

# **“The City and American Literature”**

A Symposium Sponsored by the  
American Literature Association

September 10-12, 2015

Hotel Monteleone  
214 Royal Street  
New Orleans, Louisiana



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Conference Director:  
Leslie Petty, Rhodes College

## Acknowledgments

I wish to express my appreciation to the individuals who are serving on panels as well as those who organized sessions—without your continued support we would not have such robust and productive symposia. I am also grateful to Alfred Bendixen, founder and Executive Director of the ALA, and to Olivia Carr Edenfield, the Executive Coordinator of the ALA, for their unerring guidance and diligent assistance in planning this event. The Association thanks Rhodes College and the Department of Literature and Philosophy at Georgia Southern University for their support of the fall symposium. I would also like to express special thanks to our keynote speaker this year, Ed Folsom.

## **Thursday, September 10, 2015**

### **Literary Tour of New Orleans: 3:30 p.m.**

Dr. Nancy Dixon, professor, author of *N.O. Lit: 200 Years of New Orleans Literature*, and licensed New Orleans tour guide, will lead a literary walking tour of the French Quarter, a place known to have housed and inspired some of the greatest writers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Space is limited to those who pre-registered because of New Orleans tour guidelines. Please meet in the lobby at 3:15 pm.

### **Registration: 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. (Royal Salon D)**

#### **Welcome Reception**

*Please join us during our opening night registration for a Welcome Reception.  
Complimentary beer and wine will be served.*

## Friday, September 11, 2015

Registration: 8:15 – 10:20 a.m. (Cathedral Room)

### Session One A: 9:00 – 10:20 (Beauregard Room)

#### ***Health and the City***

Chair: Olivia Carr Edenfield, Georgia Southern University.

1. "Syphilitics and the City: Gynecology and the Urban Society in Annie Nathan Meyer's *Helen Brent, M.D.*" Stephanie Peebles Tavera, University of Texas at Arlington.
2. "Moral Contagion: Yellow Fever and the Moral Character of New Orleans." Kathleen Downes, University of New Orleans.

### Session One B: 9:00 – 10:20 (Pontalba Room)

#### ***The I-10 Chican@ Renaissance from Califas to Tejaztlan: Identity, Social Change, and (Re)writing the City***

Chair: Megan Elizabeth Nieto, University of Texas at San Antonio.

1. "Playwriting the City: Chican@ Theater for Social Change in East Los Angeles." Trevor Boffone, University of Houston.
2. "'We are all our own gods': Proclaiming Chicana in El Chuco." Claire M. Massey, Saarland University, Germany.
3. "Let Them Sing to the Birds: Huelga School Verses and the Art of Anthropoesia." Guadalupe Mendez, University of Texas at El Paso.

### Session One C: 9:00 – 10:20 (Ursuline Room)

#### ***Race and "Caste" in Nineteenth-Century New Orleans***

Chair: Kelli Purcell O'Brien, University of Memphis.

1. "Eavesdropping on the City: Female Privacy and Regionalist Form in Alice Dunbar-Nelson's Urban Fiction." Jordan L. Von Cannon, Louisiana State University.
2. "*Blake* in the Crescent City: Martin R. Delany Reimagines Antebellum Radicalism." Paul Fess, CUNY Graduate Center.
3. "'The unjust spirit of caste' in Charles W. Chesnutt's and George Washington Cable's New Orleans Novels." Matthew Teutsch, University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

### Session One D: 9:00 – 10:20 (Cabildo Room)

#### ***Transatlantic Currents***

Chair: Amber Shaw, Coe College.

1. "Joseph Mountain's London: Transnational Currents in Early American Crime Literature." Brian Baaki, CUNY Graduate Center.
2. "'The Commercial Emporium': City, Race and Economics in James Fenimore Cooper's Sea Novels." Luis A. Iglesias, University of Southern Mississippi.

**Session Two A: 10:30 – 11:50 (Beauregard Room)**

***Violence in the City***

Chair: Dustin Anderson, Georgia Southern University.

