lives, contributions, and everyday experiences of Black and Indigenous people in New England.

At left: *Racial Slavery, Marronage, and Freedom: A 10th Anniversary Retrospective* Exhibition reception

## SEMINAR SERIES

### CSSJ Advanced Knowledges Working Group

The CSSJ Advanced Knowledges Working Group is a seminar for graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and other scholars affiliated with or working alongside the CSSJ to come together to think critically about the legacies of racial slavery and boundaries of freedom across time and space.

### Carceral State Reading Group

The CSSJ facilitates a year-long reading group which focuses on issues of imprisonment, incarceration, captivity, criminalization, and policing historically and in the present day. The reading group is a collaboration between various sectors of the Providence community and the CSSJ.

### Faculty Fellow Seminar

This graduate-level seminar led by Brown faculty is an interdisciplinary course that seeks to explore emerging issues in the study of racial slavery and its legacies.

## CSSJ AFFILIATED STUDENT GROUP

### Decolonization at Brown

Decolonization at Brown (DAB) is a student-led group that seeks to bring together students, staff, faculty, and local communities to resist colonialism in Brown's relationships, academics, and spaces. DAB's current focus is identifying and raising awareness of colonialism in Brown's structure and culture through task forces, bi-weekly general body meetings, mutual aid initiatives, teach-ins, campaigns, and more.

## CSSJ ARTS INITIATIVES

### Heimark Artist in Residence

The Heimark Artist in Residence program brings to campus musicians, poets, visual artists, and performers whose work grapples with the legacies of racial slavery on our world today.

### The Imagined New | Black Sonic: Heritage as Heresy

The Imagined New is an interdisciplinary platform for critical exchange and research around African and African Diasporic art practices, as they relate to questions of history, archive and the alternative imagination(s) of the Radical Black Tradition. This project is collaboratively presented by the Visual Identities in Art and Design Research Centre (VIAD), University of Johannesburg, CSSJ, and the Brown Arts Initiative.

### reflection / abyss / vision / legacy Exhibition

Inspired by an expedition into the multidimensional realms of Octavia E. Butler's archives, 2020 Heimark Artist in Residence Porsha Olayiwola and CSSJ Visiting Artist Dara Bayer '08 together explore patterns in the development of the individual and the collective. This exhibition was on view from fall 2021–spring 2022.

## PUBLIC HUMANITIES PROJECTS

### Freedom Archive

This project creates an inventory of materials in Brown University Library's Special Collections related to racial slavery and abolition to help scholars more easily access these items. Through the Unfinished Conversations (UC) initiative, the *Freedom Archive* will also include memories of the afterlives of racial slavery and colonialism gathered from communities around world.

### Global Curatorial Project

This exhibition and curatorial project presents both the global interconnectedness of Atlantic slavery and the slave trade, as well as illuminates an alternative view about the history of our "modernity". It is co-led by CSSJ and the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History & Culture in partnership with museums around the world.

### Unfinished Conversations Series

Unfinished Conversations is a new form of curatorial practice, public engagement, and programing to collect, give voice to, and provide a platform for untold histories, memories, and narratives related to the history of racialized slavery and its afterlives. Part of the *Global Curatorial Project*, it is a collaborative project with museums and communities around the world.

### Slave Trade Film Project with Filmmaker Stanley Nelson

This project involves creating a multi-part documentary series on the Atlantic slave trade, a digital learning platform, and a learning companion. One of the project's main objectives is to provide accessible educational tools to chart the economic and human costs of the slave trade across the Atlantic basin, underscoring how this system of violence and profit built the modern world.

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

### Slavery & Legacy Walking Tour

The Slavery & Legacy Walking Tour examines the history behind Brown University, the State of Rhode Island, and their roles in the transatlantic slave trade. New digital resources help students (K–12 & college) as well as adult groups think critically about the University and state histories.

### Slavery in the Americas High School Curriculum Project

The Slavery in the Americas High School Curriculum Project is a collaborative project with The Choices Program at Brown. This curriculum fulfills part of the CSSJ's mission to undertake public history projects which tell the story of racial slavery. In the fall of 2021, free professional development webinars were offered that assisted educators in implementing the materials in their classrooms. This high school curriculum project sought to challenge myths and the current absences in how our schools teach the history of racial slavery. The project worked closely with youth and educators to discern their understanding of the topic, areas of interest, and classroom challenges. [View the curriculum online here.](#)

### Black and Indigenous Summer Institute

The [Black and Indigenous Summer Institute](#) is a two-week immersive enrichment program for students who are juniors or seniors in high school and who are Native American/African/African American/Afro-Indigenous. Participating students gain exposure to a simulated college experience, learn to conduct scholarly research, have access to renowned collections, make connections to scholars and community leaders, and have an opportunity to meet and collaborate with peers throughout New England to develop plans, strategies, or programs that enrich communities and seek more [Just Futures](#). The Summer Institute is sponsored by CSSJ, Haffenreffer Museum of Anthropology, and Tomaquag Museum. View the curriculum online here.

### This Is America

Embedded within the American social, political, and economic systems are various forms of structural violences. The CSSJ's series [This Is America](#) explores how these structures and systems are rooted in anti-Black racism.





# THE YEAR IN REVIEW

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## The Year in Review

2022 marks the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice. This year, we reflect as well as honor the past ten years and the people who have supported us throughout our journey.

After a period of social distancing due to the pandemic, the Center's focus this year was on community building and reconnecting with local partners, students, alumni, and the general public through a series of programming, public humanities initiatives, and events. In 2022, the Center held its first conference on the topic of reparations and a retrospective exhibition in commemoration of its 10th anniversary.

As we reflect on the past, we are also reminded of where we are presently and where we are headed. We look forward to strengthening relationships, forming new ones, and furthering our mission in the next ten years.

## CSSJ Research Clusters

### HUMAN TRAFFICKING RESEARCH CLUSTER

In March 2022, the CSSJ Human Trafficking Research Cluster (HTRC) worked with grassroots collective, Red Canary Song (RCS), to commemorate the one-year remembrance of the Atlanta spa shootings. Building on collaborative research with RCS into the *Policing of Asian Massage Work*, HTRC held an interactive "Vigil for 8 Lives Lost" on March 18th, 2022 at the List Art Building. The event featured seven Red Canary artists and massage workers in a public talk, followed by the unveiling of an art installation: *Curtains: A Weak Armor*. This installation brought to life two massage rooms as chambers drawing on Chinese and Korean massage daily life experiences visible in each chamber. These commemorative efforts, and the collaboration between RCS and HTRC Fellow Professor Elena Shih, were profiled in a [Washington Post article](#) that was published on the one-year commemoration of the 2021 Atlanta spa shootings.

#### ELENA SHIH

Manning Assistant Professor of American Studies  
CSSJ Human Trafficking Research Cluster Faculty Fellow





## RACE, MEDICINE, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE RESEARCH CLUSTER

Science, medicine, and public health have been and continue to be central epistemic sites for the naturalization of ideas of human difference. In the U.S., this history is deeply intertwined with colonialism, racial slavery, Indigenous genocide, and their ongoing legacies. While activists and scholars have contested biomedical practices at different historical moments in different ways, this contestation has been limited in failing to account for the invisible racialization of everyday science and, specifically, how it naturalizes the prevailing social order. Yet, in the wake of the murder of George Floyd in 2020—and the murder of many other Black and Latinx men, women, and trans people—research has shown that almost every medical condition and technology is racialized, albeit with different histories.

The CSSJ Race, Medicine, and Social Justice Research Cluster is an interdisciplinary working group composed of faculty, graduate students, and medical students across the University and in Alpert Medical School. The group has been meeting for six years, with approximately 3–4 meetings per year and one scholar per semester who speaks to the Brown audience and the wider Rhode Island and global communities. Our primary goal this year, as in years past, has been to interrogate the processes by which racialization has become the norm in science, medicine, and public health; to investigate how deeper questioning has been silenced and to explore the kind of change necessary for equitable healing.



The main theme of the 2021–2022 academic year was an interrogation of the medical-industrial complex’s development and its contemporary iterations. We opened our meetings in the fall semester with a discussion of the complexities of activism in institutions where power, inequality, and scarcity at every level of medical care operate in ways that seem overwhelming. We moved on to explore how the health industry, a supposedly healing industry, became rooted in racial capitalism. Two speakers, historian [George Aumoithe](#) from Stonybrook University and historian and Emergency Medicine physician [Luke Messac](#) addressed one important dimension of the global medical-industrial complex: the social production of medical scarcity in the US and Malawi. Both illustrated in their work that scarcity is not inevitable and, therefore, can be changed.

We continued to investigate these themes the following semester by focusing on the history, theory, and practice of social medicine. We explored the centrality of social, political, economic, and cultural contexts to gain a deep understanding of the meaning of social medicine and its possibilities. In the U.S., for example, the dominant theoretical framework of social medicine emphasizes individual behavior and responsibility, blaming the unhealthy. It also focuses on biological determinism, producing conceptions of health such as “lifestyle medicine.” Latin American social medicine, on the other hand, takes a different approach that is rooted in a more radical framework that underscored the structural conditions central to health. Anthropologist and physician [Helena Hansen](#) ended the year with her talk to our group and the CSSJ community about the social processes by which the so-called opioid crisis naturalized “technologies of whiteness” over the past two decades.

### LUNDY BRAUN

Professor of Medical Science, Professor of Africana Studies  
Race, Medicine, and Social Justice Research Cluster Faculty Fellow

### TANEISHA WILSON

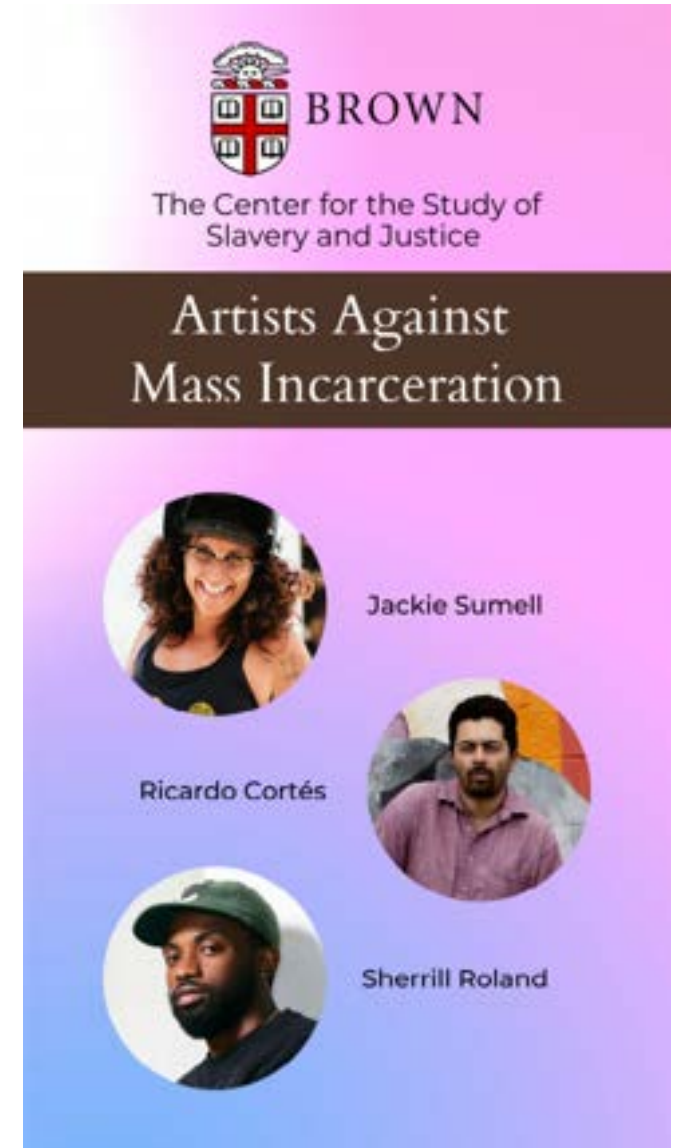
Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine  
Race, Medicine, and Social Justice Research Cluster Faculty Fellow

## MASS INCARCERATION AND PUNISHMENT IN AMERICA

The Mass Incarceration Research Cluster examines the origins and consequences of mass incarceration and centers race and anti-Black racism as the cornerstones to understanding punishment in America. This research cluster serves an important purpose: bridging the research-based examination of mass incarceration in the United States with the activist and system-impacted people shaping the dialogue around human rights, criminal justice reform, and abolition.

