

**NeMLA Board
Meeting Minutes
October 27, 2018**

11:00 AM Eastern: Phone/webcam conference

Board Members Present:

Past President, Maria DiFrancesco; President, Simona Wright; Vice President, Carole Salmon; Second Vice President, Brandi So; Anglophone/British Literature Director, Elaine Savory; CAITY Caucus President and Representative, Katelynn DeLuca; Comparative Literature Director, Katherine Sugg; Cultural Studies and Media Studies Director, Maria Matz; French and Francophone Language and Literature Director, Claudia Esposito; German Language and Literature Director, Alexander Pichugin; Pedagogy and Professionalism Director, Maria Plochocki; Women's and Gender Studies Caucus Representative, Rachel Spear; Editor of *Modern Language Studies*, Laurence Roth; Graduate Student Caucus Representative, Nicole Lowman; Diversity, Susmita Roye

Non-Board Members Present

Executive Director, Carine Mardorossian; Administrative Coordinator, Derek McGrath; Graduate Assistant, Sarah Goldbort; Exhibitors and Promotion Coordinator, Claire Sommers

Board Members Absent:

Italian Language and Literature Director, Emanuela Pecchioli
Spanish and Portuguese Language and Literature Director, Margarita Vargas
Creative Writing, Publishing, and Editing Director, Christina Milletti
Anglophone/American Literature Director, Ben Railton

I. Executive Director's Report, Carine Mardorossian

- A.** Approval of Spring 2018 Board Minutes:
1. ED Mardorossian made a motion to approve the minutes for Spring 2018 minutes at 11:39 AM. Approved with a few no corrections. Seconded by Elaine Savory.
- B.** Staff:
1. Derek McGrath: Administrative Coordinator and Marketing
 2. Sarah Goldbort: Graduate Assistant
 3. Claire Sommers: Promotions, Professionalization and Exhibits
 4. Solon Morse: Graphic Designer, Posters, Newsletter, Program
- Fellows:
1. Cassandra Scherr, Newsletter and Events Fellow
 2. Jiwon Ohm, Awards Fellow
 3. Kinga Winnicki, Exhibitor & Job Clinic Fellow
 4. Ashley Byczkowski, Awards Fellow
 5. Callie Ingram, Convention and Editor Fellow

C. 2019 Convention

1. Convention Site:

- We are excited to be at the Gaylord, a convention-focused resort with the feel of outdoor space in a climate-controlled environment. This is our largest convention yet and it bodes well for NeMLA that we did not have to extend the deadline. We are projecting over 2200 attendees, about 400 more than last year.

2. Session Information:

- 600 sessions submitted and 443 running
 - **Pittsburgh** 573 submitted and 380 running
 - **Baltimore** 537 submitted sessions Baltimore and 385 running
- 3028 Abstracts submitted and 1894 approved vs 1658 last year and 1604 in Baltimore (where 2600 were submitted)
- 55 second session requests, all granted! vs 51 requests last year with 5 accepted
- More sessions and abstracts (with more double sessions) but fewer Special Events = **more attendance at each**. That is what we are going for, a more streamlined, better attended convention without double booking special events in the same language at the same time.
 - Drawback: venue is far from DC and luxurious so pricing may be an issue.
 - Fortunately:
 - + we have been saving money in preparation for this year.
 - + distance: a shuttle will take people to the mall and back throughout the convention
 - + airport is close and we have discounted flights (United) and transportation from the airport and back with Supershuttle

3. Special Events: Still need the info for some of the speakers so please forward a high resolution picture, a blurb and a bio asap so we can make posters and start thinking of future conventions now so as to secure co-sponsorships (2020 Boston, 2021 Philly, 2022 Baltimore)

- Also remember that we have decided to provide the honorarium separately from the travel expenses which should not exceed \$500

4. Undergraduate Forum: this will be the most important new initiative at this 50th Convention! The undergraduate forum will take place on Thursday afternoon. The students will do a short presentation and also have the opportunity to present their poster to the general public. They will have a workshop designed just for them about applying to graduate school. They will get to attend the opening speaker and get free books. We have new buttons for them that say “ASPIRING GRADUATE STUDENT” The excitement about the new NeMLA Undergrad Forum is electric and contagious. Deans are contacting me to ask about covering registration for a group of undergraduates to attend (we have made registration really low at \$50 and we have waived membership). Some of the undergrads were very ambitious and submitted abstracts to other sessions than the Undergraduate

Forum and they must have been good because two were accepted into regular sessions alongside faculty and graduate students! We will work with the programmers to make sure that does not happen again.

