

# AN INTRODUCTION TO PUBLISHING JOURNAL ARTICLES IN THE HUMANITIES

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UCLA Graduate Writing Center  
Marilyn Gray, Director



# A Major Source for this Workshop

Wendy Belcher. (2009) *Writing your Journal Article in 12 Weeks*. Thousands Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Website, which includes workshop forms:

<http://www.wendybelcher.com/writing-advice/writing-your-journal-article-in-twelve/>



# Journal Article as a Genre

- Read all the articles you're reading not just for content, but for form as well—structure, linguistic features, style
- A published article is the end product of a long, complex, socially-situated process that involves all of the input and feedback you receive before you submit to a journal and all the communication with journal editors that happens around the submission and revision.
- Many of these aspects are “occluded,” i.e., not part of the publication record, and can only be done appropriately with insider knowledge of the process



# Stages of the Process

1. Having a paper worth submitting
2. Finding a Journal
3. Revising for the chosen journal
4. Submitting an article
5. Revising based on reviewer comments
6. Responding to reviewer comments



# Having a Paper Worth Submitting – Where to Start

- Course Paper
- Conference Presentation
- MA Thesis
- Dissertation Chapter



# How to Find a Journal

- Recommendations from faculty and colleagues
- CVs of professors in your field – where are they publishing?
- Articles you cite
- Browse the library
- Browse online

Note: keep an eye out for Special Issues related to you work. They have less article submissions, plus you'll be in contact with other scholars in your field

Check contributor pages for the past 3 years to see if these scholars are the critical community you want to be a part of. This will also give you a sense of their career stage as well as which disciplines and fields tend to be represented.



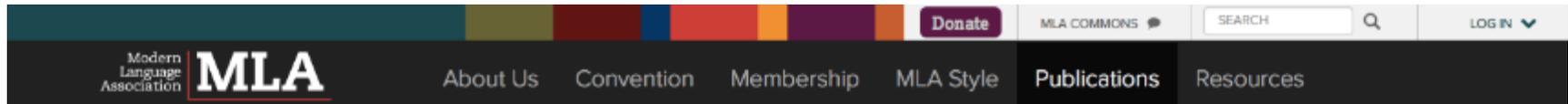
# Types of Journals

- Disciplinary Journals (highest ranked)
- Field or Sub-Field Journals
- Regional Journals
- Interdisciplinary Journals
- Online vs. Print

Avoid non peer-reviewed journals



# MLA Directory of Periodicals



HOME > PUBLICATIONS > MLA INTERNATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY > MLA DIRECTORY OF PERIODICALS > ABOUT THE DIRECTORY OF PERIODICALS

*MLA Directory of  
Periodicals*

*About the Directory of  
Periodicals*

MLA Directory of  
Periodicals Search

## About the *Directory of Periodicals*

The *MLA Directory of Periodicals* contains information on over 6,000 journals and book series that fall within the scope of the *MLA International Bibliography*. This information has been gathered by the MLA staff with the cooperation of MLA bibliographers and the editors represented in the listings. The entries list editorial addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers, e-mail addresses, frequency of publication, descriptions of scope, circulation figures, subscription prices and addresses, advertising information, links to online content, peer review, and submission guidelines. The directory also provides statistics on the number of articles and book reviews published each year, as well as how many are submitted.

### Scope

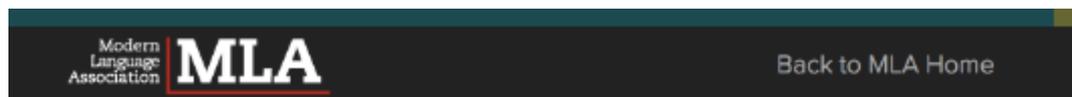
Any regularly published print or electronic journal available to libraries or universities that regularly includes articles on language, linguistics, literature, folklore, pedagogy, or film is eligible for inclusion in the directory. Any series that publishes books on language, linguistics, folklore, pedagogy, or film, regardless of the frequency of the series, is also eligible. Editors of journals or series not currently included in the directory are invited to send a sample copy of the journal or series, or the URL if the periodical is published only in electronic form, to the editor at Directory of Periodicals, Modern Language Association, 85 Broad Street, suite 500, New York, NY 10004-2434; [periodicals@mla.org](mailto:periodicals@mla.org).

