

Society for the Study of American Women Writers Newsletter

Volume 9
Issue 2

Fall 2008

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Greensboro

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Message from the President

During my weekly visit to the local farmer's market last Saturday, a farmer from whom I regularly buy tallied my balance: "That's twenty-one dollars—no, make it twenty." When I told him that twenty was not enough—having grown up on a farm, I know the hard labor involved in growing plants and animals—he told me about the customer who had just purchased some cucumbers, complaining "A dollar is too much!" I wondered to Mike, could she grow her own? How many of us could?

"We"—and here I mean not just Society members but Americans and world citizens—will need to ponder such questions in the coming years and understand how much we depend on various communities for genuine sustenance (as opposed to the acquisition of "stuff"). Reflecting in this vein, I appreciate the diverse ways in which Society members support one another. Those of you who have visited our new website (still accessible at ssaww.org, ssaww.com, and ssaww.net) may have noticed announcements in the "Community" section for four regional Society group meetings, organized by several energetic volunteers (see also the notices on pages 10-11). Our community also prospers through members volunteering to serve on the Conference Committee and Local Arrangements Committee. As we continue to expand our conference's scope and welcome more contemporary areas of inquiry, I am hoping to organize at least one venue in which members who are themselves "creative" writers have an opportunity to share their work.

(continued on the next page)

President's Message (continued)

ADVISORY
BOARD

Elizabeth Archuleta (2010)
Arizona State University

Dorothy Baker (2008)
University of Houston

Carmen Birkle (2010)
University of Marburg

Lois Brown (2008)
Mount Holyoke College

Edward Brunner (2008)
Southern Illinois
University, Carbondale

Deb Clarke (2009)
Pennsylvania State Univ.

Maria Cotera (2009)
University of Michigan

Elizabeth Maddock Dillon
(2008) Northeastern Univ.

Gregory Eiselein (2008)
Kansas State University

John Ernest (2010)
West Virginia University

Janet Floyd (2009)
King's College, London

Susan Stanford Friedman
(2009) Univ. of Wisconsin

Carmen Gillespie (2009)
Bucknell University

Kirsten Silva Gruesz (2010)
University of California,
Santa Cruz

Deidre Hall (2008)
University of North
Carolina at Greensboro

Looking beyond our professional lives, all of us have opportunities to connect with our local communities. As the economic news worsens daily, many of us have turned our attention to urgent non-academic matters; many, I'm sure, have wondered how, in the context of our sometimes fragmented and harried lives, we can make a difference. Extending our reach beyond the academy, talking with and listening to different voices: I have to believe that these activities can help. Sharing stories may be one of our most important tasks; convincing people to vote this fall is surely another. During the 2000 presidential election, one frequently repeated story was that the choice didn't really matter, since the two candidates were "essentially identical." But, as Barbara Johnson observed many years ago, "Unification and simplification are fantasies of domination, not understanding." If we can help shape the stories that are told and encourage more complex forms of understanding, we will have performed vital service to the many communities to which we each belong. At the very least, the story that "we" can and should go it alone needs to be retired—for good.

—Karen Kilcup

SSAWW Website

The calls for papers, news from regional study groups, and other information in this edition of the SSAWW Newsletter can also be found on our web site, <http://www.ssaww.org>. The Newsletter includes calls for papers received through September 15, but additional calls for papers for the SSAWW Conference are on the web site. Please send all announcements for the web site and the newsletter directly to campbelld@wsu.edu or ssaww.web@gmail.com.

If you have another address listed in your browser's bookmarks, or if you usually Google "SSAWW" to find the site, you may be going to the old site at UNC-Greensboro, which is not being updated. Please use www.ssaww.org (or, as Karen Kilcup notes, ssaww.net or ssaww.com) instead to find the latest SSAWW information.

—Donna Campbell

L e g a c y N o t e s

In 2009, *Legacy* will celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary. Our anniversary observances will include a special issue of the journal, volume 26, number 2, which you will receive early in 2010; special sessions at several conferences, most especially the upcoming SSAWW conference in Philadelphia next fall; and the launch of a special new and redesigned portrait gallery of American women writers on our website. If you haven't yet done so, please make a bookmark for the new journal website (now separate from, but linked to, the new SSAWW website). The address is <http://legacy.ucsd.edu>.