5. **Workshops** are \$10 to enroll (to make sure people don't reserve a spot and don't show up) and we approved of 9 workshops, including three in the languages. We will open registration for the workshops shortly.
6. **Poster session:** we will have 3 types of posters: undergraduate ones, Summer Fellows and regular members. They will be strategically placed in the exhibit hall
7. **CV Clinic and Mentoring circle:** please sign up for slots; Claire will be in touch. We are still working on avoiding overlap between the WGSC mentoring and the publishing mentoring NeMLA organizes
8. The "Meet the Author" initiative which I thought had died a natural death was resurrected by members... We have two sessions, one in Spanish and one in French, who will have an author attend the session. If the author is not affiliated with an institution, I usually waive the registration for them
 - For 2019, "All of NeMLA reads a book" initiative involves Mbue's book BEHOLD THE DREAMERS. For 2020, it is Andre Dubus III's GONE SO LONG: A NOVEL but it is in hardback so the price of acquiring the same # of copies tripled. We are holding off on buying hoping the paperback will be out soon.
 - Also we decided that the interviewer for the opening speaker will always be the Creative Writing director to preserve continuity and expertise. Once we saw what a superb job Christina Milletti did last year, and how far from easy that was to pull off so naturally, it became obvious that we can't take risks with inviting members to interview our authors. It simply has to be expertly done.
9. **Seminars** increased from last year (42 from 39): we are doing a better job of notifying chairs of their duties and reminding them of rules when it comes to session format.
10. We will not have additional tracks starting at noon on Thursday or on Sunday at 1:30. That simply did not have enough attendance and people complained.
11. **Database:** We will have a new contract with our programmers, so they can address the problems and needs that have arisen since we actively began using the system.
 - I can't say enough about how much easier it is to keep track of what is happening with sessions. If they drop to two, I see it as opposed to realizing it at the convention or too late. I can immediately contact the chair to ask them to either find another paper submission or withdraw their session and make room for a double session. Sometimes chairs withdraw their session after having accepted two panelists. I then work to find new homes for the accepted two papers of presenters whose sessions folded through no fault of their own. Some of you were contacted and know what I am talking about. I often resort to area directors to help me in this process. I believe I "rescued" about 30 abandoned papers this year alone. I make sure to indicate to every new chair I consult about considering this extra paper that there is no obligation to accept

the paper I am asking them to review because the presenter has no knowledge of what I am doing.

- One of the biggest changes this time around was we decided NOT to let presenters have access to the status of their papers right away. That gave chairs time to decide and play around with accepting / declining or retrieving papers under consideration and moving them to accepted.
 - Then we only allowed accepted presenters to see their “accepted” status but not the others, still to give chairs time to make adjustments mostly because if a chair goes back and retrieves a paper that had been declined or under consideration (because someone else drops out), then the presenter is not aware that they were a “second choice.”
 - A week later, we then opened the database and allowed everyone to see their status. The idea with this staggered method is to build in time to make mistakes and change one’s mind about acceptance/rejection. In retrospect, next year, we will allow presenters to see their “accepted” status right away. There is no point withholding the good news at least.
 - Comment that people might eventually find out that they heard about getting accepted or declined way later than others. Carine mentioned that she is not too worried about this because people don’t always pay attention to deadlines.
 - One problem: people submitting 10 sometimes 15 abstracts to ensure participation in at least one session (we are that popular!). It created a mess with presenters getting accepted in a session then choosing another and the first session that was finalized is left in trouble etc. This is especially true when chairs don’t make sure to get confirmation from their presenters that their session is the one they want to be on. Sometimes, it is also the presenter who wants to wait and wait until their favorite session has notified them of their status. Can we revisit limiting the number of abstract submissions? Is 4 ok? That would help tremendously.
 - Some suggested 5; others said 3. The majority said 3.
 - Maybe a waiting list would be helpful—Carine said that we basically already have this. The chair creates their own waiting list. Or maybe the person who submits a proposal could rank the sessions they would like to participate on. Carine said she would think more about this. The issue is that sometimes chairs get offended that people have submitted abstracts to multiple places.
 - Also we had many presenting the SAME exact paper with the same exact title on different sessions, a roundtable and a panel let’s say. We added online the rule that no paper can get presented twice.
- 12. Fun Prizes:** We will continue with the photo contest and social engagement challenge. Members are encouraged to meet with their session panelists after their session in a social setting, to take a picture, and submit it to win free membership for next year.
- NEW PRIZES: We will also have prizes for the oldest program and one for the oldest tote bag. We will show these at the brunch.
 - My hope is to have a videographer on site asking people how the feel

about NeMLA so we can create a clip of testimonies.

13. Swag: it is our 50th so we are looking to add fun stuff to the bags and at registration (will keep the suspense alive). We are concerned about the tariffs since the price of the tote bags will quadruple if we deal with goods coming from China so we are researching vendors who sell MADE IN THE USA, which is a good thing.

14. New initiatives:

- + webpage devoted to books based on sessions from NeMLA
- + table in exhibit hall allowing members presenting to exhibit one copy of their book.
- + creative writings selling their books
- + **Cash bar or NeMLA gathering at MLA?**

D. Board: As we proceed with the next vote, please remember to remind your successor to:

- + Read the bylaws
- + Read documents on dropbox
- + Meet with you at the convention and/or an Area Directors Meeting I would love to see resurrected.
- + Use board-sponsored sessions judiciously
- + Work on their speakers while keeping in mind the exhibitors
- + Have a graduate student (ideally on the market and in the field) introduce the speaker and work to help that student network with the speaker (dinner? Reception?)
- + Invite them to the board meeting on the first day of the convention (we cover wed night if they do and that free night is not interchangeable)
- + Attend the brunch meeting
- + ALSO please recruit, recruit, recruit. Please note however that the 2nd VP needs to be from the host institution for obvious reasons.

