# Minutes of the MLA Delegate Assembly

THE DELEGATE ASSEMBLY MET ON 9 JANUARY 2016 AT THE JW MARRIOTT AUSTIN HOTEL. First Vice President Kwame Anthony Appiah presided. The assembly was called to order at 12:44 p.m. The chair made preliminary announcements about the conduct of the meeting and called for a demonstration of the electronic voting system to be used during the meeting and for an explanation of the light at the podium that would warn speakers when their allotted time was about to expire. The chair also explained that, because the meeting was open to all MLA members and to credentialed members of the press, speakers should have no expectation of confidentiality. He added that tweeting was allowed but that no photography or voice or video recording was permitted. The chair announced the quorum for the meeting, which was 85 delegates, because 170 delegates had signed in for the meeting at the beginning. [Note: Of the 270 delegates, 198 (73%) attended all or part of the meeting (see the list that follows for the names of the delegates in attendance).]

1. On behalf of the Delegate Assembly Organizing Committee (DAOC), Mecca Jamilah Sullivan moved the adoption of the agenda that had been sent to the assembly, subject to emergency change. Margaret Hanzimanolis proposed a motion to amend the agenda so that item 9 (a), Emergency Resolutions, would be considered immediately after item 7, Open Discussion. This motion to amend was seconded, and the chair opened the floor for discussion of the amendment. Hanzimanolis said she was concerned about a possible loss of quorum late in the meeting, which would affect the assembly's ability to vote on the emergency resolution that the assembly had received. The assembly's consideration of the reports included in item 8 would not be similarly affected, since the reports did not require any votes. Stephanie Kirk, chair of the DAOC, spoke against the amendment, noting that delegates and others had planned their attendance based on the published agenda. Since there was no further discussion, the chair stated the question on the amendment and asked the assembly to vote. The assembly approved the amendment by a vote of 102 yes and 56 no. The chair asked if there was further discussion of the now-amended agenda. Since there was none, the chair asked if there were objections to adopting the amended version of the agenda. There were no objections, so the chair declared the amended agenda adopted by unanimous consent.

Sullivan then offered a motion on behalf of the DAOC that the rules presented to the assembly be adopted. This motion occasioned no discussion and no objections. The chair therefore declared the rules adopted by unanimous consent.

Again on behalf of the DAOC, Sullivan moved that the assembly approve the minutes of the January 2015 meeting as printed in the May 2015 issue of *PMLA*. The chair asked if



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there were corrections. Since no corrections were offered, the chair declared the minutes approved as published.

2. The assembly elected two of its members, Cheryl Narumi Naruse (English, Univ. of Dayton) and Heather Willis Allen (French, Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison), to the DAOC for three-year terms (from 11 Jan. 2016 through the close of the Jan. 2019 convention). In the election of a delegate to serve on the Executive Council, Angelika Bammer (humanities, Emory Univ.) was elected for a four-year term (from 11 Jan. 2016 through the close of the Jan. 2020 convention). Voting from a slate of nominees selected by the current officers of the association, the assembly elected Jane K. Brown (German, Univ. of Washington, Seattle), David Theo Goldberg (comparative literature, Univ. of California, Irvine), and Anjali Prabhu (French, Wellesley Coll.) to the Nominating Committee for two-year terms (2016–17). Voting from a slate of nominees selected by the DAOC, the assembly elected the following persons to the Elections Committee for two-year terms (2016–17): Kanika Batra (Texas Tech Univ.), Monica Diaz (Univ. of Kentucky), Saree Makdisi (Univ. of California, Irvine), and Ato Quayson (Univ. of Toronto).

3. The assembly received a report from the Executive Council on the council's consideration in February 2015 of the implementation of the first section of Motion 2015-1, which called for increasing the representation of part-time faculty members in MLA governance roles and on MLA committees (see May 2015 *PMLA* 890). Stephanie Kirk presented the report to the assembly. She explained that the council could not be sure that its decisions on the implementation of the motion would fulfill the assembly's wishes because the meaning of *part-time* was unclear. The council noted that those who teach on a part-time basis occupy a wide range of institutional roles and receive varied levels of compensation and benefits. Documents that the council had consulted, including one from the American Association of University Professors, did not provide a definition of the term, so the council returned the motion to the assembly with a request for the assembly's guidance on a definition of the term.

Since the next agenda item, a request from the Committee on Amendments to the Constitution for clarification of the second section of Motion 2015-1 (see May 2015 *PMLA* 890–92), dealt with the same issue, the chair proposed to combine the discussion of the council's report and the committee's request. Samer Ali, who presented the committee's request to the assembly, called for discussion of possible definitions of *part-time* based on such criteria as a specific percentage of a full-time course load, eligibility for benefits, or per-course employment and for discussion of the relation between part-time status and other statuses (e.g., retired, non-tenure-track). Ali also drew the assembly's attention to a second question from the committee: whether it was the assembly's intent to add a seat to the council to allow for the representation of part-time faculty members or to provide for this representation within the current limits on the size of the council.

The chair proposed that the assembly begin the combined discussion of the council's report and the committee's request by spending ten minutes on the question of the defining criteria for part-time faculty members. After speakers argued for and against relying on institutions' definitions of *part-time* or on one or another of the criteria mentioned in the council's report, the chair asked for a specific proposal to discuss. Margaret Hanzimanolis, one of the proposers of Motion 2015-1, offered a motion that the MLA use the definition of full-time faculty that the National Center for Education Statistics uses for its Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System: "As defined by the institution. The type of appointment at the snapshot date determines whether an employee is full-time or part-time. The employee's term of contract is not considered in making the determination of full- or part-time." This motion was seconded, and the chair opened the floor for discussion. A speaker asked if the MLA's dues categories were based on employment status and could therefore provide the needed definition. Rosemary Feal explained that, except for the graduate student category, the dues categories were based on income, not on academic rank or position. She added that members are asked to provide demographic information but that the information collected does not allow the staff to compile comprehensive statistics on members' employment status because some members do not provide the requested information while others identify in multiple ways. The chair called for further discussion of the motion. One speaker argued against the motion because the definition it provided—*part-time* as the absence of full-time status—would not be helpful to the Executive Council. Two speakers said that relying on self-identification by part-timers would be the cleanest way to provide a definition. There were also questions about how a person who holds a full-time position at one institution and a part-time position at another would be counted and about the distinction that the 2015 motion makes between part-time and contingent faculty members. Hanzimanolis responded to this last question by saying that *contingent* was an umbrella term that included part-timers but that her aim was to separate out part-time faculty members and address the disadvantages associated with part-time status. She then asked the chair if she could withdraw her motion and propose instead the use of self-identification for part-time faculty members. Noting that only the assembly could authorize the withdrawal of the motion, the chair asked if there were any objections to allowing the withdrawal of the motion. Since there were no objections, the motion was withdrawn. Hanzimanolis then offered a motion to use self-identification at the time of joining the association or renewing membership to determine part-time employment status. This motion was seconded, and the chair opened the floor for discussion. Feal offered the following clarification. The income-based dues categories that members select are not verified by the MLA staff, and members' self-identifications will not be verified. As a

