

SSAWW Triennial Conference

October 10-13, 2012; Westin Tabor Center, Denver, Colorado

Call for Proposals

Key dates:

Monday, February 6, 2012: Proposals due to ssawwconf@gmail.com; see page 2 for directions.

May 2012: Acceptance notifications sent

June 30, 2012: Program schedule announced

Note: Presenters must be members of SSAWW by the “early/discounted” date for conference registration in the fall of 2012.

Participants presenting one formal academic paper may also appear on the program in additional ways (e.g., as a respondent, on a roundtable, or in a “professionalization” session.)

Theme: Citizenship and Belonging

For the fall 2012 Conference of the Society for the Study of American Women Writers (SSAWW), we are issuing a special invitation for session and paper proposals linked to the theme of “Citizenship and Belonging.” **As in the past, the conference organizers will welcome proposals on any topic related to the study of American women writers, broadly conceived.** However, we are also eager to capitalize on the conference opportunity to promote conversations—both “in the moment” and sustained—around a shared theme.

Why “Citizenship and Belonging”?

Historically speaking, these have been concerns of American women authors from their earliest writings, published and unpublished, and they remain concerns today. Long before the 1848 Declaration of Sentiments, women writers raised questions about how they could participate in the leadership of new American communities; similarly, contemporary women respond to the day’s political events and social trends in many forms of the written word. Just as women of all backgrounds considered the parameters of “Americanness”—its inherence or its acquisition, its stability or fluidity, its necessity or its superfluity—their contemporary counterparts are using both old-fashioned forms and cutting-edge technologies to reimagine the United States and its people for the 21st century. Whether one thinks of Harriet Jacobs pondering her own “sale” in 19th-century New York, Jhumpa Lahiri imagining connections across seas and generations in her short fiction, or young writers seizing the potential of the internet and social media to create their own publishing worlds, women writers have always, and perhaps always will, wrestle with what it means to belong.

Citizenship—how to claim it, how best to exercise it, and where its boundaries lie—is at the heart of much women’s writing. Citizenship can be constructed in many ways, both legally and culturally, and can be explored in terms of race, class, ethnicity, family, sexuality, economics, religion, place, and region—in short, from multiple perspectives and through multiple lenses. It can also be investigated as a question of form and genre: what kinds of writing “belong,” and to what realms or entities do they claim entry?

We hope our fall 2012 conference will provide an array of opportunities for examining these interrelated themes of “Citizenship and Belonging,” even as we continue to honor the many other topics and organizing principles that have made our field so dynamic. So, as we build a strand of theme-related sessions, we encourage SSAWW members to consider these two terms—citizenship and belonging—either together, in dialogue with each other, or individually, as productive lenses for exploring the heritage, current work, and future promise of American women writers.

Directions for Completing and Submitting Your Proposal

Note: Please use TIMES NEW ROMAN 12 POINT for all your information. Also, due to the increasing cost of AV equipment in conference settings, we urge all presenters to use alternative approaches such as handouts. If AV is essential to your presentation, you need to include a note to that effect at the end of the proposal.

If you need any other type of special accommodations in the room where your session is scheduled, provide that request with your proposal as well.

I. For a complete session (roundtable, panel, or alternative format such as mini-workshop), create a word file with the information listed below provided in the order requested.

Name of session as it should appear in the program:

Session chair's name and institutional affiliation: _____

Name of presenter #1: _____

Institutional affiliation: _____

Title of presentation: _____

Name of presenter #2: _____

Institutional affiliation: _____

Title of presentation: _____

Name of presenter #3: _____

Institutional affiliation: _____

Title of presentation: _____

[Repeat data listed above for any additional presenters.]

Provide a brief paragraph describing the content and goals of the session as a whole. Then, in order of anticipated presentation, give a several-sentence description of each paper/element in the session. Provide a paragraph-length professional biography of each presenter. Give the email address for the person who should be notified about the results of proposal review.

II. For a single paper (which conference planners would connect to other appropriate submissions to form a full session)

Your name: _____

Institutional affiliation: _____

Title of presentation: _____

Provide a brief paragraph describing the content or your proposed presentation and a paragraph-length professional biography. List the email address to be used for notification.

Email your proposal in a single attachment to ssaww-conf@gmail.com no later than February 6, 2012. Please make sure your file name includes your last name—e.g., Smith-ssaww2012.

Questions about the conference? Contact Sarah Robbins (s.robbsins@tcu.edu) or Maria Sanchez (mcsanche@uncg.edu), conference co-chairs, or Deb Clarke, SSAWW President (Deborah.Clarke@asu.edu). We hope to see you in Denver in October, 2012.