

# HOLGER DROESSLER

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Worcester Polytechnic Institute  
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Worcester, MA 01609

Humanities & Arts  
Salisbury Labs 018

## PERSONAL

### 1) Education

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Harvard University, Cambridge, MA                        |      |
| Ph.D., History of American Civilization                  | 2015 |
| A.M., History  | 2011 |
| Ludwig-Maximilians-University, Munich, Germany           |      |
| M.A., <i>summa cum laude</i> , American Cultural History | 2008 |

### 2) Work Experience

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|---|--------------|
| Reader for AP U.S. History Exam, ETS  | 2017-present |
| Writing Tutor, Harvard Writing Center   | 2013-present |
| Convener of History of Capitalism Workshop, Bard College  | 2016-18      |
| Founded and organized monthly workshop for faculty and students to discuss readings in the history of capitalism; organized inaugural conference in April 2018.             |              |
| Research Assistant for Sven Beckert, Harvard History Department   | 2012-15      |
| Coordinated edited volume <i>Global History Globally</i> (Bloomsbury, 2018); researched primary sources and secondary literature for <i>Empire of Cotton</i> (Knopf, 2014). |              |
| Research Assistant for Alex Keyssar, Harvard Kennedy School   | Summer 2014  |
| Researched primary sources and composed memos for book on U.S. electoral college.   |              |
| Weatherhead Initiative on Global History, Graduate Student Coordinator  | 2012-15      |
| Arranged guest presentations and conferences, including conference on "Global Agrarian Labor Regimes" at Harvard in April 2013.   |              |
| Co-organizer of Harvard American Studies Workshop   | 2011-12      |
| Organized guest faculty and student presentations.  |              |

## TEACHING

### 1) Teaching Experience

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| Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, MA | 2019-present |
| Assistant Professor of History                 |              |

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| Smith College, Northampton, MA<br>Lecturer in History                            | 2018-19 |
| Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY<br>Visiting Assistant Professor of History | 2016-18 |
| Tufts University, Medford, MA<br>Lecturer, Department of History                 | 2015-16 |
| Harvard University, Cambridge, MA<br>College Fellow in U.S. History              | 2015-16 |

## **2) Teaching Innovations at WPI**

- B21 HU 3900 Hiphop (12/12 students)
- D21 HI 2914 Capitalism and Its Discontents (21/20 students)
- B20 HI 3344 Pacific Worlds (10/20 students)

## **3) Courses Taught at WPI**

- C22 HI 2314 U.S. History, 1877-1920 (49/50 students)
- B21 HU 3900 Hiphop (12/12 students)
- B21 HI 2316 20<sup>th</sup>-Century USFR (51/50 students)
- A21 HI 1313 United States & Territories (25/25 students)
- D21 HU 3900 Oceans (13/12 students)
- D21 HI 2914 Capitalism and Its Discontents (21/20 students)
- C21 HI 2314 U.S. History, 1877-1920 (50/50 students)
- B20 HU 3900 Working (12/12 students)
- B20 HI 3344 Pacific Worlds (10/20 students)
- A20 HI 1313 United States & Territories (25/25 students)
- D20 HU 3900 Oceans (14/12 students)
- D20 HI 2316 20<sup>th</sup>-Century USFR (49/50 students)
- C20 HU 3900 Working (9/12 students)
- C20 HI 3341 Decolonial Thought & Practice (5/20 students)
- A19 HI 1313 U.S. Empire and Technology (27/25 students)

## **4) Undergraduate Projects Advised at WPI**

none

## **5) Graduate Theses Advised at WPI**

none

## **6) Independent Studies at WPI**

- C22 HI 3999 USFR in MENA (1 graduate student)
- B20 HI 3999 Colonialism & Sexuality (1 undergraduate student)
- C20 HI 3999 War Workers (1 undergraduate student)

## 7) Academic Advising at WPI

none

## 8) Teaching Honors and Awards

Certificate of Teaching Excellence, Bok Center, Harvard 2015  
History Prize Instructorship, History Department, Harvard 2013

## SCHOLARSHIP

### 1) Books

*Coconut Colonialism: Workers and the Globalization of Samoa* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2022).

