



James H. Sweet

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2022 Presidential Biography

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I know I am not the sort of person I imagine when I hear that a person has a position at the university. . . . When others describe me this way, they appear to describe me completely, whereas in fact they do not describe me completely, and a complete description of me would include truths that seem quite incompatible with the fact that I have a position at the university.

—Lydia Davis, "A Position at the University"

Would Jim Sweet even like this poem? If you were to ask him, he would tell you, but he would couch his response in such a way that you would need to think about it for a few days. That is a skill he learned from his mentor, Colin Palmer—an artful ability to encourage and question, all the while connecting the smallest suggestions with powerful ideas. Yet Sweet's razor-sharp critical lens, native intellect, and creative impulse must have all been hardwired from birth. All who meet him experience his infectious enthusiasm, his astute guidance, and his relentless hospitality. This short biography will give a sense of who he is, including the truths that sometimes appear "incompatible" with his position at the university.

Origins

Sweet was born in St. Petersburg, Florida, in 1967 and then moved to Charlotte, North Carolina, in 1971, where he spent the rest of his childhood. His mother, Lyn Sweet, a teacher in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System, wielded an important influence in his early life, as did the examples of his two brothers, Gray and Jason. Of the boys, Gray was the toughest, Jim the smartest, and Jason the funniest. Like his brothers, Jim's father, JW, provided many stories for those lucky enough to be around when he chose to share them. Jim's maternal grandfather, Ed Sibilsky, who had helped liberate the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp and earned a Purple Heart in World War II, was another important influence. Sibilsky also worked

as a high school math teacher and administrator in Milledgeville, Georgia, and retired from the military as a colonel. Meanwhile, Jim's stepmother, Mary Moore, was a Spanish teacher from Venezuela who stoked his initial interest in the Atlantic world.

Sweet's unique approach to education took form early on. He started first grade in 1973, just two years after the US Supreme Court ordered enforced busing to integrate public schools in Charlotte. As a six-year-old child, Sweet was oblivious to the larger political scene, but he felt its effects inside and outside the school walls. Even from this young age, he was neither content nor able to take in the world passively. Despite his precocious rebelliousness, or likely because of it, he was inspired by teachers, coaches, and principals who lived and represented new possibilities. These figures pushed him, in subtle ways, often linked to both the promises and limits of desegregation, to think about social inequalities. "Attending Charlotte public schools in the 1970s and 1980s," Sweet writes, "shaped everything I would become, both personally and professionally."

The guiding influence of his mother and the larger public school system helped Sweet translate his voracious curiosity and lightning-fast wit into college admission. As an undergraduate at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill, Sweet majored in political science but was disengaged from structured learning. He also took history courses at UNC, however, and as a work-study student in the history department, he crossed paths with Colin Palmer, then the department chair. Sweet credits Palmer with shaking him out of his self-proclaimed "mediocrity."

After graduating in 1990, Sweet enrolled in law school in New Hampshire, where one professor told him he would make a good personal injury lawyer, likely struck by his creativity. Whatever the spirit of this suggestion, Sweet left law school after one year and returned to Charlotte. Over the next two years, he worked at the Charlotte airport and began taking history courses again, this time at UNC-Charlotte. He also stayed in touch with Palmer, who provoked Sweet into the admiration for and discipline towards history that has gone on to shape his life. "Colin encouraged me to apply for graduate school," Sweet remembers. "He opened the door for me, and I haven't looked back."

North Carolina to NYC

In the fall of 1993, Sweet began a master's program in Latin American history at UNC-Chapel Hill with Palmer as his advisor. Through Palmer, Sweet met Patrick Lynn Rivers, a graduate student in political science who hailed from Miami. Rivers and Sweet became guick friends, often gathering at Palmer's home in Durham, where Appleton's rum was always within reach. "You felt obliged to take it," recalls Rivers, who is a professor and co-director of Afield, a design research practice. "Otherwise you felt like you might be insulting Colin and Jamaican culture." Appleton's is a slow drink, made for sipping, and it was ideal for their conversations about life and music, about class and gender, but most often about race. "Colin used to always say, 'race is never neutral; it either works for you, or against you, but it's never neutral," Rivers says. "Jim and I heard the same words but held them and digested them in a different way. We also had a sense of how the other held and digested them, and that was enough to understand each other and respect each other."

