
Editor's Column

WHO'S WHO IN *PMLA*? Is it the names displayed in the journal's table of contents or those cited in the documentation that carry the greatest weight? Ironically, authors turn into authorities as they recede from the heights of their bylines to the fine print below. No academic heart swells so fully as when its owner becomes a citation. Accordingly, delicate vanity drives scholars first to the onomastic indexes of books and to the notes of articles—to the reduced fonts where their immortality reposes. My own debut as a footnote occurred many years ago in this very journal and endures in my memory as the acme of my career. No matter that my name had been misspelled; I could rest on my laurels.

Footnotes vanished from *PMLA* in the revolutionary air of 1971, when no one over thirty was to be trusted, and some may wonder whether in the disputed gesture of switching notes from the foot to the end the ground on which the text stood was relegated to an afterthought, a postscript. The motives were actually quite innocent—easier reading, a cleaner page, greater economy—and authors continued to build their cases on veteran experts sanctified in marginal spaces that, as we all know from our earliest days in graduate school, exude essence and value. The demand for scholarly endorsement outweighs the pressure to streamline documentation (as *PMLA* did again, in 1982, when it introduced the Works Cited list), for recourse to the word of oracular chieftains in whom the reader presumably has confidence is indispensable to the art of persuasion. So the opportunity remains for us to hang in the august galleries of the referential hall of fame and to savor the prestige that comes with a superscript number or an alphabetical roster.

The custom of citation also produces a historical record of the arbiters of power at a given moment and, over time, tells much about critical predilections. In his January 1980 Editor's Column, Joel Conarroe commented on the citations in thirty-five essays that had come before the *PMLA* Editorial Board at a 1979 meeting. Jacques Derrida (with a score of 10) and Roland Barthes (7) were the winners of that limited competition. English Showalter's effort to spot trends at mid-decade (Editor's Column, March 1985) yielded no definitive list of our profession's mavens and led him to conclude that "[w]e remain a diverse discipline, the new

discourses overlaying and sometimes overshadowing but seldom entirely replacing the old" (139).

The compiling of citation tables is a fascinating exercise, a temptation editors apparently find difficult to resist. Succumbing to that impulse, I decided to survey the entire decade that has just closed. In unscientific fashion, by hand and head, without the aid of a computer or a statistician, I collected the sources of 235 articles (including two of the presidential addresses) that appeared in *PMLA* between 1981 and 1990. Some of the documentary bows are mere "see" references; others record extended dialogues and profound debts of method and argument. Some express admiration; others establish difference. The results are skewed by a variety of factors: the nature of the submissions and the frequency or rarity of each constituency's representation; the critical favoring of particular genres; the differing amounts of documentation customary in individual fields; the citation of multiple works from single sources; idiosyncratic practices among authors; and my own fallibility. The same canvass would likely vary from journal to journal, but one would expect *PMLA*, given its scope, to represent a reliable crosscut of our professional acts of reverence. What surprises, if any, do my discoveries hold?

Two pillars of Western civilization, I am relieved to report, carry almost equal weight, with Plato having a slight edge over Aristotle. Among the five front-running German philosophers, Schopenhauer is last; Hegel (with 10 references, half of them to his *Phenomenology of Mind*) and Kant (11, most to his *Critique of Judgment*) pace respectably just behind Nietzsche (13), whose followers split among numerous titles. The clear winner, however, is Heidegger, even without the 12 citations in a single 1990 article on his "Logos." There are some 13 references to the writings of Marx, but he is no match for Freud, who, with approximately 50 citations that range across his work, emerges as one of the major influences on contemporary literary criticism, whether frontally or, through Lacan, indirectly. Lacan himself is cited 20 times.

One is struck by presences but also by absences or at least meager representations. Some hallowed names of the past, along with more recent luminaries, have begun to flicker: Gaston Bachelard, Emile Benveniste, Benedetto Croce, E. M. Forster, René Girard (though a single essay includes 8 references to him), Lucien Goldmann, A. J. Greimas, Roman Ingarden, Wolfgang Kayser, Q. D. Leavis, C. S. Lewis, A. O. Lovejoy, Percy Lubbock, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, José Ortega y Gasset, Georges Poulet, Jean Ricardou, Alain Robbe-Grillet, Jean Starobinski, Rosemond Tuve. Few, like Saussure, have become so much a part of the critical vernacular that authors no longer feel compelled to pay public obeisance to them.