### Acronyms, ISSNs

Journal and series acronyms are those used in the *MLA International Bibliography*. International Standard Serial Numbers (ISSNs) and Electronic International Standard Serial Numbers (EISSNs) are included when they are known.



# Journal Information Continued



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## MLA Directory of Periodicals Search

The screenshot displays the search results for 'American Literary History'. The left sidebar contains search criteria and instructions. The main content area shows the 'Periodical Details' for the journal, with several fields circled in orange: 'Scope', 'Circulation', and 'Frequency'.

**Search Criteria**

Perform Search Clear Search

Search by Keyword

american literary history

You may combine terms using AND, OR, and NOT (using parentheses to clarify search logic)

Example: To search for periodicals related to linguistics, you could try

linguistics AND (phonology OR morphology)

Example: For English poetry, but not Shakespeare, you could use

English Literature AND Poetry AND NOT Shakespeare

If you wish to search for the literal words or, and, or not, Add Search Limits

Browse by ...

**Search Results** American Literary History

**Periodical Details**

**Scope:** Publishes articles on American literature and culture from all periods. Bringing together work in history, theory, and interpretation, it seeks not to reflect but to extend and challenge the terms of recent literary inquiry.

**Subject Index:** American literature

**Terms:** Literary theory and criticism  
Ethnic literature  
American literary tradition  
American culture

**Publishes Book Reviews?** Yes

**Publishes Short Notes?** No

**Publishes Abstracts?** No

**Peer Review:** Yes

**Languages:** English

**Published:** 1,250

**Frequency:** 4 times/year (Mar, June, Sept, Dec)

**Accepts Advertising?** Yes

**Advertising Rates:** USD 150.00/half page  
USD 200.00/full page

**Available in Microforms?** Available in microforms

**Pagination:** Consecutive

Print Details Export Details

For questions, changes, or suggestions, please contact [periodicals@mla.org](mailto:periodicals@mla.org).

[MLA Directory of Periodicals User Guide](#)



# Journal Information Continued



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## MLA Directory of Periodicals Search

The screenshot shows the search results for 'American Literary History'. The left sidebar contains search criteria and examples. The main content area lists submission requirements:

- Charge for Pages?** No
- Suggested Length of Articles:** 5,000-8,000 words
- Suggested Length of Book Reviews:** 2,000-3,000 words
- Editorial Style:** MLA Preferred
- Number of Copies of Manuscript Required:** 1
- Blind Submission Policy?** Yes
- Special Submission Requirements:** Submit online via <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/alh>
- Copyright Holder:** Oxford University Press
- Disposition of Rejected Manuscripts:** Returned; enclose SASE
- Time between Submission and Publication Decision:** 1-4 months
- Time Between Decision and Publication:** 12-15 months
- Number of Readers prior to Publication Decision:** 2-4

For questions, changes, or suggestions, please contact [periodicals@mia.org](mailto:periodicals@mia.org).

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# Journal Information Continued

Modern Language Association **MLA** Back to MLA Home

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## MLA Directory of Periodicals Search

**Search Criteria** << Perform Search Clear Search

Search by Keyword  
american literary history

You may combine terms using AND, OR, and NOT (using parentheses to clarify search logic)

Example: To search for periodicals related to linguistics, you could try

linguistics AND (phonology OR morphology)

Example: For English poetry, but not Shakespeare, you could use

English Literature AND Poetry AND NOT Shakespeare

If you wish to search for the literal words or, and, or not, Add Search Limits +

Browse by ... +

**Search Results** American Literary Hist

**Blind Submission Policy?** Yes

**Special Submission Requirements:** Submit online via <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/alh>

**Copyright Holder:** Oxford University Press

**Disposition of Rejected Manuscripts:** Returned; enclose SASE

**Time between Submission and Publication Decision:** 1-4 months

**Time Between Decision and Publication:** 12-15 months

**Number of Readers prior to Publication Decision:** 2-4

**Articles Submitted Per Year:** 500

**Articles Published Per Year:** 25

**Book Reviews Submitted Per Year:** 25

**Book Reviews Published Per Year:** 20

**Date Info Confirmed:** 4/29/2008

Print Details Export Details

For questions, changes, or suggestions, please contact [periodicals@mla.org](mailto:periodicals@mla.org).

