

Joani Etskovitz

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EDUCATION, AWARDS, & FELLOWSHIPS

Harvard University, [Beinecke Scholar](#), PhD, English Literature, 2019 – June 2025.

- [Graduate School of Arts & Sciences Merit Scholar](#), GPA: 4.0.
- [Howard Mumford Jones Dissertation Prize](#), 2025: For the best doctoral dissertation in English concerning some aspect of British or American literature in the 19th century.
- Dissertation: *The Feminist Adventure Novel: From the Curious Girl to the New Woman*, advised by Professors Deidre Lynch, Jim Engell, and Beth Blum.
- Languages: passed translation exams in Spanish and French.

University of Oxford, [Marshall Scholar \(2017\)](#), New College, 2017 – 2019.

- 2018-19: M.St. British and European History (1700-1850). “The Educator’s Assistants: Juvenile Authors in the Edgeworth Family,” advised by Professor Kathryn Gleadle.
- 2017-18: M.St. English Literature (1830-1914). “*The Children’s Garden*, and What the Catlows Made of Botany,” advised by Professor Diane Purkiss.
- Choral Exhibitioner and Bursar, The Queen’s College and Exeter College, Oxford.

Princeton University, A.B., GPA: 3.94, *Summa Cum Laude*, Phi Beta Kappa. 2013 – 2017.

- Concentration (Major): English Literature, Comp Lit Track, Departmental GPA: 4.0.
- Certificates (Minors): Humanistic Studies, European Cultural Studies.
- Thesis: *Girls Growing Curiouser*, advised by Professors Susan Wolfson and Esther Schor.
- Awards: Class of 1859 Prize (English); Center for Human Values Thesis Prize; Shapiro Prize; Bread Loaf Oxford Fellowship; Humanities Council Ferris Summer Fellowship.

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

“Maria Jacson’s *Botanical Dialogues* and Their Ecological Digressions.” In *Vegetal Agency in the Global Eighteenth Century: Plants and Their Perceptions*, edited by Min Wild and Kathryn Gray. Eighteenth-Century Moments. Clemson UP, Forthcoming.

“‘Not for Mere Children’: Charlotte Smith’s Feminist Novels for ‘Young Persons.’” *SECC*, vol. 54, no. 1, 2025, pp. 47–67. <https://doi.org/10.1353/sec.2025.a951740>.

“Sarah Fielding’s Feminist Literary Pedagogy, in Which Nasty Women Become Novel Writers.” *ELH*, vol. 90, no. 1, 2023, pp. 29–54. <https://doi.org/10.1353/elh.2023.0001>.

CONFERENCES & INVITED SPEAKING

Jan 2027 **MLA Forthcoming Talks:** “Frame Tales as Feminist ‘Liberatory Spaces’” and “Insights from Eliza Haywood & Sarah Fielding about Virtual Personas.”

Nov 2026 **NASSR/NAVSA Forthcoming Talk:** “The Female Ramblers (1770-1820).”

- 4/9/26 **ASECS:** “Women’s Adventures & The Arabian Nights Entertainments,” for the Aphra Behn Society Panel.
- 3/28/25 **ASECS:** “‘Constant Examples of Classification’: Botany for Girls and Gendered Hierarchies,” for the panel on “Plants and Revolution.”
- 1/6/24 **MLA:** “Adolescent Girls’ Curiosity: Memory and Imagination in Early 19th-Century Culture Wars,” panel on “Memory’s Celebration Through the Teaching of Literature.”
- 11/21/23 **Princeton University [GradFUTURES](#) Program:** Invited to speak on panel with Christie Henry and Dean James Van Wyck about Harvard’s Literary Careers Program.
- 5/5/23 **Maria Edgeworth Centre Invited Lecture, International Conference for the [225th Anniversary of Practical Education](#).** The Centre published my talk “[Lessons in Pedagogy from Practical Education](#)” on their YouTube account.
- 3/10/23 **ASECS, Women and Books Panel, Women’s Caucus:** “Remembering & Remaking Women’s Books in Charlotte Smith’s Writing for ‘Young Persons.’”
- 12/6/22 **New Eyes on the Eighteenth Century, Symposium, Mahindra Humanities Center:** “How Charlotte Smith Invented Feminist YA.”
- 10/16/18 **National Trust [Study Day on Women Gardeners](#), Oxford:** Talk based on M.St. thesis: “*The Children’s Garden*, and What the Catlows Made of Botany.”

