



# ALS-MLA

American Literature Section of the  
Modern Language Association

## Annual Report, 2007

Compiled by  
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### Contents

Officers.....	2
Report of the Section Chair.....	3
The Hubbell Medal 2007 .....	4
The Foerster Prize 2007 .....	7
Reports from <i>American Literature</i> .....	8
2007 MLA Convention Sessions	
American Literature to 1800 .....	9
Black American Literature and Culture .....	10
American Indian Literatures .....	10
Asian-American Literature.....	11
Chicana/Chicano Literature.....	11
Nineteenth-Century American Literature.....	12
Late Nineteenth-and Early Twentieth-Century American Literature.....	12
Twentieth-Century American Literature .....	13
American Literature Section Sessions .....	14
Lists from the Hubbell Center	
Chairs of the Section .....	14
Executive Coordinators of the Section.....	15
Winners of the Hubbell Medal .....	15
Winners of the Foerster Prize.....	16
Articles of Organization.....	17
Minutes of the 2007 Meeting.....	18

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## American Literature Section

### Officers 2008

**Chair:** Caroline Levander (Rice University)

**Executive Coordinator:** Sarah Robbins (Kennesaw State U)

### Advisory Council

#### Elected Members:

George Hutchinson (Indiana U), 2006-08  
Caroline Levander (Rice U), 2006-08  
Rachel Adams (Columbia U), 2007-09  
Ralph Bauer (U of Maryland), 2007-09  
Elizabeth Dillon (Northeastern U), 2008-10  
Mark McGurl (UCLA), 2008-10  
Sandra Zagarell, Past Chair and Ex-Officio Council Member, 2008 (Oberlin College)

#### Division Chairs:

##### American Literature to 1800

Joanna Brooks (San Diego State U)

##### Nineteenth-Century American Literature

Sharon M. Harris (U of Connecticut, Storrs)

##### Late-Nineteenth- and Early-Twentieth-Century American Literature

Bill Brown (U of Chicago)

##### Twentieth-Century American Literature

Thadious M. Davis (U of Pennsylvania)

##### Black American Literature and Culture

[position unfilled for 2008]

##### American Indian Literatures

Simon J. Ortiz (Arizona State U)

##### Asian American Literature

Greta Ai-Yu Niu (U of Rochester)

##### Chicana and Chicano Literature

Maria Eugenia Cotera (U of Michigan)

(The executive coordinator and editor of *American Literature* are also members of the Advisory Council.)

## ALS-MLA Standing Committees

#### Nominating Committee:

George Hutchinson (Indiana U), 2008 Chair

Rachel Adams (Columbia U)

Marianne DeKoven (Rutgers U)

#### Hubbell Award Committee:

Wai Chee Dimock (Yale U), 2008 Chair

Douglas Anderson (U of Georgia), 2009 Chair

Dana Nelson (Vanderbilt U), 2010 Chair

Mary Loeffelholz (Northeastern University), 2011 Chair

Shirley Samuels (Cornell U), 2012 Chair

#### Foerster Prize Committee:

Robert S. Levine (U of Maryland), 2008 Chair

Anna Brickhouse (U of Virginia)

Steven J. Mailloux (U of California, Irvine)

### Editorial Board, *American Literature*

Priscilla Wald (Duke U), Editor

Leslie Bow (U of Wisconsin, Madison), 2008

Alan Golding (U of Louisville), 2008

David Leverenz (U of Florida, Gainesville), 2008

Samuel Otter (U of California, Berkeley), 2008

Shawn Michelle Smith (School of the Art Institute of Chicago), 2008

James Dawes, (Macalester College), 2009

Laura Doyle, (U of Massachusetts, Amherst), 2009

P. Gabrielle Foreman, (Occidental College), 2009

Steven J. Mailloux, (University of California, Irvine), 2009

Brook Thomas, (U of California, Irvine), 2009

Daphne A. Brooks, (Princeton U), 2010

Gavin Jones, (Stanford U), 2010

Melani McAlister, (George Washington U), 2010

Gretchen Murphy, (U of Texas, Austin), 2010

Siobhan Somerville, (U of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), 2010



## Final Report of the American Literature Section, 2007

Sandra Zagarell, Chair of the Section

In 2007, the American Literature Section (ALS) planned and successfully sponsored several panels at the MLA convention; selected winners and gave awards for the Hubbell and Foerster prizes; selected two new council members and a new section chair; and continued a close relationship with *American Literature*, the flagship journal for the field. The Section leadership also worked to improve communications and year-to-year continuity in planning.

Panel topics for 2007 developed through conversation at the 2006 council meeting, at which council members, Priscilla Weld (editor of *American Literature*), and many division chairs joined in discussion. Council members selected the general topics of “Networks” and Languages.” These two calls drew a number of excellent proposals, requiring difficult choices for assembling the final panels; at the 2007 convention, both panels were superb and prompted such engaged discussions after the presentations of papers that people did not want to leave the rooms when time elapsed. Panel paper titles and the names of participants appear elsewhere in this newsletter. One sign of the impact these sessions have had is in the references made to their content in listserv discussions, such as those for the Society for the Study of American Women Writers, during the weeks and months after the December sessions themselves.

Another highlight for 2007 was the annual awards the Section sponsors for outstanding work in American Literature. The Hubbell Award honored the extraordinary lifetime achievement of Lawrence Buell as a teacher and scholar. The Foerster prize was claimed by a path-breaking *American Literature* article, “Negotiating Peace, Negotiating Literacies: A French-Iroquois Encounter and the Making of Early American Literature,” authored by Birgit Brander Rasmussen. Both scholars’ acceptance speeches were thoughtful, informative, and quite moving, as were the citations for each scholar. The citation for Professor Buell was composed by Viet Thanh Nguyen of University of Southern California, the chair of this year’s Hubbell Committee, and was delivered eloquently by former Buell student Douglas Anderson of the University of Georgia. The second citation, for the Foerster prize winner, was written and read by Bethany Schneider of Bryn Mawr College. The circa 45 people in attendance represented the broad spectrum of the profession, ranging from graduate students to former Hubbell

awardees. Full texts of these citations appear elsewhere in this newsletter.

The Section continues to face some challenges in maintaining a robust number of members. Membership in the Section is achieved through subscription to *American Literature* and American Literary Scholarship, publication of which is managed by Duke University Press. In a time when many scholars and teachers have relatively easy access to the journal through their home institution’s online subscriptions, attracting membership through individual subscription may become more difficult. But this context has had the positive side effect of encouraging Section leaders to ask ourselves what the other benefits of affiliation with the Section can be. Besides the intellectual exchange and networking at the convention, we should be seeking in the years ahead to promote other attractive benefits for Section membership.

With an eye toward such goals, in 2007 we focused on providing more opportunities for the MLA American Literature division leaders to connect with the Section’s planning and activities. For example, we created a listserv that includes both the chairs and the secretaries of each division. We also expanded the invitations to attend the annual council meeting beyond the division chairs to include the secretaries, hoping both to ensure representation from each division at the meeting and to promote increased continuity in planning, since the secretaries would also be eligible to attend the following year when serving as chairs of their respective divisions. This approach has indeed increased awareness among the various division leaders about the connections between the Section and the divisions. We hope to see continued opportunities for cross-division collaboration arising from these connections as well. In another move to ensure year-to-year stability in governance, at the 2007 convention meeting of the council, we elected a new Executive Coordinator to serve as co-coordinator in 2009 with Sarah Robbins for one year and then to take over the position for two years, before collaborating with another new coordinator in 2012. This four-year system with new coordinators first learning the role from an outgoing Executive Coordinator will help maintain institutional memory while ensuring that the work of the Section carries forward each year in the most organized way possible. Accordingly, Joycelyn Moody will begin a term in 2009, after being formally inaugurated at the 2008 convention.

