

Robert A. Higney

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Academic Positions

Associate Professor of English, City College of New York, CUNY, 2022 – Present
Visiting Professor, Universität Regensburg, Germany, Spring 2024
Assistant Professor of English, City College of New York, CUNY, 2014 – 2022
Lecturer, Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University, Fall 2013

Education

Ph.D. English Literature, Johns Hopkins University, 2014
M.A. English Literature, Johns Hopkins University, 2008
B.A. English Literature, Boston College, 2004
St. Edmund Hall, Oxford University, Visiting Student, 2002-2003

Teaching & Research Fields

Twentieth-Century British and Colonial Literatures
Modernist Studies
The History of the Novel
Contemporary Anglophone Fiction
Institutions, Infrastructure, Media

Publications

Book

Institutional Character: Empire and Collectivity in the Modernist Novel (Charlottesville, VA: Univ. of Virginia Press, 2022)

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

“From the English School to the Archive,” *symploke* 32:1-2 (2024): 335-342

“Where the Network Ends,” in “The Character of Literary Criticism,” eds. Lisa Mendelman and Octavio Gonzalez, *ASAP/J* (September 2021), asapjournal.com/trashed/

“Institutional Picaresque,” in “Modernist Institutions,” eds. Meghan Faragher and Caroline Krzakowski *Modernism/modernity Print+* (November 2020),
doi.org/10.26597/mod.0156

“‘Law, Good Faith, Order, Security’: Conrad’s Institutions,” *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 48.1 (Spring 2015): 85-102

Review Essays

“Institutions, Genres, Readers,” review essay on *Paraliterary: The Making of Bad Readers in Postwar America* and *Orhan Pamuk and the Good of World Literature* by Gloria Fisk, *Contemporary Literature* 60.2 (2019): 289-299.

“Scholarship, Inc.,” review of *Literary Criticism: A Short Political History*, by Joseph North, *The AnaChronist*, New Series, Vol. 19 (2019): 159-165, www.theanachronist.org

Reviews

Review of *British Literature and the Life of Institutions: Speculative States*, by Benjamin Kohlmann, *Studies in the Novel* 55.2 (2023): 242-244

Review of *Elizabeth Bowen: A Literary Life*, by Patricia Laurence, *American Book Review* 43.3 (Fall 2022): 126-130

Review of *Figures of Catastrophe: The Condition of Culture Novel*, by Francis Mulhern, *Modernism/modernity* 24.2 (April 2017): 412-414

Related Scholarly Projects

Entries on Virginia Woolf’s *The Years* and *The Pargiters*, *Yale Modernism Lab* (2008), modernism.coursepress.yale.edu

The Modernism Lab was a relatively early project in what has become known as the digital humanities, directed by Prof. Pericles Lewis at Yale University. It developed a wiki linking entries on important figures and major works of the modernist period. I contributed essays (2000 words each) on Virginia Woolf’s novel *The Years* and her manuscript “The Pargiters.” The latter essay was quoted extensively in Carina Chocano’s “Why Suppress the ‘Experience’ of Half the World?”, *New York Times Magazine*, 23 October 2018.

Media Appearances

City Cinematheque, “Alfred Hitchcock’s *Sabotage*” 10 June 2023, youtu.be/qRdrnknBLWo

Presentations

“Stuart Hall, Modernism, and the Many Lives of Close Reading” (invited presentation) Johns Hopkins University Department of English, March 2025

“From the English School to the Archive” (invited presentation) Writing Collectivity: Forms, Figures, Agency, Universität Regensburg, July 2024

“Legacies of Modernism in Postcolonial and Cold War Studies” (invited presentation) Modernist Studies Today Roundtable, CUNY Graduate Center, April 2024

