

29th Southern Writers/Southern Writing Graduate Student Conference
University of Mississippi
August 7th-8th, 2026

Call for Submissions: Critical and Creative
Supernatural South(s): The Monstrous, The Fantastic, The Grotesque, The Speculative and So
On...

The Southern Writers/Southern Writing Conference (SW/SW) is an interdisciplinary conference, welcoming graduate students, creative writers, activists, and community members with interest in the U.S. or Global South from all departments and fields of study. The 29th meeting of SW/SW will be held at the University of Mississippi from **August 8th-August 9th, 2026**.

“New Orleans, though beautiful and desperately alive, was desperately fragile. There was something forever savage and primitive there. Something that threatened the exotic and sophisticated life both from within and without.” – Anne Rice, *Interview with the Vampire* (1976)

In the wake of the tremendously successful and critically acclaimed Ryan Coogler film *Sinners*, as well as AMC’s recent television remake of Anne Rice’s *Interview with the Vampire* and Netflix’s adaptation of Juan Rulfo’s *Pedro Páramo*, it is apparent that there is a contemporary popular interest in Global South literatures that engage with horror, Gothic, and supernatural themes. What we suggest is that there is a specific intersection between Global South geography, culture, folklore, and history with literature that engages in the fantastic, grotesque, monstrous, and Gothic— and that this intersection can help reveal the interconnected, multicultural, and global nature of Southern writing.

In the spirit of both contemporary Gothic studies’ conception of the “globalgothic” and Southern studies’ conception of the “Global South” we are interested in works that question how notions of horror, the supernatural, and the Gothic are engaged in a discourse that addresses a broader understanding of Southern literature in the context of its long history of colonial exploitation. We are seeking papers that address supernatural fiction, film, folklore or culture within a Global South context that can include speculative fiction, magical realism, supernatural horror, contemporary or past folklore, and others not mentioned here.

The 29th SW/SW Conference calls for scholarship, art, and activism that asks, answers, or troubles the question: **What is it about Southern landscape and places that causes us to think about the supernatural or Gothic? What makes the South a site for speculative literatures as in the work of Anne Rice, Jeff VanderMeer, Octavia Butler, and others?**

We encourage submissions of writing and scholarship from all types of backgrounds and lived experiences, including those who have been historically barred from participation by the exclusionary politics of other conferences.

Example topics for paper submissions may include (but are not limited to!)

- An ecocritical approach that addresses the way in which Southern environments can be made grotesque or monstrous

- The postcolonial Southern social landscape as a site for supernatural literature(s)
- How Global South religious practice may inform or foreground gothic or supernatural narratives
- A gender and sexuality studies approach to a monstrous or marginalized supernatural figure from the Global South
- Southern histories and economies as the backdrop for horror, supernatural or speculative narratives
- Work that engages with magical realism, Global South supernatural literature and folklore, or Gothic literature that refers to the Global South
- Work that engages or challenges contemporary horror narratives in the context of the Global South

Instructions for submission:

For all submissions (research, creative, or activist), please submit a 250-word abstract that explains how the proposal engages with Southern expression or culture and one (or more) of the topics listed above. Please also include a 100-word biography for each presenter. Additionally, for creative submissions, please also submit **ONE** of the following: 1) a 5-page (or less) excerpt of a written creative work; 2) a 10-minute or less excerpt of film or video; 3) a zip folder with images of an artistic or other visual medium.

To apply, complete the [online submission form](#).

We will actively update [the conference website](#) as we approach the dates of the conference.

The deadline for submissions is May 10th, 2026. Accepted presentations will be notified no later than the end of May.

Please direct all questions to [the conference chairs](#).