A year later, in 1994, when Palmer moved from UNC to the City University of New York (CUNY), he hired Sweet and Rivers to move his belongings up to New York in a U-Haul. "We left early in the morning," recalls Rivers. "I slept for the first few hours of the drive, until sunrise or so, but when I woke up, we talked, back and forth, all the way to New York, with Janet Jackson playing in the background." Their friendship, forged through Palmer, was not grounded in the personal details but rather in an unspoken connection: "There was something in common between us, something that bound us together," says Rivers. "I think it might have to do with growing up in the South in the late 1970s, when the racial landscape was changing. If you want to understand Jim, you have to understand the Charlotte that he grew up in. It's interesting to look back on that time, to look back on what we thought our future might look like."

In 1995, Sweet followed Palmer from Chapel Hill to the Graduate Center at CUNY to pursue a PhD in history. Before arriving in New York, however, Sweet took his first research trip to Lisbon and was nearly overcome by the 15th-century paleography work. "After reading all morning, I was often tired and frustrated," Sweet remembers. "Then I would look out the window and watch the planes on the glide path to the airport and wonder if I was in over my head." Nevertheless, Sweet gradually found a rhythm when he started reading Inquisition cases, just as Palmer had done to uncover the histories of Africans in Mexico.

Palmer was a key figure in African diaspora studies. He had taken over Arthur Schlesinger Jr.'s chair at CUNY, and he opened up possibilities for what African diaspora studies could be. He emphasized comparative perspectives and incorporated important ideas from cultural studies. In addition to his prodigious scholarship, Palmer also contributed a working definition of the African diaspora, previously a massive blind spot of professional history, even if nascently understood outside its gates. "Colin always insisted that his students attend to the history of the African diaspora in all its depth and complexity," remembers Erica Ball, one of Palmer's other CUNY graduate students. "He insisted that we view people of African descent from centuries past as worthy historical subjects on their own terms."

Taking this lesson to heart, Sweet settled in Brooklyn and began his dissertation research on Africans in Brazil. With the support of a Fulbright fellowship and funding from the Social Science Research Council, Sweet traveled again to Portugal and also Brazil, where he worked in the archives from open to close, usually skipping lunch. "Even as a graduate student, Jim was a historian's historian," notes Ball. "He interrogated his sources with extraordinary precision and care and appreciated the variety of factors shaping how individuals from the past understood themselves, their culture, and their world."

While working on his dissertation, Sweet published several articles. "The Iberian Roots of American Racist Thought" (William and Mary Quarterly, 1997) remains widely cited and taught. Grappling with Eric Williams's thesis that "racism was the consequence of slavery," Sweet analyzed the development of racial thinking on the Iberian peninsula and around the Mediterranean in the centuries preceding the transatlantic slave trade. Arguing that racial stratification was already firmly in place by 1500, Sweet demonstrated how Iberian racism was then extended to the Americas. In 1999, Sweet defended his dissertation and then headed to rural Wisconsin, where he began his first academic appointment at the University of Wisconsin (UW)—Oshkosh.

Recreation and Recreating

After one year in Oshkosh, Sweet moved again, this time to Florida International University (FIU) in Miami. There, Sweet joined a unique cast of faculty centered around the African-New World Studies Program. "That was the hub for our scholarly conversations,"

recalls Terry Rey, now at Temple University, "but the best things went down at the parties. It was Miami, after all, so what else are you going to do?" Whether on campus, in each other's homes, or at restaurants and bars—including the defunct but still legendary Miami Beach Haitian restaurant, Tap Tap—Sweet forged close academic and personal friendships. "Comparative Atlantic World was the key concept that linked all of us together," remembers Akin Ogundiran, now at UNC-Charlotte. "There was a deliberate effort to diversify the questions being asked, and Miami was the place where theory meets practice: diaspora, migration, and cultural exchange were in your face. You lived it. Where else in the US can you dance rumba, visit with a Santero, attend a lecture on Candomble, eat acaraje, and wash it down with rum, all within two hours?"

Jean Rahier, another FIU colleague, hosted many informal gettogethers, often accompanied by homemade ginger beer and a soundtrack featuring Cassandra Wilson, Fela Kuti, and music Sweet brought from Brazil. "When Jim arrived at FIU, we became good friends," writes Rahier. "We were part of a group of younger scholars who liked to see each other on and off campus." On one occasion, they attended a Haiti–Costa Rica soccer match at the old Orange Bowl in the center of Miami. The Haitian drummers and fans ruled the stands even as the team lost a hard-fought 2–1 result.

