

Symposium on North American Literature and Culture in the Twentieth Century

University of Leicester, 27th October 2018

From its beginnings in the Naturalism of Dreiser and Wharton, through the Modernism of William Faulkner and the Lost Generation, the emergence of new voices in African-American, Native, and other minority writing, to more recent developments in the commercialisation of publishing houses, the growth of creative writing departments in colleges across North America, and the giving way of Hugh Kenner's Pound Era to Mark McGurl's Program Era, the dramatic history of North America in the twentieth century has been reflected in its literature. We are now almost two decades into the twenty-first century, and the time is right to look back on the twentieth century and its literature.

Despite the clear links between the history of the twentieth century and its literature, it is rare in current literary scholarship that the twentieth century is conceived of as an era. North American writing of the twentieth century is often discussed in part, or the century broken down around supposed epochal ruptures and historical moments. Seeking to address this gap, the organisers invite panellists to discuss the century as a period, to investigate the effects of the events of the century on its literature, and the trajectory of changes that occurred within the literature of the century. We also hope to encourage discussion of the twentieth century as an era, the usefulness of historical periods as defining concepts in the study of literature, and the ways in which the literature of North America in the twentieth century can be conceptualised, taught, and studied.

We therefore invite 250-word proposals for 20 minute papers addressing any aspect of twentieth century North American writing. Papers may be submitted on any topic that addresses literary works published between 1900 and 1999, and/or their relationship with other arts, sciences, and disciplines, including (but not limited to) the following areas:

- Conceptualising the twentieth century through literature
- Teaching the literature of the twentieth century
- The relationship between literature and economics in the twentieth century
- Publishing and prize cultures of the twentieth century
- Poetry in the twentieth century, and/or its relationship to institutions and publishers
- The relationship between technology and literature in the twentieth century
- The usefulness of the twentieth century as a critical lens or unifying concept
- The benefits and difficulties of studying the twentieth century through literature
- The relationship between history and literature in the twentieth century
- Theory and its relationship to literature in the twentieth century
- Twentieth century means, modes, and forms of publication and distribution

To submit paper proposals, email proposals to C20Symposium@gmail.com by **1st August 2018**.
Panel proposals are both welcome and encouraged.