

# Vincent Willis, PhD

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The University of Alabama  
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## Current Position

Assistant Professor of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences, New College/Gender and Race Studies, The University of Alabama

## EDUCATION

2013      PhD, Division of Educational Studies, Emory University

**Major Fields:** History of U.S. Education, History of African American Education, Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century African American History, and Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century American History

**Other Fields:** American Studies, Southern Studies, and Youth Studies

**Dissertation:** *Rhetoric, Realism, and Response: Brown, White Opposition, and Black Youth Activism, 1954-1972*

**Committee:** Vanessa Siddle Walker (Chair), Leroy Davis, Carole Hahn, Maisha Winn

2007      M.A., African and African American Studies, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

**Major Fields:** Nineteenth-Century American History

**Other Fields:** History of the Antebellum South and Childhood Studies

**Thesis:** *We Were Affected Too: Black and White Children Growing up in the Antebellum South*

**Committee:** Stephanie Shaw (Chair), Walter Rucker, Stephen Hall

2003      B.A., African American Studies, Morehouse College, Atlanta, Georgia

## PUBLICATIONS

### Book

Willis, Vincent. *Audacious Agitation: Black Youth and the Uncompromising Commitment to Equal Education after the Brown Decision*. (Under Contract, Submitted, *The University of Georgia Press*).

### Book Chapters

Willis, Vincent, Khalilah Ali and Jillian Ford. "We Cared Because They Did: The Ethic of Care," Book Chapter, *DES Legacy Project*, (Accepted, Spring of 2018).

### Journal Articles (\*peer reviewed)

Willis, Vincent, Sheryl Croft, Miyoshi Juergensen, and Tiffany Pogue. "A Pedagogy of Intentionality: Developing Scholars Dedicated to Social Justice." *The SoJo Journal: Educational Foundations and Social Justice Education*, (Fall 2018): Volume 4, no. 1, 31-44.

Willis, Vincent. "A Biscuit for a Letter: Black Children and the Education in the Antebellum South." *Africana Studies: A Review of Social Science Research* Vol.6, Transaction Publishers (April 2015): 5-20.\*

Willis, Vincent. "'Let me in, I have the right to be here: Black youth struggle for equal education and full citizenship after the *Brown* decision, 1954-1969." *Citizenship Teaching & Learning* 9, no.1, (December 2013): 53-70.\*

### In Progress

Willis, Vincent. *Exhaustive Defiance: Black Youth and the Persistent Quest to Democratizing Extracurricular Activities in Public Schools, 1964-1975* (Funded by the National Academy of Education (NAEd)/ Spencer Postdoctoral Fellowship)

Willis, Vincent. "Beyond the Restraints of the Supreme Court: Black Youth and the Reorientation of Measuring Educational Equality"

Willis, Vincent. "Lean on Me: Black Student Advocacy and the Uncomfortable Conversation on Love and Public-Schooling"

Willis, Vincent. "The Great Perpetuator: Sports and Racial Practices After the *Brown v. Board of Education* Decision"

## **Book Reviews**

- Willis, Vincent. Review of *Black Power in the Bluff City: African American Youth and Student Activism in Memphis, 1965-1975* by Shirletta J. Kinchen. *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth*, (Fall 2017).
- Willis, Vincent. Review of *A Child Shall Lead Them: Martin Luther King Jr., Young People, and the Movement*, by Rufus Burrow Jr. *The Journal of Southern History*, (November 2015): 1037-1037.
- Willis, Vincent. Review of *From Brown to Meredith: The Long Struggle for School Desegregation in Louisville, Kentucky, 1954-2007*, by Tracy E. K'Meyer. *The Journal of African American History* 100, no. 3 (Summer 2015): 544-546.
- Willis, Vincent. Review of *The Resegregation of Schools: Education and Race in the Twenty-First Century*, by Jamel K. Donnor and Adrienne D. Dixson. *The British Journal of Educational Studies* 62, Issue 4 (October 2014): 466-468.
- Willis, Vincent. Review of *Harlem vs. Columbia University: Black Student Power in the Late 1960s*, by Stefan Bradley. *The Journal of African American History* 96, no. 3 (Summer 2011): 425-427.
- Willis, Vincent. Review of *The Cost of Unity: African American Agency and Education and the Christian Church*, by Lawrence Burnley. *The History of Education Quarterly* 50, no. 3 (Summer 2010): 393-395.

