

Matthew Pettway is assistant professor of Spanish at the University of South Alabama where he is associated with the Africana Studies Program. He teaches Afro-Latin American, Caribbean and Spanish literatures. He was a Visiting Scholar in the LILAS BENSON Latin American Studies Collections at the University of Texas in Austin in 2014. And, in 2013, the University of Kansas named him the Langston Hughes Visiting Professor. At Kansas, he offered a graduate seminar on blacks in Cuban literature and delivered a public lecture on his research. Moreover, he was awarded the Foreign Language Area Studies Award (FLAS) to study Brazilian Portuguese in Salvador da Bahia in summer 2005.

Pettway has a keen interest in how Afro-Latin Americans that endured extreme trauma in the colonial era took hold of the aesthetic and spiritual tools available to them to conceive a poetics of emancipation. His research examines race, slavery, and African ideas of spirit and cosmos in nineteenth-century Black Cuban literature. His work is part of a broader project of literary and historical recovery, akin to what Toni Morrison has termed “a kind of literary archaeology.” And, he has published peer-reviewed articles, book chapters and encyclopedia entries on Cuban writers of African descent such as Juan Francisco Manzano, Plácido, José del Carmen Díaz, and Ambrosio Echemendía.

His first book, *Cuban Literature in the Age of Black Insurrection: Manzano, Plácido and Afro-Latino Religion* is part of the Caribbean Studies Series of the University Press of Mississippi.

Pettway’s peer-reviewed articles, “Ritual and Reason: Negotiating Freedom in the Literature of Juan Francisco Manzano” and “Black Femininity and the Silence of Domestic Space in ‘The Cemetery on the Sugar Plantation’ by José del Carmen Díaz” appeared in *PALARA* (2012) and *The Zora Neale Hurston Forum* (2013), respectively. In the Cuban journal *Del Caribe*, he published two pieces: “Manzano en el monte: Recuperando el sujeto perdido en ‘Un sueño a mi Segundo hermano’” (2013) and “Páginas salvadas de la historia de Santiago de Cuba” (2014). His review essay in *American Studies Journal* examines *Caribbean Literature and the Public Sphere: From the Plantation to the Postcolonial* (2011) by Raphael Dalleo and *Oshun’s Daughters: The Search for Womanhood in the Americas* (2014) by Vanessa Valdés. Furthermore, he published “The Altar, The Oath and the Body of Christ: Ritual Poetics and Cuban Racial Politics of 1844,” the inaugural chapter in *Black Writing, Culture and the State in Latin America*, an anthology edited by Jerome Branche and published by Vanderbilt University Press (2015). He also contributed four biographical articles to *The Dictionary of Caribbean and Afro-Latin American Biography* that Oxford University Press released in 2016.

Matthew Pettway is a native of Detroit, Michigan.