



Round One Caucus and Affiliate Society Guaranteed Sessions

Anne Schroder New Scholars Session

Historians of Eighteenth-Century Art and Architecture

The Anne Schroder New Scholars Panel, sponsored by HECAA, seeks to promote scholarship that represents the future of eighteenth-century studies. We invite proposals from dissertating graduate students and early-career scholars working in the academy or museum. We welcome submissions that explore topics across the cultures, spaces, and materials that are related to art and architectural history over the long eighteenth century and around the globe. We especially encourage projects that reflect new approaches to both long-standing and under-studied issues and methods in eighteenth-century studies broadly, including but not limited to: critical race art history; Disability studies; ecocriticism and environmental studies; empire, colonization, and decolonial theory; gender and queer theory; global diasporic histories; Indigeneity; and material culture studies. Papers can be based on dissertations, book or article manuscripts in progress, Digital Humanities collaborations, or curatorial projects. We particularly encourage BIPOC scholars, contingent or independent scholars, and those working outside of North America to apply.

Beyond the Pope: Transnational Networks and Elite Sociabilities in Rome during the Long Eighteenth Century

SISSD (Società Italiana di Studi sul Secolo Diciottesimo)

Long interpreted primarily as the capital of Christendom and the center of papal authority, Rome has increasingly emerged as one of the principal crossroads of European mobility during the long eighteenth century. The coexistence of religious, political, cultural, and representative functions endowed the city with a distinctive character, making it a privileged site of encounter for actors from diverse social, cultural, and geographical backgrounds. Rome thus became one of the arenas in which tensions between Catholic traditions and Enlightenment culture unfolded with particular intensity.

This panel examines Rome as a transnational contact zone in which aristocratic, diplomatic, ecclesiastical, and intellectual elites interacted, negotiated affiliations, interests, and shared languages at the intersection of Catholic universalism, Enlightenment cosmopolitanism, aristocratic mobility, and emerging forms of political and cultural sociability. Engaging with spatial history, network analysis and the New Diplomatic History, the panel investigates the mechanisms through which such connections were established, maintained, and mobilized.

Particular attention will be devoted to the actors and spaces that sustained these exchanges. Academies, salons, diplomatic circles, Masonic networks, and aristocratic households functioned as infrastructures of connectivity, fostering networks that transcended political, confessional, and territorial boundaries. The panel seeks to recover the complexity of Rome's place within eighteenth-century Europe, interpreting the city not merely as a destination of European mobility, but as a setting in which transnational forms of sociability, cultural mediation, and political interaction were constructed, negotiated, and redefined, thereby contributing to the shaping of wider European networks.

Cross-disciplinary Collaborations

Science Studies Caucus

This roundtable is focused on the different ways humanists are partnering with colleagues in the sciences (including the social sciences) for research and/or teaching initiatives at their universities. We invite papers that share practical strategies and workable models for such collaborations. What has working across disciplinary boundaries brought to your research or teaching? What challenges emerged, and how did you navigate them? What methodological discoveries and/or innovations have cross-disciplinary collaborations inspired in your research or teaching? How might cross-disciplinary collaboration respond to increasing attacks on both the sciences and the humanities? What does eighteenth-century science studies in particular offer to interdisciplinary projects, and what do these projects offer for our scholarship and pedagogy in eighteenth-century studies?

Cultures of Taste in the Italian Settecento

Italian Studies Caucus

The concept of taste (*gusto*) occupied a central place in eighteenth-century Italian culture, shaping debates on aesthetics, literature, music, art, science, sociability, consumption, politics and the formation of knowledge. Far from being limited to artistic judgment, taste functioned as a powerful category through which individuals and communities negotiated questions of authority, identity, refinement, and cultural change. We invite papers exploring the practices, representations and meanings of taste in the Italian eighteenth century to illuminate how notions of taste contributed to shaping Italian society and its place within the wider Enlightenment world. We welcome contributions from a wide range of disciplines and perspectives. Possible topics include, but are not limited to, learning, travel, collecting, fashion, sociability, education, translation and cross-cultural exchanges.