In the future, we'll be adding new features to the journal, and continuing our immensely successful and well-received Profiles and Reprints series. I'd like to take this chance to invite interested scholars to consider submitting Profiles of several writers whose work has become newly interesting (Maria Cristina Mena) and or whose work was foundational to our field (Tillie Olsen, Madeleine B. Stern, and Paula Gunn Allen).

It is with great reluctance that we have accepted the resignation of Dawn Keetley of Lehigh University as a co-editor of *Legacy*. Dawn's brilliance, tact, and sharp eye has improved the content and form of innumerable essays. As an officer of SSAWW, she maintained that organization's website and was a mainstay planner of the 2006 conference in Philadelphia. We shall miss Dawn's hard work, wisdom, and skill and we thank her profusely and wish her all the best.

Theresa Strouth Gaul, of Texas Christian University, has graciously agreed to become a co-editor of the journal, effective immediately. Theresa was a unanimous choice of the editorial collective. She has hit the ground running, as the expression goes, and we look forward to a long and productive working relationship with her.

Denise MacNeil of Redlands University and Rita Bode of Trent University have agreed to serve as reader-consultants to the journal.

Forthcoming in *Legacy* 26.1

Karen A. Weyler, "Marriage, Coverture, and the Companionate Ideal in Early American Fiction"

Kristin Comment, "'When It Ceases to Be Silly it Becomes Actually Wrong': The Cultural Contexts of Female Homoerotic Desire in Rose Terry Cooke's 'My Visitation'"

Margaret A. Toth, "Framing the Body: Imperialism and Visual Discourse in Maria Cristina Mena's Short Fiction"

Neill Matheson, "Woolson's Anthropology of Desire"

Angela Sorby, "The Milwaukee School of Fleshly Poetry: Ella Wheeler Wilcox's Poems of Passion & Popular Aestheticism"

Legacy Reprint: Ellen Gruber Garvey, "Mothering, The Story of a Revolt," by Nina Sutherland Purdy and "More Work for 'Mother': Rural Readers, Farm Papers, and 'The Revolt of 'Mother'"

Legacy Profile: Kathryn Zabelle Derounian-Stodola on Ann Eliza Webb Young

—Nicole Tonkovich

A D V I S O R Y B O A R D

(C O N T I N U E D)

Allison Hedge Coke (2009)
University of Nebraska at
Kearney

Annie Merrill Ingram (2009)
Davidson College

Sherrie Inness (2008)
Miami University of Ohio

Laura Hyun Yi Kang (2009)
University of California,
Irvine

Dawn Keetley (Legacy)
Lehigh University

Shirley Geok-lin Lim (2009)
University of California
at Santa Barbara

Carla Mulford (2008)
Pennsylvania State
University

Sarah Robbins (2008)
Kennesaw State
University

Carol Singley (2010)
Rutgers University,
Camden

Nicole Tonkovich (Legacy)
University of California,
San Diego

Jennifer S. Tuttle (Legacy)
University of New
England

Hanna Wallinger (2009)
University of Salzburg

Elizabeth Wilkinson (2008)
University of St. Thomas

A f f i l i a t e d O r g a n i z a t i o n s

American Humor Studies Association (AHSA)	Evelyn Scott Society
American Women Writers of Color	Harriet Beecher Stowe Society
Association for the Study of American Indian Literatures (ASAIL)	James/Susan Fenimore Cooper Society
Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE)	Katherine Anne Porter Society
Carson McCullers Society	Margaret Fuller Society
Catharine Maria Sedgwick Society	Nineteenth-Century American Women Writers' Study Group
Charlotte Perkins Gilman Society	Nineteenth-Century American Women Writers' Research Group (UK)
Children's Literature Society	Research Society for American Periodicals
Constance Fenimore Woolson Society	Society for American Jewish Literature
Edith Wharton Society	Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing (SHARP)
Elizabeth Bishop Society	Society of Early Americanists
Ellen Glasgow Society	Susan Glaspell Society
Emily Dickinson International Society	Willa Cather Society
Eudora Welty Society	