During the 2021–2022 academic year, I visited Harvard University as a Radcliffe Fellow while working on research about wrongful conviction in the United States. However, the cluster was still active with events and research activities aimed at building an archive on mass incarceration. This year, through programming, we focused on art as a form of resistance to mass incarceration—centering the voices of some of the most preeminent artists focusing on criminal injustice in the United States. Our event, *Artists Against Mass Incarceration* featured artists Ricardo Cortés, Sherrill Roland, and Jackie Summell. The panelists discussed their own relationships with the carceral state and how they respond to mass incarceration through art. This event was truly interdisciplinary in nature and student-led as it was conceived of and organized by undergraduate Justin Li Brown-RISD Dual Degree Program ’25.

As with much of our online programming, this dialogue between artists sharing experiences of activism, art, and time within prison institutions was recorded for preservation in the mass incarceration archive that is collected and curated by the Mass Incarceration Lab. The Lab’s mission is centering incarcerated voices in the telling of the history of mass incarceration in America. This archival project will be a central way that students can contribute to the growing intellectual life around the study of mass incarceration and the mission to preserve the narratives and experiences of those impacted by incarceration and its violence. This initiative will be part of the John Hay Library’s collecting initiative entitled, *Voices of Mass Incarceration*, and will be preserved alongside the newly acquired papers of Mumia Abu-Jamal, an acquisition featured in the New York Times (Aug 24, 2022). Thus far, the archive examines art, religion, healthcare, and other facets of daily life



Poster design by Justin Li, Brown-RISD Dual Degree Program ’25.

defined by incarceration. The archive includes oral histories as well as letters from incarcerated people. This project has led to considerable student engagement and will continue in the next academic year.

### NICOLE GONZALEZ VAN CLEVE

Associate Professor of Sociology  
Mass Incarceration and Punishment in America Research Cluster Faculty Fellow

## HISTORICAL INJUSTICE AND DEMOCRACY RESEARCH CLUSTER

As a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice and the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, I have been anchoring the Historical Injustice and Democracy Research Cluster, a joint collaborative project between these institutions that focuses on the legacies of colonialism and racial slavery in the making of the modern world. Since the fall of 2021, I have been developing my own research on slavery, citizenship, and racial violence in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States during the long nineteenth century, and I have organized a course and a seminar series titled, *Slavery, Democracy, and Racial Violence in the Americas*.

This research cluster provided a series of lectures during the spring of 2022 in which scholars like Keila Grinberg, Alejandro de la Fuente, and Vincent Brown discussed the legacies of colonialism and the enslavement of Indigenous and African peoples in the making of racialized societies in the Americas. One of the main objectives of these initiatives was to move beyond the American paradigm of racial violence and offer a transnational and comparative perspective of this phenomena across the continent by focusing on the historical experiences of slavery and racism in Latin America and the Caribbean. This seminar and the course offer theoretical and analytical contributions to students, scholars, and political activists who wish to understand the past to resist the historical injustices of our time.

### MARCELO ROSANOVA FERRARO

*CSSJ/ Watson Institute Joint Historical Injustice and Democracy Postdoctoral Research Associate  
Historical Injustice and Democracy Research Cluster Fellow*



## STOLEN RELATIONS PROJECT RESEARCH CLUSTER SUMMER INSTITUTE

For the second time in two years, Lydia Curliss, Nipmuc, Ph.D. student at the University of Maryland, and I led a four-session long summer institute for regional Indigenous tribal members on settler colonialism, Indigenous enslavement, and digital humanities. We were pleased to have strong interest, with over forty applicants for only ten slots. In the end, we selected eight participants from five Indigenous nations: Narragansett, Nipmuc, Shinnecock, Mashantucket Pequot, and Navajo.

The four sessions—all of which were convened in June—covered a variety of topics including decolonization, digital humanities, the history of Indigenous enslavement, and the longer meanings of enslavement and loss over time among present day communities. Participants also were tasked with a final project that engaged the *Stolen Relations* project and related themes. Two participants received training in entering historical documents and information into the database. Others chose to write blog-style posts reflecting on their experiences and their own relationships with these histories. Participants gave short presentations at a final session in late July.

### LINFORD FISHER

*CSSJ Faculty Fellow  
Associate Professor of History  
Principal Investigator, Stolen Relations Project*

## CSSJ Seminar Series

### ADVANCED KNOWLEDGES WORKING GROUP: ON METHOD AND FORM IN BLACK STUDIES

While at the Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice, Felicia and I co-facilitated the working group for doctoral candidates; our organizing concept of the year has been “On Method and Form in Black Studies.” We’ve prioritized thinkers, artists, and scholars whose work resides outside colonial mastery. During the fall semester, the group attended the conference organized to honor the work of Dionne Brand and discussed *A Map to the Door of No Return* (2001). During the spring semester, Prof. Lina Fruzzetti shared broad reflections on how she constructed the concepts of “race” and “displacement” through the auto-ethnographic and documentary film formats. In our last meeting, we hosted NourbeSe Philip who discussed the meaning of “form” in her poetics and the case of the unauthorized Italian translation of her work, *Zong!*

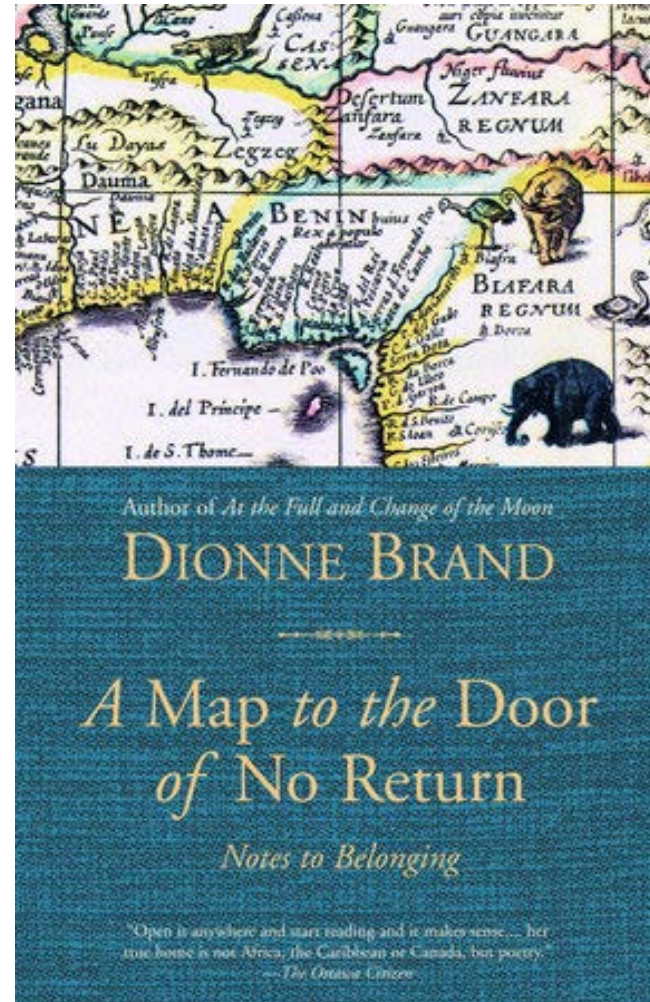
#### FELICIA DENAUD '22 PH.D.

6th Year Interdisciplinary Graduate Dissertation Fellow, 2021–2022

#### LEONORA MASINI, '22 PH.D.

6th Year Interdisciplinary Graduate Dissertation Fellow, 2021–2022

Postdoctoral Research Associate in Slavery and the Public Humanities,  
2022–2023



## CARCERAL STATE READING GROUP

In the 2021–2022 school year, the Carceral State Reading Group returned to in-person meetings for the first time since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Reconvening in person allowed us to revisit and recommit to the aims of the group in a new context and enhance our engagement with the Providence community. For our members, the group has served as a space of study and collaboration to support them and their organizational work in the city. We selected our readings to be responsive to the intellectual needs of our members, to think through issues that arose in their campaigns, to reflect on organizing practices, and to analyze the operation of carceral logics, technologies, and strategies in a range of contexts. We approached the local context of Providence alongside ongoing struggles nationally and globally to explore the relationships between varying ideas and experiences.

In addition to our ongoing reading and study, we hosted and supported the organization of a number of community forums and workshops aimed at facilitating collective knowledge production and awareness around local campaigns focused on solitary confinement and women’s justice reinvestment. We have found this work to be critical in furthering the aims of the group by participating in and facilitating public conversation, and contributing to projects our members and community are engaged in. These kinds of public gatherings were opportunities for inviting new interlocutors to engage in the forms of study which the group attempts. The experiments in community-centered knowledge production advance the analyses of all participants and enable the group to determine our next directions for study. Ultimately, this year has been exciting for the development of the Reading Group, as new and returning members alike brought a heightened level of energy to rigorously think through the relationship between study and struggle. We are looking forward to the next phase.

#### CONNOR JENKINS '22

Carceral State Reading Group Co-Facilitator

#### JUSTIN LANG PH.D. '25

Carceral State Reading Group Co-Facilitator

## CSSJ Affiliated Student Group

### DECOLONIZATION AT BROWN

With the support of the CSSJ, Decolonization at Brown (DAB) continued its anti-colonial political work and community-building during the 2021–2022 school year. Projects in our task forces included reading groups, organizing against racism and ableism in STEM curricula, and promoting accurate and meaningful land acknowledgments at Brown. Throughout the year, our steering committee organized general body meetings and social events which included discussions about political texts, conversations about DAB’s visions and directions, and movie nights to view films relevant to our work. We also organized a visit for 30 students to the Tomaquag Museum, where we attended a nature tour and a museum tour centered around Narragansett histories and lifeways. We were able to collaborate with and provide financial support for other organizations on campus, including the Palestine Solidarity Caucus and Railroad.

