

## Melville Society – ALA 2019

### Unsettling Feeling: Melville's Emotions

Talk of Melville and "emotion" may call to mind Moby-Dick's affective extremes: Ahab's monomaniacal fury and the egalitarian exuberance of the crew. But in recent years critics have begun to excavate a range of less focused, recognizable, or stable feelings, which permeate Melville's oeuvre. Sianne Ngai analyzes The Confidence Man's circulation of "fake feeling" and its ambiguous, unstable atonality; Jennifer Greiman has described "misgivings" in Battle-Pieces as a productive "mood of suspension"; and Michael Jonik troubles our visions of squeeze-of-the-hand camaraderie by tracing the "sensation of misanthropy." What other unexpected, in-between, unsettled—or unsettling—feelings might we recover in Melville's texts?

Related questions to consider: How do we understand the political effects of Melville's affects? What linkages might we trace between feelings associated with characters within the diegesis and the "tone" or "mood" of the texts themselves? How can we put Melvillean emotion in dialogue with ongoing debates within literary studies about our field's critical dispositions (e.g. suspicion, distance, enchantment) and emotional investments?

Please submit an abstract of [250-300](#) words and a short bio to [nathan.wolff@tufts.edu](mailto:nathan.wolff@tufts.edu) by January 11th, 2019.

### Melville and Women, Revisited

2019 marks the 200th year since Melville's birth and has inspired varied observances of this anniversary. It also marks 25 years since the first Melville Society panel on Melville and women at ALA. This panel returns to gender theory and scholarship, inviting fresh considerations of women as shapers of culture and the arts, voices of protest and reform, and pioneers in fluid conceptions of gender and identity. How do these contexts influence our understanding of women who inhabit Melville's pages and with whom he lived, worked, corresponded, and met the challenges of 19th-century life and writing? What do we make of unconventional characters like Isabel Banford, Agatha Hatch, Hunilla, or Goneril? What of his queens—Pomaree, Hautia, and "queenly" Ahab? How do 21st-century understandings of race, gender, sexuality, and identity help us frame these presences in Melville's work?

Please submit an abstract of [250-300](#) words and a short bio to [wkelly@mit.edu](mailto:wkelly@mit.edu) by January 11th, 2019.