

EWS CFPs for the American Literature Association 2026

May 20-23, 2026 at the Palmer House, Chicago, IL

Minor Characters in Welty's Fiction

“Narrative meaning,” writes Alex Woloch, “takes shape in the dynamic flux of attention and neglect toward the various characters who are locked within the same story but have radically different positions within this narrative” (*The One and the Many 2*). For this panel, the Eudora Welty Society seeks proposals exploring the rich tapestry of minor figures in Welty's work: characters positioned on the edges of her stories, who receive attention only in passing, who populate the background, who may be instrumental to their narratives but whose interiorities remain unreported. How do such characters help shape the specific meanings of their stories, and what power is actually (and perhaps more poignantly) given to them to do this shaping? What harmonies and/or dissonances do they create with characters more central to the narrative? How do they speak to/for/against dominant social and narrative structures? And how might studying the “dynamic flux of attention and neglect” offer new insights into Welty's fiction?

Send abstracts of 250-400 words and brief bios by December 1st to Michael Pickard (pickawm@millsaps.edu). Earlier statements of interest are strongly encouraged.

New Approaches to Eudora Welty's *The Golden Apples*

This panel invites the presentation of new approaches to the stories in Welty's masterwork, *The Golden Apples*. All new work on the story cycle or individual stories will be considered. Papers presented might grow into future submissions for the volume *New Essays on Eudora Welty's The Golden Apples*, planned for the UPMs series *Critical Perspectives on Eudora Welty*. There is particular need in the area of stories other than "June Recital."

Topics for this panel might include:

- intertextuality among the stories.
- focus on the story-cycle as a genre.
- new readings of a character or story.
- [re]considerations of previously published readings of *The Golden Apples* or its stories.
- the treatment of race in this story cycle written in the years leading up to the civil rights era.
- Welty's revision of literary tradition in her adaptation of literary convention or genre.
- Welty's [re]construction of Mississippi (or the South) in her creation of Morgana.
- Welty's representations of modernity, or of elements of history.
- Welty's uses of allusion.
- consideration of Welty's own westward migration (to SF) influencing this work.
- ecocritical approaches to Welty's depictions of the natural world therein.
- archival reconstruction of Welty's own construction process.
- pedagogical issues in teaching the collection.

- consideration of the collection in the arc of Welty's career.

Send abstracts of 250-400 words and brief bios by December 1st to Harriet Pollack (pollackh@cofc.edu). Earlier statements of interest are strongly encouraged.

FYI—If accepted, graduate students may apply for small travel grants sponsored by the Eudora Welty Society for this conference.