

Chimo

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

This Issue

Presidential Letter

Report of Activities 1995-98

Conference Program

Conference Reports

Report from HSSFC

Abstracts of Papers

Executive Committee Report

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& Call for Papers*

Directory of Members

Number 38

Spring 1999

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

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Please address all membership correspondence to Gary Boire, Secretary-Treasurer.

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From the President

This spring issue of *Chimo* is slightly later than normal. We had a minor problem this year with members who offered papers and then withdrew those offers once accepted. In some cases they found they were unable to be in Sherbrooke at the time of the meetings; in others they had offered their papers to more than one Learned Society. When faced with a choice they chose against us.

The good thing about this phenomenon is that interest in the field on which CACLALS focuses is now widespread and part of the mainstream of literary studies in Canada. The resulting drop in the number of accepted papers available has led us to rearrange the program and concentrate it in two days. Since so much of the current Congress is interdisciplinary and since so many of our members—evidently!—belong to and participate in other societies, this trimming down of our program does leave our members free to spread their activities on the third day. The splitting of the meetings between Bishop's and Sherbrooke could make this element of freedom even more attractive. Our shared pedagogy session is, as you can see, now at Bishop's whereas most of our sessions are at Sherbrooke.

Another reason for the delay is the continuing difficulty in finding a home for the CACLALS executive team next year. A breakthrough does, however, appear imminent now. Instead of delaying the mailing of this edition of *Chimo*, with the program for Sherbrooke, I have decided to send out a slate of executive nominees in a separate mailing, which

will still give time for further nominations (if so desired) to be mailed in by members before the Annual General Meeting. In the Fall issue of *Chimo* you were all invited to make nominations and suggestions.

The extension of the term of the Gary/Rowland gang has meant that we in CACLALS are now in sync with ACLALS. The next ACLALS triennial will be in Canberra in 2001, during the second/third year of the next CACLALS Executive. The current President of CACLALS will then represent our organisation at the ACLALS triennial and have the same period of grace to report to CACLALS as I have had in reporting on the last triennial in Kuala Lumpur in December last year. As you recall, one of our problems has been that the CACLALS Executive triennial changeover coincided with the ACLALS triennial meeting. Now it does not.

That ACLALS triennial in Kuala Lumpur was a muted affair. Because it occurred in the early days of December there was poor attendance from Associations in the Northern Hemisphere. Those two Associations, CACLALS and EACLALS have the largest membership in ACLALS except for IACLALS. In the latter case what constitutes paid-up membership differs from the norm in EACLALS and CACLALS. There was significant representation in Kuala Lumpur from Asian and South-East Asian countries, although association officials from those regions complained at the ACLALS Executive meeting that many individuals attending the triennial in Kuala Lumpur were not paid-up members of their regional associations. A resolution was

passed in Kuala Lumpur that all those attending future triennials should have paid regional dues, or else pay them at the triennial conference on registration.

The meetings in Kuala Lumpur were held in an international hotel in the downtown area. This meant that many registrants, who could not afford to stay there, had to be bused back and forth from university residences some distance away. This is a bad idea. The collegial nature of the meetings is completely destroyed with such a divergence. With beer costing about \$5 a bottle in the conference hotel bars and lounges, even normal social interaction among delegates from have- and have-not regions was limited. In future we should argue consistently for triennial meetings to utilise residence accommodation and university social facilities. A significant feature of all such gatherings should be the informal conversation, the after-hours socialising, and the ability to do so in locales that at least to some extent reflect local culture and the texture of local experience. Few who were there can forget the time spent in the early hours at the "In Country" speak easy on the UWI, Mona, campus under the intrepid guidance of Victor Ramraj, who knew of the place, during the Jamaican triennial. There was a special quality to those beery conversations on metal chairs sinking slowly—and unevenly—into the bare soil, while the nocturnal chickens pecked at one's feet, and the guard dogs whined, their muzzles pressed to the cracks in the packing cases in which they were housed until all clients left and they were let free to guard the establishment. The hotel in Kuala Lumpur was FINE; it was comfortable, the food was good, it had a pool

and an exercise room—but it could have been in Mississauga.

There is another problem with ACLALS. With the organising Executive shifting from region to region every three years, it is losing its memory. Old timers constantly complain about earlier decisions—taken at the business meetings—being forgotten and/or ignored. The constitution is out of date. (Presidents/Chairs are now being asked to suggest revisions.) Regional interests tend to prevail. Your fearless leader and the equally fearless leader of EACLALS had to become aggressive (can you believe it?) with the Canberra organisers, and insist that the 2001 triennial be held in either July or August in order to allow significant numbers of our members to attend. The dates of November or December were being suggested by the Australians as the best for tourism, visits to the vineyards, and the opportunity to avoid the rigours of a Canberra winter. The final resolution, moving the Executive to SPACLALS, did in fact specify July or August as the months for the next triennial.

Once again, let me state what a pleasure it has been to serve as President of CACLALS, and how much we all owe to the efficiency and good spirits of Roza Cunningham. Gary and I bade a simian farewell (prematurely) last year. This year all three of us are doing so harlequin mode.

Rowland Smith
April 1999

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES 1995-98
Delivered at the ACLALS Triennial Conference,
Kuala Lumpur, December 1998

As a Canadian "Learned Society," CACLALS is affiliated with the Canadian Congress of Learned Societies and with the Social Science and Humanities Federation of Canada.

The Executive of CACLALS moved from the University of Calgary to Wilfrid Laurier University in September 1995. The CACLALS constitution provides for three-year terms for the Executive: regional representatives from every region except that from which the President and Secretary/Treasurer come (and they are usually from the same institution or at least the same geographical district) as well as representatives from the College system. Graduate student executive members are elected on a different cycle.

A problem with the CACLALS cycle has been that it is the same as the ACLALS cycle. This has meant that both the immediate Past President and the brand new Incoming President have attended the last two ACLALS triennials. Two years ago CACLALS changed its constitution so that the Executive change-over should occur either in September of the third year (after elections at the spring meeting) or after the ACLALS triennial—the latter being the crucial element.

At its spring annual general meeting last year, 1998, CACLALS was unable to find a new team of President and Secretary/Treasurer. The result was that the current team

had its term of office extended for another year (until September 1999) while the organization searches for a new Executive. The unexpected benefit of this extension is that now CACLALS is on a three-year cycle different from that of ACLALS, and a September handover will be normal in the foreseeable future.

The main function of CACLALS is the annual spring meeting of the Association, held in conjunction with other Canadian Learned Societies in one location over a period of several days in the spring (late May and early June). Two years ago the format of this series of meetings was changed. The period during which the meetings were held was shortened; the event was called the Congress of Social Sciences and Humanities (COSSH); a permanent Secretariat was established to provide organizational continuity from one locale to another (previously each host university provided the organization for each set of meetings); interdisciplinary gatherings were encouraged with the establishment of certain Congress "themes."

