

Call for Papers

Organized by the Carson McCullers Society

Chair: Alison Bertolini, North Dakota State University

The Carson McCullers Society, in conjunction with The Carson McCullers Center for Writers and Musicians (Columbus State University), invites proposals for a panel at the 35th Annual Conference of the American Literature Association (ALA), May 23-26, 2024, The Palmer House Hilton, 17 East Monroe, Chicago, IL 60603.

In “The Curious Case of Carson McCullers: Appropriation, Allyship, and the Problem of Speaking for Others,” (*Disability Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 42 No. 3-4, 2023), Alexander Steele concludes that Carson McCullers’s “lived experience as a queer disabled woman became a key lens through which she both identified and put to work in her fiction, including her many portraits of impairment.” Steele continues, “In thinking across embodied difference without erasing it, McCullers helps the field reconsider what distinguishes allyship from appropriation and unethical identification, even as she reveals the difficulty in making such judgments.”

This proposed panel broadly seeks papers that engage with Carson McCullers’s writing; however, we are especially interested in papers that center disability and illness in McCullers’s work, question the meaning of allyship and the related fear of speaking for others, and challenge the idea of disability as limitation.

Topics can include but are not limited to:

- Invisible disabilities
- Injury, disability, and physical or sensory impairment
- The intersection of disability and race/gender/sex, etc.
- Spiritual isolation/pain
- Underdogs and outcasts
- The asylum
- Invalidism and hypochondria
- Disability and industrialism
- Embodiment

Abstracts of no more than 400 words, should be sent to Alison Bertolini, Panel Chair, at alison.bertolini@ndsu.edu and to Kristen Proehl, kproehl@brockport.edu by Jan 12. Preliminary inquiries are welcome.