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consequence, some self-identified part-timers may be business people or distinguished writers or retirees who teach one course. One speaker suggested that self-identification as a part-time faculty member was insufficient and that an income criterion be added. The next speaker argued in favor of the motion, since it provided a straightforward definition for *part-time* and since voters would be able to verify candidates' professional status. Another speaker argued for the extension of the process of self-identification to other categories of contingent faculty members. The discussion came to an end, and the chair asked the assembly to vote on the motion to use self-identification to determine members' part-time employment status. The assembly approved the motion by a vote of 148 yes and 18 no.

The chair then asked the assembly to address the second question from the Committee on Amendments to the Constitution: whether it was the assembly's intent to add a seat to the council to allow for the representation of part-time faculty members. He called for ten minutes of discussion. Hanzimanolis offered a motion to add a council seat, noting that this was the intention behind the use of the verb *create* in the 2015 motion. This motion was seconded. After consulting with the parliamentarian, the chair explained the effect that a defeat of the motion would have: the Committee on Amendments to the Constitution would formulate an amendment—to be submitted to the 2017 Delegate Assembly for a vote—to fulfill the aim of the 2015 motion through the use of an existing council seat. He then opened the floor for discussion of the motion. Speakers made several arguments against the motion: the Nominating Committee has been careful to provide for representation of different employment categories and should be allowed to continue that work; the council might grow to be too large if representation for more employment categories were mandated; expanding the size of the council would add to the cost of council meetings; enlarging the council would dilute the impact and effectiveness of the added voice for part-time faculty members. Arguing for the motion, one speaker emphasized the importance of having representation on the council for part-time faculty members. When there was no further discussion, the chair restated the question, reiterated his explanation of the effect of voting no, and asked the assembly to vote on the motion. The assembly defeated the motion; the vote was 46 yes and 122 no.

4. The assembly received a report from the Elections Committee that covered three items: a proposed nomination process for forum delegates that would be implemented once the task of electing forum delegates was transferred from the forums' executive committees to the forums' membership (see next item) and two revised recommendations, on regional representation and on professional-issues representation, that were based on the 2015 assembly's discussion of the committee's original recommendations (see May 2015 *PMLA* 874–76). The chair recognized Julie Rak, who presented the report on behalf of the DAOC and moved that the assembly adopt the committee's proposed nomination process and two revised recommendations. The chair ruled that the motions pertaining to the three items in the report would be considered separately, reiterated the time limits applicable to the discussion, and opened the floor for discussion of the nomination process for forum delegates proposed by the committee:

> The nomination process for forum delegates will be modeled on the nomination process for forum executive committees. That is, the voting members of the forum's executive committee will be responsible for nominating one candidate and for reviewing all the nominees suggested by the membership (including self-nominations) and choosing from these one candidate to be paired with the executive committee's choice. Membership suggestions will be solicited through the forums' groups on *MLA Commons*. If fewer than three suggestions are received from the membership, the executive committee will be encouraged to give serious consideration to these suggestions but will not be required to use them. If there are no suggestions from the membership, the executive committee will nominate both candidates. Before their names are placed on the ballot, nominees must agree to accept the nomination and to provide candidate information and a statement on matters of professional concern. A ballot for each forum delegate election will be made available to members who have a primary affiliation with the forum in question. Elected forum delegates will be required to have a primary affiliation with the forum they represent.

In response to a question about primary forum affiliations, Rosemary Feal explained that all MLA members would have the opportunity to establish primary affiliations with up to five forums and that the primary affiliation conferred the right to vote in forum executive committee elections and forum delegate elections. Members would also be able to join as many forum groups on *MLA Commons* as they wish, but participation in a *Commons* group did not establish a primary affiliation. Discussion came to a close after one speaker commented on the benefits of the new approach to the nomination and election of forum delegates, and the chair asked the assembly to vote on the proposed nomination process. The assembly approved it by a vote of 145 yes and 4 no.

The chair called for discussion of the committee's revised recommendation on regional representation:

> The committee recommends that each of the seven current electoral regions be allocated eight seats, for a total of fifty-six regional delegates, and that one seat in each region be reserved for a graduate student. It should be noted that the committee's intention is to use the remaining seats in each region to provide representation for different ranks (assistant professor, associate professor, full professor, adjunct professor) and types of institutions.

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Joshua Lund, assembly member and chair of the Elections Committee, explained in response to a question from a delegate that the increase in the number of seats in each region from five to eight was a way to accommodate the 2015 assembly's concern that the original recommendation reduced regional representation too much and the committee's concern that a very large increase in the overall size of the assembly would make meetings unworkable. Another delegate questioned the proposed decrease in graduate student representation. Christopher Lupke, assembly member and immediate past chair of the Elections Committee, noted that the committee considered one graduate student seat in each region to be a minimum and that the eight seats gave the committee leeway to provide more representation of various professional statuses. He added that graduate students would also hold other types of assembly seats, including the six professional-issues seats that the committee had proposed. The chair asked for further discussion of the revised recommendation on regional representation. Since no one came forward, the chair asked the assembly to vote on the recommendation. The assembly approved it by a vote of 136 yes and 17 no.

