

CONVENTION

MLA to Meet in Philadelphia for Its 122nd Annual Convention

Philadelphia, the birthplace of “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,” will host the 122nd MLA Annual Convention. The MLA Web site offers a link to information about museums and sights in Philadelphia, including the newly opened Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, which has scheduled performances of three silent films, accompanied by organ music, on 29 December; the National Constitution Center; Independence Hall; the Liberty Bell; and South Philadelphia’s 125-year-old Italian Market. The Philadelphia Museum of Art will feature several special exhibits (on pop art and on Korean art, among others) in addition to its wide-ranging permanent collection, and the recently renovated Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts is celebrating its 200th anniversary and will also have a number of special exhibits during the MLA convention, including a show of American painting from 1900 to 1950. Its collection includes works by John Singleton Copley, Thomas Eakins, Benjamin West, and Violet Oakley. The convention bureau will have people on hand to help with restaurant reservations. With more than thirty restaurants with a Zagat food rating of 26 or higher and more than 250 with a cost rating under \$25, Philadelphia offers a great selection of places to eat.

Join your friends and colleagues at the 2006 MLA Annual Convention and browse through the exhibit hall, explore the city, and enjoy the meeting.

Transportation to and in Philadelphia

MLA convention hotels are located in Center City, Philadelphia. **By plane.** Philadelphia International Airport is served by all major domestic carriers, with flights to more than 100 cities, including 30 international destinations. The SEPTA Airport Rail Line R-1 connects the airport with Center City and includes stops at 30th Street Station (Amtrak), Suburban Station, and Market East Station (Convention Center, Marriott, and Loews). It operates daily every half hour; the one-way fare is \$5.50. Call 215 580-7800 for specific travel instructions and sales locations. Calls are answered from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on weekends. Additional information is available at www.septa.org. Lady Liberty Transportation Company offers an airport shuttle between the Philadelphia Airport and Center City. Shuttles run every 15 minutes between 5:00 a.m. and 12:00 midnight. No reservations are required. Dial #27 from the free transportation counter telephones located in the baggage claim area. The one-way fare is \$8. One-way cab fare to or from Center City is \$26.50. For Philadelphia International Airport information, stop at one of the information booths in the airport terminals, call 215 937-6937 or 800 PHL-GATE (800 745-4283), or go to www.phl.org.

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By train. Philadelphia is served by Amtrak (800 USA-RAIL; www.amtrak.com), which operates rail service along the north-east corridor. Visitors have access to intercity trains operating over the corridor, including high-speed Metroliners and Acela Express service between Boston and Washington, DC. Intercity service is also provided to many points south and west. Amtrak's 30th Street Station is two miles from the Pennsylvania Convention Center and Center City hotels. The one-way taxi fare is \$4–\$6. Your train ride to the Market East Station (Convention Center, Marriott, and Loews) is complimentary for those who show their Amtrak ticket to the ticket agent.

By bus. Intercity bus service is excellent, with daily arrivals from all parts of the country. The Greyhound Terminal (215 931-4075) is located at 20th and Filbert Streets.

Transit. Philadelphia has an excellent transit system. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) offers commuter rail service between the city and the suburbs. Suburban Station and Market East Station are in the heart of the business, shopping, and hotel districts. Also, 30th Street Station provides a quick connection with Amtrak. Each of these stations connects the entire rail system with the city's Airport Rail Line. SEPTA also operates a large fleet of buses, subways, and streetcars throughout the city and suburbs with highly concentrated service in the Center City area. Two subway lines—Market-Frankford (east-west) and Broad Street (north-south)—crisscross the city. Cash fare on most routes is \$2 (exact change required). Discounted tokens and passes are available. Call 215 580-7800 for specific travel instructions and sales locations. Calls are answered from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on weekends.

Most English sessions and the child care center are in the Philadelphia Marriott. Most foreign language and comparative literature sessions are in the Loews Philadelphia. Some foreign language sessions, some comparative literature sessions, some English sessions, the Job Information Center, and the exhibits are in the Pennsylvania Convention Center.

A complimentary transportation service for persons with disabilities will also operate throughout the convention.

The convention begins at 3:30 p.m. on 27 December and continues until 3:00 p.m. on 30 December. All MLA members and others involved in the study or teaching of language and literature must register to participate in or attend meetings, take part in the job service, or reserve hotel rooms at special MLA rates.

Some of Philadelphia's best hotels are offering MLA registrants special rates. Single rooms range from \$99 to \$149 a night, double rooms from \$119 to \$169 a night. MLA rates apply at all convention hotels from 25 December 2006 through 1 January 2007, based on availability and arrival and departure dates.

The Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau will supply information on galleries, theaters, restaurants, and other points of interest. You can also obtain information by writing or calling the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau, 1700 Market St., Suite 3000, Philadelphia, PA 19103; 800 537-7876. Pamphlets will be available at the MLA information centers in each hotel (Millennium Hall, Loews Philadelphia; Grand Hall, Pennsylvania Convention Center).

Travel arrangements may be made through Association Travel Concepts (ATC), the official travel coordinator for the MLA An-

WEB SITE NEWS

Web Site Redesign

On 1 September 2006, the redesigned MLA Web site was launched. The new design features easier navigability from the home page, streamlined sections, and enhanced searchability.

2006 Convention Registration

As of 1 September 2006, online convention registration is open at www.mla.org for the MLA Annual Convention in Philadelphia. MLA members receive priority registration as well as reduced rates. A searchable list of all convention sessions will be available to members beginning in November. □

nual Convention; through the MLA Web site; or by phone directly with American Airlines, United Airlines, or Amtrak.

Airline Discounts

- Up to 15% off the available fare in a number of applicable classes of service on United for tickets purchased more than thirty days before the MLA Annual Convention.
- 5% off the available fare in a number of applicable classes of service for tickets on American Airlines purchased before the MLA Annual Convention.
- ATC will also search for the lowest available fare on any airline.
- Zone fares are also available. Zone fares are region-to-region flat rates.
- The above discounts are valid for travel from 24 December 2006 to 2 January 2007. Some other restrictions may apply.

American Airlines 800 433-1790
United Airlines 800 521-4041

Meeting ID: A59D6AA
Meeting ID: 510CK

ATC will send electronic ticket receipts and itineraries for your airline tickets to your e-mail address if you book through the Web site or to your e-mail address or by regular mail if you book over the phone. There is a service fee of \$20 per airline ticket issued for telephone reservations and a \$15 per airline ticket issued for reservations made through the MLA Web site (where housing reservations can also be made). ATC can be reached at 800 458-9383 Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Eastern time. Reservations can be made for air travel only on the MLA Web site at any time.

Amtrak Discounts

Amtrak offers a 10% discount off the lowest rail fare available when you make your reservations to travel between 24 December 2006 and 2 January 2007. This offer is not valid for the Auto Train. It is valid with sleepers and business-class or first-class seats with payment of the full applicable accommodation charges. The discount is valid on Metroliner and Acela service. Amtrak reservations cannot be made through the MLA Web site.

Amtrak 800 USA-RAIL (800 872-7245)
Convention code: X79J-958 □

The Poetry-Sound Initiative: A Convention Preview

For the past decade or so, the MLA Annual Convention has cast its net increasingly wide to accommodate the many and diverse interests of our impressively diverse membership. But because the line between the eclectic and the splintered can be a narrow one, I thought it might be interesting, for the 2006 convention in Philadelphia, to try something a little different—namely, to have a particular thread run through the whole program, even though most sessions would, of course, retain their variety and autonomy.

Accordingly, I have organized the 2006 Presidential Forum and related workshops around a single broad topic: “The Sound of Poetry, the Poetry of Sound.” To implement my overall plan, I approached members of the appropriate MLA divisions and allied and affiliate organizations at a breakfast meeting at the 2005 convention and was encouraged by the large-scale enthusiasm for the project. I chose “The Sound of Poetry” not only because I happen to be a specialist in twentieth-century poetry who has had a long-time interest in issues of poetic form and the relation of sound to meaning but also because I would like to showcase one particular—and very neglected—area of the expertise we have as students and teachers of modern language and literature. Specifically, many of us have long wanted to call into question the notion axiomatic in contemporary culture that poetry, when taken into account at all, is read for its thematic value only. What, the textbook question goes, does this poem say? What feelings and ideas does it express, and to what extent can the reader share them? In most secondary schools, I have observed, poetry, when it is taught at all, is taught almost exclusively this way: the student learns to decipher poem X so as to determine what it’s all about, what—and I always cringe at this word—its message might be. Or again poetry is studied as a symptom of anxieties, inequities, or cultural displacements of one sort or another.

Yet poetry—which today is largely synonymous with lyric poetry—has always been designed not to deliver messages but to embody what are often conflicting meanings by formal and material means. And here the question of sound structure comes in. The term *lyric* derives, after all, from the word *lyre*; in the words of *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*,

Lyric poetry may be said to retain most prominently the elements which evidence its origins in musical expression—singing, chanting, and recitation to musical accompaniment. . . . The primary importance of the musical element is indicated in the many generic terms which various cultures have used to designate nonnarrative and nondramatic poetry: the English “lyric,” derived from the Greek *lyra*, a musical instrument; the Classic Greek *melic* or *mele* (air, melody), the Chinese *shi* or *ci* (word song). (713)

The *Oxford English Dictionary* makes the same point, observing that even in the freest of free verse—verse neither metrical nor stanzaic nor rhyming—there is always some form of repeat, whether rhythmic or phonemic or verbal. The word *verse*, after all, comes from *versus*, or turning. Even in the prose poem, as many critics have shown, sonic repetition of some sort is a sine qua non. In so-called poetic prose as well, smaller congeries of repeated sound units play a central role: just think of the opening words of *Ulysses*, “Stately, plump Buck Mulligan,” with their patterning of *l*’s, *m*’s, and *u*’s.