1. "Narrating Race and Infrastructure in Philadelphia's MOVE Bombing." Anne Stewart, University of Texas at Austin.
2. "Uncommon Ground: Boston, Busing and Crime Narrative." Lisa Fluet, College of the Holy Cross.
3. "From Solitary to the City: Norman Mailer's Bet on Jack Henry Abbott." Jerome Loving, Texas A&M University.

**Session Two B: 10:30 – 11:50 (Pontalba Room)**

***American Travelers and the City***

Sponsor: Society for the Study of American Travel Writing

Chair: Deborah Wilson, Arkansas Tech University.

1. "Berlin, Berlin: Exploring the City in Mary Church Terrell's German Diaries." Kerstin Rudolph, University of Mississippi.
2. "'What a Woman Sees and Says': Constance Fenimore Woolson, the City, and the Female Flaneur." Anne Boyd Rioux, University of New Orleans.
3. "'These Pictures of New-York Life': Gender, Democracy, and National Identity in Margaret Fuller's *Tribune* Dispatches, 1844-1846." Maggie Nerio, University of Texas at San Antonio.

**Session Two C: 10:30 – 11:50 (Cabildo Room)**

***The City in American Crime Fiction I***

Sponsor: Society for the Study of American Crime Fiction

Chair: David Schmid, University at Buffalo.

1. "Towns and Cities in Nineteenth-Century Detective Fiction." LeRoy Lad Panek, McDaniel College.
2. "Marie Roget in the Suburbs." Jon Blandford, Bellarmine University.
3. "The City in African American Crime Fiction." John Gruesser, Kean University and Norlisha Crawford, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.

**Session Two D: 10:30 – 11:50 (Ursuline Room)**

***Place and Race in Percy and Welty***

Chair: Mary Anne O'Neal, University of Georgia.

1. "New Orleans as the 'terminus of never' in Welty's 'No Place for You, My Love,'" Nancy Dixon, Dillard University.
2. "New Orleans in Walker Percy's Works: Place, Placement, Nonplacement, and Displacement." Edward J. Dupuy, Southwest School of Art.
3. "'Where Is the Voice Coming From?': Eudora Welty in Jackson, Mississippi." Steven Price, Mississippi College.

**Lunch: 11:50 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**  
**Riverview Room**

**Registration: 1:00 – 1:20 p.m. (Cathedral Room)**

**Session Three A: 1:20 – 2:40 (Ursuline Room)**

***Poe and Whitman***

Chair: Carol Wardell, University of Memphis.

1. "Edgar Allan Poe and the Richmond Slave Trail." Scott Peeples, College of Charleston.
2. "Feeling It: Central Park, Walt Whitman, and the Rhythmic Commons of Nineteenth Century American Urban Space." Krystyna Michael, CUNY Graduate Center.
3. "Chess and Whist in 'Rue Morgue': Poe's "Games-Theory" Argument for a New Logic of Urban Space." Garrett C. Jeter, University of Arkansas.

**Session Three B: 1:20 – 2:40 (Pontalba Room)**

***The City and Minority Resistance***

Chair: Sharon Lynette Jones, Wright State University.

1. "Sing the Body Septic: Disturbing the White Gaze in Horrorcore Hip-Hop." Ray Leonard, University of Miami.
2. "A Cabdriver Sings the Blues: Mem Shannon's Articulation of Urban Life and Working Class Resistance in Late Twentieth-Century New Orleans." Marcus C. Tribbett, Arkansas State University.
3. The (In)Significance of Urban Context in Transcultural Minority Politics: Unsettling the City in Dinaw Mengestu's *The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears*." Marta Gierczyk, University of Miami.

**Session Three C: 1:20 – 2:40 (Beauregard Room)**

***Toni Morrison***

Chair: Rachel Smith, University of Memphis.

1. "Precarious Urbanity in the Post-Obama Era: Morrison's *God Help the Child* and the (Im)possibility of Redress." Asimina Ino Nikolopoulou, Northeastern University.
2. "Harlem is for the Birds: Avian Imagery and the City in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* and Toni Morrison's *Jazz*." Patrick Naick, Coe College.