PUBLIC HUMANITIES WRITING

- “Don’t Listen to Morals, Listen to Vegetables.” *Public Books*, October 20, 2021. <https://www.publicbooks.org/dont-listen-to-morals-listen-to-vegetables/>.
- “Hurray for Inventing New Genres or Whatever: On Dr. Moiya McTier’s ‘The Milky Way.’” *Los Angeles Review of Books*, December 24, 2022. <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/hurray-for-inventing-new-genres-or-whatever-on-dr-moiya-mctiers-the-milky-way>.
- “Making and Measuring Education at Home: From Maria Edgeworth to the Kid Interrupting Your Attempt to Read These Words.” *Los Angeles Review of Books*, May 6, 2020. <https://lareviewofbooks.org/short-takes/making-and-measuring-education-at-home>.
- “Medicine and Activism in George Eliot’s ‘Quarry for Middlemarch.’” *Los Angeles Review of Books*, August 29, 2020. <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/medicine-and-activism-in-george-eliot-quarry-for-middlemarch>.
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TEACHING

- 2026 **CMC, “Blaming Charlotte Brontë”:** “Anybody may blame me who likes,” remarked Jane Eyre in 1847. In reply, Virginia Woolf wondered in 1929, “What were they blaming Charlotte Brontë for?” Brontë has often been treated as interchangeable with her characters—blamed and celebrated for their most controversial ideas—since early readers of *Jane Eyre* developed a fan theory that Jane herself was the real-life writer behind Brontë’s penname, Currer Bell. This course considers why Brontë’s novels provoke such impassioned, imaginative responses. Students read the books behind *Jane Eyre*, peruse Brontë’s childhood manuscripts, analyze her semi-autobiographical *Villette*, and engage with some of her iconic interlocutors.
- 2026 **CMC, “British Writers II”:** After Milton and through the onset of Modernism, British writers invented genres and crafted texts that continue to shape our culture. Their readers experienced the rise of the novel genre, an explosion of periodical prose, the poems of Wordsworth, and the essays of Woolf. How are we to understand the innovation and influence of these works in their own time and in our present? This course—the second in CMC’s required sequence for Literature majors—investigates how British writers from the late-seventeenth through the early-twentieth centuries crafted narratives about their past and present that, in effect, shaped their future.
- 2025 **CMC, “Silly Novels by Lady Novelists?”:** In 1856, George Eliot’s essay, “Silly Novels by Lady Novelists,” playfully eviscerated her female colleagues and provoked two related questions: what were the literary criteria for evaluating novels, and what had the novel genre to do with gender? These questions guide students’ readings of novels and criticism by Sarah Fielding, Samuel Johnson, Charlotte Lennox, Frances Burney, Jane Austen, Elizabeth Gaskell, and Anonymous Ladies. From 1750-1850, these authors were experimenting with definitions of “novel” and imagining how this new genre might reshape gender norms. The novel genre may have been silly at times, but lady novelists were all too serious.
- 2025 **CMC, First-Year Writing Seminar, “The Young Adult Novel”:** This course examines what a YA novel is and how this genre experiments with its own literary and cultural connotations. Each unit addresses a different type of YA story, pairing historical texts with contemporary novels that test the limits of their subgenres. We read *Alice’s Adventures with Seraphina* as adventure stories, *Anne of Green Gables* with *Akata Witch* as school stories, and *Little Women* with *The Henna Wars* as love stories. In close reading and research papers, students analyze understudied YA novels.
- 2022-25 **Harvard, Senior Thesis Co-Advisor in English:** I co-advised five senior theses with Professors Deidre Lynch and Nicholas Watson. The research topics included modernist influenza novellas, feminist criticism, Victorian maternal character “types,” gothic fiction, Helen Oyeyemi’s novels, and foster children in Jane Austen’s novels.
- 2024 **Harvard, Junior Tutorial, “Feminist YA”:** Created a writing-intensive course culminating in a 25-page paper. Our novels ranged from the 18th-21st centuries, and our theoretical approach melded literary history, feminist theory, gender studies, critical