The neglect of the difference sound makes in poetic—or, for that matter, in any—discourse is especially odd given the wonderful digital facilities now available on the Internet—facilities that have largely been created by and for our colleagues and students. There are, at this writing, dozens of Web sites on which a simple click will produce a voice reading poetry, one’s own or someone else’s—from Chaucerian Middle English to Pope’s *The Rape of the Lock* to contemporary sound poetics. At PennSound, for example, a site produced at the University of Pennsylvania, you can hear Gertrude Stein reading “A Valentine for Sherwood Anderson” or Lili Brik, Mayakovsky’s mistress, reading the great Russian poet’s *Iz ulitsy v ulitsu* (“From Street to Street”) or Caroline Bergvall performing her “Ambient Fish.” At Ubuweb (www.ubu.com), you can hear Marinetti declaiming *Zang Tuum Tuumb*, Apollinaire reading “Le Pont Mirabeau,” or Henri Chopin and Jap Blonk reciting their sound poems. Intermedia poetics—what Joyce called “verbivocovisual”—are now readily available: from Samuel Beckett’s *Embers* to Brazilian concrete poetry to the radio plays of Sweden’s Oyvind Fahlstrom to Adrian Piper performing her word square “Here and Now.” Ubuweb and PennSound also feature interviews, lectures, and scholarly papers on poetic sound vis-à-vis music and the visual arts. These resources testify to a whole new era of language-literature learning and are hence important to the MLA.

In inviting speakers for the forum and workshops as well as contacting the divisional chairs and representatives from the allied organizations, I posed a number of questions, in no particular order, just to get the ball rolling:

1. Is metrical (or rhythmic) choice culturally or nationally determined? And, as a corollary, what is the relation of metrical choice to historical circumstance (e.g., free verse as the ostensible sign of freedom in the twentieth century)?
2. How does one best describe the sound structures of poetry? How does one avoid mere impressionism on the one hand, excessive technical analysis on the other?
3. What determines the choice of verse or prose in a particular case? John Ashbery’s *Three Poems*, for example, is written in prose. Does this choice make this long tripartite poem different from Ashbery’s other poems? If so, how? If not, how not?
4. What are the *politics* of rhythm? What happens to that politics in translation?
5. What is the role of sound in predominantly visual poetry? How does one perform a visual poem?
6. How does sound structuring change over the careers of individual poets?
7. What about recorded sound, the collaging of sounds, digital soundings? How have magnetic tape, radio, and the computer changed poetic sound and our attitudes toward it?

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8. What is the relation of poetic sound to its environment? to music? to the architecture in which it is performed? to its audience?
9. What role do the so-called secondary sound features—rhyme, alliteration, consonance, repetition—play in poetic prose as well as in lineated poetry?
10. And finally a question close to my heart: how much flatness—that is, ordinary prosaic language—can today's poetry tolerate? Has free verse, as we know it from the little magazines, had its day? And what about such mathematical forms as those of Oulipo?

As I hope these questions suggest, the sessions are designed to engage panel members in theoretical, critical, and scholarly issues rather than offer them venues for poetry readings or for homage to particular poets.

The Presidential Forum, to be held at 10:00 a.m. on 28 December, will feature six well-known poets who are also important scholar-critics in an informal roundtable format, debating what they take to be the role of sound in poetry, including their own. Three consecutive workshops will follow the forum. The first, on sound poetry, takes up a radical poetic mode that extends from futurist and Dada models of the 1910s to the present. Sound poetry, in its relation to a more normal semantic poetry on the one hand and to music on the other, remains a contested territory and should produce lively discussion. The second workshop, "Sounding the Visual," explores a related conundrum: given the increasingly common emphasis on what poetry looks like, whether we are thinking of George Herbert's *The Temple* or contemporary digitally designed poems, how does one sound the silent visual design? The third workshop deals with the problem of translating poetic sound: participants in this workshop, themselves experienced translators, represent national languages such as Finnish, Chinese, Portuguese, French, German, and Serbo-Croatian. How to translate from and into poetics in other languages is a special challenge.

The three workshops will be followed, at 5:15 p.m., by a reading given by the two forum guests from abroad: the Japanese-German Yoko Tawada, who will do a multilingual performance, and the French Oulipo poet and theorist Jacques Roubaud. This event will be followed, in turn, by the Division on Poetry's program "Orality and Sound in Poetry." There will therefore be a continuous poetry-sound thread from morning till evening on the 28th, and those interested are urged to attend all the events in sequence.

But this lineup is only part of the story. Other divisions—for example, the Divisions on Black American Literature and Culture and Twentieth-Century Latin American Literature—were devoting one of their allotted sessions to the sound initiative, as are approximately fifteen allied and affiliate organizations from the International Spenser Society (their program title is "Spenser's Acoustic Worlds") to the Beckett, Byron, Dickinson, Goethe, and Stevens societies. Indeed, the response to my initial query has been electric, with, for example, the Wordsworth-Coleridge Association joining forces with the Keats-Shelley Association of America to do some distinctive programs on voice, accent, and dialect in the Romantic period.

The next step—and here I can't thank Maribeth Kraus, our director of convention programs, and her staff enough—was to distribute time slots to minimize overlap. We have all known

situations where the two sessions we most want to attend occupy the same time slot. Conflicts cannot be entirely avoided since, all in all, the convention has no more than fifteen available slots for the programming in question, and of course some of these slots are at 8:30 a.m. or 7:15 p.m., some on the first evening (the 27th), others on the afternoon of the 30th. Then, too, many speakers are also participating in a second session, and the need to accommodate two slots for them makes programming something of a nightmare. Members often surmise that a 9:00–10:15 p.m. slot is some sort of punishment for a given group, a signal that X or Y is considered unimportant. In fact, since so many factors weigh in, such programming is largely random.

After what seemed like endless Scrabble or Monopoly games, moving counters around the board, we came up with as little duplication as possible. There will still be some, especially since special sessions—and many of these are on related poetry-sound topics—also figure into the puzzle. Then, too—and this is largely coincidence—a second forum this year, "A Philadelphia Story of Modernism, 1901–11," focuses largely on the great modernist poets, from Gertrude Stein (born in Allegheny, PA) to Marianne Moore to the three Philadelphia poet-friends Pound, H.D., and Williams. This forum, held at 1:45 p.m. on 29 December, will overlap with some of our sessions, but the two forums should also work to illuminate each other.

In assembling speakers and chairs, I have done my best to include as many language communities as possible, from West African Francophone (Bobakary Diakite) to Serbo-Croatian (Gordana Crnković), Chinese (Yunte Huang), Brazilian (Odile Cisneros), Finnish (Leevi Lehto), Mexican (Rubén Gallo), and French Canadian (Nourbese Phillip). A number of panelists come from the United Kingdom (Peter Middleton, Richard Swigg, and Caroline Bergvall) as well as from France (Hélène Aji).

To emphasize the continuity and coherence of "The Sound of Poetry, the Poetry of Sound" papers, the MLA will publish a brochure, to be distributed at the forum, listing all related events and participants. Many sessions don't have paper titles, the object being to have more rather than fewer speakers on a given panel and to keep discussion as informal as possible. The reading of formal papers will be less common than oral presentation from notes. But there is already much interest on the part of leading presses to publish longer versions of the conference papers, and we certainly hope a book will result from the convention program.

So there it is. In the larger scheme of the convention, the poetry-sound thread will not (and should not) dominate the discourse: indeed, the three Executive Council-sponsored sessions, which I also helped plan, are devoted to a very different set of topics: "Everquesting: Digital Learning and the Humanities," chaired by Priscilla Wald; "(Re)Thinking the Postcolonial?," chaired by Elisabeth Mudimbe-Boyi; and "The University and the High School," chaired by Gerald Graff, together with John C. Brereton from the Boston Athenaeum. Issues of pedagogy, germane to all the above sessions, are always at the center of our concerns. The house of MLA has many mansions, and we hope this year you will attend—and enjoy—as many of what promise to be cutting-edge sessions as possible.

Marjorie Perloff

WORK CITED

Preminger, Alex, Terry V. F. Brogan, and Frank J. Warnke, eds. *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1993.

The MLA Annual Convention: Meeting Members' Needs in the Twenty-First Century

There they sit in their formal wear, those gentlemen and ladies of yesteryear, around tables with their academic colleagues, enjoying the annual dinner at the fifty-second MLA convention. I see this 1935 photograph daily at our headquarters office in New York, and it reminds me that each of our annual meetings builds on the tradition of the ones that have taken place since our founding in 1883. Some aspects of the annual convention have changed dramatically over the years, but one core element remains intact, as the photograph conveys so well: the thing we value most about the convention is the opportunity to connect with friends and colleagues and to feel the energy of the profession.

But for many the dates have been a problem. Over the years, I've heard numerous complaints about having to attend a professional meeting during the December holiday week, and committees have looked into changes in the dates (see Alan Rauch's letter to the editor on pp. 18–19). I was not surprised, then, when last year the Executive Council included in its charge to the Ad Hoc Committee on the Structure of the Annual Convention a request to study, among other things, the dates of the annual meeting. The members of the ad hoc committee, which I chair, began working in March, and the first questions we asked ourselves were these: What do our members most value about the annual convention? What do they like least? The committee decided to survey a representative portion of the membership before formulating any recommendations. Of the twenty thousand surveys we sent electronically to members, exhibitors, and recent convention attendees, we received close to six thousand responses, a highly respectable return rate of twenty-nine percent. The single most attractive feature of the convention for many respondents is the opportunity to network and socialize, including making job-search-related contacts and connections. And, by an overwhelming majority, the least appealing aspect is when the convention is held. A full seventy-five percent of respondents said that changing the date of the meet-

ing to early January would positively influence their decision to attend. (I should also note that 9% said such a move would be a negative factor.)

I have long been aware that the late-December dates present serious conflicts and inconveniences for many of our members. We are one of very few scholarly associations that meet in the period between Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Virtually no college or university holds classes during that period, so academics who attend the MLA convention must do so on their vacation time. For those who celebrate holidays (which often means travel, family gatherings, and so forth), another serious conflict is added to the mix. In short, many members have expressed their displeasure and resentment that an important professional activity like the annual meeting must exact such a high personal sacrifice.

Before I continue discussing this aspect of the convention, let me assure you that, if the dates are to change in the future, they will remain the same at least through next year, since we have already executed contracts for the 2007 convention. Let me also say that the committee is aware that, to put it bluntly, no convention dates will be viable for all members—classes start and end at different times throughout the United States and Canada, and good dates for one member are bad dates for another (for example, virtually the entire month of December was cited as off limits because of exams, grading, preparation for the holidays, or travel). If we move the meeting to early January, we know that we will run afoul of institutions that begin their semester in the days following New Year's; members affiliated with such institutions, who have been able to attend in December, will no longer be able to do so with ease.

