

Call for Papers

The Society for the Study of Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States (MELUS)

American Literature Association

37th Annual Conference

May 20-23, 2026

Palmer House

17 East Monroe Street

Chicago, IL 60603

Panel: Where There's Life: Reading Liberated Futures in Multiethnic Literature

Embarking on a journey away from home can be both escaping from current circumstance as well as flight towards imagined futures. Imagining beyond one's dismal present to instead contemplate a better time to come is an act of agency—one that requires hope in the face of fear. MELUS invites individual paper proposals that examine multicultural literatures of the US (i.e., fiction, memoir, or poetry) by ethnic American writers who read visions beyond characters' quotidian and/or extraordinary actions. What does the act of envisioning bring about? Specifically, we are interested in papers that consider how the works of authors from historically excluded populations demonstrate imagination of liberated futures and how they fuel actions of escape.

Please send abstracts of 250 words, a CV, and a short bio to Sherry Johnson at johnsshe@gvsu.edu by January 12, 2026. Presenters must be members of MELUS by the time of the conference. To join or renew, click here:

<http://www.melus.org/members/membership/>.