

***MELUS* Call for Papers**

Special Issue: Twenty-First Century Perspectives on US Ethnic Literatures
(A commemorative special issue in honor of *MELUS* Emeritus Editor Joseph T. Skerrett, Jr.)

Guest Editors: A Yemisi Jimoh and Angelo Robinson

Deadline for submission: 31 August 2016

Anticipated publication: 2018

With more than a decade and a half into the twenty-first century, the editors of this *MELUS* special issue seek scholarly papers that can contribute to a critical exploration of the significance of multiethnic literatures in the academy, the nation, and our increasingly connected world. We seek papers that examine or/theorize US ethnic literatures through engagement with concerns and questions shaping literary study in the twenty-first century. While emphasizing scholarly perspectives informed by our contemporary times, we welcome a broad range of approaches (ranging from theoretical examinations to formal literary structures) and themes in essays covering all periods, all US ethnic literatures, and a variety of genres, including poetry, plays, ethnic travel writing, children's literature, essay writing, neoslave narratives, short story collections, film, and relatively new genres such as the graphic novel.

This special issue will also commemorate the teaching and scholarship of Joseph T. Skerrett, Jr. in his service to *MELUS* as president and editor. His influence on the study of US ethnic literatures, particularly in the areas of identity politics, cultural memory, and narrative structure is immense. In celebration of these contributions and more, we seek papers that present forward-thinking approaches to societal gender imperatives, ethnicity, race, class, sexuality, culture, and immigration/citizenship.

With the above objectives in mind, we are looking for submissions that could address, yet are not limited to, these questions:

- How do twenty-first century demographics affect conversations on ethnicity and race?
- Are there new ways, informed by our twenty-first century moment, to engage literature when considering issues such as race, class, gender, and sexuality?
- How has the state of ethnic literatures evolved during this century and how do our pedagogical practices reflect these changes?
- What is the landscape of gender debates in US ethnic literatures?
- How are ethnic masculinities portrayed in US ethnic literatures?
- Who are the emerging multiethnic writers in the United States and what stories are they telling or what different perspectives are they presenting in literature? Consider writers such as Daniel Black, Beth H. Piatote, Bryan Thao Worra, Debra Magpie Earling, Jade Chang, Colson Whitehead, Lê thi diem thúy, Linda LeGarde Grover, Mohja Kahf, Claudia Rankine, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Evelina Zuni Lucero, Randall Kenan, Paul Beatty, and others.

- Are there new ways to engage the works of established writers such as Richard Wright, Percival Everett, Gwendolyn Brooks, Ernest Gaines, Sherman Alexie, Zora Neale Hurston, Gish Jen, Toni Cade Bambara, Leslie Marmon Silko, Chang-Rae Lee, Toni Morrison, N. Scott Momaday, Walter Mosley, Gerald Vizenor, Phillis Wheatley, Langston Hughes, Vikram Chandra, Ishmael Reed, Maxine Hong Kingston, Alice Walker, David Henry Hwang, Zitkala-Sa, August Wilson, Joy Harjo, Ralph Ellison, Mitsuye Yamada, Jhumpa Lahiri, James Baldwin, Gloria Naylor, Maria Helena Viramontes, Shawn Wong, Louise Erdrich, or other well-known writers?
- How have ethnic literary and cultural movements (Afro-futurism, Native American Renaissance, Pinto Poets, and others) progressed during the twenty-first century?
- Are there new ideas in ethnic feminisms?
- What is the role of popular fiction (mystery, romance, speculative/science fiction, urban fiction, and so forth) in the twenty-first century literary landscape?
- How are US ethnic literatures representing sexuality and the ethnic/raced body?
- How are citizenship and immigration (e.g. post-9/11 ethnicity in the US; racial justice; the Confederate flag in South Carolina and across the US) represented in ethnic US literatures?
- What role do cultural themes such as food, ethnic gardens, religion, art, music, or travel play in literature by ethnic writers?
- What are the new critical issues in multiethnic literary studies resulting from increased literary production by diverse voices in US ethnic literatures, including new immigrant populations that have resulted in an expanded US citizenry and a broadened ethnic literary environment?

The editors welcome theoretical examinations of these questions/topics. Submissions should be between 7,000 and 10,000 words, including notes and works cited, prepared according to the *MLA Style Manual 7th edition*. Please do not include the author's name anywhere in the manuscript. Essays under review at other journals or previously published in any form will not be considered for publication in *MELUS*. Please also include a 250-word abstract with your submission. All submissions will go through *MELUS*'s normal refereeing process.

Please submit completed papers through the *MELUS* online manuscript system: <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/melus> by 31 August 2016. Also, you will need to indicate in the "custom questions" section of the online submission form that you are responding to the CFP for the special issue on **Twenty-First Century Perspectives on US Ethnic Literatures**. For questions about the issue, please contact Angelo Robinson (arobinso@goucher.edu) or Yemisi Jimoh (jimoh@afroam.umass.edu).