Some essential considerations will go into the committee's thinking when it comes to a recommendation to change the dates. Members understandably do not want to face dramatic cost increases. Early January is still low season in most of the

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cities where we normally convene (we can meet only in cities that have enough meeting and sleeping rooms to accommodate the more than 9,000 people who attend in a typical year), while the week before Thanksgiving, which might otherwise be appealing, would bring us substantially increased hotel costs (possibly double the late-December rates).

We must also be mindful of the hiring cycle. The annual convention offers a unique opportunity for departments to interview many candidates in a very economical way. This arrangement also benefits job seekers who might not otherwise be chosen for a campus visit as a finalist. Department chairs tell us that changing the dates to early January would not affect the cycle negatively, since little happens on most campuses during the first days of January. Yet there are concerns. We know that some departments have moved to an early hiring cycle, largely in response to the competition for positions across units or the whole campus. Top candidates often are asked to make campus visits before the department conducts wider interviews at the MLA convention. We've also heard a great deal about incidents in which candidates are offered a position and asked to make a decision before the convention, something that goes against our guidelines to hiring committees (a topic for a future column). If we change the convention dates to early January, will departments step up the "preemptive hiring" that privileges candidates with a certain profile (e.g., accomplishments in terms of quantity of scholarly work already disseminated, perceived prestige of the degree-granting institution)? How can we encourage hiring departments to continue to interview at the annual convention despite the pressures they face on their campuses to lock down positions as early as possible? There is much at stake here—and the problems aren't exclusively connected to the timing of the convention, as you can appreciate from what I've outlined here.

The ad hoc committee is exploring other ways of making the annual meeting a more positive experience for members. Would the convention atmosphere be improved if there were no panels in the evenings? How can we encourage new models of presentation to supplement—or supplant—the conventional paper-reading sessions (some of which leave little or no time for audience participation)? What other activities might attendees enjoy (more readings by authors, events related to the literary and cultural histories of the cities where we meet)?

More generally, how can we achieve an optimal balance among the different kinds of sessions that now have a claim on the program? The mix of special sessions, division and discussion group meetings, allied and affiliate organization activities, social events, and so on requires fine tuning from time to time. Members expect traditional fields of inquiry to have a place on the convention program, and they also want new fields to be represented. Specialists in twenty-first-century literature do not yet have divisions that explicitly accommodate their interests. (In practice, divisions devoted to twentieth-century literature have expanded their mandate.) Practitioners of interdisciplinary studies also seek ways to have their work showcased at the annual convention. With close to thirty thousand members in a wide variety of fields, the MLA has the responsibility to plan annual conventions that have room for all our interests. The question of balance is one that the ad hoc committee takes seriously.

Marjorie Perloff's column (see pp. 3–4) on her initiative for the 2006 convention ("The Sound of Poetry, the Poetry of Sound") provides a wonderful example of how the convention can be responsive to members' interests. By bringing together dozens of sessions that focus on poetry, Perloff has spun a thread that begins with her Presidential Forum and runs throughout the entire convention. Attendees who wish to follow the thread will create for themselves a convention with a theme. Many members say they wish the convention had more structure and focus, and the ad hoc committee will suggest different ways to accomplish this objective. Others will not want to follow a specific track or theme, and the convention will remain big enough to accommodate more than one modality.

I feel a sense of excitement as I work with the Ad Hoc Committee on the Structure of the Convention and the Executive Council to reimagine the annual convention, and I look forward to instituting the changes that will eventually be adopted. You can help in the process. The ad hoc committee will hold an open hearing on 29 December at 10:15 a.m. (Independence Ballroom Salon III, Philadelphia Marriott). We hope to hear from many of you at that session. The committee will issue an interim report at the Delegate Assembly meeting on 29 December (open to all MLA members). I also welcome your comments by e-mail (execdirector@mla.org) or by regular mail.

Rosemary G. Feal

GOVERNANCE

2006 Election Ballot to Be Mailed

The 2006 ballot covering the elections for second vice president, Executive Council, Delegate Assembly, and division executive committees will be mailed early in October to all 2006 MLA members. Ballots must be received at the MLA office on or before 10 December to be counted. The ballot sheet contains instructions for retrieving candidate information from the members-only area of the MLA Web site.

To enter this area, you will need to log in with your current member number or user name and your password. If you do not remember your current log-in information, you can retrieve it at www.mla.org by selecting "Change Your User-Name and

Password" or contact the MLA membership department (646 576-5151; membership@mla.org). Members who do not have access to the Web or who do not wish to retrieve documents from the Web should request a printout of the candidate information from the coordinator of governance before 10 November (MLA, 26 Broadway, 3rd floor, New York, NY 10004-1789; fax: 646 576-5107; governance@mla.org).

If you are eligible to vote and do not receive your ballot by 20 October, please write or call Carol Zuses, coordinator of governance, at the MLA office (646 576-5103; governance@mla.org). □

GOVERNANCE

Nominations for 2007 Division Executive Committee Elections

One new member is elected annually to each division executive committee. The elections are held in the fall, when the other major association elections (for second vice president, Executive Council, and Delegate Assembly) take place. Division executive committees arrange the contests in accordance with the "Policies for Divisions, Discussion Groups, and Allied and Affiliate Organizations" (Sept. 2006 *PMLA* 952–56; www.mla.org). Because the policies require that an executive committee choose one nominee from among the MLA members "suggested by the division membership at large," executive committee members strongly encourage such suggestions.

To suggest someone for nomination in 2007, use the designated space at the bottom of this year's MLA election ballot or send a letter of nomination to the coordinator of governance at the MLA office. Please provide the person's name and affiliation and indicate the appropriate division. All suggestions received by 10 December 2006 (the deadline for receipt of election ballots) will be considered by the division executive committees during their meetings at the 2006 annual convention. Nominees selected by the executive committees will be invited in the spring of 2007 to accept the nomination. Anyone proposed by ten division members must be included by the executive committee on the slate of candidates (provided the person agrees to stand for election). □

GOVERNANCE

Executive Council Meeting Highlights

The Executive Council held its winter meeting on 24–25 February 2006 at the MLA office in New York. A complete report of this meeting appears in the October 2006 issue of *PMLA*; the following actions may be of special interest to members.

Administration and Finance. The council received the independent auditor's report and financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2005. It also received the Finance Committee's report, which reviewed the budget for the 2005–06 fiscal year and discussed the preparation of a budget for the 2006–07 fiscal year. The council authorized the staff to prepare a balanced budget for 2006–07.

Graduate Student Travel Grants. Rosemary Feal reported to the council that there were forty-four eligible applicants for travel grants to the 2005 MLA convention who had not been funded but who had attended the convention in Washington, DC. As it had done the previous year, the council agreed to fund these eligible applicants retroactively, provided that they supply receipts. In addition, the council decided to increase from 150 to 200 the number of grants available annually for graduate students.

Letter to New York University. The matter of the strike by graduate teaching assistants at New York University (NYU) was raised during the December 2005 Delegate Assembly meeting. Since the assembly could not act, delegates and other concerned members were encouraged to ask the council to act. The council received numerous requests from members in January 2006, carried out its procedure for making decisions between council meetings, and authorized the staff to send a letter to NYU's president that cited the 1999 MLA resolution on the right of all academic employees to engage in collective bargaining and encouraged the NYU administration voluntarily to recognize the NYU graduate student employees' bargaining unit, to negotiate a mutually acceptable contract, and to refrain from taking actions that would discourage graduate employees from engaging in union activities. (Note: Council member John Guillory recused himself from the council's deliberations and decision on this matter.) As stipulated in the council's procedure for making decisions between meetings, the council ratified the decision to send the letter at the February council meeting.

Delegate Assembly Recommendations. The council considered two recommendations from the 2005 Delegate Assembly. First, the assembly approved a motion calling on the MLA to ask the AAUP to respond to recent developments in higher education (e.g., challenges to academic freedom, increases in the number of adjunct and non-tenure-track faculty members) by strengthening its "Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure" and the protection that statement provides to faculty members. The council implemented the motion by sending the text of the assembly's motion to the AAUP along with a cover letter from the council asking that the AAUP consider the motion. Second, the assembly approved a motion that calls on the MLA to establish a policy regarding the use of unionized hotels for MLA conventions. The council noted that the association's current practices in this area are in keeping with the motion and that the association intends to maintain its current practices.

Review of a Resolution Approved by the 2005 Delegate Assembly. As required by the MLA constitution (art. 7.B.3), the council reviewed the resolution that the 2005 Delegate Assembly had approved (see the article on page 8). After lengthy discussion of the language of the resolution and the requirements of the constitution, the council authorized nonsubstantive copyediting changes to the wording of the resolution and forwarded it to the membership for the required ratification vote. The council also asked that writers of resolutions be advised not to use the future tense.

Election of a Council Member to the Delegate Assembly Organizing Committee. The council elected Priscilla Wald to the Organizing Committee for a two-year term (2006–07).

Appointments to MLA Committees. The council made fifty-seven appointments to the standing committees of the association and appointed nine committee chairs or cochairs. Lists of all new and continuing committee members can be found in the September 2006 (Directory) issue of *PMLA* and at the MLA Web site.

Contribution to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). Pursuant to a request from the general secretary of the AAUP, the council decided to make a \$5,000 contribution to the AAUP's endowment campaign. □

GOVERNANCE

Request for Comments on Delegate Assembly Resolution

At its meeting on 29 December 2005 in Washington, DC, the Delegate Assembly approved the following resolution, which is subject to ratification by the MLA membership. MLA members are asked to comment on the resolution before the ratification vote is conducted.

The resolution comment process will be conducted in a members-only area of the Web site (www.mla.org). The text of the resolution will be posted at the Web site on 1 October, and members may enter signed comments at the Web site from 2 October to 1 November. Members who wish to comment but who do not have Web access may forward comments to Carol Zuses for posting at the Web site. The Delegate Assembly Organizing Committee, which proposed the use of the Web site for the comment process, encourages members to be brief, to limit comments to the issues addressed in the resolutions, and to observe common rules of Internet etiquette. Members' comments will not be subject to a word limit, nor will there be a limit on the number of comments that an individual may post.

