Curriculum Vitae

**Joanna Davidson**

Department of Anthropology

Boston University

232 Bay State Road

Boston, MA 02215

[jhdavid@bu.edu](mailto:jhdavid@bu.edu)

**EDUCATION**

Ph.D. **Emory University,** Anthropology, November 2007

Dissertation: *Feet in the Fire: Social Change and Continuity among the Diola of Guinea-Bissau*

M.A. **Emory University,** Anthropology, June 2001

B.A. **Stanford University,** Anthropology and Feminist Studies with honors, June 1992

# RESEARCH INTERESTS

# Social and cultural responses to environmental change; political ecology; cultural conceptions of knowledge; anthropological engagements with development theory and practice; social and religious transformation.

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

2011- present ***Assistant Professor*, Department of Anthropology, Boston University**

2010 ***Researcher*, Senegal & Guinea-Bissau**

(Jan-June) Conducted six months of ethnographic research in West Africa. Topics included: development and humanitarian aid efforts, environmental change, agricultural transformation, schooling.

2008-2011 ***Postdoctoral Fellow*,** **States at Regional Risk Program (SARR), Emory University**

***Adjunct Assistant Professor*, Department of Anthropology, Emory University**

***Faculty Member,* Emory Program in Development Studies**

Conducted two independent research projects on topics of contemporary concern in West Africa; developed and taught interdisciplinary advanced undergraduate seminars; coordinated SARR Fellows reading group; co-organized SARR conference on “Mano River Region at Risk” in Monrovia, Liberia (November 2008).

1998-present ***Senior Strategist (Consultant)*,** **Ashoka, Washington D.C.**

Consult with senior executive staff and board members to develop strategic plans for this international NGO, specifically regarding African programs, social entrepreneurship, and rural development. Serve as panel chair on international juries selecting Ashoka Fellows in Africa, Latin America, and Europe.

2004 ***Visiting Scholar,*****Centre for Cross-Cultural Research (CCCR)**

**The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia**

Participated in a forum for selected junior and senior scholars to present work-in-progress and collectively grapple with current issues and techniques in ethnographic writing.

* 1. ***Researcher***, **Guinea-Bissau, West Africa**

Conducted ethnographic research in a rural Diola village in northwestern Guinea-Bissau. Research topics included the impact of environmental change on rural populations, social and religious transformation, inter-ethnic relations, and gendered domains of knowledge and power.

1999 & 2000 ***Researcher,*** **Guinea-Bissau, West Africa**

(summers) Conducted pilot studies on ethnicity and inter-ethnic relations in Guinea-Bissau.

1995-1998 ***Associate Director of International Programs,* Ashoka, Wash D.C. and New York**

Designed and implemented programs to establish international collaboration among social entrepreneurs working in the citizen sector in Africa, Asia, Central Europe, and Latin America. Devised new concepts and methods for assessing impact of social change efforts.

1994 ***Consultant,* Organización de Desarrollo Empresarial Feminino (ODEF)**

**San Pedro Sula, Honduras**

Evaluated rural development projects focused on gender equity in several Honduran communities.

1994 ***Research Assistant,* Alandaluz, Ecuador**

Conducted ethnographic needs assessment of Secoya indigenous community in Ecuadorian Amazonia.

* 1. ***Assistant Director,* African Refugee Resettlement Center, San Francisco**

Provided comprehensive social services for African refugees; presented testimony to public officials; advocated for refugee and immigrant rights.

# PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

**Articles and Books Chapters**

Davidson, J. (forthcoming) “Rice and Revolution: Agrarian Life and Global Food Policy on the Upper Guinea Coast,” in J. Knoerr and C. Kohl (Eds) *The Upper Guinea Coast in Transnational Perspective*, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology and Berghahn Books.

Davidson, J. 2012. “Of Rice and Men: Climate Change, Religion, and Personhood among the Diola of Guinea-Bissau,” *Journal of the Study of Nature, Religion, and Culture*. Volume 6(3): 363-381.

Davidson, J. 2012. “Basket Cases and Breadbaskets: Sacred Rice and Agricultural Development in Postcolonial Africa,” *Culture, Agriculture, Food & Environment.* Volume 34(1): 15-32.

Davidson, J. 2010. “Cultivating Knowledge: Development, Dissemblance, and Discursive Contradictions among the Diola of Guinea-Bissau.” *American Ethnologist.* Volume 37(2): 212-226.

Davidson, J. 2009. “‘We Work Hard’: Customary Imperatives of the Diola Work Regime in the Context of Environmental and Economic Change.” *African Studies Review.* Volume 52(2): 19-141.

Davidson, J. 2006*.*  “Rotten Fish: Polarization, Pluralism and Migrant-Host Relations in Guinea-Bissau.” In D. L. Donham and E. Bay (Eds) *States of Violence: Contemporary Conflicts in the African Subcontinent.*Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press. Pp. 58-93.