#### ROOPA DUVVI '23

Decolonization at Brown Steering Committee Member

#### HSIAO SHAN PECK '23

Decolonization at Brown Steering Committee Member

## CSSJ Arts Initiatives

### THE IMAGINED NEW | BLACK SONIC: HERITAGE AS HERESY

Collaboratively presented by the Visual Identities in Art and Design Research Centre (VIAD), University of Johannesburg, the Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice, Brown University, and the Brown Arts Initiative

*Black Sonic: Heritage as Heresy* launched on December 1, 2021 as a digital program that explores Black sound and sonics not as content, category, or the cultural ‘by-product’ of the Black experience, but as a heritage of heretical praxis; as so many ways of being and becoming. The project asks: If the project of history is one of silencing, of systematic erasure and disappearance of Blackness, then how might the sonic present a uniquely enabling modality for thinking, feeling, and performing a different historical imagination?

In answering this, the project considers the Black Sonic as an “analytic-interpretative reduction of phonic materiality” and discusses Blackness as an ongoing improvisation “that moves in excess of meaning.”

The program was delivered in four sets: *Black Phonic Substance*, released December 1, 2021; *The Radical Imagination of the Ordinary*, released January 3, 2022; *Erased Bodies Which*

*Speak*, released June 3, 2022; and *Perceptive Knowledge*, released July 1, 2022. All four sets include conversations and artist-led contributions from Africa and its diaspora. The collaborators on this program include Vernon Reid, Rhea Storr, Jessica Care Moore, and Geri Augusto. A full list can be found [here](#). From December 1, 2021 to June 8, 2022, the digital program had received 1,519 unique visits and 4,676 page views.

*Black Sonic: Heritage as Heresy* launched alongside an in-depth interview with Anthony Bogues exploring the concept of “Heritage as Heresy”. Due to the value and success of the program, additional funding was received from the University of Johannesburg research fund for an in-person exhibition at FADA Gallery at the University of Johannesburg, which ran from July 14 through August 10, 2022.

#### LOIS ANGURIA PH.D.

Lecturer at Rhodes University  
Research Manager, Visual Identities in Art and Design,  
University of Johannesburg, 2021–2022

#### MACHEL BOGUES

Associate Researcher, Visual Identities in Art and Design,  
University of Johannesburg

Access the program via QR code:

Funding for *The Imagined New* is made possible by the Abrams Foundation



### REFLECTION / ABYSS / VISION / LEGACY EXHIBITION

*Inspired by an expedition into the multidimensional realms of Octavia E. Butler’s archives, 2020 Heimark Artist in Residence Porsha Olayiwola and CSSJ Visiting Artist Dara Bayer ’08 together explore patterns in the development of the individual and the collective. This exhibition was on view from fall 2021–spring 2022.*

Each month, the College’s Curriculum and Co-Curriculum team meets in-person to discuss and reflect on goals, trends, and challenges that impact our work. Diverting from our standard format for these meetings, in April we had the privilege of convening around the CSSJ’s *reflection / abyss / vision / legacy* exhibit.

We were drawn by the opportunity to engage with a vivid and layered collaboration of words, images, and ideas, and we relished the chance to share and discuss a “live” experience with one another. Close to ending another academic year, which at times felt like the stuff of science fiction, some of us were eager to gain inspiration from the legacy of Octavia Butler. One team member noted the comments that were strung up as banners in a corner of the exhibit, where voices of teachers and

students were intermingled and shared space with the artists, blurring the lines between learning, teaching, and making art. Another on our team, who had previously visited the exhibit online during the pandemic, was struck at how meaningful it was to experience it in person. Someone noted the power of hearing Porsha Olayiwola read her work on the listening device and another was struck by Dara Bayer’s use of light and desert imagery.

Together, we reflected on the significance of Octavia Butler’s resolve written in her own hand: “I will find the way to do this! So be it! See to it!” We left, as one wrote, “calmed and centered in the middle of a hectic period” and feeling gratitude for this gift tucked away in a building some of us pass daily, previously unaware of what Anthony Bogues so aptly refers to as the “radical Black imagination” that was just inside the door and within our reach.

#### BETSY SHIMBERG

Senior Associate Dean of the College for Co-Curricular and Experiential Learning



# Racial Slavery Marronage & Freedom

10TH  
ANNIVERSARY  
PROGRAMMING



I chant to the water  
to flood my veins with  
the voices of those who  
were here before

when my sea-spirit rises  
out of the waves and spins  
a wreath onto my head  
who then  
is my master what  
claim of brand  
upon my flesh

when my sea-spirit enters  
I am cast from my body's tethers  
I am no slave  
I am the first language  
spinning spinning  
beyond the fields

Poem excerpt from *What Noise Against the Cane*  
by Desiree C. Bailey MFA '15

## CSSJ 10th Anniversary Launch

For ten years, the CSSJ has been a venue for serious discussion around the legacies of racial slavery in the world. It has conducted this discussion through panels, catalogs, exhibitions, high school projects, conferences, and collaboration with academic institutions and museums. In 2020, the nation and the world were rocked by mass mobilization and protests around Black Lives Matter. Despite this, the structural legacies of racial slavery continue to haunt many societies.

The Center's 10th anniversary programming began on December 7, 2021 with a series of conversations featuring a reading by poet Desiree C. Bailey MFA '15 followed by conversation between Desiree C. Bailey and CSSJ Faculty Advisory Board member Prof. Kevin Quashie, and concluding with a keynote address by Marcus Rediker, entitled *The Maritime Frontier of Freedom: Escaping Slavery by Sea in Antebellum America*.

Below is an excerpt of the conversation between Desiree C. Bailey and Prof. Kevin Quashie.

**KEVIN QUASHIE:** [Desiree], It feels like a particular gift to have you reading these poems, these magnificent poems, in the state of the world that we're in. And the incredible reminder that your care and intelligence is that in the midst of terrible, there's also grace. And this book is fantastic and we're so grateful that you've made it and we're grateful you're here. So thank you. Thank you. Thank you for reading.

**DESIREE BAILEY:** Thank you. Thank you.

**KEVIN QUASHIE:** I wonder if you would say something about—you mentioned that in your time in Professor Bogue's class that the long poem had its genesis there. Will you say something about the making of this book, how this book came together? And maybe in responding, would you also say something about the title?





Desiree C. Bailey in conversation with Kevin Quashie

**DESIREE BAILEY:** Yes, absolutely. So really the book is in two or maybe even three parts, depending on how you look at it. But the first part of the book came out of so many of the ideas that I was learning and was inspired by that course. It was an Art and Politics of Haiti course taught by Professor Bogues. We looked at so many different aspects, both visual art but also thinking about the religious aspects that are often overlooked in their significance towards the Haitian Revolution. And that was something that stuck with me thinking about the role of voodoo. And so when we had this final project, I was drawn to that because I thought, well, here's a space where I can actually attempt to understand the psyche and maybe even the psychospiritual of what people were moving through at that time. And because we're quite limited in what we have in terms of the ideas of, I would say, someone who was an everyday person, someone who is not necessarily noted in history books, I thought that this is a place where I can at least begin to think about that. And so of course, I was also thinking about La Sirène, the ocean spirit of the sea. Some stories say that she swam from the Congo to Haiti alongside the slave ships.

I thought about that as well in the formation of this poem. And really as someone in the contemporary world thinking about that risk and what it means to actually put your body on the line for your freedom. It's not something that I know and that I can ever say that I will ever know. But I just wanted to honor that. And really in that space with so much going on, there was also a part of me that thought, well, we should be talking about this all the time. We should really be talking about this moment as something pivotal and really at the center in many ways of our modern world. And so I felt like this is my small part in really pushing forward that vision and hoping that other people then begin to speak this and possibly also find their own ways of looking towards history to inform, perhaps, their present moment and maybe to inspire them to think about the ways that they can make a change and the way that they can work towards a kind of freedom.

**KEVIN QUASHIE:** One of the things I hear in your response is a real attention to trying to manage the scale. And maybe we can say two related but very different scales in the book. One is the kind of epic scale of the wrath of slavery and then the kind of intimacy. You use the language of the psyche or the psychospiritual or talk about the body. You try to imagine the figure of the person who swims across the ocean. And so I wonder if some of the—Carl Phillips, who wrote the introduction and who was the judge for the prize, the iconic poet, and many commentators of the work, as someone who's now studied the work for the last couple of weeks, I see you managing scale in the book. And I wonder if you would say something about the poetics of that management of scale. A thing I read as, again, your way of trying to reckon with the wrath of slavery. Can you say something about that? And I'd be happy to have this question be an extended one because I think there are some fantastic ways that your poetics manage scale.



Desiree C. Bailey reading from *What Noise Against the Cane*

**DESIREE BAILEY:** I really love this question because I think in the making of the book I wasn't necessarily thinking like I'm managing scale and structure. Well, maybe structure, because a lot of poems in a lot of poetry books, you have disconnected poems. Maybe there's a connection but you can kind of move them around and you have to figure out the arc or not. And so I have some of that in there. But I also have this poem, "Chant for the Waters and Dirt and Blade" that is in the epic tradition and which was written at different points in time across like five years. And so there was a lot of managing in terms of what will go where what should be the beginning, and how should this end. So in terms of structure, that's something that I was kind of sitting with. And in terms of scale, it's huge to think about a history like this and to put it alongside my own contemporary musings and my own trying to find myself in the world as a Black woman from the Caribbean, from Trinidad who moved to New York at a young age and also constantly moving back and forth and moving between all of these different spaces. So I think I was working through all of that and wanting to be careful with the histories, wanting

to have a kind of ethics about it, and making sure that I paid attention to those nuances there. And so in terms of that and the history, that's something that I really hope showed up. My head is spinning because I'm trying to think. There's so much here when we're thinking about something like the scale. But I tried to manage the chronology. I tried to manage different registers. And I tried to hopefully echo what so many of us are walking around with inside of us. We carry these stories, these resistances, and people that we've lost, people who sacrifice themselves along the way. All of these things are sitting within us when we're in a classroom, when we're at work, when we're crossing the street. And it was important for me to put all of those things together and to try to wrestle with that and with that scale in some way.

**KEVIN QUASHIE:** I'm just so grateful for what you've said. And also I want to note your commitment to thinking about how you want to be as a poet, not only simply wanting to be a poet. I hope that other people are hearing that as inspiration but also as an articulation of something that you're trying to have fidelity to. I think that's beautiful.

[See the full conversation between Desiree C. Bailey and Kevin Quashie.](#)

## REPARATIONS CONFERENCE: HISTORY, JUSTICE, AND REPAIR

“We live in [the] wake of that catastrophic history,” Anthony Bogues, director of the CSSJ, says of the legacies of settler colonialism and racial slavery in his introduction to the CSSJ’s 2022 *Reparations Conference: History, Justice, and Repair*.

On May 5th, 2022, the CSSJ convened local public officials, students, scholars, museum curators, community members and activists, for its inaugural conference on reparations. The conference, part of the Center’s 10th-anniversary programming, provided a platform for discussions on the meaning of reparations, Rhode Island’s history and its involvement in the transatlantic slave trade, and reparations work being done at the local level.

