

cfp: Literature Beyond Bars

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Call for Papers

Date:

March 10, 2022 to March 13, 2022

Location:

United States

Subject Fields:

Humanities, Literature, Teaching and Learning

Call for Papers: Roundtable Session - "**Literature Beyond Bars**"

NeMLA's 53rd CONVENTION

Baltimore, MD

March 10-13, 2022

Keynote: **Professor JUDITH BUTLER**

[Abstract submissions](#) accepted **June 15 to September 30, 2021!**

Abstract: Literature Beyond Bars

Don't you realize that we are worms

born to become angelic butterflies,

that fly towards justice without impediment?

- Dante Alighieri, Purgatorio 10. 124-6

How does the prison context disrupt and innovate upon traditional readings of literary texts? This roundtable hosts a collaborative discussion of the symbiosis of literature and the contemporary penal system in the age of mass incarceration. We welcome contributions that address the promising and/or potentially problematic aspects of reading and teaching literature in prison, with particular interest in the interpretive, pedagogical, and civic implications of these practices. Questions for consideration include:

- How does teaching in prison question our preconceived notions about the student-teacher relationship with regards to power, authority, and trust?

- The stories we tell shape who we are. How does literature equip returning citizens with tools to reclaim human identity, meaning, and freedom beyond bars?
- What role might trauma-informed pedagogy play in teaching literature in the carceral space?
- How does literature provide a means of thinking critically about issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality with regards to the prison industrial complex?
- To what extent is prison education complicit in justifying the prison itself as a “correctional” or “reformatory” institution? Is it possible to seek rehabilitation without rationalization?

Ultimately, this roundtable seeks to challenge the preconceived remits of academia and prison, in order to reimagine the interdependence of literature and civic life. Please submit an abstract of no more than 250 words via the NeMLA online system.

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