

# CHIMO



*Salmon*

*Danny Dennis*

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

Number 45

Winter 2002

# *Chimo*



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*Chimo* is published twice yearly by the Canadian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies. This issue is published with financial assistance from the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, the Commonwealth Foundation, and Kwantlen University College. It is provided free of charge to members of the Association. Non-members may obtain single issues at \$3.00 per copy. Please address editorial and business correspondence to:

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The Editors appreciate receiving all extended submissions in electronic form (Microsoft Word, if possible). The Editors reserve the right to amend phrasing and punctuation in items accepted for publication in *Chimo*.

CACLALS Annual Membership Fee:  
Regular \$45.00 Student or Unwaged \$20.00

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On the cover: Salmon. Danny Dennis is a self-taught Tsimshian Native artist who cites mentors such as master artists Francis Williams and Robert Davidson. Unique to Danny's art are the free-flowing lines capturing the expression of "freedom" and the infinite possibilities of where a person's spirit can lead.

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Canada Post Publications Agreement # 40723093

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**FROM THE PRESIDENT**

*Ayubovan (Greetings in Sinhalese)*

CACLALS moved to the west coast in the summer and is now at Kwantlen University College in British Columbia. The transition was facilitated by Wendy Robbins and Robin Sutherland who drew up a detailed protocol for us, and the Administration at Kwantlen University College who pledged time release and administrative support to carry out our multitudinous tasks. Since this is the first time one of the "learned societies" is housed at a University College, I'd like to give you an idea of our home base. Kwantlen ("tireless runner" or "tireless hunter" in the Halq'emeylem language of the Sto:lo Nation) is the largest University College in Canada, with four campuses - in Surrey, Richmond, Langley, and Newton - and a diverse immigrant student population. The Office of Research and Scholarship, in whose website CACLALS is featured, shares with us their Administrative Assistant, Leslee Birch, while the V-P's office, Faculty of Humanities, and the English Department are providing us time release and office support. I invite you to visit us if you are travelling through the lower mainland: Robert is on the Richmond campus, and Leslee and I are in Surrey.

This year, the Commonwealth Grant Application asked for "A brief statement of the organization's most significant accomplishment in the past ten years." My answer was two-fold: first, a shift toward global networking through the digital medium (specifically the CACLALS website and caclals-l) and second, maintaining relevance in the public sphere as well as in literary studies through the politicizing of postcolonial literature. The Aboriginal Roundtable, now a regular feature at our annual Congress sessions, and Native-Lit listserv, both begun by the previous executive, are two specific items I mentioned regarding this. When we consider the past three decades of CACLALS, I think we can confidently state that our society has been grappling not only with the historical memory of British colonialism but also with current global conditions that question the very concept of postcoloniality.

As I write this, I think of recent events reflected in the literary world: Salman Rushdie's prescient novel *Fury*, Rohinton Mistry's cancellation of his U.S. book tour due to difficulties at the border, and a comment by the president of a renowned Canadian university that diversity of the student population is negatively affecting enrollment. The Congress in Halifax, with its theme of "Conflict and Cooperation," and the CACLALS sessions on "Postcoloniality, Literature, and Terrorism" promise a stimulating exchange of ideas on national and global concerns through textual critique and theoretical discourse.

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**NEWS OF THE EXECUTIVE**

- We welcome Taiwo Osinubi Adetunji (Tunji) into the executive as the second graduate student representative after Stavros Stavrou completed his two-year term. We wish Stavros a very good time in Cyprus.
- We divided some of the tasks as follows:

Book review editor: Susan Gingell

Conference proposal vetting: Kelly Hewson, Judith Leggatt

Program assistant: Jill Didur

Program chair: Ranjini Mendis

On-site coordinator at Dalhousie: Shao-Pin Luo

We thank Carrie Dawson and Andy Wainwright for assisting Shao-Pin in the arrangements for the CACLALS sessions and colloquium in Halifax.

Rob has updated the membership database and completed the changeover of the listserv and website to the new addresses (caclals-1@kwantlen.ca and [www.kwantlen.ca/CACLALS](http://www.kwantlen.ca/CACLALS)), while the UNB team will continue to manage the research links of the website and scan past issues of *Chimo* into our website.

**A Major Congress Colloquium**

CACLALS took the lead in proposing a joint international, interdisciplinary colloquium for the Congress 2003 in Halifax on the Congress theme of "Conflict and Cooperation: Wealth and Creativity." We are happy to report that we were successful in our application. The associations joining us are ACCUTE (Association of Canadian College and University Teachers of English), CACS (Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies), and CIESC (Comparative and International Education Society of Canada).

This joint colloquium, introduced and chaired by Diana Brydon, will address the interrelated issues of inequalities in resource distribution, the undermining of socio-cultural specificity, and the lack of means by which to express such distinction among those who have experienced a history of colonization or resistance to colonial domination. Two of our three speakers are from Literary Studies and the third from the Social Sciences (Education and Technology): George Elliott Clarke, Helen Tiffin, and John Willinsky. George Elliott Clarke agreed to give a reading following the session, and Laura Moss' *Is Canada Postcolonial? Essays on Canadian Literature and Postcolonial Theory* (WLUP) will be launched at that time.

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**A Fully Online Journal for Postcolonial Studies**

In August 2002, CACLALS received an offer from the Public Knowledge Project at UBC to set up an open-access online journal with a slate of international editors. It was in response to a concern I expressed on my return from a visit to Sri Lanka this summer about the perceived distance between the research-based knowledge of the western world and the lack of resources for scholars, especially for women writers and academics, in the developing world. I felt that scholars and students in Canada would benefit, as well, by having direct contact with those about whom they were writing. The UBC Project suggested that a free-to-read online journal with none of the expenses associated with print and publishing might be a way of remedying the difficulties in this regard. They will be providing us free, open source Open Journal Systems software and managerial assistance. (More info at <http://www.pkp.ubc.ca/ojs/faq.html>.)

Such a venture might also allay the concern of Sharon Robinson of the Commonwealth Foundation in London as to funding Humanities associations such as ACLALS which engage in theoretical research without seeming to be actively involved in the political and social arena. (See Wendy's reference to the need for us to serve as "Public Intellectuals," in Summer 2002 *Chimo*, pg 2). A journal with a slate of international editors, with open access to readers in many parts of the world, would indeed demonstrate an attempt on our part to communicate with and serve the wider community that we represent as an association of literature and language studies.

***Report of the AGM in Ottawa of the Canadian Federation of Humanities and Social Sciences (formerly HSSFC)***

Outgoing President Patricia Clements was positive in her outlook for the Humanities and Social Sciences in her General Assembly speech at the AGM in Ottawa on Nov 24, 2002. Reflecting on the upturn of events following SSHRC withdrawal of funds to academic associations in the mid-1990's, she remarked "The worm has turned", and that the Federation's attempts to revitalize the associations in the past few years have been successful. Right now "a window of opportunity is open" for the Federation to make a case for more funding from the government for academic resources, she noted, acknowledging how good it was to feel a sense of accomplishment at the end of her two year term as President of CFHSS. Harking back to last year's article by Anne Dowsett Johnston in *Macleans* which predicted that Little Johnny would not have teachers when he enrolls at university because of the massive retirements of the Baby Boomers, she said that the number of headlines in the national newspapers have been considerable in the past year, reflecting public interest in universities. The

way for us to proceed is to use Martha Piper's Killam lecture on the building of a "civil society" which articulates a defence of what the Humanities and Social Sciences are all about, she noted. (The Piper paper is on the web at <http://www.hssfc.ca/english/index.cfm>.) Clements urged the Assembly to move on this quickly to reorganize academic programs to include a Humanities and Social Science component in all degree programs to broaden the scope and influence of Human Sciences. (Please see Patricia Clements' "Open Letter to the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Community" on page 10.)

Doug Owram, the new President, echoed Patricia Clements' reflections of the 1990's which were not kind to universities, saying that this is a crucial time for practical, simple ideas to be put forward. We need to think of mobilizing on two fronts, he said: a) at the government level we need a language that is unqualified, clear and positive; and b) we need new structures, new disciplines - but with careful consideration to not tear down everything we've achieved thus far. We need to be inclusive and flexible, he cautioned.

*Meeting the Needs of the New Generation of Scholars: A workshop to support the work of the Fed's New Scholars Task Force: Session chaired by Patricia Demers, Professor of English, University of Alberta*

The mandate of the Task Force, chaired by Wendy Rolph, Vice-Dean of Arts and Sciences at the University of Toronto, is given as follows:

- to examine the needs of new scholars in the Humanities and Social Sciences now entering Canadian universities, and in particular to address issues of support as these new colleagues establish their research
- to make available an inventory of best practices at Canadian universities for circulation to our member associations and universities;
- to recommend how the Federation and its member associations and universities can best support new colleagues as they establish their research and teaching in the Humanities and Social Sciences in Canada.

This workshop asserted the need to re-imagine the workplace to include new faculty into the citizenry of the universities and reminded us that collegiality is more than mere friendliness, and that real collegiality does not constitute getting out of teaching to do more research. The necessity to create an infrastructure that is supportive of new faculty was emphasized.

*Renewing Scholarly Infrastructure for the Next Generation: A workshop to support the work of the Federation's Associations Task Force: Session chaired*

by Noreen Golfman, Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, Memorial University, and Donald Fisher (Faculty of Education and Centre for Policy Studies in Higher Education, UBC)

This workshop considered the role of scholarly associations in the Federation, their advantages, problems and possible solutions. The background information to the session stated: "The continuing vitality of Canadian scholarly associations is crucial to the development of Canadian research and Canadian researchers. Yet, it is clear that we stand at a moment where change will occur rapidly in the humanities and social sciences. Associations must respond to this change to ensure their continued vitality and the vitality of the disciplines in Canadian academic life."

This group reflected on the lack of loyalty to Canadian associations among new scholars, how we could recruit them, and the usefulness of a survey of best practices on scholarly journals and e-publishing. The point was raised that senior members were not active in the associations or at the Congress, and that we should look at other models of associations such as the MLA and European associations for ideas on how to attract and retain members.

#### *The Electoral Colleges:*

The Universities and Colleges sub-group reported concerns about a) the outcome and impact of proposed academies and b) committees such as WIN (Women's Issues Network) which should be strengthened to include other groups of marginalised peoples. This group also articulated new scholars' needs and the urgency for a best practice to meet their growing demands. Wendy Robbins noted that the Federation website should be expanded to include the interests of disabled, coloured, aboriginal and transgendered groups.

