

2027 ASECS Annual Meeting
Round 3: Open Sessions Accepting Individual Sessions
Updated 8.24.2026

GS245 Title: "Books Received"

Session Chair: Jason Pearl

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Administration/Career/Professional Development

Keywords: Books/Publishing; History; Literature

Description: Quite a lot of books are received by journals but not reviewed in their pages. Quite a lot are sent to prize committees that recognize only a few standouts. The purpose of this roundtable is to bring to light new and excellent but lesser-known monographs and to identify topics and arguments that have gotten too little attention. Accordingly, we invite critical reflections on recently published books—or better, groups of them—that reveal important, if neglected, trends in eighteenth-century studies. Included in the roundtable's purview are edited volumes and new editions, as well as trade books that scholars have disregarded. Ideally, contributors and audience members will come away with a fuller and richer picture of the latest book-length work in our field.

CA44 Title: "Deviant Matter"

Session Chair: Emily West

Session Type: Panel

Science Studies Caucus

Keywords: Aesthetics; Material Culture; Queer and Trans Studies; Race and Empire; Science and Technology

Description: Kyla Wazana Tompkins's recent book *Deviant Matter* (2024) focuses on gelatinousness, fermentation, putrefaction, and intoxication. Tompkins writes that

Ferment, intoxicants, jelly, and rot are what I call "deviant matter" because they have often come to be, in the microbiological and post-Pasteurian world, affiliated with foodways, modes of living, spaces, and sensory regimes (palates, for instance) that unsettle the hygienic, disciplinary ordering of the world. They seem to continuously affix to those humans who have come to be designated as less-than-human: the fat, the poor, the queer, the Black, the immigrant, and the brown. Similarly, they are deviant because in refusing the taxonomizing imperatives of classic aesthetics, they often demand multisensory attention: they are flavors that also unfold as touch; they are visualities that seem tactile; and they are objects that move on their own. But finally, ferment, intoxicants, jelly, and rot are also materialities that can describe atmospheres: they are affective and aesthetic formations that undo the boundaries of the liberal-human self, confusing inside and outside, making the singular multiple. (7)

Building on Tompkins's theorization, this panel asks how gelatinousness, fermentation, putrefaction, and intoxication operate before Pasteur. In particular, we ask what a focus on deviant matter brings to eighteenth-century science studies (considered broadly). Papers might take up questions such as: How do these lively materialities interact with the sensory, aesthetic, and political projects undertaken within (or against) eighteenth-century natural philosophy? How does attention to deviant matter's insurgent potential offer new perspectives on the relationship between scientific practices, subjectivity, and state power amid the intensification of settler colonialism and transatlantic slavery? And, how does Tompkins's project, rooted in Black feminist and queer of colour thought, offer models for an undisciplined eighteenth-century science studies (following Christina Sharpe's assertion that scholars "must become undisciplined" to confront and unmake slavery's ongoing legacies)?

GS234 Title: "In Search of Phillis Wheatley Peters": A Screening and Roundtable

Session Chair: Mona Narain

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Race, Empire, & Nation

Keywords: Archives; Black Atlantic; Gender/Sexuality Studies; North America; Race and Empire

Description: Filmmaker Leslie Askew's new 35 minute documentary examines a rarely explored chapter in Phillis Wheatley Peters' life, her marriage to John Peters and their relocation from Boston to rural Massachusetts, drawing on newly surfaced archival research by Professor Cornelia Dayton. The film offers new insight into the historical context surrounding Wheatley Peters' later life through court records and archival materials. The project involves multiple ASECS members and contributes to scholarly conversations central to eighteenth century studies, including authorship, social mobility, race, and the lived realities of Black life within the Atlantic world.

This roundtable, in conjunction with a screening of *In Search of Phillis Wheatley Peters*, will include scholars who work on Wheatley Peters, including some who worked on the documentary itself. Roundtable participants will have a chance to see the documentary before the conference, while other colleagues will be watching live in the session. The session invites participants and audience members to join in to discuss the new discoveries the film showcases and the new approaches to understanding the writer's life, times, and works.

GS282 Title: "Sins of Government": Anna Barbauld's Forms of Dissent

Session Chair: Scott Krawczyk

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Author/Authorship; Critique; Culture/Cultural Studies; Politics; Publication strategies

Description: After surveying arguably the greatest generic range ever expressed by an English author, Isobel Grundy concludes that "[Anna Barbauld] has a whole rhetorical armoury at her fingertips: narrative sweep, the starkly simple and the elaborate, the visual and the conceptual, the capacity for humour and surprise" (32).[1] With Oxford University Press's recent publication of *The Collected Works of Anna Letitia Barbauld* in four volumes, and 2027 marking the 25th anniversary of the publication of *Anna Letitia Barbauld: Selected Poetry and Prose* (Broadview, 2002), edited by Elizabeth Kraft and William McCarthy—a collection that offered the first glimpse of both Barbauld's "rhetorical armoury" and her uncommonly wide formal range—this panel invites fresh considerations of the forms, functions, and audiences of Barbauld's anti-establishment writing. As an educator, public intellectual, and cultural/political critic, she deployed protest and dissenting sentiment gently, bluntly, ironically, scathingly, and even humorously, in a range of forms made more evident now than ever before with the new Oxford Barbauld. We invite proposals of 500 words for 20-minute papers that explore Barbauld's impact, ingenuity, and influence on forms of protest writing more broadly. [1] Grundy, Isobel. "'Slip-Shod Measure' and 'Language of Gods': Barbauld's Stylistic Range." *Anna Letitia Barbauld: New Perspectives*. Ed. William McCarthy and Olivia Murphy. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell UP, 2014. 23-36.

CA8 Title: "Weird Girls" in the Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Alexia Ainsworth

Session Type: Panel

Women's Caucus

Primary Category: Women, Gender, Sexuality

Keywords: Gender/Sexuality Studies; Queer and Trans Studies; Transgression; women

Description: 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.

CA31 Title: (De)Colonizing Time(s)

Session Chair: Humberto Garcia

Session Type: Panel

Race and Empire Caucus

Primary Category: Race, Empire, & Nation

Keywords: History; Interdisciplinary; Politics; Race and Empire; Methods

Description: 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.

CA16 Title: “Intertextual Sympathies: Remediating Affect”

Session Chair: Ellwood Wiggins

Session Type: Panel

Lessing Society

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Aesthetics; Culture/Cultural Studies; Literature; Theatre; Transnational Novel

Description: 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, *Laokoon*, 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.

CA34 Title: “Scholar Adventurers”: Recounting Our Eighteenth-Century (Bibliographic) Detective Work

Session Chair: Emily Spunaugle

Session Type: Panel

Bibliographic Society of America

Primary Category: Authorship, Book Studies, & Print Culture

Keywords: Books/Publishing; Material Culture; Methods

Description: 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.

GS235 Title: “Treated with Humanity”: Care, Benevolence, and Human Rights in Swift and His Circle

Session Chair: Jeremy Webster

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Advocacy; Class; Disability Studies; Health and Medicine; Politics

Description: At the end of Parts III and IV of *Gulliver’s Travels*, Gulliver takes note of how first the Dutch and then the Portuguese respectively “treated me with humanity” and “spoke to me with great humanity.” Jonathan Swift’s satire is frequently interpreted as a bitter reflection on human nature, but he also seems to advocate for an ethics of care, benevolence, and fundamental human rights. How do writers, polemicists, and artists of the first half of the eighteenth century use conventions of genre (satire, the novel, poetry, sermon, music, painting, sculpture, etc.) to construct what we might now call “progressive” social agendas concerning the poor, persons with disabilities, the sick, criminals, the disenfranchised, and/or the enslaved? Panelists might consider issues of care, benevolence, and/or human rights in works by Swift, Alexander Pope, John Gay, John Arbuthnot, Thomas Parnell, Joseph Addison, Richard Steele, Daniel Defoe, George Frederic Handel, Delariviere Manley, Mary Barber, Laetitia Pilkington, Mary Wortley Montagu, Penelope Aubin, Eliza Haywood, and/or any other figures explicitly included in or excluded from “his circle.”

GS242 Title: A Tribute to Donna Landry

Session Chair: Charlotte Sussman

Session Type: Special Session

Primary Category: Women, Gender, Sexuality

Keywords: Gender/Sexuality Studies

Description: This roundtable will celebrate the life and work of Donna Landry, who passed away in June 2026. Donna was the author of a number of significant books in eighteenth-century studies, feminist literary history, and animal studies, including *Muses of Resistance: Laboring Class Women's Poetry in Britain 1739-1796* (1990) and *Noble Brutes: How Eastern Horses Transformed English Culture* (2009). Her work was groundbreaking when it was published and continues to influence new generations of scholars. Donna was also a deeply generous teacher, mentor, and friend. The roundtable welcomes proposals for short presentations on any aspect of Donna Landry's work or life, particularly her impact on a speaker's intellectual trajectory or on the shape of the field.

GS288 Title: Abridgements, Translations, and Piracies: The Shadow Lives of Eighteenth-Century Texts

Session Chair: Michelle Lyons-McFarland

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Authorship, Book Studies & Print Culture

Keywords: Bibliography; Books/Publishing; Global/World/Any Country; Literature

Description: While we often resort to siloing our studies of eighteenth-century texts according to language, culture, or geography due to the inevitable boundaries of individual scholarship, the landscape of publishing in that time was not of separate pools of publication. It might more clearly be imagined as bustling neighborhoods separated by mere lanes, where constant traffic of texts blurred lines of separation and the appetites of the reading public outstripped any one community of booksellers to satisfy. Driven by the desire for income (and in defiance of British copyright practices prior to *Donaldson v. Beckett*), booksellers abridged popular works, published unauthorized sequels, pirated works to sell cheaply or in secondary markets, and translated popular foreign works to sell in their own communities.

This oft-overlooked world of secondary 18th-century publications is significant in its own right. As Rebecca C. Johnson notes, the texts and reading publics of the 18th-century were already globalized long before the term "transnationalism" came to be applied to the modern era. Questions of copyright, popularity, availability of texts, political and cultural norms, religious expression, and the rights and interests of non-Eurocentric audiences are all in play once we start looking at the second lives, afterlives, and doppelgangers of 18th-century texts. This panel invites papers working with alternate publications of eighteenth century texts, including (but not limited to) English translations of foreign texts, translations of British texts into other languages, pirated versions, abridgements, or other authors, booksellers, printers, or importers, or practices involved with these works.

GS256 Title: Aesthetics and Individuation: A Works-in-Progress Session

Session Chair: Heather Keenleyside

Session Type: Special Session

Primary Category: Critical Theory

Keywords: Aesthetics; Critical Theory/Theory; Gender/Sexuality Studies; Literature

Description: This special session will function as a workshop, introducing a set of essays-in-development for a special issue of *Modern Philology* devoted to the work of Frances Ferguson and her impact on the fields of eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century studies.

This special issue, alongside the forthcoming *Records of Reward* (2026), a new selection of Ferguson's own essays, will showcase for a broader readership what eighteenth-century scholars have long known: that Ferguson has written with field-defining force about a remarkable range of topics, including (literary, philosophical, social) formalism; free indirect discourse; the aesthetics of the sublime; rape and the rise of the novel; utilitarianism and action, personhood and personification; new methods and theories of education.

The range of Ferguson's interests, the longevity of her career, the brilliant singularity of her connections and insights—these can sometimes make her influence difficult to spot. Special issue editors Ruth Mack and Heather Keenleyside have sought to highlight that influence through the cultivation of new work that demonstrates how generative Ferguson's thought continues to be, both in and beyond eighteenth-century scholarship. They have offered contributors two of Ferguson's key terms—"aesthetics" and "individuation"—as points of departure and nodes of conversation.

This workshop session provides a forum for that conversation to unfold among participating contributors and the broader ASECS community.

GS214 Title: Alexander Pope in Context

Session Chair: Rachel Carnell

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Culture/Cultural Studies; Disability Studies; History/Historiography; Literature

Description: With the *Cambridge Alexander Pope in Context* in preparation, several dozen scholars are busy writing short essays in the following categories: Biographical Contexts, Literary Contexts, Contexts of the Wider Arts, Social and Cultural Contexts,

Posthumous Contexts, and Uses of the Past. For this roundtable, any scholars interested in these or other contexts (whether or not they are contributing to the forthcoming volume) are encouraged to propose 5-7 minute presentations to generate a lively roundtable discussion of any contexts relevant to understanding Pope and his works today.

GS287 Title: Anglo-Scottish Union in the Age of Revolutions

Session Chair: Phineas Dowling

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Race, Empire, & Nation

Keywords: Britain/England; Culture/Cultural Studies; Politics; Race and Empire

Description: This panel is interested in a particular question: How did (or did not) the Age of Revolutions at the end of the eighteenth century impact the Anglo-Scottish (British) Union? This panel welcomes papers on literary, artistic, and material culture of the long eighteenth century with the goal of exploring the (re)negotiation of Scottish identities and the Anglo-Scottish Union—through artistic, cultural, national, martial, political, and many other discourses. Some questions the panel seeks to explore include: What does it mean to be Scottish/British/Anglo-Scottish, and does that meaning change as a result of the (post-)revolutionary era? How do the Scottish characterize Scottish identities (and how might that be shaped by region, class, gender, etc.)? How do others (the English or others) characterize Scottish identities? How are the Anglo-Scottish union and identities impacted by moments of political or military crisis, such as the Jacobite risings or the American Revolution? Topics might include, but are not limited to, literary representations of Scottish national, regional, gender, or political identities; material culture of Scotland and/or the Union; cultural memory; depictions or commentary of key figures or events; the political or social beginnings, aftermath, or ramifications of the Union in light of the revolutionary era? Authors are welcome (and encouraged) to explore intersections with diverse methodologies and disciplines (e.g., disability studies, gender/queer theory, performance theory, and more). The panel also welcomes alternative presentation methods and styles.

GS200 Title: Anna Letitia Barbauld, Woman of Letters: Greeting Her Collected Works and Imagining New Scholarly

Directions

Session Chair: Elizabeth Kraft

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Author/Authorship; Britain/England; Editing; Literature

Description: This roundtable celebrates the now-completed four-volume Oxford edition of The Collected Works of Anna Letitia Barbauld. Long dismissed as “good Mrs. Barbauld,” this uniquely influential presence in the English world of letters is acknowledged, today, as a major literary intelligence of her time. Participants (4-6) will address in short presentations (5-7 minutes) questions of Barbauld’s relations with her contemporaries, the importance of her work to them and to posterity, and directions for further research and discovery.

CA7 Title: Anne Schroder New Scholars Session

Session Chair: Dawn Odell

Session Type: Panel

Historians of Eighteenth-Century Art and Architecture

Primary Category: Art, Architecture, and Aesthetics

Keywords: Art History/Architecture; Culture/Cultural Studies; Material Culture; Visual Culture/Studies

Description: 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.

GS297 Title: Art at the Crossroads of Church and Empire in the Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Luis Gordo Pelaez

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Art, Architecture, and Aesthetics

Keywords: Art History/Architecture; Enlightenment; Race and Empire; Visual Culture/Studies

Description: The relationship between imperial politics, religious institutions, and visual culture underwent significant changes during the eighteenth century. Given the historical relationship between the Church and imperial authority, institutional interests, values, and objectives had long shaped elite or official art production across Europe and eventually, its imperial outposts. In a period of intensified global expansion, territorial conflicts among European powers and among imperial subjects increased

leading to popular revolutions on both sides of the Atlantic. As expected, the visual arts both registered and served as agents in such developments. In addition to advancing imperial agendas and facilitating cultural exchange, sacred spaces, architecture, religious images, devotional objects, and ritual practices came to shape local identities and served as tools to express alternate viewpoints and counter imperial interests. The changing relationship between the Church and the Imperial State inevitably inflected non-religious artworks, as well, as seen in certain categories of portraiture among other secular genres and forms. This session invites proposals that delve into the intersections of church, empire, and visual culture in the long eighteenth century, considering diverse geographical contexts and interdisciplinary approaches. Papers discussing imperial peripheries, global connections, cross-cultural encounters, marginal voices, and acts of resistance are particularly welcome. Please submit a proposal with a title, a brief abstract (200–250 words), name, professional affiliation, and contact information.