The chair then called for discussion of the committee's revised recommendation on professional-issues representation, which consisted in the following list of professional issues, with seat allocations:

| *Category* | *Seats* |
|---|---|
| Independent Scholars | 1 |
| Retired Scholars | 1 |
| Careers outside the Classroom | 2 |
| *Full-Time Contingent/Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Members | 3 |
| *Part-Time Contingent/Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Members | 3 |
| Scholars Residing outside the US and Canada | 2 |
| Disability in the Profession | 2 |
| Race and Ethnicity in the Profession | 3 |
| LGBTQ in the Profession | 3 |
| Women and Gender in the Profession | 3 |
| Continuing, Distance, and Online Education | 2 |
| Composition, Rhetoric, and Writing Programs | 3 |
| Creative Writing Programs | 2 |
| Language Programs | 3 |
| Less Commonly Taught Language Programs | 2 |
| Community Colleges | 6 |
| Graduate Students | 6 |
| Academic Freedom | 2 |
| Academic Labor | 2 |
| Publishing Issues in the Profession | 2 |
| Libraries and Archives | 2 |

The chair noted that the category names with asterisks presented a question for the assembly—Which term, *contingent* or *non-tenure-track*, did the assembly prefer?—that would be voted on separately, at the end of the discussion of the overall list of categories. He then opened the floor for that discussion. Elizabeth Losh said she was concerned about the conflation of continuing education with distance and online education since the two areas involved different issues. She proposed a motion to amend the category list by splitting the single category with two seats into two categories, Continuing Education and Distance and Online Education, with one seat each. This motion was seconded, and the chair called for discussion. After brief discussion, the chair called for a vote on the motion to amend. The assembly approved it by a vote of 140 yes and 35 no. Discussion on the category list continued. There was a question about the absence of the current category Politics and the Profession from the proposed list. Rosemary Feal said that the Elections Committee had substituted two more specific categories, Academic Freedom and Academic Labor. Speakers deemed those two specific categories useful but insufficient. Margaret Hanzimanolis offered a motion to amend the category list by restoring Politics and the Profession and allotting two seats to the category. This motion was seconded; the chair called for discussion. Those who spoke against the motion made two main arguments: that political issues were covered by the two categories that the Elections Committee had established as substitutes and also by many other listed categories (e.g., Race and Ethnicity in the Profession, Less Commonly Taught Language Programs) and that adding two seats was not in keeping with the committee's efforts to control the overall size of the assembly. Those in favor of the motion saw a need for the broad category in addition to the specific categories. Since there was no further discussion, the chair asked the assembly to vote on the motion to restore Politics and the Profession to the category list with two seats. The assembly approved the motion by a vote of 106 yes and 45 no.

The chair then turned to the asterisked category names and the choice between the terms *contingent* and *non-tenure-track*. There was brief discussion of the merits of each of the terms, after which the chair asked assembly members to choose between the terms using their electronic voting devices. Pressing 1 would indicate a preference for *contingent*; pressing 2 would be a vote for *non-tenure-track*. The assembly decided that the category names will include the word *contingent*, the term preferred by 77 delegates; 69 preferred *non-tenure-track*. Since there was no further discussion of the professional-issues categories, the chair called for a vote on the list of professional issues to be represented in the assembly, as amended and clarified during the preceding discussion. The assembly approved the list by a vote of 142 yes and 4 no. The approved list of professional issues, with seat allocations, reads as follows:

| *Category* | *Seats* |
|---|---|
| Independent Scholars | 1 |
| Retired Scholars | 1 |
| Careers outside the Classroom | 2 |
| Full-Time Contingent Faculty Members | 3 |
| Part-Time Contingent Faculty Members | 3 |

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| | |
|---|---|
| Scholars Residing outside the US and Canada | 2 |
| Disability in the Profession | 2 |
| Race and Ethnicity in the Profession | 3 |
| LGBTQ in the Profession | 3 |
| Women and Gender in the Profession | 3 |
| Continuing Education | 1 |
| Distance and Online Education | 1 |
| Composition, Rhetoric, and Writing Programs | 3 |
| Creative Writing Programs | 2 |
| Language Programs | 3 |
| Less Commonly Taught Language Programs | 2 |
| Community Colleges | 6 |
| Graduate Students | 6 |
| Academic Freedom | 2 |
| Academic Labor | 2 |
| Politics and the Profession | 2 |
| Publishing Issues in the Profession | 2 |
| Libraries and Archives | 2 |

5. The assembly received a report from the Committee on Amendments to the Constitution that consisted in the six amendments to the constitution published at the MLA Web site in September 2015. The amendments grew out of four recommendations from the Elections Committee that the 2015 Delegate Assembly approved (see May 2015 *PMLA* 876–80). The first recommendation led to the formulation of the following amendment (language subject to change struck and new language shown in boldface):

> **Amendment 1** (to article 10, Delegate Assembly—Composition and Election)
> A. The assembly shall represent the following:
> 1. *Areas of study*. One delegate shall be elected by the ~~executive committee~~ **membership** of each officially constituted forum.

The second and third recommendations resulted in the formulation of the following three amendments (language subject to change struck and new language shown in boldface):

> **Amendment 2** (to article 10, Delegate Assembly—Composition and Election)
> A. The assembly shall represent the following:
> 2. *Electoral regions*. ~~A total of 108 delegates shall be elected from~~ **Each of** seven geographic regions within the United States and Canada **shall be represented by an equal number of delegates, the number to be determined by the Delegate Assembly**. Each of these regions shall represent approximately one-seventh of the total membership of the association residing in the United States and Canada~~, with the number of delegates from each region proportional to that region's membership as a percentage of the total membership of the association~~. Members may vote in all contests in any one region.

> **Amendment 3** (to article 10, Delegate Assembly—Composition and Election)
> A. The assembly shall represent the following:
> 3. *Students*. ~~The number of graduate students elected from each region shall be as nearly as possible in proportion to the student membership in the region, but each~~ **Each** region shall elect at least one student member.

> **Amendment 4** (to article 10, Delegate Assembly—Composition and Election)
> D. All elections for the assembly shall be supervised by the Elections Committee, which shall strive to secure a fair distribution of delegates among various constituencies of the association. On a regular basis, but at least every three years, the Elections Committee shall examine the allocations within the various categories of membership in the Delegate Assembly and propose necessary changes to the assembly. The Elections Committee shall have the following responsibilities:
> 1. Apportionment of the membership of the United States and Canada into seven approximately equal electoral regions~~, apportionment of delegates among the seven regions, and apportionment between student and regular members within each region. These apportionments~~. **This apportionment** shall be reexamined every three years.

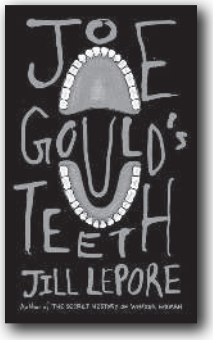
The fourth recommendation necessitated the following two amendments (language subject to change struck and new language shown in boldface):

> **Amendment 5** (to article 10, Delegate Assembly—Composition and Election)
> A. The assembly shall represent the following:
> 4. ~~*Special interests*~~ ***Professional issues***. To secure representation responsive to ~~various other constituencies in~~ **the professional concerns of the members of** the association, ~~as many as fifty-five but no fewer than thirty-nine special-interest delegates~~ **professional-issues delegates** shall be elected. **Their number and the concerns to be addressed shall be determined by the Delegate Assembly.** Candidates shall be elected by a plurality vote of the entire membership of the association.