The result has been greater cooperation in plenary sessions among Learned societies, but since CACLALS always cooperated with like-minded societies (the larger English group, for instance, ACCUTE), the change has not been particularly marked for us.

The Annual general meeting of CACLALS is held each year at the COSSH meetings.

CACLALS publishes two issues each year of its Newsletter, *Chimo*. *Chimo* provides news of members, of other relevant meetings and conferences, occasional book reviews, and accounts of meetings at which members have been present. The fall issue contains the call for papers at the next spring meeting, and the spring issue contains the program for those meetings. *Chimo* is an invaluable tool in keeping members informed of the Association activities, the activities of ACLALS, and of all conferences and gatherings—throughout the world—that are relevant to the study of Commonwealth Literature. *Chimo* is frequently asked-for by members of other regional organizations because it is known to be one of the few regular and reliable newsletters in the field.

CACLALS has a tradition of holding a large triennial meeting of its own—in a year different from that in which ACLALS holds its triennial. The CACLALS triennial, traditionally called THE COMMONWEALTH IN CANADA, is usually held in the fall, and is international in scope. In 1997 it was held at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario. Those attending came from all parts of Canada and from: Australia, France, Jamaica, South Africa and the United States.

As a regional organization of ACLALS, CACLALS plays a vital role in the study, promotion and dissemination of Commonwealth Literature throughout North America. Although the majority of its members are based in Canada, there are several Americans who belong to the organization—because there is no equivalent group in the US—and the annual spring conference usually attracts

members of Commonwealth countries other than Canada (and some from non-Commonwealth European countries). The Canadian membership includes full-time university and college teachers, graduate students, part-time university teachers, private scholars and retired university teachers.

Membership dues are paid by the calendar year, and the paid-up membership is roughly 200, divided more or less equally between faculty members and graduate students. There are many more people associated with the Association for whom the intricacies of annual payment prove daunting. Members whose dues are lapsed receive *Chimo* for two issues before they are withdrawn from the membership list if annual dues are not forthcoming. Graduate students are playing an increasingly visible role in all sessions, and traditionally organize one session entirely devoted to graduate students each spring.

Rowland Smith

The Secretary-Treasurer fell victim to the Y2K bug a few months ahead of time; i.e. some members will have received receipts made out for the membership year "2000". This is, of course, a clumsy blunder and all the receipts should have read "1999" since CACLALS membership is based on the calendar year. Members are obsequiously asked to forgive the Secretary-Treasurer; those members needing a correct "1999" receipt need only send an e-mail and a corrected receipt will be issued forthwith.

*Canadian Association for Commonwealth
Literature and Language Studies*

**1999 COSSH, UNIVERSITÉ de SHERBROOKE
Program**

CACLALS sessions will be held in Rooms A8-260 (June 3-4, 1999) as indicated.

Wednesday, June 2

7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Registration: CACLALS Desk in the
Registration Area

Thursday, June 3 - Room A8-260

9:00 - 10:30 South Africa

Chair: Rowland Smith

a) Susie O'Brien (McMaster): "To be a Tender of the Soil": Unearthing the Ecocritical Imperative in *Life and Times of Michael K*

b) Mark Libin (UBC): Finding a Voice: The Post-Apartheid Novel and the Scapegoat

c) **Sheila Roberts** (Wisconsin):
Political Agnosticism in the Poetry of
Douglas Livingstone (1932-1966)

10:45 - 12:30

Rushdie/Naipaul

Chair: Ranjini Mendis

a) **Neil ten Kortenaar** (Toronto):
Saleem Sinai and the Process of
Becoming Indian

b) **Victor Ramraj** (Calgary): Paul
Theroux's Promotion of V.S. Naipaul
from Postcolonialist to Postmodernist

1:45 - 3:15

Canada I

Chair: David Leahy

a) **Lynda Hall** (Calgary): "an old
worn-out story": THE JAGGED
EDGE in Margaret Atwood's *Alias
Grace*

b) **Heike Harting** (Victoria): Making
Waves—Translating Origins: Generic
Ambiguities in Austin Clarke's *The
Origin of Waves*

c) **Judith Leggatt** (Lakehead): Bingo Betty and the Particular Puck: Women's Games in Thomson Highways' Rez Plays

3:30 - 5:00

Cyberspace:

Chair: Lily Cho

a) **Douglas Ivison** (Montreal): In Other Worlds: Postcolonial Readings of Science Fiction

b) **Wendy Robbins** (UNB): Electronic Resources for Commonwealth Teaching and Research

5:00 - 7:00

University Rector's Reception

Friday, June 4

- 9:00 A.M. at Sherbrooke, Room A8-260
10:45 A.M. at Bishop's, Room TBA
P.M. at Sherbrooke, Room A8-260

9:00 - 10:30

Grad Panel (Room A8-260)

Chairs: Sujaya Dhanvantari &
Lily Cho

Thinking Through Race In Canadian Institutions

a) Apollo Amoko (Michigan): Teaching Against Race: Confession of a Non-Resident Alien

b) Ashok Mathur (Calgary): "What's a Field Like You Doing in a Race Like This?"

c) Rita Wong (SFU): Whose Agenda is Visible? Some Dynamics of Talking Race

10:45 - 12:30

CACLALS/ACCUTE Joint Session
(at Bishop's, Room TBA)

CACLALS acknowledges the generous financial support of this session from the HSSFC.

Chair: Renate Eigenbrod (Lakehead)

Writing to Teach/Reading to Learn?
Education through Literature in a
'Post-Colonial' Context

a) Powhiri Rika-Heke (Osnabrück):
"I'm Telling This Story-Learning
About Those of Us Who are the
Centre in the Lands of Our Ancestors"

b) Claudia Eppert (Toronto):
(Un)Learning Home: *Bildung*,
Emmanuel Levinas, and the Reading
of Paule Marshall's *Praisesong for the
Widow*

c) Jo-Ann Thom (Regina): Teaching
Through Humour in Richard
Wagamese's *Keeper 'N Me*

1:45 - 3:15

India (*at Sherbrooke Room A8-260*)

Chair: Neil ten Kortenaar

a) **Clara Joseph** (York): Virgin and
the Nation

b) **Teresa Hubel** (Western):
Scapegoating the White Working
Classes: Imperialist Racism in the
Fiction of Sara Jeannette Duncan and
Rudyard Kipling

3:30 - 4:30

Annual General Meeting
- *Room A8-260*

18

4:30 - 5:45

Canada II:

Chair: Gary Boire

Roundtable on Canadian Modernism

David Bentley (UWO), **Brian Trehearne** (McGill), **Noreen Golfman** (Memorial)

6:00 - 8:00

CACLALS President's Reception
Room A8-260



Conference Reports

A REPORT FROM THE HSSFC

As requested by the members of the General Assembly, we are sending you a report on the annual meetings so that you can inform the presidents of your universities or associations as well as your colleagues of the activities and programmes of the Federation. As you know, the HSSFC is an organization representing the interests of humanities and social science researchers at the national level and supports their activities via the annual Congress of the Social Sciences and Humanities and the Aid to Scholarly Publications Programme. As a grass roots representative organization and with its lobbying efforts and research policy initiatives, the HSSFC is an important partner with and complement to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), the government agency which actually funds research in the humanities and social sciences. The advocacy of the HSSFC was partly responsible for the increase last year of SSHRC's budget by 13 million dollars. As well, the on-going Breakfast on the Hill Series, which links university researchers to politicians and policy makers in Ottawa, is an excellent and high profile speakers programme that demonstrates the tangible policy importance of humanities and social science research.