## **FELLOWSHIPS, HONORS, and AWARDS:**

### **Spencer Foundation**

Conference Grants 2020-2021  
Grant (\$50,000) (Rejected)

### **National Academy of Education/ Spencer**

Postdoctoral Fellowship Program 2019-2020  
Fellowship (\$70,000) (Awarded)

### **National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)**

Summer Stipends 2019  
Proposal nominated by the University of Alabama  
Research Grant (\$6,000) (Rejected)

### **Center for Ethics & Social Responsibility**

Faculty Fellows in Service-Learning Initiative 2017  
University of Alabama

Research and Teaching Grant (\$1,500) (Awarded)

**African American Studies at the University of Houston**

Visiting Scholars Fellowship (2013-2015)

Research Grant (\$2,500)

Travel Grant (\$1,500)

**UNCF/Mellon Mays Program**

Graduate Student Coordinator, January Program, Cape Town, South Africa, 2014

Travel Grant (\$3,000)

**James Weldon Johnson Institute for the Study of Race and Difference at Emory University**

Laney Graduate School Dissertation Completion Fellowship, (2012-2013)

Graduate Assistant Fellow (\$21,000)

**Mellon Graduate Teaching Fellowship**

Teaching Fellowship, Spelman College. (2012-2013), (\$ 21,000) Declined

**Spencer Foundation**

Dissertation Fellowship for Research Related to Education, Finalist, 2012-2013

**Ford Foundation**

Diversity Dissertation Fellowship, Honorable Mention, 2012-2013

**PEER-REVIEWED PRESENTATIONS**

Willis, Vincent. "Fortify: Extracurricular Activities, Race, and Out-of-Classroom Inequities After Brown." Invited Poster Session for the American Educational Research Association for the annual meeting, San Francisco, California, April 2020, <http://tinyurl.com/tzuohtr> (Conference Canceled).

Willis, Vincent, Latrise Johnson, and Tiffany Pogue. "The Deception of Post-Truth: Understanding Blacks' Desire for Educational Equality and the Influence of Alternative Facts." Panel session presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Toronto, Canada, April 2019.

Willis, Vincent and Brandi Nicole Hinnant-Crawford. "Navigating the Torrid Terrain of Public Education: Remaining Committed to Equality in a Post-Truth Era." Panel session presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Toronto, Canada, April 2019.

Willis, Vincent and Robert Bennett. "The Socialization of Athletics: Sports and the Complex History of Access to Education." Roundtable session presented at the bi-

- annual meeting of the International Conference on Urban Education, Nassau, Bahamas, November 2018.
- Willis, Vincent, Sheryl Croft, Miyoshi Juergensen & Tiffany Pogue. "Creating Troops for the Front Line: Developing Black Scholars Dedicated to Social Justice." Panel session presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, New York, April 2018.
- Willis, Vincent. "We Were Trying to Just Be": Black Youth Participation in the Americus Movement." Panel session presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Antonio, Texas, April 2017.
- Willis, Vincent. "Lean on Me: Love, Black Youth Advocacy, and Progressive Black Educators in Urban Schools." Panel session presented at the bi-annual meeting of the International Conference on Urban Education, San Juan, Puerto Rico, November 2016.
- Willis, Vincent. "'It was like Living in a Rat Hole': Black Youth Fight for Educational Improvements in Moultrie, Georgia." History of Education Society, Seattle, Washington, November 2012.
- Willis, Vincent. "'Don't Be Fooled...The Fight Has Just Begun': Black Youth Activism and White Opposition, 1954-1960." American Educational Research Association, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, April 2012.
- Willis, Vincent. "Education for Civic Engagement in Diverse Settings: Black Student Activism in the Fight for Equal Education, 1954-1972." The 7<sup>th</sup> CitizED International Conference, Atlanta, Georgia, May 2011.
- Willis, Vincent. "Educational Equality for the Public Good: A Historical Perspective on Black Student Activism from 1954-1972." American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, Louisiana, April 2011.
- Willis, Vincent. "Refusing to Accept Unequal Education: Black Children in the Aftermath of the Brown Decision, 1954-1972." History of Educational Society, Cambridge, Massachusetts, November 2010.
- Willis, Vincent. "Let Me In, I have the Right to be here: The Little Rock Nine's Fight for Citizenship." Association for the Study of African American Life and History, Cincinnati, Ohio, October 2009.
- Willis, Vincent. "Beyond the Deficit and Disparity Approaches: A New Blueprint for Understanding the Issues Facing African American Males." Indiana Commission on the Social Status of Black Males, Indianapolis, Indiana, October 2007.

Willis, Vincent. “‘Teach Me to Read and Write’: Enslaved Black Children as Historical Agents and Rebel.” National Conference of Black Studies, San Diego, California, April 2007.

Willis, Vincent, “Young Black Males; Last in Education, First in Prison Population, Who’s to Blame?” Summer Humanities Institute, University of California- Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California, August 2005.