GS263 Title: Art Histories Untold

Session Chair: Kaitlin Grimes

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Art, Architecture, and Aesthetics

Keywords: Art History/Architecture; Material Culture; Visual Culture/Studies

Description: Calling art historians, visual culture specialists, and material culture authorities! After the success of the “Untold Art Histories” panels at the 2026 ASECS in Philadelphia, this panel re-emerges in Portland to provide scholars a space for exploration, experimentation, and collegial interaction. Do you have a paper, image, or object that you have always wanted to present at ASECS, but have never found a panel? Is there some idea you have always wanted to research, but could never justify it? Have you craved to bring awareness to new 18th-century art histories, methodologies, or geographies outside normal art historical praxis? Do you have a weird art history idea you want to explore with your colleagues? Well, now is the time! This panel calls for the random, the weird, the unusual, the unconventional, the marginal, the underdeveloped, and the unexplored art histories whose stories have yet to be told. There are no rules or themes; rather, this panel gives scholars the opportunity to experiment, to question, and to investigate untold 18th-century art histories. The panel invites papers from emerging, junior, and senior scholars and is open to papers outside the potential ideas listed above. Please submit an abstract of 250 words.

CA35 Title: Beyond the Pope: Transnational Networks and Elite Sociabilities in Rome during the Long Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Marina Formica

Session Type: Panel

SISSD (Società Italiana di Studi sul Secolo Diciottesimo)

Primary Category: Cities and Urban Spaces

Keywords: Archives; Enlightenment; Italy/Italian; Sociabilité;agency

Description: 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.

GS279 Title: Bluestocking Alliances: Multivalent Readings and Feminist Recovery

Session Chair: Caroline Pari

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Author/Authorship; Britain/England; Gender/Sexuality Studies

Description: Emerging in the 1750s under the leadership of hostesses like Elizabeth Montagu and Elizabeth Vesey, the Bluestocking circles fundamentally reshaped Georgian intellectual life by replacing elite gambling assemblies with vibrant, mixed-gender literary salons. For nearly four decades, this expansive network functioned as a vital hub for female solidarity, literary patronage, and epistolary mentorship. However, by the late 1790s, amidst anti-Jacobin anxieties and a sharp conservative turn in separate-spheres domestic ideology, the movement lost its cultural respect, and the term “Bluestocking” soured into a derogatory caricature mocking intellectual women.

This panel seeks to examine the intricate relationships within these circles, exploring how their horizontal alliances balanced shared intellectual ambitions with internal ideological friction. While traditional literary histories often dismissed these women as conservative defenders of domestic propriety, decades of feminist recovery work have repositioned them as sophisticated political and social agents who strategically navigated genres like epistolary prose, poetry, and conduct literature to claim an active public voice.

We invite papers that interrogate the divergent ways we read Bluestocking contributions today. Does their adherence to virtue signify compliance, or a sophisticated mode of ideological negotiation and what Toni Bowers calls "collusive resistance"? Presentations may explore individual writers, intertextual relationships, the mechanics of feminist recovery, or the multivalent nature of Bluestocking texts. Ultimately, this session aims to re-evaluate how these networks challenge our understanding of eighteenth-century women's agency, collaborations, and literary experimentation.

GS228 Title: Celebrating 50 years of Dieciocho: Hispanic Enlightenment

Session Chair: Elizabeth Franklin Lewis

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Ibero-American Studies

Keywords: Editing; Enlightenment; Hispanophone/Lusophone spheres; Latin America

Description: Dieciocho: Hispanic Enlightenment, founded in 1978 by Professor Eva Kahiluoto Rudat of Cornell University, was the first journal dedicated to Iberian and Ibero-American eighteenth century studies. In spring 2027, the publication celebrates its fiftieth year with issue 50.1. Participants on this roundtable will explore Dieciocho's rich history, broad reach, important contributions to the field, and the future directions of the journal.

GS244 Title: CENSORSHIP in the Global 18th Century

Session Chair: Elena Lorenzo Álvarez

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Authorship, Book Studies & Print Culture

Keywords: Author/Authorship; Books/Publishing; Culture/Cultural Studies; Law/Legal Studies; Literature; Politics

Description: We seek submissions for a panel exploring the complex ambits of censorship and speech control during the long 18th century in a global context. We welcome papers from scholars across disciplines including history, literature, art, philosophy, political science, law -among others-, analysing case studies, theoretical questions, or comparative approaches in themes such as legal frameworks of censorship, inquisitorial censorship of printed works, governmental censorship of manuscripts, newspapers, pamphlets..., forbidden works, self-censoring and protection strategies, the censorial criteria for granting and denying licenses, the role played by censors and censorial institutions, the limits of public discourse...

GS254 Title: Character (Over)determined

Session Chair: Miranda Hoegberg

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Critical Theory/Theory; Literature

Description: Character is, to borrow Deidre Lynch's term, an "overcharged" concept in literary studies: a source of pleasure and suspicion, emotional investment and meta-investment. As a flashpoint in the recent "method wars," the debate over treating character like real people itself hinged, as David Kurnick suggests in "A Few Lies," on a "covert characterology" of credulous readers and joyless critics—quixotism, to use our period's language, all the way down. But in addition to a history and a theory of our anxious attachment to characters, eighteenth-century studies offers ways of thinking about the literary character as a hinge between different kinds of determination: where plot function molds, or warps, the outlines of personality; where particularized "nobodies" meet familiar types (Catherine Gallagher); where harms call forth the agents liable for them (Sandra Macpherson); where the movement of bodies shapes, and is shaped by, the motions of minds (Kevis Goodman).

This panel seeks to recalibrate the discussion on character by taking its overdetermination as a provocation to read character deterministically. We seek papers that work across, or work through, the boundary between character's "outsides" and its "insides" to track the different orders of causation and explanation—material, psychological, social, formal—that come together in making characters and making sense of them.

GS211 Title: Children's Literature and the Long Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Jill Campbell

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Books/Publishing; Childhood/Children/Youth; History; Literature; Race and Empire

Description: "Children's Literature" emerged as a separate category of publication in the course of the eighteenth century, with John Newbery successfully creating a market for books for children at mid-century and an explosion of innovative children's books appearing at the end of the century and into the next. While distinguished from other forms of writing in a new way, these books for children are closely and complexly tied to various literary and historical developments of the long eighteenth century: the history of the novel; new theories of education and of human development; changing markets for print; the rise of consumer

culture; shifting models of domestic life; contention about the economy and class relations; Evangelical religious movements; advocacy for animal rights; the popularization of natural history; industrialization; abolitionism; new articulations of race and gender; colonial and imperial relations; and so on. This session invites speakers to address works from the under-studied early history of children's literature in dynamic relation to other aspects of the history of the long eighteenth century.

GS296 Title: Climate Change, the Critical Zone, and/ or Plants

Session Chair: Jeong Oh Kim

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Eco-Humanities & Environmental Studies

Keywords: Culture/Cultural Studies; Ecology/Eco-humanities/Environmental Studies; Interdisciplinary

Description: This panel invites papers that explore the intersection of climate change, the critical zone, and/ or plants. According to Bruno Latour, the critical zone is a thin, permeable, near-surface layer created by geological and atmospheric interactions (Critical Zones: The Science and Politics of Landing on Earth.) This panel, "Climate Change, the Critical Zone, and/ or Plants" is part of a larger exploration of atmosphere, geology, and geography that increasingly concerns eighteenth-to nineteenth-century scholars across a range of fields. This panel especially welcomes papers that treat the Long Eighteenth-Century British literature or works of art as a critical archive of the historical patterns and cycles of climate change, extreme weather events, and impacts of climate on the critical zone and/ or plants represented in Elizabeth Blackwell's *Curious Herbal*, Erasmus Darwin's botanic poetry, Gilbert White's *Natural History and Antiques of Selborne*, Alexander Humboldt's *Cosmos*, Joseph Banks's botanical adventures, Thomas Green's *Agricultural Dictionary*, or Luke Howard's *Climate of London*, among others. Are there any other overlooked literary and scientific collaborations that shaped early understandings of climate, atmosphere, and geography, as if they were the critical zone observatories, to construct large-scale ecosystem models for eighteenth-to nineteenth-century British literature? This panel is open to scholarly practices that contribute a fresh, original perspective to reveal the new nexus between climate change, the critical zone, and/ or plants in the Long Eighteenth Century.

GS284 Title: Colonial Louisiana: European Connections and Influences

Session Chair: Michael Taylor

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Race, Empire, & Nation

Keywords: Atlantic World; Ecology/Eco-humanities/Environmental Studies; History; North America; Race and Empire

Description: French Louisiana has long been focused studies on the interaction between Native Americans and French imperial ambitions, as well as Spanish colonial administration after 1763. Yet beyond official colonial policies and native action and reaction, Louisiana became a crossroads where multiple European populations, traditions, and political projects converged. This session proposes to explore the diversity of European influences that contributed to the making and influence of eighteenth-century Louisiana.

While particular attention will be paid to French and Spanish colonization schemes from 1699 on, contributors are encouraged to look beyond the official imperial narratives to examine the circulation of peoples, ideas, agricultural practices, commercial models, religious traditions, and political cultures across colonial borders. They are also encouraged to assess how Europeans responded to the planned and actualized model of the Louisiana colony after its inception. To what extent did French, Spanish, and other European experiences influence colonial development? Can parallels be drawn between Louisiana and contemporary experiments in improvement and innovations – especially in agriculture – elsewhere in Europe?

We also encourage the contributors to give attention to usually overlooked groups of Europeans: the Dutch settlers displaced from Brazil, the French-Acadian refugees, expelled from British North America after the Great Deportation, and the Scots who, following the failure of the Darien scheme and later Jacobite exiles and migrants, settled in what is now Upper Louisiana. Although often difficult to identify in the archival record, these communities participated in the economic and social development of the colony while maintaining extensive Atlantic connections.

GS272 Title: Connected Eighteenth Centuries: Digital Humanities across the Italian, Iberian, and Ibero-American Worlds

Session Chair: Clorinda Donato

Session Type: WSECS Panel

Primary Category: Digital Humanities

Keywords: Digital Humanities; Hispanophone/Lusophone spheres; Italy/Italian

Description: This panel explores how digital humanities methods and infrastructures are transforming research on the connected eighteenth centuries. From the Mediterranean to the Atlantic—and extending into the Pacific and other transimperial spaces—the Italian, Iberian, and Ibero-American worlds were linked through networks of commerce, diplomacy, religion, science, migration, print culture, and artistic exchange. Digital approaches now make it possible to recover, visualize, analyze, and reinterpret these connections in innovative ways.

Sponsored by the Western Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (WSECS), this panel welcomes papers on completed projects, works in progress, experimental initiatives, and demonstrations of digital resources, platforms, and tools. We encourage contributions from literature, history, art history, musicology, philosophy, history of science, book history, linguistics, library and information science, cultural heritage, museum studies, and related disciplines.

Topics may include digital editions and archives, GIS and spatial humanities, network analysis, multilingual corpora, AI-assisted transcription, translation, and annotation, Linked Open Data, digital pedagogy, public humanities, and interoperable digital infrastructures. We especially invite collaborative and multilingual projects that illuminate the movement of books, people, objects, and ideas across Mediterranean, Atlantic, Pacific, and other global networks, while reflecting on sustainability, interoperability, and the ethical use of AI in humanities research.

By bringing together scholars, librarians, archivists, museum professionals, and digital practitioners, this panel seeks to build an international community dedicated to exploring the connected eighteenth centuries through innovative, collaborative, and sustainable digital scholarship.

CA14 Title: Cross-disciplinary Collaborations

Session Chair: Emily West

Session Type: Roundtable

Science Studies Caucus

Primary Category: Science and Technology

Keywords: Critical Theory/Theory; Interdisciplinary; Pedagogy; Science and Technology; Methods

Description: 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?

CA21 Title: Cultures of Taste in the Italian Settecento

Session Chair: Irene Zanini Cordi

Session Type: Panel

Italian Studies Caucus

Primary Category: Taste

Keywords: Aesthetics; Art History/Architecture; Italy/Italian; Material Culture; Music

Description: 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.

GS271 Title: Decay, Regeneration, and Environmental Thought in the Long Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Sophia Bevacqua

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Eco-Humanities & Environmental Studies

Keywords: Art History/Architecture; Culture/Cultural Studies; Ecology/Eco-humanities/Environmental Studies; Race and Empire; Science and Technology

Description: In the 1740's, the microbiologist John Needham arrives at a metaphysics, in which life spontaneously generates from decomposing organic material, as observed through his microscope. This interdisciplinary panel will feature papers that explore the eighteenth-century scholars, practitioners, and creators enmeshed in this biological paradox. How does their output engage this emerging modern conviction—that progress is fundamentally undergirded by corruption, but that the ensuing rot is inherently regenerative?

For instance, the naturalist Comte de Buffon is enthralled by Needham's idea, yet promulgates a theory of degeneration, in which the European body decays upon relocating to the tropics. In the Caribbean isles of that very planetary zone, indigo leaves are deliberately rotted in waterlogged vats to produce blue dyes. The revolutionary emancipation of the enslaved forced into such labor ignites what Haitian writer Baron de Vastey calls "the regeneration of a large part of the human race." Such ecological language echoes across the Atlantic. The Salon of 1785 enthrones Jacques-Louis David as the "regenerator of painting" through his renewed vision of ruins. These same critics deride the proliferating botanicals of rococo ornamentation as the nadir of aesthetic decline. The era dissolves with this paradox still in flux: on the eve of the Bourbon Restoration, Romantic writers set to reanimating corpses.

Possible topics include: generative aspects of decay in processes of making, environmental cycles as modeling ways of thinking, ruins as creative generator, problems posed by infestation, conceptualizing social and economic progress/decline, restorations of art/architecture, urban/landscape regeneration, disease vs. medical practice

GS213 Title: Discontinuous Masculinities in the Long Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Christopher Vilmar

Session Type: Round Table

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Culture/Cultural Studies; Gender/Sexuality Studies; Literature

Description: Many discussions of eighteenth-century masculinity emphasize its continuities with later periods. But in his book *Horace Walpole's Letters* (2011), George Haggerty argued that Walpole displays a kind of *sui generis* masculinity: constructed on his own terms, Walpole's masculinity must be understood as such by critical inquiry. Its lack of precedent marks it as *discontinuous*, as does its ability to elude terms (such as straight, toxic, or queer) as currently understood. This panel seeks to consider eighteenth-century constructions of masculinity generally; especially welcome are examples where such discontinuities may be found. Submissions across languages and genres are also especially welcome: memoirs (e.g. Pepys, Casanova, Rousseau); fiction (e.g., *Oroonoko*, *Candide*, *Young Werther*); stage (*Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, *The Rover*, *Die Rauber*); poetry (*l'honnete homme*, skeptical idealist, *der Kraftsmensch*). Such examples are not meant to be restrictive, but rather to stimulate an expansive conception of where instances might be found. This roundtable will consider the widest and most inclusive approaches, including languages and traditions not appearing above.

CA33 Title: Digital Humanities and AI

Session Chair: Alice McGrath

Session Type: Roundtable

Digital Humanities Caucus

Primary Category: Digital Humanities

Keywords: Administration; Digital Humanities; Pedagogy; Machine Learning

Description: 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

CA20 Title: Disability Aesthetics

Session Chair: Lesley Thulin

Session Type: Panel

Disability Studies Caucus

Primary Category: Disability Studies

Keywords: Aesthetics; Disability Studies; Literature; Visual Culture/Studies

Description: 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. We invite 250-word proposals for papers that explore these topics from a range of theoretical and methodological angles.