###### Davidson, J. 2003. “Mato, Mesquita e Maternidade: Diola Land Practices and Conflicts in Susana, Guinea-Bissau.” Rome: FAO.

Davidson, J. 2003. “Native Birth: Identity and Territory in Postcolonial Guinea-Bissau, West Africa.” *European Journal of Cultural Studies.* Volume 6(1): 37-54.

Davidson, J. 2002. “Plural Society and Inter-ethnic Relations in Guinea-Bissau.” In R. A. Shweder, M. Minnow, and H. R. Markus (Eds) *Engaging Cultural Differences: The Multicultural Challenge in Liberal Democracies.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation. Pp. 417-431.

# Book Reviews

Davidson, J. 2013. “Rice Biofortification: lessons for global science and development. *Journal of Peasant Studies.* Volume 40(4): 790-794.

# Presentations

*Jopai, and the Limits of Legibility,* Invited lecture, Walter Rodney seminar series, African Studies Center, Boston University, April 2013.

*“The Devil is in the Details: Ivan Karp’s Ethnographic Sensibilities,”* Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, San Francisco, CA, November 2012.

*Co-Organizer,* Panel: The Work and Legacy of Ivan Karp, Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, San Francisco, CA, November 2012.

*Gendered Dimensions of Environmental Change in Rural West Africa,* Invited lecture at the MIT Workshop on Gender, Technology, and Development, Cambridge, MA, October 2012.

*The Political Ecology of Environmental Change in Rural West Africa.* Guest lecture in Geography & Environment 400/600, Boston University, September 2012.

*Invited Expert, United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).* Briefed UN officials on emerging and ongoing areas of conflict in Guinea-Bissau, New York, NY, May 2012.

“School is the path now:” Labor, Learning, and New Rural Realities in Guinea-Bissau, West Africa. Invited lecture at the Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University, Providence, RI, March 2012.

*Chair and Co-Organizer,* Panel: Keeping Company: Ethnographic Portraits Revisited, Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Montreal, Canada, November 2011.

*Marina: A Life Foreclosed,* Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Montreal, Canada, November 2011.

*From Basket Case to Breadbasket: Agricultural Development in Postcolonial Africa, Again,* Politics in Africa Conference, Institute of African Studies, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, April 2011.

*Chair & Discussant,* Panel on Nationalism and Development, Politics in Africa Conference, Institute of African Studies, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, April 2011.

*Crops and Conflict,* Yale Council on African Studies, Yale University, New Haven, CT, Feb 2011.

*Sacred Rice: Identity, Encounter, and Development on the Upper Guinea Coast,* Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Leipzig, Germany, December 2010.

*Food and Culture: Rice among the Diola,* Coming to the Table: Critical Perspectives on Food, Health, and Justice, Emory University Center for Ethics, September 2010.

*Roundtable member,* Social Science Research Council Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum (CPPF) United Nations Interagency symposium on West African Drug Trafficking, Dakar, Senegal, January 2010.

*The “New” Green Revolution in Africa?* Interdisciplinary Group in Development Studies, Emory University, November 2009.

*Water and Global Development.* Guest Lecture, Global Classroom pilot for Master’s in Development Practice (MDP) program, Emory University, October 2009.

*The Dreams and Delusions of a New Green Revolution for Africa.* Annual Meeting of the American Ethnological Society, Vancouver, BC, May 2009.

*“We used to be able to do this”: Discourses of Decline among Rural Diola in Guinea-Bissau, West Africa*. Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, San Francisco, CA, November 2008.

*Patterns in West African History.* Guest lecture, Anthropology 190 (Living Across Cultures), Emory University, October 2008.

*Violence and the Public Sphere: Speaking Across Africa and Latin America.* Institute for Developing Nations (IDN), Emory University, September 2008.

*Secrecy and Silence in Diola Social Life.* Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington D.C., November 2007.

*Invited Expert,* United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). Briefed UN officials on emerging and potential areas of conflict in Guinea-Bissau, including land-based conflicts, environmental change, and migration patterns. New York, NY, October 2007.

*Controlling Knowledge in the Context of Economic Decline: The Production and Circulation of Information among Diola Villagers in Guinea-Bissau.* Annual meeting of the African Studies Association, New York, NY, October 2007.

*Feet in the Fire: Social Reproduction and Work Ethic among the Diola of Guinea-Bissau*. Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, San Francisco, CA, November 2006.

*Ulysses in West Africa: Transatlantic Transformations and the Epic of Bolama.* Invited lecture for the Prime Movers of the Atlantic World Symposium, SUNY-Buffalo, April 2006

*Social Reproduction among the Diola of Guinea-Bissau.* Department of Anthropology, Yale University, New Haven, CT, April 2006.

*Of Missions and Men: Diola Christians and Transformations of Personhood in Guinea-Bissau.* Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington D.C., November 2005.

*Wombs and Tombs: Some Symbolic Dimensions of Diola Burial Practices.* Annual Meeting of the American Ethnological Society, Atlanta, GA, April 2004.

