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Chimo
The Newsjournal of the Canadian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies

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Chimo

The Newsjournal of the Canadian Association for
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CHIMO (Chee'mo) greetings [Inuit]

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From the President

As I write, the call for nominations for the next CACLALS Executive is arriving in members' mail boxes. A slate of nominees will be circulated before the Ottawa meetings, and the next Executive either elected at the AGM in Ottawa or (if there are further nominations from the floor) by mail ballot after the AGM.

The timing of the handover will be complicated, but we have-luckily-prepared for that complication by the amendments to the constitution, made at the St. John's AGM. At that meeting we made the changes that had been discussed for some two years; that the CACLALS officer representing the organization at the ACLALS triennial meetings should be the outgoing President. One of the main tasks of that representative is to sum up the work of the previous three years. At both the Jamaica ACLALS Triennial and the Sri Lanka Triennial there had been two CACLALS representatives on the ACLALS Executive: the past President (in order to sum up the previous three years) and the current President (who had been in office about six weeks at the time of the ACLALS meetings). Only one of these had a vote (usually the current President) and only one was funded by ACLALS (usually the past President). This cumbersome arrangement will not be in force at the Kuala Lumpur Triennial in early December this year. The CACLALS constitution has been amended to read: "the New Executive Committee shall assume office on September 1 after the Annual General Meeting of the Association at which the elections have taken place or after the Triennial Meeting of ACLALS whichever comes last."

Because we had envisaged the ACLALS meetings to be normally in August, the December 1998 Triennial in Kuala Lumpur poses a slight problem of delay in organising the CACLALS program at COSSH in May 1999. I propose that the President Designate and the Secretary-Treasurer Designate begin planning in September (this year) for the COSSH meetings in May 1999. Gary and I will transfer to those worthies sufficient funds to carry out the routine preparations for COSSH as President and Secretary-Treasurer Designate. This will include their preparing, creating and mailing the Fall issue of *Chimo*, with its call for papers and requests for renewal of membership. By January 1, 1999 all the remaining funds will be transferred to what will then be the new Executive, together with a financial statement covering the period between the AGM in Ottawa (May, 1998) and the handover on January 1,

1999. The amount transferred to the officers designate (to prepare for the annual meetings in May 1999) will appear on that statement as a lump sum, and the Secretary-Treasurer in place in May 1999 will account for the use of that lump sum in the financial statement presented to the AGM in May 1999. The next President of CACLALS will represent the organization at the ACLALS Triennial in Australia in 2001 (and we hope that meeting will take place in August!).

I hope this does not sound too complicated. I believe the plan outlined offers a workable solution to the problem of the delayed ACLALS Triennial, scheduled for Kuala Lumpur from December 1 to December 6, 1998. In the first drafts of this report I had written: "I have heard nothing further about those meetings since last I wrote on this subject in the Fall. Has anyone?" Today (March 20), however, I received an e-mail message from the ACLALS Chair, Professor Lim Chee Sing. The message calls for those "interested in contributing" to contact ACLALS by June 1, 1998. He states that the deadline for abstracts is it July 1998." The theme of the conference will be "Sharing A Commonwealth," and ACLALS has its own web site:

http://www.tcol.co.uk/comorg/aclals.htm

When I visited that site this morning (March 20), there was no conference information on it. A page with the information so far received from ACLALS follows my report.

The CACLALS triennial conference, "The Commonwealth in Canada," took place at Wilfrid Laurier in November 1997. Comments from some non-CACLALS members who attended are included in this issue of Chimo. The occasion was lively and friendly, with some really excellent papers. Beginning with a public presentation by Janette Turner Hospital on the evening of Friday, November 7, 1997, and ending at lunch on Sunday, November 9, 1997 after a session pairing [sic] Stephen Slemon and Asha Varadharajan, the conference was intense and sociable at the same time. It certainly was a pleasure to organize.

This year's election of graduate student representatives to the Executive has run into problems. None of the candidates finally agreed to serve. The election itself produced a total number of 12 ballots from graduate student members. It will be up to the membership and the next Executive to decide whether the question of graduate student representation on the Executive need be further discussed.

I have enjoyed my time as President of CACLALS, and although I shall have one further opportunity to address the membership formally (in my President's Report to the AGM in Ottawa), let me say once again (what must be clear to all those who participate in CACLALS affairs) how much we owe to the efficiency and dedication of Roza Cunningham, who does all the routine dirty work out of my office. It has also been a particular pleasure to play alongside Gary (work would not be the correct term to describe our CACLALS experiences). The final illustration in this issue sums up our wistful relief at handing over the Association to new leadership.

Rowland Smith March 1998

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ACLALS TRIENNIAL 1998

(Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies)
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
December 1-6, 1998

http://www.tcoLco.uklcomorg/aclais.htm

Conference Theme: SHARING A COMMONWEALTH

Papers might focus on fields such as:
Translation of Commonwealth Literatures into English & Vice-Versa
Migration of Writers to Other Countries
From Page to Screen: Literature On Screen
Literary Development & Cultural borrowing
English as a Pragmatic/Creative Commonwealth Language
Language Enrichment Through Borrowing

If you are interested in contributing, please contact ACLALS by June 1, 1998. Deadline for abstracts approx. July 1, 1998.

Registration is now open. Participants should pay US $150 by cheque or bank draft to ACLALS Triennial

Convenors: Professor C. S. Lim, Mrs. Sid Rohaini Kassim & Ms. Mary Susan Philip, Department of English, Faculty of Arts, University of Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA e-mail: f4limcs@umcsd.um.edu.my
fax: 603-7595456

Canadian Association for Commonwealth
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1998 COSSH, UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

CA CLALS sessions will be held in Rooms TBT (Tabaret) 070 and TBT 083 (May 28-30, 1998) as indicated.

Thursday, May 28 - *Room TBT (Tabaret) 070*

10:00 - 1:00	Registration: CACLALS Desk in the Registration Area
11:00 - 12:15	Session A; Graduate Student Session Roundtable on Graduate Student Concerns
1:45 - 3:15	Session B: CACLALS/ACCUTE Joint Session Room SMD 423 *CACLALS acknowledges the generous financial support of this session from the HSSFC.* *Chair:* Susan Spearey (Brock)

a) Guy Beauregard (Alberta): Diaspora Theory and Its Imagined Homeland

b) Charmaine Eddy: Contested Spaces: Disease and Diasporic Identities in Jamaica Kincaid's *My Brother*

c) Jill Didur (York): Recovered? Partition, Nationalism and the Gendered Migrant in Joytrimonyee Devi's *The River Churning*

3:30 - 5:00 Session C:

Chair: Gary Boire (WLU)

a) Maureen Moynagh (St. F.X.): The Ethical Turn in Postcolonial Theory and Narrative: A Reading of Michelle Cliffs *No Telephone to Heaven*

b) Claudia Marquis (Auckland): *Not at Home in Her Own Skin*: Jamaica Kincaid, Selfhood and History

c) Lori Pollock (Queen's): 'For Years Now We Black Women have been Fighting for Our Rights': Collaborative Drama and Community Healing

6:30 - 8:00 CACLALS President's Reception
Room TBT (Tabaret) 083

Friday, May 29 - *Room TBT (Tabaret) 070*

9:00 - 10:30 Session D:

Chair: Maureen Moynagh (St. F.X.)

a) Darryl Whetter (UNB): Losing Beautifully: Photography, Failure and the Found in Michael Ondaatje's *Running in the Family*

b) Carrie Dawson (Queensland): Calling People Names: Identity, Fraud, and Confession After *The English Patient*

c) Lisa Salem-Wiseman (York): 'We are not alone here, Charlie': Madness, Nature, and Wonder in Timothy Findley's *The Piano Man's Daughter*

10:45 - 12:30 Session E:
Member Organized Special Session
on Postcolonial Pedagogy

Chair & Organizer: Craig Tapping
(Malaspina)

a) Renate Eigenbrod (Lakehead): Who is the Teacher of This Class? A Reconsideration of the Production of Knowledge in a Cross-cultural Literature Course

b) Deborah Bowen (Redeemer): Liberally Guilty: Guitily Liberal: What is a Poor (White, Christian) Student to Do?

c) Philip Mingay (Alberta): Yes, We Always Have Bananas: Teaching the Consumer-Oriented Student in a NeoColonialist Society

1:45 - 3:15 Session F:

Chair: Victor Raniraj (Calgary)

a) Sam Durrant (Queen's): The Trouble with History that Happened Overseas: The Traumatic Place of Race in *The Satanic Verses*

b) Claudia Walter (Augsburg): The City as Subject - Bombay in the Imagination of Salman Rushdie and Rohinton Mistry

c) Antje M. Rauwerda (Queen's): Homing Devices: The Uncanny in Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*

3:30 - 5:30 ACCUTE Plenary: Mary Jacobus

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Saturday, May 30 - *Room* TBT (Tabaret) 070

9:00 - 10:30 Session G:

Chair: Marilyn Rose (Brock)

a) John Eustace (Acadia): Waiting for the Barbarians: Peter Carey's *Bliss* and the Ethics of Millennialism

b) JoAnn McCaig (Calgary): Bad Faith: Author, Text and Reader in Carol Shields' *Swann: A Literary Mystery*

c) Karen E. Macfarlane (McGill): Gender, Colonialism and the Wild Colonial Girl in Canada and Australia

10:45 - 12:15 Session H:

Chair: Sam Durrant (Queen's)

a) Susan Spearey (Brock): The Readability of Conrad's Legacy: Narrative Navigations! Historiographic Revisions in *Heart of Darkness*

b) **Douglas Ivison** (Montreal): With Chinua Achebe in the Contact Zone: Things Fall Apart and/as Colonial Discourse

c) Anil Persaud (UT): Towards the Nation State

1:45 - 3:15 Session I:

Chair: Rowland Smith (WLU)

a) Sheila Roberts (WisconsinMilwaukee): Magical Realism as Strategy of Reconstitution in Recent Afrikaans Literature

b) **Constance Rooke** *(Guelph): The Writer's* (and the Critic's) Path: Who Leads the Reader Where and Why?