CA28 Title: Disability and Citizenship

Session Chair: Paul Kelleher

Session Type: Roundtable

Disability Studies Caucus

Primary Category: Disability Studies

Keywords: Disability Studies; Enlightenment; Politics

Description: 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. We invite 250-word proposals for short papers (5-7 minutes) that explore this topic from a range of theoretical and methodological angles.

GS247 Title: Domestiques, domesticité, relations et tensions entre conditions: The Underbelly of the Public Sphere?

Session Chair: Downing Thomas

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: French/Francophone

Keywords: Class; France/French

Description: La récente disparition de Jürgen Habermas nous invite à revenir sur son oeuvre et plus particulièrement sa conception d'une sphère publique qui trouve son origine dans les débats agitant les cercles de sociabilité et de diffusion des idées au 18e siècle. Les conditions d'expansion de cet espace public impliquent également la question de la condition sociale: le développement d'une société bourgeoise dont l'influence grandissante prend le pas sur la société de cour se pourvoit des lieux, des formes de sociabilité, du langage conceptuel commun, des outils de représentation et de transmission qui permettent à cette sphère de prendre toute son ampleur. Vis-à-vis de cette condition, cependant, et chargé de l'entretien de ces existences privées où s'enracine la discursivité propre à la sphère publique, existe tout un monde de domestiques. Quels sont les rapports que la domesticité entretient avec l'espace public? Qu'advient-il lorsque ce sont des valets, des femmes de compagnie, des secrétaires qui, dans l'univers de la représentation romanesque ou théâtrale, prennent en charge la circulation des opinions à l'occasion d'une intrigue dont ils ou elles mènent le jeu? Que se passe-t-il lorsque d'invisibles, ils ou elles deviennent les agents d'une parole à consonance publique? Souvent accusé.e.s de faire circuler la rumeur, quelle place leur est-elle réservée au sein d'un espace où ces rumeurs s'opposent aux opinions? Comment théoriser plus précisément cette opposition? Voici certains des thèmes proposés à la réflexion dans cette session.

CA12 Title: Eighteenth-Century Collaborations

Session Chair: Alina Romo

Session Type: Panel

Western Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (WSECS)

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Interdisciplinary; Literature; Material Culture; Pedagogy; Community

Description: 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. Please submit a 250-word proposal by September 18, 2026.

CA27 Title: Eighteenth-Century Data

Session Chair: Cassidy Holahan

Session Type: Panel

Digital Humanities Caucus

Primary Category: Digital Humanities

Keywords: Digital Humanities; Interdisciplinary; Literature; Science and Technology

Description: 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.

GS286 Title: *Eighteenth-Century Studies After the Secularization Thesis*

Session Chair: David Alvarez

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Religion, Belief, & Philosophy

Keywords: Enlightenment; Philosophy/Religion/Faith; Race and Empire

Description: Is the eighteenth century essentially religious or secular? It's a perennial question. Rather than thinking about the eighteenth century through these concepts (an arguably anachronistic endeavor), this panel seeks to examine their historical formation. How might our understanding of this period change when we treat the modern religious-secular binary not as a neutral analytical tool valid for all times and all places but as itself an object of analysis? Papers are especially welcome that 1) criticize, modify, or augment claims about the eighteenth century that key thinkers in secularism studies (e.g., Talal Asad, Charles Taylor, Saba Mahmood) rely upon for their arguments; 2) rethink our usual stories about the relationship between innovations in literary form (e.g., the novel) and secularization; or that 3) place the formation of the secular in relation to constructions of race, gender, and imperialism.

GS276 Title: *Everyday Devotions: Prayer, Ritual, and Other Engagements with the Sacred*

Session Chair: Laura Stevens

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Religion, Belief, & Philosophy

Keywords: Literature; Material Culture; Music; Performance; Philosophy/Religion/Faith

Description: Proposals are welcome for presentations dealing with any aspects of how ordinary people of the eighteenth century performed prayer or conducted rituals to engage with what they regarded as sacred. Our focus will be on actual as opposed to idealized devotions of those generally beyond authorities the elite, exploring what human beings in a range of settings really were doing when they were immersed in activities that connected them with their apprehensions of the divine. Guiding questions may include: what exactly did prayer look and sound like, and how did it manifest in writing, music, or material culture? What gaps exist between the prayers and rituals that authorities dictated, and what individuals and communities actually spoke and did? What debates emerged in communities about how exactly to pray or perform actions that apprehend the sacred? And how did acts of religious or spiritual devotion constitute a site of intercultural contact or conflict?

GS226 Title: *Experiencing Enlightenment Sociability*

Session Chair: Valérie Capdeville

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Culture and Transmission

Keywords: Enlightenment; History; Interdisciplinary

Description: Enlightenment sociability has long been recognised as a defining feature of eighteenth-century society, shaping intellectual exchange, cultural practices, political participation, and everyday life. Recent scholarship has expanded our understanding of sociability beyond its formal institutions to explore the practices, emotions, material culture, and interpersonal relationships through which it was experienced. This session invites contributions that examine sociability as a lived phenomenon, asking how individuals and communities encountered, negotiated, and gave meaning to social interaction during the long eighteenth century.

We welcome papers exploring a wide range of sociable spaces and practices, including clubs, salons, coffeehouses, taverns, assemblies, homes, gardens, learned societies, places of worship, theatres, and voluntary associations, as well as the role of print and correspondence in creating communities across distance. Contributions may address themes such as conversation, friendship, politeness, hospitality, consumption, leisure, emotions, rituals, material culture, sociability and the senses, etc. Comparative, transnational, colonial, and global perspectives are particularly encouraged, as are papers considering how sociability was shaped by gender, class, race, age, or other forms of inclusion and exclusion.

By foregrounding experience, this session aims to foster dialogue across disciplines and to encourage fresh perspectives on the diverse ways in which sociability was lived, imagined, and contested in the long eighteenth century across Europe and the wider world.

GS290 Title: *FAKE: the Art of Imitation in Early Modern Europe*

Session Chair: Esther Gabel

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Art, Architecture, and Aesthetics

Keywords: Aesthetics; Art History/Architecture; Material Culture

Description: Long before (and long after) interest in antiquity drove an industry of imitation in Italy, the Republic of Venice built tremendous wealth on the art of the fake. With a strategic position between east and west, and a market full of imported spices, textiles and ceramics, Venetian artisans had long traded in imitations. Renaissance damasceneware and cristallo became lattimo and lacquer by the 18th century, to imitate the latest in luxury. What was the place of these imitations in the broader European marketplace? Who sought them out? Could a discerning eye spot a fake? Or did authenticity truly matter to the cultivator of taste? Beyond Venice, beyond Italy, what was the place of the fake in early modern European culture? This panel seeks to bring together interdisciplinary perspectives to examine the idea of imitation in the early modern period. What objects were deemed worthy of reproduction? Where were they made? And why? What are the complexities of counterfeit culture in the 18th century? Potential topics include, but are not limited to, fashion, furnishings, porcelain, beauty and the broader context of early modern material culture.

GS250 Title: **Feminist Editorial Practice and the Future of Editing Women's Writing**

Session Chair: Zoe Van Cauwenberg

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Critical Theory

Keywords: Books/Publishing; Editing; Gender/Sexuality Studies; Literature; Pedagogy

Description: Critical editions of women's writing from the long eighteenth century have played an important role in making previously inaccessible texts available to students and scholars. Through annotation and contextualization, these editions situate individual works within broader cultural, political, intellectual, and material histories. Yet despite the growing presence of editions of authors such as Eliza Haywood, Sarah Fielding, Sydney Owenson, and the new editions of Ann Radcliffe, editorial work often remains undervalued by funding agencies and institutional review processes. Those who undertake such projects frequently do so without clear editorial models for women's writing, a gap identified by scholars including Margaret J. M. Ezell, Amy Culley, and Anna M. Fitzer.

Building on this work, this roundtable asks: What might a feminist editorial practice look like? We invite short position papers and reflections from scholars working in editorial theory and practice, textual scholarship, book history, digital humanities, and pedagogy. We also welcome discussions of the challenges and possibilities of editing texts that circulate across borders, languages, and media, as well as reflections on collaborative, digital, and open-access editorial projects that expand access to women's writing and diversify editorial practice.

This roundtable aims to foster a conversation about the future of editing women's writing and the continuing importance of critical editions. We hope to generate both practical and theoretical insights that support new editorial projects while considering how feminist editorial practices can make women's writing more accessible, more teachable, and more fully situated within transnational literary histories.

GS274 Title: **Finishing the Revolution: Writers and Political Founding in the Long Eighteenth Century**

Session Chair: Trevor Sanders

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Religion, Belief, & Philosophy

Keywords: Culture/Cultural Studies; Interdisciplinary; Literature; Philosophy/Religion/Faith; Politics

Description: In Des circonstances actuelles qui peuvent terminer la Révolution et les principes qui doivent fonder la République en France (1798), Madame de Staël declared, "Ce sont les philosophes qui ont fait la Révolution, ce sont eux qui la termineront." Her claim suggests that the work of political founding extends beyond constitutions and institutions into literature, philosophy, and public culture. If revolutions unsettle inherited forms of legitimacy, what role do writers play in imagining, justifying, or securing new political orders? How does writing mediate the transition from revolutionary principle to political practice? What kinds of writing become necessary once a revolution has been made but not yet finished? Taking Staël's provocation as its point of departure, this session explores how writers across the long eighteenth century approached the problem of political founding. We invite papers examining the roles of literature, philosophy, religion, and public discourse in moments of constitutional innovation, revolutionary upheaval, and political reconstruction. How do novels, plays, pamphlets, histories, speeches, educational treatises, religious writings, and other literary forms participate in the work of political founding? We welcome contributions from literary studies, history, philosophy, political theory, religious studies, and related fields. Interdisciplinary and comparative perspectives are especially encouraged. Papers may examine authors and traditions within or beyond the Francophone world, including the broader Atlantic and European contexts of the Age of Revolutions.

GS303 Title: **France and the World: The Long Eighteenth Century**

Co-sponsored by the Society for French Historical Studies and ASECS

Lauren R. Clay, Vanderbilt University / Jennifer Sessions, University of Virginia

Description: What does it mean to study and teach "France and the world"? Co-sponsored by the Society for French Historical Studies and ASECS, this panel invites contributions that explore what this emerging field, born in recent decades out of the overlapping global, imperial, and transnational "turns" in French studies, can offer scholars of the long eighteenth century. What new light does a conceptual approach centered on a broader, more flexible understanding of "the world," the term chosen by the editors of both the 2007 volume *Pour une littérature-monde* and 2017's *Histoire mondiale de la France*, shed on the history, literature, and culture of France and the French empire? What can we learn from the intensifying extraterritorial entanglements,

both formal and informal, that defined France—and the French imagination—at the local, regional, national, transnational, imperial, or global levels during the era? How should we understand the interplay of different scales of analysis, forms of identity, or types of relations that connected France with a world whose own boundaries were shifting in this period? With a particular emphasis on methodological, conceptual, and theoretical approaches, the panel seeks to map out the diverse, dynamic linkages between France and the world in this transformative period.

GS251 Title: Genres and Infrastructures of Misinformation In the Eighteenth-Century

Session Chair: David Mazella

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Culture and Transmission

Keywords: Author/Authorship; Books/Publishing; Enlightenment; Material Culture; Politics

Description: 18th-century historians and literary critics have long recognized the transnational circulation of political information in our period, and have grown more receptive to John Adams's dyspeptic comment that the period represented "anything but an Age of Reason." In literary studies, however, these contexts are usually organized around isolated but pivotal figures like John Wilkes or Thomas Paine. Americanists like Jordan Taylor, book historians like Robert Darnton, and Anglophone critics like Dabhoiwala have all examined the crucial role of misrepresentation and misperception in driving political discussion from the Sacheverell "riots to Barruel's deeply paranoid account of the Jacobin Illuminati. But to what extent do these largely topical, usually under-read genres—and the infrastructures that supported them, help push readers into participation in political media events (Wark)?

This roundtable will revisit earlier scholarship on 18c hacks, pamphleteers, and rabble rousers to examine, first of all, how our current awareness of "flood the zone" strategies of misinformation might affect our view of literary and political genres and infrastructures. The second goal is to see if it's possible to read these genres as trading upon certain kinds of implicit—and therefore social—knowledge. Presentations will be brief, lightning style talks of less than 10 minutes, and topics can focus upon any geographic location or phenomenon in our "long 18c." Potential approaches to our encounter with misinformation's purposes and supports could include: gender studies, critical race studies, materialist, digital, intellectual historical, and bibliographic approaches.

CA30 Title: Goethe and Environmental Thought in the Anthropocene

Session Chair: Jan Mieszkowski

Session Type: Panel

Goethe Society

Primary Category: Eco-Humanities & Environmental Studies

Keywords: Aesthetics; Ecology/Eco-humanities/Environmental Studies; German/Germany; Literature; Science and Technology

Description: 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.

GS204 Title: Gulliver's Travels at 300: Everywhere, Everyone, Somewhere, Someone, Nowhere, No One

Session Chair: Kevin Cope

Session Type: Panel

Keywords: Interdisciplinary; Literature

Description: Popularity can coincide with absence. The best-selling books of the long eighteenth century were John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress and Alexander Pope's translations of Homer's epics. Pilgrim's Progress has maintained its worldwide audience for 350 years, yet few in contemporary academe build careers around the exploits of Christian, Evangelist, and Ignorance. No one relishes Pope's rendering of ancient adventure. Now reaching the 300th anniversary of its publication, that third smash-hit of the eighteenth century, Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels, shares in this strange mixture of universality and marginality. Despite three centuries of chart-busting sales, despite inspiring movies and media adaptations, Gulliver's Travels has only a minimal academic audience. The massive 2026 ASECS program, for example, includes only two paper titles mentioning Swift. This disappearance from scholarly conversations is more than a quirk of academic fashion. Swift's satiric travelogue ripples with the interplay of crowds and loners, real places and imaginary islands, sought audiences and satirized humanity. Lilliput and Brobdingnag appear on Swift's satirical maps but could be anywhere or nowhere; Gulliver is at once lead character, narrator, everyman figure, and no one, a fiction whose supposed travels lead beyond life as we know it. This panel welcomes papers addressing the many manifestations of and responses to Gulliver and his stories. Assessing 300 years of love, hate, fame, reprobation, zeal, obsession, and disregard, the panel will investigate how Gulliver and his tale have traveled in time, space, and around our world.

CA38 Title: Heated Rivalries ~ Les rivalités passionnées/passionnelles

Session Chair: Christy Pichichero

Session Type: Panel

Society for Eighteenth-Century French Studies (SECFS)

Primary Category: French/Francophone

Keywords: Atlantic World; Black Atlantic; France/French

Description: “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.

GS289 Title: Heretical Traditions

Session Chair: Rachael King

Session Type: Panel (WSECS)

Primary Category: Culture and Transmission

Keywords: Culture/Cultural Studies; Enlightenment; Global/World/Any Country; Philosophy/Religion/Faith; Race and Empire

Description: The eighteenth century witnessed the emergence and entrenchment of myriad systems of knowledge and power that would become hegemonic in modernity. From the rise of the novel to the triumph of the scientific method, the century has come to be known for the ascendancy of realism over fantasy, rationalism over superstition, secularism over religion, governance over the ungovernable. This panel seeks papers that locate and pry open the cracks in this façade. We invite submissions that explore the eighteenth century’s understudied heretical traditions. What are the radical currents of knowledge, practice, and social being that survived and thrived alongside, underneath, or in spite of the eighteenth century’s hegemonic movements? What heretical streams remained “undisciplined” despite the century’s great disciplining of knowledge and bodies? How do we locate and read these heretical traditions? What kinds of methodologies do we need to develop in order to study and learn from them?