A number of important issues and initiatives were discussed at the annual meeting which are of interest and concern to humanists and social scientists.

(1) Challenge `98 is an HSSFC initiative that aims to compile an extensive dossier of current research profiles in the humanities and social sciences. Well over 180 reports have been compiled so far.

These profiles form an integral part of the Federation's communications strategy that is based on fostering closer connections between researchers, the media, and the general public. Over the coming months, the profiles will be made available to university communications officers and local media outlets both as a service to the Federation's university members and as a tool for promoting humanities and social science research with the general public.

Anything you can do to encourage faculty to submit research profiles to the Federation will be greatly appreciated and help ensure that all disciplines and universities are well represented. Profiles should be short, one page, outlines describing the subject, major conclusions, and relevance of the research to the general public.

(2) The Vice-President, Research Dissemination reported on the 1998 Congress which had an outstanding attendance of 7,500 delegates and a level of media coverage not only more positive than ever before but also unparalleled in volume. Members applauded initiatives such as the international colloquia and the Breakfasts on the Campus which widened the appeal of the Congress and increased its profile. Plans for next year's Congress include sessions for Vice-Presidents, Research, and Communications Officers as well as increased public access to the colloquia. The Congress Secretariat was

urged to highlight the availability of transportation for delegates from Dorval airport to the Université de Sherbrooke and Bishop's University for the 1999 Congress.

The sites for future Congresses were discussed. Many universities are now bidding to host the Congress as the presence of upwards of 7,000 academics on one's campus constitutes a very prestigious event. Moreover, there are significant economic spill-overs to the host community. The high quality of the bids for the years 2001 and 2002 made the choice a difficult one.

The sites for the following two years are:

1999 Université de Sherbrooke - Bishop's University
2000 University of Alberta

Sites for 2001 and 2002 will be formally announced in January 1999.

(3) The Management Board of the Aid to Scholarly Publications Programme held its bi-annual meeting and discussed a series of issues affecting the Programme. Among other things, the Management Board approved the creation of a Native Studies Sub-Committee within the Publications Committee, looked into refashioning the Reader's Guide provided to assessors and announced the winners of the HSSFC Scholarly Book Prizes.

(4) SSHRC has approved funding for two HSSFC research proposals. The first, titled "Measuring the Impact of

Research in the Human Sciences", will deal with the study of performance indicators in human science research. The second, titled "National Electronic Archive of Scholarship in the Humanities and Social Sciences", will deal with electronic publishing and will be done in partnership with the National Library of Canada.

(5) Members of the General Assembly endorsed the importance of re-affirming the centrality of Women's Issues in the activities and programmes of the Federation. The incoming Vice-President, Cynthia Alexander, will be working closely with the President, Louise Forsyth, and with members of the Women's Issues Network (WIN).

(6) Work is currently underway on an initiative known as Data Liberation II (DLI II). The original Data Liberation Initiative, from which university researchers have benefited immensely, made large amounts of Statistics Canada data available in an affordable manner to university based researchers. At present, 51 universities participate in this initiative paying subscription rates based on institutional size and social science research profile. The DLI II proposal is the next step to advance research in social statistics and will try to provide work opportunities and resources to researchers using social statistics.

(7) SSHRC will be implementing a program of Community University Research Alliance (CURA) centres which are based on the policy proposal originally put together and developed by the HSSFC. Up to 8 CURA centres will be funded in 1999-2000 and another 8 in 2000-2001.

Application forms for the competition and additional information can be obtained from SSHRC.

(8) The results of the Canadian Foundation for Innovation program were discussed and concerns were expressed about the dearth of opportunities and infrastructure renewal for social scientists and humanists. The failure to sponsor additional humanities and social science research to deal with the impact of technological change on health, society and the economy appears to indicate that these impacts are not fully appreciated. There is a real concern that the CFI, as well as health research initiatives, are literally vacuuming up resources. This lack of balance is also troubling given that approximately half of enrollment at Canadian universities is in the humanities and social sciences and such a resource shift threatens to turn these students into second class citizens within the university system even though their tuition is a significant financial resource for universities. This under investment in the social sciences and humanities is further compounded by the fact that SSHRC receives the smallest investment of the three funding councils.

(9) Roundtables were held which covered 4 different topics.

Humanities Futures:

The roundtable on the Future of the Humanities featured three speakers, Dr. Christine Bold, Dr. Ian Lancashire, and Dr. Joanne Burgess, each of whom discussed different ways to broaden appreciation for the humanities among students, faculty, and the general public. Discussion centered on two challenges facing humanists. First, the need for university

budgets to reflect both rhetoric and enrolment that place the arts at the heart of these institutions. Second, the need to share with students more about the work involved in humanities research. Participants agreed that the first steps to winning greater public recognition must be made among our colleagues and students on campus.

Performance Indicators:

A roundtable on performance indicators highlighted their importance in a context where government and university administrators increasingly emphasized accountability in evaluating scientific research. Cautions were expressed about finding a set of "best practices" and about, as feminists pointed out, the problems raised by evaluating different disciplines. Many wanted to ensure that indicators included the gamut of academic and scholarly experiences. A follow-up will be undertaken in order to identify individuals and researchers who will work on the Federation's research project, funded by SSHRC, on performance indicators in the social sciences and humanities.

Women and Health: Who Cares?

Participants in the roundtable were reminded that this was the 25th anniversary of the publication of "Our Bodies, Ourselves". Three main issues were raised: What are women's health issues in 1998?; Who is doing research in this area?; and What are the granting opportunities? Representatives from the Canadian Women's Health Network, the Centres of Excellence for Women's Health, Health Canada, and SSHRC participated in the discussions. It was noted that one of SSHRC's new Strategic Themes is

Society, Culture and the Health of Canadians. Participants discussed the possible role of the Federation in facilitating the exchange of ideas between women researchers and also profiling the research through the Breakfast on the Hill series.

