

Joanna Davidson
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Boston University

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EDUCATION

- Ph.D. **Emory University**, Anthropology, 2007
 Dissertation: *Feet in the Fire: Social Change and Continuity among the Diola of Guinea-Bissau*
- M.A. **Emory University**, Anthropology, 2001
- B.A. **Stanford University**, Anthropology and Feminist Studies with Honors, 1992

ACADEMIC PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

Associate Director, Kilachand Honors College, Boston University, 2019-present

Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology (affiliated faculty member, African Studies Center, Kilachand Honors College, Women's Gender & Sexuality Studies Program, and Global Development Policy Center), Boston University, 2018-present.

Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology (affiliated faculty member, African Studies Center and Kilachand Honors College), Boston University, 2011-2018.

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

RELATED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Consultant, Ashoka, Washington DC, 1998-2012

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

Associate Director of International Programs, Ashoka, Wash DC and Brazil, 1995-1998

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

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

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

Assistant Director, African Refugee Resettlement Center, San Francisco, CA, 1992-1994

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

PUBLICATIONS

Book

Sacred Rice: An Ethnography of Identity, Environment, and Development in Rural West Africa (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

Edited Volume

Narrating Illness: Prospects and Constraints, eds. Joanna Davidson & Yomna Saber (Oxford: Interdisciplinary Press, 2016).

Peer-Reviewed Articles and Book Chapters

"The Problem of Widows," *American Ethnologist* 47.1 (2020).

"People insult me – Oh My!": Reflections on Jola Women's Story-Songs in Rural West Africa," in *Global Storytelling*, eds. T. A. Hayes, T. Edlmann, and L. Brown (Leiden & Boston: Brill Press, 2019).

"Women in Guinea-Bissau," in *The Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African Women's History* (Oxford University Press, 2019).

"Towards an Ethnography of Narrative Competence," in *Narrating Illness: Prospects and Constraints*, eds. J. Davidson and Y. Saber (Oxford: Interdisciplinary Press, 2016).

"Introduction: Prospects of Storykind," by **J. Davidson** and Y. Saber, in *Narrating Illness: Prospects and Constraints*, eds. J. Davidson and Y. Saber (Oxford: Interdisciplinary Press, 2016).

"Rice and Revolution: Agrarian Life and Global Food Policy on the Upper Guinea Coast," in *The Upper Guinea Coast in Global Perspective*, eds. J. Knöerr and C. Kohl (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2016): 174-196.

"Multidisciplinary Approaches to Research on Bullying in Adolescence," by M. Holt, J. Grief Green, M. Tsay-Vogel, **J. Davidson**, and C. Brown, *Adolescent Research Review*, 2016, doi: 10.1007/s40894-016-0041-0.

"Of Rice and Men: Climate Change, Religion, and Personhood among the Diola of Guinea-Bissau," *Journal of the Study of Nature, Religion, and Culture* 6.3 (2012): 363-381.

"Basket Cases and Breadbaskets: Sacred Rice and Agricultural Development in Postcolonial Africa," *Culture, Agriculture, Food & Environment* 34.1 (2012): 15-32.

"Cultivating Knowledge: Development, Dissemblance, and Discursive Contradictions among the Diola of Guinea-Bissau," *American Ethnologist* 37.2 (2010): 212-226.

"We Work Hard': Customary Imperatives of the Diola Work Regime in the Context of Environmental and Economic Change," *African Studies Review* 52.2 (2009): 119-141.

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

"Native Birth: Identity and Territory in Postcolonial Guinea-Bissau, West Africa," *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 6.1 (2003): 37-54.

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

Book Reviews

Review of *Pioneers of the Field: South Africa's Women Anthropologists*, by Andrew Bank, *Journal of Southern African Studies* (in press).

Review of *West Africa's Women of God: Alinesitoué and the Diola Prophetic Tradition* by Robert M. Baum, *African Studies Review* 59.2 (2016): 254-257.

Review of *Rice Biofortification: Lessons for Global Science and Development* by Sally Brooks, *Journal of Peasant Studies* 40.4 (2013): 790-794.

Selected Policy Papers and Non-Peer-Reviewed Reports

“Guinea-Bissau: Background & Context,” Report prepared for political asylum case, 2015.

“Guinea-Bissau: Beyond Coups & Drug Trafficking,” Policy Note prepared for United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), 2012.

