

**ANNA BRICKHOUSE TO RECEIVE MLA'S JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL PRIZE FOR
THE UNSETTLEMENT OF AMERICA; RAMIE TARGOFF TO RECEIVE
HONORABLE MENTION FOR *POSTHUMOUS LOVE***

New York, NY – 1 December 2015 – The Modern Language Association of America today announced it is awarding its forty-sixth annual James Russell Lowell Prize to Anna Brickhouse, of the University of Virginia, for her book *The Unsettlement of America: Translation, Interpretation, and the Story of Don Luis de Velasco, 1560–1945*, published by Oxford University Press. Ramie Targoff, of Brandeis University, has received honorable mention for her book *Posthumous Love: Eros and the Afterlife in Renaissance England*, published by the University of Chicago Press. The prize is awarded annually for an outstanding work—a literary or linguistic study, a critical edition of an important work, or a critical biography—written by a member of the association.

The James Russell Lowell Prize is one of fifteen awards that will be presented on 9 January 2016, during the association's annual convention, to be held in Austin. The selection committee members were Bruce Thomas Boehrer (Florida State Univ.); Fred Gardaphe (Queens Coll., CUNY); Ann Rosalind Jones (Smith Coll.); Herbert F. Tucker (Univ. of Virginia), chair; and Mark A. Wollaeger (Vanderbilt Univ.). The committee's citation for the winning book reads:

In The Unsettlement of America, Anna Brickhouse puts the close-reading skills of literary criticism to work in a skeptical analysis of stories about indigenous interpreters in the sixteenth-century Hispanophone world. The result is a forceful intervention in American studies. Brickhouse demonstrates that the motivated mistranslation practiced by native informants allowed them to pursue unsettlingly sophisticated political agendas, which were based on their shared knowledge of the devastating consequences of colonialism. Reading between the lines of historical documents, she challenges us to reconsider the power of language as used by the colonized to resist the very forces that have shaped the archive and the ways we understand it. Brickhouse tells a vivid story that speaks not only to advanced students of the hemispheric Americas but also to the common reader with an interest in history and how it gets made.

Anna Brickhouse is a professor of English and American studies at the University of Virginia. She received her PhD, MPhil, and MA from Columbia University and her BA from the University of Virginia. Her first book, *Transamerican Literary Relations and the Nineteenth-Century Public Sphere* received the Gustave Arlt Award for Best First Book in the Humanities from the Council of Graduate Schools and an honorable mention for the Lora Romero Award for Best First Book from the American Studies Association. Brickhouse's essays and articles have appeared in publications such as *PMLA*; *Clio: A Journal of Literature, History, and the Philosophy of History*; and *American Literary History*. *The Unsettlement of America* is the cowinner of the inaugural book prize of the journal *Early American Literature*.

The citation for the honorable mention reads:

In *Posthumous Love*, Ramie Targoff assays the refusal of love poems in Renaissance England to imagine that love exists after death—a distinctive feature remarkable, yet never until now so thoughtfully remarked, in some of the most famous poetry in the language. Targoff shows how and why that poetry “found the means to build, on the very ruins of transcendent love, something powerful and new.” Erudite interweaving of classical elegy and the legacy of Petrarch lets her highlight in contrast, within the work of Shakespeare, Donne, Marvell, Milton, and others, love’s earthly survival in the medium of verbal art. Burial practice, medical theory, and Protestant doctrine furnish contexts for Targoff’s sharp and subtle interpretation of poetic texts, in a cool, pellucid prose that addresses a wide range of readers across the academy and beyond.

Ramie Targoff is a professor of English, cochair of Italian studies, and director of the Mandel Center for the Humanities at Brandeis University. She is the author of *Common Prayer: The Language of Public Devotion* and *John Donne: Body and Soul* and the coeditor of *Sir Thomas Browne: Religio Medici and Urn-Burial* and *Love after Death in the Mediterranean World from Antiquity through the Renaissance*. Targoff is the recipient of fellowships or grants from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. Her current research concerns the Italian Renaissance poet Vittoria Colonna, and she is writing a book entitled “Divine Vittoria.” She lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts, with her husband, Stephen Greenblatt, and their son, Harry.

The Modern Language Association of America and its nearly 26,000 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 meetings on a wide variety of subjects and typically draws between 7,000 and 8,000 attendees. More information on MLA programs is available at www.mla.org.

First presented in 1969, the James Russell Lowell Prize is awarded under the auspices of the MLA’s Committee on Honors and Awards. Recent winners of the prize have been Paula R. Backscheider, W. J. T. Mitchell, Martin Puchner, Laura Marcus, Isobel Armstrong, Laura Dassow Walls, Phillip H. Round, Simon Gikandi, Stephen Greenblatt, Sianne Ngai, and David Rosen and Aaron Santesso. In recent years honorable mention has been awarded to Wai Chee Dimock, Cynthia Wall, Joseph Litvak, Andrew F. Jones, Leah Price, and Michael North.

Other awards sponsored by the committee are the William Riley Parker 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 a Bibliography, Archive, or Digital Project; 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 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, and for a Translation of a Scholarly Study of

Literature; and the Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Publication Award for a Manuscript in Italian Literary Studies.

James Russell Lowell (1819–91) was a scholar and poet. His first important literary activity came as editor of and frequent contributor to the *National Anti-slavery Standard*. In 1848 Lowell published several volumes of poetry, criticism, humor, and political satire, including *The Vision of Sir Launfal* and the first *Biglow Papers*, which firmly established him in the galaxy of American writers of his day. In 1855 he succeeded Henry Wadsworth Longfellow as Smith Professor of French and Spanish at Harvard. Lowell was the first editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* (1857–61) and was later minister to Spain and Britain. James Russell Lowell served as second president of the MLA from 1887 until his death in 1891.