

Curriculum Vitae

Steven James SARSON

Faculté des Langues
Université Jean Moulin – Lyon 3
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Education / Qualifications

1987 – BA First Class Honours, American History and Politics, University of East Anglia
1990 – MA, The Johns Hopkins University
1998 – PhD, The Johns Hopkins University
2013 – *Habilitation à Diriger des Recherches*, Université Paris 7 - Denis Diderot

Employment

Spring 1988: Adjunct lecturer, School of English and American Studies, University of East Anglia, Norwich
1989-92: Research Assistant for Professor Jack P. Greene, Department of History, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland
1991-92: Adjunct Professor, Department of History, Towson State University, Maryland
1992- 2014: Lecturer/Senior Lecturer/Associate Professor, Department of History, Swansea University
2014-present: Professor of American Civilisation, Department of English Studies, Jean Moulin University, Lyon 3

Teaching

License (BA)

Year 2 (LLCER License 2): The American Revolution, 1764-1791
Year 3 (LLCER License 3): The Past in the Present: American History on Film
Year 3 (LLCER License 3): The 1619 Project: Slavery, Race, and British America and the Early United States

Masters

LLCE Masters 1: Liberty and Slavery in Early America, 1607-1808
LLCE Masters 2: The United States Declaration of Independence, 1776
MEEF 2A (Masters in Teaching): Barack Obama's American History
LANSAD Masters 2: English for non-specialists, History

Concours (National competitions)

Agrégation (National Advanced Teaching Qualification):
British Civilisation (Option): *La Glorieuse Révolution, 1688-1701* (2015-17)

American Civilisation (Option): *De l'antiesclavagisme à l'abolition de l'esclavage aux États-Unis : idées, arguments et écrits des militants noirs et blancs, 1776-1865* (2017-19)

American Civilisation (Compulsory): *La présidence de Barack Obama, 2009-2017* (2019-21)

American Civilisation (Option): *De la démocratie en Amérique: politique et société aux États-Unis, 1824-1848* (2021-23)

Areas of research (key words)

American civilisation; British civilisation; British Atlantic History; political, social, economic history; history of ideas; Glorious Revolution; England/Britain in seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; American colonies; American Revolution; Declaration of Independence; Early United States; Barack Obama

Current work

When in the Course of human events: History and Historical Consciousness in the US Declaration of Independence (2025, under contract with University of Virginia Press)

The American Revolution in History and Memory, edited with Bertrand Van Ruymbeke (University of Virginia Press)

Publications

Books

Barack Obama: American Historian (London, New York: Bloomsbury, 2018). Translated into Portuguese and Spanish by Ubook, Rio de Janeiro, 2021

The Tobacco-Plantation South in the Early American Atlantic World, in the series *The Americas in the Early Modern Atlantic World* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013)

British America, 1500-1800: Creating Colonies, Imagining an Empire (London: Arnold Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005; London: Bloomsbury, 2010)

Edited document collection

The American Colonies and the British Empire, 1607-1783, 8 Volumes (London: Pickering and Chatto, Major Works Series, 2010-11), General Editor Jack P. Greene

Articles and chapters in books

“Les révolutions anglaises du XVII^e siècle: le Chesapeake et les Antilles,” in Eric Roulet, ed., *Les colons contre l'Empire. Les contestations dans l'Amérique franco-anglaise du XVII^e et du XVIII^e siècles* (Aachen: Shaker Verlag, 2020), 170-98

“‘A total contradiction to every principle’: American Revolutionaries and the Glorious Revolution,” for Edward Vallance, ed., *Remembering Early Modern Revolutions: England, North America, France and Haiti* (London: Routledge, 2019), 61-77

“‘Breadth’ and ‘Depth’: Some Remarks on Atlantic History and Vast Early America,” *XVII-XVIII. Revue de la Société d'études anglo-américaines des XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles*, No. 74 (2017): <https://journals.openedition.org/1718/820>

“Origines des colonies britanniques et les fondations de l'indépendance américaine,” *Outre-Terre: Revue européenne de géopolitique*, Numéro spécial, “Identités britanniques”, 49 (février 2017), 443-56

“‘[T]he way to make a huge fortune, easily and without risk’: Economic Strategy and Tactics among Tobacco-South Planters in the Early National United States,” Pierre Gervais, Yannick Lemarchand, and Dominique Margairaz, eds., *Building a Fragmented World: Merchant Management in the Age of Commerce, 1650-1850* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2014), 153-70

“‘It cannot be expected that I can defend every man’s turnip patch’: Embargoes, the War of 1812 and Inequality and Poverty in the Chesapeake,” *Revue Française d’Etudes Américaines*, Numéro special, “Wars of 1812,” 139 (2^e Trimestre 2014), 16-29