4:00 - 5:30 ACCUTE Plenary: Linda Hutcheon

6:00 - 7:00 Annual General Meeting

- Room TBT (Tabaret) 070

7:00 Dinner/Outings/Excesses etc.

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Conference Reports

COMMONWEALTH IN CANADA

It was one of those moments. Post-colonialism was beginning to itch. There were questions it could answer very well-and a few it could answer all too well-but some people were feeling ready to move beyond those questions, to look for the hard post-colonial questions, to stretch the paradigm, to challenge the protocols, to get out of the comfort zone.

Asha Varadharajan, for instance, wanted to ask Homi Bhabha to come clean on just what some of those fantastically useful and simulating terms-of-phrase might really mean if they were pushed to the interrogatory limit. Quite a few people wanted to get specific about what went on in those so-called interstitial spaces, what kind of contact occurred in the contact zones, how much hybridity cost. Others wanted to see just where, if post-colonialism was a reading strategy, it could be taken: Wordsworth, Foetal Alcohol Syndrome, the law, Nineteenth Century South African letters, fictions of immigrancy. If post-colonialism could speak to Indians, could it also speak to cowboys?

The so-called liminal spaces were to be seen as something much more than in-between spaces-and definitely NOT empty ones-they are overlapping spaces that are highly-contested, very crowded, multiply-occupied by bodies, discourses, regimes of material force with political effects and personal affects, and epistemologies.

Agency-multiple and uneven agencies-was a big question. So was a kind of evolving discussion about the limits of textual or discursive resistance. Stephen Slemon's tour de force in the last session about climbing Mt Everest (or about the limits of symbolic management: what happens when you've got to the top?) was pivotal in focussing the discussion on just what it is that has managed in/by discourse; just where, then, is it that "agency' has its efficacy and its limits. My own problematic in the first paper: "how to be grounded and theorised at the same time" seemed to resonate through several other sessions. The way in which this worked, for me, was in watching how so many papers kept trying to deal seriously with differences that are incommensurable but which must be articulated. How to talk about things that go on in the same space at the same time but in inarticulably different ways, with almost unregisterably different ways of participating in the asymmetries of power.

I think that the feature of the program that I liked most was the panels of grad students from (or recently from) particular departments. These were generative because the paper-givers had thought about how their papers-taken together-might raise bigger questions than could be articulated within a single paper. There's a dumb way of doing this-and we've seen it often-you start with a theoretical introduction and you conclude with a factitious theoretical tail-piece that always begins with the word, "thus". This didn't happen. The papers spoke to each other.

This conference was not just about theories and taxonomies of difference-and in what must be a world first, no-one claimed difference, or romanced the margins. It spoke to the issues of making a difference. At a time of historically extraordinary pressures in

universities in most countries to forget their historic function and turn instead to unproductive individualism and competition, it was really good to have my faith in conferences, co-operation, and collegiality restored-even if only for a short while. So, this was one of those rare conferences when intellectual work was actually being moved forward; when everyone seemed to care about the ideas and the ideas were worth caring about.

How did this happen? Well, I think that it was an historic moment in the evolution of post-colonialism and that was lucky. It helped a lot that a large proportion of the delegates were graduate students for whom the cutting edge was a daily companion; it certainly helped that the conference organisation (by Rowland Smith and Gary Boire) was so good that it was unnoticeable. The physical space helped too. While it never became a gulag, it was true that the architectural arrangements helped to keep people together (and away from all the enticements of downtown Waterloo on a Sunday) and keep them talking to each other. The fact that the Security Service had to evict large groups of people from the meeting rooms each afternoon, long after the formal completion of the sessions was testimony to the fact that there were things worth talking about.

Alan Lawson
University of Queensland
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The conference was stimulating, dealing with texts which are placed on the map of the Commonwealth yet also defined in a more dynamic way as "post-colonial." The critical approach of that name has added a great deal of energy to the reflexion on works now seen as moving in similar directions. Stephen Slemon and Alan Lawson showed once more how fertile such theories are. In the papers and discussions that compared settler narratives in Canada, Australia, South Africa-a solid contribution from that country-much was said that illuminated the myths that coloured the vision of the Other, the first inhabitants of the land.

Yet one cannot help feeling that in some instances, the debate is moving further and further towards pure cultural studies and away from the study of "major" works-in itself, possibly a debatable definition. The terms and concepts are borrowed from psychology and psychoanalysis, from history and political science, from sociology, in a way that gives relevance to the works of fiction but takes all of us close to very diverse specialist fields (in France we tend to be suspicious of the lack of theoretical grounds for cultural studies, maybe too conservative.) A need must have been felt, however, for a connection with our former training, and rhetorical tropes like "zeugma" or "chiasmus" were at times summoned to make the pattern in the carpet more visible. The transformation of the field of Commonwealth to a broader "Post-colonial" basis has another consequence: the comparisons are still drawn from within the countries of the ex-British Empire and there is a tendency to generalise from the limited-even if dominant experience of the English-speaking world. For instance, the preconceived world views of settlers, and their relations with local people were not the same in the Mahgreb, Indochina or the Cap Verde. It is exhilarating to find similar attitudes and mythical constructs but it should not forget the challenge of counter-examples in specific works and specific histories. Finally, it is strange that a theory which started with French thinkers is now focussed on a debate between dominant and dominated within the Anglophone world, and the lively discussions in Waterloo between academics from the white Commonwealth and the Subcontinent or Middle East was a good image of the dialogue going on in North America, with Said, Spivak, Bhabha, Varadharajan et al.

Another comparison in the conference proved fruitful: various parts of the world address the teaching of Commonwealth writers for different purposes. In the Caribbean, they are mostly interested in the African diaspora and Africa, but also Algeria. South Africa

explores the multilingual, multicultural aspect of its own production as well as comparing with the rest of the Commonwealth. And continental Europe, less directly involved, examines formal characteristics, defines its own canon. The wish is felt for more exchanges of this kind between the various approaches and methods. One gets the impression that the definition of both entities "Commonwealth Literature" and "Post-colonial criticism" is fluid, and the debate is very much open, fortunately. Its momentum has given birth in the last decade to powerful ideas, an urgent questioning of diverse texts and this was apparent in the well focussed papers by Canadian doctorate students. Their reading of texts was both precise and aware of general issues, open to a much wider context. Le mouvement se prouve en marchant.

Jacqueline Bardoiph
Université de Nice-Sophia Ant4polis

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ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS

Guy Beauregard *(Alberta):* Diaspora Theory and Its Imagined Homeland.

This paper examines the potential of "diaspora theory" in coming to terms with the uneven material and epistemological consequences of peoples being dispersed across the globe. Following James Clifford, this paper asks "what is at stake, politically and intellectually, in contemporary invocations of diaspora" (302), and it argues that the emerging field of "diaspora theory"-as formulated by critics such as Stuart Hall, Paul Gilroy, len Ang, Rey Chow, Lisa Lowe, Vijay Mishra, R. Radhakrishnan, Gayatri Spivak, Aihwa Ong, Homi Bhabha, James Clifford, and others-matters for two reasons: first, it provides an opportunity to rethink foundational social categories (including "the nation," "ethnicity," and "community") that structure many of the courses we teach and the scholarly fields in which we work; and second, its methodological tensions and contradictions (between charting material histories, making transhistorical theoretical statements, and doing textual analysis) may be the precise methodological dilemma facing literary studies at this moment.

This paper suggests that the relation between diaspora theory and its imagined "homeland" of cultural theory is productive to the extent that it enables comparative analysis, crosscultural dialogue, and the situating of specific diasporic histories in broader transnational contexts; it is disabling, however, to the extent that it a) limits the participants to academics (however diasporic or minoritized) who are situated in First World universities, and b) limits the terms of discussion to the discourses of the various "posts": the postmodern, the postcolonial, the postnational, and so on. Following Spivak, it is crucial to note the many voices (aboriginal and subaltern) that are excluded from such discussions of "diaspora," and the problematic status of a "global" theory that emerges out of First World institutions. Finally, this paper stresses that the very problem of methodology raised by diaspora theory-the way in which we interconnect material histories, "theory," and/or textual interpretation-may ultimately be a crucial one for us to address at a moment in which cultural studies has asked us to rethink the basis of how, and why, we do "literary studies."

Deborah Bowen *(Redeemer):* Liberally Guilty, Guiltily Liberal: What Is a Poor (White, Christian) Student to Do?

The narration of guilt can be seen as a necessary part of any move to establish restorative rather than retributive justice, even while recognizing the impossibility of full reparation. For students in the post-colonial classroom who self-identify as descendants of the colonizer, the knowledge

of past oppression may become an overwhelming and disabling burden. Citing the different experiences of disorientation in three of my specifically Christian students, I will suggest that guilt may be a potentially positive motivator in activating an agency understood as "the potentially positive motivator in activating an agency understood as "the way I take a social construction personally" (Gregory Jay), and will argue for the therapeutic and functional importance of respecting both narration and counter-narration within the classroom as part of a dialogic exchange of the past.

Carrie Dawson *(Queensland):* Calling People Names:
Identity, Fraud, and Confession After *The English Patient.*

Michael Ondaatje's novel *The English Patient* explores the relationships between four people who inhabit a deserted Tuscan villa at the end of World War II. One of them is identified only as the English Patient. In the wake of an airplane accident that has left him burned beyond recognition, the Patient claims to have forgotten his identity. At least one of the other characters suspects that he feigns memory loss in an attempt to avoid recriminations for his war-time actions. The Patient's housemates include a nurse, a thief, and a sapper, who also struggle to reconstitute themselves in the wake of wartime horror. In doing so, they attempt to elicit a self-explanatory narrative from the inscrutable protagonist. Because the recognition and reiteration of names functions to stabilise identities, the Patient's (ongoing?) attempt to "erase" his name unsettles them.

