Sean Griffin, Ph.D.

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Sarah Lawrence College
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EDUCATION

Ph.D., History, The Graduate Center, City University of New York, 2017
Dissertation: *A Reformers' Union: Land Reform, Labor, and the Evolution of Antislavery Politics, 1790–1860*
Committee: James Oakes, David Waldstreicher, Manisha Sinha, Joshua Brown

M.Phil., History, The Graduate Center, CUNY, 2013

M.A., History, The Graduate Center, CUNY, 2013

B.A., American Studies, City College of New York, 2007

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Guest Faculty in Atlantic World History, Sarah Lawrence College, 2026–27

Visiting Assistant Professor, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY, 2024–26

Visiting Assistant Professor, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC, 2023–2024

Substitute-Line Assistant Professor, Lehman College, CUNY, Bronx, NY, 2019–2020

Adjunct Assistant Professor/Lecturer, Cooper Union, Baruch College, Manhattan College, Queens College, Brooklyn College, and Hunter College (CUNY), 2013–2025

PUBLICATIONS

Book

The Root and the Branch: Working-Class Reform and Antislavery, 1790–1860
University of Pennsylvania Press, 2024

Peer-Reviewed Articles

"Antislavery Utopias: Communitarian Labor Reform and the Abolitionist Movement."
Journal of the Civil War Era 8, no. 2 (2018): 243–268.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Courses Taught

U.S. History

- U.S. History: Colonial Period to 1877
- U.S. History since the Civil War
- Civil War and Reconstruction
- African American History
- History of the Abolitionist Movement
- Civil Rights Movement
- American Constitutional History
- American Labor History
- Radicalism and Reform in American History
- American Environmental History
- History of New York City
- History of American Business

Global History

- Global History Since 1800
- Culture, Identity, and Power, 1300–1800
- Slavery, Politics, and Ideology in the Early Modern World
- The Shaping of the Modern World

Writing and Research Instruction

- Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Tutor, Borough of Manhattan Community College

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HONORS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND GRANTS

- LAWCHA Labor Research Grant, 2023
- Program in Early American Economy and Society Fellowship, Library Company of Philadelphia, 2021
- Massachusetts Historical Society–NEH Long-Term Research Fellowship, 2020
- American Antiquarian Society Short-Term Fellowship, 2019
- Colonial Dames Dissertation Fellowship, 2015
- ARC Award for Archival Research in African American and African Diaspora Studies, CUNY, 2015
- Doctoral Students Research Grant, CUNY, 2015

- Enhanced Chancellor's Fellowship, CUNY, 2009–2014
- Humanities Fellowship, CUNY, 2009–2010

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED TALKS

Invited Talks

"Slavery, Free Labor, and the Nation's First Labor Movement: Philadelphia's Workingmen and Abolitionism."
Library Company of Philadelphia Fireside Chat, November 2024.

"'We Have Always Regarded the Question of Slavery, as Really and Essentially That of Labor.'"
Massachusetts Historical Society Brown Bag Lunch, September 2020.

Selected Conference Presentations

"Antislavery Struggle, Labor Struggle: Recovering Lost Connections and Missed Opportunities in the Labor-Abolitionist Coalition."
Princeton University Antislavery Moment Conference, 2022.

"The Problem of 'Wage Slavery' in an Age of Emancipation."
Society for U.S. Intellectual History Conference, 2019.

"Workingmen's Antislavery and the Liberty Party-Labor Alliance."
Lebanon Valley College Conference on American Political History, 2018.

PUBLIC HISTORY AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Brooklyn Historical Society — Research and Curatorial Assistant, 2015–2017

Brooklyn Waterfront Research Center — Project Coordinator, 2016

New-York Historical Society — Research Associate, 2014–2015
Developed educational and historical content related to Reconstruction-era history and public programming.

American Social History Project — Research and Media Assistant, 2007–2009
Contributed to curriculum development, educational media, and public history initiatives for K–12 and college audiences.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- Organizer, "Labor Movement Ideology and State Intervention in the Pre-Lochner Era," Organization of American Historians Conference, 2025
- Organizer, "Lost Traditions of Economic Equality," American Historical Association Annual Meeting, 2022
- Organizer, "Inequalities and Intersections in the Abolitionist Movement," SHEAR Annual Meeting, 2019
- Secretary-Treasurer, CUNY Public History Collective, 2015–2017
- History Program Representative, Doctoral Students Council, CUNY Graduate Center, 2014–2015

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Historical Association
Organization of American Historians
Society of Historians of the Early American Republic
Labor and Working-Class History Association

DIGITAL AND PUBLIC-FACING PROJECTS

- *Mapping Timbucto: Patterns of African-American Settlement on the Gerrit Smith Lands of Adirondack New York* (digital humanities project, in progress)
- "Free Labor, Slavery, and Working-Class Movements, 1800–1830," Teaching Labor's Story, LAWCHA.org
- "Sean Griffin on *The Root and the Branch*," Labor Online, April 2025
- "The Trouble with Nashoba," *Frances Wright: America's Forgotten Radical* podcast series
- "Transatlantic Radicalism in Early National New York," Gotham Center for New York City History