

Invitation for Participation

The 2020 Annual Meeting of the American Folklore Society

October 14-17, 2020
Hyatt Regency Tulsa
Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA

Proposal submission deadline: March 31, 2020

Recentering the Periphery

On October 14, 2020, the American Folklore Society will reconvene in Tulsa, Oklahoma, the 45th largest city in the U.S., located where the South, Midwest, and Great Plains regions meet.

Re-centering the Periphery calls us to focus on the intersections of what is marginalized and centralized both in our field and in the larger public debates about national identities in 2020. The multiple perspectives, peoples, communities, and histories that make up the story of Oklahoma intersect with and challenge many of the tropes we often use to symbolize the nation. Historically, Tulsa is the location of some of the most important drivers of national economic prosperity—petroleum production, agribusiness, and aerospace manufacturing—and also some of the worst excesses of colonialism and westward expansion, racial violence, and environmental degradation. Oklahoma's populations of relocated Native Americans, freed slaves, and immigrant communities have been the sources of centering and important symbols of national identity even as they themselves have been displaced, marginalized, and otherwise pushed to the periphery.

This geographical backdrop can also serve to reflect on and engage in deeper discussions of what is on the periphery and the margins of our own field. We invite participants to reflect on this moment in our national discourse and disciplinary development. How might folklorists contribute to larger conversations in productive ways? How does our work highlight the interplay between theory and practice, the representation of the marginal as centering symbols, the complications of advocacy and analysis, and the cultural and rhetorical mechanics of marginalization?

Wherever folklorists live and work, their concerns and engagements can almost certainly be re-centered or fruitfully rethought when we gather in Tulsa.

Of course, in addition to this topic, we encourage participants to explore the full dimensions of their scholarship regardless of subject.

The Annual Meeting of the American Folklore Society will bring hundreds of US and international specialists in folklore and folklife, folk narrative, popular culture, music, material culture, and related fields, to exchange work and ideas and to create and strengthen relationships and networks. Prospective participants may submit proposals for papers, panels, forums, films, and diamond presentations, or propose new presentation formats.

You can find more information about the meeting, including the full theme statement, instructions for submitting proposals and more about meeting events at <http://www.afsnet.org/page/2020AM>.

Proposals may be submitted February 15–March 31, 2020.

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