

## **Ben Davidson**

NEH Long-term Fellow, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, MA 01609  
ben.max.davidson@gmail.com, 914-255-1822

### **Education**

New York University, New York, NY

PhD, United States History, July 2018

Bessie and George Levy Prize for Excellence in American History, 2015

High Pass on Comprehensive Exams, 2013

Dissertation: "Freedom's Generation: Coming of Age in the Era of Emancipation"

Committee: Martha Hodes (advisor), Thomas Bender, Michele Mitchell, Steven Hahn;

Crystal Feimster (Yale University, outsider reader)

Williams College, Williamstown, MA

Bachelor of Arts, June 2010, Cum Laude with Highest Honors in History

Major: History and English, concentration in Jewish Studies

### **Publications and work in progress**

*Freedom's Generation: Coming of Age in the Era of Emancipation*, book manuscript in progress.

*The Freedman's Savings Bank, Civil War Memory, and the Possibilities of Reparations*, research for book manuscript in progress.

"The Right to Childhood and the Process of Emancipation in the American Civil War," *Civil War History* 69, no. 3 (2023), 32-55.

"Jewish Emancipation, the End of Slavery in the Anglo-Atlantic World, and Freedom's Multiple Meanings," under review, *Atlantic Studies*.

"Georgiana Tillotson and Civil War Childhood," *Emerging Civil War*, April 28, 2019, <https://emergingcivilwar.com/2019/04/28/emerging-scholar-ben-davidson>.

"History of Childhood Roundtable," *The Junto: A Group Blog on Early American History*, November 5, 2018, <https://earlyamericanists.com/2018/11/05/roundtable-the-history-of-childhood-youth-ben-davidson/>.

Encyclopedia Entry: "Women's Education," in *Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*, <https://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/womens-education/>, 2016.

### **Book reviews**

Karlos K. Hill, *The 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre: A Photographic History*, in *Journal of Southern History* 88 (2022), 418-419.

Kate Masur, *Until Justice Be Done: America's First Civil Rights Movement, From the Revolution to Reconstruction*, in *Civil War Book Review* 23 (2021), <https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/cwbr/vol23/iss2/14>.

Caitlin Rosenthal, *Accounting for Slavery: Masters and Management*, in *Civil War History* 66 (2020), 416-417.

Karsonya Wise Whitehead, *Notes From a Colored Girl: The Civil War Pocket Diaries of Emilie Frances Davis*, in *Journal of African American History* 102 (2017): 81-83.

### **Teaching**

Henry G. Fairbanks Visiting Humanities Scholar-in-Residence, Saint Michael's College, Colchester, Vermont, 2020-2023

US History, Civil War to Present

Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration in U.S. History

19<sup>th</sup>-Century Humanities

19<sup>th</sup>-Century Humanities (Honors)

Historical Justice

Civil War and Reconstruction (advanced seminar)

Advised 8 senior theses on topics from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the present

University of Texas-Austin

*Grader* (online)

History of the United States, 1492-Present, 2018-2019, 2019-2020

OnRamps Program (dual-enrollment course for students in Texas public high schools)

New York University

*Workshop leader* (instructor of record)

Emancipation in U.S. History, Spring 2014 (required 2.5-hour seminar per week, paired with introductory course, History 101)

*Teaching Assistant* (recitation section leader)

U.S. History to 1865, Fall 2017

delivered lecture, "The Civil War, Part I"

Historical Studies: Theories and Practice, History 101, Spring 2014

Culture Wars in American History, Fall 2012

*Course Assistant* (grading and administrative work)

Women, the Entertainment Industry, and the Blacklist Era, Spring 2015

War Between the Wars, U.S. History 1919-1941, Fall 2014

Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History

*Guest Lecturer and Pedagogy Instructor*

The Civil War, online graduate-level course, Fall 2016

Salisbury School, Salisbury, Conn.