### 2) Book Chapters

“Changes on the Plantation: An Environmental History of Colonial Samoa.” In: *Migrant Ecologies: Environmental Histories of the Pacific*, edited by Edward Melillo and Ryan T. Jones (under contract with University of Hawai’i Press, tpb Dec. 2022).

“Afrodeutsche ‘Besatzungskinder’ im Nachkriegsdeutschland: Ein Interview mit Willi Meiler.” In: *The Black Diaspora and Germany/Deutschland und die Schwarze Diaspora*, edited by BDG Network, 144-158. Münster, Germany: edition assemblage, 2018.

“Colonialism by Deferral: Samoa Under the Tridominium, 1889-1899.” In: *Rethinking the Colonial State (Political Power and Social Theory, Vol. 33)*, edited by Søren Rud and Søren Ivarsson, 203-224. Bingley, UK: Emerald, 2017.

“Eveli Hau’ofa.” In: *Encyclopedia of Imperialism and Anti-Imperialism*, edited by Zak Cope and Immanuel Ness, 55-58. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015 (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2020).

“Germany’s El Dorado in the Pacific: Metropolitan Representations and Colonial Realities, 1884-1914.” In: *Imperial Expectations and Realities: El Dorados, Utopias, and Dystopias*, edited by Andrekos Varnava, 105-124. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2015.

“Performing Scientificity: Race, Science, and Politics in the United States and Germany after the Second World War.” In: *Black Knowledges/Black Struggles: Essays in Critical Epistemology*, edited by Jason R. Ambrose and Sabine Broeck, 145-169. Liverpool, UK: Liverpool University Press, 2015.

“Leonardo Ortiz.” In: *Encyclopedia of Blacks in European History and Culture*, edited by Eric Martone, 397-398. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2009.

### 3) Articles in Peer-Reviewed Journals

“Copra World: Coconuts, Plantations, and Cooperatives in German Samoa.” In: *Journal of Pacific History*, Vol. 53, No. 4 (November 2018): 417-435.

“From A-Town to ATL: The Politics of Translation in Global Hip Hop Culture.” In: *The Journal of Hip Hop Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Summer 2015): 100-116.

“Whose Pacific? U.S. Security Interests in American Samoa from the Age of Empire to the Pacific Pivot.” *Pacific Asia Inquiry*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Fall 2013): 58-65.

#### 4) Book Reviews

Vernadette Vicuña Gonzalez, *Securing Paradise: Tourism and Militarism in Hawai'i and the Philippines* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013). In: *Journal of Pacific History* 49:2 (2014), 239-240.

#### 5) Fellowships and Grants

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|--|-------------|
| Postdoctoral Fellow, Dahlem Humanities Center, Berlin                          | Summer 2015 |
| Graduate Society Dissertation Completion Fellowship, Harvard                   | 2014-15     |
| Term-Time Dissertation Research Grant, Warren Center, Harvard                  | Spring 2014 |
| Graduate Summer Research Fellowship in Global History, Harvard                 | Summer 2013 |
| GSAS Merit/Term-Time Research Award, Harvard                                   | Spring 2013 |
| Doctoral Fellowship, German Historical Institute, Washington, D.C.             | Fall 2012   |
| Graduate Student Affiliate, Weatherhead Initiative on Global History, Harvard  | 2012-15     |
| Graduate Student Affiliate, Center for European Studies, Harvard               | 2012-15     |
| Weatherhead Mid-Dissertation Fellowship, Harvard                               | Summer 2012 |
| GSAS Pre-Dissertation Summer Travel Fellowship, Harvard                        | Summer 2011 |
| Bavarian American Academy Fellowship, Gilder Lehrman Center, Yale              | Fall 2008   |
| Fulbright Scholarship, University of Massachusetts Amherst and Amherst College | 2006-07     |

#### 6) Professional Presentations

Invited member for roundtable on “The After/lives of Pacific Plantations,” at Association for the Social Anthropology of Oceania Annual Meeting, Portland, OR (January 2022).