The Small Associations discussed problems of maintaining websites, lack of simultaneous translation, funding, and executive burnout. Wendy Robbins, who chaired the session, directed us to a paper by Claire Polster on academic restructuring. Medium Associations reported on centralizing online membership databases, payments of fees of those who belong to multiple associations, the sharing of information with other organizations, and the need to maintain travel funding and ASPP funding. They inquired about the CFHSS report on Modern Languages, and Jacqueline Wright reported that two surveys have been sent to the ML departments electronically. The Large Associations sounded a caution regarding Marc Renaud's report on SSHRC restructuring, and reinforced the Federation's commitment to lobby the government for funding. The feasibility of collaborative research needs attention, they reported.



It is a privilege to serve CACLALS; the dedication of the executive members bodes well for the association as we endeavour to expand resources and organize events on postcolonial studies. Leslee Birch, our Administrative Assistant, lends a most willing hand to get our many tasks done on time, and we thank her very much for her resourceful assistance. During the next three years, we hope to hold a triennial conference in British Columbia and attempt to launch an online journal for postcolonial studies. Also on our plate are the CFHSS conferences at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg 2004 and the University of Western Ontario in 2005. The listserv (caclals-l@kwantlen.ca) and email (caclals@kwantlen.ca) will help us stay in touch, and we look forward to hearing from you.

***Suba alut auruddak weva (May you have a very good new year)***

Ranjini



## More news from the Federation

- **Aid to Scholarly Publications Programme (ASPP)**

The ASPP, with CACLALS former President Diana Brydon as Chair of the Management Board, has been supporting many notable publications, including Sukeshi Kamra's *Bearing Witness: Partition, Independence, End of Raj* (2002) last year, and Laura Moss' *Is Canada Postcolonial? Unsettling Canadian Literature*, to be launched in Halifax at the Congress.

This year's ASPP scholarly book prizewinners announced at the National Library of Canada are as follows:

Patrick Macklem, University of Toronto, *Indigenous Difference and the Constitution of Canada* (University of Toronto Press).

Harold Adams Innis Prize (best English-language ASPP-subsponsored book in the social sciences):

Gervais Carpin, Université Laval, *Le Réseau du Canada. Étude du mode migratoire de la France vers la Nouvelle-France (1628-1662)* (Les éditions du Septentrion, Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne).  
Prix Jean-Charles-Falardeau (best French-language ASPP-subsponsored book in the social sciences):

Marilyn Randall, University of Western Ontario, *Pragmatic Plagiarism: Authorship, Profit and Power* (University of Toronto Press). Raymond Klibansky Prize (best English-language ASPP-subsponsored book in the humanities):

Germain Lacasse, Université de Montréal, *Le bonimenteur de vues animées* (Les éditions Nota bene, Méridiens Klincksieck). Prix Raymond-Klibansky (best French-language ASPP-subsponsored book in the humanities):

- **Canada Research Chairs**

The Federation is now on record as sharing the discouragement and outrage of the SSHRC Board over the low number of female chairs nominated and awarded through the CRC program. The Federation's Executive has been instructed by its Board to take prompt action to address and change the situation, drawing upon the expertise of women academics.

- Support for a Post-Secondary Education Act

The Federation lent its support in principle to the Canadian Association of University Teachers' proposal for a federal Post Secondary Education Act. The draft Act calls for dedicated PSE funding transfers to the provinces with provisions for provincial fiscal accountability and, like the Canada Health Act, national principles which must be met as a condition for funding.

- Federation Strategic Plan

Executive Director Paul Ledwell reported on the newly adopted Strategic Plan. Much has been achieved already despite its three-year time frame, including

- setting up task Forces on Associations and New Scholars;
- development of an on-line program at congress;
- a special six-page supplement on the humanities and social sciences included in the *Globe and Mail*, and the pilot project for on-line membership renewal with two member associations.

- Advocacy Campaign

VP External Communications, Denise Pelletier, elaborated on the Federation's most recent advocacy campaign. Beginning with the Congress post card campaign, the Federation has raised the profile of human science research among MPs and bureaucrats.

National representatives have met with Cabinet members, MPs and senior bureaucrats and over 20 researchers have met with MPs in their local constituencies. All have pressed for the Federation's main objectives in the next federal budget:

- an increase in asymmetrical funding for SSHRC;
- funds for graduate students and new faculty; and
- capacity building initiatives for universities

- Endowment Campaign

According to VP Development, Rob Merrett, the Endowment Campaign for the Humanities and Social Sciences is moving ahead with a high participation rate among prospective donors. With the labour-intensive nature of the contact, the campaign has moved more slowly than anticipated, but Dr. Merrett expects it to pick up momentum by inviting members of the GA to become involved in the campaign.

- SSHRC President Marc Renaud

SSHRC President Marc Renaud delivered a presentation on SSHRC, the Innovation Agenda and the proposals in Dr. Piper's paper. Referencing his first presentation to the Federation in 1997, where he committed to increasing Standard Research Grants in equal measure to targeted research funding, Dr. Renaud showed that Standard Research Grants have in fact increased at a greater rate than targeted funding. Along with his support for the concept of renewing SSHRC, he committed to a full consultation process with the humanities and social sciences community.



## **An Open Letter to the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Community**

Dear Colleagues,

**As President of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, I am writing for two reasons. One is to share with you the success of Congress 2002, which was hosted by the University of Toronto with the support of Ryerson University. The other is to ask you to participate personally in the Federation's campaign for increased research funding for the humanities and social sciences.**

**First, the Congress.** It was the largest in the 71-year history of our annual scholarly meetings, it brought together just under 8,000 members of our research community. Members of 90 scholarly associations presented papers, explored ideas, and discussed issues of importance in research and in post-secondary education. We were joined by distinguished public figures and international scholars, speaking on cultural and social issues. The University of Toronto took the occasion of the Congress to confer an honorary doctorate upon Nobel Prize winning novelist and scholar, Toni Morrison, who gave the Alexander Lectures during our meetings. This Congress celebrated the excellent, exciting, and essential work of Canada's social sciences and humanities research community.

We look forward now to Congress 2003, which will be held in Halifax, where we will be hosted by Dalhousie University with support from the University of King's College. I hope that you will come.

**Now, to the Federation's campaign for increased research funding.** Most members of our community know that the Government of Canada has provided outstanding financial support for research in areas of science, but that, at the same time, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council is unable to meet the research needs of Canadian universities. (See the statistics on the Federation website.) This critical gap in research funding is impeding the development of Canadian research, the education of highly qualified personnel and the establishment of the research careers of the many new professors now joining our ranks. The Council has indicated that without new resources it will not be able to fund existing programs.

**In this context, the Federation has accelerated its work of advocacy.** Over the past year, we have met with several government

officials to discuss the funding of research, and last year we presented to the Prime Minister's office a proposal for the establishment of Canada Graduate Research Fellowships. At the Congress this year, we launched a post card campaign. Hundreds of delegates sent cards to the Minister of Industry, Allan Rock, and to their local Member of Parliament. Our message is this: it is time for the government to deal with this major outstanding issue in Canadian research and post-secondary education.

Minister Rock has responded to the post cards. In a letter to me, he invited further dialogue and he indicated that he would be glad to learn more about the contributions of the social sciences and humanities to the great challenges facing Canada in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I was delighted to reply. You will find the Minister's letter and my response, including my request for a meeting with him, on the Federation website at [www.hssfc.ca](http://www.hssfc.ca).

**I believe that we must get our message out, now.** Within the next few months, the Federal Government will declare its priorities in a Speech from the Throne and Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister, John Manley, will present his first budget.

The Post Card campaign, with its strong response from the research community, gives us a head start. But more is required. The Federation has been arranging meetings between social and cultural researchers across Canada and their local Members of Parliament. In addition to a meeting with the Minister of Industry, I have requested meetings with other Cabinet members, MPs, and senior department officials. We have again presented a paper to the government's Post Secondary Education and Research Caucus. But more is required.

**We need to build upon the momentum of the Post Card campaign and, as a community to articulate, in a positive way, what social and cultural research contributes to Canada and why this work deserves support in a competitive environment.** Among the many positive points to be made are these:

- Social and cultural research is about Canada's greatest resource: it is about people.
- The great challenges facing Canada in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are human and social challenges.
- There are many positive outcomes of research in the humanities

and social sciences. One of these is education. The quality of education of a majority of Canadian undergraduate and graduate students depends on the health of this research.

The time has come for us to make our case, positively and confidently and in a concerted way. **I urge each of you to make this issue of the adequate funding of social and cultural research a personal cause.** Whenever the opportunity presents itself, please speak out. Write letters to the editor; meet with your elected representatives; mail the Federation Post Card if you haven't yet done this. Speak for the human sciences within your own university, to your senior administration, to the Board of Governors, to your neighbours who are parents of children whose education will depend on the health of our universities. Make it clear that what social and cultural research contributes is important to Canada's future.

The Federation is asking the Government of Canada to:

- Increase the budget of the SSHRC to an adequate level;
- Establish a program of support for Graduate Fellowships and for startup funding for new scholars; and
  
- Support capacity-building initiatives in Canadian universities.

It is important for you to act, to join your voice with others in the humanities and social sciences research community about issues that are central to the future of our universities.

Yours sincerely,

Patricia Clements  
President (2000-2002)  
Canadian Federation for the  
Humanities & Social Sciences

**Report from Wendy Robbins, VP, Women's Issues Network (WIN)**

The members of the WIN Steering Committee for 2003-04 are: Patricia Balcom (medium-size associations); Barbara Crow (President, CWSA, ex officio); Betty Donaldson (large associations); and Jean Wilson (small associations), as well as staff member Jaqueline Wright.

At the November meeting, the WIN got unanimous backing from the Board for the Federation to take "prompt action" and "draw upon the expertise of women academics" over the continuing under-appointment of women to the Canada Research Chairs program

The WIN has four major activities planned for the current academic year:

- \* lobby the Canada Research Chairs program secretariat to hire more women and members of other equity groups and increase the allocation of Chairs to humanities and social science disciplines;
- \* organize and hold a WIN reps meeting at Congress 2003 at Dalhousie University. Date: June 1st. Theme: Conflict, co-operation, and co-opting, on campus: the perspectives of women academics.
- \* produce WIN's third annual "postcard": Ivory Towers: Feminist Audits 2003
- \* survey, jointly with CAUT Status of Women Committee and Legal Counsel, faculty wages across Canada and document in detail the sources and extent of the persistent gender-based faculty wage gap;

In addition, WIN is developing its Web site and invites your comments and suggestions on how to better serve the community of women faculty and graduate student researchers and also, most importantly, how to help the Federation advance the concerns of other equity groups as well.