**Session Three D: 1:20 – 2:40 (Cabildo Room)**

***Southern Cities***

Chair: Steven Price, Mississippi College.

1. "Between Baton Rouge and Burden's Landing in Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men*." Deborah Wilson, Arkansas Tech University.
2. "Class Structure, the New South, and the Search for Identity in Charles Gaines's *Stay Hungry*." Edward Journey, Alabama A&M University.
3. "The Cradle and Crucible of 'History City': Montgomery, Alabama, in American Literature." Kirk Curnutt, Troy University.

**Session Four A: 2:50 – 4:10 (Beauregard Room)**

***Philadelphia***

Chair: Ashley Rattner, University of Memphis.

1. "The Naming of the Lady from Philadelphia." Emily Kolf, University of Kentucky.
2. "Charity in Chaos: The Desperate City *Arthur Mervyn*." Kathleen N. Monahan, Saint Peter's University.
3. "Benjamin Franklin, Charles Brockden Brown, and the Decline of Mercantile Philadelphia." Peter J. Bellis, University of Alabama at Birmingham.

**Session Four B: 2:50 – 4:10 (Pontalba Room)**

***The City in American Crime Fiction II***

Sponsor: Society for the Study of American Crime Fiction

Chair: Alfred Bendixen, Princeton University.

1. "City and Setting in Ben H. Winters' *Last Policeman* Trilogy." David Schmid, University at Buffalo.
2. "Detecting the multicultural city: the limits of realism." Cynthia Hamilton, Liverpool Hope University.
3. "*The Wire* and Crime Fiction After Ferguson and Baltimore." Andrew Pepper, Queen's University Belfast.

**Session Four C: 2:50 – 4:10 (Cabildo Room)**

***Urban Southscapes***

Sponsor: Society for the Study of Southern Literature

Chair: Michael Bibler, Louisiana State University.

1. "Noir Orleans: Nick Travers, *True Detective*, and The Big, Dirty Easy." Andy Crank, University of Alabama.
2. "City Apocalypse/Country Apocalypse: Population, Ecology, and the Place of the Southern Small Town After the End." Kathaleen Amende, Alabama State University.

**Session Four D: 2:50 – 4:10 (Ursuline Room)**

***William Faulkner and the City***

Chair: Anne Boyd Rioux, University of New Orleans.

1. "'The Promised Land of Sin and Delight': Memphis in the Fiction of William Faulkner." J. Christopher O'Brien, University of Memphis.
2. "'A Meeting South': New Orleans' French Quarter Circle and Faulkner's Global Thematics." Bryant Louis Scott, University of Miami.
3. "Faulkner's Cities: Transmogrifying Yoknapatawpha." Andrea Dimino, New College of Florida.

**Session Five B: 4:20 – 5:40 (Pontalba Room)**

***The City of the Roaring Twenties***

Chair: Kirk Curnutt, Troy University.

1. “Detroit was a great city to live in’: John Herrmann’s Literary Memorials to Detroit’s Past.” Sara Kosiba, Troy University.
2. “Finding and Redefining F. Scott Fitzgerald’s ‘Lost City’ in the Novel, the Essay and the Luhrmann Film Adaptation of *The Great Gatsby*.” Nancy VanArsdale, East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania.
3. “Ferber, Fitzgerald, and the Big City.” Doni Wilson, Houston Baptist University.

**Session Five C: 4:20 – 5:40 (Ursuline Room)**

***Kate Chopin, New Orleans, and Nineteenth-Century Literature***

Chair: J. Christopher O’Brien, University of Memphis.

1. “Chopin Property Transfers in New Orleans During the 1870s and Their Literary Implications.” Thomas Bonner, Xavier University of Louisiana.
2. “Post Bellum New Orleans’s Societal Influences on Motherhood and Femininity in Kate Chopin’s Fiction.” Kelli Purcell O’Brien, University of Memphis.
3. “The Freedom of Travelling and Walking Alone Through the Cities: Kate Chopin’s Portrayal of Female Experience in the Context of Nineteenth-Century German Women Writers.” Heidi Podlasli-Labrenz, University of Bremen, Germany.

