

The Louisa May Alcott Society | Call for Papers
American Literature Association Conference | May 2022

Deadline for Submissions: January 14, 2022

Name of Organization: The Louisa May Alcott Society

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The Louisa May Alcott Society will sponsor two panels at the 33rd Annual Conference of the American Literature Association, to be held May 26-29, 2022, The Palmer House Hilton, 17 East Monroe, Chicago, IL 60603.

Session 1: The Literary Nonfiction of Louisa May Alcott and Mark Twain

Although Alcott and Twain are perhaps most famous for their later novels about young people, they each became famous in the 1860s for their hilarious but often dark nonfiction writings—Alcott’s *Hospital Sketches* (1863) and Twain’s *The Innocents Abroad* (1869)—and both continued writing nonfiction books and sketches throughout their careers. This panel aims to offer a critical reassessment of the significance of Alcott’s and Twain’s nonfiction work, within the context of nineteenth-century society and culture or in light of recent critical perspectives on literary nonfiction as a genre. Attention to major works (such as Twain’s *Life on the Mississippi*, *Roughing It*, and *Innocents* or Alcott’s *Shawl Straps* or *Hospital Sketches*), shorter essays and sketches, travel writings, or political writings (including Alcott’s feminist writings or Twain’s anticolonialist work) are all welcome. Papers comparing the two authors’ writings are encouraged. This session is co-sponsored by The Mark Twain Circle of America.

Session 2: Kiddie Lit, Sassy Sissies, Tattling Tomboys, and More: Honoring Beverly Lyon Clark

For this Alcott Society-sponsored panel, the organizers invite papers about the life and work of Scholar Extraordinaire Beverly Lyon Clark (1948-2021). Bev blazed a trail for the academic study of children’s literature in works such as *Girls, Boys, Books, Toys: Gender in Children’s Literature and Culture* (co-edited with Margaret R. Higonnet, 1999) and *Kiddie Lit: the Cultural Construction of Children’s Literature in America* (2003). In *Alcott Studies*, Bev co-edited “*Little Women*” and *the Feminist Imagination* (with Janice M. Alberghene, 1999) and collected Alcott’s *Contemporary Reviews* (2004). In 2014, she published *The Afterlife of “Little Women”* (2014), drawing from a breathtaking array of resources to trace the scholarly and popular fortunes of Alcott’s most well-known novel. She edited the Norton Critical Edition of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, and recently she published an essay on “The Most Scorned of the Newbery Medalists?: *Daniel Boone* (1940).” With contributions to the scholarship of adaptation, including illustrations, and with an intelligence that knew no bounds, Clark was a formidable, influential, and beloved figure in our field. Presenters should demonstrate how Bev’s scholarship has inspired and/or influenced their own work, honoring her accomplishments while delineating the ways that her scholarship will endure.

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Please send 300-word abstracts for either panel to Gregory Eiselein at eiselei@ksu.edu. The deadline for proposals is Friday, January 14, 2022. Early submissions welcome.

Additional details about the 2022 ALA Conference may be found online at: <http://americanliteratureassociation.org/ala-conferences/ala-annual-conference/> . For more information about the Louisa May Alcott Society, please visit the Society’s website at: <http://www.louisamayalcottssociety.org> .