

JOB AD

Assistant Professor in British literature (Tenure Track)

The University invites applications for a tenure-track appointment in English at the rank of assistant professor, effective August 16, 2018. Applicants are expected to have a Ph.D. in an appropriate field, and a primary specialization in British or Anglophone literature/culture, excluding North America. Candidates must hold the Ph.D. by the starting date and must have an appropriate record of publication. Prior to interview, candidates without the PhD in hand will be asked to submit the dissertation.

The successful candidate will be expected to 1) maintain an active research agenda, 2) apply for extramural research funding, 3) teach four courses per academic year at the undergraduate and graduate level, 4) provide service to the department, the university, and the profession.

The Department is committed to creating an environment that affirms diversity across a variety of dimensions, including ability, class, ethnicity/race, gender identity and expression. We particularly welcome applicants who can contribute to such an environment through their scholarship, teaching, mentoring, and professional service. The university and greater community enjoy a diversity of culture, music, restaurants, year-round outdoor recreational activity, and social opportunities, including organizations that support the interests of people from varied backgrounds.

Salary is competitive, commensurate with qualifications and experience and includes a full benefits package.

For full consideration, applications must be submitted online and must include: (1) a cover letter, (2) a research statement of approximately two pages, single-spaced, (3) a CV, (4) an article-length writing sample, (5) the names and email addresses for three references, and (6) teaching statement and, if available, representative teaching evaluations. After initial review, letters of recommendation will be requested for selected applicants. Review of applications will begin as received and will continue until the position is filled.

State clearly in your cover letter and CV the field in which you received your PhD as well as areas of specialization that align with those listed in the ad. You can further demonstrate this alignment throughout your materials with examples of courses and publications/presentations in these areas.

If you have not yet completed all requirements for the PhD, state clearly in your cover letter your timeline for doing so.

List your publications in your CV and make reference to them clearly in your cover letter as well.

Research is foregrounded here, indicating the department/university's research focus

Teaching is still requirement at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

If you can demonstrate previous experience providing service to your department or university, be sure to include it in your CV. If it was a significant part of your graduate school experience, you may want to mention it in your cover letter.

Their commitment to diversity is emphasized in its own paragraph. Be sure to include your own experiences and/or commitment to diversity in your materials. Try not to simply pay "lip service" to the topic.

Where appropriate, include mention of how a commitment to diversity informs your research, teaching, mentoring, etc.

This application requires many additional documents. Be sure to send everything that is requested and refer to these documents in your cover letter.

Ryan Smith

name@gmail.com

Education

University, City, State

Ph.D. in English, May 20XX

Specialization: Victorian Literature and Culture

University, City, State

M.A. in English, August 20XX

Concentration: 19th-century British Literature

College, City, State

B.A. in English, May 20XX

Academic Appointment

Visiting Assistant Professor of English

University, City, State

Teaching and Scholarly Interests

Victorian fiction; 19th-century Poetry and Prose; Science Fiction; Gothic, Sensation, and Detective Fiction; British Modernism; Psychoanalysis; Gender Studies

Publications

"Shattered Dials and Mute Objects: The Surfaces of *Lady Audley's Secret*." *Genre* (forthcoming 20XX)

"Industrial Evolution: Steampunk and the Victorians," co-authored with Kyle Green. Introduction to Special issue of *Neo-Victorian Studies* (forthcoming 20XX)

Entries on "The Improvisatrice" and *Northanger Abbey*. *Companion to Literary Romanticism*. (Ed. Andrew Maunder, Facts on File, Inc.) (forthcoming, 20XX)

Current Book and Collection Projects

The Subject of Surfaces in Victorian Fiction: book-length analysis of material surfaces, psychological depth, and shifting temporal paradigms in Victorian fiction and culture.

"Steampunk, Science, and (Neo)Victorian Technologies," Special Issue of *Neo-Victorian Studies* (forthcoming 20XX): invited, with Kyle Green to design and edit a special issue of peer-reviewed journal. Topics include steampunk and gender, empire, aesthetics, and historicity.

Awards

Dean's Teaching Fellowship, Graduate School of Arts and Science, University, 20XX-20XX

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Travel Grant for Research at The Harry Ransom Center for the Humanities, Austin, TX
English Department, University, July 20XX

Graduate Fellowship, Department of English, University, 20XX-20XX

Graduate Fellowship, Department of English, University, 20XX-20XX

Conference Papers and Presentations

“Industrial Evolution: Steampunk’s Predecessors and Present,” Twenty-Second Annual Meeting of the Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts, Charlotte, North Carolina, November 20XX

“Embodying Evolution’s Invisible Depth: *The Invisible Man*, Materiality, and Interiority,” North American Conference on British Studies, San Francisco, November, 20XX.