E. Accounting:

My accountant fired himself and let us know two months ago that he could no longer do the end-of-year review (he is a CPA but apparently lost his standing in some way so he can file taxes but not do reviews). Brandi located a fantastic replacement but we realized she would not work because NeMLA's accountant has to be in NY state. In the meantime, a colleague recommended a firm; this is something I had stayed away from because the firm we had first hired cost us 3 times what the individual accountant charged. The good news is we just got an engagement letter from our new accounting firm that comes highly recommended, and the price is comparable to what we have been paying. In addition, this firm is located close by and will make it possible for me to meet with the bookkeeper we are hiring on a regular basis to keep our records up to date.

F. Finances: Projected budget:

Projected income:

Registration/membership	\$263,290
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Exhibits	\$6100
Host institution	\$5000
Fees (workshops, caucus, events)	\$6050

\$280,440

Expenses

AV and Media	\$15,000.00
Box handling fees	\$500.00
Food and Beverage	\$75,000.00
Service charge	\$15,750.00
Photographer	\$700.00
Videographer	\$500.00
Attrition	\$0.00
Shuttles/Misc	\$3,000.00
Local Events	\$1,500.00
Total	\$111,950.00

Convention Materials	Estimated
Printing: CFPs, Flyers, Inserts, Postcards	\$4,500.00
Name Badges/holders	\$1,200.00
Signage	\$1,000.00
Totebags, pens	\$8,500.00
Program	\$9,000.00
50th Anniversary	\$15,000.00
Total	\$39,200.00

Awards	Estimated
Grad Travel Award	\$12,000.00
CAITY Travel Award	\$4,000.00
Summer Fellowships	\$12,000.00
Book Award	\$1,250.00
Caucus Paper Awards	\$500.00
Total	\$29,750.00

Publications	Estimated
Newsletter Winter/Summer	\$4,000.00
Journal: Italian Studies (includes mailing)	\$1,500.00
Graphic Design	\$3,000.00
Total	\$8,500.00

Speakers	Estimated
Keynote (elevated for 50th)	\$5,000.00
Opening Speaker (elevated for 50th)	\$5,000.00
Speaker Honoraria (Travel Inclusive)	\$8,000.00
Total	\$18,000.00

Board Expenses	Estimated
Board Meeting Meal (listed above)	
Lodging	\$8,750.00
Total	\$8,750.00

Operations	Estimated
Postage - Bulk	\$1,500.00
Postage - Misc	\$2,500.00
Office Supplies	\$4,000.00
Bank Fees	\$400.00
Insurance/Webhosting/SurveyMonkey	\$1,500.00
Credit Card Processing Fees	\$6,600.00
Accountant	\$6,000.00
Accounting Review	\$500.00
Grad Fellows UB Support	\$1,000.00
Long Range/Site Visits	\$4,000.00
MLA Convention: Travel	\$3,000.00
Misc Fees (State Registrations, Etc.)	\$600.00
Local Fellows	\$1,200.00
Registration Hourly	\$2,300.00
Grad Fellows/Board (Hotel Rooms Included above)	\$0.00
Executive Director	\$10,000.00
Temp/Consultant/Office Allowance	\$7,500.00
Exhibitor Fellow/CV Clinic/Database Research	\$6,000.00
Marketing	\$7,000.00
Total	\$65,600.00
Total Expenses	Estimated
	\$294,750.00

Profit & Loss Summary

	Estimated
Total income	\$280,440.00
Total expenses	\$294,750.00
	(\$14,310.00)

G. Other Business:

1/ CAITY's status:

- Concern about the interest by the membership for this caucus. (Move to Katelynn's CAITY caucus report below)

2/ Cap on honorarium for speakers

- Want to think about having a standard, so that speakers think its fair
- Also want to encourage speakers to stick around for dinners or networking

3/ A new NeMLA film journal

- Would love to sponsor a film journal if we have enough funds
- Suggestions on whether to move forward? Do we want to make it more open than just film?
 - The idea for film came up in order to not overlap with MLS (but MLS also accepts submissions on film, even if it's not its focus)
 - If it was online and entirely digital, it would help to separate it from MLS
 - Would it be open to all languages? We need more information about what this could look like.
 - Decision was made to revisit this at the spring board meeting.

4/ Registration workers: open to membership?

- We usually work with the host institution for registration desk workers. They usually get the right of first refusal, but do we want to open it to the membership?
- Suggestion to limit it to graduate students

5/ Allow members to sponsor graduate fellowships in their names

- This could be partly a networking opportunity, but also a chance to have members have their name associated with a fellowship

6/ Board – sponsored sessions: Graduate caucus (Nicole Lowman)

- Two of the sessions that the GC proposed (that members wanted) were declined. What happened here, and how can deal with this in the future?
 - The issue might have been with the topics seeming similar to other sessions, and the other issue is possibility that they would not have received many abstracts. There's also a limit on how many sessions a member may propose, so this could have been an issue.
 - Suggestion that maybe the graduate student themselves submit a proposal for a session they are interested in (instead of having board members propose it, especially because we don't want it to look like board members

get preferential treatment for sessions getting accepted). We need to decide as a board whether we want to guarantee sessions for board members, and if so, how many? Or are we just doing this for graduate students? Perhaps we should add the board-sponsored sessions afterwards.

- Rachel chimed in about what the WGSC does for this—they discuss session ideas at the brunch, and propose one roundtable and one panel. They then find chairs to run the sessions (typically at the brunch, but also via email after the convention).
- Perhaps this was a miscommunication about how board-sponsored sessions work. We need to talk more about what board-sponsored sessions work in general (perhaps the issue is the difference between having 1 guaranteed versus 5 submissions).

