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**MLA PRIZE FOR A FIRST BOOK AWARDED TO LA MARR JURELLE BRUCE FOR  
*HOW TO GO MAD WITHOUT LOSING YOUR MIND*; LAURENCE CODERRE  
RECEIVES HONORABLE MENTION FOR *NEWBORN SOCIALIST THINGS***

New York, NY – 7 December 2022 – The Modern Language Association of America today announced it is awarding its twenty-ninth annual Modern Language Association Prize for a First Book to La Marr Jurelle Bruce, associate professor of American studies at the University of Maryland, College Park, for *How to Go Mad without Losing Your Mind: Madness and Black Radical Creativity*, published by Duke University Press. Laurence Coderre, assistant professor of East Asian studies at New York University, is receiving an honorable mention for her book, *Newborn Socialist Things: Materiality in Maoist China*, published by Duke University Press.

The MLA Prize for a First Book was established in 1993. It is awarded annually for the first book-length publication of a member of the association that is a literary or linguistic study, a critical edition of an important work, or a critical biography.

The MLA Prize for a First Book is one of nineteen awards that will be presented on 6 January 2023, during the association's annual convention. The members of the selection committee were Grace Lavery (Univ. of California, Berkeley); Christopher M. Lupke (Univ. of Alberta); Tobias Menely (Univ. of California, Davis); Brian Russell Roberts (Brigham Young Univ.); Mikko Tuhkanen (Texas A&M Univ., College Station), chair; Christophe Wall-Romana (Univ. of Minnesota, Twin Cities); and Michelle Zerba (Louisiana State Univ., Baton Rouge). The committee's citation for Bruce's book reads:

*In How to Go Mad without Losing Your Mind: Madness and Black Radical Creativity*, La Marr Jurelle Bruce offers us a new practice of Black criticism by focusing on the generativity of what has most frequently been pathologized and dismissed: Black madness. While the study is rooted in a Foucauldian critique of psychiatry, Bruce counters the Eurocentrism of Continental philosophy by demonstrating the ways that jazz solos, slapstick routines, rapped verses, and other forms of cultural expression have theorized Black life and Black resistance. Bruce develops original and provocative readings across media and genres, and the impact of his work will be felt in multiple fields and disciplines.

The committee's citation for Coderre's book reads:

*Newborn Socialist Things: Materiality in Maoist China* is a radical reinterpretation of the Chinese Cultural Revolution that asks us to reassess its legacy. Laurence Coderre's study examines such material aspects of culture as department store displays, mass-produced porcelains, radio shows, popular songs, revolutionary model operas, textbooks, and ornamental mirrors manufactured and distributed at the pinnacle of the Maoist period—

artifacts that ushered in a new mode of consumer culture that continues to inform social practices today. Grounding her study in the key notions of mediation and remediation, Coderre offers a Copernican turn in modern Chinese studies by demonstrating that what has been thought of as a near pure form of Communist socioeconomics was actually predicated upon commodity relations.

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 meetings on a wide variety of subjects. More information on MLA programs is available at [www.mla.org](http://www.mla.org).

Before the establishment of the MLA Prize for a First Book in 1993, members who were authors of first books were eligible, along with other members, to compete for the association's James Russell Lowell Prize, established in 1969. Apart from its limitation to members' first books, the MLA Prize for a First Book follows the same criteria and definitions as the Lowell Prize

The MLA Prize for a First Book is awarded under the auspices of the association's Committee on Honors and Awards. Other awards sponsored by the committee are the William Riley Parker Prize; the James Russell Lowell Prize; 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 Collaborative, 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](#).