On the topic of the meaning of reparations, Don Rojas, director of communications and international relations at the Institute of the Black World (IBW) and the National African American

Reparations Commission (NAARC), expressed that reparations is an intergenerational commitment to reckoning with a history of harm as far-reaching as enslavement, Indigenous dispossession, and cultural theft (alluding to museums’ possession of robbed artifacts and their delaying or plain lack of repatriation efforts).

Panelists representing the Providence Municipal Reparations Commission: Keith Stokes, director of business and development for the city of Providence; Jim Vincent, president of the Providence NAACP and Providence Municipal Reparations Commission member; and Raymond Two Hawks Watson founder/CEO at Providence Cultural Equity Initiative and Providence Municipal Reparations Commission member also asserted that reparations should be a reckoning with the aftermath of recent government policies such as urban renewal and redlining that also stemmed from white supremacy.

Left to right: Jason Carroll '21, Zanagee Artis '22, and Sydney Smith '22



KIKU LANGFORD MCDONALD

Brown alumni Jason Carroll '21, Zanagee Artis '22, and Sydney Smith '22 also shared their perspectives and stories as students in demanding reparations for local Providence communities who have been harmed by the university’s ties to the transatlantic slave trade and the gentrification of College Hill.

“Even if we don’t undo racism, even if we don’t fix the problem of human rights abuses, even if we don’t correct history... there’s a lot to learn in the process of trying to do that,” said Dr. Akeia de Barros Gomes. Gomes, senior curator of Maritime Social Histories at Mystic Seaport Museum and CSSJ Visiting Scholar who was joined by Dr. Bambi Ceuppens, curator of Contemporary African Art at the Royal Museum for Central Africa in Tervuren, Belgium as panelists to discuss the topic of museums, reparations, and decolonization.



DESIREE OBIMPE



DESIREE OBIMPE

## CSSJ NORWOOD HOUSE EXPANSION

In recognition of the CSSJ’s expansion of postdoctoral fellows, visiting faculty, and community fellows, the University provided the Center with a second building, Norwood House, located down the street from CSSJ. Norwood House, located at 82 Waterman Street, was renovated during the academic year 2020–2021. CSSJ fellows moved into their offices at the start of the fall 2021 semester. The building is also shared temporarily with faculty from the Africana Studies Department and includes two meeting spaces.



**ON VIEW | RACIAL SLAVERY, MARRONAGE, AND FREEDOM: A 10TH ANNIVERSARY RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBITION**

Since 2012, the CSSJ has engaged in questions around the complex practices of freedom that have historically and continue to animate Black freedom struggles globally. As the staff began to envision an exhibition to mark the Center’s 10th anniversary, we knew immediately such an exhibition would require engaging the distinguished group of artists who have become CSSJ partners and friends over the last 10 years. We were honored that Edouard Duval-Carrié, Jess Hill, and Rénoald Laurent agreed to be part of this exhibition, helping visitors reflect on the theme of racial slavery and freedom. Each artist has a body of work that is deeply connected to the values and mission of the Center.

This retrospective exhibition, along with an accompanying catalog, is an integral part of the 10th anniversary of the CSSJ.

*Racial Slavery, Marronage, and Freedom: A 10th Anniversary Retrospective Exhibition* is on view from September 22nd, 2022 through February 17, 2023.



Left to right: Edouard Duval-Carrié, Rénoald Laurent, Jess Hill and Anthony Bogues at *Racial Slavery, Marronage, and Freedom: A 10th Anniversary Retrospective* exhibition reception



Design by Erin Wells

*“In the end, this exhibition is both an echo and reminder. An echo of the struggles past and a reminder about those to come. Freedom remains the ground on which we can all create a more humane world. But, it is not the freedom of political liberty, nor consumer choice, it’s a freedom which grounds itself upon the ending of all forms of human domination. The first enslaved African discerned this and sang about it. Today we walk and trod those grounds until we are free.”*

**ANTHONY BOGUES**

*Racial Slavery, Marronage, and Freedom* exhibition catalog.



Preliminary figure sketch of *Marooning, when the slave snatches his freedom*



Preliminary figure sketch of *Cécile Fatiman*



Linocut of *Oh Say Can You See America and Its Birth*



*Procession of slaves celebrating the abolition of slavery in the United States, 2022*  
 Rénoald Laurent  
 acrylic on canvas  
 70" x 40"  
 PHOTO: PATRICK SYLVAIN



*Marooning, when the slave snatches his freedom, 2022*  
 Rénoald Laurent  
 acrylic on canvas  
 60" x 40"  
 PHOTO: PATRICK SYLVAIN



*Cécile Fatiman, 2022*  
 Edouard Duval-Carrié  
 waterjet cut aluminum  
 72" x 44" x 12"  
 PHOTO: MARTINA TUATY



*Oh Say Can You See America and Its Birth, 2022*  
 Jess Hill  
 mixed media  
 99" x 71"  
 PHOTO: JESS HILL

## THE MAKING OF THE DIGITAL EDITION OF THE SLAVERY AND JUSTICE REPORT

In 2006, Brown released its groundbreaking *Slavery and Justice Report*, confronting and publicly documenting the University's complex history with the transatlantic slave trade. The Report, commissioned by then-President Ruth J. Simmons, set a high standard for unflinching analysis and became a national model for responsible scholarship, sparking a national conversation. Brown was among the first institutions of higher education in the United States to publicly catalog its ties to racial slavery. Fifteen years later, under the leadership of President Christina H. Paxson, the University released a digital second edition, [Brown University's Slavery and Justice Report with Commentary on Context and Impact](#), which offers insights into the document's evolving impact both on Brown's campus and across the nation and the world.

The expanded Report, which I co-edited with Anthony Bogues, director of the Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice, and Cass Cliatt, senior vice president for communications, symbolizes Brown's commitment to constant evolution. Previously available only in print and PDF form, the digital edition, published on November 12, 2021, transforms the original Report into an engaging, interactive experience. Rather than reproduce the report exactly as it appeared in 2006, we wished to acknowledge and celebrate the significance of this historical document for a new and expanded readership. We felt it was important to foreground the Report not only as a scholarly publication but also as a major historical document in its own right, with reflections and commentary that present the fuller, richer story of how it came into being and how it transformed higher education's engagement with histories entangled with



Anthony Bogues and Rakim H. Brooks '09 discussing *Brown University's Slavery and Justice Report with Commentary on Context and Impact* during Commencement 2022

slavery. Readers of the second edition, which was also released in print format, will find an interview with President Emerita Simmons, who comments on her motivations for beginning the University's examination of its history and offers her reflections on the enduring legacy of the Report; an essay by Anthony Bogues on how the CSSJ, which was born directly out of the Report, has become a catalytic entity for public discourse on the historical significance and legacies of slavery; and reflections from several alumni on the history of Black students at Brown and the impact the Report had on their experiences both as students and, later, professionals.

In addition to the newly-commissioned essays, the digital second edition includes high-resolution, zoomable images of historical documents referenced in the Report, such as the *Articles from the Slave Ship Sally* (the list of men who served

on the ship in 1764), as well as links to full transcriptions of the documents for readers seeking a deeper engagement with the historical sources. Pop-up notes include updated URLs that have been archived to ensure permanent, reliable, unalterable links to the online sources cited throughout the book. As an open-access publication, the digital second edition provides enduring, barrier-free access to knowledge. In other words, it's available to anyone, anywhere—at no cost. The application of universal design principles ensures equitable use by all persons, including those with disabilities. And further reflecting our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, the display typeface chosen for the digital edition was designed by a type foundry for creatives of color.

The second edition acknowledges the work of Africans and African Americans who helped build Brown University and this nation. The dedication also recognizes the scholars and educators who confront history and effect change every day. The creation of the second edition was a deeply collaborative project, and all who contributed are acknowledged as well—staff and faculty colleagues, undergraduate and graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows contributed their scholarship, insights, and professional talents from Brown's libraries and special collections, academic departments and programs, and administrative offices including the Office of the President and Office of University Communications.

[Brown University Digital Publications](#) also developed a “teaching edition” for the College's First Readings program for incoming undergraduates, enabling Brown to make it a regular offering in students' orientation. Featuring an expanded set of historical documents, an array of supplemental resources,



Allison Levy and Crystal Brush of Brown University Digital Publications, along with Diversity in Digital Publications Postdoctoral Fellow Cosette Bruhns Alonso, during the making of *Brown University's Slavery and Justice Report with Commentary on Context and Impact*.

and robust annotation and sharing tools, this version makes the Report accessible to every student, faculty member, and staff member as a shared community experience.

I invite you to explore the digital second edition of Brown's Slavery and Justice Report, to immerse yourself in the accompanying historical documents, and to learn from the contributors—past and present scholars at Brown, current and former University leaders, alumni and recent graduates—all of whom have so generously contributed their expertise and insight to this remarkable re-imagined Report.

### ALLISON LEVY

Director, Brown University Digital Publications

Access [Brown University's Slavery and Justice Report with Commentary on Context and Impact](#) via QR code





**PUBLIC  
HUMANITIES  
PROJECTS**

## UNFINISHED CONVERSATIONS GRANT FROM THE ABRAMS FOUNDATION SUPPORTS GLOBAL ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

A generous \$1.25 million grant from the Abrams Foundation to CSSJ in December 2021 will allow scholars at Brown University to work with partners across the globe to collect important untold stories about the history of racial slavery—revealing how that history still shapes society today.

With support from the grant, researchers at CSSJ will collaborate with an international network of scholars in Senegal, South Africa, the United Kingdom, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Belgium, Brazil and beyond to host public conversations, capture video narratives and record oral histories that seek to answer two important questions: How did slavery and colonialism shape these places, and how did they shape the world as a whole?

The historical archival project—called *Unfinished Conversations*—will play a key role in an exhibition tentatively titled *In Slavery's Wake*, which will open in December 2024 at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) in Washington and will later travel to major museums in Europe, Africa and South America. It will also reshape the way current and future researchers understand the stunning scope of the transatlantic slave trade and the global legacy of racial slavery and colonialism.

Scholars at the forefront of contemporary discourse on colonialism and racial slavery draw mostly on conventional historical sources such as written documents from European colonial powers. *Unfinished Conversations*, on the other hand, seeks to prioritize the voices of everyday people who have fewer opportunities and resources than others as a direct result of their ancestors' enslavement.

Anthony Bogues, director of the Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice stated, "Many will, for the first time, hear the voices and memories of people whose personal experiences are still inextricably tied to racial slavery, the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism. These moving and revealing conversations will demonstrate why we are not finished reckoning with the past."

The \$1.25 million grant comes from the Boston-based [Abrams Foundation](#), founded by Brown alumna Amy Abrams and her husband, David. Abrams, who concentrated in history at Brown, said she was inspired to support "Unfinished Conversations" because of its unusual scope and reach—with scholarly partners working together across four continents.

"I see the project as ambitious, groundbreaking, and innovative," Abrams said. "In documenting and giving voice to the stories, memories and narratives of the descendants of slaves, 'Unfinished Conversations' provides expanded resources for students and scholars. Working with this rich source material, researchers can deepen our understanding of slavery and its impact in the making of our modern world."

