

@ the edge:
REVISITING /CONTESTING MARGINALITY



Canadian Association for Commonwealth Literature
and Language Studies (CACLALS)

Conference Program 2013

University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia

All sessions are in Clearihue (CLE), except for Wayde Compton's Plenary Address, which will be in Social Sciences and Mathematics (SSM) A102, the Aboriginal Roundtable, which will be in First Peoples House (FPH) 110, and Richard Van Camp's Design Your Character Writing Workshop for Emerging Aboriginal Writers, Fraser Bldg 152

Registration for the Victoria CACLALS conference is through Congress 2013:

<https://www.fedcancongress.com/>

CACLALS acknowledges that our conference is being held on the traditional territory of the Songhees peoples.

Abstracts appear in alphabetical order at the end of the program.

Saturday, June 1

9:30-10:30

Session 1 The Humanitarian Edge: Gender and Nation in Narratives of Cosmopolitan Care, CLE A203

Chair: Margery Fee

1. David Jefferess (UBC Okanagan) "Gender, Transgression and the Humanitarian Witness"
2. Romita Choudhury (Athabasca) "Worlding the Nation in Humanitarian Documents"

Session 2 Edges of the Self, CLE A206

Chair: Farah Moosa (McMaster)

1. Sarah Power (New Brunswick) "'Unhomely' Skins: The Splintered Self in David Chariandy's *Soucouyant*"
2. Marlene Goldman (Toronto) "Aging on the Edge: Wandering Old Women in *Soucouyant* and *The Double Hook*"

Session 3 Edgy British Responses to Non-White Migration to the Imperial Centre, CLE A207

Chair: Malissa Phung (McMaster)

Kasim Husain (McMaster) and Cassel Busse (McMaster) "Migration as Invasion? Figures of Postcolonial Threat in the White British Cultural Imaginary"

10:30-10:45 **Break**

10:45-12:00 **Keynote Address: Jenny Sharpe (UCLA), "Technologies of Orature," CLE A127**

Chair: Susan Gingell

Dr. Jenny Sharpe is Professor of English, Gender Studies, and Comparative Literature at UCLA. She is author of *Allegories of Empire: The Figure of Woman in the Colonial Text* (U Minnesota P 1993), which provides historically-grounded readings of Anglo-Indian fiction for how the topos of interracial rape helped manage a crisis in British colonial authority. Her book has been widely reviewed and is considered a classic in postcolonial studies. Her second book, *Ghosts of Slavery: A Literary Archeology of Black Women's Lives* (U Minnesota P 2002), challenges the equation of subaltern agency with resistance and self-determination, and introduces new ways to examine black women's negotiations for power within the constraints of slavery. Professor Sharpe has published widely on the gendering of the black Atlantic and cultural theories of globalization. Her current research addresses the literary turn in archival studies from the perspective of Caribbean women's literature that offers alternatives to historicism's linear temporality and the presumed materiality of the archives.

Abstract of "Technologies of Orature":

In order to make a case for Kamau Brathwaite's innovative Sycorax video style as a visual form of nation language, my talk will address his merging of Afro-Caribbean cosmologies with computer technologies through what he calls "cosmological/ pebbular interfaces." But it also makes a case for how this move disrupts the logic of coordinated universal time, whose neat grid of longitudes and latitudes maps the globe into margins and centers. Brathwaite's expression of a new poetics through female spirits that inhabit the margins of his Macintosh computer reveals the animism and wildness of a print culture identified with civilized Europe. Due to the female-gendering of his spirit world, my talk presents his poetics alongside Erna Brodber's experimental novel, *Louisiana*, which also depicts female spirits as taking up residence in a machine. However, Brodber's merging of the secular discourse of communication technologies with the sacred one of communicating with the spirit world provincializes Europe in a manner that reclaims black women's collective agency lost to history.

Dr. Sharpe's address is generously supported by the International Speakers Fund of



12:00-1:30 **Lunch; CACLALS Executive Committee Meeting, CLE C116**

1:30-3:00

Session 1 Weathering the Storm: Ecologies of Writing and Healing in Postcolonial and Indigenous Literary and Visual Texts, CLE A203

Chair: Sneja Gunew (British Columbia)

1. Madison Bettle (Western) "Ecological Tropes: Snow and Healing in Gail Jones' *Sorry*"
2. Shirley McDonald (Alberta) "Looking at Weather in Canadian Prairie Settler Life-Writing through a Posthumanist Lens"

Session 2 South African Potentialities, CLE A205

Chair: Philip Holden

1. Christina Turner (British Columbia) "Extinguished Possibilities in K. Sello Duiker's *Thirteen Cents*"
2. Jesse Arsenault (McMaster) "On Interspecial Romance, the Social Function of Bestiality, and Animal Alterity: A Reading of Zakes Mda's *The Whale Caller*"
3. Sarah Waisvisz and Brenda Vellino (Carleton) "Transnational Adaptations as Redress Theatre: Yael Farber's *Molora* and Lynn Nottage's *Ruined*"

Session 3 Technologies of Indigeneity, CLE A206

Chair: Renate Eigenbrod

1. Sarah Henzi (Montréal/British Columbia) "Aboriginal Writers and the Graphic Novel: Alternative Forms of Storytelling"
2. Judith Leggatt (Lakehead) "Cyberspace and Indigenous Nationalism in Skawennati Tricia Fragnito's Online Texts"
3. Deena Rymhs (British Columbia) "Automobility in Tomson Highway's *The Rez Sisters*"

Break 3:00-3:30

3:30-5:00

Session 1 Gaining an Edge through Contrapuntal Readings CLE A202

Chair: Deena Rymhs (British Columbia)

1. Maude Lapierre (Montréal), "Revisiting the Relationship between Indigenous and Diasporic Writing: A.M. Klein and Tessa McWatt"
2. Naava Smolash (Simon Fraser/Douglas) "'The Dispossessed Annie': Reading Sinclair Ross' *As For Me and My House* with Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed*"
3. Malissa Phung (McMaster) "'Where are all the coolies [. . .]?'": Re-Reading Chinese Exclusion in Karen Cho's *In the Shadow of Gold Mountain*"

Session 2: Writing over the Edges of Cultures and Nations, CLE A205

Chair: David Jefferess (UBC Okanagan)

1. Jannik Eikenaar (UBC) "In the Beginnings: History's Immanent Edges in Salman Rushdie's *The Enchantress of Florence*"
2. Pamela McCallum (Calgary) "Biyi Bandele's Conversations with Virginia Woolf"
3. Simon Harel (Montréal) "Alterbiographies: V.S. Naipaul's Travel Narratives"

Session 3: Writing South Asian Women @the edge, CLE A206

Chair: Romita Choudhury (Athabaska)

1. Kathleen Fernando (York/Kenyon) "'Refusing to Clean-up Her Acts: Dirt, the Body, and Everyday Life in Ismat Chughtai's *The Crooked Line*"
2. Lindsay Balfour (British Columbia) "Domesticity, Diaspora and Orientations on the Edge in Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*"
3. Prabhjot Parmar, "Space, Sensorium, and Home: The Delhi Junction Café in Anita Rau Badami's *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?*"

7:00 **CACLALS Community Dinner**, Thai Lemongrass Restaurant, 3838 Cadboro Bay Rd.

Wayde Compton will read following the dinner.

Sunday, June 2

7:45-8:55 **CFHSS Event: Dany Laferrière, "I write as I live," McLaurin B125, Philip T. Young Theatre**

9:00-10:30

Session1 South Asian Women @the edge of/in Nation, Politics, and the Digital Economy, CLE A206

Chair: Mariam Pirbhai (Laurier)

1. Jay Rajiva (Toronto) "Nationalism and Nonselfhood in Mahasweta Devi's 'Douloti the Bountiful'"
2. Anna Guttman (Lakehead) "India on the edge: Digital Economies and New (?) Identities in Bharati Mukherjee's *Miss New India*"

Session 2 Euro-Canadian Writings of Ethnicized and Racialized National Edges, CLE A118

Chair: Naava Smolash

1. Carl Watts (Queen's) "Genre and the Edges of Nationalism in Laura Salverson's *The Viking Heart*"
2. Melina Baum Singer (Western) "Temporality and Historicity in Daphne Marlatt's *Steveston Recollected: A Japanese-Canadian History and Steveston*"
3. John C. Ball (New Brunswick) "Over the Edge: Risk, Vertigo, and Equivalency in Will Ferguson's *419*"

Session 3 Rewriting the African as Marginalized Subject and Sounding Africa's Peripheries, CLE A202

Chair: Dorothy Lane

1. Alan Ramon Ward (London) "The Innate Insurgent: A New Model for Fanon's 'Black Man'"
2. Susan Gingell (Saskatchewan) "'Southernising the North': Sound Identity in Diasporic Dub"

10:30-10:45 **Break**

10:45-12:00 Plenary Address: Wayde Compton, "The Canadian Dub Poets, Aesthetic Conscience, and Donato Mancini's Critique of the Discourse of Craft," SSM A102

Chair: Anna Guttman

In his book *You Must Work Harder To Write Poetry of Excellence: Crafts Discourse and the Common Reader in Canadian Poetry Book Reviews* (BookThug, 2012) Donato Mancini describes the conflicts and contradictions of ideology that exist in practices of aesthetic appraisal. While mostly championing a fair reading of postmodern works, within his criticism, space is made for re-thinking the valuation of all aesthetic formations that operate outside of the assumed mainstay of Canadian poetry—namely, the 'well-crafted' anecdotal lyric. While the kind of criticism leveled at postmodern writers is not the same as that given to many poets of colour, the underpinning ideology and "aesthetic conscience" (in Mancini's wording) dominant in Canadian poetry reviewing provides a common basis of rebuke. A return to the work of the Canadian dub poets of the 1980s and '90s, as well as other poets of colour and Indigenous poets, whose writing opposes a dominant poetic Canadian voice (or formalism) in ways not usually called postmodern, is well worth considering in light of Mancini's interesting analysis.

12:00-1:00 **Lunch**

1:00-2:30

Session 1 Graduate Student Presentation Prize Panel, CLE A202

Judges: Laura Moss (British Columbia), Philip Mingay (King's), and Jill Didur (Concordia)

Chair: Pamela McCallum (Calgary)

1. L. Camille Van Der Marel (Alberta) "Marginal Returns: Debts, Indebtedness, and the Caribbean-Canadian Diaspora"

2. Gregory Fenton (Guelph) "Resisting Neoliberal Citizenship from the Humanities"
3. Rebecca Campbell (Western) "Insurgency and Commemoration at Batoche"

Session 2 Indigeneity and Hybridity; Critically Centering Métis Culture, CLE A118

Chair: Michele Lacombe (Trent)

1. Leah Schoenmakers (New Brunswick) "Theatrical Hybridity: *Brébeuf's Ghost* and its Early Contemporaries"
2. Renate Eigenbrod (Manitoba), "@the edge of the human and the wolf: interspecies relationships in Indigenous writing"
3. Jennifer Adese (Carlton) "Thunder through Our Veins: Métis Literary Nationalism"

1:30-3:15 Kyla Wazana Tompkins, "Racial Indigestion," Co-sponsored with ACCUTE

Respondent: Mary Chapman

2:30- 2:45 **Break**

2:45-3:45

Session 1 Centering on Sexualities, CLE A202

Chair: Kasim Husain

1. Susan Billingham (Nottingham) "'In the middle of somewhere': Canadian Young Adult Literature and LGBTQ2 Content"
2. Philip Holden (Singapore) "'Somewhere Foreign Enough to Belong To': Patrick Anderson on the Edges of the International Literary Field"

Session 2 Imaginative Edges: Science Fiction and Technology, CLE A118

Chair: John Ball (New Brunswick)

1. Claire Peacock (Saskatchewan) "Le Guin, Empire, and Imagination's Edge"
2. Mark McCutcheon (Athabaska) "Globalizing McLuhan's Discourse of Technology in Scholarship and Policy"

2:45-4:45

13th Annual Aboriginal Roundtable: Indigenous Resurgence or Reconciliation: Contestations and Conversations, co-sponsored by ACCUTE, **First Peoples House 110**

Organized by Daniel Heath Justice

Featured speakers:

Jennifer Adese (Carlton)

Aubrey Hanson (UCalgary)

Dory Nason (British Columbia)

CACLALS gratefully acknowledges funding support for this event from the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences Aid for Interdisciplinary Sessions Fund.

