

# SEBASTIAN LECOURT

Department of English  
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## ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

University of Houston, Assistant Professor of English, 2016-Present  
The Johns Hopkins University, Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in the Humanities, 2015-2016  
University of Konstanz, Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study, 2014-15  
Rutgers University, ACLS New Faculty Fellow (English), 2012-14  
Brandeis University, Visiting Assistant Professor of English, 2011-12

## EDUCATION

Yale University, Ph.D. in English Language and Literature, December 2011  
Macalester College, B.A. *summa cum laude* in English, June 2003

## BOOKS

*The Genres of Comparative Religion, 1783-1927* (in progress)  
*Cultivating Belief: Victorian Anthropology, Liberal Aesthetics, and the Secular Imagination* (Oxford, 2018)

## ARTICLES

“Nineteenth-Century Literature, New Religious Movements and Secularization.” Introduction to special issue of *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 73:2 (September 2018): 147-60. Co-authored with Charles LaPorte.  
“Prophets Genuine and Spurious: The Victorian Jesus Novel and the Ends of Comparison.” *Representations* 142 (Spring 2018): 33-54.  
“Idylls of the Buddh: Buddhist Modernism and Victorian Poetics in Colonial Ceylon.” *PMLA* 131.3 (May 2016): 668-85.  
“That Untravell’d World: The Difficulties of Thinking Globally in Victorian Studies.” *Literature Compass* 13.2 (2016): 108-17.  
“The Mormons, the Victorians, and the Idea of Greater Britain.” *Victorian Studies* 56.1 (Autumn 2013): 85-111.  
“‘To surrender himself, in perfectly liberal inquiry’: Walter Pater, Many-Sidedness, and the Conversion Novel.” *Victorian Studies* 53.2 (Winter 2011): 231-53.  
“Matthew Arnold and Religion’s Cosmopolitan Histories.” *Victorian Literature and Culture* 38.2 (September 2010): 467-87.

## REVIEWS AND SHORTER PIECES

Review of Nathan K. Hensley, *The Forms of Empire: The Poetics of Victorian Sovereignty* (Oxford, 2016). *Victorian Studies* (forthcoming).

Review of Ian Hesketh, *Victorian Jesus* (Toronto, 2017). *Journal of British Studies* 57.4 (October 2018 ): 895-897.

Review of Arie L. Molendijk, *Friedrich Max Müller and the Sacred Books of the East* (Oxford, 2016). *Victorian Studies* 60.2 (Winter 2018): 331-2.

“*The Light of Asia* and the Varieties of Victorian Presentism.” *boundary 2 online* 1.2 (October, 2016). Available at: <http://www.boundary2.org/2016/10/sebastian-lecourt-the-light-of-asia-and-the-varieties-of-victorian-presentism/>

Review of Lauren Goodlad, *The Victorian Geopolitical Aesthetic* (Oxford, 2015). *The Wordsworth Circle* 46.4 (2015): 241-43.

Review of Alison Byerly, *Are We There Yet? Virtual Travel and Victorian Realism* (Michigan, 2013). *Victorian Studies* 58.2 (Winter 2016): 378-80.

“Victorian Studies and the Transnational Present.” Guest blog post at v21collective.org. Available at: <http://v21collective.org/sebastian-lecourt-victorian-studies-and-the-transnational-present/>

Review of Norman Vance, *Bible and Novel: Narrative Authority and the Death of God* (Oxford, 2013). *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 69.3 (December 2014): 405-08.

Review of Kirstie Blair, *Form and Faith in Victorian Poetry and Religion* (Oxford, 2012). *The Wordsworth Circle* 44.4 (2013): 236-38.

Review of Lene Østermark-Johannson, *Walter Pater and the Language of Sculpture* (Ashgate, 2011). *Victorian Studies* 55 (2012): 141-43.

Review of Marjorie Wheeler-Barclay, *The Science of Religion in Britain, 1860-1910* (Virginia, 2010). *Victorians Institute Journal* 40 (2012): online.

Review of Joshua Landy and Michael Saler (eds.), *The Re-Enchantment of the World: Secular Magic in a Rational Age* (Stanford, 2009). *Religion and the Arts* 15 (2011): 184-86.

Review of Peter Melville Logan, *Victorian Fetishism: Intellectuals and Primitives* (SUNY, 2009). *Religion and the Arts* 14 (2010): 349-52.

## AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

2017 Interdisciplinary Nineteenth-Century Studies (INCS) Essay Prize

2017 New Faculty Research Grant, University of Houston

2015-17 Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Humanities, Johns Hopkins University (second year declined)

2015-19 Society of Fellows, University of Chicago (declined)

2016 Fellowship, Institute for Advanced Study, University of Notre Dame (declined)

2015-16 Fellowship, Institute for Advanced Study, Central European University (declined)

2015-16 Fellowship, Center for Transcultural Studies, University of Heidelberg (declined)

2014-15 Fellowship, Institute for Advanced Study, University of Konstanz

2014 NEH Summer Institute – Problems in the Study of Religion, University of Virginia

2012-14 ACLS New Faculty Fellowship, Rutgers University

2012-14 ACLS New Faculty Fellowship, UC Berkeley (declined)

2011 Warnock Research Fellowship, The Private Papers of James Boswell, Yale University

2010 Veech Prize for Outstanding Essay Accepted for Publication, Yale University

2009-10 Mrs. Giles Whiting Dissertation Fellowship, Yale University

2008 Summer Research Fellowship, Beinecke Rare Books and Manuscripts Library, Yale University

2005-2009 Graduate Fellowship, Yale University

2003 Phi Beta Kappa, Macalester College

2003 Harry Scherman Essay Prize, Macalester College

## INVITED TALKS

Wrap-up discussion. NVSA Conference, University of Pennsylvania. April, 2018.

“Prophets Genuine and Spurious: Comparative Religion, the Victorian Jesus Novel, and the Limits of Formalism.” Stanford University. January, 2017.

“Idylls of the Buddh: Buddhist Modernism and Victorian Poetics in Colonial Ceylon.” American University. February, 2016.

Panelist. “Empire and Unfielding.” V21 Symposium. University of Chicago. October, 2015.

“History’s Second-Hand Bookshop: Self-Cultivation and Scripturality in *Daniel Deronda*.” 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Colloquium, University of California, Berkeley. April, 2015.

“George Eliot and the Object World of Scripture.” Boston College. February, 2015.

“The Genres of Comparative Religion.” CUNY Graduate Center Victorian Seminar. May, 2013.

“Idylls of the Buddh: Buddhist Modernism and Victorian Poetics in Colonial Ceylon.” British Studies Colloquium, Yale University. April, 2013.

“Victorian Anthropology and the Secular Imagination.” P19 Colloquium, Temple University. December, 2012.

“Walter Pater’s Secular Ethics.” Religion, Politics and Society Colloquium, Yale University Departments of Sociology and Political Science. April, 2011.

## CONFERENCE PAPERS

“Bengali Renaissance’s Epic Dilemma.” NAVSA Conference, University of Florida. October, 2018.

“Individuality and Imposture: George Eliot on the Religious Founder.” NAVSA Conference, Arizona State University. November, 2016.

“Individuality, Exemplarity, Imposture: George Eliot on the Religious Founder.” Panel on New Religious Movements and the Victorian Literary Imagination. MLA Convention, Austin, TX. January, 2016.

“George Eliot and the Vanishing Scripture.” NAVSA Conference, University of Western Ontario. November, 2014.

“Idylls of the Buddh: Buddhist Modernism and Victorian Poetics in Colonial Ceylon.” NAVSA Conference, Pasadena, CA. October, 2013.

“The Life of Buddha and the Genre-Systems of Victorian Comparative Religion.” NAVSA Conference, University of Wisconsin-Madison. September, 2012.

“Richard Burton and the Believing Body.” NAVSA Conference, Vanderbilt University. November, 2011.

“The Rise of English and the Decline of Ethnology.” NVSA Conference, University of Maryland. April, 2011.

“Religion, Culture, and the Mormon Problem.” NVSA Conference, Princeton University. April, 2010.

“Walter Pater and the Anthropology of Survival.” Joint BAVS-NAVSA Conference, Cambridge University. July, 2009.

“Arnoldian Secularism.” British Studies Colloquium, Yale University. February, 2009.

“Frazer and Machen: The Detective Plot between Anthropology and Occult Belief.” NAVSA Conference, Yale University. November, 2008.

“Andrew Lang, Anthropology, and the Alternatives to Realism.” Graduate Student Conference, University of Chicago. October, 2007.