**Opening Reception and Keynote Address: 5:40 – 7:15 p.m.  
East/West Ballrooms**

**“What Walt Whitman Learned (and Failed to Learn) in New Orleans”**

Ed Folsom

University of Iowa

Editor: *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review*

## Saturday, September 12, 2015

### Session Six A: 9:00 – 10:20 (Beauregard Room)

#### ***Ethnic Communities in the City***

Chair: Trevor Boffone, University of Houston.

1. "Affective Topographies of the City in Tina De Rosa's *Paper Fish* and Salvatore Scibona's *The End*." Sabrina Vellucci, University of Roma Tre.
2. "'The Offbeat Beauty of Rasquache': San Antonio, Texas as a Communal Village in Sandra Cisneros' *Have You Seen Marie?*" Megan Elizabeth Nieto, University of Texas at San Antonio.
3. "Cities of Hope and Freedom: The Parallels between Harlem and Moscow as Seen through the Accounts of the *Black and White Cast*." Ileana Sherry, Trinity University.

### Session Six B: 9:00 – 10:20 (Pontalba Room)

#### ***The Post 9/11 City***

Chair: Samantha Anderson, University of Memphis.

1. "In and Out of New York: Women Writing 9/11." Sun Hee Lee, Gustavus Adolphus College.
2. "'The bottle fell off the counter in the galley': Falling Man and the days after 9/11." Uzma Imtiaz, NUML University of Pakistan.

### Session Six C: 9:00 – 10:20 (Ursuline Room)

#### ***The Harlem Renaissance in Chicago and New York***

Chair: Megan Tutt, University of Memphis.

1. "Census Geography and the Burdens of Representation: The Example of the Harlem Renaissance." Michael Soto, Trinity University.
2. "Work is God: *Dark Princess*, Underground Labor, and Romance." Franklin Ridgway, University of Cincinnati.
3. "'Your shuttered door of glass': Impenetrable Interiors in Claude McKay's *Harlem Shadows*." Steven A. Nardi, College of Mount St. Vincent.

### Session Six D: 9:00 – 10:20 (Cabildo Room)

#### ***New Orleans, Then and Now***

Chair: Nancy Dixon, Dillard University.

1. "Slave-bricked Streets and Women's Work: The Practiced Place of Brenda Marie Osbey's New Orleans." Shari Evans, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.
2. "American Horror Stories: Representations of New Orleans Slavery in Nineteenth-Century Sensation Fiction and Contemporary Television." Kim Manganelli, Clemson University.

**Session Seven A: 10:30 – 11:50 (Beauregard Room)**

***Outside the City Walls***

Chair: Jerome Loving, Texas A&M University.

1. "From Shillington to Ipswich: John Updike's Midcentury Suburbia." Matthew Koch, Tarrant County College South.
2. "Fleeing the City for Authorial Self-Construction in Jack London's *The Road* (1907), Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* (1957), and Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006)." Jeanne Campbell Reesman, University of Texas at San Antonio.
3. "Cormac McCarthy's Invisible Cities." Dustin Anderson, Georgia Southern University.

**Session Seven B: 10:30 – 11:50 (Pontalba Room)**

***Moving Around Manhattan***

Chair: Sara Kosiba, Troy University.

1. "The American Subway Play: Underground Theater from Boucicault to Baraka." Sunny Stalter-Pace, Auburn University.
2. "The City and Apotheosis in Truman Capote's *Breakfast at Tiffany's*." William Mark Poteet, Duquesne University.
3. "Dos Passos's *Manhattan Transfer* and Berlin Dadaist Georg Grosz: Transforming Roaring Twenties Manhattan into a Traumatized Post-War Metropolis." Barry Maine, Wake Forest University.

**Session Seven C: 10:30 – 11:50 (Cabildo Room)**

***American Literature and the European City***

Chair: Leslie Petty, Rhodes College.

