

Suzanne E. Smith

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Education

Yale University
Ph.D. in American Studies, 1996.
Carnegie Mellon University
M.A. in English, 1988.

University of California, Los Angeles
B.A. in Communication Studies, Magna Cum Laude, 1986.

Employment

George Mason University

Associate Professor, Department of History and Art History, July 2001 to present.

Assistant Professor, Department of History and Art History, September 1996-June 2001.

Instructor, Department of History, September 1995-August 1996.

Wesleyan University

Instructor, "The Civil Rights Movement and the Culture Industry," Spring 1993

Yale University

Instructor, "The Civil Rights Movement and the Culture Industry," Fall 1994/Fall 1992

Teaching Fellow, "Formation of Modern American Culture: 1920-1980," Spring 1992

Teaching Fellow, "Introduction to Film Studies," Fall 1990

Carnegie Mellon University

Instructor, "Introduction to Drama, Fiction, and Poetry," Fall 1988/Spring 1989

Publications

Books

To Serve the Living: Funeral Directors and the African American Way of Death,
(Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010).

"Dancing in the Street": Motown and the Cultural Politics of Detroit,
(Harvard University Press, 1999).

Articles

"Where Did Our Love Go?": Contemplating the Life and Death of Motown and the Motor City,"
Michigan Quarterly Review, (forthcoming Fall 2010).

"To Serve the Living: The Public and Civic Identity of African-American Funeral Directors" in *Public Culture: Diversity, Democracy, and Community in the United States*. Marguerite S. Schaffer, Editor (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

"'Laid Out in Big Mama's Kitchen': African Americans and the Personalized Theme Funeral," in *American Behavioral History*. Peter N. Stearns, Editor (New York University Press, 2005).

"'Boogie Chillen': Uncovering Detroit's African American Cultural History." *Michigan Historical Review* 27:1 (Spring 2001): 93-107.

"Motown" in *Africana: the Encyclopedia of the African and African-American Experience*. Kwame Anthony Appiah and Henry Louis Gates, Editors (Basic Civitas Books, 1999).

"The Civil Rights Era" in *The African American Experience*. Part of *The American Journey on CD ROM Series*. Michele Stepto, General Editor. (Research Publications International, 1995).

"'Please Correct Me, If I'm Wrong': Teaching Civil Rights and Race Relations in the Age of the Politically Correct" in *Teaching a New Canon*, James Hall and Bruce Goebel, Editors. (National Council of the Teachers of English, 1995).

Book Excerpts

"The Political Culture of Detroit" in *Major Problems in African American History*, Volume II. Thomas C. Holt and Elsa Barkley Brown, Editors (Houghton Mifflin, 2000).

Reviews

"Review of Derek Valliant's *Sounds of Reform: Progressivism and Music in Chicago, 1873-1935*." *Social History*, Vol. 30, No. 4, November 2005.

"Review of Jerma A. Jackson's *Singing in My Soul: Black Music in a Secular Age*." *Journal of American History*, Vol. 92, No. 2, September 2005.

"Review of Randy D. McBee's *Dance Hall Days: Intimacy and Leisure among Working-Class Immigrants in the United States*." *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 38, No. 1, Fall 2004: 244-246.

"Review of Alice Echols's *Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin*." *Journal of American History*, Vol. 88, No. 3, December 2001.

"Review of William Van Deburg's *Black Camelot: African American Culture Heroes in Their Times, 1960-1980*." *Journal of American History*, Vol. 87, No. 1, June 2000.

"'Purchase Power'?: The False Promise of African American Consumerism." *H-Net Reviews*, www.h-net.msu.edu/reviews, January 1999.

"Discovering Difference: Contemporary Essays In American Culture." *Criticism*, Vol. 37, No. 1, Winter 1995.

"Beyond Blackface: Three Books by Donald Bogle." *Off-Hollywood Report: The Magazine of the Independent Feature Project*, Vol. 5/No. 6, Winter 1990/1991.