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**FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

As many of you know, we have faced a few difficulties in getting the new website and listserv up and running at Kwantlen University College. We apologize for the inconveniences that have resulted from this process. Hopefully, the majority of the problems are behind us now.

The new website address is [www.kwantlen.ca/CACLALS](http://www.kwantlen.ca/CACLALS). Please visit the website and provide us with your feedback. We want to ensure that the information is accurate and that problems are addressed in a timely fashion.

Please note that the majority of the old website ([www.unb.ca/CACLALS](http://www.unb.ca/CACLALS)) has been deactivated, so you will not be able to access all of the information available on the new website hosted by Kwantlen University College if you are using the old website hosted by the University of New Brunswick. Despite the confusion of having two versions of the same website, we have had to keep the website hosted by University of New Brunswick partially active in order for Wendy Robbins and Robin Sutherland to be able to manage the website pages related to Chimo Archives, Ph.D. lists, Research Links, and Canadian Studies Associations. The one remaining problem that we have yet to solve involves the "return to main page" command on those pages hosted by the University of New Brunswick. Currently, this command returns the user to the deactivated CACLALS website main page hosted by the University of New Brunswick rather than the fully operational one hosted by Kwantlen University College. So, for now, please use the "back" button on your web browser if you want to return to [www.kwantlen.ca/CACLALS](http://www.kwantlen.ca/CACLALS) from any of the website pages hosted by the University of New Brunswick.

The new CACLALS listserv, [caclals-l@kwantlen.ca](mailto:caclals-l@kwantlen.ca), has replaced the old CACLALS listserv hosted by the University of New Brunswick. Despite some technical glitches that resulted in many of you receiving numerous unwanted emails from the Kwantlen University College listserv administrator, we now believe we have addressed all of the remaining problems associated with importing and updating the email addresses from the old CACLALS listserv hosted by the University of New Brunswick. Please let us know if you are experiencing difficulties with the new listserv.

Finally, please remember that any individual can subscribe to or unsubscribe from the listserv by following the instructions provided on the About CACLALS page of the website. Alternatively, I can subscribe or unsubscribe you, but I will only do so if I receive a request directly from you. Because some people are members of CACLALS but do not wish to subscribe to the listserv (and vice versa), I do not automatically subscribe

or unsubscribe people as a matter of protocol when processing membership applications and renewals.  
I welcome your questions and comments.

Robert Fleming  
Executive Officer



**Financial Report**

April 1, 2002 September 30, 2002

**BALANCE** (April 1, 2002): \$11,333.39**INCOME**

Memberships	1,660.38
HSSFC Outreach Grant (Aboriginal Roundtable)	250.00
SSHRC Travel Grant	3,480.00
Account Interest	2.42

**TOTAL INCOME** + \$ 5,392.80

Sub-total: \$16,726.19

**EXPENDITURES**

Administration (Stationery, Phone, Photocopying, Printing, Postage)	576.13
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New Bank Account and Cheque Printing Fees	79.81
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<i>Chimo</i> Online Archive Project	183.81
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- Production and Advertising 866.99
- Postage 424.68

HSSFC Membership Fee	1,167.00
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Outgoing President / Commonwealth Federation	852.95
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## COSSH 2002

- President and Executive Officer Registration 165.00
- Membership Travel Expenses 3,940.00
- Conference Program 96.85
- Additional HSSFC Expenses 55.84
- Other 28.95

**TOTAL EXPENDITURES** - \$ 8,438.01**BALANCE** (September 30, 2002): \$ 8,288.18

Robert Fleming, Executive Officer

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Book Review Editor: Susan Gingell**

*NEXT STAGE IN ABORIGINAL LITERARY CRITICISM*

Renate Eigenbrod and Jo-Ann Episkenew, eds. Creating Community: A Roundtable on Canadian Aboriginal Literature. Theytus/Bearpaw, 2002. 304 pages, \$22.95

Review by Margery Fee, University of British Columbia

*The book reviewed below contains some mistakes, among others in the table of contents (Jonathan Dewar's paper refers to Communitist, not Communist literature), in the list of contributors (Dewar is of Huron-Wendat, not Heron-Wendat ancestry), and even in the title itself (it should have referred to Aboriginal Literatures rather than using the singular form). These flaws came about because the publishers, besides having decided to collaborate on this project only quite late in the publishing process, were also under pressure to make the deadline of the book launch at the CACLALS conference in May this year (which was a wonderful celebration). We are told that the mistakes are now being corrected or will be corrected very soon. Thanks for understanding. Renate Eigenbrod and Jo-Ann Episkenew.*

This collection contains 13 essays by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal scholars on a range of literary issues and texts. It arose from a roundtable on Aboriginal literature organized through CACLALS (the Canadian Association for Commonwealth Language and Literature Studies) at the 2000 Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences in Edmonton. The editors, who were the organizers of the roundtable, are building, they tell us, on three earlier anthologies: Renée Hulan's *Native North America*, Jeannette Armstrong's *Listening to the Words of Our People*, and Armand Ruffo's *(Ad)dressing Our Words*. Eigenbrod and Episkenew also point out that all of the papers in the collection deal with works published in Canada and all the critics live here. Why they don't mention two earlier collections, *Native Writers and Canadian Writing* edited by W.H. New and *The Native in Literature* edited by Thomas King and others, is not clear although the reason may be that these two collections include some studies of non-Aboriginal writing. At any rate, the appearance of two such anthologies, this one and Ruffo's, in the same year is a matter for celebration that not only is there a thriving Aboriginal literary scene in Canada, but also a thriving community of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal scholars here who are reading, teaching, and writing about this literature. And Aboriginal presses publishing it, for that matter. The point is, I suppose, that despite Hartmut Lutz's

identification of a dearth of courses on Aboriginal literatures in Canada a few years ago, something has changed.

What this anthology also tells us is that we are in the second (at least) phase of critical thinking on this literature. This depends, first, on a community of scholars like the one consolidated by the round table, a canon (that is, a list of works regularly taught in university courses), and the institutionalization of the category of Canadian Aboriginal literature. Then we can move to complicating the category without endangering the means by which this literature is written, published, and read. I suspect that Anne Marie Sewell's "Natives on Native Literature" was put first because it cheekily and eloquently rejects the pieties that characterized the earlier period. I contend that some of these pieties were necessary— all-out warfare over the body of a yet-un-established literature isn't a good way to proceed, but I love Sewell's saying it like she sees it as an Anglophone-only, "mixed blood," urban Indian; she bluntly refuses to believe that the only authentic life is lived on the res, that the only proper topic for her is the woes of colonization and related themes, or that the only response to the occasionally astounding racism that she encounters is resentment rather than writing it down and getting on with her human life. This is the next generation finding its voice.

David Brundage writes about how reading Aboriginal writing about Aboriginal themes affected him as a child and later, as a "White" writer. We should all revisit our child libraries: in my house are two Little Golden Books, one called *Indian, Indian* and the other *The Little Eskimo* that survived with a few others from a huge collection that I read and reread. Who can say what effect they had on me? Many of the articles address pedagogy, the central idea being that we can't teach Aboriginal literature as if it were Canadian literature. Jennifer Kelly's work with her students on the intersection between racist discourses and those of the literature she teaches is both frightening and admirable. She makes it clear that racist discourse is not simply the obvious stuff: she examines the position of the instructor in the students' eyes as a surveillance agent for political correctness, as well as cataloguing the complex connections between Christian teachings on guilt, goodness, and redemption and the reactions of herself and her students. Sharron Proulx and Aruna Srivastava focus on their attempts to teach Native literature differently and how this leads to the cancellation of Proulx' contract at Mount Royal College. (This paper was clearly written under some duress and left me with many questions about what happened next.) Jo-Ann Episkenew gives a useful comparison of the different impact of Aboriginal education in the United States and Canada on literature. She reminds us that teaching Aboriginal literature brings along with it the requirement to conceptualize and that our students may know more about the context of the literature we are teaching than we do. It is tricky for non-Aboriginal professors to be open enough so that Aboriginal students feel

able to tell them when they get it wrong without forcing these same students into the role of reluctant "class experts." She gives many examples of how non-Aboriginal critics have missed the point in portraying Métis cultures. Emma LaRocque's article reminded me of the excitement with which I read her *Defeathering the Indian*: her clarity and sincerity in the face of tough issues are evident here also. She too argues that this literature should not simply become yet another literature to be taught just like all the others and maintains that it should be taught in Native Studies departments by those who have not only the usual academic credentials but also an understanding of Aboriginal epistemology. Debra Dudek examines the issue of whether postcolonial theories work with Aboriginal literatures by surveying parts of actual courses she teaches (course outlines included), showing the value of bringing the theory to these texts to demonstrate the ways in which they challenge it or it fails them. Renée Hulan and Linda Warley look at the pedagogical issues raised by Thomas King's *Medicine River*, noting how dangerously easy it is to allow students to "consume" the novel without actually understanding it, once again raising the point that the complex political and social context out of which this literature arises must not be ignored. Non-Aboriginal students and instructors must tackle a steep learning curve; it is not enough just to read these works; a long-standing cultural illiteracy must be remedied.

Renate Eigenbrod examines what it means, following Len Findlay, "always" to "indigenize." First, it means that there is a conversation going on, a two-way learning process, and that the non-Aboriginal instructor should listen most and learn from the texts, rather than imposing on them. She draws in Jace Weaver's idea of communitism (community + activism) to read the theme of the artist in a range of texts, showing that the heart must come with the mind in indigenising. Karen E. MacFarlane looks at the power of "storying" in Lee Maracle's *Ravensong*, examining the many liminal areas, the borders between categories, where the best work of the trickster takes place. Kristina Fagan shows how a focus on "authentic identity" of both literature and writers stalls important work in this next stage. However she notes that the answer is not to throw out the category "Native literature," but rather to move to studies of Native literature through Native epistemology, to look at particular authors and particular traditions, to consider the effect of Aboriginal languages on these literatures, and to look at reader reception of these works.