On campus, Sweet taught classes on the Atlantic world and the African diaspora, as well as a memorable seminar with Alex Lichtenstein on comparative race relations in the US, Brazil, and South Africa. As Lichtenstein recalls, the seminar "brought into dialogue [Sweet's] knowledge of Brazil, my knowledge of the US, and our shared familiarity with South Africa." Working at FIU, Lichtenstein adds, suited Sweet's style: "It was not only Miami's polyglot Latin American-ness that he valued, but also such an interesting mix of students—many first-generation students, many Latin American students, and many Caribbean students. They really responded to Jim, and he to them."

All the while, amidst soccer matches, cachaças, and caipirinhas, Sweet was working hard on transforming his dissertation into a book. "On the surface, he had this carefree, rascally, and rebellious personality," remembers Ogundiran. "But beneath that was studiousness, intellectual rigor, and compassion." Jaime Price-Anderson, who studied with Sweet at FIU, recalls him as "a real honest genuine historian (and person) who was excited to guide his students through their own research without coloring it with his

own opinions." At a more personal level, she offers that it "never felt like he forced me to study things a certain way." She voices what those who have taken classes with him understand: "He always made us feel like we had valuable things to say." Out of this matrix of teaching and connecting formally and informally with colleagues and students, Sweet's first book finally took shape.

Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441–1770, was published with the University of North Carolina Press in 2003. Based on a critical reading of the Portuguese Inquisition archives, Sweet used his knowledge of Central Africa to uncover the histories of Africans in Portugal and Brazil between the 15th and 18th centuries. The book highlighted how Africans drew on specific cultural institutions and practices from central Africa to challenge slavery and transcend the strictures of life in the Portuguese imperial world. "As cultural historians of Africa and the African diaspora, we had so much to talk about," recalls Ogundiran, as they worked on their books alongside each other. "We compared notes from our research in Nigeria, Brazil, and central Africa. We were stretching methodology, theory, and conceptual frameworks and collapsing disciplinary boundaries."

Recreating Africa was well received and won the American Historical Association's 2004 Wesley-Logan Prize for the best book on African diaspora history. The book also set Sweet in collegial counterbalance to established scholars such as Sidney Mintz, Richard Price, Linda Heywood, and John Thornton, among others. This opposition was at first characterized by Sweet's fearless assurance in his scholarship and soon enough grew into rich scholarly exchange on the strength of his evidence and presentation thereof. In fact, Thornton peer reviewed the book manuscript for UNC Press, marking it with both the praise and the criticism of an honest assessment. Many great conversations, both in the form of public debates and private chats and correspondence, were born of Sweet's early entry into the field as a force to be reckoned with.

Sifting and Winnowing

In 2004, after four years in Miami, Sweet returned to Wisconsin, this time to the University of Wisconsin flagship campus in Madison. This was also the department where Sweet's mentor, Colin Palmer, had studied in the 1960s. "The job talk was one of those that one remembers years later for all the amazing ideas and conversation

that it generated," recalls Marc Hertzman, then a graduate student in Latin American history at UW–Madison. Sweet came to Madison as part of an African diaspora cluster hire and one of the other new arrivals was Teju Olaniyan, a literature scholar who had come to Madison a few years earlier. "Our goal was to root diaspora studies firmly in the African context," writes Tom Spear, then chair of the UW–Madison history department. "Jim quickly demonstrated that he was every bit as skilled in African history as in Brazilian."

Once in Madison, Sweet and Olaniyan discovered their many common research interests, and they co-chaired the African Diaspora and Atlantic World Research Circle. This was an extension of the kinds of discussions that had centered Sweet's scholarly world in Miami. Several years later, Sweet and Olaniyan co-edited *The African Diaspora and the Disciplines* (Indiana Univ. Press, 2010), an interdisciplinary volume that grew out of a 2006 symposium in Madison that brought together a wide range of scholars.