*Authenticity and the Mediation of Modern Ethnicity.* Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, San Francisco, CA, November 2000.

*Elective Ethnicity: The Conundrum of Cultural Norm Conflict in Guinea-Bissau.* Social Science Research Council working group conference on Ethnic Customs, Assimilation, and American Law, Chicago, IL, April 2000.

*Longitudinal Social Impact Analysis: A Methodology for Social Entrepreneurs.* Ashoka-Brazil first annual conference on Social Entrepreneurism and Social Justice, São Paulo, Brazil,

October 1997.

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

2011-present ***Assistant Professor***, **Department of Anthropology, Boston University**

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (AN 101); Peoples and Cultures of Africa (AN 312); Critical Perspectives on the Food and Water Crises (AN 363); Exploring Ethnographic Genres (AN 584); Proposal Writing for Social Science Research (AN 506); other courses in development.

2009 ***Recognition for Excellent Teaching,* Phi Beta Kappa Society,**

**Gamma Chapter of Georgia.**

2008-2011 ***Instructor***, **States at Regional Risk Program (SARR), Emory University**

Critical Perspectives on the Global Food and Water Crises (cross-listed as Anthropology 385; Environmental Studies 385; Interdisciplinary Studies 385); Senior Seminar in African Studies: Environmental Change and Development in Africa (African Studies 490).

2007-2011 ***Instructor/Juror***, **Grant Writing Institute, Emory University**

Participated as a faculty member in workshopsfor graduate students across the humanities and social sciences to improve dissertation research proposals for external funding.

2006 ***Instructor,*** **Department of Sociology, Emory University**

Intensive grant-writing workshop for graduate students, Department of Sociology.

2006 ***Instructor,*** **Department of Anthropology,** **Emory University**

Anthropology 202: Concepts and Methods in Cultural Anthropology.

2004-2005 ***Instructor*, Freshman Seminar Program, Emory University**

ECFS 190: Frontiers in Natural and Social Sciences.

2001 ***Co-Instructor,*** **Department of Anthropology,** **Emory University**

Anthropology 202: Concepts and Methods in Cultural Anthropology.

# FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS

2006-2007 Woodrow Wilson Foundation, Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship

2005-2006 Emory University, Dean’s Teaching Fellowship

* 1. Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Emory University, Teacher-Scholar Fellowship
  2. Social Science Research Council, Global Security and Cooperation Program,DoctoralDissertation Fellowship
  3. National Science Foundation, Cultural Anthropology Dissertation Improvement Grant
  4. Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, Dissertation Fieldwork Grant
  5. Emory University Internationalization Fund, FieldworkGrant
  6. Ford Foundation, Vernacular Modernities Initiative, Area Studies Fellowship
  7. National Science Foundation, Graduate Research Fellowship

1999 Social Science Research Council, Pilot Research Grant

1998-1999 Woodrow Wilson Foundation, Andrew W. Mellon Humanistic Studies Fellowship

1998-2005Emory University, Graduate Fellowship for Doctoral Studies in Anthropology

**SERVICE**

**University Service**

2012-present ***Committee Member***, **Boston University**

* + - 7-year BA/MD Admissions Committee, College of Arts and Sciences
    - Graduate Admissions Committee, Department of Anthropology
    - Social Science Curriculum Committee, College of Arts and Sciences
    - African Studies Financial Aid Committee, African Studies Center
    - African Studies Center representative, Faculty Advisory Committee for Student Academic Life, College of Arts and Sciences

2007-2011 ***Committee Member,* Emory University**

* Dean’s Special Advisory Committee for the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
* Master’s in Development Practice Curriculum Committee
* Development Studies Steering Committee

**Service in the Discipline**

2007-present ***Peer Reviewer***

Evaluated academic manuscripts for publication in the following journals: *American Ethnologist (7), African Studies Review (2); Journal of Agrarian Change (2); Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism (1), Ethnopolitics (2); Africa Today (1); Lusotopie (1); Culture, Agriculture, Food & Environment (2).*

2007-2010 ***Secretary of the Executive Board*,** **American Ethnological Society**

Participated as voting member of the AES executive board; composed monthly AES column and served as contributing editor for *Anthropology News*; recorded and distributed minutes to board members; communicated with general membership as needed; maintained AES records and archives; coordinated efforts to overhaul AES website.

2007-2009 ***Screener***, **Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research**

Reviewed and evaluated Africanist socio-cultural anthropology proposals.

2007 ***Juror***, **Cultural Horizons Prize, Society for Cultural Anthropology**

Served as one of three jury members responsible for choosing the best published article in *Cultural Anthropology* 2006*.*

**PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

American Anthropological Association (AAA), American Ethnological Society (AES), Anthropology and the Environment Section of AAA (A&E), African Studies Association (ASA)

**LANGUAGES**

Guinean Crioulo, Edjamat Diola, Portuguese, Spanish, French, Hebrew