The project originated in 2020 and 2021, when partner scholars led by Ibrahima Thiaw at the Cultural Engineering and Anthropology Research Unit of Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar, Senegal, captured more than 20 hours of video interview footage with 27 people who live between Saint-Louis and the Senegal River Valley, once a central node in the transatlantic slave trade. At the end of the 19th century, French colonial authorities established villages de liberté, or "freedom villages," for formerly enslaved Africans, and they relied on the villages' inhabitants for cheap or even unpaid labor—effectively keeping Africans in positions of subordination even after they were technically freed from slavery. After developing relationships and cultivating trust with current residents of those former "freedom villages," Senegalese scholars traveled there from Dakar and recorded their stories about ancestral migration to the area, the region's evolving spiritual and cultural practices, and how French colonization changed the physical landscape.

Throughout the rest of 2022, scholars at CSSJ and partner institutions conducted interviews in several other countries where the legacies of racial slavery still reverberate. In the U.K. port city of Liverpool, interviews were recorded in August 2022 with descendants of West Africans who arrived there in the late 18th century, when the bustling area was Britain's main slave-trading port. In September, colleagues at the NMAAHC conducted interviews and filming in Africatown, Alabama, a community that includes descendants of the enslaved people



Arlean Horton discusses her family history and the changing landscape of Africatown, Alabama.

who were smuggled to the United States aboard the *Clotilda* in 1860, decades after the 1807 Act Prohibiting the Importation of Slaves. In October researchers based in Rio de Janeiro interviewed Afro-Brazilians. Brazil was the landing place for over half of all Africans who crossed the Atlantic in the prime years of the slave trade; two centuries later, millions of Afro-Brazilians live in poverty and comprise two thirds of the country's incarcerated population. This November, scholars and curators visited the wine region near Cape Town, South Africa, where vineyards once paid their workers in wine [Dop system] instead of currency. This led to systemic alcohol-related health issues

that persist today. Also in November, colleagues at the Royal Museum for Central Africa began the process of interviewing their community.

"The legacies of slavery are not just structural — they are also personal," Bogues said. "Hearing an individual's story about living in precarity or navigating the carceral state can humanize systemic inequality better than a statistic can. Together with our international partners, we hope to broaden everyone's understanding of the histories and the aftermaths of racial slavery and colonialism on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean."

Once interviews are complete, the one-of-a-kind collection will be digitized and housed at Brown's John Hay Library, where it will be accessible to researchers, students and members of the public everywhere. Importantly, each partner institution will also retain an archive of the conversations conducted in their respective locales—making them easily accessible to nearby scholars and members of the public who don't have internet access or cannot travel to Brown. The interviews will also remain the intellectual property of the various communities, and interviewees will reserve the right to remove their interviews from the archive at any time.

Amanda Strauss, associate University librarian for special collections, said she believes the collection of global conversations will not only inform high-impact scholarship on the repercussions of racial slavery, but will also reshape the way that stories are collected and curated.

"This isn't just an oral history project—it's also a different kind of curatorial practice," Strauss said. "These oral histories highlight the knowledge and expertise of individuals and reflect the way their communities keep and transmit knowledge. Facilitators are taking time to establish close relationships with interviewees, establishing a mutually beneficial relationship grounded in trust. This project is a glimpse at the future of how collection-building and scholarship can intersect in a non-extractive, equitable, thoughtful and community-focused way."

### JILL KIMBALL

Communications Manager & Writer (Humanities and Social Sciences),  
Brown University

Read [The New York Times article](#) on the *Unfinished Conversations* project

## REIMAGINING NEW ENGLAND HISTORIES (RNEH)

I joined the Reimagining New England Histories project in July, 2021. This project has enabled me to engage in work that synthesizes my research, interests, and fieldwork over the last two decades among Indigenous nations in New England, Black communities in New England, communities in West Africa, communities in Central America and communities in the Southern United States. I have had the opportunity to collaborate across institutions (Mystic Seaport Museum, Brown University and Williams College) and more importantly, I have had the opportunity to collaborate and consult with Black and Indigenous community members across New England. My primary role in this project is to lead the 2024 exhibition, *Entwined: The Sea, Sovereignty and Freedom*. We have established an Exhibition Committee, composed primarily of members of Black communities and Indigenous tribal members to guide the process of creating the exhibition and ensure that this maritime history is told through Indigenous and Black voices. The foundation of the project is a central concept in both Indigenous North American and West, Central and Southern African communities—reciprocity.

We consistently engage with Black and Indigenous communities as we move forward to discover what the project, the research and the resources of the institutions involved can do to work with communities toward redressing many of the historical injustices and legacies of those injustices highlighted in this project (dispossession, enslavement and other forms of structural and symbolic violence). Conversations with the Committee shape the narratives and themes of the exhibition and have highlighted issues of naming (place names, museum terminology, and language use), confronting traumatic histories, authoritative voice, contemporary concerns and struggles,



Logo and Illustration by Erin Wells and Julia Kirwin

and other issues. We are collectively working to create a narrative that highlights the legacy of Black and Indigenous history in New England—the communities, the families, the cultures, the struggles, the oppressions, the resistance, and the presence, survivance, and agency of these communities on the contemporary landscape.

### AKEIA DE BARROS GOMES, PHD

Senior Curator of Maritime Social Histories, Mystic Seaport Museum  
Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice Visiting Scholar  
RNEH Exhibition Development Committee Chair

## 2022 FRANK C. MUNSON INSTITUTE AT MYSTIC SEAPORT MUSEUM

This past summer, the 2022 Munson Institute invited twelve fellows into a re-remembering of Indigenous and Black history in maritime New England. We formed a diverse group, arriving from across the country with backgrounds ranging from art history to underwater archeology. As we found seats in our opening seminar, we could not have imagined how profoundly the five-week institute would impact each of us personally and professionally. We are grateful for the opportunity created by the Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice, the funding from the Mellon Foundation, and Senior Curator of Maritime Social Histories, Mystic Seaport Museum Dr. Akeia de Barros Gomes' inspired leadership of the Institute.

Beginning that first day, over two dozen scholars, community leaders, and culture keepers challenged us to engage with under-heard perspectives: African spirituality and its echo in the Black Atlantic diaspora; Indigenous women in contemporary New England; the lives of enslaved whalers, sailors, and divers; environmental history and the human transformation of the New England coast; resistance and rebellion by enslaved peoples; efforts to decolonize maritime history and museums; the dynamics of contemporary global shipping, and more.

As seminar days moved us out of our disciplinary silos, field days grounded our inquiry in physical locations. We were deeply moved, for example, by Sylvester Manor. Crops grown there by enslaved Africans and Indians were sold to feed other enslaved people on plantations in the West Indies. The grandeur of the manor house, the hush of the slave cemetery, and attic carvings by enslaved children witnessed the interconnections of our region with a global system fed by human trafficking. Through the Institute, we learned to see the connections between individual lives and broad history without losing sight of either.



Munson Fellows at the Wanton Lyman Hazard House with Newport Historical Society Executive Director, Ruth S. Taylor.

Living together allowed us to retreat from the formalities of academia and get to know each other's perspectives and passions. We learned that "interdisciplinary" is not just a methodology but a way of relating, of building networks. We went from being colleagues to friends and allies, cheering each other on as our experiences helped us expand upon the work that brought us to the Munson Institute in the first place. These alliances did not end with the fellowship. Even our writing this together is a testament to our continued connections as we resume our professional lives.

### KATRINA COUNCIL, PILAR JEFFERSON, AND RACHEL COLLOPY

2022 Munson Institute Summer Fellows

*Rachel M. B. Collopy, Ph.D., an associated professor at the University of Dayton, is writing the biography of an enslaved eighteenth century Puritan family that illustrates their lived experience in Massachusetts within the context of an international economy fed by human trafficking.*

*Katrina J. Council, an award-winning teacher at Miss Porter's School, is currently writing a high school curriculum that highlights the work of African and Indigenous people in the maritime industry in New England.*

*Pilar Jefferson, a doctoral candidate at UC Berkeley, incorporates artists and communities' connections to water and land to reveal how museums' historical narratives have tangible stakes for descendant communities.*



KIKU LANGFORD MCDONALD

## 2022 BLACK AND INDIGENOUS HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER INSTITUTE: DIGGING FOR GREATER SOCIAL JUSTICE

On the first day of the 2022 [Black and Indigenous High School Summer Institute](#) (BIHSSI), we stood about chest high in brackish water, probing the mud with our feet and sinking a little with each step. We knew that once our toes felt the distinctive hard and smooth shells, we would need to go even deeper and dive to the bottom to retrieve our prizes from beneath the muck. There are other ways to collect Quahogs. Some harvesters use waders, boats, and rakes. But our Narragansett guide explained how tribal members had collected shellfish from these waters using only their hands and feet for thousands of years. And that this method placed less stress on the environment than trampling through the water in heavy boots and scraping up the bottom of the pond. Although some of us were apprehensive at first, we left our water shoes and rakes on the shoreline and followed our guide into the water for an experience that none of us would soon forget.

The BIHSSI was a two-week residential program that brought together twenty young activists and changemakers from around the country to learn more about and strategies ways to address continued inequalities to create more [Just Futures](#).

*“The best part is being with people, like me, who care about diversity issues and want to do something about it...we’re learning how to solve these issues together as a group.”*

**LILY ASPEN**

*Black and Indigenous High School Summer Institute participant*



KIKU LANGFORD MCDONALD



KIKU LANGFORD MCDONALD

The BIHSSI employed an experiential learning model that invited participants to explore and comprehend—in a deep and meaningful way—the challenges of equity and inclusion faced by communities of color throughout New England. Our trip to Winnapaug Pond constituted the experiential component of a lesson that explored disparities surrounding resource allocation, access, and food sovereignty. When participants in the BIHSSI waded into the pond, they bore witness to the inequality created by a long history of social, political, and economic marginalization because land claimed by wealthy homeowners surrounded this centuries-old harvesting place. And none of these “owners” were Narragansett.

When they dove into the waters of Winnapaug, the students emerged with more than just shellfish. They developed an intimate understanding of the past and its consequences. They cultivated an informed knowledge base to speak authoritatively about social justice issues. And they gathered from the muck and each other the confidence and inspiration to get their hands dirty doing the sometimes uncomfortable yet rewarding work of creating greater social justice.

**MACK SCOTT**

*Visiting Assistant Professor, Reimagining New England Histories Project*

*“My time with students during the summer institute highlighted the importance of exposing young people to diverse voices and America’s hidden histories. It also reinforced the idea of building an intentional community of care with each other, especially while unpacking the various harms that were and continue to be committed against marginalized folks. It was clear students were able to take away critical thinking and community building skills while bonding with peers and community members.”*

**NADA SAMIH-ROTONDO**

*CSSJ Manager of Public Education Initiatives and Community Outreach*



Intern Spencer Krenitsky sharing *The Sea Connects Us* panel he created with Mystic Seaport Museum Staff on Thomas Downing.

## 2022 MYSTIC SEAPORT MUSEUM INTERNSHIPS

The summer undergraduate intern program was part of a multi-year initiative Reimagining New England Histories: Historical Injustice, Sovereignty, and Freedom funded by the Mellon Foundation. This project explored and reinterpreted histories of New England to students, scholars, and the national public, challenging prevailing narratives about the region as founded on principles of liberty and justice for all.

