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## **MLA AWARDS WILLIAM RILEY PARKER PRIZE FOR ARTICLE IN *PMLA* TO DOYLE CALHOUN AND TO ANNE MARIE THOMPSON**

New York, NY – 6 December 2023 – The Modern Language Association of America today announced the cowinners of its sixtieth annual William Riley Parker Prize for an outstanding article published in *PMLA*, the association’s journal of literary scholarship. The authors of this year’s winning essays are Doyle Calhoun, assistant professor of language and culture studies at Trinity College, Connecticut, and Anne Marie Thompson, teaching fellow at St. John’s College, Santa Fe. Calhoun’s article, “Variations on *Verrition*: (Re)turning to the Enigmatic Final Word of Aimé Césaire’s *Cahier d’un retour au pays natal*,” appeared in the March 2023 issue of *PMLA*. Thompson’s article, “Intimate Editing: The Textual Poetics of Susan Howe’s Collage Poems,” also appeared in the March 2023 issue of *PMLA*.

The William Riley Parker Prize is one of twenty-two awards that will be presented on 5 January 2024 during the association’s annual convention, to be held in Philadelphia. The members of the selection committee were Dina Al-Kassim (Univ. of British Columbia); John Garrison (Grinnell Coll.); Edward B. Kamens (Yale Univ.); Suzanne Keen (Hamilton Coll.), chair; and Robert St. Clair (Dartmouth Coll.). The committee’s citation for Calhoun’s article reads:

Doyle Calhoun’s “Variations on *Verrition*: (Re)turning to the Enigmatic Final Word of Aimé Césaire’s *Cahier d’un retour au pays natal*” offers an incisive reading of the enigmatic last lines of Césaire’s poem by means of historical poetics. Zeroing in on one word, Calhoun recovers *verrition* as a nineteenth-century physiological term describing the mechanics of taste. Illuminating the poem’s imagery of liberatory articulation, Calhoun places *Cahier* in a genealogy of the language of difference. A stylistically riveting meld of archival curiosity and sophisticated close readings of the semiotic texture of buccal images and embodiment, Calhoun’s work redirects attention to the enduring interpretability of one of the most important, and daunting, poems in the modern French and world literature canon.

The committee’s citation for Thompson’s article reads:

“Intimate Editing: The Textual Poetics of Susan Howe’s Collage Poems,” by Anne Marie Thompson, is bold in its claims and in its evocative analytic frame. Thompson’s analysis of Howe’s challenging, celebrated, and controversial poetry springs to life in lucid prose that reengages readers in the joy of discovering poetry anew and in the satisfactions of its sustained discussion. Highlighting Howe’s philological commitments, celebration of concordances (and the underappreciated scholars who created them), harmonization of words across pages, and attunement to the tiniest resonant details in her assembled materials, Thompson’s probing of Howe’s poetic creations urges readers to see her as ever on the cusp of new discoveries and new techniques, a maker’s maker working with tangible materials.

The Modern Language Association of America and its over 20,000 members in 100 countries work to strengthen the study and teaching of languages and literature. Founded in 1883, the MLA provides opportunities for its members to share their scholarly findings and teaching experiences with colleagues and to discuss trends in the academy. The MLA sustains one of the finest publication programs in the humanities, producing a variety of publications for language and literature professionals and for the general public. The association publishes the *MLA International Bibliography*, the only comprehensive bibliography in language and literature, available online. The MLA Annual Convention features 750 scholarly and professional development sessions. More information on MLA programs is available at [www.mla.org](http://www.mla.org).

The MLA's oldest award, the prize for an outstanding article in *PMLA* was first presented in 1964. In 1968 the prize was named in memory of a distinguished former editor of the journal and executive secretary of the association, William Riley Parker.

The William Riley Parker Prize is awarded under the auspices of the MLA's Committee on Honors and Awards. Other awards sponsored by the committee are the James Russell Lowell Prize; the MLA Prize for a First Book; the Howard R. Marraro Prize; the Kenneth W. Mildener Prize; the Mina P. Shaughnessy Prize; the MLA Prize for Independent Scholars; the Katherine Singer Kovacs Prize; the Morton N. Cohen Award; the MLA Prizes for a Scholarly Edition and for Bibliographical or Archival Scholarship; the Lois Roth Award; the William Sanders Scarborough Prize; the Fenia and Yaakov Leviant Memorial Prize in Yiddish Studies; the MLA Prize in United States Latina and Latino and Chicana and Chicano Literary and Cultural Studies; the MLA Prize for Studies in Native American Literatures, Cultures, and Languages; the Matei Calinescu Prize; the MLA Prize for an Edited Collection; the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prizes for Comparative Literary Studies, for French and Francophone Studies, for Italian Studies, for Studies in Germanic Languages and Literatures, for Studies in Slavic Languages and Literatures, for a Translation of a Literary Work, for a Translation of a Scholarly Study of Literature, for African Studies, for East Asian Studies, for Middle Eastern Studies, and for South Asian Studies; and the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Publication Award for a Manuscript in Italian Literary Studies. A complete list of current and previous winners can be found on the [MLA website](#).

William Riley Parker (1906–68) was executive secretary of the MLA and editor of *PMLA* from 1947 to 1956. In 1959 he was elected to serve as the MLA's sixty-ninth president. Internationally known as the founder and director (1952–56) of the MLA's Foreign Language Program and author of major studies and essays about foreign language education in the United States, Parker was a scholar of English literature and author of major books and articles on Milton and other British poets and writers. At the time of his death, he was distinguished professor and chair of the Department of English at Indiana University, Bloomington.