> **Amendment 6** (to article 10, Delegate Assembly—Composition and Election)
> D. All elections for the assembly shall be supervised by the Elections Committee, which shall strive to secure a fair distribution of delegates among various constituencies of the association. On a regular basis, but at least every three years, the Elections Committee shall examine the allocations within the various categories of membership in the Delegate Assembly and propose necessary changes to the assembly. The Elections Committee shall have the following responsibilities:
> 3. Determination of constituencies to be represented by ~~special-interest~~ **professional-issues** delegates.
> 4. Nomination of ~~special-interest~~ **professional-issues** delegates, with at least two names for each contest.
> E. Any member of the association may initiate a petition proposing an additional candidate for regional and

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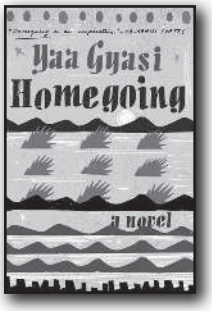

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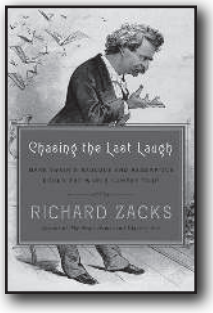

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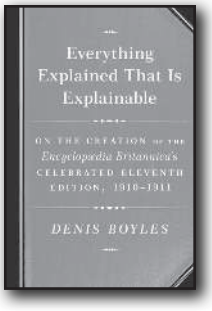
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~~special-interest~~ **professional-issues** contests. The petition must include the written consent of the candidate, the signatures of at least twenty-five members of the association, and specification of the contest involved. The Elections Committee shall have final authority for assigning candidates to particular contests. A notice of the right to petition, together with the deadline therefore, shall be printed in an appropriate publication of the association along with the announcement of the candidates selected by the Elections Committee.

The chair recognized Susan Solomon of the DAOC, who, on behalf of the Committee on Amendments to the Constitution, moved that the assembly adopt the amendments presented in the report. Only five votes would be needed, since the fifth amendment entailed the sixth. The chair opened the floor for discussion of amendment 1. Since there was no discussion, the chair asked the assembly to vote on the amendment. The assembly approved it by a vote of 131 yes and 3 no. The chair opened the floor for discussion of amendment 2. There was no discussion; the assembly approved the amendment by a vote of 130 yes and 7 no. Amendments 3 and 4 came to the floor for discussion in succession. There was no discussion of either amendment, and the assembly voted to approve both. The vote on amendment 3 was 125 yes and 11 no; the vote on amendment 4 was 138 yes and 5 no. The chair called for discussion of amendments 5 and 6. After responding to a request for clarification, the chair called for a vote on the amendments. The assembly approved amendments 5 and 6 by a vote of 142 yes and 2 no. The chair noted that, in accordance with the procedure outlined in the constitution, the amendments would be forwarded to the Executive Council for action.

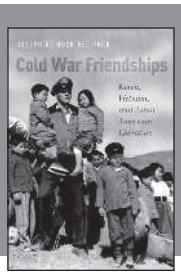
6. The assembly received a recommendation from the Executive Council for a change in the criteria for granting life membership, which are included in the dues structure of the association (see art. 3.C of the MLA constitution). In the current dues structure for life members, in place since at least 1974, life membership is granted to members of more than twenty years' standing who have retired from teaching and to all members who have paid membership dues for forty years. The council noted that the percentage of life members in the membership had more than doubled between 1977 and 2015, increasing from 6% of the membership to 16.7%, and that changes in the profession over the years since the current criteria for granting life membership were set, including the abolition of mandatory retirement, have led members to continue to teach and work actively in the profession well past the age of 65. The council therefore proposed changing the current eligibility criteria, such that life membership will be granted to members of more than thirty years' standing who have retired from teaching and to all members who have paid membership dues for fifty years. The chair recognized Gaurav Desai, who presented the recommendation to the assembly and proposed a motion that the assembly approve it. The chair opened the floor for discussion of the motion. Discussion touched on the cost of paid life membership, the amount of revenue that the proposed changes were expected to generate, the possible negative reactions of the long-term members who would be directly affected by the changes, and the perceived unfairness of exempting members with higher incomes from the payment of dues. There was also a suggestion that the granting of life membership be limited to retirees and that another way be found to honor long-term members who have not retired. At the conclusion of the discussion, the chair asked the assembly to vote on the motion calling for approval of the council's recommendation. The assembly recorded its approval by a vote of 103 yes and 34 no.

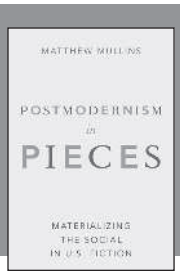
7. The assembly held an open discussion of the following topic: The Tenured and the Precariat. To organize the discussion, the DAOC also proposed two subtopics: Governance under Siege and The MLA and Professional Identity. Delegates had received background information for the discussion before the assembly meeting. The chair asked Second Vice President Diana Taylor to preside over the open discussion. Taylor reminded all present that one hour had been set aside for the open discussion. She also reminded those in attendance of the rules that would govern the open discussion. The chair then recognized in turn three members of the DAOC for introductions to the topic and subtopics. In her overview of the discussion topic, Stephanie Kirk gave the reasons for the DAOC's selection of the topic, including the expansion of precariat labor, the erosion of tenure in Wisconsin and elsewhere, the undermining of shared governance in recent years, the corporatization of universities, and the selection of business executives as university leaders. The DAOC hoped the discussion would lead to an exchange of information and the finding of common ground that would allow members to take action in their institutions and help the MLA identify relevant activities. Julie Rak said the first subtopic addressed the question of the erosion of faculty participation in university governance and whether universities and colleges that are not controlled by academics will be able to maintain their core missions. She called for discussion of ways to push back against a model of governance that does not place students and professors at the center. Vicky Unruh said the second subtopic prompted the following questions: Is there a professional identity that connects us? If so, what does that identity look like and how might it shape the future work of the MLA on the issue of university governance?