Do Modern Languages Have a Future?

Participants expressed their concern about the decline of modern languages in Canadian universities and the need to look at innovative ways to increase enrollment and to make links with other departments. The two watchwords were Beware and Be Aware. The elimination of modern language programmes have wider implications for teaching and research in the humanities. There is a real need to be involved in the strategic planning process of universities, to ensure that colleagues are familiar with the work a scholar does and to get to know the Dean. The presence of several Deans at the round table indicated their strong interest in the question and their interventions demonstrated that they too were looking for solutions.

(10) Book Prizes: The winners of the HSSFC 1997-98 book prizes were announced. The Prizes, selected by a cross-Canada jury, are awarded for the best Canadian scholarly works written in English and in French, in the humanities and the social sciences, and subsidized by the Aid to Scholarly Publications Programme during the 1997-1998 fiscal year. The Harold Adams Innis Prize went to A.A. den Otter (Memorial), the Jean-Charles Falardeau Prize to Michel Morin (Ottawa), the Raymond Klubansky Prizes (English and French) to David Williams (McGill) and Marcel Olscamp


(UQAM).

11) Tri-Council Policy Statement on "Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans": Members voiced their concerns about the application of this Policy to the research of social scientists and humanists. It was agreed that Federation representatives should be attentive to concerns raised on their campuses and keep the Federation Secretariat apprised of reaction to the Policy's implementation.

The activities of the HSSFC are important to the promotion of the humanities and social sciences in Canada and of benefit to researchers and academics at universities. You will, in the near future, be receiving a detailed listing of the benefits of HSSFC membership from the Federation Secretariat. Our membership fee, which is currently due, is an excellent value.

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Abstracts of Papers

 **all, Lynda (Calgary):** "an old worn-out story":
THE JAGGED EDGE in Margaret Atwood's *Alias Grace*

Crossing psychic and physical landscapes, Atwood writes *Alias Grace* within an intricate weave of oppressive colonial and empire building patriarchal discourses that metaphorically layer and inscribe the female body. The world as a body politic cannot be extricated from private experience and desires. Focusing on the body as text, I demonstrate the diverse ways in which identity cannot be divested from a body that is already marked by cultural values based on appearance and "appropriate" performance of "femininity." With amazing Grace, Atwood re-memembers Grace Marks's life as "an old and worn-out story" (441). She represents Grace Marks's plural sites of oppression, culminating in imprisonment in mental institutions and prisons for twenty-nine years. Repeatedly and tenderly drawing out the fragile territory of Grace's attempts to keep body and mind together, and Grace's patient acts of quilting her fragmented self back into a wholeness, Atwood engages one woman's desire and need to reinvent and reconfigure cultural scripts. Atwood redraws territorial borders in order to change the old and potentially create a new world order with shifted power dynamics. In this paper I trace the colonial metaphor throughout Atwood's *Alias Grace*, with particular focus on institutional forces which inscribe Grace's mind and body. I demonstrate Grace's active struggle in her

resistance to subjugation, violation, powerlessness, and marginalization.

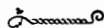
I suggest Grace's "disorderly" acts challenge women's inferiorization and devaluation as abjected Other, located as object of the tyranny of male privileged ownership of looks and desires and defining powers. Atwood extends the historical othering which occurs at the colonizer's hands to include the othering and inferiorization located on the female body as battleground and theatre of action. Providing a triangle which mirrors the many triangles in the book (Britain, Canada, United States; Grace, Nancy, Kinnear; Grace, Nancy, McDermott; Grace, McDermott, Walsh; Grace, Jordan, Rachel; and so forth) the American War of Independence and the American Civil War provide a background metaphoric stage for acts of invasion, occupation, battle, displacement, evacuation, imprisonment, containment, and exile from self - ordeals which many women experience in attempting to fulfil the *appropriate* roles and scripts for "femininity," and which Grace literally embodies in her imprisonment in jail and mental institutions, particularly tellingly when she is sexually assaulted by a doctor while she is bound in a strait jacket. Atwood makes the analogy between the predicament Grace and other women find themselves in, where their bodies and acts are taken against their will, and Britain's imperialistic enterprise in which commodities are extradited by authority from Canada (and formerly from the United States) as part of the Empire.


Harting, Heike (Victoria): Making Waves—
 Translating Origins: Generic Ambiguities in Austin
 Clarke's *The Origin of Waves*

Austin Clarke's recent novel *The Origin of Waves* (1997) dramatizes the historically and psychologically heterogeneous positions two Barbadian men, Tim and John, both occupy and defy in the course of their lives as immigrants in Canada and the US respectively. Both men's narratives, however, cannot make an authoritative claim to be accurate accounts of the past. On the contrary, their stories turn out to be a series of self-deceptions and memory fragments that characterize their culturally and psychologically alienated social positions. Rather than relying on received realist modes of ethnic writing, Clarke's novel employs generically hybrid narrative strategies to extrapolate the characters' various and often irreconcilable subject-positions. By comparing *The Origin of Waves* with one of Clarke's earlier manuscripts for a novel called *An American Dutchman*, this paper examines how and to what effect *The Origin of Waves* employs "post-realist" narrative strategies.

Archival research has helped me establish that *The Origin of Waves* is a rewriting of Clarke's unpublished novel *An American Dutchman*. The Austin Clarke Archive at McMaster University contains three manuscripts of which the earliest, dated 1969, is a literary and autobiographical essay written in the form of a journal. This long essay was reworked into a novel in 1987 and 1990. The 1987 novel ms *An American Dutchman* fictionalizes Clarke's experiences as a teacher of Black studies at the University of Indiana in the

midst of the US-American Black Panther movement. The manuscript displays a radical critique of that movement dramatized through both the intertextual references to LeRoi Jones' (Amiri Baraka) play *The Dutchmen* and through the various palimpsests and recursive structure of organizing metaphors, such as the constant presence of flies, wind, and waves, which intertwine the manuscript and *The Origin of Waves*. Reading *The Origin of Waves* through and against *An American Dutchman* establishes an historical genealogy of Clarke's recent novel that engages the writer as the reader and translator of his own texts and autobiographical musings. Here, the claim to textual and cultural authenticity, as it is often made by ethnic texts written in the conventions of realism, diminishes considerably. The rewriting strategies Clarke employs in *The Origin of Waves* are not based on intertextual transpositions taken from *An American Dutchman*. Instead, *The Origin of Waves*, I propose, generically transforms the realist narrative of *An American Dutchman* into a "post-realist" (Kwame Anthony Appiah) narrative. The latter delegitimizes and denaturalizes the former's normative claim to essentialist and exclusionary conceptualizations of cultural belonging. *The Origin of Waves* contests the realist narrative conventions of *An American Dutchman* by reappropriating and displacing its organizing metaphors of waves, empty spaces, and insects into a new narrative context. Elaborated through a distinctly Canadian setting and framed in a pseudo-psychoanalytical dramatic dialogue in *The Origin of Waves*, these metaphors reappear as a catachresis and produce a post-realist narrative of heterogeneous cultural identifications.