During the balloting period, from 2 November through 10 December, additional comments will not be accepted, but comments already posted will remain available for review. Members who do not have Web access may request hard copies of the posted comments from Carol Zuses.

To enter the members-only area of the Web site, you will need your membership number and your password. Your membership number appears on the line above your name on the mailing label for all MLA mailings. Unless you have changed it, your password is your five-digit zip code if you receive mail at a United States address; if your mail is delivered outside the United States, your password is the first five letters of the country on your mailing label.

The resolution that is subject to ratification is printed below. Members may reach Carol Zuses by mail (MLA, 26 Broadway, 3rd floor, New York, NY 10004-1789), e-mail (governance@mla.org), and fax (646 576-5107).

Resolution 2005-1

Whereas the Academic and Student Bills of Rights (A/SBOR) will, wherever embodied in legislation, give some power over course content and faculty expression to one or another governmental agency, encouraging it to define such matters as "indoctrination," "substantive disagreements" and "controversial matter," "appropriate," and the "spectrum of significant scholarly viewpoints"; and

Whereas, therefore, the purpose of these initiatives is the violation of academic freedom of both students and faculty members;

Be it resolved that the MLA oppose the A/SBOR and all related legislation. □

CONVENTION

Program Available for Members with Visual Impairments

Members with visual impairments who would like to receive a copy of the November 2006 (Program) issue of *PMLA* in a usable format should write or call June Hicks in the executive director's office (646 576-5102; jhicks@mla.org). □

CONVENTION

Meeting Times for Allied Organizations

For allied organizations sponsoring two meetings, one meeting will take place on 30 December, beginning in either the 12:00 noon or 1:45 p.m. time slot. Please keep this in mind when making travel arrangements. □

CONVENTION

Travel Assistance for Advanced Graduate Students

The Executive Council has voted to allot funds to provide partial travel reimbursement of \$200 to advanced graduate students who are members of the MLA by 30 June 2006 and who will travel to the 2006 convention in order to attend preconvention workshops, sessions in their areas of scholarly interest, meetings with job counselors, or interviews. The council is particularly concerned with helping students who have no support for convention attendance from their institutions or other sources and who incur substantial costs for travel to and from the convention. Funds are available to cover awards for up to 200 students; if more apply, recipients will be selected in a random manner.

Letters of application must reach the MLA by 1 November 2006, by mail to the MLA Travel Assistance Program, 26 Broadway, 3rd floor, New York, NY 10004-1789, or by fax at 646 835-4067. Further information is available on the MLA Web site (www.mla.org). Fax transmissions may be used to meet the deadline, but they must be followed by signed letters. (Applications by e-mail will not be accepted.) Each letter should include a brief statement by the student stipulating that he or she has no external support for travel to the convention, together with a statement on university letterhead signed by the student's dissertation director or department chair confirming that the student is enrolled in a doctoral program at the signer's institution and has met all requirements for the PhD except the dissertation.

Since 1997, the Executive Council has invited MLA members to donate money to a professional education assistance fund that will provide ongoing support for these travel reimbursements. A space on the membership renewal form allows members to indicate that they have added to their dues payments a tax-deductible contribution to the fund. Advanced graduate students who have paid dues for the 2007 calendar year will be eligible to apply for travel reimbursements in 2007. □

CONVENTION**2006 Convention Invitation**

The invitation to the 2006 MLA Annual Convention in Philadelphia was mailed to members during mid-September; it includes complete information about convention hotels, travel arrangements, and preregistering at member rates. A priority mailing of the convention preregistration packet was sent the last week of August to department chairs whose departments were members of ADE or ADFL by 23 June 2006. Once the mailing has gone out to the entire membership in September, suites will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Members can register for the convention and make hotel and airline travel arrangements through the MLA's Web site (www.mla.org) as of 1 September. Members cannot reserve suites (with the exception of Embassy Suites) or book Amtrak tickets through the Web site. □

CONVENTION**ADE- and ADFL-Sponsored Sessions for Job Candidates and Interviewers**

ADE and ADFL will sponsor several sessions at the MLA convention to help job candidates and interviewers with interview protocols and job search procedures. ADE and ADFL also provide an individual job counseling service in the interview area of the Job Information Center. Department chairs will offer their experience and expertise in 25-minute one-on-one counseling sessions on 28 and 29 December. Job candidates who take advantage of the counseling service should bring a copy of an application letter and c.v.

ADE-sponsored convention sessions for job candidates. "A Preconvention Workshop for Job Seekers: The Job Search in English" will provide job candidates an opportunity to hear experienced department chairs from three types of institutions describe how their departments approach interviewing and reaching decisions about who should receive the offer of a faculty position. Speaking are David J. Bartholomae (Univ. of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh), Valerie B. Lee (Ohio State Univ., Columbus), and Diane M. Borden (Univ. of the Pacific). "Career Opportunities in Two-Year Colleges" will provide information about the needs of and job opportunities at two-year colleges. Speaking are Robert Barshay (Prince George's Community Coll., MD) and Bonnie Tymorski August (New York City Coll. of Tech., City Univ. of New York).

ADFL-sponsored convention sessions for job candidates. "A Preconvention Workshop for Job Seekers: The Job Search in Foreign Languages" will offer job candidates and interviewers opportunities to participate in a roundtable discussion of interviewing and hiring practices led by experienced department chairs who serve on the ADFL Executive Committee. Participating will be Nelly Furman (MLA), Nancy Hessert (Univ. of Wisconsin, Marathon County), Christina Kramer (Univ. of Toronto), Downing A. Thomas (Univ. of Iowa), and Jennifer K. Ward (Gustavus Adolphus Coll.). In a second session, "Mock Interviews for Job Seekers in Foreign Languages," recently successful candidates will be publicly interviewed by department chairs; discussion will focus on what went right and wrong, what the interviewers were expecting or looking for, and how the interviewee might improve his or her performance. Participating will be Jennifer K. Ward (Gustavus Adolphus Coll.), Rebecca L. Copeland (Washington Univ.), and Randolph D. Pope (Univ. of Virginia).

ADE and ADFL sponsor "The Job I Got: The Job Search and the Pathway from Graduate Student to Adjunct and Tenure-Track Faculty Appointment." Speakers include Paul Lauter (Trinity Coll., CT), Bettina Messias Carbonell (John Jay Coll. of Criminal Justice, City Univ. of New York), Nicholas K. Davis (Trinity Coll., CT), and Patricia A. Matthew (Montclair State Univ.).

ADE and ADFL also jointly sponsor "A Preconvention Workshop for Members of Search Committees," which will provide members of departmental search committees an opportunity to discuss the hiring process, including writing advertisements, reading vitae and dossiers, interviewing at the MLA convention and on campus, and negotiating job offers. Discussion leaders will be Deborah Ellen Kaplan (George Mason Univ.), Christina Walther (Duke Univ.), and Susan Wells (Temple Univ.). □

CONVENTION**Travel Grant for Part-Time and Contingent Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Members and for the Unemployed**

For the first time, the MLA is offering \$200 travel grants to part-time and contingent non-tenure-track faculty members and those without employment to attend the 2006 convention in Philadelphia. To qualify for a grant, applicants must have been members of the MLA in 2005 and must be nonstudent members of the MLA for 2006. They must teach less than full time, be non-tenure-track faculty members, or be unemployed. Their income must place them in the lowest income range in the dues schedule. As part of the application process, members must request matching funds from their departments or institutions using a letter provided by the MLA (available for downloading from the MLA Web site). The council wants to make institutions aware of the importance of supporting all instructional staff members in their professional development activities. The institution's response to the MLA letter must be submitted, even if no matching funds are granted. The response should be presented when grant recipients pick up their checks at the convention. To apply for a grant, members should send their contact information, along with a brief statement stipulating that they are part-time or non-tenure-track faculty members or are unemployed, to MLA headquarters by 1 November 2006. Applications should be addressed to Travel Assistance Program, MLA, 26 Broadway, 3rd floor, New York, NY 10004-1789. Fax transmissions to 646 835-4067 may be used to meet the deadline, but they must be followed by signed applications. Applications by e-mail will not be accepted. For additional information or details on how to apply, please contact Annie Reiser (646 576-5141; areiser@mla.org). □

CONVENTION

Using the MLA Job Information Center

The Job Information Center will be located in the Pennsylvania Convention Center (Ballroom A, Ballroom level). The center includes a sign-in and interview information area, an interview area, and a message center.

All candidates, departmental representatives, and interviewers who wish to use the facilities of the Job Information Center must be registered for the convention.

The center, which is designed to assist job candidates and interviewers in both English and foreign languages, will provide the following services:

1. Sign-In Desk. The MLA will maintain a database of information about the location of interviews that departments have scheduled. Departmental representatives who plan to hold job interviews during the convention, whether in their hotel rooms or in the interview area of the Job Information Center, should sign in so that candidates with whom they have set up interviews will be able to locate them. Although an interviewer's name may appear in "Who's Where," for security reasons hotel switchboards will not give out guests' room numbers—and are in any case extremely busy. A brief stop at the sign-in desk by a thoughtful interviewer can save much confusion and worry for candidates.

The sign-in desk will be open on 27 December from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., on 28 December from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., on 29 December from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and on 30 December from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

Interviewers should give, and candidates should ask for, as many specifics as possible at the time when an interview is being arranged. Candidates should be informed

- whether the interview will take place in the interview area or a hotel room
- what hotel the room will be in
- what name the room will be registered under
- the day, date, and hour when the interview will take place

Interviewers need to remember that a hotel switchboard will be able to connect candidates with them only if the person the candidate asks to be connected with is the person in whose name the hotel room is registered. Candidates may be unable to locate an interviewer if told no more than, for instance, "We'll be in the Marriott."

The interview committee should let candidates know whether it will be checking in with the Job Information Center or whether candidates should call the switchboard of the committee's hotel to find out its room number. Unless a committee checks in with the Job Information Center, the center will not know where it is interviewing.

The center opens at 12:00 noon on 27 December to provide candidates information on interview locations; it will not be able to give location information to candidates for any interviews scheduled before that time.

2. Interview Area. For the convenience of departmental representatives and candidates, the Job Information Center includes an interview area for both English and foreign languages. Departments that wish to use the interview area should schedule interviews with candidates before the convention whenever possible.