5:00-7:00

President's Reception

Monday, June 3

9:00-10:30

Session 1 Caribbean Edges, CLE A202

Chair: Veronica Austen (St. Jerome's)

1. Linda MacKinley-Hay (Northern BC) "Combermere and Collymore: The Schoolmaster Examined"
2. Janet Neigh (Penn State Erie) "At the Edges of the Nation State: Airport Spaces in Anglophone Caribbean Literature" 2:30-2:45
3. Lincoln Shlensky (Victoria) "Creolization at the Edge"

Session 2 Richard Van Camp @the edge of genres and media: A Panel of Papers, CLE A206

Chair: Deanna Reder (co-organized by Renate Eigenbrod)

1. Aubrey Hanson (Calgary) "From Nelson Crummy to Panty Point: The 10 Sexiest Moments in the Writing of Richard Van Camp"
2. Sarah Henzi (Montréal/British Columbia) "'A Necessary Antidote': Richard Van Camp and the Graphic Novel"
3. Adar Charlton (Saskatchewan) "Becoming an Ancestor: Extending Kinship Bonds and Maintaining Identity in Richard Van Camp's 'Mermaids' and 'Sky Burial'"

10:30-10:45 **Break**

10:45-12:00

Session 1: Asian Canadian Writing: Embracing Edginess/Moving Away from Edges, CLE A203

Chair: Ranjini Mendis (Kwantlen)

1. Ranbir Banwait (Simon Fraser) "Asian Canadian Experimental Poetics and Racialized Consumer Culture"
2. Mariam Pirbhai (Wilfrid Laurier) "At the Nation's Edge? Flagging a New Era of Criticism for South Asian Canadian Literature"

Session 2: Richard Van Camp @the edge of genres and media, cont'd: A Screening of *firebear called them faith healers* and an Interview by Daniel Heath Justice, CLE A206

Chair: Renate Eigenbrod (co-organized by Deanna Reder) CACLALS gratefully acknowledges generous financial support of this event by Renate Eigenbrod through her SSHRC grant.

12:00-1:00 **Lunch**

1:00-2:30

Session 1 Working at Ecological Edges, CLE 203

Chair: Brenda Carr-Vellino

1. Jon Gordon (Alberta) "Irrational Oil: Ducks, Bitumen, Satire"
2. Susie O'Brien (McMaster) "Postcolonial Edgework: Critical Resilience in Arundhati Roy's Writing"

Session 2 Centering on the Photograph and Video, CLE A206

Chair: Lincoln Shlensky (UVic)

1. Veronica Austen (St. Jerome's) "Disparagement of Image, Silencing (?) of Voice: George Elliott Clarke's *Illuminated Verses*"

2. Antje Rauwerda (Goucher) "Michael Ondaatje's *The Cat's Table*, Visual Images and Third Culture Kids"
3. Jennifer Hardwick (Queen's) "We've got stuff to say": Re-writing Identity in *Another Slice* and "In Our Shoes"

1:30-4:00 **Design Your Character Writing Workshop for Emerging Aboriginal Writers with Richard Van Camp, Fraser Bldg 152**, co-sponsored with the Canadian Applied Literature Association (CALA)
CACLALS gratefully acknowledges generous financial support of this event by Dr. Renate Eigenbrod through her SSHRC grant. Pre-registration required; information and registration through Dr. Eigenbrod, Head, Department of Native Studies, University of Manitoba.

2:45-4:00 **Celebration Session: Graduate Student Presentation Prize Announcement and Book Launch, CL A203** (refreshments served)
CACLALS gratefully acknowledges the book prizes provided by Goose Lane, publishers of Riel Nason's *The Town That Drowned*, winner of the 2012 Commonwealth Book Prize for Canada and the Caribbean. We also thank McFarland Books, the University of Calgary Press, and the University of Manitoba Press for contributions to the refreshment budget for the launch.

GSPP Announcement: Laura Moss

Book launch:

Antje Rauwerda, *The Writer and the Overseas Childhood: The Third Culture Literature of Kingsolver, McEwan and Others* (McFarland, 2012)

Pamela McCallum, *Cultural Memories and Imagined Futures: The Art of Jane Ash Poitras* (U Calgary P, 2011)

Keavy Martin, *Stories in a New Skin: Approaches to Inuit Literature* (U of Manitoba P, 2012)

4:00-6:00 **Annual General Meeting, CLE A206** (juices and soft drinks and pizza or other snack food will be served)

Special guests: Drs. Onowa Mclvor, Director of Indigenous Education, College of Education, University of Victoria, and Lynn Wells, Vice President Academic, First Nations University of Canada and CFHSS Vice President, Equity and Diversity, to discuss collaboration on revitalization of Indigenous languages.

CACLALS sends out a warm thank you to our Local Arrangements Coordinator Misao Dean of the Department of English, University of Victoria, and to her colleague Lincoln Shlensky for further on-site help. We also gratefully acknowledge support of our conference by the Commonwealth Foundation.



Abstracts

Jennifer Adese, "Thunder through Our Veins: Métis Literary Nationalism"

According to Daniel Heath Justice, "Indigenous literary nationalism is a philosophy that places Indigenous intellectual and cultural values at the center of analysis, rather than the margins" ("Indigenous Literary Nationalism"). Indigenous writers like Justice, Jace Weaver, Kristina Fagan, and Deanna Reder, have written about the importance of drawing on the theoretical framework of literary nationalism to, as Reder writes, "shift the focus of research away from the effects of colonization to the contributions and potential of Indigenous worldviews" ("Critical Approaches" 32). Reder contextualizes the need for this shift by explaining the troubling lack of awareness of students as to foundational texts such as Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed* in the "historical trajectory of Métis literary output in Canada" (ibid 34). She also affirms the centrality of Campbell's *Halfbreed* to the "Native literary canon." For the purposes of this paper (which is part of a larger and growing conversation on Métis literary nationalism) I will begin by "pulling back" *Halfbreed* from the center of Native literary traditions to its margins, subsequently re-centering it at the heart of a broader, continuous, and distinct tradition of Métis literary nationalism. I will then analyze the centrality of autobiography, kinship, and home, as reflected in the stories of Victoria Belcourt Callihoo (dictated contributions to the *Alberta Historical Review*, 1953), and Herb Belcourt's *Walking in the Woods: A Métis Journey* (2006). While these texts are situated within a much larger history of Métis writing, I focus on them to begin to trace the nuances and particularities of Métis intellectual and cultural values from a position that is rooted in the particularities of my Métis familial ties and from a Métis-centered approach. Such a positioning challenges assertions that Métis literatures are best understood through a "diasporic-Indigenous-sovereignist critical approach" (McCall 1) by being attentive to basing understandings of Métis literary nationalism in, as Fagan has advised, "experiences of community rather than in institutionalized definitions" ("Critical Approaches" 36).

Works Cited

- Fagan, Kristina et al. "Canadian Indian Literary Nationalism?: Critical Approaches in Canadian Indigenous Contexts – A Collaborative Interlogue." *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* XXIX, 1&2 (2009): 19-44. Print.
- Justice, Daniel Heath. "Indigenous Literary Nationalism." Daniel Heath Justice, n.d. Web. 26 Nov. 2012.
- McCall, Sophie. "Diaspora and Nation in Métis Writing." *Cultural Grammars of Nation, Diaspora, and Indigeneity in Canada*. Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier UP, 2012. Print.

Jesse Arsenault, "On Interspecies Romance, the Social Function of Bestiality, and Animal Alterity: A Reading of Zakes Mda's *The Whale Caller*"

Zakes Mda's 2005 novel, *The Whale Caller*, tests the limits of interspecies intimacy in its representation of a relationship between the eponymous protagonist and a southern right whale named Sharia. The probing of this controversial limit has not been without contestation, as the text's construction of sexual desire between the two characters has been received by popular criticism as a cautionary tale against such bonds, read under the rubric of deviant bestiality. As one reviewer puts it, "some people just take their love of animals too far" (Cuda), figuring the excessive indecency of certain types of animal love. Reading the intersection between how Mda's novel writes the relationship between Sharia and the protagonist and how popular criticism has received it, this paper suggests that *The Whale Caller* taps into social anxieties about our relationship to animal alterity, but not merely

those pertaining to bestiality. Rather, the refusal to accept the novel's construction of interspecies intimacy on the part of certain audiences might be read as a guise for anxieties about what contemporary animality theorists frame as our disavowed ties to – and dependence on – nonhuman animals. Indeed, enduring discourses about animal tourism and wildlife conservation in South Africa (with which Mda's novel engages) are never fully accounted for in hasty rebukes of the novel's purported excess of animal love. While not concerned with interspecies sexuality specifically, this paper draws on both animal studies and queer theory in a reading of Mda's text to complicate an hermeneutics of interspecies intimacy (not just between humans and other animals) that rejects the reductive and polarizing lexicon of bestiality. In the context of Mda's novel, interspecies love compels us to think about ways of relating to nonhuman others as cohabitants of our world rather than as commodified objects in touristic and conservationist visions of animal life in South Africa and across the globe. In short, the novel's handling of animal love asks us to think intimately about the politics of our difficult ties with certain nonhuman beings.

Veronica Austen, "Disparagement of Image, Silencing(?) of Voice: George Elliott Clarke's *Illuminated Verses*"

George Elliott Clarke's *Illuminated Verses* occupies a difficult place amidst his collection of work. Although there is an ever growing body of scholarship concerning Clarke's writing, *Illuminated Verses* remains largely undiscussed. As Clarke's forward to *Illuminated Verses* admits, this text languished for a publisher for eleven years; one might further note that despite having been published in 2005, *Illuminated Verses* has just recently (Spring 2012) at last been reviewed in *Canadian Literature*. Why has this text, out of all of Clarke's other texts, experienced such a quiet reception? Clarke himself hypothesizes that "Maybe the idea of the unclothed black feminine seems too brazen, or just too dark a concept for a society addicted to depictions of elect whiteness" (viii). My paper builds upon Clarke's hypothesis by arguing that the difficulty Clarke's text faces is rooted in the nature of the interaction between text and image. As discussions of multi-modality have frequently noted (See Barthes; W. J. T. Mitchell; Kress and Van Leeuwen; etc.), images are often treated as that which to pass, not linger, over. The images of *Illuminated Verses*, as representing naked flesh, both garner attention through their potential shock value and yet motivate the desire to turn away, the social norms of privacy and decorum dictating that nakedness is rarely to be watched. While *Illuminated Verses* is positioned by Clarke as a means of honouring Black women, this text requires a contemplation of the line between praise that honours and praise that silences. Through closely reading the interaction between the poetry and images, my paper will query whether the female body can be recuperated from the long history of male scopophilic gaze. Can photographic images speak (and speak in a way different from other art forms)? Or do they represent a continued silencing of their subjects?

Lindsay Balfour, "Domesticity, Diaspora and Orientations on the Edge in Monica Ali's *Brick Lane*"

In her book *Queer Phenomenology*, Sara Ahmed questions the patriarchal and colonial assumptions to which philosophies of being have traditionally oriented themselves. She suggests, "when bodies take up spaces that they were not intended to inhabit, something other than the reproduction of the facts of the matter happens...we should celebrate such arrivals" (62). Ahmed's argument has significant implications for theorizing how gender and diaspora operate as orientations "on the edge" of dominant hegemonic society. With this in mind, this paper takes up Ahmed's concerns in consideration of Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2004) in order to interrogate the extent to which the novel's

protagonist, Nazeem, mobilizes her orientations to the edges of domestic and diasporic life. Nazeem's home and Brick Lane itself, as a geographical location, both operate as interfaces in the text, where homeland and diaspora, terror and love, and disgust and desire collide.

The gendered edges of Ali's text are striking as Nazeem and her husband Chanu experience diaspora very differently. Their migration to Britain finds Chanu opportunistic, embracing new technologies and full of hope while Nazeem is "left to [her] fate" (4), uncomplaining and unquestioning. Yet it is Nazeem who learns to speak English and engages in a love affair in order to enact her resistance to patriarchy. While her affair is indicative of Nazeem's desire to live in "the English style" (Ali 360), she consummates her resistance with a young radical Muslim and with him attends meetings of the "Bengal Tigers". In Nazeem's experiences, then, the edges between desire and the reality of diaspora in an age of terror become blurred.

Thus, *Brick Lane* speaks to a particular geographical and cultural orientation that conditions both Nazeem's encounters with others and, following Ahmed's argument, the spaces available for action and agency. Ali's novel provides a compelling site upon which to question what it might mean to orient oneself toward an edge rather than a center. Literature, in Ahmed's words, therefore offers a "politics of disorientation" (24) that exceeds the edges of patriarchal and colonizing discourse and puts other possibilities into reach. This paper takes up Sara Ahmed's arguments regarding phenomenology in consideration of Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2004) in order to interrogate the extent to which the novel's protagonist, Nazeem, mobilizes her orientations to the edges of domestic and diasporic life. Ali's novel provides a compelling site upon which to question what it might mean to orient oneself toward an edge rather than a center.

John C. Ball, "Over the Edge: Risk, Vertigo, and Equivalency in Will Ferguson's 419"

In *Edgework: The Sociology of Risk-Taking*, Stephen Lyng writes of risk-takers' desire "to control the seemingly uncontrollable" in order to compensate for "a lack of control in their institutional lives." "The exploration of limits or 'edges,'" he writes, often "provides a way to break free of the rigidified subjective categories created by disciplinary technologies that circumscribe ... human experience" (43). Voluntary risk-taking, or "edgework," becomes a form of liberation. But for whom is risk-taking voluntary and for whom a desperate measure? Will Ferguson's Giller-winning novel *419* (2012) offers a more ambivalent and complicatedly intercultural view of the "edge" – a recurring word and key metaphor in a narrative precipitated by a car driving off a cliff. As it explores various edges – socioeconomic, geographical, environmental, behavioural – *419* both invites and contests a sense of equivalency between its North American and African risk-takers.