With the help of Duke University Press and Kennesaw State University (home institution for the current Executive Director), the Section is maintaining

a position of financial stability. Major annual expenses include creating the Hubbell medal, running the elections via mail balloting, and hosting the awards ceremony at the MLA convention (with the last expense increasing each year as hotel charges for the cash bar are continuing to rise).

As the outgoing chair of the section, I would like to offer my thanks to several leaders whose support helped make 2007 such a successful year for our shared work. Former head of the ALS Phillip Banish of the University of Texas provided much guidance and good advice. Sarah Robbins, Executive Coordinator, carried out her organizational duties with unequaled equanimity and skill. Priscilla Wald, editor of *American Literature*, continues to shape the field with her brilliant editorial vision. The ongoing changes in America--in what we study, in how we do so, in who we are--made this past year an especially rewarding time to be Head of the division, and I thank division members for having elected me to the position.



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### **Report of the Hubbell Award Committee**

The Jay B. Hubbell Award is given each year to a scholar who has made an extraordinary contribution to the study of American literature over the course of his or her career. In 2007, committee members recognized Professor Lawrence Buell for his outstanding work. Members of the Hubbell Award Committee for 2007 were as follows:

Viet Nguyen (U of Southern California), 2007 Chair  
Wai Chee Dimock (Yale U)  
Douglas Anderson (U of Georgia)  
Dana Nelson (Vanderbilt U)

### **Citation for Professor Lawrence Buell from the Award Committee**

It is my pleasure tonight to present the Jay B. Hubbell Medal for Lifetime Achievement in American Literary Studies to Lawrence Buell. The Hubbell Medal recognizes scholars who have made major contributions to the contemporary understanding of American literature. Lawrence Buell has made two such contributions, first to the study of literary transcendentalism, and second to environmental criticism. For over three decades, he has been widely acknowledged as a leading interpreter of transcendentalist aesthetics. More recently, his work on environmental criticism has shaped the establishment of that field, such that no one writing in it can do so without acknowledging his formative influence. In honoring Lawrence Buell this evening, we recognize someone whose work has both deepened and widened the traditions of American literature.

Lawrence Buell is the Powell M. Cabot Professor of American literature at Harvard. He earned his A.B. at Princeton and his Ph.D. from Cornell, both in English, and taught for many years at Oberlin College. Not long after moving to Harvard in 1990 as the John P. Marquand Professor of English, he became the Dean of Undergraduate Education. His commitment to undergraduate life was rewarded when he was named one of the first Harvard College Professors in 1998, an honor created to recognize those especially dedicated to undergraduate teaching. This devotion to teaching hardly interfered with his research. Over the course of his career, he has written or edited nine books, and published over a hundred and fifty articles and reviews in American, British, Canadian and Japanese journals. He has served on the editorial boards of many of those journals, including the *American Quarterly*, *American Literary History*, *PMLA*, and *American Literature*, where he won the 1968 Norman Foerster Prize for the best essay published in that momentous year, one of numerous honors Prof. Buell would collect as his career unfolded. During his years at Cornell, Oberlin and Harvard, he also received fellowships recognizing the importance and the implications of his work from the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, the Howard Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Council of Learned Societies, the Guggenheim Foundation, and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science.

While he might have to explain how he came to win that last award, there is no mystery as to why the MLA is honoring him with the Hubbell Medal.

Lawrence Buell joins an illustrious company of recent Hubbell recipients—Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Martha Banta, Sacvan Bercovitch, and Houston Baker—who have not only intervened in established American literary traditions but opened new and important fields of inquiry. Since the publication of his first book, *Literary Transcendentalism*, in 1973, Professor Buell has been a leading expert on Ralph Waldo Emerson and the American Transcendentalists. Two recent works exemplify his expertise: the 2006 Modern Library edition of the American Transcendentalists' essential writings, which he edited, and his 2003 book, *Emerson*, winner of the Christian Gauss Award for Literary Scholarship from Phi Beta Kappa and the Warren-Brooks Award for Outstanding Literary Criticism from the Center for Robert Penn Warren Studies at Western Kentucky University. Previous winners of the Warren-Brooks Award include John Hollander, Denis Donoghue, and Frank Kermode.

Besides these two notable books, Lawrence Buell's major work on the writers of the American Renaissance includes his 1986 study, *New England Literary Culture*, which like *Literary Transcendentalism* thirteen years earlier was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize, and again like *Literary Transcendentalism* immediately became an indispensable resource for Americanists. A model of scholarship for its intricate interweaving of history, biography, and religion, with insightful readings across a range of literary genres, *New England Literary Culture* stands as a comprehensive and authoritative treatment of New England's ethical and aesthetic sensibility from the Revolution through the American Renaissance.

This cluster of books on 19th century American literature would have been enough in themselves to establish Lawrence Buell's lasting reputation and influence, but in 1995, he published a book that would signal a change in his own intellectual interests and inaugurate a new field. This book, *The Environmental Imagination*, energized the movement for environmental criticism, or what is popularly known as ecocriticism, a term that Buell describes in the book as providing a "cartoon image" of the field "no longer applicable today, if indeed it ever really was." Using Thoreau's *Walden* as a touchstone, *The Environmental Imagination* was the most ambitious study to date of how literature represents the natural environment. But the book's concerns extend beyond studying literary representations to making a case for how these representations and our examination of them could have an impact on our relationship to nature and our understanding of our place in it. As Buell argues in

his book, an "environmental crisis involves a crisis of the imagination the amelioration of which depends on finding better ways of imagining nature and humanity's relation to it." Poet Gary Snyder described the book as "changing the way American literature departments think and teach." *The Environmental Imagination* does so by consolidating the field of environmental criticism, placing it within the tradition of American literary criticism, and integrating it with feminism and deconstruction. In accomplishing these varied goals, the book provides one of the most important studies of American nature writing in the last few decades.

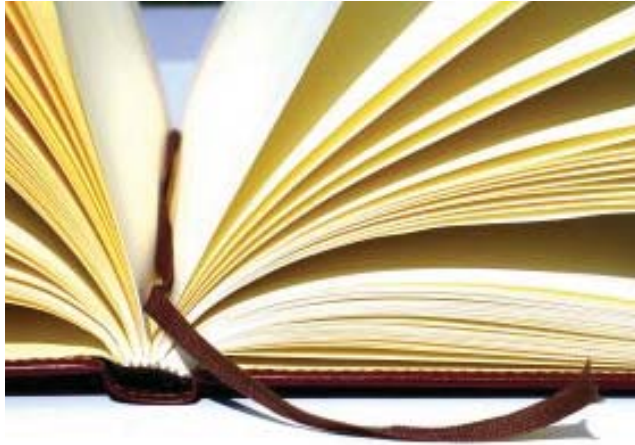
Professor Buell amplified the impact of his work on literature and the environment with his next book, *Writing for an Endangered World*, which won the 2001 John G. Cawelti Award for the Most Outstanding Scholarly Inquiry into American Culture, sponsored by the Popular Culture Association and the American Culture Association. While *The Environmental Imagination* addresses the green tradition in American writing, *Writing for an Endangered World* extends the work of environmental criticism to the urban landscape in a transnational context. Covering a diverse range of 19th and 20th century English and American writers, from Thomas Hardy to Joy Harjo, this book puts natural and artificial environments in "conversation with each other," as Buell puts it, and puts an end to the stereotypical conception associating environmental criticism with whiteness.