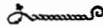


 ubel, Teresa (*Western*): Scapegoating the White Working Classes: Imperialist Racism in the Fiction of Sara Jeannette Duncan and Rudyard Kipling

In the middle-class British writing about India, a long historical and literary tradition exists that locates imperialist racism in the white working classes. This attempt to associate racism with only one class of whites is accomplished by, first, beginning racism solely on the basis of certain physical and verbal expressions, and, then, making the further class-based assumption that the culture of the British working classes is the only place where such expressions are allowed and encouraged. At the same time and in quite a contradictory manner, the working classes are understood through a paradigm of deficiency; that is, they are seen as lacking various cultural codes and values that middle-class writers identify as distinctly middle class—codes, for instance, of courtesy and values surrounding ideals of verbal and physical control. Through this kind of elaborate and frequently discordant justification, authors like Sara Jeannette Duncan and Rudyard Kipling absolve their own race and class community of the guilt—conscious or not—that saturated the foundations of the British imperialist project in India.

Comparing Duncan's *Set in Authority* to a number of Kipling's short stories about white soldiers of the British Army in India, I intend to explore in my paper this construction of the white working classes as the repository of white racism during the British Raj. What I can say at this point is that Duncan—because her novel is, in part, a critical response to the Viceroy George Curzon's turn-of-the-century

efforts to address white racism in India by targeting British soldiers—wavers between disgust with this class of whites and a grudging solidarity. In Kipling's stories, on the other hand, the hyper-masculinity that he seems so bent on seeing in the soldiers leads him to the creation of portraits that combine compassion, affection, amused contempt, and painful envy. Although Duncan and Kipling each turn their writerly attentions to the white working classes for different personal and political reasons, both succeed in contributing to a powerful mainstream and middle-class view of working-class whites in India that continues to haunt literary and historical scholarship even today.



Ivison, Douglas (*Montreal*): In Other Worlds: Postcolonial Readings of Science Fiction

Since its inception as an identifiable genre in the late-Victorian period, science fiction has frequently dealt with issues related to colonialism and imperialism. H. G. Wells' *The War of the Worlds* (1898), for example, published during the peak of British imperialism, imagines an alien invasion and thus places its readers in the position of peoples around the world who were in the process of being colonized by the British. His earlier *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896) allegorizes the relationship between imperial administration and science and its colonial subjects, and has been read (similarly to Kipling's *The Man Who Would be King*, for instance) as articulating the British fear of a 'native' uprising. Such issues have remained at the heart of science fiction's concerns throughout the twentieth century.

Yet, despite this focus, remarkably little attention has been paid to science fiction from the perspective of postcolonial studies. Scholars working within the fields of postcolonial literatures and theory rarely discuss science fiction texts (particularly 'genre science fiction'), while scholars of science fiction have rarely employed the insights of postcolonial theory to their field of study. This paper will attempt to rectify this oversight by demonstrating the value of science fiction texts to postcolonial studies, and the value of postcolonial theory to science fiction texts.

To do so, I will discuss a number of different ways in which

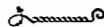
postcolonial studies and science fiction intersect. First, I will briefly discuss the tradition of imagining Mars as a site of future colonization. In particular, I will focus on Kim Stanley Robinson's massive (nearly 2000 pages) and award-winning Mars trilogy (1993-1996), which attempts to reconcile science fiction's ideological predisposition to exploration and colonialism with an ethics informed by ecological and postcolonial perspectives. In light of the apparent inevitability of Terran occupation and colonization of Mars (documented in a number of contemporary texts, both fiction and nonfictional), the Mars trilogy can be read as an (ultimately unsuccessful) attempt to work out an ethical colonialism. *Red Mars* (1993) explores the tensions between the various ideological approaches to the settlement of Mars (roughly between those who wish to tamper as little as possible with Martian ecology [the reds] and those who wish to terraform Mars to make it suitable for Terran settlement [the greens]), between the increasingly heterogeneous and multicultural settler colonies, and between the Mars colonists (and their descendants) and the Earth.

Second, I will discuss science fiction that is written from the perspective of the colonized, concentrating on Philip K. Dick's classic alternative-history novel *The Man in the High Castle* (1962), set in a post-Second World War America divided between Germany and Japan. This novel explores the relations between the colonized and colonizer, focussing on issues of language, culture, and history in a manner that will be instantly recognizable to readers of postcolonial fiction. Yet, ultimately the text reaffirms 'American values' and obscures contemporary American imperial practices.

America is constructed as a non-imperialist nation.

Third, I will look at texts that can easily be read as postcolonial fiction. I will discuss Caribbean-Canadian writer Nalo Hopkinson's *Brown Girl in the Ring* (1998) and Amitav Ghosh's *The Calcutta Chromosome* (1996). Hopkinson uses Afro-Caribbean spiritual and cultural traditions to disrupt genre science fiction, which, she writes, "speaks so much about the experience of being alienated, but contains so little written by alienated peoples themselves." While not always successful, her novel does suggest the possibilities that science fiction holds for 'postcolonial' writers. Although *The Calcutta Chromosome* was not published as 'science fiction' it was the recipient of a British science fiction award. This complex novel uses many of the conventions of science fiction to explore the relations between British and Indian knowledges, disrupting histories of British scientific and cultural superiority.

Through these examples, I hope to demonstrate the value of reading science fiction through the lens of the postcolonial, and to suggest the disruptions this act causes in our understandings of both terms.





Joseph, Clara (York): *Virgin and the Nation*

It is widely believed that India was unusually lucky in its early women's movement being supported by male leaders most important of whom was Mahatma Gandhi, a man who often referred to himself as "woman" and "mother." When Nayantara Sahgal, one of the earliest and most established of the female Indo-Anglian novelists of this century, writes, she does so in an Indian feminist tradition: a socio-political past that strains under often opposing male and female agenda. By examining three novels of Sahgal, this paper traces that conflict to the Gandhian nation's need for subordinate women. Sahgal investigates the intricacies of female chastity in the context of the nation.

Sahgal's novels *This Time of Morning*, *Storm in Chandigarh*, and *A Day in Shadow* represent the subordinate yet key position of the "virgin wife" in an Indian family. The importance of the family is measured by its significance to the nation—as the basic unit of the Indian nation. Mahatma Gandhi upheld the sanctity of the family along with the gendered roles: the husband outside the family and the wife inside the family, the former as administrator and the latter as nurturer, as essential to the nation. In *Women and Social Justice* Gandhi takes for granted the role of the wife as cook and the husband as bread-winner (82). The assumption affirms the general situation of families at that time. Also, while fighting against purdah, Gandhi is obliged to emphasize 'modesty' as a natural characteristic of women that will

produce "good wives," "worthy mothers," and "useful servants of the country" (102). Demarcating women as first wives and mothers and then as citizens positions the family as the 'natural' foundation of the nation.