“Yeoman Farmers in a Planters’ Republic: Socioeconomic Conditions and Relations in Early National Prince George’s County, Maryland,” *Journal of the Early Republic*, 29:1 (Spring 2009), 63-99

“‘The torment with the servants’: Management and Labor in a Southern Maryland Plantation Household in the Early Nineteenth Century,” *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 102:3 (Fall 2007), 131-55

“Similarities and Continuities: Free Society in the Tobacco South before and after the American Revolution,” Eliga Gould and Peter S. Onuf, eds. *Empire and Nation: The American Revolution in the Atlantic World (Anglo-America in the Trans-Atlantic World)*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 136-58, 341-45

“‘Objects of distress’: Inequality and Poverty in Early Nineteenth-Century Prince George’s County », *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 96:2 (Summer 2001), 141-62

“Distribution of Wealth in Prince George’s County, Maryland, 1800-1820,” *Journal of Economic History*, 60:3 (September 2000), 847-55

“Landlessness and Tenancy in Early National Prince George’s County, Maryland,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, 62:3 (July 2000), 569-98

“‘One must differentiate oneself a little’: Economy, Society and Refinement in Early National Prince George’s County, Maryland,” *Borderlines: Studies in American Culture*, 5:3 (1998), 253-73

“Harriet Beecher Stowe and American Slavery,” *New Comparison: A Journal of Comparative Literary Studies*, 7 (Summer 1989), 33-45

Contributions to reference works

“The US Bill of Rights,” *Modern History Review*, Hodder Education, to be published in 2023

“Chesapeake Region,” in eds. Ken Wachsberger and Jordan Goodman, *Tobacco: Scribner’s Turning Points in History Series* (Michigan: Macmillan Reference USA: Farmington Hills, 2005), 117-25

“Maryland” and “Tobacco,” in *Colonization and Settlement (1585-1763)*, Volume 2, in Billy G. Smith, ed., *The Facts on File Encyclopedia of American History* (New York: Facts on File Inc., 2003), 209-11, 373-75

“Chronology,” in Jack P. Greene et J. R. Pole, eds., *A Companion to the American Revolution* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992, 2000), 707-42

“African American History: Colonial Beginnings to 1860,” “American Revolution: Character, Scope, Significance,” “Colonial History: Colonies, Settlement, and Growth, 1) Chesapeake Bay,” “Colonial History: Society,” “Colonial History: Slavery and Indentured Servitude,” in Peter J. Parish, ed., *Reader’s Guide to American History* (London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1997), 14-16, 37-38, 140-42, 148-49, 152-53

Other media

“‘We the People’ Concepts of the American People in the United States’ Founding Documents », Howorth Constitution Day Lecture, The James Madison Center, Delta State University, Cleveland, Mississippi, September 2022: [Facebook Live](#) | [Facebook](#)

“‘The circumstances of our emigration and settlement here’: Thomas Jefferson’s Civil History and the invention of peoples in the Declaration of Independence,” biannual conference of the *European Early*

American Studies Association, Université de Poitiers, December 2021: [\[Vidéo\] People, citizenship, and nationhood in the US Declaration of Independence | UPTv - La WebTV de l'Université de Poitiers \(univ-poitiers.fr\)](#)

“When in the Course of human events: History and Historical Consciousness in the US Declaration of Independence,” Revolutionary Memories in the History and Historiography of the Atlantic World, 1730-1830, AMERICA 2026, Université Aix-Marseille, October 2021: [Remembering the American Revolution \(Part 3, Steven Sarson\) - YouTube](#)

“Presidents and Kings,” *The Last Best Hope? Understanding America from the Outside In*, Rothermere American Institute Podcast Series, University of Oxford, January 2021: [The Elected King Episode | Rothermere American Institute \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)

Barack Obama’s *A Promised Land*, Rothermere American Institute Book Club Webinar, University of Oxford, December 2020: [RAI Book Club: Barack Obama's A Promised Land \(2020\) - YouTube](#)

“The ‘illustrious Fathers of this Republic’: Frederick Douglass on the Founders, the Fourth of July, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution,” *GRAAT On-Line, Gender Studies and Cultural Studies*, “Abolitionnisme(s) aux États-Unis. Et ailleurs ?” ed. Monia O’Brien-Castro and Maboula Soumahoro, 24 (September, 2020), 85-103: <http://www.graat.fr/abo5.pdf>