(De)Colonizing Time(s)

Race and Empire Caucus

How do marginalized communities experience and represent the passage of time outside dominant cultural histories? To answer this question, scholars have introduced concepts such as wake work (Christina Sharpe), the repertoire (Diana Taylor), reenactment (Rebecca Schneider), surrogation (Joseph Roach), queer time (J. Jack Halberstam), and temporal drag (Elizabeth Freeman). Except for Roach, few of these scholars have engaged explicitly with the arts, cultures, or histories of the long eighteenth century, the period in which normative ideas of linear time and of history as teleology were being established. This panel solicits abstracts that explore the ways in which space and time were colonized in this period, and how race was socially constructed on a temporal-spatial axis. Presenters might consider, for example, the establishment of the Greenwich Observatory under King Charles II, which led to the establishment of Greenwich Mean Time (which relegated cultures outside this zone as behind the times); the development of precise timekeeping devices, such as the pendulum clock (1656) or the marine chronometer; and the emerging idea that European thought and culture was more modern and progressive than other cultures. We welcome papers that model new approaches to decolonizing historical methodologies, without repeating the assumptions about time and history that have become imbricated within colonial structures and epistemologies. Such methodological and theoretical innovations are crucial given that historical references to the eighteenth century—such as the American Revolution of 1776—are being currently invoked to justify nationalist, racist, and imperialist policies.

Digital Humanities and AI

Digital Humanities Caucus

What does it mean to practice digital humanities in the age of AI? While large language models and other machine learning technologies have long offered core methodologies for DH research, the field also has a long history of critical approaches to such technologies, and many digital humanists strongly object to generative AI (and its current prominence within academia) for ethical, social, and intellectual reasons. This roundtable seeks to explore this ambivalence about AI (whether defined as generative GPT models specifically or a broader array of machine learning tools) from the perspective of eighteenth-century digital

humanities pedagogy and research. We invite remarks that engage with AI technologies from a range of stances: refusal, critique, mitigation, adoption, advancement, and anywhere in between.

Responses might address topics such as:

- Historicizing and contextualizing AI through DH work
- The position of DH in an institutional landscape that has shifted to prioritize AI
- AI, accessibility, and digital archives
- Vibecoding and using AI to lower skill-barriers for DH work
- Critical technology studies and AI
- Teaching with, without, or about AI in the DH classroom.
- Using open-source and local AI models
- Informed refusal of AI
- Professionalization and administrative initiatives focused on AI

Disability Aesthetics

Disability Studies Caucus

In 2010, Tobin Siebers introduced disability aesthetics to name a new, productive engagement with disability in modern art—one that revalues physical and mental difference, rather than the aesthetic ideals of bodily wholeness and health, and that makes room for disabled artists and subjects. What does eighteenth-century disability aesthetics look like? We welcome papers that consider disability aesthetics in various genres and forms, such as literature, visual art, philosophical aesthetics, and material culture. Possible topics include, but are not limited to, disability in relation to theories of sympathy and affect, taste, beauty, the sublime, ugliness, deformity, disinterestedness, mimesis, and formalism.

Disability and Citizenship

Disability Studies Caucus

For this roundtable, we invite reflections on how the relationship between disability and citizenship was imagined, asserted, and contested in the long eighteenth century. Our understanding of “citizenship” is capacious. Accordingly, our presenters are encouraged to take up wide-ranging questions and to mix the theoretical and the practical dimensions of citizenship. How did the eighteenth century understand disability in relation to, for example, social belonging, “the pursuit of happiness,” civic duty, civic virtue, modes of governance, (dis)obedience, political protest, or enfranchisement? We are especially interested in bringing different national contexts and different forms of representation and expression (literature, art, performance, and more) into conversation.

Eighteenth-Century Collaborations

Western Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (WSECS)

Building on the theme of the 2026 WSECS conference, this panel welcomes proposals from all disciplines for individual papers on the theme of “Eighteenth-Century Collaborations.” Potential paper topics include: Commonplace books, scrapbooks, and ephemera collections that represent authorial collaboration, as well as collaborative relationships across various media; collaborative assignments or pedagogical practices for teaching the 18th century; collaborative readings of 18th-century texts; collaborations between the 18th century and other time periods; digital collaborations surrounding 18th-century materials; 18th-century musical collaborations; collaborations across 18th-century visual culture; collaboration and conviviality in 18th-century social culture; collaborations across the arts and sciences; collaborative collecting practices; institutional collaborations; collaborative research practices.