The Nigerian email scammer Winston, operating on the edge of the law in an underground, technologically enabled economy, successfully substitutes his own financial marginality for the relative wealth of his Canadian victim; Henry, prompted by greed or do-goodism or both, is driven through voluntary financial risk-taking to the brink of bankruptcy, humiliation, and suicide. Then, in an extraordinarily – indeed, unbelievably – risky confrontation with Winston, the victim's daughter, Laura, seeks retribution and reversal; as she succeeds, she sees in Winston's eyes "the look of a man being driven off an embankment" (341) – as her father was. Later, however, after realizing that her whiteness has enabled her to cause the death of a black man who spared her life, she endeavours to rebalance the accounts once again; in doing so, this vertigo sufferer feels "as though she were going to slide off entirely at times – off the edge of the bed, off the edge of the world" (388). Through such equivalencies and substitutions, the novel invites questions about how the 21st century's digital-global economy can enable the vertiginous verticality of the edge to become a new kind of contact zone – a dizzying, topsy-turvy place where privileged Canadians and impoverished Nigerians can play high-stakes cat-and-mouse on a playing field that is not as level as it seems.

Ranbir Banwait, “Asian Canadian Experimental Poetics and the Life Histories of Commodities |

Asian Canadian writer Larissa Lai’s collection of poems *Automaton Biographies* (2009), is haunted by the longing, disquiet, and restless presence of a set of non-human subjects: Rachel, the romanticized clone in Ridley Scott’s 1982 film *Blade Runner*, and Ham the chimpanzee, who was selected by NASA for a journey to outer space in 1959; given the nickname Chop Chop Chang, Ham’s story references a history of racialization for non-whites in North America. Conversely, Roy Miki’s *Mannequin Rising* (2011) adopts a wholly non-human, inanimate perspective with mannequins as the text’s epicentre, a history of the racialized city as supplement, and global consumerism as its backdrop. These poets strikingly couple memories and feelings with non-human subjects, thus troubling the historically conceived connexion between the speakability of these modes of being and the racialized white body that iterates them.

The precarity of globally mobile subjects in a Canadian context – Filipino migrant domestic workers, Mexican agricultural labourers, and historically, Chinese railway workers or Japanese Canadians in internment camps during WWII – frames these works. Responding to theorists such as Judith Butler (*Precarious Life*) and Zygmunt Bauman (*Wasted Lives*), as well as Immanuel Kant’s notion of dignity and value, this paper argues that these experimental poets rearticulate mourning, precarity and loss outside of a human-centred – or rather – Eurocentric frame. In doing so, they read technologically non-human bodies as racialized ones, thus drawing our attention to how racialized subjects themselves have been historically and variably read as human, non-human, and as having feelings that exceed the parameters of humanness (Sianne Ngai, Rey Chow, Sara Ahmed); such poetic exercises heed Jacques Derrida’s call to look “[b]eyond the edge of the so-called human,” and indeed, Kaushik Sunder Rajan’s point that consumerism and biotechnologies together produce the affective aspects of “lively capital” (*The Animal that Therefore I Am; Lively Capital*).

Melina Baum Singer, “Temporality and Historicity in Daphne Marlatt’s *Steveston Recollected: A Japanese Canadian History and Steveston*”

Responding to the CFP’s question –“Is the connection that the theme makes between being at the edge and marginality a necessary or desirable one?” – this paper will explore temporality and historicity in Daphne Marlatt’s *Steveston Recollected: A Japanese Canadian History* (1975) and *Steveston* (1974). The two texts differ in genre, the former is an aural history collection based on interviews that Marlatt compiled and edited, and the latter is a long poem authored by Marlatt.

My paper will read the texts as a conversation, a conversation that produces a unique understanding of the politics and poetics of temporality and historicity. A relational reading allows the texts to not only supplement one another, but also raise questions about the possibilities and limits of historical narrative. This paper will explore questions such as; What are the ethics of encountering marginalized pasts? What is the relationship between such a past and the present moment? Does the editor or author (especially if she does not share in that past) have a responsibility to situate herself on the edge of the narrative? And is the past a construct used in modernity’s project of historical causality? I will begin with an examination of the editorial decisions of *Steveston Recollected*, looking at the ways Marlatt situates herself outside the narrative. I will argue these decisions relate to the collection’s progressive linear narrative development, in itself projecting a desire to represent and transmit the experiences of a specific community through linear ideas about time and place. Then, I will consider the ways Marlatt interjects herself into the narrative of the long poem. In contrast to the edited collection

that confirms the autonomy between past and present (the *raison d'être* of historical narratives), the long poem does not historicize. The poem makes an implicit connection between the capitalist logic of continual re-development and the erasure of Steveston's local communities (Aboriginal and Japanese Canadians). The poem creates an idea of time best described as historical now, relating the multiple erasures (best depicted in the edited collection) as haunting presences that continue to exist: thereby taking an alternative path from progressive development.

Susan Billingham, "In the middle of somewhere": Canadian Young Adult Literature and LGBTQ2 Content"

In David Levithan's *Boy Meets Boy* (2003), Paul feels like he lives "in the middle of somewhere. My somewhere." His 'somewhere' is a small (fictional) U.S. town where Paul was the first openly gay class president of his grade three class, and Infinite Darlene, the star high school quarterback, is also the homecoming queen. What possibilities exist for young lesbians or gay males in Canadian Young Adult (YA) fiction?

As recently as 2002, when Paulette Rothbauer posed this question, she could find only fifteen YA Canadian books including gay or lesbian characters. Most of those twenty-six characters are peripheral or secondary, providing a 'problem' to be negotiated by a heterosexual protagonist; only six are lesbian and not one gay male adolescent tells his own story. The first two novels appeared in 1989, twenty years after John Donovan's *I'll Get There. It Better Be Worth the Trip* (generally cited as the first YA novel published in the U.S. to deal openly with homosexuality). While Diana Wiener's *Bad Boy* won the Governor General's award in the children's category, one might ask what conclusions can be drawn about a national literature that interpellates teen characters into homophobic discourses without providing a full spectrum of LGBTQ2 characters or convincing affirmative counter-discursive positions with which adolescent readers might identify. There are signs of improvement in the twenty-first century, as established writers like Shyam Selvadurai and Ivan Coyote release their first works aimed specifically at young adults. But even finding the few YA literature texts with LGBTQ2 content that do exist remains difficult, since publishers and booksellers seldom provide transparent descriptions or explicit links to such books.

This paper forms part of a larger project interested equally in literary analysis of young adult texts with LGBTQ2 content, the institutional contexts within which such texts are produced, and what happens to the texts once they are published. Are we really 'in the middle of somewhere' when YA queer content is still relegated to the 'special interest' category, or infiltrates the K-12 curriculum only through such topics as 'bullying,' 'diversity' and 'self-esteem'?

Madison Bettle, "Ecological Tropes: Snow and Healing in Gail Jones' *Sorry*"

Snow is a frequent and pervasive ecological trope within Gail Jones' *Sorry*, embodying both painful loss and potential healing. Despite the fact that no character in the novel experiences snow in its physical form, Stella often dreams of it. Both Stella and her daughter are haunted by "snow dreams": Stella in having them and Perdita in hearing her mother describe them. Perdita, therefore, inherits a connection to England through this fixation with snow. Unlike her mother, however, Perdita has never seen or felt snow. Since Bhabha argues that English weather strengthens images of "forever England", Perdita and her mother carry the weight of Britain's imperial burden, specifically the guilt of Britain's involvement in Australia's Stolen Generations. Furthermore, Bhabha argues that weather in postcolonial literature evokes "memories of its demonic double"; in contrast to English snow, the violent storm that

rips apart Perdita's home represents the brutalized postcolonial domestic sphere and the ripple effects of settler colonization. Perdita's troubling connection to England can be read as trauma. The novel's explicit trauma is Perdita's psychosomatic stutter she acquires at the age of ten. In order to protect her mother and her aboriginal friend, Mary, Perdita murders her father and suppresses the memory of it. As a result, Perdita's identity is "pulled apart" (22) by language. To overcome her trauma, Perdita relearns how to speak by emulating the rhythms of Shakespeare's iambic pentameter. It is only by reconciling her English identity with her Australian upbringing that Perdita can successfully overcome her trauma and apologize to Mary for not recognizing her guilt sooner. At the novel's end, snow takes on new meaning. Perdita attempts to lull herself to sleep by thinking of Stella's snow dream: "... the slow transformation of the shapes of the world, inconclusive, obliteration" (226) echoing an earlier postcolonial novella, James Joyce's *The Dead*. Although both texts are linked due to their fixation on snow, Gail Jones' *Sorry*, instead, transforms 'obliteration' into a spiritual healing—a "blank" space in which Perdita and her mother can begin again and achieve the "peace" (226) they, and those affected by settler colonization, longed for.

Rebecca Campbell, "Insurgency and Commemoration at Batoche"

In 1885 a combined force of North West Mounted Police, Canadian volunteer militia, and British professionals defeated the provisional Métis government at Batoche. The Métis occupied an ambiguous position in Canada, as they were both citizens subject to the discipline of the para-military Mounted Police force, and insurgents who had declared themselves outside the emergent nation. Through his words and his tactics, the Canadian commander, General George Middleton framed the North West Rebellion as a "small war"—a limited, dirty, colonial action in the tradition of the Zulu or Maori Wars.

These tactics destroyed the Métis Resistance, but they also constitute a decision regarding the nature of Métis identity. A "small war" is a rhetorical category for a particular kind of asymmetrical violence, usually intent on disrupting a whole culture, rather than engaging in a limited, "civilized" war between standing armies. For these reasons, the Battlefield at Batoche persists at the very threshold of the nation-state—not its geographical boundary, but the line drawn between the civilized citizen and the insurgent non-citizen. This liminality persists in the site's commemoration. While many of Canada's other significant battlefields—at Quebec, Queenston or Vimy—are easily integrated into a European commemorative tradition, Batoche resists the narratives of uniformed heroism and sacrifice. How do we remember civilians who die out of uniform when the forms of commemoration stress the continuity between the uniformed body of the soldier and the nation for which he dies? How do we remember insurgency? In the 125 years since the fall of Louis Riel's provisional government Batoche has become (among other things) a point of origin for the Métis nation, an argument for Canadian dominion from sea to sea, and a measure of Western alienation. To illustrate this ambiguous relationship with both the forms of classical war, and with the forms of classical commemoration, I will look at recent strategies for commemoration at Batoche, with particular reference to 2010's "Trails of 1885" project, and the new, Michif, English and French inscriptions on the gates of the graveyard at Batoche.

Renate Eigenbrod, @the edge of wolf and human: interspecies relationships in Indigenous writing

Gwi'chin author Robert Alexie in *Porcupines and China Dolls*, Métis author Beatrice Culleton Mosionier in *In the Shadow of Evil*, and Métis author Joseph Boyden in his short story "Born with a Tooth" all create wolf stories that parallel as well as intersect with the human story about trauma from abuse both species are affected by. This paper discusses their texts as illustrations of "the tribal web of

kinship rights and responsibilities that link the People, the land, and the cosmos together in an ongoing and dynamic system of mutually affecting relationships” (Heath Justice). I will utilize Justice’s kinship criticism as an approach toward situating trauma within a relational approach also drawing from, yet going beyond, Michael Rothberg’s call for multidirectional memory in trauma studies which, with its focus on humans, leaves out Indigenous intellectual traditions grounded in interspecies relationships.

In *Porcupines and China Dolls*, an italicized wolf narrative prefaces each chapter of two core sections of the novel in which the human protagonists move from “acting out” to “working through” (La Capra) their trauma; however, it is up to the reader to create connections between the two parallel stories in which the dying of the wolf adds to the ambiguity around healing and closure expressed in this novel (Martin). In Culleton Mosionier’s work, on the other hand, the story of a wolf family at the outset of the novel sets the parameter for the human story but also eventually intersects with it through the theme of mutual protection, while Joseph Boyden seems to straddle the divide between the ‘otherness’ of the non-Indigenous character and the ‘otherness’ of the wolf but concludes with the Métis woman’s vision of the birth of a wolf/human baby.

Each of these narratives alludes to the “so-called species boundary” as forming “the inescapable basis for racism and genocide” (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin) - from residential schools to foster care to exploitation of Aboriginal women to ecocide. By telling the wolf/human story, writers emphasize that healing from individual and collective colonial trauma requires a worldview based on kinship with ‘all my relations.’

Jannik Eikanaar, “In the Beginnings: History’s Immanent Edges in Salman Rushdie’s *The Enchantress of Florence*”

This paper explores the implications of the historical narratives in Salman Rushdie’s most recent novel, *The Enchantress of Florence*, a work that juxtaposes Akbar’s Mughal Empire with Machiavelli’s Florence. In particular, it considers the novel’s historiographic elements in light of Rushdie’s continuing project of writing back, of contesting dominant centres via discursive migrations from the margins. In this light, history’s leading edges, its clear accounts of beginnings and origins, are rendered as clarifications as much of what is going now as what has gone before.