7/ Travel funds for international attendees? (Susmita Roye)

- One of the issues is that the award from CAITY or GSC is that the award does not cover enough of international travel costs
- Maybe we could collect donations for a NeMLA fund to help cover international travel costs
- Either we single it out as an “international scholars” travel award—this could be a problem because some countries fund people better. If we single it out as an “identity” issue related to economics, this could be a disaster. If we single out certain countries to support, we would run into complaints from others. We need to figure out how to support international students in particular, but in a way that doesn’t single them out as their own category/award.
 - Maybe we make an “underrepresented” category, but people abuse this category and we don’t have time to figure out if they are abusing the system.
- Is it possible to cover their rooms somehow? We have a limited amount of free rooms, so this is a tough route to go because we use these rooms for staff, speakers, fellows, board, etc.
- No answer as of now, but we will continue the conversation. Carine recommends Susmita comes up with a proposal or work with the caucuses, so that we can come up with more ideas moving forward.

DEADLINES:

- Please offer to join the book award committee and the summer fellowship
- If you want to be added to the google calendar to receive more information about deadlines, please email Derek McGrath.
- If you have changes to the website in your area, please email Derek McGrath.

Other: Great work, area directors! The board reports have great information about the status of each area, and folks are doing great! Keep up the hard work.

II. Officers’ Reports

A. CAITY Caucus President and Representative, Katelynn DeLuca

a. Leadership:

- i. As of last September, I am no longer considered a CAITY constituent due to a change in employment to a full time, tenure track position at a four-year institution. I brought this to the attention of all members in attendance at the 2018 business meeting and a vote was held to determine whether I should remain as representative and president. Subsequently, I was voted to remain in my position.
- ii. I spoke with Carine during the 2018 conference about adding a Vice President role to the CAITY Caucus leadership, as I have been the only representative. The impetus for such a request is primarily a reflection of my desire to better serve CAITY constituents. I have continued to maintain the essay and travel awards, email accounts, and other matters, but there were additional opportunities, such as the creation of a single-page flyer highlighting the Caucus and offering important information about it that would have been placed in the 2018 welcome bags, that were missed. This was a result of practical matters as it was not feasible to create such a document while fulfilling the other demands relevant to the caucus.
- iii. At the 2018 Business Meeting, constituents asked for and voted on having an online vote for various issues including: the election of a vice president, the possibility of adding a \$1.00 membership fee that would help fund Caucus activities or awards, and how, more specifically, constituents would like such money to be used.
- iv. I created a series of survey questions regarding the above financial questions and the VP election below, but it is on hold until after the board meeting.
- v. **Vice President Election**
 1. Two people submitted self-nominations for the role of VP. Both have recently moved from adjunct to full-time status, and one is from a two-year institution. Carine raised concern about such representation and requested that the vote be placed on hold until the fall board meeting
 2. Therefore, a discussion about how to proceed forward with leadership is necessary for the board meeting. I came up with a few options and hope to hear more from the board:
 - a. I'm concerned that the incentive of offering the VP free registration alone is not enough to encourage adjunct, contingent, or independent scholars to apply for such roles because the funding available is much different and often significantly less. I recognize there are budgetary concerns that must be considered, but possibly adding a complimentary night or two in our conference hotel or secondary hotel may increase the likelihood and ability of such members to attend and participate as part of the CAITY leadership.
 - b. I don't have the historical perspective, but a possibility might be to change the name of the caucus or merge it with

another related area. This could help with gaining interest in leadership from constituents.

c. Change in leadership

3. Discussion:

a. Is this an issue with lack of interest or lack of support?

b. The question of help in terms of organizing the travel awards is different than a question about leadership, since we have the graduate assistant and the fellows who can help. Perhaps a solution is to involve the leader of the Pedagogy and Professionalism area.

i. Carine proposes that this is brought to the constituency at the convention and see what they think. Ask them what it would take to become more involved, or if they have other ideas of what should happen with the caucus. Can also send a survey out and talk about things more at the board meeting in the spring. Just need to make it clear that NeMLA will still provide funds for the travel awards, and that the Pedagogy and Professional area will still be available to serve this population. See if it's an issue with funding for leaders or perhaps a workload issue.

b. Awards

- i. Judging: I will continue to seek volunteers in order to assemble a panel to judge the paper prize and travel awards blind, and I'm hopeful that more volunteers will be available and willing to participate. This past year I reached out to our Past-President, as well as local colleagues and Carine. Also, I intend to ask for help from Carine's team again to help with judging and anonymizing the entries prior to distributing them to the judging panel. I want to formally thank Sarah Goldbort for her work with the CAITY Travel Award anonymizing process last year.
- ii. Last year we saw a steep reduction in the number of ineligible submissions for both the essay prize and the travel award last year, which is largely a result of the revisions to the submission process, application, and information provided on the website. Therefore, we will follow the same process as last year in which applications will be sent via email using the revised application form.
- iii. The due date for both awards have been changed to reflect the earlier conference date as compared to last year; essay award submissions are due January 10th, 2019 and travel award applications are due December 5th, 2018.
- iv. **Submissions:** We have already received a larger number of essay award submissions than the total received last year and we expect additional submissions to come in as the date approaches. This is a great improvement and I will continue our digital campaign reminding constituents to submit their revised papers.