In order to address the relationship between identity, fraud, and confession, this paper considers the variously more and less subtle efforts to identify the Patient. It contends that the attempts by the nurse, the thief, and the sapper to elicit a confession from the Patient are motivated by their common hope that his admission of mis-taken identity will admit the possibility of an integrated, "properly" identified subject and will allow them to reconceive of themselves as such. Because no confession is forthcoming, these emotionallyscarred individuals must find other means to reconstitute themselves as integrated.

In the first part of the paper I trace the narrative shift from a belief that "true" identity can be constituted against an acknowledgement of misidentification *to* an idea of identity reconceived in and as a "testament" (269). In the second part of the paper I argue that Ondaatje interpellates an audience who share his characters' appetite for an admission of mistaken identity and I consider his attempts to confound the practice of reading for confession. In doing so, I attempt to identify some of the expectations which underlie the desire to receive confession.

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Jill Didur (York): Recovered? Partition, Nationalism and
the Gendered Migrant in Joytrimonyee Devi's *The River Churning*

India's Partition in 1947 produced violence and mass migrations that displaced thousands of women from their extended families on either side of the border in the newly created nations of India and Pakistan. Prior to Partition, patriarchal interests at the community level attempted to police women's sexuality as a means of maintaining control over land, resources and (re)production. The community's claim that its women were both protected from and disdainful of sexual contact with 'outsiders' was used to sustain an image of moral and cultural superiority. With the rise of modern nationalism, this claim became the focal point of a struggle among Sikh, Hindu and Muslim communities in their desire to achieve hegemony in the post-colonial nation-state.

This paper tracks how Joytrimoyee Devi's *The River Churning* disturbs the silence surrounding 'abducted' women's experiences at the time of Partition and makes visible the patriarchal and majoritarian interests invested in the control of women's sexuality. The novel tells the story of a young Hindu girl, Sutara, who is orphaned by the Partition riots and taken into the care of her Muslim neighbours. When she is returned to her extended family in India, she is rejected and stigmatized by the community as a whole. Sutara is labelled as 'abducted' by India but 'polluted' by her extended family and community. I will argue that Devi's figuration of Sutara's subject position as a gendered migrant resists both these labels and highlights the patriarchal, elite an Hindu-centric interests that have come to characterise nationalism in post-colonial India. Thus, Devi's narrative locates the trope of the 'abducted/polluted' woman as an aporia in patriarchal nationalism by refusing to reconcile her identity with that dictated by the community or state. In the process, she discloses a slippage within the representative status implied by the concept of the nation-state and the citizen-subject in modernist history.

My paper tracks the anxious relation between the trope of the 'abducted/polluted' woman and the nation-states of India and Pakistan at the time of Partition to foreground the gendered construction of the citizen-subject's identity within patriarchal nationalist discourse. Devi's narrative troubles the communities' and nation-state's so-called humanitarian concern for the welfare of these women and suggests that the Recovery Operation was deeply compromised in its reliance on physical and discursive violence. Drawing on the work of Carole Pateman *(The Sexual Contract),* Veena Das *(Critical Events)* and Partha Chatterjee *(The Nation and Its Fragments),* this paper considers how the inclusion of migrant woman's body in discussions of citizenship ruptures the very idea of the nation. I argue for the articulation of a more provisional notion of citizenship, one that addresses the gendered conditions of mobility and 'belonging' in the modern nation-state. While the events of Partition offer a unique opportunity to study these issues, my paper also opens up into the larger question of how to understand the conflictual relation between migrants and the nation in the context of globalization.

Sam Durrant *(Queen's):* The Trouble with History that
Happened Overseas: The Traumatic Place of Race in *The Satanic Verses*

> The trouble with the Engenglish is that their hiss hiss history happened overseas,
> so they dodo don't know what it means.
> - Salman Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses*

Despite the best efforts of multiculturalists to recover a history that would ground the racial subject, and despite the best efforts of white liberals to exorcise the history of race and (re)ground the universal subject, race continues to haunt identity as the sign of an exorbitant difference that can neither be adequately remembered nor forgotten. *Contra* the historicism of those who would seek to lay claim to history in the name of a particular racial community, and *contra* the amnesia of those who argue that constitutional democracies guarantee equality precisely by being colour-blind, I will argue that the history of race can neither be owned nor disowned. As the history that happened overseas, the traumatic history of race returns to remind us of the way in which the history of the self is always already involved in the history of the other, to remind us, in the words of Cathy Caruth, that: "history... is never simply one's own, that history is precisely the way we are implicated in each other's traumas" (Caruth 192). The exorbitant place of race, then, radically displaces the subject, forcing a recognition of history in terms not of identity and ownership but of *dfférance* and ethical responsibility.

Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* captures the traumatic place of race in the figure of Gibreel Farishta, an Indian who comes to haunt London as the return of the history that happened overseas. Homi Bhabha is right to read Gibreel as the return of the repressed, but his

all too cursory reading fails to ask a vital question: from whose repressed does Gibreel return? Rushdie deliberately highlights this problem in a passage which Bhabha quotes without analysing in sufficient depth: "Those powerless English. Did they not think their history would return to haunt them?-'The native is an oppressed person whose permanent dream is to become the persecutor' (Fanon)... And I'm back." *(The Satanic Verses 343).* Gibreel conceives of himself on the one hand as the product of his own colonial psychosis, and on the other as the repressed of English history. The novel compounds this confusion: on the one hand it intimates that Gibreel is indeed suffering from delusions; on the other his dreams hover over London as a meteorological "blocked pattern," inducing a heatwave that threatens to "tropicalise" the national identity. The affect of race effects a mutual disturbance, forcing us to recognise an unconscious-a cultural memory-that refuses to be located within the confines of the individual subject.

The tropicalisation of London is Gibreel's last desperate bid for recognition, after a series of scenes in which the people of London resolutely fail to recognise him as either angel or avatar. This repeated scene of non-recognition further refines our understanding of the place of race. As the history that happened overseas, Gibreel is not so much the return of a colonial history that either he or the English have forgotten; rather he is the "return" (for want of a better word) of a history that never really took *place* at all. In his seminal essay on race and trauma, *Heidegger and "the jews,"* Lyotard makes a similar point by virtue of the psychoanalytic distinction between primary and secondary repression.

There is no history of "the jews" that has somehow been forgotten or repressed. Rather, the traumatic time of "the jews" constantly threatens to disturb our sense of chronology and identity. History, as the chronologisation of time, is the attempt to ward off this threat; it constitutes a "protective shield" designed to anaesthetise the affective presence of "the Jews, " to forget that which threatens to destroy memory. Thus, the Londoners are unable to recognise Gibreel because to do so would be to discard the anaesthetic of history; to recognise him as both avatar and angel, as the return of both his and their own history, would be to destroy their own conception of what it means to be English. Their own sense of identity is grounded in the non-recognition of Gibreel, in the disavowal of where he is really coming from.

How, then, would it be possible to meet Gibreel's exorbitant demand for recognition, how to recognise the (non-)place from which he has returned? To fully come to terms with the foreignness of history we would have to learn to understand race as that which dislocates identity by locating us in each others' histories, as that which renders us accountable to each other for history. Rather than attempting to banish racism or to recover a racial subject, we must learn to live with the spectre of race, allowing it to take up residence in the disjuncture of our collective history.

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Charmaine Eddy: Contested Spaces: Disease and Diasporic Identities in Jamaica Kincaid's *My Brother.*

> [lit is not enough to recall that there are cultures of death and that from one culture to another, at the crossing of the borders, death changes face, meaning, language, or even body .... One must go further: culture itself, culture in general, is essentially, before anything, even a priori, a culture of death.
>
> (Derrida, Aporias)

Nothing is at home in the unsettled and unsettling text of Jamaica Kincaid's *My Brother.* Ostensibly a memoir about her brother as he is dying of AIDS in Antigua, Kincaid's text also becomes an account, through the language of the diseased and dying body, of the pervasive displacement and dislocation of the condition of migrancy.

Like many migrant writers, Kincaid occupies and writes from the ambivalent space between

homelands: the Antigua she has left behind and the Vermont landscape which secures her identity as a writer, a wife, and a mother. While the condition of migrancy has given Kincaid the ability to exact meaning from her originary homeland, as if displacement and dislocation were themselves requirements for understanding the homeland's contradictory nature, that very displacement produces a desire to return that we can never be fulfilled. Kincaid's narrator in *My Brother,* who is and is not Kincaid herself, does journey homeward, retracing in reverse her former path of escape, but her journey serves to illustrate the impossibility of coming home for the migrating subject.

The most contested and ambivalent space in My *Brother is* the infected body of the narrator's brother as he slowly dies of AIDS. While not immediately identifiable as an act of dispossession, AIDS offers a displaced site of Post-Colonial migratory trauma. Transported into a feminist CarribeanAmerican memoir from its own literary "homeland" in gay literature and queer theory, the virus situates the body of the individual subject as the space upon which the marks of collective dispossession emerge. When the narrator first sees her brother dying in a hospital bed, she does not recognize his black colour, finding it extreme and inconsistent with her memory of him. Suspecting that her own "colour" sense has been eradicated by living in a culture which homogenizes variations into a single shade of otherness-suspecting that she has undergone an ethnic "cleansing" through migration--the narrator only belatedly discovers that her brother's skin has darkened due to the disease. AIDS does not become the answer to the question of colour, however. The medical and biological narratives which offer to situate the subject remain as suspect in the context of the virus as they do in the context of our cultural narratives of race and gender. Rather, the virus is understood as participatory in questions of identity politics, such as sexual orientation and "colour," colonizing the body through a narrative of symptoms it is powerless to resist.