- race theory, media studies, and book history. We explored what a “young adult novel” is, how this genre (or genre cluster) raises questions about female identity, how scholars write about YA, and why these texts are so often banned in schools. Spring Semester.
- 2023 **Harvard, Literary Forms, Teaching Fellow:** I wrote all the paper prompts and exams, taught two weekly seminars, and assisted Prof. Nicholas Watson in two weekly lectures for this foundational course, which all majors are required to take, and which was overenrolled. Authors ranged from Chaucer to Du Bois, to Ishiguro. Spring Semester.
- 2022 **Harvard, Junior Tutorial, “Sex and the Series”:** This writing-intensive course concluded with a 25-page paper. Our discussions fused novel theory, feminist criticism, queer theory, the history of the book, and adaptation studies. We considered how the serial form of the Victorian novel and early-2000’s TV invites extended, fluid, and critical thought about gender, sexuality, and identity. We interrogated when gossip, daily life, and pop culture count as “Art”—and for whom? We read four novels, pairing *Bleak House* with *Gilmore Girls*, *Vanity Fair* with *Bridgerton* and *Sex & The City*, *Cranford* with *Grace and Frankie*, and *Middlemarch* with *Gossip Girl*. Fall Semester.
- 2021-22 **Harvard, Humanities [10a](#) & [10b](#), Teaching Fellow and Exam Author:** I taught one seminar discussion and one Expository Writing Lab per week, for which I wrote and commented on students’ responses to Canvas prompts, delivered core writing curriculum, moderated seminar discussion, and graded essays. I was also hired to write the midterm and final exams. I earned two **Bok Center Awards for Distinction in Teaching**. Supervised by Professors Glenda Carpio (fall) and Jay Harris (spring).
- 2018-19 **KCL & UNC Chapel Hill, “[Literature and Diplomacy](#),” TA & RA:** Taught with former ambassador Sir Christopher Meyer and Prof. Ted Leinbaugh; co-authored the curriculum; led visits to British Museum; co-coordinated “Global Forum on Brexit.”
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ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP & CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

- 2026+ **Administration Committee, Claremont McKenna College:** Elected to serve the college as a junior faculty representative to CMC’s governing committee.
- 2021 – 25 **Director, Co-Founder of the Harvard English [Literary Careers Program](#):** Guided humanities students to identify and obtain intellectually fulfilling careers. Collaborated with English Department Chair Glenda Carpio, administrative team, and student co-founder to create need-based professional development scholarships, an alumni network, internships, and mentorship events. We’ve awarded need-based funding to over 50 students (undergrad and grad), and our events include an annual Symposium, mentorship panels (e.g., on publishing, education), and application workshops.
- 2022+ **Curriculum Lead, [Indigo Research](#):** Leading 400+ professors and graduate students to deliver college-level curriculum to high school students and to mentor their research papers. My core writing curriculum for our 1:1 tutorials and IRIS summer program, honor code, and generative AI policy are accredited by UCSB. We partner with the **New York Academy of Sciences** to provide scholarships for students in need.

- 2021-22 **Co-Founder & Editor, [Literary Papers](#)**: As the official journal of the Harvard English Department, LP publishes literary critical essays by graduate and undergraduate students. LP employs graduate student editors, editors, designers, and reviewers.
- 2015-17 **Founding President, [Princeton Humanities Mentorship Program](#)**: Led Humanities Council Symposia, writing workshops, and alumni outreach initiatives. Trained two cohorts of undergraduate mentors to continue and grow the program after I graduated.
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LIBRARY CURATING, OUTREACH, & EXHIBITS