S S A W W 2 0 0 9 C a l l s f o r P a p e r s

SSAWW Conference
Fourth Conference of the Society for the Study of American Women Writers
October 21-24, 2009
Sheraton Society Hill, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

We invite submissions of proposals for panels, roundtables, workshops, or individual papers. We welcome sessions on U.S. women authors and themes from the seventeenth through the twenty-first century; sessions and papers that compare U.S. women writers to writers of other nations are also welcome. The deadline for proposals is December 31, 2008. All conference participants must be members of SSAWW. Each member's name can appear in the program twice – once as a presenter and once in some other capacity (chair, commentator, roundtable participant, etc.).

Proposals for entire sessions should include: (1) a paragraph describing the session as a whole; (2) a one-page abstract of each paper; (3) a one-page cv for each participant. The conference prefers four presenters per session, excluding the chair, although submissions for panels of three presenters will be considered. Proposals for individual papers should include a one-page abstract and a one-page c.v.

Affiliated societies and organizations have one panel automatically included in the conference program. Affiliates' contact persons should send panel titles with a list of participants, panel format, and presentation titles (if applicable). Proposals should specify if audio/visual equipment is needed. However, due to the high cost, we ask that presenters request equipment only if it is essential.

All submissions should be sent electronically by the December 31, 2008 deadline to Carolyn Sorisio (csorisio@wcupa.edu). Please send proposals as Microsoft Word attachments. If that is not possible, then paste the information into an email.

SSAWW 2009 Calls for Papers

Charlotte Perkins Gilman in Dialogue. The Charlotte Perkins Gilman Society invites papers for the Fourth Conference of the Society for the Study of American Women Writers to be held in Philadelphia October 21-24, 2009. We invite submissions that explore the intersections and continuities of Gilman's work with that of other women authors writing within different national, cultural, or social contexts. Papers may address the explicit or implicit dialogues between Gilman's work and that of other women writers from other nations, or scrutinize similar agendas or comparable discursive gestures in the work of women writers belonging to different ethnic communities within the U.S. If interested, please submit a one-page abstract with a one-page c.v. to Mariela Mendez at mendezmariela@hotmail.com by October 31, 2008. Participants will need to be or become members of the Charlotte Perkins Gilman Society.

Susan Glaspell's *Alison's House* and the Legacy of Emily Dickinson. We invite proposals considering any aspect of the relationship between the Emily Dickinson legend and Glaspell's 1931 Pulitzer Prize winning drama. Topics might include, but are not limited to: the relationship between the Dickinson biographies (Taggard's and/or others) or other treatments of the Dickinson legend and Glaspell's play; comparisons between *Alison's House* and other dramas about the Dickinson legend; comparisons of Glaspell's and Dickinson's writing; historical analyses of the controversial Eva Le Gallienne production of *Alison's House* or its critical reception; new directions in the study of *Alison's House* alone or in combination with other Glaspell works. Please send proposals by Nov. 15, 2008 to J. Ellen Gainor (jeg11@cornell.edu).

Rediscovering Native American Women's Literature. This roundtable focuses on the recovery and publication of early Native American women's literature. What do these texts have to tell us about women's literature and American Indian studies? How might they challenge the paradigms of these fields? What are the particular challenges that such projects entail? Please submit one-page abstracts and a one-page cv to Cari Carpenter (Cari.Carpenter@mail.wvu.edu) by December 1, 2008.

Call for Papers on E.D.E.N. Southworth and Other Lesser Known 19th-C. Novelists. For the 2009 SSAWW conference, I'd like to organize a session on Southworth and other less frequently studied 19th-C. American women novelists. Papers could focus on Southworth alone or other female novelists writing in the second half of the 19th century. Please send a one-page abstract and one-page cv to Beth Lueck at lueckb@uww.edu by 1 December 2008.