Eighteenth-Century Data Visualization

Science Studies Caucus

When Thomas Sprat proudly proclaimed that the Royal Society’s purpose was “to heap up a mixt Mass of Experiments, without digesting them into any perfect model,” he perfectly encapsulated the ambitions of those early experimentalists. They sought to advance science by assembling their experiments and observations into “publique Registers,” unbiased by hypotheses or conclusions, “to be nakedly transmitted to the next Generation of Men,” in the hope that their pure experimental data might be incorporated in new

investigations and stimulate new discoveries. Sprat may have advocated the sharing of information in disorganized heaps, but few practitioners shared his faith in militant empiricism. In fact, the long eighteenth century saw the emergence of wide array of techniques for compiling, displaying, analyzing and communicating empirical data. Accordingly, this panel seeks research papers that explore any aspect of data visualization in the eighteenth century: charts, maps, graphs, tables, figures, diagrams, sketches, engravings, and so on. In a period when all manner of phenomena were investigated empirically, with an increasing recourse to quantification, how did knowledge practitioners grapple with the challenge of assembling, systematizing and conveying the increasingly large sets of data that they were collecting, such that the essential information, and significant patterns of organization, might be immediately apparent?

Eighteenth-Century Data

Digital Humanities Caucus

Dispersed throughout a narrative account of the mid-seventeenth-century bubonic plague, Daniel Defoe's 1722 *Journal of the Plague Year* "reprints" weekly bills of mortality that provide parish mortality rates and causes of death. Reading patterns in this data becomes one way for the narrator and novel-reader to read the spread of plague throughout London, alongside narrative description. This panel invites papers on all aspects of data in the eighteenth century, including the datafication of knowledge in the eighteenth century (how it was collected, communicated, and narrativized) and how we, as twenty-first century scholars and digital humanists, curate and analyze data about the eighteenth century. How have data feminism and critical data studies impacted the work we do in eighteenth-century studies? And what can the eighteenth-century tell us about our current age of "big data"?

Paper topics may include, but are not limited to: working with historical data and creating data to represent eighteenth-century forms; encoding categories such as gender and genre in data-driven digital humanities projects; working with linked data; data accompanying and scraped from the mass digitization of archival material; the datafication of knowledge in the eighteenth century and the rise of what Foucault terms regulatory power; data and empire; and the intersection of data and narrative fiction.

Goethe and Environmental Thought in the Anthropocene

Goethe Society

The North American Goethe Society invites papers for a session exploring Goethe's relevance for contemporary environmental thought. In an age of climate change, biodiversity loss, and accelerated species extinction, Goethe's "tender empiricism" and his approaches to morphology and metamorphosis have acquired renewed significance for scholars seeking to rethink relations among different life-forms.

We welcome reflections on Goethe's place in debates about vitalism and materialism, posthumanism, and the poetics of nature. We are particularly interested in how his work informs twenty-first-century literary projects and discussions of aesthetics and ecology.

Heated Rivalries ~ Les rivalités passionnées/passionnelles

Society for Eighteenth-Century French Studies (SECFS)

"Eh bien ! la guerre." Merteuil and Valmont. Deffand and Lespinasse. Saint-George and Dumas. Jacques le fataliste's captains. Clairon and Dumesnil. Louverture and Rigaud. Rousseau and, well, a lot of people.

Across the French empire, the long eighteenth century was an age of great rivalries, both lived and imagined. Yet, as the aforementioned examples evince, these rivalries were fueled by a panoply of complex relationships and emotions: erotic desire, jealousy, decimated kinship, rancor, money, malice, muscle memory, and much more. How do these rivalries reflect larger forces of social and political change, capitalism and its exploitations, revolutionary ideologies, and Enlightenment thought? This panel invites paper submissions that explore heated, textured rivalries amongst historical figures and as portrayed in literary, fine, and performing arts. Papers may be in French or English.

À l'échelle de l'Empire français, le XVIIIe siècle fut marqué par de profondes rivalités, aussi bien réelles qu'imaginées. Pourtant, comme l'illustrent les exemples précédents, ces antagonismes s'enracinaient dans un faisceau complexe de relations et d'affects : désir érotique, jalousie, ruptures de liens, ressentiment, intérêts financiers, malveillance, mémoire incarnée, et bien d'autres encore.

Comment ces rivalités donnent-elles à voir des dynamiques plus larges de transformation sociale et politique, du capitalisme et des formes d'exploitation qui lui sont associées, des idéologies révolutionnaires ou encore de la pensée des Lumières ? Ce panel sollicite des propositions de communication consacrées à l'étude de rivalités intenses et multidimensionnelles, qu'elles mettent en scène des figures historiques ou qu'elles soient représentées dans les œuvres littéraires, les arts visuels et les arts du spectacle.

