



The Way We Teach Now

MLA • SAN FRANCISCO
2008

“Some of the diverse aspects of teaching today that sessions will address include the opposition between teaching and research, politics in the classroom, student and academic discourse, the teaching of civic literacy, what students should read and how they should read it, bridging the science-humanities gap, the teaching of creative writing, the impact of technology on teaching, and the teaching of high and popular culture. These sessions will demonstrate that our commitment to teaching has never been more serious. I am confident that The Way We Teach Now will be a memorable collection of events, and I hope to see you at many of them.”

**—Gerald Graff
2008 MLA President**



The Way We Teach Now is the theme of the Presidential Forum at the 2008 MLA Annual Convention. In addition to featuring four sessions that will address this theme, the Forum will be the focus of more than three dozen related programs arranged by divisions, discussion groups, allied and affiliate organizations, and individual members.

The following is a list of forums, workshops, and sessions on The Way We Teach Now.

PRESIDENTIAL FORUM

Sunday, 28 December

202. The Way We Teach Now

10:15 a.m.–12:00 noon, Continental 5, Hilton

The Presidential Forum. *Presiding:* Gerald Graff, Univ. of Illinois, Chicago

1. “Theory as a Vocation,” Amanda S. Anderson, Johns Hopkins Univ.
2. “Conventional Wisdom,” Michael Bérubé, Penn State Univ., University Park
3. “After Suspicion,” Rita Felski, Univ. of Virginia
4. “Writing without Paper: Instant Global Distribution and the Future of Thought,” Richard E. Miller, Rutgers Univ., New Brunswick

SESSIONS LINKED TO THE PRESIDENTIAL FORUM

Sunday, 28 December

320. Biocultures: Closing the Science-Humanities Gap

1:45–3:00 p.m., Continental 5, Hilton

Presiding: Gerald Graff, Univ. of Illinois, Chicago

1. “The Biocultural Unconscious: Literary Studies as Symptom in the Pedagogical Space,” Lennard J. Davis, Univ. of Illinois, Chicago
2. “The Bats and the Bees: Science, Culture, Sex,” Judith Halberstam, Univ. of Southern California
3. “Blood and Stories: Cultures in the Classroom,” Priscilla B. Wald, Duke Univ.



337. Politics and the Classroom: A Roundtable
3:30–4:45 p.m., Continental 5, Hilton

Presiding: Andrew Hoberek, Univ. of Missouri, Columbia

Speakers: Patricia Lynn Bizzell, Coll. of the Holy Cross; Judith Butler, Univ. of California, Berkeley; Jonathan Culler, Cornell Univ.

Respondent: Stanley Eugene Fish, Florida International Univ.

Monday, 29 December

488. Why Study Literature in School and College, and How Do We Judge Good Reading?
10:15–11:30 a.m., Continental 5, Hilton

Presiding: Gerald Graff, Univ. of Illinois, Chicago

1. “Reading and Readings, Beauty and Truth,” Mark W. Edmundson, Univ. of Virginia
2. “Trusting the Text,” David Steiner, Hunter Coll., City Univ. of New York
3. “How We Read Trumps What We Read,” Gerald Graff

PRESIDENTIAL FORUM PARTICIPANTS



Amanda S. Anderson is Caroline Donovan Professor of English Literature and department chair at Johns Hopkins University and the director of the School of Criticism and Theory. She is the author of *The Way We Argue Now: A Study*

in the Cultures of Theory; The Powers of Distance: Cosmopolitanism and the Cultivation of Detachment; and *Tainted Souls and Painted Faces: The Rhetoric of Fallenness in Victorian Culture*. She coedited, with Joseph Valente, *Disciplinary at the Fin de Siècle*.



Michael Bérubé is the Paterno Family Professor in Literature at Pennsylvania State University. He is the author of *Marginal Forces / Cultural Centers: Tolson, Pynchon, and the Politics of the Canon*; *Public Access: Literary*

Theory and American Cultural Politics; *Life As We Know It: A Father, a Family, and an Exceptional Child*; *The Employment of English: Theory, Jobs, and the Future of Literary Studies*; *What's Liberal about the Liberal Arts? Classroom Politics and "Bias" in Higher Education*; and *Rhetorical Occasions: Essays on Humans and the Humanities*.