Stowe's Failure: *Dred* and the Politics of Unpopular Fiction. The Harriet Beecher Stowe Society welcomes proposals for its panel at the upcoming SSAWW conference. This panel focuses on the aesthetic and political aspects of Harriet Beecher Stowe's second antislavery novel, *Dred* or *A Tale of the Dismal Swamp*. Since much of the resurgence in Stowe criticism relies on the popularity of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *Dred* continues to occupy a minor position in the literary canon. How did *Dred* affect contemporary literary and political movements? How have modern scholars situated *Dred* in relation to the popularity of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*? Does *Dred* mark the end of Stowe's sympathy with slaves and their descendants? Please submit one-page abstracts and a one-page CV to Tess Chakkalakal (tchakkal@bowdoin.edu) by December 1, 2008.

Jewish American Women Writers. CFP: Papers for a proposed panel on late-nineteenth and turn-of-the-century Jewish American women writers. Please send abstracts to Barbara Cantalupo, bac7@psu.edu by December 1, 2008.

SSAWW 2009 Calls for Papers (continued)

Research Society for American Periodicals. The Research Society for American Periodicals is delighted to sponsor two sessions at the Fourth Conference of the Society for the Study of American Women Writers to be held in Philadelphia October 21-24, 2009.

1. Women Periodical Essayists. Paper proposals are welcomed on any topic related to American periodical essayists, from Judith Sargent Murray's "Gleaner" through Fanny Fern and on into the 20th century. This panel is especially interested in American women writers who focused throughout their career on the periodical essay form. It especially seeks papers that explore the way in which women utilized, revised or interrogated traditional conventions of the essay and its related forms, and which examine the relation between gender and generic form. Please send a 250-500 word abstract and 1-page vita to Jared Gardner (gardner.236@osu.edu) by November 10, 2008. Proposals should specify if audio/visual equipment is needed. Panelists chosen for this session must be members of both RSAP and SSAWW.

2. Advice Columns, Letters Columns, and Conversation Columns in Periodicals. Women have long been associated with the magazine advice column, a widely disparaged form. But advice columns, letters columns, and other arenas for conversing with the editors and with other readers build the sense of community that the periodical convenes. How have women contributed to that as writers-in or editors of such features? Papers for this panel might examine letters columns, community conversation features (such as the Boston Globe's long-running "Chatters" column), advice columns, or a related feature. Papers might address such questions as:

- Are such features the forerunners of present-day community-conversation features on present-day blogs and periodical websites?
- What is the relationship of such columns to the rest of the periodical?
- Have they been freeing or confining venues for women's writing? Did they offer special opportunities to women?
- What aesthetics and ideologies have such columns promulgated?
- How is such writing related to other writing opportunities?

Please send a 250-500 word abstract and 1-page vita to ellengarvey@earthlink.net by November 10, 2008. Proposals should indicate if audio/visual equipment is needed. Panelists chosen for this session must be members of both RSAP and SSAWW.

Un-Mothers/Mothering in American Women's Writing. Feminist theory and literary criticism has had much to say about the role of motherhood in American literature, from theories of "republican motherhood" to early domestic manuals like Lydia Maria Child's *The Mother's Book*, from the maternal (and/or the absent mother) in women's sentimental fiction to the slave narrative, from the connection between motherhood and creativity to the mother's psychic power in psychoanalytic terms. What has been left out of our criticism is the role that un-mothers (and mothering) have played in American communities, families, and individual lives. This panel then is interested in critical treatments of women without children in literature from any period and genre of American literature (including poetry, drama, fiction, and/or memoir). Whether by choice or circumstance, how have such women been portrayed? How have they represented themselves without the supposed marker of "true" femininity and womanhood? How are such categories altered by race, sexuality, class? Where are the scenes of un-mothering in American literature? Why have we been silent on and hesitant to theorize such women? How have women writers negotiated the place of the un-mother? Please send a 500 word abstract and one-page CV to Maglina Lubovich at mlubovich@drake.edu by December 1, 2008.