“Intertextual Sympathies: Remediating Affect”

Lessing Society

Until recently, two models of intertextuality have dominated literary studies. On the one hand, there is the question of influence, in which scholars trace the provenance of allusions in one text back to earlier precedents to elucidate the dramatic interplay of authors as characters in agonistic or psychoanalytic scenes (e.g., Bloom). On the other hand, postmodernist scholars see reverberations between texts as constitutive features of writing: texts consist in endless chains of disembodied echoes (e.g., Barthes, Kristeva). In a haunting study of shared grief in texts dealing with the Shoah, however, Simone Stirner proposes an alternative approach to intertextuality that “shifts the focus to the ways texts participate in [...] a shared structure of feeling” (Poetic Grief, 2026, pg. 28). This “relational intertextuality” is also a suggestive model for understanding how bodily emotions are mediated and transmitted between texts in the eighteenth century. This panel invites participants attentive to how echoes between texts are akin to shared feelings between people. G.E. Lessing, for instance, performs the remediation of emotions in his aesthetic tract, *Laocoon*, in which compassion (*Mitleid*) is repeatedly translated between genres and media. Building on studies of sympathy and emotion in the eighteenth century (e.g., Fritz Breithaupt, Aleksandra Hultquist, Lynn Hunt, Glen McGillivray, Julia Weber, et al.), we can begin to flesh out embodied conceptions of both intertextuality and emotions, and aim for a better understanding of the physical transmission of emotions and texts between languages, cultures, and genres in eighteenth-century discourses.

Ireland and Empire in the Long Eighteenth Century

Irish Studies

The long eighteenth century witnessed Ireland's complex and often contradictory position within the expanding British Empire. Simultaneously a site of colonial subjugation and an active participant in imperial projects, Ireland occupied a distinctive place in the political, economic, cultural, and intellectual networks that connected Britain, Europe, the Atlantic world, and beyond. Recent scholarship has increasingly explored the multifaceted relationships between Ireland and empire, highlighting the ways Irish individuals, institutions, and communities shaped—and were shaped by—imperial processes.

This roundtable seeks to bring together scholars from history, literature, political thought, religious studies, material culture, Atlantic studies, and related fields to reflect on current approaches to understanding Ireland's imperial entanglements during the long eighteenth century.

We welcome contributions addressing topics including, but not limited to:

- Ireland's status as colony, kingdom, or partner within the British Empire
- Irish participation in imperial administration, trade, and military service
- Ireland and the Atlantic world
- Slavery, abolition, and Irish connections to the Caribbean and North America
- Migration, diaspora, and settler colonialism
- Religion, missionary activity, and imperial expansion
- Political thought, sovereignty, and imperial governance
- Print culture, intellectual networks, and the circulation of knowledge
- Gender, family, and imperial identities
- Material culture and consumer goods in imperial contexts
- Comparative colonial experiences and Ireland's place in global imperial history
- New methodological approaches to studying Ireland and empire

J'Accuse! The Rhetoric of Denunciation

Society for Eighteenth-Century French Studies (SECFS)

This session seeks to examine the rhetoric of denunciation and its forms, especially from the following areas: Ancien Régime forms of surveillance and denunciation such as the lettre de cachet, the monitoires read from the pulpit; colonial cultures of coercion and torture legitimized by the Conseil Supérieur and the Maréchaussée; and Revolutionary informant cultures. During the Revolution, several cultures coexist in commercial and administrative spaces. The press published libelles, such as Marat's *L'Ami du peuple*, condemning enemies of the people. The state enacted the Loi des suspects which opened the door to an accusatory culture seconded by the Comité de sûreté générale, the Comité de surveillance, and the Tribunal révolutionnaire. From these examples, we can begin to understand and ask the following questions about cultures of denunciation. What is the anatomy of accusatory cultures in the eighteenth century? What social conditions produce climates of denunciation? How do those climates select their targets, and how or why do they subside? How might these cultures differ across time and space? Does the Ancien Régime's version of this culture differ between Paris and Saint-Domingue? Does the Revolutionary period modify or invent new forms of cultural policing?

