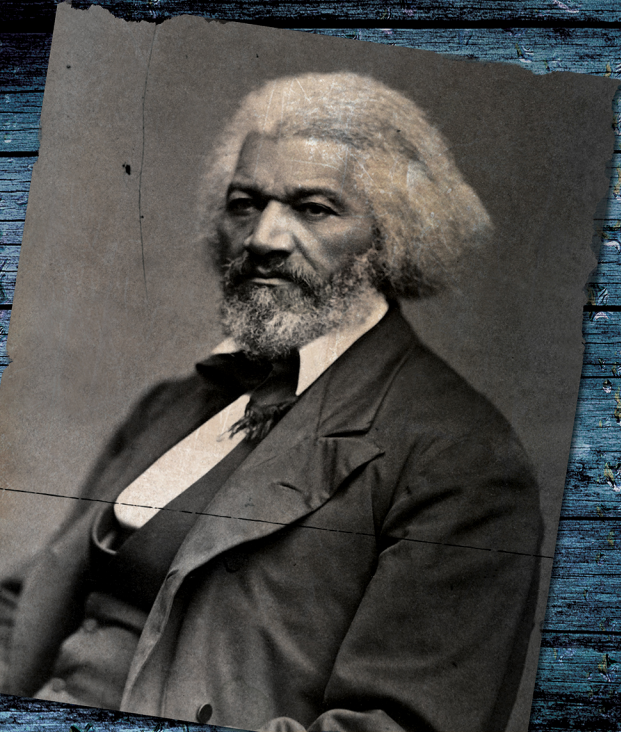


THE PROMISE AND IMPERIALISM OF FREE TRADE:
CHINA AND THE "LONG
ARM OF COMMERCE" IN
FREDERICK DOUGLASS'S
LIFE AND TIMES (1882)
DR. KENDALL JOHNSON



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THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
16 FEB [THU] 6:30PM

The essay considers Douglass's struggle for authorship, beginning from his *Narrative of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845) through *My Bondage, Me Freedom* (1855), and finally to *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (1881). The struggle begins as a fugitive slave with the challenge of securing ownership of the labor required in representing one's experiences for publication while avoiding bounty hunters. It continues with the international scene that enables him to write *My Bondage and My Freedom*. *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* is both an end point in his quest for civic enfranchisement and a new beginning to complicated challenges of owning one's story in a globally economy of print publication after the failure of Reconstruction.

This talk is part of a series of lectures organized by the American Studies Programme (SMLC) and inspired by the exhibition "Rising Above: The Kinsey African American Art and History Collection" which is on show at the University Museum and Art Gallery until February 26, 2017.

The exhibition is co-organized by the Faculty of Arts and the University Museum and Art Gallery of the University of Hong Kong in collaboration with KBK Enterprises, Inc. and the Bernard and Shirley Kinsey Foundation for Arts & Education. Goldman Sachs is a Silver Sponsor and American Airlines is the exhibition's Official Airline. Supporting organizations include the Consulate General of the United States of America in Hong Kong and Macau, the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Tourism Board, the Lan Kwai Fong Group, and the Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong. With special thanks to Caripelago Trading Limited.



Dr. Johnson researches and teaches American literature and studies, colonial through early-twentieth centuries. His forthcoming book *The New Middle Kingdom: China in the Early American Romance of Free Trade* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017) explores the literary historical legacy of US merchants, missionaries, and diplomats who ventured to China before the Civil War (1861-1865). He is the contributing editor of *Narratives of Free Trade: The Commercial Cultures of Early US-China Relations* (Hong Kong University Press, 2012) and the author of *Henry James and the Visual* (Cambridge University Press in 2007; 2011).

All are welcome. No registration is required. For enquiries, please contact Dr. Tim Gruenewald at tgruene@hku.hk