American Literature Association
Symposium on American Fiction
October 2-4, 2008

Location: DeSoto Hilton Savannah
15 East Liberty Street,
Savannah, Georgia

Conference Director: Olivia Carr Edenfield
Georgia Southern University

Acknowledgments

The Conference Director, Olivia Carr Edenfield, wishes to express her appreciation to the many people who organized sessions and contributed to the development of this conference. Thanks, too, to the support of the author societies who formed panels. Their presence at the symposium is crucial to the study of American fiction. Special appreciation goes to Alfred Bendixen, Executive Director of the American Literature Association, for his guidance, faith, and constant patience and support. I wish also to thank my mentor, Dr. James Nagel, for his expertise in program planning and for his support of me and all of his UGA students. We are indebted to Andre Dubus III for making time out of his extremely busy schedule to share his time and work with us. Particular thanks to my students Laine Bradley and Ashley Akins for their help with many things, most notably their energy and good will. I thank my university, Georgia Southern, particularly the Department of Literature and Philosophy and the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences Dean’s Office, for its support of this conference. Both Alfred and I would like to extend our appreciation to Martin Waid and Stephanie Hansard with the DeSoto for their sound advice and guidance. Finally, I thank my family, whose love makes everything possible.

Olivia Carr Edenfield
Conference Director
Thursday, October 2, 2008

4:30 pm: Visit and Private Tour of Flannery O’Connor Birthplace, 207 E Charlton St.

8:30-10:00 pm: Opening Reception and Registration, Harbor View Room

Friday, October 3, 2008

Registration Desk 8:00 – 10:00 am
Main Lobby

8:20-9:50   Flannery O’Connor: Social Issues and Human Struggles
   North Room
   Chair: Marshall Bruce Gentry, Georgia College & State University

      John D. Cox, Georgia College & State University

   2. “O’Connor’s Displaced Lynchings,” Robert Donahoo,
      Sam Houston State University

   3. “Material Culture, Revelatory Imagery, and the Politics of Containment in
      Flannery O’Connor’s Short Fiction,” Doug Davis, Gordon College

   4. “The Erotic Imagination of O.E. Parker,” Dianne Bunch,
      Alcorn State University

8:20-9:50   Imagery and Point of View
   Madison Ballroom
   Chair: Gloria Cronin, Brigham Young University

   1. “Symbolic Action in Kate Chopin’s ‘The Awakening,’” Liam Purdon,
      Doane University

   2. “Hawthorne’s Magic Immorality: Following the Hand in The Blithedale
      Romance,” Thomas Sowders, University of North Carolina Wilmington

      Fiction, 1940-1955,” Julieann Ulin, University of Notre Dame

   4. “‘A ripping good yarn’: Language as Weapon in Anita Scott Coleman’s
      Fiction,” Laura Barrett, Wilkes Honors College at Florida Atlantic
      University
10:00-11:20  Historical and Bibliographical Insights
North Room
Chair: Paul N. Christensen, Texas A&M University

1. “Unwitting Provocateur: Mary Wilkins Freeman and American Academy of Arts and Letters,” Keith Newlin, University of North Carolina Wilmington

2. “Twain’s Tom Sawyer: Adult Literature or Children’s Fiction?” Jerome Loving, Texas A&M University

3. “Fitzgerald to Cather: Authorial Attitude in Letters,” Gautam Kundu, Georgia Southern University

10:00-11:20  Opera and American Literature
Madison Ballroom
Chair: Bradley C. Edwards, Georgia Southern University

1. “Consumed by Her Art: The Diva in Cather’s Fiction,” Carmen Trammell Skaggs, Columbus State University

2. “Operatic Poe-etics,” Anne Williams, University of Georgia

3. “American Literature and Operatic Speech,” David Dudley, Georgia Southern University

11:30-12:50  Sutton Griggs and the Philosophy of Black Fiction
North Room
Chair: Gretchen Long, Williams College