GS257 Title: How Low Should We Go?: Dumbing Down the Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Ann Campbell

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Pedagogy/Education

Keywords: Pedagogy

Description: Eighteenth-century texts are challenging for students for all kinds of reasons. The diction and vocabulary are difficult. The typography is unfamiliar. Even genres students are familiar with (like the novel) don’t follow their expectations for the form. One approach to these difficulties is to teach excerpts of longer texts, to assign faddish assignments like TED talks, and to try to meet students where they are. Is this an effective approach? Or should we resist the temptation to dumb down the eighteenth century and require more of students than they think they are capable of doing? When it comes to pedagogical expectations, how low is too low?

GS216 Title: Human Flourishing

Session Chair: Wolfram Schmidgen

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Critical Theory

Keywords: Critical Theory/Theory; Disciplinary futures; Ecology/Eco-humanities/Environmental Studies; Enlightenment; Philosophy/Religion/Faith

Description: What can eighteenth-century studies contribute to the question of human flourishing? The question strikes us as urgent. Urgent because of the unified threats that climate change poses to the survival of humans; the new pressure artificial intelligence puts on the ancient question of what it means to be human; and the mental health crises of so many of our students. At the same time, a focus on human flourishing must also seem suspect for its problematic universalism: who decides what

flourishing looks like? And when an ecological disaster calls on humans to leave their elevated stations and join the nonhumans in the web of life, isn't the suggestion of human exceptionalism ethically and politically misguided? Placing these risks to one side, this panel hopes to take a serious look at the theory, research, and practice of human flourishing in our field. Some of the questions we would like to explore include: how do eighteenth-century figures address the question of human flourishing? What can we learn from them? How can eighteenth-century scholars contribute to the well-being of students and society? Should we reexamine enlightenment universalism, and does it again have a role to play? Contributions engaging literary studies, political philosophy, ecological theory, anthropology, religious studies, and the extant scholarship of human flourishing are welcome.

GS267 Title: Imperial Confluences and the Future of Water Humanities

Session Chair: Mita Choudhury

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Eco-Humanities & Environmental Studies

Keywords: Culture/Cultural Studies; Disciplinary futures; Ecology/Eco-humanities/Environmental Studies; Global/World/Any Country; History/Historiography

Description: "Amid . . . an uneven global political economy that preys on natural resources, landscapes are reshaped at the confluence of land and water, concretely and abstractly. Focusing on the production of place, [Gagné and Rasmussen] suggest that at their point of convergence, there is relational ontology between land and water" (2016). This panel will explore that "relational ontology" along two overlapping themes: water as an ontological condition inseparable from human existence, and water as an extractive resource harnessed to fuel and sustain human progress. In 1743, Mark Catesby observed (Natural History of Carolina), that "[o]n this wet Land grows a variety of Evergreen Trees and Shrubs." Using histories of empire-building such as Catesby's, this panel might consider how resource-rich lands elsewhere were described in terms of value, and how value was built upon access to and harnessing of water and waterways — seas, rivers, estuaries, deltas, watersheds (first coined in the eighteenth century), basins, tributaries. Welcome are proposals related to the "production of place" in imperial frameworks, those that read the sea or waterways as historical archive in Middle Passage, Pacific, or other voyaging narratives or that read eighteenth-century science — cartography in particular — through the lens of "tidalectics," a concept first articulated by Kamau Brathwaite (1991–99) and developed as literary method by Elizabeth DeLoughrey (2007). The goal of this panel is to consider whether, methodologically, the cyclical, tidal movement of land and water can destabilize the linear narratives of trade and diasporic routes central to imperial historiography.

GS283 Title: Imperial Logics and The Provenance of the Page: Mapping Authority in 18th-Century Narratives

Session Chair: Charlotte Fiehn

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Books/Publishing; Britain/England; Culture/Cultural Studies; Literature; Race and Empire

Description: Colonial and imperial projects affected the lens through which many people perceived themselves and others. As writers attempted to construct narratives representative of their experiences, encapsulating the experiences of others and the other, they often tended to rely on or otherwise revert to these frameworks of power to define situations and relationships.

This panel will explore the various narrative strategies developed by writers to define, map, consolidate, and convert authority within narratives of the eighteenth century, including but not limited to the novel, poetry, letters, pamphlets, and other forms of fiction and non-fiction narratives. It will also examine the extent to which narratives of the period evolved to define, frame, and otherwise reflect experiences of discovery and governance.

GS280 Title: Inerasable African Women in the Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Mary Beth Harris

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Race, Empire, & Nation

Description: African women were central to the wider eighteenth century world. As laborers, cultural brokers, knowledge keepers, healers, merchants, mothers, domestic partners, political allies, friends, and rebels, they shaped history at all levels, from the contours of everyday life to the terms of international diplomacy. Yet, scholars of the era struggle to account for them, particularly as African women. If we talk about them at all, we go over, around, or under their Africanness, making them legible by extracting them from their continental context. Imoinda can be historicized only once she arrives in America. Nekayah and Pekuah are best analyzed as characters in an oriental tale. Phillis Wheatley's Africa is a metaphor rather than a terrestrial place she once called home. The numerous female political leaders, merchants, pawns, and domestic partners that are named and unnamed in the Royal Africa Company correspondences are objects of a colonial scheme rather than subjects of an unfolding history. This panel seeks papers on African women, fictional or historical, that contend with rather than set aside their continental origins, affinities, or affiliations. How might we challenge ourselves as a field to push beyond the familiar in order to recognize the inerasable African women?

GS232 Title: *Inventing the Human: Disability, Bildung, and Citizenship in German Literature (1750–1830)*

Session Chair: Paola Del Zoppo

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Disability Studies

Keywords: Disability Studies; Enlightenment; Europe; German/Germany; gender

Description: Inspired by the ASECS Disability Studies Caucus theme Disability and Citizenship and building on conversations initiated at the international conference Dis-Abilities (University of Macerata, 2026), this panel explores disability as a cultural, aesthetic, and political category rather than merely a medical condition or literary metaphor. Focusing on the German-speaking world, we invite papers examining how physical, sensory, cognitive, and mental disabilities shaped literary, philosophical, pedagogical, and anthropological discourses, challenging Enlightenment ideals of reason, autonomy, usefulness, and self-cultivation (*Bildung*). We are especially interested in how representations of blindness, deafness, chronic illness, bodily impairment, melancholy, madness, nervous disorders, cognitive difference, and emotional vulnerability expose the normative assumptions that defined who could be recognized as fully human, morally autonomous, and capable of civic participation. The panel welcomes contributions on disability in relation to aesthetic theory, philosophical anthropology, pedagogy, the emerging sciences of the mind, and the history of madness before psychiatry. Possible approaches include studies of Goethe, Schiller, Kleist, Bettine Brentano (von Arnim), Karoline von Günderode, the Brothers Grimm, Sophie von La Roche, Sophie Mereau, Caroline Auguste Fischer, Therese Huber, Benedikte Naubert, and other German-language women writers, as well as work on the pedagogical novel, *Empfindsamkeit*, folklore, fairy tales, theater, medicine, visual and print culture, and comparative or transnational perspectives. By bringing German literary studies into dialogue with Disability Studies, Enlightenment studies, and the history of medicine and anthropology, this panel investigates how German literature both constructed and contested the bodily and mental norms underlying modern concepts of citizenship, inclusion, and the human.

CA9 Title: *Ireland and Empire in the Long Eighteenth Century*

Session Chair: Scott Breuninger

Session Type: Roundtable

Irish Studies

Primary Category: Race, Empire, & Nation

Keywords: Britain/England; Politics; Race and Empire

Description: 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

CA29 Title: *J'Accuse! The Rhetoric of Denunciation*

Session Chair: Scott Sanders

Session Type: Panel

Society for Eighteenth-Century French Studies (SECFS)

Primary Category: French/Francophone

Keywords: Caribbean; Culture/Cultural Studies; France/French; Politics; Race and Empire

Description: 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? Please submit a 350-word abstract to scott.m.sanders@dartmouth.edu.

GS260 Title: Jewish Material Culture

Session Chair: Michael Feinberg

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Art, Architecture, and Aesthetics

Keywords: Art History/Architecture; Critical Theory/Theory; Culture/Cultural Studies; Race and Empire; Visual Culture/Studies

Description: This panel examines the relationship between Jewishness and visual and material cultures. What can the practices of making, collecting, and patronizing art tell us about how Jewish identity was negotiated in the eighteenth century? Art historians have begun employing feminist, postcolonial, and decolonial lenses to bring attention to minoritarian artists, collectors, and patrons. They have shown how visual representations helped these individuals navigate the relationships between their marginal positions and dominant cultures. However, the artistic contributions and practices of Jewish people have remained more elusive. Perhaps this reticence stems from the difficulty in defining and discerning Jewishness, especially when visual objects lack an ostensibly religious function or iconography. We are therefore invested in grappling with the complex role art and objects played in developing and promoting cultural practices related to Jewish identity in the long eighteenth century. Potential materials to address include, but are not limited to, portraiture, paintings, clothing and personal adornment, domestic objects, foodways, and Judaica. Contributions that characterize Jewishness as a subversive or anti-canonical position are especially welcome..

CA43 Title: Lend me Your Words: Textual Legitimacy and Authority in the Long Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Jennifer Vanderheyden

Session Type: Roundtable

New Lights Forum

Primary Category: Popular Culture and Media

Keywords: Author/Authorship

Description: Epistolary novels with “fictional” editors, author disclaimers, pseudonyms, “discovered” manuscripts, and the appropriation of others’ words: the long 18th Century offers many examples of authors who disclaimed ownership of their own writing, whether from fear of censorship, more severe consequences, or other motives. This roundtable proposes a discussion of authorial legitimacy and the reasoning behind these choices, and what is at stake for making them. When does literary playfulness or inventiveness become intentional deception, and is that any different in principle from the use of generative AI? After drafting this proposal, I asked the AI platform Claude (Anthropic), for its assessment of the project, and include its following response as an experiment in the very dynamics this roundtable addresses: “the rise of AI-generated text has reopened basic questions about what authorship requires, whose words are whose, and what happens to legitimacy and accountability when a text's origin is distributed, disguised, or disputed.”

This roundtable invites abstracts from all disciplines for a discussion that may include epistolary novels, ghostwriters, stolen words by specific writers, slave narratives, texts that have been dictated, collaborative works, and other relevant cases, in light of the dialogues they suggest with current questions of legitimacy, authority and authorship.

GS253 Title: Literature and Citizenship, in the 18th Century and the Present

Session Chair: Tristan Schweiger

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Race, Empire, & Nation

Keywords: Gender/Sexuality Studies; History; Literature; Politics; Race and Empire

Description: The concept of “citizen” has always been one of both inclusion and exclusion. Whether we examine the select male residents of an ancient Mediterranean city-state forming a “democracy” which excluded women and the enslaved, or the “citiseyn” of towns and cities during the medieval period, who enjoyed rights and legal protections not available to the vast majority of people in a kingdom like England or France, the citizen was simultaneously the site of political agency and its hard border. In the eighteenth century, revolutions in France and what would become Haiti and the United States radically redefined the idea of citizenship in ways that continue to reverberate – and in ways still subject to significant debate. Throughout these struggles, literature played a central role in imaging the shape, potentials, and limits of citizenship as it conceived the subject or represented the relationship between the individual and the state, or in the speculative political communities with which literature experimented. This panel invites a wide range of papers on how the concept of the citizen is developed, and contested, in literature. As these questions remain of central importance to the current historical moment, it is especially interested in papers that think about the impact eighteenth-century citizenship questions have on longer literary history. For example, how does sentimental literature characterize questions of belonging? How do eighteenth-century realism and later naturalism point to shifts in ways the nation is conceptualized? Or how does the novel as a form grapple with questions of international struggle.

GS225 Title: Making as Method

Session Chair: Jennifer Comerford

Session Type: Roundtable

Keywords: Archives; Global/World/Any Country; Material Culture; Race and Empire; Science and Technology

Description: From Pamela Smith's Making and Knowing Project to Sean Silver's Motley Emblem Project, experimental recreation has emerged as a critical research method for interrogating historical craft practices. This roundtable invites reflections on experimental and practical recreation as a methodology for enriching our literary and historical analysis in eighteenth-century studies. What might attempting to replicate eighteenth-century artisanal practices—from needlework and fiber arts to recipes to bookmaking and more—tell us about eighteenth-century makers' embodied epistemologies and material processing? How might engaging with material culture and maker's knowledge supply us with a stronger sense the broader networks of trade and empire in which this craft work was enmeshed? How might tracing and engaging in these practices reshape our own practices of reading and interpretation? What pitfalls or challenges materialize in the process of experimental recreation? And in what new directions might this area of inquiry take us in the future? Given the hands-on nature of this kind of practical work, how might it be applied as an instructional tool both in the classroom and in public humanities work to engage new audiences in the period? This roundtable welcomes ruminations on experimental recreation undertaken for research, pedagogy, and/or public-facing work.

GS298 Title: Making Time in Eighteenth-Century Poetry

Session Chair: Michael Genovese

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Aesthetics; Britain/England; Literature

Description: The eighteenth-century novel has been the dominant genre for investigating the changing idea of time in the period. Scholars such as Stuart Sherman, Christina Lupton, and Amit Yahav have given us valuable ways of looking at the complexity of how time is experienced: whether by technologies, by feelings, etc. More recently, Tess Somervell has extended these ideas to the long poem stretching from the Restoration to the Romantic Period. The goal of this roundtable is to extend this temporal approach to poetry to a greater range of verse: georgic, pastoral, satire, ballad, epic, loco-descriptive, panegyric, occasional, spiritual, lyric. The range is the point, for although the period was dominated by couplets interrupted by works of blank verse, genre variety did not suffer. How did this variety conceptualize time in ways that borrowed from novels, or in ways that diverged from them? What happens to time in poems that tell no stories--does satire, a massively popular genre, take time, make time? What can we do with the mixture of philosophical time, theological time, labor time, affective time, contemplative time, geological time, etc. across a century of poetry that perhaps did not want to yield this category of measurement and experience to the novel? This roundtable invites all approaches to poetry that wrestle with the construction of time in verse during the long eighteenth-century.

GS201 Title: Making Waves: Aquatic Creatures in the Global Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Taylin Nelson

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Eco-Humanities & Environmental Studies

Keywords: Atlantic World; Ecology/Eco-humanities/Environmental Studies; Global/World/Any Country; Interdisciplinary

Description: The eighteenth century was profoundly shaped by aquatic life. Whales, sharks, turtles, fish, crustaceans, mollusks, amphibious animals, marine mammals, and other aquatic creatures moved through the oceans, rivers, wetlands, coasts, and waterways that connected empires, facilitated trade, generated scientific knowledge, inspired artistic production, and sustained human communities across the globe. Yet these animals were not merely passive resources or symbolic figures. They disrupted voyages, redirected commercial ventures, challenged systems of classification, shaped local ecologies, and mediated encounters among peoples, environments, and institutions.

This panel invites papers that examine the diverse aquatic creatures populating the global eighteenth century. By foregrounding aquatic nonhumans, the panel seeks to explore how marine and freshwater life participated in the making of eighteenth-century worlds and how these creatures complicate conventional narratives centered on human actors, terrestrial spaces, or imperial institutions.

Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Aquatic animals in travel narratives, natural histories, literature, or visual culture
- Marine life and the history of empire, commerce, slavery, or colonial expansion
- Whaling, fishing, and other extractive economies
- Aquatic creatures and scientific observation, taxonomy, collecting, or specimen culture
- Rivers, oceans, wetlands, and littoral environments as multispecies spaces
- Indigenous, African, or local ecological knowledges of aquatic life
- Aquatic animals in archives, museums, collections, and material culture
- Global and transoceanic perspectives on aquatic life
- Extinction, conservation, environmental change, and ecological histories of aquatic species

CA10 Title: Mapping Ireland's Long Eighteenth Century: Digital Humanities Projects, Methods, and Futures

Session Chair: Scott Breuninger

Session Type: Panel

Irish Studies

Primary Category: Digital Humanities

Keywords: Britain/England; Digital Humanities

Description: 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 p 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?

GS273 Title: Maria Edgeworth's Fictional and Lived Communities

Session Chair: Jessica Richard

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Biography; Britain/England; Editing; Literature

Description: This panel seeks papers that explore fictional and/or lived communities in Maria Edgeworth's life, letters, works, and/or afterlives. From family groups to educational thinkers to politicians to industrialists and more, Maria Edgeworth was part of a wide range of communities. Her letters shed light on the facilitation of these communities. And she explored the affordances and drawbacks of such webs of connection in her fiction. Her descendants and biographers both developed and sometimes obscured Edgeworth's communities even as they continued to be enmeshed in them. Papers might consider who was included and excluded from the Edgeworth family circle. Papers might examine English versus Irish communities. Or papers might compare communities in Edgeworth's fiction, such as the Pervicals' circle versus that gathered around Lady Delacour in *Belinda*. Papers might examine not only what but how we know about Edgeworth's communities. What communities continue to shape our understanding of Edgeworth's?

GS300 Title: Masculinity, Sexuality, and Refinement in the Long Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Joelle Del Rose

Session Type: Panel

Keywords: Gender/Sexuality Studies; History; Material Culture

Description: Over the course of the long eighteenth century, middle-class Britons and their counterparts in the Atlantic world reimagined and changed their domestic spaces. As new luxury goods, furniture, and the layout and social uses of rooms changed, so too did the behavior of the men and women inside of them. Refinement affected all aspects of the domestic and public world, and inspired new social codes of behavior and speech. As the century progressed, long held assumptions about masculinity, seduction, and courtship were challenged by new codes of behavior privileging gentleman and those who aspired to politeness.

The masculine ideal was accordingly remade to include the refined behavior that had crept in over decades. In art and literature, in newspapers and on the stage, men were valorized for their self-sacrifice, good manners, education, and their consideration of women. Men who would be successful in courtship and seduction sought to refine their speech, appearance, and sexual skills. This panel seeks papers that explore the connections between objects, print culture, and the changing ideals of masculine behavior in terms of romantic or sexual desirability. This panel seeks papers the topic of masculinity, sexuality and refinement as they relate to the material world. How did middling codes of politeness, the vagaries of fashion, new entertainments, and the flood of didactic literature, print culture, and beliefs about privacy, domesticity, and visual status markers change the underlying beliefs about men? Particularly in the realm of courtship and seduction, what was notable and different?

GS230 Title: Mediating Enlightenment Sociability

Session Chair: Brian Cowan

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Culture and Transmission

Keywords: Books/Publishing; Enlightenment; Film/Television/Media; History/Historiography; Interdisciplinary

Description: The Enlightenment was characterised by an unprecedented expansion of the media through which ideas, information, and social relationships circulated. Sociability was not simply enacted in clubs, salons, coffeehouses, or learned societies; it was also shaped, represented, and transformed through a wide variety of media, including print, manuscript, visual culture, performance, correspondence, objects, and material environments. This session focuses on the media, technologies, and cultural forms that enabled or shaped sociability, by exploring the diverse ways in which media mediated sociable practices and, in turn, how sociability influenced the production, circulation, and reception of texts, images, and other cultural forms.

We invite papers examining the relationship between media and sociability across the Enlightenment world(s). Possible topics include periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets, letters, books, engravings, portraits, architecture, theatre, music, scientific communication, collecting, exhibition, and the circulation of objects and knowledge. Contributions may also consider the role of mediation in shaping public opinion, politeness, conversation, friendship, emotional communities, commercial exchange, and political engagement, as well as the interactions between local, imperial, and global networks.

By bringing together scholars working on different forms of mediation, this session aims to illuminate how media both reflected and actively constituted the cultures of sociability that defined the Enlightenment across diverse geographical and social contexts.

GS239 Title: Menarche to Menopause; or, Periodizing the Period

Session Chair: Jessica Fripp

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Women, Gender, Sexuality

Keywords: Gender/Sexuality Studies; Health and Medicine; Interdisciplinary; Material Culture; Visual Culture/Studies

Description: “Les menstrues des femmes sont un des plus curieux & des plus embarrassans phénomènes du corps humain.”

(Women’s menses are the most curious and the most embarrassing phenomenon of the human body.) So begins the Encyclopédie’s entry on “Mentrues,” or menses. Like many biological functions of the female body, menstruation in the eighteenth century provoked a wide range of responses, from curiosity and fascination to discomfort and disgust. Scientific understandings of menstruation were informed by a mix of classical learning, popular folklore, and new medical research, which often stood in tension with or opposition to the lived experience of many. Complicating matters further, menstruation was often referred to obliquely or euphemistically (e.g., “flowers,” “courses,” “floods”)—when it was mentioned at all. This panel invites papers that explore the history of menstruation in the long eighteenth century from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. Contributions might focus on particular moments or conditions associated with menstruation or its absence (menarche, menopause, amenorrhea, menorrhagia); the language used to talk about or around it; its manifestation in literary, visual, and material culture; medical technologies and treatments; or medical treatises and first-person narratives, among other topics.

GS231 Title: Mythological Figures: Narrative and Philosophical Devices

Session Chair: Mladen Kozul

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: French/Francophone

Keywords: Culture/Cultural Studies; Enlightenment; France/French; Literature; Theatre

Description: Throughout the long 18th century, mythological figures were highly prominent as narrative, heuristic, and philosophical devices in their own right. From increasingly startling and audacious rewritings of the Pygmalion myth to the political deployments of Prometheus and the shifting boundaries of Protean identity, the gods and heroes of antiquity served as invaluable instruments for testing speculative frameworks, debating moral philosophy, expressing or reformulating phantasms, and thereby interrogating the limits of both human nature and Enlightenment rationalism.

This panel invites papers that explore how eighteenth-century authors deployed mythological figures as demonstrative tools to articulate philosophical arguments, subvert dominant political and social structures, and give form to fantasy. We welcome proposals that examine the formal, generic, and ideological dimensions of these mythological reconfigurations in literary and philosophical texts.

Potential thematic axes include:

- The role of myth in Enlightenment pedagogy and fables;

- The staging of materialist, libidinal, or vitalist tensions through myths of animation and transformation;

- The use of allegorical personifications to negotiate questions of gender, sovereign power, and (social) justice.

By examining the frictions and continuities between classical iconography and Enlightenment epistemologies, this session seeks to uncover the precise narrative mechanics that transformed ancient fables into philosophical machines or new lyrical expressions.

GS205 Title: Natural History's Affects

Session Chair: Jeremy Chow

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Culture and Transmission

Keywords: Aesthetics; Classification; Critical Theory/Theory; Global/World/Any Country; Race and Empire

Description: This roundtable session invites renewed considerations of eighteenth-century natural histories with an eye towards the myriads affects generated by these multi-generic works: fear, humor, disgust, disappointment, glee, sadism, rage, dissmell, shame, etc. These affects could be modeled by the naturalists themselves or demonstrated by audience reactions/reports (past and present). Canonical as well as non-canonical natural histories are all welcomed.

Questions panelists might consider:

What affects, intentionally or unintentionally, are mobilized by natural history's anecdotes?

What of the visual, musical, or multi-media aspects of natural history?

How do these affects map onto audience reception?

Why might naturalists include these affective moments?

How do these affects provide neo-colonial, anticolonial, or decolonial readings?

In their proposals, potential panelists are asked to share both the natural history on which their work will focus and the specific affect that will be discussed.

GS293 Title: New Approaches to Personal Writing by Georgian Women

Session Chair: Toby Benis

Session Type: Panel

Keywords: Author/Authorship; Britain/England; Editing; Material Culture;gender

Description: The basis of the novel form, personal letters also were the emotional and intellectual currency of eighteenth-century life. Jane Fairfax's ode to the post office in Austen's Emma suggests the particular value of confidential letters to the era's female correspondents. This panel welcomes reappraisals of the letter as well as other forms of personal writing (the journal, the diary) as conduits for domestic news; female friendship and rivalry; reflections on reading and writing; and romantic attachments. Possible approaches could include the materiality of letters and journals; the role of the post; (self) censorship; implications for female subjectivity; or the conservation of materials as personal legacies or published collections.

GS206 Title: New Feminist Practices of Scholarship in Eighteenth-Century Studies

Session Chair: Kirsten Saxton

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Women, Gender, Sexuality

Keywords: Critique; Ecology/Eco-humanities/Environmental Studies; Gender/Sexuality Studies; Global/World/Any Country; Interdisciplinary

Description: Through archival recovery, new critical approaches, inclusive editorial work, and spotlighting and filling aporias in scholarly practice and materials, feminist practices have consistently reshaped our understanding of the eighteenth century and its relationship to the present. As feminist scholars, we treat inclusivity, ethical practice, and care not as aspirations but as concrete methodological problems.

This roundtable invites participants to consider how we do the work.

For example, how might our methods resist current pressures on academic labor? On antiracist, trans-inclusive, eco, and crip feminist practices and projects? Can our work in/on the eighteenth century provide useful ways of thinking about our responses to the current climate? How might we, as feminist scholars, usefully continue to transform the way we learn, excavate, read, write, teach, and explore the eighteenth century?

The roundtable is a space to share and consider feminist practices of eighteenth-century studies scholarship that do not simply iterate but offer new approaches and responses to the situations in which we now find ourselves.

We seek short, example-driven provocations that invite collaborative conversations, for example, a specific editorial decision and its stakes, a model for compensating or crediting labor, a pedagogical or collaborative experiment that worked or failed, thoughtful ways of considering authorship, reading practices, history, space?

We welcome the positions, practices, or cases you will bring to the table.

GS208 Title: New Light on Samuel Johnson

Session Chair: Timothy Erwin

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Culture and Transmission

Keywords: Editing; History/Historiography; Language/Languages; Literature

Description: Alongside dozens of recent studies and collections, the completion of the Yale edition of the Works has brought the achievement of Samuel Johnson into clearer focus. We have The New Cambridge Companion with which to explore Johnson's

views of enslavement and colonialism alongside his politics and religion. We also have the Cambridge Introduction to Samuel Johnson with its careful treatment of the known facts and comprehensive assessment of the latest scholarship. The new Oxford Handbook of Samuel Johnson offers 35 articles on as many topics, from his youth in the West Midlands to his later influence as mentor and arbiter. The MLA bibliography lists a dozen important new books and articles on Johnson, including a milestone history of the Literary Club, and they are supplemented by new work on writers close to Johnson like Frances Burney and Oliver Goldsmith.

Sponsored by the Samuel Johnson Society of the West, this roundtable invites remarks about these and other contemporary resources in Johnson studies and promises a lively informative discussion.

GS281 Title: *On Difficulty*

Session Chair: Brett Wilson

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Critique; Culture/Cultural Studies; Literature; Pedagogy

Description: As critics like Deidre Lynch call for renewing a love of literature, how do we value the 18th century's difficult books? Long, arcane, diffuse, and even plain dull ones punctuate our period. Yet many of us work with, teach, or cultivate a taste for texts that are seen as, or maybe just are, hard to read and hard to love. George Steiner once suggested considering difficulty an aesthetic or intellectual choice rather than an impediment to meaning, pleasure, or popularity. Is it time to heed his call in 18th century studies? Contributions invited from scholars working both inside and outside of the contexts, geographies, and paradigms of the English-speaking world.

CA2 Title: *'Once more unto the breach': New Editions of Defoe and Contemporaries*

Session Chair: Rivka Swenson

Session Type: Panel

Daniel Defoe Society

Primary Category: Culture and Transmission

Keywords: Editing; Literature; Pedagogy; Editions

Description: 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. Send abstracts of proposed papers to Rivka Swenson at rswenson@vcu.edu.

GS291 Title: *Opinion, Morality, and History: Sir James Mackintosh and Afterlives of Scottish Moral Philosophy*

Session Chair: Yuki Okamoto

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Religion, Belief, & Philosophy

Description: Sir James Mackintosh, a Scottish MP, jurist, and philosopher, has often been overlooked in the canon of moral/political philosophers, mostly due to his supposed lack of "originality." For instance, Alasdair MacIntyre, the late Scottish philosopher, was completely silent on the Whig statesman in his *A Short History of Ethics*, except for a brief name drop in the introduction. Given his awkward position as an inheritor rather than a creator, it's partially understandable that posterity has treated him as a "footnote" to Scottish Enlightenment moral philosophers such as Hume, Adam Smith, and Thomas Reid. That said, Mackintosh's moral philosophy, mainly demonstrated in his *Dissertation on the Progress of Ethical Philosophy*, provides us with an insight into his attempts to reconcile a particularistic account of moral judgement with a universal moral standard. Through close analysis of the *Dissertation* and his other writings throughout his life, this paper attempts to show that his failure to complete this reconciliation is not incidental but diagnostic — a faithful record of a tension between natural jurisprudence and political economy that Smith himself left unresolved, and one that Mackintosh's later political disenchantment made him unwilling to paper over with premature system-building.

CA32 Title: *Organizing for Academic Freedom*

Session Chair: Humberto Garcia

Session Type: Roundtable

Race and Empire Caucus

Primary Category: Race, Empire, & Nation

Keywords: Advocacy; Pedagogy; Race and Empire

Description: 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.

CA5 Title: *Overlapping Lives: Frances Burney, Jane Austen, and their World*

Session Chair: Laura Engel

Session Type: Panel

Burney Society of North America

Primary Category: Biography and Culture

Keywords: Culture/Cultural Studies; Health and Medicine; Material Culture; Theatre;revolution

Description: 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.

CA17 Title: *Pacific Worlds of the Early Americas*

Session Chair: Sal Nicolazzo

Session Type: Panel

Society of Early Americanists

Primary Category: Race, Empire, & Nation

Keywords: Asia; Ecology/Eco-humanities/Environmental Studies; Hispanophone/Lusophone spheres; Indigeneity/Indigenous Studies; North America

Description: 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.

GS218 Title: *Palestine in/and the Eighteenth Century*

Session Chair: Sue Lanser

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Race, Empire, & Nation

Keywords: Economy; Global/World/Any Country; History/Historiography; Interdisciplinary; Philosophy/Religion/Faith

Description: Poised midway between Ottoman and British conquest, the eighteenth century is perhaps the most neglected period in the scholarly study of Palestine, the “Holy Land” encompassing the southern districts of Bilad al-Sham or Greater Syria. Yet transformative work by scholars such as Beshara Doumani, Haim Gerber, Adel Manna, and Mahmoud Yazbak affirms that well before the classic dividing point of Napoleonic invasion, Palestine was a dynamic space of indigenous, Ottoman, and European engagements with emergent modernity, a site of dense competing and complementary identities, imaginaries, and social practices.

This roundtable welcomes diverse approaches to understanding eighteenth-century Palestine from scholars working in Ottoman, Arabic, and Hebrew traditions alongside those drawing on European sources. How was Palestine situated materially and conceptually in the projects of global commerce, colonial expansion, religious aspiration, and Enlightenment thought? What connections and distinctions characterize Palestine's three administrative districts: Nablus, Acre, and Jerusalem? How does Palestine figure in eighteenth-century Muslim, Jewish, Christian, and secular imaginaries? What do we know—or still need to learn—about eighteenth-century Palestinian communities, cultural practices, and social interactions? How might new knowledge of eighteenth-century Palestine alter our understanding of its long history? Conversely, how might studying Palestine contribute to the critical vocabulary of eighteenth-century studies? We encourage explorations of these and other relevant questions from fields ranging from economics and cartography to literature, music, and visual arts.