More importantly, Kincaid's language is torn between an Americanized English, an Americanized translation of Antiguan dialect, and (most often placed in parentheses) a rendering of Antiguan dialect. Conducted primarily in Americanized English, the Antiguan dialect marks the language of the novel with its own peculiar form of linguistic hybridity. The process of translation between cultures and languages has multiple stages, and its complexities, like the complexities facing the migrant subject, are not easily resolved. When the language attempts to address the virus that infects the individual body, language refuses to name the site of dispossession and displacement. The narrator uses medical terminology at times, though most often she resorts to the more metaphoric term, "virus." The narrator's brother is said never to refer to the disease by name and only rarely to acknowledge its existence. When he does begin to name the virus, he calls it "this stupidness (dis chupidness)." It is a term that encompasses the condition of the migrant subject: incredulity and incomprehension along with cynical nihilism; resistance, anger, and dismissiveness as well as reluctant acceptance.

Renate Eigenbrod *(Lakehead):* Who is the Teacher of This Class? A Reconsideration of the Production of Knowledge in a Cross-Cultural Literature Course

The title for this proposal is worded as an analogy to the title of a book which was one of my first readings in the field of Native literature - Who is *the Chairman of This Meeting?,* a collection of essays on Indigenous ways of conceptualizing and coming to knowledge, published in 1972. The question in the title is a quote from "a modern legend" asked in order to establish a hierchical order in a situation in which the speaker desperately needs to be assured of his control and power. It seems to me that the context of my title locates my paper right from the beginning in relation to "the whole complex problem of knowledge and power" (Said) which I want to discuss. Since my reading of the above mentioned book in the early 80's I have been "the Chair" in my role as teacher-critic in a second year university Canadian Native -or First Nations - Literature course; however, over the years, I became increasingly

aware that I was being taught as much as I was teaching. In a class in which approximately half of the students are of aboriginal descent and the other half mostly from Eurocanadian (immigrant) families with a curriculum focusing on a "minority literature" supposedly particularly relevant to the first-mentioned group, the awareness of being taught while also being a teacher made me ask a number of questions:

1. Do you think I have to admit to being taught because I am not of Native but of European descent and hence feel either incompetent or uncomfortable because I seem to perpetuate a colonial teaching situation? Am I doing what Henry Giroux, quoting Grossberg, warns teachers not to do, namely by refusing to assert their authority "erasing themselves in favor of the uncritical reproduction of the audience [students]"?

2. What is it that I am being taught? What should I learn and from whom? Do I consider an Aboriginal student more knowledgeable than a non-Aboriginal student because he or she "lived it" (Rita Joe)? Am I "fetishizing the informant" (Spivak)? Do all Native students offer equally valid knowledge or do I have to respect culturally recognized criteria (e.g. age) for identifying the most knowledgeable person? Do I follow the rationale for identity politics and validate students with a "traditional" upbringing "rooted" in an Indigenous language?

3. If I want to stay away from "an essentializing notion of voice" (Giroux), I face another dilemma: how do I get around the irony implied in the history of colonial and "post"-colonial education which started out by silencing Aboriginal people because of **their race and** now de-validates their voices by proposing that race, identity and experience are mere constructs? Could I be comfortable with a pedagogical philosophy that moves "into and out of rhetorics of authenticity" (Pratt)?

4. How can all students in my class understand their limitations without feeling limited in their search for knowledge?

Taking "the pedagogical arts of the contact zone" (Pratt) and the concept of a "border pedagogy" (Giroux) as frameworks and models, I want to attempt in my paper to answer the above questions; the discussion will include, for example, the role of storytelling in critical pedagogy (Razack), Freire's dialogical model as well as strategies which connect a university course with the community (and communities) outside the university walls.

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John Eustace (Acadia): "Waiting for the Barbarians": Peter Carey's *Bliss* and the Ethics of Millenialism

In its own endearingly cross-eyed way, the discipline of postcolonialism tends to see almost everything as double, so why should the turn of the millennium be any different? It's not, of course, and turning the postcolonial bifocal on the millennium reveals its doubleness in interesting ways. I would like to examine one of those ways, by suggesting that the millennium might be read as a space in which ethical and unethical knowledges are contested.

Ethical knowledge, from the postcolonial perspective, would be any body of truth claims that identifies and articulates the workings of colonial and neo-colonial discourses. Unethical knowledge, then, would be any body of truth claims that serves those discourses. As the site of ethical knowledge, the millennium is fairly easy to understand; it is an admittedly arbitrary vantage point which invites us to triangulate our positions and determine our trajectories within the larger framework of colonial and neo-colonial history. As the site of unethical knowledge, the millennium is a bit more complex: it is a vehicle of self-indulgence and escapism, a vehicle by which fantastic and apocalyptic conspiracy is exercised for mass entertainment in a way that allows us to ignore real oppression; it is a vehicle of performative containment. We watch "The X-Files" with its "cancer man" and "Millennium" with its stress on the convergence of evil that will follow the turn of this century not to confirm our suspicions about the collusions of government and multinational corporations, nor to confirm our fears about the existence of some abstract evil in our lives, but to allay fears about such collusions and evils by performing them as entertainment. Clearly, if we turn the postcolonial glass on the millennium to see its doubleness, we must recognise it as a rather problematic space, simultaneously the site of political clarification and obfuscation.

Peter Carey's first published novel, *Bliss* (1981), the story of "good bloke" and storyteller extra ordinaire, Harry Joy, seems to represent this quandary. Told from the postapocalyptic perspective of Harry's children in the pastoral setting of Bog Onion Road, Queensland, Australia, the novel describes Harry's pursuit and eventual acquisition of bliss on the margins of his society. Whether he actually achieves that bliss in this pastoral setting is a matter of some critical debate, of course, because to concede that he does, is to concede that Cary's text is endorsing an escapist agenda. Harry's discovery of bliss on the margins of his society comes, after all, at the expense of his responsibility to his family and his community in the metropolis. In abandoning his children-one of whom is, by the way, a certifiable millenarian, "waiting for the Barbarians" (228)-and running away to Bog Onion Road, he knowingly escapes the apocalyptic cancer epidemic which he, as the owner of an advertising company has helped to create.

Carey's own statements that he intended the ending as an "unalloyed celebration," and other statements to the effect that 'the whole book stands or falls' on the pastoral lyricism of the ending" (Woodcock 51) have fuelled the debate about whether Harry's pastoral bliss is idealised or ironic. Critics, such as Graeme Turner and A. J. Hassell, see Harry's bliss as genuine. They defend Carey's narrative from charges of escapism by focussing on Harry's adaptation to the margins the neo-colonial stories of his youth. They see in this act an appropriative resistance that gives value to the marginalised community (Hassell, 1989: 641; Turner 1986: 441). Others, such as Teresa Dovey and Bruce Woodcock, see Harry's bliss as highly problematised. They identify a dystopian element in Bliss, seeing in its ending a narrative idealisation that calls attention to itself and to the problematic constructedness of its utopian ideal (Dovey 203; Woodcock 49). Hence the novel's location in this quandary between millennial clarification and obfuscation. To support Turner's and Hassell's readings-despite their attempts to identify the novel's effective resistance-is to relegate the novel to the dusthin of performative containment. For the mode of resistance they identify in the text ultimately inscribes the binary between centre and margin, effectively containing all attempts at decentring. To read the novel as Dovey and Woodcock suggest, however, is to dismiss Carey's own statements about the unalloyed celebration of the ending, and to identify a self-reflexivity in the text that challenges the impulse to performative containment. In this case, one sees the text deconstructing the processes by which simplistic and essentialised understandings of the world operate.

Douglas Ivison *(Montréal):* With Chinua Achebe in the Contact Zone: *Things Fall Apart* and/as Colonial Discourse

Achebe has said that one of his most important objectives in writing *Things Fall Apart* was to recuperate and recover African history and culture from its appropriation by the colonizers, the

British, and many of his critics have made similar arguments. Achebe's comments in various essays and interviews condition his readers and critics to read his fiction as an explicit response to colonialist fiction about Africa. His is presumed to be a more accurate representation than that of writers like Joyce Cary, for example.

Assuming that the question of the 'authenticity' of *Things Fall Apart's* historical representation of Ibo life is problematic and theoretically unproductive, this paper will examine the extent to which the text does/does not successfully rewrite the colonial narrative, through reading it in conjunction with another fiction of colonial contact, H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* (1885). Bracketing the most intensive period of British imperialism in Africa, these two novels would seem to be totally dissimilar. Yet, both texts narrate the same historical moment, that of first contact between British colonialists and an 'untouched' African society. Furthermore, each text played a key role in producing 'Africa' for its contemporary readers, and they continue to work to produce competing, but not necessarily incompatible, 'Africas' in today's Western cultural imaginary.

Each of these stories takes place in what Mary Louise Pratt has called the "contact zone,' in which two cultures and societies collide and interact. This paper is, in a sense, such a contact zone, recognizing as it does the mutual constitution of subjectivity in relation to texts 'representing' the Other. By reading a colonialist romance and a postcolonial novel with and against each other, we are able to recognize the intertextual field in which our readings are always already participating. Those of us in the West, at the very least, cannot read one without the other. Even the reading practices of those in Africa, as Achebe's own experience testifies, are to some extent implicated within the intertextual field of colonial discourse. As a result, this paper will argue that *Things Fall Apart is* unavoidably interpellated by and within colonial discourse, and so are its readers. While it does successfully challenge and rewrite earlier representations of Africa in colonialist narratives, it remains entrapped within colonial discourse. While it does not deploy many of the rhetorical strategies which are typical of earlier colonial narratives, and while it tells the story of contact from the opposite perspective, it inevitably reproduces some of those rhetorical strategies and its critique of other strategies opens rhetorical spaces in which colonialism can be legitimated.