Interviews may be scheduled on-site by leaving messages at the message center, although departments should be aware that communication during the convention can be difficult. Tables in the interview area will be assigned to departmental representatives on a first-come, first-served basis. The hours for the interview area are from 12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m. on 27 December, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on 28 December, from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on 29 December, and from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on 30 December. Interview committees using the interview area should not arrange interviews outside the scheduled hours. Candidates who know that their interviews will take place in the interview area can go there directly to find the right table number without stopping at the interview location desk. Staff members will be on duty in the area to assist interviewers and candidates.

Interviewers and candidates who use the area must be registered for the convention and display a registration badge to enter.

3. Counseling Service. The Job Information Center counseling service affords job seekers the opportunity to discuss individual employment problems with experienced departmental administrators. While counselors cannot help candidates obtain interviews, they can offer concrete advice on such matters as the appropriate content and presentation of vitae and letters of application, the kinds of institutions to which candidates might most profitably apply, and realistic approaches to job interviews. Counselors will be on hand to speak with interested candidates during selected hours from 10:15 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. on 28 and 29 December. Appointments can be arranged through the staff member on duty. Each counselee should bring a sample cover letter and vita.

4. Vacancy Notices. A list of openings received too late to be included in the print version of the December *Job Information List* will be posted in the center. Detailed descriptions of any last-minute vacancies may be submitted to the MLA staff in the center for posting. On request, the MLA staff will collect vitae for departments that plan to conduct interviews at the convention for such positions.

5. Message Center. Open from 12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m. on 27 December, from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on 28 December, from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on 29 December, and from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on 30 December, the message center will help candidates and interviewers who have corresponded before the convention arrange specific interview times and places. The message center will not be useful to those who leave messages at random for persons with whom they have had no earlier contact and who may not even be at the convention. Such messages are rarely picked up.

While every effort will be made to assist participants at the Job Information Center, it should be stressed that the MLA does not have the facilities to introduce candidates and interviewers who have not corresponded before the convention. Job candidates who do not have prearranged interviews should not attend for the sole purpose of seeking employment.

Before attending the convention, candidates and interviewers should review the guidelines for job seekers and hiring departments in the *JIL* section of the MLA's Web site. □

CONVENTION

Accommodations and Services for Persons with Disabilities

The MLA is committed to making arrangements that allow all members of the association to participate in the convention. Karin Bagnall in the MLA convention office handles arrangements for persons with disabilities (kbagnall@mla.org). Meeting rooms in the headquarters hotels are accessible by elevator, and the doors are wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs. There will be desks in the convention registration and information areas at the Pennsylvania Convention Center (Grand Hall, level 2) and the Loews Philadelphia (Millennium Hall, 2nd floor), as well as at the Philadelphia Marriott (outside Grand Ballroom, Salon I, level 5), staffed by personnel who can provide assistance to convention attendees with disabilities. To reserve hotel rooms that are specifically equipped for persons with permanent or temporary disabilities, write or call Karin Bagnall in the MLA convention office by 15 November 2006. The convention housing form also includes a space for attendees to request particular equipment or accommodations.

Shuttle Bus. A complimentary transportation service for persons with disabilities will be available throughout convention meeting hours to transport attendees with disabilities. Arrangements should be made at the desk for persons with disabilities in the Pennsylvania Convention Center (Grand Hall, level 2) and the Loews Philadelphia (Millennium Hall, 2nd floor) as well as at the satellite desks located in the lobbies of the Philadelphia Marriott and the Loews Philadelphia. Further details and phone numbers will be posted in the headquarters hotel lobbies.

Sessions. Speakers are asked to bring five copies of their papers, even draft copies, for the use of members who wish to follow the written text. Speakers who use handouts should prepare some copies in a large-print format (fourteen- to sixteen-point). Speakers should indicate whether they want their papers and handouts returned. Sign language interpreters are available on request. To arrange for an interpreter, write or call Karin Bagnall by 15 November.

Please report any problems on-site to the MLA staff members in the headquarters offices at the Philadelphia Marriott (Conference Suite III, level 3) or the Loews Philadelphia (Hospitality Suite 413, 4th floor), and they will do their best to assist you. Hotel staff members may not be able to respond. □

CONVENTION

Child Care Arrangements

KiddieCorp will provide child care during the annual convention in Philadelphia. The KiddieCorp staff's professional child care specialists have designed a program for convention groups that includes age-appropriate crafts projects, toys, games, and entertainment. KiddieCorp stresses carefully selected staff; sturdy, safe equipment; and close supervision of play and rest.

Parents are urged to preregister by Monday, 4 December, since only a limited number of on-site registrations may be available, depending on space, insurance, and staffing. To secure a reservation, you can download a copy of the form from the MLA Web site (www.mla.org). You can also write the convention office (convention@mla.org) and request a registration form. Please return the completed form to the convention office by Monday, 4 December, along with the registration fee: \$45 a day for the first child and \$15 a day for each additional child; for graduate students, \$25 a day for the first child and \$15 a day for each additional child. The preregistration process will ensure the appropriate child-to-caregiver ratio. The registration fee may be paid by credit card or by check made payable to the Modern Language Association of America.

KiddieCorp has the right to refuse child care to children who are seriously ill and to refuse on-site child care registrations if accepting additional children would adversely affect the quality of child care. A morning snack and an afternoon snack will be provided. Lunch will also be provided for children who are in child care at lunchtime. Parents must indicate each morning whether their children will need lunch, so that the staff can order the appropriate amount of food. Parents should inform the staff of any special dietary needs. □

CONVENTION

Calls for Papers for 2007 Convention in Chicago

The 2007 convention will be held in Chicago. Members should familiarize themselves with the guidelines for the MLA convention, which appear in the September 2006 *PMLA* (pp. 946–51), before writing to the organizers listed below. If not provided, organizers' addresses are available on the MLA Web site to MLA members and listed in the September 2006 *PMLA*. All participants in convention sessions must be MLA members by 7 April 2007. Organizers are responsible for responding to all inquiries. A member may participate as speaker or respondent only twice (e.g., by organizing and chairing a meeting, reading a paper, or serving as a speaker, panelist, or respondent in one or two sessions) at a single convention.

Calls for papers are limited to thirty-five words, including the session title but not the name or address of the organizer.

Groups that announce two or more calls for papers with the same contact person list the contact person only once.

Discussion Groups

CATALAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
The Return to the Rural in the Països Catalans. Artistic and theoretical evolution of the concept of the rural in the Països Catalans. 200-word proposals for 20-min. papers by 9 Mar.; Robert A. Davidson (robert.davidson@utoronto.ca).

MLA Committees

COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE PROFESSION
Be the First to Rate This Dissertation. Recent agreements between Proquest and Amazon.com make dissertations available online as "books." How do developments in electronic publishing affect the careers of junior professors? Abstracts by 25 Feb.; William Orchard (weorchar@uchicago.edu).

Special Sessions

These proposed topics for special sessions at the convention have not been approved; the announcements are intended to bring potential organizers and panelists together before organizers send in their final proposals. Organizers and panelists should note the 7 April deadline for membership and the 1 April deadline for submission of final proposals.

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The Book Review. Book reviews as literary criticism, as journalism, as print culture artifacts. 250-word abstracts by 1 Mar.; Gail Shivel (shivel@earthlink.net).

Ecocriticism, Ecofeminism, and Southern Women Writers. Papers exploring matriarchal and indigenous societies, environmental balance, economic and community sustainability, and other issues in writings by Southern women. 2–4-page proposals by 15 Feb.; Mae Miller Claxton (mclaxton@email.wcu.edu).

Jack Kerouac: *On the Road*. 2007 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of *On the Road*. Papers focusing on the literary and cultural significance of the novel. Abstracts by 15 Mar.; Jody Spedalieri (spedalieri@cup.edu).

Allied and Affiliate Organizations

ASSOCIATION FOR BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Business, Technical, and Professional Communication. Papers on any aspect of this field, including connections with linguistics, cultural studies, and literature. 1–2-page abstracts by 1 Mar.; Daphne Jameson (daj2@cornell.edu). □

Deadline for Audiovisual Requests

All requests for audiovisual equipment must be made by the chair of the session by **1 April**. Requests must be received by mail or by fax by 5:00 p.m. on this date. Because the need for audiovisual equipment is a major factor in the scheduling of meetings (and because the movement of equipment is both costly and hazardous), the deadline is firm. Participants who plan to use audiovisual equipment should check with the chair of the session or with the MLA convention office to be sure that the necessary equipment has been ordered by 1 April.

COMMITTEES

MLA Committee Meetings, October 2006–June 2007

The following schedule of MLA committee meetings is current as of 19 July 2006.

Members wishing to bring issues to the attention of a committee may write to the committee chair listed in the September 2006 PMLA (pp. 931–37) or address letters to the executive director's office.

OCTOBER

- 5–6 Advisory Committee on the *MLA International Bibliography*
- 5–6 *PMLA* Editorial Board
- 12–13 Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession
- 16–17 Ad Hoc Committee on the Structure of the Annual Convention
- 19–20 ADFL Executive Committee
- 19–20 Committee on Information Technology
- 25–27 Delegate Assembly Organizing Committee
- 27–28 Executive Council

NOVEMBER

- 9–10 Committee on Academic Freedom and Professional Rights and Responsibilities

JANUARY

- 19 Radio Committee
- 26 Committee on the New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare
- 26 Elections Committee

FEBRUARY

- 1–2 *PMLA* Editorial Board
- 9 Nominating Committee
- 23–24 Executive Council
- 26–27 Committee on the Status of Graduate Students in the Profession

MARCH

- 1–2 Committee on the Literature of People of Color in the United States and Canada
- 2 Texts and Translations Series Editorial Board
- 8–9 Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession
- 9 Committee on Honors and Awards
- 15–16 ADE Executive Committee
- 15–16 Ad Hoc Committee on the Structure of the Annual Convention
- 19–20 ADFL Executive Committee
- 26–27 Committee on Information Technology

APRIL

- 19–20 Committee on Academic Freedom and Professional Rights and Responsibilities
- 26–27 Committee on Community Colleges
- 26–27 Publications Committee

MAY

- 3–4 Program Committee
- 3–4 *PMLA* Editorial Board
- 18–19 Executive Council

JUNE

- 1 Radio Committee

PMLA

Electronic PMLA

Current issues of *PMLA* are available to library subscribers in a searchable format. For more information, write or call Cindy Girone at the MLA office (646 576-5155; subscrip@mla.org). In addition, a historical archive of *PMLA* articles is available to *JSTOR* subscribers.

