

Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha 2021
“Faulkner, Welty, Wright: A Mississippi Confluence”
July 18-22, 2021
University of Mississippi
Announcement and Call For Papers
<http://www.outreach.olemiss.edu/events/faulkner>

The forty-eighth annual Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha conference will interrupt its long history of focusing on a single author to take up a trio of Mississippi giants who have left an indelible mark on American literature and modern intellectual life: William Faulkner, Eudora Welty, and Richard Wright. Together they have shaped, and moreover embodied, what we might call a “Mississippi modernism” that has yet to be fully reckoned with by literary scholars. And they have collectively bequeathed to us a bold imaginative encounter with history, society, power, and indeed life in the state, region, nation, and beyond, over a timespan that reaches from white settlement and the Middle Passage to decolonization and the Civil Rights Movement. This legacy, still vital today, invites, and should richly reward, comparative study, so proposals that approach the authors’ work in comparative context will be particularly welcome. Topics might include but are not limited to:

Authorship

- transnational currents in the authors’ lives and careers: itineraries, encounters, constellations
- authorship, publishing, and the literary marketplace: negotiation, frustration, remuneration, etc.
- histories and patterns of critical reception
- the writer as public intellectual, as celebrity, as political figure
- personal encounters, correspondence, or other exchanges between/among the three authors

Aesthetics

- convergent/divergent modernisms: aesthetics, themes, genres, commitments
- structures of feeling: textual or authorial affects, emotions, temperaments
- historical fiction, historical consciousness across/among the three writers
- non-fiction: memoir, poetry, screenwriting, reviewing
- nonliterary media in the creative life: painting, drawing, photography, film, music

History

- representations of poverty and/or in the Great Depression
- literary and intellectual engagements with Cold War culture and politics
- civil and human rights in the writer’s life, work, and world
- intersections of racial, gender, class, and sexual identity; intersectional performances
- accounts/experiences of war or other forms of global conflict; the role of violence in the authorial imagination

Geography

- senses of place: shared visions or competing versions of the plantation, the farm, the school, the prison, the church, the neighborhood, etc.
- senses of (existing) place: shared visions or competing versions of Jackson, the Delta, the Natchez Trace, the Mississippi River, Memphis, etc.

- glimpses of alternate, emergent, or possible Mississippis
- Faulkner, Welty, Wright and/in the environmental humanities
- scaling up: literature at geological, global, planetary, or cosmic scales

The program committee, which will consist of Wright, Welty, and Faulkner scholars, especially encourages full panel proposals for 60-minute conference sessions. Such proposals should include a one-page overview of the session topic or theme, followed by 400-500-word abstracts for each of the panel papers to be included. We also welcome individually submitted 400-500-word abstracts for 15-20-minute panel papers. Panel papers consist of approximately 2,500 words and will be considered by the conference program committee for possible expansion and inclusion in the conference volume published by the University Press of Mississippi.

Session proposals and panel paper abstracts must be submitted by January 31, 2021, preferably through e-mail attachment. All manuscripts, proposals, abstracts, and inquiries should be addressed to Jay Watson, Department of English, C-135 Bondurant Hall, University of Mississippi, P.O. Box 1848, University, MS 38677-1848. E-mail: jwatson@olemiss.edu. Decisions for all submissions will be made by March 15, 2021.