Mapping Ireland's Long Eighteenth Century: Digital Humanities Projects, Methods, and Futures

Irish Studies

Digital humanities approaches have transformed the study of Ireland's long eighteenth century, opening new possibilities for analyzing texts, archives, networks, spaces, and material culture. From digital editions and databases to GIS mapping, network analysis, visualization, and public-facing digital archives, scholars are increasingly using digital tools to explore Ireland's social, political, cultural, and intellectual histories.

This panel will bring together digital practitioners to discuss ongoing and emerging digital humanities initiatives related to Ireland in the long eighteenth century, emphasizing project presentations, methodological reflection, collaboration, and discussion of future directions for the field.

We welcome contributions from those working on established projects as well as projects in development.

Possible topics include:

- Digital editions of eighteenth-century Irish texts and manuscripts
- Databases and archival resources for Irish studies
- GIS and spatial approaches to eighteenth-century Ireland
- Mapping migration, travel, trade, and imperial networks
- Social network analysis and prosopographical projects
- Digital recovery of marginalized voices and communities
- Book history, print culture, and bibliographic databases
- Public humanities and community-engaged digital projects
- Linked open data, interoperability, and digital infrastructure
- Teaching Ireland's long eighteenth century through digital methods
- Sustainability, preservation, and project management
- Artificial intelligence, machine learning, and new approaches to historical research
- Collaborative and interdisciplinary digital scholarship

The panel seeks to address broader questions about the opportunities and challenges facing digital scholarship in Irish studies. How can digital methods reshape our understanding of eighteenth-century Ireland? What infrastructures and collaborations are needed to support future research? How can digital projects balance innovation, accessibility, and sustainability?

'Once more unto the breach': New Editions of Defoe and Contemporaries

Daniel Defoe Society

It is easy to be comfortable and even complacent in teaching the same works by Defoe and his contemporaries in courses on the history of the novel and on literature of the Restoration through the mid-eighteenth century more generally. But we have choices. If we return once more to the vast 'field' of ECCO contents, what texts, not presently in print, would we most like to see modern editions of and why? Is, for example, Robert Paltock's *The Life and Adventures of Peter Wilkins* (1751) worthy of a new edition? Have you

taught Conjugal Lewdness, and would you do it again? Share your plans, calls, home-spun editions, wild hares, and most spectacular failures.

Organizing for Academic Freedom

Race and Empire Caucus

Recent years have seen the passage of several state level bills aimed at restricting what can be taught in institutions of higher learning, and providing legislative definitions of concepts such as sex, gender, and race. These ideologically charged laws, supported by aggressive rhetoric and repressive action by the federal government, aim to limit how concepts such as race, gender, and sexuality are taught and researched, and potentially punish faculty members who do not comply with the ideological restrictions placed on teaching. Given that the 18th century is a crucial historical locale for exploring the construction of institutional racism, and given that its legacy of imperialism is still visible in the geopolitical organization of today's world, many ASECS members will find themselves teaching content, concepts, and ideas that have been restricted or prohibited by their state legislatures or targeted by their university leadership. This roundtable and interactive workshop focuses on equipping ASECS members with the skills for getting organized and fighting back. We welcome presentations from a wide variety of institutional and political contexts, including stories of successful or unsuccessful organizing efforts and lessons learned from them. We also welcome presentations or exercises aimed at teaching faculty members practical organizing skills that we can all use to build power and fight back.

Overlapping Lives: Frances Burney, Jane Austen, and their World

Burney Society of North America

Frances Burney and Jane Austen are often coupled in scholarship of the eighteenth-century novel, studies of literary influence, and the professionalization of the women writer. Much has been written and said about Burney and Austen's literary works, but this panel is interested in their lives and cultural contexts. Papers may address their experiences with – and critical responses to – life writing; family and friends (relationships with sisters, fathers, confidantes); health and medicine (and grappling with illness); responses to revolution, empire, and war (and relatives in the military); art (attending theatre, visiting museums, family performance); travel; fashion; etc.

Pacific Worlds of the Early Americas

Society of Early Americanists

Rooted in the West Coast location of our conference, this panel invites papers that consider the global and multilingual early Americas from the vantage point of the Pacific. What does “vast early America” look like from here? What does it mean to research or teach “the early Americas,” however our subfields define it, with this ocean, its histories, its languages, and its ecologies informing our inquiries and our classrooms? A broad range of topics, fields, languages, and approaches are welcome.