Virginia Woolf, T. S. Eliot, and Henry James are creative artists whose critical commentaries continue to hold sway, in that order of frequency and with high frequency. Woolf's dominance, most notable through her diary and *A Room of One's Own*, accompanies the surge in feminist criticism. Matthew Arnold's is another voice that has not faded. A number

of well-known names that by now have acquired the aura of classics in modern criticism have resisted the final plunge of the parabolic curve. Among those who continue to be read, Leo Spitzer and Ernst Curtius present an interesting contrast: the 14 references to Spitzer address almost that many of his articles, while all 13 essays that invoke Curtius cite his *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, now more than forty years old. Of similar vintage, Cleanth Brooks's *Well Wrought Urn* continues to be uncorked now and then, as does Ian Watt's *Rise of the Novel*, younger by a decade. Other survivors are René Wellek (13 citations), Georg Lukács (11), Lionel Trilling and Victor Turner (10 each), Theodor Adorno and William Empson (9 each), I. A. Richards and John Searle (8 each), Harry Levin (6), Ernst Gombrich (7, mainly to *Art and Illusion*), Roman Jakobson (6, with another 13 in a translation from Gérard Genette), Mircea Eliade (6), Georges Bataille, Ernst Cassirer, C. S. Peirce, and William Wimsatt (5 each). A more prevailing trio are Northrop Frye (23), Wayne Booth (19), and M. H. Abrams (18). Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* is no longer ubiquitous, but 8 authors saw fit to quote it; Booth's *Rhetoric of Fiction* garnered 5 citations; Abrams's *Natural Supernaturalism* outscored his *Mirror and the Lamp* 10 to 3.

Among the names that appear often enough for the pollster to take note of them are Peter Brooks, Hélène Cixous (most frequently her article "The Laugh of the Medusa"), Hans-Georg Gadamer (almost exclusively his *Truth and Method*), Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar (*The Madwoman in the Attic*), Thomas Greene, Norman Holland (his book *Five Readers Reading* and his *PMLA* article "Unity Identity Text Self"), Wolfgang Iser (both *The Implied Reader* and *The Act of Reading* attract attention), Barbara Johnson (in particular *The Critical Difference*), Frank Kermode, Julia Kristeva, Mary Louise Pratt, Edward Said, Elaine Showalter, Raymond Williams (each with 10 or more citations); also J. L. Austin, Nina Baym, Noam Chomsky, Terence Cave, Umberto Eco, Shoshana Felman, Clifford Geertz, Erving Goffman (his *Frame Analysis*), Carolyn Heilbrun, E. D. Hirsch, Jr. (especially *Validity in Interpretation*), John Hollander, Margaret Homans, Hans Robert Jauss, U. C. Knoepfelmacher, Frank Lentricchia, Richard Levin, George Levine, Nancy Miller, Richard Poirier, Gerald Prince (mainly his 1973 *Poétique* article on the narratee), Maureen Quilligan, Paul Ricoeur, Michael Riffaterre, Robert Scholes, Susan Sontag, Tony Tanner, Jane Tompkins, and others, who I hope will forgive me for omitting them from this catalog.

Top billing on my accreditation list goes to the same French thinkers who dominated Joel Conarroe's count ten years ago: Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida, tied at 58 entries each. That Barthes should continue with so strong a showing (36 of the citations are from the last five years) is perhaps one of the unexpected results of my compilation. *S/Z* leads, with 14 references, but 23 of Barthes's titles make their way into the documentation. The favored Derrida text is, not surprisingly, *Of Grammatology*. Michel Foucault is also a strong contender (47 entries), with the more recent *History of Sexuality* gaining ground on *The Order of*

Things. Other critics, of diverse fields and persuasions, who speak to and for *PMLA* authors are Paul de Man (31 citations, with *Allegories of Reading* and *Blindness and Insight* ahead), Fredric Jameson (30 citations, half of them to *The Political Unconscious*), Kenneth Burke (25), Mikhail Bakhtin (24, with another 14 in Caryl Emerson's 1985 article on Tolstoy and Bakhtin), Jonathan Culler (24), Stanley Fish (23, widely spread among his essays), Gérard Genette (23), Geoffrey Hartman (21, with his studies on Wordsworth and his theoretical writings carrying equal weight), Harold Bloom and Claude Lévi-Strauss (20 each), J. Hillis Miller (19), Terry Eagleton (17), Walter J. Ong (also 17, most often to the book *Orality and Literacy* and the article "The Writer's Audience Is Always a Fiction"), Walter Benjamin (16, half of them to *Illuminations*, especially "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"), Barbara Herrnstein Smith and Tzvetan Todorov (16), and Hayden White (15).