His most recent book, *The Future of Environmental Criticism*, published in 2005, completes his trilogy on criticism and the environment. It also constitutes a critical introduction to the field in which he himself has played such an influential role. This book, written with the same elegance and theoretical acumen that characterize his earlier work, signals the transformation of environmental criticism from an emergent field into an established research area that is global in scope. Not coincidentally, it has been translated into Japanese and is being translated into Chinese. These translations are a fitting acknowledgment of the book's scope, of the expanding significance of Lawrence Buell's career, and of the turn it has taken most recently with his co-editing of *Shades of the Planet: American Literature as World Literature*, with Wai Chee Dimock. In this collection, ten prominent scholars of American literature join Buell in relocating the field within an international framework, measuring its significance, as Buell puts it in his contribution to the collection, on a planetary scale, where, to quote Maxine Hong Kingston, it "translates well." So too does Lawrence Buell's own work, both as a critic and as an advocate for American

literature and the environment.

In recognition of his many achievements and their deep influence upon the field of American literature, we present the Jay B. Hubbell Medal for 2007 to Lawrence Buell.

Viet Thanh Nguyen  
University of Southern California



## **Hubbell Acceptance Speech** by Lawrence Buell

I'm delighted, grateful, moved, and still quite amazed to receive this award—mindful as I am of the many colleagues with claims at least as strong as mine, not to mention those who passed away without receiving it.

By way of thanks and response, these reflections.

First, that this year's award demonstrates, de facto if not by intent, that the profession sometimes really does reward late bloomers. By no means was I a person predestined for academia. I was a dutiful bourgeois youth—brought up to enact my father's fond dream of my son the attorney, or, failing that, the manager. My resistance to that received identity was belated, conflicted, protracted, and nearly retracted during the dark night of the soul that grad school so often is. Nor was I a particularly distinguished student—good but by no means great. I benefitted crucially from the brief one-time window of opportunity in the late '60s when humanities jobs were plentiful and tenure even at good places basically a reward for good behavior. When I asked my undergraduate advisor for grad school recommendations, he benignly replied, yes, he thought anyone who wanted to enter the profession should be encouraged; and he couldn't disguise his astonishment when I was actually admitted to my

departments of choice, which were a cut above what he thought me suited for. I then proceeded to choose what in those days was reckoned the least galactic option, solely because it was the school of repute nearest where my then-fiancée (now wife) was finishing college. This, however, proved the ideal place for me—and not just for personal reasons, either, since Cornell was extremely strong not only in European romanticism but American too, with the preeminent Emersonians of their day, Stephen Whicher and Jonathan Bishop, plus which, thanks to a retrospectively inexplicable act of free grace on my advisor's part I was given in my second year what elsewhere would have been vetoed as an unconscionable degree of liberty to substitute private reading for regular courses. Yet my overriding motivation then and for some years after had little to do with scholarship as such. What excited me above all was the opportunity to teach, think, read, and talk. At this threshold stage, I had zero desire to write for publication.

That's a second point I'd stress here: at least sometimes, certainly for me, however anomalous it may seem from the standpoint of a research university lifer, the desire to do something of scholarly worth may arise at least as much from one's teaching commitment as vice-versa.

Obviously scholarship is and should be the chief requisite for this award. Yet my own professional *raison d'être* has always been even more my sense of vocation as teacher, and my research life has always felt inextricably symbiotic with that. The mental electricity generated by working with super-bright undergraduates was what first set me down the path to writing articles and then turning my ho-hum dissertation into a book. Later on, in the early 80s, student-driven enthusiasm for interdisciplinary environmental studies was almost as crucial in nudging me towards ecocriticism—first as teacher, and only then as scholar, when I found myself (so to speak) having to make up the terms of my critical discourse as I went along. The greatest blessing of my professional life has been the chance to work, year after year, with groups of remarkable students, first at Oberlin, then at Harvard—many of them inherently smarter than I even if they didn't realize it yet (luckily for me)—and, beyond that, more often than not (also luckily for me) cantankerous and independent-minded enough to instill a salutary consciousness of my own mental limits and the desire to keep trying to surpass those. Paradox though it might seem, I'm convinced that the quality of my critical thinking actually gained from knowing that most of my students during the first two-plus decades of my career knew little and cared less

about my scholarship, which freed me up to range more widely and be less tribally obeisant than otherwise I might have been.

All this in no way diminishes my very large debt to my many colleagues and friends in the profession over the past forty years—a debt all the larger in proportion to the smallness of the place I spent the first half of my career. Most especially I thank those who’ve helped me think through how the fields of literature, culture, history, ideology, and religio-ethical commitment synergize yet also pull against each other (without coming to terms with which you simply can’t think non-reductively about Transcendentalism, or about the prevailing rhetoricity and instrumentalism of literary practice in the U. S. Before modernism, or about the various constituent discourses of environmentality). I’m no less grateful to all those who’ve pressed me to think beyond as well as within and beneath the confines of the national. The sense of U. S. antebellum writing as a moment when this eclectic brew of commingled force fields were on display in uniquely unstable and volcanic ways—and touched off not in isolation but in relation to the sense (however rudimentary) of interlinkage with a wider world—is key to my long fascination with it, to why I started out as a specialist in what used to be called “the American renaissance,” to why I keep returning to it and always shall.

Earlier I mentioned ecocriticism. I can’t help but take this award as a sign of literature-and-environment studies’ advancement from a problematic fledgling project to something like a fully emergent one. Though my track record as a prophet is spotty, I continue to suspect that if the defining social issue of the 20th century was the problem of the color line, the defining issue of the 21st may be the problem of ensuring a decent future for life on the planet. But even if that proves wrong, and given the worst-case scenarios in play I hope it will, everyone in literature-and-environment studies (from whatever perspective) may rightfully take today’s occasion as confirming the significance of that broader project, not just mine alone. When I began the first of my three ecocritical books, *The Environmental Imagination*, I was haunted by a very strong “Who’s listening?” dubiety. Now my problem’s the obverse: how to keep up with all the important new work.

A further attraction of ecocritical work for me—which brings me to my last point—is that it requires its practitioners, at least in principle, to stretch, intellectually and empathetically, from local to planetary. As such, it’s one though hardly the only

approach that gives promise of reimagining one’s critical horizon in terms of multiple socio-geographical scales at a time when literature studies as a field has fissioned relative to a generation ago; the understanding of what counts as “America” has become much more elastic; and American culture (however defined) is manifestly more tangled up with the rest of the world, for better and for worse. My parting shot, then, isn’t a brief for ecocriticism or any other ism, but for the obverse: for receptivity to any and all forms of critical practice that help us navigate the unprecedentedly vast and messy situation in which we live now. Speaking for myself, at least: when it comes to measuring the possible value of my own work whether as scholar or as teacher, I’d rather not think of how it maybe helped to build or further this or that school of thought but of what it might have set in motion—what it stirred up, not what it settled down. To be thought of as having actually done something in this vein in return for all I’ve been given is the greatest honor of all. Thank you.



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### Citation for the Foerster Prize

Bethany Schneider (Bryn Mawr College)  
Chair, Foerster Award Committee for 2007

It is my great pleasure to be here tonight awarding the Foerster Prize; my thanks to my fellow committee members, Mary Pat Brady and Ellen Gruber Garvey. The three of us had a difficult job; the essays we read were of the very highest caliber, and many essays impressed and delighted us. With that said, we agreed quickly and powerfully upon our chosen winner, Birgit Brander Rasmussen, for her essay, “Negotiating Peace, Negotiating Literacies: A French-Iroquois Encounter and the Making of Early American Literature.”