*Ninth- and Tenth-Grade English Instructor*

Fall 2010 - Spring 2011

### **Long-term Fellowships**

Fulbright Scholar, University of Salzburg, Austria, Spring 2024  
American Antiquarian Society National Endowment for the Humanities Long-term Fellow,  
2023-24 (7 months)  
Mellon Fellowship, Huntington Library, 2019-2020  
Justice Sandra Day O'Connor Postdoctoral Fellow, James Smithson Fellowship Program,  
Smithsonian Institution (in residence, National Museum of American History), 2018-2019  
Core Curriculum Postdoctoral Teaching Fellowship, New York University, 2018-2019  
(declined)  
Global Perspectives on Society Teaching Fellowship, New York University-Shanghai,  
2017-2018 (declined)  
Center for the Humanities, Dissertation Research Fellowship, New York University, 2016-2017  
Henry MacCracken Fellowship, New York University, 2015-2018  
Jacob K. Javits Fellowship, U.S. Department of Education, 2011-2015

### **Short-term Fellowships and Grants**

National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Stipend, 2021  
Winterthur Library and Museum, Dissertation Fellowship, Spring 2018  
New England Regional Fellowship Consortium Award, 2016-2017  
Princeton University Library, Research Grant, 2016  
American Historical Association Council, Annual Meeting Travel Grant, 2016  
Massachusetts Historical Society, African-American Studies Fellowship, 2015-2016  
Huntington Library, C. Allan and Marjorie Braun Fellowship, 2016  
American Historical Association, Albert J. Beveridge Grant, 2015  
Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, Research Fellowship, 2015  
American Antiquarian Society, Justin G. Schiller Fellowship, 2015  
Library Company of Philadelphia and Historical Society of Pennsylvania,  
Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship, 2015  
Winterthur Library and Museum, Research Fellowship, 2015  
Virginia Historical Society, Andrew W. Mellon Research Fellowship, 2014  
Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, Scholars Program, 2009

### **New York University**

Provost's Global Research Initiative Dissertation Writing Workshop, London, Summer 2017  
Graduate School of Arts and Science Dean's Travel Grant, Fall 2016, Spring 2013  
Provost's Global Research Initiative Fellowship, Paris, Spring 2016  
Student Senators Council Travel Grant, Spring 2017, Spring 2015  
Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Summer Dissertation Research Funding, 2013

### **Williams College**

Russell Bostert Thesis Prize in History, 2010  
Rhodes Scholarship Endorsement, 2009  
Russell Bostert Research Fellowship, Summer 2009  
Bullock Poetry Prize (judged by former poet laureate Louise Glück), 2009  
Williams College Writing Assistant Program, 2008-2010  
Theodore Clarke Smith Prize in American History, 2007

### **Scholarly Presentations: International**

“The Crisis of Civil War, Enslaved Children’s Resistance, and the Meanings of Emancipation,” Nordic Association for American Studies, Uppsala, Sweden, 2023.

Panel chair, “Post-Roe America,” Nordic Association for American Studies, Uppsala, Sweden, 2023.

“Freedmen’s Savings Bank Reparations and the Uses of Memory, 1899-1910,” Historians of the Twentieth Century United States, Edinburgh, UK, 2022.

Panel chair, “Imagining and Producing Race in the US Empire,” Historians of the Twentieth Century United States, Edinburgh, UK, 2022.

Panel chair, “Myth, Memory, and Race in the Twentieth-Century South,” Historians of the Twentieth Century United States, Edinburgh, UK, 2022.

“Emancipation and the Possibilities of Language and Liberty in the Nineteenth-Century Anglo-American Atlantic World,” Irish Association for American Studies and British Association for American Studies Joint Conference, Queen’s University, Belfast, Ireland, 2016.

“‘To Be Seen and Not Heard’: Exploring the Place of Children in the Nineteenth-Century United States,” Irish Association for American Studies, Dublin, Ireland, 2015.

“Children, Emancipation, and the Making of ‘Free Land’ During the American Civil War,” Society for the History of Children and Youth Biennial Conference, University of Nottingham, UK, 2013.

### **Scholarly Presentations: U.S.**

“Memories of Civil War Childhoods and Possibilities of Freedom at the Close of the Nineteenth Century,” Massachusetts Historical Society, forthcoming, February 2024, virtual.

Commenter for panel, “Alternative Southern Perspectives on the Civil War,” Southern Historical Association, Baltimore, MD, 2022.

“The Underexamined Power of Youth in the Past and Present,” Annual Phi Alpha Theta Lecture, Saint Michael’s College, virtual, 2021.

“Freedom’s Generation: Coming of Age in the Era of Emancipation,” Humanities Center, Saint Michael’s College, virtual, 2021.

