



Centre for the Study of the

Legacies of British Slave-ownership

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Newsletter July 2019

New Director of LBS

We are extremely pleased to announce the appointment of Professor Matthew Smith as the new Director of LBS and as Chair in the Department of History at UCL.

Matthew Smith is a distinguished Caribbeanist and historian of Caribbean nationhood and of Atlantic slavery and Emancipation and their aftermaths. He is currently Professor in History and Head, Department of History and Archaeology at the University of the West Indies at Mona, Jamaica.

Professor Smith said, "I am delighted to assume the Directorship of LBS. While extending and further strengthening its existing wonderful work on slave-ownership in metropolitan Britain, I believe we can fully realise its potential for research into the lives of the enslaved people as well as the enslavers."

Catherine Hall, Chair of LBS, spoke for existing staff with her comments: "This is a terrific appointment for the Centre. We are fortunate to have attracted a scholar of Matt's stature. He will help embed us fully in the Caribbean and extend the reach and scope of our work."



Photo credit: Joel Elliott

Matthew Smith's publications include *Liberty, Fraternity, Exile: Haiti and Jamaica After Emancipation* (2014) and *Red and Black in Haiti: Radicalism, Conflict, and Political Change* (2009).

Nick Draper, current Director of LBS, will be retiring in September. Nick's PhD work was the foundation of the original LBS database and he has been central to the development of LBS in all its stages. He has demonstrated, most recently in his leadership of LBS, his deep commitment to the significance of this work to the development of modern Britain. He has always insisted on the importance of solid empirical evidence and the necessity of making this work available to as wide an audience as possible. We will miss him very much and look forward to continuing connections.



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New Centre for the Study of Race and Racism

Professor Paul Gilroy has been appointed as the Director of the new Centre for the Study of Race and Racism at UCL, a significant commitment by the University to the critical study of racism and its effects.

Paul Gilroy is a world-leading theorist of race and racism. His publications include *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack* (1987), *Postcolonial Melancholia* (2005) and *Darker Than Blue* (2010). UCL's statement on his appointment notes Paul Gilroy "has transformed the canon of political and cultural history, making us aware of how the African diaspora – spurred into motion, largely, by racial slavery – was an extra-national, socio-political and cultural phenomenon which challenged essentialist conceptions of country, community and identity, and what is more, was constitutive of modernity."

The Centre for the Study of Race and Racism will establish a new MA programme for students interested in exploring processes of racialisation, racialised experience and racism in global, trans-historical and multi/interdisciplinary ways.

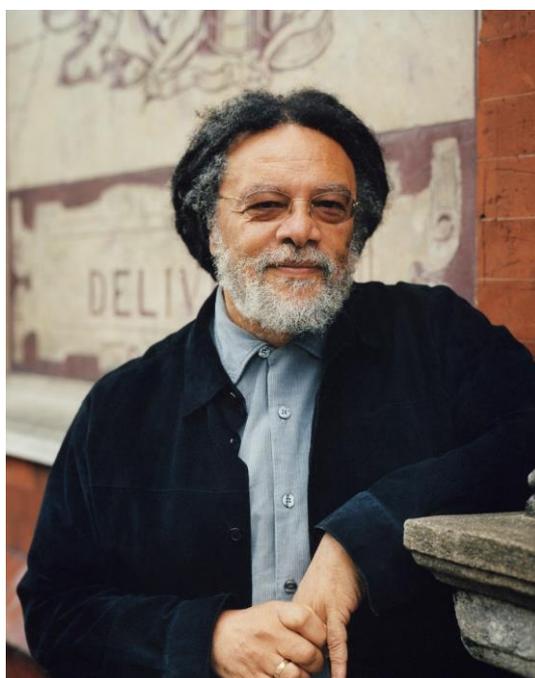


Photo credit: Lola Paprocka

Catherine Hall

LBS's Honorary Chair, Professor Catherine Hall, will be awarded with two honorary degrees this year for her work as an historian. The first is at York University on July 17. The second is at Sussex University on July 24.

Catherine will be speaking on 'Men, women and slavery' at the Historians Day in the Netherlands, at Groningen on August 22. This is a biennial event open to all – teachers, academics and anyone interested in history – focusing on current research and public debates. For more information see <https://historicidagen.nl/english/>.