GS268 Title: *Past into Present: Reimagining Eighteenth-Century Worlds*

Session Chair: Nora Nachumi

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Biography; Culture/Cultural Studies; Literature; Material Culture; Visual Culture/Studies

Description: This panel invites participants to examine different methodologies through which we access and reconstruct eighteenth-century life. How do literary, visual, material, and archival sources shape our understanding of the subjects we study?

What kinds of understanding emerge from contemporary practices, including museum exhibits, digital reconstruction, historical performance, modern adaptations, and various types of immersive engagement? What possibilities and limitations do different methodologies offer for scholarship, teaching, and public engagement? Participants are invited to present findings from their research and to reflect on the methods, assumptions, and choices that have informed their own work.

GS222 Title: Pedagogies of Two-Eyed Seeing: Foregrounding the Indigenous Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Natalya Baldyga

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Pedagogy/Education

Keywords: Global/World/Any Country; History/Historiography; Indigeneity/Indigenous Studies; Interdisciplinary; Pedagogy

Description: Shannon Leddy and Lorrie Miller, in their 2024 book *Teaching Where You Are: Weaving Indigenous and Slow Principles and Pedagogies*, explore the ways that all educators can Indigenize their curriculum. In accordance with the principle of *Etauptmumk* or “Two-Eyed Seeing” advanced by Mi’kmaq Elder Albert Marshall, Leddy and Miller’s approach emphasizes multiple perspectives and the value of Indigenous approaches and content as central to learning, rather than as a supplement. Such an approach can only benefit Eighteenth-Century studies, which has for so long privileged homogenized Eurocentric narratives and interpretations of a critical moment in global history. By actively working to Indigenize their curriculum, educators can provide a more holistic understanding of the Long Eighteenth Century.

This interdisciplinary panel therefore seeks to highlight case studies in which curriculum has been recentered to foreground Indigenous voices, practices, histories, and material culture. Mindful of the concerns raised by Robbie Richardson and others about the limitations of “decolonizing the classroom,” we are especially interested in pedagogies that engage local Indigenous communities and Indigenous scholarship, use the past to interrogate our present moment, and emphasize the practical over the theoretical.

CA18 Title: Pedagogy and Uncertainty

Session Chair: Christopher Catanese

Session Type: Panel

Graduate Student and Early Career Scholars Caucus

Primary Category: Pedagogy/Education

Keywords: Advocacy; Culture/Cultural Studies; Pedagogy;Resources;Community

Description: 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.

Please submit title, an approximately 300-word abstract, and a short bio. Papers in all disciplines are welcome, especially work that considers interrelations between form (pedagogical reflections/theory), content (specific eighteenth-century texts and topics), and practice (details such as assignment sequences, classroom management, institutional demands, etc.).

GS278 Title: Phillis Wheatley and Religion

Session Chair: Keith Byerman

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Race, Empire, & Nation

Keywords: Author/Authorship; Black Atlantic; Literature; Philosophy/Religion/Faith

Description: Phillis Wheatley and Religion

Phillis Wheatley, after she was brought as a slave to Boston, was a devout member of the Old South Church, a Congregationalist institution that had been established in 1669. As such, she was part of the evangelical tradition in Protestantism. This panel seeks to explore the various forms she employs—elegy, versified biblical stories, spiritual instruction, debates, and the various themes she articulates through these form: antislavery, religious errors, the sin of pride, and the virtuous life. The panel is also open to biographical elements, such as her connections and correspondence with other people of faith.

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GS246 Title: Possibilities in Print: McMaster University as Groundswell for Eighteenth-Century Studies

Session Chair: Eugenia Zuroski

Session Type: Special Session

Primary Category: Archives, Museums, History, & Historiography

Keywords: Archives; Books/Publishing; Disciplinary futures

Description: This special session highlights the resources at McMaster University for researchers in eighteenth-century studies, with a particular emphasis on the remarkable collection of eighteenth-century print materials held by the William Ready Division of Archives and Special Collections and their long, productive conversation with the journal *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* (ECF) which is housed in McMaster's Faculty of Humanities. We aim to introduce ASECS members to these resources, to promote the ASECS-McMaster Library Fellowship, and to catalyze a broader conversation about how special collections and journals constitute important research ecosystems that sustain scholarly communities.

Myron Groover (Archives and Rare Books librarian at McMaster) and Eugenia Zuroski (Professor of English and Cultural Studies and Editor of ECF) will offer overviews of the collections, the journal, and how these might serve ASECS members. In addition, the session will include current and recent PhDs who have made extensive use of the collection and have experience working at the journal. Collectively, we will present examples of projects these resources have facilitated, answer specific questions about how to access them, and generally demystify how archives and journals function to make new research possible in the field.

GS261 Title: Present-day Pamela

Session Chair: Corey Risinger

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Film/Television/Media; Gender/Sexuality Studies; Literature; Politics

Description: In the opening letter of Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*; or, *Virtue Rewarded* (1740), a dying "Lady" makes a final request to her son: "Remember my poor Pamela!" This son, often to Pamela's detriment, rarely loses track of the titular servant. Richardson's readers have, from diverse vantage points, kept an eye on his protagonist, too. Where Pamela appears a "Mistress of so many Accomplishments of her own" to young Astrea Hill, she wages a "rebellion" that is (un)certain to many literary scholars (Doody, Bowers, Rosenberger). As Toni Bowers notes, the novel has similarly been subject to "contradictory readings [that] can seem equally grounded in textual evidence." Pamela crucially impacts the developing and domestic novel; and yet, it can also feel boring or on the verge of genre "collapse" (Armstrong, McKeon, Eaves and Kimpel).

This panel asks how we recall Pamela and Pamela today. It welcomes wide-ranging and interdisciplinary responses to this prompt. And it especially invites papers that approach the canonical novel with contemporary conversations and theoretical frameworks in mind. What might Richardson's protagonist have to tell us about creation and consent in the wake of the #MeToo Movement and its backlash? How might our current social and media landscapes shift formal interpretations of the novel? How do we, as educators, go about teaching Pamela in today's undergraduate classroom, and to what end?

CA23 Title: Queer Embodiment in the Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Noah Chaskin

Session Type: Panel

Queer and Trans Caucus

Primary Category: Queer & Trans Studies

Keywords: Culture/Cultural Studies; Gender/Sexuality Studies; Interdisciplinary; Queer and Trans Studies

Description: 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.

CA24 Title: Queer Intersections: Methods for Ensuring Intersectional Research and Teaching

Session Chair: Ziona Kocher

Session Type: Roundtable

Queer and Trans Caucus

Primary Category: Queer & Trans Studies

Keywords: Disability Studies; Interdisciplinary; Queer and Trans Studies; Race and Empire

Description: 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.

GS264 Title: Radical French Thought in the Post-Independence United States

Session Chair: Natania Meeker

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Culture and Transmission

Keywords: Culture/Cultural Studies; Enlightenment; France/French; North America; Philosophy/Religion/Faith

Description: While the American Revolution is known to be deeply rooted in the European liberal tradition, the impact of the French Enlightenment on the intellectual and political life of the post-Independence United States is still to be gauged. This panel aims to explore the reverberations of radical French Enlightenment thought, as in the work of Diderot, d'Holbach, Meslier, and Volney among others, in the United States and in Anglophone contexts more broadly, including for instance the writings and political projects of important intellectuals and activists such as Thomas Paine, Frances Wright, and Robert Dale Owen. It will thus unearth an understudied but important set of transatlantic and transhistorical cultural and political connections while also enriching the historical picture of American atheism and secularism drawn by scholars such as Eric Chalfant, Kirsten Fischer, Susan Jacoby, and Eric R. Schlereth. Above all, the panel seeks to enhance understandings of the exchanges shaping revolutionary activity and thought in both France and the global Anglosphere, and give their due to experimental and/or radical political thinkers and activists who sought to move the United States closer to more democratic, egalitarian, and abolitionist ideals. We invite proposals on any aspect of the reception of radical French thought in the late eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century U.S., with a particular interest in research that focuses on French and Francophone influence on U.S. activisms and/or progressive political movements.

GS275 Title: Radical, Reimagined, and Revised Austen

Session Chair: Kit Kincade

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Austen; Critical Theory/Theory; Culture/Cultural Studies; Film/Television/Media; Literature

Description: This panel encourages readings of Austen's work, scholarship, or adaptations that challenge, upend, or reinvent traditional interpretations, theories, or academic approaches. Whether it be a new or more complex reading of a particular character (or group of characters), an adaptation that changes our vision of a story, a new take on a biographical issue, or a challenge to a scholarly theory or approach. With new takes on Austen such as questioning her political leanings, challenging her ever-evolving biographical construction, providing new contexts for understanding characters, or questioning traditional scholarly arguments—the panel seeks to see how our current cultural moment maybe reshaping long held understanding of her and her work.

GS265 Title: Reading, Writing, and Grieving in the Long Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Deborah Weiss

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Austen; Health and Medicine; Literature

Description: In an intimate conversation with the grieving Captain Benwick in *Persuasion*, Anne Elliot suggests that he ought not indulge himself quite so much with the poetry of Walter Scott and Lord Byron, and she expresses the idea that poetry—particularly the popular poetry of the Romantic period—was dangerous to the mental and emotional well-being of those whose strong feelings permitted them best to understand and appreciate it. In place of his steady diet of poetry, which only served to intensify his grief, Anne suggests a “larger allowance of prose” and mentions “such works of our best moralists, such collections of the finest letters, such memoirs of characters of worth and suffering.” Anne's advice to Captain Benwick raises a number of questions about reading, writing, and grieving. Austen no doubt had Dr. Johnson's *Rasselas* in mind, but what other eighteenth-century authors and texts might Austen have been thinking of? Is she really being fair to poetry in suggesting that it can only augment, but not assuage, sorrow? And what might Austen be saying about the relationship between strong feeling, different genres of writing, and the experience of reading? This panel seeks papers that explore grief and grieving in the long eighteenth century and asks if any written remedies from a period of precarious health, incessant war, and unstable well-being might be useful for us today.

GS262 Title: Reckoning with Race in New Worlds: Reflections and Colloquium with author Ruth Hill

Session Chair: Karen Stolley

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Ibero-American Studies

Keywords: Archives; Atlantic World; Hispanophone/Lusophone spheres; Race and Empire; différence

Description: This session proposes a roundtable with author Ruth Hill on her recent book, *Reckoning with Race in New Worlds* (University of Virginia Press, 2026), with 4-6 presenters who will each address different aspects of the book (perhaps with a focus on specific chapters); the author will present a response, followed by questions from the audience. Our goal is to provide an

opportunity for a broad interdisciplinary conversation about Hill's important contribution to scholarship on race and empire in a global eighteenth century.

Ralph Bauer (University of Maryland) describes *Reckoning with Race* as "the most comprehensive, in-depth, competent, and significant study of the history of the concept of race before Darwin. Its historical reach and multilingual archival breadth are encyclopedic; its scholarly erudition and cross-disciplinary exigence are nothing short of breathtaking." Neil Safier (Brown University) writes, "By eschewing the idea that corporeal identities were fixed and fatalistic, Hill adds nuance and subtlety to pre-Darwinian ideas of diversity as she expansively interprets the archive of racial thinking to include adages and animals alongside leprosy and moral philosophy. From Spanish and Portuguese American to the British Caribbean, from Benito Jeronimo Feijoo to Benjamin Rush, *Reckoning with Race in New Worlds* is an essential and comprehensive account of how eighteenth-century racial concepts came to be created across a stunning array of geographies, doctrines, and disciplines."

GS215 Title: Religious Toleration in the Eighteenth Century: Ideas, Practices, and Publicity

Session Chair: Daniel Watkins

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Religion, Belief, & Philosophy

Keywords: Books/Publishing; Enlightenment; History; Philosophy/Religion/Faith

Description: The history of religious toleration in eighteenth-century Europe has often been divided between two explanatory frameworks. Intellectual historians have traced the emergence of toleration through the writings of philosophers, theologians, and political thinkers, while social historians have emphasized the practical accommodations and forms of coexistence worked out in everyday life. This panel intends to bring these approaches into conversation by exploring the relationship between ideas, practices, and the public circulation of information about religious difference. How did local instances of coexistence become visible beyond the communities in which they occurred? What role did media play in shaping perceptions of religious diversity? How were experiences of coexistence translated into broader arguments for toleration? By examining toleration as both a lived reality and a subject of public discussion, this panel seeks to bridge methodological divides and consider new explanations for the emergence of religious pluralism in the eighteenth century. We welcome papers addressing any aspect of religious toleration, coexistence, publicity, and confessional relations across Europe and the Atlantic world.

GS269 Title: Rethinking the Marvelous in Eighteenth-Century Literature, Art, and Aesthetics

Session Chair: Andrew Billing

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Aesthetics; Interdisciplinary; Literature; Science Fiction; Visual Culture/Studies

Description: In light of contemporary interest in science fiction, this panel will reexplore the marvelous and related "unruly" genres whose imaginative excesses upset neo-classical rules of aesthetic decorum.

Although the Abbé Dubos concedes that the greatest poets are those who unite the merveilleux with the vraisemblable and admires Cyrano's interplanetary fiction *Voyage dans la lune* (1657), he affirms in his *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture* (1721) that art and literature should strive to touch and please through the plausible imitation of nature. Dubos's treatise sets forth a hygienic conception of the imagination, whose figures can illustrate or ornament aesthetic imitations and convey an appealing "vividness," but should be subordinated to neo-classical rules of propriety and mimesis. In poetry, painting, and even music, "l'imagination ne supplée pas au sentiment," and in fictional invention Dubos prefers the verisimilitude of Horace's convenientia finge to Aristotle's tolerance of "probable impossibilities."

Panelists are invited to take Dubos's treatise as a starting-point for reflections on the marvelous/merveilleux and other cognate or related terms in eighteenth-century literature, art, and aesthetics.

Paper topics might include: What are marvelous works, and why do they trouble eighteenth-century aesthetic categories or values? How are judgments of these works linked to concepts of fiction, figuration, visuality, speculation, and the sublime or grotesque? What is the relationship between the marvelous and nonmimetic theories of art and literature, including as expression or discovery? How might we apply SF critical concepts (novums, future orientation, world-building, etc.) to marvelous works?

CA40 Title: Rousseau's Built and Unbuilt Environments

Session Chair: Masano Yamashita

Session Type: Panel

Rousseau Association

Primary Category: Eco-Humanities & Environmental Studies

Keywords: Ecology/Eco-humanities/Environmental Studies; Economy; France/French; Interdisciplinary; Methods

Description: 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.

GS241 Title: Seeing as Knowing: Rethinking Visual Culture in the Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Debra Bourdeau

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Culture and Transmission

Keywords: Visual Culture/Studies

Description: Visual culture is often understood as the study of images. More fundamentally, however, it has demonstrated that visibility is central to cultural inquiry. In the eighteenth century, seeing was never merely an act of perception but a mode of inquiry through which social, political, scientific, and aesthetic knowledge was produced, circulated, and contested. This expanded understanding of visibility has made visual culture a point of convergence for scholars working across literature, art history, the history of science, architecture, material culture, performance studies, book history, and related fields.

This session seeks papers that examine visual culture in its broadest sense, from prints, paintings, and scientific illustration to maps, architecture, performance, spectacle, advertising, and the visual dimensions of texts. We welcome work that advances historical, theoretical, or interdisciplinary approaches to visibility and explores how visual culture continues to transform the questions we ask about the eighteenth century.