The Emily Dickinson International Society. The Emily Dickinson International Society (EDIS) invites proposals on any topic related to Dickinson, especially in relation to other American women writers (topics might include influence, affiliations, reception, conditions of writing practice, and more). Send one-page proposals by December 1 to either vrpollak@wustl.edu or msmith@umd.edu.

SSAWW 2009 Calls for papers (continued)

Proposed Panel: Religion and Rebellion in 19th-Century American Women's Writing. 19th-Century American women's culture was immersed in religious doctrine and practice and many female authors of the era deployed representations of faith as a vehicle of cultural rebellion. However, women's use of religion as a subversive touchstone varied widely. Activists like Harriet Beecher Stowe used a feminine, Christian ethos as a badge of moral superiority and as a warrant for radical political advocacy. Other female authors, such as Emily Dickinson, rebelled against mainstream Christianity itself, and some, like Sarah Piatt, figured religion as a vehicle of patriarchal control to be resisted. This panel will explore 19th-century women's use of religion both as a weapon for and target of cultural critique. Please email a one page abstract of proposed papers and a one page cv to Mary Wearn (mary.wearn@maconstate.edu) by December 5th.

British Influence and American Originality in Early American Novels. Launching from some of the thinking we did this summer at the Transatlantic Women's conference, I'd like to propose a panel for the 2009 SSAWW that situates early American novels (late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century texts) within the context of their British/Anglo-Irish/French/transatlantic predecessors and contemporaries. For example, much mention has been made of the various American Clarissas, but what other texts are ideological or literary models for early American women novelists? And what can we learn by reading American novels with their British counterparts? I'm personally interested in presenting a paper on Rebecca Rush's *Kelroy* (1812) and its connections with Fanny Burney's *Evelina* (1778), as well as other Anglo-Irish/British influences on Rush's novel, and I'm seeking others to create a full panel organized loosely around other studies of influence. Contact Jill Kirsten Anderson at jiander@siue.edu. Send a one-page abstract and one-page CV by 1 December 2008.

Postbellum Sentimentalism(s). Sentimentalism survived the Civil War, but in what form? This panel will explore manifestations of a residual mode in an era whose canon has been traditionally defined by the emergent modes of realism and naturalism. Of particular interest are papers exploring how women writers used sentimental forms and conventions in the Gilded Age, including papers that uncover presently obscure works whose one-time popular success led Howells to bemoan "a fungus crop of sentiment" perpetually blighting American literature. Panelists might also address the following questions: What was being sentimentalized after the war? Was it still the mother, home, and child (or dependent)? Was sentimentalism primarily a feminine mode? Did it remain middle-class and "middlebrow"? How did minority writers make use of sentimentalism? How did the "cultural work" and formal devices of postbellum sentimentalism change in the face of a changing world? Please submit one-page abstracts and a one-page CV to Cynthia J. Davis (cjdavis@sc.edu) by December 1, 2008.

Edith Wharton and Women's Cultures. This panel sponsored by the Edith Wharton Society seeks papers that think about the relation between Edith Wharton's work and life and all kinds of "women's cultures," from reading groups to working girl clubs to wartime-nursing and charity work to knitting etc. All approaches welcome. Please send 250-500 word abstract and a one page cv to Hildegard Hoeller, at hilhllr@aol.com by December 1, 2008.

New Directions in Elizabeth Stoddard Scholarship: A Roundtable Discussion of Two Men. The Elizabeth Stoddard Society and the Texas Regional SSAWW Study Group seek participants for a roundtable discussion at the Fourth Conference of the Society for the Study of American Women Writers (SSAWW) in Philadelphia from October 21-24, 2009. We invite submissions on Stoddard's second novel, *Two Men* (1865), recently published by the University of Nebraska Press, which also serves as the common text for the Texas Study Group's meeting on Nov. 1, 2008. The roundtable will consist of 5 presenters speaking on their unique topic for 10 minutes each, followed by discussion with the entire audience. Abstracts should indicate how the participants' comments will seek to encourage and facilitate broader audience discussion. Interested participants should send abstracts and a one-page CV to Elizabeth Stockton (stockton@southwestern.edu) within the body of their e-mails by December 1, 2008. No attachments, please. For the full call for papers, go to www.ssaww.org.