Fellowships, Honors, and Awards

Fellowships and Grants

National Endowment for the Humanities, Research Fellowship, July 2006-2007

Spencer Library Travel Grant, University of Kansas, October 2002

Mathy Junior Faculty Award, George Mason University, Fall 1998

Participant, NEH Summer Institute on the History of Death in America,
Columbia University, 1998

Pew Foundation Summer Fellowship, Yale University, 1994

Bentley Library Travel Fellowship, University of Michigan, 1993

Henry P. Kaiser Travel Fellowship, Wayne State University, 1993

John P. Enders Travel Grant, Yale University, 1993

Jacob K. Javits Fellowship, 1987-1991

Honors and Prizes

Martin Luther King Jr., César Chavez, Rosa Parks Visiting Professorship, University of Michigan, October 2001

Teaching Excellence Award, George Mason University, Spring 2001

Finalist, Association for Recorded Sound Collections: Awards for Excellence in Historical Recorded Sound Research, Category: Best Research in Record Labels or Manufacturers, June 2001

Honorable Mention, 1999-2000 John Hope Franklin Publication Prize, sponsored by the American Studies Association

Ralph Gleason Music Book Award, sponsored by *Rolling Stone* magazine, BMI, and New York University, Third Prize, August 2000

Finalist, Sonneck Society for American Music Dissertation Prize, 1997

Phi Alpha Theta, Yale University, 1990.

Phi Beta Kappa, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986.

Public History

NEH Adviser, "American Routes" radio program, National Public Radio, July 2009 to present
Consultant to the program including suggestions for topics and artists, musical selections, script review and other questions of historical context.

Consultant to ARO/Rockwell Group Architects, February 2003
Consulted with ARO/Rockwell Group Architects to design their winning entry in the architectural competition to design a Motown Center and Museum in Detroit, Michigan.

Consultant to the Library of Congress, Music Division, July 1998-July 2001.

Coordinated a "Motown Evening" at the Library of Congress, November 20, 1998; assisted with the creation of an oral history archive of rhythm and blues music in the Library's Music Division.

Grant Reviewer, NEH Media Proposals, March 2000

Reviewed media proposals for public television documentaries that focused on American history and, specifically, popular music. Proposals were multifaceted including: scripts, video clips, and historical research. Also responsible for assessing proposed budgets for each proposal, which ranged from \$250,000 to over \$1,000,000.

Academic Adviser to Blackside Productions, 1996-1997.

Consultant for the PBS series, *I'll Make Me A World*, which premiered in February 1999. The series presents the history of African American arts and music in the twentieth century.

Research Assistant for Peace River Films, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1991-1992.

Research and academic consultant for the film, *Rachel Carson's Silent Spring*, for the PBS "American Experience" Series, which premiered in February 1993.

Presentations

Invited Lectures

"To Serve the Living: Funeral Directors and the African American Way of Death," National Funeral Directors Association Convention, New Orleans, Louisiana, (scheduled for October 10, 2010).

"The Role of History in African American Funeral Service," National Funeral Directors and Morticians Association Convention, Keynote Address, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, (scheduled for August 2, 2010).

"My Man's An Undertaker': Funeral Directors in the African American Cultural Imagination," History Workshop, Department of History, University of Delaware, March 23, 2010.

"Where Did Our Love Go?': Contemplating the Life and Death of Motown and the Motor City," Public lecture, Motown Symposium: "Growing Up Motown: Stevie Wonder, Michael Jackson and the Making of Motown," University of Michigan, February 19, 2010.

"My Man's An Undertaker," Lawrence W. Levine Faculty Seminar, Department of History and Art History, George Mason University, December 4, 2009.

"Dancing in the Street: The Politics of Motown Music," Public lecture, Berklee College of Music, Boston, Massachusetts, October 23, 2009.

"Can't Forget the Motor City': Remembering Detroit's Past Through Its Music," National Trust for Historic Preservation, Washington D.C., October 4, 2006.

"The Happening': the Supremes and Civil Disorder," Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, Cleveland, Ohio, May 26, 2004.

"To Serve The Living: A Cultural History of African American Funeral Directors," Black Cultural Studies Faculty Lecture Series, Tufts University, March 26, 2003.