Patricia Lynn Bizzell is professor of English at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. She is the co-author, with Bruce Herzberg, of *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the*

Present, which won the National Council of Teachers of English Outstanding Book Award, and *The Bedford Bibliography for Teachers of Writing*. A collection of her essays on composition theory appears in *Academic Discourse* and *Critical Consciousness*.



Judith Butler is Maxine Elliot Professor in the Departments of Rhetoric and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley. She is the author of *Subjects of Desire: Hegelian Reflections in Twentieth-*

Century France; *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*; *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"*; *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*; *Excitable Speech*; *Antigone's Claim: Kinship between Life and Death*; *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality: Contemporary Dialogues on the Left* (with Ernesto Laclau and Slavoj Žižek); *Precarious Life: The Power of Mourning and Violence*; and *Giving an Account of Oneself*.



Jonathan Culler is Class of 1916 Professor of English at Cornell University. He is the author of *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics, and the Study of Literature*, which won the MLA's James Russell Lowell Prize in 1976; *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism*; and *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction*.



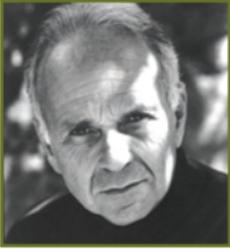
Lennard J. Davis is professor of English literature, disability studies, and medical education at the University of Illinois, Chicago. He is the author of *Obsession: A History*; *Bending Over Backwards: Disability, Dismodernism, and Other Difficult Positions*; *Enforcing Normalcy: Disability, Deafness, and the Body*; *Resisting Novels: Ideology and Fiction*; and *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel*. He is the editor of *The Disability Studies Reader*, coeditor of *Disability Studies Handbook* (forthcoming), and author of *Go Ask Your Father* (forthcoming).



Mark W. Edmundson is University Professor at the University of Virginia. He is the author of *The Death of Sigmund Freud: The Legacy of His Last Days*; *Why Read?*; *Teacher: The One Who Made the Difference*; and *Literature against Philosophy, Plato to Derrida: A Defence of Poetry*. He is a contributing editor to *Harper's* and *Raritan*.



Rita Felski is William R. Kenan, Jr., Professor of English at the University of Virginia and the incoming editor of *New Literary History*. She is the author of *Beyond Feminist Aesthetics: Feminist Literature and Social Change*; *The Gender of Modernity*; *Doing Time: Feminist Theory and Postmodern Culture*; *Literature after Feminism*; and *Uses of Literature* and the editor of *Rethinking Tragedy*.



Stanley Fish is the Davidson-Kahn Distinguished University Professor of Humanities and Law at the Florida International University College of Law. He is the author of *Surprised by Sin: The Reader in Paradise Lost*; *Self-Consuming*

Artifacts: The Experience of Seventeenth Century Literature; *The Living Temple: George Herbert and Catechizing*; *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities*; *Doing What Comes Naturally: Change, Rhetoric, and the Practice of Theory in Literary and Legal Studies*; *There's No Such Thing as Free Speech . . . and It's a Good Thing, Too*; *Professional Correctness: Literary Studies and Political Change*; *The Trouble with Principle*; and *How Milton Works*.



Gerald Graff is professor of English at the University of Illinois, Chicago. He is the author of *Professing Literature: An Institutional History*; *Beyond the Culture Wars: How Teaching the Conflicts Can Revitalize American Education*; and *Clueless in*

Academe: How Schooling Obscures the Life of the Mind and the coauthor, with Cathy Birkenstein, of "*They Say / I Say*": *The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*.



Judith Halberstam is professor of English, gender studies and American studies, and ethnicity at the University of Southern California. She is the author of *Skin Shows: Gothic Horror and the Technology of Monsters*; *Female Masculinity*;

and *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* and the coeditor of *Posthuman Bodies*, with Ira Livingston. She has published articles in *Bitch*, the *Nation*, and other venues.



Andrew Hoberek is associate professor and director of graduate studies in the Department of English at the University of Missouri, Columbia. He wrote *The Twilight of the Middle Class: Post-World War II American Fiction and White-Collar Work* and guest-

edited a special issue of *Twentieth-Century Literature* on the topic "After Postmodernism."