Two special features, a directory of current members (updated daily) and a searchable list of convention sessions (online beginning in November), are available at the MLA Web site to members only. □

PMLA

Microsoft Word Tagging May Affect Anonymity in Peer Review

Earlier this year an article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (21 Apr. 2006: A41; <http://chronicle.com/weekly/v52/i33/33a04101.htm>) brought attention to an aspect of *Microsoft Word* that could compromise anonymous peer review at many academic journals. Each document created and saved in *Word* is tagged with an author field composed of information stored in the user's computer. Unless the tag is edited to remove the author's name, readers of on-screen files can ascertain the author's identity with a few simple clicks. To view a document's tag, bring down the "File" menu, then click on "Properties" and select the "Summary" tab. At this point it is possible to remove identifying features from the file and preserve the anonymity of the document.

Submissions to *PMLA* undergo anonymous peer review; until a final decision on publication is made, the author's name is concealed from consultant readers, members of the Advisory Board, and the editor. To maintain the integrity of the *PMLA* review process, the MLA sends articles to reviewers as hard copy and not as *Word* files. In turn, reviewers' names are not revealed to authors, and reviewer comments are sent to authors only as hard copy. □

BOOK NEWS

Call for Essay Proposals for MLA Volume *Teaching Anglophone Caribbean Literature*

For the MLA Options for Teaching Series, the Publications Committee has approved development of the volume *Teaching Anglophone Caribbean Literature*, edited by Supriya M. Nair. Essay proposals are invited for the following projected sections of the volume: Movements and Migrations (e.g., indigeneity, settlement, colonialism, slavery, indentured servitude, nationalism, diasporas, globalization; linkages to various continents are encouraged); Ritual, Performance, and Popular Culture (e.g., carnival, creolization, music, religion, folk influences); Teaching Approaches (e.g., questions of form, genre, theory, identity, interdisciplinarity, intertextuality); Course Contexts (selected courses and syllabi representing a variety of curricular and institutional situations; comparative frameworks are especially welcome); and Teaching Resources (e.g., archives, databases, bibliographies, Web sites). Preliminary inquiries and suggestions for possible contributors are welcome. One-page proposals for specific essays should be sent by 1 December 2006 to the editor at supriya@tulane.edu. □

BOOK NEWS

Call for Contributions in Approaches Series

For the series *Approaches to Teaching World Literature*, the Publications Committee has approved development of two new titles, *Approaches to Teaching The Story of the Stone* (Dream of the Red Chamber), edited by Andrew Schonebaum and Tina Lu, and *Approaches to Teaching the Works of Carmen Martín Gaité*, edited by Joan L. Brown.

If you wish to contribute to either of these volumes, please send your name and mailing address to Joseph Gibaldi at the MLA office by 15 November 2006 (jgibaldi@mla.org; fax: 646 458-0030). □

Updated MLA Recommendations on Salaries for Entry-Level, Full-Time, and Part-Time Faculty Members

At its meeting of 30–31 March 2006 the MLA Committee on Academic Freedom and Professional Rights and Responsibilities updated MLA salary recommendations, as charged by the Executive Council. The minimum salary range for full-time appointments at the entry level should be at least \$39,500 to \$43,000 or better for instructors and \$50,000 to \$54,000 or better for beginning assistant professors. Health care benefits and shared contributions to a portable retirement plan should also be provided.

Part-time faculty members perform a valuable role in institutions, giving employers flexibility in scheduling and providing a high level of expertise without a substantial long-term commitment from the institution. These faculty members should be compensated not only for the expertise but also for the flexibility and convenience they offer. The Modern Language Association therefore recommends a salary range of \$6,000 to \$8,500 per course section, with fringe benefits and cost-of-living increases, as reasonable minimum compensation for part-time faculty members. □

BIBLIOGRAPHY

MLA International Bibliography Fellowships

In 2003, the Executive Council approved a request by the Advisory Committee on the *MLA International Bibliography* for the creation of *MLA Bibliography* fellowships. These ongoing fellowships were suggested to recognize the efforts of scholars who index materials on behalf of the *MLA International Bibliography*. Earlier this year, the third group of recipients for this award were announced. The 2006 recipients are

Susan Amper, assistant professor of English, Bronx Community College (American literature)

Maria Teresa Beltran-Aponte, PhD candidate, Ohio State University (Latin American literature; teaching languages and applied linguistics)

Kathryn M. Brooks, librarian, Indiana University (German, Germanic studies, French, Yiddish)

Alison D. Harvey, PhD candidate, University of California, Los Angeles (Irish literature, including theater and women's studies)

Mildred L. Jackson, librarian, Grand Valley State University (rhetoric and composition, history of reading, British literature)

Leonard R. Koos, associate professor of French, University of Mary Washington (French literature, including Francophone, North African, film, and media)

Shirley Lua, associate professor of literature, De La Salle University (Philippine literature)

Lynn Penrod, professor of French, University of Alberta (contemporary French literature and literary theory)

John Paul Walter, PhD candidate, Saint Louis University (Old English, Old Norse, science fiction)

Maria Willstedt, assistant professor of Spanish, Florida State University (medieval and Renaissance Spanish and Italian literatures)

Applications for the 2007 field bibliography fellowships are due 1 March 2007. Fellowships are for a three-year period, beginning 1 July 2007 and ending 30 June 2010. The MLA seeks scholars of any level of seniority interested in training as field bibliography fellows and able to deliver at least one hundred citations each year. This opportunity is open to potential as well as existing field bibliographers. The MLA will provide materials and training meetings at the annual convention. Fellows attending training sessions will have their conference registration fees waived. On completion of the fellowship, they will receive a stipend of \$500 and a certificate at the awards ceremony during the Presidential Address at the MLA convention. It is hoped that recipients of these fellowships will continue submitting citations throughout their careers.

The basic criteria for application are MLA membership, a master's or PhD in a relevant field, and access to scholarly material for indexing. Please submit a letter of request, including qualifications and reasons for applying for the fellowship, and a current résumé or c.v. to the attention of Helen Slavin, *MLA International Bibliography*, 26 Broadway, 3rd floor, New York, NY 10004-1789 (hslavin@mla.org). □

MLA Policy on Membership Mailing-List Rentals

From time to time the MLA rents mailing lists—of members, groups within the membership (e.g., divisions), and departmental administrators—to individuals and organizations wishing to reach scholars and teachers in the fields served by the association. The manager of the member and customer services department reviews the contents of mailings by prospective customers and approves only those that are relevant to teachers and scholars of modern languages and literatures; the rental of a list does not, however, imply endorsement of a product or of the sponsoring organization. Lists are frequently rented to announce calls for papers and forthcoming conferences and to promote new book titles and software products. Members who wish to be omitted from list-rental mailings should notify Cindy Girone, membership activities coordinator, member and customer services office, in writing. □

BOOK NEWS

Three New MLA Titles to Be Published

Set for release in September is *Electronic Textual Editing*, edited by Lou Burnard, Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe, and John Unsworth. The long history of textual editing and scholarship has been intimately involved with the physique of the book, which set limits on the presentation and study of text. Increasingly since the 1980s, the written word has taken on a digital form, and the shift from codex to computer, from print to electronic media, creates new opportunities—and new difficulties.

This volume offers an emerging consensus about the fundamental issues of electronic textual editing. It provides practical advice and faces theoretical questions. Its twenty-four essays deal with markup coding and procedures, electronic archive administration, use of standards (such as Unicode), rights and permissions, and the changing and challenging environment of the Internet. Some of the specific texts discussed are Greek and Latin inscriptions, the Gospel of John, the *Canterbury Tales*, William Blake's poems and art, Percy Bysshe Shelley's *The Devil's Walk*, Stijn Streuvels's *De teleurgang van den Waterhoek*, Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Nachlass*, and the papers of Thomas Edison.

The guidelines of the MLA Committee on Scholarly Editions, recently revised to address electronic editions, are included in full. The CD accompanying this volume contains the complete text of the Text Encoding Initiative guidelines (P4 edition) in both HTML and PDF formats. The volume costs \$45.00 (MLA members \$36.00) in cloth and \$28.00 (MLA members \$22.40) in paperback.

Due for release in October, *Diversifying the Discourse: The Florence Howe Award for Outstanding Feminist Scholarship, 1990–2004* was edited by Mihoko Suzuki and Roseanna Dufault. The Florence Howe Award for Outstanding Feminist Scholarship, created in 1974, has played a major role in establishing the legitimacy and visibility of feminist inquiry. The early award-winning essays are available in the MLA volume *Courage and Tools*. This volume presents the seventeen essays that won the award for the years 1990–2004, an era that witnessed a diversification of the objects of feminist study and critical approaches. Essays treat authors ranging from well-known writers such as Jane Austen, Charlotte

Brontë, Gwendolyn Brooks, Doris Lessing, and Virginia Woolf to less familiar writers such as the Magreb author Asya Djebar, the Spanish poet Concha Méndez, the Native American writer Zitkala-Ša, and the Palestinian novelists Liana Badr and Sahar Khalifeh. Essayists explore their topics through a multiplicity of perspectives, including race and ethnicity studies, cultural studies, psychoanalysis and film theory, nationhood and nationalism, and discourses of aging. Each award winner has written a short afterword, reflecting on her essay and her critical practice.

The volume includes a foreword by Florence Howe, cofounder of the Feminist Press, and an afterword by Annette Kolodny, an early recipient of the Florence Howe award. The volume costs \$40.00 (MLA members \$32.00) in cloth and \$22.00 (MLA members \$17.60) in paperback.

Available in November, *Approaches to Teaching Collodi's Pinocchio and Its Adaptations* was edited by Michael Sherberg. *The Adventures of Pinocchio* has become one of Italy's most successful literary exports, giving life to numerous adaptations. The novel is meaningful to college students today, as it deals with the difficulty of abandoning childhood, the value of education, and what it means to be human.

