

Sarah Bilston

Department of English, Trinity College
Hartford CT USA

Education

Somerville College, University of Oxford, UK (1995-2000).
D.Phil. in English Literature (2000); M.St. (1996).

University College, University of London, UK (1991-5).
M.A. with distinction (1995); B.A. in English Literature, with first class honors (1994).

Selected Honors and Appointments

Professor of English Literature, Trinity College (July 2019-present).
Thomas Church Brownell Prize for Excellence in Teaching, Trinity College (2017).
Honorary Fellow, Davenport College, Yale University (2017-present).
Associate Professor of English Literature (with tenure), Trinity College (July 2011-June 2019).
Assistant Professor of English Literature, Trinity College (2005-June 2011).
Lecturer, English Dept. and WMGST Yale University (2001-5).
Life Member, Clare Hall, University of Cambridge (2001-present).
Junior Research Fellow, Clare Hall, University of Cambridge, England (2000-2001).
Lecturer, Yale English Department (Fall '99), Morse & Pierson Colleges (Spring 2000).
Lecturer in Twentieth-Century Literature, Somerville College, Oxford (Spring 1999).

Publications

Scholarly Books

The Hunt for the Lost Orchid. Under contract with Harvard University Press.

The Promise of the Suburbs: A Victorian History in Literature and Culture. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019. [Choice Outstanding Academic Title, 2019]

The Awkward Age in Women's Popular Fiction, 1850-1900: Girls and the Transition to Womanhood. Oxford: Clarendon Press [O.U.P.], 2004.

Fiction

Sleepless Nights. A Novel. HarperCollins US (2009) and Sphere UK [Little, Brown] (2008). Sold also in Italy, Netherlands, Japan.

Bed Rest: A Novel. HarperCollins US (2006) and Sphere UK [Little, Brown]. Sold also in Brazil, Sweden, Spain, Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Japan. [*Washington Post* "Spring Pick" 2006]

Academic Reference

“Women’s Suburban Fiction” [2000 word entry]. *Palgrave Encyclopedia of Victorian Women’s Writing*. Palgrave/Springer Nature: 2019.

“Eliza Lynn Linton.” Invited volume advisor. *Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism: Criticism of Novelists, Philosophers, and Other Creative Writers Who Died between 1800 and 1899, From the First Published Critical Appraisals to Current Evaluations*. Vol. 362. Ed. Catherine C. DiMercurio. New York: Gale Cengage/Layman Poupard, 2018. 271-86.

Academic Articles, Book Chapters

“Pictures, Plants and Ornaments”: Jane Ellen Panton and Creative Practice in the British Victorian Suburbs.’ Ilja Van Damme, Ruth McManus & Michiel Dehaene, eds. *Suburban Creativity*. Toronto: U of Toronto Press; forthcoming. [Global Suburbanisms Series]

“The Most Extraordinary Novel of Modern Times’: Collaborative Fiction in *The Gentlewoman*.” *Victorian Literature and Culture*; forthcoming.

“Your Vile Suburbs Can Offer Nothing But The Deadness Of The Grave’: The Stereotyping of Early Victorian Suburbia.” *Victorian Literature and Culture* 41 (2013): 621-42.

“They Congregate in Towns and Suburbs”: The Shape of Middle-Class Life in John Claudius Loudon’s *The Suburban Gardener*.” *Victorian Review* 37 (2011): 144-59.

“Queens of the Garden: Victorian Women Gardeners and the Rise of the Gardening Advice Text.” *Victorian Literature and Culture* 36 (2008): 1-19.

“It is Not *What* We Read, But *How* We Read”: Maternal Counsel on Girls’ Reading Practices in Mid-Victorian Literature.” *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 30 (2008): 1-20.

“Conflict and Ambiguity in Victorian Women’s Writing: Eliza Lynn Linton and the Possibilities of Agnosticism.” *Tulsa Studies in Women’s Writing* 23 (2004): 283-310.