Richard E. Miller is the author of *Writing at the End of the World*, which received the James Britton Award for Exemplary Studies Published by English Language Arts Teachers, and *As If Learning Mattered: Reforming Higher Education*. He and Kurt Spellmeyer are co-authors of *The New Humanities Reader*, now in its third edition. He has been teaching writing at Rutgers University for the past sixteen years.



David Steiner is Klara and Larry Silverstein Dean of the School of Education at Hunter College, City University of New York. He has served as director of arts education at the National Endowment for the Arts and as chairman of the Department of Education Policy at Boston University. Steiner has published two books on the challenges of public education and two edited volumes.



Priscilla B. Wald is professor of English at Duke University. She is the author of *Constituting Americans: Cultural Anxiety and Narrative Form* and *Contagious: Cultures, Carriers, and the Outbreak Narrative*. She is the editor of *American Literature* and serves on the editorial boards of *Literature and Medicine*, *ESQ*, and *Leviathan*.

SESSIONS RELATED TO THE PRESIDENTIAL THEME

Saturday, 27 December

25. Preparing the Professoriat as Teachers: Innovations in Rhetoric and Composition Programs
3:30–4:45 p.m., *Lombard, Hilton*

Program arranged by the Council of Writing Program Administrators.

70. Beyond the Classroom: Research into Knowledge Making

5:15–6:30 p.m., *Union Square 22, Hilton*

Program arranged by the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing.

93. The Capstone Project: Designing the Senior Experience for English Majors

5:15–6:30 p.m., Union Square 12, Hilton

Program arranged by the College English Association.

115. Teaching the University: A Roundtable

7:00–8:15 p.m., Golden Gate 4, Hilton

A special session.

116. New Subjects in and beyond the Classroom

7:00–8:15 p.m., Golden Gate 1, Hilton

Program arranged by the MLA Executive Council.

133. Program and Outcomes Assessment in Collegiate Foreign Language Education

8:45–10:00 p.m., Yerba Buena Salon 15, Marriott

Program arranged by the Division on Applied Linguistics.

141. Technology: A Critical Examination

8:45–10:00 p.m., Foothill F, Marriott

Program arranged by the Division on the Teaching of Language.

144. Anthologies and the Construction of Pedagogical Canons

8:45–10:00 p.m., Golden Gate 7, Hilton

Program arranged by the Division on the Teaching of Literature.

Sunday, 28 December

166. Teaching in the Small College English Department

8:30–9:45 a.m., Union Square 22, Hilton

Program arranged by the Association of Departments of English.

170. Language, Identity, and War: The Return of the Ritchie Boys

8:30–9:45 a.m., Imperial B, Hilton

Program arranged by the Office of the Executive Director.

202. The Way We Teach Now

10:15 a.m.–12:00 noon, Continental 5, Hilton

The Presidential Forum.

266. A Delicate Balance: Teaching and Scholarship in the Community College

12:00 noon–1:15 p.m., Union Square 18, Hilton

Program arranged by the Community College Humanities Association.

286. Options for Teaching Nonfiction: Literary Journalism

12:00 noon–1:15 p.m., Golden Gate 5, Hilton

Program arranged by the Division on Nonfiction Prose Studies, Excluding Biography and Autobiography.

288. Why Teach Literature Anyway?

12:00 noon–1:15 p.m., Imperial B, Hilton

Program arranged by the Division on the Teaching of Literature.

297. Where We Teach and Learn Now

1:45–3:00 p.m., Franciscan C, Hilton

Program arranged by the MLA Executive Council.

320. Biocultures: Closing the Science-Humanities Gap

1:45–3:00 p.m., Continental 5, Hilton

A linked session arranged in conjunction with the Presidential Forum *The Way We Teach Now* (202).

337. Politics and the Classroom: A Roundtable

3:30–4:45 p.m., Continental 5, Hilton

A linked session arranged in conjunction with the Presidential Forum *The Way We Teach Now* (202).

341. The Honors Programs at Two-Year Colleges

3:30–4:45 p.m., Golden Gate 5, Hilton

Program arranged by the MLA Committee on Community Colleges.

354. Confronting Issues of Race in the Academy: African American Professors Examine Literary Responses to Racism

3:30–4:45 p.m., Union Square 18, Hilton

Program arranged by the College English Association.

