

DAVID SWEENEY COOMBS
Department of English
Clemson University
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ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Associate Professor of English, Clemson University, 2020-present
Assistant Professor of English, Clemson University, 2012-2020
Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, Center for the Humanities, Wesleyan University, 2011-2012

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Cornell University, English, 2011
M.A. Cornell University, English, 2007
B.A. Indiana University (with high distinction, Phi Beta Kappa), English, 2000

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Victorian literature; the history of science; nineteenth-century intellectual history

PUBLICATIONS

Book:

Reading with the Senses in Victorian Literature and Science, University of Virginia Press, 2019.
Reviewed in *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, *CHOICE*, *Review 19*, *Victorian Web*, *V21: Victorian Studies for the Twenty-First Century*

Peer-reviewed Essays:

"Romola and Presentism," in *The Oxford Handbook of George Eliot*, ed. by Juliette Atkinson and Elisha Cohn, expected 2023.

"Description." *Victorian Literature and Culture* 46.3/4, Fall/Winter 2018: 646-9.

"The Sense and Reference of Sound; or, Walter Pater's Kinky Literalism." *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 72.4, March 2018: 487-514.

"Does Grandcourt Exist? Description and Fictional Characters." *Victorian Studies* 59.3, Spring 2017: 390-8.

"Dickens' Resonance." *b2o: an online journal*. 4 October 2016.

"An Untrained Eye: The Tachistoscope and Photographic Vision in Early Experimental Psychology." *History and Technology* 28.1, Spring 2012: 107-117.

“Reading in the Dark: Sensory Perception and Agency in *The Return of the Native*.” *ELH* 78.4, Winter 2011: 943-966.

“Entwining Tongues: Postcolonial Theory, Post-Soviet Literatures, and Bilingualism in Chingiz Aitmatov’s *I dol’she veka dlitsia den’*.” *The Journal of Modern Literature* 34.3, Spring 2011: 47-64.

Additional Publications:

Review of Tina Young Choi’s *Victorian Contingencies: Experiments in Literature, Science, and Play*. *Review* 19, 7 April 2022.

“Reflection: Review Forum on *The Physics of Possibility*.” *V21: Victorian Studies for the 21st Century*. 5 February 2019.

“Reflection: Review Forum on *The Age of Analogy*.” *V21: Victorian Studies for the 21st Century*. 24 April 2017.

“Towards a Strategic Presentism.” Co-authored (with Danielle Coriale) introduction to a special V21 forum on strategic presentism. *Victorian Studies* 59.1, Autumn 2016.

“Descriptive Turns in the Victorian 21st Century.” *V21: Victorian Studies for the 21st Century*. 13 July 2015.

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Clemson University SEED Grant for Project Completion, 2018

South Carolina Department of Education Grant for AP Summer Institute, 2017, 2018, 2019

Andrew Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship, Wesleyan University, 2011-2012

NAVSA Graduate-Student Paper Prize, Honorable Mention, for presentation delivered at the annual meeting of the North American Victorian Studies Association in Montréal Québec, November 2010

Graduate School Fellowship, Cornell University, 2010

Martin Sampson Teaching Award, Cornell University, 2009

Sage Fellowship for Dissertation Completion, Cornell University, 2008

Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship for Russian Language Studies, Indiana University, 2006

Sage Fellowship for Graduate Studies, Cornell University, 2004-5

Phi Beta Kappa, Indiana University, 2001

INVITED TALKS AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 2019 “The Victorian Novel and the Novel of Ideas,” North American Victorian Studies Association, Columbus, Ohio
 “Lewis Carroll: Behind the Looking-Glass,” Invited lecture at the Upcountry History Museum, Greenville, South Carolina
 “Ideas and the Victorian Novel,” Interdisciplinary Nineteenth-Century Studies, Dallas, Texas
- 2018 “The Ecological Approach to Formal Perception,” North American Victorian Studies Association, St. Petersburg, Florida
 “Empiricism,” Society for Novel Studies, Cornell University
- 2017 “Tagging the Vatican with Vernon Lee,” North American Victorian Studies Association, Banff, Alberta
 “Art Sounds: Sound Technology and the Aesthetic Movement,” Invited Lecture at the Hughes Main Library, Greenville, South Carolina
- 2016 “Does Grandcourt Exist?: Description and Fictional Characters,” North American Victorian Studies Association, Phoenix, Arizona
 “Illiteral Eliot: on Not Reading *Romola*,” Inter-Disciplinary Nineteenth-Century Studies, Asheville, North Carolina
- 2015 “Dickens’ Resonant Houses,” The V21 Collective Inaugural Symposium, The University of Chicago
- 2014 “Signs Taken for Objects: Pater and Latour,” North American Victorian Studies Association, London, Ontario
 “‘A Sort of Listening’: Pater, Helmholtz, and the Social Sense of Sound.” Northeast Victorian Studies Association, Stonybrook, New York
- 2013 “A Jewish Science: Race and the Physiology of Consciousness in *Daniel Deronda*,” North American Victorian Studies Association, Pasadena, California
- 2012 “The Victorian *Bildungsroman* and the Emergence of Neural Network Theory,” North American Victorian Studies Association, Madison, Wisconsin
 “Unlearning to Read in Early Experimental Psychology,” Science, Mind, and Language Symposium, Cornell University
- 2011 “Uncommon Sense: Aesthetic Democracy and the Neural *Bildungsroman*,” The Center for Humanities, Wesleyan University
- 2010 “Beautiful Graffiti: Vernon Lee and the Semiotics of Perception,” North American Victorian Studies Association, Montréal, Québec

