

Curriculum Vitae
Joanna Davidson

Department of Anthropology
Boston University
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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; anthropological engagements with development theory and practice; social and religious transformation; cultural conceptions of knowledge; gender and feminist studies; storytelling.

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 works-in-progress and collectively grapple with current issues and techniques in ethnographic writing.

- 2001-2003 **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 (summers) **Researcher, Guinea-Bissau, West Africa**
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.
- 1992-1994 **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

Book

Davidson, Joanna. 2016. *Sacred Rice: Identity, Environment, and Development in Rural West Africa*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Articles and Books Chapters

- Davidson, J. 2016. "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 Global Perspective*. Oxford: Berghahn Books, pp. 174-196.
- 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

- Narrative Medicine: Can Stories Save Lives?* Storytelling, Illness and Medicine Conference, Inter-Disciplinary Network, Budapest, Hungary, March 2016.
- The Lives of Others: Enacting Connectivity through Jola Stories*, Invited lecture at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) Symposium in honor of Olga Linares, Panama City, Panama, February 2016.
- Imagining Social Responsibilities in the Twenty-First Century: Perspectives on Faith-Based Traditions*, Discussant, Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Denver, CO, November, 2015.
- Ethnography as Storytelling*, Invited lecture, Bullying Research Network (BRNET), Boston University School of Education, June 2015.
- Environmental Change and Structural Uncertainty in Rural West Africa*, Invited lecture, Boston University Alumni Discovery Series, May 2015.
- African Families in Transition: The Case of Widows*, Annual Africa/Diaspora Conference, Center for African Peace and Conflict Resolution, California State University, Sacramento, April 2015.
- The Problem of Widows*, Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington DC, December 2014.
- Chair and Co-Organizer*, Panel: Aberrant Women, Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington DC, December 2014.
- Theorizing Invisibility*, Annual meeting of the American Ethnological Society, Boston, MA, April 2014.

- 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.
- 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.
- Labor and Development*, Panelist for Workshop on Curriculum Development, Master’s in Development Practice and Institute for Developing Nations (IDN), Emory University, October 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.
- 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.

- 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.

Selected Guest Lectures

- The Political Ecology of Environmental Change in Rural West Africa.* Guest lecture in Geography & Environment (GE 400/600; Prof. Anne Short) Boston University, December 2015, November 2013, September 2012.
- Ethnographic Toolkits for Global Health,* Guest lecture for Boston University Medical School class on Global Health, September 2015.

Ethnographic Research Methods and Theoretical Storytelling. Guest lecture in Proseminar: Theory, Methods, and Techniques in Fieldwork (AN 590; Prof. Rob Weller) Boston University, September 2015

Ethnography versus Anthropology? Guest lecture in Proseminar: The Biological and Historical Past (AN 705; Prof. Matt Cartmill) Boston University, March 2014

Sacred Rice in Rural Guinea-Bissau, West Africa. Guest lecture in Food & Anthropology (MET ML 641; Prof. Carole Counihan) Boston University, November 2013.

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

Food and Development. Guest lecture, Introduction to Anthropology (Anthropology101; Prof. Peter Brown), Emory University, April 2009.

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

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (AN 101); Peoples and Cultures of Africa (AN 312); Food and Water (AN 363); Anthropological Critiques of Development (AN 589); Exploring Ethnographic Genres (AN 584); Proposal Writing for Social Science Research (AN 506); The Power, Politics, and Ethics of Storytelling (KHC AN 102); 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 workshops for 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

- 2014-2015 Boston University Center for the Humanities (BUCH), Junior Faculty Fellow
- 2006-2007 Woodrow Wilson Foundation, Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship
- 2005-2006 Emory University, Dean's Teaching Fellowship
- 2004-2005 Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Emory University, Teacher-Scholar Fellowship
- 2001-2003 Social Science Research Council, Global Security and Cooperation Program, Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship
- 2001-2003 National Science Foundation, Cultural Anthropology Dissertation Improvement Grant
- 2001-2004 Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, Dissertation Fieldwork Grant
- 2001-2002 Emory University Internationalization Fund, Fieldwork Grant
- 2000-2001 Ford Foundation, Vernacular Modernities Initiative, Area Studies Fellowship
- 1999-2003 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
- 1998-2005 Emory University, Graduate Fellowship for Doctoral Studies in Anthropology

SERVICE

University Service

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

- Search Committee, Assistant Professor in Psychological Anthropology (2015-2016)
- Search Committee, African Studies Outreach Coordinator (2015)
- Admissions Committee, Seven Year Accelerated BA/MD Program (2013-present)
- Chair, Graduate Student Professionalization Committee, Department of Anthropology (2013-present)
- Graduate Admissions Committee, Department of Anthropology (2012)
- Social Science Curriculum Committee, College of Arts and Sciences (2012-present)
- African Studies FLAS Selection Committee, African Studies Center (2012-present)
- African Studies Center representative, Faculty Advisory Committee for Student Academic Life, College of Arts and Sciences (2012-present)

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

2014-2016 ***Program Chair, Association for Feminist Anthropology (AFA)***

Coordinate the solicitation, review and rankings of panels and papers submitted to the AFA for review, in consultation with the AFA Board. Prepare AFA column for *Anthropology News*, compose final report to AFA Board.

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

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-present ***Peer Reviewer***

Evaluated academic manuscripts and textbooks for publication for the following journals and presses: *American Ethnologist*, *African Studies Review*; *Journal of Agrarian Change*; *Ethnography*; *Afriques*; *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism*, *Ethnopolitics*; *Journal of Peasant Studies*; *Africa Today*; *Lusotopie*; *Culture*,

Agriculture, Food & Environment (CAFÉ); Politique Africaine; Food & Foodways; Numen; Oxford University Press; W.W. Norton & Company; Berghahn Books.

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), Association for Feminist Anthropology (AFA), African Studies Association (ASA).

LANGUAGES

Guinean Crioulo, Edjamaat Jola, Portuguese, Spanish, French.