CALL FOR PAPERS

WEIRD AMERICA: CIRCUM-ATLANTIC CULTURES, 1790-1830

October 21-23, 2010
The Huntington Library / Pasadena, California
(www.huntington.org)
A conference sponsored by the Charles Brockden Brown Society
(www.brockdenbrownsociety.ucf.edu)

250-word proposal deadline: Monday May 3 (Acceptances announced Tuesday June 2)
Please send a Word.doc of the proposal to: Duncan Faherty at duncan.faherty@qc.cuny.edu
For any questions, please contact: Philip Barnard at philipb@ku.edu

The Brown Society invites proposals on all aspects of weirdness in the circumatlantic basin between 1790 and 1830. The revolutionary Atlantic is full of weird, awkward, aberrant, or emergent cultural artifacts and performances, many of which do not fit into exceptionalist (nationalist) literary and cultural narratives or canons. Do relatively unknown or understudied texts force paradigm shifts? What is weird in the revolutionary age? Does it resist canonization? Is "difference" something other than declension?

We encourage proposals that present and ponder what is less canonical in the Atlantic Revolutionary and early American Republic/National period, be it textual, sonic, performative, or a folkway. Proposals DO NOT need to be framed with reference to Charles Brockden Brown, although work on Brown is welcome. The Society wants to create a space for first impressions and discussion of less familiar pathways, of what does not (yet) fit into familiar narratives of explanation for our period.

Weird America will be the seventh biannual conference organized by the Brown Society and the first to be thematically untethered from its signature author. Our conference culture tries to create a space of egalitarian consideration free from career-oriented and competitive attitudes, a place for new work to blossom. In this light, we have no concurrent sessions, so that all may be heard by all. Because of time/space constraints, we may ask you to reframe your proposed talk for inclusion within a roundtable of more informal presentations.

Possible topics include and are not limited to:
Weird literatures of the revolutionary age / Alternative feminisms / Recovered Atlantic women writers / Revolutionary women / Weird domesticities and the counter-private / Medicine, the body and the weird: pus, vomit, semen, sweat, blood, tears / Reclaiming weird legacies: cultural afterlife(s) of the revolutionary era / Weird time and space: temporality, narrative, revolution / Weird sex-gender: narratives of transvestism and bodily revolution / Terror, conspiracy, paranoia, scapegoating as organizing tropes / "Savages", Indian-hating, Lusophobia / Racial revolution, slavery, abolition / Weird dimensions of sentiment and sensibility; weird affect / Idiosyncrasies, madness, and mental “alienation”: psychology, demography, dysfunction / Weird religion, evangelicism, fanaticism / Ghosts, goblins, the satanic, spiritualism / The Caribbean in narratives of the Revolutionary Age / Abnormality as resistance to capitalist discipline / Weird commerce: speculation, forgery, theft / Genres and modes in periodical writing (serial essays, anecdotes, modes of reprinting, etc.) / Gothic from architecture to literature and politics / Revolutionary theater and performance / Aspects of revolutionary painting, visual culture, or music / Rhizomes, subterranean networks, and proto-communist multitudes / Hermits, pirates, saints, and seers / Alternative histories or counter-factual tales / Imposture, fraud, hoax, and masquerade
Travel Support for Graduate Students:

Four Alfred Weber Travel Awards of $500 each for graduate student participation will be awarded, funded by the Brown Society. Criteria for these travel subventions will favor students at the dissertation stage (over those in earlier stages of degree work) and those who have not previously presented at a CBBS meeting. Graduate students applying for a subvention should indicate their interest in a cover letter and provide information about whether or not they are ABD.

http://www.brockdenbrownsociety.ucf.edu