History and its recitation figure prominently in Rushdie’s fiction – Saleem Sinai gives an account of Independence and Partition in *Midnight’s Children*, Gibreel Farishta dreams an origin of Islam in *The Satanic Verses*, the eponymous protagonist bears witness to the battles over Kashmir in *Shalimar the Clown* – but *Enchantress* is perhaps the most clearly historiographic of Rushdie’s novels. Certainly, the inclusion of a research bibliography uniquely foregrounds the novel’s historiographic elements. That foregrounding serves to emphasise the instability and incredibility of history as a record of what happened in the past: for example, Akbar’s various intercessions clearly reveal history’s responsibility to the whims of its audience over the actualities of the past. Historical events and their causes may thus be revised or even redacted from previous accounts according to the immediate demands of context and function. Moreover, the very structures of history, its linearity and its progressions of past, present, and future, may be rendered unstable.

This paper will thus trace the novel’s accounts of the elements and structures of history, focusing on their instabilities and the resulting implications. At least one of those implications is consistent with the conference theme: the edges of history are not merely blurred but immanent with the conditions of their production.

Gregory Fenton, “Resisting Neoliberal Citizenship from the Humanities”

Lily Cho, in her 2007 essay, “Diasporic Citizenship: Contradictions and Possibilities for Canadian Literature,” argues that the “dissonance between diaspora and citizenship” (109) can be mobilized against forms of national forgetting that elide histories of loss, difference, and violence. As Canada continues to become more embedded in networks of global neoliberalism, it is worth revisiting Cho’s concept of “diasporic citizenship” and considering it within the many connotations of “neoliberal citizenship.” This paper presentation will depart from a sustained analysis of Cho’s argument, methodology, and acts of contextualizing, in order to carefully situate the interventions she makes into questions of literary analysis and canon formation, approaches to the study of transnationalism, and ultimately, directions for resistive practice. Cho’s “commitment to the uneasiness” (100) in relations between minoritized and majority literatures serves the double function of articulating the position of minoritized literatures within Canada as they relate to a national literary in an era of globalization, and offering possibilities for revisiting the problematic of citizenship within this same global neoliberal moment.

The central issue that I will explore through my analysis of Cho’s work and other contexts is the question of resistance and why this matters for humanities scholars and university communities. The role of public institutions is increasingly contested as the ideology of neoliberalism restructures the role of “the public” itself, the role of education, and the value of critical pedagogy. By turning to the recently anthologized online writings of the Chinese artist, Ai Weiwei, in MIT Press’s *Ai Weiwei’s Blog: Writings, Interviews, and Digital Rants, 2006-2009*, my paper will consider the possibility for hybrid digital/material frontiers where intellectuals, a popular audience, and creative practitioners can collaborate in exploring hopeful alternatives for a more democratic future from the “edges of society” (CACLALS CFP). New modes of literary and civic belonging must respond to power relations under “neoliberal citizenship,” and the model provided by Ai Weiwei’s blog – as well as its anthologization and dissemination – is complementary to Cho’s hybrid postulation: “against citizenship” (Cho 105). Ultimately, I intend to respond to the questions: why “diasporic citizenship” and where does it lead us next?

Kathleen Fernando, “Refusing to Clean-up Her Acts: Dirt, the Body, and Everyday Life in Ismat Chughtai’s *The Crooked Line*”

The ‘edge’ connotes a boundary or the demarcation of a zone. Living on edge is a fertile image since it can represent living in between two zones and not fully belonging to either of them. What does everyday life experience of existing on the ‘edge’ look like for a middle class Muslim woman in 1930s India? It is this question that Ismat Chughtai raises, by tracing the maturation and growth of Shaman, *The Crooked Line’s* (1943) main protagonist. In my paper, I suggest that Chughtai uses the image of ‘dirt’ to highlight the contradictions that constitute Shaman’s everyday life. Living on the ‘edge’ for Shaman is constituted by her desire to be independent, to express same-sex desire, the need to be loved by a maternal figure, and her longing to be free. Indeed, these desires are construed, quoting Mary Douglas, as being ‘matter out of place’ by the Muslim middle class patriarchal social organization. ‘Dirtiness’ in this narrative represents Shaman’s repression and repudiation by the Reformist middle class patriarchal social organization that viewed women as simply objects of reform; it also represents Shaman’s desire for an alternate order, where she is able to live out her full personhood. Hence, although, ‘living @ the edge’ may connote a space of radical newness, for Shaman this means living through and against the discursive as well as material realities of normative womanhood that was framed through a discourse of ‘moral hygiene’. Contrary to what many feminist scholars such as Judith Butler have suggested,

repudiation for Shaman didn't result a space of pleasure and love. Instead, living on the edge results in pain, suffering, confusion, and the lack of clarity.

Susan Gingell, "'Southernising the North': Sound Identity in Diasporic Dub"

In African-Jamaican diasporic contexts, notions of margins and centres are radically destabilized by the multiplying of centres to include imperial, African, Jamaican, and "Jamasporic" ones. The inevitably complex affiliations with and abrogations of culturally coded sounds in such contexts are the focus of this paper's examination of sound identity in diasporic dub. In "The 'Sound' Identity: Music-Making and Schooling," educational theorist Glenn Hudak argues that collaborative music-making entails the formation of "a musical We . . . a 'sound' identity" (446) that although "constituted within a field of social intimacy with others" (455) is inherently oppositional to hegemonic culture (463). I adapt his concept of sound identity in two ways: to include the serendipitous suggestion of healthy, grounded identity despite (neo-)colonial and working- or underclass pejoration inherent in the term sound identity, and to carry the idea of identity formation "in the nexus of activities involved in the making of music and community" (446) into the communal contexts of diasporic dubpoetry performance and textualization. I examine how Jamaican sounds are carried to the Global North on the currents of dubpoetry and show that such sounds are key constituents of counter-hegemonic "Jamasporic" identity. The paper acknowledges Louise Bennett's role in the promotion of Jamaican sound identity through music and poetry as one way of establishing the contingency and fluidity of sound identity, and the paper also attends to metadub (Cooper, *Noises* 68) voicings of reggae and Creole as foundational elements of dubpoetry. Listening for the place of music and employing Leung, Harris, and Rampton's concepts of language expertise, affiliation, and inheritance, I argue that in the soundscapes of Canada and Britain, dubpoets such as d'bi.young. anitafrika and Jean 'Binta' Breeze use sound synecdoches of Jamaican-ness to negotiate and perform their identities. I conclude by examining the centrality of sound in the constitution of "Jamasporic" identity as painfully manifesting in amuna baraka-clerke's fighting the feeling of being "ja-fake-an" ("mih mudda tongue" 33) as she claims Jamaican sound identity even while declaring herself "bahn ah faw-rehn" (baraka-clerke 7) and subsequently revealing the default linguistic codes of her Canadian "downbringing" (19).

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Marlene Goldman, Aging on the Edge: Wandering Old Women in Soucouyant and The Double Hook

My talk analyzes David Chariandry's recent novel *Soucouyant* (2007) in light of Sheila Watson's modernist classic *The Double Hook* (1959). Both works interrogate the competing claims of elderly

women prone to transgressive wandering and their sons. *The Double Hook*'s opening scene features the Old Lady's "fall": she is pushed down the stairs to her death by her son James. Paradoxically, this act of matricide goes unpunished and, even more troubling, it paves the way for the fragile community to establish itself beyond the transgressive, matriarchal claims of the Old Lady and James's sister, Greta. The threat of the matriarchal claim is so powerful that James is grateful that his sister commits suicide—she immolates herself—and, in the process, destroys the Old Lady's house.

Both Watson's and Chariandry's texts, which are set in places of "waste and hard edges" (*Soucouyant* 174), rely on the figure of a spectral, old woman to explore the uncanny power of the claims made by the past on the younger generation.

Recalling *The Double Hook*'s preoccupation with fire and maternal death, *Soucouyant* reveals that the old lady was once a young girl who played with fire. In contrast to *The Double Hook*, however, *Soucouyant* portrays the burning of the women as the text's central, unspeakable trauma—a trauma clearly instigated by colonial forces. At the end of *Soucouyant*, the mother wanders and falls to her death in the house she shares with her son. Although not pushed to her death, her passing similarly eases her son's guilt and allows him to move on, paving the way for the lovers in the younger generation to reunite.

There are, of course, striking differences between the two texts. Most obviously, Watson's fantastic, modernist text represses the markers of racial difference whereas Chariandry's realist narrative focuses explicitly on the racism experienced by immigrants from Trinidad to Canada in the 1970s. Nevertheless, both novels ultimately lead its characters (and its readers) to the frayed edges of the social order and its collective memory only to re-install them forcibly within the existing, youth-oriented, patriarchal, and heteronormative framework of the Canadian nation-state.

Jon Gordon, "Irrational Oil: Ducks, Bitumen, Satire"

In "Tarhands: A Messy Manifesto," Warren Cariou searches for means to shift the debate over bitumen from economic boon to ecological bane. Cariou "sets aside any attempt to make reasoned arguments about conservation or regulation, and instead embraces irrationality as the last possible mode of engagement with a contemporary public that will no longer listen to reason" (17). While most participants in the conversation about this unconventional oil source continue to present their arguments as primarily based in reason, to make arguments founded in logos, the effectiveness of those arguments is also bound up in ethos and pathos. This last, the appeal to emotion, has traditionally been seen as the least important of the rhetorical appeals; however, in discourse about bitumen, and, perhaps, about ecological devastation generally, it is extremely important. The comforting images of bison frolicking on "reclaimed" bitumen mines can be mobilized to counter the statistics about carbon dioxide emissions or process-affected water.

North Americans have a vested interest in our own self-deception about the consequences of our lifestyles. As Alan Stoekl puts it "we know enough to want not to know" (40). By contrast, images of bitumen-coated ducks, which made headlines in April 2008 after 1600 migrating ducks landed on Syncrude's Aurora tailings pond, can undo all of the industry's talk about reductions in emissions or water use and can cause us to question our faith in the narrative of progress. Indeed, the deaths of these ducks have impacted public perception of the industry like nothing else (not the deaths of workers, the loss of habitat, or the unusually high cancer rates among First Nations communities downstream). Those ducks continue to haunt the industry, refusing to be appropriated by the industry's narratives of progress and sustainability.

This paper explores Cariou's hypothesis—that irrationality is an effective mode of engaging the public regarding bitumen extraction—through two recent representations of the duck deaths. The novel *5,000 Dead Ducks* and the film *Dead Ducks* both satirize the industry to reveal an underlying irrationality to bitumen extraction and, by extension, the society that enables that extraction.

Anna Guttman, "India on the edge: Digital Economies and New(?) Identities in Bharati Mukherjee's *Miss New India*"

With approximately 350,000 employees, India's call centres employ less than 1/10th of one percent of India's estimated workforce. Yet business process outsourcing companies (BPOs) have, according to Shashi Tharoor "become the symbol of India's rapidly globalizing economy." Certainly, the runaway success of Chetan Bhagat's *One Night @ the Call Centre* (2005) suggests a willingness to re-imagine, following Arjun Appadurai, global India's ethnoscape and financescape as increasingly refracted through its technoscape. In Bharati Mukherjee's *Miss New India* (2011), the final installment of Mukherjee's acclaimed trilogy, the protagonist, Anjali, never actually works in a call centre, but, I argue, it is the very idea of the IT-enabled workplace and its accompanying cultural economy that structures her identity as Miss New India. Mukherjee has long been celebrated outside of India, and in contrast to Bhagat's work, *Miss New India* has been widely reviewed in Canada, the United States and Britain. Linda Leith points out in her review for *The Globe and Mail*, "American cultures and values have never played a bigger roll in Mukherjee's work than they do here." Indeed, *Miss New India* has also been dubbed "passé" by Indian reviewers (such as Kishwar Desai). This paper will argue that even as Mukherjee's novel purports to reject structuring colonial binaries such as modernity vs. tradition in favour of a celebration of post-liberalisation India, one that has found widespread popularity within India itself, *Miss New India* actually reinscribes a familiar narrative of national modernization and Westernization. I contend that Anjali, the eponymous character, enters an electronic space on the edge of India and

America, where both her identity and history, and that of the Indian nation itself, dissolve, producing not so much an embodiment of a 'new' 'India,' as a cipher available for appropriation by Americans and diasporic Indians alike.

Jennifer Hardwick, "We've got stuff to say": Re-writing Identity in *Another Slice* and 'In Our Shoes'"

Homeless youth live at the margins of Canadian society. With little financial, social, or political power, they are often overlooked by the general population and treated as statistics by academic, media, and political institutions. Reports about street-entrenched youth are far more likely to focus on their HIV and addiction rates, mental health status, or criminal activities than on their talents or social contributions. However, thanks to the growing accessibility of digital media young homeless writers, artists, musicians, and activists are beginning to assert themselves publicly, breaking down stereotypes and sharing the realities of street life— both good and bad — in their own ways.

This presentation will explore the ways that young street-entrenched writers, artists, and musicians are using digital media through an examination of *Another Slice*, a Vancouver based multimedia site created for and by homeless youth. Using the New London Group's concept of multiliteracies which describes "the increasing multiplicity and integration of significant modes of meaning-making, where the textual is also related to the visual, the audio, the spatial, the behavioral, and so on" as a framework, I will place personal interviews with *Slice* content producers in conversation with an analysis of the site's blog and related sections, including the "In Our Shoes" video project and "Another Slice University." In particular, I will explore the ways that content creators for *Another Slice* negotiate and re-write their positions as "invisible," shifting themselves from unheard, marginalized subjects to experts who guide readers through the unknown and misunderstood elements of homeless life in Vancouver. Ultimately, my presentation will highlight the ways street youth use artistic expression to bring unseen and unheard perspectives to the forefront, to challenge power relations, to form alternative communities, and to re-imagine space in meaningful ways.