“All men are created equal? Barack Obama and the American Revolution,” La Clé des Langues (Anglais), ENS de Lyon, 28 mars 2019: <http://cle.ens-lyon.fr/anglais/civilisation/domaine-americain/all-men-are-created-equal-barack-obama-and-the-american-revolution>

“Barack Obama: American Historian,” History News Network, 9 September, 2018: <https://historynewsnetwork.org/article/169742>

Book reviews in the following journals:

American Historical Review; *Economic Journal*; *English Historical Review*; *History: A Journal of the Historical Society*; *Institute of Historical Research* [on-line reviews]; *Journal of American History*; *Journal of American Studies*; *Journal of Early American History*; *Journal of Economic History*; *Slavery and Abolition*; *Journal of Southern History*; *William and Mary Quarterly*

Seminars and conferences (2012-2023)

Invited participant, “The Long Constitutional Debate, Part 1: Liberty versus Imperial Authority, 1764–1773,” Liberty Fund Conference, organized by Jack P. Greene and Gordon S. Wood, Boston, Massachusetts, 4-7 May 2023

“The ‘Course of human events’: History in the US Declaration of Independence,” public lecture, The Omohundro Institute for Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia, 25 April 2023

Invited participant, Robert H. Smith Center for Jefferson Studies, Book Workshop, Lindsay Chervinsky, *An Honest Man: The Inimitable Presidency of John Adams*, to be published by Oxford University Press in 2024, 21 April 2023

“From ‘league & amity’ to ‘absolute Tyranny’: The History of Royal Government in the Declaration of Independence,” Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, Pauline Maier Research Seminar, 4 April 2023

“‘A distant people’: History, Slavery, and Race in the US Declaration of Independence », McNeil Center for Early American Studies, Research Seminar, 24 April 2023

“‘We hold these truths’? Equality and Unalienable Rights in American History,” *Institut Stansilas de Cannes, Classes Préparatoires aux Grandes Ecoles*, 10 February 2023

“To ‘effect their Safety and Happiness’: Conditional Proslavery in the US Declaration of Independence,” University of Hull, sponsored by the Wilberforce Centre for the Study of Slavery and Emancipation and the Cultures of Incarceration Centre, 25 January 2023

Commentary on Emilie Mitran, *Gouverneur Morris, traducteur de la Révolution française (1789-1793)* (Rennes : Les Perséides, 2022) REDEHJA, Journée Publications Récentes, 16 December 2022

“‘We the People’ Concepts of the American People in the United States’ Founding Documents,” Howorth Constitution Day Lecture, The James Madison Center, Delta State University, Cleveland, Mississippi, 15 September 2022

“The ‘inhabitants of our frontiers’: History, Territory, and Peoples in the US Declaration of Independence,” Plenary Lecture, annual conference of the *British Group in Early American History*, University of Cardiff, 2 September 2022

Invited participant, “Exploring the Bounds of Liberty: The Late Colonial Period,” Liberty Fund Conference, organized by Jack P. Greene and Peter S. Onuf, Providence, Rhode Island, 12-15 May, 2022

“‘The circumstances of our emigration and settlement here’: Thomas Jefferson’s Civil History and the invention of peoples in the Declaration of Independence,” biannual conference of the European Early American Studies Association, Université de Poitiers, 8 December 2021

Commentary on Agnès Delahaye, *Settling the Good Land: Governance and Promotion in John Winthrop’s New England (1620–1650)*, Leiden, Boston, Brill, 2020, Journée Publications Récentes, REDEHJA, 18 October 2021

“When in the Course of human events: History and Historical Consciousness in the US Declaration of Independence,” Revolutionary Memories in the History and Historiography of the Atlantic World, 1730-1830, AMERICA 2026, Université Aix-Marseille, 1 October 2021

Commentary on *La Marche sur Yorktown*, Bertrand Van Ruymbeke et Iris de Rode eds. Monfaucon : J-J Guillaume, 2018. Workshop on Recent Publications, REDEHJA, 26 March 2021

“Presidents and Kings,” *The Last Best Hope? Understanding America from the Outside In*, Rothermere American Institute Podcast Series, University of Oxford, 14 January 2021

Barack Obama’s *A Promised Land*, Rothermere American Institute Book Club Webinar, University of Oxford, 1 December 2020

“‘Les circonstances de notre émigration et de notre établissement dans ces contrées’ : Peuples et territoire dans la déclaration d’indépendance américaine, 1776,” Territorialiser les espaces modernes XVe-XIXe siècle, Villa Finaly, Chancellerie des Universités de Paris, Florence, 2 October 2019

“The ‘illustrious Fathers of this Republic’: Frederick Douglass on the Founders, the Fourth of July, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution,” Journée d’étude : Abolitionisme, Université de Tours, 22 March 2019; Journée d’étude : De l’abolition aux réparations (États-Unis-France), Université de Rouen, 15 March 2019