Several speakers, citing events on their campuses, gave examples of the exclusion of faculty members' input on administrative decisions affecting students and classroom matters. Other speakers pointed to outside influences (e.g., big donors, foundations, organizations like the American Council of Trustees and Alumni and the American Legislative Exchange Council) that work against faculty control and create negative public perceptions of

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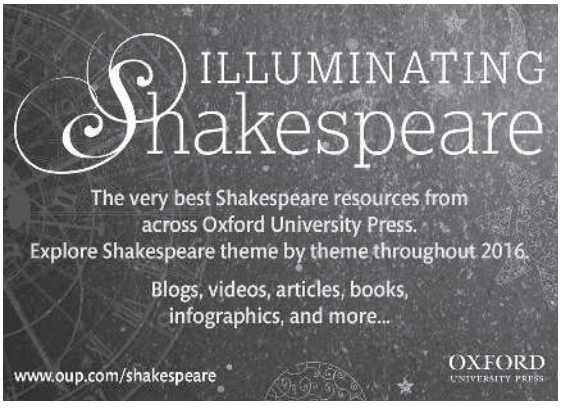
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the role that faculty members play in universities. A concerted campaign was needed to change public opinion and generate public support for the professional values that faculty members would bring to bear on matters of university governance. One speaker said the MLA should work with other organizations (e.g., Campaign for the Future of Higher Education) on this outreach effort. Another suggested that the MLA publish a statement outlining the issues. Since having information about what was happening on campuses would help faculty members identify countermeasures to pursue, it was also suggested that the MLA collect and disseminate this information.

It was noted that the casualization of labor was perhaps the most important factor underlying the erosion of faculty governance. To strengthen faculty governance, it was necessary for tenured and tenure-track faculty members to support the inclusion of non-tenure-track faculty members in departmental and institutional governance structures. One speaker said her own institution could serve as a model for such inclusion. Other speakers noted that faculty unions had an important role to play in this regard and should be encouraged to turn their attention to the mechanisms of shared governance. Also discussed was the role of departments, where the tenured and the precariat coexist. It was suggested that the MLA develop a code of departmental conduct for the treatment and inclusion of contingent faculty members, that the topic of faculty governance be included in graduate training, and that the MLA offer a departmental leadership workshop that can address how to handle interactions with upper administrators.

Discussion also touched on the defunding of higher education in general and the humanities in particular. Speakers suggested countering this trend by making the argument for higher education as a public good and by calling for a student- and faculty-centered university, not a corporatized university with a top-down, top-heavy administrative structure. It was also suggested that the MLA collaborate with other disciplinary organizations and that departments get beyond disciplinary competition for resources and find and pursue their shared interest in reasserting the value of higher education. One speaker noted that defunding and the disregard of the humanities also affected lower levels of the education system and encouraged wider attention to the problem. In response to a question, Rosemary Feal commented on the MLA's work on these issues, including the Action for Allies campaign and lobbying efforts through the National Humanities Alliance. She encouraged the DAOC to pursue the discussion, perhaps by establishing an assembly subcommittee. Kirk proposed using *MLA Commons* for this purpose and encouraged delegates to join the *Commons*.

The open discussion came to a close after fifty-one minutes, at which point First Vice President Kwame Anthony Appiah returned to the chair.

8. In the category of new business was one emergency resolution—so designated because it was received after the 1 October deadline for submission of regular resolutions. It had been submitted to the DAOC during the Open Hearing on Resolutions the previous day. The text of the emergency resolution and supporting materials provided by the proposer were distributed to delegates immediately before the assembly meeting. The resolution, designated Emergency Resolution 2016-1, was submitted by Barbara Foley on behalf of the Radical Caucus in English and the Modern Languages and read as follows:

> Whereas racialized hatred and violence toward Muslims and perceived Muslims have increased since the Paris and San Bernardino killings;
>
> Whereas global contestation over resources has resulted in US military operations directed at Muslim-majority countries;
>
> Whereas the rise in Islamophobia and the rhetoric of "radicalization" and the "war on terror" are being deployed to justify US foreign policy, reinforce the surveillance state, and target Muslim students, professors, and BDS activists;
>
> Be it resolved that the MLA support faculty who challenge Islamophobic rhetoric and the increased militarism, xenophobia, and racism associated with the upsurge in Islamophobia.

The chair reminded the assembly that it could consider an emergency resolution only if three-fourths of the members agreed to consider it. Since the question of consideration involved a procedural motion that was not debatable, the chair called for an immediate vote on the question. The assembly's vote, 101 yes and 5 no, was sufficient to allow the assembly to discuss and take action on the resolution. The chair explained the two-stage process of consideration for a resolution with a preamble: he would call first for debate on and amendment of the *resolved* clause and then for debate on and amendment of the preamble before putting the full text of the resolution to a vote. He also reviewed the time limits that governed the discussion and said that he would remind the assembly at an appropriate point during the discussion of the need to turn its attention to the resolution's preamble. The chair recognized Stephanie Kirk, chair of the DAOC, to introduce the resolution. After introducing the resolution on the floor of the assembly, Kirk presented the DAOC's recommendation against its adoption by the assembly. She referred the assembly to the statement on Islamophobia that the Executive Council had adopted in December 2015, which was projected on the screen in the meeting room. Kirk said that the council's statement offered a strong condemnation of xenophobia, particularly as it pertains to the censorship and harassment of teachers and scholars of Islam. If, however, the assembly wished to adopt the resolution, the DAOC proposed to strike the words "and BDS activists" from the third *whereas* clause, since the reference to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign conflicted with the special rule adopted by the 2015 Delegate Assembly: "The

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"Political Psychology: Theory and Doxa"

**Jonathan Culler**
*Class of 1916 Professor of English and Comparative Literature, Cornell University; Honorary Senior Fellow, School of Criticism and Theory*
"Narratology and the Lyric"

**Frances Ferguson**
*Ann L. and Lawrence B. Buttenweiser Professor and Chair, Department of English, University of Chicago*
"Molding Populations: Deep Education"

