

Society for the Study of the American Short Story – ALA 2018

As in the past, SSASS will sponsor two panels and a business meeting at the ALA convention in San Francisco, May 24-27, 2018. . Please submit your proposal for either panel by January 15, 2018 by sending an email to the president at jnagel@uga.edu. Your document should contain two paragraphs, the first a brief abstract of your central subject and thesis, the second a biographical statement of your academic position, pertinent publications, and your credentials to present on this subject. You should receive a response before the end of January.

Panel 1 New Readings of Old Stories

This panel will present three papers that bring an innovative approach to an important American short story, one that is often anthologized (or should be) and has been part of literary history for some time. The story might be analyzed on the basis of new biographical or historical information, a new context in which to consider it, or new manuscript evidence or publication history that provides information that has not been part of the traditional reading of the story. Each presentation will be limited to twenty minutes, roughly 8-9 pp. of double-spaced text.

Panel 2 Why American Short Stories are Important: A Roundtable Discussion

This panel will present a discussion of why, in an era of renewed emphasis in higher education on math and the sciences, the reading of American stories continues to be a significant element of an undergraduate education. Short fiction succeeded in the United States on a level unmatched in any other nation. Why was that? Is there something uniquely “American” about the genre? Is there something that remains important about it?

Each member of the panel will make a brief statement (no one will read a standard paper) of 5-10 minutes and then the group will engage in conversation with the audience. As a literary society, about to launch a literary journal following two international conferences, we should be able to justify the inclusion of our field in a general undergraduate curriculum