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Karen E. Macfarlane (McGill): Gender, Colonialism and the Wild Colonial Girl in Canada and Australia

In early women's writing in the settler colonies, the tension between traditions-British and Colonial, as well as masculine and feminine-is articulated through a sophisticated interrogation and reinscription of the British literary tradition. In this paper, I discuss the manifestation of the "wild colonial girl" in the works of two of the most influential women writing in Canada and Australia at the turn of the century. Lucy Maud Montgomery and Miles Franklin. In *Anne of Green Gables (1908)* and *My Brilliant Career* (1901). Montgomery and Franklin constructed what is arguably the paradigmatic representation of the "wild colonial girl" in their national contexts. I argue here that Anne and Sybylla are paradigmatic "wild colonial girls" * within their respective contexts. Independent, driven, intelligent and tenacious, these characters are *in,* but not *of*, their societies. Both Anne and Sybylla "should have been.. .boy[s]" (Franklin) and the emphasis in these texts on the significance of the masculine in settler cultures-and the corresponding peripheral positioning of the feminine-shapes the resistant process of self-definition for both of these characters.

Defining "Self" through both English literary standards and masculine frames of reference, the "wild colonial girl" is placed at the discursively precarious space between hegemonic notions of masculine and feminine; at a transitional and uncharted point between cultural codes and their own experiences and inclinations. The "wilderness" of these characters is constructed quite differently in the Canadian and Australian works. For Montgomery, the power to name and to reinscribe oneself is intimately connected with the process of interrogation and

reinscription that shapes her character's resistance. Anne is, I argue, the paradigmatic Canadian version of the "wild colonial girl."

She is described throughout the novel as inquisitive, intelligent, independent, capable and iconoclastic. Anne's point of view is consistently *other than* that of the inhabitants of Avonlea. Her interrogative perspective challenges the ideology, rituals and value systems of the community. While Anne is subversive, however, Franklin's Sybylla Melvyn openly and unequivocally rejects the values, roles and structures that are at work within her culture. *My Brilliant Career is* a more overtly political novel than Montgomery's text, and, like other Australian authors, Franklin explores the multiple levels of control imposed by many interconnected political systems.

Both authors were aware of the power of the cultural mythologies that defined and excluded women in these settler spaces and, through their young protagonists, initiate a form of woman-centred resistance to those mythologies in which the vocabularies of the narrative discourses that sustained those mythologies were extended and reworked in order to accommodate the experience of women.

Note

*1 first came across this extremely evocative phrase in Susan Gardiner's article "My *Brilliant Career:* Portrait of the Artist as a Wild Colonial Girl.' Gardiner, however does not pursue the implications of the potential for disruption and interrogation in that wildness, and it is with this in mind that I have adapted the term in this discussion.

Claudia Marquis *(Auckland): Not At Home In Her Own Skin:* Jamaica Kincaid, Selfhood and History

Throughout Jamaica Kincaid's fiction, plot tends to equate with history, the critical point in which is the moment when the protagonist speaks and acts in full possession of herself. Identity often seems like heroic solitude: "I was alone in the world. It was not a small accomplishment. I thought I would die doing it." (Lucy) This sense of perilous identity is the immediate object of my paper; it is an identity that is achieved against the odds, because of the cultural forces that both underpin it and stand against it.

The first of these complex cultural forces is social-it's a matter of race and region. Kincaid's novels deal with the fashioning of identity not as a black problem, say, but as a black West Indian problem, achieved in resistant thraldom to a common past-formed fantasy, the story of slavery: "the simple tale of victimisation, the simple triumph of emancipation." How do you become yourself, compose yourself in a society that mires you in daily corruption and/or lays over you the grid of types that derives from a past you cannot ignore?

Secondly, in Kincaid's novels the need and capacity to divest one's self of a phantasmatic past is bound up in her central representation of the mother/daughter relationship. This relationship is the dominant problematic of Kincaid's writing. In *Annie John,* her first novel, Annie's mother is treated quite sympathetically, although seen as a victim of white, European ideology, especially in her adoption of the white attitude to sexuality and the female body. Annie wishes to be absorbed into the mother, to be like her. In *Lucy,* the argument with the mother is carried further. Now it's "My past was my mother," as the protagonist sets about defining herself by creating distance between them. In making the mother both the source of identity and an obstacle to achieving it, Kincaid responds to psychological truths, but also to the contradictory realities of a Caribbean inheritance and upbringing.

While the estrangement between the mother and the daughter is a psychological universal, then, its configurations in Kincaid's writing are culture specific, with details drawn from the experience of the colonised, which means that it is impossible to reduce it to a universal female experience, that which binds woman to woman, mother to daughter. Repeatedly women,

mothers, determine the authentic, in functioning as repositories of local knowledge. Kincaid herself has acknowledged her abiding preoccupation with this relationship, but has also argued that she is mostly interested in it as a way of figuring the history of Caribbean colonisation.

I would argue, then, that in *Lucy,* for instance, for all the sense of personal conflict, the protagonist's history of savage, emotionally fraught separation from her mother, inflected with the signs of cultural difference, should be read as functioning in the way Frederic Jameson argues the literature of most emerging nations works-as a compact allegory of nationhood. Kincaid's ability to link the psychologically provocative with the culturally significant is a crucial element in her method of indirection. What might be seen as a passionate fixation with an elemental relationship-unalloyed childhood infatuation with the mother and then resistance to her engulfing power-now acquires a distinct ideological charge.

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JoAnn McCaig *(Calgary):* Bad Faith: Author, Text and Reader In Carol Shields' *Swann: A Literary Mystery*

Swann: A Literary Mystery is deceptively packaged in the highly formulaic mode of the detective novel, but the text concerns itself not with solving a murder-but with exposing the unseemly relationship, in literary ideology, between author, text and (particularly academic) reader. Pierre Bourdieu, in *The Field of Cultural Production,* asserts that "The artistic field is a *universe of belief.* Cultural production distinguishes itself from the production of the most common objects in that it must produce not only the object in its materiality, but also the value of this object, that is the recognition of artistic legitimacy. "(164) *Swann: A Literary Mystery* places this universe of belief under scrutiny, and interrogates, at the fictional and actual levels, the material object of the text and the production of its value.

At the fictional level, the author Mary Swann is a naive genius and a tragic victim-suggesting the traditional, romantic construction of authorship. Mary Swann's o1ly book, the ironically named *Swann 's Songs,* suffers more imperilments than a maiden tied to the railroad tracks. Mary Swann's readers-two academics, a publisher, and a librarian-are shameless, selfish, greedy, possessive and selfaggrandizing.

In the unfolding of Mary Swann's story, however, Shields invites another level of questioning of author, text, and reader. The "actual" author Carol Shields is no tragic victim, but an author of what has been labelled as "women's magazine fiction with a little extra intelligence," an author seeking to widen her audience, to be taken seriously, to be valued differently. Shields' text is a deft, multiple point of view mystery novel, and in fact it won The Crime Writer's Arthur Ellis Award. However, the subject is not murder but the idolatry of literature, and, in formal terms, the novelistic gives way to the dramatic in the closing chapter, which is written as screenplay. The mystery is not a whodunit but rather an attempt to disclose the mystery of the power of literature in the lives of readers. And Shields' readers? For this reader, at least, there is a moment in *Swann* in which the fictional text threatens to be proven a fraud. My visceral reaction to this scene was a painful recognition of, and an invitation to re-evaluate, the covenant I make with literary texts. In *Swann,* Shields pays attention both to the materiality of the artistic object and to the ways in which its value is created-thus problematizing and challenging the ideological assumptions of literary creation and especially the "universe of belief" that a reader brings to a text.

Bourdieu has described the field of cultural production as a "bad faith" economy, and Shields deftly gathers her antagonists against each other in ways that make the "bad faith" of cultural economy abundantly clear. When Brownie steals and destroys all but one copy of Swann's book, he forces the others to set aside their own ambitions to possess, to appropriate, the work and suffering of one small town battered wife who happened to write poetry, and to return to the text itself, and to the elemental pleasure that is the essential power of literature.

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Philip Mingay *(Alberta):* Yes, We Always Have Bananas: Teaching the Consumer-Oriented Student in a NeoColonialist Society

When introducing first-year university students to a colonial or post-colonial text I include questions about bananas: "How much do bananas cost?" "Is that a good price?" "Have you ever been to a store that has been out of bananas?" "Where do bananas come from?" "Who picks the bananas and how much do you think they are paid?" "Who owns the banana companies?" The purpose of these questions becomes evident to the students: the production of bananas is neoimperialist endeavour with colonial roots. It also becomes evident that many students, particularly young students, do not know very much about bananas other than that they taste good.

My pedagogical agenda, however, is possibly just as exploitive as the production of the banana: reveal the students' general lack of knowledge about food production so that they identify with the plot and politics of the text. Because students are targeted consumers they understand the banana analogy, and it helps prepare them for more complex topics of rhetoric, identity, and imperialism. The analogy works because colonialism, simply put, is the exploitation of another's wealth and the cultural manipulation to maintain this wealth, thus making historical methods of selling empire comparable to the marketing methods of today's multinational corporations. Slogans urging citizens of the British Empire to "Follow the Flag in All Your Purchases" are remarkably similar to advertisements telling the "Pepsi Generation" to "Just Do It" in that both rely on a passive, emotional response that hides the monetary agenda of the producer. As a result, the "imperial preference" of the British Empire is now a corporate allegiance that defines the consumer among his or her peers. Once buying Empire was morally good; now the act of purchasing itself is a sign of goodness, and product loyalty has replaced national loyalty. It is at this stage of the conference presentation that I will briefly explain visual comparisons between advertisements from nineteenth-century Britain and advertisements from today.