1. "'One sees everybody here at Rome': Literary Networks and Harriet Beecher Stowe's Italian Sojourn." Amber Shaw, Coe College
2. "'Perishing Republic': Margaret Fuller, Rome, and the American Democracy." David M. Robinson, Oregon State University.
3. "Venice as a Topographic Palimpsest in William Dean Howells' *Venetian Life* (1867)." Eleftheria Arapoglou, University of California, Davis.

**Session Seven D: 10:30 – 11:50 (Ursuline Room)**

***Sex in the Southern City***

Sponsor: Society for the Study of Southern Literature

Chair: Andy Crank, University of Alabama.

1. "Sex Change and the City: The Unlikely New Orleans of Truman Capote's 'Dazzle'." Michael Bibler, Louisiana State University.
2. "A Confederacy of Dunces' Queer New Orleans." Erich Nunn, Auburn University.
3. "Drag *Designing Women*: Performing Gender in the Southern City." Monica Miller, Georgia Institute of Technology.

**Lunch: 11:50 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**  
**Riverview Room**

**Session Eight A: 1:20 – 2:40 (Beauregard Room)**

***Southern Women Writers: City Life and Pastoral Visions***

Sponsor: Ellen Glasgow Society

Chair: Jordan Von Cannon, Louisiana State University.

1. "More than One City of New Orleans: Views from Angelou, Welty, Hurston, Chopin." Ruth Caillouet, Georgia Gwinnett College.
2. "A 'Castle' of Her Own: Amelie Rives' Rejection of the City in *Barbara Dering*." Amy Berke, Middle Georgia State College.
3. "Pastoral and Anti-Pastoral Visions in Ellen Glasgow and Mary Johnston." Gwendolyn Jones Harold, Clayton State University.

**Session Eight C: 1:20 – 2:40 (Cabildo Room)**

***Protest and Reform in the City***

Chair: Jeanne Campbell Reesman, University of Texas at San Antonio.

1. Maurice Egan's *The Disappearance of John Longworthy* and the Rise of Catholic Realism." Lisa Oliverio, Fontbonne University.
2. "The Erotics of Spatial Protest in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* and James Baldwin's *Another Country*." Lucy Mensah, Vanderbilt University.
3. "The City and the Country: A Farm Worker Critique of Neoliberalism." Marcial Gonzalez, University of California at Berkeley.

**Session Eight D: 1:20 – 2:40 (Ursuline Room)**

***Hybridity, Urbanity, and Shifting Identities***

Chair: Doni Wilson, Houston Baptist University.

1. "Migrations: Defining Urbanity in Jazz Literature and Music." Kevin Kjos and Andrew Vogel, Kutztown University.
2. "Modern Urbanity and Literary Modernism in Early-Twentieth-Century U.S. Passing Fiction." Masami Sugimori, Florida Gulf Coast University.
3. "Tom Robbins and the Idea of the City." Liam Purdon, Doane College.

**Session Nine A: 2:50 – 4:10 (Beauregard Room)**

***Detectives and Mysteries in the City***

Chair: Allen Josephs, University of West Florida.

1. "Crime, Class, and Communities: Examining Encounters in Edward P. Jones's *Lost in the City*." Sharon Lynette Jones, Wright State University.
2. "Chester Himes' Harlem: *City of Nightmares*." Alice Mikal Craven, American University of Paris.

**Session Nine B: 2:50 – 4:10 (Pontalba Room)**

***Feminine Geography and Female Spaces in Twentieth-Century Poetry***

Chair: Ruth Caillouet, Georgia Gwinnett College.

1. "Black Women's Work, Everyday Language, the Urban Kitchenette, and Gwendolyn Brooks' *Maude Martha*." Eve Dunbar, Vassar College.
2. "The Heterogeneity of Suffering, the Universality of Difference: Spatial Theoretics in Joy Harjo's 'Woman Hanging From The Thirteenth Floor Window'." Tierney S. Powell, Creighton University.
3. "'Across a city from you, I'm with you': Feminine Geographies in Three Poems by Adrienne Rich." Alyssa Duck, Emory University.