“Land-Based Conflicts in Guinea-Bissau,” Policy Note commissioned by the Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum (CPPF), Social Science Research Council, 2007.

“Mato, Mesquita e Maternidade: Diola Land Practices and Conflicts in Susana, Guinea-Bissau,” Report commissioned by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (Rome: FAO, 2003).

PRESENTATIONS AND CONFERENCES

Invited Lectures

Sacred Rice: Some Updates, Fairfield University, April 2019.

Widows, Marriage, & Un-marriage in Rural West Africa, African Studies Workshop, Harvard University, March 2018.

Widows & Silence, Anthropology Speaker Series, UC Berkeley, March 2018.

Singing Wives: Making and Unmaking Marriage in Rural West Africa, Anthropology Seminar Series, Boston University, February 2018.

Sacred Rice, Department of Anthropology, Haverford College, Haverford, PA, November 2016.

The Problem of Widows, Haverford College, Haverford, PA, November 2016.

Sacred Rice: Environmental change and structural uncertainty in Rural West Africa, Environmental Studies Program, Tufts University, Medford, MA, April 2016.

Sacred Rice: Environmental change and structural uncertainty in Rural West Africa, School of International Studies, Texas A&M, College Station, TX, April 2016.

The Lives of Others: Enacting Connectivity through Jola Stories, Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) Symposium in honor of Olga Linares, Panama City, Panama, February 2016.

Ethnography as Storytelling, Bullying Research Network (BRNET), School of Education, Boston University, Boston, MA, June 2015.

Environmental Change and Structural Uncertainty in Rural West Africa, Alumni Discovery Series, Boston University, Boston, MA, May 2015.

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

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

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

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

Conference Papers and Roundtables

Opting Out: Women Evading Marriage around the World, Discussant Comments, Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Vancouver, BC, Canada, November 2019.

Tying the Knot: Work, Marriage, and Suffering in Rural Guinea-Bissau, Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Atlanta, GA, November/December 2018

A House by (Not Just) Any Other Name: Widows Visibility & Invisibility in Rural West Africa, Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington DC, November 2017.

The Problem of Widows, Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Chicago, IL, November 2017.

Refusing Marriage: The Case of Widows in Rural West Africa, Annual meeting of the American Ethnological Society, Stanford, CA, March 2017.

“Women Have Their Songs”: Anthropological Reflections on the Politics of Storytelling in Rural West Africa, Storytelling: Global Reflections Conference, Inter-Disciplinary Network, Oxford, England, July 2016.

Narrative Medicine: Can Stories Save Lives? Storytelling, Illness and Medicine Conference, Inter-Disciplinary Network, Budapest, Hungary, March 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.

African Families in Transition: The Case of Widows, Annual Africa/Diaspora Conference, Center for African Peace and Conflict Resolution, California State University, Sacramento, CA, April 2015.

The Problem of Widows, Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington DC, December 2014.

Theorizing Invisibility, Discussant, Annual meeting of the American Ethnological Society, Boston, MA, April 2014.

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

- 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.
- Crops and Conflict*, Yale Council on African Studies, Yale University, New Haven, CT, February 2011.
- 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 (MDP) and Institute for Developing Nations (IDN), Emory University, Atlanta, GA, October 2010.
- Food and Culture: Rice among the Diola*, Coming to the Table: Critical Perspectives on Food, Health, and Justice, Center for Ethics, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, September 2010.
- The "New" Green Revolution in Africa?* Interdisciplinary Group in Development Studies, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, November 2009.
- The Dreams and Delusions of a New Green Revolution for Africa*, Annual Meeting of the American Ethnological Society, Vancouver, Canada, 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, Atlanta, GA, September 2008.
- Secrecy and Silence in Diola Social Life*, Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington DC, November 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.
- Of Missions and Men: Diola Christians and Transformations of Personhood in Guinea-Bissau*, Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington DC, 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.

Conference Organizing

Co-Chair and Co-Organizer, *Opting Out: Women Evading Marriage around the World, Parts 1 & 2*, Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Vancouver, BC, Canada, November 2019.

Co-Chair and Co-Organizer, *Roundtable: Feminist Anthropology – A Live Annual Review*, Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington DC, November 2017.