"Recording Memories, Making History: Motown and Detroit," Cranbrook Art Institute,

- Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, January 18, 2002.
- "'The Happening': The Supremes and Civil Disorder," Detroit's Tricentennial Lecture Series, University of Michigan, October 12, 2001.
- "Motown and Detroit: An Overview," Carter G. Woodson Center, University of Virginia, April 21, 2001.
- "Dancing in the Street: Motown and the Cultural Politics of Detroit," Detroit's Tricentennial Celebration/Defining Detroit Lecture Series, Marygrove College, Detroit, Michigan, October 11, 2000.
- "Motown and Detroit: The Urban Struggle for Civil Rights," NEH Summer Seminar: The Civil Rights Movement: History and Consequences, W.E.B. Du Bois Institute, Harvard University, July 24, 2000.
- "A Cultural History of Death in America," Smithsonian Associates Program, Washington, D.C., April 9, 2000.
- "'The Happening': The Supremes and Civil Disorder," The New Afro-Americanists Lecture Series, Center for the Study of Black Literature and Culture, University of Pennsylvania, April 5, 2000.
- "Motown and the Motor City: The Urban Origins of the Motown Sound," *Detroit Free Press* Staff Seminar, Detroit, Michigan, March 13, 2000.
- "Motown and Detroit's Role in the Civil Rights Struggle," NEH Summer Seminar: The Civil Rights Movement: History and Consequences, co-presentation with Thomas Sugrue, University of Pennsylvania, W.E.B. Du Bois Institute, Harvard University, July 23, 1999.
- "'Money That's What I Want': Motown Records, Black Capitalism, and Black Freedom in Detroit," Hagley Research Seminar, Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, Delaware, Feb. 12, 1998.
- "Motown and the Motor City: The Urban Origins of the Motown Sound," Public Lecture, Library of Congress and the Association of Recorded Sound Collectors, Nov. 19, 1997.
- "Taking It To the Streets: African American Studies and Community Service," African American Studies Faculty Lecture Series, George Mason University, Sept. 1997.
- "Without a Song: The Reverend C.L. Franklin, Motown Records and Detroit's 'Great March To Freedom'," American Religious History Luncheon, Yale University, March 27, 1995.

Conference Papers

- "An Undertaker Like Him: Dan Young and the 1946 Moore's Ford Lynching," American Studies Association Conference, Washington, D.C., November 6, 2009
- "'My Man's An Undertaker': Funeral Directors in African American Life," Southern American Studies Association Conference, George Mason University, February 13, 2009.
- "Laid Out in 'Big Mama's Kitchen': African Americans and the Personalized Theme Funeral," American Studies Association Conference, Washington, D.C., November 4, 2005.
- Commentator, "Travel and the Remaking of African American Culture," African American Identity Travels Conference, University of Maryland, September 17, 2004.

"To Serve the Living: The Public and Civic Identity of African-American Funeral Directors," Miami University of Ohio, *The Transformation of Public Culture: Assessing the Politics of Diversity, Democracy, and Community in the United States, 1890 to the Present* Conference, March 6, 2004.

Commentator, "The Resonance of Chicago Music," American Historical Association Conference, Chicago, Illinois, January 3, 2003.

Commentator, "Civic Voices of the Air: Nation, Immigration and Labor in American and Mexican Radio, 1925-1955," American Studies Association Conference, Washington, D.C., November 2001.

"Can't Forget the Motor City': Reading and Hearing Detroit, A Bus Tour," American Studies Association Conference, Detroit, Michigan, October, 2000.

"Popular Culture and Urban Struggle: Locating Sites of Possibility," American Studies Association Conference, Detroit, Michigan, October, 2000.

"Recording Memories, Making History: Motown and Detroit's Great March to Freedom," Association for the Study of African-American Life and History Conference, Detroit, Michigan, October 8, 1999.

"The Happening': the Supremes and Civil Disorder." Organization of American Historians Conference, Toronto, Canada, April 21, 1999.

Chair and Commentator, "Taking It To The Streets: American Studies and the Wider World," American Studies Association Conference, Washington, D.C., October 30, 1997.

Chair and Commentator, "Urban Geographies" panel, North American Labor History Conference, Wayne State University, October 18, 1997.

"The Happening: The Supremes and Civil Disorder," Feminist Theory and Music Conference, University of Virginia, June 7, 1997.

"Motown and the Motor City," Works in Progress Conference, Washington Women Historians, American University, April 12, 1997.

"Recording Memories, Making History: Motown and Detroit's Great March to Freedom," North American Labor History Conference, Wayne State University, October 19, 1996.

