

ALEX S. CUMMINGS

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EDUCATION

Columbia University, (New York, New York), 2003-2009

PhD in Modern United States History, with distinction (May 2009)

Dissertation: *Music Piracy and the Value of Sound, 1909-1998*

Committee: Elizabeth Blackmar (adviser), Barbara Fields, Brian Larkin, Sarah Phillips, and Andie Tucher

An analysis of the transformation of copyright law in response to changing technological and cultural practices from the beginning of the recording industry through the advent of new media in the 1960s. Combines study of legal records, oral history interviews and the material culture of sound recording to demonstrate how the political power of the culture industries grew during the twentieth century, while their product - intellectual property - became increasingly vulnerable to appropriation.

MPhil in Modern United States History (May 2006)

Examination Fields: *Colonial America; Nineteenth and Twentieth Century United States; Media Technology and Modernity*

MA in Modern United States History (May 2005)

Thesis: *Portland, Oregon and the Making of the One-Newspaper Town*

A case study of concentration of media ownership, examining the role of the Newhouse publishing empire and a controversial strike in the consolidation of two local newspapers.

University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 1999-2003

BA in History, *Summa cum laude*, with University Honors (May 2003)

Thesis: *Orientalism, Religion and the West China Border Research Society, 1911-1948*

EMPLOYMENT

Assistant Professor, Department of History, Georgia State University, 2010-present

Consortium for Faculty Diversity Fellow, Media Studies Program, Vassar College, 2008-2010

Teaching Assistant, Department of History, Columbia University, 2004-2007

ACADEMIC AWARDS

Mellon/American Council of Learned Societies Recent Doctoral Recipients Fellowship, 2010-2011

Bancroft Dissertation Prize nominee (pending), Columbia University, 2009

Society of American Historians Allan Nevins Dissertation Prize nominee, 2010

Harvard Society of Fellows nominee, Harvard University, 2009

Consortium for Faculty Diversity Post-Doctoral Fellowship, Vassar College, 2009-2010

Consortium for Faculty Diversity Scholar Travel Fund Grant, 2009

Consortium for Faculty Diversity Pre-Doctoral Fellowship, Vassar College, 2008-2009

Mellon/American Council of Learned Societies Dissertation Completion Fellowship, 2008-2009 (declined)

Whiting Fellowship, 2008-2009 (declined)

Summer Research Fellowship, Columbia University, 2007-2008

Torbet Prize, American Baptist Historical Society, 2007

Research Fellow, Center for Popular Culture Studies, Bowling Green State University, 2007

Hofstadter Fellowship, Department of History, Columbia University, 2003-2008

Secondary Education Teaching Award, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 2003

Davenport Scholar, Department of History, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 2001

North Carolina Teaching Fellow, 1999-2003

COURSES TAUGHT

Vassar College, 2008-2010

Instructor

Art, Appropriation, and New Media

Geography of Media

Approaches to Media Studies

Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Center for Labor Studies, Empire State College, 2009

Instructor

Critical Issues in Labor History

Columbia University, 2004-2007

Teaching Assistant

American Urban History, Professor Kenneth Jackson

The Radical Tradition in America, Professor Eric Foner

American Civilization to the Civil War, Professor Robert McCaughey

America since 1960, Professor Sarah Phillips

The American West, Professor Ellen Baker

United States, 1900-1940, Professor Sarah Phillips

University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 2005

Instructor

Connecting with College (writing seminar)

Teaching Assistant

Visual Performance: The Language of Our Time, Professor James Vesce

Ashbrook High School (Gastonia, North Carolina) 2003

Student Teacher

United States History

Advanced Placement American Government

PUBLICATIONS

“Marketing the ‘Information Revolution’: The 1960s Campaign for Automation,” in progress.

“From Monopoly to Intellectual Property: Music Piracy and the Remaking of American Copyright, 1909-1971,” *Journal of American History*, accepted for publication.