However, employing analogy to introduce critical methodologies creates problems. Unfortunately, excessive consumption of goods and images means teaching critically passive students in a manner that may elicit much response as they provide their own personal analogies, but ultimately caters to their self-interests. Students recognize imperialistic rhetoric, but often in a removed and detached manner because its political content is distant. As a result, preparing a post-colonial lecture does not necessarily involve outlining its basic literary traits, but rather providing a current social context packaged in rudimentary semiotics.

Thus the question is raised: does such a presentation, even if properly executed, fully prepare a text for a detailed examination of its post-coloniality, or does it delay more meaningful questions of ideology and agency while the instructor entertains the students with interesting historical comparisons? Deconstructing social binaries is not the same as deconstructing literary ones, especially when current codes are often visual rather than textual. Consequently, another disturbing question must be asked: does the post-colonial context exist only within the confines of the text itself? More specifically, are students aware that Canada is a post-colonial country? Unlikely, since brand loyalty has replaced nation loyalty. Within the text, the students understand the colonial process, but not always a character's motivations and actions that result from his or her lack of agency. Therefore, how useful is analogy, and by straying from more conventional critical practices is post-colonial criticism limiting a text's ability to confront issues of imperialism? I do not believe so, but I also no longer believe that my witty, insightful analogies instantaneously provides my students critical access to complex literary issues.

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Maureen Moynagh (St. *Francis Xavier):* The Ethical Turn in Postcolonial Theory and Narrative: A Reading of Michelle Cliff's No *Telephone to Heaven*

Kwaine Anthony Appiah's contention that the distinction between the "post" in postcolonial and the "post" in postmodern lies in the appeal of the former to an ethical universal flags a facet of postcolonial theorizing that has not as yet been adequately addressed. There can be little doubt of the veracity of Appiah's claim about the ethical orientation of postcolonial theory, but as the very title of Appiah's piece "Is the Post- in Postmodernism the Post- in Postcolonial?" in *Critical Inquiry* (Winter 1991) implies, the search for an ethical foundation for postcolonial theory is vitiated by its other post-foundational affiliations. In this light, while one may be inclined to agree with the tenor of Sarya P. Mohanty's claim that "the most powerful philosophical ally of modern anticolonial struggles of all kinds is [the] universalist view that individual human worth is absolute," one can't help find the Kantian framework he chooses oddly anachronistic. On the other hand, Homi Bhabha's most recent efforts ("Minority Manoeuvers and Unsettled Negotiations") to find a betwixt-and-between alternative seem less a solution than a protracted demonstration of the problem. Rather than sally forth on this terrain (to take up Bhabha's military metaphors, if not his agenda), I wish to pursue an excursus that may prove somewhat less intractable: a materialist genealogy of this ethical turn. For the purposes of this paper, moreover, I will attempt that genealogy-in true literary-critical fashion-via a reading of a novel, Michelle Cliffs No Telephone to Heaven.

In Cliff's novel, a loss of faith in the institutions of modernity and in the efficacy of master narratives is situated in the context of neocolonial devastation and the apparent failure of anti-colonial national liberation-on the terrain, in other words, of what has come to be known as the "postnational." Cliff paints a socio-political scene in which civil society has broken down, historically-grounded categories of emancipation no longer seem available, and revolutionary action has become the stuff of Hollywood cinema. What does it mean to act ethically in such conditions? All that is left is the recognition of human pain and suffering and an impulse to end it. Significant portions of the narrative trace the life journey of a character, Clare Savage, whose fragmented diasporic identity seems the quintessence of the hybrid "post-marked" subjectivity currently embraced in so much postcolonial theorizing. The formal features of the novel itself, to the extent that it eschews linear narrative, and in some respects, closure, is episodic, multi-layered, and apparently polyphonic, suggest the novel's imbrication in the cultural logic of postmodernity. Yet the presence of an omniscient third-person narrator contributes to a realist hierarchy of discourses that directs both reader and protagonist toward an ethical turn: "Cyann live split. Not in this world" is the pronouncement of Harry/Harriet, arguably the most hybrid character in the novel, and the character who guides Clare in her political development. The refusal of the "ludic" politics of postmoderity in favour of armed insurrection, a choice that is not presented without irony in the novel, can perhaps be read as an imaginary resolution of the real contradictions of postnationalism. In this way, the contradictions that beset ethical action and also render it necessary, may be taken as the material basis for postcolonial theory and narrative alike.

Anil Persaud (UT): Towards the Nation State

Chinua Achebe's novel Arrow *of God,* among other things, can be read as a comment on the state of colonialism, as a report on the presence and impact of British colonial authority in the Ibo heartland of Eastern Nigeria in the early 1920s.

Similarly, I propose to present on the current state of postcolonialism. To report on the presence and impact of postcolonialism on the now middle aged nation state in the late 1990s. I will do this through a blend of essay and fiction, of narrative and theory, unabashedly using Arrow *of God,* the plot, language and insights therein, as my foundation. (To use Achebe's work as a reflection of and a discourse on the development of post-colonialism.) For example, I find particularly fertile Achebe's fictional village, Umuaro, the coming together of six villages under one god for their own reasons and the efforts of Captain Winterbottom to exploit (and eventually kill) this strategic, dynamic organization.

(Can the nation state ever become what it really is, a notion state? In the middle of this century, the way out of (colonial) domination was thought to be the nation state, and so the globe became a quilt of nation states. Ironically, however, much of the world map is again a familiar though deeper shade of red. That which once served to keep out now serves to contain.)

Written in the 1960s, Achebe, with the benefit of hindsight, was able to present a real time, running account of (what seemed to be the trend) the move from direct to indirect-rule in the British colony. The phase after indirect rule being nationalism and independence. Present all around us today are the devastating effects of that progress. Is post-colonial theory, in its own way, heading down the same path?

My aim in the presentation is to first, reiterate the now familiar parallels between colonialism and post-colonialism (or post-colonial theory) using Achebe's novel. Then, believing as I do that we are firmly in the middle of the indirect-rule phase of post-colonialism, to ask, is there anything we can learn from the history of colonialism that may be applied to the fate of post-colonialism? Are there strategies we can develop to derail us from re-treading the path of direct-indirect-independent rule? If, as appears to be globalizations message, independence is a myth, then are the current battles of post-colonialism worth the effort? Indeed, what, if anything, is post-colonialism fighting for these days? Has the time come for post-colonialism to re-examine its mandate?

The above preamble aside, post-colonialism helped create and is now dependent for its survival on the existence of the nation state, it therefore, can never objectively critique the state. The nation state needs to be dismantled. Is it the post- colonial industry that is in the way? Two new battles need to be fought: One, against what is quickly becoming the reified post-colonial industry with headquarters in the first-world and, two, against the borders that are the fortress states that litter the third-world. Increasingly, the walls of the nation state serve to contain not to keep out.

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Lori Pollock *(Queen's):* 'For years now we black women have been fighting for our rights': Collaborative Drama and Community Healing

This paper will examine the role of collaborative drama in establishing national, communal, and personal identities in South Africa in order to investigate how black women writers are beginning to perform the work necessary to heal communities affected by the destructive cultural and social legacies of apartheid. You *Strike the Woman You Strike the Rock,* by Thobeka Maghutana, Nomvula Qosha, Xolani September, Poppy Tsira and Humeleng Wa-Lehulerle (1986) was first performed at the Arena Theatre, University of Cape Town, proffering itself as "a celebration of the spirit of the millions of black women in South Africa who refused to give in to an oppressive system." The desire of these writers to depart from the currently male-centred mythologies of South Africa and instead initiate a process of cultural healing through the provision of positive female identities is evident in their narrativization of identities for women that are individualized yet inextricably bound with their communities.

You Strike the Woman You Strike the Rock initiates this process of cultural healing for black women by allowing them to envision empowerment before they are able to attain it economically, socially, or psychologically by relating the vicissitudes of three women selling chickens and oranges on the outskirts of Cape Town. The play offers empowering models for South African women and creates a crucial space for the performance of gendered identities: it provides a protected place to inhabit or perform identities that most masculinized narratives in South Africa elide or disavow. This paper will interrogate the extent to which this play may be read as an appropriate healing strategy for women who do not currently have unrestricted access to mutable identities, for the play informs us that women in South Africa often inhabit various identities as a matter of survival rather than as an effect of conscious choice.

Antje M. Rauwerda *(Queen's):* Homing Devices: The Uncanny in Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*

In Imaginary Homelands, Salman Rushdie writes "The Satanic Verses is the story of two painfully divided selves ...The novel is 'about' their quest for wholeness.' These divided selves, Saladin Chamcha and Gibreel Farishta, struggle to establish wholeness through "homedness." For both, the attempt to consolidate identity is predicated on notions of belonging and home. Saladin struggles to make England home, but uncanny incidents point to the impossibility of his divorcing himself from his other, Indian, home in order to achieve this. Gibreel seeks a secular home in the present, but the religious "home" in his history uncannily maintains a hold on him. Both characters entertain irreconcilable "homing" desires which manifest themselves uncannily in The Satanic Verses. This paper will interrogate the post-colonial problem of establishing a notion of "home" from numerous contradictory options by examining the operation of the unhomely/uncanny as that which gestures most effectively towards both the "unhomed" condition of characters like Gibreel and Saladin, and to their desires for home.

Desires repressed into the unconscious, as Sigmund Freud notes, come to light in unexpected and peculiar ways *(Das Unheimliche). This* paper will examine how Saladin and Gibreel's conflicting desires for different kinds of home manifest themselves as both unhomely perceptions of place, and uncanny events. I will refer extensively to Freud's *Das Unheimliche,* using "unheiinlich" in both its German senses: uncanny and unhomely. I will consider in particular the uncanny as a surfacing of repressed desires in dreams, delusions, Freudian slips, aberrant perceptions of events and even, in unintentional interpellations into repressed colonial and racist notions (for instance when Saladin metamorphoses into a priapic goat, fulfilling a racist stereotype of the kind Fanon critiques). I will examine as well the phenomenon of the double which works particularly pervasively in Gibreel and Saladin's Angelic/Devilish partnership. I will also consider the link with female genital organs as the site of *Heim,* or homeliness and investigate how this is manifested in Saladin and Gibreel's *unheimlich* relationships with women in the text.