c. Award Questions from Constituents:

- i. We received three inquiries about language requirements for the essay award. Although it isn't stated on the website that essay submissions must be made in English only, the travel award does indicate this explicitly. Constituents are concerned that as an organization that embraces multiple languages, restrictions placed on language fail to support all members.
- ii. I would like to remove language restrictions from the requirements of both awards, but will need assistance in gathering language experts who can serve as judges and evaluate submissions made in languages other than English.

d. Planning for events at 2019 conference

- i. The Travel and Essay Awards are currently being advertised to constituents. We have already exceeded the number of Essay Award submissions received last year and have received many Travel Award applications.
- ii. Travel checks will be distributed at the business meeting to facilitate involvement.
- iii. Business meeting: topics will include: brainstorming ways to increase involvement of CAITY constituents such as those above; revisiting prior discussions regarding our social media presence: developing a clearer sense of issues currently facing constituents.

B. President, Simona Wright:

- a. Early last summer, Carine and I were approached by Carolina Sanchez, Commissioning Editor of Vernon Press, with the idea of a possible publication of an anniversary volume. Carine and I believe that this is a great idea, but would like to present it to the board for further discussion. Points of discussion are: possible editor(s), themes, CFP, and timeline.
 - i. Send your ideas to Carine or Simona if you have any so that this is a collaborative project.
 - ii. Could also be a collaboration between MLS and others, or maybe two different anniversary issues since MLS is working on something.

C. Vice President, Carole Salmon

a. Information about 2020 convention:

- i. Boston University signed the contract with us in July 2018 and they will be our host institution! We are working with our two faculty liaisons, Dr. Karl Kerchwey, Associate Dean of Faculty in the Humanities at Boston University, and Dr. Davida Pines, Chair of the Division of Rhetoric, to select and invite a speaker for the Thursday Opening Ceremony. At this moment, we are hoping to get someone from BU and our faculty liaisons are working on it. I will share more as plans get finalized.
- ii. André Dubus III (*The House of Sand and Fog*, *Townie*, *Dirty Love*, etc.) signed a contract with us in Dec 2017 and he will be our keynote speaker for Friday March 6, 2020 and the author featured in our "NeMLA Reads Together" program for the Boston convention (see Dubus' webpage:

<http://andredubus.com/index.html>).

D. Comparative Literature Director, Katherine Sugg

- a. We are very excited to be co-sponsoring with the Women and Gender Studies Caucus (Rachel N. Spears, Representative) on our Special Event in Washington, DC, which will be a talk by Ricardo Ortiz, of Georgetown University:
 - i. Ricardo L. Ortiz is Chair of the Department and Associate Professor of Latinx Literature and Culture in the English Department at Georgetown University. His first book, *Cultural Erotics in Cuban America*, was published by the University of Minnesota Press in 2007; his second book, *Latinx Literature Now: Between Evanescence and Event*, will be published by Palgrave Press in 2019 *Sex and Gender After "Latinx"*

E. Second Vice President, Brandi So:

- a. **Summer Fellowships:** The process and associated information for applications to the NeMLA Summer Fellowship is posted online at <http://www.buffalo.edu/nemla/awards/fellowships/summer-fellowships.html>. The Deadline is February 6, and I hope my colleagues will join me in encouraging junior scholars and graduate students to apply. Sushmita Roye, Carole Salmon, and Hilda Chacon all graciously volunteered to sit on the selection committee with me, and I look forward to working with them in this endeavor. Sincere thanks go also to Derek McGrath and Sarah Goldbort for their role in making the website presence clearly marked and available and for helping to manage the dissemination process of the materials to the committee!
- b. **Selection of Host Institution for NeMLA 2021:** I am excited about collaborating with our host institution in Philadelphia in 2021 and for the incredible experience we look forward to in that beautiful city! I will update the Board as I get closer to confirming with one of the many attractive options in the area.
- c. **Workshops:** Submissions to this year's workshops was extraordinarily competitive, but while we had to decline several, we are still offering more this year than ever before.
- d. **Developing a Foundation Account for NeMLA:** One thing that I've become increasingly aware of is the great disparity in resources available to organizations of our size. NeMLA boasts a healthy membership and a reserve savings that befits a nonprofit of its size for sheer implementation purposes. However, other similarly sized organizations, like the National Women's Studies Association, often have considerable endowments, several full-time staff, and an advancement strategy that serves to bolster these resources. In the coming months, I'd like to explore the cost and feasibility of launching an advancement campaign for NeMLA, one that would align the goodwill and earnest support of our members and ex-members of means with the long-term goals of the organization. NeMLA Currently doesn't even have a "donate now" option for members who might wish to support the graduate travel award, book award, or caucus awards. Moreover, I believe starting an advancement campaign, however small and steady, would eventually lead us to a capacity to hire full-time administrative staff, as is common for many other institutions our size. Doing so would allow us to increase our publications of record, invest more consistently in our association

infrastructure, develop more relevant and transforming programming for our members, and provide the primary servants of the convention machinery a much-needed foundation of support to make the roles of the convention organizers more feasible.

- e. Possibility of getting support to develop clearer guidelines/materials for onboarding new board members.