“Servicing the Occupiers: Sex Work in the Vietnam War” at *Historicizing the Concept of Europe in Global History* Conference, European Labor History Network (ELHN) and COST Action “Worlds of Related Coercions in Work” (WORCK) at University of Vienna, Austria (September 2021).

“Coconuts and Coercion: Colonial Capitalism in German Samoa” at Virtual Conference *Colonial Capitalism in Action: The New Social and Economic History of German Colonialism* (May 2021).

“The Invisible Army: Third-Country Nationals and the U.S. Military in Iraq, 2003-Present,” Labor and Working-Class History Association, Durham, NC (May 2019).

“War Workers: Pacific Islanders and the U.S. Military in WWII,” Labor and Working-Class History Association, Seattle, WA (June 2017).

“Rethinking the Colonial State from the South Pacific: Euro-American Diplomats and Samoan Administrators, 1889-1899,” Reanalyzing the Colonial State: Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives, workshop at University of Copenhagen (August 2016).

“The Education of Miss Pepe: Samoan Nurses and the Politics of Colonial Care, 1900-1924,” Circulation of (Post)Colonial Knowledge: A Transpacific History, 1800-1980, workshop at University of Zurich (March 2015).

“Coals for Empire: The Building of the U.S. Naval Station in American Samoa and the Roots of Anti-Colonial Resistance, 1899-1920,” Labor and Empire Conference, UC Santa Barbara (November 2014).

“From Copra Hands to Casino Tourists: Chinese Workers and the Making of Empire in Samoa, 1903-2013,” Fourth European Congress on World and Global History, Paris (September 2014).

“Germany’s El Dorado in the Pacific: Images and Realities, 1884-1914,” Association for Asian Studies Conference, San Diego, CA (March 2013).

“Whose Pacific? U.S. Interests and Samoan Livelihoods from the Age of Empire to the Present,” American Studies Association Conference, San Juan, Puerto Rico (November 2012).

“‘A Cable to Bring Peace’: Telegraphic Imperialism in Samoa,” Northeastern University Graduate Conference Empires and Technologies in World History in Boston (March 2012).

“‘And God Has a Long Memory’: Looking at Time in the Short Fiction of Edward P. Jones,” CAAR Conference Black States of Desire: Dispossession, Circulation, Transformation, Paris (April 2011).

“Resistant Bodies: Towards an Analytics of the Body in African Diaspora Studies,” Inaugural Workshop Transcending Diaspora: Whiteness, Performativity, and the Politics of the Body of the DFG Young Scholars Network Black Diaspora and Germany at the University of Muenster (December 2010).

“What Difference Does Difference Make? A Transatlantic Perspective on Policing Interracial Relationships in the United States and Germany,” British Association for American Studies Conference, Nottingham, UK (April 2009).

“Searching for Order in the ‘White Atlantic’: Racism, Nationalism, and Interracial Relationships in the United States and Germany, 1877-1917,” Brown Bag Series at the Gilder Lehrman Center, Yale University (December 2008).

“Afro-German Hiphop and the Construction of (Trans)National Identity in Postwar Germany: The Case of B-Tight’s *Der Neger*,” conference on Community Building and Identity Formation in the African Diaspora, Boston University (March 2007).

## **7) Commentator/Chair for Academic Conferences**

Comment on “Thinking About the Future of Work” panel, NSF NRT Program on Future of Robots in the Workplace at WPI (May 2021).

Comment on Quito Swan (UMass Boston), “Rude Boy International: Sound Systems, Dancehall and Diasporas,” Harvard International and Global History Seminar, Cambridge, MA (April 2021).