Within Gandhian thought chastity or brahmacharya is the duty of patriotic men and women. Gandhi asserted that he himself took to brahmacharya when he realized his "sacred mission" (80). According to him, sexual intercourse within marriage must be for the sole purpose of producing children. "Sexual intercourse for the purpose of carnal satisfaction is reversion to animality," he said (76). In Gandhian ideology, both men and women are bound by the demands of fidelity and self-control so that sexual aberration reflects on one's nationalism. Here, it is interesting to note that Gandhi was just a little more concerned about the direct impact of the men (than of the women) on the nation. Radha Kumar reports Sucheta Kripalani as having been asked by Gandhi to "marry someone else" in a bid to preserve the brahmacharya and patriotism of J.B. Kripalani (1993:84-5).

In India, ideology has worked to produce a second-class female citizen by mixing Gandhian nationalism with religious perspectives on woman as goddess/temptress. Nationalist thought functions only within historical and social contexts. As Partha Chatterjee notes in *Nationalist Thought and Colonial World*, "nationalist thought does not, and indeed cannot, constitute an autonomous discourse" (10). Within a socio-historical background, nationalist discourse is a "battleground of political power" marked by the impact of thought (11). Gandhian nationalism is thought and enacted

within a patriarchal tradition and society where power struggles are gendered and women effectively (even tenderly) marginalised.

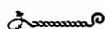
Whereas protecting women's virtue is consistent with Gandhian teachings as well as with the tradition of absolute allegiance to the husband, called *pativrityam*, the political consequences of such an emphasis amount to a seclusion of the wife within the four walls of the family. Sahgal's novels elaborate on the tragedy of the wife in a patriarchal family. To quote Sahgal:

All but a few societies make a ruthless cult of male honour and female virtue. Down the ages the halo of virtue has extracted an awesome range of self-denial in return, from the sacrifice of life, as in *sati*, to the sacrifice of personality, expression and ambition, depending on the times, and more crucially, the culture of the home, especially of its males. (*Relationship* vii)

This paper considers the virgin wife as a) an object of discourse; b) an object of the nation; and c) a subject. I employ the theories of Louis Althusser and Pierre Macherey to explore the dominating Gandhian ideology in Sahgal's works.

The novels depict the domesticated woman as a social reality while questioning the desirability of that category. In all three novels, the female characters who fail to uphold 'family

values' are liberated at the end within contexts alien to the traditional family system: they have access to male lovers, the husband is absent, and the children are only secondary to the woman's self-esteem. As Sahgal tells S. Varalakshmi in an interview, even those women characters who are deeply attached to their children ultimately have no choice: "I mean there is only one option at that point, and that is self-respect" (Dhawan 4:10).

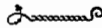





ortenaar ten, Neil (*Toronto*): Saleem Sinai and the Process of Becoming Indian

Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* is at once an allegory of Indian national history and a memoir of growing up in a middle-class Muslim family in Bombay. The two narratives are in contradiction: because he is aware of his own allegorical relation to India, Saleem is a schizophrenic suffering delusions of greatness. The critical conundrum posed by the two narratives may resist resolution and yet yield valuable insight. One solution is to read Saleem's allegorical relation to the nation in psychological terms, as a rendering, albeit highly metaphorical, of the processes of identity-formation that Saleem undergoes along with Rushdie and millions of his fellow citizens (though by no means with all or even most who live within the frontiers of the nation-state). *Midnight's Children* is concerned not just with the nature of a collective history but also with what Lauren Berlant calls the "National Symbolic": "the order of discursive practices whose reign within a national space produces, and also refers to, the 'law' in which the accident of birth within a geographic/political boundary transforms individuals into subjects of a collectively-held history." I will reverse the usual critical judgement of the novel, which subordinates the study of psychology to style and theme, and read the novel as a highly impressionistic bildungsroman, where even Saleem's identification of the state with himself is a stage in the larger narrative of identity development. Read in this way Saleem's national identity is intimately

linked with his growing sexual awareness (indeed both are focused on the body). National identity is a function of male desire which works by projection to imagine a whole that complements the self and that is constructed of discrete parts that are not the self. In response and in opposition is a female desire which breaks down wholes into constituent parts and thereby threatens the male self. The nation that Saleem identifies with is produced by the tension between these centripetal and centrifugal forces.



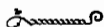
eggatt, Judith (*Lakehead*): Bingo Betty and the Particular Puck: Women's Games in Tomson Highway's Rez Plays

Tomson Highway calls *Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing* the "flip side" of *The Rez Sisters*; while the latter text portrays only the women of the Wasaychigan Hill Reserve, the former portrays only the men. To further this gender distinction, Highway represents Nanabush—the ambiguously gendered trickster figure of Ojibwa mythology—as the opposite gender from the human characters in each play. Despite this dichotomy between the two texts, both focus on the playing of games by the Wasaychigan women: the women's trip to "THE BIGGEST BINGO IN THE WORLD" in *The Rez Sisters* and the starting of a Native women's hockey league in *Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing*. The women's game playing contrasts with the men's inability to put any of their grandiose ideas into action. This focus on female action emphasizes Highway's belief that women hold the "cure" for the "poison" that *Dry Lips* exposes, and that through the action of game playing, they can effect positive change in the community.

These women's games are not unambiguously positive, however. While both hockey and bingo do play a major role in contemporary Native communities, the effect of these games are usually detrimental. Bingo, as with all games of chance, is stacked against the players and large winnings are offset by even larger losses. Hockey—usually played by males—has become an outlet for aggression and frustration in many First Nations' communities. The violent confrontations

of hockey and the sneak-thievery of bingo make both games excellent metaphors for colonization, and so the women's playing of these games can be read as a sign of their cooption by the colonizers.

In this paper, I will explore the ambiguities of the games played by women in the two texts, and show how Highway mythologizes the games in order to point the way to new, syncretic modes of being. While Highway acknowledges the pain wrought both by colonization, and by the sexism that has infected the Native community, he shows how that pain can be transformed into new Native culture. Both plays culminate with surreal representations of the games in question, and the figure of Nanabush—who plays the role of the Bingo Master in *The Rez Sisters* and of the hockey-playing women in *Dry Lips*—situates the games on the boundary between the physical and the spiritual realms. This hybrid space allows Highway to transform the very ills of colonization into their possible cures, without in any way downplaying the traumas that are faced by the Native community he depicts.





ibin, Mark (UBC): Finding a Voice: The Post-Apartheid Novel and the Scapegoat

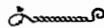
In post-apartheid South Africa one of the concepts politicians and academics alike are seeking to define is the notion of "community." In the face of a radically reconfigured society, the idea of constructing, defining, and/or negotiating what a community might consist of is at once intriguing and urgent. Nelson Mandela's vision of a new "Rainbow Nation," a nation, as the new South African constitution suggests, "united in our diversity," is only the beginning of an understanding of how unity and diversity might coexist with each other, and what sort of "voice" might emerge from the configuration.