Professor Rasmussen’s essay follows several trajectories of scholarship. She is working in a long tradition of interpretations of encounter – physical, linguistic, cultural—between European and American Indian Nations, specifically the Haudenosaunee, or Iroquois Confederacy. But this is a field that has in the past explored these dynamics of encounter under a

particularly ingrained tenet, that in studying encounter we are studying a clash between what scholars have called a literate and an illiterate, or an oral and a written, culture. To this particularly ossified understanding, Rasmussen brings the work of Latin American scholars who insist instead that the arrival of Europeans in the so-called New World brought about the contact of competing and radically different literacies. We must, Rasmussen argues, understand Iroquois wampum – which we so easily overlook as either a mnemonic aid” or as “Indian money” – as writing, and the encounter between French and Iroquois cultures in the 17th century as a dynamic encounter between literate cultures. The challenge to “Early American Literature” as we tend to conceive it is, for Rasmussen, a challenge to the status of writing itself.

“Just as wampum is more than a cultural artifact,” Rasmussen writes, “alphabetic script is not simply a record of facts. Both are documentary media and forms of literacy – one printed, one beaded and strung. Each emerges out of distinct cultural and textual contexts, but at the moment of this peace negotiation in North America, wampum and alphabetic script intersect in a space where neither is hegemonic.” Her article allows us to look at these moments of encounter as moments of cultural change for both parties, in which we can “study how alphabetic script was marked and deformed by its encounter with wampum, and vice versa.” Rasmussen’s intervention, and her delightfully bold placement of wampum as a factor in the material “making” of Early American Literature is of the first importance because of the almost universal acceptance by even the most respected and important scholars in the field that Native American people had no writing, and a sad acceptance that we can only know the European side of any encounter narrative because of this so-called “lack.” Without diminishing the importance of work on orality and oral cultures that has animated the field in recent years, Rasmussen points out that we too readily accept the impossibility of knowing the complexity of encounters between Native and European peoples in the 17th century. Our refuge in illegibility derives not from Iroquois inability to write, but from “our inability to understand and recognize their writing.” She therefore proposes “a comparative textual study of wampum and ‘Pen-and-Ink work,’ as one Iroquois speaker called alphabetic writing.” The happy result of that proposal is a marvelous, erudite and field-transforming essay, one that transforms the field of book history as well as early American literature.

As a committee, we were struck by the elegance of the writing, the depth of the scholarship,

but most of all the daring and the excitement of the argument itself: when Rasmussen argues that wampum constitutes a form of writing, she challenges literary scholars’ understanding of the very thing we think we study. Not only that, but some 17th-century Europeans negotiating and making treaties with the Iroquois in part accepted wampum as just such a challenge to their own understandings. We admired the essay’s bold resistance to received notions of what counts as writing, and we saw it as a model for the kind of ground breaking thinking and scholarship that prizes like this are meant to affirm.



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## ***American Literature*** **Annual Report 2007**

### **Awards for *American Literature* Essays**

Finalist for the Don D. Walker Prize for the best essay published on Western American literature in 2006:

Laura Lomas, “‘The War Cut Out My Tongue’: Domestic Violence, Foreign Wars, and Translation in Demetria Martínez” (June 2006)

### **Foerster Prize**

Birgit Brander Rasmussen, “Negotiating Literacies: A French-Iroquois Encounter and the Making of Early American Literature” (September 2007)

### **American Literature Staff**

There have been no changes in our permanent staff or our student employees. Brit Russert, is our returning graduate student employee. Our work-study student is Daniel Riley, who has been with us since fall, 2005.

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## Contents of American Literature, Volume 79

Essays	24
Book Review Essays	1
Reviews	140
Total number of pages:	901
<b>New submissions</b>	263
(Does not include revised resubmissions)	

### Decisions made on essays during 2007:

(Note: This total is different from the number of submissions because it includes essays submitted before 1 January 2007 as well as revised paper and electronic resubmissions submitted during 2007.)

Accept	27
Revise toward Acceptance	13
Reject	257
Revise for Reconsideration	15
 Total	 312

The acceptance rate for 2007 was 9%.  
(Calculated on the number of essays processed, not the number of new submissions.)



### American Literature Sessions MLA 2007

Chicago, IL; December 27-30

#### AMERICAN LITERATURE TO 1800

#### 193. The Matter of Things in Early American Writing

10:15–11:30 a.m., New Orleans, Hyatt Regency  
Program arranged by the Division on American  
Literature to 1800

Presiding: Martin C. Brückner, Univ. of Delaware,  
Newark

1. “Chaos Theory: Objects and Social (Dis)Order in

Early American Texts,” Mary McAleer Balkun, Seton  
Hall Univ.

2. “Republican Interiors and Interiority,” Edward C.  
Cahill, Fordham Univ., Bronx

3. “Gift Objects: Diplomatic Emblems, Diplomatic  
Presents,” Martha Elena Rojas, Univ. of Rhode Island

#### 324. Brave New World: Digital Scholarship and the Future of Early American Studies

3:30–4:45 p.m., New Orleans, Hyatt Regency  
Program arranged by the Division on American  
Literature to 1800

Presiding: Karen A. Weyler, Univ. of North Carolina,  
Greensboro

1. “The Ocom Project: Creating and Teaching with  
an Archival Web Site,” Ivy Schweitzer, Dartmouth  
Coll.

2. “The Charles Brockden Brown Electronic Archive  
and Scholarly Edition and the Text Encoding  
Initiative (TEI),” Mark L. Kamrath, Univ. of Central  
Florida

3. “Teaching Early American Literature with Digital  
Resources,” Michelle Harper, Readex

#### 636. Interactions: Old Documents, Present Interests, Early American Studies

636. Interactions: Old Documents, Present Interests,  
Early American Studies

9:00–10:15 p.m., New Orleans, Hyatt Regency  
Program arranged by the Division on American  
Literature to 1800

Presiding: Kristina Bross, Purdue Univ., West  
Lafayette

1. “Enter into 1787: The National Constitution  
Center and the Politics of Reimagining United States  
National Foundations,” Emily M. Garcia, Grand  
Valley State Univ.

2. “Jonathan Edwards and Crisis Theology in  
Contemporary Evangelicalism,” Douglas R.

Harrison, Florida Gulf Coast Univ.

3. "And We Will Follow the Steps of Our Forefathers: Canassatego, Sagoyewatha, and Contemporary Six Nations Land Rights Negotiations," Katherine Young, Univ. of Texas, Austin

## **BLACK AMERICAN LITERATURE AND CULTURE**

### **91. The Institutional Life of African American Studies**

7:00–8:15 p.m., Toronto, Hyatt Regency  
Program arranged by the Division on Black American Literature and Culture

Presiding: Meta DuEwa Jones, Univ. of Texas, Austin

Speakers: Herman Beavers, Univ. of Pennsylvania; Judith Jackson Fossett, Univ. of Southern California; Lawrence Jackson, Emory Univ.; Dwight A. McBride, Northwestern Univ.; Richard Alan Yarborough, Univ. of California, Los Angeles

### **502. The New Chicago Renaissance Studies**

1:45–3:00 p.m., Columbian, Hyatt Regency  
Program arranged by the Division on Black American Literature and Culture

Presiding: Daylanne K. English, Macalester Coll.