Another important influence was Wisconsin's African Studies Program, which complemented Sweet's attention to the histories of African cultures and languages in the Americas. In formal and informal settings, in seminar rooms and at bars, Sweet interacted with scholars from a variety of fields and methodological backgrounds. Neil Kodesh, a historian of east Africa who arrived at Wisconsin around the same time, was especially instrumental in broadening Sweet's methodological horizons. As a result, Sweet's research became increasingly grounded in African historiography, including the considerable scholarship on health, illness, and healing. Particularly significant for Sweet was an introduction to the work of Steven Feierman, who, not coincidentally, had taught at Wisconsin from 1969 to 1989.

It was in this context that Sweet's second book took shape. With Domingos Álvares, African Healing, and the Intellectual History of the Atlantic World (Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2011), Sweet traced the remarkable 18th-century life of a healer and vodunun from Dahomey named Domingos Álvares. The book followed Álvares's trajectory from Dahomey to enslavement in Brazil, where he built a network through a healing community in Rio. Not long after gaining his freedom, however, Álvares was charged with "witchcraft" and sent to Portugal to face the Inquisition. After two trials, the Inquisition banished Álvares to northern Portugal and he disappeared into obscurity, either continuing to survive against the odds or finally succumbing to his forced isolation. Álvares's Inquisition file was the

evidentiary core of the book, but Sweet also pulled together other forms of evidence: oral traditions, ethnography, slave trade data, newspapers, and travel accounts.

While the biographical focus of Domingos Álvares was considerably narrower than the scope of Recreating Africa, Sweet took on a broader historiographical target—the "intellectual history of the Atlantic world." Working against the prevailing scholarly trends and categories of Atlantic history, Domingos Álvares centered how Africans relied on their own histories and cultures as they shaped and defined this "intellectual history." In particular, Sweet used Álvares's story to highlight the political discourse of healing. In doing so, Sweet also challenged the domination of European colonial categories in Atlantic history. Rather than foregrounding how Africans and their descendants made claims on European institutions, ideologies, and colonial legal systems, Domingos Álvares instead demonstrated how the institutions and ideas of enslaved Africans themselves had major impacts in the making of the Atlantic world. Domingos Álvares won the AHA's 2011 James A. Rawley Prize for the best book in Atlantic history, as well as the 2012 Frederick Douglass Prize, awarded by Yale's Gilder Lehrman Center for the best nonfiction book in English on the subject of slavery, resistance, and/or abolition.

Over the last decade, Sweet has taken on a number of administrative roles at Wisconsin: director of the African Studies Program from 2012 to 2013; chair of the Department of History from 2013 to 2016; and chair of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese from 2017 to 2020. From 2016 to 2019, meanwhile, he served as a Council member for the AHA's Research Division.

Despite these commitments, Sweet has continued to write insightful research articles. In 2014, for example, he published "Reimagining the African-Atlantic Archive" in the *Journal of African History*. The article, more a methodological reflection, was a further call to "read" the history of the Atlantic world "through an African lens," rather than relying on the categories, periodizations, and epistemologies of European colonial logics. To this end, Sweet not only acknowledged alternative approaches to engaging with the African past—archaeology, historical linguistics, oral traditions, material history—but also called for an ontological shift, a way of thinking beyond the dominant, Euro-American frameworks of scholarly writing on Atlantic history.

Three years later, in 2017, Sweet published a research note in *The Americas*, "New Perspectives on Kongo in Revolutionary Haiti." Centered on a Kongolese-French dictionary from 18th-century Haiti, Sweet offered a careful linguistic analysis to the contention that the Haitian Revolution was an African revolution. As with *Domingos Álvares*, this essay demonstrated how African intellectual histories were woven into the fabric of the revolutionary Atlantic world. It was also a forceful rejoinder to skeptics who have claimed that efforts to uncover such histories are largely futile.

Most recently, Sweet has been putting the finishing touches on a new book, tentatively titled *Mutiny on the* Black Prince: *Slavery, Piracy, and the Limits of Liberty in the Revolutionary World*. The book traces the dramatic story of a mutiny on a slave ship traveling between Bristol, England, and Old Calabar, a port in the Niger River Delta. The mutineers renamed the ship, sailed for Brazil, and then north to the Caribbean, where their ship wrecked along the coast of Hispaniola. The book uses the story of the *Black Prince* mutineers to reflect on broader issues related to the study of Atlantic history during the "Age of Revolutions."