Pedagogy and Uncertainty

Graduate Student and Early Career Scholars Caucus

The GECC is pleased to solicit papers--with a particular invitation to graduate students and early career scholars--which reflect on the role of uncertainty in the classroom. Uncertainty appears most immediately in the precarious conditions within which we find ourselves teaching and learning to teach, but it extends to a more generalized uncertainty regarding the institutional basis and orientation of higher education in the coming years: what we teach and how, in what circumstances, and to what ends. For our students, uncertainty is often experienced as a broader crisis of futurity (political, ecological, technological) that may manifest as a skepticism toward work in historical fields like eighteenth-century studies. Our period was of course itself shot through with uncertainties, and with this panel we hope to draw out connections between the two eras in ways that mutually illuminate our courses' subject matter and its relevance for our students and ourselves. How should one variously bracket, embrace, confront, thematize, or metabolize uncertainty in the eighteenth-century classroom? Recognizing that the material conditions of teaching can shift markedly even from year to year, we hope to reprise the lively collegiality of last year's panel and continue conversations that

will support and galvanize us in collectively addressing whatever ongoing or new uncertainties we may be facing by April 2027.

Queer Embodiment in the Eighteenth Century

Queer and Trans Caucus

In our contemporary moment, the queer body has been under increased political scrutiny as anti-trans legislation proliferates through the U.S. and U.K. Of course, such scrutiny is hardly new. This panel invites papers that explore queer embodiment in eighteenth-century literature and culture. We welcome diverse approaches to the topic: queer phenomenology; the material body's place in queer communities; the marginalized body as an object of socio-political panic; how ideas about gender, sexuality, ability, and race might play out on and through the queer body; how narrative form and genre affect the cultural construction of sex and gender, etcetera.

Queer Intersections: Methods for Ensuring Intersectional Research and Teaching

Queer and Trans Caucus

Over the years, members of the Queer and Trans caucus have observed that panels about marginalized groups are often scheduled during the same blocks, forcing members of multiple caucuses to pick and choose which presentations to prioritize. In an effort to bridge the potential gaps between caucuses, the Queer and Trans Caucus seeks short, 5-7 minute presentations focused on methods for producing intersectional research and teaching. These presentations can be broad or narrow: for example, sharing general recommendations for teaching the eighteenth century more intersectionally or presenting a snippet of your research to illustrate the methods you use to guarantee a fuller picture of how the complexities of identity play out during the period.

Rousseau's Built and Unbuilt Environments

Rousseau Association

The panels seeks papers that explore Rousseau's engagement with built environments, broadly construed. *La Lettre à d'Alembert* and the *Lettre sur la Providence* evidence Rousseau's long-standing interest in infrastructures. The material organization of human society permitted by roads, buildings, and other sites for human play, work, habitation and political gatherings informed Rousseau's cultural criticism of European capitals. We welcome papers that address Rousseau's takes on matters of urban geography, land usage, natural disasters, *le vivre-ensemble*, and inequality. Panelists interested in the methodologies underlying Rousseau's approach to studying various human organizations are invited to submit proposals. We hope to build a panel that reflects the interdisciplinary nature of Rousseau's environmental writings.

"Scholar Adventurers": Recounting Our Eighteenth-Century (Bibliographic) Detective Work

Bibliographic Society of America

Regale us with your tale of unconventional academic discovery! Whereas traditional outputs of academic research must demonstrate the significance of the find, this panel asks you to share the journey to that discovery. This panel takes its cue from Richard Altick's 1950 classic *Scholar Adventurers*, which recounts riveting cases of literary detective work including the discovery of the famous Malahide Boswell papers and the exposure of notorious forger T. J. Wise. Panelists will narrate research avenues that surfaced unexpected source material or productive (albeit odd) avenues of investigation: while chasing ghosts (or just citations), did an unlikely local history museum unlock your research? Did you find research gold in a forgotten collection moulding in a basement? Did a fortuitous eBay find or a happenstance conversation in a pub lead to an epiphany? Did a quick "side quest" to populate a footnote lead to an even greater discovery? This panel wants your stories of chance, surprising, or unconventional research methods that might never make it into an academic publication, but which made that discovery possible—and which are well worth the retelling. Successful proposals will identify a specific personal research anecdote and articulate the value of sharing your methods of detection with fellow scholars.