1. "Gwendolyn Brooks's Urban Theater," Michael W. Clune, Univ. of South Florida
2. "Apprehending the Sonic Color Line in Richard Wright's Native Son," Jennifer Stoeber, Univ. of Southern California
3. "Black and White Unite! The Interracial Left, the Color Line, and Literary Radicalism in Bronzeville," Michelle Y. Gordon, Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison
4. "Fugitive Cosmopolitanism: Migration in Willard Motley's Knock on Any Door," John C. Charles, North Carolina State Univ.

### **627. Bound to Respect: Surviving Dred Scott**

9:00–10:15 p.m., Dusable, Hyatt Regency

Program arranged by the Division on Black American Literature and Culture

Presiding: Joycelyn K. Moody, Univ. of Texas, San Antonio

1. "'Going to Law': Early Nineteenth-Century West Indian Slave Narratives and Legal Discourse," Nicole N. Aljoe, Univ. of Utah

2. "A Different Kind of Slave Narrative: Race and Rhetoric in the Saint Louis Freedom Suits," Eric Scott Gardner, Saginaw Valley State Univ.

3. "Representing Legacies of Slavery: Legal Cases, Race, and Difference in Samuel R. Delany's The Einstein Intersection," Sandra Marie Grayson, Univ. of Wisconsin, Milwaukee  
Respondent: Katie Rose Guest, Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

## **AMERICAN INDIAN LITERATURES**

### **175. Red and Black: Comparative Symbols of Survival**

8:30–9:45 a.m., Plaza Ballroom B, Hyatt Regency

Program arranged by the Division on American Indian Literatures

Presiding: Chezia Brenda Thompson, Maryland Inst Coll. of Art

1. "Nature Symbolology in Native and African American Literatures Means Survivance," Stephanie Sellers, Shippensburg Univ.
2. "An Egyptian, Pan–Native American, and Pan–African American Totems Chart," Chezia Brenda Thompson
3. "Totems in the Classroom: Indigenous American Poetry," Simon J. Ortiz, Arizona State Univ., Tempe

### **614. Decolonizing Native American Languages**

7:15–8:30 p.m., Columbus Hall G, Hyatt Regency  
Program arranged by the Division on American Indian Literatures

Presiding: Frederick H. White, Slippery Rock Univ

1. "Endangered Literatures: Why Saving Languages Is Important to Native American Studies," Margaret A. Noori, Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor
2. "The Colonization and Decolonization of the Dakota Language," John Hunt Peacock, Jr., Maryland Inst. Coll. of Art
3. "Pure Oral Tradition: A Decolonized View of Language and Literature," Delphine Red Shirt, Univ. of Arizona, Tucson

## ASIAN AMERICAN LITERATURE

### 58. Marketing Childhood and Adolescence in Asian American Literature

5:15–6:30 p.m., San Francisco, Hyatt Regency  
Program arranged by the Division on Asian American Literature

Presiding: Greta AiYu Niu, Univ. of Rochester

1. "Asia Lost and Found: Allen Say and Kyoko Mori, Two Japanese American Authors of Children's and Young-Adult Books," Sheng-mei Ma, Michigan State Univ.
2. "Korean American Children's Literature and 'Axis of Orientals': Cold War Discourse in Sook Nyul Choi, Frances and Ginger Park, and Linda Sue Park," Mijeong Park, Univ. at Buffalo, State Univ. of New York
3. "That's Not Me: The Cultural Production of the Foreign and the Familiar in Asian American Literature for Young Adults," Monica E. Chiu, Univ. of New Hampshire, Durham
4. "Jin, Danny, and the Monkey King 3-in-1: Gene Yang's American Born Chinese," Lan Dong, Univ. of Illinois, Springfield

### 301. Racial Allegory

3:30–4:45 p.m., Stetson B and C, Hyatt Regency  
Program arranged by the Division on Asian American Literature

Presiding: Leslie A. Bow,  
Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison

1. "Abstract Embodiment and Allegories of Asian Americanness," Megan Obourn, State Univ. of New York, Brockport
2. "Me Love You Long Time: Asian Women's Bodies, Black Male Cultural Citizenship," Hiram Perez, William Paterson Univ.
3. "Race as Metaphor: Framing the Question," Brian Locke, Univ. of Utah  
Respondent: Colleen Lye, Univ. of California, Berkeley

### 637. Poetry's Place in Asian American Studies

9:00–10:15 p.m., Field, Hyatt Regency  
Program arranged by the Division on Asian American Literature

Presiding: Tina Yih-Ting Chen, Vanderbilt Univ.

Speakers: Marilyn Chin, San Diego State Univ.; Michelle Rhee, Stanford Univ.; Timothy Pan Yu, Univ. of Toronto; Xiaojing Zhou, Univ. of the Pacific

## CHICANA AND CHICANO LITERATURE

### 123. Comparative Latinidades: The Institutional Politics of Chicano/Latino Studies

7:00–8:15 p.m., Colorado, Sheraton Chicago  
Program arranged by the Division on Chicana and Chicano Literature

Presiding: Maria Cotera, Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor

1. "Between Supplementary Absolution and Transnational Sophistication," Richard T. Rodríguez, Univ. of Illinois, Urbana
2. "Transborder Literary Criticism and the Chicana/Latina Intellectual: The Female Child Perspective," Ricardo Vivancos-Perez, George Mason Univ.
3. "Comparative Latinidades: The Institutional Politics of Chicano/Latino Studies," Ricardo L. Ortiz, Georgetown Univ.

**233. Chicana/o Textual Practices  
and the Politics of Assimilation**

12:00 noon–1:15 p.m., Colorado, Sheraton Chicago

Program arranged by the Division on Chicana and Chicano Literature

Presiding: John M. González, Univ. of Texas, Austin

1. “Translation for Assimilation? Robert Cantú’s Translation of Pocho,” Marta Esther Sánchez, Arizona State Univ., Tempe

2. “Transnational Spaces: The Crisis of Dislocation in Chicana/o Literature,” Kevin Thomas Concannon, Univ. of Wisconsin, Platteville

3. “Wounded Warriors: Masculine Assimilation in George Washington Gómez and Pocho,” John Alba Cutler, Univ. of California, Los Angeles

**630. Business Meeting of the Division on  
Chicana and Chicano Literature**

9:00–10:15 p.m., Colorado, Sheraton Chicago  
Program arranged by the Division on Chicana and Chicano Literature

Presiding: Rafael M. Pérez-Torres, Univ. of California, Los Angeles

Speakers: Sheila Marie Contreras, Michigan State Univ.; Maria Cotera, Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor; John M. González, Univ. of Texas, Austin; Catherine S. Ramírez, Univ. of California, Santa Cruz

**NINETEENTH-CENTURY  
AMERICAN LITERATURE**

**61. Critical Pedagogy, Service Learning, and  
Nineteenth-Century American Literature**

5:15–6:30 p.m., Plaza Ballroom A, Hyatt Regency

Program arranged by the Division on Nineteenth-Century American Literature

Presiding: Patricia Crain, New York Univ.

Speakers: Jean Lee Cole, Loyola Coll.; Liz Hutter, Univ. of Minnesota, Twin Cities; Marie L. Troppe, Univ. of Maryland, College Park; Aaron Winter,

Univ. of California, Irvine

**457. Disciplinary Networks, Hemispheric  
Studies, and Nineteenth-Century American  
Literature**

10:15–11:30 a.m., Toronto, Hyatt Regency

Program arranged by the Division on Nineteenth-Century American Literature

Presiding: Anna C. Brickhouse, Univ. of Virginia  
Speakers: Rolena Adorno, Yale Univ.; Kirsten Silva Gruesz, Univ. of California, Santa Cruz; Ruth Hill, Univ. of Virginia; Vera Kutzinski, Vanderbilt Univ.

