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Carolina Low Country and Atlantic World Commemorating the Abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade

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Call for Papers
Carolina Low Country and Atlantic World
Commemorating the Abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade.
Charleston, South Carolina, March 26-29, 2008.



To mark the Bicentennial of the abolition of the Atlantic Slave trade in the United States and the British Empire, the Program in the Carolina Lowcountry and Atlantic World (CLAW) at the College of Charleston will hold a conference from March 26-29, 2008, focusing on the trade, and its effects on the Lowcountry and the American South as a whole. Topics to be covered include: African culture in the Lowcountry; Lowcountry Caribbean trade connections; impact on the southern economy; the growth of the internal slave trade; Charleston as a slave trading center; influence on pro- and anti-slavery ideology; the growth of "scientific" racism; attempts to reopen the trade; and the illegal importation of slaves.

As one of the key nodes for the importation of slaves into continental North America, Charleston is a prime location for a conference such as this. It was a major entrepot for African and Caribbean slaves and, as Walter Johnson has highlighted in *Slave by Slave*, also a major transit point for slaves being transferred from the upper South to the deep South. In addition, Charleston politicians such as Robert Barnwell Rhett were major supporters of attempts to reopen the trade. This conference will be the academic culmination of a city-wide series of events marking the bicentenary and beginning to address Charleston's role in the international slave trade (and its legacy) more directly and thoroughly than ever before. It is therefore in line with a number of local initiatives that will address the "acknowledgment gap" between white and black contributions to local culture and history -- most prominent among these efforts are the federally supported Gullah-Geechee and the city's commitment to its proposed International African American Museum. Because of the density of slave trade-related sites people attending the conference will have an unparalleled opportunity to tour historically pertinent sites, including local archives as well as buildings, plantations, and the like.

Abstracts of between 250 and 400 words, accompanied by a 2-page c.v., should be sent to conference convener Simon Lewis at lewiss@cofc.edu before Friday, July 20th, 2007. Notification of acceptance will be sent out by the end of August, and completed papers will then need to be submitted electronically before January 21st, 2008, so that all accepted papers can be posted in full on a

password-protected website prior to the conference. At the conference itself, presenters will have ten minutes each to extrapolate from their written papers and engage in seminar-style discussions with their colleagues. In our previous conferences on such topics as the Haitian Revolution, Manumission in the Atlantic World, and Lowcountry and Caribbean foodways, we have found this process to be highly productive and intellectually invigorating because of the ample time available for discussion and the opportunities junior scholars have to interact with the major players in their field.

Among the scholars who have already committed to the conference as speakers, panel chairs, commentators, or presenters are: Paul Lovejoy, Joseph Inikori, Kenneth Morgan, Jerome Handler, James Walvin, David Eltis, and Vincent Carretta. For further information on the Carolina Lowcountry and Atlantic World program, please visit our website at www.cofc.edu/atlanticworld or call Simon Lewis at 843-953-1920.