

**Call for Papers - The Toni Morrison Society
American Literature Association Meeting
May 23-26, 2024
Chicago, Illinois**

PANEL I

Reading Toni Morrison's Novels Then and Now

The content of Toni Morrison's novels has remained the same over the decades. Yet, our approaches to reading Morrison's novels alone or in combination with various other texts have shifted over the years. Historical changes, shifts in American and African American literary studies, the rise of digital culture, and other developments all combine to shape engagements with Morrison's works. This panel, "Reading Toni Morrison's Novels Then and Now," will focus on changes in how we analyze, interpret, theorize, or simply read Morrison. How has the abundant scholarship on Morrison prompted approaches to understanding her novels? In what ways do we now read her novels that were less likely 20 and 30 years ago? How have audiobooks and digital devices altered the ways we comprehend Morrison's novels? These questions only signal the many possibilities for submissions on the subject of reading Morrison's novels then and now. Proposals should not be more than one page long and should be submitted by **December 15th**.

PANEL II

Toni Morrison and the Interview as Genre

Through her literature and essays, Toni Morrison has made compelling critical interventions and contributions to *belles lettres*, contributions that catalyzed deeper thinking on a range of topics, including questions related to race, nationality and identity, while advancing the globalization of the novel as a form and genre and helping to transform world literature. Notably, throughout her long and distinguished career as an author, she preferred that critics focus their discussions on her writings rather than her personal background and biography. Still, feature presentations about Morrison's life undergird by interviews—"Toni Morrison - A Day with Toni Morrison" (1978), "The Foreigner's Home" (2018), and "The Pieces I Am" (2019)—make her interviews useful for providing additional insights on her artistry. Not only was her crystalline critical voice was regularly highlighted in media interviews through the years, but such dialogues have also been showcased in several publications—from an early interview in Mari Evans's *Black Women Writers, 1950-1980: A Critical Evaluation* (1984) to *Conversations with Toni Morrison* (1994), edited by Danielle K. Taylor-Guthrie and *Toni Morrison: Conversations* (2008), edited by Carolyn C. Denard, to *Toni Morrison: The Last Interview and Other Conversations* (2020). Since Morrison so profoundly impacted and helped to reshape world literature over the span of nearly a half century, it will be increasingly important to consider ways Morrison used the interview as a critical genre that enabled her to reveal aspects of her artistry meant to move literary criticism about her work from sociological perspectives to craft orientations. Papers for the panel might examine some of the following topics.

- Toni Morrison's television and print interviews;

- Toni Morrison in films and documentaries;
- Toni Morrison's public lectures, award acceptance speeches, and commencement addresses;
- Toni Morrison in dialogue with friends; and
- Toni Morrison's dialogues with the Oprah Book Club and the *Oprah* magazine

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Please submit one-page proposal to

Dr. Michelle Hite, Program Chair and Vice President of the Society

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Scholars may submit proposals to both panels but only one proposal will be selected for presentation.