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# Go to Journal Websites

- About this journal
- Types of articles
- Instructions for authors
- What to put in a cover letter



# Journal Websites Continued

## MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION

Manuscripts should be typewritten with wide margins on 8.5 x 11-inch bond paper. **All material should be double-spaced including notes, references, extracts, poetry, and figure legends.** Do not divide words at the ends of lines. Each section of the manuscript should begin on a separate page. The title page should include the author's address and telephone number, as well as fax number and e-mail address if available. **If a prospective author wishes to remain anonymous to readers, please submit the title page separately from the essay itself.** Assemble the sections in the following order:

- title page
- text
- notes
- works cited
- figure legends

Acknowledgments should appear as the first (unnumbered) note. In general the journal follows the recommendations of the *MLA Style Manual*. For specific instructions on style contact the editorial office at the address below.

Articles for publication may be submitted through the [ScholarOneManuscripts website](#). Click [here](#) for instructions on how to submit.

## FIGURE PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

The journal encourages the submission of suitable illustrations. Prepare your figures at print publication quality resolution, using applications capable of generating high-resolution .tif files (600 d.p.i. for line drawings and 300 d.p.i. for color and halftone artwork). The printing process requires your figures to be in this format if your paper is accepted for publication. For useful information on preparing your figures for publication, go to <http://cpc.cadmus.com/da>. Please also prepare a second version of your figures at low-resolution for use in the review process; these versions of the figures can be saved in .jpg, .gif, .tif, or .eps format. Your figures will need to be in final format, with all cropping already done. For more information regarding figure requirements and preparation, please go to [http://www.oxfordjournals.org/for\\_authors/figures.html](http://www.oxfordjournals.org/for_authors/figures.html).

Authors are responsible for obtaining permission to reprint extracts and reproduce illustrations. The permissions forms should be supplied with the final manuscript. All necessary credits and acknowledgments should be included in the figure legends.

## BOOK REVIEWS

All copies of books to be considered for review should be submitted to the editor:

**Gordon Hutner**  
Department of English  
Rm. 208 English Building  
University of Illinois  
608 S. Wright St.  
Urbana, IL 61801-3668  
USA



# Revising for the Selected Journal

- Find and study a model paper
  - Similar primary sources
  - Similar analytical approach
  - Similar in other important ways
- Backwards outline the model paper
  - Look at structure, headings
  - Mark signal phrases, signposts
  - Trace how the argument develops



# Argument and Structure

- Single, simple argument
- Sample Structure:
  - Introduction (5-6 pages)
    - How the work is usually interpreted (lit review), how my interpretation departs from and contributes to these arguments, context (literary, historical), roadmap
  - Section 1 (10 pages) – analysis of work 1
  - Section 2 (10 pages) – analysis of work 2
  - Conclusion (4-5 pages)
    - Broader critical significance of argument



# Genre Differences

- Argument: singular, focused, thoroughly developed and followed through to the end.
- Introduction and Positioning in Field:
  - Position your work and contribution conceptually at first, without too much citation of other literature
  - Map the most relevant and most current literature relevant to the topic, again using only strategic citation
  - Point out gap(s) in scholarship that you are filling and its(their) importance
  - Maintain a strong scholarly voice where you use others to delineate your position



# Tips for Revising

- Expanding text (from course paper or conference presentation)
  - You will look for ways to deepen and address your topic more thoroughly
- Narrowing text (from master's thesis or dissertation chapter)
  - Decide what focus is most important or interesting for you and your field
  - Reverse outline the existing piece
  - Point out gap(s) in scholarship that you are filling and its(their) importance
  - Maintain a strong scholarly voice where you use others to delineate your position



# Style

- Look at models for target journal
- Consider sub-headings
- Use clear, direct language
- Sign-posting phrases (In this section, I ...)
- Strong transitions
- Aim for skimmability
- Be concise
- Support claims and explain evidence with best examples, but not extra examples
- Avoid jargon (think about journal audience)
- Use active voice & meaningful verbs



# Steps of the Process & Who is Involved

- You submit an article (need cover letter)
  - Article goes to editor
  - Then, if the editor decides to send it on, the article is then sent to 2-4 peer reviewers
- You wait for a response from the editor
  - Reviewers submit their reviews
  - Editor examines the reviews, then makes a decision



# Letter of Inquiry/Query Letter

- Mention any personal connections you have
- Why the editor and journal readers would be interested in your article/significance
- Demonstrate knowledge of the journal
- Title of article and abstract
- Length (pages, word count)
- State that it hasn't been published before and it's not currently under review somewhere else
- Grants or awards you have received for this research



