

## Proposal from the William Gilmore Simms Society

**Simms and Poe: the Role of Boston in American Literature:** Most American Literature anthologies feature Boston and the "wise men" of the New England such as Emerson and Thoreau comprising the formation of American Literature before the Civil War. While sharing the triple name monikers of their New England counterparts, William Gilmore Simms and Edgar Allan Poe had a divergent vision of American Literature before the Civil War and sought to root American literature outside of the orbit of New England and the Boston-Cambridge epicenter of intellectual formation. It is no coincidence that in Poe's global novel, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*, the protagonist, Pym himself, a New Englander, ends up in Richmond, among "gentleman" unburdening his dark tale to a "Mr. Poe," editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*. Poe's adroit choice of a New Englander choosing the *Messenger* to confess his horrendous actions illustrates his challenge to Transcendentalist thought. Poe's fellow traveler, William Gilmore Simms, was likewise tireless in his efforts to challenge what Orestes Brownson called the "Boston movement." The panel invites papers on Poe and Simms efforts to codify a national American literature in the mid-nineteenth century. How do such efforts provide an alternate perspective of American literature not featured much in textbooks or in the teaching of American literature before the Civil War?

Send abstracts via email by Jan, 11, 2017 to:

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