
KENNETH COHEN

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Curriculum Vitae

Education

- Ph.D. (History), University of Delaware, 2008
- M.A., Winterthur Program in Early American Culture, 2002
- B.A. (History and Communication Arts), Allegheny College, 1998

Employment

- Curator of American Politics and Culture, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, 2017-2020
 - Supervisory Curator for Political History, 2019-2020
 - Led team of seven curators to co-ordinate and achieve research, exhibition, programming, and collecting goals related to the political history of the United States.
 - Edward & Helen Hintz Secretarial Scholar, 2017-2020
 - Endowed 5-year position appointed by Secretary of the Smithsonian to inspire new approaches linking scholarship to public outreach.
- Associate Professor of History, St. Mary's College of Maryland, 2014-2017
 - Coordinator, Museum Studies Program, 2012-2015
 - Interim Director, Center for the Study of Democracy, 2014-2015
 - Assistant Professor of History, 2008-2014

Selected Fellowships and Honors

- Getty Leadership Institute, NextGen Executive Education Program, Mar. 2019
- Distinguished Public Historian in Residence, American University, 2018-2019
- James Broussard Prize for Best First Book on American History, 1776-1860, Society of Historians of the Early American Republic (SHEAR), 2018
- Dallenback Foundation Research Fellowship, Buffalo Bill Center of the West, Sept. 2018
- Fulbright Professor of American and Museum Studies, Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Côte d'Ivoire, Aug. 2015- Jun. 2017
- Norton Dodge Award for Outstanding Scholarship by a Junior Faculty member, St. Mary's College of Maryland, 2011-2014 cycle
- NEH-ODH Doing Digital History Institute Fellowship, Center for History and New Media, George Mason University, Aug. 2014
- Consortium Fellow, McNeil Center for Early American Studies, University of Pennsylvania, 2007-2008
- Research Fellowships (2004-present) from American Antiquarian Society, Buffalo Bill Center of the West, Library Company of Philadelphia, New Jersey Historical Commission, University of South Carolina Institute of Southern Studies, Virginia Historical Society
- Graduate Student Research Prize, North American Society for Sport History, 2003
- Lois F. McNeil Fellowship, Winterthur Program in Early American Culture, 2000-2002
- GTE Academic All-American (Soccer), Allegheny College, 1998
- Scripps-Howard Journalism Scholar, Scripps Foundation, 1996-1998
- Phi Alpha Theta, Charter Member, Allegheny College, 1996

Books

- *Entertaining America* (under consideration by Smithsonian Books)
-Editor of this anthology and catalog for forthcoming (2021) Smithsonian exhibit of the same name, tracing the history of American commercial entertainment from 1840 to the present.
- *They Will Have Their Game: Sporting Culture and the Making of the Early American Republic, 1750-1850* (Cornell University Press: 2017).
-Awarded James Broussard Prize for Best First Book on American History, 1776-1860, by the Society of Historians of the Early American Republic.

Peer-Reviewed Articles

- “Let’s Not Cradle The Past,” under consideration by *American Furniture*
-exposes mythic interpretations of an 1870s baby cradle in many museum collections, and argues for museums to attribute production to labor not firm (the cradle was made by prison labor).
- “Material Conclusions: Moving From Old to New Questions about Early American Artifacts,” *Reviews in American History* 47:1 (Mar. 2019), 3-11.
- “The Manly Sport of American Politics, Or, How We Came to Call Elections ‘Races,’” *Common-Place* 12:3 (Apr. 2012), the peer-reviewed online journal of Early American History published by the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture at the College of William and Mary: <http://www.common-place-archives.org/vol-12/no-03/cohen/>
- “‘The Entreaties & Perswasions of Our Acquaintance’: Gambling and Networks in Early America,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 30:3 (Fall 2011), 599-638.
-recognized by *National Affairs* in its quarterly “round-up” notable scholarly literature related to politics, from all academic disciplines.
- “‘Sport for Grown Children’: American Political Cartoons and Sporting Culture, 1790-1850,” *International Journal of the History of Sport* 28:8-9 (May-June 2011), 1301-1318
-reprinted in *The Visual in Sport*, Mike Huggins and Michael O’Malley, eds. (London: Taylor and Francis, 2012), 215-231.
- “Well Calculated for the Farmer: Thoroughbreds in the Chesapeake, 1750-1830,” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 115:4 (Fall 2007), 370-411.
- “‘A Mutually Comprehensible World?’ Native Americans, Europeans, and Play in the Eighteenth-Century Mid-Atlantic,” *American Indian Quarterly* 26:1 (Spr. 2002), 67-93.