Tale-Bearers and Tale-Makers: The School for Scandal at 250

Theatre and Performance Caucus

On 8 May 1777, Richard Brinsley Sheridan's comedy of manners, *The School for Scandal*, first premiered at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in London. Ever since, it has been considered one of the foremost comedies of English theatre history, continually revived in the 250 years since its premiere. Its plot hinges on gossip and deceit, following the "tale-bearers" and "tale-makers" amongst London's social elite. The aptly-named Lady Sneerwell is in love with Charles Surface who is, in turn, in love with Maria. However, Charles's brother, Joseph, is also in love with Maria, thus prompting Lady Sneerwell and Joseph to plot against Charles. At the same time, Sir Peter Teazle has married the younger Lady Teazle, who eventually considers an affair with Joseph. Rumors, disguises, and social tangles ensue as the characters each navigate their reputations on the verge of scandal. *The School for Scandal* remains an epitomic example of late-eighteenth-century English comedy. This panel will consider *The School for Scandal*'s enduring comedic legacy over 250 years from 1777 to 2027, welcoming papers on all aspects of the play, including but not limited to discussions of its gossip and rumors, textual history and variants, gender roles, representations of antisemitism, actors and theatre history, character studies, libertinism, family and friendship, modern performances and adaptations, and more.

Tales of Perils and Prosperity in Publishing

Graduate Student and Early Career Scholars Caucus

The Graduate and Early Career Caucus invites speakers to a roundtable on the ins and outs of publishing. The aim is to have a conversation about what junior academics can expect when publishing their first article, monograph, and the various opportunities in between such as editing anthologies, publishing online vs. in print, or writing book reviews. Questions and topics to be addressed are: What are current standards and expectations, and how do they differ across disciplines? How can I make a piece of work attractive to editors and reviewers? Are certain publication formats more valuable than others at different career stages? Should I be able to use AI in my published work? Are there ethical standards associated with publishing? What is this I hear about Reviewer #2?

Teaching the Eighteenth Century: A Poster Session

Pedagogy Caucus

How do we continue to engage students with the eighteenth century in innovative ways? All aspects of pedagogy are welcome for poster presentations that cover an entire course or focus on a particular element of a course. Brief presentations will be followed by ample time for conversation. Share your teaching innovations with others; come pick up ideas from your colleagues. Guidance on how to prepare a poster is available at <http://ltroost.wordpress.com/posters>; posters will remain on display throughout the conference.

The Eighteenth-Century Reception and Reinterpretation of Machiavelli

Italian Studies Caucus

The year 2027 will mark the 500th anniversary of Niccolò Machiavelli's death. Considering that in the Eighteenth Century Machiavelli underwent a profound intellectual 'metamorphosis', and experienced quite a revival, the Italian Studies Caucus would like to dedicate one of its sessions to the Enlightenment's reinterpretation of the man and his works. We are especially (but not exclusively) interested in receiving proposals dealing with: surviving Machiavellian stereotypes and censure; Machiavelli vis-à-vis enlightened despotism, secular thought, and republican thought; Machiavelli in the writings of 18th-century Italian and other European authors; Machiavelli and the US founding fathers; Machiavelli and the 18th-century debate about the intellectual and legal standing of women; Machiavelli 'prophet' of the Italian Risorgimento.

The Future of 18th-Century Studies: How to Promote Oddity, Novelty, Individuality, and Eccentricity

South Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies

Few things are more difficult to predict than what topic will be the next to capture the attention of eighteenth-century scholars. One year a previously neglected author seems to appear on every conference program; soon, that same author becomes a fixture of anthologies and graduate reading lists. Often, exciting discoveries emerge from unexpected quarters: a packed session on an unfashionable topic, an unfamiliar

archive, an overlooked object, or a quirky paper that unexpectedly finds a wider audience. How do such delightful surprises occur, and what can the institutions of eighteenth-century studies do to promote them? Scholarly attention, and public interest, rarely follows predictable pathways. Some topics become fashionable almost overnight; others wait years before finding their audience. The institutions of eighteenth-century studies—ASECS and its affiliates, journals and newsletters, university presses, museums, archives, digital humanities projects, funding organizations, and other partners—play important roles in these processes of discovery, cultivation, and dissemination, providing spaces where new ideas can be tested, refined, funded, published, exhibited, and shared.

This panel invites participants to examine how those institutions can help scholars discover significant new subjects, encourage intellectual curiosity, and connect specialized scholarship with broader audiences. How do affiliates foster experimentation and unexpected conversations? How do editors, publishers, curators, and project directors recognize promising work before it becomes fashionable? What successful models of funding, mentorship, collaboration, and public engagement have helped new ideas flourish? And how can the institutions of the field continue to promote intellectual diversity rather than simply amplifying the latest trend?