“The ‘saving principles’ of ‘our common creed’: The radical whiggism of Frederick Douglass and Barack Obama,” Conference, Frederick Douglass: Across and Against Times, Places, and Disciplines, Université de Paris, 12 October, 2018

“Barack Obama : American Historian,” Keynote, “Recent Publications,” REDEHJA, Université de Chicago (Centre de Paris), 28 September 2018

“‘A total contradiction to every principle’: American Revolutionaries and the Glorious Revolution,” Remembering Early Modern Revolutions: England, North America, France, and Haiti, One-day conference at the Institute for Historical Research, London, 17 June 2017

“The ‘pursuit’ of happiness: Migration, Allodialism, Agrarianism, and an American Pastoral Ideal,” Annual Conference of the French Association for American Studies, University of Strasbourg, 8 June, 2017

“Barack Obama, American Historian,” Triangle, Atelier Amérique du Nord, Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Lyon, 13 April 2017

“‘Breadth’ and ‘Depth’: Some Remarks on Atlantic History and Vast Early America,” in a session with Bertrand van Ruymbeke on “Empire in the English-speaking world: round table on Empire and Atlantic History,” Annual Conference of the *Société d’études anglo-américaines des XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles*, “L’Empire/Empire,” 22 January 2017

“‘[A]n instance of despotism to which no parallel can be produced in the most arbitrary ages of British history’: Thomas Jefferson, Natural Rights, and Trade and Navigation Laws in the British-American Empire,” Biennial Conference of the European Early American Studies Association, Université Paris VII - Denis Diderot, 9 December 2016

“‘A total contradiction to every principle’: The American Revolution and the Glorious Revolution, Keynote Address, *Journée d’Etude* on “The Glorious Revolution: Transatlantic Perspectives,” Université Toulouse - Jean Jaurès, 13 May 2016

Panel Chair, “*Epistémologie et pratiques des Humanités numériques*,” *Séance numérisation de fonds familiaux*, Sara Georgini (Boston University, Massachusetts Historical Society), “The Adams Papers @ Work: Rewiring Preservation, Access, and Early American Archives in the Digital Age,” 18 March 2016

“The Glorious Revolution and the American Revolution: Or, why the US Constitution is more ‘ancient’ than the British one,” Seminar Paper, Département d’Etudes Anglophone, Université Paris IV - Paris-Sorbonne, 20 February 2014

“‘Now open, now hidden’: Asymmetrical Class War in the Early National Upper South,” at “On the Anvil of Labor History in the Revolutionary Era: Billy G. Smith and Fellow Artisans,” Conference at the McNeil Center for Early American Studies, University of Pennsylvania, 8 November 2013

“‘I Don’t Stand to the Will’: Property, Gender, Class, and Race in an Early National Southern Community,” Seminar Paper, Department of History, University of Cambridge, 6 March 2013

“The Glorious Revolution and the American Revolution: Or, why the US Constitution is more ‘ancient’ than the British one,” Seminar Paper, Department of History, University College Cork, 18 February 2013

“The Grand British League and Confederacy: John Cartwright and the Geography of Sovereignty in Revolutionary America,” Biennial Conference of the European Early American Studies Association, Bayreuth University, 14 December, 2012, with S. Max Edelson, University of Virginia

Other activities

Organisation of conferences, seminars, and study days

Co-organiser for “Historiographies of the American Revolution,” America2026 Conference, Jean Moulin University and Lumière University, Lyon, 14-15 October 2022

Member of Organising Committee, “Anachronisms,” International symposium, Centre de Recherches Interdisciplinaires et Transculturelles (CRIT), Université de Franche-Comté Musée du Temps, Besançon, 19-20 March 2020

Member of Organising Committee, Annual Conference of the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 18-21 July 2019

Member of *Pôle Scientifique du Comité d’Organisation* for the Annual Conference of the *Société des Anglicistes de l’Enseignement Supérieur*, “Confluence(s),” Université Jean Moulin – Lyon 3, 2-4 June 2016

Organiser of seminar by Robert Olwell, University of Texas, Austin, “Regarding Jefferson: A Discussion of America’s Enduring Fascination with Thomas Jefferson,” 10 June 2016

Co-organiser of *Journée d'étude* on "La Révolution Glorieuse," Ecole Normale Supérieure de Lyon, Université Lumière - Lyon 2, Université Jean Moulin - Lyon 3, 15 January 2016

Co-organiser of Conference on "1812 in the Americas," sponsored by the *Réseau pour le développement européen de l'histoire de la jeune Amérique* and l'Université de Bretagne Occidentale, Brest, 7-9 June 2012