Simon Harel, "Alterbiographies: V.S. Naipaul's Travel Narratives"

As Pierre Pachet asserts in *Un à un*, the travel narrative admittedly belongs to a minor narrative mode. However, similarly to Norman Mailer, the reportage is for Naipaul a narrative technique that is not undervalued. It is not surprising that the state of the subaltern subject imposes an affect of depersonalization, of which Naipaul remarks concerning paternal blindness and madness in "Prologue to an Autobiography.' In this perspective, resorting to formal autoreflexivity, to the contamination of literary genres, and to the autofictional game would not be favoured. If writing is a 'place' of suffering, it can be asserted then that for Naipaul, autobiographical egotism remains uneasily present in his travel writing. In the ones about India, the narrator examines, page after page, the ancestral places of his family who had immigrated to Trinidad. And this sudden acknowledgement of the past is not without suffering. The reportage is a cruel journey; it brings the author and reader into contact with precarious spaces – spaces of entropy– ruins that are there to swallow them up in the dust of devastation, in order to humiliate them: 'Before the reminders of this England of India, then, I ought to have been calm. But they revealed one type of self-deception as self-deception [...]. It was an encounter with a humiliation I had never before experienced, [...] as others might have felt for me the colonial humiliation I did not feel in Trinidad' (*Area of Darkness* 198). Naipaul is well known for being a 'braggart' and for displaying fits of rage that create a media sensation. After all, his novels and books of inquiry are full of provocative maxims and conclusive sentences. However, it would be wrong to restrict the reportage to a touristic

scenography based on the forgotten places of the globalised world, a kind of exploration aimed at discovering new *terrae incognitae*. Rather, Naipaul uses the reportage as the distorted form of a subtle autobiography.

Sarah Henzi, "Aboriginal Writers and the Graphic Novel: Alternative Forms of Storytelling"

The field of Aboriginal literary studies has focused largely on the novel, drama, and poetry. This paper discusses how alternative genres and popular culture, such as the graphic novel, are valuable additions to the existing field of Aboriginal literary studies. In particular, I am interested in an analysis of how the graphic novel is fast becoming a genre of choice for a new generation of Aboriginal writers. These texts, which include the mythological and the supernatural into the narrative, underline the importance given to the visual, and how it too can be reclaimed in order to upset and undo the false representations inherited from colonialism – they are, according to Gord Hill, "a necessary antidote to the conventional history of the Americas."

Through an examination of Gord Hill's *The 500 Years of Resistance Comic Book*, David Alexander Robertson's *7 Generations Series*, and excerpts from *Stories of Our People: A Métis Graphic Anthology*, this paper seeks to address the following questions: How can the already-existing critical theory around Aboriginal literature inform, and be complemented by, an analysis of the visual? How do new, alternative genres break away from, while expanding the field? How might one consider the current value of popular culture in its ability to speak beyond linguistic, cultural, and intergenerational gaps? And how is the mythical brought up-to-date with the contemporary within new spaces of diffusion and discussion?

Drawing upon conceptual tools that arise from the already-existent critical theory around Aboriginal literature, I examine the continuities and discontinuities between the literary and the visual, and new reflexive avenues for approaching questions of identity and artistic production.

Philip Holden, "'Somewhere Foreign Enough to Belong To': Patrick Anderson on the Edges of the International Literary Field"

Patrick Anderson has the distinction of being on the edge of two different national literary histories. His place in Canadian Literature is perhaps the most secure, given his ten-year residence in Canada in the 1940s, citizenship, published poetry, and work as editor of the Montreal literary magazine *Preview*. Yet he is also part of a history of Singapore literature in English. Anderson arrived at the newly founded University of Malaya in Singapore in 1950, just when a new generation of student writers was developing a distinctly Malayan idiom in poetry in English. In his two years in Singapore, Anderson came to know the most talented of a new generation of poets and activists: Wang Gungwu, Beda Lim, James Puthuchear and Hedwig Aroozoo [later Hedwig Anuar], before returning to the United Kingdom in 1952. Anderson's memoir of his stay in Singapore, *Snake Wine* (1955), was popular reading among undergraduates in Singapore in the late 1950s.

Anderson's peripatetic movement seems at first to lend itself to analysis in terms of recent debates concerning world literature and the development of international literary space in the wake of Pascale Casanova's *The World Republic of Letters* (2004). Yet a close examination of both Anderson's published writings on Singapore and unpublished documents from the National Archives in Ottawa reveals a heady mixture of Marxism, modernism, queer sexuality and colonial governmentality that challenge Casanova's schema. Modernism here is not simply reflective of literary autonomy, nor do its exponents use its techniques, as Casanova argues, "as an instrument for struggling against the

presumptions, the arrogance, and the fiat of critics in the centre." Anderson's experience in his own writing suggests that the demands of community, literary form and literary audience often undermine a deeply felt and carefully evolved politics.

Discussion of Anderson in Singapore, however, is not best served by a return to concepts such as Orientalism and colonial discourse. Rather, the space of the university under decolonization enables the mapping of poetic forms onto new social landscapes, as shown in echoes of Anderson's poems in those of the author of Singapore's first English-language poetry collection, Wang Gungwu.

Kasim Husain and Cassel Busse, "Migration as Invasion? Figures of Postcolonial Threat in the White British Cultural Imaginary"

Recent events like the 7/7/2005 bombing of the London Underground have contributed to increased scrutiny on Islam within the United Kingdom, as indexed by the rise of the explicitly anti-sharia English Defence League in 2009. We regard this Islamophobic turn as the latest iteration in a genealogy of white British anxiety around the permeability of national edges. The fantasy of empire as a unilateral relationship of domination continues to structure Britain's contemporary racial regime; as Stuart Hall writes in "The Local and the Global,"

"...[The British] had ruled the world for 300 years and, at last, when they had made up their minds to climb out of the role, at least the others ought to have stayed out there in the rim, behaved themselves, gone somewhere else, or found some other client state. But no, they had always said that this [London] was really home, the streets were paved with gold, and bloody hell, we just came to check whether that was so or not."

Given the conflict between the notion of Britain as a space of unsullied whiteness and the disruption of that imaginary by the migrations that attended decolonization, two lead-off position papers take seriously the way in which this fear of invasion erupts repeatedly within postcolonial Britain. Examining filmic and literary texts that both reinforce and also contest white British fears of the marginal, these presentations reflect critically on this theme of Britain as subject to perceived invasions: one considers the rehabilitation of 1980s skinheads' image in Shane Meadows' *This Is England*, even as shortly after its 2006 release skinhead culture's ties to fascism seemed more reified than ever; the other considers the way in which mobility and classed privilege is represented in Ian McEwan's *Saturday* as imperilled by the imminent threats of terrorist attack and Islamic cultural takeover. A roundtable discussion will follow.

David Jefferess and Romita Choudhury, "The Humanitarian Edge: Narratives of Cosmopolitan Care"

In spite of the imperialist spectre that continues to haunt cosmopolitanism, the desire to locate a "genuine" strand of human interconnection beyond neoliberal defenses of globalization and multiculturalism persists. This panel explores whether humanitarianism can be seen as one such strand of cosmopolitanism. To what extent does humanitarianism provide an "edge" that marks the transcendence of the divisions of borders, cultures, and difference? To what extent does humanitarianism provide a model for inclusivity that cosmopolitanism, and this year's Congress, seek to promote?

Since the end of the Cold War, the number and diversity of humanitarian organizations have proliferated at the same time that the humanitarian ideal has come into question. Joseph Slaughter traces the origins of humanitarianism to Henri Dunant's narrative *Un Souvenir de Solferino* (1862). Dunant is widely seen to have been the inspiration for both the International Committee for the Red

Cross and the Geneva Conventions. We seek to examine contemporary narratives of humanitarianism in relation to the ideal of “indifference” (to the religion, citizenship, race of the sufferer) that Slaughter argues *Un Souvenir de Solferino* represents; the humanitarian tradition posits neutrality, impartiality and universal humanity as its ideals. These narratives include: Dallaire’s *They Fight like Soldiers, They Die like Children* (2010); Orbinski’s *An Imperfect Offering* (2008); Nutt’s *Damned Nations* (2012); and Morgenson’s *Three Cups of Tea* (2007).

The panel will be organized to foster extensive audience involvement and to model critical dialogue. Each of the two presenters will share a specific argument in 10-15 minutes each. Following these brief position papers, they will engage in a discussion of approximately 15-20 minutes in which they critically engage with one another’s arguments. Then, they will open the discussion to the audience, fostering a discussion of the material rather than a traditional question and answer format.

Maude Lapierre, “Revisiting the relationship between indigenous and diasporic writing: A.M. Klein and Tessa McWatt”

Through close readings of A.M. Klein’s poem “Indian Reservation: Caughnawaga” and Tessa McWatt’s novel *Out of My Skin*, two texts that discuss the Mohawk reservation of Kahnawake, this paper tracks how the representation of indigenous peoples in diasporic texts has changed from emphasizing uncritical connections between the communities, to questioning the possibility of effective strategic alliances. As Marie Lo notes, the presence of indigenous characters in Asian Canadian texts does not provide insights into the experiences of indigenous peoples, but rather serves to “contest the particular formations of Asian Canadian marginalization” (97). Further, she mentions that because those texts contain traces of imperial representation, they enable Asian Canadian texts to be situated within both a diasporic and a colonial settler history (96). Similarly, Klein’s poem and McWatt’s novel represent indigenous peoples in order to explore issues specific to their diasporic conditions, that is, crises of loss and belonging. While Klein’s poem has been hailed as a rare example of a modernist work acknowledging the plight of indigenous peoples in Canada (see for instance Steinberg, Brenner, Gerson and Strong-Boag, and Margolis), his poem inevitably aligns itself with dominant modes of representation through its elegiac tone and use of the “Vanishing Indian” trope. As the work of Lo, Rita Wong, and Lily Cho demonstrates, the strategic alliances diasporic texts attempt to construct are often complicated by the insidious nature of the dominant discourse. Analyzing McWatt’s novel in conjunction with Klein’s earlier representation of indigenous peoples then enables me to argue that the manner in which indigenous characters are often appropriated and instrumentalized to illuminate the complexities of diasporic experiences is being criticized in contemporary literary texts. As McWatt’s protagonist attempts to resolve her identity crisis as a child of transnational adoption through a connection with an indigenous activist involved in the Oka Crisis, the connection between the two characters proves impossible because the textual strategies McWatt’s novel deploys fractures the possibilities for connection. In that way, the novel proposes a different way to apprehend the relationship between indigenous and diasporic peoples without necessitating the instrumentalization of indigenous peoples.

Judith Leggatt, "Cyberspace and Indigenous Nationalism in Skawennati Tricia Fragnito's Online Texts"

This paper will use *Imagining Indians in the 25th Century* and *TimeTraveller™*, two online texts by Mohawk artist Skawennati Tricia Fragnito, to explore the possibilities of using the artificial territory of cyberspace to further Indigenous nationalist aims. While the current #Idle No More movement demonstrates the possibility of the internet as a tool for organizing Indigenous activism, I am interested in the way artistic expression can contribute to this endeavor. Skawennati has been working with online artistic communities since the mid 1990s. She believes that cyberspace "offers Aboriginal communities an unprecedented opportunity to assert control over how we represent ourselves." To that end, she helped to produce the first *CyberPowWow* in 1996, creating a space for aboriginal artists to publish and aboriginal people to connect online. This project later morphed into Aboriginal Territories in Cyberspace (AbTeC), of which *TimeTraveller™* is a part. When conceived of as a separate space that has its own rules, virtual reality provides the possibility of new territory on which to stake a claim, to supplement but not replace the ongoing land claims happening in the physical world. Conversely, many critics, including Loretta Todd, argue that the very nature of cyberspace is at odds with Indigenous philosophy, and is instead "anchored to re-enactments of western cultural consciousness" (162). In addition, virtual reality might in the future become a simulacrum of the physical world, and thus become a dangerous substitute territory, one that might allow other territory to be lost. Both *Imagining Indians* and *TimeTraveller™* overtly reclaim Indigenous history and posit a future where Native nations have self-determination; in this way both can be read as nationalist texts. This paper will explore the way these nationalist impulses play out in the online forms of web art and machinima, how the medium supports the message.