“The Mute Propriety of Tables and Chairs: Superficiality and Madness in *Lady Audley’s Secret*,” North American Victorian Studies Association Conference, Victoria, British Columbia, October, 20XX.

“Layering Narrative and Uncovering Authority in Landon’s *The Improvisatrice*,” British Women Writers Conference, Lexington, April 20XX.

“The Depths of Detection: Indexicality in *Lady Audley’s Secret*,” Popular Culture Association Conference, Boston, April 20XX.

“The Burden of Depth: Eating in *The Invisible Man*,” McGill Graduate Conference on Language and Literature, Montreal, Canada, March 20XX.

“The Space of Sensation Fiction,” North Eastern Modern Language Association Conference, Pittsburgh, March 20XX.

“A Collection of Narratives: the Sensationalized Body as Souvenir in *Lady Audley’s Secret*,” South Atlantic Modern Language Association Conference, Atlanta, November 20XX.

Organized Conference Panels and Presentations

Panel co-organizer, “Steampunk’s Vision and Revision,” Society for Literature, Science, and the Arts, Charlotte, November 20XX.

Panel co-organizer, “Veils of Form: The Nineteenth-Century Woman Writer and Formal Authority,” British Women Writers Conference, Lexington, April 20XX.

Inter-departmental Lecture Coordinator, “Transparency and Survival in Graduate School,” University, January 20XX.

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Panel co-chair, "Women's Bodies in Space(s)," South Atlantic Modern Language Association Conference, Atlanta, November 20XX.

Teaching Experience

Independently designed and taught courses:

ENG 332: Victorian Science in Prose and Poetry
Upper-level course for English majors
University, Spring 20XX

ENG 212: Seeing through Science Fiction
English major requirement
University, Spring 20XX

ENG 336: The Victorian Novel – Forms and Function
Upper-level course for English majors
University, Spring 20XX

ENG 181: Writing about Literature – Dangerous Reading
First year writing requirement
University, Fall 20XX, Fall 20XX

ENG 101: Expository Writing – Representations of the Domestic
First year writing requirement
University, Spring 20XX

ENG 101: Composition and Rhetoric
First year writing requirement
University, Fall 20XX; Spring 20XX; Fall 20XX; Spring 20XX

Teaching Assistant:

ENG 389: Cultural Studies
University, Spring 20XX
(Lectured in area of expertise, graded papers and exams)

ENG 215: History of Theater and Drama
University, Fall 20XX
(Led discussion, taught expository writing skills, graded papers, quizzes, and exams)

Pedagogical Training

Technology and Literacies Seminar: Workshop exploring the uses of technologies in English literature courses, including Blackboard, Dreamweaver, Fireworks, Photoshop, iMovie and iDVD, Powerpoint, podcasting, wikis, and blogs
Center for Information Technology, Fall 20XX

ENG 791: Pedagogy in the Composition Classroom
English Department Graduate Seminar, Spring 20XX, Fall 20XX

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Teaching Assistant Training Program,
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, August 20XX

Teaching of English Composition and Rhetoric Program
University Graduate English Department, August 20XX

Professional Service and Activities

Writer and Research Consultant, Office for Foundation and Corporate Relations
Summer 20XX

Co-developer and author, English Department wiki
Summer 20XX

Coordinator, Brown Bag Informational Sessions
English Department, University, August 20XX – May 20XX

Social Chair
English Department, University, August 20XX – May 20XX

Logistical and Social Coordinator, Prospective Graduate Student visits
English Department, University, February 20XX

Project Assistant, Women's Writers Research Project
February 20XX – February 20XX

References

Names Listed

COVER LETTER

Dr. First Name Last Name

Title

University

City State Zip

Dear Dr. Last Name and Members of the Search Committee:

I write to apply for the position of Assistant Professor, British Literature. I received my PhD in May 20XX from University and am currently working as an Assistant Professor of English at University. While teaching, I am revising my dissertation, “The Subject of Surfaces in Victorian Fiction,” for publication. I am eager to bring my research enthusiasm and teaching specialties – which include Victorian literature, British Modernism, and science fiction – to your students and am prepared to contribute to a community in which diversity and student mentoring are privileged.