**736. Reading Minds**

12:00 noon–1:15 p.m., Plaza Ballroom A, Hyatt Regency

Program arranged by the Division on Nineteenth-Century American Literature

Presiding: Eliza Richards, Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

1. “Beyond Association: The Gothic Mind in the Early Republic,” Paul Gilmore, California State Univ., Long Beach

2. “‘Head-work’: Theory of Mind and the Reform Writing of Maria W. Stewart,” Paul Ryan Schneider, Purdue Univ., West Lafayette

3. “‘Bewildered and Confounded, and Finally Corrupted’: A Southern Theory of African American Minds,” Kelly Ross, Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

4. “Talking Heads,” Christopher D. Castiglia, Penn State Univ., University Park; Eric Norton, Loyola Univ., Chicago

**LATE-NINETEENTH- AND EARLY-  
TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICAN  
LITERATURE**

**184. Global Chicago**

8:30–9:45 a.m., Grand Suite 3, Hyatt Regency

Program arranged by the Division on Late-Nineteenth- and Early-

Twentieth-Century American Literature

Presiding: Bill Brown, Univ. of Chicago

1. "Bread Labor: The Abstract and the Concrete in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago Literature and Social Science," Christine L. Holbo, Stanford Univ.
2. "Chicago-Berlin: Trafficking Theory, Fantasy, People," Sabine Haenni, Cornell Univ.
3. "Germania, The Jungle, and the Cultural History of No Man's Land," Christopher A. Hager, Trinity Coll., CT

### **511. Materializing the Mind: Literature and Psychology at the Turn of the Century**

1:45–3:00 p.m., Burnham, Hyatt Regency  
Program arranged by the Division on Late-Nineteenth- and Early-Twentieth-Century American Literature

Presiding: Jennifer L. Fleissner, Indiana Univ.,  
Bloomington

1. "Theology, Neurology, and Aesthetic Experience in Frederic's Theron Ware," Jane F. Thrailkill, Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
2. "Multiple Selves, Wordless Communication, and Twain's Mysterious Stranger Manuscripts," Randall Kent Knoper, Univ. of Massachusetts, Amherst
3. "The Specious Present and the Matter of Literature: Jamesian Time Psychology and the Jamesian Sentence," Jesse E. Matz, Kenyon Coll.

### **687. General Business Meeting of the Division on Late-Nineteenth- and Early-Twentieth-Century American Literature**

10:15–11:30 a.m., Dusable, Hyatt Regency  
Presiding: Donald E. Pease, Dartmouth Coll.

## **TWENTIETH-CENTURY AMERICAN LITERATURE**

### **262. Ethnic Fictions and American Geographies**

1:45–3:00 p.m., Gold Coast, Hyatt Regency  
Program arranged by the Division on Twentieth-

Century American Literature

Presiding: Shari Huhndorf, Univ. of Oregon

1. "Strangers from a Different Suburb: Reading Space and Cross-Ethnic Encounters in Gish Jen's *Mona in the Promised Land*," Wendy A. Lee, Brown Univ.
2. "American Indian Literature and the City of Chicago," Lindsey Claire Smith, Oklahoma State Univ., Stillwater
3. "Comparing Legal Geographies from Canada and the United States: Feminist-Indigenous Reinscriptions of Identity and Place," Cheryl L. Suzack, Univ. of Victoria
4. "Wombs and Tombs: Ideological Spaces in Toni Morrison's *Paradise*," Sandra K. Stanley, California State Univ., Northridge

### **405. The Poetics of Urbanity**

8:30–9:45 a.m., Columbus Hall K and L, Hyatt Regency

Program arranged by the Division on Twentieth-Century American Literature

Presiding: Lauren Berlant, Univ. of Chicago

1. "Urbanity and Murder: In Cold Blood," Joseph Litvak, Tufts Univ.
2. "Speculative Fictions of Urbanity in the Age of Globalization," Madhu Dubey, Univ. of Illinois, Chicago
3. "The Urban Seen: Glimpses of a Grocery Store," Jon Cotner, Univ. at Buffalo, State Univ. of New York; Andrew Fitch, Graduate Center, City Univ. of New York

### **685. Paranoia as Style**

10:15–11:30 a.m., Columbus Hall H, Hyatt Regency

Program arranged by the Division on Twentieth-Century American Literature

Presiding: John Wharton Lowe, Louisiana State

Univ., Baton Rouge

1. "Specters of Modernism: Conspiracy's Death in Ubik and The X-Files," Phillip Edward Wegner, Univ. of Florida
2. "'Either Way, They'll Call It Paranoia': Mutual Exclusivity and Ethics in The Crying of Lot 49 and The Turn of the Screw," C. Namwali Serpell, Harvard Univ.
3. "The Bilocation of Paranoia: Fox Mulder, the One, and Pynchon's Against the Day," Samuel Chase Coale V, Wheaton Coll., MA

### AMERICAN LITERATURE SECTION MEETINGS

#### **308. Languages: America's and Americanists' Languages and Discourses**

3:30–4:45 p.m., Atlanta, Hyatt Regency  
Program arranged by the American Literature Section

Presiding: Sandra Abelson Zagarell, Oberlin Coll.

1. "Saying 'Uncle Tom' in Spanish: Translations and Illustrations in a Multilingual Approach to Uncle Tom's Cabin," Kim Wallace-Sanders, Emory Univ.
2. "Resistance in French: Recentring the World of Slavery in Charles Testut's *Le Vieux Salomon*," Heidi Kathleen Kim, Northwestern Univ.
3. "Nation and Empire: José Martí's Strategic Multilingualism," Laura Anne Lomas, Rutgers Univ., Newark
4. "Realism's Artifice: Language(s) of Power and Crisis in Asian American Poetics," Warren T. Liu, Bryn Mawr Coll.

#### **408. Networks: Interrelationships Characterizing the Subjects We Study and our Methods of Studying Them**

8:30–9:45 a.m., New Orleans, Hyatt Regency  
Program arranged by the American Literature Section

Presiding: Sandra Abelson Zagarell, Oberlin Coll.

1. "After Place: A Report from the Blogospheric Frontier," Scott M. Kushner, Duke Univ.
2. "Infrastructuralism: The Wire and the Limits of Cultural Studies," Caroline E. Levine, Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison
3. "The Casablanca Connection: Two Universities Building a Moroccan American Studies Connection," Nina Y. Morgan, Kennesaw State Univ.

Respondent: Priscilla B. Wald, Duke Univ.