# Other Pre-submission Correspondence with Editors

- Number of Submissions
- Turnaround Time
- Backlog
- Interest
- Feedback



# Cover Letter Guidelines

In addition to using letterhead, naming the editor, providing the title and abstract, include:

- The contribution to the field
- Describe the appeal to readers
- Mention the journal
- Mention any permissions
- Note sources of funding
- Omit status\*



# Submission Ethics

- Can't claim credit for the same work twice:
  - Don't submit to multiple journals at once
  - Don't republish analysis
  - Don't republish text



# Types of Decisions

- Acceptance:
  - Pure acceptance (rare)
  - Revise minor problems and resubmit
  - Revise major problems and resubmit
- Rejection:
  - Rejected but will entertain a resubmit
  - Rejected and dismissed
  - Rejected by editor



# Why do Editors Reject?

- Too narrow/broad, off topic

Journal-specific

- Not scholarly (e.g., poor documentation, tone of course paper, not argumentative)
- Not original, not significant

Author-specific

- Theoretically or methodologically flawed

Reviewer, Journal, or Author-specific



# How to Respond to “Revise & Resubmit”

1. Often, editors will divide their concerns into “major” and “minor” issues
2. Take note of this and also note similarities among reviewers
3. Respond to **EVERYTHING**
4. Make changes (include page numbers or paste new text into the response letter)
5. Get feedback from advisors, friends, and/or colleagues and revise again
6. Write cover letter to editor



Dogeaters Article Revision Tracking.xlsx

Home Layout Tables Charts SmartArt Formulas Data Review

Edit Font Alignment Number

Calibri (Body) 14

General

C3

|   | A               | B   | C   | D                | E |
|---|-----------------|---|---|------------------|---|
| 1 | <b>Reviewer</b> | <b>Suggestions</b>  | <b>Response</b>   | <b>Finished?</b> |   |
| 2 |                 | Expand on the already existing<br>1 work on ilustrado homosociality | Situated Rizal within the context<br>of ilustrado homosociality<br>through organizations like La Liga<br>Filipina and Los Indios Bravos |                  |   |
| 3 |                 | 1,2 Define use of the term "queer"                                  |   |                  |   |
| 4 |                 |   |   |                  |   |
| 5 |                 |   |   |                  |   |
| 6 |                 |   |   |                  |   |

After listing all suggestions from each reviewer, organize them in order of priority

Keep track of your changes so you can use them in your cover letter detailing your revisions



# How to Respond in Your Cover Letter

Dear EDITOR,

Article title re-stated; if you've been given a Manuscript ID, include that too



Thank you very much for sending along the reader reports and for the invitation to revise and resubmit my article, "Guerilla Conversions in Jessica Hagedorn and José Rizal: The Queer Future of National Romance." I very much appreciated the readers' detailed and thoughtful comments and your suggestions regarding key issues on which to focus.

Comment how helpful the reviews were



Based on the reader reports, I identified four central concerns: 1) a closer engagement with debates within Asian-American and Filipino-American Studies; 2) an engagement with the work already done on Rizal and homosociality; 3) a clear understanding of how I am using the word "queer" and 4) a clear definition of the guerrilla conversion narrative early on.

Summary of main revisions to indicate significant revision



# Steps of the Process & Who's Involved

- After submitting, you wait while *either*:
  - The editor sends your paper out for another round or review (often to at least one of the original reviewers)
  - OR editor makes a decision on their own
- Once accepted, then you will follow author instructions for: formatting, style, permissions, copyediting, proofs, etc.



# Establish Yourself as a Researcher

- Upload papers on academia.edu or your personal website (if copyright permits)
- Maintain an academia.edu account or a website so you can continue to craft your identity as a scholar
- Keep your CV updated – for junior scholars, articles “under review” are still helpful to list



# A Few General Tips

- Special issues
- Use of “I”
- Word limits
- Graduate Writing Center  
<https://gwc.gsrc.ucla.edu/>



# WORKSHOP CREDITS

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This workshop has been developed and revised over the years multiple writing consultants. The humanities version of this workshop has most recently been developed by Renee Hudson, Marilyn Gray, and Eric Newman, with input from Professors Sara Melzer and Saloni Mathur