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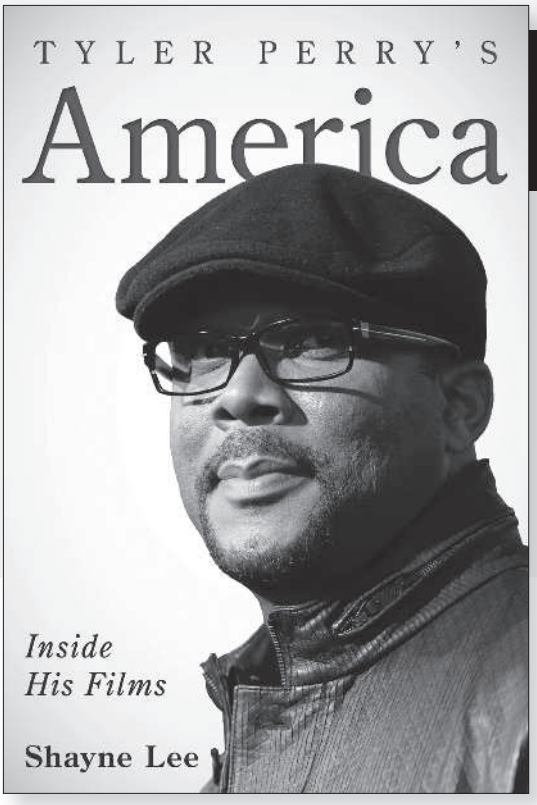
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Delegate Assembly will not consider motions or resolutions on academic or institutional boycotts of Israel or on matters related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict until the January 2017 meeting" (May 2015 *PMLA* 872). Taking the DAOC's recommendation into account, the chair again reviewed the process of consideration that would be followed. The DAOC's amendment would be processed first. Consideration of the *resolved* clause would follow; the proposer of record would be given the opportunity to speak first. After half of the time allotted for discussion of the resolution had elapsed, the chair would remind the assembly of the need to consider the preamble; once again, the proposer of record would have the opportunity to speak first. When discussion came to an end, he would ask the assembly to vote on the full text of the resolution.

The chair opened the floor for discussion of the DAOC's proposed amendment. In response to a question, Julie Rak explained that the special rule was prompted by the agreement reached before the 2015 assembly meeting with the proposers of two conflicting resolutions that dealt with the boycott of Israeli academic institutions. Under the agreement, the resolutions were withdrawn in favor of a two-year process of discussion on *MLA Commons* and at the 2016 and 2017 conventions of the issues surrounding the boycott. The original or revised resolutions on the subject could be resubmitted for consideration at the 2017 assembly meeting. The special rule ensured that the two-year process could run its course. The DAOC judged that the BDS reference violated the special rule and would nullify the agreement, an outcome that the proposed amendment aimed to avoid. The chair raised an additional parliamentary issue: if the amendment failed, a motion to rescind the special rule would be needed, and rescinding the special rule would effectively undo the agreement. Discussion of the DAOC's amendment then continued. The main arguments against the amendment were that the BDS reference was not a violation of the special rule and that the deletion of the reference weakened the resolution's stance on protecting free speech. It was then proposed to amend the DAOC's amendment by substituting "anti-Islamophobic" for "BDS." The chair asked if there were objections to making this substitution. There was an objection, and the chair consulted with the parliamentarian on how to proceed. Since consideration of the new amendment before the DAOC's amendment would require a vote on suspending the assembly's rules, the chair asked the assembly to continue with discussion of and a vote on the DAOC's amendment before taking up the second amendment. Discussion of the DAOC's amendment therefore continued. The two main arguments against the amendment were reiterated and a third argument added: that retaining the reference to BDS activists, who are particular targets of Islamophobes, would preserve the historical specificity of the resolution. The main arguments in favor of the amendment were the need to avoid any possible violation of the special rule and to broaden the language of the resolution to include all those who oppose Islamophobia, not just BDS activists. After clarifications were requested and provided about the documentation submitted with the resolution and about the DAOC's decision to bring the resolution to the floor despite the concern that it violated the special rule, the chair announced that time for discussion of the amendment had expired. Since two speakers were waiting at the microphones, the chair asked if there were objections to extending the discussion for two minutes to allow them to speak. There were no objections, so the chair recognized the two speakers in turn. One asked about the vote required for membership ratification of a resolution; the other called for adoption of the DAOC's amendment in the interest of preserving the agreement allowing for broad discussion of the issues surrounding the boycott of Israeli academic institutions. At the conclusion of the discussion, the chair asked the assembly to vote on the DAOC's amendment. The assembly approved it by a vote of 89 yes and 24 no.

The chair opened the floor for discussion of the *resolved* clause and recognized Foley, the proposer of record. Instead of addressing the *resolved* clause, Foley suggested that the assembly consider the alternative amendment to the third *whereas* clause that had been suggested during the previous discussion. Responding to a request from the chair, Donald Hall and Lakey Lakey proposed a motion to amend the amended version of the third *whereas* clause by adding the words "and anti-Islamophobia activists" at the end. This motion was seconded and occasioned no discussion. The assembly approved the motion by a vote of 105 yes and 5 no. The chair called for discussion of the resolution's *resolved* clause and again recognized Foley. She said that the resolution was supported by four MLA forums—CLCS Global Arab and Arab American, LLC Arabic, LLC South Asian and South Asian Diasporic, and LLC West Asian—and that it qualified as an emergency resolution because of events that took place after 1 October, specifically the Paris and San Bernardino attacks. She explained that the resolution was not redundant with the council's statement because a resolution, with its membership vote, places the MLA on record in a way that a council statement cannot. Finally, Foley argued that the resolution introduces a broader critique of what is involved in Islamophobia, a critique that finds a causal relation between United States foreign policy, including the militarism associated with resource wars, and the rise in Islamophobia. The chair asked for further discussion. Svetlana Tyutina made a motion to amend the *resolved* clause by adding the words "and students" after the word "faculty." This motion was seconded. The chair called for discussion of the motion to amend; no one came forward. The chair asked if there were objections to adopting the amendment. There were no objections, so the chair declared the amendment adopted by unanimous consent and called for further discussion. Jonathan Skolnik proposed a motion to amend the *resolved* clause by

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striking the words "increased militarism." This motion was seconded, and the chair called for discussion of the proposed amendment. Skolnik explained that the words in question presumed as fact something that was an opinion and introduced an ideological element that would occasion objections to a resolution that was otherwise unobjectionable. Speakers who supported the amendment said that the reference to militarism brought in a political or foreign policy issue that is not the business of the MLA and detracted from the resolution's main purpose of offering a condemnation of Islamophobia. Those who opposed the amendment made several arguments: the reference to militarism was based on facts supported by the documentation submitted with the resolution, was consistent with the preamble, was an integral part of the broader context that distinguished the resolution from the council statement, and was in keeping with the view that Islamophobia and the war footing of the United States were mutually dependent. David Lloyd made a motion to close debate. The chair asked if there were objections to closing debate; there were none. The proposed amendment to the *resolved* clause therefore came to an immediate vote. The assembly rejected it by a vote of 41 yes and 60 no.