F. Past President, Maria DiFrancesco:

- a. We need readers for the book award, and we also need more manuscript submissions
 - i. We might extend the deadline

G. Editor of *Modern Language Studies*, Laurence Roth

- a. *MLS* continues in very good editorial health overall. I'm sorry to report, however, that our issue 48.1 (Summer 2018) did not go out on time. Our printer took nearly two weeks to move the journal through the bindery, and then Susquehanna's mailing services discovered that the plastic bags we usually use to mail the copies did not fit our 128-page issue, necessitating a special order that took another few days to arrive. The printer's delay was unusual. No cogent explanation was offered, but the Reprint Production Supervisor at Workman Publishing informed us that because of the trade war with China there have been paper shortages and consequent publishing delays across the industry. Whatever the cause, we plan to get the next issue to the printer as early as possible so as not to delay distribution in advance of the 50th anniversary convention.
- b. The upcoming Winter 2019 issue will feature a special cluster on "Language of the Unheard': Riot on the American Cultural Stage," which was organized and edited by Susan Gilmore, plus an essay on immigration and restorative justice from the NeMLA President, Simona Wright, in recognition of this year's convention theme, the next installment of Mara Rutherford's *Minotaur*, and creative work by C.R. Resetarits and Chloe N. Clark. We are still sorting through whether to run book reviews in the issue and, if so, which ones.
 - i. Perhaps Carine could write a short intro to the issue for the 50th anniversary, and maybe the caucus/area representatives could do this as well (instead of the "NeMLA notes" section that's typically at the end). An email will go out to request a brief note from caucus/area representatives.

H. Cultural Studies and Media Studies Director, Maria Matz

- a. The Cultural Studies and Media Studies Area is in good shape as we prepare for the 2018 conference. The area has 49 accepted proposals for the 50th NeMLA Annual Convention in Washington, D.C. scheduled to take place March 21-24, 2019. We have 33 panels (31 in 2018), 5 seminars (7 in 2018), 11 roundtables (12 in 2018), and a special event. 21 sessions were declined or did not make. While a few sessions languished, 10 sessions received 10 or more abstracts.
- b. In addition to addressing this year's theme on Intersections of Cultures, Languages, and Peoples, the Cultural Studies and Media Studies area continues to

cover a range of mediums (fiction, film, television, fashion, comics, and music) mostly from the contemporary period. The most popular sessions (receiving 10 or more abstracts) represent diverse areas. The sessions are distinct from each other and many are new to the NeMLA program. Fantasy, science fiction, immigration and gender/transgender identities were popular in the numbers of abstracts across numerous sessions, and comics continued having a presence. Same as last Fall 2017, sessions focused on race, class, and disability were not as visible as they were in prior conferences.

- c. This year we have joined forces with Anglophone / American Literature Area and the Spanish and Portuguese Studies Area to bring a high-profile speaker. Professor Aviva Chomsky accepted our invitation to be our keynote speaker and to give a 45 minutes talk on the representation of immigration and undocumentedness in the United States followed by a 30 minutes Q&A part. She is a professor of history and the Coordinator of Latin American, Latino and Caribbean Studies at Salem State University in Massachusetts. We are very excited to have this prominent scholar and activist joining us to speak on such crucial questions, and have offered her a \$3000 honorarium (combining our three areas' funds).

I. Anglophone/British Literature Director, Elaine Savory

- a. Might want to change the area to “Global Anglophone,” or something similar, so that we’re not being colonialist. Questioning our categories might be helpful, especially so that we’re being inclusive. “Anglophone” could be problematic when attached to “British” or “American.”
- b. Anglophone has partnered with the Diversity Caucus to bring a strong speaker . This is Professor Gayle Wald, who is in both the English and American Studies Departments at George Washington University, D.C.
 - 1. She is an interdisciplinary scholar who works in African American and U.S. popular music, culture and race theory and feminist and gender studies. Whilst she may seem an unusual choice for a division of NeMLA committed to literature as text, Wald works in both English and American Studies departments, and clearly aligns and relates music and orature to American literature, especially in the African American tradition.
 - a. This is also a move on our part to recognize that the necessary administrative divisions between American and Anglophone literatures are often not borne out in terms of work within a transnational frame of reference- in this case, work on an aspect of the global African diaspora. Her work connects to other areas of African diaspora culture and literature in the Caribbean and in Britain, as well as West African traditions of orature and music. Within Anglophone and British, there is a healthy interest in transnational literatures, reflecting a developing subsection of work of great importance in understanding how our

complex world is expressed in literary culture, both oral and scribal.

- c. Issue to discuss: a narrow topic or a broad topic present issues. So, we'll try to see how we can fix this moving forward—area directors need to make sure that people don't get rejected for the wrong reasons.
 - i. Maybe for cases when a chair receives many submissions, but doesn't want a second session, we could create a session anyway and see if someone is interested in chairing the session (so that good papers don't get declined for the wrong reasons).

J. Creative Writing, Publishing, and Editing Director, Christina Milletti

a. Issue for Discussion:

- i. As NeMLA grows, adding a small press or individual sales component to the book fair seems to me an essential area for development, particularly for Creative Writing. The ability to sell small press books is a key reason to participate in an organization or attend a conference. Adding the feature, will attract more writers. (Many writers go to the AWP Conference every year merely to attend the book fair.) I'm aware of the obstacles in staffing and fund distribution enhancing our book fair presents. However, I would urge the Board to continue to pursue the matter as technology and apps develop that can perhaps create mechanisms to ease part of the puzzle. For instance, collecting funds for books through Square and then distributing them to the authors through Venmo might be an option. By next year, there may be a single app that can assist this side of the issue.
 1. Maybe using Square to take care of sales would help with some of these issues or some other software solution.
 2. We'll talk about this more at the spring board meeting.