- “Modernism, Magazines, and the Cold War,” City College of New York Cohen Library, November 2023
- “The Cold War Practice of Cultural Studies,” Modernist Studies Association Conference, Brooklyn, New York, October 2023
- “From the English School to the Archive: An Alternate Genealogy of Close Reading,” Ethics of Close Reading colloquium, Penn State Center for the Humanities and Information, October 2023
- “*Marg*: Imagining Independent India,” American Comparative Literature Association, Chicago, March 2023
- “Stuart Hall and Modernism at the CCCS,” Modernist Studies Association Conference, Portland, Oregon, November 2022
- “Crossroads Nowhere: Modernism at the Birmingham Centre,” Modernist Studies Association Conference, Toronto, Ontario, November 2019
- “The Enchanted State and Its Failures,” Modern Language Association Convention, Chicago, January 2019
- “*Marg*: Furnishing Independent India,” Modernist Studies Association Conference, Columbus, OH, November 2018
- “Institutional Picaresque: Mulk Raj Anand from Bloomsbury to Bombay,” Modernist Studies Association Conference, Columbus, OH, November 2018
- “Persons Writing,” Society for Novel Studies, Cornell University, June 2018
- “Zadie Smith in the University,” (invited speaker) The Langston Hughes Festival, The City College of New York, November 2017
- “The Novel Without History,” Modernist Studies Association Conference, Amsterdam, August 2017
- “Modernist Historiographies,” Modernist Studies Association Conference, Amsterdam, August 2017
- “‘Such is Our Age’: The Gothic Marxism of *The Black Jacobins*,” Memory and Prophecy in the Space Between, 1914-1945, University of Mississippi, May 2017
- “Against Infrastructure,” Modernist Studies Association Conference, Pasadena, November 2016
- “Virginia Woolf and the Standardization of Character,” Modernist Studies Association Conference, Pasadena, November 2016

- “C. L. R. James, Novelist,” C. L. R. James Now! Conference, CUNY Graduate Center, November 2016
- “Mulk Raj Anand and the Politics of Institutional Form,” (invited presentation) NYU Global Modernisms Working Group, April 2016
- “Red Bloomsbury: Genre and C. L. R. James’s Literary Publics,” American Comparative Literature Association Conference, Harvard University, March 2016
- “Connoisseurship and Radicalism at Hogarth Press,” Modernist Studies Association Conference, Boston, November 2015
- “The New Institutionalism in Modernist Studies,” Roundtable Organizer and Chair, Modernist Studies Association Conference, Boston, November 2015
- “‘When Mr. Churchill Goes, I Go’: Elizabeth Bowen, Evelyn Waugh, and the Engagements of the Postwar Novel,” CCNY English Department Lecture Series, April 2015
- “Conservatism at Midcentury: Elizabeth Bowen and Evelyn Waugh,” Modernist Studies Association, Pittsburgh, October 2014
- “C. L. R. James’s *Bildungsromane*,” American Comparative Literature Association Conference, University of Toronto, March 2013
- “Mulk Raj Anand: Institutional Form and Late Empire,” Yale University, January 2013
- “Institutional Character and Elizabeth Bowen’s Postwar,” American Comparative Literature Association Conference, Brown University, March 2012
- “‘Efforts of Detachment,’ Periods of Realism: Conrad’s *Under Western Eyes*,” Modern Language Association Convention, Los Angeles, January 2011
- “Institutional Form in Imperial Modernism,” Modernist Studies Association Conference, Montréal, Québec, November 2009
- “Modernist Realism and Critical History: The Failure of *The Years*,” *Difficulty Intransigence Failure* Graduate Conference, Johns Hopkins University, April 2008

Fellowships, Honors, Awards

PSCCUNY Grants, Trad A: Fall 2021; Trad B: Fall 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2023
 CUNY Career Success Fellow, 2023 – 2024
 CCNY Rifkind Center Faculty Fellow, Spring 2023
 CUNY Faculty Fellowship Publication Program, Spring 2016
 CCNY Faculty Travel Program Grant, Fall 2014, Fall 2015, Spring 2017, Fall 2018
 Allen Grossman Teaching Fellowship, Johns Hopkins University, 2012 – 2013
 Dean’s Teaching Fellowship, Johns Hopkins University, Fall 2010

School of Criticism and Theory, Cornell University, Summer 2009
ELH Graduate Fellowship, Johns Hopkins University, 2008 – 2010
Owen Graduate Fellowship, Johns Hopkins University, 2005 – 2008
Phi Beta Kappa, Boston College, 2004

Teaching Experience

At Universität Regensburg

35797 Migration, Displacement, and the City in Contemporary Anglophone Literature

At the City College of New York, CUNY

17 MA English Theses Directed

6 MFA Creative Writing Theses Directed

13 Undergraduate Honors Theses Directed

Second Reader, CCNY Joint Master's Degree in English & American Studies

Mellon Mays & City College Fellows Advisor

Graduate:

ENGL B1968 The Historical Novel After Modernism (Spring 2021, 2025)

ENGL B1957 The Novel Now: Contemporary Fiction (Fall 2015, 2017, Spring 2019, 2020, 2022, 2023, 2024)