Jonathan Dewar's piece is a complex examination of "imposture" in a reading of Armand Ruffo's *Grey Owl: The Mystery of Archie Belaney*. This is another take on the authenticity trap, and he quotes Louis Owens' comment that "In order to be recognized, to claim authenticity in the world in order to be seen at all the Indian must conform to an identity imposed from the outside." Dewar, however, instead of seeing Belaney as "just" a

fraud, examines the resonances of what other theorists have called performance, or passing. He looks at Ruffo's book as a kind of theory of Indian autobiography, part of a struggle to become self-defining. Few of us any more live in such small and homogeneous communities that we grow up seamlessly into an identity: most adolescents actively "try on" a variety of identities in the theatre of high school and university to an audience of their peers before "settling down." Of course, the presence of rigid racist stereotypes denies First Nations people easy freedom of choice around their identity construction, but certainly the literature shows us ways in which it can still be achieved (Jeremiah in Tomson Highway's *Kiss of the Fur Queen*, and Garnet in Richard Wagamese's *Keeper n' Me*). Deanna Reder picks up the theme of identity and life writing. Rather than looking at the usual binary constructions of identity that imply an impossibly rigid purity, she uses the metaphor of fireweed, a beautiful plant that moves into land devastated by fire, a plant with a variety of uses, a plant that can both feed and cure. She derives her approach from two autobiographical fictions: Shirley Sterling's *My Name Is Seepeetza* and Tomson Highway's *Kiss of the Fur Queen*, both of which show characters fighting to claim an identity that allows them to live whole lives after the devastating experience of residential school. Her light-handed reading, like the others in this collection, leaves the texts space to breathe, opens up, rather than shutting down.

What impresses me most about this collection is that it is hugely detailed and informative, while maintaining the individual voice in the papers. Unlike many critical communities, this one has not been generically tamed; the papers are involved not just with texts, but with the whole process of theorizing, writing, reading, teaching, and civic life. Most papers combine theoretical critique, close reading, pedagogical or institutional history, and the wider political context. I am kicking myself I didn't go to the roundtable, and I salute Eigenbrod and Episkenew for seizing a wonderful chance to consolidate new knowledge in a way that those of us who missed the event can nonetheless learn from it.

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## WRITERS, LOCAL RESISTANCE, AND WORLD POLITICS

Arundhati Roy, *Power Politics*.

Sound End P, 2001. 132 pages, \$12 (US)

Review by Julie McGonegal, McMaster University

Ever since Arundhati Roy gained international fame with her Booker Prize-winning novel *The God of Small Things*, she has used her world renown as a writer to draw attention to issues that, despite their import, are either virtually ignored or radically misrepresented in mainstream media. For example, in *The Cost of Living*, published shortly after her best-selling novel, Roy produced a scathing indictment of the dam-building industry in India by unveiling the hidden and human costs of projects that are generally perceived as launching the country into the so-called modern era. Her *Power Politics* is, in many ways, a sequel to *The Cost of Living*; it is also a testament to Roy's ongoing social commitment to exposing the daunting damage that has and is being done to already impoverished people in India as a result of the policies pursued by an insidious conglomerate of first-world multinationals, the Indian government, and international bodies such as the World Bank. In the three essays that make up the original edition of the book, Roy continues to disclose, in her provocative and polemical fashion, the largely unspoken and unacknowledged consequences of dam development. Where *Power Politics* is different from *The Cost of Living* is in its range: while the dangers of dam development constitute its focus, the book also addresses several related issues, including the responsibilities of the postcolonial writer, the suppression of dissent, and the phenomenon of globalization. Of the latter, Roy suggests that although globalization is creating an ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor the world over, in India this gap has a particularly terrifying magnitude. She opens her book by evoking an image of India torn schizophrenically between modernity and traditionalism, not in order to suggest that the former is necessarily good and the latter bad, but as a means of describing the calamitous effects of corporatisation and privatization on the vast, rural majority of India's people.

The first several pages of *Power Politics* reflect on the position of writers – especially writers with the kind of international prestige that Roy enjoys in a nation with the extreme disparities of wealth that India exhibits. In the first essay, "The Ladies Have Feelings, So ... Shall We Leave It to the Experts?," Roy asserts that occupying the role of writer in a country still experiencing the violent consequences of colonialism is a "ferocious burden" and an "onerous responsibility" (4). Yet she does not harbour many illusions about the relationship between writers and their societies, particularly writers of acclaim in the English-speaking world. Indeed, she acknowledges that for the handful of Indian authors who have recently attained commercial success in the global marketplace, thus leading Western publishers to search



desperately for the next "big" Indian novel, worldwide renown can have a seductive and sedative effect far more efficacious in foreclosing protest and struggle than state-sanctioned violence. To speak of preserving the "free speech" of writers is, then, an especially challenging and somewhat paradoxical task given that writers, and particularly famous writers, are ineluctably ensconced in the global economy. In considering some of the machinations through which that economy seeks to contain protest, Roy contemplates the implications of the term "writer-activist" with which she herself has been labelled. By relying on a false opposition between the presumed subtlety, complexity, and lack of clarity of the writer, on the one hand, and the ostensible vulgarity and crudeness of the activist, on the other, this term, she suggests, is rhetorically designed to "professionalize the public debate on matters that vitally affect the lives of ordinary people" (24), and thereby contain discussion of political and social issues at a time when, perhaps more than ever, the concept of expertise needs demystifying. What is more, the suggestion that writing and activism are fundamentally incompatible overlooks the potential that the former has to give globalization "the human face" that the statistics and speeches of the World Bank and its cohorts have, for all their claims, failed to deliver.

It is a face whose contours Roy seeks to trace, particularly in her second essay, "The Reincarnation of Rumpelstiltskin." Here she imaginatively likens our seemingly incomprehensible militaristic and capitalistic system to King Rumpel himself, a figure she uses to describe the deterritorialized and dispersed nature of power at the present time. Foregrounded in this essay is Roy's interest in ecological politics, an interest that permeates the text as a whole, thus suggesting a concern shared by her *Power Politics* and Margaret Atwood's 1971 book of poetry by the same name. Despite this commonality, however, there is no evidence that Roy has read or is borrowing from Atwood, especially since the concern with women's subordination to men in the latter's text, though a salient feature of *The God of Small Things*, does not find expression in this collection of Roy's essays. The issue of dam development is paramount for Roy, and the core of *Power Politics* continues the work that she began in *The Cost of Living* on exposing the distorted and unspoken truths about the dam-building industry. This business has created devastating economic, not to mention ecological, damage, and has displaced millions of Indians, mostly Adivasis and Dalits. And while it has been represented by the Indian government, the World Bank, and of course private corporations such as Enron and S. Kumars as the solution to poverty and hunger, Roy produces convincing evidence to the contrary, showing that developing dams in regions where people rely on the land for survival actually creates poverty and hunger. As a result, several protest struggles have emerged which, as Roy documents in some detail, have, through coalition building, become a virtual civil disobedience movement. Such a movement, she maintains, represents the possibility of resistance within a

system that would have us believe in the impossibility of opposition or transformation. She writes: "What is happening to our world is almost too colossal for human comprehension to contain. To contemplate the girth and circumference, to define it, to try and fight it all it once, is impossible. The only way to combat it is by fighting specific wars in specific places" (86).

Roy is aware, however, of the hegemonic tools that states have at their disposal for suppressing protest and preventing combat. The final essay of *Power Politics*, "On Citizens' Rights to Express Dissent," discusses what she alleges to be the patently false criminal charges that she currently faces as a result of having participated in peaceful demonstrations outside of the Indian Supreme Court against the construction of the Sardar Sarovar Dam. In addition, then, to awaiting her trial for corrupting public morality, a charge filed against her in 1997 for her book *The God of Small Things*, Roy must now defend herself against accusations of committing criminal contempt of court. In outlining these charges, part of Roy's aim is to register the threat to democratic modes of governance that is posed by judicial intolerance to dissent. But for the most part, this last essay is a written defence, and perhaps for this reason pales in comparison to the second essay in *Power Politics*, which is, in the way that the essays of *The Cost of Living* are, an informative and penetrating analysis of an issue that despite its urgency is almost wholly undiscussed and unknown.

A more sustained account of the pernicious consequences of suppressing dissent can be found in "The Algebra of Infinite Justice" and "War is Peace," two essays that Roy wrote in the very initial aftermath of 9/11 that are included in a revised and expanded (2002) second edition of *Power Politics*. These essays, which created a furor among the American public when excerpts were read by Roy on ABC News' *Nightline*, anticipate the use of the events that occurred that day to justify the curtailment of civil liberties, the harassment of ethnic and religious minorities, and the re-direction of public spending to defence. The essays also discuss the American government's almost instantaneous invention of an enemy in the wake of the bombings (e.g. its lack of any substantial evidence implicating Osama bin Laden), its distortion of the motives underlying the attacks, its ironic efforts to annihilate a regime that it in fact installed, its malicious attempts to redestroy a country for the sake of finding the proverbial "needle in the haystack," and its absurd and futile "humanitarian" support in the form of dropping emergency food rations into Afghanistan. In calling for a reaction that emerges from some modicum of introspection, Roy presciently anticipates the sad appropriation of 9/11 as a means of mourning only American loss, an appropriation that requires the asking of harsh and unwelcome questions. (Her prediction has a particularly uncanny resonance for me, as I write this on the first-year anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, when the privileging of American lives over non-Western lives continues unabated, as does the failure in this part of the

world to forge connections between the bombings and American foreign policy).

The absence of Roy's essays on 9/11 from the first edition of *Power Politics* means that many of the linkages that the text seeks to draw between the situation of poor, displaced, and dispossessed Indians and larger global configurations of power are somewhat attenuated and partial. While the text goes beyond *The Cost of Living* insofar as it seeks to situate the politics of dam development vis-à-vis the politics of international development generally, it concentrates on the former at the arguable expense of the latter. But in all fairness to Roy, the focus on the former is indispensable given its profound neglect, not least among postcolonial scholars located in the West. Certainly the import of *Power Politics* is that, like *The Cost of Living*, it offers copiously detailed documentation of dam development, an issue that is widely and unjustifiably ignored in part because "It lacks the drama, the large format, the epic magnificence of war or genocide or famine. It's dull in comparison. It makes bad TV. It has to do with boring things like jobs, money, water supply, electricity, irrigation" (13). But if discussions of dam building seem banal to postmodern audiences whose imaginations are typically inspired only by visual excess, Roy frames her text in rhetoric that makes it difficult not to acknowledge the significance and scale of the issue at hand, the tragic stories it has created, and the fierce resistance it has elicited. *Power Politics* demonstrates that writing and activism are by no means contradictory activities, that intellectual sophistication can indeed be combined with grit and passion.