K. Spanish and Portuguese Language and Literature Director, Margarita Vargas

- a. The Spanish and Portuguese area received 56 proposals and we accepted 49 for the 50th NeMLA Annual Convention in Washington, D.C. scheduled to take place March 21-24, 2019. Our numbers grew, which is exciting.
- b. This year we have joined forces with Anglophone / American Literature Area and the Cultural Studies and Media Studies Area to bring a high-profile speaker. Professor Aviva Chomsky accepted our invitation to be our keynote speaker and to give a 45 minutes talk on the representation of immigration and undocumentedness in the United States followed by a 30 minutes Q&A part.

L. French and Francophone Language and Literature Director, Claudia Esposito

- a. Board Sponsored Panel (Creative)
 - i. In discussion with the Director of NeMLA we decided to propose a board sponsored creative session with two writers and a documentary filmmaker that we have called "Meet the Authors" where participants will have a chance to hear two authors read from recent works and to see excerpts

from a recent documentary. Readings and short screening will be followed by a question and answer session.

- b. Francophone Area Special Event:
 - i. The French and Francophone Area joined the Italian Special Event to sponsor a talk by Roberto Dainotto (Professor of Romance Studies at Duke University) entitled Ernesto de Martino and Frantz Fanon: “Forms of Fanonism” in the Mediterranean”. On the heels of our recent discussions regarding the numerous overlapping special events at NeMLA, it seemed that someone like Dainotto, who is a specialist of the Mediterranean, among other things, could interest both Italian and French/Francophone members. The Mediterranean today is an area of primary concern and to understand it from as many angles as possible—in the long and short *durée*—is more necessary than ever. Roberto Dainotto is Professor of Italian and of Literature at Duke University, where he teaches courses on modern and contemporary European culture.

M. Pedagogy and Professionalism Director, Maria Plochocki

- a. For the 2019 convention, 64 sessions were proposed in all, of which 43 were approved and 18 declined. Here are some interesting trends to note, which should also inform future efforts: Several overlapping sessions were proposed (i. e., more than one member proposed a session on the same or closely related topic), so I recommended that they merge their sessions, which I thought would give them a better chance of running: this way, proposed abstracts wouldn’t be so scattered, and the session chairs would not compete for abstracts/ submissions. Most were amenable to this; one even withdrew her session altogether as she already had quite a bit of experience presenting and chairing at NeMLA and so wanted to give someone else the opportunity to do so.
- b. I’m seeking to increase the representation of adjunct faculty within NeMLA, both in terms of attendance/ turnout and addressing issues of relevance to them; when their voices are better heard, and more are able to attend, perhaps the number of accepted sessions and those running (attracting enough abstracts) will align better. As well, as has been attempted for the past several years (at least), collaboration between CAITY and other caucuses with related interests, such as the Grad Student and WGS, should be a priority: such efforts can not only increase the number of viable, relevant sessions but also allow us to merge resources for purposes like invited speakers and special events. Unfortunately, as I know from experience, scholarship by adjunct faculty is not always encouraged or rewarded by employers (and not only financially), so we should also develop ways for these members to continue their own scholarly efforts, publicise these, and engage their colleagues; after all, with adjunct faculty teaching well over half of all general-education courses at all institutions of higher learning, and many other types, as well, they truly are the “ear to the ground” for the rest of the profession: they often know best what’s happening, locally and more broadly, and what happens to them will often also happen to faculty considered more secure.

N. Italian Language and Literature Director, Emanuela Pecchioli

- a. For the 2019 NeMLA convention in Washington, DC (NeMLA 50th anniversary), the Italian area has a total of 43 sessions divided into 25 panels, 12 roundtables, and 6 seminars. This year's number of sessions is higher than last year, but the division of the Italian sessions into panels, roundtables, and seminars mirrors that of 2018.
- b. The Italian sessions for the 2019 NeMLA convention are truly diverse and wide-ranging. Medieval and Renaissance cultures are still slightly underrepresented, but the downward trend in session submissions in these areas is starting to turn around. This year, there are more sessions devoted to these cultural and historical periods than last year.
- c. This year, the Italian Area Special Event and the French Area Special Event are joined. Roberto Dainotto, Professor of Italian and of Literature at Duke University, will give a lecture titled "Ernesto de Martino and Frantz Fanon: "Forms of Fanonism" in the Mediterranean."

