

2021 Virtual Graduate Student Conference: Poetry & Poetics of Loneliness

The Poetry & Poetics Workshop at the University of Michigan is seeking submissions from graduate students for a virtual conference, with sessions to be staggered over three weeks in Spring 2021. Our conference theme—*Loneliness*—grows from the particular combination of factors shaping our lives and work in 2020. We plan to spend the semester exploring the multifaceted meanings of this term, considering topics such as lyric poetry and the social; community and communication on the Internet; and mourning and loss. What social, political, and economic conditions encourage loneliness? How can poetic forms or genres address or evoke loneliness? How does loneliness work as an affect? How does loneliness alter the experience of being a graduate student during the COVID-19 pandemic? The form of the conference will take into account the ways the pandemic has afforded opportunities for remote, accessible engagement in academic conversations at the same time as it has limited our sense of community or caused loneliness. Abstracts of approximately 250 words are due February 15 to zdorman@umich.edu. The virtual conference will take place over Zoom on Fridays in March and April, depending on panelist availability. Panels will consist of three 15-minute papers and discussion.

We welcome abstracts that include but are not limited to the following topics:

- Elegy
- Mourning
- The Internet
- Isolation
- Solitude
- Communication
- Community
- Social life
- Alienation
- Intimacy
- Longing
- Shared experience and private expression
- Absence
- Lack
- Lyric voice
- Affect
- Remote teaching, virtual classroom community, remote research