Teacher and Mentor

The themes that have animated Sweet's scholarship have also informed his approach to teaching and mentorship. And, as with his scholarship, the key role model remains Colin Palmer. "Colin had an eye for the quiet student at the back of the class who has something to say," writes Sweet. "He taught me that mentoring is as much emotional as it is intellectual." Building on Palmer's example, Sweet's expectations for students are clear but also deceptively simple: "Have a few lively ideas, write well, work hard, and don't become an intellectual robot."

In undergraduate classrooms, Sweet has a gift for pulling students out of their shells and for shaping unfocused ideas into coherent, even powerful arguments. Along the way of course, as any of his former students will tell you, Sweet has been susceptible to tangents. One of his earliest student reviews claimed that he went on so many tangents that the student wanted to run outside and jump into the path of a bus. Nevertheless, most of his students have found the common threads in these tangents and have appreciated how he uses them to bring students into discussions. While guest lecturing at Dartmouth in 2018, for example, Sweet guided

students through a complex iteration of embodied temporality that they had previously found largely impenetrable. He did so by listening carefully as the class came up with and connected the seemingly disparate points he had already secretly set before them. Brow furrowed, eyebrows pumping up and down, Sweet carefully processed and refined their questions and comments. In the space of one class, he had gone from stranger to teacher to confidante.

With graduate students, Sweet is well-known for his generosity, regardless of the emotional labor that entails. His approach has attracted a great variety of students, and his adherence to respect has kept them at his side. For one thing, he invites graduate students into his home—where he has also stored their belongings, sometimes for years at a time. He also offers tenacious support and timely advice. "Jim was a mentor in ways that he didn't have to be," remembers Marc Hertzman (Univ. of Illinois Urbana-Champaign). "When he arrived in Madison, I already had an adviser and committee in place, and he could have easily and justifiably ignored or tactfully avoided me. But just the opposite, he became an incredible mentor, reading my work closely, pushing me with hard, poignant questions; and, perhaps above all, became an incredibly warm source of support. Many of my fondest memories from grad school occurred in Jim's living room, watching soccer while his kids ran around and brought welcome chaos to the setting. I've always thought of Jim's unique ability to combine that kind of friendship with serious, critical dialogue." Following what he had learned from Palmer and had refined at FIU, Sweet has motivated and inspired his students in Madison by combining this kind of "critical dialogue" with kindness and hospitality.

Ben Cross (PhD, UW–Madison 2014), has a similar recollection. "Jim was not my advisor, but he spent more time and energy guiding me through every aspect of graduate school than most formal advisors would have." That guidance was powerful and specific to each student. According to Cross, Sweet "was able to discern something unique in each student's work and had not only the insight and creativity to see its potential, but the communication skills to impart to the student a way of transforming it into a more fully realized vision." For Cross, this was an epiphany.

Alberto Ortiz Diaz (Univ. of Texas at Arlington; PhD, UW–Madison 2017) recalls the space Sweet made for him and the respect he accorded him. "I don't recognize Sweet for his scholarship first, but him as a person, how he treated me when I got recruited to

and arrived at Wisconsin, how he has always taken and continues to take my voice seriously." That respect extended to Ortiz Diaz's wife Shirlie, who often felt excluded by "inclusive" academics of all persuasions. For Ortiz Diaz, Sweet is among "the most generous, humble, and sincere people I know." He adds that Sweet put him on to "the 'critical plurality' at the heart of the discipline of history—the idea that history is about entangled perspectives with an 's,' not just the one/s anyone in particular at the individual or collective levels may prefer."

As a teacher and mentor, Sweet was "tough but fair," according to former advisee Sean Bloch (PhD, UW–Madison 2015), "except he absolutely lacks the egocentric reflexivity that generally comes with that description." Bloch shared that "Sweet meets his students and peers, all of them, on the same field of ideas. If you have good ideas, especially ones that challenge him, his excitement is palpable. If you do not, he will somehow find the kernel of promise within what you do have and nurture it into something that, you will have to admit, you never would have conceived of alone." Yet, with his typical respect and kindness, Sweet would "be there to remind you that it is in fact yours, that it is shared, and that at our best that is what academics do; share, challenge, and develop ideas."