Affiliated Organizations
 Calls for Papers

Constance Fenimore Woolson Society Eighth Biennial Conference

"Region, History, Environment: Constance Fenimore Woolson and Her Contemporaries Write the Natural World."

West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia April 16-19, 2009

Even a brief excursion into the writings of Constance Fenimore Woolson (1840-1894) reveals the author's interest in the natural world. An amateur botanist, Woolson was no detached appreciator of picturesque landscapes; she was attuned to the details of the environment and alive to the changes an industrialized nineteenth century was working on the places of America. The eighth biennial meeting of the Constance Fenimore Woolson Society will focus on Woolson's knowledge of and interest in the natural environment as she rendered it in her travel sketches, fiction, poetry, and letters. All papers are welcome, but participants might consider the ways in which Woolson's contemporaries were engaging specific physical locations, as well as more generally depicting land and landscape. Possible topics include but are not limited to these:

- landscapes, real and imagined tourism as industry
- swamps, coastlines, mountains, rivers the development of regional identities
- urban/rural tensions travel writing
- the idea of wilderness writing Appalachia
- women and mechanized industry natural science, plants, collecting
- railroads, mass transportation botany in the nineteenth century
- late nineteenth-century industrialization literature and ecology
- the environmental consciousness of Woolson's contemporaries, beginning with Rebecca Harding Davis, Mary Murfree, and Sarah Orne Jewett

Please send 250 word abstracts to Kathryn McKee (kmckee@olemiss.edu) at the University of Mississippi, Department of English, University, MS 38677 by November 15, 2008.

Eighth Biennial ASLE Conference

"Island Time: The Fate of Place in a Wired, Warming World."

University of Victoria, British Columbia June 3-6, 2009

The Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) invites proposals for its Eighth Biennial Conference, to be held June 3-6, 2009, at the University of Victoria, in British Columbia, Canada, on the theme of "Island Time: The Fate of Place in a Wired, Warming World." We seek proposals for papers, panels, roundtables, workshops, and other public presentations connecting language, nature, and culture. As always, we welcome interdisciplinary approaches; readings of environmentally inflected fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction; and proposals from outside the academic humanities, including submissions from artists, writers, practitioners, activists, and colleagues in the social and natural sciences.

This year's theme uses the conference's temporal and spatial location on Vancouver Island as a metaphor for the past and future of place generally. In particular, it reflects the fact that ASLE's first conference outside the U.S. is a fitting location to consider how the Internet and globalization now connect us all (linking our different identities, nations, and communities), as well as how the threat of climate change is affecting our interpretation of texts and cultures, not to mention the material world itself.

Building on the colloquial expression "you're now on island time," the theme suggests our interest in exploring intersecting questions of time and place, and of isolation and community, in a global era in which there are no longer any "islands" of nature outside of history and technology. Indeed, time appears to be running out as we seek ways to address ecological disasters that risk turning the planet as a whole into another "Easter Island." (continued on next page)

A f f i l i a t e d O r g a n i z a t i o n s C a l l s f o r P a p e r s
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ASLE (continued). For this reason, we also urgently wish to consider the interconnected subjects of indigeneity, race, and social justice, in the Americas and globally, the engagement of which is crucial to achieving a sustainable society. For information on plenary speakers, proposal topics, and submission guidelines, visit <http://asle.uvic.ca/>. All proposals must be submitted by November 15, 2008.