401. Teaching Narrative Ethics; or, Narrative as Art versus Narrative as Argument

7:15–8:30 p.m., Golden Gate 3, Hilton

A special session.

405. Multimodal Literacies: A Pedagogical Imperative?

7:15–8:30 p.m., Continental 1–2, Hilton

Program arranged by the Division on the Teaching of Writing.

406. Poetry and Pedagogy: A Panel and Plenary Discussion

7:15–8:30 p.m., Nob Hill B, Marriott

Program arranged by the Division on Poetry.

421. Digital Immigrants Teaching Digital Natives

7:15–8:30 p.m., Golden Gate 5, Hilton

Program arranged by the Office of the Executive Director.

Monday, 29 December

449. Teaching Our Research

8:30–9:45 a.m., Franciscan A, Hilton

A special session.

468. Humanities 2.0: Participatory Learning in an Age of Technology

8:30–9:45 a.m., *Golden Gate 5, Hilton*

Program arranged by the MLA Executive Council.

488. Why Study Literature in School and College, and How Do We Judge Good Reading?

10:15–11:30 a.m., *Continental 5, Hilton*

A linked session arranged in conjunction with the Presidential Forum *The Way We Teach Now* (202).

490. The Scholarship of Teaching: How Writing Programs Support Teaching-Centered Research

10:15–11:30 a.m., *Golden Gate 5, Hilton*

Program arranged by the Council of Writing Program Administrators.

511. Options for Teaching Nonfiction: Literature

10:15–11:30 a.m., *Yosemite A, Hilton*

Program arranged by the Division on Nonfiction Prose Studies, Excluding Biography and Autobiography. Presiding: Daniel Joseph Martin, Rockhurst Univ.

518. School Culture and Minority Discourses

12:00 noon–1:15 p.m., *Yosemite A, Hilton*

A special session.

530. Teaching Literature in the Twenty-First Century

12:00 noon–1:15 p.m., *Union Square 15, Hilton*

Program arranged by the National Council of Teachers of English.

562. Teaching Popular Media; or, Theorizing Our Students' Pleasure

1:45–3:00 p.m., *Yosemite B, Hilton*

A special session.

572. Anthologizing British Literature: Negotiating the Canon for the Classroom

1:45–3:00 p.m., *Franciscan B, Hilton*

Program arranged by the Division on the Teaching of Literature.

590. Applied Linguistics and Teaching-Assistant Development

1:45–3:00 p.m., *Yerba Buena Salon 1–2, Marriott*

Program arranged by the Division on Applied Linguistics.

612. The Accountable Professor

3:30–4:45 p.m., *Continental 3, Hilton*

Program arranged by the Division on Teaching as a Profession.

614. Technology and Composition: Implications for the Profession

3:30–4:45 p.m., Golden Gate 5, Hilton

Program arranged by the Division on the Teaching of Writing.

668. Study Abroad: Critical Languages

7:15–8:30 p.m., Yerba Buena Salon 10, Marriott

Program arranged by the Division on the Teaching of Language.

689. The Dilemma of Critical Pedagogy: Countering the Bias of Business as Usual

7:15–8:30 p.m., Yosemite A, Hilton

A special session.

710. Creative Writing in the Twenty-First Century

9:00–10:15 p.m., Golden Gate 5, Hilton

A special session.

728. Options for Teaching Nonfiction: Creative Nonfiction

9:00–10:15 p.m., Nob Hill A, Marriott

Program arranged by the Division on Nonfiction Prose Studies, Excluding Biography and Autobiography.

Tuesday, 30 December

745. Teaching or Research?

8:30–9:45 a.m., Golden Gate 6, Hilton

A special session.

752. Composition Studies: Where Is the Discipline? Where Is It Going?

8:30–9:45 a.m., Yosemite A, Hilton

Program arranged by the Division on the Teaching of Writing.

761. Reintegrating Civic Literacy and Political Rhetoric in the Humanities Curriculum

10:15–11:30 a.m., Yosemite A, Hilton

Program arranged by the Division on the History and Theory of Rhetoric and Composition.

765. Rethinking the Culture of Instruction in the Literature Class

10:15–11:30 a.m., Lombard, Hilton

A special session.

787. Recontextualizing the Humanities: Past, Present, and Future

12:00 noon–1:15 p.m., Yosemite A, Hilton

A special session.



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