- Republished in *Nineteenth-Century Literature Criticism: Criticism of Novelists, Philosophers, and Other Creative Writers Who Died between 1800 and 1899, From the First Published Critical Appraisals to Current Evaluations*. Vol. 362. Ed. Catherine C. DiMercurio. New York: Gale Cengage/Layman Poupard, 2018. 271-86.

“Authentic Performance in Theatrical Women’s Fictions of the 1870s.” *Women’s Writing* 11 (2004): 39-53.

“A New Reading of the Anglo-Indian Women’s Novel (1880-1894): Passages to India, Passages to Womanhood.” *English Literature in Transition* 44 (2001): 320-341.

Selected Reviews

Rev. of Winter Jade Werner, *Missionary Cosmopolitanism in Nineteenth-Century British Literature*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2020. Forthcoming; *Journal of British Studies* (2020).

Rev. of Barbara Leckie, *Open Houses: Poverty, The Novel, and the Architectural Idea in Nineteenth-Century Britain* and Joanna Hofer-Robinson, *Dickens and Demolition: Literary Afterlives and Mid-Nineteenth-Century Urban Development*. *Victorian Studies* 62 (2020): 346-351. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/760666>.

Rev. of Eleanor Fitzsimmons, *E. Nesbit: Victorian Iconoclast, Children's Author, and Creator of The Railway Children*. *Victorian Review* 45 (2019): 330-33. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/757846>.

Rev. of Laura Baker Whelan, *Class, Culture and Suburban Anxieties in the Victorian Era*. [nbol-19.org](http://test.nbol-19.org), 2010. http://test.nbol-19.org/view_doc.php?index=56.

Rev. of Christa Zorn, Vernon Lee: Aesthetics, History, and the Victorian Female Intellectual. *ELT* 48 (2005): 75-9.

Rev. of Dominic Hibberd, Harold Monroe: Poetry of the New Age. *ELT* 46 (2003): 437-441.

Rev. of Nicola Diane Thompson ed., *Victorian Women Writers and the Woman Question*. *Notes & Queries* 47 (2000): 382-3.

Selected Journalism

"She *Didn't* Start it: Jane Ellen Panton, A Victorian Marie Kondo." Yale University Press Blog, April 3, 2019. <http://blog.yalebooks.com/2019/04/03/she-didnt-start-it-jane-ellen-panton-a-victorian-marie-kondo/>

"Breaking up Families? America Looks Like a Dickens Novel." *TheConversation.com*, 20 June, 2018. <https://theconversation.com/breaking-up-families-america-looks-like-a-dickens-novel-98660>. Republished by outlets around the world including *Chicago Tribune*, *Houston Chronicle*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *International Business Times*, *Alternet.com* and *Salon.com*.

"The Death of Chick-Lit," *Slate/Double X*. 11 August 2009.

Featured article on Bed Rest, *Eve Magazine UK* (May 2007); featured article on Bed Rest, *You Magazine UK* (July 2007).

"Don't Take This Lying Down," *New York Times* (24 March, 2006).

Op-eds in *Hartford Courant* and *Tallahassee Democrat* on motherhood (June 25 & 26 '06).

Selected Conference Papers and Presentations

"On Beholding 'The Lost Orchid.'" Victorians Institute Conference, Charlotte, N.C. October, 2021.

"Mapping the Sociable Suburbs: Women and Literary Networks." Accepted NAVSA, November 2020 [Conference postponed to March 2022 due to Covid].

“Form and Collaborative Fiction: *The Fate of Fenella*.” NAVSA, Columbus, Ohio. October 2019.

“An Unlikely Friendship? Sarah Grand, Matilda Betham-Edwards and Late-Victorian Literary Celebrity.” VSAWC, Calgary, Canada. May 2019.

“Women and Creative Opportunity in the British Victorian Suburbs.” “Suburban Nowheres,” University of Antwerp: Centre for Urban History & Urban Studies Institute. April 2019.

“Dickens and Dombey.” Invited Speaker: Friends of Dickens NYC. November, 2018.