GS220 Title: Slavery, Rhetoric, and Reality in the Age of Enlightenment

Session Chair: Faith Barringer

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Art, Architecture, and Aesthetics

Keywords: Art History/Architecture; Caribbean; France/French; Race and Empire

Description: In 1989, historian David Geggus wrote: "In the political rhetoric of the mother country, slavery was merely a metaphor, but it was a grim reality in the colonies of the Caribbean and Indian Ocean." Geggus identified a fundamental asymmetry at the heart of French Enlightenment political culture: the discursive frameworks that mobilized metropolitan subjects around liberty and the rights of man were seemingly detached from the slave economy sustaining French colonies across the Atlantic and Indian Ocean worlds.

In the years since, Geggus's assertion has proven generative, yet it also risks reproducing a clean binary between a metropolitan sphere of abstraction and a colonial sphere of fact. Three decades of Atlantic historiography have complicated both halves of that equation: the French metropole was never insulated from colonial slavery, and enslaved and free people of color did have an impact on the European metropole. This panel takes Geggus's provocation as a starting point while pushing beyond it, seeking papers that trace or probe the entanglements between the rhetorical and the material, the metropolitan and the colonial, in the age of Enlightenment and Atlantic slavery.

Possible topics include portraiture and the visual construction of difference; the presence or absence of enslaved and free people of color in material objects; visual culture inspired by Black Atlantic communities; decorative arts linked to the French colonies; and the visual afterlives of these tensions in Revolutionary-era imagery.

GS294 Title: Spheres: Then and Now

Session Chair: Elizabeth Giardina

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Art, Architecture, and Aesthetics

Keywords: Art History/Architecture; Ecology/Eco-humanities/Environmental Studies; Global/World/Any Country; Material Culture; Science and Technology

Description: Étienne-Louis Boullée's proposed cenotaph for Isaac Newton. Hot air balloons. London's time ball. Globes—poetic and terrestrial—in Milton and maritime history. Habermas's idea of public vs private social space. Expansive and holistic by their very nature, spheres appeared across the long and deep eighteenth century. Both literal and physical, spheres and circles theorized material, philosophical, spatial, artistic, and social interactions in the period, containerizing concepts in ways we often take for granted in the twenty-first century.

This roundtable (emphasis on round) seeks to bring together the eighteenth century's variety of spheres from around the world, exploring their wider uses and multimedia appearances. We invite interdisciplinary contributions that consider spheres, balls, circles, and other round-ness as a way to explore everything from transatlantic exchanges to coterie publishing circles, from circuits of meteorology and ocean currents to masquerade balls. How did/do spheres shape our ideas of the eighteenth century, its people and discourses? What makes the sphere particularly suited for discussions of anchored social spaces, then and now? How do spheres impact maritime exploration, Greenwich Mean Time, and other nautical orientation methods? What do spheres construct and why do we keep coming back to them, over and over, even as building physical spheres is famously a difficult task? Where do spheres show up and surprise us? Where do they feel so obvious as to be not worth notice? Together we hope to circle around these questions—metaphorical, spiritual, physical—approaching but never quite reaching a center.

GS240 Title: Staging Gulliver for the 21st Century

Session Chair: Misty Anderson

Session Type: Special Session

Primary Category: Performance: Music and Theater

Keywords: Enlightenment; Literature; Performance; Theatre

Description: Swift imagined the voyages of Gulliver in an enduringly popular novel that has rarely if ever been successfully adapted for stage or screen. Playwright and actor Zack Fine is about to change that story. His broad, biting, and thoughtful adaptation of Gulliver's Travels is scheduled for the Alley Theatre in Houston, and ASECS members have a chance to provide feedback while it is still in development. This special session will feature a reading of scenes from the play, a short roundtable discussion, and time for open conversations about the perils and pleasures of adaptation, as well as the possible conversations that staging Gulliver at this moment in history might engender. This call seeks respondents with a strong interest in the novel and questions of performance.

GS252 Title: Strangers in a Strange Land : European and Asian Visitors to New and Dangerous Lands

Session Chair: Martha Lawler

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Archives, Museums, History, & Historiography

Keywords: Ecology/Eco-humanities/Environmental Studies; Global/World/Any Country; Indigeneity/Indigenous Studies; North America

Description: The eighteenth century was a time of travel and discovery. Visitors to the Pacific Northwest and elsewhere encountered people and places they could never have imagined -- new cultures, different species of plants and animals, challenging weather and terrain. The interactions between people of different cultures were sometimes mutually beneficial and sometimes tragic. The plants and animals they encountered were intriguing but were often misused and misappropriated. The climate and the terrain posed challenges that resulted in equal parts failures and successes. Librarians and others who work to maintain eighteenth century materials -- to keep them safe and make them available to researchers -- have a particular perspective on the significance of not only the materials themselves, but their special place in history and cultural development. We encourage presentations on the collections of eighteenth century materials with a particular emphasis on indigenous peoples, natural resources, natural phenomema, and the acclimation of others to new and different environments.

CA36 Title: Tale-Bearers and Tale-Makers: The School for Scandal at 250

Session Chair: Alexandra LaGrand

Session Type: Panel

Theatre and Performance Caucus

Primary Category: Performance: Music and Theater

Keywords: Britain/England; Literature; Performance; Theatre

Description: 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.

CA39 Title: Tales of Perils and Prosperity in Publishing

Session Chair: Pamela Ahern

Session Type: Roundtable

Graduate Student and Early Career Scholars Caucus

Primary Category: Administration/Career/Professional Development

Keywords: Books/Publishing

Description: 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? Please submit an abstract if you are interested in sharing your success, lessons learned, or horror stories of publishing.

GS221 Title: Teaching the 18th Century Locally in the West

Session Chair: Angelina Del Balzo

Session Type: WSECS Roundtable

Primary Category: Pedagogy/Education

Keywords: Indigeneity/Indigenous Studies; Latin America; North America; Pedagogy; Race and Empire

Description: This panel invites contributions to a roundtable on teaching the eighteenth century as local history and culture in the North American west. While Massachusetts' Freedom Trail, Colonial Williamsburg, Florida's Castillo de San Marcos, to name only a few examples, provide 18th-century touchstones for place-based education our colleagues back east, western North American histories often erroneously begin in the 19th century in the public imagination. What does place-based 18th-century education look like in the West? How do or could local cultures enrich the teaching of our period? Teaching and pedagogy here are broadly defined, including but not limited to the university and K-12 classrooms, historical site education programs, and public history projects. Topics may include early global contact or imperial projects by Britain, Russia, Spain, and the United States, but Indigenous histories and pedagogies are especially welcome.

CA11 Title: Teaching the Eighteenth Century: A Poster Session

Session Chair: Linda Troost

Session Type: Poster Session

Pedagogy Caucus

Primary Category: Pedagogy/Education

Keywords: Pedagogy

Description: 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.

GS238 Title: Technologies of Empire: Visual, Textual, and Material Practices of Imperial Power

Session Chair: Anahit Manoukian

Session Type: Panel

Keywords: Interdisciplinary; Literature; Material Culture; Science and Technology; Visual Culture/Studies

Description: Empires did not sustain themselves through military force alone. They depended on a wide range of visual, textual, legal, scientific, bureaucratic, and material technologies that rendered distant territories, peoples, and resources intelligible and governable. This panel invites papers that examine the practices, media, and epistemologies through which imperial power was produced, maintained, contested, or reimagined across the long eighteenth century. We understand "technology" broadly to encompass not only mechanical innovation but also the techniques, systems of knowledge, and representational practices that made imperial rule possible. How did maps, legal codes, bureaucratic records, mathematical practices, financial instruments, printed texts, visual culture, scientific knowledge, or material objects shape imperial authority? How did such technologies circulate across imperial formations, and how were they adapted, resisted, or repurposed by imperial subjects? We welcome papers addressing any imperial formation—including but not limited to the Spanish, British, French, Portuguese, Dutch, Ottoman, and Russian empires—as well as comparative, transimperial, and interdisciplinary approaches.

GS229 Title: The Academic Adjacent Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Chloe A Northrop

Session Type: Roundtable

Sponsored by the Diverse Careers Pathways Caucus

Primary Category: Caucus & Affiliate Org Meetings

Keywords: Alt-ac/Academic Adjacent; Interdisciplinary

Description: Eighteenth-century scholarship happens in many different settings, and thrives in community college classrooms, general education courses, visiting and adjunct positions, museums, public history, publishing, and in the work of scholars who continue their research outside traditional academic appointments. This roundtable invites participants from across those career paths to discuss what it means to build and sustain a scholarly life when research is something you pursue alongside, rather than because of, your institutional role.

Panelists will reflect on questions such as: How does teaching the eighteenth century in survey or general education courses shape the stories we tell and the ways we make the period meaningful to students? What does it take to maintain a research agenda without regular access to institutional funding, course releases, or research libraries? How can the skills developed through eighteenth-century scholarship find new life in museums, public history, editing, publishing, or other professions? What strategies exist for maintaining connections to the eighteenth century in student-facing but non-classroom positions? Rather than treating these experiences as separate conversations, this roundtable asks a broader question: What does a sustainable career in eighteenth-century studies look like today?

By bringing together scholars from a range of institutions and career stages, we will consider how the Diverse Careers Pathways Caucus at ASECS can better support the many ways people contribute to the field. We welcome proposals from scholars at any career stage and professional setting. Please submit a biography and a 150-word statement describing the career-pathway topic you would like to address.

GS237 Title: *The (Anti-)Reparative Turn in Eighteenth-Century Studies?*

Session Chair: Ryan Sheldon

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Critical Theory

Keywords: Critical Theory/Theory; Culture/Cultural Studies; Disciplinary futures; Politics

Description: This panel invites meditations on the affordances and limitations of reparative and anti-reparative reading strategies for the study of eighteenth-century culture. If reparative reading was supposed to show us how, in Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's memorable phrase, "selves and communities succeed in extracting sustenance from the objects of a culture—even of a culture whose avowed desire has often been not to sustain them," Patricia Stuelke asks us to consider, in *The Ruse of Repair* (2021), how the reparative "emerged as a consoling mode for responding to state and racial capitalist violence, for accepting such violence as known or intransigent to the power of critique, enabling the paring back of visions for social transformation." For Avgi Saketopoulou, repair is the route towards quiescence: it "gives us a sedative politics that lulls us into choosing peace over dignity and justice," enforcing "austerity logics that persistently caution us to guard what we have, to prioritize our well-being, and to look out for ourselves." Contributions might seek to offer genealogies of reparative or anti-reparative approaches in eighteenth-century studies, excavate prehistories of (anti-)reparative reading in the culture of the period, probe internal and external issues of "method," or explore the uses and liabilities of (anti-)reparative reading in the context of the broad defunding and censorship of humanistic inquiry in higher ed today. Presentations thinking about the study of eighteenth-century questions of race and empire, gender, and sexuality in relationship to contemporary imperialism, capitalism, and fascism are especially welcome.

GS203 Title: *The Afterlives of Abraham Cowley*

Session Chair: Joshua Swidzinski

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Literature

Description: Abraham Cowley cast a long shadow over the long eighteenth century. A versatile writer, he was regarded (accurately or not) as the innovator of at least two genres—the 'Pindaric' or irregular ode and the familiar essay—central to literary histories of the period. In addition to their appeal to Dryden, Swift, and Pope, Cowley's poetic experiments were influential among women writers such as Aphra Behn, Anne Finch, and Elizabeth Singer Rowe, each of whom drew on Cowley while crafting her own literary voice. (In his *Life of Cowley*, Samuel Johnson grumbles that "all the boys and girls caught the pleasing fashion, and they that could do nothing else could write like Pindar." Tellingly, this is the only mention of "girls" as poets anywhere in Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*.) This session invites participants to explore the reception, revision, and revaluation of any aspect of Cowley's legacy. Topics might include: the afterlife of metaphysical poetry and wit; uses and misuses of the irregular ode; the familiar essay and 18th-century periodicals; Cowley's readers, imitators, detractors, and translators; etc.

This session is inspired by the revival of the University of Delaware Press edition of *The Collected Works of Abraham Cowley*, which published two well-received volumes in 1989 and 1993, only to falter after the death of its founding editor, Thomas O. Calhoun. Under a new editorial board and with the support of the University of Delaware Press, the edition will be completed in seven further volumes.

GS248 Title: *The Archive and the Theatrical Repertoire in the Eighteenth Century*

Session Chair: Lisa Freeman

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Performance: Music and Theater

Keywords: Archives; Performance; Theatre

Description: Drawing on both the theoretical work of Diana Taylor (*The Archive and the Repertoire*) and more recent critical work by Susan Vallardes on "stock pieces," this panel seeks to continue the conversation to explore the types of "embodied knowledges" produced on Restoration and eighteenth-century stage through stagings and re-stagings of plays across the period. What can those revivals, revisions, adaptations, performances, dramatic practices, and the critical response to them tell us about the role of theater as a locus of understanding and thought, action and reflection in large public debates, questions, issues, and controversies? What can they tell us about the state of the art of theater? In the absence of modern technologies that preserve performance, the panel seeks papers that attend to the traces and evidence of the archive and to the questions of what we can know and claim about performance and what we cannot. All approaches from the granular to the abstract and theoretical are welcome.

GS255 Title: The Art and Science of Collecting

Session Chair: Tili Boon Cuillé

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Culture and Transmission

Keywords: Books/Publishing; Culture/Cultural Studies; Global/World/Any Country; Material Culture; Visual Culture/Studies

Description: The early eighteenth century saw a rise in collection practices among antiquarians, amateurs, and connoisseurs of objects as diverse as shells, plants, insects, coins, relics, artifacts, artworks, tales, porcelain, and lacquer, gathered, catalogued, and displayed in curiosity cabinets, private or print collections, salons, and libraries. Throughout this process a certain amount of appropriation, relocation, and repurposing necessarily transpired. This session seeks to discern the method in the madness, considering to what extent these collection practices can or should be taken seriously as an art or a (nascent) science, even as they responded to changes in taste and market pressures. At a time when translation and adaptation, astronomy and astrology, chemistry and alchemy were not yet clearly distinguished and from which the fields of natural history, archeology, anthropology, and folklore emerged, who and what were understood to be legitimate, authoritative, or authentic practitioners or practices of collecting and why? This panel welcomes contributions from various disciplines including history, art history, material and print culture, and literary, cultural, or religious studies, particularly those with a broad linguistic or geographical scope.

GS266 Title: The Company Archives: A John Company Megagame Experience

Session Chair: Emily Friedman

Session Type: Special Session

Primary Category: Popular Culture and Media

Keywords: Economy; Games; Politics; Race and Empire

Description: Building off the last decade of experimental gatherings of playful media and the well-attended Game Night and panel in Philadelphia, this session offers a "megagame" version of Cole Wehrle's JOHN COMPANY <https://wehrlegig.com/products/john-company-second-edition>

John Company is an interactive historical game about the rise and fall of the British East India Company from the designer of Root, Pax Pamir, and Oath. John Company is a business game with an important twist: players must collectively steer the fate of a single, sprawling organization. They must navigate its vast bureaucracy while reckoning with the consequences of their actions on the Indian subcontinent.

Released to acclaim in 2017, this new edition reimagines the original game with lavish components and updated gameplay that offers new strategic challenges. John Company is the culmination of over a decade of research into the operation of the East India Company and offers an uncompromising portrait of the people who laid the foundations of the British Empire.

The megagame can accommodate up to 50 players. No experience is required.

Suggested as an evening event of 3 hours.

<https://www.gencon.com/events/313311>

<https://playerelimination.com/2025/08/25/an-archivists-dream-a-feeble-recounting-of-john-company-the-megagame/>

GS277 Title: The Diplomat: Gender, Power, and International Affairs

Session Chair: Jonathan Haddad

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Women, Gender, Sexuality

Keywords: Culture/Cultural Studies; Gender/Sexuality Studies; Global/World/Any Country; Politics

Description: This panel discussion aspires to shed new light on the role of women's invisible labor in diplomatic relations during the eighteenth century. Speakers should analyze artistic or literary representations or present new research into the intersection of gender and international affairs.

