

David Bresnahan  
Curriculum Vitae  
University of Utah  
Department of History  
Carolyn Tanner Irish Humanities Building  
215 S Central Campus Drive, Room 310

### **Academic Appointments**

Assistant Professor of History, University of Utah, July 2019-

### **Education**

PhD, African History, University of Wisconsin-Madison, August 2018

Minor Field: Anthropology

Dissertation Title: "The Contours of Community on the East African Coast: A View from the Hinterlands, ca. 100-1850"

M.A., African History, Ohio University, 2010

Minor Field: Latin American History

M.A. Thesis: "Sacred Spaces, Political Authority, and the Dynamics of Tradition in Mijikenda History"

B.A., History, Elizabethtown College, 2008

### **Publications**

#### Book Manuscript

*Inland from Mombasa: The Indian Ocean World, East Africa's Interior, and the Making of Global Connections* (under contract with the University of California Press).

#### Peer Reviewed Articles and Chapters

"Translating Slavery between Lake Malawi and the Swahili Coast: Evidence in a Nyanja/Chewa Dictionary from Mombasa," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* (accepted pending revisions)

“In Mombasa They Are ‘Like Prisoners’ to the Mijikenda: Martiality, Trade, and Inland Influences on a Swahili Port City,” in *Making Martial Races: Gender, Society, and Warfare in Africa*, Myles Osborne, ed. (Ohio University Press, forthcoming January 2024).

“Greatness is like a Rubbish Hole: Social Frictions and Global Connections in the Early-Swahili World,” *Journal of World History* 31, no. 2 (2020): 361-390.

“Forest Imageries and Political Practice in Colonial Coastal Kenya,” *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 12, no. 4 (2018): 655-673.

### Public Writing, Digital Publications, and Reviews

“Short Teaching Module: Precolonial Kenya, a Small-Scale History,” in *World History Commons*, <https://worldhistorycommons.org/short-teaching-module-precolonial-kenya-small-scale-history> (January 2022) [peer reviewed].

Review of Gwyn Campbell, *Africa and the Indian Ocean World from Early Times to Circa 1900*, *H-Africa* (December 2019) <https://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=54513>

“Running in Kenya, a Field Story,” *Edge Effects* (December 8, 2016) <http://edgeeffects.net/running-in-kenya/> [Republished by *The Star* (Nairobi) December 12, 2016]

### **Fellowships and Awards**

2017-18. Graduate School Fellowship, University of Wisconsin-Madison Graduate School and Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation

2016. Mellon-Wisconsin Summer Dissertation Fellowship

2015-16. University Fellowship, University of Wisconsin-Madison

2014. Chancellor’s Fellowship, University of Wisconsin-Madison

2014. Graduate Student Summer Research Fellowship, University of Wisconsin-Madison African Studies Program

2013. Chancellor’s Borderlands Fellowship, University of Wisconsin-Madison

2012-13. Title VI Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship (Arabic)

2012. Scott Kloek-Jenson International Pre-Dissertation Fellowship

2011. Title VI Foreign Language and Area Studies Summer Fellowship (Mijikenda)

2010-11. University Fellowship, University of Wisconsin-Madison

2010. Phillip Loring Allen Fellowship, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- 2009-10. Title VI Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship (Swahili)
2009. Title VI Foreign Language and Area Studies Summer Fellowship (Swahili)
2009. Ohio University History Department Summer Research Grant

### **Invited Talks and Papers**

2021. "Slavery in Translation: Tracing Concepts of Marginality and Belonging between Lake Malawi and Mombasa in the first Nyanja Dictionary," Archive and Public Culture Research Lab, University of Cape Town (by Zoom), September 30.
2018. "Urban Prisoners to the Interior: Honor, Diffidence, and Martiality in Mombasa, ca. 1500-1850," Martial Race(s) in African History, University of Colorado-Boulder, October 13-14.
2018. "Turning Inland to the World: Connectivity and Dissonance along East Africa's Indian Ocean Littoral, ca. 500-1700 CE," Global & Transnational Research Group, University of Edinburgh, April 25.
2014. "Prestige Economies of Coastal East Africa: Mijikenda, Swahili, and Waata in Oral, Ethnographic, and Linguistic Evidence," Pwani University, Kilifi, Kenya, October 13.