Other Academic Publications

- “Charlotte Cushman,” *Women’s 100: Smithsonian Collections in Honor of the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment* (Smithsonian: 2020), 58.
- Selected book, film, and museum exhibit reviews:
 - Peter Benes, *For a Short Time Only: Itinerants and the Resurgence of Popular Culture in Early America*, *The Historian* 80:2 (Summer 2018), 367-369.
 - Katherine C. Mooney, *Race Horse Men: How Slavery and Freedom Were Made at the Racetrack*, *Journal of the Early Republic* 34:4 (Summer 2015), 335-337.
 - Jeffrey Hill, Kevin Moore, et. al, *Sport, History, and Heritage: Studies in Public Representation*, *Journal of British Studies* 53:1 (Jan. 2014), 75-76.
 - Thomas Katheder, *The Bayloads of Newmarket: The Decline & Fall of a Virginia Planter Family*, *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 117:4 (Winter 2010), 396-397.
 - “Written in Bone: Forensic Files of the Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake,” *Journal of American History* 115:3 (Dec. 2009), 778-781.
 - The Game of Their Lives*, *Journal of Sport History* 32:3 (Fall 2005), 283-285.
- “Leisure and Recreation,” in *The Eighteenth Century*, ed. Brendan McConville, vol. 3 of *American Centuries: The Ideas, Issues, and Trends that Made U.S. History* (New York: MTM, 2010).
- “Frolics,” in *Scribner’s Encyclopedia of Sport and Leisure*, ed. Gary Cross, (New York: 2004), 307.

Selected Academic Presentations

- “Can We Ever Be Complete?: Planning for the Challenges of Shared Authority,” *Annual Conference of the National Council on Public History, Atlanta, GA (19 Mar. 2020)* – delivered virtually due to coronavirus pandemic.
- “Between a Rock and Hard Place: Plymouth Rock and Sublime Memory,” *Smithsonian’s 114th Material Culture Forum, Washington, DC (21 Jan. 2020)*.
- “The Language of Celebrity in American Newspapers, 1760-1860,” *Annual Conference of the Popular Culture Association, Washington, DC (19 April 2019)*.
- “Tracking the Language of Celebrity in the Early Republic, 1760-1820” *Annual Conference of the Society of Historians of the Early American Republic, Cleveland, OH (19 July 2018)*.
- “The Rise of Sporting Political Bodies in America, Britain, and France, 1750-1850” *Colloque du Groupe CIMMA, Université Paris-Est Créteil (9 Sept. 2016)*.
- “Thoroughbreds and Credit Networks in the English Atlantic,” *19th Annual Conference of the Omohundro Institute for Early American History and Culture, Baltimore, MD (14 June 2013)*.
- “Sport and Risk Culture in Early America,” *invited presentation at The Johns Hopkins University Early American Seminar (2 Apr. 2012)*.
- Comment, “Early Football (Soccer) and the Idea of Philanthropy,” *2009 North American Society for Sport History Conference, Asheville, NC (24 May 2009)*.
- “An Economic Approach to Social Authority in American Theatres, 1790-1820,” *Society of Early Americanists/Omohundro Institute of Early American History joint conference, Williamsburg, VA (8 June 2007)*.

