COMMITTEE ON SCHOLARLY EDITIONS
ANNUAL REPORT TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
OF THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION

AUGUST 2014

Background

The Committee on Scholarly Editions (CSE) was created in September 1976 and became a standing committee of the MLA in 1979. It replaced the advisory board of the MLA Center for Editions of American Authors (CEAA) when the CEAA ceased to be a grant-making body funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The CSE now serves as a clearinghouse for information about scholarly editing and editorial projects, offers advice and consultation to editors on request, honors excellence in editing by awarding emblems to qualified volumes, and promotes dissemination of reliable texts for classroom use and among general readers. Over time the committee has enlarged the range of editions, periods, and languages for which it provides professional advice, and over the past decade it has increasingly considered electronic scholarly editions, in various forms. The committee’s central purpose is the review and evaluation of particular scholarly editions and the consequent decision whether to award the MLA’s “seal of approval” to editions that merit the distinction.

Current Membership

The committee normally has nine members, eight of whom represent various areas and historical periods of literary scholarship while one member represents scholarly presses. While the current membership does not include a representative from a scholarly press, it does include several members with specialties in digital texts and electronic publishing. The membership of the committee for the period July 2013–June 2014, with their terms of service noted, was as follows:

   Julia Flanders, Northeastern University (2011–15)
   Zachary Lesser, University of Pennsylvania (2010–14)
Stephen G. Nichols, Johns Hopkins University, MD (2011–15)
Kenneth M. Price, University of Nebraska, Lincoln (2012–16)
Jesús Rodríguez-Velasco, Columbia University (2010–14)
Susan Schreibman, Trinity College Dublin (2010–14; cochair, 2012–14)
Andrew Stauffer, University of Virginia (2013–17)
John Kevin Young, Marshall University (2012–16)

MLA staff:
Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Director of Scholarly Communication (liaison)
Anna S. A. Chang, Associate Director of Scholarly Communication
James C. Hatch, Senior Acquisitions Editor
Susanna Mayer, Editorial Assistant

Activities of the Committee

The cochairs of the CSE serve, whenever possible, in staggered rotation. For 2013–14, Susan Schreibman and Raymond G. Siemens cochaired. As of July 2014, John Young became cochair. He’ll serve along with Siemens for 2014–15 and thereafter for one more year.

The committee met on 6 September 2013 at MLA headquarters in New York and on Google Hangout on 2 December 2013 and 9 June 2014.

During the year, the CSE considered the following seven scholarly editions:

1. 
Author: Ælfric
Title: The Digital Ælfric
Editor: Aaron J Kleist
Publisher: Boydell and Brewer
Review manager: Stephen Nichols
Vetter: Timothy L. Stinson
Status: seal awarded

2. 
Author: Anonymous
Title: The Siege of Jerusalem
Editor: Timothy L. Stinson
Publisher: Society for Early English and Norse Electronic Texts
Review manager: Stephen Nichols
Vetter: Andrew Galloway
Status: seal awarded
3. Author: Ray Bradbury
   Title: The Collected Stories of Ray Bradbury, volume 2 (1943–44)
   Editor: Jonathan R. Eller
   Publisher: Kent State University Press
   Review manager: John Young
   Vetter: Andrew Jewell
   Status: seal awarded

4. Author: Willa Cather
   Title: Lucy Gayheart
   Editors: Guy Reynolds, David Porter, and Kari Ronning
   Publisher: University of Nebraska Press
   Review manager: Andrew Stauffer
   Vetter: Mark Kamrath
   Status: seal awarded

5. Author: James Fenimore Cooper
   Title: Homeward Bound; or, The Chase: A Tale
   Editor: Stephen Carl Arch
   Publisher: AMS Press
   Review Manager: Kenneth Price
   Vetter: Jonathan Eller
   Status: seal awarded

6. Author: Henry James
   Editors: Greg W. Zacharias and Pierre A. Walker
   Publisher: University of Nebraska Press
   Review Manager: Susan Schreibman
   Vetter: Oliver Herford
   Status: seal awarded

7. Author: Gertrude Stein
   Title: Tender Buttons: The Corrected Centennial Edition
   Editor: Seth Perlow
   Publisher: City Lights Books
   Review Manager: John Young
   Vetter: Emily Setina
   Status: seal awarded

The following editions are currently in progress or in preparation for review: Joseph Conrad’s Victory, An Island Tale, ed. John Stape and Alexandre Fachard, to be published by

The committee also began work on a white paper, “Engaging and Expanding our Consideration of the Digital Scholarly Edition.” The white paper will include a bibliography of books and articles that would help readers understand the range of digital editing as well as highlight digital editions that have won the CSE seal. Ray Siemens and Julia Flanders will prepare a new draft to be circulated in time for consideration at the committee’s next meeting.

For the annual convention in 2015, the CSE will sponsor the following sessions:

**Friday, 9 January 2015**

**298. What Is the Role of the Critical Edition in the Digital Age?**

1:45–3:00 p.m., West 215, VCC West  
*Presiding:* John Young, Marshall Univ.  
*Speakers:* Benjamin Albritton, Stanford Univ.; William Leake Andrews, Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Neil Fraistat, Univ. of Maryland, College Park; Andrew Scott Galloway, Cornell Univ.; Kenneth M. Price, Univ. of Nebraska, Lincoln

Editing protocols date from the analog age. Digital editions continue to follow analog protocols. Textual scholars—and textual scholarship—can profit from discussion of digital technology’s contribution to editing. Panelists, textual scholars with experience in both analog and digital editing technologies, discuss and suggest further exploration.

**Saturday, 10 January**

**437. Pedagogy and Digital Editions**

8:30–9:45 a.m., West 215, VCC West  
*Presiding:* Jesús Rodríguez-Velasco, Columbia Univ.  
*Speakers:* Julia Bninski, Loyola Univ., Chicago; Harold Henry Hellwig, Idaho State Univ.; Kathleen Ogden, Univ. of Toronto; Leah Reade Rosenberg, Univ. of Florida; Brandon Walsh, Univ. of Virginia

Participants consider the issues related to the use and development of digital editions and the availability of digital versions of primary sources in the classroom.
Sunday, 11 January

745. Genetic Editing and Interpretation
12:00 noon–1:15 p.m., West 120, VCC West

Presiding: Kenneth M. Price, Univ. of Nebraska, Lincoln

1. “Work in Progress as a Dialogue of Text with Itself (and Its Author),” Hans Walter Gabler, Univ. of Munich

2. “Walt Whitman, Electronic Genetic Editing, and the ‘Separation of Concerns,’” Brett Barney, Univ. of Nebraska, Lincoln


The CSE’s next meeting will be held on 5 September 2014 at MLA headquarters in New York.

In conclusion, the two cochairs wish to thank the individual members of the committee and the MLA staff members, Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Anna Chang, James Hatch, and Susanna Mayer, for their dedication and hard work in support of the CSE.

Respectfully submitted, Susan Schreibman and Ray Siemens, cochairs, CSE