

[The Secular and the Literary: Re-thinking Analysis and Interpretation in Light of Post-Secularism](#)

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Call for Papers

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Subject Fields:

Cultural History / Studies, Humanities, Philosophy, Religious Studies and Theology

Ever since Charles Taylor (*A Secular Age*) and Talal Asad (*Formations of the Secular*) questioned the supremacy of secularization, scholars in the fields of philosophy, sociology, and anthropology have used post-secularism to analyze gender, state violence, religion, pain, the senses, and more. This perspective has helped us to consider how secularization has been accepted as normative and inevitable, and how it functions as a disciplinary apparatus or as a constructed ideology. Lori Branch writes, “to view secularism as an ideology admits that it has operated as an invisible and insufficiently examined set of assumptions,” while Michael Warner “advocates seeing secularism ‘as a specific cultural formation in its own right, with its own sensibilities, rituals, constructions of knowledge and ethical projects.’” However, many humanities scholars have been reluctant to apply these new ideas to the literature we read and teach.

This panel seeks proposals that investigate how post-secular theory—a mutually constitutive view of the dialectic of the sacred and the secular—functions in relation to narrative and fiction. What are some of the ways in which post-secularism remakes or changes our understanding of the interpretation of literature as such? How does post-secularism force the humanities to analyze novels, plays, and poetry in new ways? What does it change about our understanding of literary history? How does imagining secularization as a narrative help us to rethink the literature that support this thesis—i.e. the development of the realist novel? This panel welcomes papers from all disciplines, time periods, and specialties.

Submit abstract proposals to <http://www.buffalo.edu/nemla/convention/callforpapers/submit.html>.

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