Please submit 300-word abstracts.

CA19 Title: The Eighteenth-Century Reception and Reinterpretation of Machiavelli

Session Chair: Irene Zanini Cordi

Session Type: Panel

Italian Studies Caucus

Primary Category: Literature and Language

Keywords: Author/Authorship; Critical Theory/Theory; History; Italy/Italian; Politics

Description: 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.

CA13 Title: The Future of 18th-Century Studies: How to Promote Oddity, Novelty, Individuality, and Eccentricity

Session Chair: Susan Spencer

Session Type: Panel

South Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies

Primary Category: Administration/Career/Professional Development

Keywords: Archives; Author/Authorship; Books/Publishing; Digital Humanities; Interdisciplinary

Description: 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?

CA4 Title: The Languages of the Ibero-American Enlightenment

Session Chair: Hazel Gold

Session Type: Panel

Ibero-American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies

Primary Category: Ibero-American Studies

Keywords: Culture/Cultural Studies; Enlightenment; Hispanophone/Lusophone spheres; Language/Languages; Material Culture

Description: 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.

CA6 Title: The New Activism

Session Chair: Sue Lanser

Session Type: Roundtable

Women's Caucus

Primary Category: Administration/Career/Professional Development

Keywords: Advocacy; Interdisciplinary; Labor/Business; Politics; protest

Description: 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?

GS270 Title: The Parasocial Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Joseph Drury

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Popular Culture and Media

Keywords: Author/Authorship; Culture/Cultural Studies; Literature; Performance; Theatre

Description: Long before the Cambridge Dictionary declared it word of the year in 2025, the term “parasocial” was coined by sociologists Donald Horton and Richard Wohl in 1956 to describe the sometimes intense feelings of intimacy with public figures and their personas triggered by media innovations that made available “nuances of appearance and gesture to which ordinary social perception is attentive and to which interaction is cued.” Horton and Wohl found television a particularly effective medium for such relationships, with its power to bring larger than life but seemingly ‘real’ personalities into the home. But the term has since been applied to film, radio, and, most recently, social media and digital culture. It has also been incorporated into historical studies of celebrity and public intimacy, including in the eighteenth century.

Nonetheless, there has been little concerted interrogation into if and how the “parasocial” might productively intersect with our ongoing study of the history of celebrity and authorship, the rise of fictionality, changing reading practices, and the proliferation of new media. What does the term allow us to see in the period that others do not? Is the eighteenth century a key moment in the history of the parasocial? What specific techniques or practices are developed to produce parasocial intimacy in the period? This panel invites papers seeking to employ or grapple with the idea of a parasocial eighteenth century across a range of subdisciplines, welcoming work on literature and novels, social and political figures, artists and intellectuals, the theatre, the press, popular culture, and more.

CA37 Title: The Past on Stage: Contemporary Approaches to Historical Drama

Session Chair: Willow While

Session Type: Panel

Theatre and Performance Caucus

Primary Category: Performance: Music and Theater

Keywords: Film/Television/Media; Global/World/Any Country; Performance; Theatre

Description: 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.

GS243 Title: The Printed Image in Eighteenth-Century Britain

Session Chair: Maureen Harkin

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Art, Architecture, and Aesthetics

Keywords: Art History/Architecture; Britain/England; Culture/Cultural Studies; Politics; Visual Culture/Studies

Description: Despite the low status accorded to printmaking by the Royal Academy in the late 18th century it is now acknowledged that the profusion of important and innovative work by multiple artists working in the medium made it one of the richest and most innovative visual forms of the period. Artists including James Barry, William Blake, James Gillray, John Hamilton Mortimer, and many others demonstrated a power and a breadth of range in image-making that have shaped our sense of the period and left a long-lasting legacy.

This panel aims to focus on the major and multifaceted role of the printed image both in illuminating contemporary political events and in developing the otherworldly, alternative visions of artists like Blake and Fuseli. Papers may take a variety of approaches; topics could include the British market for prints; how viewers read prints; the popularization of emblematic images via prints from Hogarth to Fuseli; the engagement with major political events and personalities of the day; illustrations of sentimental and gothic novels; the print as fashioner of national cultural identity, including Boydell’s Shakespeare Gallery; representations of imperial expansion; representations of religion and spirituality; and the afterlife and influence of particular artistic practices or specific images.

GS233 Title: The Shapes of Narrative in Daniel Defoe's Fiction

Session Chair: Marcie Frank

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Critical Theory

Description: This panel takes as its prompt Wolfram Schmidgen’s revision of Georg Lukács’s classic essay “Narrate or Describe.” In *Eighteenth-Century Fiction and the Law of Property*, Schmidgen argued that description in 18th-century fiction could embed material social relations, the capacity Lukács had reserved for narration in nineteenth-century realism. Lukács had directed attention to Daniel Defoe himself when he bolstered his claim that a poetry of things could not exist without people by observing the “profound poetic effect of the tools rescued in Robinson Crusoe.” How do these classic categories of fiction apply to Defoe, if they do? Papers are invited that consider these questions by examining the shape taken by ideas, objects, repeating loops, and other things in Defoe’s fiction. Will such a consideration alter our sense of Defoe’s contributions to the long history of the novel?

GS249 Title: Theater Beyond the Text: Performance and the Nonverbal

Session Chair: Jean Marsden

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Performance: Music and Theater

Keywords: Interdisciplinary; Performance; Theatre

Description: As anyone who has attended the theater knows, performance is far more than words written on the page. The theatrical experience, broadly considered, combines components of performance that are more than the published play text. Even when the words spoken remain the same, these nonverbal elements provide texture and depth to performance and differentiate one performer from another. This roundtable will consider the ways extra-textual elements affect the theatrical experience and cue audience response in the long eighteenth century at a time some of the most popular performances had few spoken words. How do the nonverbal components of performance make meaning? Topics of discussion could include such diverse topics as the role of song, sound effects, stage business, or spectacle as well as the implications of movement, from the simplest hand gesture to the extended elegance of dance. Presentations might also consider the ways in which twenty-first century productions of eighteenth-century drama could harness these nontextual elements to make older works newly relevant. Submissions exploring subjects outside the traditional canon as especially encouraged.

GS210 Title: Theory and Practice in the Enlightenment

Session Chair: Crystal Lake

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Critical Theory

Keywords: Critical Theory/Theory; Culture/Cultural Studies; History/Historiography; Material Culture; Philosophy/Religion/Faith

Description: This roundtable anticipates a special issue of Eighteenth-Century Studies and invites presentations that reflect new work on the relationship between theory and practice in the long eighteenth century. Recent scholarship by Paola Bertucci, Ruth Mack, Abigail Zitin, and others has challenged traditional accounts of the Enlightenment by recovering the practical, artisanal, and embodied forms of thinking that shaped both the period's intellectual culture and everyday life. We invite short papers that build on this scholarship by asking how practical knowledge occasioned, responded to, or resisted the philosophical ideals commonly associated with the Enlightenment.

We welcome interdisciplinary as well as disciplinary approaches to the topic. We are especially interested in work that considers how practical knowledge intersected with broader structures of class, gender, race, empire, and colonialism—and can inform our understanding of the Enlightenment in its contemporary valences.

GS227 Title: Tourism and the Imagination

Session Chair: Emily Anderson

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Culture and Transmission

Keywords: Culture/Cultural Studies; Literature; Material Culture

Description: In his seminal book *The Tourist*, Dean MacCannell defines tourism as a “search for authenticity”: a quest made by groups of individuals to locate and verify the origin point of something “real.” In practice, this quest may lead individuals to seek out a monument commemorating a famous historical event or a celebratory ritual or setting believed to be representative of some concept of “authentic” life. But what happens to this definition of tourism when the tourist's quest is inspired by imaginary or ahistorical events?

The eighteenth century offers a good testing ground for this question. This panel is interested in examples of 18th-c “tourism” that are inspired by imaginary, unreal, or not-historically referential events. We invite panelists to consider the types of imaginary subjects that in the 18th-century draw public communities together, and how the dynamics of these gatherings may or may not differ from the communities formed around more historically-motivated quests. If tourism is understood by MacCannell as motivated by an (admittedly impossible) quest to locate the “authentic,” how do imaginary subjects appeal to this desire? What draws eighteenth-century audiences to these pursuits? What does “authentic” in this context seem to mean?

Ways into the topic could include, but are not limited to:

- examples of “literary” tourism: popular responses to novelistic scenes or characters
- public gatherings inspired by supernatural events
- theatrical attendance-as-tourism, or 18th-c versions of “media events”
- examples of historical monuments erected to imaginary characters

GS299 Title: Triads, Polycules, and Hinges: Polyamory and Non-Monogamy in the Eighteenth Century

Session Chair: Nicole Garret

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Queer & Trans Studies

Keywords: Gender/Sexuality Studies; Queer and Trans Studies

Description: This panel explores how contemporary concepts of polyamory, non-monogamy, and sexual multiplicity can enrich our understanding of eighteenth-century sexuality. By treating non-monogamy as an interpretive framework rather than a modern identity projected backward, this panel aims to recover overlooked forms of attachment, kinship, queer identities, and desire in the long eighteenth century. We are particularly interested in narratives and histories that move beyond the tragic or moralizing to examine how individuals and communities successfully renegotiated the pressures of compulsory monogamy.

We also seek papers that draw inspiration from recent scholarship such as Kim TallBear's work on Indigenous critiques of settler sexuality and relationality, and Mimi Schipper's queer studies informed work on polyqueer sexualities, and we invite participants to examine how heteronormative, patriarchal, colonial, and class-based frameworks have obscured or erased histories of non-monogamous attachment.

Potential topics include, but are not limited to: Sexual multiplicity and competing models of attachment; alternative households, chosen kinships, and communal domestic arrangements; polyamorous, pansexual, or non-exclusive forms of intimacy; new readings of canonical texts: new readings of canonical texts: distinguishing sexual plurality from narratives of excess. The Devonshire House circle, aristocratic networks, and elite relational experimentation; friendship, service, dependency, and intimacy outside conjugal frameworks; Indigenous perspectives on relationality and critiques of monogamous normativity; the role of class, patriarchy, and heteronormativity in producing historical archives of intimacy; methodological challenges in identifying and interpreting non-monogamous relationships in historical records.

S219 Title: Value and the Visual Arts

Session Chair: Katherine Calvin

Session Type: Panel

Primary Category: Art, Architecture, and Aesthetics

Keywords: Aesthetics; Art History/Architecture; Economy; Material Culture; Visual Culture/Studies

Description: This panel seeks papers that explore how the value of visual art was constructed and contested during the long eighteenth century. New economic conceptualizations of art's value developed alongside the eighteenth-century expansion of financial technologies and interconnected global markets. Agents involved in the speculative valuation of visual art included collectors, dealers, and, of course, artists themselves. Many of the period's art market innovations, including the prominence of auctions, remain foundational today. At the same time, however, debates flared about the aesthetic and moral value of art. These took place not only in art academies but also across literary, philosophical, and political texts. How was art's financial value informed by competing frameworks of aesthetic or moral value (and vice versa)? How did artists and other agents strategically manipulate conceptions of art's value? What was the relationship between new understandings of the value of art and the economic upheaval of the long eighteenth century? Papers focused on any geographic region(s) are welcome.

CA1 Title: Ways of Reading: Eighteenth-Century Practices

Session Chair: Leah Thomas

Session Type: Panel

East-Central American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies

Primary Category: Authorship, Book Studies, & Print Culture

Keywords: Books/Publishing; Critical Theory/Theory; Culture/Cultural Studies; Global/World/Any Country; Interdisciplinary

Description: 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.

GS217 Title: What Do We Want from Pictures?

Session Chair: David Brewer

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Art, Architecture, and Aesthetics

Keywords: Visual Culture/Studies

Description: More than twenty years ago, W.J.T. Mitchell asked "What Do Pictures Want?" But desire can go in multiple directions and so I'd like to turn the question around and ask "What Do We Want from Pictures?" The "we" that interests me here are specifically the members of ASECS as scholars, teachers, and aficionados of the eighteenth century. What do we want images to do: for our scholarship, for our teaching, perhaps even for our civic engagement or personal enjoyment? How receptive (or resistant) are pictures to those wished-for uses? What, if anything, happens to pictures, either as images or as artifacts, as a result of being put to those uses? And why turn to pictures in the first place? In short, the vast majority of us regularly use images in some capacity of our lives as dix-huitiémistes. How and why does that happen and are there ways in which we could do it more intriguingly, memorably, delightfully, or persuasively? Proposals for short, provocative talks are welcome from scholars of all disciplines and national traditions. You need not have any formal training or professional employment connected to things visual, just an interest in them and a willingness to reflect on your own practices, wishes, and perhaps follies or frustrations.

GS207 Title: Why What We Teach Still Matters

Session Chair: Jade Higa

Session Type: Roundtable

Primary Category: Pedagogy/Education

Keywords: Literature; Pedagogy

Description: In a 2025 study of hundreds of required texts in AP Literature classes, Lucy Li found that "over the last 20 years, despite significant changes in the American sociopolitical climate, AP Literature's suggested book lists have not substantially increased in racial/ethnic diversity of characters." Many institutions, particularly high schools/secondary schools, still require certain canonical texts to be taught.

Building on the work of *Adapting the Eighteenth Century*, edited by Sharon Harrow and Kristen T. Saxton, and *Teaching the Eighteenth Century Now*, edited by Kate Parker and Miriam L. Wallace, this roundtable aims to discuss the purpose of teaching British and American texts from the long eighteenth century in required courses for high school/secondary students as well as core courses in college/university. The purpose of this roundtable is twofold: (1) to offer encouragement and reinvigoration to those feeling that our subject is often dismissed by our students and (2) to share innovative strategies for demonstrating the value of reading and discussing "old books." Some of the questions this roundtable hopes to grapple with are: Why do we continue to read "canonical" works? How can we acknowledge the importance of BIPOC and LGBTQ perspectives while continuing to teach required white and male authors? What are ways we can help our students see the cultural relevance of frequently taught eighteenth-century texts?

This roundtable welcomes proposals that offer lesson plans, discussions of pedagogy, and presentations that raise further considerations in relation to the above themes.

CA45 Title: Women and Music in the long Restoration

Session Chair: Aleksondra Hultquist

Session Type: Panel

Aphra Behn Society

Primary Category: Women, Gender, Sexuality

Keywords: Books/Publishing; Gender/Sexuality Studies; Music; Theatre

Description: Linda Zionkowski's 2023 edited collection *Women and Music in the Age of Austen* is the most recent of the titles focusing on women and music in our age; Rebecca Cypress (2022) and especially Leslie Ritchie (2008) have also contributed important books on the subject. This panel seeks to open the question to the earlier era of music, before the novelization of domestic music-making and the popularity of the salon, to the era dominated by theatre and theatrical spectacle, the novelty of opera, and the poetic practice of song writing. From Aphra Behn's life-long professional involvement in musical theatre (Runge 2023) to Mary Delany's private libretto she sent to Handel, how did women involve themselves in music production? Who were the musical pioneers in an age before gender barriers shut women out completely? Were people like The Incomparable Hester Santlow (Goff 2007) an influence on young women who saw her dance? What role did colonization play in women's musical behaviors? What types of cultural cross-fertilization took place? What was the impact of the beginning of widespread musical publishing for women and girls, in London, the outer counties, the lands across the Atlantic? How does research in the archives enhance our understanding of the role music played in the private reflections and imaginations of women? We hope to have a panel of diverse perspectives that return us to the early period of the long Restoration (ca1660-1720).