Since about half of the time for discussion of the resolution had elapsed, the chair reminded the assembly of the need to discuss the preamble. After determining that there was no further discussion of the *resolved* clause, the chair called for discussion of the preamble and recognized Foley, who had the right to speak first. Instead of commenting, Foley offered to respond to requests for clarification. Since no one came forward to discuss the preamble, the chair asked the assembly to vote on the amended resolution. The assembly approved it by a vote of 69 yes and 32 no. The text of the resolution approved by the assembly reads as follows:

> Whereas racialized hatred and violence toward Muslims and perceived Muslims have increased since the Paris and San Bernardino killings;
>
> Whereas global contestation over resources has resulted in US military operations directed at Muslim-majority countries;
>
> Whereas the rise in Islamophobia and the rhetoric of "radicalization" and the "war on terror" are being deployed to justify US foreign policy, reinforce the surveillance state, and target Muslim students, professors, and anti-Islamophobia activists;
>
> Be it resolved that the MLA support faculty and students who challenge Islamophobic rhetoric and the increased militarism, xenophobia, and racism associated with the upsurge in Islamophobia.

9. The chair called on Stephanie Kirk, chair of the DAOC, to present the DAOC's annual report. Kirk talked briefly about the committee's work on establishing the assembly's agenda and planning the open discussion. She encouraged delegates to suggest topics for future discussions. She commented on the valuable experience gained through the previous year's experiment with assembly subcommittees that were organized to foster collaboration with the Executive Council on several association issues. The DAOC would consider continuing the experiment with a different subcommittee model. Finally, Kirk reviewed the elements of the agreement that the DAOC had reached with the members who had proposed resolutions in October 2014 on the question of the boycott of Israeli academic institutions (see May 2015 *PMLA* 872) and called attention to the town hall meeting that the DAOC was organizing for the January 2017 convention. The chair asked if there were questions or comments on the report; no one came forward.

10. The assembly received the report of the executive director, the Finance Committee report, and annual reports from the following association committees: *PMLA* Editorial Board, Publications Committee, Committee on Scholarly Editions, Committee on the New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare, Advisory Committee on the *MLA International Bibliography*, Committee on Honors and Awards, Committee on Academic Freedom and Professional Rights and Responsibilities, Committee on the Literatures of People of Color in the United States and Canada, Committee on the Status of Women in the Profession, Committee on Information Technology, Committee on Disability Issues in the Profession, Committee on Community Colleges, Committee on the Status of Graduate Students in the Profession, and Committee on Contingent Labor in the Profession. The chair recognized Executive Director Rosemary Feal to present the first report. In the interest of time and with the chair's permission, Feal presented the first two reports. She called attention to the information in the second report on the projected budget deficits for the 2014–15 and 2015–16 fiscal years. She then invited questions about the reports. Stephen Powell expressed concern about the travel costs associated with recent convention sites. Feal said that the Executive Council and the staff shared the concern. She noted that travel to the next two conventions, in Philadelphia and New York City, would be relatively easy for many members on the East Coast but that more needed to be done to reduce the cost of convention attendance. Increases in airfares were a given, but the staff was working to provide lower-cost options for housing. Johanna Schuster-Craig asked about the connection between the convention and the job market. Feal noted that the convention is above all a scholarly and professional conference and that the increasing availability and use of teleconference interviews was separating the job market from the convention. The council and the staff were working on making the convention a more attractive venue for all, through, for example, the scheduling of professional development workshops for members at different career stages. Thomas Russell Smith asked if the MLA had guidelines for *Skype* interviews. Feal responded in the affirmative and also called attention to general guidelines on the

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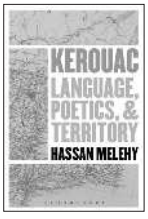
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### Language, Poetics, and Territory
*Hassan Melehy, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, USA*

Of the more than twenty-five biographies of Kerouac, few have seriously examined his relationship to the French language and the reason for his bilingualism, the Québec Diaspora. Although this background has long been recognized in French-language treatments, it is a new dimension in Anglophone studies of his writing. Hassan Melehy explores how Kerouac's poetics of exile involves meditations on moving between territories and languages. He shows that, far from being a naïve pursuit, Kerouac's writing practice not only responded but contributed to some of the major aesthetic and philosophical currents of the twentieth century in which notions such as otherness and nomadism took shape.

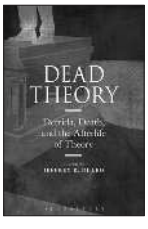
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## British Fictions of the Sixties
### The Making of the Swinging Decade
*Sebastian Groes, University of Roehampton, UK*

*British Fictions of the Sixties* focuses on the major socio-political changes that marked the sixties in relationship to the development of literature over the decade. This book is the first critical study to acknowledge that the 1960s can only be understood if, next to its contemporary socio-political history, its fictions and mythologies are acknowledged as a vital constituent in the understanding of the decade. Groes uncovers a major epistemological shift, and presents a powerful meta-narrative about post-war literature in the UK, and beyond.

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## Dead Theory
### Derrida, Death, and the Afterlife of Theory
*Edited by Jeffrey R. Di Leo, University of Houston-Victoria, USA*

What is the legacy of Theory after the deaths of so many of its leading lights, from Jacques Derrida to Roland Barthes? Bringing together reflections by leading contemporary scholars, *Dead Theory* explores the afterlives of the work of the great theorists and the current state of Theory today. Considering the work of thinkers such as Derrida, Deleuze, and Levinas, the book explores the ways in which Theory has long been haunted by death and how it might endure for the future.

May 2016 • 256 pages
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job search from the Committee on Academic Freedom and Professional Rights and Responsibilities. The chair asked if there were further questions on the reports; no one came forward. The chair then recognized Susan Solomon, of the DAOC, to present the reports from the association's committees. Solomon encouraged delegates to read the reports and thanked committee members for the valuable work they had done during the past year. The chair asked if there were questions or comments; there were none.

11. The chair called for the announcement of other items of new business, noting that new proposals could be discussed but could not be voted on until the next assembly meeting. No one came forward.

