

**Call for Papers (CFP): Catharine Maria Sedgwick Society  
2026 American Literature Association Conference**

**Genre Mobility: Women Writers, Literary Markets, and Career Strategy**

Catharine Maria Sedgwick stands among the earliest professional women writers in the United States, and her long career offers a particularly revealing case study in literary versatility. Over several decades, Sedgwick moved among historical novels, domestic fiction, travel writing, moral tales, short fiction, and children's literature, adapting her literary production to shifting personal interests, publishing opportunities, and market demands. Her career raises enduring questions about how and why women writers have navigated multiple genres across the arc of their professional lives.

The Catharine Maria Sedgwick Society invites proposals that examine genre mobility in the careers of American women writers, using Sedgwick as a touchpoint. To what extent did women writers choose genres out of artistic inclination, and to what extent were those choices shaped or constrained by what could be sold, to whom, and when? How did gendered assumptions about readership influence these decisions?

Possible questions include, but are not limited to:

- How and why have women writers moved among genres at different stages of their careers?
- What role does financial stability, reputation, or market saturation play in prompting generic shifts?
- How does genre affect literary authority, visibility, and critical reception for women writers?
- In what ways does Sedgwick's career anticipate patterns seen in later nineteenth-, twentieth-, or twenty-first-century American women writers?

While Sedgwick remains a focal point for the Society, we welcome proposals that place her in dialogue with women writers beyond her era, including but not limited to writers of the nineteenth century, modernist and postwar authors, and contemporary figures.

**Submission Guidelines:**

Please submit a 250 to Maureen.Tuthill@liu.edu by **January 26**. with the subject line "CMSS ALA Proposal." Proposals for both individual papers and fully constituted panels are welcome. Include a brief biography (100 words) and specify any audio-visual or technical requirements for your presentation.

For more information about the Catharine Maria Sedgwick Society, please visit [cmsedgwickociety.org](https://cmsedgwickociety.org)