

The Elizabeth Oakes Smith Society Newsletter



at the conference...

OAKES SMITH REPRESENTED IN TWO PANELS IN SAN FRANCISCO

IN THIS ISSUE

OAKES SMITH WELL REPRESENTED AT THE ALA CONFERENCE SAN FRANCISCO, 2016

Oakes Smith's work will be the subject of papers at both a special session and a roundtable

A NEWLY DISCOVERED IMAGE?

Once again, the internet-of-things provides us something new—a painting of Oakes Smith as a child?

STUDENT WORK ADVANCES EOS STUDIES

Scholars may now visit an expanded EOS website, including new discoveries in EOS bibliography (early works), new downloadable primary texts, and a blog space for scholarship in progress

NEW SCHOLARSHIP ON EOS

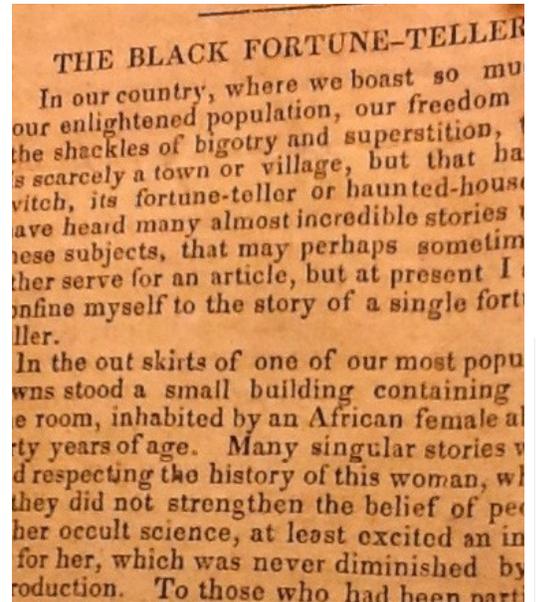
Papers and Chapters recently published and/or presented



Two sessions at the ALA Conference in San Francisco will feature papers and presentations on Oakes Smith's work: on Thursday, May 26 at 3pm, as part of a roundtable on teaching Sedgwick sponsored by the Catherine Maria Sedgwick Society, our editor **Tim Scherman** will discuss why **Caroline Woidat's** Broadview edition of *The Western Captive*, which appeared last summer, may be a fine addition to courses already featuring Sedgwick's *Hope Leslie*. While delays in the publication of the new edition made it tough to adopt last year, there's plenty of time to order this one for fall term!

On Saturday morning at 8:15, early risers and others without an official Author Society can attend a whole Special Session dedicated to Oakes Smith's work entitled "New Scenes in the Recovery of Elizabeth Oakes Smith," featuring three papers that present new findings on some of Oakes Smith's earliest work. In "Recovering the African Subject of Oakes Smith's earliest published fiction," independent scholar **Abigail Harris-Culver**, who discovered what is perhaps Oakes Smith's first published short story

during a research trip to Maine Historical Society in 2013, presents a paper documenting the conditions of its publication and the local contexts that may have inspired Oakes Smith's work. In "When Gothic Rears its Ugly Head, or Unsettling Sentimentalism in 19th century Women's Poetry," **Rebecca Jaroff** returns to Oakes Smith's break-out poem of 1842, "The Sinless Child" to read in its images of revenant corpses a radical gothic dimension to what some critics have considered an important but fairly bland sentimentalist work. Finally, **Tim Scherman**, in "Uh Captain, What Captain?: Recovering the Publishing Context of *The Western Captive*" will share his research into the publishing history of Oakes Smith's first Indian novel, including a strangely misleading advertisement appearing a month before its publication. It will be great to have **Tracey Lynn Clough** back with us to chair the panel.



from the classroom...

Undergraduate and MA students find new relations in Oakes Smith works

Let's give credit where it's due! While our students may not be publishing their work, they may be discovering new angles, new readings, new insights into Oakes Smith's writing that all of us can build on. We can start this column with comments on two papers by students at Northeastern Illinois University.

In an Honors Thesis completed this past spring, **Santa Torrijo** makes several fascinating comparisons between the men represented in Oakes Smith's "The Defeated Life," published in *The Mayflower* for 1847, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892). Both stories feature women driven insane by their isolation and domestic imprisonment, but as Torrijo notes, Oakes Smith's tale describes a clearly predatory husband, complete with a Poesque staring eye from which his wife cannot escape in their seemingly one-room existence, while Gilman depends upon her reader's perception of irony to discern the husband's role in the narrator's descent into madness. Otherwise, John the husband is presented much more innocently—even as the victim of the situation. Taking on the series of scholars identifying autobiographical relations in Oakes Smith's work, Torrijo also reminds us that if "The Yellow Wallpaper's" John conspires with the medical community to take the pen away from his wife, Oakes Smith's husband Seba Smith figuratively and literally *handed her one* to become his editorial partner and contributor to his journals only some years into their marriage.

In a graduate seminar paper, **Mary Clemmensen** contributed to our understanding of Oakes Smith's Indian novels by identifying in the affinity of her young heroines for Native American customs and traditions an anticipation, or even influence on, later characters drawn by authors of juvenile fiction such as Laura Ingalls Wilder and Carol Ryrie Brink.

If you have students writing on EOS who bring us new ideas, please send them in!

a new image...

Independent Scholar Discovers New Information on the Home of Appleton Oaksmith and New Oakes Smith Image

Independent scholar **Loren Christie** continues to uncover new images and facts for Oakes Smith scholars, most recently an image new to most of us of EOS as a child. Published in Edwin M. Bacon's *Literary Pilgrimages to the Homes of Famous Makers of American Literature and Among their Haunts and the Scenes of Their Writings* in 1902, without identification, the reproduction presents a black and white image of an oval portrait whose original size is unknown. The editor's inclusion of Oakes Smith's image may indicate something of her continued recognition in literary



history in the decade after her death in 1893. Other writers in her Portland circle (Nathaniel Deering, Ann Stephens, Edward Morse and Grenville Mellen) are not given portraits.

new scholarship...

Recent Work on EOS

Three papers on Oakes Smith's work were presented at the SSAWW conference in Philadelphia, November 7, 2015, in a session entitled "Rejoining the Conversation: Oakes Smith's The Western Captive:"

Rebecca Jaroff, "Rejecting "Whiteness" in Elizabeth Oakes Smith's *The Western Captive*; or the Times of Tecumseh"

Irene S. DiMaio, "Friedrich Gerstäcker's *Western Captive: Mediation of America through Translation*"

Tracey-Lynn Clough, "Captive to Kin: Accounts of Adoption in Indian Captivity Narratives"

Friend or Colleague Interested in Receiving the EOS Society Newsletter?

Send an email with name, affiliation, and scholarly interest to newsletter editor and webmaster t-scherman@neiu.edu