Comment for panel on Neoliberal Employment & Unemployment Labor at Digital Workshop *Neoliberalism in the Global South*, hosted by The Decolonization Group, Utrecht University, Netherlands (May 2021).

Invited chair and commentator for panel on “American Empire on the Pacific: Whaling, Militarism, Addiction, and Tourism in the 19th and 20th Centuries,” at Annual Meeting of American Historical Association, New Orleans, LA (February 2022).

### **8) Public Lectures**

Book Talks on *Coconut Colonialism*: Harvard Alumni for Oceania (Nov. 2021), University of Naples (Nov. 2021), Goethe-University Frankfurt am Main (Nov. 2021), Association for the Social Anthropology of Oceania (Jan. 2022), University of Augsburg (Feb. 2022)

“A Sea of Islands: An Introduction to the History of Oceania,” keynote lecture at WPI Global School Oceania Hub launch event (Feb. 2021).

“Apia Calling: How the Telegraph Came to German Samoa,” invited lecture at Goethe-Society, Auckland, New Zealand (August 2012).

### **9) Editorial and Referee Services**

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| Reviewer for <i>Labor History</i> (Routledge)                                   | 2020-present |
| Reviewer for <i>American Journal of Legal History</i> (Oxford University Press) | 2019-present |

### **10) Memberships and Offices in Professional Societies**

American Historical Association (AHA)  
Organization of American Historians (OAH)  
Society for Historians of U.S. Foreign Relations (SHAHR)  
Labor and Working-Class History Association (LAWCHA)  
German Research Foundation (DFG), Young Scholars Network “Black Diaspora and Germany”  
German Association for American Studies (DGfA)

### **11) Scholarship in Progress**

*War Workers: How Foreigners Built the U.S. Military from the Civil War to Iraq* (second book manuscript, research in progress)

“Pacific Islanders and the U.S. Military in World War II” (journal article to be submitted for *Journal of American History*, summer 2022)

“Servicing the Occupiers: Sex Work in the Vietnam War” (journal article to be submitted for special issue on “Gender, War, and Coerced Labor,” *Labor History*, spring 2022)

“Teaching U.S. Territories” (journal article to be submitted to AHA *Perspectives on History*, summer 2022)

### **12) Scholarly Honors and Awards**

Obama Dissertation Prize 2015, Transnational American Studies Institute, Mainz, Germany

### 13) Citations

See attached document

### 14) Public Scholarship

Twitter: @HolgerDroessler

“American Samoa has succeeded in fighting covid-19 while the U.S. government failed: Historical awareness can save lives.” *Washington Post*, Made by History, July 27, 2020, <[washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/07/27/american-samoa-has-succeeded-fighting-covid-19-while-us-government-failed](https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/07/27/american-samoa-has-succeeded-fighting-covid-19-while-us-government-failed/)>.

Co-Host of “New Books in History” podcast on *New Books Network* 2020-present

American Samoa Affairs Editor at *Pasquines* (news website for U.S. territories) 2020-present

“The Life and Times of Taole: Whaling, Unfree Labor, and Lessons for U.S. History in the Pacific.” *U.S. History Scene*, Jan. 2014 <[ushistoryscene.com/article/taole-pacific](http://ushistoryscene.com/article/taole-pacific)>.

### SERVICE

#### 1) Service to the Profession

none

#### 2) Service to WPI

Elected Member of Campus Hearing Board 2021-23

Co-Founder of WPI Oceania Hub 2021-present

Chair of HUA Class of 1879 Awards Committee 2021  
(honors excellent works in culminating project for HUA requirement)

Reader for President’s IQP Awards 2020, 2021  
(honors IQPs with outstanding focus on science, technology, and societal needs)

Member of HUA Class of 1879 Awards Committee 2020  
(honors excellent works in culminating project for HUA requirement)

#### 3) Service to the Community

Member, Advisory Board, Clemente Program Worcester 2020-present

Mentor, Big Brothers Big Sisters Massachusetts Bay 2013-15

Member of Amnesty International 2003-present

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February 2022