### **INVITED AND OTHER PRESENTATIONS**

Keynote Panel, “Connecting the Dots in Urban Education: Memory, Identity, and Vision.” The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Sources of Urban Educational Excellence Conference, Alonzo A. Crim Center for Urban Educational Excellence, Georgia State University, Virtual Conference, November 2020.

Panelist, “Exhaustive Defiance: Black Youth and the Persistent Quest to Democratizing Extracurricular Activities in Public Schools, 1964-1975.” The 2020 National Academy of Education Annual Meeting & Fellows Retreat, Virtual Conference, November 2020.

Keynote Speaker, “Historicizing the Need to Organize,” Invited by Southern Policy & Practice Network and the Southern Education Foundation to speak at the Policy Academy #4 Event at Georgia Tech Hotel & Conference Center, Atlanta, Georgia, August 22, 2019.

Guest Lecturer, “A Discussion on ‘Let Me In: I have a Right to be Here: Black Youth Struggle for Equal Education and Full Citizenship after the *Brown* Decision, 1954-1969.’” NEW 420: *Youth Culture* (Dr. Barbara Brickman, Instructor), University of Alabama, September 2018.

Keynote Speaker, “My Place in the World: Youth Activism and the Struggle for Freedom.” Invited by Central High School to speak at The History of Now event, “Celebrating Youth Activism from Civil Rights to the Present,” Tuscaloosa, Alabama, April 2018.

Discussant, “Black Mothers’ and Fathers’ Involvement in Their Children’s Education.” Roundtable session at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, New York, April 2018.

Panelist, “The Historical Present: A Close Examination of Student Activism Throughout the Years.” Invited panel at The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, March 2018.



Fall 2018	Instructor for Social Issues and Ethics and Cooperation and Conflict The University of Alabama
Spring 2018	Instructor for Social Issues and Ethics and Introduction to African American Studies The University of Alabama
Fall 2017	Instructor for Social Issues and Ethics and Introduction to African American Studies The University of Alabama
Spring 2017	Instructor for Social Issues and Ethics and Cooperation and Conflict The University of Alabama
Fall 2016	Instructor for Social Issues and Ethics The University of Alabama
Spring 2015	Instructor for Introduction to African and African Diaspora Studies, (AADS 1101) and Instructor for American Cultural Productions: Politics, Citizenship, and the History of American Education, (AMST 3770) Kennesaw State University
Fall 2013-Spring 2014	Instructor for Introduction to African American Studies, (AAS 2320) University of Houston
Fall 2012	Graduate Teaching Assistant, Introduction to African American Studies, (AAS 100), Professor Nagueyalti Warren Emory University
Spring 2012	Instructor for History of American Education (EDS 305) Emory University
Fall 2011	Graduate Teaching Assistant, Introduction to African American Studies, (AAS 100), Professor Nagueyalti Warren Emory University
Spring 2011	Division of Educational Studies Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT), University Supervisor

Emory University

Fall 2010  
Instructor for Education in African American History,  
(EDS 471)  
Emory University

### **INSTITUTIONAL & PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

Summer 2020  
Committee Member for the Levitz Leadership Program  
New College

Summer 2020  
Editorial Review Board Member  
*Equity & Excellence in Education*

Summer 2020  
Invitation to Review  
American Educational Research Association

Spring 2020  
Outstanding Book Award Committee  
American Educational Research Association

Fall 2018  
Committee Member for Student Education Planner  
Degree Works  
New College

Spring 2018  
Committee Member for the Arts Entrepreneur Assistant  
Professor Position  
New College

Winter 2016  
UNCF/Mellon Advisory Board for the MMUF  
Undergraduate Fellowship, Greensboro, Georgia

Winter 2015  
UNCF/Mellon Advisory Board for the MMUF  
Undergraduate Fellowship, Greensboro, Georgia

Summer 2015  
Graduate Assistant Advisor for the UNCF/Mellon Mays  
Fellows

Winter 2014  
Graduate Student Advisor for the UNCF/Mellon Mays  
Fellows for the University of Cape Town Program, Cape  
Town, South Africa

Winter 2014	UNCF/Mellon Advisory Board for the MMUF Undergraduate Fellowship, Atlanta, Georgia
Summer 2013	Graduate Student Advisor for the UNCF/Mellon Mays Fellows
Summer 2012	Graduate Student Advisor for the UNCF/Mellon Mays Fellows
Fall 2011- Summer 2011	Graduate Student Coordinator for Teaching in the Urban South (TITUS) Emory University
Summer 2010	Graduate Student Advisor for the UNCF/Mellon Mays Fellows
Spring 2008	Mentoring Seminar, Division F for American Educational Research Association (AERA), New York, NY