**LISTS FROM JAY B. HUBBELL CENTER  
FOR AMERICAN LITERARY  
HISTORIOGRAPHY**  
*Special Collections Library  
Duke University  
Durham, NC 127708-0185  
Telephone: 919-660-5820*

#### **American Literature Group/Section Chairs**

- 2008: Caroline Levander  
2007: Sandra Zagarell  
2006: Philip J. Barrish  
2005: Mary Loeffelholz  
2004: Mary Loeffelholz  
2003: Carla Kaplan  
2002: Gary Scharnhorst

2001: Thadious Davis  
2000: Robert Levine  
1999: Paul Lauter  
1998: Cecelia Tichi  
1997: Susan K. Harris  
1996: Linda Wagner-Martin  
1995: William Andrews  
1994: Eric Sundquist  
1993: Elaine Hedges  
1992: Blanche Gelfant  
1991: Emory Elliott  
1990: James Justus  
1989: J. A. Leo Lemay  
1988: John Seelye  
1987: Leo Marx  
1986: Roger Asselineau  
1985: Martha Banta  
1984: Nina Baym  
1983: Lewis Simpson  
1982: James M. Cox  
1981: Joseph Blotner  
1980: Walter B. Rideout  
1979: Edwin Cady  
1978: William M. Gibson  
1977: Nathalia Wright  
1976: Russel B. Nye  
1975: Richard B. Davis  
1974: Louis D. Rubin, Jr.  
1973: Norman Grabo  
1972: Michael Millgate  
1971: Harrison Hayford  
1970: Hugh Holman  
1969: John Gerber  
1968: Roy Harvey Pearce  
1967: Arlin Turner  
1966: Henry A. Pochmann  
1965: Lyon N. Richardson  
1964: Lewis Leary  
1963: Henry Nash Smith  
1962: Hyatt H. Waggoner  
1961: Herbert R. Brown  
1960: Norman Holmes Pearson  
1959: Clarence Gohdes  
1958: Walter Blair  
1957: Charles Anderson  
1956: Theodore Hornberger  
1955: Gay Wilson Allen  
1954: William Charvat  
1953: Leon Howard  
1952: Floyd Stovall  
1951: Randall Stewart  
1950: Harry R. Warfel

1949: Ernest E. Leisy  
1948: Harry H. Clark  
1947: Perry Miller  
1946: Willard Thorp  
1945: Gregory Paine  
1944: Louise Pound  
1943: Tremaine McDowell  
1942: Milton Ellis  
1940-41: Napier Wilt  
1939: Jay B. Hubbell  
1937-38: Sculley Bradley  
1935-36: Howard Mumford Jones  
1933-34: Stanley T. Williams  
1932: Ralph L. Rusk  
1930-31: Robert E. Spiller  
1928-29: Kenneth B. Murdock  
1925-27: Jay B. Hubbell  
1924: Fred L. Pattee  
1923: Percy H. Boynton  
1922: Arthur H. Quinn  
1921: Killis Campbell

**American Literature Section  
Executive Coordinators**

2006- : Sarah Robbins  
1999-2006: Sheryl L. Meyering and Brian A. Ragen  
1995-98: Susan Belasco  
1991-94: Paul Sorrentino  
1987-90: Jerome Loving  
1986: Benjamin Franklin Fisher IV  
1982-85: Donald Yannella  
1978-81: Charles Milon  
1974-77: William Mulder  
1970-73: Robert Edson Lee  
1966-69: Paul J. Carter, Jr.  
1962-64: James Woodress  
1957-61: Alexander Kern  
1954-57: Robert P. Falk  
1950-53: Arlin Turner  
1946-49: Allan Halline  
1942-45: Alexander Cowie  
1937-41: Tremaine McDowell  
1928-36: Sculley Bradley  
1924-26: Ernest Leisy  
1923: Robert Spiller  
1921-22: Francis A. Litz



### **Jay B. Hubbell Medal Winners**

2007: Lawrence Buell  
2006: Henry Louis Gates, Jr.  
2005: Martha Banta  
2004: Sacvan Bercovitch  
2003: Houston A. Baker  
2002: Annette Kolodny  
2001: Paul Lauter  
2000: Nina Baym  
1999: Paula Gunn Allen  
1998: Louis J. Budd  
1997: James M. Cox  
1996: Blyden Jackson  
1995: Blanche H. Gelfant  
1994: Leslie Fiedler  
1993: Leo Marx  
1992: Merton M. Sealts, Jr.  
1991: Lewis Simpson  
1990: Edwin Cady  
1989: Nathalia Wright  
1988: Richard Poirier  
1987: Daniel Aaron  
1986: Leon Edel  
1985: James Woodress  
1984: Roy Harvey Pearce  
1983: R.W.B. Lewis  
1982: Alfred Kazin  
1981: Lewis Mumford  
1980: Robert Penn Warren  
1979: Malcolm Cowley  
1978: Cleanth Brooks  
1977: Gay Wilson Allen  
1976: Lewis Leary  
1975: Henry Nash Smith  
1974: Walter Blair  
1973: Leon Howard  
1972: Willard Thorp  
1970: Howard Mumford Jones  
1967: Robert E. Spiller  
1965: Norman Foerster  
1964: Jay B. Hubbell

### **Norman Foerster Award for the Best Article Published in *American Literature***

2007: Birgit Brander Rasmussen  
2006: Jeff Allred  
2005: Geoffrey Sanborn  
2004: Cherene Sherrard-Johnson  
2003: Ed White  
2002: Gillian Silverman  
2001: Michael Warner with Natasha Hurley, Luis

Iglesias, Sonia Di Loreto, Jeffrey Scraba, and Sandra Young  
2000: Daylanne English  
1999: Mary Pat Brady  
1998: Amy Kaplan  
1997: Lisa A. Long  
1996: Chadwick Allen  
1995: Carla Kaplan  
1994: Caleb Crain  
1993: Lauren Berlant  
1992: Michael Warner  
1991: Lora Romero  
1990: Catherine Rainwater  
1989: Richard Lyon  
1988: Margaret Dickie  
1987: Cynthia Jordan  
1986: Joan Burbick  
1985: David Hesla  
1984: Karen Dandurand  
1983: Michael North  
1982: Christopher P. Wilson  
1981: Thomas M. Walsh & Thomas D. Zlatich  
1980: Robert A. Ferguson  
1979: Bryan Short  
1978: Stephen J. Tapscott  
1977: Charles Scruggs & Philip Gura  
(separate articles)  
1976: Robert Lee Stuart & William Andrews





## Articles of Organization of the American Literature Section of the MLA

This document was originally adopted on December 31, 1947 and has been revised and amended several times over the years. This version, which incorporates amendments approved in the fall of 2005, becomes the current “Articles of Organization” for distribution to members of the Section and of the American Literature Divisions.

### Membership

Any member of the Modern Language Association who pays the American Literature Section yearly dues to the Journals Department of Duke University Press will be a voting member in good standing in the Section.

### Officers and Offices

The officers of the Section will be a Chair, a Chair-elect, and the Executive Coordinator.

Offices of the organization will consist of an Advisory Council, an Executive Committee of three members, the Chairs of Standing Committees, the Secretaries of the five American Literature Divisions, and the Editor and the fifteen other members of the Board of Editors of *American Literature*.

### Tenure of Office

The Chair of the Section will hold office for one year and will not be eligible for successive re-election. The Executive Coordinator will serve a four-year term on initial appointment and may be appointed to a second term.

### Duties of Officers

*Chair.* In consultation with the Advisory Council, the Chair will plan and preside over the program and the open meeting of the Section. He or she will appoint one member of the Hubbell Award Committee, three members of the Foerster Award Committee, and the members of other committees recommended by the Advisory Council. He or she will observe the regulations established by the Modern Language Association for guidance of its organization.

*Chair-elect.* The Chair-elect will attend the Council meeting immediately following his or her election to office as an ex-officio member. He or she may assume their duties as sitting Council and Chair determine.

*Executive Coordinator.* The Executive Coordinator will maintain the files of the Section, handle daily correspondence, monitor the collection of dues by Duke University Press, pay the bills of the Section, organize the annual Section functions at MLA, order the Hubbell Medallion, conduct the annual election, work with the chair to plan and conduct the annual business meeting, work with the Chair and other members of the Advisory Council to run the Section, and compile, and publish the annual report.

### Advisory Council

The Advisory Council will consist of the Chair of the Section and the Executive Coordinator, six members to be elected two each per year for terms of three years each, and the Chairs of each of the five American Literature Divisions. The six elected members will not be eligible for successive re-election. If any member of the Council expects to be absent from its annual business meeting, that member can give a proxy to vote to a person from the following group: the Chairs of the Standing Committees, the Editor and the Members of the Board of Editors of *American Literature*, and the Secretaries of the Division. The Council will hold at least one session at each business meeting of the Section.