To properly center Indigenous stories and learn mindful collaborative practices, interns Anujot Kaur, Bridget Hall, Cheyenne Tracy, Liz Ferrara, Lydia Downs, and Spencer Krenitsky met with the Executive Director of the [Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center](#), Joshua Carter, and tribal members to plan for a Three Sisters Garden to be planted on the museum grounds in the spring. The team built an interactive guest experience highlighting Cape Verdean whaling culture and the life of the last master of the *Charles W. Morgan*, a Cape Verdean whaling captain named John Teofilo Gonsalves.

As an act of reciprocity with Indigenous partners, the Mellon interns created a digital inventory with the [Tomaquag Museum](#). These students also brought a diverse reinterpretation of foodways to the [Buckingham Hall House](#). As a start, they invited Silvermoon LaRose, assistant director at Tomaquag Museum, to share a Harvest Johnnycakes cooking demonstration at the Hall House. Interns also highlighted Black oystering stories in the [Thomas Oyster House](#), and designed a new garden on the seaport grounds rooted in African and Indigenous Maritime culture that was planted in October.

### CHRISTOPHER BRESKY

Manager of Internships and Youth Programs, Mystic Seaport Museum

*I have a special feeling for Brown University and the Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice. I thought years ago that the courage Brown showed in facing its past would be exemplary. And now years later we find other universities trying to do the same thing. Warm congratulations to all of the colleagues who have built a first-rate center. What you have accomplished is tremendously impressive.*



Excerpt from 10th Anniversary Launch keynote address

### MARCUS REDIKER

Distinguished Professor of Atlantic History at the University of Pittsburgh





## FELLOWS & GRADUATING SENIORS

## Reflections from Our Seniors

### EDUCATION PROGRAM COORDINATOR

The CSSJ has been a central aspect of my college experience, and I am deeply grateful to have been a part of such a strong and important community at Brown. As a student tour guide and education coordinator for the Center's *Slavery & Legacy Walking Tour*, I saw firsthand how essential public history initiatives are to the collective consciousness and culture of an institution. Bringing people together to learn and reflect on histories of violence hidden in plain sight on our university campus is a powerful piece of the Center's broader mission.

In my experience as a guide, these tours were crucial to remedying the purposeful silencing of the institution's entanglements with racial slavery. The Center has taught me that grappling with our violent past and its present resonances is an imperfect, ongoing, and urgent practice, grounded in honest and intimate communities. In my time at the CSSJ, I was lucky to be a member of the Carceral State Reading Group (CSRG), which brought students, faculty, community members, and organizers into one space to reflect on the injustices of the carceral state. It was through my first meetings with the CSRG that I made connections with activists across the city, whom I worked with over the years on various justice campaigns, most recently the STOP Torture campaign to shut down the high security prison in R.I. Because so few spaces at Brown truly honor the transformative power of relationships outside of university itself, the Center's support of the CSRG and groups like it is even more exceptional. Thank you to Maiyah Rivers, Shana Weinberg, Kiku Langford McDonald, and all of the staff at the Center for making my time at Brown so special, and even more, for building a campus space that cultivates and supports critical reflection, learning, and direct action.

### LILY PICKETT '22

*American Studies and Public Policy*

### STUDENT RESEARCH ASSISTANT

The CSSJ has been an intellectual home and community space for me since February of 2020 and I'm so grateful for all the memories and relationships over the past two and a half years. I've served in a variety of roles, from office assistant, to graphic designer, communications coordinator, and eventually Departmental Diversity and Inclusion Action Plans (DDIAPs) board member, all the while believing in the CSSJ's mission and forming incredible bonds with everyone in the community.

Thank you to my fellow senior student workers, Connor, Dylan, Lily, Kaela, Callie, and Uwa for making the Center such a joyful place to work and study. Thank you to Shana, Maiyah, Catherine, Kiku, and Anthony Bogues for allowing me to be one small part of the Center's work and for supporting me in all of my other academic and intellectual endeavors. Above all, the CSSJ and its mission has taught me how to think deeply, ask questions, and consider what role I have played in truly reckoning with our past and shaping our future.

### SYDNEY SMITH '22

*Africana Studies and Political Science*

### CARCERAL STATE READING GROUP CO-FACILITATOR AND SLAVERY & LEGACY WALKING TOUR GUIDE

I first entered the CSSJ as a bright-eyed and bushy-tailed student on the heels of their first year at Brown eager to pursue study and struggle against the criminal legal system in Rhode Island. The Center quickly became an intellectual and political home for me and the bellwether for pursuing justice through meaningful relationships with people directly impacted by the afterlives of transatlantic slavery in the criminal legal system.

The CSSJ modeled for me the radical potential of the public humanities as a means of disrupting the often hierarchical and disciplinary function of knowledge production in academic spaces, instead demonstrating how we grapple with the past in all its complexity alongside the ongoing traumas, harms, and violence that institutions perpetrate today in service of nominal progress.

With the housing of the Carceral State Reading Group at the CSSJ, I have learned to always attend to the trenchant histories of racial slavery and settler colonial genocide that underwrite both modernity and the legacies of slavery, including the modern prison. Such an eye for the historical trajectory of slavery and captivity keeps me and the Group primed to the ways that systems of control recapitulate themselves under the insidious banner of reform and progress. By way of earnest dialogues with Providence community members and esteemed senior scholars in Black studies and slavery studies, the CSSJ has given me the resources and access to learn deeply and intentionally about the role of study as a radical enterprise.

Yet, even more important are the flexibility and the unwavering institutional support that the CSSJ has given me as an individual and an undergraduate to pursue justice work both at and beyond Brown.

The onslaught of the relentless losses of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic laid bare to me what distinguishes the CSSJ from so many other cutting-edge research institutions: an investment in care, generosity, and intention. It became clear to me in 2020 that these necessary priorities had always colored my experiences with the CSSJ, yet their meaning retained a new sense of succor in the season of isolation and social distancing. Not only did the kindness and care of CSSJ staff and affiliates embodied allay the stresses of our new reality, but it also sharpened our imagining of how we pursue study in relation to one another, providing a framework of rigorous thinking based in care and in community. Heeding Saidiya Hartman's invocation of "care as the antidote to violence," the CSSJ has demonstrably pursued twin investments in community and in rigor to model a praxis of thinking and study that is engaging, necessary, and expansive.

I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to both witness and be part of such a brilliant and kind cadre of thinkers and practitioners. It has been such an honor, and to name only a few, I cannot extend enough thanks to Catherine Van Amburgh, Maiyah Rivers, Shana Weinberg, Anthony Bogues, Kiku Langford McDonald, and Africa Smith for your unparalleled support these past few years.

### CONNOR JENKINS '22

*History and Africana Studies*

## Reflections from our Fellows

### 6TH YEAR INTERDISCIPLINARY GRADUATE DISSERTATION FELLOW

This academic year I received a Sixth Year Interdisciplinary Dissertation Opportunity Fellowship awarded by the CSSJ. I am truly grateful to have had this opportunity to learn from and with the colleagues involved in the Center's activities. It has been a real pleasure organizing the Advanced Knowledgees Working Group with my brilliant colleague Felicia Denaud. One of our first conversations revolved around the crucial issue of the process of decolonization of different curricula; we discussed with the members of the Working Group how a process of decolonization should begin, how it evolves, and what kind of conversations this process should include. Colleagues from different departments at Brown joined our discussions addressing scholars in all disciplines but especially those that work in fields that are traditionally Eurocentric and perpetrate racism and white supremacy. During our first meeting, we referred to and described the vital work that Princeton scholar Dan El-Padilla Peralta has been developing through his scholarship and activism aimed at decolonizing the so-called field of Classics.

Continuing this path, in the subsequent meetings of the Working Group, we decided to focus on anti/de-colonial knowledges, slavery, "histories from below" and works that challenge traditional ways to think of disciplinarity, like Dionne Brand's poetics, Lina Fruzzetti's documentaries and forthcoming e-monograph, and NourbeSe Philip's poetry and essays. Thanks to the colleagues who attended the Working Group meetings and the conversations with Felicia Denaud, I learned new ways to enter and experience Dionne Brand's and NourbeSe Philip's poetics transcending time and space,

and how to formulate novel questions about the auto-ethnographic work investigating "race" and "displacement" that Lina Fruzzetti conducted in her films. My reading of these poetics is a work in progress and the insights developed through the Working Group meetings and the conversations with Felicia Denaud on the entanglements of "content" and "form" in Black Studies will accompany me forever.

The marvelous exhibition, *reflection / abyss / vision / legacy* on display throughout the entire academic year at the CSSJ main building (94 Waterman St.), has offered me an ideal space to reflect upon the constellation of ideas generated by the enriching discussions described above. Parallel to the learning and life experience of the Working Group, during the year I enjoyed important conversations with other colleagues involved in the Center's activities. I am particularly grateful to Marcelo Rosanova Ferraro for our many conversations about the urgent need for reorganizing knowledge and reforming the disciplinary formations that study it in academia. I want to thank Professor Anthony Bogues for his insights on my research expressed during the lecture series organized in the spring. In sum, all these exchanges and interactions have contributed to the completion of my doctoral dissertation exploring the "educational" films used as pro-imperial propaganda in British and Italian colonies between 1910 and 1945. At the same time, they have also motivated me to further explore representations of slavery in Italian cinema which I hope will become the core of my postdoctoral research.

#### LEONORA MASINI '22 PH.D.

*6th Year Interdisciplinary Graduate Dissertation Fellow, 2021–2022  
Postdoctoral Research Associate in Slavery and the Public Humanities*

### REIMAGINING NEW ENGLAND HISTORIES GRADUATE PROCTOR

I first began my work with the Reimagining New England Histories project (RNEH) as a summer 2021 Mellon Fellow at the Frank C. Munson Institute of American Maritime Studies, Mystic Seaport Museum in Mystic, Connecticut. This fellowship expanded my growing interest around the ways in which settler-colonialism, Native dispossession, and racial slavery are intertwined. Particularly, I was interested in how this history informs the way we understand the relationship between Indigenous, Black, and Afro-Indigenous communities and our collective resistance, survivance, and futurities. Following this summer fellowship and beginning my last year as a master's student in Public Humanities at Brown University, I applied for and was selected as the Graduate Proctor for the RENH project with the CSSJ for the 2021–2022 academic year. I was mentored by Anthony Bogues and throughout the year I attended committee meetings to plan an upcoming exhibition, a summer institute for high school students, and a research cluster. In addition to this, my scholarly research as a graduate student was largely informed by my participating in these areas. Throughout the 2021–2022 academic year, which was my last year as a master's student, I was committed to questioning, exploring, and mapping the intersecting, contradicting, and overlapping genealogies of Indigenous studies and Black studies.

