**Benjamin Lindquist**

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**POSITIONS HELD:**

2025-present Leo Marx Career Development Assistant Professor of the History and Culture of Science and Technology, History Section and the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA

2023-2025 Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow at the Science in Human Culture Program and Department of History, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL

**EDUCATION:**

2023 Ph.D., Princeton University Department of History, Princeton, NJ

2013 M.A.R., Yale Institute of Sacred Music, New Haven, CT

2009 M.F.A., Yale University School of Art, New Haven, CT

2004 B.F.A., The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL

**BOOK MANUSCRIPT:**

*The Feeling Machine: How Talking Computers Learned Emotion,* under contract with the University of Chicago Press.

**PUBLICATIONS:**

2026 “The Age of Wonder: How Blind Programmers Helped the Computer Talk,” *American Historical Review*, forthcoming 2026.

2026 “The Computer Will Take Your Call: Gendered Labor, Automation, and the Making of Digital Assistants, 1960-1975,” *Information & Culture*, forthcoming 2026.

2025 Christoph Borbach (co-author). “Körper, Stimmen, Prothesen: Eine Geschichte sprechender Interfaces als Assistenztechnologien” [Bodies, Voices, Prostheses: A History of Talking Interfaces as Assistive Technologies] in *Akustische Interfaces: Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven auf Schnittstellen von Technologien, Sounds und Menschen*, ed.Christoph Borbach, Timo Kaerlein, Robert Stock, Sabine Wirth, Springer, 2025.

2024 “The Art of Text-to-Speech.” *Critical Inquiry*, Volume 50, Number 2 (Winter 2024).

2019 “Slow Time and Sticky Media: Frank Beard’s Political Cartoons, Chalk Talks, and Hieroglyphic Bibles.” *Winterthur Portfolio,* Volume 53, Number 1 (Spring 2019).

2015 “Testimony of the Senses: Latter-day Saints and the Civilized Soundscape.” *Western Historical Quarterly*, Volume 46, Issue 1 (Spring 2015).

2014 “Mutable Materiality: Illustrations in Kenneth Taylor’s Children’s Bibles.” *Material Religion*,Volume 10, Issue 3 (September 2014).

**COURSES TAUGHT:**

***Graduate Seminars*:**

2021 Sprachsynthese von Sprechmaschinen zu Sprachassistenten, University of Regensburg, Germany (5 students)

2014 Art in Theory, Purdue University (14 students)

***Undergraduate Courses:***

2025 Artificial Intelligence: A History, Northwestern University (lecture, 28 students)

2024 Computing: A Global History, Northwestern University (seminar, 13 students)

2023 The Romantic Computer, Northwestern University (seminar, 13 students)

2015 Art Since 1945, Butler University (seminar, 13 students)

2014 History of Design, Purdue University (lecture, 57 students)

2010 Western Art History, Manchester Community College (lecture, 12 students)

***Studio Art Courses:***

2011 Advanced Studio Art, Figure Painting, Art Concepts, University of Massachusetts

2011 Figure Painting, Figure Drawing, New Hampshire Institute of Art

2010 Introduction to Art, Drawing I, Manchester Community College

***As Teaching Assistant:***

2023 Introduction to Media Theory (for Tom Levin), Princeton University

2023 Technology and Society (for Mihir Kshirsagar), Princeton University

2022 US History from 1920 to 1974 (for Kevin Kruse), Princeton University

2012 Western Art from the Renaissance to the 20th Century (for Alex Nemerov), Yale University

2012 Exploring the Nature of Genius (for Craig Wright), Yale University

2009 Basic Drawing (for Sam Messer), Yale University

**FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS:**

2021-22 Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies (PIIRS) Graduate Fellow, Princeton University

2019-21 Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) with “Epistemes of Modern Acoustics” at the Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte, Berlin

2019-20 The John R. Irwin '06 Fellowship, Princeton University

2019 SSRC Fellow, Seminar on “Mechanical Rules before Machines: Rules and Paradigms” with Lorraine Daston

2015 Bert M. Fireman Prize, The Western History Association

2015 Strong National Museum’s Valentine-Andrew Cosman Research Fellowship

2013-14 Fulbright Research Grant, Switzerland

2013-14 Bundes-Exzellenz-Stipendium, Universität Zürich

2013 Research Fellowship, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

2012 Grant from Creative Time Reports to co-produce a podcast “I Ran into Iran” dealing with the intersection of art and politics in the Middle East

2009 Al Held Affiliated Fellow, The American Academy in Rome

**INVITED LECTURES:**

2025 “Chance, Creativity, and the History of Random Neural Nets,” Klopsteg Lecture, Northwestern University, Science in Human Culture Program, January 13, 2025.

2024 “On Phonemes and Feelings: A Short History of Text-to-Speech,” Klopsteg Lecture, Northwestern University, Science in Human Culture Program, February 5, 2024.

2022 “The Computer’s Voice,” class lecture at Massachusetts Institute of Technology for Stefan Helmreich and Caroline Jones, Resonance: Sonic Experience, Science, and Art, November 29, 2022.

2021 “The Global Development of Synthetic Voices,” Kolloquium der Wissenschaftsgeschichte, Universität Regensburg, Germany, January 27, 2021.

2019 “Synthetic Speech: From Art to Algorithm,” Phonetics Colloquium, Universität des Saarlandes, Saarbrücken, Germany, November 16, 2019.

