

[Queering the U.S. South](#)

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Call for Papers

Date:

June 14, 2018

Location:

United States

Subject Fields:

African American History / Studies, American History / Studies, Humanities, Literature, Digital Humanities

For the annual conference of the South Atlantic MLA (SAMLA) in Birmingham, AL November 2-4, 2018.

This panel is sponsored by the Emerging Scholars Organization, an affiliate of the Society for the Study of Southern Literature.

The queer/quare South has long been an important aspect of the region's cultural and literary imagination. Stories by authors such as Tennessee Williams, Dorothy Allison, Truman Capote, Alice Walker, and Fannie Flagg (to name a few) provide a rich discourse surrounding queerness, while narratives such as the film *Moonlight*, the graphic novel *Stuck Rubber Baby*, and the podcast *S-Town* move the discussion beyond the written word and into other forms of storytelling. As Michael Bibler explains, "a queer study of the region means doing more than simply pointing out aberrant forms of gender, desire, eroticism, and identity [. . .] it also enables a systemic critique of the larger social and ideological structures that define normativity and transgression both within the region and at the junctures between the region and nation." In other words, embracing a study of queerness allows us to explore not only gender and sexuality but also the presuppositions of normative behavior in general, which can open up new discourses surrounding regional difference and normative prescriptions about "right" and "wrong" action. It allows us to dig into assumptions made by dominant cultures and to push back against the oppressive structures that often result from normative ideologies. This panel, then, seeks to address how the region is queer(ed), and looks for submissions that explore the many ways queerness is deployed in the loosely defined South. We welcome a wide range of topics and encourage work that touches on how we can queer the South both in our reading of texts and in our actions as teachers and members of the larger community. Additionally, we welcome examinations of a range of print and non-print media, from conventional literary forms to multimedia and performance art.

Possible topics include:

- How does race and/or class play into our considerations of queerness?
- How do queer narratives from or about the South resist or counter more mainstream narratives about the region?
- What is a queer southern narrative? What makes a queer narrative southern? What makes a southern narrative queer?

- How have southern cultures influenced LGBTQIA+ politics, and vice versa?
- How do queer presences in the South queer southern ethics and morality?
- How do we queer faith, religion, and/or spirituality in the South?
- How do we queer our classrooms, and what role does the South play in this queering?

Other topics related to these questions are also more than welcome. Please submit by June 14th, a 250-word abstract, brief bio, and A/V requests to the ESO email address: emergingscholarsorg@gmail.com.

Contact Email:

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