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Shirley McDonald, "Looking at Weather in Canadian Prairie Settler Life Writing through a Posthumanist Lens"

Sub-literary works such as farm logs were used by pioneers "to record expenditures and calculate profits, as well as to note farm work, weather, and crop yields to aid in planning future seasons" (Motz). My study focuses on the farm logs and pioneer memoirs of several British immigrants who established ranches in Alberta. A feature that drew my attention to these texts is the representation of agricultural practices modelled on Virgil's *Georgics*, which "imagine what would now be called a sustainable relationship between production and consumption" (Landry). Regardless of their value, these manuscripts enact or re-enact the erasure of Indigenous culture. Both the diarists and the memoirists document their daily lives; however, the memoirists, recalling their experiences decades after settlement, disseminate ideologies shaped by modern cultural and political forces. Specifically, they promote myths of the prairies as an Eden, a temperate region, where they worked hard to establish lives of prosperity and gentility, or as a frontier, a rugged and hostile environment, where they struggled to survive. Both myths are foundational to the authors' sense of deserving of success.

The memoirs readily lend themselves to literary analysis; the farm logs, composed of empirical data and sentence fragments, resist a reader's grasp. Indeed, the fact that the diarists refrain from

assigning meaning to their experiences imparts an existential quality to them. Thus, as an aid to comprehension, I employ a posthumanist lens. Posthumanist theory offers ways to “untether” humanist forms of “meaning, reason, and communication [...] from [their] moorings in the individual, subjectivity, and consciousness” (Wolfe xv-xx). I examine the farm logs through a phenomenological lens, as well, to avoid “employing a ‘concept of the human [that] exclude[s] ... any reference to the human body’” (Gumbrecht qtd. in Wolfe 304). My paper discusses the diarists’ documentation of their physical experiences within a literal environment, the absence of pastoral imagery in the farm logs, and the memoirists’ figural depictions of weather and the environment. My purpose is to demonstrate that the examples of settler life writing in my study are self-legitimizing discourses that serve to support the authors’ claims of land entitlement.

Pamela McCallum, “Biyi Bandele's Conversations with Virginia Woolf”

The question of intertextuality in the literatures from former colonies has always occupied a central place in postcolonial studies. Foregrounded by the influential analyses by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin in *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Postcolonial Literatures* (1989), intertextuality provided a touchstone for postcolonial writers to assert their voices into a canon dominated by the colonizers’ literatures. In the twenty-first century, however, a number of questions can be raised about the model of “writing back.” How appropriate is it within a globalized world with ever-increasing migration? How might the increasing pressures on the powers and borders of nation states transform a conception of “writing back”? In the paper, I will explore these questions through the dialogue Biyi Bandele creates with Virginia Woolf in his novel about London, *The Street*. Bandele’s novel, I will suggest, initiates a dialogue with Woolf’s best known novels, *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*, in order to situate his narrative about the inhabitants of the Brixton area within a tradition of representing London. In an alternative to “writing back” Bandele, a Nigerian writer now resident in London, produces a counterhistory that takes up and develops Woolf’s representations of the London streets. The dialogue with Woolf in *The Street* can be read less as a “writing back” but as a gesture of what Paul Gilroy in *After Empire* (2004) has called the new formations of a “convivial culture” against the melancholia of colonial histories.

My purpose in the paper is to create a space where the particular instance of Bandele’s conversations with Woolf might open up new questions about intertextuality in a contemporary moment.

Mark A. McCutcheon, “Globalizing McLuhan’s Discourse of Technology in Scholarship and Policy”

This paper brings a postcolonialist perspective to popular culture (see Devadas and Prentice), towards rethinking Canada's mobilizations of popular culture for nation-building and neoliberal projects. Canada’s white, Anglophone popular culture has not figured centrally in postcolonial studies of Canadian culture, but rather on the field’s edges; what post-colonial attention to Canadian popular culture can provide is a way of “doing the national differently” (Pennee 83), articulating connections between Canadian policy and the transnational corporate interests that dominate it - even arguably colonize it (see Hedges).

The paper focuses this methodology on Marshall McLuhan’s appropriations by international scholars and the Canadian government. Of specific interest is McLuhan’s discourse of technology in these appropriations: this paper details a larger study arguing that McLuhan’s media theory and its

diverse receptions (from “McLuhanisme” to Videodrome and Deadmau5) have, together, constructed and globalized a discourse of technology as a Frankensteinian monstrosity.

International scholarly receptions of McLuhan show the global diffusion of his Frankensteinian discourse of technology. In the USA, Langdon Winner’s *Autonomous Technology* (1977) and Avital Ronnell’s 1991 *Telephone Book* explicitly link McLuhan and Frankenstein; another notable American reception is Neil Postman’s *Technopoly* (1993). In Europe, Jean Baudrillard takes up McLuhan’s work in his apocalyptic critiques, and Friedrich Kittler redeploys McLuhan to historicize war as the engine of technological change. These receptions illustrate McLuhan’s reach in globalizing his distinctive discourse of technology.

The Canadian state both domestically memorializes McLuhan (e.g., in the Heritage Minute short film) and promotes him abroad as a cultural ambassador. Illustrating the latter is Berlin’s Canadian Embassy, built in 2005 and featuring a “McLuhan Salon”; the building literally shadows the ruins of the Führerbunker. The renovated site for Canada’s globally asserted “technological nationalism” (Charland 197) shadows the demolished site of Germany’s prior assertion of similar technological nationalism. This reflection suggests a revision of the idea of “technological nationalism” as technological transnationalism, to better describe the global investments and ambivalent involvements of Canadian popular culture. These converge in McLuhan’s popularized discourse of technology, which frames images of the global technological crises in which Canada is embroiled, from copyright to climate change.

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Dr. Linda MacKinley-Hay, "Combermere and Collymore: The Schoolmaster Examined"

During the height of British imperialist expansion, a number of self-appointed examiners took the prose measure of both headmasters and the "gentlemanly education" model that inspired them to capture their schooldays, Thomas Hughes' paean to Thomas Arnold being the prime example. Not unexpectedly, the model that prepared British youth for leadership and literary success assumed a different face on the margins as graduates of colonial schools appropriated the colonizer's tongue and genre to do their own examinations of teachers and the "hidden curriculum" of the exported education they received. In this regard both George Lamming and Austin Clarke, both products of Combermere School and Frank Collymore's curricular and extracurricular mentorship, produced in their first novels' response to both. With help from Collymore's biographer, Edward Baugh, this paper will examine this particular ex-centric headmaster (himself a Combermere alumnus) as his former charges individually take the measure of his influence, one that reaches beyond Barbados and into the twenty-first century. While the schools portrayed in Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin* and Clarke's *Amongst Thistles and Thorns* do not expressly represent Combermere Secondary, the former's dedication, "To my mother and Frank Collymore whose love and help deserved a better book" and the latter's acknowledgement of the credit due to Frank Collymore for the encouragement to write and for editorial expertise regarding his Bajan dialogue (Algoo-Baksh 15) suggest the mark left on both former charges by this Barbadian-born educator, writer, painter, actor, and lexicographer.

While some might suggest that Frank Appleton Collymore was simply an agent of Combermere's mandate to "discover, nurture and develop talents, be they academic or non-academic" (Combermere Old Scholars Assn), perhaps his own humble beginnings, his colour, his lack of university education, his "enlightened idea about discipline" (Baugh), and his many extracurricular pursuits more accurately distinguished his notable mentorship of George Lamming and Austin Clarke and, by extension, to West Indian Literature.

Janet Neigh, "At the Edges of the Nation State: Airport Spaces in Anglophone Caribbean Literature"

Many Caribbean scholars, such as Paul Gilroy and Édouard Glissant, underscore the ship and the sea as quintessential Caribbean images, drawing a colonial link between the slave ship and the contemporary cruise ship. The frequent references to ships and naval travel in Caribbean literature certainly make sense given the predominant themes of migration, exile, return, diaspora, and the geographic realities of island life. However, in the present moment the majority of people exit and enter the Caribbean via airplanes. More than ships, it is aerial flight and airports that shape the edges of Caribbean space in the twenty-first century.

This presentation examines the representation of airports in Anglophone Caribbean literature from the 1980s to explore how this transitory space becomes emblematic of the impact of globalization on newly independent islands' efforts to cultivate self-determination. As Jamaica Kincaid eloquently illuminates in her lyrical essay *A Small Place* (1988), Caribbean airports are sites of continual arrival and departure where tourists, diasporic subjects, and island residents, stand together in line-ups and go through security checks, with contrasting ideologies of destination, survival, leisure, and home. They are simultaneously national and transnational spaces, where citizenship categories are both reinforced and complicated by travel and immigration. In addition to Kincaid, I will analyze Derek Walcott's poem "The Fortunate Traveller" (1981), which critiques the privilege associated with air travel, and Earl Lovelace's short story "Joebell and America" (1988), which features a border interrogation with an Afro-Trinidadian man in a Puerto Rican airport trying to enter the United States on a fake passport. It is from the airport

and from the perspective of the air that these writers re-imagine possibilities for Caribbean self-determination beyond postcolonial independence.

Susie O'Brien, "Postcolonial Edgework: Critical Resilience in Arundhati Roy's Writing"

Resilience has assumed a central role in the study of social-ecological systems. Departing from traditional models of sustainability, which emphasize continuity and stability in the face of change, resilience science focuses on change itself, as it relates to risk and growth (Walker and Salt). A resilience approach to social-ecological systems highlights their complex, dynamic, multi-scalar—and, consequently, uncertain--nature, attending to the "ebullient surprises" that impede, but also impel, healthy adaptation (Holling).

The concept of resilience has been taken up in a number of different contexts from business to disaster planning to social policy, as part of a broader agenda of change management. Invoked within a model of a risk-laden future that stresses the value of creativity in the service of thriving through turbulence, resilience is politically ambivalent: while it can help to envision ways of surviving and growing through trauma, it can also provide cover for a neoliberal agenda of "creative destruction". My paper attempts to think through these different valencies of resilience through the writing of Arundhati Roy. In particular, I consider her departure from fiction after the huge success of her 1998 Booker-winning novel *The God of Small Things*, to write political non-fiction. I focus on her 2011 book *Walking with the Comrades*, which describes the days she spent with Maoist guerillas in the Dandakaranya forest, and which highlights possibilities for understanding resilience within an environmental and social justice framework.

Challenging conventional conceptions of national resilience tied to the 1990s "India Shining" campaign (in which *The God of Small Things* played a celebrated role) Roy's later work articulates a more critically reflexive idea of resilience, encompassing the following themes: 1) a focus on the dynamic tension between forces of change and conservation, transformation and integrity, necessary to sustaining fragile natural-cultural webs of existence; 2) an attention to scale that requires shifting one's vision away from the middle ground (in different senses of the word) towards macro and micro fields of action; and 3) an interest in what happens at edges, meeting places and contact zones as sites of uncertainty, collaboration and—sometimes (but not always)--productive surprise.

Prabjhot Parmar, "Space, Sensorium, and Home: The Delhi Junction Café in Anita Rau Badami's *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?*"

This paper argues that in Anita Rau Badami's *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?* "The Delhi Junction Café" in Vancouver becomes the crossroads of colonial and postcolonial encounters. As a spatial-architectural representation of home, it materially connects and exposes diasporic Indians to the pleasures of being in a space that provides nurturing comfort while located on the edge of a city that has both welcomed and rejected them. By drawing attention to the space and the sensorium of sounds, aromas, and flavours, I argue that the café becomes a surrogate for home. While the café forces open a space of comfort, of home for those "doing splits between two cultures" (Badami 58), it also serves as an interstitial borderland between divided people. To this end, I examine how its space offers nodes of collision and camaraderie that are burdened with the weight of history and memory. As national boundaries are redrawn in South Asia, the physical manifestations of alliances or discords display reconfigurations of geopolitical identities within the space of the café. The spatial movement of people within it, I suggest, reflects political, cultural, and national affiliations of home, as events are played out thousands of miles

away. These affiliations establish who shifts to the margins and who remains at the centre. Through “The Delhi Junction Café” Badami not only transforms a diasporic space into a microcosm of home, but also provides a place to critique immediate/local issues emerging from the milieu outside the four-walls of the café.

Claire Peacock, “Le Guin, Empire, and Imagination's Edge”

Literary studies need to be brought from the edge of academia into a place of greater social relevance. While the edge implies marginalization, it also presents as an advantage. That is, rather than being “edged out” by the dominant, there is potential to gain advantage over the dominant by virtue of the space and incentive to re-imagine and thus re-shape current, dominant conceptualizations within academia. Rather than sanitizing and separating culture from literature, there is utility in examining assumed cultural understandings such as the “completion” of colonialism, the “success” of cosmopolitanism, and the “reward” of sovereignty. Amalgamating the study of culture and literature when investigating society’s role in Hardt and Negri’s conception of “Empire” encourages a more comprehensive exploration of social identity. To this end, I propose to examine Empire in relation to Ursula K. Le Guin’s Hainish Empire in *The Left Hand of Darkness* and *Four Ways to Forgiveness*. This approach will not only disturb and subvert preconceived notions of culture, but will also provide a lens to examine the Canadian identity within the concept of Empire.

An imaginative text temporarily relocates the discussion of space and time to the theoretical level, increasing ideas and potentialities for the corporeal. Le Guin’s ventures in both empire construction and negotiation open a critical landscape wherein the consequences of Empire, globalization, cosmopolitanism, and sovereignty can be examined in relation to our current political context. She demonstrates the malleability of Empire, encouraging readers to engage in a dialogue concerning power relations, commodities, exploitation, politics and international community. In doing so, Le Guin demonstrates that a dynamic conceptualization of Empire is neither a linear process nor a cyclical reinforcement of imperialism. Similarly, Hardt and Negri stress the need to question the processes of globalization and Empire as our political obligation. This perspective relocates the necessity of literary criticism and uses the theoretical explorations of science fiction and cultural theory as a pragmatic spring board to create a platform concerned with social and cultural consequences.