"I first met Jim during Wisconsin's graduate student recruitment weekend," remembers Philip Janzen, one of Sweet's former advisees (Univ. of Florida; PhD, UW–Madison 2018). "It was the warmest welcome. And, as it turned out, not just a show for prospective students, but a reflection of the kindness and generosity he extends to all who cross his path." Janzen also remembers Sweet's skill for reframing challenging issues, both academic and personal, with enthusiasm and candor. "He has a peculiar ability to make you feel better not only about the question or issue at hand, but also about other questions and issues, even unrelated ones, all without saying very much. I quickly lost track of how many times I left his office with a sense of clarity and encouragement."

Patrick Otim (Bates Coll.; PhD, UW–Madison 2016), shares that "Professor Sweet is not just an excellent teacher and historian but also a caring and humble human." He remembers how at times he felt isolated as an international student, and Sweet "made sure to check in on me time and time again." Otim explains that this warmth carried over to their professional relationship, and "I will always remember how he helped me engage with my primary sources and tell more interesting stories."

Coach Sweet

For the last decade or so, Sweet has also been a football coach. Between August and November, he spends every afternoon on a football field or in a weight room. As with his students, he seeks to inspire, guide, and build personal relationships. Sweet started coaching football in 2011, when his son Aidan joined the fourth grade team. He continued coaching youth football until 2016, and then followed Aidan to Madison West High School. There, Sweet has taken on a number of roles: ninth grade coach, junior varsity coach, offensive coordinator, and, currently, offensive assistant. Regardless of the title, Sweet's role as a football coach has always gone beyond the boundaries of the field, and he has spent many hours supporting his players.

"Jim believes in these kids more than they believe in themselves, and usually more than their own parents," says Garth Alston, who coached youth football with Sweet for several years. "And it's not all about football for Jim. He gets to know each of his players on an individual level and tries to get them to believe in themselves off the field even more than on the field." Alston credits Sweet's background and upbringing for this devotion: "Jim comes from humble beginnings. He understands the socioeconomic environment of his players far better than the stereotypical white liberal in Madison. Jim lives in both worlds as a professor and as a coach, and he has more empathy for his players than anyone I've ever been around."

Alston also tells a story that encapsulates Sweet's trust in his players. In a close-scoring championship game in 2015, the team was pinned down deep in their own half. Facing fourth down and very long, Sweet decided to go for it, telling only the players and none of the other coaches. The play, a risky misdirection quarterback keeper, resulted in a touchdown that sealed the victory. The quarterback in question was Alston's son. Walking down the sideline, Sweet passed Alston with a big grin on his face, saying, "Don't you believe in him?"

Trevor Sellers, who has coached with Sweet at Madison West for the last five years, also emphasizes the close relationships Sweet builds with his players—during car rides, over breakfasts and lunches, through phone calls and text messages, and with continued support after graduation. "They ask him questions, not just in regard to football, but life in general," Sellers explains. "The relationships they have are much deeper than football, and it is

through these relationships that he is able to motivate and inspire players. They see Jim as a mentor that they can count on to be there."

Danny Karofsky, a former player from Madison West, similarly emphasizes Sweet's commitment to coaching: "He's really only there for the players." Karofsky, now a college quarterback, credits Sweet with helping him become the player he is today. He also describes Sweet's example of dealing with adversity, both on and off the field. "Seeing how he dealt with the struggles of the program and life and still showed up every day for selfless reasons with a smile on his face taught me so much about being a man." He sums up Sweet's influence nicely: "Coach Sweet is just a good person. He's like a second father to me and I know he will be for the rest of my life."

Mikey Vorlander, another former player from Madison West, offers a similar impression. "Coach Sweet's ability to connect and relate to us was something I never understood for a man with so little to say at times. There has never been a more influential person in my life who has loved me as unconditionally as Coach Sweet." Vorlander also captures the spirit of Sweet's commitment and dedication: "It's hard to see the big picture, but Coach Sweet saw the whole painting in us."

Looking Back, Looking Forward

In the acknowledgments to Domingos Álvares, Sweet reflected on hope and bereavement. These two states of being have hounded his existence, circling each other through time in a sort of balance. Somehow, he has been able to pass on only the hope to those around him. What might it be like for him to page through his old words again? Perhaps they would feel as familiar and distant as an old tattoo, in the resonance of pain and immediacy to a certain time in life. Perhaps they would remind him of his fourth-dimensional conversations with Álvares, confined to the mind and caught in archival glimpses and creative questions. He enjoyed the privilege of recovering and sharing that history because he was equipped with the ability to listen to and see it. No doubt it also shaped him, allowing Álvares the influence and memorialization that so many of us aspire to impart to the future. But again, you would have to ask him. That is the default of the people that know him, whenever difficult questions arise.