My paper examines literary constructions of allegorical or metaphorical communities in two contemporary novels: Etienne Van Heerden's *Leap Year* and Zakes Mda's *Ways of Dying*. Both novels interrogate the idea of a cohesive community through the central image of the scapegoat. Mda's novel describes the progress of Toloki, a man who has defined himself as a "professional mourner." In the proliferation of funerals for young Black Africans, Toloki positions himself as a designated sufferer, a scapegoat who voluntarily, and with unself-conscious dignity, takes on the grief of the community and the violent sins of factional warfare. In *Leap Year* Van Heerden literalizes the idea of the scapegoat with the "fall-goat," a newly bred species who faint when startled. By introducing a fall-goat into a herd of sheep, the flock is protected by the goat's inherent defect.

The fall-goat, then, takes on the role of inadvertent martyr for the community.

Both novels share a desire to explore the necessity of the scapegoat in the new South Africa, and the function of that scapegoat figure within the community. More than this, both novels complicate the narrative voice in the telling of their tales. While Van Heerden's narrator occupies the unusual position of first person omniscience, Mda's novel is related by an equally unusual first person plural. The subjective impersonality of Van Heerden's narrator contrasts with the narrative of Mda's communal "we," foregrounding in their respective structures a mediation on the possibility of realizing a community united in its diversity.

My paper explores the images of the scapegoat within the text and in the construction of the narrative voices in *Leap Year* and *Ways of Dying*, and offers a reading of how these two divergent texts each provide commentary on how a new South Africa might find a new "voice."





Brien, Susie (*McMaster*): "To be a Tender of the Soil": Unearthing the Ecocritical Imperative in *Life and Times of Michael K*

Enough men had gone off to war saying the time for gardening was when the war was over; whereas there must be men to stay behind and keep gardening alive, or at least the idea of gardening; because once that cord was broken, the earth would grow hard and forget her children

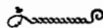
J.M. Coetzee, *Life & Times of Michael K*.

In the introduction to his recent book, *The Environmental Imagination*, Lawrence Buell lends weight to his study of nature writing and the formation of American culture by grounding it in a matter of indisputable urgency: "I hope I do not need to spend many pages defending the reasonableness of the claim that [in U.S. Vice President Al Gore's words] 'we must make the rescue of the environment the central organizing principle for civilization'" (2). This proposition, or something like it, is an animating force behind ecocriticism, which has made a strong case for putting the environment on the agenda of literary criticism. As Glen Love observes, "race, class, and gender are the words which we see and hear everywhere at our professional meetings and in our current publications. But curiously enough...the English profession has failed to respond in any significant way to the issue of the environment, the acknowledgment of

our place within the natural world and our need to live heedfully within it, at peril of our very survival" (226). Implied in both propositions is the suggestion that, however significant questions of race, class, and gender may be in the realm of human relationships, they are predicated on the health of the physical environment; ideological battles are ultimately won and lost at the expense of the earth they are fought on. Love's point in singling out these areas is clearly *not* (as in the arguments of many conservative critics) to disparage politically inflected criticism; like the others', his critique is clearly predicated on the idea that literary criticism should be *more*, not less, concerned with material issues, of which the environment simply emerges as the most pressing. The substance of Love's critique of contemporary literary scholarship—a critique implicit in much ecocritical writing—is aptly summed up in a question posed by Buell: "must literature always lead us away from the physical world, never back to it?"(11)

This paper is an attempt not so much to offer an answer to this question, as to examine some of the assumptions that inform it, and to highlight some of the dangers inherent in the belief that literary critics can, and should, get back to the physical world. These issues will be pursued via an analysis of J.M. Coetzee's writing, in particular his 1984 novel, *Life and Times of Michael K*. As the story of a gardener who, although displaced by civil war, transcends the ideologies of race and class that swirl around him in favour of his commitment to the earth, *Michael K* seems on one level to endorse Buell's claim that we must make the rescue of the environment the central organizing principle for civilization.

On another, deeper level, as critics such as Derek Wright have shown, the novel self-consciously represents the allure and the danger of a white liberal discourse which, in its belief in its own commitment to a universal good, presumes to speak for a disenfranchised other. K, the story's protagonist, has a harelip, which represents not so much a physical as a psychological barrier to speech; his story, accordingly, is interpreted to us partly through the voice of a liberal doctor, whose well-intentioned misreadings implicitly call into question the ostensibly global perspectives of author and reader. It also raises significant questions of representation and power: what does it mean to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves? (How) is the domination of other human beings connected to the domination of the non-human world? Is it possible to construct an environmentalist politics outside the battlelines of race, class, and gender? *Life and Times of Michael K* does not so much support or refute the principles of ecocriticism as point to the need for a more rigorous examination of its own discursive foundations. While such an examination might seem a long way from the goal of environmental rescue endorsed by Buell and others, it will facilitate the more modest process of critique which, like gardening, offers not so much a "central organizing principle for civilization" as a way of negotiating its limits.



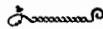


Roberts, Sheila (*Wisconsin*): Political Agnosticism in the Poetry of Douglas Livingstone (1932-1966)

White South African poets writing before 1960 were able to develop narrative voices that derived sense and value from liberal and humanistic convictions. Technically, they could remain untouched by Modernism. But 1960 introduced the decades of violence, the year itself starting with the Sharpeville Massacre and South Africa's expulsion from the Commonwealth. Writers in the 1960s were forced to acknowledge not only a radical shifting of political attitudes but also the mutability of the previous ethical and aesthetic underpinnings to their work. Poets like Sydney Clouts, Ruth Miller, Douglas Livingstone, and others, began introducing elements of dislocation, alienation, and psychological tensions in their work. Livingstone also set himself on a path of ongoing stylistic innovation. *The Anvil's Undertone* (1978), for instance, utilizes scientific and surrealist imagery in order to evoke the peculiarly modern dilemmas of isolation and anxiety during cultural change and tumult.