The Council will make nominations to the standing committees, to the Board of *American Literature*, and to the Council and certify all nominations submitted by members of the Section; after the balloting is completed, it will certify the election of candidates duly chosen according to the provisions of these articles; and it will consider such matters of policy as may be brought before it and make appropriate recommendations to the Section and the Divisions.

### Standing Committees

Members of these committees will be appointed by the Chair of the Section upon the recommendations of the Advisory Council or as specified herein.

1. *Executive Committee.* It will consist of the Chair of the Section, the Executive Coordinator, and one other member of the Section selected by the Chair. The immediate past Chair of the Section will serve as an ex officio advisory member of the Executive Committee. The Committee will have power in all urgent matters that require action between meetings of the Section.

2. *Hubbell Award Committee.* It will consist of five members, oriented to four regions and serving five-

year terms. The Chair of the Award Committee will be the member serving his or her fifth and last term. The Committee will be responsible for nominating candidates for the Hubbell Medal according to provisions adopted by the Advisory Council. The Executive Committee will appoint the Executive Coordinator of the Section with the advice and consent of the Advisory Council.

3. *Foerster Award Committee*. It will consist of three voting members of the Section appointed annually by the Chair of the Section. It will be responsible for selecting the best essay in *American Literature* during the calendar year.

### **Nominations and Elections**

The annual general election will include the officers of the Section and two members of the Advisory Council. The two members of the Advisory Council in the second of their three-year terms will constitute the annual slate for the election of the Chair of the Section. The winner of this election will serve as Chair in the following year. Nominations for the annual general election of the Section will come from a Nominations Committee of three members of the Advisory council chosen annually by the Chair of the Section.

Upon receiving from the Advisory Council the names of approved nominees, the Executive Coordinator will announce the names at the business meeting of the Section and in his or her annual report to all members of the Section.

Each year, the Executive Coordinator will mail to each voting member of the Section a ballot containing the nominations. Thus circulated, these names constitute a ballot to be marked and returned to the Executive Coordinator not later than December 1. It will be the duty of the council to certify the election of candidates. The Executive Coordinator will announce the results of the election at the annual business meeting.

Whenever vacancies occur in any elective offices, the Executive Committee will appoint a member of the section to serve out the unexpired terms in all cases except those of Chair and of Executive Coordinator. The Executive Coordinator will serve out the unexpired term of the Chair. The Advisory Council will appoint someone for the unexpired term of the Executive Coordinator.

### **American Literature Divisions**

In order to preserve the advantages of a unified American literature organization within the Modern Language

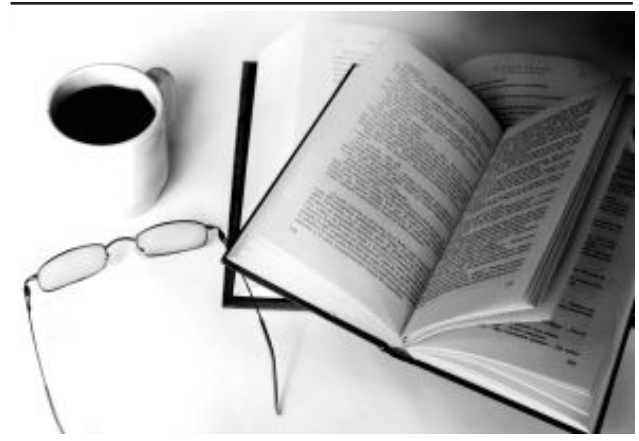
Association, an organization that can effectively plan and sponsor projects research and publication, the divisions will be represented by voting members on the Advisory Council.

The Section and the Divisions will work intensively and conscientiously to preserve and strengthen the unity of the American literature establishment as a whole. If the officers and Executive Committee members are not already members in good standing of the Section, they should become members.

### **Amendments**

Proposed amendments to these Articles of organization originate with the Advisory Council. Copies of the amendments approved by the Council will be mailed to all members of the Section with the final ballots or published in the Executive Coordinator's Report or in *American Literature*. Proposed amendments submitted to the Council too late to receive circulation before the annual meeting will not be voted on until the following year.

All ballots will be submitted in writing and signed. A proposed amendment will be adopted if approved by a majority of the total number of votes cast.



### **Minutes of the American Literature Section Meeting Dec. 27, 2007**

Present: Ralph Bauer (Univ of Maryland), Patricia Crain (NYU) Thadious Davis (Univ of Pennsylvania), Elisabeth Dillon (Northeastern Univ), Frances Smith Foster (Emory Univ), Sharon Harris (Univ of Connecticut), George Hutchinson (Indiana Univ), Caroline Levander (Rice Univ), Mark McGurl (UCLA), Greta Niu (Univ of Rochester) Simon Ortiz (Arizona State University), Patricia Wald (Duke Univ) Sandra Zagarell (Oberlin College)

Taking notes: Greta Niu

At the opening of the meeting, Sandra Zagarell announced Caroline Leander's election as Chair of the Section, 2008.

Joycelynn Moody unanimously affirmed as new executive coordinator (for 2009-2012, overlapping with Sarah Robbins for 2009 and with next executive coordinator in 2012)

Sandra Zagarell announced the two MLA panels and the awards ceremony. She brought up the cost of the last (this year the ALS must guarantee \$610.00, which is a burden in light of our total budget of \$740.00).

Sandra Zagarell and Priscilla Wald gave a brief history of the American Literature Section (ALS).

The Council discussed the idea that the awards ceremony with cash bar be on the 28th at next year's MLA but decided against the schedule change because the divisional representatives want to be able to inform their divisional meetings about discussion at the ALS council meeting and, if possible, coordinate divisional panels with the ALS panels for the next MLA.

Divisional representatives said they'd emphasize the importance of attending the Awards ceremony to their councils and membership. The group expressed great enthusiasm for using the listerv to coordinate panels for future conventions.

Priscilla Wald reported on American Literature, including the election of new board members. (See the list in the annual report's section on the journal.)

Lively discussion ensued on where the field and the journal are going. Priscilla Wald addressed what transnationalizing of the field means. She discussed it as a dynamic, a back and forth. Rather than Americanists now primarily training their sights on others, to be genuinely global we must also continue to focus on America--in the world.

The group identified key issues around which the question of the field and the journal now center:

- \* science and technology
- \* religion, terrorism
- \* US race/ethnic theory
- \* Postcolonial theory

\* reemergence of the mid-19th century as a focus

Priscilla Wald said it is not possible to do special issues until American Literature's two-year backlog clears. To facilitate that goal, and to keep abreast of current scholarship more fully, AL is looking into the possibility of shifting to on-line publishing of book reviews.

Discussion segued from this into consideration of next year's ALS panels and perhaps divisional panel topics as well.

Sandra Zagarell reported on ideas that she, Priscilla, and Sarah Robbins had discussed earlier in the fall:

- \* American literature now
- \* key figures in American lit/studies
- \* religion

Other ideas were also generated, including the question of collaborative research and new forms of scholarship and writing; data sampling, other kinds of sampling,

The two that emerged for the 2009 ALS MLA panels are

1. Provocations (probably a short set of presentations, perhaps fronted by a longer one, with much discussion time)

and

2. Where is the archive?

The meeting ended with announcements about the other American literature-oriented panels at the MLA for 2007 and a general sense that the discussion had been very productive.

Submitted by Sandra Zagarell and Greta Niu