Malissa Phung, “‘Where are all the coolies [. . .]?’: Re-Reading Chinese Exclusion in Karen Cho’s *In the Shadow of Gold Mountain*”

Since the 1970s the history of Chinese exclusion, particularly the Chinese “coolie” experience of racially discriminatory policies such as the Chinese Head Tax and the Chinese Immigration Act, has inspired the creative and political investments of Chinese Canadian cultural producers. Seminal writers such as SKY Lee, Wayson Choy, and Paul Yee represent the material legacies of Chinese exclusion and labour exploitation in their fictional texts, paving the way for future generations of Asian Canadian artists and writers. Their works demonstrate a political imperative to honour and remember the marginalized Chinese labourer: to assert a Chinese presence that has long been erased and disavowed in Canadian history. But given the sizable output of Chinese Canadian literature, scholarship, and political activism in the past thirty years, I question the imperative behind returning to the history of Chinese exclusion, especially if recalling this history serves to memorialize the labour contributions of the Chinese migrant labourer. While I recognize that recalling the history of Chinese exclusion and exploitation serves an important anti-racist pedagogical purpose, I contend that it is just as important to

remain critical of the settler colonial labour narrative that underpins contemporary interpretations of any marginalized immigrant community.

In this paper, I discuss an anti-colonial approach to reading the history of Chinese exclusion in Canada. I argue that a text such as Karen Cho's documentary *In the Shadow of Gold Mountain* runs the risk of erasing an Indigenous presence in order to assert a Chinese presence in Canada's national imaginary. Such texts involve more than a historical re-telling of early Chinese settlement; they inevitably launch a social justice argument for how the early Chinese labourers should have belonged to the nation and what settler benefits and privileges they were entitled to on account of their nation building contributions. Rather than approaching Chinese exclusion as a hegemonic majority-minority racial conflict, I present a reading methodology that draws on intersectional analysis, Asian diaspora studies, and settler colonial and Indigenous critical theory. Curiously, what would it mean to read Chinese exclusion alongside Indigenous displacement and dispossession in Canada? What does it mean to assert Chinese presence in the shadow of Indigenous claims to autochthony?

Mariam Pirbhai, "No Longer at the Nation's 'Edge': Flagging a New Era of Criticism for South Asian Canadian Literature

In *The Geography of Voice: Canadian Literature of the South Asian Diaspora*, Diane McGifford notes that Canada's leading diasporic South Asian writers (e.g., Mistry and Vassanji) "[record] and [depend] on pre-Canadian experience" (Introduction, vii). Donald Goellnicht laments the fact that such "pre-Canadian" experiences are seen as "'acceptable' and 'exotic'" ("Long Labour," 10) by a publishing market and academic establishment still reticent to promote writing that is socially and critically engaged with local issues and concerns. Both McGifford and Goellnicht's claims foreground the extent to which multicultural filters continue to position ethnic writers at the nation's proverbial 'edge', where the geographic and cultural 'elsewheres' of the imagination preclude these writers' presence and engagement with Canada.

This paper aims to situate South Asian Canadian literature differently from multicultural treatments, implicitly calling for a new set of reading practices. Examining works in which 'Canada' figures prominently, this paper will a) excavate those extant texts Goellnicht suggests have been glossed over by critics and readers in preference of the sweeping historical or foreign locales that have become the benchmarks of the South Asian Canadian novel; and b) foreground a post-millennium wave of fiction where Canada is insistently 'present'. Specifically, this paper will feature fiction by a first and second wave of South Asian Canadian writing, including Rabrindranath Maharaj's *Homer in Flight* (1997), M.G. Vassanji's *No New Land* (1997), Cyril Dabydeen's *Short Stories of Cyril Dabydeen* (2010), Tariq Malik's *Chanting Denied Shores* (2010), Gurjinder Basran's *Everything Was Goodbye* (2010), and Anita Rau Badami's *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?* (2007) and *Tell it to the Trees* (2011). These writers' (and their fictions') diverse positionings across Canada (particularly British Columbia and Ontario where South Asian communities are largest) create a new cartography of Canada within its plural and often contradistinctive "geographies of voice": that is, from its east to west coasts, and in terms of its urban and rural ethno-scapes. This paper maps South Asian Canadian writing anew in light of the various 'Canadas' these fictions imaginatively traverse, where the 'edge' or 'elsewhere' of the imagination is no longer a critically viable place to be.

Sarah Power, "'Unhomely' Skins: The Splintered Self in David Chariandy's *Soucouyant*"

Homi Bhabha has cited Freud's concept of the *unheimlich* as "the paradigmatic condition of the postcolonial" (*The Location of Culture* 9). Held together by gothic tropes of repressed trauma and spectralization, David Chariandy's 2007 novel *Soucouyant* invites an interrogation of the relationship between the uncanny (as defined by Freud) and the unsettled social and psychological space occupied by the second-generation Caribbean immigrant. An exploration of this nature reveals the persistent pain associated with both the concept and experience of being split apart. Though other critics (Delisle, Minto) have considered how Chariandy employs the vampiric figure of the soucouyant from Afro-Caribbean folklore in order to convey the narrator's uncertain relationship with his mother's past and the shared cultural memory of his Trinidadian roots, they focus on the constructive nature of haunting, implying that being forced into a confrontation with the past through the haunting of the soucouyant ultimately urges the protagonist to commence the active formation of his own narrative, one which accounts for both his mother's past in Trinidad and his own future in Canada. While these conclusions are accurate and important, they fail to acknowledge what has remained unresolved by the novel's end. In particular, the language of the uncanny can shed light on what is frightening and disturbed about the second-generation's witnessing of the splintered existence exhibited by its parents, immigrants caught in an in-between space that does not always lead to the formation of hybrid identities, but which can instead result in a painful splitting leading to fragmentation and deterioration. In Chariandy's novel, the figure of the soucouyant evokes the uncanniness of cultural memory, of being caught between continents and ripped apart in the process. In short, an examination of the uncanny in *Soucouyant* reveals that there is an element of terror to the postcolonial condition.

Jay Rajiva, "Nationalism and Nonselfhood in Mahasweta Devi's *Douloti the Bountiful*"

The nationalist identity of post-independence India associates the rise of India as a nation with the entrance of western capitalism and materialism into the dialogue of nationhood. The *adivasi* (tribal) bondslave, however, is absent from this narrative of Indian national identity; though the *adivasi* have won important gains in economic self-determination in recent years, bondslavery remain prevalent in India. Many tribals function as a subordinate population of bondslaves, erased from the narrative register, constituting the "shadow economy" that subtends the Indian nation. This tacit collusion between material oppression and postcolonial nationalism reveals the danger of "reducing the flux of experience to fit within a singular understanding of what counts in defining subjectivity; and that danger may be compounded by an attempt to combine strands of postcolonial and psychoanalytic theories into a single determinant narrative" (Schultheis 13). My paper examines the conceptual framework of western-influenced postcolonial nationalism, demonstrating a reliance on psychoanalytic models of subject formation in which the bounded, discrete container of the family unit and the implicit division between public and private spheres are instrumental in shaping the "I" or "citizen-subject" (11). Reading Mahasweta Devi's *Douloti the Bountiful* as a counterpoint to contemporary Indian nationalism, I argue that the representation of the tribal prostitute — homeless, valueless, treated as inanimate matter — challenges supposedly universal models of psychoanalytic subject formation by producing a "nonself" exiled from the symbolic order. The tribal prostitute, for whom the image of the nation as family is neither natural nor naturalized, is thus unable to become the citizen-subject of postcolonial India. Thus, Douloti's bondslavery undermines Benedict Anderson's distinction between pre-nationalist eternal time and "modern" calendrical time by showing how both forms of time operate simultaneously within contemporary Indian nationalist discourse to marginalize the *adivasi*. Ultimately, Devi's story destabilizes any conception of a postcolonial edge that relies on the notion of progress in steady, calendrical time; it also calls on us to reevaluate the move to post-national critical approaches by demonstrating how nationalist ideology still contributes to systemic marginalization.

Antje M Rauwerda, "Michael Ondaatje's *The Cat's Table*, Visual Images and Third Culture Memory"

In *The Cat's Table* (fiction that encourages us to contemplate how the text might also be autobiographical), narrator Michael struggles most of all to remember accurately: he reconstructs evidence in the absence of documentation, and especially in the absence of photographs. "If I had to invent one photograph of myself from my childhood, it would be [. . .]" he begins, searching for an image to define his youth (27). He regrets that he can't make concrete and thus permanent or unchanging his memory of himself and his two closest friends aboard *The Oronsay* on its 1954 journey from Colombo to Tilbury: "For us, this was an era without the benefit of photography so the journey escaped any permanent memory" (79). The absence of a photograph makes the whole experience transitory: "whatever we did had no possibility of permanence" (80).

Impermanence is amplified in the experiences of Third Culture Kids (TCKs). The children of expatriates who move abroad for business, as diplomats, as military service people or even as missionaries, their first culture is that of their passport nation, their second culture is that of their host country, and their third culture that of the dislocated, expatriate community of which they are a part. Ondaatje is a TCK, as is this novel's Michael, whose identity is "rooted" in his memories of a ship in international waters, the ship providing a powerful image of dislocated third culture expatriatism as the boys travel between Ceylon (first culture) and England (second culture).

This paper examines imagined photographs in *The Cat's Table* to argue that third culture life is so improbable that it feels like it can be neither authenticated nor accurately remembered without photographs. I then consider Cassius' paintings: as imaginative renderings of the past they seem like "abstractions at first" but are in fact the most accurate accounts of TCK identity the novel provides (131).

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Deena Rymhs, "Automobility in Tomson Highway's *The Rez Sisters*"

While *The Rez Sisters* has attracted considerable scholarly attention, no analysis to date has offered a sustained examination of automobility in Highway's text. The road trip not only figures as a central structuring element in this work, but it is also an important link to the play's broader commentary on gender, colonial violence, and the affective geographies that both limit and motivate the women's travel. While much of *The Rez Sisters* focuses on the characters' struggle for increased mobility, a connection between mobility and violence emerges over the course of the play: roads become associated with trauma through characters' individual accounts of motor accidents, death, and rape. Roads are not only the spaces of such violent acts, but they also are implicated in a larger colonial (and postcolonial) history of expropriated territory—a remaking of physical and social landscapes that involved ecological destruction, uprooted communities, and entrenched geographies of segregation. In making the road trip the prerogative of seven Indigenous women who embody a different kind of mobile subject than the (White) questing male figure, *The Rez Sisters* brings racialized and gendered experiences to bear on the road narrative. Travelling south rather than west, the women's trip bypasses the storied route of east to west and thus serves as a wedge against the road narrative's conventional

mythologizing. The women's movement south further inverts myths of the north as an untouched wilderness for revelation and quests. Against this flow of traffic, the women in *The Rez Sisters* undertake a quest to their own mythologized destination of Toronto. My reading will look at the relationship between civic agency and automobility explored in Highway's play. Highlighting the social bonds as well as solitudes that roads, vehicles, and motor travel engender, I will underscore the play's ambivalences about automobility and its promise of freedom.

Leah Schoenmakers, "Theatrical Hybridity: *Brébeuf's Ghost* and its Early Contemporaries"

In *Brébeuf's Ghost* – a play about the collisions between Iroquois, Ojibwa, and Christian cultures in 1649 – Daniel David Moses combines cross-cultural theatrical traditions in order to articulate the often-overlooked complexities of his early colonial setting. In "Stages of Conflict," Diana Taylor and Sarah J. Townsend note that Christian plays from the early-contact period translated so well into native cultures because "the sensuous performance modes provided by Catholic rituals and colonial ceremonies offered ways to transmit some of their own practices" (5). Europeans controlled the theatre, but native populations maintained and adapted their performance traditions through these new practices. Though these early plays are products of missionary culture and intent, a deeper investigation will show that the engagement of native peoples was sufficient to impact the style and content of each piece. Rather than relegating native and colonial plays to their respective margins of performance studies, this paper will examine early and modern productions as hybrid cultural forms. I will analyze the implications of Moses' cultural subversions in *Brébeuf's Ghost* within a broader performance model by comparing it to other plays that were written or staged in Native North American communities during its proposed setting.

Final Judgement is a Franciscan missionary play dating to the sixteenth or seventeenth century. As a Catholic play written in Nahuatl and staged during a moment of early contact, *Final Judgement* contains theatrical elements that were uniquely interpreted by each culture. *Los Comanches* is a nineteenth-century re-enactment of a battle between the Comanche Indians and Spanish settlers. It is still performed at Christmas in the town of Alcalde, New Mexico, offering a yearly opportunity to re-stage the historical narrative. The variations of its modern performances and the range of critical responses to them indicates that the complexities of these early dramas are ongoing. By analyzing these plays alongside *Brébeuf's Ghost*, my paper will explore convergent indigenous and colonizing performance forms. It will assert the inadequacy of early hybrid productions to create an equal or sustainable tradition, and the need for continued examination and performance if their modern counterparts are to be more productive.

