

Society of Early Americanists Panels at American Literature Association, 2025

Contemplating Place in Early American Literature

Boston, New England, and the Northeast hold a deep significance in American literary studies, for instance, in Lisa Brooks's analysis of "the common pot" in Native conceptions of this locale and in numerous studies of Puritan faith and spiritual writing as well as studies of the new political, social, and geographical affiliations formed during the American Revolution. What role do place-based or geographic approaches play in contemporary studies of early American literature? How might attending to place in the Northeast and beyond (re)shape our conceptions of "early America"? And, of course, how do early American authors before 1830 conceptualize the importance of place, the environment, land and water, and the human impact on these places in their writing? Proposals are not limited to the northeast; any considerations of place, land, or environmental approaches are welcome. Please send 250-word paper proposals to madamscampbell@niu.edu by January 22, 2025 for consideration. Proposals from graduate students and independent scholars are welcome.

Gender in Early American Literature

Conflicting notions of gender shaped early America and troubled early Americans. From Deborah Miranda's archival reconstruction of Native California joyas, to the prophecies of "The Public Universal Friend," and disguised soldiers such as Deborah Sampson, early Americans experienced gender as a complex and malleable set of social expectations. This panel seeks papers that consider the work of gender and sexuality broadly construed in early American writing, performance culture, and everyday life before 1830. Proposals that center individuals and communities of color and/or women writers are especially welcome. Please send a 250-word paper proposal to madamscampbell@niu.edu by January 22, 2025 for consideration. Proposals from graduate students and independent scholars are welcome.