



# Canadian Society for Eighteenth Century Studies — North-East American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies

## Symposium

Hotel Château Laurier Quebec  
16-19 October 2019, Quebec City

### Call for Papers: CSECS-NEASECS 2019 “Ethic(s) of/in the Enlightenment”

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If the term “ethics” is omnipresent today and, in questions regarding the relationship between subjects and their actions, seems to have superseded that of “morality”, considered as normative, this was certainly not the case during the Enlightenment, during which the term was generally confined to a didactic context. By “Ethic(s) of/in the Enlightenment” proposes to examine the long eighteenth century both in terms of the historicity of its concepts and practices, and of their engagement with our contemporary moment. The choice of the word “Ethics” over that of “Morals” is intended here to suggest a broadening of the reflection on the individual’s relationship with all living beings and, in a larger sense, with nature, which we currently designate as the environment.

Although the eighteenth century valued personal experience, with its desires, pleasures and dreams, it did not disregard the relationship that each individual has with others and the world. For example, when Enlightenment philosophy, literature, or arts stressed the importance of sensitivity, it was often in order to describe the ability of each individual to identify with the feelings of the Other. Simply put, self-concern and concern for others were, in part, linked. Our current moment requires that we attend to the social bonds that unite human beings to each other, to nature and the world.

It is in this context that we invite paper proposals — whether they concern literature, philosophy, history, art history, or even political thought — that can deepen our understanding of the different concepts, issues, practices, and representations nurtured by Enlightenment ethics. Though not exhaustive, the following questions offer potential topics :

- What discourses are permeated by ethical discourse ? Do these discourses borrow from new forms? Which figures and models, new or reconsidered, do these discourses inspire ?

- How can we envision the relationship between moral thought and fiction and, more generally, between moral thought and art ?
- What judgments does morality issue regarding entertainment and, conversely, what is the place of morality in entertainment (theatre, music, games, etc.) ?
- How do multiple ethical discourses compete or conflict with each other ? With what principles do they align ?
- What is the role attributed to emotion in understanding the new relationship to the self, to the Other, to nature, and to animals ?
- What new ideas regarding justice and law emerge from the criticism of The Old Regime judicial practices ?
- What principles and political theories are evoked by questions of ethics and in what way do these principles and theories question the future of individuals and societies ?
- What changes in the public space complement the ethical transformations thus outlined ?
- What changes do questions of ethics entail in teaching and education, and thus in the training of the citizen ?
- To what extent do ethical discourses influence the means of disseminating knowledge, particularly in the domains of publishing, book sales and journalism ?
- Etc.

## Deadlines

**Individual proposals** must contain the title of the paper, a 150-word summary and a brief biographical note indicating the presenter's name, email address, academic status and institutional affiliation. Proposals will be evaluated upon reception. Deadline for individual proposals : **April 15, 2019**.

**Workshop proposals** should include the above information for each individual paper, as well as a brief description of the workshop. These proposals will be evaluated upon reception. Deadline for workshop proposals : **March 15th, 2019**.

Please send your proposals to the following email address: [sceds-csecs-2019@lit.ulaval.ca](mailto:sceds-csecs-2019@lit.ulaval.ca). In keeping with the tradition of CSECS, workshops and papers on other topics related to the eighteenth century are also welcome. Participants may present their talks in English or French. Lumen, the Society's journal, will host a selection of articles from the papers presented at this symposium. Finally, all participants must have paid their membership fees to CSECS.

## Organizing Committee

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