

CFP: Autism in Literature, NeMLA 10 March 2022 Baltimore, MD - Deadline 30 September 2021

Announcement published by Katherine Lashley Fischer on Monday, June 28, 2021

Type:

Call for Papers

Date:

September 30, 2021

Location:

Maryland, United States

Subject Fields:

Cultural History / Studies, Humanities, Literature

From the savant to the quirky person, there are various ways that people on the autism spectrum are presented in fiction. One common trope of a person on the autism spectrum is the savant, particularly the detective savant, as seen in such novels as *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon, *The London Eye Mystery* by Siobhan Dowd, and the *Asperger's Mystery* series by E.J. Copperman and Jeffrey Cohen. However, not all autistics are savants or detectives, and literature that promotes savant characteristics of autism does a disservice to people who are not savants. How can authors write autistic characters into fiction without relying on savant characteristics? In addition to the savant characteristics, certain themes and symbols, such as mice, have been perpetuated in literature about the autism spectrum, including *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck and *Flowers for Alergnon* by Daniel Keyes, (and my own sister). How can these common symbols reflect autism in everyday life?

Representations of autism in literature can influence how people perceive autism. Therefore, how has literature challenged previously held misconceptions of autism? And how has literature reinforced stereotypes of autism? This panel seeks to explore representations of autistics in twentieth and twenty-first century fiction and nonfiction, including self-narratives from those on the autism spectrum.

Submit abstracts on the NeMLA website: <https://www.cfplist.com/nemla/Home/S/19411>

Contact Info:

Katherine Lashley Fischer, UMBC

Contact Email:

klashley@umbc.edu

URL:

<https://www.cfplist.com/nemla/Home/S/19411>