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Courses Taught:

Victorian Waste Frontiers
 The Victorian Novel and the Novel of Ideas
 Character References: Theories of Fictional Character
 The Historical Novel
 Trying Oscar Wilde: Decadence and Indecency
 The Rise of the Novel in English
 British Literature from 1789 to the Present
 Victorian Literature and Photography
 Darwin and Victorian Literature
 Critical Writing about Literature: Introduction to the English Major
 Contemporary Literature
 World Literature
 Neurocognitive Science and Literature

Graduate and Honors Thesis Committees:

Director, “‘The Profoundest Arcana of Our Dual Existence, and Its Intermediates’: The Technology of Monstrously Gendered Bodies in *Carmilla* and Havelock Ellis” (Evelyn Grey [Dennis Ranahan], MA in English 2021)
 Committee member, “*War and Peace*: Possibilities for a New History” (Daniel Thrift, MA in History 2019)
 Director, “Reading Charlotte and Branwell Bronte’s Early Writing as Colonialist Fantasy” (Kristian Wilson, MA in English 2019)
 Committee member, “‘I Was Quiet, but I Was Not Blind’: The Surprising Consistency of Fanny Price” (Blake Bowens, MA in English 2019)
 Director, “Transgressive Theatricalities: Questioning the Existence of a Sincere Self in Sensation Fiction” (Carley Robertson, MA in English 2018)
 Committee member, “A World of Wallpapered Women: Deviancy and Diagnosis” (Kaitlyn Samons, Honors in English 2018)
 Committee member, “The Zombi of the British Empire: Rochester’s Imperialist Drive in Charlotte Bronte’s *Jane Eyre* and Jean Rhys’ *Wide Sargasso Sea* (Chloe Whitaker, MA in English 2016)
 Committee member, “Finding Freedom for Jane: Subjugation, Shame, and Sympathy in Charlotte Bronte’s *Jane Eyre*” (Rebecca Shaver, MA in English 2016)
 Director, “Conspicuous Consumers: The Victorian Department Store and the Women’s Movement” (Joslyn Vonkaenel, MA in English 2015)
 Director, “Painting vs. Photography in *The Romance of a Shop*: Capturing the New Woman through a Mechanical Lens” (Sarah Naciuk, MA in English 2015)
 Committee member, “Truth and Value in Literature: The Critic vs. the Reader” (Marilyn Vickery, MA in English 2015)

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Professional Service:

Tenure, external reviewer 2021
Selection Committee Member, North American Victorian Studies Association's Donald Gray Prize for the best essay published in Victorian Studies in 2020, 2021
Executive Committee Open Rank Member, North American Victorian Studies Association, 2021-present
Organizing Committee member, Inter-Disciplinary Nineteenth-Century Studies Conference, Asheville, North Carolina, March 2016
Associate Editor/Book Reviews Editor, *The South Atlantic Review* (journal for the South Atlantic Modern Language Association), 2013-2016

Manuscript Review:

Routledge
Comparative Literature
Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Literature

University Service:

Calhoun Honors College liaison and coordinator for the English Department, 2013-Fall 2017
Faculty Senate, alternate representative for the College of Arts, Architecture, and Humanities, 2016

Departmental Service:

Director of Undergraduate Studies, 2019-2022
English Curriculum Committee, Chair, 2018-2019, Member 2017-present
English Department Chair Second-Year Performance Review Committee, 2019
English Assessment Committee, 2017-2018
English B.A. Committee, Chair 2019-present, Member, 2016-2018
Arts, Humanities, and Literature Committee, 2015-2020
English Advisory Committee, 2013-2015, 2017-2019
English M.A. Committee, 2013-2015