

Abby Whitaker

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EDUCATION

- Temple University Philadelphia, PA** 2018 - present
Ph.D. Candidate, History
Dissertation: "Sesame Street and the Making of Fuzzy Liberalism"
Committee: Bryant Simon (chair), Lila Corwin Berman, Katya Motyl, and Lily Geismer
- University of Florida Gainesville, FL** 2011 - 2015
B.A. History | B.A. Anthropology

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed

- "Sesame Street and the City: Revitalizing the City Through Popular Culture" 2023
Journal of Urban History (under review)

Book Chapter

- "A Cookie is a Sometimes Food": Cookie Monster and the Politics of Children's Health on *Sesame Street*," in *Cultural Perspectives on Sweets in Children's Literature and Media*, eds. Sabine Planka and Corina Lowe (forthcoming) 2024

Public Facing Scholarship

- "Sesame Street' models inclusivity but it has left Black viewers behind," 2022
Washington Post: Made By History, <https://wapo.st/3pHN9ou>
- "Supply chain issues could fuel a holiday toy craze," 2021
Washington Post: Made By History, <https://wapo.st/3141OSe>
- "Sesame Street' corporate deals have upset fans. But they keep the show alive," 2021
Washington Post: Made By History, <https://wapo.st/2VOT13B>
- "Why we need Mister Rogers, Big Bird and Oscar the Grouch now more than ever," 2019
Washington Post: Made By History, <https://wapo.st/3cqW9vr>
- "How 'Sesame Street' surrendered in the culture wars," 2018
Washington Post: Made By History, <https://wapo.st/2EslSLI>

Book Reviews

- "Ben Holtzman, *The Long Crisis: New York City and the Path to Neoliberalism*," 2023
Urban History 50, no. 4
- "Elana Levine, *Her Stories: Daytime Soap Opera & U.S. Television History*," 2021
H-Soz-u-Kult (Berlin), <https://bit.ly/3uQnV7I>

FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

Fellowships

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| Public Policy Lab Graduate Fellow, Temple University | 2022 - 2023 |
| University Fellowship, Temple University | 2021 - 2022 |
| University Fellowship, Temple University | 2018 - 2019 |

Research Grants & Awards

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| John S. Kramer Prize, Outstanding Graduate Student in U.S. History Temple University History Department | 2023 |
| Baron Prize, Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Temple University History Department | 2021 |
| Nessa Forman Award, Forman Family Funds at the Philadelphia Foundation | 2020 |

SELECT PRESENTATIONS & LECTURES

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| “ <i>Sesame Street</i> and the City: Revitalizing the City Through Popular Culture and the War on Poverty” and “Struggling (and Striking) for the Public University in Philadelphia” Urban History Association Conference: Pittsburgh, PA | 2023 |
| “From Prairie Dawn to Abby Cadabby: Deconstructing Gender on <i>Sesame Street</i> ” Society for the History of Childhood and Youth: University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada | 2023 |
| “‘I Am Somebody’: Thinking about Race and Colorblindness on <i>Sesame Street</i> ” Guest lecture: Morgan State University, Baltimore, MD | 2023 |
| “‘A Neighborhood to Identify With’: <i>Sesame Street</i> , the City, and the Contradictions of Fuzzy Liberalism” American Historical Association: Philadelphia, PA | 2023 |
| “C is for Colorblindness: <i>Sesame Street</i> , Race, and the Transformation of Liberalism” American Political History Conference: Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN | 2022 |
| “‘A Black Dr. Spock’: <i>Sesame Street</i> and the Education of Parents” Popular Culture Association Conference: Virtual | 2022 |
| “Bert & Ernie: The Closeted Curriculum of <i>Sesame Street</i> ” Brian Bertoti Innovative Perspectives on History: Virginia Tech, Virtual | 2021 |
| “G is for Gentrification: How <i>Sesame Street</i> Made the City Appealing” Urban History Association Conference: Detroit, MI (Canceled due to COVID-19) | 2020 |
| “ <i>Sesame Street</i> and the Making of Fuzzy Liberalism: Prospectus” HDEA Graduate Workshop in U.S. Urban History: Sorbonne University, Virtual | 2020 |
| “An ‘Electronic Head Start’: <i>Sesame Street</i> , the City, and the Contradictions of Great Society Liberalism” University of Erfurt Exchange Program: Erfurt, Germany, Virtual | 2020 |
| “Bert & Ernie: LGBTQ+ Representation in Children’s Television” Guest lecture: Temple University, Philadelphia, PA | 2019 |

PUBLIC & DIGITAL HUMANITIES

Untitled Chet Pierce Documentary produced by Gloria Respress-Churchwell 2023 (forthcoming)
Consulted on Chet Pierce's involvement as an advisor for *Sesame Street*. Interviewed.

Philadelphia Inquirer, "A More Perfect Union" Philadelphia, PA 2022
Conducted research for [A More Perfect Union](#), a series of features on the history of systemic racism in Philadelphia institutions, including chapters on media, labor, education, infrastructure, and urban renewal.

COURSES TAUGHT

HIST 2001: The Historian's Craft, Instructor of Record Fall 2020 / Spring 2021 / Fall 2022

HIST 2212: History of the American Presidency, Instructor of Record Summer 2021

HIST 1102: U.S. History Since 1877, Instructor of Record Fall 2019 / Spring 2020

RESEARCH & TEACHING SPECIALTIES

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| 20th/21st Century U.S History | Cultural History | Gender |
| Political History | Urban History | Family & Childhood |
| Media & Popular Culture | Race | Education |

WORK EXPERIENCE

Assistant Editor: *Diplomatic History* Philadelphia, PA Jan 2023 - present
Work with an editorial team to produce five issues per year of *Diplomatic History*, the flagship journal of the Society of Historians of American Foreign Relations. Manage the book review process from solicitation to publication. Provide author's with substantial feedback on articles to work towards publication. Copyedit articles, special features, and book reviews.

Instructor of Record: Temple University Philadelphia, PA Aug 2019 - Dec 2022
Taught two sections (thirty-five students in each) per semester. Taught in-person, online, and in hybrid formats. Utilized interdisciplinary approaches, incorporated media in class assignments and instruction, and encouraged students to engage in local history. Mentored students from a variety of majors and backgrounds.

Production Coordinator: A&E (A+E Networks) New York, NY July 2015 - July 2018
Coordinated post-production for the on-air marketing department at the History Channel and A&E. Wrote and produced promotional materials for A&E campaigns including shows covering the KKK, Scientology, and policing. The highlight of my time at A&E was the opportunity to write and produce a video for *Born This Way* about special education.

SERVICE

Organization of American Historians

Graduate Student Committee 2023 - 2025

James A Barnes Graduate Student Organization, Temple University

Panel Commenter, James A. Barnes Graduate Conference 2022, 2023

Prize Committee Chair for U.S. History, James A. Barnes Graduate Conference 2021, 2023

Digital Chair 2020 - 2021

Conference Chair 2019 - 2020

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Historical Association 2019 - present

Popular Culture Association 2019 - present

Organization of American Historians 2021 - present

Society for the History of Childhood and Youth 2023 - present

Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations 2023 - present

REFERENCES

Available upon request