Call For Papers: Emily Dickinson's Reading (journal issue). What happened when Emily Dickinson sat down to read, and what did she do with what she found? For a special issue of the Emily Dickinson Journal, we seek essays exploring her deep immersion in the written word. How did her reading influence her thinking and her writing? Essays might—though are not obliged to—theorize what Dickinson did with what she read. According to one biographer, Dickinson's engagement with literature was "burrlike"—choice bits would attach to her and stick. On the other hand, other scholars have suggested that she engaged more deliberately with the ideas and aesthetics of her "kinsmen of the shelf." The essays in this volume might address this distinction. Why did she claim she never touched "paint mixed by another person" when clearly she did? Contributions could argue for traces of semi-conscious influence or for a more sustained and earnest engagement with what she read. We welcome studies of still-unexhausted warhorses like hymnody and the Bible; perennially rich areas such as contemporary fiction and poetry; juvenilia like primers, textbooks, conduct manuals, and gift books; as well as any discourses in the wider world that filtered through Amherst in any conceivable fashion: legal documents, marketing and advertising materials, travel literature, journalism, philosophy, political polemics, reports of war and combat, comic performance, agricultural pamphlets—all manifestations of the burgeoning print culture of her time.

Finished essays will be 25-35 pages in length, including notes and bibliography (double-spaced, 12-point font). Please send a one-page proposal and an abbreviated CV by April 1, 2009, to the Co-Editors, Dan Manheim and Marianne Noble, at dan.manheim@centre.edu and mnoble@american.edu. Finished papers will be due August 15, 2009.

The International Cather Seminar 2009: "Cather, Chicago and Modernism."
University Center, Chicago, IL, June 25-28, 2009.

The 12th International Seminar will focus on Willa Cather's relationship to broader formations of cultural and literary modernism. How, and in what ways, is Cather a modernist (if at all)? Cather described *Death Comes for the Archbishop* as a "narrative"; does this kind of description point to a radical, experimental fiction-making? To what extent did she also resist and reject the "modern"? The Seminar encourages papers that will address a wide range of intersections and connections between the full range of Cather's work and modernism/modernity.

The Seminar will take place in the downtown "University Center," Chicago, IL, and will include events focused on specific literary/cultural sites within that area. We thus encourage papers that counterpoint Cather and Chicago within turn of the century culture. The Seminar solicits papers analyzing the musical, visual, architectural and urban cultures of Chicago, and their representation in Cather's work (for instance, in *Lucy Gayheart*). The broader question of how Chicago has figured within the national literary imagination will naturally serve as another focus for the program. Diverse critical and theoretical perspectives are encouraged.

Interested contributors should submit abstracts of 500 words with a cover letter and brief résumé by January 26, 2009. Persons whose proposals are accepted will be expected to submit final papers by May 1, 2009. Papers should be 10-12 double-spaced pages for a 20 minute presentation time.

Submit proposals by January 26, 2009, to Guy Reynolds, Cather Seminar Director, 337D Andrews Hall, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE 68588-0333.

News from SSAWW Regional Study Groups

Southern California Nineteenth-Century American Women Writers Group

A southern California nineteenth-century American women writers group is now forming. This group will be a collegial, non-hierarchical study group, affiliated with SSAWW. Our primary meeting format will be focused, moderated discussions of research topics related to the study of texts written by American women in the nineteenth century. We will have our first meeting in conjunction with the PAMLA conference at the Claremont Colleges in Claremont, California.

We will meet Friday, November 7th, from 11 a.m. to noon at the Claremont Graduate University Humanities Resource Center, 131 E. Tenth Street (between Dartmouth and College Avenues). This first meeting will be an informal get-together to begin getting acquainted, provide information, etc. All are welcome to this meeting in conjunction with PAMLA (whether attending the conference or not), but you do not need to be at this meeting in order to be a part of the group.

If you would like more information or are interested in becoming part of the group, please send an email to scssaww@ucsd.edu so that we can put your on our electronic mailing list. If you are interested in helping us with the group, have suggestions for topics or texts to study, etc., please also let us know that in your email. Our first discussion meeting will take place in early spring 2009 at the University of Redlands (exact date to be determined). Announcement of the spring '09 meeting will be sent to everyone on the mailing list. Finally, please also pass this announcement on to your graduate students and other colleagues who share our interests.