*"SOMETHING OF OURSELVES": ON READING THE  
RE-RELEASE OF LAURENCE'S LONG DRUMS AND CANNONS*

Margaret Laurence, *Long Drums and Cannons: Nigerian Dramatists and Novelists, 1952-1966*. 1968. Edited and with an Introduction by Nora Foster Stovel. Edmonton: U of Alberta P, 2001. 270 pages, \$29.95

Review by Wendy Schissel, University of Saskatchewan

My first response, upon seeing that *Long Drums and Cannons* had been re-released in a critical edition, was nostalgia. The last time I read Margaret Laurence's book, I had just graduated with a Bachelor of Education from the University of Alberta, from whence this new edition comes, curiously enough, and I was on my way to Nigeria to teach with Canadian University Services Overseas (CUSO). I wanted to read everything I could get my hands on about Nigeria, and this book, so hard to access because of the disregard in which the original publisher Macmillan seemed to hold it, was at the top of my list. Here was a Canadian prairie writer who had not only

spent time in Nigeria, but also written about its writers. No matter that those writers were not yet part of a curriculum in English at the school at which I was about to teach, or that few of their works were readily available in the library or the bookstores in Edmonton, I was eager to read about them, hoping to get a glimpse of another "national" literature.

Writing that paragraph and reading this critical edition have made me realize that it is impossible to write about postcolonial literature without colonizing the very texts we study. In *Long Drums and Cannons*, Laurence says that "the most enduringly interesting aspect of this literature . . . as of literature anywhere, is the insight it gives . . . into the human dilemma as a whole. . . . The best of these Nigerian plays and novels reveal something of ourselves to us, whoever and wherever we are" (13). Always the humanist, Laurence believed that there was a universal condition that tied the real lives described by novelists together no matter where they wrote. The re-release of Laurence's book makes us realize how we always project "something of ourselves" onto texts and writers, how reading (and writing) add layer upon layer of colonizing reflection and meaning. Nora Foster Stovel's introduction to *Long Drums and Cannons* forms the upper layer here. I want to say outer layer, but it is Stovel's hierarchical comment that the "disadvantages [of Laurence's perspective] include a lack of theoretical context and scholarly research" (xxii) that makes me say "upper." Laurence, Stovel tells us, "was a novelist, not an academic, and she was often apologetic about her limitations as critic and scholar."

I think there are two things amiss in what Stovel has to say. First, what she finds lacking in Laurence may have lessened the impact of the book for Nigerian or African and Western readers alike. Laurence, describing herself as a "reasonably skilled reader who stood outside the culture and who hoped to make these works better known and more accessible" (xxii), set out to "survey" as well as to interpret. Nigerian critics of *Long Drums*, including Chinua Achebe – of all the writers included in the book Laurence's favourite and her friend – have chosen not to read Laurence's intention as one of appropriation by a white, Western woman. She is a writer writing about other writers; hence, I think, the respect amongst Nigerian writers for her text. Stovel seems to be suggesting that Laurence's purpose is a lesser purpose than theorizing and scholarship.

The second thing that I think Stovel misses is that, like her Canadian mentor Ethel Wilson, Margaret Laurence may well have seen herself as "a cat amongst falcons." In her essay by the same name, Wilson made it quite clear in her smoothly subtle way that the writer, the country cat, is not a lesser creature than the literary falcons, or scholarly critics. I cannot help but read the same kind of lack of self-effacement in Laurence's comments about the purpose of her book.

There is certainly good scholarship in the critical edition that Stovel has put together: its updated biographies and bibliographies; its glossary; its inclusion of Laurence's formerly unpublished essay "Tribalism As Us Versus Them," a post-publication reflection on *Long Drums and Cannons* given at a University of London conference during the Biafran War; the appendices, including one on the civil war in Nigeria and one on the ethnic groups discussed in the book. But there is little of the kind of postcolonial theorizing that we might expect in a critical edition of a book on early Nigerian postcolonial literature in English. In fact, a significant amount of the introduction to this critical edition is little more than a summary of what Laurence says in each of the sections of her book.

That is not to say that the critical introduction is without substance. What Stovel is interested in is what Canadian literary critics have always been most interested in with regard to *Long Drums and Cannons*: the relationship between Laurence's Manawaka cycle and her critical book. Stovel remarks on two striking similarities between Laurence's fiction which is best known to Canadians and the Nigerian novels and plays that Laurence surveys: first, the need to come to terms with one's ancestors and the past they represent; and second, the failure of people to communicate with one another. Canadian critical interests in Laurence's Canadian books seem to me yet another kind of colonizing of Laurence's text.

On the subject of contemporary, postcolonial commentary and theorizing, however, the best section of the book is the all-too-brief essay written by Abdul-Rasheed Na'Allah, "Nigerian Literature Then and Now." Na'Allah cites Laurence's failure to uproot the Nigerian writers she surveys "from their African traditions or superimpose foreign critical criteria on them" as the first quality of her work, something that he says satisfies an Elaloro, or Indigenous Yoruba concept, of "critical discourse" (lvii).

But I would like to take issue somewhat with Na'Allah's critique, too. The second quality he admires is Laurence's universalizing, her relating of Nigerian literature to human experiences everywhere. It may be true that Laurence "creates human connections where others have claimed African barbarism" – perhaps that is most true in her fascination with and treatment of various tribal responses to infant and child mortality. But in his reading, Na'Allah posits yet again the unified humanist subject in whom Laurence believed and who so easily becomes the imperialist subject. While it is clear that Laurence is attempting to make connections for non-Nigerian readers when she compares a Nigerian character to Lear, her comparison also inevitably sets up another layer of colonizing reading, simply because comparisons of this kind are never without hierarchy. It does seem impossible that colonialism can be completely "post'-ed anywhere" (Ama Ata Aidoo cited in Boyce Davies, 95).

With all of my reservations about the possibility of taking a humanist approach to "postcolonial" literature, I do think that Laurence's text is relevant even today. Hers is a critical survey and history of works set in a period leading up to Independence and ending pre-civil war, between Amos Tutuola's *The Palm-Wine Drinkard* (1952) and Achebe's *A Man of the People* (1956). And despite what Stovel says, Laurence did her research, conceptualizing by reference to cultural beliefs her appreciation (or lack thereof) of the novels and plays she reviews, even if she was, as she admits, looking at them from the outside. Laurence helped to bring the attention of the world to Nigerian novels and plays of a particular period. That was an accomplishment given the residual colonialism of Western publishing houses.

Finally, though, *Long Drums and Cannons* and Laurence's essay "Tribalism As Us Versus Them" have another and more chilling relevance today. Gayatri Spivak remarked in 1990 on a "new colonialism which is not space-based . . . a planetary capitalism" (94). The global village that Laurence was envisioning in her third kind of tribalism, a mutually respectful one, has lost all currency within a more insidious globalization. Despite her best hopes, Laurence feared a "universal truth ordinary people as pawns, played with in the chess game known as history, by those few who are addicts of power" ("Tribalism As Us Versus Them," 230). She could have been describing the "addicts of power," such as George W. Bush, who are today reinventing an even more insidious "Us Versus Them" tribalism on a world scale.

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## CONFERENCE NEWS

- Sri Lanka Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies will hold its Biennial Conference from the 3-6<sup>th</sup> (incl.) January 2003 running concurrently with The 6th SAARC Writer Sessions, in Colombo and in Peradeniya. The theme is 'Interactions' and about fifteen writers from SAARC nations will be attending. Dr. Ashley Halpe, Chair of SLACLALS, invites members of CACLALS to attend this conference or drop in for a visit. His email is ashleyhalpe@hotmail.com.

## CALLS FOR PAPERS

Invitation  
GNEL-Conference

Annual ASNEL-Conference

28 - 31 May 2003 Magdeburg

*GLOBAL FRAGMENTS*

*DIS-ORIENTATION IN THE NEW WORLD ORDER*

While the world seems to be getting ever smaller and globalization has become a ubiquitous buzz word, regionalism and fragmentation also abound. This might be due to the fact that far from the alleged production of cultural homogeneity, the global is constantly re-defined and altered through the local. This tension, pervading much of contemporary culture, has an obvious special relevance for the new varieties of English and the literatures published in English world-wide. Postcolonial literatures exist at the interface of English as a hegemonic medium and its many national, regional and local competitors that transform it in the New English Literatures. Thus any exploration of a globalization of cultures has to take into account that culture is a complex field characterised by hybridisation, plurality and difference. But while global or transnational cultures may allow for a new cosmopolitanism that produces ever changing, fluid identities, they do not give rise to an egalitarian "global village" as the asymmetry between centre and peripheries remains largely intact, albeit along new parameters.

These problems have repeatedly been focussed on in previous meetings of the Association for the Study of New English Literatures at its various national and international levels. The 2003 GNEL meeting scheduled for 28th to 31st May, 2003 at the Otto-von-Guericke Universität Magdeburg will address some issues across the range from the global to the fragmented. These will include the following panels or sessions:

-Diasporic Literatures

- Media
- Postcolonial Literature for children and young people
- Local colour in global English
- Teaching New English Literatures and Cultures

### I Diasporic Literatures (Graduate Forum)

Convenors: Anke Bartels (Magdeburg), Rüdiger Kunow (Potsdam), Mala Pandurang (Mumbai)

The panel on Diasporic literatures will try to situate the tension between the forces of homogenisation and fragmentation and analyse their impact on cultural (re)production within a global framework conducive to hybrid cultural forms and transcultural writing. Possible topics will include, but not be limited to, themes like transculturation, hybridity, migrancy, identity formation, gender, inscriptions of home and exile, space and mobility, the global imaginary, re-assessing history, memory, representations of (trans)nationalism and the role of the publishing industry. We hope to include themes such as the diasporic novel in Britain and North America, the politics of gender in diasporic literatures, diasporic theatre and poetry.

### II Media

Convenors: Dirk Wiemann (Magdeburg), Satish Poduval (Hyderabad)

The intensification of global flows of exchange and interaction has resulted in constantly shifting mediascapes that more often than not combine aspects of homogenisation, globalization, and increasing local productivity. In the field of broadcast mass media, the unbounded dissemination of information and its packaging seems to push into the direction of global cultural homogenisation. At the same time even global players such as MTV have been forced to fine-tune their offerings to their diverse local constituencies. Can the media- and here especially film and the rhizomatic internet- function as an arena for the emergence of new affiliations "from below", partly "local", partly disembodied? In addressing these problems, we would particularly appreciate contributions from practitioners in the fields of the media.