1. Ken Warren, University of Chicago

2. Finnie D. Coleman, University of New Mexico

3. Tess Chakkalakal, Bowdoin College
11:30-12:50   Visual Patterns and Twentieth-Century American Fiction  
Madison Ballroom  
Chair: Mary Carney, Gainesville State College  

   Linda Miller, The Pennsylvania State University, Abington College  

2. “Recovering Renaissance Imagery: Katherine Anne Porter’s ‘Pale Horse, Pale Rider’ and Albrecht Dürer’s Apocalyptic Engravings,”  
   Shayna Skarf, Brandeis University  


12:50-2:10   LUNCH (Center Room)  

2:10-3:40   Women’s War Fiction  
North Room  
Chair: Karen Weekes, Pennsylvania State University, Abington College  

1. “Mary Boykin Chesnut and the Confederate Memorial Movement,”  
   Wendy Kurant, North Georgia College & State University  

2. “‘An Unknown World’: Piranesi Mysteries in Edith Wharton’s Writing,”  
   Mary Carney, Gainesville State College  

3. “It’s strange what you don’t forget’: Dreaming of the Battlefield in Women’s War Fiction,” Lisa Hinrichsen, University of Arkansas
2:10-3:40 Contemporary Fiction: Cormac McCarthy and Breece D’J Pancake
Madison Ballroom
Chairs: Rick Wallach, University of Miami, and Olivia Carr Edenfield, Georgia Southern University

1. “The Road to Extinction: McCarthy’s Landscape of Loss,”
   Dianne C. Luce, independent scholar

2. “Apocalypto Redux: McCarthy’s The Road and the Post-Apocalyptic Genre,”
   Scott Yarbrough, Charleston Southern University

   Brad McDuffie, Nyack College


3:50-5:10 Perspectives on Faulkner
North Room
Chair: Hugh Ruppersburg, University of Georgia

1. “Androgyny and the Ovidian Subtext in William Faulkner’s Sanctuary,”
   Nicole Camastra, University of Georgia


3. “Ledgers, Logic, and Legal Fictions in Absalom, Absalom!”
   Angela Green, University of Georgia

3:50-5:10 Perspectives on Melville
Madison Ballroom
Chair: Carmen Skaggs, Columbus State University


   Bradley C. Edwards, Georgia Southern University

3. “The Speculative Economy of Bachelorhood in Melville’s ‘Benito Cereno’,”
   Leslie Petty, Rhodes College
5:00-6:00 Book Signing with Andre Dubus III: E. Shaver Bookstore, 326 Bull Street (on the corner of the DeSoto)

5:30-7:30 Key Note Address and Reception
Harbor View Room
Andre Dubus III will read from and discuss The Garden of Last Days

Saturday, October 4, 2008

Registration Desk 8:00-10:00
(Main Lobby)

8:10-9:30 Travels and Journeys
North Room
Chair: Laine Bradley, Georgia Southern University

1. “You Must Go Home Again: The Native American Plot,”
   Paul N. Christensen, Texas A&M University

2. “Road Kill: Travel and Identity in Patricia Highsmith’s The Talented Mr. Ripley and Jack Kerouac’s On the Road,” Tiffany Gilbert,
   University of North Carolina Wilmington


4. “Deracination as Theme in Thomas Wolfe’s ‘The Lost Boy,’”
   Walton Young, Truett-McConnell College

8:10-9:30 Artistry and Visuality
Madison Ballroom
Chair: Ashley Akins, Georgia Southern University

1. “‘Dressed with an idea’ and ‘arming herself for the battle of life’: Fleda Vetch’s Artistry in Henry James’s ‘The Spoils of Poynton,’”
   Amber Nicole Shaw, University of Georgia

   Rashna Richards, Rhodes College

3. “New Awakenings: The Significance of Easter Lilies in Kate Chopin’s Fiction,” Natalie M. Khoury, University of Georgia
9:40-11:00  **Emergence of American Fiction**  
**North Room**  
Chair: Tomasz Warchol, Georgia Southern University  