“Looking Out Across a New Landscape: Suburban Problems and Women’s Design Solutions.” NAVSA, St. Petersburg, Florida. October 2018.

“New Directions: Women and the Suburban Margins.” British Women Writers Association Conference, Austin, TX. April 2018.

“Understanding Queen Victoria.” Invited talks. Wallingford Historic Preservation Trust, C.T. March 2018; St. Mary’s Women’s Guild, Farmington C.T. April 2017; Simsbury Historical Society, C.T. January 2017.

“Gertrude Jekyll and The Idea of the Garden.” Trinity Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies, Trinity College, Spring 2013.

“Desperate Housewives? Victorian Women and the Literature of Suburbia.” Salon, English Department, Trinity College, Spring 2010.

Panel Chair, “Anthology Reading Audiences.” Anthologies Conference, Trinity College, March 2010.

“Domesticity and Community in Victorian Suburbia.” NEMLA, Boston, March 2009.

“Writing and Publishing ‘Mommy Lit’: One Author’s Perspective.” NEMLA, Buffalo, April 2008.

“Queens of the Garden: Victorian Women Gardeners and the Rise of the Gardening Advice Text/The Literature of the Victorian Villa.” Salon, English Department, Trinity College, September 2007.

25 Radio Interviews, UK and USA, on Bed Rest, 2006-7; featured appearance on local NBC TV channel, June 2 2006; featured appearance on Marketplace, NPR, October 2009.

Selected Professional Work

Manuscript reviewer for *Nineteenth-Century Contexts*, *Victorian Review*, *Women’s Writing*, *Irish University Review*, *Romance, Revolution & Reform*, Yale University Press, U of Toronto Press.

Board Member, *American Short Fiction*.

Memberships in Academic Organizations

NEVSA (North East Victorian Studies Association).
VSAWC (Victorian Studies Association of Western Canada).
NAVSA (North American Victorian Studies Association); Aestheticism & Decadence
Caucus.
INCS (Interdisciplinary Nineteenth-Century Studies Association).
BWWA (British Women Writers Association).

Courses Taught at Trinity College

First-Year Seminars, “Queen Victoria’s England,” “Harry Potter’s Literary Past.”
English 220, “Crime and Passion: Studies in Victorian Literature.”
English 222, “Victorian Short Fiction.”
English 259, “Victorian London: Literature of a Changing City.”
English 260, “Introduction to Literary Studies.”
English 264, “Victorian London: Center and Suburbs.”
English 298, “Fairy Tales.”
English 327, “Reading and Writing Women’s Fiction.”
WMGS/English 343, “Women and Empire.”
English 315, “Girls Growing Up in Victorian Literature.”
English 358, “Victorian Literature and Social Crisis.”
English 421/821, “British Literature of the 1890s.”
English 424/824, “Studies in Victorian Narrative.”
English 464/863, “Feminist Approaches to Literature.”
English 498, “Senior Thesis Colloquium.”

Service at Trinity College

Chair, Curriculum Committee, 2021-22.
Curriculum Committee Member, 2020-present.
- Wellness Requirement Subcommittee
Faculty Conference Member, 2019-2021.
“Supercommittee,” 2019-2021 [Faculty Conference & CC Representative].
Chair, Jury Pool, 2019-20; Vice-Chair, 2017-18 & 2020-21.
Brownell/Hughes Prize Committee Member, 2018.
Jury Pool Member, 2016-17; 2021-22.
Faculty Research Committee Member, 2015-16.
Chair, Senior Thesis Committee, English Department, 2014-18; 2020-22.
Graduate Studies Committee Member, English Department 2014-16.
Co-ordinator, AK Smith Visiting Scholar Series, 2010-2013; 2014-8; 2019-20.
Search Committee Member, History Department, 2012.
Search Committee Member, Athletics [Men’s Lacrosse Coach], 2011.
Faculty Liaison, Men’s Lacrosse Team, 2010-13.
Advisor, Office of Study Abroad, 2010-20.
Financial Affairs Committee Member, 2007-10.