ENGL B1720 The Twentieth-Century British Novel (Spring 2015)

Undergraduate:

ENGL 46503 Global Modernisms (Spring 2025)

ENGL 36503 Energy, Infrastructure, and the Worlds of Modern Literature (Fall 2020, 2024)

ENGL 490 Capstone Seminar: Global Modernisms (Spring 2019, 2025, Fall 2023)

ENGL 261 Introduction to Genre: The Novel (Spring 2018, Fall 2016, 2019, 2020, 2021)

ENGL 250 Introduction to Literary Study (Fall 2014, 2015; Spring 2015, 2016, 2018, 2019)

ENGL 358 Representative British Writers: Modern Period (Spring 2015, Fall 2017, 2019)

ENGL 492 Capstone Seminar: The Novel Now (Fall 2016)

At Peabody Conservatory

Humanities Core I, Fall 2013

At Johns Hopkins University

Expository Writing: The American Wild, Fall 2012, Spring 2013, Fall 2013, Spring 2014

British Literature I (TA for Prof. Drew Daniel), Fall 2011

Colonial Modernism and the Novel of Youth, Fall 2010

James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Summer 2010

Looking Back: England In and After World War II, Winter 2010

Family and Politics in the Twentieth Century British Novel, Winter 2009

Expository Writing: The Short Fiction of William Faulkner, Summer 2008

Expository Writing: Representing the Gothic South, Fall 2007 and Spring 2008

Nineteenth-Century Novel (TA to Prof. Amanda Anderson), Spring 2007

Modernism and Modernity (TA to Prof. Kevin Attell), Fall 2006

Professional Service and Administrative Experience

At the City College of New York

Co-Chair, 2024-2029 Strategic Planning Committee, 2023 – 2024
World Humanities Coordinator, Department of English, 2023 – Present
Library Committee, Department of English, 2023 – Present
PSC-CUNY Grant Evaluation Committee, 2022 – Present
Deputy Chair, Department of English, 2021 – Present
Executive Committee, Department of English, 2021 – Present
Director, English Honors and Isaacs Scholarships, 2019 – Present
Honors Committee, Department of English, 2019 – Present
College Research Council, 2021 – Present
Macaulay Honors Admissions Reader, 2021 – Present
Secretary to the Faculty Senate, Fall 2015 – 2022
Faculty Advisor, Dominican Students Association, 2019 – Present
Global Modernisms Certificate Committee, 2017 – Present
Composition Committee, English Department, Spring 2016 – Present
Literature in the Core Committee, English Department, Fall 2014 – Present
Faculty Senate Executive Committee, 2017-2018, 2020-2021, 2023-2024, 2024-2025
Faculty Senate Physical Plant Committee, Chair, 2017 – 2022
Hiring Committee for Lecturer in Composition, English Department, Spring 2022
Provost's Committee on Academic Integrity, Co-Chair, Spring 2022
Hiring Committees, Black Cultures, Afro-LatinX Studies, CCNY Black Studies, 2021 – 2022
Judge, Stark Short Fiction Graduate Prize, English Department, 2022
Co-Chair, Division of Humanities & Arts Mellon Planning Grant, 2019-2020
Erasmus+ Committee, Department of English, 2020
Judge, Goodman Undergraduate Short Story Award, Spring 2016, 2019, 2020, 2021
Judge, Meyer Cohn Graduate Essay Award, Spring 2018
English Department Mission Statement Committee, Spring 2016
Judge, Mack Awards, English Department, Spring 2015, 2016
Hiring Committee in Science and Literature, English Department, Fall 2014

At Johns Hopkins University

Writing Center Tutor, Johns Hopkins University, Fall 2008 – Spring 2014
Associate Editor, *ELH*, Johns Hopkins University, Fall 2008 – Fall 2010
English Graduate Student Association Officer, Johns Hopkins University, 2006 – 2009
“Difficulty, Intransigence, Failure” Conference, Johns Hopkins University, Spring 2009
Philological Society Committee, Johns Hopkins University, Fall 2006 – Fall 2008

To the Profession

Steering Committee member and book exhibit chair, Modernist Studies Association Annual Conference, Brooklyn, November 2023 (postponed from November 2020)
Reviewer: Bloomsbury Academic, *ELH*, *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*

Professional Affiliations

Modern Language Association
American Comparative Literature Association

Modernist Studies Association
Joseph Conrad Society of America
Society for Novel Studies