Co-organiser of the Biennial Conference of the European Early American Studies Association, Venice, 13-14 December 2008

Co-organiser and host of the Annual Conference of the British Group in Early American History, Swansea University, 8-10 September 2007

Honorary Member of the Scientific Committee of the European Early American Studies Association, 2012-présent

Participation in research groups and institutions

President, European Early American Studies Association, 2022-2024

Member of Organizing Committee, America2026, 2021-2026

Vice President of REDHEJA (*Réseau pour le développement européen de l'histoire de la jeune Amérique*)

Member of the Editorial Committee of *Transtext(e)s Transcultures - Journal of Global Cultural Studies* (Institut d'Etudes Transtextuelles et Transculturelles)

Member of the Editorial Committee of *Studies in Democratic Culture*, Palgrave Macmillan, USA, 2014-présent

Réfèrent, l'Université Jean Moulin – Lyon 3 for the *Institut des Amériques*, 2014-2016

Member of *Société d'études anglo-américaines des XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles*, 2016-présent

Member of *l'Institut d'Etudes Transtextuelles et Transculturelles*, Research Laboratory, Université Jean Moulin - Lyon 3, 2014-present

Vice-President of *Réseau pour le développement européen de l'histoire de la jeune Amérique*, 2014-présent

Member of the Scientific Committee of the European Early American Studies Association, 2008-2012

Member of the Scientific Committee of the British Group in Early American History, 2005-2012

President of the British Group in Early American History, 2006-2007

Member, Organization of American Historians

Member, Society for Historians of the Early American Republic

Associate of the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture

Member, Institut d'Etudes Transtextuelles et Transculturelles

Consultant for the Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia, Staunton, Virginia

Consultant for the Massachusetts Historical Society for the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution.

Other

President, Committee of Experts, HCERES (*Haut Conseil de l'évaluation de la recherche et de l'enseignement supérieur Évaluation de la recherche*), HDEA (*Histoire et Dynamique des Espaces Anglophones*), Paris Sorbonne University, January 2018

Grant Scholar (consultant) for the Frontier Culture Museum of Virginia seeking funding from the US National Endowment for the Humanities

Peter Nicolais International Fellow, Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies, Monticello, Charlottesville, Virginia, March-April 2023

PhD thesis supervised

Richard HALL, “Reassessing the failure of the Braddock Plan of 1755,” Swansea University, June 2014

PhD theses under supervision

Leslie TASSERY, “Rhétorique de George Washington et première définition présidentielle du peuple états-unien”

Caroline LAPLACE, “*Star Trek* et la recherche de l’identité américaine par-delà l’ultime frontière”

Membership of doctoral committee

Debra E. GLASSCO, “2922 Days: Barack Obama and a Legacy of Public Representation,” Rutgers University, New Jersey

Participation in PhD vivas/defenses

Francesca GENESIO, “Philip Mazzei: a ‘Citizen of the Atlantic World’ in Revolutionary Times (1773-1791)?” Université Aix-Marseille, 18 March 2022

Rachel FONDVILLE, “Genèse et évolution de la gouvernance des nations et tribus Indiennes: Le cas de la Californie de 1850 à nos jours,” Université Jean Moulin, Lyon 3, 09 October 2021

Andy CABOT, “Esclavage, Empires et Diplomatie (France, Grande-Bretagne, Etats-Unis) : Abattre ou Consolider l’Esclavage dans le monde Atlantique après Saint-Domingue (c. 1795 – c. 1815)?” Université de Paris, 12 January 2021

Emilie MITRAN, “Gouverneur Morris : traducteur de la révolution française,” Université Aix-Marseille, 14 June 2019

Kathleen KUHL, “The Invisible Legacy of the Oneida Indians and the American Revolution,” Swansea University, UK, 19 February 2019

Agnès TROUILLET, “Le mouvement Tea Party 2009-2017: résultat d’une enquête en immersion, à Philadelphie et à Boston,” Université Sorbonne Cité, 29 September 2017

Isabelle SICARD, “Vers la tolérance religieuse : le Massachusetts de l’intolérance à la séparation entre Eglise et Etat dans la période post-révolutionnaire, 1776-1833,” Université Paris VII - Denis Diderot, 18 November 2016

Emilie ROMAN, “Le bicentenaire de la révolution américaine. Représentations audiovisuelles de la mémoire,” Université Aix-Marseille, 26 June 2015

Florent ATEM, « “Silences et Dissidences dans les journaux de l’expédition Lewis et Clark,” Université Aix-Marseille, 22 May 2015