

The Society of Early Americanists will once again be sponsoring three panels at the American Literature Conference, which takes place 24-27 May 2018 in San Francisco. Abstracts of 300 words or fewer which relate to one of the three topics below should be e-mailed to the SEA@ALA coordinator, Len von Morzé (leonard.vonmorze@umb.edu), by January 10. Please also send along a short CV.

1830 is the New '20: The 1820s as Early American Literature

In spring 2017, the Society of Early Americanists voted to extend the Society's temporal range from 1820 to 1830, in order to (as the Society stated) "reflect more fully the range of the scholarship and teaching of our members." This panel asks us to consider the implications of this temporal extension. In what sense can writing of the 1820s be called "early American"? How do we put works from the decade into a historical constellation with literature from earlier periods? What's interesting about the decade?

SEA Teaching Panel: Early American Drama

Despite a flurry of exciting recent scholarship, many early Americanists teach one play (if they teach any at all) in their courses on the period. Though theater might now be seen as republicanism's primary literary mode, and as a defining circumatlantic form, our syllabi have yet to catch up with this recognition. This panel invites reflections on teaching drama in the period. What texts, practices, assignments work for you?

Internationalizing Non-State Actors in the Early Republic

On July 2, 2017, California governor Jerry Brown described an end-run around federal climate policies by invoking the political power of non-state actors in international relations, even as Brown also explained that "the biggest state in the union is the venue for a worldwide convocation of states, regions and entrepreneurs and others." Reflecting a contested history of mixed sovereignty suggested by the multiple meanings of the word "state" in the US context, Brown's comment evokes a tradition that includes George Logan, whose non-state diplomacy triggered the Logan Act much discussed these days. In the spirit of its Californian inspiration, this panel calls for studies of non-sovereign (or sub-sovereign) entities in the international republic of letters, whether in diplomatic or literary sources. How does early republican writing represent, or perform, the powers of these groups (which might include proto-states, militias, factions, partisans, etc.)? How is their political agency represented? While these groups are often viewed as anti-federalists, can we read them as internationalists?