### III Postcolonial Literature for children and young people

Convenors: Jürgen Martini (Magdeburg), Cecile Sandten (Bremen)

What this session wants to look at is how the global economy has been influencing traditional values and ways of thinking in the past and how the concept of the global village has changed the outlook of societies. In particular, contributions are welcome that consider the ambivalent role of a literature addressing itself to younger readers through the voice and the eyes of adult writers. Key questions to be discussed should include reference to such terms as colonialism, postcolonialism, neocolonialism, diasporic writing, and the literature of postindependence. Papers should bring to bear these terms on focussing the concept of childhood and youth in a globalized society. Whose values are being advocated, whose culture is hegemonic,



whose culture is marginalised? Are the concepts of culture transmitted through children's literature able to fight the loss of regional identity and culture?

#### IV Local colour in global English

Convenors: Karin Ebeling (Magdeburg), Josef Schmied (Chemnitz)

The sessions on "Local colour in global English" will analyse how the international language English gains local colour when it is adapted to the cultural needs of multilingual societies throughout the world.

Multilingualism, multiple identities and multiple layers of hybridisation in various cultural forms of writing will be analysed.

Possible topics include, but are not limited to the following:

language change/transfer, creolisation, acculturation, transculturation, nativisation, identity formation, intercultural communication, loan words/translations, etc.

#### V Teaching New English Literatures and Cultures

Convenors: Helene Decke-Cornill (Hamburg), Reinhold Wandel (Magdeburg)

At the level of secondary schools, teachers of English have started to realise that, outside the USA and Britain, there are other sociogeographical and cultural domains in English-speaking cultures and literatures, and this has made an impact on syllabi and curricula and will soon turn into an essential part of the work done in EFL-classrooms. We ask for contributions in this field. Since this session of the GNEL meeting will also be offered as a regular teacher training course, we should like to ask contributors to opt for workshop-like, interactive presentations.

All communications about possible contributions to these, or other relevant topics, should be forwarded to the convenors based in Magdeburg, or to: Bernd-Peter Lange, Institut für fremdsprachliche Philologien, Otto-von-Guericke-Universität Magdeburg, Zschokkestr. 32, D-39104 Magdeburg; T 0391 6716669; Fax 0391 6716668;

More information on our website:

[Http://www.uni-magdeburg.de/gnelkonf/](http://www.uni-magdeburg.de/gnelkonf/)

or contact: [gnelkonf@gse-w.uni-magdeburg.de](mailto:gnelkonf@gse-w.uni-magdeburg.de)

Conference: 'Inside the Whale: The Postcolonial and Globalization':  
Northampton, 11-13 July, 2003

Plenary Speakers: Susan Bassnett, Simon During, Bart Moore Gilbert

Call for papers:

Papers are invited on the theme of 'Inside the Whale: The Postcolonial and Globalization'. The conference seeks to explore the tensions existing between economic, political and cultural global forces and the resistances and adaptations to them that come from local and regional identities. It aims to re-examine the meaning of the 'post-colonial' in the light of recent world developments. Aspects of this theme may include the following:

- New modes: the Gothic and Exotic
- Post-Colonial Theory Now
- Identities and Locations
- Translating Cultures
- Travel, Tourism and Terrorism
- Networking the Postcolonial: Teaching and Publishing
- Re-branding the Popular
- Deterritorialized Nationalities
- Asylum and Exile
- New uses of History

Contributions from disciplines other than literary and cultural studies are welcome. Suggestions for panel discussions are also invited. The conference will include readings from noted writers.

Abstracts of approximately 300 words should be sent by 28th February, 2003 to Janet.Wilson@northampton.ac.uk; offers for convening panels to the same address.

The conference proceedings will be published in the journal *World Literature Written in English* which is now edited from The School of Cultural Studies.

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School of Cultural Studies, University College Northampton.

*Burden, Benefit, Trace?**The Legacies of Benevolence*

UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND, BRISBANE

11-14 DECEMBER 2003

Long before Rudyard Kipling urged his readers to take up the white man's burden, benevolence was integral to cultural domination, whether through the formal structures of empire, or through associated charitable activities such as the provision of medical aid, education, or missions. As the rise of the middle classes and the emphasis on Puritan conscience increasingly replaced the notion of aristocratic patronage and noblesse oblige, benevolence functioned as an umbrella term under which imperial and neo-imperial domination, particularly cultural domination, were rationalised and promoted within government and among the subjects of empire. For the British, the burden of benevolence and the work of civilizing were seen as differentiating their own from other European imperial enterprises. To a certain extent, a similar self-perception is evident now in the policies and practices of the contemporary world's dominant imperial power, the United States. This conference will consider benevolence, and representations of benevolence, in a wide variety of forms. Papers on the following topics will be welcomed:

- Anthropology and academic study
- Culture
- Ecology and Environment
- Education and training
- Governance and administration
- History
- Literary representation
- Medicine and welfare
- Migration and resettlement
- Military and police activity
- Religion and missionary activity
- Trade and commerce

For updates and further information, see the conference website:  
<http://emsah.uq.edu.au/conferences/benevolence-2003/>

Abstracts should be sent electronically by 30 April 2003 to  
Helen Gilbert - [H.Gilbert@uq.edu.au](mailto:H.Gilbert@uq.edu.au)  
Leigh Dale - [L.Dale@uq.edu.au](mailto:L.Dale@uq.edu.au)

**CFPs for 2003 Congress in Halifax (sent through caclals-l)*****Joint session with ACCUTE***

"Representations of Justice: Law and Transgression in Postcolonial Literatures"

Papers are invited for this joint session of ACCUTE and CACLALS. Authors are encouraged to interpret the session theme as broadly as possible. Papers may deal with a single text, an author (literary or theoretical), or such issues as native transgression/imperial law, psychoanalysis and the law, marxist theories of law, literary representations of legal genres, colonial legal discourse, racism and state law etc.

Three copies of papers and/or proposals, accompanied by three copies of a 100 word abstract and a 50 word biographical note should be sent to the following by November 15, 2002:

Gary Boire

Chair, Department of English and Film Studies  
Wilfrid Laurier University Waterloo, ON, Canada  
N2L 3C5

Proposals should be 300-500 words in length; completed papers should be no longer than 10 pages. Email attachments and a disk copy (preferably in WordPerfect) should also be submitted.

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"Postures, Impostures, and Hoaxes: Identity Conflicts and Crises in Australian Literature"

In the last decade there have been a number of high-profile cases of literary posturing in Australia, cases where the ethnic and racial identities of writers were revealed as poses. From the Demidenko affair, which led to a widespread examination of the orthodoxy of multiculturalism, to the Mudrooroo affair, which called into question the status of Aboriginal literature in the academy – the public exposure of literary postures, impostures, and hoaxes have created a number of crises in the corpus of contemporary Australian literature, and the academy responsible for negotiating its canon. The literary debates engendered by these crises bear directly on significant cultural and political issues in Australia, such as multiculturalism, indigenous cultural policy, cultural authority, and national identity. They have also prompted a re-examination of earlier manifestations

of literary posturing, such as the Ern Malley, Nino Culotta, and B. Wongar cases.

We invite proposals on a wide range of issues emerging from the phenomenon of posturing in Australian literature. Presenters might consider the following questions as part of a general theorisation of literary posturing or in the context of studying a specific Australian manifestation of the posture: What constitutes literary posturing? What do incidents of posturing tell us about the commodification and fetishisation of certain racial and ethnic identities? Are posturing, imposture, and hoaxing appropriate paradigms for negotiating these racial and ethnic identities? Do we need to distinguish between the posture, the imposture, and the hoax, and if so what are the trajectories of each? What impact does posturing have on cultural and national identities? In the case of Aboriginal posturing, what impact might it have on negotiations for reconciliation, political rights, or land claims? How might the study of posturing illuminate questions of intellectual property and appropriation? Can posturing be enabling, or is it necessarily neo-colonial in its trajectory? How and why do Australian cultural institutions including the media, the publishing industry, and the academy legitimise posturing, and what is the nature of their response once it has been exposed? Are the cultural conflicts resulting from posturing repairable, and is such reparation even desirable?

Send 500 word abstracts on any element of the literary posturing in Australia to Carrie Dawson, Department of English, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS, B3H 3J5 (cvdawson@IS.Dal.Ca) or John Eustace, Department of English, Acadia University, Wolfville, NS, B4P 2R6 (john.eustace@acadiau.ca) by November 15, 2002.

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“Imagining A Different Future:  
The Politics of Postcolonial Reconciliation”

At the present moment in history there is an unprecedented proliferation of public scenes and processes of collective reconciliation. So global and widespread is this current phenomenon of reconciliation that it seems to have become a common, even guaranteed, feature of national and international politics alike. Witness, for example, the creation and operation of truth commissions in South Africa, Chile, and Argentina, the emergence of the "Sorry" movement in Australia, and the various movements for reconciliation by Palestinians and Israelis. Yet if processes of reconciliation constitute a trend of almost international proportions, postcolonial critics have barely begun the immense task of assessing its import and implications, as well as problems and possibilities. Especially neglected by critics has

been the question of the role that literary and other cultural texts perform in contributing to discourses of reconciliation. We solicit proposals on a wide range of issues related to the topic of collective reconciliation. Specific questions that presenters might consider could include but are not limited to the following: What is the relationship between postcolonial reconciliation and resistance? How do discourses of reconciliation operate in a gendered manner? What is the relationship between reconciliation and related concepts such as guilt, repentance, remembrance, apology, forgiveness, restitution, and redress? How do specific cultural, linguistic, religious and other differences inform and affect demands and desires for reconciliation? Do practices of collective reconciliation efficaciously undermine or transform positions of dominance and subordination or only reinforce them? How does the proliferation of projects of collective reconciliation relate to processes of globalization? If postcolonial reconciliation is indeed possible, what are its conditions of possibility? Given that it is often corporations and nation-states that facilitate processes of reconciliation, what does it mean for institutions to express affect (e.g. regret, shame, contrition)? How is it possible to apportion responsibility for (post)colonial crimes and racial wrongdoing without resorting to such reified categories as colonizer and colonized?

Papers will be presented at the annual conference of the Canadian Association of Commonwealth Language and Literature Studies (CACLALS) at the Congress of Social Sciences and Humanities, 29-31 May 2003, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Presenters must be members of CACLALS at the time of the conference.