“*Marius the Epicurean*: Nostalgia, Conversion, and Culture in the Historical Novel.” Graduate Student Conference, University of Chicago. October, 2006.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Literature of the Victorian Age (University of Houston; Spring 2019)  
 The Romantic Movement (University of Houston, Spring 2019)  
 Late Romanticism (graduate seminar; University of Houston, Fall 2018)  
 The Romantic Movement (University of Houston, Fall 2018)  
 British Novel since 1832 (University of Houston; Spring 2018)  
 Literature of the Victorian Age (University of Houston; Spring 2018)  
 Nineteenth-Century Science Fiction (University of Houston; Fall 2017)  
 Victorian Poetry (graduate seminar; University of Houston; Fall 2017)  
 Victorian Prose (graduate seminar; University of Houston; Spring 2017)  
 Introduction to Literary Studies (University of Houston; Spring 2017)  
 Literature of the Victorian Age (University of Houston; Fall 2016)  
 Victorian Literature as World Literature (Johns Hopkins University; Spring 2016)  
 Nineteenth-Century Science Fiction (Johns Hopkins University; Fall 2015)  
 The Genres of Victorian Anthropology (Rutgers University; Spring 2014).  
 The History of Literary Theory (Rutgers University; Spring 2014).  
 Victorian Poetry (Rutgers University; Fall 2013).  
 Secret Gardens: Children's Literature since the Grimms (Rutgers University; Spring 2013).  
 Victorian Poetry (Rutgers University; Spring 2013).  
 Other Worlds: British Literature, 1870-1914 (Rutgers University; Fall 2012).  
 Novel Horizons: Victorian Fiction and the Global Imagination (Brandeis University; Spring 2012).  
 The Literature of Adolescence (Brandeis University; Spring 2012).  
 British Literature in the Age of Darwin and Dickens (Brandeis University; Fall 2011).  
 The History of Theory and Criticism (Brandeis University; Fall 2011).  
 Reading and Writing the Modern Essay (Yale University; Spring 2011).  
 Religion in a Secular Age (Yale University; Fall 2010).  
 Reading and Writing the Modern Essay (Yale University; Spring, 2009).  
 Fiction Without Borders (TA; Yale University; Fall, 2008).  
 The Victorian Novel (TA; Yale University; Spring, 2008).  
 The Modern British Novel (TA; Yale University; Fall, 2007).  
 Romantic Poetry (TA; Yale University; Fall, 2006).

## ADVISING

2011-12: Senior Thesis Director, Julia Heckman-Mark (Brandeis University), ““A Vague and Terrible Power”: The Threat of Mormonism in the Victorian Imagination”

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

2018: Organizer and chair, Empire and Form roundtable. NAVSA Conference, University of Florida. Panelists: Tanya Agathocleous (Hunter College), Gordon Bigelow (Rhodes College), Nathan Hensley (Georgetown University), Amy Martin (Mount Holyoke College), Mary Mullen (Villanova University), Jason Rudy (University of Maryland), Philip Steer (Massey University).  
 2018: Manuscript reviewer for *Victorian Literature and Culture*.  
 2018-present: Member, CLASS Undergraduate Studies Committee, University of Houston  
 2018-present: Member, ERG Committee, Dept. of English, University of Houston

2018: Organizer, symposium on New Directions in African Studies. Panelists: Akin Adesokan (Indiana University), Jeanne-Marie Jackson (Johns Hopkins University), Nathan Suhr-Sytsma (Emory University). University of Houston.

2018: Organizer and chair, How Seriality Matters roundtable. INCS Conference, San Francisco State University. Panelists: Susan David Bernstein (Boston University), Erica Haugtvedt (South Dakota School of Mines and Technology), Linda Hughes (Texas Christian University), Robyn Warhol (Ohio State University), Christine Woody (University of Pennsylvania).

2017-present: Member, Upper-division Studies Committee, Dept. of English, University of Houston

2016-Present: Events director, Empire Studies Group, University of Houston

2015-17: Committee member, Rudikoff Prize for Best First Book in Victorian Studies, Northeast Victorian Studies Association.

2015: Manuscript reviewer for *PMLA*.

2014: Manuscript reader for *Victorian Studies*.

2013: Manuscript reader for *Religion and Literature*.

2011-13: Member, Northeast Victorian Studies Association conference planning committee.

2012: Coordinator, Networking Session on Religion and Secularism. NAVSA Conference, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

2011: Chair, “Sacred Play and Secular Pleasures.” NAVSA Conference, Vanderbilt University.

2011: Chair, “Social Form.” “The Politics of Form” graduate conference, Columbia University.

2010-11: Organizer, Yale British Studies Colloquium.

2010: Response to Clifford Ando, “The Ontology of Religious Institutions.” Religion, Politics and Society Colloquium, Yale Departments of Sociology and Political Science.

2010: Chair, “Strategies of Serialization.” Research Society for Victorian Periodicals conference, Yale University.

2010: Chair, “The Digital Age Library.” “The Past’s Digital Presence” conference, Yale University.

2008-09: Organizer, Yale English Department Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Colloquium.

2008: Student assistant, NAVSA Conference, Yale University.

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Modern Language Association  
 Northeast Victorian Studies Association  
 North American Victorian Studies Association  
 V21 Collective

## LANGUAGES

French, German, Latin