“Remembering and Remaking Freedom: African American Memories of Civil War Childhoods, 1910-1940,” Organization of American Historians, virtual, 2021 (presenter and panel organizer).

“Jewish Emancipation and the End of Slavery in the Anglo-Atlantic World,” Atlantic Jewish Worlds, 1500-1900, McNeil Center for Early American Studies, University of Pennsylvania, virtual, 2021.

“Children’s Perspectives on the Civil War and the End of Slavery,” Pasadena Civil War Roundtable, Pasadena, CA, virtual, 2020.

“Civil War Memory and American Families in the Early Twentieth Century,” National Museum of American History Research Colloquium, Washington, DC, 2019.

“Legacies of Civil War Childhood,” James Smithson Lecture, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, 2019.

“Freedom’s Generation: Coming of Age in the Era of Emancipation,” Emerging Scholars Series, American Civil War Museum, Richmond, VA, 2019.

“Childhood, Emancipation, and the Question of Citizenship,” National Museum of American History (gallery talk for Whitworth University student group), Washington, DC, 2018.

“Remembering Education, Remembering Freedom: African American Memoirs of Reconstruction, 1880-1920,” American Educational Research Association, New York, NY, 2018.

“Young People’s Experiences of Reconstruction and the Legacies of the Civil War,” American Historical Association, Washington, DC, 2018 (presenter and panel co-organizer).

“Indoctrinating the Children: Child Learners and the Anti-Slavery Movement in the Antebellum North,” Organization of American Historians, New Orleans, 2017 (presenter and panel co-organizer).

“Child Readers, Child Writers, and the Politics of Freedom in the Civil War Era,” American Historical Association, Denver, 2017.

“Freedom’s Generation: Coming of Age in the Era of Emancipation,” Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, 2016.

“Freedom’s Generation: Coming of Age in the Era of Emancipation,” Library Company of Philadelphia, 2015.

“Young People’s Experiences of Reconstruction and the Legacies of Emancipation,” American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, MA, 2015.

“‘Misbehaving’ Black Children in the American South and the Meaning of Freedom in the Civil War Era,” Afro-American Studies Graduate Conference, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, 2015.

“Using Memory to Study the History of Education in the American South during the Civil War and Reconstruction,” History of Education Conference, Indianapolis, 2014.

“Freedom’s Generation: American Families and the Meaning of Emancipation, 1850-1900,”  
Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, 2014.

“Studying Emancipation Using the Sylvester Manor Archive,” Sylvester Manor Working Group,  
New York University, 2012.

### **Other Scholarly Experience**

Baylor Institute for Oral History, Getting Started With Oral History workshop, Spring 2022  
NEH Summer Institute, “Visual Culture of the American Civil War and its Aftermath,”  
selected participant, 2021.

Training in public policy and public history through James Smithson Fellowship: included  
meetings with congressional and Smithsonian staff, attending curatorial meetings, and  
training in writing for the public, 2018-2019.

Collections Management course, National Museum of American History, Spring 2019.

American Antiquarian Society, Summer Seminar, History of the Book, “Reading  
Children,” selected seminar participant, 2015.

Institute for Constitutional History, “Race, Union, and Nation,” New-York Historical Society,  
New York, selected seminar participant, Fall 2012.

### **Professional Service**

Rokeby Museum Board of Trustees, 2022-present

Serve on advisory committee to the director for redesigned central exhibition on the  
Underground Railroad to open 2024

AP Reader, US History, Summer 2022

NEH Review Panel, Division of Public Projects, Fall 2021

Gilder Lehrman Institute Scholarly Advisory Board, 2020-Present

History Day Volunteer Judge, National Competition, 2019; New York City, 2017, 2018

Contributor, *The American Yawp*, online, open-access U.S. history textbook.

Exhibition proposal (co-curated) for “Look Again: Rethinking Reconstruction,” National  
Museum of American History, 2019.

New York University Graduate History Students Association, co-chair, 2016-2017

Fact-checking, Little, Brown Books, 2014

Worked on two children’s books about history of race and slavery.

Research Assistant, 2012-2013

Conducted research at New-York Historical Society for Professor Earl Hess, Stewart W.  
McClelland Chair in History, Lincoln Memorial University.

### **Professional Memberships**

American Historical Association

Organization of American Historians

Society of Civil War Historians

Southern Historical Association