### **Conference Papers**

2021. "Enslavement in Translation: A Nyanja Dictionary and a Microhistory of Slavery Between Lake Malawi and the Swahili Coast," Rocky Mountain Workshop on African History [virtual], August 20-21.
2020. "Salimini's Words: A Nyanja Dictionary and Microhistory in Indian Ocean Slavery," African Studies Association Annual Meeting [Virtual], November 18-20.
2020. "Honor, Debt, and Rupture in Mombasa: A History of Urban to Rural Tributes," Rocky Mountain Workshop on African History [Virtual], August 7-8.
2020. "What Happens When Global Networks Decline? Rupture and Connection on the Mid-First Millennium Swahili Coast," World History Association Conference. [Conference cancelled due to Covid-19]
2019. "Unmoored from the Ocean: Global Disconnection and Social Transformation on the First Millennium East African Coast," Rocky Mountain Workshop on African History, Salt Lake City, UT, August 9-10.

2018. "Eating, Spending, and Consuming: Wealth and Social Complexity in the Pre-Swahili World," African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA, December 1.
2017. "Inland Innovators and the Struggle for Mombasa, ca. 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries," African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL, November 18.
2017. "Bulk Grains and Game: Food Procurement and Abundance in Indian Ocean Africa before ca. 1000 CE," Conference on Labour, Working Animals, and Environment in the Indian Ocean World, Indian Ocean World Centre, McGill University, May 4.
2015. "The Wise Person and the Fool: Insults and Intelligence in early Swahili History, ca. 1000-1500," African Studies Association Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, November 20.
2015. "To Read, to Write, to Ridicule: Knowledge and Expression in early Swahili History," Early Maritime Cultures on the East African Coast Conference, University of Wisconsin-Madison, October 23.
2012. "Politics, Violence, and Difference in the Mombasa Region, 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries," African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, December 1.
2009. "Producing Environmental Narratives: Knowledges on Landscapes and History in Shimba Hills, Kenya," African Studies Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA, November 9.
2009. "Cultural Space and Environmental Change in Kenya's *Kaya* Forests," Mid-American Alliance for African Studies Annual Conference, Tulsa, OK, October 9.

## Teaching Experience

### University of Utah

- African in World History/Early Africa (online and in person)
- Environmental History of Africa
- Global History of Poverty (online and in person)
- The Global Indian Ocean
- World History to 1500 (online and in person)
- Themes in World History (graduate readings seminar on "The Global Turn")
- Graduate Research Seminar
- African Environmental History (graduate independent study)

### University of Washington

- History of Modern Africa
- Africa in the Era of the Slave Trade

### Western Washington University

- Humanities of Africa
- Religion and Society in Africa

University of Wisconsin-Madison:  
History of East Africa

### **Undergraduate Research Supervised**

John Bowden, “Recapturing the Day-To-Day Sensory Experience of the 19th Century Swahili Coast,” Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program, Spring & Summer 2023; HIST 4950 “Research Credits” Fall 2023.

### **Graduate Steering Committee Member**

Nicholas Backman, MA History, May 2022; PhD in progress.

Dumitru Toderic, MS History, May 2022.

Sam Johnson, MA History, in progress.

### **Professional and University Service**

Co-Organizer, Rocky Mountain African History Workshop (2021, 2022, 2024).

Faculty Advisory Committee, International Studies Program, University of Utah (2023-2026).

Committee Member, Premodern Middle East/North Africa/Islamic World Faculty Search, University of Utah (2023-2024).

Department of History Graduate Committee, University of Utah (2020-2021; 2023-2024).

Committee Member, US and the World Faculty Search, University of Utah (2020-2021).

Committee Member, Ancient Mediterranean Faculty Search, University of Utah (2019-2020).

Department of History Undergraduate Committee, University of Utah (2019-20).

Department of History, Intellectual Life Committee, University of Utah (2019-20).

Peer Reviewed article manuscripts for *Africa: Journal of the International Africa Institute*; *African Studies Review*; *History in Africa*; *Journal of World History*.

### **Related Employment**

2016-2017. Outreach Coordinator for the African Studies Program at UW-Madison.

Responsible for outreach initiatives for African Studies Title VI National Resource Center. Duties included developing resources for educators, coordinating outreach speakers, and organizing an annual symposium for high school students.

2015-2016. Web Assistant and Swahili Translator for African Political Cartoons Project:  
africacartoons.com.

### **Languages**

Swahili: reading, writing, speaking ability

Mijikenda languages (Kenya & Tanzania): intermediate speaking ability

### **Professional Affiliations**

African Studies Association

World History Association