This volume, like others in the MLA's *Approaches to Teaching World Literature* series, is divided into two parts. Part 1, "Materials," gives the instructor bibliographic information on the text and contexts of the book, the critical literature, and audiovisual and electronic resources. Part 2, "Approaches," contains nineteen essays on teaching *Pinocchio* and its adaptations and covers such topics as Collodi's life, society in postunification Italy, the gothic element, the Frankenstein theme, myths and archetypes, the influence of Ariosto and other writers, children's literature and censorship, the animal fable, and how the famous Disney movie is both a help and a hindrance in the classroom. The volume costs \$37.50 (MLA members \$30.00) in cloth and \$19.75 (MLA members \$15.80) in paperback.

To purchase these or other MLA publications, please call customer services (646 576-5161), fax your order (646 576-5160), or place your order through the MLA Web site at www.mla.org. The MLA accepts Visa, MasterCard, and American Express. □

GRANTS AND PRIZES

Competition Open for MLA Book Awards

The MLA Committee on Honors and Awards invites authors and editors to compete for the association's publication prizes. Six prizes that are awarded only in odd-numbered years will be presented at the 2007 convention: the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for Studies in Slavic Languages and Literatures, the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for Italian Studies, the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for a Translation of a Scholarly Study of Literature, the Morton N. Cohen Award for a Distinguished Edition of Letters, the MLA Prize for a Distinguished Scholarly Edition, and the Lois Roth Award for a translation of a literary work.

Prizes awarded annually by the MLA are the James Russell Lowell Prize for an outstanding book by a member of the association; the MLA Prize for a First Book; the MLA Prize for Independent Scholars, awarded for a distinguished scholarly book on language or literature; the Kenneth W. Mildener Prize for an outstanding work in the fields of language, culture, literacy, or literature with strong application to the teaching of languages other than English; the Mina P. Shaughnessy Prize for an outstanding work in the fields of language, culture, literacy, or literature with strong application to the teaching of English; the Katherine Singer Kovacs Prize for an outstanding book published in English in the field of Latin American and Spanish literatures and cultures; the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for Comparative Literary Studies; the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for French and Francophone Studies; the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Publication Award for a Manuscript in Italian Literary Studies; the William Sanders Scarborough Prize for an outstanding scholarly study of black American literature or culture; and the MLA Prize in United States Latina and Latino and Chicana and Chicano Literary and Cultural Studies. A work published in 2006 may compete for one of the annual prizes that will be presented in 2007 if it meets the specific eligibility requirements for the prize. The deadline for entries for the 2006 James Russell Lowell Prize is 1 March 2007; for the First Book Prize it is 1 April; for the Scaglione Publication Award it is 1 August; for all other MLA awards it is 1 May.

Five prizes that are awarded only in even-numbered years will be presented at the 2008 convention: the Fenia and Yaakov Leviant Memorial Prize in Yiddish Studies, the MLA Prize for a Distinguished Bibliography, the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for Studies in Germanic Languages and Literatures, the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for a Translation of a Literary Work, and the Howard R. Marraro Prize. Biennial prizes are open to books or editions published in either of the two calendar years preceding the year in which the prize is presented, except for the prizes for Italian studies (the Scaglione Prize for Italian Studies and the Howard R. Marraro Prize) and the prizes for literary translation (the Scaglione Prize for a Translation of a Literary Work and the Lois Roth Award), for which works must have been published in the year prior to the year in which they are presented.

Only members of the association may compete for the MLA Prize for a First Book, the Lowell prize, the Marraro prize, the MLA Prize in United States Latina and Latino and Chicana and Chicano Literary and Cultural Studies, and the Scaglione prizes for comparative literary studies, French and Francophone studies, Italian studies, studies in Germanic languages and literatures, and the Scaglione Publication Award for a Manuscript in Italian Literary Studies. Authors who are not members may compete if they join the association before the deadline. For detailed information about eligibility and the number of copies required to compete for any MLA prize, please call or write the Office of Special Projects (646 576-5141; awards@mla.org). □

Honorary Members and Fellows

Members are invited to submit nominations for honorary members and fellows of the association. Honorary members are distinguished foreign scholars, and honorary fellows are distinguished men and women of any nationality. The current rosters of honorary members and fellows can be found on pages 997-98 of the September 2006 (Directory) issue of *PMLA*.

Members who would like to recommend honorary members and fellows should refer to the instructions in the September *PMLA* (p. 992) or to the MLA Web site under MLA Prizes and Awards. □

GRANTS AND PRIZES

ADE Francis Andrew March Award for Distinguished Service to the Profession Presented to Jacqueline Jones Royster

The ADE will present the Francis Andrew March Award to Jacqueline Jones Royster at the 2006 MLA Annual Convention in Philadelphia. The award was established in 1984 to honor exceptional service to the profession of English. It is named for Francis March (1823–1911), professor of English at Lafayette College and the first professor of English in America. The ADE Executive Committee looks for candidates whose impact reverberates beyond the local to affect, regionally or nationally, the ADE and MLA communities and the profession at large.

Royster is senior vice provost and executive dean of the Colleges of the Arts and Sciences, professor of English, and an associate faculty member in the departments of women's studies and African American and African studies at Ohio State University, Columbus, where she has taught since 1991. Royster has also taught at the University of Michigan, Clayton Junior College, Spelman College, Bread Loaf School of English at Middlebury College, and Pennsylvania State University. She has been the local arrangements chair for the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) and the program chair for both the CCCC and the MLA Division on the Teaching of Writing. She has served as senior associate editor of *Sage: A Scholarly Journal on Black Women* and on the advisory committees of numerous other journals, including *CCC*, *PMLA*, and *Profession*. Her work on national committees includes the

College Board's Advisory Board to the National Commission on Writing, the National Council of Teachers of English Preparing Future Faculty Project selection committee, and the CCCC's executive committee. Royster chaired the MLA Task Force against Campus Bigotry, which published its report in *Profession 2000*.

Throughout her professional service and scholarship, Royster has advanced historical understanding of literacy among African American women and promoted the effective use and analysis of language to negotiate differences. Among her edited volumes are *Double Stitch: Black Women Write about Mothers and Daughters*, *Southern Horrors and Other Writings: The Anti-Lynching Campaign of Ida B. Wells*, and *Calling Cards: Theory and Practice in the Studies of Race, Gender, and Culture*. She has authored *Traces of a Stream: Literacy and Social Change among African American Women* and *Profiles of Ohio Women*. Her many articles have appeared in journals such as *College English* and *PMLA* as well as in numerous anthologies.

Prior recipients of the ADE Francis Andrew March Award are June Aldridge, Wayne C. Booth, Mary Burgan, Marcia Dalbey, Carole Edmonds, Phyllis Franklin, John C. Gerber, Donald J. Gray, Charles B. Harris, Richard Lloyd-Jones, Andrea Lunsford, J. Hillis Miller, Robert Scholes, James F. Slevin, Philip Smith II, and Patricia Meyer Spacks. □

MLA Fund Subsidizes Dues

Permanent residents of soft-currency or developing nations who apply for membership in the MLA may apply to have their dues paid by the Good Neighbor Fund. Each applicant should enclose with the membership application a letter stating his or her annual salary and citing an authority for claiming that he or she resides in a soft-currency or developing nation. Applications are due by 30 April and are processed in the order received until funds are depleted. Individuals may receive assistance for no more than two years. On request, the fund will pay for airmail delivery of the Spring and Winter *MLA Newsletter* for members receiving assistance. Members should alert potential applicants to this notice. Address applications and inquiries to Annie Reiser (646 576-5141; areiser@mla.org). □



Philadelphia Museum of Art

GRANTS AND PRIZES

Christopher Kleinhenz Receives the ADFL Award for Distinguished Service to the Profession

The twelfth ADFL Award for Distinguished Service in the Profession will be presented to Christopher Kleinhenz, Carol Mason Kirk Professor of Italian at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, at the MLA Annual Convention in Philadelphia. The first Italianist to be presented with this award, Christopher Kleinhenz is honored for his exceptional contributions to the field of foreign languages and literatures at the postsecondary level. During his tenure as president of the American Association of Teachers of Italian (1999–2003), he spearheaded the movement to create an Italian language advanced placement (AP) program with the College Board. This major achievement was made possible through his tireless efforts in bringing together representatives of high schools, universities, consulates, the Italian Embassy, and Italian American organizations; the AP program was established in 2003. A task force recommended by Kleinhenz is now in place, designing and developing the AP curriculum and examination. He has served as chair of the Department of French and Italian and as associate chair for the Italian faculty at the University of Wisconsin, overseeing the spectacular growth of Italian at the university. He also assisted in the creation of Italian courses in a number of Wisconsin high schools. He has designed an elementary Italian curriculum and accompanying textbook that are widely used in the UW-Extension system. For his dedication in promoting Italian in North America, he received the University of Wisconsin's Chancellor's Award for Distinguished Teaching in 2004. He is an advocate for a unified curriculum formed of courses in language, literature, and civilization and a promoter of the idea that senior scholars must not disdain teaching language in the undergraduate curriculum. He has served as president of the American Boccaccio Association

and the Medieval Association of the Midwest and has been a member or chair of numerous committees and editorial boards. He has operated as an external consultant for many grants, awards, doctoral committees, and program reviews and has organized over a dozen conferences in the United States and Italy. He is the author of many scholarly books, articles, translations, book reviews, and bibliographies and is currently preparing a teaching guide on Petrarch for the MLA.

The colleagues who nominated Christopher Kleinhenz for the ADFL Award for Distinguished Service in the Profession write glowingly of his accomplishments, his determination to bring Italian to the community at large, and his singular personal traits. As one writes, "One marvels at the energy that any one person could have devoted, not only to his career, but to every aspect of it." Another colleague writes of the unique qualities that have sustained his career, "selflessness, dedication, the willingness to take on often thankless tasks that contribute to the good of the whole, diplomacy, thoughtfulness, and, I believe, great joy in what he does."

ADFL welcomes nominations for this award. Criteria specify that the award is given for outstanding service to the profession in the larger community, not for recognition of scholarly accomplishments. Anyone wishing to nominate a candidate should write a letter of no more than two typed pages, gather three supporting letters, and forward these materials, together with the nominee's vita, to Nelly Furman, Director, ADFL, 26 Broadway, 3rd floor, New York, NY 10004-1789 (adfl@mmla.org). The ADFL Executive Committee acts on nominations at its spring meetings and confers the award only in years when a particularly outstanding candidate is nominated. □



The Program Committee met 4–5 May 2006. Standing (left to right): Aldon I. Nielson, Gabriele Dillmann, David Palumbo-Liu, and Kristin Ross. Seated (left to right): Leonard Tennenhouse, Elizabeth Deeds Ermarth, and Lawrence D. Kritzman.