Send 250-500 word abstracts on any aspect of collective reconciliation, as well as a bio. of approximately 100 words to:

Julie McGonegal,

Department of English, McMaster University, Hamilton,

ON, L9H 2YG (mcgoneja@mcmaster.ca), or,

David Jefferess,

Department of English, McMaster University, Hamilton, ON, L9H 2YG

(jefferdm@mcmaster.ca)

Deadline for submissions: November 1, 2002.

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"Parting, Crossing, Returning"

Deadline for submission of abstracts:

January 13, 2003.

We invite students of all arts and humanities programs to submit papers to

this year's UBC Arts Graduate Students' Conference. The conference aims to encourage interdisciplinary dialogue. Following are a number of keywords intended to open up the possibilities of our theme. "Parting, Crossing, Returning" can take place between borderlines and contact zones. These movements can be located in space, time, history, and memory. They can describe dynamics of geography and spatial structures, as well as those of social systems, cultural relations, and local and global communities. They relate to the processes of language acquisition and migration, to theories of subjectivity, identity, and otherness, and to concerns about traditions, canons, and genres. We encourage students of all levels to submit their work. Please submit a one-page abstract of your presentation and a short biography. Your biography should provide your email address and phone number, the title of your paper, your name, program, year of study, research interests, and any other information you would like to provide. We will grant the AGSC Award to the best abstract of a paper to be presented. Please submit your abstract and biography electronically, either as attachments in Rich Text Format, or in the body of your email. Our email address is <agsc@mail.arts.ubc.ca>. We will notify successful submissions by email. For more information please visit our website at <<http://www.arts.ubc.ca/conferences/agsc/>>.

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#### "Canada and the Americas"

Submissions are invited for a proposed three-session seminar on Canada and the Americas: Comparative Approaches to Canadian Literatures to be convened at the annual American Comparative Literature Association Conference meeting, April 4-6, 2003 at Cal State San Marcos in North San Diego County. Americanists are increasingly moving towards a more hemispheric and comparative model of literary study. Yet discussions of a hemispheric American Studies and of the literature of the Americas tend to be oriented southward to the exclusion of Canada. Similarly, border theory has tended to identify the U.S.-Mexico border as paradigmatic, again to the exclusion of a Canadian presence. In keeping with ACLA 2003's focus on borders and on inter-American relations, this seminar seeks papers that will explore the place of Canada in a hemispheric American Studies. How would our understanding of the Americas be changed through the inclusion of Canada? To what extent does Canadian cultural production fit easily with current paradigms and assumptions about the Northern hemisphere? And how might a stronger emphasis on Canada alter the shape of American Studies? In addition, this seminar seeks papers that examine how Canadian texts travel. In particular, how are diasporic Canadian authors such as Dionne Brand and filmmakers such as Srinivas Krishna received differently outside of their local Canadian contexts? How neatly do models of diasporic culture developed out of a U.S. context apply to Canadian cultural production? How important is it to maintain a sense of local and national contexts in light of the increasingly

transnational and global character of Canadian cultural production? Finally, how is the theme of "crossing over" explored within Canadian literature and other art forms? This may include not only geographical border crossings but also cross-overs between historical periods, ethnicities, languages, religions, sexual orientations, genres, and media. Papers comparing intra-Canadian literature and cultures are welcome.

Please submit paper proposals by September 13 to Rachel Adams (REA15@columbia.edu) and Sarah Phillips Casteel (SAP34@columbia.edu)

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**CONFERENCE REPORTS****"Minority Discourse in Canada as the Model for Developing Secular Pluralism" in Ustron, Poland, in April, 2002.**

By Craig Tapping, Malaspina University College

Craig Tapping (Malaspina University College, Nanaimo) attended an international conference on the theme "Minority Discourse in Canada as the Model for Developing Secular Pluralism" in Ustron, Poland, in April, 2002. The conference was organized by the Centre for Canadian Studies at the University of Silesia in Katowice, and sponsored by Canada's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Civic Education Project for Eastern Europe. Over 100 delegates attended from universities in 25 countries, all of which shared a common history of being formerly under the jurisdiction of the USSR. Many participants spoke of the double bind of being over-run earlier in the 20th century by fascism.

Papers ranged from literary and cultural analyses to economic and socio-political examinations of aspects of European and Canadian life and pedagogy. Craig gave the final address in a paper "Being Here, Being Queer and Getting Used To It", which examined Michael Ignatieff's CBC Massey Lectures Series, "The Rights Revolution", in the context of his own personal and professional life, especially how a (successfully fought) legal battle begun in the early 1990s--to gain spousal equivalency and landed immigrant status for his partner, Fergus Foley--directed his efforts to design, articulate and inaugurate Malaspina's English 420: Gay and Lesbian Literatures.

Since returning to Nanaimo, he has initiated a process to link the Centre for Canadian Studies and the Department of English at the University of Silesia with Malaspina's Departments of History and English. When this agreement is finalized, students and faculty will study and teach in Poland and, in turn, Polish students and faculty will come on exchanges for at least one semester to Malaspina University-College.

The conference proceedings will be published in Warsaw and London later this autumn.

**"IntraNation: race, politics and canadian art"**  
**Vancouver, November 21 to 24, 2002**

Rita Wong, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia

Opened by Chief Ian Campbell of the Squamish Nation, IntraNation put into practice Gandhi's saying "Be the change you want in the world" by bringing together many artists and cultural workers to discuss their work, their lives, and their insights into the challenges facing us at this particular moment of history. Building on the legacy of creative anti-racist efforts in the 1990's such as the Writing Thru Race conference, Racy/Sexy, and many other events, IntraNation began with a performance by Chris Creighton-Kelly reminding the audience how the global is irrevocably local and how the "Third World" is always with us, in the clothes we wear, in the languages we speak, in our intimate reliance upon each other's labour and histories.

"Biospheric Questions and Bodily Poetics," with Scott McFarlane, Laiwan, and Shirley Bear, related the questions of biotechnological power dysfunctions, histories of colonization, and "groundedness" in land and earth. McFarlane's response to the brutal violences of biotechnology (which have arguably misused the name of scientific "progress" to justify and enable corporate ownership of life, what Vandana Shiva terms biopiracy) was a recognition of what he called "the living in general," resonating with indigenous traditions based on a respect for all life, for "all our relations" including plants and animals. In conjunction with beautiful images, Laiwan discussed how so-called "clean technology" such as computers relies on the unsustainable depletion of natural resources, generating tons of garbage, and creating a workforce of disposable women (racialized as "Asian" for instance) whose bodies are used, injured, and then discarded by corporations. Shirley Bear reminded us that Mother Earth is always with us underneath the urban concrete, and that culture cannot be divorced from nature.

In the session "Screens: Subjects, Sites, Practices," Fred Wah read excerpts from *Diamond Grill*, and Karin Lee translated them into her film script. Sylvia Hamilton talked about her practice of digging up the past and living in the present, engaging Portia White's "Think On Me" as living proof. Richard Fung offered what he had learned over the years: to move away from single strand (vertical) histories to understanding linked (horizontal) relations; to recognize the dialogic relationship between content and form; to be attentive to who is addressed as the spectator; to take care of the ordering of information and unpredictable, multiple audiences; and to develop a criticality that leaves spaces open for participation and change.

In "Performative Impulses and Critical Perspectives", Kirsten Forkert, Paul

Wong and Rebecca Belmore showed slides of visiting various First Nations communities with an immense megaphone, interacting with people in an incredibly touching way. Kirsten Forkert raised important and difficult questions of commodification and the abuse of words such as "freedom" when they are appropriated by right wing politicians like George Bush to justify the murder of thousands in places like Afghanistan and Iraq. Paul Wong divulged the kinds of abuse and violence he has survived, and his heartfelt lived experience of racism and other traumas shook me in a way that I had not expected.

The evening of the second day opened with book launches for *13 Conversations About Art and Cultural Race Politics* by Richard Fung and Monika Kin Gagnon and *what the auntys say* by Sharron Proulx. Larissa Lai read from *Salt Fish Girl*. We watched Richard Fung's video *Sea in the Blood* and Jayce Salloum's *everything and nothing* and *(as if) beauty never ends*. Fung's poetic mourning of his sister Nan touched the audience greatly, and Salloum's gripping conversation with Soha Bechara revealed the everyday courage and resilience of this woman, a Lebanese National Resistance fighter, who was imprisoned for 10 years in the notorious El-Khiam torture and interrogation centre in South Lebanon.

On the third day "Imagined Geographies" by Marwan Hassan spoke of the systemic biochemical oppression against brown bodies in a global context, AIDS, methyl mercury poisoning and radiation poisoning, Iraq, Bolivia, Japan, Africa, as well as Anishnabe people in North America. His range of analysis was daunting and sobering, and he threw out the challenge that identity is worth nothing unless it grapples with this mass scale global violence in which we are all implicated and related. Henry Tsang spoke of his artistic and curatorial practices in Vancouver that have encouraged and facilitated work by many other artists. Jin-me Yoon humorously and perceptively interrogated the spectacle of the Calgary Stampede to show how colonization continues to operate today.

"Digging Out/Digging In: Connective Agency and Political Dissent" brought together the historical knowledge of tjsnow, Jayce Salloum, and Jim Wong-Chu in their work. It was a relief when tjsnow broke into poetic speech after detailing the relentless violence of the bureaucratic machinery that has been and continues to be used against First Nations people. Jayce Salloum quoted that resistance is "to not let go of what you hold dear" and suggests that we are invested in each other's subjectivities. Jim Wong-Chu shared his research into the complexities and interrelations within Asian North American history.

In "Politics and Processes of Learning" recognizing the racism that makes art colleges chilly places for First Nations artists and artists of colour,

Adrian Stimson nonetheless generously hoped for processes of working together that build trust. Cindy Mochizuki described the relational practices of her work as it spans both intentional and accidental audiences, while Kira Wu played with the implications of popular culture on radicalized bodies and Loretta Todd used the metaphor of the holodeck in her preconceptions of space and time.

Performances by Hiromi Goto, Baco Ohama, and recent Governor General Award winner Roy Miki were followed by the premiere Vancouver screenings of *Sunflower Children* by Karin Lee and *Portia White: Think On Me* by Sylvia Hamilton. I was of course quite tired by the intense pace of the last couple days, and I walked around in a state of awe, trying to process all the sensory stimulation, dizzy with the possibilities their works open up.