12. The chair called for announcements; there were none.

13. The chair declared the 2016 meeting of the Delegate Assembly adjourned sine die at 5:25 p.m.

Delegates in attendance:

*Forum Delegates:* Mary-Grace Albanese, Fabian R. Alfie, David Alworth, Elizabeth Anker, Mary McAleer Balkun, John C. Brereton, Kristina Bross, James J. Brown, Jr., Zahid R. Chaudhary, Katie Chenoweth, T. Craig Christy, Deborah L. Clarke, Albrecht Classen, Ann Baynes Coiro, Rhonda Collier, Mary Jean Corbett, Siobhan S. Craig, Corry Cropper, Lorenzo Fabbri, Cristina Ferreira-Pinto Bailey, Andrew Franta, Catherine Fung, Charles Victor Ganelin, Deniz Göktürk, Nathan Gorelick, Jessica Greenfield, Laura Heffernan, Omaar Hena, Patrick Colm Hogan, Benjamin Kahan, Stephen P. Knadler, Thomas Koenigs, Bonnie Lenore Kyburz, Jessie M. Labov, Cassandra Laity, Joshua K. Lund, Susan H. Lurie, Ellen MacKay, John Marx, Anna H. More, Alberto Moreiras, John W. Mowitt, Laura Murphy, Christopher John Newfield, Daniel E. O'Sullivan, Yolanda Padilla, Thomas Augustine Prendergast, Ato Quayson, Kristin C. Ross, Seth Rudy, Jeffrey Sacks, Eve Salisbury, Jonathan S. Skolnik, John H. Smith, Thomas Russell Smith, Joanna Stalnaker, Lisa Surwillo, Jane F. Thrailkill, Elaine Treharne, Gabriel Trop, Priya Wadhera, Ariel Watson, Johanna Watzinger-Tharp, Ellen Welch, Sebastian Wogenstein.

*Special-Interest Delegates:* Tahia Abdel Nasser, Karyn Marie Ball, Sukanya Banerjee, Olivia Banner, Ginny Carney, Frank Cha, David Clemens, Basuli Deb, Héctor Dominguez, Sébastien Dubreil, Leigh Gilmore, Richard Hardack, Salah D. Hassan, H. Edward Higginbotham, Dolan Hubbard, Maryse Jayasuriya, Jeongoh Kim, Rachael King, Elizabeth Mathews Losh, Paul Manfredi, Brandon Manning, Suzanne Matson, Charlotte Pressler, Janice A. Radway, Ignacio F. Rodeño Iturriaga, Channette Romero, Stephen Sheehi, Karen Shimakawa, Steven Shoemaker, Rebecca Jane Stanton, Rebecca F. Stern, Joyce Lynn Tolliver, Susan Weeber, Timothy F. Weiss, Patrick Williams, Hertha D. Sweet Wong, Veli N. Yashin, Elizabeth Marie Zanichkowsky.

*Regional Delegates:* Carlos Abreu Mendoza, Chiji Akoma, Eveline Bailey, Danielle Barkley, Katia C. Bezerra, Mariana Bolivar Rubin, Michelle Jeannette Brazier, Stephen Matthew Brockmann, Heather Brown, Sarah E. Chinn, Olivia Jones Choplin, Shalyn Claggett, Adam Coon, Ana Corbalan, Juan E. De Castro, Stacey Lee Donohue, Erica Edwards, Jonathan Elmer, Christopher Eng, Maria Faini, Gregory Foran, Marc Fortin, Benjamin Friedlander, Patrick L. Gallagher, Jürgen E. Grandt, Jenelle Grant, Nathan Grant, Karen Elizabeth Gross, Brian Gutierrez, Emily A. Haddad, Margaret Hanzimanolis, Caroline Kyungah Hong, Katie Kane, Lakey Lakey, Corey Lamont, Donald F. Larsson, James Kyung-Jin Lee, Diana Leong, Jill LeRoy-Frazier, Anna Lillios, David C. Lloyd, Christopher M. Lupke, Juliet Lynd, Kyle McAuley, John McGowan, Salvador Mercado, Feisal G. Mohamed, Alex Mueller, Nasser Mufti, Amy Mulligan, Jonathan Naito, Lisa Nalbone, Cheryl Narumi Naruse, Patrick R. O'Malley, Frank A. Palmeri, Roy Pérez, Stephen David Powell, Mark A. Reid, Natalia Ruiz-Rubio, Willis A. Salomon, Rebecca Sanchez, Rosaura Sanchez, Johanna E. Schuster-Craig, Tristan Schweiger, Cynthia L. Selfe, Jordan Stone, Erin Sweeney, Christopher J. Taylor, Svetlana Tyutina, Luiz Fernando Valente, Lauren Vedal, Judson D. Watson III, Lily Wong.

*Delegates Representing Regional MLAs:* Ezra Cappell, Jason M. Houston, Kristin A. Le Veness, Elizabeth J. West.

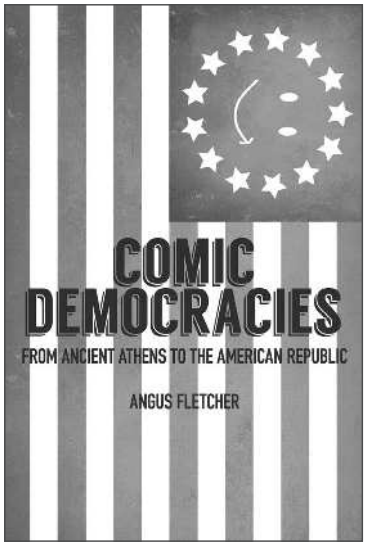
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*Members of the Delegate Assembly Organizing Committee:* Stephanie Louise Kirk, Margaret A. Noodin, Julie Rak, Susan Solomon.

*Parliamentarian:* Jeanette N. Williams.

*Clerk:* Rosemary G. Feal.

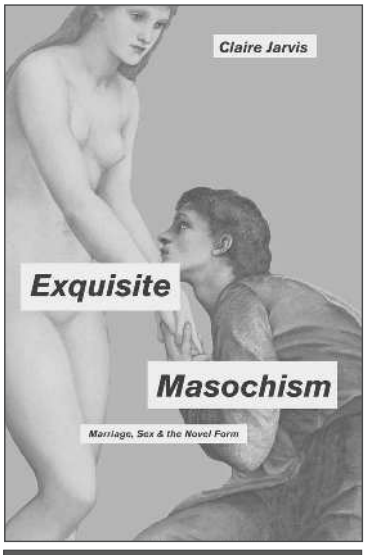
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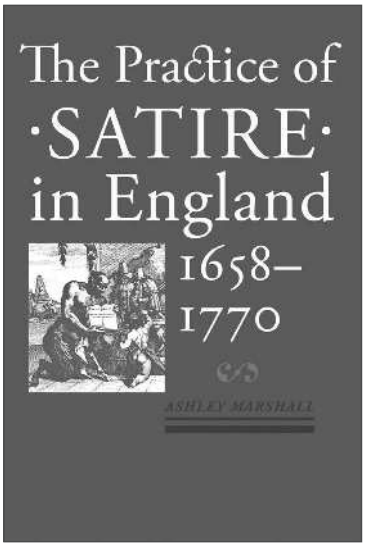

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