**Session Nine C: 2:50 – 4:10 (Cabildo Room)**

***Transnational Cityscapes***

Chair: Dustin Anderson, Georgia Southern University.

1. "'In the *corazon* of the capital: Globalization and Urban Design in Cisneros's *Caramelo*." Elisabeth Mermann-Jozwiak, Gonzaga University.
2. "Archipelological Memory." Kevin Concannon, Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi.
3. "Born in the USA: Breeding Political Violence in *The Tattooed Soldier*." Dale Pattison, Texas A&M University.

**Session Nine D: 2:50 – 4:10 (Ursuline Room)**

***Chopin's The Awakening and Global New Orleans***

Chair: Gwendolyn Harold, Clayton State University.

1. "*The Awakening's* New Orleans Coffee: Global Commodity and National Culture." Kathryn Dolan, Missouri University of Science and Technology.
2. "Rac(e)ing the U.S.-Mexico Border: Kate Chopin's Global New Orleans." Shanna Michelle Salinas, Kalamazoo College.
3. "'The Voice of the Sea': The Specter of Transatlantic Slavery in *The Awakening*." Carina Evans Hoffpaur, Southwestern University.

**Session Ten A: 4:20 – 5:40 (Beauregard Room)**

***Literary Lessons of the New Republic***

Chair: Alyssa Duck, Emory University.

1. "Of Providence Plantations: Roger Williams and Habitation as a Dissenting Statement in Seventeenth Century New England." Ashley Rattner, University of Memphis.
2. "The Underwritten City: Charleston in the Literary Imagination." Jennie Lightweis-Goff, Tulane University.
3. "'Sex and the City': *Pamela* and the Policing of Female Sexuality in the New Republic." Carol Wardell, University of Memphis.

**Session Ten B: 4:20 – 5:40 (Pontalba Room)**

***Policing Gender and Sexuality in the City***

Chair: Monica Miller, Georgia Institute of Technology.

1. "Reversing the Gaze: Natasha Trethewey's Storyville Sex Workers in *Bellocq's Ophelia*." Mary Carruth, Southern University.
2. "Sex and the Early Twentieth Century American City: Miriam Michelson's 'Girl Reporter' Goes Under Cover." Debbie Lelekis, Florida Institute of Technology.
3. "Trigger City: Fanny Fern, Claudia Rankine, and the City in an Age of Microaggressions and Trigger Warnings." J.D. Isip, Collins College.

**Session Ten C: 4:20 – 5:40 (Ursuline Room)**

***Ann Petry***

Chair: Steven Nardi, Mount Saint Vincent University.

1. "'Cellar Crazy': The Basement that is Black Society in Ann Petry's *The Street*." Sondra Bickham Washington, University of Alabama Birmingham.
2. "'From Harlem to Bronzeville, with Love: Ann Petry's and Gwendolyn Brooks' Intimate Cities.'" Jennifer D. Williams, Morgan State University.

**Session Ten D: 4:20 – 5:40 (Cabildo Room)**

***William Faulkner and Lyle Saxon***

Chair: Dustin Anderson, Georgia Southern University.

1. "'The Watery Mirror': Masquerading in Lyle Saxon's *Fabulous New Orleans*." Mary Anne O'Neal, University of Georgia.
2. "Urban Social Discourses in William Faulkner's *New Orleans Sketches*." Charles Tyrone, Arkansas Tech University.
3. "'Mr. New Orleans': Lyle Saxon's Literary Portraits of the City He Loved." James W. Thomas, Pepperdine University.

**Closing Reception: 5:40 – 7:00 p.m.**  
**Riverview Room**

**Please join us for our 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference:**

May 26-29, 2016  
Hyatt Regency Embarcadero  
San Francisco CA

Conference Director:

Alfred Bendixen, Princeton University

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**American Literature Association  
Symposium on Frontiers and Borders in American  
Literature**

February 25-27, 2016  
Sheraton Gunter Hotel

San Antonio, TX

Conference Director:

Steven Frye, California State University, Bakersfield

Please see the ALA website for the complete call for papers for these and other future events sponsored by the ALA. Thank you for your support of the American Literature Association.

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