"Without a Song: The Reverend C.L. Franklin, Motown Records and Detroit's 'Great March To Freedom'," *Soul: Black Power, Politics and Pleasure* Conference, New York University, April 8, 1995.

"Urban Religion and the Cultural Politics of Detroit," Pew Foundation Fellows Conference, Yale University, April 7, 1995.

"What's Going On?': Transformations in Motown Music from Pop to Protest," American Studies Association Conference, Boston, Massachusetts, November 1993.

"Motown and the Motor City: Exploring the Sounds and Technologies of an Industrial City," New England American Studies Association, Rutgers University, May 1993.

"Disney's Land: Tourism and the Pseudo-destination," Popular Culture Association Conference, St. Louis, Missouri, April 1989.

Selected Media Interviews

Radio interview, Discussion of *To Serve the Living: Funeral Directors and the African American Way of Death*, "The Kojo Nnamdi Show," WAMU 88.5 FM, March 24, 2010.

Radio interview, Discussion of *To Serve the Living: Funeral Directors and the African American Way of Death*, "Midday with Dan Rodricks," WYPR 88.1 FM, Baltimore Public Radio, March 9, 2010.

Radio interview, Discussion of *To Serve the Living: Funeral Directors and the African American Way of Death*, "With Good Reason," Virginia Public Radio, February 6-11, 2010.

Radio interview, "Motown's 50th Anniversary Special," "Talking History," Ireland Public Radio, October 4, 2009.

Print interview, "Honoring the Dead is Disturbed at Burr Oak," *Chicago Tribune*, July 19, 2009.

Print interview, "GM's Powerful History Still a Source of Pride," *Detroit Free Press*, May 31, 2009.

Radio interview, "Motown's 50th Anniversary," "Midmorning Show," Minnesota Public Radio, March 18, 2009.

Radio interview, Discussion of *Dancing in the Street: Motown and the Cultural Politics of Detroit*, "Public Interest with Kojo Nnamdi," WAMU 88.5, April 3, 2000.

Television appearance, *Dancing in the Street: Motown and the Cultural Politics of Detroit* at the Library of Congress, "History on Book-TV," C-Span, March 18, 2000.

Radio interview, Discussion of *Dancing in the Street: Motown and the Cultural Politics of Detroit*, "Airtalk," KPCC 89.3, January 11, 2000.

Radio interview, Discussion of *Dancing in the Street: Motown and the Cultural Politics of Detroit*, "Night Waves," BBC Radio, January 7, 2000.

Courses Taught

African American History Survey, Transatlantic Slave Trade to Present

U.S. History Survey, Colonial era to Present

American Roots Music

American Popular Music

Medical Ethics in Twentieth Century America

Race, Justice, and Memory in Twentieth Century America

Grassroots Politics in Twentieth Century America

Civil Rights and Citizenship in Twentieth Century America

African Americans in Sports

Radio in American Society

The Civil Rights Movement and the Culture Industry

The Media in Contemporary America
The History and Culture of New Zealand and Australia

Departmental and University Service

Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure Committee

College of Humanities and Social Sciences, July 2009 - present
Dept. of History and Art History, July 2007 - present

Ph.D. Coordinator and Director of Admissions

Dept. of History and Art History, July 2000 - July 2008

Graduate Committee

Dept. of History and Art History, July 2005 - June 2008

Job Search Committees

Dept. of History and Art History, 1996-1997; 2000-2001; 2005-2006; 2009-2010

African and African American Studies Faculty

August 1995 – present

Cultural Studies Faculty

August 1995 – present

Professional Service

Committee on Graduate Education, American Studies Association, September 2009 to present.

Board of Directors, Chesapeake American Studies Association, September 2009 to present.

Grant Reviewer, NEH Research Fellowships, June-July 2009

Reviewed forty research fellowship grant applications for a panel that focused on American Arts including projects on the history of American popular music, dance, and painting.

John Hope Franklin Book Prize Committee, American Studies Association, 2003.

Grant Reviewer, *Project on Death in America*, January 1999-December 2000.

Acted as a grant reviewer for the Project on Death in America's Arts and Humanities Initiative, part of the George Soros Open Society Institute, Directors: Dr. Kathleen Foley and Professor David Rothman.

Professional Memberships

Organization of American Historians

American Studies Association

Southern Historical Association