As Benedict Anderson observes in *Imagined Communities,* the construction of an idea of home
is reliant on several factors, the most prominent of which is the very fact of the *construction* of an idea of that place. Similarly, the uncanny or unhomely is also always, at some level, reliant on individual construction. When, in post-colonial context, competing constructions and ideals of "home" run up against one another, problems of "unhomeliness," and concomitant fracturings or losses of identity, arise. Even as the postcolonial moment is predominantly concerned with constructing home, and how one is at home, so it conjures up spectres of what is *not* home, an how one is fractured or alienated. Homi Bhabha writes of the unhomely effect as, specifically, the recognition of the strange and frightening aspects of one's dwelling *(The Location of Culture).* While this is certainly true, the unhomely effect is also produced by conflicting, frequently unconscious desires. Thus the postcolonial individual recognises not only the strange and frightening aspects of their "unhome," but also those aspects of themselves. Gibreel and Saladin both conjure up or construct their "unhomes" *and* perceive them as uncanny; they are thus afraid of what they recognise of their own desires in apparently inexplicable phenomena. Postcolonially, constructing "home" is a process of acknowledging repressed or hidden "unhomes" and of reconstructing what the word "home" means in the context of them.

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Sheila Roberts *(Wisconsin-Milwaukee):* Magical Realism as Strategy of Reconstitution in Recent Afrikaans Literature

In Anthony Voss's article on "Reading and Writing in the New South Africa: *(Current Writing, Vol.* 4, No. 1) he quotes Michael During's remark that "the postcolonial novel has a specific relation to classic realism." He also quotes During's observation on "the civil imaginary," a writerly state of mind which does not simply report on or symbolize, but envisions its society. In my paper I should like to challenge During's all-inclusive linking of the postcolonial novel with classic realism in a discussion of the nature of recent Afrikaans fiction. For instance, Etienne van Heerden's work *(Kikoejoe* and *Toorberg)* relies on a magic realism that envisions a mythically transformed earth where all South Africa's ethnic groups are restored to possessing the land, even as Afrikaner ghosts wander at night, sensed by the living and by other restless spirits. His work gives full imaginative treatment to the ancient relation between Afrikaners, Khoisan, Colored and IXam populations; it opens its doors to vitally real Gays, Lesbians, dagga-smokers, colorful con-men (e.g. a Gene Autry poseur in a white costume on a white stallion), and people with unusual insanities.

In Karel Schoeman's novels such as *'n Ander Land, Afskeid en Vertrek,* and *Verkenning,* South African history is reexamined and an imaginative connection between past and present established in writing employing both realistic and self-reflexive modes.

I believe that the magic realism and self-reflexity (another example being John Miles's *Kroniek uit die doofpot)* currently being exploited by Afrikaans writers derive from the early poetry and later fictional work, such as *Miernes,* of Breyten Breytenbach, and novels like Venter's Witblitz (1986) and Ryger's *die hol gevoel* (1989). I hope to offer theories as to why some writers splintered off from the traditional novel of farm-life or the dissenting but realistically conceived work of, for instance, Jan Rabie and Andre Brink. I shall open the paper by an examination of Jack Cope's theories in *The adversary within: dissident writers in Afrikaans* (1982) and then move on to my own, hopefully informed, analyses and speculations.

Constance Rooke *(Guelph): The Writer's* (and the Critic's) *Path:* Who Leads the Reader Where and Why?

This is a polemical talk addressing the fate of the postcolonial literary text and its author and readers in an era/academic milieu characterized by the ascendancy of postcolonial (and other) theory. Taking off from *The Writer's Path,* a new short story anthology co-edited by Constance and Leon Rooke, it discusses the principles of selection employed as well as the potential for offense in the title, and goes on to raise some concerns about our current pedagogy.

Lisa Salem-Wiseman (York): 'We are not alone here, Charlie': Madness, Nature, and Wonder in Timothy Findley's *The Piano Man's Daughter*

The Piano Man's Daughter is one of many of Timothy Findley's works which problematize the categories of sanity and madness. Lily Kilworth joins a long line of Findley protagonists who range from the mildly unbalanced to the clinically insane, and whose position on the margins of "insane" social systems allows them to resist the tyranny of those systems. In the contemporary world in and of which Findley writes, a world in which, according to R. D. Laing, "normal men have killed perhaps 100,000,000 of their fellow normal men in the last fifty years," those who stand outside the realm of the normal, of the "sane" are perhaps the only ones who do exhibit true sanity. In his preparatory notes for his novel *The Wars,* Findley expressed similar sentiments, writing that the premise of that novel "is simply that the human race has gone mad and one of them decides that-before it's too late-the other inhabitants of the

planet must be saved." While Robert Ross is labelled mad by the society whose codes he has transgressed, Findley makes it clear that the madness is not Robert Ross's, but the world's; this is a world so out of balance that it can only understand Robert's act-which involves risking human lives in order to save the lives of non-human beings-as insanity. In *The Piano Man's Daughter,* Lily Kilworth, like Robert Ross, transgresses the generally accepted hierarchy which places human lives above all others. Lily suffers from a madness which not only manifests itself through seizures and the setting of fires, but most remarkably, through an intense connection with the animal and insect worlds. All three of these manifestations of Lily's illness function strategically in the novel to subvert the artifice, hypocrisy and rigidity of the conventions by which the so-called "rational" world is governed, but it is her *benevolence,* her affinity for nonhuman beings, her recognition that "we are not alone" in the world, that ultimately points beyond the ossified polarities of bourgeois culture to a reconciliation of divided worlds.

The world into which Lily is born is one of narrow minds and rigid codes of behaviour, a society in which a piano is both reducible to a mere artifact, a "sign and signal of civilization" (p. 26) and feared for its power to inspire and excite the emotions. James Kilworth's repression of the nonrational leads to his condemnation of the piano as "a pagan instrument," (p. 26) words which foreshadow Lily's own brief encounter with Karl, a flautist whom she imagines as "the Great God Pan" (p. 448) and who, for Lily, combines the liberating, anti-rational principles of music and nature. Interestingly, although James forbids the introduction of a piano into his home, he does eventually learn to embrace the non-rational in the person of Lily, whom he welcomes into his home in spite of her illness. Thus, Lily acts as the agent of reconciliation of rational and non-rational worlds. Neither Lily's conception nor her birth occur in the stately family home of Munsterfield where Ede lives with her parents, but rather in the field across the road which is the site of her "conspiracies against reality"- fictions she constructs to derive hope and wonder from life, despite the rigid rules and conventions which structure her existence. Lily herself is the product of one such conspiracy; her very existence functions, therefore, as a corrective to the "reality" of life in turn-of-the-century Ontario.

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Susan Spearey *(Brock)* : The Readability of Conrad's Legacy: Narrative Navigations/Historiographic Revisions in *Heart of Darkness*

Homi Bhabha identifies the discovery of the European text in a colonial setting-a recurrent scenario in nineteenth-century imperialist writing-as simultaneously a constitutive imposition of authority--cultural, religious, political and textual-which is registered as a moment of historical and narrative origination, and also a point of disjunction or displacement in which colonial authority is reframed and revised almost at the very instant in which it is asserted. Marlow's discovery of Towser's/Towson's *An Inqidry into some Points in Seamanship* provides an obvious case in point, and the fact that the scene of inauguration/dislocation of authority is emblematised through the trope of navigation is highly suggestive. The navigational manual, although reassuring to Marlow in a world where all his bearings seem to have been lost, seems *out of* place-unhomely-and somehow unbefitting of the sacrosanctity with which he regards it. Its appropriateness to the situation with which he is immediately confronted seems tenuous, and its discovery raises questions not only as to how authority is constituted and sustained-and what kind of reality is posited by that authority-but also as to how the reader (whether Marlow himself, the narrator on board the Nellie, the latter's immediate audience, Conrad's contemporary readership, or the much more diversified global readership of *Heart of Darkness* in era of decolonisation) is to navigate through the text, through the reality it postulates as well as that which it excludes, through the historical trajectories it posits and through the topoi it evokes. Each of these readers is faced with such questions as, what is the nature of this odyssey? How is the journey signposted? How are those indicators to be read? What tools of navigation are at my disposal, and whence am I proceeding? And we, as the readers currently

at the furthest remove from the action recounted in the novella can see most plainly that the answers to these questions will differ markedly for each of the tale's audiences.

Clearly, both narrative and historical authority are called into question within the text, not only through the figure of Kunz, whose disembodied voice speaks eloquently-if disingenuously-of the idealism of European expansionist projects, and which compels Marlow onward, but also in the play between the novella's various narrative frames, its multiple speakers and audiences-both within the text and without-which leaves us wondering who is ultimately responsible for this story and how might we respond to its legacy, which must of necessity by polyvalent. *Heart of Darkness* continually articulates and calls upon its readers to witness acts of silencing, distortion, and repression; at the same time, it signals the weight of the authority it bears in its continual off-loading of the ethically burdensome tale.

