

The Carson McCullers Society ~ Call for Papers

American Literature Association Annual Conference

Chicago, IL, May 26-29, 2022

For a proposed session of the 2022 annual meeting of the American Literature Association (ALA), we invite papers that consider the intersections of Carson McCullers's life and writing with issues of social justice. From her earliest publications, such as *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (1940), to her final novel, *The Clock Without Hands* (1961), McCullers is arguably most well-known for her representations of individuals who experience isolation and marginalization within the context of their small-town, Southern communities, often in association with or because of their social identities. McCullers's letters and correspondences, as well as her fiction, persistently demonstrate her deep commitment to anti-fascism and racial justice, as well as her concerns about homophobia and other forms of oppression. We invite papers that examine how McCullers's novels, short fiction, plays, and other works explore and/or address issues of inequality across differences in race, gender, dis/ability, sexuality, class, and other categories of identification. We also invite new scholarship that examines this topic through archival research and/or a biographical lens.

Panelists might consider:

- What are the insights and/or limitations of McCullers's novels, plays, short fiction, and other creative works as social criticism?
- How does McCullers engage with and/or respond to fellow writers and artists as she addresses issues of social inequity, including racism, homophobia, ableism, and other forms of oppression?
- To what extent did McCullers's personal experiences of grief and loss shape her representations of injustice?
- What insights might McCullers's fiction offer into our contemporary historical moment in the U.S.?
- How do our contemporary understandings of race, gender, sexuality, and categories of identification, as well as scholarship in queer theory and critical race and disability studies, shape and influence our readings of McCullers's work?
- How does anti-fascism shape McCullers's participation in the social protest tradition?
- To what extent has McCullers's life and writing informed other works of social protest fiction?

Please send 300-word abstracts and a brief bio or CV to Kristen Proehl at kproehl@brockport.edu. The deadline for proposals is Monday, January 12th, 2022, 5pm EST. Additional details about the 2022 ALA Conference may be found online at: <http://americanliteratureassociation.org/ala-conferences/ala-annual-conference/>