

CALL FOR PAPERS AND SEMINARS

AMERICAN COMPARATIVE LITERATURE ASSOCIATION

March 23-26, 2006
Princeton University
Princeton, New Jersey

“The Human and Its Others”

The American Comparative Literature Association's 2006 Annual Meeting will take place at Princeton University on March 23-26, 2006 (Thursday Evening through Sunday noon). Hosted by the Department of Comparative Literature, along with other departments and programs in the humanities and the creative arts, the conference will focus on a central theme: The Human and Its Others."

What does it mean to be-or not be-"human"? In the long history of attempts to draw boundaries around the human, in efforts to define its mental, spiritual, physical, and linguistic particularities, as well as its ideals, its failures, and, in the view of some, its extinction in a "posthuman" era, literature has encountered almost every other discipline and domain of experience. It has also participated in the creation of a series of "others" against which-and whom-the human has defined and measured itself. Looking to literary examples and theoretical distinctions, to changes through time and through cultures, to explanations arising from modern technologies as well as from ancient myths, we will highlight a range of questions: How does literature, along with the other creative arts, help define the human? How do definitions differ according to time and place? How elastic is the idea of the human? How has it been shaped by religion, politics, philosophy, science, economics, medicine, and technology? Against what images, ideas, dreams, and nightmares has it been defined and refined? And why does it seem to be a particularly pertinent, if not pressing, concern for us today? The conference invites discussion of these various issues as they have helped create our sense of literature, the "humanities," and, of course, the study of Comparative Literature.

The Conference Program Committee invites proposals for seminars on any topic falling under the conference title's ample possibilities. The categories below provide some examples:

- Language and the Human
- Keeping Time
- Literature, the Arts, the Human
- Embodiment/Disembodiment
- The Renaissance Individual
- Literature and Human Rights
- The Posthuman
- Religion and the Human
- Space and Movement

- The Language of Animals
- Translation and Metamorphosis
- Media and the Human
- Gendering the Human
- The Invention of the Human
- Cyborgs and Automata
- Magic, Spirituality, and the Human
- The Human and the Natural World
- Endgames
- Philosophy, Literature, and the Human
- Relativity and the Human
- The Humanistic Tradition
- Monsters and Angels
- Representing the "subject"

The ACLA's annual conferences have a distinctive structure in which most papers are grouped into twelve-person seminars that meet two hours per day for the three days of the conference to foster extended discussion. Some eight-person (or smaller) seminars meet just the first two days of the conference. This structure allows each participant to be a full member of one seminar, and to sample other seminars during the remaining time blocks. Previous conference programs that show this pattern are available online at <http://www.acla.org>. The conference also includes plenary sessions, a business meeting, a banquet, and other events.

Seminar proposals can be submitted via our online form. The submission deadline for seminar proposals is October 1, 2005. Proposals can be up to 250 words long. Seminars will be posted as they are accepted in October 2005. The deadline for individual paper proposals for these seminars is November 30, 2005.