Lincoln Z. Shlensky, "Creolization at the Edge"

This paper will consider the question of how scholars and activists can locate the edges of the concept of hybridity, and specifically of its iteration in the discourse of creolization. I aim to reframe creolization so as to capture something of what the phenomenological philosopher Claude Romano has described as an "evential hermeneutics," that is, as a mode of understanding the world and those who inhabit it in relation to the changes brought about by unexpected and fundamentally disruptive events. My argument is that creolization conceptualized in evential terms helps us to parse the problem of hybridity's edges because it indicates how such paradigms come to be differentiated even within the same historical or geographical context. The stakes of such conceptual diversity are comprehensible if we understand, as Romano suggests that we need to do, how events break through their "innerworldly"

(or familiar) conceptual horizon and upend the historical contexts through which they initially had been interpreted. This unexpected shift, I claim, is suggestively explored in the writings of a number of the major advocates of creolization within a literary framework, although the theoretical basis of such an understanding is also evident in social scientific analyses of the process of creolization, such as those of renowned linguists such as Robert Chaudenson and John Singler. My primary examples, nevertheless, will be drawn from the writings of the major Martinican literary figure, Edouard Glissant. Glissant shows how creolization (and its conceptual cognates in his oeuvre, such as *la Relation*, *la durée*, *détour*, and *poétique forcée*) enacts a process of intersubjective and intercommunal exchange resulting in the creation of new cultural forms that inevitably reference existing social structures but tend to radically alter their meanings. The iterative work of creolization may be broadly comparable across cultural contexts, his writings suggest, yet the new cultural formations and social consequences of this process tend to thoroughly upend previously explanatory causal frameworks and thus to reveal the “edges” of existing paradigms. One is compelled, therefore, to understand creolizing events, and the hermeneutic activity to which they give rise, beyond the framework of any simple commensurability of abstract universals. The “edge” of creolization, in this sense, disrupts the contextual basis of comparison by means of the very same creatively approximative activity that traditionally underlies eventual discourse.

Naava Smolash, “‘The Dispossessed Annie’: Reading Sinclair Ross’ *As for Me and My House* with Maria Campbell’s *Halfbreed*”

As she lies awake at night in the room of the “neat Half-Breed girl called Annie” (131) who works as a housekeeper at the Kirby’s ranch, Mrs. Bentley names an anxiety about which virtually nothing has been written. Lying sleepless, she thinks: “there’s always the thought of the dispossessed Annie sleeping in the kitchen on a makeshift mattress” (Ross 135). These overlooked words connect *As for Me and My House* with Maria Campbell’s *Halfbreed*. Annie is the only overt indication in Ross’ book of any Métis presence in his imagined prairie. However, this paper takes as its starting point the idea that we need to read Mrs. Bentley’s vague unease about Annie’s ‘dispossession’ together with the novel’s visions of land, visions central to the traditional notion of the garrison mentality. Juxtaposing representations of land in Ross and Campbell brings into stark relief an unexamined edge of Ross’ canonical text.

In Ross’ novel land is famously imagined as either indifferent or hostile to human life. Mrs. Bentley speculates that the inhabitants of the town “project” (141) their own fears onto the land, because they cannot accept an indifferent landscape in which they “have no meaning at all” (141). Against the safe and claustrophobically social world of the small town, the landscape is fraught. At the edges of town, the characters find it difficult to see and walk; Mrs. Bentley cannot understand the “underlying rhythms” (97) she senses, and fears “plunging into space” (103). *Halfbreed*, in contrast, represents the land as the source of food, medicine, safety, and spiritual knowledge; here, settler society is a source of danger. Juxtaposing these texts, this paper asks: what if the land, so protective and full of life in Campbell’s narrative, is neither indifferent nor hostile to humanity, as the garrison mentality paradigm imagined, but is instead resisting the settlers and their destructive ways? Can we read the land in Ross as a repressed metaphor for colonial relations? Through a contrapuntal reading that brings together *As for Me and My House* and *Halfbreed*, this paper explores the possibility of a Métis subtext in Ross’ novel.

Christine Turner, “Extinguished Possibilities in K. Sello Duiker’s *Thirteen Cents*”

This paper will examine ways of reading K. Sello Duiker's *Thirteen Cents*, and will argue that the text performs a set of operations to secure itself from appropriative reading. This novel recounts, in brutally terse prose, a few weeks in the life of Azure, a blue-eyed, black-skinned street child in Cape Town, South Africa. Duiker's first novel, though a brief 160 pages, is rich in iterative possibilities, and its confluence of styles and symbols make it possible to attempt a variety of readings upon it. Yet each of these readings ultimately gives way to a new style or set of symbols, making it impossible to perform one coherent reading without blatant disregarding key components of the text.

I will examine two abortive reading strategies that this novel employs. First, the short, flat style used by Duiker in the novel's first chapters make it possible to categorize this text as a realist representation of a young boy's harrowing day-to-day existence as a child prostitute in the oceanside neighbourhood of Sea Point. Yet this realist representation decays when the novel shifts into a fantastical mode reminiscent of magic realism. The appearance of Saartje Baartman, the "Hottentot Venus" whose remains were repatriated to South Africa from France in the early 2000s, encourages an interpretation of this novel as a development story. However, Baartman was a much-disputed symbol of post-Apartheid national unity, making Duiker's invocation of her as a maternal figure uneasy at best. I will argue that this series of abortive reading possibilities is intentionally disruptive, because it forces us to read *Thirteen Cents* for what it is. In this series of manoeuvres, the text arms itself against being read as a poster for postcolonial urbanity, child poverty, racial liminality, or any other category of precarity. To this end, I will think of Azure in the context of J.A. Mbembe's African subject, one that emerges in the act and context of "displacement and entanglement" (*On the Postcolony*, 15). Because he exists at the (urban, sexual, racial) edge, Azure provides us with the opportunity to rethink the appropriative impulse inherent in most representations of marginality.

L. Camille Van Der Marel, "Marginal Returns: Debts, Indebtedness, and the Caribbean-Canadian Diaspora"

What is owed in the colonial aftermath? This question runs through the centre of anti-colonial thought; its presence is a call to recognize and condemn the marginalizing consequences of imperial history. Lingering inequalities continue to inform anti-colonialism's attempts to re-imagine the world resulting from Europe's colonial projects, but in many ways the outcomes of these re-imaginings have themselves been marginal (Cho). Further undercut by emergent discourses of globalization and diaspora, it is uncertain what potency is left in idea(l)s such as the postcolonial nation state in post-national times. Still, inequalities that overdetermine the lives of contemporary diasporic subjects, those charted in the work of Dionne Brand, David Chariandy, and Nalo Hopkinson, undeniably have roots in European colonialism, reiterating the question 'who owes what to whom in the colonial aftermath?'

Concurrently, ours is a historical moment unique for its experiments with debt and credit. The global financial crisis helps expose the imaginative limits that maintain capitalist systems (Cazdyn and Szeman), but the largely material discourses of debt arising from the crisis may obscure more telling conflations between material and ethical indebtedness in post-national, transcultural times. Not an exclusively (post)modern, localized, or financial phenomenon, debt's currencies are moral and monetary. A genuine struggle is surfacing in Caribbean-Canadian literature concerning the entanglement of political and consumer freedoms in the wake of the civil rights and anti-colonial movements of the 1950s and 1960s, a phenomenon Paul Gilroy charts in his *Darker than Blue: Moral Economies of the Black Atlantic* (2010). One of the dominant forms of un-freedom that limit individuals and nations at the beginning of the 21st century, debts are also mnemonic devices par excellence that tether past and future, so called first- and third-worlds, children and parents, and the subjects of nations and diasporas.

In discussing the pervasiveness of debt throughout Caribbean and Caribbean-Canadian literature, I hope to demonstrate how debt's metaphorical evocation compounds, rather than resolves, questions of what is owed in the colonial aftermath. This metaphorical overburdening hints at "the informal, individual acts of symbolic redress" (Gilroy 21) that are increasingly called on to address marginality in transnational times.

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Sarah Waisvisz and Brenda Vellino, "Transnational Adaptations as Redress Theatre: Yael Farber's *Molora* and Lynn Nottage's *Ruined*"

"Contemporary politicized adaptations of both classical and modern plays contribute to a phenomenon we call "redress theatre" in which theatre contributes its creative repertoire to legal and quasi-legal modes of transitional justice and conflict transformation in the aftermath of mass violence. *Molora* (2008), by South African playwright Yael Farber, undertakes an extensive reworking of dramatic elements from Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides' versions of the Oresteia saga, here resituated as a critical re-enactment of a TRC hearing. In *Molora*, a white actor in the guise of an Afrikaner farmwife plays Klytemnestra, while her daughter Elektra is cast as a black house servant. The two characters face each other across the commission table in their perpetrator and victim/avenger roles. Members from the Ngqoko Cultural Group, an Indigenous ensemble of Xhosa women "Split-Tone" throat singers, are ultimately cast as the chorus who disrupt the expected revenge plot in the *Oresteia* and thus leave the story open to an as yet unrealized possibility. First staged in Johannesburg a decade after the TRC proceedings, *Molora* suggests that the legacy of apartheid in South African society was not settled when the commission closed its doors and tabled its report.

In contrast *Ruined* (2008), by American playwright Lynn Nottage, is based on testimonial accounts of Congolese women who have survived horrific sexual and physical violence during the protracted conflict in the DRC. Through the portrait of complex perpetrator & victim/survivor characters, the play questions whether or not survival depends in some part on moral ambiguity and immoral choices. Itself a response to Bertolt Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *Ruined* hovers above threats of cultural appropriation in order to inform North American audiences of mass rape and genocide in the DRC as a result of the protracted civil war that owes much of its roots to the extraction of "conflict minerals" and other resources that we in the West continue to benefit from. Both mid-conflict and in the aftermath of conflict transformation initiatives, these plays demonstrate the role of theatre as a means of furthering the labour of critical redress "from below."

Alan Ramon Ward, “The Innate Insurgent: A New Model for Fanon’s ‘black man’”

Most broadly, my paper will be an exploration of a particular marginal identity—Frantz Fanon’s figure of the ‘black man’—and its possibly inherent revolutionary potential. I position myself against Homi Bhabha’s reading of this figure as split dichotomously in his self-identification between a normative western subject position and its ‘dark reflection’. In particular, I believe that Bhabha’s reading of this figure is untenable even on its own (Lacanian) terms and, moreover, negates the development of Fanon’s black man as a free subjectivity. Consequently, Bhabha’s attempts to recuperate Fanon’s black man as a figure of resistance or subversion have relied on the simple fact of this figure’s existence: because the black man’s identity is irrevocably divided, Bhabha claims that its mere existence calls the unity of a normative identity into question.

I will suggest instead a new model for the figure of Fanon’s black man—also based on Jacques Lacan’s work but drawing as well from the work of Jean-Paul Sartre—which retains the possibility for a free subjectivity oriented toward resistance. It is a model that positions Fanon’s black man as a paranoid subject led inherently toward a subversive outlook by its own repetition automatism. The tacit belief that resistance must arise as a consciously developed response is belied here by my suggestion that there are psychic tensions that might produce a subversive subjective orientation involuntarily, spontaneously. Hopefully, the exploration of the possibility that resistance does not necessarily follow a considered political outlook opens the door to a new subjective positioning that subordinates individuality to collectivity in unexpected yet convincing ways.

Carl Watts, “Genre and the Edges of Nationalism in Laura Salverson’s *The Viking Heart*”

Laura Salverson’s *The Viking Heart* (1923) has been praised for its treatment of transcultural identity (Redl 22) and nation building (Morris 52), but many link its successes with its emphasis on realism over romance (Craig, *Racial Attitudes* 70). I would argue, however, that the genre of romance is an essential (and unexamined) component of Salverson’s conception of European nationality and immigration to Canada. While Glenn Willmott includes the novel in his diagnosis of modern Canadian literature’s negotiation of realism, romance, and modernism, for example, he argues only for the text’s development of an archaic national identity into the “quotidian triumphs” of the settler experience (*Unreal Country* 178). Regarding the “Icelandic” sequence that opens the novel as a foreclosed romance inscribing historical marginality and the realism that follows as recentring identity in a settler environment, however, reveals that Salverson’s generic interplay depicts the European nation in a way that is aesthetically distinct from its expression of life in North America. Salverson’s characters flee a volcanic eruption in Iceland, in which, “Against a quickly darkening sky, tongues of flame, fiery red, and forked like lightning, lea[p] and lengthe[n] into pillars of sheer fire” (17); leaving this romance-infused setting behind, however, severs them from the Viking-esque narrative that begins only to enable the realist, North American text that follows. Similarly, this necessary failure of genre establishes a European national identity whose only purpose is to give way to ostensibly post-national life in Canada.

Fundamentally, then, Salverson writes on the edges of genre to articulate a gap between European and North American conceptions of nationality: her characters identify as European in terms of heritage and history, but paradoxically embrace and disavow this heritage by transmuting it to the failed romance prefacing her realist depiction of experience in a North American nation.