What is it?

“PMLA is the journal of the Modern Language Association of America. Since 1884, PMLA has published members' essays judged to be of interest to scholars and teachers of language and literature. Four issues each year (January, March, May, and October) present essays on language and literature; a Directory issue (September) contains a listing of the association's members, a directory of departmental administrators, and other professional information; and the November issue is the program for the association's annual convention. Each issue of PMLA is sent directly to the nearly 30,000 college and university teachers of English and foreign languages who belong to the association and to about 3,000 libraries throughout the world.”

Wish to Submit?

The PMLA welcomes submissions from all topics, scholarly methods, and theoretical approaches within the realm of language and literature. Offered articles must be greater than 2,500 words and less than 9,000 words in length and must address significant problems as well as clearly demonstrate the implications of their findings. Submissions are only accepted from members of the Modern Language Association. The PMLA does not print book reviews or works of fiction. Those who wish to submit their work should send duplicate copies of their article to

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How do the Powers That Be Grind the Grist?

“Each article submitted is sent to two reviewers, usually one consultant reader and one member of the Advisory Committee. Articles recommended by these readers are then sent to the members of the Editorial Board, who meet periodically with the editor to make final decisions. Until a final decision is reached, the author's name is not made known to consultant readers, to members of the Advisory Committee and the Editorial Board, or to the editor. Because the submission of an article simultaneously to more than one refereed journal can result in duplication of the demanding task of reviewing the manuscript, it is PMLA's policy not to review articles that are under consideration by other journals. An article found to have been simultaneously submitted elsewhere will not be published in PMLA even if it has already been accepted for publication by the Editorial Board.”

Who are the Powers That Be?

Editorial Board:  Staff Liaison, Judy Goulding  
Wai Chee Dimock, 2004-06  
Barbara Hahn, 2003-05  
Maria Herrera-Sobek, 2003-05  
Marianne Hirsch, Editor, 2003-06  
Bruce Robbins, 2003-05  
Pierre N. Saint-Amand, 2004-06  
Susan A. Stewart, 2004-06

Oh So Recently...

In January 2004, a Special Topic issue was released concerning the theme of “Literatures at Large” and the articles printed really spanned the approaches and subjects discussed in the introduction page. In May 2004, another Special Topic issue concerning “Science Fiction and Literary Studies” was released; articles in 2004 seemed to cover all manner of topics from authorship to translation studies to disability studies in the profession to transcripts of Nobel lectures. Trends are hard to discern given the broad range of material and approach.

Special Topic Issues

Special Topics, such as “Remapping Genre” for March 2006, are announced from time to time by the PMLA. Should such an issue be planned, notification is sent out in the MLA Newsletter far ahead of the submission deadline for that particular issue. One coordinator is specially chosen to direct each Special Topic Issue.

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