

Call for Papers: Hawthorne's Sympathies

In her recent work *Rethinking Sympathy and Human Contact in 19th-Century American Literature*, Marianne Noble reconsiders mutual bonds as “confirm[ing] another’s infinite individuality” rather than a “substituting” of one’s “own experience for that of another” (4). Affect and shared subjectivity have long been part of critical conversations on nineteenth-century American literature, particularly in Nathaniel Hawthorne studies. In letters to his fiancée, Sophia Peabody, Hawthorne suggests that “true sympathy” only exists in the “deepest, deepest heart” from one soul to another rather than in a “distant image,” or conception, that exists for a loved person (27 Feb. 1842). Sympathetic attachment within the sentimental-novel tradition and slave narratives have long been argued as part of the readerly experience (Samuels, et al). Nineteenth-century sentimentality, however, could also be viewed in light of social problems, hermeneutics, politics, eroticism, and more. This panel, sponsored by the Nathaniel Hawthorne Society, seeks fresh approaches to Hawthorne and sentimentality but also to affect and feeling, broadly understood, in the long nineteenth-century. Topics might include:

- Hawthorne’s linking of sympathy with nineteenth-century spiritualism,
- nonfictional portrayals of sympathy within *The Notebooks*,
- artwork and pictorial sympathy,
- the role of sympathy in friendships and authorial relationships,
- transatlantic forms of sympathy within long fiction,
- homosocial relationships and sympathy, among others.

Please send abstracts of 250-300 words to Nancy Sweet by (nsweet@csus.edu) by Jan. 18, 2022.

Call for Papers: Antebellum Apocalypse

In the wake of the Second Great Awakening, apocalyptic themes of unveiling, prophecy, battle, resurrection, and judgment abound in the work of Hawthorne, Poe, Melville, Stowe, and others. The uncovering (*apocalypsis*) of hidden truth became almost an obsession for authors who sought to evaluate theological, philosophical, and hermeneutic claims about revelation. In negotiating such claims, these writers look to the hieroglyphics of sealed books and scrolls and to the text of nature as a “vast sheet of record” and a “fitting page for [the] soul’s history” to “write a people’s doom upon” (*Scarlet Letter*). Equally suspicious of American millennialism and transcendentalism, such writers approach the apocalyptic with an effort to see into and beyond the increasing presence of democratic secularism to arrive at the insights that annihilation might bring. The sense of universal cataclysm arising from religious, environmental, and political degradation led to consideration of the meaning of end times, particularly in the face of their own portending apocalypse: the crisis of the Union, the abolition of slavery, the threat of national dissolution, and the onset of war. We invite papers that reflect on antebellum writers, including Hawthorne, whose work ruminates on revelation, judgment and accountability, and the ways in which private concerns relate to public ones in the realms of

religious, environmental, and political stewardship. In our own moment of cultural, ecological, and medical apocalypse, what understanding can antebellum apocalyptic writers extend to us? Please submit paper proposals of 250-300 words to Nancy Sweet at nsweet@csus.edu by January 18, 2022.

The American Literature Association's 33rd annual conference will meet at the Palmer House Hilton in Chicago, IL, May 26-29, 2022. For more information about the conference, please consult the ALA website at www.americanliteratureassociation.org or contact the conference director, Professor Leslie Petty, at pettyl@rhodes.edu or the Executive Director of the ALA, Professor Alfred Bendixen of Princeton University, at ab23@princeton.edu.