

**American Literature in the World Graduate Conference**  
**Yale University**  
**April 6, 2018**

The conference hopes to broaden the scope of American literature, opening it to more complex geographies, and to a variety of genres and media. The impetus comes partly from a survey of what is currently in the field: it is impossible to read the work of Toni Morrison and Junot Díaz, Yusef Komunyakaa and Carolyn Forché, Tony Kushner and Lynn Nottage without seeing that, for all these authors, the reference frame is no longer simply the United States, but a larger, looser, more contextually varied set of coordinates, populated by laboring bodies, migrating faiths, generational sagas, memories of war, as well as the accents of unforgotten tongues, the taste and smell of beloved foods and spices.

The twenty-first century is a good century to think about American literature in the world. But other centuries are equally fertile ground, as the writings of Anne Bradstreet, Phillis Wheatley, William Apess, Margaret Fuller, Walt Whitman, Herman Melville, Sui Sin Far, Gertrude Stein, Langston Hughes, James Baldwin, Frank O'Hara, and Tomás Rivera make abundantly clear. To study these and countless other authors is to see that the United States and the world are neither separate nor antithetical, but part of the same analytic fabric. Our conference explores these extended networks through many channels: from the cultural archives circulating across the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans as well as the Caribbean Sea; to the dynamic interactions between indigenous populations and those newly arrived; from the institutions of print, to the tangled ecologies of literature, art, theater, music, and film, to the digital globalism of the present moment.

The conference is supported by the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library; the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences; the Creative Writing Program; the English Department; the American Studies Department; and the African American Studies Department.

Conference attendees are also invited to a slate of related events: a reading by former U.S. Poet Laureate and Pulitzer Prize winner Rita Dove on Thursday; a research workshop with Melissa Barton, Curator at the Beinecke Library; and a publication workshop with Wai Chee Dimock, editor of *PMLA*, and Gregory Cowles, columnist and staff editor at the *New York Times Book Review*.

Please send a 1-page abstract (250-650 words)  
to [americanliteratureintheworld@gmail.com](mailto:americanliteratureintheworld@gmail.com) by December 15.