

[NEMLA 2022: Family Inheritance in Original Creative Work](#)

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Conference

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September 30, 2021

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Maryland, United States

Subject Fields:

Fine Arts, Oral History

Writers inherit much from their families: stories, material wealth, trauma, discipline, genetic traits, knowledge, and other legacies. What do we do with this heritage and how do we make it our own in our original creative productions? Will the legacy become a heirloom seed that produces exquisite blooms or a hereditary disorder that wilts inspiration on the vine? Bestselling memoirists Mary Karr, Sherman Alexie, Ocean Vuong, and many others have famously shaped family trauma into achingly poignant works of art, begging us to ask if such pain is a necessary ingredient of their success. On the other hand, poets such as Robert Hayden and Ruth Stone have eulogized family members through art, thereby immortalizing the positive aspects loved ones have left behind.

This panel will explore these positive and negative inheritances through readings of creative works followed by a panel discussion. Writers are invited to interpret the theme of inheritance broadly, to read a 10 to 15-minute excerpt of the poetry fiction, or creative non-fiction (including memoir) that showcases their inheritance, and participate in a discussion of how writers make use of what their families leave them. Please submit a 200-250-word abstract of your presentation, including how it applies to the theme of inheritance, and a two-page excerpt of the creative work you will read. Submit to <https://www.cfplist.com/> by September 30, 2021.

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