“Collectors, Bootleggers, and the Value of Jazz, 1930-1952,” in David Suisman and Susan Strasser, eds., *Sound in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

“Life in the Menagerie: David Crockett Graham and Missionary-Scientists in Sichuan, China, 1911-1948,” *American Baptist Quarterly* (Fall 2009).

TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS

“Bootlegging as a Form of Anti-Capitalist Consumerism,” in the session “The Commerce of Social Change: Business, Consumer Culture, and American Politics, 1950-1980,” at 2010 Annual Meeting of the Organization of American Historians (Washington, DC), 7-10 April 2010.

“Culture Industries,” chair, at 2010 Annual Meeting of the Business History Conference (Athens, GA), 27 March 2010.

“Using New Media to Map the History of the Information Economy,” poster session at 2010 Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association (San Diego, CA), 9 January 2010.

“The Technology and Rhetoric of Democratic Access to Sound Recordings,” at Humanities and Technology Association Conference, University of Virginia (Charlottesville, VA), September 24-26 2009.

“The Forms of Bootleg Culture in Twentieth Century America,” invited talk at the Department of Art and Art History, St. Olaf College (Northfield, MN), 21 April 2009.

“Sound Recording and the Rise of an Intellectual Property Movement in the United States,” talk at the Department of History, Vassar College (Poughkeepsie, NY), 27 March 2009.

“Technology, Counterculture, and the Bootleg Boom,” at *Popular Music & Popular Culture: Intersections and Histories* (IASPM-Canada annual conference), Brock University (St. Catharines, Ontario), May 9-11, 2008.

“Jazz Collectors and Copying as Preservation,” at *Sound in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (conference), Hagley Museum and Library (Wilmington, Delaware), November 29, 2007.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

“The Crack Epidemic,” “The Election of Benazir Bhutto,” “The Execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg,” “FDR and the New Deal,” “The Great Leap Forward,” “The Emergence of Pentecostalism,” “The US Enters World War I,” and “The WTO Protest in Seattle,” in Bianca Jackson and Jonathan Morton, eds., *Defining Moments in History: Over a Century of the People, Discoveries, Disasters, and Political and Cultural Events that Rocked the World* (London: Cassell Publishing, 2008).

“Is Piracy Killing Independent Music?” *Brooklyn Rail*, December 2007.

THESES ADVISED

Vassar College, Media Studies Program

Evan Altshuler, *The Google Brand and the Search for Its Marketing Strategies* (2009)

Ben Krakow, *Hail to the Thief: Music Blogs and the Propagation of New Music* (2009)

Paul Noonan, *Self Identification with Music* (2010)

Sarajane Tarlow, *Journalism 2.0: Rethinking Potentials for Specificity of Online News in the Digital Age* (2009)

RESEARCH WORK

Research Assistant for George Stephanopoulos, 2008

Historical background for study of presidential leadership (Hyperion Books)

Research Assistant for Professor Steve Gillon, 2007

Revision of US history survey textbook, *The American Experiment* (Houghton-Mifflin)

Columbia Business School (New York, New York), 2006-2007

Research Assistant for Professor Sheena Iyengar

Historical background for book project on social psychology of economic choice.

University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 2003

Research Assistant for Professor Kathleen Donohue

Collected primary sources for a history of the Freedom of Information Act.

MULTIMEDIA

Tropics of Meta, 2010

Designed and edited website for discussion of culture, politics, and research by historians and other scholars, at <http://tropicsofmeta.blogspot.com>.

Videri Project, 2005-2007, 2009-2010

Designed and organized collaborative wiki database for summary and analysis of historical literature, at <http://videri.wikidot.com>.

LICENSES/CERTIFICATIONS

North Carolina Secondary (9-12) Social Studies Teaching License

REFERENCES

Elizabeth Blackmar
212 854 3016
eb16@columbia.edu

Barbara Fields
212 662 1403

Sarah Phillips
617 353 2550
sarahphi@bu.edu

Eric Foner
212 854 5253
ef17@columbia.edu