1. “On *Edgar Huntly’s* Hybridity,” Jason Richards, Rhodes College  

9:40-11:00  **What Is Southern about Hemingway and Fitzgerald**  
**Madison Ballroom**  
Chair: James H. Meredith, The Ernest Hemingway Foundation and Society  

1. Ruth Prigozy, Hofstra University  
2. Kirk Curnutt, Troy University Montgomery  
3. E. Stone Shiflet, Capella University  
4. Kathleen Robinson, Eckerd College and University of South Florida  
5. Bryant Mangum, Virginia Commonwealth University  

11:10-12:30  **Memory, Memoir, and Mythical Space**  
**North Room**  
Chair: Alfred Bendixen, Texas A&M University  

3. “Willa Cather’s Sante Fe Saints: The Desert Sublime in *Death Comes for the Archbishop*,” Gloria Cronin, Brigham Young University
11:10-12:30  Contemporary Perspectives
Madison Ballroom
Chair: Selina Lai, The University of Hong Kong

1. “American Vietnam War Fiction in the Iraq War Era,” Joan Boyd, University of Ulster, Northern Ireland
2. The Professor as Super(anti)hero in Contemporary American Academic Fiction,” Jo Angela Edwins, Francis Marion University
3. “Boroughs and Neighbors: Traumatic Solidarity’ in Jonathan Safran Foer’s *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*,” Matt Mullins, University of North Carolina Greensboro

12:30-2:00  Luncheon and Key Note: James Nagel, University of Georgia
Harbor View Room
“Reflections on Realism and Naturalism”

2:10-3:30  Realism and Naturalism
North Room
Chair: Keith Newlin, University of North Carolina Wilmington

1. “Creating the Real from the Naïve and Romantic: Mrs. Gerhardt and the Harper editing of *Jennie Gerhardt*,” Annemarie Koning Whaley, East Texas Baptist University
2. “Performance Anxiety: Staging the Self in Edith Wharton’s Fiction,” Taylor Parson, University of North Carolina Wilmington
3. “Transforming History: The Economic Context of Frank Norris’s ‘A Deal in Wheat,’” Jon F. Dawson, University of Georgia
4. “‘You Must Remember This’: Reverie, Bereavement, and a Sense of Place in Theodore Dreiser's *A Hoosier Holiday*,” Michael Wentworth, University of North Carolina Wilmington
2:10-3:30  Flannery O’Connor: Philosophy and Theology
Madison Ballroom
Chair: Robert Donahoo, Sam Houston State University

1. “‘Tantum Ergo Ridiculum Sacramentum’: O’Connor and the Meaning of Sacrament,” Henry (Hank) T. Edmondson III, Georgia College & State University


3. “Rayber Squared: Negotiating Self-Representation in The Violent Bear It Away,” Scott Daniel, Georgia College & State University

3:40-5:00  Postmodern Perspectives
North Room
Chair: Richard Flynn, Georgia Southern University


3. “‘A Lamb in Wolf’s Clothing’: Postmodern Realism in A.M. Homes’s Music for Torching and This Book Will Save Your Life,” Mary Holland, SUNY New Paltz

4. “‘A Devouring Neon’: Don DeLillo and the Threat of Fame,” Matthew Luter, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill

3:40-5:00  Southern Literature
Madison Ballroom
Chair: James Nagel, University of Georgia

1. “A Defense of Steve Zaillian’s 2006 Remake of All the King’s Men,” Hugh Ruppersburg, University of Georgia

2. “Tarred, Feathered and Ridden on A Rail: Historical Contexts for Mob Violence in Mark Twain’s Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,” Steven Florczyk, University of Georgia

5:00-7:00  
Closing Reception and Fiction Reading

Harbor View Room
Chair: David Dudley, Georgia Southern University

Fiction Reading:

1. Kirk Curnutt, Troy State University
   Selections from *Breathing Out the Ghost*

2. Lucy Ferriss, Trinity College
   Selections from *The Woman Who Bought the Sky*

3. The fiction of Peter Christopher, Georgia Southern University
   read by Carolyn Altman