During my time as an RENH Mellon fellow and as the graduate proctor, my research has been recognized and shared by the Cogut Institute at Brown University, Henry Luce Foundation and the First Nations Institute, Asparagus Magazine, Wayland Historical Society, and Spark Magazine at the NCID - University

of Michigan. Following the completion of my master's program in spring 2022, I was offered an internship with the Stolen Relations Summer Institute. I will be joining the *Stolen Relations: Recovering Stories of Indigenous Enslavement in the Americas* project, a community-centered database project that seeks to illuminate and understand the role the enslavement of Indigenous peoples played in settler colonialism over time. My work will expand upon what it means to decolonize archives and will include primary source research, learning to enter information into the database, developing written research, and coordinating a new blog for the project. *Stolen Relations* is based at Brown University with support from the Center for Digital Scholarship, Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice, Native American and Indigenous Studies Initiative, Office of the Vice President for Research, Population Studies and Training Center, and Social Sciences Research Institute.

This fall, I will continue this research as a Ph.D. student in Ethnic Studies at UC Berkeley. I hope to articulate modes of resistance and survivance expressed through Black and Indigenous modern and contemporary visual and performing arts, archives and collections, and public monuments and memorials, examine the embodiment of memory and the interior life through the interpretation of sacred geographies as sites of geopolitical and social resistance but also sites where kinship and belonging emerge and are performed, and explore the ways Afro-Indigenous, Black, and Indigenous scholars, artists, and communities challenge and redress western intellectual traditions, particularly in ways that center traditional ecological knowledge, queer and feminist theory, and decoloniality.

#### LARISSA NEZ '22 A.M.

*Diné / Navajo, Reimagining New England Histories Graduate Proctor*

## REFLECTIONS ON NATIVE COLLECTIONS AT MYSTIC SEAPORT MUSEUM AND THE TOMAQUAG MUSEUM

As the CSSJ Graduate Proctor for the *Reimagining New England Histories* project, I had the opportunity to collaborate with two partner institutions on projects related to museum collections: [Mystic Seaport Musuem](#) and the [Tomaquag Musuem](#). This project has allowed me to build on my dissertation, *Materializing Futurity: Networks of Organizing in the Native Northeast*, which examines the role Indigenous material culture played during transnational Native movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. During these movements, Native peoples from multiple tribal nations preserved Native histories and traditions and challenged myths of Indigenous extinction. The baskets, books, canoes, wall hangings, picture frames, and more that Native people crafted during this time were and continue to be tools for intergenerational knowledge transmission, activism and organizing, and resistance to settler colonialism. As these items circulated throughout Native and settler networks, they communicated ongoing Indigenous presence in the Northeast.

I was able to bring these research interests and experience working with museum collections to my work as a Graduate Proctor. At Mystic Seaport, I conducted a collections assessment to identify more than two dozen Native-made cultural Belongings, many of them baskets, that the museum had not previously recorded or known to be created by Native artists. These Native artists skillfully crafted each of these items, whose histories reflect Indigenous survival and resilience throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. At Mystic Seaport, we took time to photograph each cultural Belonging with the goal of documenting and sharing them.

Identifying these items as Native-made was a vital first step towards ensuring Mystic Seaport researched and honored its Native collections, but building and strengthening community relationships was a necessary next step to take. During the second half of my proctorship, I worked to inventory, identify, and connect belongings in Tomaquag Museum's collections with Mystic Seaport's collections to facilitate cross-institutional research and meet the Tomaquag Museum's need to have intellectual control over their collections. During the inventory

process, I was able to identify multiple Native-made Belongings at the Tomaquag Museum that held shared histories with the baskets at Mystic, as well as many others that contribute to the landscape of material culture history in the Northeast.

Indigenous baskets and other Belongings can help uncover and contextualize the history of the making of New England, particularly when they can be reconnected to community knowledge, oral histories, and tribal and community archives. The collections at Mystic Seaport and Tomaquag Museum reflect the cultural survival and resistance of Native peoples in New England, and knowing more about these collections and their histories will help move the *Reimagining New England Histories* project forward in productive and meaningful ways. My time as a Graduate Proctor helped me begin these processes, and I have continued to work with both Mystic Seaport and the Tomaquag Museum this year to keep piecing together narratives about the past, present, and future of Native people and material culture in the Native Northeast.

### ALLYSON LAFORGE PH.D. '24

*Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice Graduate Proctor, 2021–2022*



Joe Michael, Mystic Seaport Museum photographer, photographing Native-made basket while Allyson Laforge supervises.

## GLOBAL CURATORIAL PROJECT GRADUATE FELLOWS

We joined the Global Curatorial Project (GCP) as research fellows through the Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice. We first engaged with the Project through *In Slavery's Wake*, a global traveling exhibit developed as part of the GCP and led by the National Museum of African American History and Culture. We joined the exhibit team in a phase where the team had identified key themes, and was working to refine and expand them to a resonant international context. As research fellows, we participated in weekly content planning meetings and engaged in various conversations alongside the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) team and global exhibition partners. In these conversations, we gave feedback on exhibition themes, collaborated on exhibition layout, visualizations, and story content. These collaborative engagements created contact sites to better understand the relationship between anti-blackness in the history of race, the historical and social contexts of each of the exhibition sites, as well as the varied ways in which the ripple effects of slavery have taken shape linguistically, politically, and economically. In addition to thinking alongside the team in these meetings we also built research briefs for exhibit content in two core thematic areas. These themes engaged with establishing a common understanding of the origins of global slavery and colonialism and profiles on people who embodied resistance to global enslavement.

As research fellows, we also worked on transcriptions of oral history interviews from the *Unfinished Conversation* series. The *Unfinished Conversations* project seeks to provide a shared platform for the memories and histories of racialized slavery and its afterlives in strategically selected global communities.

The interviews we engaged with were collected in 2021 from the Senegalese communities of Horkodiéré, Nganno, Walel, Saint-Louis/Lampsar, N'Der, and Ndouloumadji. Each of these interviews expanded the cultural and historical conversation surrounding the legacy of slavery specifically in Senegal as the respondents shared stories, family histories, and perspectives about the transatlantic slave-trade along with their own culturally specific experiences with the social status of slavery within the African continent. Our role as fellows was to read and analyze these translated interviews, and then summarize transcriptions and identify key themes. We also created a comprehensive searchable database of the interviews, enabling future researchers to navigate through interviews by location, content, and core thematic elements.

It was a privilege to work alongside and learn from the *In Slavery's Wake* exhibition team. The exhibition scope is, by necessity, expansive, covering global stories and perspectives from across time and place. The exhibition team is dedicated to clearly and accurately representing these stories in ways that resonate with international audiences and expand the discourse around the transatlantic slave trade. It was wonderful to watch and participate in this process and learn best practices in transmitting complex stories with care. The complexity and nuance of this project cannot be understated, yet the outstanding polyvocality of the exhibition processes and presentation continued to expand our own thinking and work not only on this project as fellows but also in our approach to projects beyond the Center.

### KENNEDY JONES '23 A.M.

*Global Curatorial Project Researcher, 2021–2022*

*Graduate Fellow for the Study of the Public History of Slavery, 2022–2023*

### BRIDGET HALL '23 A.M.

*Global Curatorial Project Researcher, 2021–2022*



**NEW CSSJ  
FELLOWS  
AND STAFF**

## New CSSJ Fellows

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### MICHAEL BECKER

*CSSJ/JCB Joint Postdoctoral Research Associate in Slavery and Justice*



Michael Becker is a historian of the African diaspora in the early modern Atlantic world, with a particular interest in slavery, resistance, and abolition in the Caribbean. He holds a PhD in History from Duke University and is an undergraduate alumnus of Brown's Africana Studies Department. He is currently working on a book manuscript tentatively entitled *Strategies of Survival: Slavery in Jamaica, 1780–1834*, which foregrounds the day-to-day practices and struggles of enslaved people to build community, fulfill basic necessities of life, and acquire a degree of autonomy. He comes to Brown from Bates College, where he was a visiting assistant professor of History.

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### LEONORA MASINI

*Postdoctoral Research Associate in Slavery and the Public Humanities*



Leonora received her Ph.D. in Italian Studies from Brown University in May 2022. Her doctoral dissertation developed a comparative study on British and Italian educational documentaries from 1910–1945 used as pro-imperial propaganda in British and Italian African territories. While a graduate student, she served two years as a digital editing assistant on a website project on colonial Eritrea and postcolonial Eritrean and Italian societies. As a postdoctoral fellow, she serves as project manager and to guide the coordination and implementation of a digitally published platform in support of the documentary film series *Creating the New World: The Transatlantic Slave Trade* in collaboration with Firelight Media and directed by Stanley Nelson.

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### GABRIEL REGALADO

*ACLS Emerging Voices Postdoctoral Research Associate*



Gabriel is a scholar-organizer focused on harmonizing liberation theory with community praxis. He earned his Ph.D. in African Diaspora Studies with a Designated Emphasis in Critical Theory at UC Berkeley in 2021. He earned his B.A. in Pan-African Studies at Cal State LA in 2013. Gabriel's concentrations of study include Pan-Africanism, the Black Radical Tradition, Black nationalism, Marxist Theory, political theory, political economy, and Austronesian futurity. As a community-based organizer with the Social Justice Learning Institute, he is concerned with issues of state-sanctioned violence, mass incarceration, mass deportation, community empowerment and solidarity, youth leadership development, and economic justice.

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### KENNEDY JONES '23 A.M.

*Graduate Fellow for the Study of the Public History of Slavery*



Kennedy Jones holds a B.A. in English with a minor in Philosophy from Davidson College, where she concentrated on Africana Studies and Literary Theory. She is currently completing her master's in Public Humanities, where she is studying Black aesthetics, postcolonial theory, and ethical practices in curation and arts education. Her work seeks to understand the intricacies of the relationship between the acquisition and presentation of Black material culture, specifically Black visual art in traditional museums and unconventional art spaces, to uncover how these spaces interact and interfere with the integrity of Black cultural objects.

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### IMEN BOUSSAYOUD '26 PH.D.

*Reimagining New England Histories Graduate Proctor*



Imen Boussayoud is a Ph.D. student in the History department at Brown University. Imen received her Bachelors in History with a focus on Adolescent Education from Hunter College, exploring research on gender formations and expressions of sexuality in the Iberian Atlantic world. She continued this research post-degree as a Michigan Humanities Emerging Research Scholar (MICHHERS) Fellow, analyzing the roles of gender, race, and sexuality in 17th and 18th century Inquisition documents. Her current research focuses on the late medieval and early modern Iberian Atlantic, centering the processes of racial formation, the genesis of empire, and the creation and conquest of Africa.

## New CSSJ Staff

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### DESIREE OBIMPE

*Communications Manager*



Desiree Obimpe works to strengthen community engagement and public awareness by amplifying the work and stories of underrepresented communities and organizations. Prior to joining the CSSJ, Desiree's passion for creating equitable societies and art led to her career at the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence (RICADV), and later her role in engaging the RISD community and the general public in art and art education through various digital communications channels as marketing associate at The RISD Museum. Desiree holds a bachelor's degree in Art History from UMass Amherst. She loves traveling, visiting museums, and blueberry scones.