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

The MLA Newsletter welcomes correspondence from members of the association concerning items in previous issues or matters of professional interest. Writers are asked to limit letters to five hundred words; the editor reserves the right to edit letters that exceed five hundred words.

To the editor:

In 1995, the Ad Hoc Committee to Study the Feasibility of Changing the Dates of the Annual Convention was formed, at the request of the Delegate Assembly, to explore the possibility of changing the dates of the MLA convention. As a member of the Delegate Assembly at the time, I had strongly advocated change for reasons that seemed, from a professional and a humane perspective, perfectly sensible. The committee eventually proposed a rather modest change in the convention schedule, recommending that:

The annual meeting of the MLA be held according to a flexible schedule for four consecutive days during the period beginning 27 December and extending no later than the first week in February. When the meeting is not held in December, it should, if possible, include a weekend. For example, the convention might be held on its traditional dates in one year, while the next year the convention might be held over a weekend in January.

Ultimately, the recommendation was voted down by the Delegate Assembly. Many people know of this proposal, but I'm always astonished at how many more people do not. I am gratified that the current Ad Hoc Committee on the Structure of the Convention is looking closely at the dates once again.

If and when a new proposal makes its way to the Delegate Assembly, I hope members keep in mind one point that we forgot to underscore years ago. Simply put, the members of the Delegate Assembly must remember their responsibility not to vote merely their own interests (after all, delegates are typically convention regulars) but to vote for the roughly 20,000 people who are not in attendance.

How many of those 20,000 individuals would actually attend if the dates were different? That question is difficult to answer. The reality is, however, that a change to a fixed date (or even a move to flexible dates) would create opportunities for individuals who find the current timing offensive, difficult, or inconvenient. The past resistance to this kind of openness is particularly striking given that the MLA sees itself as one of the most socially and politically sensitive professional organizations in the United States.

For those who are unfamiliar with the issues behind the proposed change of dates, I'll review a few significant points here.

- One of the arguments against moving the MLA Annual Convention has been the cost of hotel rooms at any time other than 27–30 December. Yet it is no longer clear that those dates would necessarily result in a substantial discount. While hotel rates may increase for convention dates in January, it is also likely that the association's bargaining power will be stronger at that time. What's more, the cost of air travel during the current dates, between major holidays, is very high in this era of airline retrenchment.
- By moving the convention into January, departments don't lose a lot of time for hiring. What we gain is the ability to read and prepare dossiers with a little more leisure and a lot more attention. Moreover, we can more easily coordinate campus visits with appropriate administrators because they too will be back on campus.

- Virtually every graduate student with whom I have spoken has supported a change in dates. Most mentioned the fact that they have little or no time to spend with their families except during the holidays. Those students who have interviews find themselves frantically trying to prepare when time is short, when library hours are reduced, and when life is particularly stressful.
- Although our colleagues in other disciplines hold their professional meetings during the regular academic year, teaching commitments are still an important concern. Needless to say, most of us find ourselves canceling a class or two when we attend smaller conferences that we deem significant for our professional and intellectual advancement. The MLA convention should be viewed not as something exceptional in our careers but as an integral component of what we do as scholars and educators.
- We impose our schedule not only on ourselves but also on the convention exhibitors. Major presses have indicated that they are eager to see the MLA dates changed. Their reasons are not entirely personal. The pressure to have new publications available for the convention is heightened by the enormous seasonal demand placed on printers.
- By scheduling the MLA convention on dates that are out of sight for our deans, our students, and our colleagues (all of whom are enjoying a break from their academic lives), we also place it out of mind. We tacitly accept the marginalization of our discipline by scheduling the convention outside of the school year. And while it may be good that we don't miss classes for our conferences, we should resist the notion that we don't deserve what others take for granted.

Is it wrong to acknowledge that the stressful burden of gearing up for the MLA convention comes at a time that for most colleagues serves as a break between semesters? Hardly. Yet for decades we have acted as though we don't deserve a more rational schedule. I am sure more than a few of us have been greeted with incredulity by colleagues in other disciplines when we explain that our major professional meeting is held from 27 to 30 December! It is also worth noting that we lose a block of potentially productive time, as scholars and teachers, to complete projects or to prepare courses, both of which are consequential to the success of departmental annual reports.

Even for those who don't celebrate December holidays, the pressure of the time of year, together with the fragmentation of what might be a substantial (and well-deserved) break, represents an enormous cost to personal well-being. Many members have companions, partners, and spouses who are obliged to take a holiday break between 26 December and 2 January. The time we lose with them simply cannot be replaced.

It is has been pointed out that many Canadian universities begin their spring semester on the first day of January that is not a holiday. This schedule would make it difficult for Canadian faculty members to attend a meeting in very early January, but it does free them up for a slightly later date. And even if the meeting were held early on occasion, it might not, to quote a Canadian colleague, be sufficient "reason to hold the rest of the continent hostage." The point is for us to create a system that distributes both hardships and advantages as evenly as possible.

In the light of current standards of human resources and current trends in professional development, the practices of

the MLA seem downright archaic. The schedule harkens back to a time when the membership of this profession was very different. Let me conclude by asking us to be mindful of all 30,000 members of the MLA for whom the convention exists. As the ad hoc committee moves forward, it should keep in mind that the possibility of attending the convention should, at least, be both feasible and practical for all of us. If there's anything radical in the suggestion that we consider new dates for the MLA convention, it's only in the recognition that we haven't done anything until now.

Alan Rauch

Classified Advertisements

Address all advertisements to MLA Newsletter, MLA, 26 Broadway, 3rd floor, New York, NY 10004-1789. Checks should be made payable to the Modern Language Association. The rate for advertisements is \$3 a word, with a ten-word minimum. Ads must be prepaid. Content and appearance of advertisements are subject to publisher's approval. The publisher does not solicit the items and cannot vouch for their reliability. Members should exercise reasonable judgment in responding to them.

Massachusetts Historical Society fellowships. In 2007–2008, the MHS will offer over 30 fellowships, including long-term (thanks to support from NEH), regional (through the New England Regional Fellowship Consortium), and short-term. Deadlines vary. For details, see the fellowships page at the Society's website, <http://www.masshist.org/fellowships/>, or contact Cherylinne Pina (617) 646-0513.

D E A D L I N E S

Fellowships and Grants

The following list includes fellowships and grants that have deadlines between 2 November and 31 December. More specific information, such as eligibility, description of grants, number of grants awarded, and sources for further details, can be found in the September 2006 PMLA, pages 1296–326. The arrangement is chronological, and each date is followed by the major title under which information is listed in the September issue.

NOVEMBER

- 15 American Association of University Women Educational Foundation
- 15 American Council of Learned Societies
- 15 Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, University of Pennsylvania
- 15 Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies of the City University of New York
- 15 Institute for Advanced Study, School of Historical Studies
- 15 Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship at Wesleyan University's Center for the Humanities
- 30 Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies
- 30 University of Michigan Center for Afro-American and African Studies
- 30 Stanford Humanities Fellows

DECEMBER

- early Oregon State University Center for the Humanities
- 1 American Classical League
- 1 American Philosophical Society
- 1 American Printing History Association
- 1 Bibliographical Society of America
- 1 Shelby Cullom Davis Center for Historical Studies, Princeton University
- 1 Dictionary Society of North America
- 1 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowships
- 1 Romance Writers of America
- 1 Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, the New York Public Library
- 1 Sex, Race, and Globalization Project at the University of Arizona
- 1 University of Utah Tanner Humanities Center
- 7 Andrew W. Mellon Fellowships in Humanistic Studies
- 15 American Association of University Women Educational Foundation
- 15 Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation Grants for Venetian Research
- 15 Harvard University's Kathryn W. and Shelby Cullom Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies
- 15 Huntington Library
- 15 Kosciuszko Foundation
- 15 William Morris Society in the United States
- 19 Andrew W. Mellon Fellowships in Humanistic Studies
- 20 American Association of University Women Educational Foundation
- 31 American Institute for Yemeni Studies
- 31 Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism

MLA Newsletter Mailing Options for Members

All current issues of the *MLA Newsletter* are now available online in PDF format. As an MLA member you may view, download, or print current and past issues at the MLA Web site (www.mla.org). Members who do not wish to receive the print *MLA Newsletter* by mail may call or write the MLA membership department (646 576-5151; membership@mla.org). □

U P C O M I N G M L A D E A D L I N E S

OCTOBER

- 1 Deadline for receipt of resolutions to be considered and voted on at the 2006 Delegate Assembly meeting (see MLA constitution, articles 9.C.10 and 11.C.3–5); deadline for receipt of motions to be placed on the agenda of the 2006 Delegate Assembly meeting
- 13 Deadline for receipt of departmental administrators' job listings for the December 2006 *Job Information List*

NOVEMBER

- 1 Deadline for applications from advanced graduate students for partial reimbursement for travel to the 2006 convention
- 1 Deadline for applications from part-time or contingent non-tenure-track faculty members or unemployed members for partial reimbursement for travel to the 2006 convention

DECEMBER

- 1 Preregistration deadline for the 2006 convention
- 9 Deadline for receipt of 2006 convention addresses for "Who's Where"

- 10 Deadline for receipt of MLA election ballots (covering contests for second vice president, Executive Council, Delegate Assembly, and division executive committees)

JANUARY

- 5 Deadline for receipt of convention calls for papers for Spring 2007 *Newsletter*
- 12 Deadline for receipt of departmental administrators' job listings for the February 2007 *Job Information List*
- 31 Deadline for receipt of proposals for honorary members and fellows

MARCH

- 1 Deadline for submission of books competing for the 2007 James Russell Lowell Prize
- 1 Deadline for submission of manuscripts for the *PMLA* special topic Comparative Racialization
- 2 Deadline for receipt of departmental administrators' job listings for the April 2007 *Job Information List*
- 15 Deadline for receipt of forum proposals for the 2007 convention
- 15 Postmark deadline for submissions to *Profession 2007*

MLA NEWSLETTER

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