Victorian material culture is lavish with ornate surfaces, yet its literature has long been supposed to privilege figures of depth. “The Subject of Surfaces in Victorian Fiction” explores this asymmetry by focusing on a mode of characterization that is enacted on material surfaces – paintings, garments, jewels, skin, hair – rather than in psychic depth. Responding to critics who have traced the production of psychological, historical, and artistic depth within the novel form, I argue that Victorian novels reveal how the psychic wholeness of deep subjectivity is paradoxically sustained by the illusory appearances of surfaces. My analysis includes novels from a range of genres – realist, sensation, gothic and science fiction – from the disappointing depths of Dickens’ *Our Mutual Friend* to the indispensable surfaces of Wells’ *The Invisible Man*. In each case, I show that in novels where the depth of characterization is reflected from surfaces, representations of time, whether a character’s personal history or a narrative’s timeline, also prove unstable. Ultimately, I argue that changes in the way nineteenth- and early twentieth-century subjects understood time precipitated a crisis for deep characterization, one that is tenuously repaired by locating subjectivity on surfaces.

I have shared parts of this project through publication and conference presentation. In a shortened version of my chapter on Braddon’s *Lady Audley’s Secret*, published in *Genre*, I argue that the sensuous surfaces and unstable psychologies for which the sensation genre is derided are in fact symptoms of the novel’s anxiety about the gulf between psychological experience and material reality. I am currently revising an article that draws on my chapter on *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. My analysis focuses on absent surfaces in Wilde’s novel and the readiness with which the novel’s critics have filled in those absences. As I prepare the dissertation for book publication, I am adding a chapter that traces the disjunction between material surfaces and the deep subject to the work of Charles Darwin and Charles Lyell.

In both my scholarship and my teaching, I seek to develop a vocabulary for the experience of reading literature. In the classroom, I encourage my students to vocalize their reactions to literature and to see those reactions as the beginning of analysis. For example, the length of Victorian and Modernist novels can be a challenge for some readers, so as part of class discussion, I ask when and why narratives become tedious: in any novel, what draws us in and what leaves us cold. To address various cultural functions of the novels, I encouraged students in a Victorian literature class at University to first ask, for example, whom we find more sympathetic, Eliot’s Adam Bede or Hardy’s Angel Clare, or whether *Dracula* strikes us as titillating or terrifying. We then connected the range of readers’ experiences to Victorian and Modernist cultural issues,

such as paradigms of masculinity in working and upper-class families or the impact of evolutionary theory, grounding reading reactions in cultural subject positions. Last semester, I began sessions of my Long Nineteenth Century British Literature seminar by asking students to identify the passage from our reading they most enjoyed or most hated. We connect those reactions to a variety of narrative and poetic techniques, some of which are more affective than others. Initiating analyses around the pleasures of reading allows students to find authority as readers and lays the groundwork for connections between the cultural issues that informed authors and those that inform our own reactions. In other words, these analyses lead to awareness of literature both as artifact that illuminates a historical period and as literary expression of how meaning is made on personal and cultural levels.

My sensitivity to students' experience in the classroom has developed through teaching at three universities. As an MA student at University, I taught expository writing and developed interdisciplinary writing assignments that appealed to a wide range of students and which would be applicable in University's 101, 102 and 103 level courses. Currently, I am teaching a class that foregrounds the skills (and risks) of literary criticism by examining contexts in which reading becomes subversive in a range of genres, the type of inquiry that would be relevant in your 241 course. A recurring topic in the course is the variety of close-readings available in any text, a focus I would bring to all the writing-intensive courses at University. I encourage students to connect with my classes on an individual level, asking them to connect learning objectives in an English class to their larger goals; I would work to privilege these connections as I develop upper-level 19th century British literature courses at University. While I have not had the opportunity to teach a graduate level course, I am prepared to design and offer new courses, including those that explore the global impact of cultural shifts in the period around gender roles and technological innovation.

I want to emphasize my eagerness to join a community with a strong commitment to affirming diverse experience, identity and ability. I am committed to liberal arts education as the most effective educational route to a fully-developed, globally-conscious, rigorously analytical awareness, and I believe I would find unshakable support for that commitment at your institution. I am particularly committed to educating and mentoring first generation and students from diverse backgrounds. A dedication to providing rigorous educational opportunities for students who may, at first, feel less prepared for success at college drew me to my current job at University, where the vision for institutional growth is explicitly informed by the specific needs and strengths of a diverse community. Your University has demonstrated how a campus can draw significant educational and intellectual vitality from its connection to community, broadening commitment to diversity from a mission statement to a fundamental institutional value. At such a significant moment for the future of higher education, the opportunity to join a school that is exemplary of this commitment to social justice is a rare privilege.

This application includes my research statement, curriculum vitae, writing sample, teaching statement and evaluations. The names and contact information for my references are listed in my vitae. I can be reached via email at name@gmail.com and at my mobile number, XXX-XXX-XXXX. I hope to speak with you about the position.

Sincerely,