2019“Painting Sounds: Haskins Laboratories and the Promise of a New Art Form in Postwar America,” at Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan, July 23, 2019.

2018 “Riffing on Resonance: Speech Synthesis,” class lecture at Massachusetts Institute of Technology for Caroline Jones, Resonance: Sonic Experience, Science, and Art, November 20, 2018.

2017 “Art and Representation” at Yale University School of Art for Edgar Serrano, Basic Drawing, September 21, 2017.

2016 “Life Drawing” visiting artist lecture, Wesleyan University, Drawing I, March 17, 2016.

**PRESENTATIONS:**

2025 “The Irrational Computer,” Annual Meeting of the Society for the History of

Technology, Luxembourg City, Luxembourg, October 11, 2025.

2024 Panel discussion (with Duri Long and Patrick Feaster), Human-Centered AI and Music, Northwestern University, January 26, 2024.

2022 “Signed, Sealed, and Delivered: Stevie Wonder, Jerome Jackson and the First Private Reading Machine,” Annual Meeting of the Society for the History of

Technology, New Orleans, Louisiana, November 10-13, 2022.

2022 “Synthia, Chatty Cathy und AudRey: Die unbeachteten Ahninnen von Siri und Alexa” Akustische Interfaces, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, May 4-6, 2022.

2020 “From Text to Speech.” Tag des wissenschaftlichen Nachwuchses, Universität Regensburg, Regensburg, Germany, November 13, 2020.

2019 “What’s Synthetic about Synthetic Speech?” Annual Meeting of the Society for the History of Technology, Milan, Italy, October 26, 2019.

2019 “The Art of Synthetic Speech: Daphne Oram and The Parametric Artificial Talker.” Third International Workshop on the History of Speech Communication Research, Vienna, Austria, September 13, 2019.

2018 “Synthesis-by-Art: Synthetic Speech and the Conversion of Tacit Knowledge into Algorithms.” Annual Meeting of the Society for the History of Technology, St. Louis, Missouri, October 11-14, 2018.

2018 “From Hal to Her: Cinematic Representations of Synthetic Speech.”45th Annual Meeting of the International Committee for the History of Technology, Université Jean Monnet Saint-Étienne, France, July 17-21, 2018.

2018 “Theorizing Synthetic Speech.” Transversale Transformationen: Geistes- und kulturwissenschaftliche Expertisen zur Tiefendynamik des Technologischen, Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany, April 26-27, 2018.

2017 “Talking Bibles and Chalk Talks: The Hieroglyphic Bibles of Frank Beard.” Works-in-Progress Workshop, Protestantism and the Materiality of Texts, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, April 22, 2017.

2017 “Spelling Salvation: Latter-day Linguistic Reform in the Nineteenth Century,” American Society of Church History / American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Denver, Colorado, January 5, 2017.

2014 “For the Love of Parents, God, and Country: Christian Nationalism in American Children’s Bibles.” Society of Biblical Literature International Conference, Vienna, Austria, July 6-10, 2014.

2014 “The Taste of God: The Construction of Taste in Religious Food Prohibitions in Nineteenth-Century America.” European Association for the Study of Religion, Semi-Annual Conference, Religion and Pluralities of Knowledge, Groningen, Netherlands, May 11-15, 2014.

2014 “Mission, Migration, and Memory: Childhood and the Latter-day Saints’ Trek to Salt Lake City.” American Society for Church History, Oxford, England, April 3, 2014.

2014 “The Bodily Experience of Sacrality among Nineteenth-century Latter-day Saints.” European Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality, International Conference, Sacrality and Materiality, Kloster Kappel, Switzerland, January 8, 2014.

2013 “The Religious Soundscape of Salt Lake City.” University Library Council, Meeting of the Yale Library Associates Trustees, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT, April 5, 2013.

2012 “Mad Magazine’s Book of Revelation: The Apocalyptic Art of Basil Wolverton.” Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL, November 17, 2012.

2012 “Sex, Art, and Censorship: Chris Ofili’s *Black Madonna* & David Wojnarowicz’s *A Fire in My Belly*.” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL, November 18, 2012.

2012 “Touch and the Ex-Gay Movement.”American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL, November 18, 2012.

2012 “Hans Hofmann’s Tutelary Legacy in Andy Warhol’s *Blow Job*.” French Association for American Studies Annual Meeting, Perpignan, France, May 25, 2012.

2011 “Following ‘The Walking Bible’ to the End of the World in 2012: The Van Impe Ministries’ Shifting Standards of Credibility.” Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA, November 20, 2011.

2011 “The Evolving Illustrations of Kenneth N. Taylor’s Children’s Bibles.” Children’s Literature Association Annual Conference 2011, “Change and Insurrection in Children’s Literature,” Hollins University, Roanoke, Virginia, June 23, 2011.

**ACADEMIC SERVICE:**

Student Representative, Faculty Reappointment Committee, Yale University

Manuscript reviews: *Utah Historical Quarterly, Western Historical Quarterly, Material Religion*

Editorial Board, *The Journal of Undergraduate Research in the Humanities* (JURH)

Helped coordinate and run the Klopsteg Lecture series, Northwestern University

**REFERENCES:**

Emily Thompson (emilyt@princeton.edu), Ken Alder (k-alder@northwestern.edu),

Mara Mills (mmills@nyu.edu).