- Denise MacNeil, University of Redlands
- Nancy Sheley, California State University, Long Beach
- Lisa Thomas, University of California, San Diego
- Nicole Tonkovich, University of California, San Diego

Pacific Northwest SSAWW Study Group

Society members are beginning to organize the first meeting of the Northwest SSAWW Research Group. To be put on the e-mail list for information, please contact Lydia Fisher, Department of English, University of Puget Sound, 1500 N. Warner St. #1045, Tacoma, WA 98416-1045 or lfisher@ups.edu.

Washington, D. C. SSAWW Study Group

The D.C.-Area American Women Writers Study Group will hold its first meeting on Friday, October 31st, 2008, at the Library of Congress. We will have a morning session, led by LOC staffers, focusing on the practicalities of researching the life and work of lesser-known women writers, and an afternoon seminar-style discussion of celebrity and obscurity centered around brief texts written by two pairs of better- and lesser-known, but thematically similar, women writers. Anyone is welcome to attend either or both sessions, and the lunch in between. For more information, or to be added to an e-list carrying announcements of future meetings, please contact Cathy Saunders at csaunde1@gmu.edu.

SSAWW Panels at ALA 2009 in Boston

The SSAWW will sponsor two panels at next year's American Literature Association Conference in Boston, Massachusetts on May 21-24, 2009. The topics are open. Please visit www.ssaww.org for more information on these panels.

News from SSAWW Regional Study Groups

Texas Regional SSAWW Study Group, November 1, 2008

We are pleased to announce the first meeting of the Texas Regional SSAWW Study Group, which is modeled on the successful New England 19th Century American Women Writers Study Group and builds on SSAWW's goal to encourage and facilitate such regional study groups. The first meeting will take place at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth on November 1. Activities will commence at noon with a luncheon, provided by TCU, and discussion will take place from 1:30-4:30. An optional dinner will follow at a local restaurant.

The common text for this first meeting is Elizabeth Stoddard's *Two Men*, newly published by University of Nebraska Press. [<http://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu/product/Two-Men,673326.aspx>]. Jennifer Putzi, the novel's editor, will be present at the meeting. The discussion period will not be comprised of a talk or presentation but will consist of free-flowing and lively conversation about the book that involves all participants of the study group. All attendees should therefore read the novel in advance of the meeting.

In addition to colleagues across Texas, we also welcome participants from Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico and elsewhere. Grad students are welcome. Please spread the word! If you are interested in attending the meeting, email t.gaul@tcu.edu or dhenderson@uta.edu for more information.

—Desiree Henderson, Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Texas-Arlington
—Theresa Strouth Gaul, Associate Professor, Department of English, TCU

Grants and Fellowships

More grants and fellowships, including several from the Massachusetts Historical Society, are listed at the SSAWW site, www.ssaww.org.

Maine Women Writers Collection Research Support Grant Program, 2008-9

The Maine Women Writers Collection at the University of New England in Portland, Maine, solicits applications for its Research Support Grant Program. These grants are intended for faculty members, independent researchers, and graduate students at the dissertation stage who are actively pursuing research that requires or would benefit from access to the holdings of the Maine Women Writers Collection.

MWWC Research Support Grants will range between \$250 and \$1000, and may be used for transportation, housing, and research-related expenses. For application instructions and more information about the program and the Collection holdings, please see the MWWC website at <http://www.une.edu/mwwc/research/grants.asp>. Questions may be directed to Cally Gurley, MWWC Curator, at (207) 221-4324; cgurley@une.edu. Deadline for receipt of applications: December 1, 2008.

The SSAWW Newsletter is published twice a year, Spring and Fall. The Newsletter is distributed as a benefit of membership to SSAWW members, and a copy is sent to a representative of each affiliated organization. Back issues are available at the SSAWW site, www.ssaww.org. For information on membership, contact Melissa Homestead, mhomestead2@unl.edu. Organizations interested in affiliation with SSAWW should contact Karen L. Kilcup, President, academic@karenkilcup.org. Announcements should be sent to Donna Campbell, Editor, SSAWW Newsletter, at campbelld@wsu.edu or ssaww.web@gmail.com.

Deadlines: Spring issue, March 15; Fall issue, September 15.

Society for the Study of American
Women Writers Newsletter

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