Selected Public Lectures, Writing, and Media Appearances

- “Who are ‘We the People?’” Coronavirus Virtual Class Session, Smithsonian Social Studies YouTube Channel, 30 Apr. 2020.
- National Museum of American History Blog,
 - “How Picturing the Boston Massacre Matters,” 9 Apr. 2020.
 - “A Sports Star Being Political, 19th-Century Style,” 22 Apr. 2019.
 - “The Woman Who Would Be Cardinal,” 11 Oct. 2017.
- *Beyond Stonewall*, Smithsonian Channel documentary, May 2019, interviewed on Charlotte Cushman, Walt Whitman, and 19th-Century vocabularies of sexuality and masculinity.
- “Star Wars as a Wild West Show,” Keynote address for Oklahoma Center for the Humanities, University of Tulsa, 11 Oct. 2018.
- “The Forgotten Origins of Politics in Sports,” *Slate*, 2 Jan. 2018
- “At *Hamilton*, Pence meets old-time rowdy activist theater,” *Washington Post*, 24 Nov. 2016.
- Guest Appearances on NPR’s *BackStory With the American History Guys*
 - “All In: A History of Gambling in America,” (6 May 2016).
 - “U.S. vs. Them: Sports on the World Stage,” (11 July 2014).
- “Why We Call Elections ‘Races,’” *C-SPAN Lectures in American History (21 Dec. 2013)*.
- “College Partnerships: A Win-Win Non-Traditional Partnership,” *National Park Service Star-Spangled Banner Trail Conference, Washington, DC (24 Jan. 2013)*.
- “A Guide for Bringing Scholars into Your Museum Programming,” *Regional Symposium of the International Museum Theatre Alliance, National Colonial Farm, Accokeek, MD (20 July 2012)*.
- “What is That? (and What Does it Mean?): Chesapeake Material Culture, c1650-1800,” *Museum Interpreters’ Workshop, Jefferson-Patterson Park and Museum (18 Oct. 2011)*.
- “Gaming and Democracy in Early American Taverns,” *John Yagerline Lecture at Gadsby’s Tavern Museum, Alexandria, VA (15 Oct. 2008)*.
- “Decoding Early American Sporting Art,” *Sporting Art Society/Banning Lecture at the Centennial Celebration of the Mellon Sporting Art Collection, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, VA (18 Oct. 2007)*.
- “The Forgotten History of Billiards in Early America,” *The Catalog of Antiques and Fine Art* 5:1 (Jan. 2004), 280-285.

Public History Projects

- Smithsonian National Museum of American History (2017-present)
 - Lead curator for exhibit case marking the 400th anniversary of Pilgrims' landing (Fall 2020).
 - Senior scholar on major 20-year exhibition covering the history of entertainment in America, (opening 2021). Responsible for content up to 1900; Lead editor of exhibit catalog.
 - Lead curator for *Made By US*, a collaborative initiative by history museums across the country to engage Gen Y & Z in conversations about the power of history.
 - Curatorial team member (collecting, selecting, writing content, and contributing to design) for temporary exhibits on the histories of the U.S. ivory trade, cosmetics, and Special Olympics.
 - Collections work included management of museum-wide survey of Early American collections (deploying cutting-edge AI and predictive software to filter through 1.8m object records), donor descendant outreach to convert century-long loans to gifts, and nearly doubling the size of the pre-1900 entertainment collection through cultivated gifts.
 - Engagement work included developing protocol for outreach and co-curation with Native American communities. Developed funded Native Studies Fellowship for students from Tribal Colleges and Universities, through partnership cultivated with Smithsonian American Indian Museum (NMAI), Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM), and the Mellon-funded Mukurtu Project at Washington State University.
- Museum Interpretation Consultant (2003-2017)
 - Fulbright Grant Project, Musée des Civilisations (Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire), 2015-2017
 - Worked with National Museum (Musée des Civilisations) to design, fundraise, and coordinate \$20,000 cataloguing project (including support from Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, George Mason's Center for History and New Media, and scholars from America, Africa, and Europe). End product will be an Omeka-based online catalog of the Musée's collection, including 5,000 previously uncatalogued objects, data on objects stolen and damaged during the 2010-11 civil war, and object descriptions and thematic essays provided remotely by experts from around the globe.
 - Colonial Conversations*, Smithsonian National Museum of American History, June 2015
 - Invited consultant to curatorial teams preparing new exhibits focused on the intersection of popular and political culture.
 - Consultant, Calvert Marine Museum (Solomons, MD), 2013-2015
 - Contributed to \$150,000 Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) grant application, and acted as consultant incorporating human history into estuarine biology exhibit. Taught a course funded by a Mellon Service Learning Grant that produced guides and school-group activities for the exhibit. Also led the exhibit's evaluation team, managing \$20,000 budget and executing front-end focus group discussions, formative observations and interviews, and summative mind-mapping and surveys, providing detailed insight that guided planning and adjustments to installation.
 - Consultant, National Gallery of Art (Washington, DC) 2012-2013
 - Advised on the design of educational programming intended to link art collection to AP US History courses.
 - Consultant, Accokeek National Farm (Accokeek, MD), 2012
 - Advised summer programming focused on rural entertainments, including editing and revising a scripted performance and staging a "court day."
 - Website Designer, Southern Maryland Tourism Commission, 2011-2012
 - Taught classes on the War of 1812, with the classes designing and building the Commission's website for the War's bicentennial (<https://destinationsouthernmaryland.com/war-of-1812/>). Content later copied by the National Park Service for its website.