From this gallery of names and titles, one can cull a reading list of the texts required for entering the current scholarly discourse or for becoming an informed modern critic. One can also conduct a market survey to determine the journals to which one should be subscribing. It is not a condition of publication that manuscripts submitted to the *PMLA* Editorial Board cite the association's journal in their bibliographies, but during the 1980s *PMLA* authors invoked their *PMLA* forebears an impressive 133 times. Comparison with other long-lived journals suggests that significance of contents rather than age alone is the determining factor for citation of a journal. The publications of the association's larger specialized constituencies of course appear regularly (*Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, *Studies in Romanticism*, *Victorian Studies*, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, *Chaucer Review*). With 63 references to its articles, *Critical Inquiry* is, after *PMLA*, the journal of general coverage that is most commonly cited in the past decade. *ELH* and *New Literary History* follow, with 45 and 31 mentions. The list continues with the *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* (25), *Modern Philology* (23), *Diacritics* and *MLN* (20 each). Also among those making respectable showings are, in descending order, *Signs*, *College English*, *Philological Quarterly* and *Studies in Philology*, *Modern Language Quarterly* and *Modern Language Review*, *Yale French Studies*, *Essays in Criticism* and *Glyph* and *Speculum*, *Poétique*, *Comparative Literature*.

Can one detect trends, names that, in view of an already significant number of references to recent publications, are likely to be on future lists? The statistics prompt me to mention, among others, Nina Auerbach, Houston Baker, Homi Bhabha, Terry Castle, Teresa de Lauretis, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Gerald Graff, Luce Irigaray, D. A. Miller, Christopher Norris, Naomi Schor, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick. The ample work of Jürgen Habermas is attracting ever more notice among *PMLA* contributors. And sometimes it takes only a single article for an author to be immediately inserted into the documentary annals; for instance, Edward Pechter's 1987 *PMLA* piece on the new historicism has been repeatedly cited. If frequency of citation is a reliable gauge, 20 references to Stephen Green-

blatt's work (all since 1983 and a third of them to his *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*) prove that the new historicism is in vogue and that Greenblatt is one of the important new forces on the critical scene. The noticeably increasing influence of African American literature and of film criticism and the persistent intensity of feminist studies are also reflected in the citations. A quick perusal of the first two issues of the 1991 volume and of the fifty-two essays in the backlog points to a measure of continuity in the citations: Barthes, with 15 entries, occupies first place, and Harold Bloom has edged ahead of Derrida (12 and 11). Kristeva, Benjamin, Freud, Lacan, Jameson, Hayden White remain visible, and they are followed by Foucault, Said, Fish, Raymond Williams, and de Man. Some shifts may be in the making, as certain standbys, both older and more recent, appear to be losing statistical strength.

Rather than offer risky predictions, I leave it to a future editor to update this account, to add the names that will soon surface, and to record the changes in the guard that are now taking place. This issue of *PMLA*, in which three essays diverging widely in subject and approach accompany an equally heterogeneous cluster on modern fiction, is perhaps already a harbinger of a critical vision that has transcended the protective custody of postmodernism. A market-oriented reading of hard-boiled detective fiction, an examination of Graham Greene in the context of punk culture, a lesson in applying "nuclear criticism" to a modern novel, and a consideration of technology viewed through Norman Mailer's literary imagination lead Richard Brodhead—whom I thank for his introduction of the cluster—to question the cogency of modernity and to underscore its evolutionary condition. That amorphousness perhaps accounts for the slippery frontier between modernism and postmodernism and for the succession of *posts* that seem to lie ahead. An article scheduled to appear this spring in another journal invokes a postpoststructuralist feminist criticism; and several essays recently accepted for *PMLA* led the Editorial Board to wonder whether, in fact, literary criticism was now going into a postpostmodernist mode. A restaurant in my enlightened hometown of Ithaca, New York, which advertises that it serves "Post-Modernist Cooking," may not realize that its menu is on the verge of becoming passé. English Showalter, in his 1985 column, offered a prize, still unclaimed, for the identification of the earliest mention in *PMLA* of a half dozen of the most cited figures. Perhaps I should now promise a reward to the member who suggests the best label for our next critical movement, the tag that best characterizes the final decade of the twentieth century. The prize? Honorable mention in a *PMLA* note.

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