- 2019-22 **Houghton Library, [500 Years of Women Authors, Authorizing Themselves](#) Co-Curator, Stacks Page**: Curated 18th-19th C case of exhibit that ran from 12/13/2021 – 3/11/2022 in the Amy Lowell Room. Wrote and installed permanent plaque about Amy Lowell's life and collection. Employed as a Stacks Page 2019 – 2022.
- 2018 **Bodleian Library [Curious Cabinets](#) Proscholium Exhibit Curator & Speaker**: Curated display of 18th-19th C children's cabinets of miniature books. Planned and led a series of [book-making workshops](#) at the Weston Building for adults and children. Gave exhibit talks and tours. Exhibit ran from June 9, 2018 – August 26, 2018.
- 2018 **Christ Church Manuscript Catalogue Author**: Catalogued unpublished Charles Dodgson letters. Assisted Curator Cristina Neagu in the Upper Library. Hilary Term.
- 2017 **National Constitution Center, Summer Intern**: Edited, created preliminary web design for "Founders Library" exhibit: Library Company books preserved from the Constitutional Convention; drafted Civil War exhibit on childhood, race, gender.
- 2014-17 **Princeton Cotsen Library, Curatorial Assistant to Andrea Immel, Education & Outreach Assistant**: Trained with Andrea Immel to research, organize, catalogue, preserve, and plan lessons about rare children's books. Assisted Dana Sheridan in co-designing and hosting free events for diverse groups of children and guardians to foster their ["love of literacy."](#) Performed period music at [Victorian Tea](#) event.
- 2015-16 **Library of Congress, Young Readers Center Assistant**: Aided the YRC director in coordinating and hosting the Center for the Book and YRC's National Book Festival booth. Curated exhibit, planned *Alice's Adventures* 150th anniversary events: [costumed story time](#), [scholarly lectures](#), [Lewis Carroll Society event](#). My YRC exhibit ran for the academic year. Funded by the Princeton Humanities Council Summer Ferris Award.
- 2014-15 **UPenn Museum, [Art in the Archives Exhibit](#)**: Curated 19th & 20th century images of archaeological sites with Archivist Alex Pezzati. Exhibit ran Aug. 2014 – May 2015.
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PEDAGOGICAL & OUTREACH TALKS

- 3/6/25 **CMC Symposium on Writing & AI:** Invited to speak about how I foster transparency around responsible, minimal AI use in writing- and reading-intensive seminars.
- 1/5/24 **MLA:** Presented “Celebrating Curiosity in Online Curriculum Development,” at panel on “Celebrating Technology: Bridging the Gap Between K-12 and Colleges.”
- 11/15/23 **Princeton University Writing Program & Cotsen Library, Invited Lectures:** Invited to give two 30-minute lectures (virtual) and two 1.5-hour seminars (at the Cotsen Library) on my current research and undergraduate thesis on curiosity in 19th-century novels. Hosted by Curator, Dr. Andrea Immel and Dr. Liora Selinger.
- 10/24/23 **Dartmouth English Department, Invited Talk:** Invited to give an hour-long lecture on Literary Careers and practical strategies for creating similar advising programs.
- 11/9/19 **Harvard Graduate Symposium:** “Widening the ‘Public’ for the Humanities.”
- 7/7/18 **Bodleian Library “Alice’s Day” Lecture:** “Girls Uncovering Curiosity” drew on my Princeton thesis to contextualize my “Curious Cabinets” Proscholium exhibit.
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REFERENCES

Professor Deidre Lynch, Harvard College Professor, Ernest Bernbaum Professor of Literature. Dissertation Chair, Co-advisor of four senior theses, Instructor in “It Is and Is Not a Novel.”

Professor James (Jim) Engell, Gurney Research Professor of English and Professor of Comparative Literature, Harvard University. Dissertation Committee, Instructor in “Comparative Romanticism.”

Professor Beth Blum, Harris K. Weston Associate Professor of the Humanities, Harvard University English Department. Dissertation Committee, Instructor in “Who Cares About Modernism?”

Professor & English Department Chair Glenda Carpio, Harvard College Professor, Powell M. Cabot Professor of American Literature, Professor of English and African American Studies. Supervisor in Hum 10 A, Co-founder of the Literary Careers Program.