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### BIANCA PALLO

*Global Curatorial Project Archivist*



Bianca Pallo is originally from South Florida and earned her BA from Florida State University and her MLS from Simmons University. She is a member of the Society of American Archivists and is passionate about cultural competency, user-friendly access to primary resources, and digital preservation. Bianca has a broad range of experience in the archival field, having worked previously in digitization, metadata, and collections management. Prior positions include Digitization Intern for Liberty Mutual, Graduate Student Assistant for Simmons University, Post Production Archives Intern for Lucasfilm Ltd., Museum Educator and Collections Assistant for The Grove Museum, and Archival Assistant for The Institute on World War II and the Human Experience.

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### NADA SAMIH-ROTONDO

*Manager of Public Education Initiatives and Community Outreach*



Nada Samih-Rotondo is a Palestinian American writer, educator, and mother. A graduate of Rhode Island College and University of Rhode Island, she earned degrees in English, ESL, and Education. Nada worked 14 years in Providence and Central Falls public and charter high schools as a classroom teacher. She earned her MFA in creative writing from Lesley University. Inspired by the relationship between personhood and place, her writings have appeared in Gulf Stream Literary Magazine and The Masters Review. She lives in Providence with her husband and three kids.

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### AFRICA SMITH

*Administrative Coordinator*



Born and raised in Providence, Rhode Island, Africa has a huge love for her city. She graduated from the University of Rhode Island with her BA in Africana Studies and Political Science, and a focus in Law, Justice, and Society. She is certified in Kingian conflict resolution and was honored at her alma mater with awards for Academic Excellence in Africana Studies, The Arthur L. Hardge Black Scholars Award for All-Around Outstanding Community Service, and the URI Josephine Milburn Comparative Government Award in Political Science. As a Providence native, Africa hopes to bring all of her shared knowledge to the center, as well as continue to help others explore the impact of slavery in our global community. In her free time, she enjoys painting, trying out delicious recipes for her friends and family, and traveling to new and exciting places!



## FRIENDS OF THE CENTER



## Friends of the Center

### TRIBUTE TO ANN COLES '63

The staff of the CSSJ would like to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to Ann Coles '63, co-founder and co-chair of the CSSJ Friends committee (2014–2021) for her tireless work on behalf of the Center. In 2013, in honor of their 50th reunion and inspired by the mission of the recently created CSSJ, Ann joined Tom Bale '63, in establishing the CSSJ Friends.

Ann and Tom both understood that Brown's alumni community should be central to the Center's work and community engagement efforts. As former student activists who had continued to work for social justice throughout their careers, they understood that many alumni shared this path, and would appreciate contributing to conversations around how the legacies of racial slavery continue to shape our lives. Ann and Tom envisioned the Friends as an outreach and educational arm of the CSSJ, serving as a bridge to alumni across class years and regions. While at the time Friends groups were an anomaly among departments and centers, Ann and Tom shared a clear vision of how a strong set of alumni supporters could bolster the Center's work.

Importantly, Ann understood that beginning a new endeavor could be a lengthy process. She became a steady supporter, encouraging the Center to share its work through various outlets with alumni, including supporting the creation of a video to help articulate the relevance and importance of the CSSJ. As the Center's work progressed and new Friends joined, she continued to offer her frank guidance, always reminding the committee to remain focused on its mission of outreach and education.

Ann's career since her time as an undergraduate has focused extensively on issues related to college readiness, pathways, and access to higher education for underserved communities. In turn, being connected to the Center's programs inspired the ways she understands her own community's history and how it is remembered. She recently joined with the Friends of the Old Burying Ground to explore options to memorialize and honor enslaved people buried in a cemetery near her home, and to



Ann Coles '63 delivering speech at CSSJ Friends Commencement 2022 lunch gathering



CSSJ Associate Director Shana Weinberg, CSSJ Friends co-founders Ann Coles '63 and Tom Bale '63, and CSSJ Director Anthony Bogues

acknowledge the contributions these individuals made to her community.

Today, thanks to Ann's and Tom's determination, the CSSJ Friends are a vital part of the Center's work and serve an important role in connecting CSSJ with alumni communities including regional clubs and affinity groups. On the occasion of the Center's 10th anniversary, we would like to acknowledge Ann's and Tom's vision of the Friends as important partners in the CSSJ's work. While Ann will always remain a Friend of the Center, in 2021 she stepped down from her role as co-chair. We want to extend our deepest appreciation to Ann for her leadership and vision as co-founder and co-chair from 2014–2021.

### CSSJ STAFF

*Ann is simply amazing. It has been a privilege to work with her as Co-Chair of the Friends these past few years. During her time in that role, the Friends grew from an idea pitched to her via email by Tom Bale, into an amazing community of alums who are dedicated to the Center's mission, to what it represents for Brown's reckoning with its fraught history, and to maximizing what it can bring into the broader discourse about the legacy of racial slavery in Rhode Island, nationally, and globally. The energy, drive, and practical sensibility that Ann has brought to this endeavor, drawing on all of her professional and activist experience, has been absolutely essential along the way. We are blessed to have benefitted from her leadership, and I'm so grateful that she's remaining on the Friends steering committee to continue providing that essential guidance.*

### SEAN SIPERSTEIN '05

CSSJ Friends Chair

*From her student days until the present, Ann has been committed to eradicating racism at Brown. She traveled to the South with the Reverend John Crocker of Saint Stephens Church to support Black students in North Carolina in their desegregation efforts. On campus, Ann spoke out if she witnessed any hurtful racist attitudes among some of Brown's personnel. Later, when the Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice was founded, Ann gravitated toward its vital historical work on racism. It was a natural fit. She eagerly took on the role of co-chair of the Friends supporting the work of the Center. Ann not only has a strong moral compass, but she has worked to encourage the success of everyone involved with her upbeat approach and good humor.*

### TOM BALE '63

CSSJ Friends Co-Founder

## Become a Friend of the Center

Learn more about what it means to be a friend of the Center and how you can support the work to create a more equitable world by visiting

[cssj.brown.edu/get-involved/friends-center](https://cssj.brown.edu/get-involved/friends-center)



### How To Give

#### SECURE ONLINE GIVING

1. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/mpvarnl>
2. Insert gift details, personal information, and payment information
3. Click finalize payment and you have made your gift to the CSSJ!

#### BY MAIL

Please make check payable to Brown University with CSSJ in the memo field.

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Brown University

Gift Cashier

Box 1877

1 Prospect Street

Providence, RI 02912-1877

## Acknowledgements & Thanks

On this occasion of the Center's 10th anniversary, we would like to recognize the many individuals who contributed to the Center's work and growth over the last decade. The work of the Center would not be possible without the support of the Office of the President, the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Dean of the Faculty, and the Office of the Dean of the College. Thank you to all the dedicated individuals on the President's Advisory Council on the CSSJ and the Faculty Advisory Board who continue to provide guidance for our work.

The Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice would like to sincerely thank its major donors for their support: Ms. Barbara and Mr. Tom Bale, Mrs. Emily and Mr. Michael Cavanagh, Ms. Katherine Chon and Mr. Bradley Myles, Ms. Alana and Mr. Paul Choquette, Mrs. Ann Coles, Ms. Donna Emma and Mr. Larry Davis, Mr. David Haas, Ms. Holly Hagens and Mr. Todd Sisitsky, Mrs. Libby and Mr. Craig Heimark, Ms. Sharon and Mr. Joseph Holston, Ms. Debra Lee, Mr. Luis Lopez, Mrs. Patricia and Mr. Timothy Schantz, Dr. Ruth J. Simmons, Ms. Ricki Stern and Mr. Evan Guillemain, Mr. Lawrence Title, Ms. Mary and Mr. Jerome Vascellaro, Abrams Foundation, American Endowment Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Firelight Media, Jewish Community Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the Wyncote Foundation.

We also wish to thank the Friends of the Center for all of their work since the beginning. Each year the work of the Center broadens and deepens. Each contribution sustains our work. Finally, we would like to especially thank Maria Lima, Nelson Ramos, Maria Fontes, and Robert Farizer, the Center's caretakers and groundskeeper, for creating the clean and beautiful spaces in which we can do this work.

## THE CSSJ SENDS OUR BEST WISHES TO MAIYAH RIVERS AND CATHERINE VAN AMBURGH

### To Maiyah Rivers

On behalf of the Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice, we want to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to CSSJ Assistant Director of Education and Public Engagement Maiyah Rivers for all the remarkable work she did while working at the Center. Maiyah first came to the CSSJ in 2014 as the Graduate Fellow for the Study of the Public History of Slavery. As a graduate fellow she created the Civil Rights Movement Initiative (CRMI), an after school program that serves students from Hope High School. This initiative's initial objective was to connect public high school students with the history of the Civil Rights Movement and its legacies through weekly courses at the CSSJ as well as visits to the South to meet veterans of the movement. There, the students would visit museums and important sites of this history.

Under Maiyah's leadership CRMI became the first of the Center's portfolio of high school level programs and curricular initiatives. Out of CMRI came the Slavery in the Americas High School Curriculum to challenge myths and absences in how our schools currently teach the history of slavery. This was a collaborative project with The Choices Program which produces award-winning curricula on current and historical international and public policy. In 2021-2022 work focused on professional development for educators.

During her nearly eight years at the Center, Maiyah was a central member of the staff and served as a mentor to the many high school and undergraduate students who worked with the Center. We wish Maiyah all the best for her future endeavors and thank her for the many important ways she has helped to shape the work of the Center. She has made a definitive mark; we will miss her and the character of the CSSJ owes a great deal to her work.

–CSSJ Staff

### To Catherine Van Amburgh

The Center for the Study of Slavery & Justice also sends our sincere thanks and appreciation to Center Coordinator Catherine Van Amburgh. Catherine began at CSSJ in 2018 as the inaugural Center Coordinator. During her time at the Center, Catherine provided support for over 140 public events and 6 exhibitions. Most importantly, she led the CSSJ's website redesign process and provided tremendous support as the Center transitioned to virtual programming during the pandemic. Many in the CSSJ community have had the opportunity to meet Catherine, whether during a visit to the Center or at a virtual CSSJ event, where she often helped to moderate audience questions. We miss her positive collaborative presence at the Center and are deeply appreciative of the tremendous support she provided during her time at CSSJ. We wish her all the best in her new role at Brown in the Department of Africana Studies!

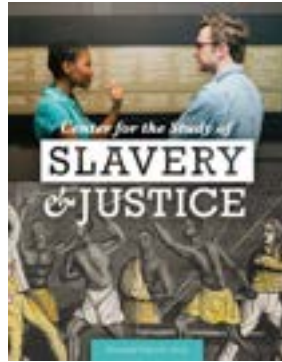
–CSSJ Staff



Chandra Marshall, Breylan Martin, Catherine Van Amburgh, Maiyah Rivers, and Shana Weinberg

# Visual Bibliography

A VISUAL CATALOG OF CSSJ ANNUAL REPORTS OVER THE PAST DECADE



2013



2014



2015



2016



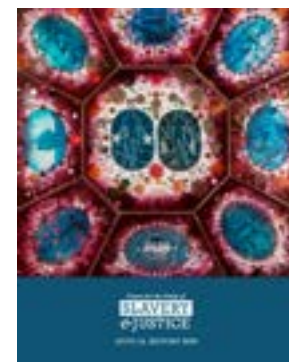
2017



2018



2019



2020



2021

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