- Lead Consultant, Sotterley Plantation (Hollywood, MD), 2010-2011.
 - Led complete redrafting of interpretive plan and tours, as well as new refurnishing and collection plans, funded by a \$40,000 IMLS grant.
- Consultant, Historic St. Mary's City (St. Mary's City, MD), 2009-2010, and Jefferson-Patterson Park and Museum (St. Leonard, MD), 2010-2013.
 - Advised on interpretation of archaeological features, especially those related to tavern and horse stable sites.
- Consultant, Lancaster County Historical Society, 2007.
 - Edited and consulted on the narrative for a successful \$500,000 NEH grant proposal, the first *We the People* grant awarded to a county or local-level historical society.
- Consultant on billiard room restoration and interpretation at Winterthur Museum (Wilmington, DE), 2002; Biltmore Estate (Asheville, NC), 2002-2003; McFadden-Ward House (Beaumont, TX), 2004; and Gore Place (Waltham, MA), 2009-2010.
- Winterthur Museum (1999-2003)
 - Served in several departments. Guided visitors, instructed school groups, created educational programs corresponding to museum exhibits, planned summer camps, wrote curatorial reports on objects, drafted public relations plan for education department, and performed donor research for development department.
- Center for Historic Architecture and Design, Contract Writer (2000)
 - Authored and edited 24 National Register of Historic Places nominations, all part of the multiple-property listing "Architectural Trends in Delaware, 1720-1950."
- National Park Service, Interpretive Ranger (1997-1998)
 - Guide and researcher at Jamestown, Va. and at Yorktown, Va.

Professional Service

- Editorial Board, *Winterthur Portfolio*, Mar. 2019-Present
- Peer Reviewer, Smithsonian Scholarly Studies Grants, NEH Preservation and Access Grants, Johns Hopkins University Press, Houghton-Mifflin (textbooks), *Journal of the Early Republic*; *Virginia Mag. of History and Biography*; *Int'l Journal of the History of Sport*
- Coordinator, Museum Studies Program, St. Mary's College of Maryland, 2012-present
 - Chief administrator of interdisciplinary minor degree program, charged with managing a \$15,000 annual budget, a \$400,000 endowed internship/scholarship fund, hiring and supervising three adjuncts per year, and leading a Steering Committee comprised of two local museum professionals and six other faculty members spread across the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities.
 - Explored potential for study abroad program in The Gambia (rejected due to unstable staffing in host country) and developed successful study tour to American Southwest.
 - As member of the Steering Committee (2008-2011), led sub-committee charged with revising curriculum and setting standards for new and cross-listed courses. Helped oversee growth of the program from 11 to 43 minors in four years, and recognition of program by Middle States Review as one of the nation's finest and a hallmark of the College's curriculum.
 - Specifically responsible for creating courses and formal programmatic and internship agreements tying the College to neighboring Historic St. Mary's City and other local cultural organizations.
 - Supervised more than twenty internships at a dozen institutions nationwide.
- Interim Director, Center for the Study of Democracy, St. Mary's College of Maryland, Aug. 2014-Mar. 2015
 - Asked to supervise NEH-funded Center charged with developing civic engagement and Maryland history programming that brings together students, faculty, and local community. Responsible for managing \$100,000 annual budget and \$1.8 million dollar endowment, one full-time program assistant plus additional student staff, and staging over twenty events and lectures over the course of the year.

- Oversaw drafting and completion of strategic plan to shift the Center toward participatory programming and away from lecture-style events.
- Member of Center's Advisory Board from 2009-2014.
- Membership Committee Chair, North American Society for Sport History, 2013-2015
 - Invited to create and lead committee dedicated to expanding membership among scholars in multiple disciplines.
- Program Committee, North American Society for Sport History Annual Conference, 2012-13
 - Invited to join six-person committee charged with vetting submissions and organizing the subfield's leading annual conference.
- AP exam review teams, 2010-2013
 - AP United States History Review Committee, 2010-2011
 - Responsible for reviewing and editing 2013 AP US History Exam.
 - AP World History Curriculum Review Committee, 2013
 - Responsible for reviewing and offering suggestions on development of curriculum goals and standards for AP World History
- Working Group on Undergraduate Standards, National Council for Public History (2010)
 - Selected to committee charged with creating standards for undergraduate curriculum in public history and museum studies.

Professional Organizations

- Organization of American Historians
- National Council for Public History
- Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture
- Society of Historians of the Early American Republic