

## 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 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Research Interests: British & Anglo-American literature 1700-present, novel theory, feminist & gender studies, children's literature, science in literature, educational texts, book history.
- Languages: passed translation exams in Spanish and French.
- Dissertation: *The Feminist Adventure Novel: From the Curious Girl to the New Woman*.

My dissertation identifies and historicizes the feminist adventure novel, a transatlantic genre that grew from *The Arabian Nights Entertainments* and empowered female readers to negotiate their identities, rights, and educations between childhood and adulthood. The *Nights* proliferated in eighteenth- and nineteenth- century Britain as 1) a model for women's collaborative narration, 2) a hybrid literary form that could absorb a wonderful variety of inset genres, and 3) an intertext that associated young women's curiosity and storytelling with their choice to adventure, or risk themselves. I offer a theoretical framework and a method, combining reception history and formalist reading, to reveal the *Nights*' persistence into the twentieth century as a formal model and an intertext for women's adventures.

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.

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### PEER-REVIEWED WRITING

"'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>.

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## 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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## ACADEMIC CONFERENCES & INVITED SPEAKING

- 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 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Culture Wars,” panel on “Memory’s Celebration Through the Teaching of Literature.”
- 1/5/24     **MLA:** Presented “Celebrating Curiosity in Online Curriculum Development,” at panel on “Celebrating Technology: Bridging the Gap Between K-12 and Colleges.”
- 5/5/23     **Maria Edgeworth Centre Invited Lecture, International Conference for the [225<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Practical Education](#).** The Centre published my keynote 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.”
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## ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP & CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

- 2021 – 25     **Director, Co-Founder of the Harvard English [Literary Careers](#) Program:** Guiding 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 Institute](#):** Leading 250+ 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, we publish literary critical essays by graduate and undergraduate students. We employ graduate student editors, editors, designers, and reviewers.
- 2021 **Research & Pedagogy Fellow, [Poetry in America](#):** Taught and aided the development of National Education Equity Lab curriculum for underserved schools in 35+ cities. Selected versions of poems for [PBS series](#). Spring semester and summer internship.
- 2021+ **Rhodes Endorsement Author, Princeton Fellowships Office, [OIP](#):** Occasionally writes institutional letters of endorsement for the Princeton Rhodes Committee.
- 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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## UNIVERSITY TEACHING

- 2022-25 **Harvard, Senior Thesis Co-Advisor in English:** I have co-advised five senior theses with Professors Deidre Lynch and Nicholas Watson. The topics ranged from 18<sup>th</sup>-century novels to contemporary metafiction. The students' research focuses 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 18<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> 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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## LIBRARY CURATING & EXHIBITIONS

- 2019-22 **Houghton Library, [500 Years of Women Authors, Authorizing Themselves](#) Co-Curator, Stacks Page:** Curated 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> 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 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> 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* 150<sup>th</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> century images of archaeological sites with Archivist Alex Pezzati. Exhibit ran Aug. 2014 – May 2015.
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### OUTREACH & PUBLIC HUMANITIES TALKS

- 11/21/23 **Princeton University [GradFUTURES](#) Program:** Invited to speak on panel with Christie Henry and Dean James Van Wyck about the Literary Careers Program.
- 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 19<sup>th</sup>-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 how humanities students can identify, pursue, and obtain gainful, intellectually fulfilling employment.
- 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.