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1914	Andrew C. McLaughlin	1947	Thomas J. Wertenbaker
1915	H. Morse Stephens	1948	Kenneth Scott Latourette
1916	George Lincoln Burr	1949	Conyers Read
1917	Worthington C. Ford	1950	Samuel E. Morison
1918–19	William R. Thayer	1951	Robert L. Schuyler

1952	James G. Randall	1987	Natalie Z. Davis
1953	Louis Gottschalk	1988	Akira Iriye
1954	Merle Curti	1989	Louis R. Harlan
1955	Lynn Thorndike	1990	David Herlihy
1956	Dexter Perkins	1991	William E. Leuchtenburg
1957	William Langer	1992	Frederic E. Wakeman Jr.
1958	Walter Prescott Webb	1993	Louise A. Tilly
1959	Allan Nevins	1994	Thomas C. Holt
1960	Bernadotte E. Schmitt	1995	John H. Coatsworth
1961	Samuel Flagg Bemis	1996	Caroline Walker Bynum
1962	Carl Bridenbaugh	1997	Joyce Appleby
1963	Crane Brinton	1998	Joseph C. Miller
1964	Julian P. Boyd	1999	Robert C. Darnton
1965	Frederic C. Lane	2000	Eric Foner
1966	Roy F. Nichols	2001	Wm. Roger Louis
1967	Hajo Holborn	2002	Lynn Hunt
1968	John K. Fairbank	2003	James M. McPherson
1969	C. Vann Woodward	2004	Jonathan Spence
1970	R. R. Palmer	2005	James J. Sheehan
1971	David M. Potter	2006	Linda K. Kerber
	Joseph R. Strayer	2007	Barbara Weinstein
1972	Thomas C. Cochran	2008	Gabrielle Spiegel
1973	Lynn White Jr.	2009	Laurel Thatcher Ulrich
1974	Lewis Hanke	2010	Barbara D. Metcalf
1975	Gordon Wright	2011	Anthony Grafton
1976	Richard B. Morris	2012	William Cronon
1977	Charles Gibson	2013	Kenneth Pomeranz
1978	William J. Bouwsma	2014	Jan E. Goldstein
1979	John Hope Franklin	2015	Vicki L. Ruiz
1980	David H. Pinkney	2016	Patrick Manning
1981	Bernard Bailyn	2017	Tyler Stovall
1982	Gordon A. Craig	2018	Mary Beth Norton
1983	Philip D. Curtin	2019	John R. McNeill
1984	Arthur S. Link	2020	Mary Lindemann
1985	William H. McNeill	2021	Jacqueline Jones
1986	Carl N. Degler	2022	James H. Sweet

The Department of History & the College of Letters and Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison wish to congratulate

Dr. James Sweet

Vilas-Jartz Distinguished Professor of History President, American Historical Association, 2022

University of Wisconsin-Madison

- ♦ Chair, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, 2017-2020
- ♦ Chair, Department of History, 2013-2016
- Director, African Studies Program, 2012-2013

Winner

- Frederick Douglass Prize for Best Non-Fiction Book on Slavery, Resistance, and/or Abolition, 2012
- ◊ James A. Rawley Prize for Best Book in Atlantic History, 2011
- CHOICE Outstanding Academic Title, 2011
- Wesley-Logan Prize for Best Book in African Diaspora History, 2004
- National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), Faculty Research Grant, 2003

Author

- Mutiny on the Black Prince: Slavery, Piracy, and the Limits of Liberty in the Revolutionary Atlantic World (2024)
- Domingos Álvares, African Healing, and the Intellectual History of the Atlantic World (2011; reprinted in 2012 and 2013)
- Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770 (2003; reprinted in 2005 and 2006)
- The African Diaspora and the Disciplines (co-edited with Tejumola Olaniyan) (2010)
- Encyclopedia of African-American Culture and History: The Black Experience in the Americas (associate editor) (2005)

With gratitude for your magnificent teaching and mentorship, leadership, and advocacy on behalf of History and the profession.