Chair and Co-Organizer, *Panel: Refusing Marriage*, Annual meeting of the American Ethnological Society, Stanford, CA, March 2017.

Senior Program Chair, Association for Feminist Anthropology (AFA), Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Minneapolis, MN, November 2016.

Junior Program Chair, Association for Feminist Anthropology (AFA), Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Denver, CO, November 2015.

Chair and Co-Organizer, *Panel: Aberrant Women*, Annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington DC, December 2014.

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

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

Co-Organizer, *Mano River Region at Risk Conference*, Monrovia, Liberia, November 2008.

Selected Guest Lectures

A Symbolic Interpretation of Jola Burial, Lecture for AN 101 (Introduction to Cultural Anthropology), Department of Anthropology, Boston University, December, 2019.

Anthropology & Food, Lecture for Met College Gastronomy Program (Anthropology of Food), Boston University, September, 2019.

Widows and the End of the Levirate in Rural West Africa, Lecture for AN 101 (Introduction to Cultural Anthropology), Department of Anthropology, Boston University, March 2019.

Identity & Rice, Lecture for MET ML 641 (Anthropology of Food), Boston University, February 2019.

Ethnographic & Narrative Approaches to Environmental Change, Lecture for GE 598 (Key Debates and Emerging Research in Land Change Science), Department of Earth & Environment, Boston University, September, 2017.

Familiar/ Strange: Perspectives from Anthropology. Lecture for Boston University Open House, April 2017.

Ethnographic Research Methods. Guest lecture for ID 716 (Fieldwork and Research Design in African Studies), Boston University, November 2016.

Narrative Medicine. Guest lecture for AN 210 (Medical Anthropology), Boston University, September 2016.

Social Theory & Global Health. Guest lecture for Global Health & Equity, Boston University School of Medicine (BUSM), September 2016.

The Political Ecology of Environmental Change in Rural West Africa. Guest lecture for GE 400/600 (Geography & Environment), Boston University, November 2016, December 2015, November 2013, September 2012.

Ethnographic Toolkits for Global Health. Guest lecture for Global Health, Boston University School of Medicine (BUSM), September 2015.

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

Ethnography versus Anthropology? Guest lecture for AN 705 (Proseminar: The Biological and Historical Past), Boston University, March 2014.

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

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

Food and Development. Guest lecture for ANT 101 (Introduction to Anthropology), Emory University, April 2009.

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

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Summer Stipend Program, May-July 2019.

Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies Program Small Research Grant, Boston University, March 2019.

Neu Family Award for Excellence in Teaching, College of Arts & Sciences, Boston University, May 2018.

Sue Bailey Thurman Award (nominated), Umoja Annual Unity Awards, Boston University, April 2018.

Boston University Center for the Humanities (BUCH), Junior Faculty Fellow, 2014-2015.

Phi Beta Kappa Society, Recognition for Excellence in Teaching, Gamma Chapter of Georgia, 2009.

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

Dean's Teaching Fellowship, Emory University, 2005-2006.

Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Teacher-Scholar Fellowship, Emory University, 2004-2005.

Social Science Research Council, Global Security and Cooperation Program, Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship, 2001-2003.

National Science Foundation, Cultural Anthropology Dissertation Improvement Grant, 2001-2003.

Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, Dissertation Fieldwork Grant, 2001-2003.

Emory University Internationalization Fund, Fieldwork Grant, 2001-2002.

Ford Foundation, Vernacular Modernities Initiative, Area Studies Fellowship, 2000-2001.

National Science Foundation, Graduate Research Fellowship, 1999-2003.

Social Science Research Council, Pilot Research Grant, 1999.

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

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

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Boston University

- AN 101: Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
- AN 312: Peoples & Cultures of Africa
- AN 363: Food & Water: Critical Perspectives on Global Crises
- AN/AR 510: Proposal Writing for the Social Sciences
- AN 533: Exploring Ethnographic Genres
- AN 589: Anthropological Critiques of Development
- AN 594: Topics in Cultural Anthropology: Feminist Anthropology
- AN 701: Proseminar: Anthropological Approaches to Marriage
- KHC AN 102: The Power, Politics, & Ethics of Storytelling
- KHC 401: The Process of Inquiry

Emory University

- ANT 385: Critical Perspectives on the Global food & Water Crises (cross-listed in Environmental Studies and African Studies)
- AFS 490: African Studies Senior Seminar: Environmental Change & Development in Africa
- ANT 202: Concepts & Methods in Cultural Anthropology
- ECFS 190: Frontiers in Natural & Social Sciences

Grant Writing Institute, Laney Graduate School: Faculty member & juror for intensive grant-writing workshops for graduate students in the humanities and social sciences to improve dissertation research proposals for external funding.

ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELD RESEARCH

- 2019 (Feb-March) Guinea-Bissau (topics included: marriage, widowhood, naming practices, women's songs)
- 2016 (March-April): Guinea-Bissau (topics included: widowhood, gender relations, women's songs, naming practices, funerary rituals)
- 2010 (Jan-June): Guinea-Bissau & Senegal (topics included: development and humanitarian aid efforts, environmental change, agricultural transformation, schooling)
- 2001-2003: Guinea-Bissau (topics included: impact of environmental change on rural populations, social and religious transformation, inter-ethnic

- relations, gendered domains of knowledge and power, inter-ethnic relations, missionization)
- 2000 (June-Aug): Portugal & Guinea-Bissau (topics included: ethnicity, ethnic relations, ethnography of archival sources)
- 1999 (June-Aug): Guinea-Bissau (topics included: nationalism, post-conflict dynamics, ethnicity)
- 1994: Ecuador (ethnographic needs assessment of Secoya indigenous population in Ecuadorian Amazonia)

POLICY-RELATED WORK

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.

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.

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.

SERVICE

National

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

Coordinated the solicitation, evaluation, and rankings of panels and papers submitted to the AFA for review, developed AFA program of invited and sponsored panels for the annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association, prepared AFA column for *Anthropology News*, composed final reports to AFA Board.

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

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.

Peer Reviewer, 2007-present

Evaluate 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, Journal of Agricultural Change, Numen, Oxford University Press, W.W. Norton & Company, Bergahn Books.*

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

Reviewed and evaluated Africanist socio-cultural anthropology research proposals for funding.

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

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

Boston University

Review Committee Member, Graduate Research Abroad Fellowship (GRAF), Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (2016-present)

Admissions Committee Member, Seven Year Accelerated BA/MD Program (SMED), College of Arts & Sciences and BU School of Medicine (2013-present)

Member, Social Science Curriculum Committee, College of Arts & Sciences (2012-2016)

Department of Anthropology, Boston University

Member, Graduate Student Concerns Committee (2015-present)

Address graduate student academic or other concerns with Director of Graduate Studies as needed.

Chair, Graduate Student Professionalization Committee (2013-2016)

Initiated effort to orient incoming and current graduate students on issues such as academic conduct, developing professional relationships with faculty, university resources, and Teaching Fellow expectations. Developed and coordinated orientation workshops for new PhD students.

Member, Graduate Admissions Committee (2018, 2017, 2012)

Reviewed applications to PhD and MA program, deliberated with committee on rankings, conducted Skype and in-person interviews of finalists, recruited admitted students.

Member, Search Committee, Assistant Professor in Psychological Anthropology (2015-2016)

Reviewed and ranked applications, conducted phone and Skype interviews, collaboratively hosted campus visits for finalists, successfully recruited first-choice candidate.

Member, Faculty Committee to Adjudicate Grade Dispute (2016)

African Studies Center, Boston University

Member, Search Committee, Assistant Director, African Studies Center (2017)

Member, Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Selection Committee (2017, 2015, 2012)

Reviewed and ranked applications for FLAS (Title VI) funding, worked with committee members to allocate FLAS fellowships to support African language instruction.

Member, Search Committee, African Studies Outreach Coordinator (2015)

Reviewed applications for Title VI- and Boston University-funded position to increase and enhance African Studies content and pedagogy in K-12 curricula, interviewed finalists, helped successfully recruit first-choice candidate.

Delegate, Dean's Advisory Committee for Director Selection, African Studies Center (2013)

Polled African Studies faculty on their perspectives of African Studies Center leadership, reported findings to Dean of CAS.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Anthropological Association (AAA), American Ethnological Society (AES), Association for Feminist Anthropology (AFA), Anthropology and the Environment Section of AAA (A&E), African Studies Association (ASA), Society for Humanistic Anthropology (SHA).

LANGUAGES

Guinean Kriyol, Ejamat Jola, Portuguese, Spanish, French