O. German Language and Literature Director, Alexander Pichugin

- a. Sessions: The German Language and Literature Area had 22 sessions (+ special event) initially registered. We had 17 last year, so the numbers have increased.
 - i. 6 sessions were cancelled because of insufficient numbers of abstracts. Most probable reason is the narrow focus of the panel.
 - ii. 3 sessions received a second panel (Thank you, Carine!)
 - iii. The resulting 20 sessions are distributed into 16 traditional panels, 2 roundtables, 1 workshop, and 1 special event. Session topics include both the language and the German-language literatures, with a concentration on modern and contemporary literature, film, and music. This year, Austrian and German-speaking Yugoslavian sub-areas are especially prominent. There is a considerable amount of panels cross-listed with *Cultural Studies and Media Studies* and *Pedagogy and Professionalism*. One panel is cross-listed with *Women's and Gender Studies*.
- b. Special Event: I am very happy and proud to report that I succeeded in inviting for a special event the author and translator Peter Wortsman. We could indicate to the membership that another area is sponsoring this session in order to encourage more attendance (since this speaker also translates French, etc.).
 - i. Peter Wortsman is the author of two books of short fiction, *A Modern Way to Die* and *Footprints in Wet Cement*, a novel, *Cold Earth Wanderers*, named by Foreword Reviews "one of the best fantasy/scifi books of the year," two stage plays, *Burning Words* and *The Tattooed Man Tells All*, both produced, a travel memoir, *Ghost Dance in Berlin*, for which he won an Independent Publishers Book Award, and a forthcoming work of nonfiction, *The Caring Heirs of Dr. Samuel Bard*. He also compiled,

edited and translated an anthology, *Tales of the German Imagination*. His other critically acclaimed English takes on German classics include works by Peter Altenberg, Adelbert von Chamisso, the Brothers Grimm, Heinrich Heine, Franz Kafka, Heinrich von Kleist, Robert Musil, Mynona, Ernst Toller, et al. A former fellow of the Fulbright and Thomas J. Watson Foundations, he was a Holtzbrinck Fellow at the American Academy in Berlin in 2010. He currently teaches literary translation in the Department of Germanic, Russian and Eastern European Languages at Rutgers University.

- c. **Undergraduate Forum:** I have advertised the newly created Undergraduate Forum at my institution (Rutgers University). I helped two undergraduate students prepare an application for participation to present their undergraduate research project *World Languages at Rutgers: A Multimedia Project*. Their presentation was accepted. The students are now applying for the travel support from the University.

P. Diversity, Susmita Roye

- a. During our upcoming board meeting, I would like us to discuss the issue of travel funds for international participants. This time, I had difficulty in finalizing my session and actually had to wait long beyond the deadline to do so. The reason was that many of the participants confirmed keen interest in participating in my session but they could not manage funds to reassure me that they could actually attend the convention next year. There were many questions about travel funds and documents but I was not able to help them much, particularly because NeMLA does not cover travel expenses for roundtable presenters. Should and could we re-think the policy, if we can afford it? How do we encourage more international participants and widen the reach of our convention?
 - i. We will discuss this more in the future (see notes above when this issue was raised). We will work on getting a proposal written to move forward with this issue.

Q. Women's and Gender Studies Caucus Representative, Rachel Spear

- a. The Women's and Gender Studies area program for the 2019 convention in Washington DC, March 21-24, 2019, currently consists of 32 sessions. There were 48 proposals, eight were declined or folded. Sessions are still in process of being finalized, so this number may change. Our target number for the 2019 convention was 36.
 - i. One of our sponsored sessions folded, and we turned our other session into a roundtable to keep it going. The one folded because it only got two submissions.
- b. WGS is co-sponsoring with Comparative Literature (Board: Katherine Sugg) for this year's special event speaker. Speaker: Ricardo L. Ortiz · Biographical Statement: Ricardo L. Ortiz is Chair and Associate Professor of Latinx Literature and Culture in the English Department at Georgetown University. His first book, *Cultural Erotics in Cuban America*, was published by the University of Minnesota Press in 2007; his second book, *Latinx Literature Now: Between Evanescence and*

Event, will be published by Palgrave Press in 2019. · Title of Talk: Sex and Gender After “Latinx” ·

- c. The WGSC offices have a four-year role, rotating throughout the officer positions. This year’s change in position includes the following: Margarita Vargas rotated to Past-President; Laura Hartmann-Villalta rotated to President; Sarah Goldbort rotated to Vice-President; Tracee Howell was elected as Secretary; and Forrest Johnson and Deborah Nunn were elected as co- Media Representatives. In addition, Michelle Tokarczyk was elected as WGS Board Representation and will start her three-year term on the Board following the 2019 convention.
- d. Submissions for the WGSC best essay award were, again, low this year; thus, the caucus decided to extend the deadline for the award to October 15. Officer will continue to promote that award, and we ask other board members to do the same. Entries should be sent to wgsnemla@gmail.com.
- e. The WGSC Mentorship Program continues to focus on pairing mentors and mentees; that mentee application deadline is January 15. The caucus continues to encourage Board members to volunteer as mentors. If you are interested (and we hope that you are!), you should email wgsnemla@gmail.com to express your interest as well as to share your areas of specialties. The caucus Vice-President, Sarah Goldbort, will work with all applicants and available mentors to create the pairings after that application deadline.

R. Graduate Student Caucus Representative, Nicole Lowman

- a. Elections: The GSC elected a Communications Director, Dana Gavin, who has been very active in promoting our social media presence and keeping our website up to date. In early 2019, we will hold elections for Vice President.
- b. Partnering with Local Institutions We will reach out to Graduate Student Associations at Howard University, Morgan State, and other Baltimore/Maryland universities in an attempt to identify possible areas of collaboration and improve diversity at the convention. We also want to invite them to our “meet and greet.”
 - i. Remind graduate students that are within 25 miles of the conference that registration is free (unless they are presenting—this is for auditors)

IV. Motion to adjourn at 2:05.