The closing session, "Potential Formations, Possible Momentums," started with presentations by Larissa Lai, Chris Creighton-Kelly, and Roy Miki. Raising thought-provoking questions around the politics of time, strategic infections, the disjunctions between representations and bodies, Larissa Lai referenced how many of the presentations at IntraNation have affected and fed her own process of thinking. Chris Creighton-Kelly lit a candle for hope, taking the radical political work and co-optation as a point of departure, and raised his hand to the candle's flame to remind us that brown bodies will burn in the coming "war" manufactured to profit the American military machine. Roy Miki identified the speechlessness that comes with the collapse of the far and the near, the struggle to find language that will not reproduce the violence we come out of, and suggested the urgency of reading our way through the labyrinth to engage with the current confusion. He made a case for the embodied self, for the ongoing rethinking of the situated local. The session generated so many comments and questions that three hours passed in the blink of an eye as the adrenalin flowed, contagious, infectious, and invigorating.

IntraNation was a much needed shot in the arm as we continue to go about building cultures that make the violence of military invasions, structural poverty, and ongoing oppression in the world no longer possible. The challenge will take us generations, but the larger context that informs our everyday lives has been made a little more tangible and a lot more imaginable through the discussions of this conference.

**GRADUATE STUDENT NEWS** by David Jefferess

Julie McGonegal, Sabine Milz, and David Jefferess, three PhD students at McMaster, are organizing the English Department's 2003 John Douglas Taylor Conference. CACLALS members may remember the 2001 conference, "Content Providers of the World Unite! The Cultural Politics of Globalization."

The 2003 conference is tentatively titled "Crises and Contradictions: The Politics of Postcoloniality". The conference will provide a venue for discussion of the often articulated concern that postcolonialism's location within the milieu of the university and particularly the Anglo-American university renders it at least partially remote from the material realities of everyday oppression whose very existence postcolonial critics claim to interrogate and resist. The questions we hope will shape the conference include: How can we move beyond some of the limits of the field that so many critics have outlined, often very vehemently? How can we move beyond the ultimately debilitating theory/practice or aesthetics/politics conundrum that continues to beleaguer the field? How can postcolonial intellectuals forge connections between their work and the many issues of injustice and inequality that operate in the world?

We are particularly concerned with making the conference a space where dialogue and discussion can take place. In that vein, we hope that our plenary speakers (Himani Bannerji and Asha Varadharajan are confirmed...) will provide focus and inspiration for a day of panel discussions and roundtables. Watch for the CFP in January... In the meantime, if you would like more information please contact any one of the organizers: [mcgoneja@mcmaster.ca](mailto:mcgoneja@mcmaster.ca), [milzs@mcmaster.ca](mailto:milzs@mcmaster.ca), or [jefferdm@mcmaster.ca](mailto:jefferdm@mcmaster.ca)

Julie McGonegal, a graduate student at McMaster, has initiated the Social Justice Reading Group. She has organized it as an interdisciplinary reading group in the interests of opening up the lines of communication among scholars interested in issues of social justice. Given that scholars interested in such issues are often divided by disciplinary boundaries, the group is intended to provide a context for graduate students and faculty from diverse backgrounds and a wide-range of perspectives to come together for the sake of sharing insights and engaging in exchanges around such broad themes as postcolonialism, anti-racism, globalization, nationalism and transnationalism, feminism, and diaspora, to mention only a few. The group welcomes participants from outside McMaster, and any one interested in attending one or more sessions can contact Julie at [mcgoneja@mcmaster.ca](mailto:mcgoneja@mcmaster.ca).

A message from Tunji:

For those of us who are TAs at UBC, one issue of concern is that we have been working without a contract since September 2002. At the last TA union meeting, members voted unanimously to hold a strike vote from November 27th to December 2nd. There are several issues at stake here but one important concern is pay parity with TAs at other institutions. TAs who support the bargaining process have particularly been trying to solicit the support of faculty at all departments and programs. The efforts at UBC to secure a new contract is of relevance to faculty at UBC and other universities because sources of funding--such as TAships--determine, to some extent, the ability of departments to attract graduate students--but there are certainly several other important arguments to be made. I think *Chimo* might be a good forum to say that faculty members of CACLALS (at UBC and elsewhere) could consider moving a motion of support for TAs whenever bargaining procedures with university authorities stall.

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## NEWS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Diana Brydon and Irena Makaryk** have co-edited *Shakespeare in Canada: 'a world elsewhere'?* (University of Toronto Press, 2002) launched on November 15 at the Picturing Shakespeare conference at the University of Toronto. The book makes the first extended Canadian contribution to the growing sub-field of postcolonial Shakespeare studies. In a review of the book in *Canadian Theatre Review* (Summer 2002), Catherine Graham writes that it presents "a very engaging discussion of the history of Canadian theatre institutions and audiences in their evolution from eighteenth-century garrison entertainments to contemporary questionings of cultural colonialism and institutional policies" (103).

**Maria Casas** has successfully defended her PhD thesis "*Multi modality in the Poetry of Lillian Allen and Dionne Brand: A Social Semiotic Approach*" at the University of London in July of this year. She is now teaching part-time in the English Dept. at the University of Toronto.

**Robert Fleming and Sue Ann Cairns** have completed the second Canadian edition of *Strategies for Successful Writing*--a reader, rhetoric, research guide and handbook for students of composition. The textbook, which is published by Pearson Education Canada, will be launched in the spring of 2003.

A new book by **Marwan Hassan**: *Velocities of Zero: Conquest, Colonization, and the Destruction of Cultures*. Toronto: TSAR. ISBN 1-894770-02-1

While war and conquest have been constant features of human existence, Marwan Hassan argues that until modern times human societies maintained a diversity and coexistence of cultures. It was only with the reconquests of Spain and the rise of European global capitalism that conquest and colonization took on their more recent forms with devastating results on many populations. Looking at the examples of Spain, the Americas, the Arab countries, and Africa, Hassan shows the extent of damage that was done to the populations of those places, their cultures and languages, and their economies.

**Helen Gilbert** and **Anna Johnston** have edited *In Transit: Travel, Text, Empire*. New York: Peter Lang, 2002. ISBN: 0-8204-5699-3

The essays gathered in *Travel, Text, Empire* focus on issues arising from the historical nexus between travel and imperialism. Contributors investigate the ways in which specific imperial projects were inextricably linked to developments in travel technologies and practices. At the same time, this collection reveals that imperial fantasies of exploration and conquest, whether actualized or not, irrevocably shaped the formulation of travel as a category of modern experience, a rite/right of passage, a type of embodied knowledge. This dynamic, reciprocal relationship between imperialism and travel is examined here in relation to written and pictorial documents produced at different historical moments and across a broad range of geographical locations, including India, Borneo, the Caribbean, South Africa, Australia, Britain, Polynesia, and Papua New Guinea.

Helen Gilbert teaches theatre, performance studies and postcolonial literature at the University of Queensland. Her major publications include *Post-colonial Drama: Theory, Practice, Politics* (co-authored with Joanne Tompkins) and *Sightlines: Race, Gender and Nation in Contemporary Australian Theatre*. Anna Johnston teaches Australian and postcolonial literature at the University of Tasmania. She has published a number of articles on missionary texts, postcolonial autobiography and Australian literature.

A new publication by **Yasmine Gooneratne** (NSW Australia): *Celebrating Sri Lankan Women's English Writing: Vol. 2: 1948-2000* 451pp. Women's Education and Research Centre, 58 Dharmarama Road, Colombo 6, Sri Lanka (Cost SLRs. 850 per copy). WERC's email address is [werc@sltnet.lk](mailto:werc@sltnet.lk)

**Kelly Hewson** is the local administrator for the 2003 Commonwealth Writers Prize to be held in Calgary the first week in May.

**W.H. (Bill) New** adjudicated the 2002 Giller prize. He has recently published:

- *Encyclopaedia of Literature in Canada*. Toronto: U Toronto P, 2002.
- *Llamas in the Laundry* (for children). Vancouver: Ronsdale, 2002.
- *Riverbook & Ocean* (poems). Lantzville, BC: Oolichan, 2002.
- *Granchild of Empire: About Irony, Mainly in the Commonwealth* (the Garnett Sedgewick Memorial Lecture). Vancouver: Ronsdale, 2002.

**Uma Parameswaran's** new novel, *Mangoes on the Maple Tree*, was released by Broken Jaw Press last September. Set against the 1997 Flood of the Century, it is a story of an Indo-Canadian family in Winnipeg.

**Victor Ramraj** introduced Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka at a public reading on November 27, 2002 at the University of Calgary. Victor also gave the 2001 Nobel Prize public lecture on Naipaul at the University of Calgary earlier this year. He has published it in the first issue of a new journal, *Evam: Forum of Indian Representations*.

**Wendy Robbins** has been re-elected as Vice President, Women's Issues, of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences.

**Routledge** is bringing out a second edition of *The Encyclopaedia of Post-Colonial Literatures in English*, in 3 volumes.

**Nora Foster Stovel** will be editing Margaret Laurence's 1976 collection of 19 travel essays, *Heart of a Stranger*, for the University of Alberta Press.



**Membership List**

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- Curran, Beverley, Ms., Department of Creativity and Culture, Multicultural Studies, Aichi Shukutoku University - 23 Sakuragaoka, Chikusa-ku Nagoya, Japan 464-8671
- Derry, Ken, Mr., 13 Roseheath Avenue, Toronto ON, M4C 3P3
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## **The Canadian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (CACLALS)**

The Canadian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (CACLALS) is the only association in Canada that concentrates on the burgeoning field of Commonwealth literature (or, in its recent manifestations, International English literature, Anglophone literature, New Literature in English, World Literature Written in English, and Postcolonial literature). CACLALS brings together critics, scholars, teachers, students, and writers who share a common interest in the Commonwealth and Postcolonial literatures and the versions of the English language they employ. And it provides members with an international context for studying Canadian literature, introducing a deeper understanding of other cultures and of Canada's multicultural tradition.

The association organizes each year a three-day conference at the Congress of Humanities and Social Sciences. Members, including graduate students, share their research in sessions that feature papers, panel discussions, readings, and workshops. It regularly sponsors joint sessions with other societies such as ACCUTE and ACQL in areas of common interest. At the annual conference, members and guests have opportunities to meet each other informally. The wine-and-cheese reception and the informal dinner (that often features Commonwealth fare) are both lively occasions.

CACLALS organizes triennially a major international conference at the current headquarters of the association. These conferences attract writers and academics from all over the world. They have been held in Montreal, Winnipeg, Wolfville, Guelph, and Waterloo.

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