

## [Female Death Work and Feminist Deathways in the American South, chapters for edited volume](#)

Discussion published by Jamie Warren on Wednesday, March 13, 2019

Type:

Call for Papers

Date:

September 1, 2019

Subject Fields:

African American History / Studies, American History / Studies, Native American History / Studies, Slavery, Women's & Gender History / Studies

### Call for Papers

**Working Title:** *Female Death Work and Feminist Deathways in the American South*

**Editors:** Kami Fletcher, Delaware State University  
Kristine McCusker, Middle Tennessee State University  
Jamie Warren, Borough of Manhattan Community College, CUNY

**Subject Fields:** American History, Southern History, African American History, Native American History, Death and Dying, Women's & Gender History / Studies

**Deadline for Submissions:** September 1, 2019

Long before hospitals, hospice, and health care professionals, there were midwives, shrouding women and layers-out-of-the dead. Death and dying was in the home and deemed the responsibility of women. When someone was dying, it was the women who cared for them. When there was a confirmed death in the community, it was the women who were first called to conduct the mourning, handle the body, and organize obsequies. Robert Wesley Habenstein and William Mathias Lamers, in their foundational work *The History of American Funeral Directing*, called the home “the central point of mourning” and described early death work as emotional work. Yet the history of death work begins with male carpenters who made coffins and the male sextons who dug the graves. This female past/masculine present hides what were (and are) complicated and evolving systems of death care.

This call for papers, tentatively entitled *Female Death Work and Feminist Deathways in the American South*, is for an edited volume that focuses specifically on the history of women, gender, and death in the American South to be published by an academic press. Recent scholarship has demonstrated that the South does indeed possess a unique history of death and dying. Southern terrain and climate, western

expansion and forced migrations, the centrality of slavery, the cultural impact of African cosmologies and social practices, the Civil War and Reconstruction, white terrorism, the globalization of the American South, and a distinct and uneven shift toward modern industry and institutions all worked to produce regionally-marked mortality rates and southern deathways. This volume will build on such scholarship with a sharpened focus on the role of women and gender in shaping the southern history of death.

Moreover, we are also interested in work that sees death practices from the American South appearing globally, and global death practices appearing in the American South. Within the scope of this volume, American South is defined broadly to include the southern United States, Mexico, Central and South America. This American South offers unique ways of understanding how southern culture has influenced gender and impacted women's place in death care. This American South promises to offer a deeper comprehension of death norms and ideology where women are central as well as a unique way of showing how gender and death intersect to undergird women's roles within death. While the volume remains rooted in historical inquiry, we also welcome contributions from other disciplines such as anthropology, archeology, human geography, women and gender studies, critical theory, and medical sociology. All time periods are welcome, from pre-colonial to the twenty-first century.

**Address All Questions, Submissions, etc. to:** [femaledeathwork@gmail.com](mailto:femaledeathwork@gmail.com)

**Abstract Submission Guidelines:**

- 250-word abstract with working bibliography
- Include a title, your name, e-mail address, and affiliation if applicable
- Submit abstract and a one-page c.v. to [femaledeathwork@gmail.com](mailto:femaledeathwork@gmail.com).
- Notification of acceptance: **January 1, 2020.**

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