One possible framing of the novella, which might serve to elucidate the further implications of the ideological and discursive interventions enacted within and by the text, is to situate it in alongside the textual experiments of contemporary writers whose work is informed by postmodernist, poststructuralist and posicolonialist thought, and who are engaged in working towards a truly postcolonial agency, history and subjectivity. *Heart of Darkness* anticipates many of the techniques of displacement, deconstruction and narrative self-reflexivity that have come to be recognisable features of postrnodermst and postcolonial texts, and in its engagement with questions of social responsibility, with speaking to-if not of-the absent presences of our constituted realities, and in its offering the reader strategies for reading and re-reading the text itself, it offers a useful 'navigational manual' for an interrogation of our own reading strategies, their agendas and implications. This paper seeks to investigate the ways in which *Heart of Darkness* asserts its authority *and* intervenes and displaces our contemporary reading practices, and the relationships we posit between textuality, discursivity and social responsibility.

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Claudia Walter *(Augsburg):* The City As Subject - Bombay in the Imagination of Salman Rushdie and Rohinton Mistry

In the earlier stages of Indian writing in English the romanticized village was often chosen as an appropriate setting to represent India. More recent Indo-English fiction proves that the Indian metropolis is equally representative of the subcontinent. The case of Bombay may be even stronger, since it is particularly syncretic: the range and complexity of its culture reflects the multiplicity of India as a whole.

Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* introduced us to Bombay's cataclytic powers, whereas Rohinton Mistry gave it literary identity in his two novels Such *a Long Journey* and *A Fine Balance* as well as in his earlier short story collection Tales from *Firozsha Baag*. As novelists but also as expatriates, they are both creating Bombays of their imaginations. The city thus ceases to be geographical territory and becomes instead an imaginary homeland. Nor do the narratives record post-Independence history, they fictionalize it.

For Rushdie, Bombay amalgamates India's diversity. His own absorption of the Hindu as well as Islamic heritage, he states, derives from the nature of the metropolis in which the multiplicity of commingled faiths and cultures curiously creates a remarkable secular ambience. The polyphonic voices of the city are reflected in the topic of the novel, the Midnight's Children Conference and in its melodramatic Bombay Talkie structure. But Bombay with its clash of colours is also his lost boyhood home and a metaphor for the impossibility of naming things.

The younger Canadian immigrant writer, Rohinton Mistry, also makes a fictional journey home to Bombay. Yet his realism is less magic and more in the tradition of Baizac. He leads his

readers through the jostling Bombay streets, evolving every distinctive smell and sound, behind compound walls and into the huts and houses where the millions sit, reinventing themselves, constantly reciting the stories of their own lives and times. Especially Mistry's latest novel, A *Fine Balance,* with its society ranging from untouchables to academics, shows plenty of symptoms of what Saleem Sinai, the child narrator of *Midnight's Children,* calls an Indian disease, this urge to encapsulate the whole of reality.

For both authors, the multicultural city is a meeting place of diverse and contradictory realities. Bombay, a city built by foreigners upon reclaimed land (Rushdie, *Imaginary Homelands), is* in Rushdie's and Mistry' s fiction a city of chaos and dreams, of realism and myth, which seeks a fine balance between hope and despair, between east and west. This paper suggests that the identity of the migrating subject may be reconstructed according to a more focussed unit of analysis, urban rather than national space.

Darryl Whetter *(UNB):* Losing Beautifully: Photography,
Failure and the Found in Michael Ondaatje's *Running in the Family*

First published in 1982, *Running in the Family* easily became an instant postmodern classic due to its skepticism of closure, its challenge to generic conventions and its foregrounded constructedness. Central to *Running's* celebrated post- modernity is its inclusion of eight found or inherited photographs. While the earlier and equally hybrid *The Collected Works of Billy the Kid* commanded various articles explicitly devoted to its uses of photography, *Running's* similar and in some ways more involved use and examination of photography does not enjoy comparable undivided attention. The continuing celebration of what David Leahy describes as *Running's* "literary resistance" renders this critical neglect all the more unacceptable in the work which clearly marks the (current) culmination of Ondaatje's objective use of photography (Leahy 68). While the later *In the Skin of a Lion* and *The English Patient* continue to explore photographs and photography as subjects, its is the triumvirate of *Billy, Coming Through Slaughter,* and *Running* in which they also appear as objects. This movement towards more formal or "less resistant" novel writing after the intensely hybrid and photographic *Running* is one indicator of the insubstantiality and inconclusivity of its photographic discoveries and exploits.

Running's uses of photography vociferously reject confidence in what Lorraine York terms the representational "fixity" of the camera. Photography is in fact one more medium through which, as Susan Spearey puts it, *Running* "constantly draws attention to what cannot possibly be told, to what is lost in translation" (137). The photographs of *Running* are implicated in processes which ultimately announce them as estranged, impermanent, and uncertain. In presenting the reader with photographs that are both public and intimate, Ondaatje's *Running* provides (visual) sites of history and intimacy *in addition* to the history and intimacy evoked through its figurative rhetoric. This narrative excess provides textbook examples of narratolog icat techniques such as Victor Shklovsky's *ostranenive* or Jean-Pierre Oudart's suture by making their text strange and implying additional presences, and surpluses to that text. The 'making familiar' of each photograph through emphases on materiality, memorability, and ineffability question the technologicality of the self. The undermining of each photograph's fixity through this achieved familiarity illustrates *Running's ontological doubts about the finiteness of textuality and representation.*

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1998 Executive Committee Reports

TREASURER'S REPORT

JULY 1- DECEMBER 31, 1997

Balance Forward, October 1, 1997	$16,825.72
INCOME	
Membership Fees (October '97-April 1, '98)	2,778.87
Commonwealth-In-Canada Registrations	600.00
Commonwealth-In-Canada Reimbursement (WLU)	1,432.60
Rebate from Memorial Learneds	639.97
HSSFC Accommodation Rebate	99.73
Total Income:	5,551.17
BALANCE	22,376.89
EXPENDITURES	
Wilfrid Laurier University (Commonwealth In Canada Cash Advance)	5,925.35
Travel & Accommodation (Secretary-Treasurer to HSSFC AGM/Ottawa)	552.61
Rebate to Invited Speaker (Commonwealth In Canada)	50.00
HSSFC 1998 Membership	460.00
Postage (Graduate Representatives Election Nov. '97 + Printing)	91.88
Postage (CACLALS Call for Nominations Mar. '98 + Photocopying)	105.23
Chimo 35 (Fall 1997)	
Printing 249.17	
Postage 113.75	*362.92*
Other	
Membership Forms - Printing	*9.00*
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	*$7,556.99*
BALANCE, APRIL 1, 1998	*$14,819.90*

The figures provided in the above statement agree with the recorded transactions with the Bank of Montreal in every respect.

GARY BOIRE, SECRETARY-TREASURER
WI if rid Laurier University

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Conferences, Announcements, Calls for Papers

Announcements

Because none of the graduate candidates in last year's election were able to take up the post of Graduate Representative, there will be an election at this year's AGM in Ottawa. We will, obviously, accept nominations from the floor for both positions of graduate representative whose terms of office will be for two years, and one year respectively beginning on September 1, 1998.

CACLALS currently has one member on the executive who represents the University Colleges in B.C. This position, however, is not written into the Constitution. Because of the advance

notice needed as stated in the Constitution, a Notice of Motion (and Call for Nomination) to include (officially) a B.C. College Representative needs to be made by the next executive.

Calls for Papers

Compr(om)ising Post-Colonialisms
February 10-13, 1999

Post-colonialism, like any important project of study, is a volatile site of contesting and contested ideas and practices. The post-colonial has been understood in the context of colonial list practice, but it has also been located in the equally ambiguous space of identity politics; it has been dismissed as a politically correct "methodology" developed by white cultures as a way of redefining themselves as nonracist and has been seen as a way for those in positions of power to maintain control over the definition and representation of oppressed groups. Alternatively, it has been applauded for creating a space in which the disempowered might speak and resist, and as a way to shift the boundaries of power to enable a celabratory gesture of rewriting boundaries and narratives. For some, the postcolonial has been celebrated for championing the so-called margins, but for others it has merely allowed for the restoration of "authority" to traditional key centres.

Precisely because of its fraught nature, the post-colonial is a vital site for interrogation and enquiry. The conference title suggests the internal conflict which operates across the field-the simultaneous act of constitution and dissolution which marks the project of post-colonialism.

The Centre for Research Into Textual and Cultural Study (CRITACS) invites offers of 20 minute papers which interrogate the project of post-colonialism from a range of disciplines and approaches. CRITACS particularly welcomes papers and/or projects which challenge and redefine (the boundaries of) the standard debates on post-colonialism. The conference seeks to bring together the creative and the critical, and to enter into debates on appropriation, multi- or inter-culturalism, identity politics, racialization and the indigenous responses to post-colonial theory. The organizers are seeking offers of paper, performances, installations, and panels which contribute to the debate.

Selected papers and presentations will be collected and published.

Abstracts of 400 words should be forwarded to Dr. Gerry Turcotte, English Studies Program, University of Wollongong, NSW, 2522 Australia by 30 September 1998. Fax: [61] (42) 214-471. E-mail: g.turcotte@uow.edu.au

I. C. C. L. '98, First International Conference on Caribbean Literature, Radisson Cable Beach Resort, Nassau, Bahamas, November 4-6, 1998

You are invited to submit one-page abstracts on any topic relevant to any aspect of Caribbean literature. Papers may be presented in English, French or Spanish. Interpreters will not be provided. Proposals for panels are welcome. Requests for moderators/chairs of sessions are also welcome.

Deadline for abstracts is May 29, 1998. Please send abstracts on Caribbean literature written in English to Melvin Rahming and abstracts on Caribbean literature written in French or Spanish to Jorge Roman-Lagunas.

Information concerning registration, accommodation and travel will be supplied by May 29, 1998. If you need information before this date, please contact Dr. Rahming or Dr. Roman-Lagunas.

Melvin Rahming, Co-Director, Morehouse College, Department of English and Linguistics, Atlanta, GA 30314. Telephone: (404) 681-2800 ext. 2512; Fax: (404) 614-8545;
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Send us your news for inclusion in the *next Chimo!*

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