The Languages of the Ibero-American Enlightenment

Ibero-American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies

Evolving notions of language in the Ibero-American sphere are unmistakably keyed to social and political changes occurring throughout the long 18th century. This panel invites contributions that address the various aspects of Enlightenment linguistic thought that emerged in Europe and the Americas in concert with the rise of the nation-state's claim to political sovereignty and changing social structures. Possible topics might include philosophies and theories of language (connections between mind and language, theories of language origins); the drive toward standardization (dictionaries, grammars); linguistic change and so-called proper form (aesthetics, culture, and taste); language and empire; language ideologies and policies vis-à-vis minority and indigenous language encounters; the challenge of vernaculars to Latin; language pedagogies; the role of translation; revolutionary languages.

The New Activism

Women's Caucus

The Women's Caucus has a long history of activism dating back to its beginnings. In today's political climate, activism is perhaps more necessary than ever, but it is also more difficult. What does scholarly activism look like in 2027? How have its method and priorities shifted since the Women's Caucus began? Is activism possible under a US Presidential administration that has threatened the job security and immigration status of scholars who speak out? What activist strategies have succeeded on college campuses? What principles and priorities might we consider for interventions that aim (for example) to preserve free speech and intellectual inquiry, oppose racism, ensure safety for all campus members, and promote gender equity? And what can we learn from the history of feminist activism in the twentieth century?

The Past on Stage: Contemporary Approaches to Historical Drama

Theatre and Performance Caucus

How do historical dramas speak to present-day audiences? What challenges arise when staging plays rooted in distant political, social, or cultural contexts, and what opportunities do such productions create for rethinking the past in light of contemporary concerns? We welcome papers that explore the adaptation, interpretation, performance, and reception of historical plays across periods and traditions. Possible topics include, but are not limited to: questions of historical accuracy and artistic license; casting and representation; political resonances; translation and adaptation; dramaturgical approaches; audience engagement; and the role of historical theatre in public memory.

Ways of Reading: Eighteenth-Century Practices

East-Central American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies

Reading manifests itself through annotation, performance, copying, and in other ways. This panel explores how people in the eighteenth century read, whether books, manuscripts, letters, illustrations, maps, music,

artifacts, people within and without books, and in various languages and as identities. Some readers read clandestinely as Lydia Languish does in Richard Sheridan's *The Rivals* (1775), copied quotations and ideas while reading as Phillis Wheatley Peters did in her copybook, or read and responded to books in coffee shops as Joseph Spence read and wrote of Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* (1748) in his 21 January 1748 letter to Richardson. Play attendees also held post performances in coffee houses recalling their favorite parts of or parodying the dramatic works they had just seen. Reading practices also include those within texts whether in paintings, performances, letters, or in novels, including literary allusions. Implied in "Ways of Reading" are theories of reading, the Black and Red Atlantic, and book history, for example, to consider how we read, define, and understand relations among texts and with their readers. Papers may take a variety of approaches and are not limited to accounts of people's reading or performing texts or may focus on characters' reading of texts or in texts. Reading may pertain to studying, understanding, uncomprehending, and even the form itself as in the epistolary novel, the narrator as a reader, the editorial apparatus, and so on. Reading in the eighteenth century may also pertain to who was reading or how we read the eighteenth century today.

"Weird Girls" in the Eighteenth Century

Women's Caucus

Following from the popularity of "Weird Girl Lit" in twenty-first century digital spaces, such as "BookTok" and Reddit, as well as Portland's unofficial slogan "Keep Portland Weird," we invite contributions on the weird women of the eighteenth century - authors, artists, characters, and celebrities. Weird girl literature has taken as its subject women who embrace their subversive, transgressive, and inappropriate behaviors; their stories are perversely fascinating and empowering, displaying acts of social rebellion as forms of agency. In applying this archetype to the eighteenth century, we are especially interested in papers that provoke further considerations of how "weirdness" was defined and encoded in the era, particularly along spectrums of women's embodiment, affect, and transgressive presence. Paper topics may examine the nature of weirdness and alienation in genre-bending characters, such as Victoria in Charlotte Dacre's *Zofloya*, volatile yet adored actresses, such as Ann Catley, pioneering pirates, such as Zheng Yi Sao, and/or other enigmatic women of the eighteenth century.