Aspects of Livingstone's poetry were influenced by his work as a marine biologist as well as by his concern for landscapes and animals in danger of destruction. However, in *A Rosary of Bone* (1975), he turned his focus to the complexities of love, his tone ranging from playfulness, to tenderness, and to ironic self-defense. In my paper, I should like to explore the poems in *A Rosary of Bone*, *The Anvil's Undertone*, and *A Littoral Zone* (1991), referring where relevant, however, to

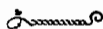
single poems from Livingstone's other collections. I should like to achieve a deeper understanding of the work of a man referred to variously as "passionate," "bawdy," "a hermit," and "a good drinking companion;" a man who claimed to have "a horror of the emotional overspill of South African politics," and yet who, experiencing a different kind of horror, stopped writing during the 1980s—that decade of ongoing "States of Emergency."



Robbins, Wendy (*UNB*): 'We Are the World':
 CACLALS, Commonwealth, and Postcolonial
 Literary Resources Online

Through the World Wide Web, researchers, teachers, students, writers, publishers, booksellers, activists, and others are creating and sharing imaginative new resources that can greatly enhance our access to, and understanding of, Commonwealth and postcolonial literatures. But the plethora of new online resources can also be bewildering. Web sites for individual authors, groups of authors (e.g. Aboriginal Australian authors), collections of national archives, and huge databases created by professional associations, universities, and other institutions all exist and are multiplying almost daily. And there are also online discussion lists in the field. How do we know what is available? How do we evaluate it? How do we keep abreast of these new developments? How can we help our colleagues? Canada is often seen as a world leader in communications: is there a role here for CACLALS and/or CALALS-L?

This presentation will provide a tour of the CACLALS Web site and a short bibliography of some useful online resources for Commonwealth and postcolonial literature studies. Please bring your favourite URL's along to add to the discussion, as well as your department's PhD comprehensive reading list, and information (preferably on diskette and in hard copy) about relevant courses that you teach, if you would like to include such material on the CACLALS site. You can find us at <http://www.unb.ca/CACLALS>.





Panel Session: Thinking Through Race in Canadian Institutions

(1) Apollo Obonyo Amoko (*Michigan*): Teaching Against Race: Confession of a Non-Resident Alien

The problem that my paper will be addressing is really simple: why do literatures in English from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean continue to occupy such a marginal place in English departments in Canada and the U.S. The major distinction in my experience between Canadian and American English programs is the centrality of Canadian literature (including literatures by Canadian of color) in the Canadian curriculum (Canadian literature is totally and completely ignored in the U.S.). The question I am posing becomes important, I think, in a context in which we have learnt to delink race from aesthetics. It seems odd that third world literatures are excluded in programs that seem to trace an unproblematic link between English literature (in the narrow sense) and contemporary American and Canadian literature. This link is made despite the disclosure, by postcolonial theory, that English literature as a discursive formation is a specific invention of colonial India. Do the discourses and institutions of English literatures, as the field is conceived in the metropolitan university, silently endorse an ultimately racist and historically untenable understanding of aesthetics even as race as a category is fashionably "deconstructed"? How does one account for the current popularity of the certain formulations of postcolonial theory in the Western

academy if one simultaneously realizes that these theories have not resulted in a fundamental reconceptualization of the field of English literary inquiry? Rather than, for example, result in a sustained and systematic study of literatures from the postcolony in western academy, postcolonial theory has, at most, promoted a handful of third world writers in the West as fetish objects (Rushdie, Okri and so on). If one contends, as I do, that race continues to be instrumentally at play in the definition of "English literariness," how does one account for the presence and prominence of literatures by Americans of color in American English departments and Canadians of color in Canadian English programs? If one contends—as I do that race is instrumental in current understanding of English literariness, how would one account of the total absence of Canadian literature as a category in the American academy? Is race really the principal mediator here, or, is it rather that in a version of literariness not too distant from Mathew Arnold we continue to seek from literature a sort of nationalist self-affirmation? Apropos of literary self-definition what is the relationship between race and nation? My essay will draw principally from Ngugi Wa Thiong'o old essay, *On the Abolition of the English Department.*"

(2) Ashok Mathur (Calgary): "What's a Field Like You Doing in a Race Like This?"

Issues of race, racialization, and racism are institutionally contained within disciplinary boundaries in the Humanities to the point where such studies rarely consist of local, sustained

critiques. In other words, liberal academia allows for—indeed encourages—critical analyses around racial issues in literature, criticism, and theory as long as the focus remains outside the protected environment of the institution.

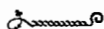
Anti-racism, then, as an institutional goal, if at all present in a given university climate, is evident in a representational manner—through passive employment equity rhetoric, shifting course content, and recruitment of "international" students—rather than in a systemic manner which would strategize against the current strains of racism that infect all aspects of university life.

Part of the problem, I would argue, is that race studies does not, in itself, constitute a field and is therefore perceived simultaneously as a "non-field" and as already covered by and through a variety of disciplines. Post-colonial scholars, for instance, may construct themselves (or be constructed by others) as race "specialists" without pursuing an activist, anti-racist cause, in effect fulfilling (for the liberal academy) the coverage of an issue considered as crucial in the world at large. Such coverage, however, does not reflect any action toward affecting progressive, social change within the university environment itself.

This presentation, featuring some of the counter-storytelling strategies employed by Critical Race Theory (which is preceded by of critical legal theory and critical feminist theory), argues for the importance of bringing race studies into academia in such a way that a systemic, institutional critique can mobilize the aforementioned progressive change.

(3) Rita Wong (SFU): Whose Agenda is Visible? Some Dynamics of Talking Race

How does an anti-racist activist survive in the academy? She looks for allies. She finds out who to avoid. She tries to stay connected to the communities she calls home, not an easy task when academic demands pull her towards isolation. She tries to communicate in ways which are more easily heard, but which might not truly be what she wants to say. Nonetheless, she looks for ways to disrupt norms rooted in centuries of racism, norms that need to be made strange. Is academic freedom only for tenured professors, or can students really speak their minds? What happens when students speak up? What are some of the classroom and institutional dynamics which work against anti-racist change? The current climate of cutbacks is a call to retrench into conservatism. How does this play itself out in the curriculum and in administrative policies? How can one incorporate anti-racist praxis into one's field? I will discuss the above questions from a student-centred perspective.



1998 Executive Reports
TREASURER'S REPORT
JULY 1 - DECEMBER 31, 1998

Balance Forward, October 19, 1998	\$19,129.84
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INCOME

Membership Fees	1,820.89
SSHRCC Grants	4,140.31
Total Income:	5,961.20
BALANCE	25,091.04

EXPENDITURES

<i>Chimo 37 (Fall 1998)</i>		
Printing	508.67	
Postage	253.89	
Letterhead	67.29	
Stationary & Photocopying	48.20	
<i>Other</i>		878.05
HSSFC Membership	460.00	
President's Expenses in Kuala Lumpur	389.27	
		849.27
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		\$1,727.32
BALANCE, APRIL 1, 1999		\$23,363.72

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

GARY BOIRE, SECRETARY-TREASURER
Wilfrid Laurier University

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